

An Exploration of Chinese Elements in Keisatsu Shugan (Police Code of Conduct)

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Abstract—The construction of the modern police system in Japan holds an important historical position in the history of Japan and social evolution. Toshiyoshi Kawaji, a key figure in the development of Japan's modern police system, was responsible for training several core police officers for the Meiji government and helping modernize Japanese society. His achievements were remarkable: stabilizing national political power and social order, altering public perceptions of the police, and expanding their social influence. Referred to as the 'Police Analects' of Japan, *Keisatsu Shugan* (Police Code of Conduct) encapsulates Toshiyoshi Kawaji's thoughts about police administration. This study describes its key ideas, including the "Blood And Sweat Concept", "Equality", and the "Role Model" "Hearing in Silence, Seeing in Invisibility," and demonstrates the influence of traditional Chinese culture and wisdom to which Toshiyoshi Kawaji was exposed during his education. The inflow and dissemination of "police" in China are similar to those in Japan, and similarly, traditional Chinese culture has played a key role in the construction of the Japanese police system. As the saying goes, "The relationship between China and Japan has a long and rich history".

Keywords—Toshiyoshi Kawaji, *Keisatsu Shugan* (Police Code of Conduct), China, police, modern Japan, Meiji

I. INTRODUCTION—TOSHIYOSHI KAWAJI: PIONEER OF MODERN JAPANESE POLICE ADMINISTRATION

Toshiyoshi Kawaji (1834–1879), also known as Toshikane Kawaji, with the courtesy name Ryusen, lived in the Satsuma Domain during the late Edo period in Japan. Born on 17 June 1834 into a lower-ranked samurai family in Hishijima Village, Kagoshima District, Toshiyoshi Kawaji's formative years coincided with a period of significant societal upheaval during the end of the Edo era [1]. Despite hailing from a lower-ranked samurai family, he endeavored to continuously improve himself through diligent learning, eventually assuming a position within the Satsuma Domain at the age of fourteen. In a fortuitous encounter, Toshiyoshi Kawaji gained the attention of Takamori Saigo and, with his recommendation, rose steadily to become a trailblazer in modern Japanese police administration. Takamori Saigo (1828–1877) was a samurai from the Satsuma clan during the late Shogunate period in Japan. He came from a lower-level samurai family and was an important figure in the Meiji Restoration movement. He was once a confidant of the enlightened feudal lord Nariakira Shimadzu and participated in the domain's politics. Later, he actively participated in the Anti-Curtain Movement and the Boshin War. Subsequently, he disagreed with Toshimichi Oukubo regarding internal affairs and resigned from his position to return to his hometown. In October 1871, the Meiji government deployed 3,000 patrols to maintain public order, a third of whom were selected by Toshiyoshi Kawaji in Kagoshima, while the rest

were recruited from other prefectures [2]. The applicants were required to demonstrate physical fitness and good conduct. The patrols in Tokyo were centrally managed, with Toshiyoshi Kawaji appointed as the chief patrol officer. In August 1872, the Ministry of Justice established the Police Security Bureau, with Toshiyoshi Kawaji assuming the roles of Assistant Director for Police and Superintendent General. In the same year, upon Takamori Saigo's recommendation, Toshiyoshi Kawaji was sent to Europe to study the police systems of various European countries. This expedition laid the groundwork for his subsequent establishment of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department. Upon his return from Europe, he submitted a police reform proposal to the Meiji government, stating, "In Europe, the police serve as the ordinary administrative body of the state, caring for the lives and health of the people, acting as their caretaker, and constituting a crucial force for the nation" [3]. The Meiji government promptly adopted the proposals, leading to the creation of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the separation of judicial and administrative police functions, the establishment of the Police Department, the introduction of an official hierarchy for police officers, the formulation of police regulations, and the creation of a fire department, among other measures. On 15 January 1874, the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department was officially inaugurated, and the ranks, organizational structure, and police regulations were all based on Toshiyoshi Kawaji's proposals. On 24 January, Toshiyoshi Kawaji was appointed as the Superintendent General of Tokyo, marking the beginning of his comprehensive reform of Japan's old police system and the eventual creation of a new police system. The reforms included the recruitment and dismissal of patrols, the establishment of regulations (e.g. relating to patrol rewards and punishments and assistance in case of death), and the standardization of duties. Additionally, he pioneered the distinction between vehicular and pedestrian lanes in areas like Kyobashi and Shimbashi, a first in Japan. In terms of the conduct of patrols, he amended their attire and demeanor.

