RICHARD RUBINGER

Private Academies of the Tokugawa Period

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PRIVATE ACADEMIES OF TOKUGAWA JAPAN

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For Noriko

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For all the conclusions in this work and for errors of fact and interpretation the author alone is responsible.

This book is dedicated to my wife, Noriko, who has been at all times a source of encouragement and support.

Honolulu, Hawaii
August 1980

PREFATORY NOTE

THE REPEATED USE of Japanese terms in the text may create difficulties for the reader. To ease the burden somewhat the following conventions have been adopted:

All names are given in the Japanese fashion, family name first followed by the personal name. All Japanese terms have been italicized the first time they appear. Words that are commonly known, such as samurai or bakufu, are not italicized thereafter. More technical, and less commonly known words, such as *yūgaku*, have been italicized throughout.

A single line over a vowel (macron) indicates that the vowel is to be given approximately double its usual length when pronounced. In the case of the word "Noh" where another convention has come into standard use, the macron has not been used. It has also not been used for commonly known place names like Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka.

All dates in the text correspond to the modern solar calendar except where otherwise noted. Ages of persons correspond to Western usage. For the equivalent age in many of the Japanese sources, one year should be added.

Abbreviations have not generally been used, but for the frequently cited source, *Nihon Kyōiku-shi Shiryō*[Materials on the history of Japanese education], *NKSS* has been used for convenience.

English translations of all Japanese-language references appear in the bibliography.

