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Rise and Decline of the 53 Stages on the Old Tōkaido Highway 東海道五十三宿

—Especially from the View Point of
One Day's Journey—

Hideo NISHIOKA

We travelled several times by car and bicycle and studied the old Tokaido Highway 東海道 or old national road from Yedo 江戸 (Tokyo) to Kyōto 京都 which consists of fifty-three post stations scattered along the Pacific coast line. (# Table I)

At present, some of the fifty-three stages are particularly prosperous, but the others have declined. Table II, for example, shows the rate of increase of population in each of the stages from 1843 to 1955. These villages have many different natural and social conditions. In this report, only the geographical location related to one day's journey are studied.

According to many old notes, the rate of lodging in each fifty-three stations is shown in Table III and IV. Almost all of the stations in high ratio over 40% on lodging are now big cities. The town of Seki 關 at the foot of the mountain pass called Suzuka 鈴鹿 is the only exception.

It seems to me that the geographical location of the villages on the highway which were convenient for lodging after one day's journey is one of the important causes to promote the prosperity of villages. The distance of one day's journey is now extended through the development of means of communication.

Origin of "Mountain Buddhism" in Japan

By R. E. BRINCKMEIER

Japanese Buddhism developed, in its early days, without any connection with mountains. It was in the late seventh century that the Buddhist movement in the mountains

appeared for the first time in Japanese history. The Government which was established on the Taiho Ritsuryō took an oppressive attitude toward the discipline in the mountains, which was one of the important exercises of Buddhist disciplinarians, during the seventh and eighth centuries. It is presumed that this oppressive attitude on the part of the authorities was relaxed in the latter half on the Tempyō 天平 era (740~750). However, after this period, the Government again adopted an oppressive policy. It is supposed that some Buddhist priests, who had critical opinions of State Buddhism, excited the authorities and the Government changed its attitude in the treatment of disciplinarians (about 770).

It was by no means an easy task for Buddhism to invade the mountains. It had to struggle with the traditional worship of Yama-no-Kami (the mountain God).

Many legends told about struggles during the period from the latter half of the eighth to the ninth century have been handed down from generation to generation.

For instance, the legend that the mountain gods prayed to be saved through the mercy of Buddha, gradually turned into a belief that the gods of the mountain intended to protect Buddhism. Thus the Buddhists established a base to work in the mountains by overcoming the traditional faith, and Buddhism and the traditional faith blended into each other. Thereafter, Buddhism became influential among the Japanese people.

Legends of this early mountain Buddhism became in fact the popular faith. In this respect we have to mention the itinerant monks who were being oppressed by the Government of the early eighth century. The main factor that facilitated the Buddhist approach to the mountains was esoteric Buddhism (Mikkyō) to which the Japanese were paying increasing attention in the mideighth century. At the same time, we must not fail to mention the influence of two Chinese priests, Dōsen 道璿 and Ganjin 鑑真 who came to Japan at that time and assumed the leadership of Japanese Buddhism.

Saichō who went out into the world towards the end of the eighth century as a priest of the Tendai Sect 天臺宗 and became the founder of the mountain Buddhism of the Heian period by Dosen and Ganjin Saicho arranged to unite the various itinerant monks in the mountains and organize them into a new State Buddhism on the basis of a systematic doctrine.

He was also capable of changing the friction between Buddhism and traditional Shintoism into a power to support his new movement.

However, under him Japanese mountain Buddhism wandered into a by-road.

On the Historical Science of Hakuseki Arai 新井白石

By Yoshio MATSUMOTO

Hakuseki Arai was a historian as well as a statesman of the Tokugawa Shōgunate who served to the sixth Shōgun Ienobu 家宣 and the seventh Shōgun Ietsugu 家繼. As a historian he wrote such historical works as "Han kampu" 藩翰譜 "Dokushiyoron" 讀史餘論 "Koshitsū" 古史通 and "Koshitsūwakumon" 古史通或問. Furthermore, his historical science was excellent in method and interpretation. He collected historical materials from various sources adopting linguistic and archaeological methods and elucidated the ancient history of Japan which had been previously a mystical interpretation by Shintoist authors. Indeed, he wrote the ancient Japanese history as a human history. In other words he used a positive method to reveal the historical facts.

It goes without saying that his realism was a result of the Confucian culture. At the same time, however, his realistic method of thinking came from his nature. This may be learned from his opinions and attitude concerning such matters as religions, literature and education.

However, his nature also included such elements as