Toshiyoshi Kawaji was thus active in Japan from the late Edo period to the early Meiji era, wielding authority in the police force and laying the groundwork for the Japanese police system. He played a crucial role in propelling Japan towards modernization and emerged as a significant figure in the Japanese police community. One of his contributions to the Japanese police system is the work known as the 'Police Analects', titled *Keisatsu Shugan* (Police Code of Conduct). Consequently, this remains relevant in contemporary Japanese policing. As is evident in this work, his thoughts about police administration were deeply influenced by Chinese culture and his understanding and absorption of Sinology. He studied Sinology under Yasutsugu Shigeno

from a young age and often wrote Chinese poems that mainly depicted changes of season, landscapes, festivals, and reflections on friendships, which were included in a posthumous collection, Ryusen Yko (Ryusen's posthumous manuscript). His keen interest in Chinese culture is reflected in a poem titled "New Year's Eve": "In the silent night, countless household lights gleam; amidst the crackling of firecrackers, sleepers are startled. An infinite sorrow for those distant from home; tomorrow morning, here, another year will begin" [4]. "New Year's Eve" has been an important traditional festival in China since ancient times. The title "New Year's Eve" by Toshiyoshi Kawaji further confirms the profound influence of Chinese traditional culture on it. His police and political ideology naturally cannot be separated from the infiltration of Chinese culture.

II. THE GENESIS OF THE MAIN IDEAS IN *KEISATSU SHUGAN*

Keisatsu Shugan (Police Code of Conduct) is a distilled record of the essential guidance provided by Toshiyoshi Kawaji when he held the position of Superintendent General at the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department. It serves as a classical textbook for Japanese police officers [5], with a status comparable to the Analects in Confucianism [3], the Bible in Christianity, and the Quran in Islam [6]. It is emphasized that "Japanese police officers should read and contemplate it diligently at all times, keeping it within their hearts and bones, considering it a source of personal cultivation" [6]. Despite the plain language in this work, it leaves an indelible mark upon reading it.

III. THE 'BLOOD AND SWEAT CONCEPT': RELATIONS BETWEEN THE POLICE AND PUBLIC

In *Keisatsu Shugan*, Toshiyoshi Kawaji constrains the roles of officials with the maxim, "Government officials are like goods purchased with resources acquired by the public with their blood and sweat" [7]. This later became known as the "blood and sweat concept" serving as a guiding principle for those in the police force. In the modern context, this maxim signifies that "the government collects taxes from citizens obliged to work. Therefore, public servants are commodities acquired by the citizens through tax payments." Toshiyoshi Kawaji uses this metaphor to underscore the relationship between citizens and public servants. In what follows, the paper shows how this concept was largely inspired by the "Monumental Stele" [5] in Nihonmatsu shi (Fukushima Prefecture, Japan), which, in turn, can be traced back to the "Jieshi Ming" (stone inscription for warning) by Chang Meng (919–965) an emperor during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period in China (907–979). According to the entry on "Jieshi" in the Ciyuan Chinese Dictionary [8]:

During the Later Shu period of the Five Dynasties, Meng Chang issued a set of admonishments for officials, comprising twenty-four sentences, each with four characters. In the fourth year of the Guangzheng period, these were promulgated in counties and districts. After the Song Dynasty pacified the Shu region, Emperor Taizong extracted the four lines 尔俸尔禄，民膏民脂，下民易虐，上天难欺 (Your salaries and positions are all from the blood and sweat of the people. The common people are easily

oppressed, but you cannot deceive heaven) and promulgated them in provinces and counties, renaming them the "Jieshi Ming" (stone inscription for warning). On the southern side of the monument, the three characters 公生明 (justice breeds trust) are engraved, while on the northern side, the inscription consists of sixteen characters. The inscription was passed down through successive generations.

