

**Janice P. Nimura, *Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016. 336 pages. ISBN: 978-0393352788, \$26.95.**

*Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux*

Deep in the western suburbs of Tokyo in the city of Kodaira lies Tsuda College, a private school of about 2,500 students where since its establishment in the year 1900, female students have received broad educations in the liberal arts and languages. It is a beautiful leafy campus with an abundance of impressive trees and flowers. It is a rare treat to visit in late March or early April when the cherry trees are in full bloom. My own school, Mary Baldwin University, has a long tradition of receiving exchange students from Japan. Some of my best Japanese students have been young women from Tsuda, who either came as juniors to pursue a degree from an American college or as graduates of Tsuda seeking an additional B.A. in the United States. Tsuda College is today a living, flourishing memorial of a bold experiment by the fledgling Meiji government in 1871 to send five young Japanese girls to live and study in the United States for a period of at least ten years. Their stated mission was to immerse themselves in Western culture and education so that they could later return to Japan to share what they had learned.

The girls, who ranged in age from six to fourteen, were all daughters of samurai and were picked at random for the mission. Two of the oldest girls found life very difficult in the U.S. and returned within a year. The remaining three younger girls, Sutematsu Yamakawa Ōyama (1860–1919), Ume (ko) Tsuda (1864–1929) and Shige Nagai Uriu (1861–1928) managed to stay. They traveled by ship and then train with the famed Iwakura Mission, a diplomatic foray by key leaders of the Japanese government to see the West for themselves. After leaving Iwakura, they lived with prominent foster families in such places as New Haven and Washington. They studied in local schools, with Sutematsu graduating from Vassar College in 1881, becoming the first Japanese woman to receive a degree from an American University, while Shige also attended Vassar as a special student of music. The Japanese government covered most of their educational expenses.

By the time all three girls had returned to Japan in 1881, they had assimilated so much to American culture that they began to feel like true aliens in their own land. Ume, the youngest, was too young to go to college upon her return to Japan, but she graduated from high school and some years

later she returned to the U.S. to study biology at Bryn Mawr College near Philadelphia. Their stories, set both in the United States and later in Japan, are lavishly chronicled by historian Janice P. Nimura. Her book, *Daughters of the Samurai*, was selected by the New York Times as one of the 100 best books of 2015, the year it was originally published. I agree with this appraisal. The book is beautifully written and based on solid, historical research; Nimura truly knows and admires her subjects and is able to bring them to life for readers.

When the three girls returned to Japan, people wondered what to do with them. Sutematsu and Shige married prominent Japanese military and political figures and settled into lives among the nobility of Japan. They produced their share of children, but also had time to foster women's education in Japan. Sutematsu, who was a close friend of Japan's first prime minister, Itō Hirobumi, was instrumental in founding and teaching at the Peeresses' School in Tokyo for several years. Shige, who was mainly preoccupied with her children, worked as a music teacher at the Peeresses' School. Meanwhile, Tsuda Ume, who never married, was the most influential of the three returnees. She began her teaching career as a tutor for the children of Itō Hirobumi. She later taught for some time at the Peeresses' School and elsewhere, but around 1900 she resigned from her various jobs and founded her own school for women in Tokyo. After a slow start, the school gained a reputation as one of the finest institutions for young women. She offered a wide curriculum that included not only language, but also a broad introduction to the liberal arts. The school was renamed Tsuda College after Tsuda's death. While Tsuda is not the oldest college for women in Japan – as other institutions such as Doshisha Women's College, founded in 1876, are older – it has always had a noteworthy repute for the high quality of its students.

Overall, these three women led long and productive lives. They were among the very first professional women in modern Japan and were true champions of women's education. Their impact as founders of and teachers at women's schools was immense. Their success as students and later as frequent visitors to the United States, who often contributed articles to American magazines and journals, gave many Americans their first view of young Japanese educators. Sutematsu's close American friend, Alice Mabel Bacon, also taught women for brief periods in Japan and wrote a series of popular books and articles about Japanese women for a broader American audience.

Indeed, I sincerely appreciated reading Nimura's *Daughters of the Samurai* after my several stints teaching at Doshisha Women's College. Japanese women today are among the best educated in the world and are playing an increasingly important professional role in Japanese society. The bold pioneering work of these three Meiji women helped to pave the way for the current educational boom for women in Japan.