PRIVATE ACADEMIES OF TOKUGAWA JAPAN

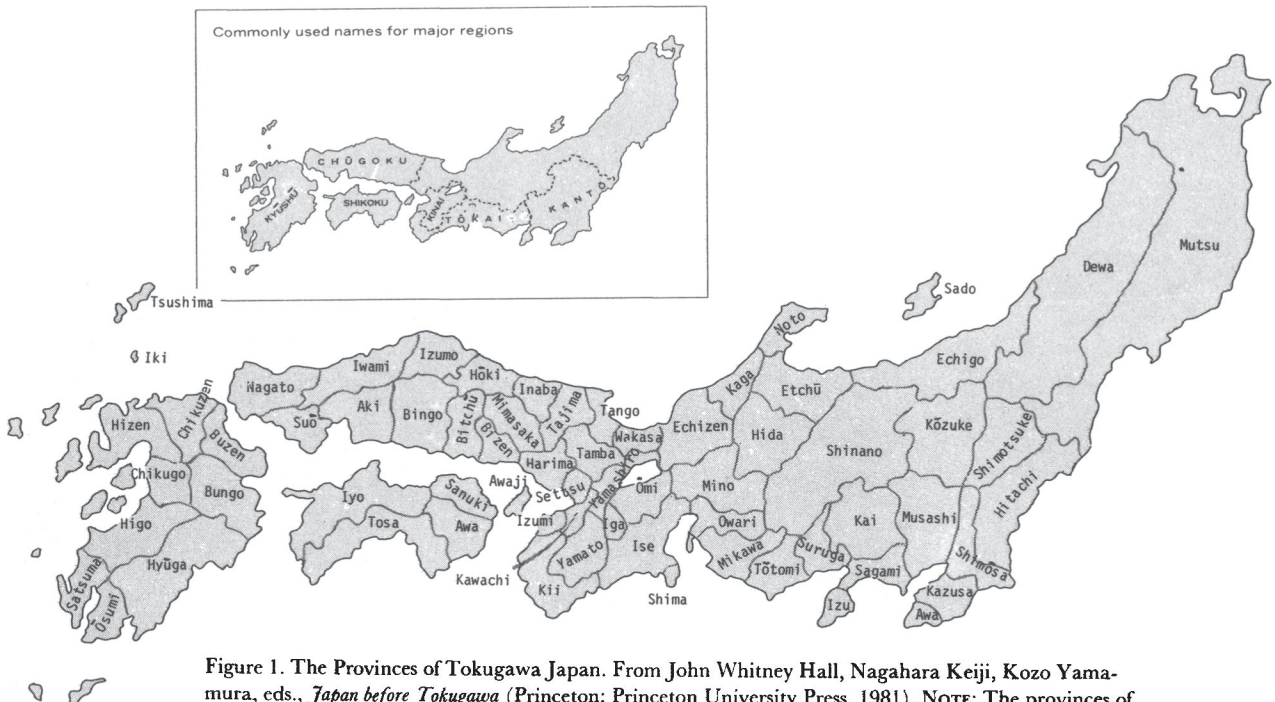

Figure 1. The Provinces of Tokugawa Japan. From John Whitney Hall, Nagahara Keiji, Kozo Yamamura, eds., *Japan before Tokugawa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981). NOTE: The provinces of Mutsu and Dewa were later subdivided.

INTRODUCTION

IN AN EFFORT to illuminate preconditions that may have contributed significantly to Japan's modern development, a great deal of scholarly attention has been directed, in recent years, to the nature of society during the Tokugawa period—the roughly 250 years preceding the Meiji Restoration of 1868.[1] This reevaluation of Tokugawa society has led to a tendency to see continuities between Tokugawa feudalism and Meiji modernization and to deemphasize the harshness and "backward" character of the earlier period. It has focused attention on elements of change and growth behind the "feudal façade" in the final years of the period and on dynamic developments within the feudal world that reinforced the drive to modernize.

In education, as in other areas, it has been well established that the Tokugawa legacy was a rich one. There have been attempts to present solutions to such fundamental problems as: (1) the extent to which Tokugawa educational institutions helped prepare the way for changes that took place after the Meiji Restoration; (2) the ways in which Tokugawa schools moulded the ideas and attitudes of the leaders who initiated those changes; and (3) the ways in which presuppositions concerning the functions of schools, embodied in Tokugawa institutions, influenced the evolution of schooling practices and pedagogy in modern Japan.[2] These efforts point strongly to

[1] The date usually given for the beginning of Japan's modern development.

[2] The formulation of the basic problems was taken, in slightly altered form, from R. P. Dore, "Education: Japan," in Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, eds., *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 176.

the importance of the Tokugawa legacy in education in Japan's transition to a modern society. Nevertheless, a fully satisfactory response to these problems that would take into account great variations in the role of formal schooling, and see education in intricate and changing involvement with the rest of society has yet to be made. In large part this can be attributed to the narrow focus by historians of Japanese education on a limited set of school types to the relative neglect of both informal agencies of education and other schools. Among the latter we may include a diverse network of independent schools known as *shijuku*—an important part of the "system" of Tokugawa schooling, and the subject of this study.

In much of the work done on Tokugawa education[3] the contributions of the schools have been presented largely in terms of a dual grouping of schools: officially sponsored schools

[3] See historiographical note in Appendix A.

