

# 1 Castles and the Transition to the Imperial State

---

[The Imperial Castle] now stands in the centre of the more modern town of Tokio, which was founded in the year A.D. 1600, and was ultimately built around it. Although recent civil wars have destroyed much of this ancient castle, some huge towers and immense battlements, formed of stones of extraordinary size remain. The Castle enclosure is surrounded by a broad moat, on the inner side of which rise the vast walls of the fortress: and if we may judge from its appearance, no castle in Europe is more impregnable. The water of the moat is broad, and the roadway skirting it on the outer side considerably above its level. Inside the walls there is a charming garden, used now as a pleasure ground during the summer months by the high officials of the Government.<sup>1</sup>

– Christopher Dresser, 1882

In 1876–1877, renowned British designer Christopher Dresser (1834–1904) spent four months visiting Japan as a consultant at the behest of the Meiji government, and his account of the journey reflects the keen eye of the artist. Dresser’s description of the former Edo Castle in Tokyo echoes those of other Western visitors to Japan, who had been awed by the scale of Japanese castles for centuries. Just a few years earlier, when the castle was still the uncontested seat of Tokugawa power, noted traveler Francis Hall (1822–1902) described it as “the most remarkable citadel in the world.”<sup>2</sup> The place of castles in Japan’s urban landscapes became far more ambiguous in the early Meiji period, and Dresser captured some of this complexity by highlighting the castle’s dominant central location, its inaccessibility to the public, its exclusive use by high government officials, and the damaging upheaval of the Meiji Restoration. This latter point was especially revealing, if inaccurate, as the Tokugawa shogunate had famously surrendered Edo Castle without a fight. Instead, the physical destruction that Dresser attributed to the “civil wars” was part of

<sup>1</sup> Dresser, Christopher. *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*. London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1882. p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Notehelfer, Fred G., ed. *Japan through American Eyes: The Journal of Francis Hall, 1859–1866*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001. p. 292.

a diverse nationwide process by which castles were repurposed for the new Japan.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of their flaws, Orientalist and otherwise, Dresser's descriptions reflect the important role that castles have played in Japan's relations with other nations. Only a few years earlier, in 1871–1873, Iwakura Tomomi (1825–1883) had led the great government mission that bears his name to the West. During this trip, the Japanese delegates visited countless castles across Europe, from Windsor to Edinburgh to Babelsberg, impressing upon them the high profile that the martial symbols of an idealized medieval period had in Europe and even in America. These visits provoked a variety of conflicting responses by the delegates. As Iwakura's secretary and the mission's best-known chronicler, Kume Kunitake (1839–1931), described the Tower of London, "it was built by the founder of the Norman house, King William the Conqueror, and succeeding monarchs lived there. It therefore has a remarkable number of ancient relics and historic associations."<sup>4</sup> This narrative provided an attractive parallel for Japanese representatives of the newborn Meiji state, with its core legitimizing ideology based on a supposedly ancient and unbroken imperial line.

Venturing inside the Tower, Kume observed "the remains here of an old prison and also the site of a scaffold where in earlier times a king of England had beheaded his wife. Within the Tower itself was the place where two princes had been killed and their corpses hidden. There were many relics of other acts of wanton cruelty committed in days gone by. Even now, simply looking at the traces of such things makes one's hair stand on end." To Kume and his companions, the terror and violence of earlier times seemed especially relevant. Less than five years after the Restoration conflict, Japan's leaders sought to distance themselves from their own "feudal" age, and the narrative of Britain's progress from medieval times was most encouraging. In contrast, in the Tower's armory, Kume admired "a huge array of old armour and weapons, each item labelled with its date. There was a breech-loading gun made three hundred years ago, which was a great rarity." He was decidedly less impressed by "a set of Japanese armour said to have been sent from Japan as a gift to King Charles II [James I]. There was also a collection of Japanese swords,

<sup>3</sup> This misconception was common, such as Henry Baker Tristram's assertion that Odawara Castle was "destroyed during the late revolution," when it was in fact demolished in the early Meiji period (Tristram, Henry Baker. *Rambles in Japan: The Land of the Rising Sun*. New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1895. p. 128).

<sup>4</sup> Kume Kunitake, comp. Chushichi Tsuzuki and R. Jules Young, eds. *Japan Rising: The Iwakura Embassy to the USA and Europe 1871–1873*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. p. 132.

but they were inferior pieces of the kind found in any antique shop and not worth looking at.”<sup>5</sup>

Kume’s responses also reflect the great uncertainty that hung over Japan’s own “feudal” heritage at this very same moment. Having taken control of the hundreds of castles throughout Japan in 1869, the central government was without a clear policy, as suggestions for the use of these important urban spaces came from all levels at home and abroad. From the late sixteenth century onward, real and perceived foreign influences were a key factor in the history of Japanese castles. Conversely, as this study argues, castles also bear witness to the substantial continuities in Japanese culture and society either side of 1868. The understanding of castles as fundamentally Japanese or Western phenomena was a key aspect of this. Similarly, the early Meiji view that castles were primarily symbols of authority with little or no practical purpose was deeply rooted in Tokugawa precedents. At the same time, from the late sixteenth century to the Meiji period, and on into the present day, castles were arguably the most prominent sites of conflict between local, regional, and national authority.

Many of the physical contexts of discourse remained constant, even if much of their content changed in the Meiji transition. For the new Meiji state, castles were showplaces for the ambitions and limits of the government’s bureaucratic and military centralizing efforts, which far exceeded Tokugawa precedents. Here, as past and present military installations, castles embodied the modern transition in Japan’s martial culture, and provided the stage for much of the bloodshed that accompanied the power consolidation of the first Meiji decade. In spite of their military obsolescence, castles commanded authority as the residences and symbols of Japan’s traditional warrior elite. Accordingly, one of the first moves by the newly resurrected imperial institution in 1868 was to appropriate the physical spaces of the former Tokugawa rulers, with the emperor and government relocating to castle sites.

Furthermore, castles presented a new challenge to Japanese society in the Meiji period. As premodern structures, castles were not necessarily linked with the modern arbiters of power. Few castles were linked to the imperial house, neither were they religious structures or considered important as architectural works. Some became accessible to the public, but they were not yet public spaces in the modern sense. Instead, castles were united by being historical, but in an era before history was important in and of itself. As Stefan Tanaka has argued with regard to the Meiji government’s treatment of temples, “the Dajōkan [Great Council of

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

State] seemed concerned about destruction and neglect, but a belief in value did not necessarily correspond to an articulation of what that value is.”<sup>6</sup> Articulating these values was a complex and controversial process, and European models were of limited use for reference to Meiji Japanese as the West was wrestling with its own issues concerning history and heritage, often centered on castles. Castles were the proving ground for developing approaches to heritage in a transnational process, from preserving physical structures to using them as ideological tools in the service of the local, regional, or national community. At the same time, the broad lack of interest in castles in the early years of the Meiji period ended up saving many structures, as there was often insufficient motivation to demolish these obsolete sites and they were left to slowly deteriorate.

Historians have used the phenomenon of the castle town to explain the development of Japanese economics, politics, and broader society in the Edo and early Meiji periods.<sup>7</sup> According to architectural historian Aldo Rossi, “[t]he identification of particular urban artifacts and cities with a style of architecture is so automatic in certain contexts of space and time that we can speak with discrete precision of the Gothic city, the baroque city, the neoclassical city.”<sup>8</sup> In the case of the Japanese castle town, although the defining architecture is usually limited to the castle, which took up an increasingly smaller proportion of the urban space as cities grew, castle towns remain such in the popular and historical imagination. The influential paradigm of the castle town has led modern cities with major industries to be popularly referred to as the “castle towns” of the dominant corporations, such as Toyota in Toyota City or YKK in Kurobe. At the same time, the bulk of the research on the castle town focuses on the town, in line with historiographical trends that place greater emphasis on commoner culture, especially that supported by merchants and other townspeople. In contrast, this chapter explores the less-examined role of castles themselves in the transition to the modern period.

### Castles in the Global Early Modern World

Scholars have often portrayed castles as repositories of Japan’s ancient and continuing global interconnections, linking them to both Western and

<sup>6</sup> Tanaka, Stefan. “Discoveries of the Hōryūji,” in Kai-wing Chow, Kevin M. Doak, and Poshek Fu, eds. *Constructing Nationhood in Modern East Asia*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2001. pp. 117–147, at p. 122.

<sup>7</sup> Rozman, “Castle Towns in Transition,” pp. 318–346; Hall, “The Castle Town and Japan’s Modern Urbanization,” pp. 37–56.

<sup>8</sup> Rossi, Aldo, Diane Ghirardo, and Joan Ockman, trans. *The Architecture of the City*. New York, NY: MIT Press, 1982. p. 116.

Chinese models.<sup>9</sup> The most influential and contentious debates concern the sixteenth century, specifically Oda Nobunaga's great keep at Azuchi, completed in 1579. With reported Chinese-style interior decorations, Buddhist elements, and possible European design influences, Azuchi Castle was certainly a structure unlike any other.<sup>10</sup> Although Azuchi Castle only lasted three years before falling along with its creator, it has been widely considered the model and inspiration for the hundreds of castles subsequently built throughout Japan.<sup>11</sup> Its splendor also impressed European Jesuits, with João Francisco Stefanoni (1538–1611/12) highlighting the stunning white and gold of the *tenshu*, while Luis Frois (ca. 1532–1597) commented on the rich scarlet, blue, and gold external walls.<sup>12</sup> Frois also remarked that the Azuchi *tenshu* was “far more splendid and noble in appearance than [European] towers.”<sup>13</sup> Oda's connections with the Europeans led to later claims that he was Christian himself, and that Azuchi Castle was based on contemporary European models. Regardless of its historical accuracy, the idea that Japan's castles had European origins was widely accepted throughout the Edo period and well into the modern age.

The historical perception that castles were influenced by Europe could be most clearly traced through the terminology used for the keep, or *tenshu*.<sup>14</sup> As American educator William Elliot Griffis (1843–1928) explained the term *tenshu* in 1907, “[i]ts name was written at first with the same characters with which the Catholic missionaries in China expressed the name of God, and the engineering idea came from them or their lay friends. Only afterwards, when the Roman religion was proscribed, was the character altered from that meaning Lord, to one signifying guardian, or the Heavenly protector.”<sup>15</sup> Throughout the Edo period, the word *tenshu* was written with characters used to designate the Christian god (天主). This reflected the popular belief that Christians worshipped their god on the upper floors of their houses and churches, and that Oda had done the same in the upper reaches of his great keep.

<sup>9</sup> Ōta Seiroku. “Tenshukaku no genryū,” *Nihon kenchiku gakkai keikaku kei ronbun shū*, 475 (September 1995), pp. 179–184, at p. 182.

<sup>10</sup> Elison, George. “The Cross and the Sword,” in George Elison and Bardell Smith, eds. *Warlords, Artists, & Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*. Honolulu, HI: University Press of Hawaii, 1981. pp. 55–86, at p. 63.

<sup>11</sup> Ono Kiyoshi. *Ōsaka-jō shi: ichimei Naniwa shi. Nihon jōkaku shi, kanshu*. Seishū Shoyazō, 1899. p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Elison, “The Cross and the Sword,” p. 63; Hirai, *Feudal Architecture of Japan*, p. 34.

<sup>13</sup> Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority*, p. 112.

<sup>14</sup> Inoue Shōichi. *Nanban gensō: Yurishizu densetsu to Azuchi-jō*. Tokyo: Bungei Shunshū, 1998.

<sup>15</sup> Griffis, William Elliot. *The Japanese Nation in Evolution: Steps in the Progress of a Great People*. London: George G. Harrap & Company, 1907. pp. 242–243.

In contrast, the alternative characters for *tenshu* as “heavenly protector” (天守) have no Christian connotation, but only became accepted later in the twentieth century.

From the Meiji period onward, the theory that Japanese castles had Christian origins was understandably attractive for Westerners like Griffis, as well as Japanese Christians. Even in the Tokugawa period, however, these symbols of power and authority were widely accepted to be of Western origin. During most of this period, from 1614 onward, Christianity was banned, with proselytization ostensibly punishable by death. This seeming contradiction motivated early modern writers to explain the term *tenshu*, often compelled by proto-nationalistic considerations. Some stressed Oda’s supposed deficiencies relative to Tokugawa Ieyasu, arguing that Oda had been converted by the Jesuits around his court. Nonetheless, the subsequent adoption of the *tenshu* indicated Tokugawa recognition of a certain foreign (and Christian) influence. The references to European models also reflected the fascination with Western technology, science, and even culture among Japan’s urban elites from the early eighteenth century onward. The discourse around *tenshu* reflects the limitations of the “closed country” thesis that have been highlighted in recent scholarship.<sup>16</sup> Not only were castles “Western,” but this exotic “Westernness” was integral to the awe they inspired in the populace.<sup>17</sup> Like firearms, often called “Tanegashima” in reference to the southwestern island where they were supposedly introduced by the Portuguese in 1543, castles were reminders of the global heritage of early modern Japan. As Anne Walthall has shown, the first firearms probably arrived in Japan from Southeast Asia, but attributing them to more exotic Europe made them more attractive.<sup>18</sup> Following the Meiji Restoration and the emergence of the modern Japanese state, powerful nationalistic arguments concerning the origins of castles emerged in a process discussed in Chapter 4 of this study.

