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Author(s): Earl H. Kinmonth

Source: *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Aug., 1978), pp. 677-696

Published by: [Association for Asian Studies](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2054370>

Accessed: 17/02/2015 10:13

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## Fukuzawa Reconsidered: *Gakumon no susume* and Its Audience

EARL H. KINMONTH

FUKUZAWA Yukichi (1835–1901) is quite possibly the best-known, most widely studied, and most frequently quoted writer of the early Meiji period. More of his writings have been translated into English than those of any other non-literary Meiji writer. So much attention is given to Fukuzawa that he often appears as *the* Meiji intellectual. One recent textbook describes him as nothing less than “the most influential man in Meiji Japan outside government service.”<sup>1</sup> In another description he is portrayed as “one of the most remarkable” of men, one of that small number of men who move history through their own personal power, and “the man who above all others” explained Western material and spiritual culture to Meiji Japanese.<sup>2</sup> Overall, scholars have been only slightly more reticent in describing Fukuzawa’s importance than he himself was. In his own view, the reforms undertaken in the early Meiji period were influenced by himself to such a degree that it was appropriate to say “If I did not chiefly initiate them, I think I may have been indirectly influential in bringing them about.”<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, it would be only a slight exaggeration to say that most scholarship on Fukuzawa has essentially followed the lines of interpretation set out by Fukuzawa himself, especially in his *Autobiography*.<sup>4</sup> Only a few scholars have questioned what one has described as a “contrived autobiography of his wondrous thoughts composed decades afterwards” in which “Fukuzawa’s consciousness that a historical drama had already taken place prompted him to find a place for himself in it.”<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, despite a certain amount of debunking, the hyperbolic approach to Fukuzawa is still much in evidence. Even those committed to a reexamination of Fukuzawa and his thought have often repeated conventional clichés concerning the role of his works, without actually testing or supporting these claims.

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Earl H. Kinmonth is Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Davis.

<sup>1</sup> John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, Albert M. Craig, *East Asia Tradition and Transformation New Impression* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978), p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> Carmen Blacker, “Foreword” in Fukuzawa Yukichi (Eiichi Kiyooka, trans.), *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa* (New York: Schocken, 1972) [hereafter *Autobiography*], p. v.

<sup>3</sup> David A. Dilworth, “Introduction” in Dilworth & Umeyo Hirano’s translation of *Gakumon no susume, An Encouragement of Learning* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969) [hereafter *EL*], p. x.

<sup>4</sup> Cited in note 2 above.

<sup>5</sup> Harry D. Harootunian, *Toward Restoration* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1970), p. 325. A somewhat revisionist stance is to be found in Albert M. Craig, “Fukuzawa Yukichi: The Philosophical Foundations of Meiji Nationalism” in Robert Ward (ed.), *Political Development in Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1968). On the Japanese side, Tōyama Shigeki has gone to considerable effort to debunk certain claims made in *Autobiography*; see his *Fukuzawa Yukichi: Shisō to seiji no kanren* (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppan kai, 1970) [hereafter *FY*].

This essay, a frankly revisionist look at Fukuzawa, focuses on the ideas in and the reception of *Gakumon no susume* (An Encouragement of Learning)—one of the most important works in establishing Fukuzawa's reputation, one about which some of the most extravagant claims have been made, and one for which there exists a substantial body of commentary written during its period of greatest popularity. The existence of that contemporary comment allows research to be carried one step further than has been done in the past; rather than speculating about the reception of Fukuzawa's thought and its role in early Meiji society, the emphasis here is on examining actual, documentable interpretations and uses of his thought as exemplified in *Gakumon no susume* (hereafter referred to simply as *Gakumon*). The text itself is not ignored, however; a careful analysis of its actual statements and non-verbalized assumptions also lead to substantial revision of conventional wisdom. This revised view is then tested against documentary evidence of early Meiji reception of and interpretation of the work.

Circulation is an issue of supreme importance in the case of *Gakumon*, for it is its popularity which lifts it out of the category of being just another item in the voluminous output of Fukuzawa. Had the work not been enormously popular, it would hardly be mentioned in even the most detailed histories of the era. Indeed, had not certain of Fukuzawa's works (of which *Gakumon* is the stellar example) achieved great popularity, he too would be but a footnote to Meiji history. Yet, for all the importance attached to the popularity of *Gakumon*, the literature on Fukuzawa is marked by a casual disregard of the data concerning its circulation—data that tells much about when, why, and by whom *Gakumon* was read. Moreover, the literature seldom makes clear the nature of the work, although there are aspects of its structure which are of considerable significance in understanding its role in Meiji thought and society.

*Gakumon no susume* was not a single work, but rather a series of pamphlets or tracts that appeared under a common title. Because of this fragmented nature, it is appropriate to speak of more than one *Gakumon*, especially since there was wide variation in the circulation achieved by the individual parts. What might be called the "original *Gakumon no susume*" began as a communication entitled "Yohai no kokyō Nakatsu ni gakkō o hiraku ni tsuki" (Opening the School in Our Home Town Nakatsu). The "our" referred to Fukuzawa and Obata Tokujirō. The latter was, like Fukuzawa, a Nakatsu *han* samurai; he later became principal of the school that was the subject of the address. Shortly after this oration was given in Nakatsu (December 1871), it was issued (in February 1872) as a pamphlet under the title *Gakumon no susume* by Fukuzawa's academy, Keiō Gijuku.<sup>6</sup> This original *Gakumon no susume* was greeted with such enthusiastic reception (Fukuzawa claimed 200,000 sold by 1880)<sup>7</sup> that Fukuzawa wrote a succession of pamphlets under the same general heading, apparently hoping to capitalize on the popularity of the first. The last of these appeared in November 1876, by which point a total of seventeen pamphlets had been issued.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Tomita Masafumi, "Gakumon no susume" in Tomita & Tsuchibayashi Shunichi, (eds.), *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1959), III, p. 642. [Hereafter this collection is referred to as *FZ*.] Tomita assumes that the address was the work of Fukuzawa alone, with Obata listed as a courtesy. Because subsequent sections attrib-

uted to Fukuzawa alone do not contradict any ideas found in the first pamphlet, I have followed convention and treated the work as his alone.

<sup>7</sup> For sources of circulation data, see the discussion in note 12 below.

<sup>8</sup> Tomita (n. 6 above), pp. 647–48 gives the dates for each.

The subsequent pamphlets generally elaborated on themes found in the original *Gakumon*, although this is not done in any systematic fashion (and in one instance, he departed completely from his stated purpose—to write a work in the vernacular for use as an elementary-school text and a reader for the general public—to engage in debate with his Meirokusha colleagues).<sup>9</sup> Despite their relation to the original *Gakumon*, the subsequent pamphlets did not achieve the circulation of the first. According to Fukuzawa's preface<sup>10</sup> to the 1880 composite edition of *Gakumon*, by that date a total of 700,000 pamphlets had been issued legitimately, with possibly another 100,000 illicit copies in circulation; and he estimated that twenty-eight percent of the total (200,000 legitimate and 20,000 illicit copies) was accounted for by the first pamphlet alone. Most of this circulation, he observed elsewhere, was due to the usage of the first pamphlet as a school text.<sup>11</sup>

These figures indicate that *Gakumon* was a popular Meiji work (Fukuzawa calculated that at least one out of every 160 Japanese had read the first pamphlet), but not to the degree nor in the way that has been claimed for it. Many scholars have cited a figure of 3,400,000 total copies;<sup>12</sup> but this is not supported by any acceptable evi-

<sup>9</sup> The fourth pamphlet, "Gakusha no shokubun o ronzu," published in January 1874, proclaims the need for scholars to be independent of the government. For a discussion of this debate, see Jerry K. Fisher, "The Meirokusha" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1974), pp. 140–75. Fukuzawa's statement of his reasons for writing (in the fifth pamphlet, also issued January 1874) sounds rather like an afterthought. It should also be noted that even when not writing for his Meirokusha counterparts, Fukuzawa was not entirely successful in writing in a style appropriate to elementary school-level readers; this is indicated by the fact that some of the illicit versions were simplified. See Tomita (n. 6 above), pp. 644–46.

<sup>10</sup> This preface, "Gappon gakumon no susume jo" is not included in *EL*; but it is given in most standard editions of the text, including that reproduced in the Iwanami *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū* (n. 6 above) and the edition I have used most often (Fukuzawa [Konno Washichi, ed.], *Gakumon no susume* Tokyo: Iwasaki shoten, 1950). (The Konno edition also includes drafts of two pamphlets which were not published.)

<sup>11</sup> See "Minkan keizai roku jo" in *FZ*, IV, p. 302.