The twenty-four sentences of the "Official Admonitions" composed by Chang Meng can be translated as follows:

I am deeply concerned about the national budget deficit. I have been working day and night, and I have entrusted the affairs of state to all of you officials. I hope that you will protect and comfort the people. The way to govern a country lies in three principles and seven rules. The principle is to drive out the evil and the rule is to protect the young. We should be both lenient and strict when necessary. Customs can be changed. We should prevent the people from being oppressed and the country from being harmed. The common people are easily oppressed, but you cannot deceive heaven. Taxes are the achievements of the state, and the army is the strength of the state. My titles and rewards will not be given out arbitrarily. Your salaries and positions are all from the blood and sweat of the people. As parents, no one is unkind. You should take this as a warning and understand my thoughts.

Later, Emperor Taizong discovered these 'Official Admonitions' and extracted sixteen characters from them, reorganizing them into a four-character rhymed verse which became the enduring "Jieshi Ming." According to the entry on "Jieshi" in the Da Han He Dictionary [9]:

Jieshi refers to a stone inscribed to admonish officials and public servants. In the Qing Dynasty, a Jieshi erected in the central hall of government offices had three characters 公生明 (justice breeds trust) engraved on the southern side and sixteen characters on the northern side 尔俸尔禄，民膏民脂，下民易虐，上天难欺 ("Your salaries and positions are all from the blood and sweat of the people. The common people are easily oppressed, but you cannot deceive heaven.")

According to historical accounts, during the flourishing era of the Qing Dynasty in the reign of Qianlong, knowledge of the Jieshi Ming spread to Japan, where it earned respect and reverence. The lord of the Nihonmatsushi Domain even deemed it a divine law. Consequently, an order was issued to inscribe the text onto a natural colossal stone, serving as a code of conduct for domain lords and samurai engaged in politics [10]. The Nihonmatsushi Domain, situated in the remote northeast of Japan's Honshu Island, was established during the 15th century under the Muromachi Shogunate. Amid the chaos of the Warring States period, positioned as a strategic pass connecting the northeast and Kanto regions, Nihonmatsu Castle became a highly contested location. Throughout history, six powerful families successively dominated this region. In 1749, during the rule of the fifth lord of Nihonmatsu Castle, Takahiro Niwa, a massive stone monument with the sixteen characters of the above

admonition, was erected at the main entrance of the castle. All samurai ascending to the castle to fulfil their duties had to pass by the monument. This served as a warning for the samurai to empathize with the hardships of the people and prioritize their welfare.

Such importance was attached to moral education for samurai at Nihonmatsu Castle because Takahiro Niwa was an enlightened and visionary lord, highly revered by the local populace. He not only regarded the essence of the Jieshi Ming as a guiding principle but also deeply admired Confucianism. Driven by a desire to stimulate friendship between China and Japan, he, with the assistance of his Confucian scholar and retainer, Dasakuhi Iwai, attempted to reform governance, promote Confucianism, establish schools, and discipline societal conduct within his domain. Furthermore, he generously donated funds to assist the common people in times of natural disasters.