The perceived Western aspects of Japan’s castles became increasingly relevant in the nineteenth century, when foreign encroachment by Russian ships in the north caused considerable concern. News of the overwhelming military superiority of the British in the Opium War of 1839–1842, followed by the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry’s American fleet in 1853 on a mission to “open” Japan, led to

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Clements, Rebekah. *A Cultural History of Translation in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Inoue, *Nanban gensō*.

<sup>18</sup> Walthall, Anne. “Do Guns Have Gender? Technology and Status in Early Modern Japan,” in Sabine Frühstück and Anne Walthall, eds. *Recreating Japanese Men*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011. pp. 25–47, at p. 28.

a national crisis. The effectiveness of Japan's defenses was a pressing issue, as they were woefully inadequate in light of the West's new military technology. In response, coastal forts with cannon platforms, or *daiba*, were constructed in Tokyo Bay and other strategic points to ward off foreign ships, using whatever knowledge of Western technology could be gleaned from books and interactions with foreigners at the enclave of Dejima off the coast of Nagasaki. Nonetheless, many *daimyō* used the opportunity to rebuild or repair existing castles, applying to the shogunate for permission and even for funds to do so.

The types of structure they proposed to build typically reflected more traditional concerns, and were primarily symbols of authority and prestige rather than practical military installations. As Ichisaka Tarō has shown, the majority of planned structures were castles of a more traditional type, as *daimyō* continued to desire the time-honored symbols of authority recognized by their subjects and peers.<sup>19</sup> Even Fukuyama (Matsumae) Castle in Hokkaido, planned in 1850 to guard against foreign threats on Japan's northern frontier, was designed around *tenshu* and *yagura*, with a few cannon platforms and some iron plating as concessions to more recent military technology. These anachronistic castle defenses were easily breached by Tokugawa loyalist Enomoto Takeaki (1836–1908) with modern weapons in 1868.<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere, the seveneenth-century *tenshu* of Matsuyama Castle on Shikoku was rebuilt in 1854 following a lightning strike several decades earlier. The last Japanese-style castle built during the Edo period was at Maebashi on the northern Kanto Plain. Although located in one of the furthest places from the sea in Japan, Maebashi Castle was rebuilt beginning in 1863 in response to foreign threats.<sup>21</sup> It was completed in 1867, just in time to witness the fall of the Tokugawa to domestic rather than foreign enemies. Like Matsumae Castle, Maebashi Castle included several cannon platforms, but was largely a traditional design unsuited to contemporary requirements.<sup>22</sup>

Castles in the last years of the Tokugawa period were simultaneously symbols of authority and militarily obsolete. Like weapons, castles were tightly controlled by shogunal regulations. Swords served as symbols of samurai status, while the more dangerous firearms were heavily restricted. The Tokugawa shogunate used castles to both legitimize and delimit the authority of the domains throughout Japan through the "one country, one castle" directive that built on policies first implemented in the late sixteenth

<sup>19</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 2–6.   <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13.   <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.

century.<sup>23</sup> The Tokugawa ostensibly limited *daimyō* to one castle each, with any alterations or new constructions requiring approval and close supervision to prevent potential challenges to the shogunate. According to the 1615 *Code for Warrior Houses (Buke shohatto)*: “Whenever it is intended to make repairs on a castle of one of the feudal domains, the [shogunate] authorities should be notified. The construction of any new castles is to be halted and stringently prohibited. ‘Big castles are a danger to the state.’ Walls and moats are the cause of great disorders.”<sup>24</sup> At the same time, *daimyō* were required to maintain their castles in a certain minimum state of repair. This ensured that they could control the local populace, while also using up *daimyō* resources that could otherwise be used in campaigns against the Tokugawa. As the Edo period progressed, many *daimyō* sought to reduce their responsibilities regarding castle maintenance. This great expense was compounded by the multiple lavish residences *daimyō* maintained in the competitive social and cultural environment of the capital, where they were required to spend much of their time.<sup>25</sup>

The Great Peace of the Tokugawa removed any military necessity for costly castle upkeep, and the majority of castles fell into disrepair. Financial difficulties gripped all strata of warrior society in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the shogunate sought to keep *daimyō* coffers relatively empty while preventing their potentially destabilizing collapse. As a result, castles steadily declined over the Edo period. Although no castles were destroyed by military conflict between the fall of Osaka in 1615 and the Boshin War in 1867, earthquakes, lightning strikes, typhoons, and accidental fires claimed dozens of castle keeps and hundreds of gates, watchtowers, and other secondary structures. Many were not rebuilt, including the great keep of the shogun’s castle at Edo. When the *tenshu* burned down in the Meireki Fire of 1657, it was already deemed largely decorative and not worth the expense of rebuilding.<sup>26</sup> Being able to construct and maintain a structure of the scale and relative fragility of a Japanese castle keep was in itself a sign of power, with the perception of strength far more important than the reality. Stone walls and ramparts were much sturdier, but after the 1650s functioned primarily to impress the local residents as imposing symbols of authority.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> For an overview of the scholarship, see Hanaoka Okifumi. “Kinsei jōkaku no kenchiku to hakyaku: Kumamoto-ken Ashikita Sashiki-jō o chūshin to shite,” *Shigaku ronsō*, 35 (March 2005), pp. 1–20, at pp. 8–9.

<sup>24</sup> Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority*, p. 105.

<sup>25</sup> Vaparis, Constantine Nomikos. *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2008.

<sup>26</sup> Hirai, *Feudal Architecture of Japan*, p. 60.

<sup>27</sup> Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority*, pp. 105–106.



Many of these structures were damaged through earthquakes, erosion, and a general lack of maintenance, contributing to the decline of castles throughout the country.

### Castles and the Fall of the Tokugawa

In the 1860s, castles were finally again called upon to fulfill a military role in the Boshin War that toppled the Tokugawa and established the new Meiji state. Throughout this conflict, skirmishes erupted between different factions within Japan, as well as with foreign powers, confirming the inadequacy of early seventeenth-century fortification technology. The continued reliance on traditional castles was not due to ignorance of foreign developments, however, as evidenced by Japanese attempts to build new star forts (bastion forts). This style of fortification had spread throughout Europe especially from the late sixteenth century, with some of the most famous extant examples in the Low Countries and the northern Mediterranean.<sup>28</sup> The star fort takes its name from the multipronged star shape of its layout, which allowed defenders to cover all exterior walls with their guns, eliminating dead spaces where attackers could gather during an assault. Only two of the planned star forts were realized, at Sakugun in Shinano Province in 1867 and near Hakodate in 1864.<sup>29</sup> This latter structure, known as the Goryōkaku, or “five-sided fort,” was built on a hillside four kilometers from the port of Hakodate. Although more effective militarily, the Goryōkaku is a low structure far from the town center, with little of the authoritative presence of a traditional castle. In contrast, the vast majority of Japan’s existing traditional castles dominated the center of the cities and towns, often on high ground, leaving no doubt as to where local power resided. Early modern castles were either located at the very center of towns, as in Edo, or in a position that commanded both the town and the main highway, as in Himeji and Nagoya.

Although there was an acute awareness of more militarily effective fortification designs, Bakumatsu rulers continued to focus on the traditional models that suited their roles as regional authorities in an essentially stable political ecosystem. The reliance on traditional castles also reflected a certain lack of faith in the military competence of the samurai class, and therefore the capabilities of potential domestic foes. From the early seventeenth century, Japanese warriors were perceived to have been

<sup>28</sup> Kingra, Mahinder S. “The Trace Italienne and the Military Revolution during the Eighty Years’ War, 1567–1648,” *Journal of Military History* 57:3 (July 1993), pp. 431–446.

<sup>29</sup> Ōrui Noboru and Toba Masao. *Nihon jōkaku shi*. Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1936. p. 691.

in decline from a previous ideal, and criticism of the samurai was widespread.<sup>30</sup> In Bakumatsu, calls for reform of the samurai grew louder than ever, with prominent reformers such as Yokoi Shōnan (1809–1869) arguing in 1860 that trained peasants would make a harder and more effective fighting force than the degenerate samurai.<sup>31</sup>

Any illusions regarding Japan's military capabilities were dispelled by the shelling of Kagoshima in 1863 and Shimonoseki in 1863–1864 by Western ships. These punitive actions rapidly forced the surrender and destruction of the maritime defenses with few Western casualties, demonstrating the imbalance of military power. The Boshin War of 1867–1868 exposed the shortcomings of samurai and traditional castles on a domestic level. Although premodern Japan was later typically portrayed as a militarized society dominated by impregnable fortresses full of fearlessly loyal warriors who would unflinchingly choose death before surrender or dishonor, the civil war was surprisingly short and was decided primarily by negotiated settlements. The casualty counts were very modest when compared with contemporary conflicts such as the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), the Paraguayan War (1864–1870), or the Austro–Prussian War (1866). The Civil War in the United States (1861–1865) appears especially devastating when considering that Japan had a similar population of roughly 30–40 million people in the 1860s.

The Boshin War saw imperial loyalist armies sweep upward from southwestern Japan, and castles typically surrendered following only token resistance. So rapid were the capitulations that the imperial troops felt compelled to symbolically take certain castles by force in order to demonstrate their presumed military superiority. One such case was at Himeji Castle, a Tokugawa family stronghold atop a hill controlling the main road linking Osaka and Kyoto to Hiroshima and the southwest. The imperial forces sought to make an example of Himeji, but internal divisions among the domain leaders contributed to the castle surrendering after only minimal fighting.<sup>32</sup> This reportedly made Himeji samurai living in Edo the laughingstock of the capital, at least until this event was eclipsed by the rolling wave of similar capitulations that followed.<sup>33</sup> To be

<sup>30</sup> Benesch, Oleg. *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Bushido in Modern Japan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. pp. 34–41.

<sup>31</sup> Yokoi Shōnan. "Kokuze sanron," in *Watanabe Kazan, Takano Chōei, Sakuma Shōzan, Yokoi Shōnan, Hashimoto Sanai (Nihon shisō taikei Volume 55)*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971. pp. 438–465, at pp. 463–464.

<sup>32</sup> Fujiwara Tatsuo. *Himeji jō kaijō: fudai Himeji han no Meiji ishin*. Kobe: Koben Shinbun Sōgō Shuppan Sentā, 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 147–148, 152.

sure, a minority of samurai did take an idealized sense of duty to heart, with some even committing suicide to atone for the shame of surrender.<sup>34</sup>

The Boshin War was ultimately decided by the surrender of Edo Castle to the imperial forces in the spring of 1868. The shogun's capital was built around the largest castle in Japan, and the entire city was given shape by its moats and outer defenses. Edo was the center of warrior life, and warriors made up more than half of its residents.<sup>35</sup> Like other Japanese cities, Edo did not have a perimeter wall. Instead, the residential areas were an integral part of the city's defenses, their winding streets, gates, and moats insulating the castle at the center from external attack. This design assumed the sacrifice of all residents in case of attack, and that commoners, like warriors, would die with "the castle as their pillow."<sup>36</sup> As the imperial forces approached, tens of thousands fled the city for the countryside. They need not have gone to such lengths. The shogun followed the precedent set by most of his vassals, and sent his negotiator, Katsu Kaishū (1823–1899), to arrange a surrender with the imperial commander, Saigō Takamori (1828–1877). The shogun subsequently withdrew from Edo to Mito, and although skirmishes occurred in the Ueno area after the surrender, the greatest castle in Japan was lost at the bargaining table, not on the ramparts. The bloodless surrender of Edo Castle was in keeping with the course of the war and has been widely praised.

The majority of castles surrendered following little if any resistance, but several became the sites of fierce fighting indeed. Other castles were preemptively damaged or destroyed by their defenders, or by the victorious enemy after they assumed control. At Kokura, for example, the defending Tokugawa forces set fire to the castle before fleeing in the face of the advancing imperial troops.<sup>37</sup> In contrast, Osaka Castle was turned over largely intact to the imperial loyalist army, who subsequently burned down many of the buildings. The victory ceremony was symbolically held atop the barren *tenshu* base.<sup>38</sup> The most serious fighting and destruction of castles occurred after the surrender of Edo, as the remaining Tokugawa loyalist forces retreated to northeastern Japan. At Utsunomiya, where the castle was already in the hands of imperial troops, the retreating Tokugawa army took the castle after destroying many of the buildings in a very brief battle. As the imperial forces pushed north in pursuit, many domains loyal to the shogunate, including

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 152.

<sup>35</sup> McClain, James L. and John M. Merriman. *Edo and Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994. pp. 13–14.

<sup>36</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 141. <sup>37</sup> Ibid. p. 115.

<sup>38</sup> Ōsakajō tenshukaku, ed. *Ōsakajo no kindaiishi*. Osaka: Ōsakajō Tenshukaku, 2004. p. 7.