<sup>12</sup> The origin of this figure is an intriguing one, and investigation of it raises serious doubts about the quality of scholarship done on Fukuzawa. The following sources, to indicate just a few, accept this figure as hard fact requiring no qualification or question: C. Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1964) [hereafter *JE*], p. 11 and p. 141, note 17; *FY*, p. 47; Itō Masao, *Fukuzawa Yukichi ronkō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbun kan, 1969) [hereafter *FYR*], p. 19; Kiyooka "Notes" in *Autobiography*, pp. 364–65; Dilworth & Hirano, "Introduction" in *EL*, p. xi; Konno "'Gakumon no susume' kaidai" in Konno ed. (n. 10 above), p. 123; Amakawa Junjirō, "The Spirit of Capitalism in Meiji Japan: The Economic

Ethics of Fukuzawa Yukichi," *Kwansei Gakuin Daigaku Annual Studies* 17 (1968), p. 110. Most of these see this circulation as being achieved between 1872 (publication of the first pamphlet) and 1901 (Fukuzawa's death), but Amakawa makes the even more extraordinary claim that this circulation was achieved between 1872 and 1876. Of sources cited thus far, only *East Asia* (n. 1 above), p. 531 gives a reasonable figure.

Although most of the scholars cited above give the 3.4 million figure without stating a source, apparently regarding it as "common sense" beyond challenge, Blacker does give a source, in Fukuzawa's own hand, found by his son in a collection of miscellaneous papers ("Gakumon no susume" in "Fukuzawa zenshū shogen"; see *FZ*, I, p. 38; for Tomita's comments on this note see *FZ*, I, p. 612). While this source does indeed indicate the possibility of a 3.4 million figure (based on sales of roughly 200,000 for each of the 17 pamphlets), there are several reasons for doubting this figure. First, Fukuzawa was making a speculative, not a declarative statement. Second, it was in a jotted recollection prepared when Fukuzawa was well along in years (those same years in which he produced his *Autobiography*, with its many errors and exaggerations). Third, the item was used as a part of an advertising campaign for the first *Fukuzawa zenshū*, which went so far as to claim an even more extraordinary circulation of 7.49 million (by adding the recollected figure to the projected figure for the *zenshū*); see *FZ*, I, p. 612. Fourth, all other available evidence concerning the circulation of *Gakumon* points to a much smaller circulation.

There are numerous references to *Gakumon* in other writings by Fukuzawa; nowhere else does he claim circulation even approaching the 3.4 million figure. In 1877, in "Minkan keizai roku jo," he claimed 590,846 total with 182,890 (31%) from the first pamphlet; see *FZ*, IV, p. 302. In 1882, in "Hanbatsu kajin seifu ron," he claimed 800,000

dence, and seems to be an attribution of a 200,000 circulation to each of the pamphlets though in fact only the first did that well. Moreover, this circulation was concentrated in the ten-year period beginning in 1872. *Gakumon no susume* was not, as has been implied, popular throughout Fukuzawa's lifetime. The preface to the first composite edition (1880) clearly indicates that the individual pamphlets were no longer doing well, and by 1890 Keiō was no longer publishing the work. Thus, it is clear that it was very much a period piece, enjoying none of the transcendent popularity that kept Nakamura Keiu's translation of Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* (*Saikoku risshi hen*) in continuous commercial publication until well into the Taishō era.<sup>13</sup> This in turn implies that the role of the work must be explained in terms of factors limited to the first years of the Meiji era. The circulation figures also imply that the work as a whole was less important than the original pamphlet, and that the first pamphlet deserves the most careful scrutiny. I shall pursue these implications below, but only after treating the work as a whole in order to follow previous interpretations that have taken it as a unit.

*Gakumon no susume* and its role in Meiji thought and society have been described in a variety of ways; but the general line taken by most Western scholars and many Japanese has been to see the work as a criticism of ideas carried over from the Tokugawa era, and as an assertion of new Western ideas especially concerning practical learning and human rights. Thus one writer has related the *Gakumon*'s large circulation to its "many startling criticisms of accepted ideas";<sup>14</sup> another has said that, in *Gakumon*, Fukuzawa "elaborates on the universality of the right of freedom."<sup>15</sup> On the Japanese side, several scholars have suggested that *Gakumon* contained ideas from the Declaration of Independence, and that the work as a whole is concerned with advocating "the general equality of the four classes, freedom, and independence."<sup>16</sup> Others have claimed a seminal role for *Gakumon* in the Jiyū Min-ken Undō (Movement for Liberty and People's Rights).<sup>17</sup> I suggest that Fukuzawa

total with 200,000 (25%) for the first pamphlet; see *FZ*, VIII, p. 117. In 1890, in "Kokkai no zen-to," he still claimed only "something more than a million total"; see *FZ*, VI, p. 55. Therefore, if the figure from 1897 is accepted as accurate, *Gakumon* had to sell in the space of only 6 or 7 years (1890–97) almost 2½ times as many copies as it had sold in the previous 18 years (1872–90). There is no evidence for such an explosion in sales. Tomita observes that Keiō had stopped publishing it after it lost certification as a text and sales began to flag in 1881. Moreover, when Nakajima Seiichi, who had got the rights from Keiō, brought out a new edition, it had poor sales. According to Tomita, no new editions were brought out until the 1898 *zenshū*; see *FZ*, III, p. 649. Thus there is every reason to be suspicious of the 3.4 million claim, and no basis whatsoever for the claim made by Dilworth & Hirano (n. 3 above, p. XI) that the work "went through seventeen printings—a total of 3,400,000 copies—in Fukuzawa's own lifetime" or for any other claim that the work was popular beyond the early years of Meiji. Dilworth & Hirano give as their source Koizumi Shinzō, *Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1966),

p. 28; but Koizumi makes no such claim, saying instead that "Fukuzawa himself calculated that 3.4 million might have circulated had all seventeen been combined."

Though seemingly a trivial point, the matter of this circulation figure not only demonstrates the degree to which both Western and Japanese scholars have been all too uncritical of the sources on Fukuzawa and have tended to ignore any material that does not fit some preconceived image; it also illustrates fabrication of explanations their own sources do not support.

<sup>13</sup> This is based on an examination of the entries for *Saikoku risshi hen* and *Self Help* in the National Diet Library catalogue. See also Sangū Makoto, "Saikoku risshi hen' oyobi sono ruisho ni tsuite," *Gakutō*, XLIII, 2 (Feb. 1939), pp. 20–25.

<sup>14</sup> *JE*, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> Craig (n. 5 above), p. 107.

<sup>16</sup> Tōyama, *FY*, p. 47. This attribution is also made in *FYR*, p. 140 and Kimura Ki, *Bunmei kaika* (Tōkyō: Shibuntō, 1966), p. 211.

<sup>17</sup> Irokawa Daikichi, *Meiji no bunka*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1971), p. 64.

actually criticized few Tokugawa ideas; that his writing shows that he himself had not thrown off many Tokugawa conceits, especially those of the samurai class; that his advocacy of “rights” was a means to other goals and not the end purpose of *Gakumon*; that his ideas concerning rights came from the most conservative eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources; and that the primary function of the work was to give voice and direction to samurai aspirations for personal advancement (*rissbin*).

The suggestion that the first line of *Gakumon no susume* (“It is said that heaven creates no man above other men and creates no man below other men”) was a rendering of the phrase “all men are created equal” from the United States Declaration of Independence is not based on any certain knowledge or statement by Fukuzawa to that effect. Fukuzawa did translate a portion of the Declaration of Independence, including its first line, for his *Seiyō jijō* (Conditions in the West); but the wording is entirely different from that used in the first line of *Gakumon*.<sup>18</sup> Although it is possible that he sought to express the same concept in simpler language in *Gakumon*, there is no evidence of this. Moreover, I have found no instance of this attribution earlier than 1946, where it appears as one of the desperate attempts by some Japanese scholars (in the wake of defeat) to find liberal currents in their tradition.<sup>19</sup> More importantly, even if it is allowed—for the sake of argument—that the first line of *Gakumon* might have been an attempt to render a phrase from the Declaration, it can also be demonstrated that the remainder of the work not only ignored all of the secondary rights enumerated in the Declaration but also attempted to repudiate the fundamental premise of it, which was that there are times when “it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another” and that with respect to despotic government “it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government.”<sup>20</sup>

The Jeffersonian idea that rebellion is not only a right but a duty could not be further from the general thrust of *Gakumon no susume*. Throughout his writing, Fukuzawa generally denied that there are any causes that justify opposition to the government; and when he did grudgingly admit the possible existence of such causes,<sup>21</sup> he then denied that a remedy should be sought through political action—let alone rebellion. The emphasis on lack of cause for discontent was greatest in the first pamphlet. There he harshly condemned those poor who “unreasonably become angry at some nearby rich man, or in extreme cases go so far as to form a band (*totō o musubu*) and engage in direct petition (*gōso*) or rebellion (*ikki*).” According to Fukuzawa, those in poverty had no cause for complaint against society or government, since poverty is due solely to ignorance. The wealthy had become wealthy only by

<sup>18</sup> FYR, p. 140. In *Seiyō jijō* the phrase is given *ten no hito o shōzuru wa okuchō mina dōittetsu ni te*; in *Gakumon* it is *ten wa hito no ue ni hito o tsukurazu hito no shita ni hito o tsukurazu to ieri*. Itō also notes that this phrase appears in a section that follows Francis Wayland’s *The Elements of Moral Science* and might be from it. My own guess is that Fukuzawa sought to start *Gakumon* with a catch phrase embodying the “heaven” theme to match the first line of *Saikoku rissbi ben* (*ten wa mizukara tasukuru mono o tasuku*: “Heaven helps those who help themselves.”).