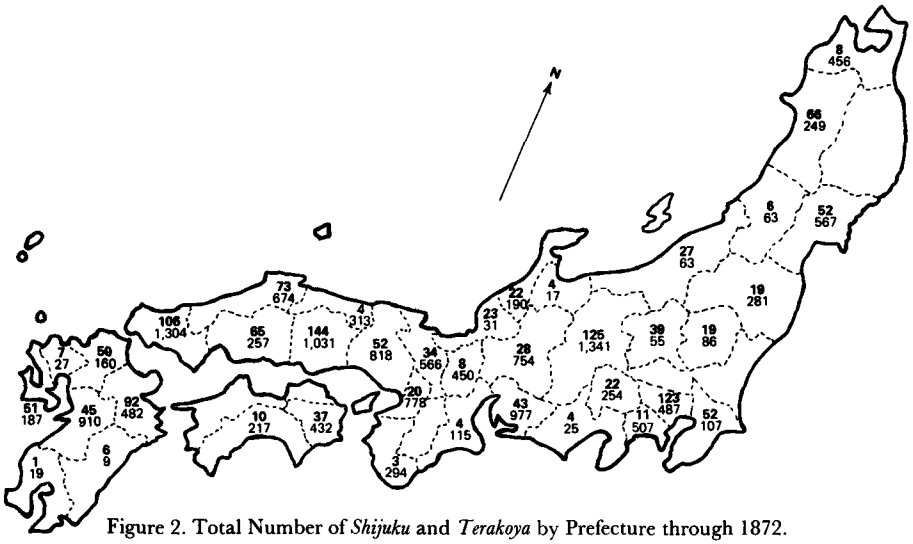

Figure 2. Total Number of *Shijuku* and *Terakoya* by Prefecture through 1872. SOURCE: "*Shijuku-Terakoya* Chart" in Mombushō, comp., *Nihon Kyōiku-shi Shiryō* (Tokyo: Mombushō, 1892), vols. 8 and 9. Cited hereafter as *NKSS*. NOTE: Boldface figures are for *shijuku*, others are for *terakoya*. Four prefectures did not report: Nara, Ehime, Iwate, and Kagawa.

Table 1. Development of Types of Schools by Date of Establishment

Year	Shijuku[1]	Terakoya[2]	Gōkō[3]	Han *Schools*[4]
Before 1750	19[a]	47	11	40
1751–1788	38	194	9	48
1789–1829	207	1,286	42	78
1830–1867	796	8,675	48	56
Date unknown	18		8	3
Total for Edo period	1,076[b]	10,202	118	225
1868–1872	182	1,035	76	48
Evidence not conclusive	233		4	3
Total	1,493	11,237	198	276

[1] Data on *shijuku* from "*Shijuku-Terakoya* Chart" in *NKSS*, vols. 8 and 9, with year periods rearranged from computations done in Nakaizumi Tetsutoshi, *Nihon Kinsei Gakkō-ron no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1976), p. 51.

[2] Data on *terakoya* from "*Shijuku-Terakoya* Chart" in *NKSS*, vols. 8 and 9, with year periods rearranged from computations done in Ishikawa Ken, *Terakoya* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1966), pp. 86–87.

[3] Nakaizumi, *Nihon Kinsei Gakkō-ron no Kenkyū*, p. 48.

[4] Ibid., pp. 44–45.

[a] Includes two established before Edo period.

[b] Ishikawa Ken gives a slightly different figure of 1086 in *Nihon Shomin Kyōiku-shi* (Tokyo: Tamagawa Daigaku Shuppan-bu, 1972), p. 162.

for the *samurai* leadership class and various institutions for commoners, particularly the *terakoya*. We know a good deal about the development, the content and aims of education, and the contributions of these two types, and do not need to repeat the details here. Since, however, we shall refer to them for comparison from time to time, a brief outline is called for.

The *terakoya* were the most numerous institutions for commoners. They were usually run locally without official support, by public-spirited citizens. They developed in response to local needs both in rural areas and in towns in all parts of the country, as shown in Figure 2. By one count the total during the period was over ten thousand, with more than eight thousand established after 1830 (see Table 1). These schools provided the

rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic to merchants, farmers, and town dwellers, as the need to cope with an increasingly complex marketplace and a bureaucratic government required such basic skills. Both R. P. Dore and Herbert Passin[4] have argued persuasively for the benefits of widespread schooling and the advantages of literacy, such as provided by the *terakoya*, to a developing nation.

We also know much about the official schools. The *bakufu* (government of the Tokugawa) itself initiated official support for schooling when in 1630 the private school of Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan (1583–1657) was supplied with a plot of ground and funds to expand into a center for the Chu Hsi brand of Neo-Confucianism favored by the Tokugawa (see note 3, Chapter II). The Shōheikō, as it came to be called,[5] became the leading institution of Confucian orthodoxy and a major influence in training Confucian scholars both for the bakufu and the various *han* (feudal domains). In addition, the bakufu established other schools, not all of which were Confucian, in the territories it administered directly.[6]

Following the model of the Shōheikō, the various han established their own schools for the military training and moral cultivation of the samurai in the castle towns. Although there were very early examples, such as the Okayama han school

[4] R. P. Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), pp. 291–295. Herbert Passin, *Society and Education in Japan* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1965), pp. 13–49.