Nagaoka, Aizu, Sendai, and Shōnai, put up strong resistance in several castle towns. At Nagaoka, the castle was largely destroyed by the advancing imperial army, and the focus of resistance then moved to Aizu, the last major stronghold of shogunal supporters on Honshu. The Battle of Aizu took place in late 1868, and included several incidents that subsequently became important markers of local, regional, and even national identity. Aizu-Wakamatsu Castle played a central role in this drama, as both the location and the symbol of seemingly heroic and desperate resistance. Aizu writer Yanatori Mitsuyoshi (1912–1993), for example, drew close parallels between the fall of Aizu and Japan's unconditional surrender in 1945.<sup>39</sup> The castle was defended by an outnumbered force that included Yamamoto Yaeko (1845–1932), who later helped to redefine the role of women in Meiji Japan. Other figures of national significance to emerge from the Battle of Aizu included the young samurai of the White Tiger Brigade, or Byakkotai, who famously committed seppuku when they mistakenly believed that the castle had fallen.<sup>40</sup> In fact, the castle held out for several weeks before it surrendered, also because the attacking army was not especially large and was hampered by the challenging weather and terrain.<sup>41</sup> In spite of the ferocity of the Battle of Aizu, the absence of heavy artillery meant that many of the castle structures survived, including the *tenshu* (Figure 1.1).

Ultimately, traditional castles played only a minor role in the Meiji Restoration conflict, and were not seen as serious impediments to substantial attacking forces. In most cases, defenders surrendered after a brief face-saving resistance, if they held out at all. The few regions where castles were defended in earnest were generally removed from the main conflict and only had to hold out against limited attacking forces. In the final stages of the war, when Tokugawa loyalist Enomoto Takeaki fled to Hokkaido and proclaimed the Ezo Republic, the Goryōkaku held out against imperial troops for almost nine months, including the winter when the attackers faced considerable logistical difficulties.

### Useless Reminders of the Feudal Past

The Meiji Restoration soon came to be viewed as the moment when the country cast off its feudal past and moved into an age of “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*). This narrative of 1868 as a watershed has

<sup>39</sup> Yanatori Mitsuyoshi. *Aizu Tsurugajō*. Tokyo: Shinjinbutsu Ōraisha, 1974. pp. 240–241.

<sup>40</sup> For an examination of the later mythologization of the Byakkotai, see Shimoda Hiraku. *Lost and Found: Recovering Regional Identity in Imperial Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014. pp. 113–126.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 36.

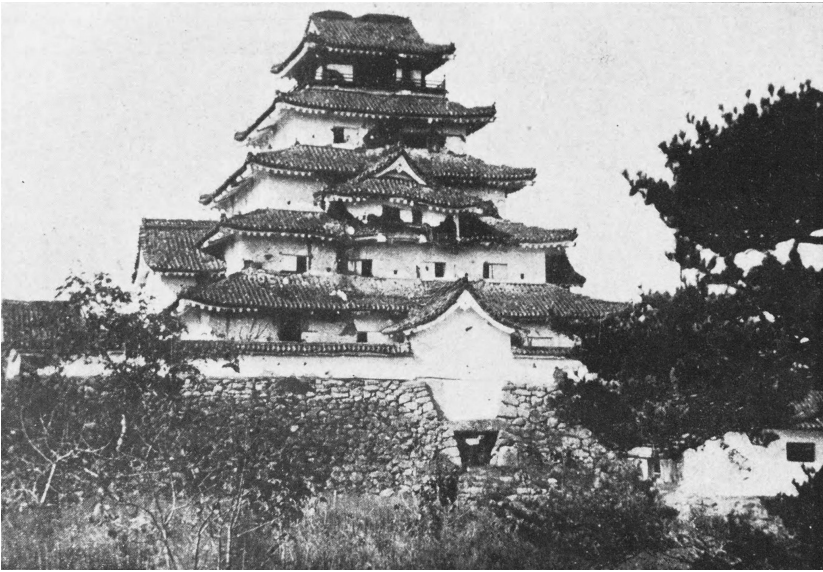


Figure 1.1 Aizu-Wakamatsu Castle *tenshu* following the Boshin War. Image courtesy of the National Diet Library

been attractive for various reasons. In the late twentieth century, for example, scholars sought to juxtapose the thriving culture of the early modern period with the supposed rigidity of the imperial period that fed into the wars of the twentieth century. This view obscures the many continuities between the Tokugawa and Meiji periods, and recent scholarship has increasingly attempted to provide a corrective to the earlier teleological approaches. The history of castles complicates our understanding of the Meiji transition, as many of the great changes after 1868 were actually the realization of earlier movements. At the same time, castles presented opportunities for the new government to establish and consolidate its authority through a combination of old and new.

Castles were unloved symbols of authority and a major financial burden on their owners before 1868, and the collapse of the Tokugawa eliminated the political rationale for castle maintenance. In 1869, the *daimyō* symbolically “returned” their castles to the emperor along with the domain registers that had represented their authority. Initially, most *daimyō* were reappointed as governors of their traditional domains, although their stipends were cut considerably, typically to 10 percent of previous earnings. As castle maintenance had often accounted for 10–20

percent of domain budgets, it now became an impossibly large expenditure.<sup>42</sup> In response, at least thirty-nine domains and prefectures petitioned the central government for permission to dismantle or at least stop maintaining their castles.<sup>43</sup> These included major structures such as the castles at Matsue, Kumamoto, Nagoya, and Odawara, among the largest in Japan.<sup>44</sup> Sentiments were encapsulated by a representative 1871 request from Aomori Prefecture to the War Ministry, referring to castles as “useless things” (*mu-yō no chōbutsu*) that stained the minds of the people with old ideas and inhibited progress. The prefecture asked for permission to sell off and demolish the castles at Hirosaki and Fukuyama to provide funds and space for economic revitalization, especially in support of “unproductive” groups such as former samurai.<sup>45</sup>

Some requests to sell off and tear down castles were granted, some were deferred, and some structures were torn down before the official response arrived. Petitions frequently invoked the rationale of economic regeneration, and Hirai Makoto has examined this dynamic in detail in the case of Ehime Prefecture, where the castles at Matsumoto, Uwajima, Ōsu, and Imabari were all to be auctioned off and scrapped for other use. Bureaucratic conflict between the Dajōkan, the prefecture, and local authority blocked most of these moves, although Imabari Castle was demolished immediately in 1869 without waiting for official sanction.<sup>46</sup> The demolition at Imabari was simplified by a munitions explosion earlier that year that had heavily damaged the castle.<sup>47</sup> Elsewhere, a suspicious fire at Yanagawa Castle in 1872 conveniently resolved the issue of maintenance, and Yanagawa Prefecture sold the site to a local farmer for growing crops in 1875.<sup>48</sup> In Odawara, the request to tear down the castle buildings was approved in 1870, and the demolition process would have been a common sight across Japan at the time (Figure 1.2).<sup>49</sup>

Confusion regarding castles was widespread. By the time the government considered the formal request to tear down Matsue Castle, the

<sup>42</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 203; Nakai Hitoshi, Katō Masafumi, and Kido Masayuki. *Kamera ga toraeta furoshashin de miru Nihon no meijō*. Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2015. p. 10.

<sup>43</sup> Hirai Makoto. “Meiji ki ni okeru haijō no hensen to chiiki dōkō: Ehime-ken nai no jōkaku, china o rei toshite,” *Ehime-ken rekishi bunka hakubutsukan kenkyū kiyō* 7 (March 2003), pp. 25–50, at p. 26; Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 203.

<sup>44</sup> Moriyama, *Meiji ishin*, pp. 16–17; Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 233.

<sup>45</sup> Ōrui and Toba, *Nihon jōkaku shi*, p. 694.

<sup>46</sup> Hirai, “Meiji ki ni okeru haijō no hensen,” p. 26.

<sup>47</sup> Ōrui Noboru and Ōba Yahei. *Tsuzuki Nihon no meijō*. Tokyo: Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1960. p. 101.

<sup>48</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 227–231.

<sup>49</sup> Nonaka, “Odawara oyobi Takayama,” p. 2679; Nakai, Katō, and Kido, *Kamera ga toraeta*, p. 69.



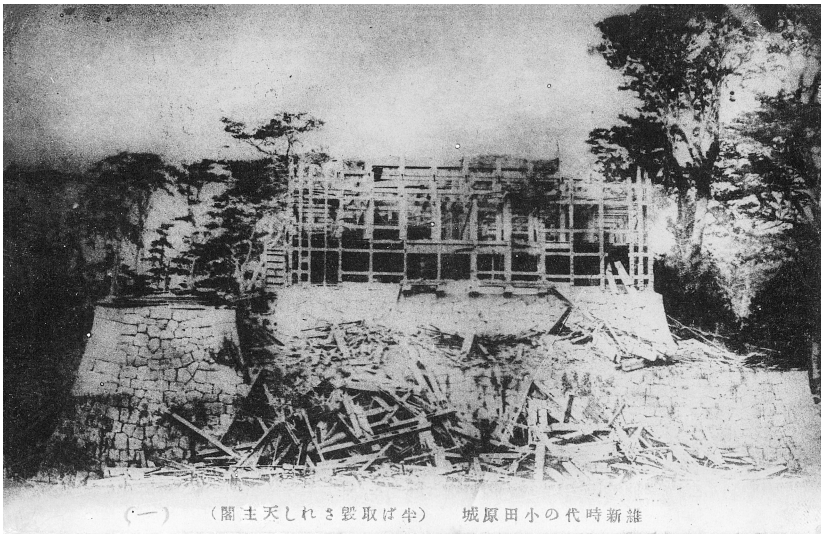


Figure 1.2 The Odawara Castle *tenshu* being demolished. Image courtesy of Odawara City Library

domain that had submitted it no longer existed, having been incorporated into the larger Shimane Prefecture.<sup>50</sup> It was evident that a coordinated national policy regarding castles was required, for both political and military reasons. Politically, it was required to affirm the new government's authority throughout the country, especially in regions that had supported the Tokugawa in the recent civil war. On the military side, the imperial loyalist army had occupied scores of castles in 1867–1868, and the Meiji state continued to face foreign and domestic threats. The government established a new army on a very tight budget, and required the use of existing castle spaces, even if castles also served as regional symbols and obstacles to centralization.<sup>51</sup> This complicated dynamic meant that castles could not all simply be razed – itself a prohibitively expensive undertaking in many areas.

The initial solution to the problem of regionalism was to remove the *daimyō* from their domains to Tokyo, where they retained their secondary and tertiary dwellings.<sup>52</sup> Their castles and primary residences became the property of the central government, severing the most important physical

<sup>50</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 233.

<sup>51</sup> Hirai, "Meiji ki ni okeru haijō no hensen," p. 27.

<sup>52</sup> Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan*, p. 59.

ties between the *daimyō* and their former authority. The greatest transition was in 1871, in a process known as “abolish domains and establish prefectures” (*haihan chiken*). This was concurrent with the establishment of the first four regional military commands. The government’s response was systematic, with the first step toward a national castle policy taking the form of an extensive national survey of all significant sites and structures. A twelve-member survey team spent several months in 1872 working together with prefectures and local authorities.<sup>53</sup> It surveyed almost 200 castles, collecting data such as the quality of wells, availability of flat ground for training, nearby forests, local wealth, and water routes for access. Other important factors included a castle’s proximity to borders or border roads, as well as its defensibility in the case of a rebellion: whether it would be taken by allies or enemies, and how easy it would be to attack or defend.<sup>54</sup> Based on this information, the Army Ministry laid claim to fifty-eight sites for immediate or future use, including the largest and strategically most important castles and fortifications, while the remainder were left to the Finance Ministry for disposal.<sup>55</sup> The Army Ministry also retained a provision to purchase further sites from the Finance Ministry at a later date.<sup>56</sup> The Castle Dissolution Edict (*haijōrei*) of 1873 classified castles into those to be dissolved (*haijō*) and those to be maintained as military sites (*sonjō*).<sup>57</sup> The army was still relatively small at this point, and the vast majority of *sonjō* were reserved for possible future use rather than immediately hosting a significant military presence.

The site of greatest concern for the Meiji government was Edo Castle, which became the nerve center of the new state. As Arakawa Shōji has described it, the start of the Meiji period saw the transformation of Edo, the ultimate castle town, to Tokyo, the ultimate military city.<sup>58</sup> Osaka Castle was briefly considered as a potential home for the new emperor, but the size and sophistication of Edo Castle were important factors in relocating the imperial government from Kyoto to the east. Cost was another major consideration, as the new government lacked the funds to construct entirely new administrative infrastructure at Osaka, and could instead use the shogunate’s existing buildings.<sup>59</sup> With the arrival of the emperor, Edo was renamed Tokyo or “Eastern Capital” in 1869,

<sup>53</sup> Hirai, “Meiji ki ni okeru haijō no hensen,” p. 27.

<sup>54</sup> Fujita Kiyoshi. “Shūshi yodan – (sono 8) zenkoku jōkaku nado no shobun,” *Kaikōsha kiji* 719 (August 1934), pp. 97–102, at pp. 97–99.

<sup>55</sup> Moriyama, *Meiji ishin*, p. 19. <sup>56</sup> Fujita, “Shūshi yodan,” p. 101.

<sup>57</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*.

<sup>58</sup> Arakawa Shōji. “Shuto no guntai no keisei,” in Arakawa Shōji, ed. *Chūki no naka no guntai 2: gunto toshite no teito – Kantō*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2015. pp. 16–54, at p. 16.