<sup>19</sup> This desire is very evident in Kimura’s *Bunmei Kaika* (n. 16 above), which was first published in 1946. Since then, it appears to have become part of the generally accepted Fukuzawa lore.

<sup>20</sup> I have followed the text as given in Marvin Meyers, Alexander Kearn, & John G. Cawelti, *Sources of the American Republic*, (Chicago: Scott Foresman, 1960), I, pp. 137–38.

<sup>21</sup> In the first pamphlet, he does talk about fighting for principle at the risk of one’s life. His later exposition indicates that what he meant was *martyrdom*.

virtue of their greater knowledge and application to study, and those who would end their poverty need only do the same.

Behind this logic is the explicitly stated assumption that any and all barriers to those who would advance by their own efforts (study) were absolutely removed by the Restoration.<sup>22</sup> Inasmuch as Fukuzawa was writing this in 1871, when stipends and other samurai privileges were still largely in effect, commoners reading it could logically have felt that at least *existing* wealth and honor in society were not distributed entirely according to individual effort.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Fukuzawa did not point out the need for further reforms or leveling legislation, let alone suggest the possibility of redress for past wrongs. Instead, his argument was: now that commoners can get government jobs, they must act in a manner appropriate to their new dignity; if they do not, if they are ignorant and rebellious, they will deserve and get a despotic government.<sup>24</sup> Neither of these points is in any way in keeping with the Declaration of Independence; his formulation completely reverses its major premise that the right of rebellion comes from despotic government.

After the first pamphlet, Fukuzawa discussed opposition largely in terms of violation of an agreement or compact (*yakusoku*), which he described as binding people and government in a system of defined duties toward each other.<sup>25</sup> In so doing, it is apparent that he was using the idea of a “social contract”; however, his particular formulation was not derived from Rousseau’s writings nor from the Declaration of Independence, but rather from an explicitly conservative—even reactionary—work by Francis Wayland (1796–1865), *The Elements of Moral Science*.<sup>26</sup> Although an heir to the thought of Thomas Jefferson, Wayland’s ideas concerning resistance to despotic government were quite different. Jefferson had not only argued the right and duty of rebellion, but also suggested that it had a regular role in government. In response to Shay’s Rebellion, he wrote: “I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical. It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government.”<sup>27</sup> Wayland, in contrast, saw only the most dire and destructive results coming from any form of rebellion. In reaction to the civil disorder of the franchise-extension movement known as the Dorr Rebellion, he developed a revised compact theory in which there was no right of redress, even when the state had violated the terms of the compact. His political theory was thus closer to that of Thomas Hobbes than that of Jefferson, and had the added weight of Calvinistic theological elements.<sup>28</sup>

Fukuzawa followed Wayland’s secular justifications of almost unconditional obe-

<sup>22</sup> “Gakumon,” *FZ*, III [hereafter “GS”], p. 33. Although I usually used Konno Washichi’s edition (see n. 10 above), for convenience I give references to the standard Iwanami edition.

<sup>23</sup> In fact, as of the date of the first *Gakumon*, the only real change involving class privileges was that samurai had been granted permission to go about without swords and to cut their hair (9 Aug 1871). All other changes were in the future.

<sup>24</sup> “GS,” p. 33.

<sup>25</sup> The earlier theme was not entirely abandoned. Fukuzawa returned to it again in pamphlets 2 and 13.

<sup>26</sup> Various scholars, including Blacker (*JE*: p. 162, no. 18) and Itō (*FYR*) have noted Fukuzawa’s reliance on Wayland; but they have said

little about where he stood in the nineteenth-century Anglo-American political spectrum.

Of the several editions of Wayland’s popular text, I have relied on that edited by Joseph L. Blau (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963) [hereafter Blau]. I think the term “reactionary” justified because of the specific relation between the contemporary politics and Wayland’s rejection of the Jeffersonian tradition of his youth for a formulation closer to that of Thomas Hobbes; see Blau, “Introduction,” pp. xxxii–iii.

<sup>27</sup> Letter, Jefferson to James Madison, 30 Jan. 1787, reproduced in *Sources* (n. 20 above), I, p. 155.

<sup>28</sup> Blau, pp. xxxii–iii.

dience to the state, although he did not hesitate to cut the latter's theological invective against rebellion.<sup>29</sup> He was especially taken by the argument that because the government is the representative (*myōdai*) of the people, they could not oppose it without going against themselves.<sup>30</sup> Although this argument may have had some validity in the American case, where there were representative organs and a not-too-severely limited franchise, for early Meiji Japan it was logically unsound. Not until the seventh pamphlet (March 1874), did Fukuzawa grudgingly admit that the government might, in some cases, actually overstep its position. Characteristically, he admitted this only after carefully restating the refrain "obedience-to-the-government-because-it-represents-the-people." Having once admitted the possibility of despotic acts by the government, he then proceeded, completely counter to the Declaration of Independence but in perfect conformity to Wayland, to deny that even tyranny justifies political opposition—let alone rebellion. Although rejecting submission as not in accord with righteousness (*seidō*), he also rejected all political opposition. He argued that because one man is ineffectual against the government, bands (*totō*) must be formed; and this is absolutely unacceptable, since it can lead to rebellion (*nairan*). Thus, all that was left is martyrdom, the Hobbesian answer to the possibility of unjust government.<sup>31</sup> Fukuzawa's personal stance in opposition to government repression was even less than what he called for in *Gakumon*. As one biographer has noted with more than a trace of disappointment, not only did Fukuzawa meet possible censorship of the *Meiroku zasshi* (Meiji-six magazine) by arguing for cessation of publication, he also rapidly and vigorously backpedaled away from other situations that might have brought down official wrath.<sup>32</sup> Action consistent with enunciated principles was not a major feature of Fukuzawa's career.

These arguments against rebellion are not isolated lines. The theme appears in *Gakumon no susume* so frequently that the avowed emphasis on the encouragement of learning is often lost. The work might have been better titled "a discouragement of rebellion." Given this orientation, Wayland was a far more useful source than Jefferson could have been. In fact, in following Wayland, Fukuzawa was also closer to the mainstream of nineteenth-century American political thought than he would have been had he followed Jefferson. The radicalism of the third president of the U.S. was something of an embarrassment to many nineteenth-century American political thinkers; Wayland was probably more representative of American thought of his period.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, Wayland was not necessarily the best source of ideas for unconditional support of the existing order. His ideas were not an original formulation of unconditional obedience to the state, but a reactionary interpretation of the potentially radical idea of the social compact. Less conservative thinkers, including men such as Ueki Emori (1857–1892), could and did develop a justification for rebellion from the concept of a social compact and apply it to early Meiji Japan.<sup>34</sup> It

<sup>29</sup> The specific parallels in wording are well documented in part II, "Fukuzawa no moraru to Wayland no 'shūshinron,'" in *FYR*; there, the relevant portions of Wayland are given in English and Japanese, along with the related portions of *Gakumon*.

<sup>30</sup> None of the sections of *Gakumon* takes rights (*kenri*) as its formal subject, a characteristic the work shares with Wayland's. I believe a word- or line-count would show just how great the dif-

ference in relative emphasis is. The argument appears in section 6, published February 1874.

<sup>31</sup> "GS," pp. 70–77, and esp. 73–75. Fukuzawa uses the English word "martyrdom." *FYR*, pt. 2, pp. 53–61 compares this section to Wayland's text.

<sup>32</sup> *FY*, pp. 107–17, 128–29.

<sup>33</sup> See Carl Becker, *The Declaration of Independence* (New York: Knopf, 1942), pp. 224ff.

<sup>34</sup> Ienaga Saburō, *Ueki Emori Kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1966), p. 85.



is further testimony to the conservative nature of Fukuzawa that he did not do this himself.