[5] Hayashi had been made Confucian advisor to the *shōgun* in 1608. The school continued to be run privately until 1630 and thereafter came gradually under official control. In 1690 it was further expanded and in the 1790s, as part of the educational reforms of Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758–1829), it was given the name Shōheizaka Gakumon-jo (Shōheikō) after the area in Edo where it was relocated. It was at this time completely taken over as an official school by the bakufu.

[6] For example, there was the Wagaku Kōdansho, a center for classical Japanese literature established in 1793 and taken over by the bakufu in 1795; the Igakusho, taken over from a private vaccination center in 1861, became a center for Western medicine; the Kōbusho, established in 1854, became a Western-style military school; the Bansho Shirabe-sho, expanded from a smaller office for translation of Western books in 1856, became the Kaiseijo in 1863, a leading center for Western studies shortly before the Restoration.

founded in 1641, most did not develop until the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, as Table 1 shows. By the end of the period, most han had at least one han school. In addition some han supported what are known as *gōkō*.[7] There were generally two types of *gōkō*: "branch" han schools for samurai in rural areas and schools for commoners used primarily for moral training.

The various types of official schools are given much credit for the transformation of a largely illiterate warrior class at the beginning of the Tokugawa period to a fully literate and well-disciplined class of loyal bureaucrats with a generally shared intellectual culture by the end. Nevertheless, these schools, as institutions of feudal administration of the bakufu and han, were expected to conform to the best interests of the state. Until the end of the period their primary purpose remained the training of moral attitudes considered a necessity for a hereditary ruling elite—hardly the background for nurturing a modern leadership group. The constituency of the han schools, with minor modifications late in the period, remained limited to the upper ranks of samurai within the geographic borders of the han. The official schools in general tended to resist the teaching of practical knowledge and were slow in incorporate Western studies and other areas of thought which lay outside the Chu Hsi tradition.

By limiting the context of Tokugawa schooling to these institutions, it becomes difficult to account for some of the fundamental changes that took place, and the role of education in them, particularly toward the middle of the nineteenth century. One suspects that to some degree it was not so much because of the official schools but rather in spite of them that we see among other important changes: the remarkable skill of the early Meiji leaders in adapting Western knowledge and methods to Japanese conditions; the technical innovations and entrepreneurial initiatives of the lower samurai and commoners; the ability of the leadership and people as a whole to transfer their allegiances from local and feudal authorities to a nation state; and

[7] Also known as *gōgaku* and *kyōyujo*.

the adoption of a unified and universal system of education for samurai and commoners alike by 1872.[8]

In order to gain some fresh perspectives on the changing nature of Tokugawa schooling and to extend our understanding of the role of education in Japan's early modernization, we need to widen the framework of the discussion. The view taken here is that few social institutions of the Tokugawa period better reflect the variety and scope of educational practices available at different times throughout the period—and particularly on the eve of modernization in the final years—or provide a better gauge of the transformation in the function, meaning, and purpose of schooling that had occurred by the middle of the nineteenth century than the *shijuku*.

What, then, were the *shijuku*? Generally rendered into English as "private academies,"[9] the *shijuku* covered a bewildering array of institutional arrangements running from small and intimate tutorial types to huge centers with elaborate administrative machinery, from writing schools scarcely distinguishable from *terakoya* to advanced research institutes. We can, however, isolate the *shijuku* as a type on the basis of: (1) administrative structure—they were privately run, in most cases in the home of an established scholar who attracted students by his scholarship or his views on politics, philosophy, education, etc., and whose personality and teaching style determined the character and atmosphere of the school; (2) the curriculum—it was free from official control and dependent solely on the particular interests and training of the headmaster; it thus could and did often include various specialized studies (such as Dutch learning, "national" learning, military studies, medicine, navigation, and so on, as well as any of the heterodox varieties of Confucianism) which were quite beyond the realm of the *tera-*

[8] Similar skepticism concerning the modern influences of the han schools was expressed in a very perceptive review article in 1967. See Marius Jansen and Lawrence Stone, "Education and Modernization in Japan and England," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 9, no. 2 (January 1967), 208–232.