<sup>59</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 208.



and Edo Castle was officially renamed the “Eastern Capital Castle” (Tōkeijō) and then the “Imperial Castle” (Kōjō).<sup>60</sup> Later, the name was again changed, to “Imperial Castle” (Kyūjō), to commemorate the completion of the new palace buildings in 1888.<sup>61</sup> These terms reflected the castle’s continued role as the center of military and political authority. As Kinoshita Naoyuki has argued, Edo Castle was the ideal space to transform the emperor from an aristocrat into a strong military figure.<sup>62</sup> Throughout the country, new prefectural headquarters were located in castles, which also retained their function as sites of authority.

The transformation to the Imperial Castle had a major impact on Edo Castle. Different government factions vied for control over the site in the tumultuous first years of the Meiji period. The War Ministry and Dajōkan disagreed whether the center of the site should be primarily a fortification or a residence, respectively. The emperor also weighed in, as he was greatly impressed with the size of the castle relative to his more modest former residence in Kyoto.<sup>63</sup> After the issue was settled in its favor, the Dajōkan directed the army to tear down twenty-one gates as well as other structures.<sup>64</sup> This episode reflected the strength of the Dajōkan, which sought to build all of its central administrative structures in the west bailey, close to the emperor’s residence. These plans were abandoned due to a major fire in 1873, and a lack of funds forced the emperor to live in the Akasaka Detached Palace until the Imperial Castle buildings were completed fifteen years later in 1888. The Imperial Castle retained the label and much of the appearance of a castle, as well as a powerful military presence. In 1871, the Imperial Guard was created from 6,000 soldiers of the Satsuma, Chōshū, and Tosa domains in order to establish a fighting force loyal to the central government rather than regional interests.<sup>65</sup> The Imperial Guard would grow and evolve over the following decades, but its physical center remained in and around the north bailey of the Imperial Castle until 1945, and its former headquarters building is now the Crafts Gallery of the National Museum of Modern Art. The Imperial Guard immediately made its presence felt, even if in its early years it was known more for harassing foreigners, drunken behavior, and other disciplinary issues than as a force for order.<sup>66</sup> The army also took over many of the former *daimyō* and shogunal residences surrounding the castle, rapidly building a dense web of military installations in central Tokyo.<sup>67</sup> These

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. <sup>61</sup> Arakawa, “Shuto no guntai,” p. 47.

<sup>62</sup> Kinoshita, *Watashi no jōkamachi*, p. 15. <sup>63</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>64</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shūro*, p. 213.

<sup>65</sup> Jaundrill, Colin. *Samurai to Soldier: Remaking Military Service in Nineteenth-Century Japan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016. p. 95.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. pp. 99–100. <sup>67</sup> Arakawa, “Shuto no guntai,” pp. 19–24.

were all located within four kilometers of the Imperial Castle, allowing the troops to reach the castle in no more than an hour in case of emergency.<sup>68</sup>

### Remilitarizing Castles in the Meiji Period

As with the emperor's residence, the best location for the military command was fiercely debated immediately after the Restoration. Osaka was a natural candidate due to its proximity to the southwestern power bases of the Meiji leadership, as well as concerns about basing the army in the defeated shogunate's capital. Plans for Osaka Castle foresaw the main bailey as the imperial residence and the second bailey for the bureaucracy, which would be surrounded by the residences of the aristocracy and cannon platforms manned by guards from loyal domains.<sup>69</sup> Former Chōshū samurai, Restoration leader, and vice-minister of the new War Ministry Ōmura Masujirō (1824–1869) favored Osaka as a military headquarters, and the construction of barracks there began in 1869.<sup>70</sup> Later that year, however, Ōmura was the victim of an assassination attempt by reactionary samurai who opposed his military reforms, and he died of his wounds several weeks later. Without Ōmura's drive, and in the face of compelling financial arguments, the military command was relocated into new and existing facilities in the former Edo Castle.

The new Imperial Japanese Army gradually evolved from the various domain armies that had made up the imperial forces in the Boshin War. The abolition of the domains in 1871 was accompanied by the establishment of a central force, based in four major garrisons, or *chindai*. In 1873, the number of *chindai* was increased to six, all of which were located inside castles, in Sendai, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima, and Kumamoto. These regional commands oversaw fourteen infantry regiments, each composed of one, two, or three battalions. In the 1870s, the majority of these were located in and around the *chindai* sites and other castles. Outside of Tokyo, infantry regiments and battalions were located in and around fourteen castles, and occupied only five other non-castle sites. These included the small fishing port of Aomori and Ōtsu, where the castle had been completely destroyed around 1600. Ten further infantry regiments were created in the 1880s, all located in and around castles.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p. 48.

<sup>69</sup> Ban Michio. *Tōkyō jō shi*. Tokyo: Nihon Konsha Shuppan Bu, 1919. p. 357.

<sup>70</sup> Hashitera Tomoko. "Ōsaka-jō shi ni kensetsu sareta heigakuryō no tatemono ni tsuite," *Nihon kenchiku gakkai taikai gakujuutsu kōen kōgai shū (Tōkai)* (September 2003), p. 627.

<sup>71</sup> Infantry regiment locations and numbers: 1. Tokyo, 2. Sakura/Utsunomiya, 3. Takasaki/Shibata, 4. Sendai, 5. Aomori, 6. Nagoya, 7. Kanazawa, 8. Osaka, 9. Ōtsu/Fushimi, 10. Himeji/Osaka, 11. Hiroshima/Yamaguchi, 12. Marugame, 13. Kumamoto, 14. Kokura/Fukuoka. Based on Katō Hiroshi, Ibuchi Kōichi, and Nagai Yasuo. "Meiji ki ni okeru

Tokyo had the largest military presence, with the Tokyo *chindai* and the Imperial Guard in and around the Imperial Palace. From 1877 until the end of the Meiji period, the Tokyo *chindai* was roughly three times the size of the second largest, at Osaka. Arakawa Shōji argues that the extent to which the military took over the spaces of the old order in Tokyo was unparalleled in other regions.<sup>72</sup> The central urban location of the military in the castles that were past and present symbols of power and authority soon imparted the Imperial Japanese Army with a unique physical and psychological presence that belied its recent vintage. Although the army remained relatively small and still relied on support from police and irregular domain troops through the late 1870s, more than 90 percent of the soldiers in the army were in the infantry.<sup>73</sup> This concentration of troops made the regimental headquarters significant centers of military power over the countryside.

In Kanazawa, the 7th Infantry Regiment moved into the castle in 1873, and was joined by the 19th Infantry Regiment in 1885. On both occasions, old buildings were demolished and replaced by new structures.<sup>74</sup> The destruction of Aoba Castle in Sendai was also done in stages, by both civilian and military actors. Buildings in the main bailey, second bailey, and third bailey were torn down to build the prefectural headquarters building in 1868.<sup>75</sup> Most of the remaining structures were torn down in 1873 to make space for the *chindai* headquarters, with more new facilities built when the *chindai* was reorganized as the 2nd Division in 1884.<sup>76</sup> The destruction of historical buildings was later blamed variously on the prefectural authorities and the army.<sup>77</sup> No one wanted to claim responsibility in later decades when a stronger sense of heritage appreciation had developed, but in the early years of the Meiji period, there was little nostalgic hesitation about tearing down these “useless” symbols of the “feudal” order.

rikugun butai heiei chi no haichi ni tsuite,” *Nihon kenchiku gakkai Tōhoku shibu kenkyū hōkoku kai* (June 2004), pp. 203–208.

<sup>72</sup> Arakawa Shōji. “Shuto no guntai no keisei,” in Arakawa Shōji, ed. *Chūiki no naka no guntai 2: gunto toshite no teito – Kantō*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2015. pp. 16–54, at pp. 16–17.

<sup>73</sup> Jaundrill, *Samurai to Soldier*, p. 116.

<sup>74</sup> Motoyasu Hiroshi. “Gunto Kanazawa to daikyū shidan,” in Kawanishi Hidemichi, ed. *Chūiki no naka no guntai 3: retto chūō no gunji kyoten, Chūbu*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2014. pp. 78–105, at p. 80.

<sup>75</sup> Miyagi-ken Shi Kankō Kai, ed. *Miyagi-ken shi 13 (bijutsu kenchiku)*. Sendai: Miyagi-ken Shi Kankō Kai, 1980. p. 336.

<sup>76</sup> Miyagi-ken Shi Hensan Inikai, ed. *Miyagi-ken shi 13 (kankō)*. Sendai: Miyagi-ken Shi Hensan Inikai, 1956. p. 66.

<sup>77</sup> Ogura Tsuyoshi. “Sendai no honmaru ni tsuite,” in Tanebe Kinzō, ed. *Yōsetsu Miyagi no kyōdo shi*. Sendai: Hōmondō Shuppan, 1983. pp. 202–208, at pp. 204–205.

Kumamoto Castle experienced the greatest turmoil in the first decade of the Meiji period, including political conflicts and actual warfare. Built by warlord Katō Kiyomasa (1562–1611), Kumamoto Castle is one of Japan's largest and most impressive fortifications. The Hosokawa family who ruled the castle from 1632 allied themselves with the Satsuma and Chōshū faction in the Boshin War, and the castle entered the Meiji period largely intact. However, domain authorities soon pushed for the demolition of the castle as a “relic from the Sengoku period” that would foster narrow thinking in the populace.<sup>78</sup> The governor, Hosokawa Morihisa (1839–1893), submitted an official request to tear down the *tenshu* and other buildings to Tokyo in 1870.<sup>79</sup> The *tenshu* was then opened to the public in late 1870 so the local residents could enter the structure for the first time before its demolition.<sup>80</sup> In the event, the *tenshu* was not demolished, as the region became increasingly volatile due to former samurai and others disillusioned by the modernizing reforms. In this delicate situation, the army left the center of the castle largely intact, and continued to allow public access to the *tenshu*, which came to be used primarily for storage. This changed with the establishment of the Kumamoto *chindai* in 1874, as the increase in military personnel necessitated greater control of the site, and the army also purchased large swathes of surrounding land between 1875 and 1877.<sup>81</sup>

In 1876 and 1877, Kumamoto Castle became the only major castle to have its military capabilities tested after the Restoration. In October 1876, with much of the garrison away suppressing the nearby Saga Rebellion, a group of former samurai around reactionary Shinto priest Ōtaguro Tomoo (1836–1876) launched a night attack on Kumamoto. In addition to killing the governor, garrison commander, and other government officials, the rebels stormed the castle, killing dozens of sleeping conscripts in a surprise attack. Inside the castle, also because the rebels used swords rather than firearms out of ideological conviction, the imperial troops were able to regroup and suppress the rebellion within a matter of hours.<sup>82</sup> Known as the Shinpūren Rebellion, their slaughter of the largely commoner soldiers has often been related to class-based resentment on the part of former samurai who were losing their traditional privileges.

<sup>78</sup> Kinoshita, *Watashi no jōkamachi*, p. 332.

<sup>79</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 203–204.

<sup>80</sup> Kinoshita, *Watashi no jōkamachi*, p. 333.

<sup>81</sup> Mizuno Masatoshi. “Gunto Kumamoto to dai roku shidan,” in Hayashi Hirofumi, ed. *Chūki no naka no guntai 6: tairiku, Nanpō bōchō no kyoten, Kyūshū, Okinawa*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2015. pp. 44–76, at p. 49.

<sup>82</sup> Vlastos, Stephen. “Opposition Movements in Early Meiji, 1868–1885,” in Marius B. Jansen, ed. *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume 5: The Nineteenth Century*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989. pp. 367–431, at pp. 391–394.

Although most rebels were killed or committed suicide and order was temporarily restored, other anti-government groups took heart from the chaos that this relatively small force was able to cause. Other rebellions followed at Hagi and Akizuki, where the Shinpūren leaders had issued a call to armed revolt to like-minded activists. More significant, thousands of dissatisfied people, primarily young men of former samurai stock, gathered in Kagoshima around former Restoration hero Saigō Takamori. In February 1877, Saigō's followers moved north toward Kumamoto, launching what would become known as the Satsuma Rebellion. Kumamoto Castle and its arsenal were the primary targets, defended by roughly 4,000 imperial troops. The defenders were able to repel the rebel army, which numbered around 14,000 men, and withstood a nine-week siege until a government relief force arrived. As Mark Ravina has pointed out, the rebel attacks on Kumamoto Castle were frustrated by a combination of modern weaponry and traditional fortifications, as the massive walls proved most difficult to breach.<sup>83</sup>

Nonetheless, the *tenshu*, palace, most watchtowers, and other central structures were no more. The loss of these buildings is often ascribed to the Satsuma Rebellion, which resulted in far greater loss of life than the Boshin War a decade earlier. In fact, the *tenshu* and other historic buildings in Kumamoto Castle burned down in mysterious circumstances on February 19, two full days before the outbreak of hostilities. The cause of the fire is unknown, but high winds soon carried the flames throughout the compound and even into neighboring residential areas. Of the original structures that remained, the majority were pulled down by the army in the following decades as space was required for firing ranges, parade grounds, and other military facilities.