Why then did Fukuzawa introduce this potentially radical idea? It is quite possible that he simply did not understand the idea of *contract* implied in the theory; his application of the idea not only to Meiji times but also to Tokugawa history is suggestive of this. He described the relation between government and people during the Tokugawa era as an agreement arrived at through consultation (*sōdan o torikimetai*)—truly an extraordinary description of how the Tokugawa land-tenure and taxation system was developed; observed that the Tokugawa government overstepped its position (here using Wayland's concept of reciprocity between government and people); and then jumped to the Meiji, where there was again in force an agreement that required submission to the government.<sup>35</sup> Significantly, he said nothing about the nature of the Restoration. Even assuming a *shizoku*-only audience, it could well be argued that the Meiji compact involved only a limited number of parties, and those who did not participate (Fukuzawa's own *han*, for example, to say nothing of commoners) need not have observed the conditions of the agreement.<sup>36</sup> Further research is needed to establish whether Fukuzawa understood the idea of a social compact and consciously ignored what did not fit his purposes, or whether he was attracted by Wayland's Hobbesian formulas and was unwittingly led into use of the social compact concept. In any event, his theory of Tokugawa history is most noteworthy.

If the central theme expounded in the Declaration of Independence—the right of rebellion—was not part of *Gakumon no susume*, what of the other rights mentioned in the Declaration? Did these appear in *Gakumon*? The simple answer is *no*. None of the other rights enumerated in the Declaration were listed, let alone discussed, in *Gakumon*; nor was any other source tapped for such a discussion. Concepts such as the freedoms of speech, religion, assembly, press, and contract formed no part of it. "Assembly" occurred only in the context of denying it, and there was no rights claim such as "no taxation without representation." Instead, Fukuzawa said that one should pay one's taxes because they are a bargain and because it is one's duty as a party to the agreement between people and government.<sup>37</sup> There was only one instance in *Gakumon* dealing with the idea of an organ to represent the people; and rather than advocating this as a right, Fukuzawa suggested that it might be useful as a device to make sure people of talent actually rise in the world.<sup>38</sup>

In essence, there was only one right actually advocated in *Gakumon no susume*; the right to participate in a competition for wealth and honor in society. It is only in

<sup>35</sup> This is the argument of section 2; "GS," pp. 36–41, esp. 39.

<sup>36</sup> Fukuzawa in fact claims to have thought it a good thing that his *han* had not been involved, calling it a "fortuitous blessing arising purely from indecision and lack of common purpose"; see Fukuzawa (C. Blacker, trans.), "Kyūhanjō," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 9 (1953), p. 323.

<sup>37</sup> This is the argument of section 7; "GS," pp. 70–77, esp. p. 73.

<sup>38</sup> Fukuzawa presents this first as the idea of contemporary intellectuals, but at the end of the section he endorses it himself; see "GS," p. 113.

Fukuzawa was never too enthusiastic about the idea of a representative body, despite the picture presented in his *Autobiography* ("A single editorial moves the whole nation," pp. 319–21); and when he did belatedly climb on the bandwagon of agitation for a parliament, his arguments in favor concerned national security, not rights. See Kano Masanao, *Nihon kindai shisō no keisei* (Tokyo: Shinhyōron sha, 1956), pp. 186–87; this chapter is easily the best treatment of Fukuzawa's thought to be found, although Kano too is in error concerning the circulation of *Gakumon*.

the context of this competition that the famous first line of the series has any meaning.

It is said that heaven creates no man above other men and creates no man below other men. If this be so, in being born in heaven, all men stand in the same rank. When they are born, there is no distinction between honored and despised (*kisen*) or high and low (*sbōka*); and all contribute to all things on the basis of the working of a heart and body which join with the spirit of all things. This means that all men may advance their usage of clothing, food, housing; exist freely and independently; and without disturbing other men, pass through this life enjoying its various pleasures.<sup>39</sup>

Although this may sound like—and might even be—a version of the formula “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” in the absence of any discussion of the political elements of this idea, the opening statement can only be considered to mean that all men start from a common baseline to pursue status and wealth.

This was in fact stated explicitly; after postulating an equal creation, Fukuzawa went on to explain how the divisions in society were arrived at and to encourage the pursuit of a favored position within society.

Nevertheless, in looking over the people in the world, it will be seen that there are clever (*kashikoki*) people; there are foolish (*oroka*) people. There are impoverished (*mazushiki*) people. There are menial people (*genin*). What is the cause of this difference which resembles that between clouds and slime? The reason is clear. According to the *Jitsugokyō*, if a man does not study (*manabazarezu*), he is without wisdom. A man without wisdom is a fool (*gujin*). If this be so, the distinction between wise men (*kenjin*) and fools comes from whether they studied or did not study.<sup>39</sup>

Thus if one wants to avoid being a fool, one ought to study. But this was no mere distinction between the lettered and the unlettered; as Fukuzawa continued, it becomes clear that he was talking about the ruling class and the ruled classes of society.

Moreover, in the world, there is difficult work and there is easy work. The man who performs difficult work is called a man of important rank (*mibun omoki*); the man who performs easy work is said to be a man of insignificant rank. All work that requires use of the heart and demands concern (*shinpai*) is difficult work. Work done with the power of the hands and feet is easy work. Therefore doctors, scholars, government officials, merchants who buy and sell on a large scale, and farmers who use (*meshitsukau*) many servants—men such as these are important in rank and are honored. If a man is important in rank and respected, he will enrich his own house by himself; and though from the point of view of the very lowest of men, the position of the former seems to be beyond reach, it will be found that this difference comes from none other than whether that person had the power of learning (*gakumon no chikara*) or not. It is not something guaranteed from heaven. A proverb says that heaven does not give wealth and honor (*fūki*) to men. Rather, a man adds wealth and honor to himself by his work. If this be so, as I said before, when man is born, he is without distinction of honor or baseness or poverty or wealth. It is merely by employing himself in learning, knowing many things well, that a man becomes respected, and by this becomes a rich man. The man without learning becomes a poor and inferior man.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, in *Gakumon no susume*, Fukuzawa introduced his ideas of equality and rights

<sup>39</sup> These passages are consecutive portions of the original *Gakumon no susume* and represent the first paragraph of it. I have made my own translation because I feel that the Dilworth-Hirano translation (*EL*, p. 1) was done with a preconceived

notion of Fukuzawa's intentions, and often gives equivalents that are too modern or have inappropriate associations. At the sacrifice of style, I have tried to be literal in both meaning and nuance. This portion is found in “GS,” pp. 29–30.

as the starting points in a competition to achieve social inequality and entry into the ruling strata of society.

The logic of this is of course unexceptionable. The idea of equal rights nowhere requires equal social conditions; it is in fact built upon the idea that even if social conditions are unequal, rights must be equal. (Of course, the logical distinction does not always obtain in practice.) But Fukuzawa never really explained what will keep those who acquire wealth and honor from abusing their position. Especially in the original *Gakumon*, the only treatment of possible abuse of wealth and position involved the concept of "social position" (*bungen*). Fukuzawa argued that one must know the limits of one's position, lest one fall into "selfishness" (*wagamama*) and "prodigality" (*hōtō*); however, this was but a single-phrase prelude to a much longer passage that argued that if people really know the "talents and ethics" (*saitoku*) of each and every rank, they will be content with their position. To know the principles of things, one must study; if people know that the key to wealth and honor is study, they will realize that poverty is all their own fault and will not blame the rich for their plight nor attack the social structure.<sup>40</sup> In terms of emphasis and actual space devoted to the subject in the text, it is clear that Fukuzawa was more concerned with encouraging acceptance of an unequal distribution of wealth and honor (power) on the part of those who lack both than he was in cautioning those who achieve not to abuse their position.

Both the concern with justifying inequality and the arguments used to explain it are well within the overall pattern of Western liberal thinking. Nevertheless, there was a substantial gulf between Fukuzawa's thought and that of nineteenth-century Anglo-American liberalism, with which he is usually associated. Western liberals were ideologues for a commercial and entrepreneurial bourgeoisie (in popular terminology, "middle class"); Fukuzawa was also a self-proclaimed spokesman for a middle class, but his middle class was essentially the former samurai—or alternatively intellectuals, most of whom came from the samurai class. Samurai traditions were, however, scholarly, administrative, and bureaucratic, not commercial or entrepreneurial. Although Fukuzawa worked in part to change the traditional samurai orientation, his own formulations actually owed more to Tokugawa-era conceptions than they did to nineteenth-century Anglo-American concepts. This can be seen by comparing certain of Fukuzawa's ideas with those of other thinkers of the period, especially Samuel Smiles and Tokutomi Iichirō. Samuel Smiles (1812–1904) is a particularly apt standard of comparison. Not only was he explicitly in the liberal tradition; his ideas were well known in Meiji Japan at precisely the same time that *Gakumon* was enjoying its greatest popularity.<sup>41</sup> He also dealt with many of the same subjects as *Gakumon*, especially personal advancement. Tokutomi Iichirō (1863–1957) commends himself because he shared many sources and ideas with Fukuzawa but operated from a strong sense of commoner identity.<sup>42</sup>

Fukuzawa's view that the samurai (or intellectuals who came largely from the

<sup>40</sup> "GS," p. 33. It is also possible that Fukuzawa was not really considering commoners at all here.

