

entered university, I went to the underground shopping mall in Ikebukuro and was threatened for the first time by a student from another school, and I was so scared. As a high school student walking around the streets of Ikebukuro and Shibuya, I thought that they were incredibly competitive, and since I was already overwhelmed by the "city," I was scared to death. Eventually, I got used to them and thought, "What the heck, I'm going to get revenge on them," but they were already gone [laughs].

**Yamamoto:** [laughs]. I grew up in the middle of Kabukicho, so I was surrounded by all kinds of dangerous people. When I was a kid, if I was playing catch and the ball went off the ground and hit a black car, I would get punched in the face and told, "You little kid. That's why I hated people who hit kids. But the GI guys were amazing. When I was practicing swinging with a wooden sword on the side of the road, I accidentally hit a GI who was standing behind me. But he didn't get angry even though his face turned red. He said, "It was just a child's act". Like Takeshi-san, my daily life was full of prostitutes and yakuza, so I didn't think of them as amazing at all, and I admired them. I wasn't scared of Shinjuku at all, but I was scared of Ikebukuro.

**Do you feel uneasy and uncomfortable about being lumped in with the term "baby boomers"?**

**Kitano:** I am often lumped up in one phrase, "baby boomers," but in fact, there were so many of them, so many different kinds, so many possibilities. My junior high school had 16 classes, and on top of that, there were 60 students per class [laughs]. 1,000 students per grade. So, the "bad guys" were really "bad guys". Some of the leaders of bad guys are now really yakuza bosses. The smart ones graduated from Tokyo University, went to Massachusetts, and became university professors, and so on. However, there are those who are in the middle, and they have become the "mainstream" of what is now called the "baby-boomer generation".

**Yamamoto:** As Takeshi-san said earlier, I think people are a matter of the individual and not a matter of generations. I don't have the sense of seeing people in terms of generations, and I don't really like that way of looking at things. I don't like that kind of way of looking at things, and foreigners often talk about "generations" and "the culture of one generation", but I don't understand the sense of it.

**Kitano:** Later, when people look back on Showa era entertainment, they may talk about me and Ken'ichi Enomoto in the same way, yuck [laughs]. When you say "baby boomers", the individual doesn't come out. What made me laugh the other day was that people often say that Japanese people have lived very long since the end of World War II. But people who are 80 years old now were born in the Taisho era, and those who were born after the war are only 50 years old now. They call it long life after the war. It is strange to divide people into generations or eras [laughs].

**Do you have a sense of uneasiness about the current times?  
You might say, "I live outside of the times."**

**Yamamoto:** I've been growing a bit senile lately [laughs]. Time is the period between your birth and death. The moment of your life is only about 50 or 60 years, and you feel a certain "attachment" to the people with whom you have shared your time as if you have worked together, and sometimes you think, "Oh, I am growing senile".