In contrast to Kumamoto, at Aizu-Wakamatsu, the army took over a heavily damaged castle that had been a focal point of shogunal resistance in the Boshin War, and the expense of urgent repairs to the *tenshu* and other structures was just one of the problems the army faced. On one hand, the castle was seen as a potential rallying point for disgruntled former samurai.<sup>84</sup> For the vast majority of local residents, however, the castle was a hated reminder of oppression and conflict.<sup>85</sup> Many of the holdouts at Aizu-Wakamatsu during the Boshin War were Tokugawa supporters from other domains, and the locals resented those who had brought war and destruction to their city.<sup>86</sup> As one contemporary observer described them, they were “a helter-skelter pack of self-centered

<sup>83</sup> Ravina, Mark. *The Last Samurai: The Life and Battles of Saigō Takamori*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2004. pp. 203–204.

<sup>84</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 190. <sup>85</sup> Shimoda, *Lost and Found*, pp. 60–63.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 32, 13–16.

samurai concerned more with their own vainglory than with saving their lord and domain.”<sup>87</sup> Commoners in Aizu-Wakamatsu were also ambivalent when their lord was taken off as a prisoner following the surrender, and resentment against former samurai ran deep in the region throughout the first decade of the Meiji period.<sup>88</sup>

Aizu-Wakamatsu Castle underwent many changes in the first years of the Meiji period. The prefectural headquarters were moved from a local temple to the main bailey, and in 1871, the prefecture obtained permission from the army to develop the site by destroying many of the buildings, ramparts, and part of the moat. In 1873, however, the prefectural headquarters moved into a new building in the town, leaving the castle largely empty. A request was made to the authorities of the Sendai *chindai* for money to pay for caretakers and urgent repairs to the castle. The commander at Sendai was a Chōshū man, and the animosity between the former domains may have contributed to the army’s rejection of the request. Instead, in 1874, the Army Ministry decided to tear down the remaining castle buildings, ostensibly to erect a barracks in their place. As elsewhere, the castle buildings were placed on the auction block. Although the auction was unsuccessful, several weeks later, local businessman Shinozaki Eizaburō paid 862 yen for the salvage rights to all the structures. As in Kumamoto, it was decided to hold an exhibition and open the *tenshu* and other buildings to the public for the first time. Between April 20 and May 9, the residents of Aizu-Wakamatsu were able to enter the former symbol of authority and power that had towered over their town for two and a half centuries.<sup>89</sup> Immediately after the exhibition, the *tenshu* was razed to the ground. The convergence of military and local interests in Aizu-Wakamatsu ensured that the castle demolition plans were carried out with unusual efficiency, reflecting the contingency of approaches to castles in the early 1870s.

Castle gates and smaller outbuildings were easily sold and/or torn down, but there was often a lack of resources for dismantling a major *tenshu*. These practicalities – combined with inertia on the part of the preoccupied army – saved several *tenshu*, including Matsue, Himeji, and Matsuyama. Nostalgia was not a significant factor. Matsuyama Castle had only been completed in 1854, and most castle buildings were torn down by the army in 1873 to make room for barracks and a parade ground. The *tenshu* and *yagura* survived due to their relatively inaccessible location at the top of the castle hill, an area not required for military use.<sup>90</sup> Just as many historically significant *tenshu* and other buildings were

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. p. 36.   <sup>88</sup> Ibid. pp. 37, 55–56.

<sup>89</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 188–190.   <sup>90</sup> Ibid. p. 161.

demolished without reservation, other structures such as the Matsuyama *tenshu* could survive due to a similar lack of interest in their fate.

The army often sought to eliminate *tenshu* cost-effectively and even profitably by auctioning them off to the highest bidder for scrap. At Himeji, the *tenshu* and all other buildings were slated for destruction as the castle was transformed into a modern military base. Having torn down most of the gates and peripheral structures, the army sold the *tenshu* and other buildings in the main bailey to a local businessman for 23 yen and 50 sen. Ultimately, however, the logistical challenge of disassembling and carting off the structures was deemed unprofitable, and the *tenshu* was spared.<sup>91</sup> This approach to old buildings reflected the treatment of temples in the early Meiji period. Most of the buildings of the Hōryūji in Kyoto were auctioned off for salvage and destroyed immediately after the Restoration. As was the case with castle keeps, the pagoda proved too cumbersome to disassemble, so the new owner planned to burn it down in order to reclaim its metal from the ashes. Fortunately, concerns about the fire spreading to nearby houses ended up scuppering this plan, and the pagoda survived.<sup>92</sup> The five-story pagoda at the Kōfukuji in Nara was saved in similar circumstances, having reportedly been sold for 25 yen to a new owner who desired to torch the whole structure for its metal.<sup>93</sup> More than a century later, in 1993, the Hōryūji and Himeji Castle were designated Japan's first UNESCO World Heritage sites, followed by the Kōfukuji in 1998.

The situation was largely similar at Matsue Castle, one of the oldest *tenshu* in Japan. Its age and size contributed to the considerable cost of upkeep, and former *daimyō* and new governor of Matsue Matsudaira Sadayasu (1835–1882) requested permission to tear it down in 1871.<sup>94</sup> Matsue Castle fell under the jurisdiction of the military headquarters at Hiroshima, but the army was reluctant to pay for maintenance. In 1875, the army attempted to sell the Matsue *tenshu* and other buildings for scrap, and to also auction off the third bailey. As elsewhere, the value of the castle materials was seriously compromised by the cost of dismantling and removing the structures, and the watchtowers, gates, and other out-buildings were sold off for a pittance and scrapped. The *tenshu* was bought by Saitō Naotada, an officer from Kanazawa, for 180 yen, the equivalent of sixty bags of rice at the time. Saitō's motivations were financial, as were

<sup>91</sup> Matsumoto Yasutoku. "Nihon ni okeru bunkazai hogo seisaku/rippō no tenkai: Meiji ki, hakai yori hozon e no michi," *Kagoshima kokusai daigaku shakai gakubu* 15:4 (February 1997), pp. 1–40, at p. 7.

<sup>92</sup> Tanaka, "Discoveries of the Hōryūji," p. 120.

<sup>93</sup> Matsumoto, "Nihon ni okeru bunkazai," p. 8.

<sup>94</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 235.



the army's, and his lack of respect for the *tenshu* was epitomized by his failure to remove his shoes when he entered for a cursory inspection.<sup>95</sup>

In a deviation from similar narratives in other cities, local notables decided that they did not want to see the Matsue *tenshu* destroyed. Their commenting on Saitō's lack of respect indicates other concerns, but there was little subsequent action to preserve the castle. A group of former retainers worked with a wealthy farmer to collect money to save the *tenshu*, and convinced Saitō to sell the *tenshu* to them rather than demolishing it.<sup>96</sup> The rest of the castle buildings were torn down for scrap, while the *tenshu* reverted to control by the army, which neglected it and allowed it to fall into disrepair.<sup>97</sup> German diplomat Peter Kempermann (1845–1900) commented on an 1876 visit to Matsue that while the castle itself was impressive, the large samurai houses nearby were empty or turned into shops and accommodation for government officials, as this was also the location of the prefectural administration, police headquarters, court, higher education institutions, and other facilities.<sup>98</sup> The case of Matsue Castle (Figure 1.3) shows that the army was still selling off castle buildings for scrap in 1875, but also indicates some limited local efforts to save historical structures.

Statistically, more significant structures survived in castles retained by the military than those in civilian hands. Although definitions of *tenshu* vary, on the basis of records collected by Moriyama Eiichi, in the 58 castles retained by the military, 24 had *tenshu* or three-story *yagura* that survived into the Meiji period, of which 9 were demolished in the 1870s (including Kumamoto). In contrast, of the 144 castles deemed surplus to requirements by the army in 1874, 37 had *tenshu* after 1868, of which 30 were demolished in the early Meiji period.<sup>99</sup> These figures have led Moriyama and other scholars to argue that the military valued and protected castles.<sup>100</sup> In fact, in the first decade of the Meiji period, military policy had little bearing on the survival of castles and other historic buildings.<sup>101</sup> The higher survival rate was due to coincidental factors. Most important, the military retained the major castles with the largest *tenshu*, which were more difficult to

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. pp. 235–239.

<sup>96</sup> NHK Matsue Hōsōkyoku, ed. *Shimane no hyakunen*. Matsue: NHK Matsue Hōsōkyoku, 1968. p. 2.

<sup>97</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 235–239.

<sup>98</sup> Kempermann, Peter. "Reise durch die Central-Provinzen Japans," *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, No. 14 (April 1878), pp. 121–145, at p. 135.

<sup>99</sup> Moriyama, *Meiji ishin*, pp. 30–157. <sup>100</sup> Ibid. p. 20.

<sup>101</sup> Nishiyama Michihiro. "Ki'nai ni okeru jōshi no kōen ka ni kan suru kenkyū," in *Nihon kenchiku gakkai Kinki shibu kenkyū hōkoku shū*, 2010. pp. 833–836, at p. 834.





Figure 1.3 New Matsue prefectural building with *tenshu* in the background. Postcard in the authors' collection

demolish. In some places, requests to tear down castle buildings were not answered by Tokyo, or only answered after political changes rendered the relevant local authority unable to act. Furthermore, the cost of disassembling large *tenshu* meant that few private citizens would take on the task. This was the case at Hiroshima, where most outbuildings and gates were destroyed as the army expanded in the early 1870s, but the *tenshu* remained until the atomic bombing in 1945. In the period after 1873, the rapidly growing military found practical applications for *tenshu*. The Nagoya Castle *tenshu* became a temporary barracks from 1874, when the establishment of the Nagoya *chindai* led to a sudden influx of conscripts.<sup>102</sup>

Rather than proactive measures to preserve castles, inaction on the part of the preoccupied military saved many important structures. Political instability was a nationwide concern throughout the 1870s, and the army had other priorities than castle preservation. This was especially true for the period 1873–1878, when the army sought to implement and consolidate the *chindai* system, while integrating the great number of new troops resulting from the introduction of universal conscription in

<sup>102</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 242.

1873.<sup>103</sup> The military played a vital role in both the destruction and preservation of Japan's castles, as the most important sites remained army property after 1873. Local military authorities had to address significant issues, often with little or delayed guidance from Tokyo. Common concerns included the high costs of maintenance and the necessity of adapting castles into modern garrisons, and the destruction of gates and minor buildings was especially widespread. Smaller structures were typically auctioned off for scrap or reuse elsewhere, and many gates and even *yagura* were taken away to temples or private residences.<sup>104</sup>

### Considering Heritage in the Early Meiji Period

Castles are important sites for considering the development of heritage preservation in Japan. There were few attempts to protect historic architecture in the early Meiji period, and interest in castles beyond their function as fortifications and symbols of authority developed only slowly. Nagoya Castle and the former Edo Castle were among the first sites to have their heritage value recognized, although the Dajōkan and the army destroyed gates and other buildings with little nostalgic sentiment. Foreigners and Japanese with experience in Europe were more circumspect, and made decisive interventions to protect architectural heritage. In this context, Japanese and foreign scholars closely engaged with one another and tied Japan directly into the developing international discourses on heritage. Castles were important sites in this dynamic, as secular structures that were recognizable to both Japanese and Europeans, and could be focal points for international exchange even as they were increasingly adopted as symbols of identity by modern nation-states.

One significant figure in these processes was art specialist Ninagawa Noritane (1835–1882), later the founder of the Imperial Museum (now the Tokyo National Museum). Ninagawa was born the eldest son of a temple administrator at the Tōji in Kyoto, and was exposed to valuable art and artifacts from a young age. In his later bureaucratic career, Ninagawa worked on translations of the French legal code, the

<sup>103</sup> Nishimura Yukio. “Kenzōbutsu no hozon ni itaru Meiji zenki no bunkazai hogo gyōsei no tenkai: ‘rekishi teki kankyō’ gainen no seisei shi sono 1,” *Nihon kenchiku gakkai ronbun hōkoku shū* 340 (June 1984), pp. 101–110, at p. 106.

<sup>104</sup> Uchida Kazunobu. “Ichiku saretā kinsei jōkaku kenchiku kikō no hozon ni kansuru kenkyū,” *Randosukēpu kenkyū* 60:5 (March 28, 1997), pp. 459–464. Kameoka-shi Bunka Shiryōkan, ed. *Tamba no shiro: kaikan ishūnen kinen tokubetsu ten*. Kameoka: Kameoka-shi Bunka Shiryōkan, 1986. p. 15; Fukumoto and Fujikawa, “Kyū jōkamachi no keikan kōzō,” p. 872.

introduction of military dress, and the preparations for the Iwakura Embassy, adding considerable knowledge of the West to his extensive background in Japanese art. With this foundation, when Ninagawa learned of the Dajōkan's plans to demolish most of the former Edo Castle in early 1871, he applied for permission to make a photographic record of the castle.<sup>105</sup> The request was granted, and Ninagawa hired pioneering photographer Yokoyama Matsusaburō (1838–1884) to photograph all important structures.<sup>106</sup> This record was first compiled as the *Old Edo Castle Photograph Album* in 1871, and a colorized selection was produced in 1878.<sup>107</sup> The original photos are now a national cultural treasure held by the Tokyo National Museum. Ninagawa's record was largely an individual initiative by a member of the elite, but it showed an early awareness of new technologies and their application to heritage preservation in Japan.