<sup>41</sup> Smiles is discussed extensively in my "The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought" [hereafter "S-MM"] (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1974), pp. 64–108. See also Timothy H. E. Travers, "Samuel Smiles and the Victorian Work Ethic" (Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1970), or

Reinhard Bendix, *Work and Authority in Industry* (New York: Harper Torch Books, 1963).

<sup>42</sup> The literature on Tokutomi in Japanese is too voluminous to cite. In English, see "S-MM," pp. 201–40 or Peter Duus, "Whig History Japanese Style: The Min'yūsha Historians and the Meiji Restoration," *Journal of Asian Studies*, III, 3 (1974), pp. 415–36.

samurai) constituted a middle class and thus were the class that should lead and direct society was strongly implied—or made explicit—in several of his major works, including *Gakumon no susume* and *Bunmeiron no gairyaku* (Outline of a Theory of Civilization).<sup>43</sup> This has been noted by scholars; but at the same time, there has been a general tendency to ignore this aspect of Fukuzawa's thought and to ascribe to his ideas in *Gakumon* a generality that he did not intend. The target audience of *Gakumon* was not the Japanese people in general, but primarily children of the former samurai. This was especially true of the first and original *Gakumon*, which was given before an all- (or largely) *shizoku* audience at what amounted to a fief (*han*) school. As Fukuzawa explained in his "Kyūhanjō,"<sup>44</sup> he promoted the school because he saw education as a means of avoiding war between the upper and lower strata of the samurai class. Another indication that *Gakumon* was meant primarily for *shizoku* emerged in the subsequent sections that explain the meaning of practical learning in terms of knowing the market price of rice and how to keep a set of account books. Certainly no child of the merchant class needed to be told this sort of thing.<sup>45</sup> In the same vein were the sections that argued against seeing government service as the only desirable career,<sup>46</sup> a tendency more of the *shizoku* than of the commoner classes.

Not only was Fukuzawa writing to *shizoku* in *Gakumon*; he was writing as a member of that class. And his view of the *samurai* as the locus of all that was good in Japanese society appears to have shaped his writing in both subtle and explicit ways. In the former category lie such items as his description of how the Restoration had changed the relative status of the *shizoku* and the commoners. He stated that the reforms of the Restoration had caused "the status of peasants, artisans, and merchants to be a hundred times what it was" (*mibun izen hyakubai shi*)—only to follow this by the demand that commoners act with the dignity appropriate to their new station.<sup>47</sup> This attitude can be contrasted with that of Tokutomi Iichirō, whose proclamations of equality came from a strong sense of identity as a commoner. For Tokutomi, the Restoration had lowered the samurai from an artificially high position; henceforth, progress was to be achieved by casting away samurai values and spreading commoner values throughout society.<sup>48</sup> On a more subtle level is the question of Fukuzawa's attitude toward class-leveling legislation. One writer has proclaimed Fukuzawa "decidedly a proponent of all class-leveling legislation,"<sup>49</sup> but this is not the case in *Gakumon*. Although the original *Gakumon* was written in 1871 (Meiji 4), when most samurai privileges were still in effect, it contained no call for further changes. Instead, as was noted earlier, it simply ignored the continuation—at the very time of composition—of virtually the whole body of Tokugawa-era privileges for the samurai class.<sup>50</sup> Fukuzawa apparently saw no contradiction between the con-

<sup>43</sup> Fukuzawa explicitly uses the term "middle class" (written in *katakana*) in *Gakumon* and observes that among the elements of the middle class, only the scholars are supporters of civilization and national independence; see "GS," pp. 60–61. In *Bunmeiron no gairyaku*, he locates progress in a portion of the samurai class; see Fukuzawa Yukichi (David A. Dilworth & G. Cameron Hurst, trans.), *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1973), pp. 69–70.

<sup>44</sup> (Note 36 above), p. 324.

<sup>45</sup> A theme in section 4.

<sup>46</sup> A theme in section 10.

<sup>47</sup> "GS," p. 33.

<sup>48</sup> Tokutomi often made this point, especially in his *Shōrai no Nihon*; see "Shōrai no Nihon" in *Tokutomi Sobō-Yamaji Aizan*, Vol. XL in *Nihon no meichō* (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1971), esp. pp. 148ff.

<sup>49</sup> Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1970), p. 197.

<sup>50</sup> See note 23 above.

tinuation of hereditary stipends and other privileges and his proclamation that all were born equal. Later, he even urged subsidies for the ex-samurai.<sup>51</sup>

Particularly striking in this context is the explicit contempt demonstrated for manual labor in *Gakumon*, an attitude that sets Fukuzawa off from nineteenth-century Anglo-American liberalism as well as from some of his contemporaries. With his idea that only work requiring the use of heart (head) was to be honored in society, Fukuzawa was clearly no more modern than Mencius, and in stark contrast to a true nineteenth-century liberal like Smiles—who not merely honored manual labor, but stressed that it was a source from which came many great men. Tokutomi also celebrated the virtues of manual labor, and declared that respect ought to be given to laborers.<sup>52</sup> Even Nakamura Keiu (1832–1891) was more in tune with Anglo-American ideas than Fukuzawa. As a Confucian scholar (professor in the Shōheikō under the Tokugawa), he might have been expected to have been more prejudiced than Fukuzawa. Nevertheless, in his own special preface to Part IV of *Saikoku risshi hen*<sup>53</sup> (his translation of Smiles's *Self Help*), he not only seconded Smiles's statements on the dignity of labor but also went on to produce several rather strained examples of Chinese literati who respected or engaged in menial labor (*sangyō*) or worked with their hands.

Fukuzawa's rather aristocratic attitudes also appear in his repeated use of the term *kisen* ("poverty and meanness") to describe those without wealth and rank (*fūki*) in society. Although the concept "poor but proud" should have been available to Fukuzawa from his stock of samurai conceits,<sup>54</sup> he did not admit to the poor being a source of anything but rebellion. In contrast, in *Self Help*, Smiles over and over again stressed that even (or particularly) those in humble circumstances not only can be honorable but are more likely to accomplish something significant than those from a favored background. Even Ogyū Sorai's (1666–1728) notion that those from humble circumstances are better experienced to deal with affairs of the people<sup>55</sup> is absent from *Gakumon*.

Going beyond the pages of *Gakumon*, we find more concrete evidence that Fukuzawa was really thinking primarily of *shizoku* in his formulations. In an 1881 essay, he explicitly revealed the limits of his conception of equality and went on record with his belief in *shizoku* intellectual and *genetic* superiority.

The great differences in the natural endowments of men are not random. They come from the bloodline of mother, father, and ancestors. . . . That the *shizoku* transcend others in endowed intelligence is clear. This is not the random event of a single day. It is the product of hundreds of years of education handed down within the family. Moreover, this education is not solely a matter of reading and writing, but of so-called family tradition [*kafū*]<sup>56</sup>—something those of other groups cannot be expected to know.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Fukuchi Shigetada, *Shizoku to samurai ishiki* (Tokyo: Shinjūsha, 1956), pp. 236–38.

<sup>52</sup> See "S-MM," pp. 214–16.

<sup>53</sup> "Saikoku risshi hen dai yon hen jo" in *Meiji shisōka shū*, Vol. XIII of *Nihon gendai bungaku zenshū* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1968), p. 90.

<sup>54</sup> A starving samurai was supposed to keep up a pretense of honor by chewing a toothpick.

<sup>55</sup> In his proposal for merit promotion, Sorai argued: "Through the study of history also we may see, as clearly in a mirror, that men of intelligence

and talent have all come from below; rarely have they come from hereditarily privileged families"; quoted in Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary, Donald Keene (eds.), *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1964), I, pp. 423–24.

<sup>56</sup> This quote is from a portion of "Jiji shogen" reproduced in Fukuchi, (n. 51 above), pp. 236–38. Other instances of similar views are cited in *FYR*, pp. 178–79.