**Richard Reeves, *Infamy: The Shocking Story of Japanese Internment in World War II*. New York: Henry Holt, 2016. 384 pp. ISBN: 978-1250081681, \$32.00.**

*Reviewed by Daniel A. Metraux*

It is indeed an unfortunate fact that Americans have always had very negative views of new waves of immigrants and that, at times of crisis, they can turn on perceived enemies en masse with a vengeance. There was considerable hostility towards the millions of Irish who immigrated to the United States in the 1840s and 1850s as well as considerable wrath against Mexicans and other Latinos who cross our borders today. My uncle, the late Paul Bubendey, a prominent New York banker born in early 1911, came from a German-speaking household. When the anti-German hysteria hit New York as the United States declared war on Germany, my uncle, then in first grade, remembers being beaten up, bullied and harassed by other students who condemned his German heritage. Although he later fought with distinction as a naval officer in World War II, he never got over that hysterical aspect of American culture. Americans have never been friendly to minority groups, but no group suffered as much privation and humiliation as Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Novelist Sinclair Lewis wrote a rather unpleasant novel in 1935 titled, *It Can't Happen Here*, about an America run by racist fascists and dominated by widespread concentration camps. Seven years later, starting in early 1942, Lewis' vision became reality following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Respected journalist Richard Reeves brings us a brilliant study of the racist backlash and internment of 120,000 Japanese-Americans, two-thirds of them American citizens, in a series of brutal and inhospitable internment camps between 1942 and 1945.

Since the late nineteenth century, there had always been a large number of ethnic Japanese in California, Oregon and Washington. Immigrants

born in Japan were ineligible for American citizenship, but their children and grandchildren born in the United States were considered citizens. The majority of those ethnic Japanese were American-born and had never visited Japan. Most of them, proud of their Japanese heritage, took great pride in their new land and demonstrated great loyalty to the United States.

Many Americans in the days after Pearl Harbor voiced fears of sabotage, spies, and actual attacks on the West coast by Japanese, but these fears proved to be unfounded. There were no acts of sabotage or assistance to Japanese attackers in Hawaii even though over a third of the population were ethnic Japanese. The same was true for the West coast of the United States. Japanese military submarines did sink a few American cargo ships off the coast and oil tanks in Santa Barbara were briefly shelled by Japanese subs, but there were absolutely no acts of violence by Japanese or any other ethnic groups.

Nevertheless, shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt, acting on the advice of Lt. General John DeWitt of the Western Defense Command and California Attorney General Earl Warren, authorized the War Department to designate certain sections of the United States as special military areas and to remove from them "any or all persons" in order to protect the nation from sabotage and spies. Acting on these orders, General De Witt ordered the evacuation of men, women and children of Japanese ancestry to ten "relocation centers" (also nicknamed "concentration camps") located mainly in the intermountain West. Seventy percent of the internees were American citizens.

DeWitt, as well as many prominent Western politicians, claimed that the ethnic Japanese in the West would side with the Japanese military. DeWitt and his followers used the phrase, "a Jap is a Jap" to justify their evacuation and internment. Roosevelt and Secretary of War Henry Stimson had access to internal government reports that indicated that American-born women and men of Japanese ancestry, the so-called Nisei and Sansei, were loyal to the United States and posed no threat. Since they could intercept Japanese cables, they also knew that the Japanese government felt that the Nisei and Sansei would be of little use to them. Despite these reports, influential columnist Walter Lippmann and other leading journalists and politicians demanded that Roosevelt take action in order to stop a "fifth column" within the United States. The anti-Japanese hysteria grew in much the same way as the witchcraft hysteria had overwhelmed Salem, Massachusetts in the 1640s. Roosevelt caved in to this madness. There were a few prominent Americans including FBI Director Hoover and Attorney

General Biddle who questioned the morality and legality of rounding up American citizens, but their voices were drowned out by the hysteria.

Reeves is at his best describing the roundup of ethnic Japanese. With little or no notice, they were told to immediately report to assembly points from which they were taken to detention centers. They were only allowed to bring what they could carry, generally two suitcases. They had to abandon all their property – cars, houses and businesses, which were either seized or bought by white neighbors at ridiculously low prices. I once met an elderly Nisei woman in California who told me that her family's house and orchard had been saved by their white neighbors. The neighbors had paid the mortgage on the land and maintained the family's house and car while they were gone, but such cases were very rare indeed. Interestingly, that family owns the property even today.