[9] The characters are 私 for "private" and 塾, taken from the Chinese word for the smallest scale of school run by a single teacher in his home. *Kyōiku-gaku Jiten* [Dictionary of education] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958), 3, 260–261.

koya and looked upon with suspicion by the Confucian scholars in the official schools; (3) the constituency—the *shijuku* imposed no geographical or class barriers to entrance. They thus became the only educational institutions of the period that could attract a truly national constituency from the various classes and from all parts of the country. Although there may have been some exceptions most *shijuku* incorporated these general features.

The meaning of "private" in this context requires some clarification. The distinctions between "private," "public," and "official" schools were not carefully drawn during the Tokugawa period; neither were there clear definitions of school types such as *shijuku*, *gōkō*, or han schools. With the exception of "*terakoya*," the terms themselves were seldom used during the period; the schools were referred to by their names rather than by type. The terms came into common use and their meanings were worked out, with some difficulty, during the birth pangs of the modern school system in the early Meiji period, as the need arose for the Meiji government to establish regulatory procedures and licensing requirements for the various surviving Tokugawa institutions. This process was aided by translations of works on the school systems of several Western countries such as France and Holland where "private"-"public" terminology was used and the distinctions clearly made.[10]

For our purposes "private" should be taken to mean that the school was not controlled by official sources (bakufu or han) or even by local groups of village elders, as was sometimes the case with the *terakoya* and *gōkō*. This however did not mean that the *shijuku* received no village, town, or even official support, for in some cases they did; it means that support was limited and did not reach the point of actual control. There is of course room for

[10]There is a detailed analysis of the meanings of "private," "public," and "official" (私, 公, 官) schools as worked out in the Gakusei (known in English as the School Law or Fundamental Code of Education) of 1872 and its several drafts, as well as in the Mombushō [Ministry of Education] guidelines for implementing it in Kambe Yasumitsu, "Gakusei-ki ni okeru Shiritsu Chūgakkō to Shigaku-kan" [Private middle schools and views of private education in the period of the School Law of 1872], *Nihon Shigaku Kenkyūjo Chōsa Shiryō* [Research materials of the Japan Research Institute on Private Education], no. 31 (March 1975), pp. 1–15.

interpretation here, and in some cases there is disagreement among Japanese scholars as to whether schools were *shijuku* or not.[11]

Since the term "private school" today sometimes carries a restrictive or exclusive connotation we should enter the caveat that this does not apply to *shijuku* in the Tokugawa period. On the contrary, as we have pointed out, they were the most "open" of schools, unrestricted by either class or geography. They did, however, require entrance and tuition "payments" of one kind or another and this tended to restrict enrollment to those of some means. In many cases however, as we shall see, the requirement could be met by a gift of food rather than cash and there were cases of special provisions made to accommodate poorer students. Thus, the financial burdens to entrance were mitigated to some extent, although the poorer peasantry were in effect excluded.

The starting place for an overview of the *shijuku* of the Tokugawa period is the "*Shijuku-Terakoya Hyō*" [*Shijuku-terakoya* chart], in *Nihon Kyōiku-Shi Shiryō* [Materials on Japanese educational history] or *NKSS*.[12] These materials are far from complete and must be used with great caution,[13] but

[11] The term *kajuku* (家塾) literally, "home-school," is generally taken as a synonym for *shijuku*. It is so defined in Shimmura Izuru, ed., *Kōjien* [Comprehensive dictionary of the Japanese language] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971), p. 407. Both terms are used to refer to the small-scale schools run in a scholar's home and to the larger-scale independent schools that were made up of a complex of buildings. One major source, for example, uses *kajuku* throughout to refer to all the varieties of private academies of the Tokugawa period, though *shijuku* is generally more common. See Aichi Ken Kyōiku Iinkai, comp., *Aichi Ken Kyōiku-shi* [History of education in Aichi prefecture], (Nagoya: Aichi Ken Kyōiku Iinkai 1973), 1, 485–737. Ishikawa Ken, however, in his various writings has made a distinction between the two terms. He has used *kajuku* for those home-schools run by official scholars and han samurai with permission and often support of the han, and *shijuku* for those home-schools opened by those not in official employ and not receiving direction or support from feudal authorities. The latter view has not been followed consistently by Japanese scholars and in some cases confusion has arisen.