Although Fukuzawa did allow that a few wealthy peasants and merchants might share the *shizoku* class ethos or family tradition, the former samurai were still, in his opinion, the source of everything good and edifying in Japan. He declared that even when the *shizoku* went into unfamiliar occupations such as business or agriculture, they did better than merchants or peasants, thanks to their natural superiority.<sup>57</sup>

Although it is clear from Fukuzawa's statements that he had been reading works on social and biological evolution, there is no basis for crediting this idea of *shizoku* superiority, rather than only its logic, to foreign sources. Had he not been basically a spokesman for the *shizoku*, he could have used the principles of evolution in a quite different but equally logical manner. He could have said that the artificial constraints of the Tokugawa system prevented free competition and natural selection, thus allowing the survival of weak and defective strains in the samurai class. He could also have argued that the harshness of the commoners' environment had resulted in their developing special virtues and skills for survival—that commoner prosperity in the face of hardship was a demonstration of their superiority. Such arguments using principles derived from the theory of evolution were in fact made in the early Meiji; but they were made by Tokutomi,<sup>58</sup> not Fukuzawa.

Saying that Fukuzawa saw the samurai as the source of everything good and edifying in Japan, and that he was an unabashed spokesman for the samurai class, is not to say that he saw the samurai as without blemish. Rather the point to be made is that, in contrast to a thinker like Tokutomi, Fukuzawa found little of merit outside the samurai; and when he did make criticisms involving samurai, it was not to criticize the class itself but to criticize some limited aspect of Tokugawa society as it actually operated. The former point is illustrated by such remarks as “even the commoners are not all foolish, spiritless, and powerless. There are some rare individuals who are just and sincere”; this represents the best that Fukuzawa said about commoners in *Gakumon*.<sup>59</sup> The latter characteristic of his thought may be observed in his comments describing samurai-officials as “gilded hypocrites.”<sup>60</sup> This was not a criticism of the samurai class in general, nor of the special position they occupied during the Tokugawa era; it was a limited criticism of high officials for abusing their position. Moreover, Fukuzawa did not see as peculiar to the samurai class the abuse he described; he showed the same phenomenon occurring within the hierarchy of merchant houses. He was not criticizing class relations or activities during the Tokugawa era, but rather was trying to show the evils that result from a hierarchical system founded on the concept of “great duty” (*taigi*) and “justice” (*meibun*). He argued that in place of these vague categories which left too much to discretion, there should be a system of well-defined functions (*shokubun*) which would be less subject to abuse.<sup>61</sup> Overall, Fukuzawa's statements in *Gakumon* do nothing to contradict an assessment of him that appeared in Tokutomi's journal *Kokumin no tomo* (Friend of the People); according to the unsigned article, Fukuzawa had been mistakenly seen as a proponent of equalitarianism when in fact he was a proponent of “social aristocraticism” (*shakai kizoku shugi*).<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> FYR, pp. 178–79.

<sup>58</sup> See *Shōrai no Nihon* (n. 48 above), pp. 149–50.

<sup>59</sup> EL, p. 23.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Maruyama Masao, “Chūsei to hangyaku” in *Jiga to kankyō*, Vol. VI of *Kindai Nihon shisōshi kōza* (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1960), pp.

390–91; the original is in section 11 of *Gakumon*.

<sup>61</sup> See EL, pp. 71–74.

<sup>62</sup> “Fukuzawa shi no shakai kizoku shugi,” *Kokumin no tomo*, No. 224 (1894) summarized in Itō, *Meiji*, p. 27. This comment was not signed, so it can only be attributed to Tokutomi; but it is in line with his comments elsewhere.

Given then that in *Gakumon no susume* Fukuzawa was speaking and thinking primarily of *shizoku*, what advice was he giving them? Essentially that they study hard to become the recipients of wealth and honor (*fūki*)—an idea thoroughly developed in the Tokugawa period, even if the Tokugawa system had not necessarily been as explicitly geared to rewarding study as some may have desired. The terminology that Fukuzawa used was thoroughly traditional; and it is significant that he specifically linked his formulations to the *Jitsugokyō*, a textbook widely used during the Tokugawa era.<sup>63</sup> As is explained in one seventeenth-century gloss on the *Jitsugokyō*, *fūki* is composed of wealth (*takara*) and rank (*kurai*).<sup>64</sup> Thus, what Fukuzawa was urging on the students at Nakatsu was the ideal of scholarship as a means to bureaucratic rank and emoluments—nothing more. There is no condemnation of government service or mention of private business in the original *Gakumon* which owed far more to Tokugawa-era ideals than to Anglo-American concepts.

It is only in subsequent and less widely read pamphlets that Fukuzawa sought to present a somewhat less traditional version of personal advancement, and began to discourage the idea of government service as a career. It is not until the tenth pamphlet in the series that he began to put any weight into the advocacy of practical learning and service outside the government. Here he argued for practical learning, but condemned those who had already acquired such knowledge only to go into the government. In his view, these latter were little more than “Chinese bodies dressed up in Western clothes.” They lacked the proper spirit of the times because their knowledge was but a means to gain entry into the government.<sup>65</sup> Yet, while this was in effect a condemnation of seeking bureaucratic careers in government (the ideal line of action for a samurai seeking wealth and honor), it was not as much of a critique of tradition as might be thought.

On the individual level, Fukuzawa seems only to have tried to substitute the idea of becoming a corporate bureaucrat for that of becoming a government bureaucrat. This may be implied from what he said in *Gakumon* about the actual mechanics of personal advancement. In his last pamphlet (November 1876), discussing the specifics of getting ahead, he gave three short steps to success. First place went to a thorough knowledge of the art of public speaking. Secondly, he emphasized facial expression (*kaoiro*) and personal appearance (*yōbō*) for giving favorable first impressions. Third, he advised that connections and acquaintances are not to be forgotten but be cultivated and continually sought.<sup>66</sup>

An early or mid-nineteenth-century Anglo-American writer on personal advancement would give only the slightest attention to these three points. Fukuzawa’s formulas did not belong to the Anglo-American genre of the individually oriented self-made man. Those “keys to success” are found only much later in the Anglo-American literature that developed in response to bureaucratic capitalism and which is essentially “other-directed.”<sup>67</sup> All those values and traits given so much stress in a work such as *Self Help* were absent from *Gakumon*. Nothing was said about attention

<sup>63</sup> For the history of the *Jitsugokyō*, see Ishikawa Ken (ed.), *Nihon kyōkasho taikēi*, (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1969), V, pp. 13–58. Curiously, not a single work on *Gakumon* has investigated Fukuzawa’s explicit reference to the *Jitsugokyō*.

<sup>64</sup> Ishikawa (n. 63 above), pp. 188–89.

<sup>65</sup> This is a point made in section 4, which was aimed at his adult colleagues in the Meirokusha. In

section 10, he makes a similar point in terms of younger students.

<sup>66</sup> Section 17, “Jinbōron,” “GS”, pp. 138–44.

<sup>67</sup> For a discussion of these concepts in the Anglo-American tradition, see Richard M. Huber, *The American Idea of Success* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1971), pp. 160ff.

to detail, patience, perseverance, hard work, inventiveness, creativity, honesty, or any of the other values catalogued by Smiles in his explanation of how his self-made men had created their own positions in society. Fukuzawa's advice was, in essence; "It's not what you know, but who you know that counts"; while this may have been more realistic than self-help, it is also indicative of the degree to which Fukuzawa was not an advocate of the values associated with nineteenth-century Anglo-American society.

For all his talk of independence, Fukuzawa's ethic was not that of the independent businessman or entrepreneur; but that of the government or corporate functionary. Perhaps nothing is more indicative of this than the striking absence, in *Gakumon*, of any references to capital accumulation. No Anglo-American writer on personal advancement would neglect capital accumulation and the values of thrift, frugality, saving, etc. Fukuzawa could and did ignore capital accumulation because he assumed his target audience would go into firms that were already in existence or that would come into existence with government subsidy. Fukuzawa was well known for (and was often criticized by more literal interpreters of liberalism, such as the *Minyūsha* and *Seikyōsha* writers, for) his close ties to the so-called political merchants (*seishō*) of the early Meiji period. These merchants owed their profits and dominant market positions not to their independent spirit but to their connection to the government and to the special privileges they gained thereby.<sup>68</sup> Finally, it is to be noted that Keiō Gijuku—said to be the embodiment of Fukuzawa's ideals, the very school for whom the original *Gakumon* was composed—early became known as the first and foremost source of educated functionaries for Japan's largest business concerns.<sup>69</sup> Although some importance may be attached to his theoretical celebration of private, non-governmental institutions as a break with Tokugawa thought, the difference was more radical in theory than in practice, and such personal independence as he preached was in the end always for state purposes.