Ninagawa's efforts were strongly supported by former Satsuma samurai Machida Hisanari (1838–1897), who had extensive foreign experience as one of fourteen Satsuma samurai who went to England to study in 1865. Machida stayed in Europe for more than two years, spending time at University College London and helping to coordinate the Satsuma exhibit at the 1867 World's Fair in Paris, where the domain sent its own delegation to compete with the official Japanese exhibit sent by the shogunate in Edo. These exhibits gave Machida valuable insights, and Stefan Tanaka describes Machida as “a key figure who first recognized the continuity between modern society and its past while on a study tour in Europe.”<sup>108</sup> Machida's time in the United Kingdom was especially influential, as it would later be for the members of the Iwakura Mission. Like Kume Kunitake, Machida was inspired by the Tower of London as a structure with no practical military purpose, yet retaining great value.<sup>109</sup> This foreign experience, combined with Machida's Satsuma roots and powerful political connections in the new government, helped him move rapidly through the bureaucratic ranks, where he later became the first director of the national museum in Tokyo in 1876.<sup>110</sup>

In 1871, the Dajōkan published what can be seen as the first guidelines relating to heritage preservation in Japan: “There are not a few benefits of some artifacts and old things in the investigation of today's

<sup>105</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 218.

<sup>106</sup> Kinoshita, “Kindai Nihon no shiro ni tsuite,” pp. 80–81.

<sup>107</sup> Ninagawa Noritane, ed. *Kyū Edo-jō shashin jō*. Tokyo: Ninagawa Noritane, 1871.

<sup>108</sup> Tanaka, “Discoveries of the Hōryūji,” p. 121.

<sup>109</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 204.

<sup>110</sup> Aso Noriko. *Public Properties: Museums in Imperial Japan*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014. p. 56.

transformation from old to new and of the history (*enkaku*) of systems and customs. It is natural to hate the old and struggle for the new, but actually we should lament the gradual loss and destruction of evil customs (*ryūhei*).”<sup>111</sup> Machida’s activities the following year were especially important for the survival of Nagoya Castle and the development of heritage protection in Japan more generally. Machida led a small group including Ninagawa and photographer Yokoyama on a four-month trip through central Japan to survey heritage.<sup>112</sup> The government’s focus was on the sale and export of art and moveable artifacts, but the appreciation of old things in the Dajōkan order could also be transferred to an awareness of historical architecture. Machida and Ninagawa’s European connections helped sensitize them to the importance of built heritage, including castles and religious structures.<sup>113</sup>

The West that Japanese travelers encountered was wrestling with its own heritage, and still developing the institutions and standards even as they were diffused around the world. Aso Noriko points out that the Smithsonian Museum was merely fifteen years old when the first Japanese delegation visited it in 1860: “Accordingly, the eventual translation of the museum form to Japanese shores was not a prefabricated affair but was marked by ongoing engagement with an institution that had just come into its own, and was still under construction.”<sup>114</sup> Significantly, the Castle – as the Smithsonian Institution Building is more commonly known due to its form of a medieval European fortress – was completed in 1855, well ahead of the Japanese delegation’s visit. In Europe, castles were a major part of the emerging dynamics of heritage protection. Medieval castles had typically fared poorly over the centuries, especially those located in urban areas where their land and materials were highly valued. There was little nostalgia in most cases as castles fell victim to the march of progress and modernization.

One of the first challenges to this trend was in Newcastle upon Tyne, where the ruins of the castle had come to host slum tenements and storage facilities as the city grew rapidly with the industrial revolution. In 1810, the Corporation of Newcastle purchased the keep for £630 and undertook some urgent repairs, as well as adding fanciful turrets and battlements. The only significant structures that remained were the keep and the Black Gate, and in 1847, the former was to be razed for construction of Newcastle Central Station. This was challenged by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, who protested that most of the city’s earlier heritage

<sup>111</sup> Tanaka, “Discoveries of the Hōryūji,” p. 120. <sup>112</sup> Ibid. pp. 121, 144.

<sup>113</sup> Kinoshita, *Gakujutsu furontia shinpojūmu*. <sup>114</sup> Aso, *Public Properties*, p. 14.



Figure 1.4 Newcastle Castle keep and the East Coast Main Line. Photo by the authors

had already been lost. This was one of the first clashes between industrialization and heritage protection, and the railway station was built just to the west of the castle site, while the later tenements were cleared from the historic ruins.<sup>115</sup> On the other hand, the rail line was run directly through the castle site between the keep and the Black Gate (Figure 1.4). This impressive mix of ancient and modern would have struck the many Japanese delegations that visited Newcastle, including the Iwakura Mission. The Tyne shipyards and munitions works supplied much of Japan's military modernization, and many Japanese visited Newcastle industrialist William Armstrong (1810–1900), whose building of the faux-medieval manor at Cragside (from 1864) and reconstruction of the ancient Bamburgh Castle (from 1894) are among the most imposing products of Victorian medievalism.<sup>116</sup> The events surrounding the castle at Newcastle

<sup>115</sup> Harbottle, Barbara. *The Castle of Newcastle upon Tyne*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1977.

<sup>116</sup> Conte-Helm, Marie. *Japan and the North East of England: From 1862 to the Present Day*. London: Athlone Press, 1989.

would also be echoed in Japan with the complete demolition of the Nagaoka Castle main bailey in 1898 for the construction of the new train station.<sup>117</sup>

One castle project with an international influence was at Carcassonne in southwestern France, where the government, military, and local interests clashed over the monumental medieval fortifications of the Cité. The military took control of the Cité after the French Revolution, but had little use for it and transferred most of the site to the Finance Ministry in 1810. Much of the Cité was subsequently sold off and destroyed, including the massive Barbacane Notre-Dame, a 60-meter-diameter structure that guarded the riverside. A businessman purchased the barbican and promptly tore it down to use the materials for a new mill. In 1820, control of the Cité reverted to the military, which had other priorities and spared Carcassonne further destruction.<sup>118</sup> As in early Meiji Japan, the site was saved by military inaction, rather than active preservation efforts. This only changed in 1853, when, following extensive negotiations between local and national authorities, work to preserve and restore the Cité began in earnest. The project was directed by architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879), who was also responsible for the “creative restorations” of Notre Dame in Paris and the walled city of Mont St. Michel in Normandy. The restoration work at Carcassonne carried on into the twentieth century, generating controversy as French approaches to heritage turned increasingly against major creative interventions. As P. François de Neufchâteau wrote in 1912, “I consider guilty of a breach of trust those men who, on the pretext of restoring the Cité, have completely disfigured and distorted it . . . Before they arrived, there were admirable ruins; after they came, there was only Viollet-le-Duc-style stonework.”<sup>119</sup>

The heated debates, high profile, and long duration of the reconstruction work at Carcassonne gave the project a far-reaching influence, and Viollet-le-Duc’s approach inspired many imitators. In Ghent, Carcassonne featured prominently in debates concerning the ruins of Gravensteen Castle. As in many urban medieval castles, including Carcassonne, local residents had used the available stone as material to construct dwellings on the castle ruins. Many of the ramshackle houses were occupied by workers at the Steinberg textile mill that had set up in

<sup>117</sup> Kinoshita, *Watashi no jōkamachi*, pp. 158–159.

<sup>118</sup> de Lannoy, François. *The Cité de Carcassonne*. Paris: Editions du Patrimoine, Centre des Monuments Nationaux, 2008. pp. 12–13.

<sup>119</sup> de Neufchâteau, P. François. *La Cité de Carcassonne et les rebâisseurs de ruines: étude critique de l'influence de Viollet-Le-Duc et de son école sur la restauration de la cité de Carcassonne*. Carcassonne: Impr. V. Bonnafous-Thomas, 1912; translation from de Lannoy, *The Cité de Carcassonne*, p. 61.



the abandoned keep in the late eighteenth century, and even used the castle in its company logo.<sup>120</sup> By the 1880s, the structure was deemed too dangerous and the mill moved out of the castle, whereupon the city decided to raze the entire site to build a new road junction. Inspired by Viollet-le-Duc's example, however, a local preservation group around businessman Auguste de Maere (1820–1900) successfully pushed for the reconstruction of Gravensteen Castle.<sup>121</sup> The project was similar to Carcassonne in favoring an idealized medievalism over historical accuracy, and the castle opened to the public in 1907.<sup>122</sup>

Approaches to heritage in Europe remained very much in flux, and historic structures continued to be readily demolished in the name of progress well into the twentieth century. In Japan, the army's plans to modernize Nagoya Castle included the demolition of Japan's largest *tenshu*, dating from 1612. Nagoya had been a Tokugawa stronghold, with the Mikawa region the ancestral home of Tokugawa Ieyasu, but the castle had surrendered without a fight in the Boshin War and survived largely intact. In early 1871, the Nagoya domain authorities notified the Dajōkan that they would donate the pair of large golden *shachi* (mythical killer whale-like creatures on the roof of the *tenshu*) as a gesture acknowledging the new government. *Shachi* were believed to ward off fires and were found on the roofs of many castles, but the Nagoya *shachi* were the most famous in Japan. They were covered with large gold scales, which successive domain administrations during the Edo period had supposedly diluted to pay off their debts. There were also many attempts to steal the gold scales, with the most audacious anecdote concerning a thief who allegedly rode a kite to the top of the castle during a typhoon. A soldier was executed for stealing a scale in 1870, and several more incidents occurred in later decades.<sup>123</sup>

By the early Meiji period, however, the *shachi* had become “useless things” (*mu-yō no chōbutsu*) along with the *tenshu* and other castle buildings, which were to be torn down to save on maintenance costs. The *shachi* were taken down and sent to Tokyo to be melted down and the gold given as a gift to the emperor.<sup>124</sup> Ultimately, the journey of the *shachi* to Tokyo became the first stage of a much longer odyssey related to the Meiji government's desire to make a great impact at its debut at the

<sup>120</sup> Permanent exhibit at Gravensteen Castle, visited in July 2016.

<sup>121</sup> D'hondt, Bart. *Van Andriesschool tot Zondernaamstraat, Gids door 150 jaar liberaal leven te Gent*. Gent: Een uitgave van Snoeck en Liberaal Archief, 2014.

<sup>122</sup> Van Aalst, Pieter and Csömör Hermina. *'s-Gravensteen & Stefanusparochie*. Gent: Ultima Thule, 2006.

<sup>123</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 242.

<sup>124</sup> Inoue Shōichi. *Nagoya to kin shachi*. Tokyo: NTT Shuppan, 2005. pp. 138–146.

World's Fair in Vienna in 1873. The new leadership considered World's Fairs essential to Japan's progress, and the Iwakura Embassy visited the former 1867 World's Fair site in Paris as part of its mission.<sup>125</sup> The government hired Austrian Gottfried Wagener (1831–1892) to advise chief organizer Sano Tsunetami (1822–1902) on assembling the Japanese exhibit in a way that would impress a foreign audience.<sup>126</sup> Wagener was a specialist in arts, especially ceramics, and worked closely with Ninagawa Noritane in the 1870s.<sup>127</sup> Wagener helped to select various pieces for the exhibit, including the *shachi* that had recently arrived in Tokyo. In preparation for the World's Fair, the Meiji government hosted its first official exhibition, at Yushima Seidō in Tokyo.<sup>128</sup> The imperial household provided both *shachi* for the exhibition, saving them from being melted down. The organizers placed the larger male on display, surrounded by a protective cage to deter theft. The Nagoya *shachi* was the star of the show, with contemporary photographs and woodblock prints documenting the public's fascination (Figure 1.5). The male *shachi* was later moved to the new Yamashita Gate Museum, while the female *shachi* set off on its own adventures overseas.

Wagener played an important role in Japan's success in 1873, writing the exhibit catalog and traveling to Vienna with the delegation.<sup>129</sup> The Japanese exhibit with the female *shachi* was very well received in a Europe that was in the early stages of the Japonisme art movement and fascinated by the exotic. On the return from Vienna, the French ship supposedly carrying the *shachi* struck rocks off Shizuoka and sank with only 4 of 146 people on board surviving. Those with a dark sense of humor speculated that the *shachi* had tried to swim back to its mate. In fact, the *shachi* had been transferred to a different vessel at Port Said due to its great weight. Nonetheless, the story of the submerged *shachi* has remained a widely repeated part of local lore. Upon its arrival back at Yokohama in 1874, the female *shachi* was sent back to Nagoya to be displayed at the "Nagoya Exhibition" at the Higashi Honganji branch temple, and subsequently toured Japan until 1878.<sup>130</sup> The *shachi* was

<sup>125</sup> Yoshimi Shun'ya. *Hakurankai no seijigaku: manazashi no kindai (Chūkō shinsho 1090)*. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Sha, 1992. p. 118.

<sup>126</sup> Anonymous. "Nekrolog für Dr Gottfried Wagener," *Mitteilungen der deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 6:57 (1893), pp. 357–364, at p. 361; Aso, *Public Properties*, p. 30.

<sup>127</sup> Wagener, Gottfried. "Geschichtliches ueber Mass- und Gewichtssysteme in China und Japan, nach Mitteilungen des Herrn Ninagawa Noritane," *Mitteilungen der deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 2:12 (1876), pp. 35–42.

<sup>128</sup> Aso, *Public Properties*, p. 35.

<sup>129</sup> Anonymous, "Nekrolog für Dr Gottfried Wagener," p. 361.

<sup>130</sup> Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, pp. 242–243.