Reeves gleefully points out the ridiculous nature of the fears prevalent in the West against the Japanese. One family was arrested because the mother had a notebook filled with knitting instructions – the authorities claimed it was a secret code to reach the Japanese. The owner of a fishing boat suffered arrest because he had oil drums filled with fish parts on his boat – he was accused of supplying oil to Japanese submarines. Such absurdities fill the pages of Reeve's book.

Reeves presents a very detailed analysis of the conditions in the internment camps, which often held more than 10,000 internees in a relatively small area. Housing was rough, the food awful, and sanitary conditions unbearable. Reeves quotes a report from the California Site Survey of the National Park Service on the conditions of one of the camps in the state:

The camp interiors were arranged like prisoner of war camps or overseas military camps and were completely unsuited for family living. Barracks were divided into blocks and each block had a central mess hall, latrine, showers, wash basins and laundry tubs. Toilets, showers, and bedrooms were unpartitioned; there was no water or plumbing in the living quarters; and anyone going to the lavatory at night, often through mud or snow, was followed by a searchlight. Eight person families were placed in 20-x-20 foot rooms. Smaller families and single persons had to share units with strangers. Each detainee received a straw mattress, an army blanket, and not much else. Privacy was non-existent. Everything had to be

done communally. Endless queues formed for eating, washing, and personal needs. (92)

Despite their personal humiliations, the Japanese internees rapidly adapted to their new surroundings and proved to be very law-abiding. There were few vocal protests as they tried to make the best of the situation. They organized schools, baseball leagues, churches, hospitals and much more to restore a degree of order to their new lives. About 2,300 young ethnic Japanese found release from their detention by agreeing to join the U.S. military. Many gained great distinction serving the country that had detained their families. Reeves raises an interesting point in that for many young internees, their new environment released them from the strict control of their parents. They now had more opportunities to find boyfriends and girlfriends, to attend dances, and much more.

Reeves reports that the Roosevelt administration surmised that after the American victory in the Battle of Midway in June 1942, even as the danger of a major Japanese attack on the West coast had passed, and that the internments had been a terrible idea. By early 1944, Roosevelt and his advisors had concluded that the camps were no longer necessary, but anti-Japanese sentiment in California and elsewhere was so strong that releasing the ethnic Japanese from the camps was not a viable political option. The dismantling of the camps only began after the November 1944 presidential election.

Moreover, Reeves asks whether such a mass evacuation and internment of American citizens could happen again. The Supreme Court in 1944 affirmed the constitutionality of the whole program, noting there is nothing in the constitution that prohibits it. Several justices objected to the proposition that the government could detain citizens based on their race, but all nine justices agreed that the government could have carried out a total evacuation of the entire population of the region.

The key theme of the book is that the whole internment program was absurd, the unwise result of mass hysteria. Reeves is especially critical of General DeWitt, who he portrays as a racist imbecile. Overall, Reeves writes in an incredibly clear, direct manner – demonstrated by the meticulous research he has conducted – hereafter leaving the reader with a vivid warning that such a deep tragedy could certainly occur again.

**Peter Cave, *Schooling Selves: Autonomy, Interdependence, and Reform in Japanese Junior High Education*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016. 296 pp. ISBN 978-0226367866 (paperback), \$35.00.**

*Reviewed by Yuichi Tamura*

Since the mid-1980s when the Ad Hoc Council on Education issued the recommendations for Japanese education toward the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the central principle of educational reform has been anchored into the idea of enhancing individuality and autonomy. In *Schooling Selves*, Peter Cave provides an insightful portrait of local school dynamics and explains why the series of educational reforms since the 1980s has failed in Japan. Delving deeper beyond the dichotomous conceptual framework centered on individualism and groupism, Cave analyzes how national discourse on educational reform was reinterpreted, reassessed, reshaped and modified by school administrators and teachers as they implemented changes in local school settings.

Cave conducted ethnographic fieldwork between 1996 and 2007 at two junior high schools (Tachibana and Yoneda Junior High Schools, as Cave calls them under pseudonyms) in the Kinki region of Western Japan. He used participant observations and semi-structured interviews to detect and dissect the nuanced views among teachers and administrators on the educational reform discourse of promoting individuality and autonomy among students. The data from ethnographic strategies are then cross-referenced with survey data, school documents, national policy documents, and secondary sources including media reports, to show the representativeness of the local dynamics at Tachibana and Yoneda. Cumulatively, the information assembled is empirically extensive, and highly valuable for anyone interested in Japanese education.