To this point, *Gakumon no susume* has been considered largely in terms of its own internal logic and sources. This has led to a description of the work as a tract aimed at *shizoku* and concerned with the advocacy of learning for three related goals: for national security, for social stability, and to give voice and direction to *shizoku* aspirations in post-Restoration society. Nevertheless, despite all this internal evidence for a revised picture of *Gakumon* and its role in Meiji society, some scholars—even while arriving at a view similar to that given above—have suggested that Fukuzawa's writing was always ambiguous and subject to more than one interpretation.<sup>70</sup> I do not believe this to be the case; but nevertheless, for the sake of discussion, the possibility of multiple interpretations can be allowed. Once this is done, the logical course is to try to determine which of the allegedly possible interpretations of Fukuzawa's thought were in fact made by Meiji readers, and which were frequently or infrequently made. Curiously, scholars who have alleged the work's ambiguity have not followed up on this point by actually examining the available material on its reception. I have tested the above-proposed reformulated description of it, as well

<sup>68</sup> Both the *Seikyōsha* and *Min'yūsha* groups sought to speak for smaller, rural businessmen who were not benefiting from the policies that enriched the *seishō*. In this connection see Kano Masanao, "Inaka shinshi' tachi no ronri," *Rekishigaku kenkyū*, No. 49 (1961) and "Kokusui shugi ni okeru shihon shugi taisei no kōsō," *Nihonshi ken-*

*kyū*, No. 52 (1961).

<sup>69</sup> For the lore concerning Keiō, see Ozaki Moriteru, *Nihon shūshoku shi*, (Tōkyō: Bungei shunjū, 1967).

<sup>70</sup> For example, see *FY*, p. 54; this is a basic theme throughout Tōyama's book.



as descriptions previously advanced by other scholars, against contemporary perceptions of the work.

Contemporary evidence concerning *Gakumon* and Fukuzawa's thought in general is of two basic types: documents in which the influence of that specific work is declared or which is evident from textual analysis, and comments of those who knew of Fukuzawa's work and its influence at first hand. Both types are considered here.

First, it must be noted that—whatever may have been his posthumous reputation—during his lifetime, Meiji figures did not see Fukuzawa in general and *Gakumon* in particular as advocating notions of rights or equality. In Itō Masao's collection *Meiji-jin no mita Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Fukuzawa Yukichi as Seen by Men of the Meiji Era), none of the Meiji figures who had direct personal recollections of *Gakumon* associated that work with the advocacy of rights or equality. On the contrary, Tokutomi was only one of several who criticized the materialism or the elitism they perceived in Fukuzawa's thought; Takayama Chogyū even praised Fukuzawa for his elitism compared to Nakamura Keiu.<sup>71</sup>

Second, what little evidence might be used to link *Gakumon* to the Jiyū Minken Undō is itself ambiguous. During the movement there did appear songs of uncertain authorship known collectively as *Minken kazoe uta* (Counting Song of People's Rights), which began with a line reminiscent of the first line of *Gakumon*; another song, *Minken inaka uta* (The Country Song of Rights), attributed to Ueki Emori, used a similar opening phrase. However, like the attribution of the first line of *Gakumon* to the Declaration of Independence, the association of the first phrase of these songs with *Gakumon* is problematical. The wording is not especially close, and there were other sources from which the phrase could have been taken.<sup>72</sup>

The only other evidence to support a general connection between *Gakumon* and the Jiyū Minken Undō is the fact that the work was proscribed as a textbook in 1881, as part of a general movement against works the government saw as possibly "harming the national stability or confusing morality."<sup>73</sup> To what degree this resulted from the ideas of *Gakumon* being read and used in opposition to the government and to what degree this resulted from Fukuzawa's association with Ōkuma in the so-called political crisis of 1881 is not immediately clear. Further, it is to be noted that Fukuzawa's arguments against rebellion were picked up in other works of the period which had government sanction.<sup>74</sup> Until we find people's rights advocates' documents, letters, or editorials clearly drawing on *Gakumon*, any association of Fukuzawa's work with the movement must be considered pure speculation.

The paucity of evidence linking *Gakumon* to the Jiyū Minken Undō, and the ambiguity of that evidence, are in marked contrast to the evidence suggesting that the work was read primarily as a tract on personal advancement. Youths contributing to early Meiji juvenile-oriented magazines such as the widely read *Eisai shinshi* (Genius Magazine)<sup>75</sup> exhibit explicit or implicit influence of the themes of

<sup>71</sup> Tokutomi has already been cited. In addition, Itō's collection of (*FYR*) records similar comments by Yamaji Aizan (p. 53), Uchimura Kanzō (p. 149) and Kitamura Tōkoku (pp. 55ff.); Takayama's praise is reproduced pp. 90ff.

<sup>72</sup> This association is discussed in Ienaga, *Ueki Emori Kenkyū*, pp. 82ff; the texts are given pp. 171–73. This connection was apparently made by Yanagida Izumi, who thought the songs "somehow" (*nan to naku*) reminiscent of *Gakumon* or *Sekai kunitsukushi*.

<sup>73</sup> The government order is partially quoted in Maeda Ai, "Meiji risshin shusse shugi no keifu," *Bungaku*, No. 33 (1965) [hereafter "MR"], p. 14.

<sup>74</sup> Ienaga (n. 72 above), p. 85.

<sup>75</sup> *Eisai shinshi* is dealt with by Maeda Ai in the article cited above (n. 73), which called my attention to the existence of this genre in early Meiji Japan. Going beyond *Eisai shinshi*, I examined all juvenile and school publications held by the Meiji bunko at Tōdai; I have discussed this genre of magazine in "S-MM," pp. 131ff.

*Gakumon*, as can be seen in these sample titles: "Study Is the Capital from Which One Receives Wealth and Fame," "Study Is the Base for Rising in the World," "Study Is the Base for Prosperity and Good Fortune." Since the bulk of *Gakumon* circulation was accounted for by its use as a text, the interpretations found in these compositions can be regarded as indicative of the modal interpretation of *Gakumon* even if they do not necessarily represent all possible interpretations.<sup>76</sup>

As with the original *Gakumon* itself, the essays of this period use the term *fūki* (wealth and honor) with exceptional frequency. Often it seems to be something of a magic amulet, but from time to time can be found an essay that expands on the formula to give a clear picture of what the encouragement of learning meant to the composition writer.

When I look at the aspects of the races of man in this world, I see that there are two types: an upper and a lower. Who are these people of the upper class of society? They are the ones who receive the good fortune and prosperity (*kofuku-eiga*) that comes with the greatest wealth and honor. Who are the people of the lower part of society? These are the people who spend the greater part of their time running from right to left in order to gain the needs of the day. These poor types ought generally to be pitied, for they never have a chance to eat delicious foods nor to experience those things which delight the ear.<sup>77</sup>

In this statement, more than money is included in the term *wealth* and more than respect in the term *honor*. There is a clear division of society into an upper, obviously leisured class and a lower, obviously harried class. In this are echoes of Tokugawa era justifications of the idleness of the stipend-fed samurai.<sup>78</sup>

Maeda Ai, the principal Japanese scholar to study *Eisai shinshi* and other early Meiji juvenile- and youth-oriented publications, has suggested that these essays represent a *shizoku* view of personal advancement as a competition (based on education) for positions within a bureaucratic order.<sup>79</sup> Certainly this view corresponds with what is known about late Tokugawa thought and the class composition of early Meiji students. Ronald Dore<sup>80</sup> has noted the generalization of concepts of merit during the Tokugawa period and the degree to which the first line of *Gakumon* was in fact a culmination of Tokugawa thinking, not a break with it. The scattered, fragmentary data on class backgrounds of early Meiji students suggest that *shizoku* were much more responsive than were commoners to the message of the 1872 proclamation of a new educational system that specifically promised advancement (*rissbin*) through education.<sup>81</sup> There was, moreover, as Maeda also notes, a special reason for *shizoku* youth in the years 1878–1880 to be writing compositions on study-for-wealth-and-honor. Samurai stipends had been abolished in 1876; thus the youth of *shizoku* families (or their parents and teachers who probably coached many of the essays) had real economic incentive to express the hope that education would lead to wealth and honor, or at least a restoration of family fortunes.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>76</sup> The relative distribution of themes in *Eisai shinshi* is discussed in the appendix, "Eisai shinshi Contributors and Contributions," in "S-MM," pp. 529–31. However, because this distribution is based on themes derived from *Gakumon*, *Saikoku rissbi hen*, and possibly other sources, it understates the frequency of study-for-wealth-and-honor as a theme because this formula comes primarily from *Gakumon*. Due to the fragmentary nature of the Meiji bunko holdings in other magazines, no counts were made; but the distribution seemed similar. Here I have limited the discussion to themes derived from *Gakumon*.

<sup>77</sup> *Eisai shinshi*, No. 24 (1877), p. 2.

<sup>78</sup> These justifications are discussed in Ienaga Saburō, *Nihon dotoku shisō-shi*, (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1952), p. 103.