Figure 1.5 1872 woodblock print of the Nagoya *shachi* displayed at Yushima. Image courtesy of the National Diet Library

now additionally famous for having traveled the world, and its supposed return from the depths of the sea. Some scholars have speculated that the many domestic exhibitions of the Nagoya *shachi* were driven by the Meiji government's desire to show off the "spoils of victory" over the Tokugawa, even if there is no record of this being articulated at the time.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, exhibition materials clearly reflect a great popular demand to see the *shachi* throughout Japan.

As the *shachi* traveled through Japan and Europe, the fate of Nagoya Castle hung in the balance. The army moved to dismantle the *tenshu*, but was delayed by logistical challenges and cost. With the *tenshu* in limbo in the spring of 1872, German General Consul Max von Brandt (1835–1920) visited Nagoya on an official mission to inspect the famous cloisonné production.<sup>132</sup> Von Brandt spent more than three decades in Japan and China. As a keen collector of Asian art, von Brandt was dismayed to learn of the plans to tear down the *tenshu*. In his memoirs, von Brandt took credit for preventing the destruction: "Fortunately the governor was an old friend of mine, and upon my request refrained from carrying out the orders he had received until I was able to effect a counter-order in Yedo." According to von Brandt, his intervention was just one example of "the influence of a foreign representative preventing some such act of vandalism."<sup>133</sup>

In 1876, Christopher Dresser made a similar visit to Nagoya to tour the ceramics production in nearby Seto. Dresser was the government's official industrial design consultant, and the governor of Nagoya invited him to visit the castle, certainly also out of an awareness that Westerners were interested in the site. However, as Dresser recounted, "[o]n the following morning we had nothing but delays. It was half-past nine before Mr. Ishida got back from the Government House, and I then learn[ed] that there was some difficulty about our getting to see the castle, as it is under the control of a military commander, and not of the governor of the town, who had invited us to see it."<sup>134</sup> The tension between local government and the army regarding authority over the castle space caused problems even for distinguished visitors. Dresser wrote: "On our return to the hotel, we found a Government officer waiting to conduct us to the castle; but although we soon reached its massive gates, we had to put up with most tedious delays before we were allowed to pass them."<sup>135</sup> Once inside, Dresser was deeply impressed by the palace and *tenshu*, as well as the fortifications: "It reminds me also of the Japanese palace in Dresden;

<sup>131</sup> Inoue, *Nagoya to kin shachi*, pp. 149–150.

<sup>132</sup> Von Brandt, Max August Scipio. *Dreiunddreissig Jahre in Ost-asien: Erinnerungen eines deutschen Diplomaten, 2. Band*. Leipzig: G. Wigand, 1901. p. 375.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. pp. 281–282. <sup>134</sup> Dresser, *Japan*, p. 181. <sup>135</sup> Ibid. pp. 181–183.

perhaps it is only the green roof that does so, for here the coverings of the immense towers are copper. Of the size of the towers I could have formed no idea from a distance; and they seem as strong as they are great.”<sup>136</sup> As a Victorian, Dresser saw no incongruity between traditional castles and the modern military. During his stay in Tokyo, Dresser wrote, “[o]n the moat outside the Castle hundreds of wild ducks were floating. The artillery were practising, and when their guns were fired the ducks rose almost in clouds. In the moat I saw leaves and bent seed capsules of the beautiful Nelumbium, or Buddhist water-lily.”<sup>137</sup> Dresser was effusive in his praise for Japanese aesthetics and had great respect for the scholars he met, being especially impressed by Ninagawa Noritane when he visited him at the Imperial Museum to discuss ancient pottery.<sup>138</sup>

Japanese interest in heritage in general, and castles in particular, was mediated by international trends and contacts that preceded the study of Japan’s art history by scholars around Okakura Kakuzō (Tenshin) (1862–1913) and Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), whose role has often been exaggerated and is recently being revised.<sup>139</sup> In contrast, many other scholars omit the earlier foreign contributions to castle protection or the Vienna exhibition, focusing entirely on the Japanese actors.<sup>140</sup> The evidence shows that in the early Meiji period, elite Japanese and foreigners such as Machida, Ninagawa, Ōkuma, Wagener, von Brandt, Dresser, and others were part of an organic movement that appreciated castles as heritage, even if their ability to save them was limited in the face of practical and financial constraints. In spite of this cooperation, heritage appreciation and protection was – and is – influenced by nationalistic agendas, as were many aspects of culture and society in the age of high nationalism.

Von Brandt’s intervention at Nagoya Castle is a case in point, and later scholars have credited Japanese figures with saving the Nagoya *tenshu*. One popular view argues that Major General Shijō Takauta (1828–1898) had initially stopped the destruction of Nagoya Castle, while others credit Machida Hisanari.<sup>141</sup> At Himeji Castle, the official narrative was literally set in stone, with a large stele crediting army colonel Nakamura Shin’ichirō (Shigetō) (1840–1884) with successfully petitioning the chief of staff of the army, Yamagata Aritomo (1838–1922), to protect

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. pp. 181–183. <sup>137</sup> Ibid. p. 32. <sup>138</sup> Ibid. p. 195.

<sup>139</sup> Conant, Ellen. “Principles and Pragmatism: The *Yatoi* in the Field of Art,” in Edward R. Beauchamp and Akira Iriye, eds. *Foreign Employees in Nineteenth-Century Japan*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990. pp. 137–170; cited in Aso, *Public Properties*, pp. 85–86.

<sup>140</sup> Nishimura, “Kenzōbutsu no hozon,” pp. 101–110.

<sup>141</sup> Hashimoto Masaji. *Himeji-jō shi 3*. Himeji: Himeji-jō Shi Kankōkai, 1952. pp. 342–343; Ichisaka, *Bakumatsu ishin no shiro*, p. 204.

the castles at Nagoya and Himeji in 1878.<sup>142</sup> In the imperial period, the emperor himself was often portrayed as the initiator of castle preservation who “taught the people to have reverence for old things.”<sup>143</sup> According to Henry Baker Tristram’s (1822–1906) 1895 *Rambles in Japan: The Land of the Rising Sun*, Hikone Castle “would have been entirely demolished had not the Mikado, happening to pass through Hikone, and finding the inhabitants exhibiting, as they thought, their loyalty, by pulling down the noble old building, promptly stopped this act of vandalism.”<sup>144</sup> For their part, foreigners often disparaged local attitudes and styled themselves as protectors of Japanese culture. As German mining engineer Carl Schenk wrote of a trip in 1875, “Kōfu is a significant city, and the administrative seat of the province of Kōshū. The old castle of the *daimyō* who ruled here in the past is located atop a small rise; in its construction [it] is very similar to the Tokyo castle buildings, only smaller; its ruin-like condition is also reminiscent of the latter.”<sup>145</sup> The following year, Peter Kempermann lamented that Tottori Castle appeared to be a sound structure but was about to be torn down for scrap, while Akashi Castle had been sold off for \$3,000 to suffer a similar fate.<sup>146</sup> Schenk went beyond a mere description of Kōfu Castle, however, writing that “[t]he Japanese [no] longer seems to have any respect for the ancient; he observes its demise without concern, unless special circumstances force him to care for its preservation.”<sup>147</sup>

Foreign accounts often betrayed a nationalistic sense of superiority, but also reflected a Romantic appreciation for ruins and old buildings. Tristram described Nagoya Castle as “the Alnwick Castle of Japan . . . the central citadel and donjon-keep are indeed a marvellous wooden pile, and a grand specimen of barbaric splendour.”<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, these accounts attest to the extensive interactions between Japanese and foreigners in early heritage preservation efforts. As German physician Erwin Bälz (1849–1913) commented in 1876, Japanese often claimed to have no history and to despise their traditional objects, making foreigners who appreciated Japanese culture feel hopeless as even the locals derided it.

<sup>142</sup> Kinoshita, *Watashi no jōkamachi*, p. 242; Hashimoto, *Himeji-jō shi* 3, pp. 342–343; Fujio, “Tenshu no fukugen,” p. 163.

<sup>143</sup> Harada, Jiro. *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*. New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1936. p. 30.

<sup>144</sup> Tristram, *Rambles in Japan*, pp. 187–188.

<sup>145</sup> Schenk, Carl. “Reise von Kofu nach den Quarz- und Bergkrystallgruben,” *Mittheilungen der deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 1:8 (September 1875), pp. 21–23, at p. 21.

<sup>146</sup> Kempermann, “Reise durch die Central-Provinzen Japans,” pp. 122, 138.

<sup>147</sup> Schenk, “Reise von Kofu,” p. 21.

<sup>148</sup> Tristram, *Rambles in Japan*, pp. 165–166, cited in Conte-Helm, *Japan and the North East of England*, p. 74.

In 1880, Bälz reflected on changing attitudes, recounting that the government had attempted to sell the great Buddha at Kamakura to a foreigner ten years before.<sup>149</sup> In February 1883, national newspapers reported on a British aristocratic couple who were taking many photographs and sketches of castles on a tour of Japan, and were inspired to build similar structures in the United Kingdom upon their return.<sup>150</sup> The *Yomiuri shinbun* even reported that they sought to purchase the Goryōkaku during their visit to Hakodate, and would ship it home to use as a residence.<sup>151</sup>

In addition to foreigners' accounts, Western photographic technology played an important part in promoting and appreciation for castles, and at least twenty-nine *tenshu* were photographed after the Restoration.<sup>152</sup> Some of these, including Tanba Shūji's (1828–1908) photographs of Wakayama Castle, were exhibited at the World's Fair in Vienna.<sup>153</sup> On the whole, foreigners were responsible for some of our best sources on castles in the early Meiji period, having photographed, or hired Japanese to photograph, dozens of castles before they were destroyed. The famous photograph of the damaged *tenshu* at Aizu-Wakamatsu was taken by young photographer Koyama Yasaburō (dates unknown), who was employed by Swiss businessman Eduard Bavier (1843–1926) for his journey from Hakodate to Yokohama.<sup>154</sup> Nationalism and heritage appreciation were often in conflict, as in the case of English world traveler Francis Henry Hill Guillemard (1852–1933), who visited Japan in 1882–1883 and described it as the smelliest, dirtiest country that he had ever encountered.<sup>155</sup> On the other hand, Guillemard was fascinated with Japanese castles, extensively documenting sites including Osaka, Nagoya, Kumamoto, and Matsuyama. His high-quality photographs of Takamatsu Castle are especially valuable as the *tenshu* was torn down shortly thereafter in 1884.<sup>156</sup> Both Japanese and foreign accounts rarely transcended their age, and reflect the prevalent nationalistic, racist, and orientalist sentiments, as well as the personal motivations and backgrounds of their authors. On the other hand, foreign accounts are invaluable resources for the history of castles, as European and American travelers brought an appreciation and recognition of “medieval” heritage that was lacking in Japan during the first decades of the Meiji period.

<sup>149</sup> Matsumoto, “Nihon ni okeru bunkazai,” pp. 11–12.

<sup>150</sup> *Asahi shinbun*, February 7, 1883. <sup>151</sup> *Yomiuri shinbun*, February 3, 1883.

<sup>152</sup> Nakai, Katō, and Kido, *Kamera ga toraeta*, p. 11.

<sup>153</sup> Kinoshita, *Gakujutsu furontia shinpojiumu*.

<sup>154</sup> Noguchi Shin'ichi. *Chotto ū Aizu rekishi*. Aizu-Wakamatsu: Rekishi Shunshūsha, 1991. pp. 208–209.

<sup>155</sup> Kinoshita, *Watashi no jōkamachi*, p. 319.

<sup>156</sup> Koyama Noboru. *Kenburiji Daigaku hizō Meiji koshashin: Mākēza Gō no Nihon ryokō*. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005.



### Castles and the Imperial House

Fortune played a decisive role in the long-term survival of historic castle architecture in the absence of a coherent policy, as seen in von Brandt's chance visit to Nagoya Castle and Dresser's experience four years later. Discussions about castle preservation occurred at an elite level, and required political and financial support in order to have an impact. Arguably the single most important factor in the treatment of castles and other objects as heritage in Meiji Japan was their relationship to the imperial house. Also due to its awareness of Western practice, the imperial house developed into the protector and arbiter of heritage. As Aso Noriko summarizes the situation with regard to museums, "state cultural authority was personalized in the figure of the emperor and his immediate relations, veiling an emergent canon under majesty not to be impolitically scrutinized . . . Visitors were granted a gift of access, not a right."<sup>157</sup> Christopher Dresser observed this dynamic in Nara and Kyoto in 1876: "Machida [Hisanari] offered to show me a wonderful collection of antiquities which are the private property of the Mikado, and are housed at Nara in the building which has contained them for over a thousand years."<sup>158</sup> Soon thereafter, Dresser wrote, "I go to the [Kyoto imperial] museum to meet Mr. Kawase; but the Governor of Kioto is also there to receive us. The museum is not a place open to the public, but a royal palace containing a large collection of antiquities belonging to the Mikado, and prepared for his inspection, as he is now here on a visit." Dresser was keenly aware of his privileged access: "I have thus the opportunity of inspecting and handling a second large collection of Japanese antiquities, such as even the natives themselves do not know. It is intended, however, to exhibit these treasures to the public at some future time, and a building is now being prepared for their reception."<sup>159</sup>

The position of castles was complicated by their status as symbols of the discredited "feudal" order, and the transition of the former Edo Castle into the Imperial Castle entailed the appropriation and redefinition of Tokugawa heritage for the modern nation. Edo Castle retained its status as a castle, even as its new ruler became the embodiment of modernity in Japan. The emperor's transformation into a monarch on the European model, replete with a new supporting aristocracy, corresponded to his counterparts in castles and palaces such as Windsor Castle in Windsor, the Stadtschloss in Berlin, and the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. Accordingly, the public rooms of the new palace buildings that were completed in 1888 were based on European royal

<sup>157</sup> Aso, *Public Properties*, p. 5. <sup>158</sup> Dresser, *Japan*, p. 33. <sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* p. 153.

residences, with many imported furnishings and decorations.<sup>160</sup> Treatment of castles by the imperial house was often contradictory. When the palace at Nagoya Castle became an imperial detached palace in 1893, part of the moat was filled in to provide carriage access.<sup>161</sup> Furthermore, the imperial house only provided money for the preservation of the castles at Nagoya and Himeji in 1878, when the last significant challenge to the Meiji government had been crushed in the Satsuma Rebellion. This made the Tokugawa heritage “safe” for appropriation as a way of reconciling the imperial house with the older values of the Satsuma rebels.