[12] *Shijuku-Terakoya Hyō* [*Shijuku-terakoya* chart], in Mombushō, comp., *Nihon Kyōiku-shi Shiryō* [Materials on Japanese educational history] (Tokyo: Mombushō, 1892), 8, 155–723; and 9, 1–412.

[13] See Appendix B for further discussion.

Table 2. Rank of Teachers at Terakoya and Shijuku (Percentages)

Rank	Terakoya[1]		Shijuku[2]
Samurai	25.74		53.0[a]
Commoners	74.26		35.0
Merchants and farmers	(39.86)	(19.5)	
Shintō priests	(7.54)	(3.6)	
Buddhist priests	(18.00)	(4.4)	
Doctors	(8.86)	(7.5)	
Others			0.7
Unknown			11.3[b]
Total	100.00		100.00

[1] Data from "*Shijuku-Terakoya* Chart," in Mombushō, comp., *Nihon Kyōiku-shi Shiryō*, vols. 8 and 9, as summarized in Ishikawa Ken, *Terakoya*, p. 122.

[2] Calculated directly from "*Shijuku-Terakoya* Chart." The actual number of teachers at all the *shijuku* is larger than the number upon which these percentages are based. In order to avoid distortion caused by some of the schools in the early Meiji period, which show twenty to thirty teachers in one school, and since the overwhelming majority of schools throughout the period had only one teacher, we have counted one teacher per school even for those few that had more.

[a] There was wide local fluctuation within these totals. In Tokyo, samurai accounted for 74.8 percent of the total. In other areas with a significant number of schools recorded, the percentages were also higher than the average: Okayama had 62.5 percent, Yamaguchi 69.8 percent, and Ōita 62.0 percent. Nagano with an extremely large number of "unknowns" brought the average down somewhat.

[b] Most of these came from one perfecture, Nagano, which recorded 93 of the total of 165 "unknowns."

nevertheless provide the single best source of documentation of a wide variety of *shijuku* for most of the period. The *NKSS* records some 1,076 *shijuku* established before 1868, the total going up to just under 1,500 through 1872 (see Table 1). It is likely too that the actual total was a good deal higher, as indicated by several attempts to supplement the *NKSS* figures (mentioned in Appendix B). The opening and closing dates recorded show that some lasted for only a few years. These were presumably established for a limited and specific purpose, and closed their doors at the completion of the task or the departure of the headmaster. Many others lasted for generations. The

records of numbers of students indicate that the schools varied greatly in size from those with less than ten students to large institutions of over two hundred. The students were overwhelmingly (but not exclusively) male; small numbers of women are recorded at some schools.

Like the *terakoya*, *shijuku* sprang up in virtually every part of the country (see Figure 1), showing the greatest increase in new schools from the last decade of the eighteenth century through the first half of the nineteenth century (see Table 1). Table 2 indicates that in contrast to the *terakoya*, the majority of teachers at the *shijuku* were from the samurai class although commoner teachers are represented as well. The preponderance of samurai teachers suggests not only that the level of learning was higher at the *shijuku* but that during the long period of peace, education had become an important field of endeavor for the warrior class.

The *NKSS* materials also indicate the courses of study followed at the various *shijuku*. This is summarized in Table 3. Although the notations in *NKSS* are brief, causing possible error in placing schools in categories (the Western studies schools and military schools especially seem to be underrepresented), we can get a general sense of the wide area of specialization of these schools. Schools designated as Chinese studies account for thirty-five percent of the total. If we add to this figure schools that in addition to Chinese studies also taught Japanese classical literature or calligraphy, the figure goes up to seventy percent. Following these in number are calculation schools, Western medical schools, and military schools—Chinese and Western military studies as well as traditional Japanese styles such as archery, horsemanship, jūdō, and kendō. Also recorded are small numbers of Buddhist schools for the clergy, schools of etiquette, painting, sewing, music, ethics, and law.

While providing some basic data on the *shijuku*, the *NKSS* materials do not include a great deal that we would like to know. We are told little about what actually was studied or about the diversity within any of the areas of study (there were many different types, for example, among the Chinese studies