His central concern is to understand how teachers at local schools accommodated the promotion of student individuality and autonomy as directed by the national ministry, while maintaining the collective cooperation and discipline. In special events such as field trips (Chapter 2) and sports day, choral concert, and cultural festival (Chapter 4), as well as in the contexts of routinized activities such as classroom teaching (Chapter 5) and homeroom and extracurricular clubs (Chapter 3), Cave identifies teachers' attempts to promote student initiatives. Yet, their attempts fell short of achieving the central aim of educational reform, due to the fact that "schools' fundamental approach to the maintenance of control remained

unchanged” (89). Framing this into neo-institutionalist perspectives, Cave points out the “weak” pressure and monitoring by the Ministry of Education over local implementation and the lack of clear criteria for success or failure, which “provided legitimacy for junior high schools’ reshaping of reform to fit their existing priorities” (229).

The introduction of the integrated studies and the expansion of elective courses in 1998 (with a nationwide implementation in 2002) presented a different type of opportunity for schools to promote student individuality and autonomy. Unlike preexisting routinized activities or special events, into which teachers attempted (or were required to attempt) to infuse the opportunity for students to show and develop their individuality and autonomous thinking, the integrated studies as a new curricular course was specifically intended for the attainment of the central goal of educational reform. Cave devotes by far the longest chapter in his book (Chapter 6) to examine how an integrated studies course was used at Tachibana and Yoneda and whether or not it achieved its intended purpose. Both schools utilized the class time for experiential learning outside the schools, such as workplace experiences at local libraries, stores and factories, and raising awareness through the exploration of local natural environments. They also used the time allotted for integrative studies to prepare for school field trips. Cave observes that more emphasis was placed on social and moral development than developing autonomous thinking and learning. Thus, Cave concludes that “far less was achieved than was hoped” (187) and specifies the following as reasons for failure: lack of enthusiasm in teachers about integrated studies; lack of proper training for teachers to formulate an integrated studies course; and lastly, the teachers’ general belief that the central mission of junior high school is to support students’ social development – in other words, to help students learn how they are situated in a web of human relationships in order to follow the pattern of socially acceptable behavior. Even as the new course was specifically established to achieve the promotion of individuality, it was implemented in a way to prioritize social development and behavioral guidance.

In any ethnographic study, access to fieldwork sites is inevitably beyond the total control of researchers. Cave had an onsite access to Tachibana Junior High continuously since 1994, but fieldwork at Yoneda Junior High was done during the four-month period in 2007. As a result, the quantity and density of data from fieldwork at Tachibana and Yoneda, as presented in each chapter, is significantly unbalanced. In each chapter, more dense and longitudinal information was provided about Tachibana, later



supplemented by the information from Yoneda to show the similarities between both schools.

Possibly due to this imbalance, Cave may have found it difficult to delve deeply into differences between Tachibana and Yoneda, thus focusing his discussion on the similarities between these two schools. While he does document some observable differences such as the level of disciplinary problems, the specific content of integrative studies, and in some occasions, differences in teacher's opinions on the idea of enhancing individuality, he does not analyze in depth how such differences emerged. Such local variations in educational practices and discourses would have added further analytical dimensions to his research and articulated discussions on local responses and resistance to a nationally constructed educational reform.

Particularly, I find it curious, and at the same time, a bit problematic how he addresses less-than-significant coverage of the school dress codes. In Chapters 2 and 3, Cave briefly brings up school uniforms and other rules as a symbol of regulatory education, a stark contrast to the idea of promoting individuality and autonomy. While schools continuously prescribe uniforms and set other rules, school rules on appearance, deportment, and off-campus lifestyles have been significantly changed toward deregulation in the 1990s and the 2000s. More extensive description and analysis of school dress codes at Tachibana and Yoneda would have added another important educational practice that conflicts with the national discourse of individuality.

Overall, Peter Cave's *Schooling Selves* is an excellent analysis of how local agents (teachers and school administrators) respond to a national-level educational reform discourse. Most importantly, I cannot overpraise the density and richness of empirical information from his fieldwork, especially the information on Tachibana Junior High School that covers more than a decade. Throughout the book, Cave also deftly illustrates local contingencies of educational reform engineered by the national education ministry. Empirically rich and accessibly written, this book is well suited for advanced undergraduate and graduate students in education, Japanese studies and social sciences. Likewise, scholars and educators in Japanese studies specializing in educational reforms, as well as social scientists with interest in institutional dynamics and changes, will find this book to be an essential contribution in their field.