It was not only major castles that benefited from the connections to the imperial house. Hikone Castle on the eastern shore of Lake Biwa is a regional castle that was used to link the imperial house with the former Tokugawa regime. This process was driven by statesman Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838–1922), a two-time prime minister, founder of Waseda University, and a close confidant of the emperor. In 1872, Ōkuma had been approached by Machida Hisanari about protecting the historic castles at Inuyama and Nagoya, and converting the latter into a military museum modeled on the Tower of London. Although this plan was ultimately not pursued, it is widely seen as one of the first official initiatives to protect castles in Japan.<sup>162</sup> It may well have been on Ōkuma’s mind in 1878, when he visited Hikone as part of the imperial circuit to Fukui. Ōkuma later recalled that the Osaka *chindai* had quickly disposed of Hikone Castle, and it was sold to private citizens to be torn down like other castles. Only a couple of buildings remained when Ōkuma arrived, and the *tenshu* was slated to be demolished the following day. Ōkuma reflected that the castle had 300 years of history, and was the ancestral home of the Ii family and their retainers.<sup>163</sup> The Ii were closely allied to the Tokugawa, with Ii Naosuke (1815–1860) serving as the highest counselor of state (*tairō*) from 1858 until his assassination by anti-foreign zealots. Ōkuma claimed that he quickly took his concerns to the prefectural governor, Koteda Yasusada (1840–1899). Determining that the *tenshu* could be saved for a mere 1,000 yen – “a bargain for such a great treasure” – Ōkuma arranged for the funds from the Imperial Household Ministry and “was able to

<sup>160</sup> Fujitani, Takashi. *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996. pp. 76–79.

<sup>161</sup> Hattori Shōtarō. *Tokubetsu shiseki Nagoya-jō ima mukashi – shashin ni mieru Nagoya-jō*. Nagoya: Nagoya-jō Shinkō Kyōkai, 1995. p. 44.

<sup>162</sup> Nishimura, “Kenzōbutsu no hozon,” p. 106.

<sup>163</sup> Emori Taikichi, ed. *Ōkuma haku hyakuwa*. Tokyo: Jitsugyō no Nihonsha, 1909. pp. 255–258.

protect [the castle] forever” on the emperor’s behalf.<sup>164</sup> While later accounts attribute the initiative for the preservation of Hikone Castle variously to Ōkuma, the emperor, Koteda, and others, it established a clear link between the imperial house and one of the most prominent Tokugawa vassal families. Furthermore, Ii Naosuke had directed the Ansei Purge, which saw the execution of pro-imperial activists including Yoshida Shōin (1830–1859), who was later deified and celebrated by the Meiji state as a national hero.<sup>165</sup> The protection of Hikone Castle made it a physical site that united both sides of the Restoration conflict under the benevolent umbrella of the imperial house.

Castles were important vehicles for tying the imperial house to the premodern past from the late 1870s onward. As Kären Wigen has argued with regard to an 1881 map of Nagano Prefecture created by the military, “what determined the value of a cultural landmark was its physical witness to the imperial past.” Merely eight of Nagano’s many castles were deemed worthy of inclusion, as these were the only sites that could provide a sufficiently convincing historical link to the imperial court.<sup>166</sup> Aside from the Imperial Palace, castles with strong imperial connections included Nagoya Castle, Nijō Castle in Kyoto, Osaka Castle, Odawara Castle, and Hiroshima Castle. The gift of the Nagoya *shachi* to the emperor was a symbol of this connection, as was their return to Nagoya in 1878, to coincide with imperial funding for urgent repairs. In 1893, the Honmaru Palace adjoining the *tenshu* in the main bailey of Nagoya Castle was designated an official detached palace, and the imperial family resided there during visits to central Japan (Figure 1.6).<sup>167</sup> Elsewhere, Nijō Castle had been the Kyoto residence of the Tokugawa family before it was taken over by the army in 1873. In 1884, the castle was transferred to the Imperial Household Ministry and became the emperor’s official residence in the former capital.<sup>168</sup> Osaka Castle frequently hosted the imperial family on visits to military facilities, while Odawara Castle served as an imperial villa in the early twentieth century. Hiroshima’s connection with the emperor has been among the most enduring. As the home of the 5th Division with close proximity to the naval port of Ujina, Hiroshima Castle contained the Imperial General Headquarters (Daihon’ei) during

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. pp. 258–259. The actual amount was 1,624 yen and 31 sen; see Nishimura, “Kenzōbutsu no hozon,” p. 106.

<sup>165</sup> Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*.

<sup>166</sup> Wigen, Kären. *A Malleable Map: Geographies of Restoration in Central Japan, 1600–1912*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p. 113.

<sup>167</sup> Fujio, “Tenshu no fukugen,” p. 163.

<sup>168</sup> Ōrui, Noboru and Toba, Masao. *Castles in Japan (Tourist Library 9)*. Tokyo: Board of Tourist Industry, Japan Government Railways, 1935. p. 78.





Figure 1.6 Using telescopes to view the restricted Nagoya Castle imperial detached palace. Postcard in the authors' collection

the Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895, and also hosted the Imperial Diet for the duration of the conflict.

The imperial house appropriated castles as the most important physical and symbolic sites of traditional martial and political authority. In this process, the Meiji state followed patterns established by European ruling houses in their use of castles, and consciously combined Western monarchical design elements with traditional Japanese aesthetics. The use of medieval castles for proclaiming a modern political agenda was widespread in Europe. It was especially pronounced in Germany, where the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm III (1770–1840), began the preservation and reconstruction of the thirteenth-century Marienburg Castle – now Malbork Castle in Poland and a UNESCO World Heritage site. The decaying Marienburg Castle was to be torn down to build gunpowder storage in the 1790s, but in a now familiar tale, a lack of funds for the project meant that the castle survived.<sup>169</sup> In the early nineteenth century, Marienburg Castle was used to link the

<sup>169</sup> Werquet, Jan. “‘Jedes Volk müßte sein heiteres Westminster haben’ – Die Marienburg als preußisches Geschichtsdenkmal zwischen Romantik und Restauration,” in Bernd Ulrich Hucker, Eugen Kotte, and Christine Vogel, eds. *Die Marienburg: Vom Machtzentrum des deutschen Ordens zum mitteleuropäischen Erinnerungsort*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013. pp. 103–124, at p. 105.

Prussian state with the medieval Teutonic Order, a connection carefully maintained until 1945.<sup>170</sup> In 1896, one of the chief restoration architects, Conrad Steinbrecht (1849–1923), described his task as ensuring “that Germanism (*Deutschthum*) remains aware of its ancient homeland rights (*Heimathsrecht*) and higher cultural tasks (*Culturaufgaben*) on the contested ground along the Vistula.”<sup>171</sup> The historical appropriation of Marienburg by the modern imperial house was made explicit by the official entry of Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941) into the castle in 1902, accompanied by Prussian soldiers dressed as knights of the German Order.<sup>172</sup>

The main architect responsible for the restoration of Marienburg Castle was Bodo Ebhardt (1865–1945), whose long career of castle reconstruction projects was “marked by a pronounced nationalism throughout.”<sup>173</sup> As Winfried Speitkamp has described Ebhardt, “the history of German construction was in his view always the prehistory of the present.”<sup>174</sup> This was also on display at another of Ebhardt’s most high-profile imperial projects, the reconstruction of the medieval castle Hohkönigsburg (Château du Haut-Kœnigsbourg) between 1901 and 1908. Echoing dynamics in early Meiji Japan, in 1899, the city of Selestat sought to relieve itself of this expensive ruin and gifted the castle to Kaiser Wilhelm II, who immediately hired Ebhardt to reconstruct it in a Gothic style.<sup>175</sup> Wilhelm intended Hohkönigsburg as a symbol of Germanic authority and culture that would help shape local identity and further integrate the Alsace region into Germany.<sup>176</sup> The grand opening of the castle in 1908 was replete with medieval costumes and heraldry under the motto “a solid castle – a solid empire” (“*Eine feste Burg – ein festes Reich*”), while Wilhelm himself gave a speech celebrating the recreation of the medieval. Furthermore, he proclaimed, “may the Hohkönigsburg here in the West of the empire, like the Marienburg in the

<sup>170</sup> Kotte, Eugen. “Die Marienburg in der Historiographie und Belletristik des 19. Jahrhunderts,” in Bernd Ulrich Hucker, Eugen Kotte, and Christine Vogel, eds. *Die Marienburg: Vom Machtzentrum des deutschen Ordens zum mitteleuropäischen Erinnerungsort*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013, pp. 125–146.

<sup>171</sup> Fischer, Ludger. *Bodo Ebhardt – Versuche baukünstlerischer Denkmalpflege: Restaurierungen, Rekonstruktionen und Neubauten von Burgen, Schlössern und Herrenhäusern von 1899 bis 1935*. Braubach: Deutsche Burgenvereinigung e.V., 2010. p. 206.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* p. 32.

<sup>173</sup> Fischer, Ludger. “Bodo Ebhardts Korrekturen der Geschichte,” *Burgen und Schlösser* 45:1 (2004), pp. 52–57, at p. 52.

<sup>174</sup> Speitkamp, Winfried. “Deutschland’s Superbauten? Rekonstruktionen und nationale Identität,” in Winfried Nerdinger, ed. *Geschichte der Rekonstruktion, Konstruktion der Geschichte*. Munich: Prestel, 2010. pp. 118–127, at p. 120.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.* p. 121.

<sup>176</sup> Fischer, Bodo Ebhardt – *Versuche baukünstlerischer Denkmalpflege*, p. 35.

East, serve as an emblem of German culture and power into the most distant times . . . !”<sup>177</sup> The chronology may have varied, but the Japanese imperial house was very much in line with European practice in appropriating historic castles to connect with earlier history, and to integrate regions into the national whole. Both Germany and Japan would reconstruct idealized castles in honor of their imperial houses in the early twentieth century, a development discussed in Chapter 4 of this study.

### Conclusions

The end of the first decade of the Meiji period in 1877 in many ways also marked the end of the long Meiji Restoration. The last significant armed resistance to the new order disappeared with Saigō Takamori’s death, symbolically cementing the demise of the samurai and the “feudal” order as a whole. Castles, as the most visible physical witnesses of warrior rule, had been sold, dismantled, or left to decay. Many were now occupied by the Imperial Japanese Army. At the same time, the physical changes to castle sites can obscure the considerable continuity they represented. Castles had been militarily obsolete symbols of power for centuries, and their owners welcomed the opportunity to rid themselves of these burdens. The resentment most Japanese felt toward the samurai meant that there was little nostalgia or attachment to castles. Furthermore, those castles that became military sites effectively remained restricted spaces occupied by a military authority, resulting in a certain sense of continuity.

Regional castles under local authority control underwent greater changes, and destruction tended to be more thorough. This reflected the long-held wishes of the *daimyō*, as well as popular resentment toward these symbols of “feudal” power, both of which represented continuity with the Tokugawa period. At the same time, in many areas, this approach to castles was also indicative of a seismic shift in people’s relationship with the state and their understanding of public space. Some castles became the sites of exhibitions and ad hoc parks, but those castles that were not sold for scrap were generally left to decay. Castles were local affairs and their fate depended largely on the specific circumstances of their region.

The few disparate voices that spoke up against the destruction of castles tended to be elites with foreign experience but little connection to regional authorities. Max von Brandt’s effective intervention was a notable exception, but it merely stayed the destruction of Nagoya Castle, without resulting in a broader preservation policy. The same was true of local

<sup>177</sup> Speitkamp, “Deutschland’s Superbauten?,” pp. 121–122.

initiatives in Matsue, Himeji, and elsewhere. Motives varied, and none of these castles saw concrete moves toward preservation before 1878. The limited recognition of the value of castles before this point was heavily mediated by the evolving European discourses on heritage, a circumstance that would later be contested on nationalistic grounds, such as the role of the imperial house in castle preservation. Indeed, the emperor's patronage was the most significant single factor determining the heritage status of a castle before 1945, and the Meiji government bringing together the conflicting interests of the old and new orders by appropriating the sites and symbols of Tokugawa authority. Castles came to be recognized as sites that could bridge "feudalism" and "civilization," East and West, military and civil, as the state and nation sought domestic and international legitimacy.