<sup>79</sup> "MR," p. 17.

<sup>80</sup> *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1965), p. 312.

<sup>81</sup> Karasawa Tomitarō, *Gakusei no rekishi* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1955), pp. 163–67 summarizes most of the available evidence on class composition.

<sup>82</sup> "MR," p. 17.

Further indication that the wealth-and-honor-through-study essays of this period reflect a *shizoku* class ethos comes from what is left out of the compositions. There is never any concrete statement of what constitutes “wealth.” Unlike late Meiji compositions, it is never monetized nor given specific value. It is always an abstract, part of the wealth-and-honor formula, suggesting that it is essentially the complex of rank and emoluments to be gained through government service. Also, compared to later Meiji compositions written after capitalism had become very much a reality, the absence of any specific career goals is rather striking.<sup>83</sup> Few if any essays of this period even mention such vague goals as enterprise (*jitsugyō*) or commerce (*shōbai*), and they never give the quite specific statements of career to be found after the turn of the century.

All this is not to say that all study-for-wealth-and-honor compositions were written by *shizoku*. Those *Eisai shinshi* compositions for which class of the author is indicated (a practice limited to the first few months of the journal) actually show a slight tendency for commoners (*heimin*) to emphasize study-for-wealth-and-honor while *shizoku* emphasized a more amorphous “learning” (*gakumon*, *kyōiku*). Similarly, more commoners than *shizoku* wrote compositions on study as that which divides men into wise and foolish groups. Nevertheless, even if non-*shizoku* responded to Fukuzawa’s message, they did so through acceptance of *shizoku* values. Education is never linked to practical endeavors. Nor is there even a hint that business might be a path to wealth and honor—let alone expression of the idea that those best qualified for political roles ought to come from the ranks of entrepreneurs, a favorite theme of *Minyūsha* and *Seikyōsha* writers who championed a commoner society.<sup>84</sup>

The basic thrust of most of the compositions of this period was simply that education was a means of entry into the ruling elite of society. This may be seen by another example of a composition on themes from *Gakumon*, this one explaining the significance of the division of mankind into wise (*ken*) and foolish (*gu*).

Is there anyone who does not desire wealth and fame? Is there anyone who does not hate being poor and despised? Since there are always people sunk into poverty and obscurity and always those who have wealth and fame, how do these differences come about? Is it not that the difference between wealth and fame and poverty and obscurity among men comes from whether they studied or did not study when they were children? If you study, you become a wise man (*kenjin*). On the other hand, if you do not study, you become a fool (*gujin*). If you become a fool, you become poor and wretched.

This is of course precisely what Fukuzawa had said in the original *Gakumon no susume*. But, rather than going on to introduce a notion of rights, even the limited one found in Fukuzawa’s writing, this young man continued by explaining where his quest would lead: “If we carry through the hard work of being a student, bear up under the load, and work like a lion, it will not be the least difficult to become a great man”—which he defined as nothing less than becoming prime minister (*dajō-daijin*).<sup>85</sup> Nowhere in this essay or any other essay using themes from *Gakumon* is there to be found any discussion of rights or equality.

The degree to which these compositions are representative of the full range of Meiji interpretations of *Gakumon no susume* is a matter certainly open to question; probably the compositions of particularly ambitious types were more likely to be

<sup>83</sup> Late Meiji themes are dealt with in “S-MM,” pp. 324ff.

<sup>84</sup> “S-MM,” pp. 223–26.

<sup>85</sup> A composition from *Eisai shinshi* (5 July 1879), quoted in “MR,” p. 16.

published than those with other concerns. There was also clearly editorial selection involved, both by teachers and by the journals themselves, and probably not a little amount of coaching.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that a rights or equalitarian interpretation would not have been published. *Eisai shinsbi* did, during the period in question (roughly to 1881, when *Gakumon* was banned as a text), carry essays debating or advocating equal rights for women; and, subsequently, it carried many themes and speeches on Jiyū Minken Undō topics.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, it seems quite likely that compositions coupling the study-for-wealth-and-honor theme with advocacy of rights or equalitarian concepts did not appear in juvenile-oriented publications simply because they were not written. Finally, while the ideas in these essays and the reading they give to *Gakumon* are at odds with conventional evaluations of the role of Fukuzawa's tracts in Meiji thought, there is nothing in them that contradicts the ideas found in the work itself. True, some points may be disregarded; but there is no contradiction, only selectivity. Moreover, those points that are ignored are either those not stated in the first pamphlet (independence versus government affiliation) or themes that stand out more obviously to those (e.g., modern scholars) brought up in a different tradition (equality and rights).

Much of the scholarly writing on Fukuzawa (both that by Japanese and that by non-Japanese) has been marked by a preconception of his thought and its role in early Meiji Japan—a preconception derived in part from an uncritical acceptance of the role and importance Fukuzawa ascribed to himself, and in part from the desire of scholars to find a figure such as Fukuzawa alleged himself to have been. This image has been sustained through a failure to consider data contrary to the preconceived or desired image of Fukuzawa. Interpretations have been grounded on attributions that can not be substantiated, on a consistent reading into Fukuzawa's early Meiji vocabulary and writings, of concepts he himself did not intend or which could be seen only by later readers with a substantially different background from that possessed either by Fukuzawa or his early Meiji audience. Little attention has been given to the strong currents of Tokugawa popular thought found in his writings, and much emphasis has been placed on him as an introducer of Western ideas without making explicit comparisons with the alleged Western sources. Possibly ambiguous statements and concepts have been found in his writing, but scholars have not bothered to look at interpretations of his contemporaries. His statements have been lifted out of context; his works have been mined for quotations which are often used for purposes quite different from those intended by the author. Indeed, one noted Japanese scholar has even proposed that the proper way to approach Fukuzawa's works is to take them apart and rearrange them in order to read between the lines.<sup>88</sup> At best, this results in a shift in emphasis; at worst, it results in a laboriously written editorial on early Meiji history in which more is said about the views of the scholar than about Fukuzawa.

To produce an image of Fukuzawa grounded in his time and his circumstances requires an approach in which the greatest weight is given to the context in which his ideas were formed and published. Texts must be read in the light of the language of the late Tokugawa and early Meiji period. Unspoken assumptions must be taken

<sup>86</sup> This problem is discussed in "S-MM," pp. 131–35.

<sup>87</sup> "MR" has theme-counts; the content of these

themes is discussed in "S-MM," pp. 168–76.

<sup>88</sup> This is Maruyama Masao's approach, as quoted and discussed in *FY*, p. 13.

into consideration. Alleged and actual sources must be read, compared, and set in their own context. The intended audience and its interests and conceits must be considered; hypotheses concerning interpretations must be tested against the actual documentary evidence available.

When this is done for *Gakumon no susume*, a substantially revised image of Fukuzawa and his work appears. This Fukuzawa is essentially a politically conservative ideologue of the samurai class, addressing himself to the aspirations of that class. His political ideas resonate with the most conservative, not the most liberal, lines of nineteenth-century Anglo-American thought. Barely a critic of the Tokugawa order, he was explicitly supportive of submissiveness—in both word and conduct—to the Meiji regime. His message to the samurai class contained little that was new. He continued a longstanding line of thought that looked to advancement through academic endeavor, and to wealth and honor from bureaucratic position. His career advice to his audience reflected his own samurai conceits, and differed significantly from the ideas of those nineteenth-century writers who had greater understanding of and closer affinity to liberalism and its economic base. His greatest departure from Tokugawa thinking was to raise corporate and academic bureaucracies to a position of theoretical parity with governmental affiliation. Significantly, this one departure from Tokugawa thought was usually lost on his readers, who interpreted his message in terms of traditional ideals and expectations of the samurai class. Overall, Fukuzawa emerges as an important figure not because of his criticisms nor because of his introduction of radically new ideas. He was important because he said what many wanted to read and believe, because he promised satisfaction for the frustrated aspirations of the former samurai class. The Fukuzawa who emerges from this discussion of *Gakumon no susume* may or may not be applicable to the man as a whole. It remains for that picture to be constructed by future research, which I hope will pay more attention to what Fukuzawa said and did rather than what he ought to have said and done to support some preconception or to satisfy some need for a particular type of Meiji thinker.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> After I completed this essay, my attention was drawn to several recent critical works on Fukuzawa which stress many of the same points I have made in my analysis of *Gakumon no susume*. See Yasukawa Junosuke, *Nihon kindai kyōiku shisō kōzō* (Tokyo: Shin hyōron, 1970) and Hirota Masaki,

*Fukuzawa Yukichi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppan kai, 1976). Yasukawa's interpretations of Fukuzawa have produced a minor *ronshō*. I hope this signals that convention and hyperbole may give way to more critical scholarship.