In 1868, Toshiyoshi Kawaji served as the commander of the official army and participated in various battles, including the campaign at Aizu Wakamatsu Castle. During this period, he heard about the stone monument at Nihonmatsu Castle and developed a keen interest in its meaning. This interest can be seen in *Keisatsu Shugan*, in which Toshiyoshi Kawaji states:

Government officials are like goods purchased with resources acquired by the public with their blood and sweat. For this reason, they must do a job that is commensurate with their price. People who fail to do so will inevitably be detested by both the public as the buyer and colleagues as fellow goods. Government officials, therefore, need to check if the achievement of their day's work is worth the price (i.e., their salaries) [7].

This serves as a warning to police officers, urging them to harbor gratitude towards citizens and contribute efforts that correspond to their "price" (i.e., their salary).

IV. THE RELATION BETWEEN POLICE SUPERIORS AND SUBORDINATES: "EQUALITY" AND "ROLE MODEL"

Toshiyoshi Kawaji believed that although there were distinctions in rank among police officers, "When you use your subordinates, you must avoid favoritism and be even-handed in the manner you give orders" [7]. Furthermore, he said that when superiors discuss work with their subordinates, they should not display personal preferences or biases. They ought to treat all subordinates impartially and handle work affairs with a gentle demeanor. "When dealing with your subordinates, you must be fair and never let self-interest intrude into the relationship" [7]. Toshiyoshi Kawaji advocated that police officers should not harbor personal motives towards their subordinates. These motives include self-centered thinking, disregarding reason and rules, appropriating others' rights to pursue personal gain, and using others' power to enhance one's reputation. Therefore, competent police superiors should embody the following characteristics:

The relationship between a superior and his subordinate is like that between a father and his son or between an older and younger brother. The superior is more knowledgeable and wiser than the subordinate. This is why the superior has the authority to supervise the

subordinate [7].

While Toshiyoshi Kawaji's views on the relationship between police superiors and subordinates bear some resemblance to the Confucian hierarchy of "rulers as rulers, subjects as subjects, fathers as fathers, and sons as sons," they differ from the strict Confucian hierarchical system that prohibits subordinates from surpassing superiors. From his perspective, police officers should not operate with the notion that "My rank is higher than his. So, if I do one job, he should do two or three. My status is high and his is low. So, he must obey me. I am entitled to use him. Why do we have to share hardship with him?" Accordingly, police superiors should set a good example and act as role models; it is precisely because they receive higher salaries that they should take on more responsibilities to ensure equality.

Furthermore, Toshiyoshi Kawaji believed that police superiors should serve as role models and must never boast about their own merits to subordinates, even if they endure tremendous hardship. "Despite the fact that he himself works really hard, a departmental manager must not boast about one's own toil to others" [7]. Toshiyoshi Kawaji's profound knowledge of Chinese studies laid the foundation for his deep understanding and insights into police management. In his youth, he studied Chinese Sinology under Yasutsugu Shigeno and was profoundly influenced by the Chinese military treatise *Jiang Yuan* by Zhu [5]. The *Jiang Yuan* states that as a commander, one should pay attention to one's demeanor. This means that when there is no water drawn from the well in the military camp, the commander should not be the first to complain of thirst; when the food is not cooked, the commander should not be the first to complain of hunger; when the fire in the camp is not lit, the commander should not be the first to complain of cold; when the tent in the camp is not set up, the commander should not be the first to complain of fatigue. In the scorching summer, the commander should not easily take a fan or raise a canopy and should share the same living details with the soldiers. Accordingly, Toshiyoshi Kawaji advocated that "subordinates are under the supervision of superiors." As police superiors, they must serve as role models, possessing the character of commanders to maintain authority and gain the trust of their subordinates.

V. THE CORE CONCEPT OF POLICE WORK: "HEARING IN SILENCE, SEEING IN INVISIBILITY"

In *Keisatsu Shugan*, there is a section titled 'Rules of Investigations' which states: "When an investigation reaches a delicate stage, the investigator must use his sixth sense. It is like hearing a voice where there is none and seeing a shape where there is none" [7]. Makoto Muto believes that Toshiyoshi Kawaji gained practical experience of life and death through his training in Kendo (Kendo is a traditional competitive martial art. Contestants compete one-on-one, with both sides wearing Kendo uniforms, protective gear, and wielding bamboo swords. They strike target areas on their opponent according to the rules, and the referee counts the points to determine the winner.) For police officers, the discovery of evidence in criminal investigations is a confrontation between good and evil. They must concentrate their minds, fully deploy their skills, and thoroughly overcome evil [5]. Therefore, police officers must possess the keen perception of "hearing in silence, seeing in invisibility"

when searching for evidence, as outlined in *Keisatsu Shugan*.

The Chief of the Kanagawa Prefectural Police Headquarters in Japan, Eino Fukuei, conducted an in-depth investigation into the origin of “hearing in silence, seeing in invisibility.” He pointed out:

This phrase did not originate from Toshiyoshi Kawaji; instead, it comes from the Chinese classic *Liji* (The Book of Rites). There’s no need to further elaborate on Kawaji’s philosophical and intellectual achievements, but they are indebted to his profound knowledge of Sinology [11].

Prior to this article, Jiro Ono, the then Chief of the Kagoshima Prefectural Police Headquarters, wrote an article titled “The Superintendent General Kawaji’s ‘Hearing in Silence, Seeing in Invisibility’.” In the article, Jiro Ono described the process he followed to clarify the origin of “hearing in silence, seeing in invisibility”:

... everyone knows that “hearing in silence, seeing in invisibility” is a famous saying attributed to Toshiyoshi Kawaji, but who originally said this remains unknown. I searched through Toshiyoshi Kawaji’s relevant works and found no information related to this. I also tried various methods of inquiry and asked around, but there were no clues. However, recently, I finally found the answer in someone else’s research. This saying comes from *Liji* (the Book of Rites), one of the Confucian Four Books and Five Classics (original text: 听于无声, 视于无形). Finally, my initial question was answered... [12].

In the “Summary of the Rules of Propriety” from the Book of Rites, the following passage appears: “听于无声, 视于无形” [13], which means being able to hear and perceive in silence and see and discern in invisibility. The intention is to advise that as juniors, one should be able to sense the intentions of seniors, even when not explicitly stated, by perceiving their thoughts in the absence of sound and form. Comparing Toshiyoshi Kawaji’s 声無キニ聞キ形無キニ見ル (hearing in silence, seeing in invisibility) with the above statement, Fukuei [12] explained, “Although 闻 and 听, as well as 见 and 视, are different Chinese characters, each pair expresses the same meaning.” Thus, “hearing in silence, seeing in invisibility” emphasizes that police officers should have acute perceptiveness and insight into people and events around them, possessing the ability to perceive, even if there is no apparent audible or visible evidence. This is precisely why this idea is said to originate from the Book of Rites.

VI. CONCLUSION

Toshiyoshi Kawaji’s position in the history of the Japanese police system is comparable to that of Robert Peel in the history of the British police system. However, while the academic community has extensively investigated the significance of Peel and his principles of policing, research on Toshiyoshi Kawaji and his work *Keisatsu Shugan* is relatively scarce. This work had a certain presence and

influence in modern China. During the period of the Nanjing Nationalist Government (1927–1948), Li’s [14] 公安警察问答 (Questions and Answers on Police) imitated *Keisatsu Shugan*, providing a systematic exposition of the essence, purpose, and principles of police duties. This reflects the cultural appreciation and mutual learning occurring between China and Japan during certain historical periods. Currently, facing complex and unstable international circumstances, China is confronted with challenging diplomatic issues, and Japan is a priority in China’s current foreign affairs policy. The future of China–Japan relations comprises many uncertainties regarding how to engage with Japan and build long-term, stable, and healthy relations. These questions are imperative for both countries. Maintaining a positive relationship between China and Japan and establishing mutually beneficial and equal platforms for dialogue in various aspects are necessary and meaningful.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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