

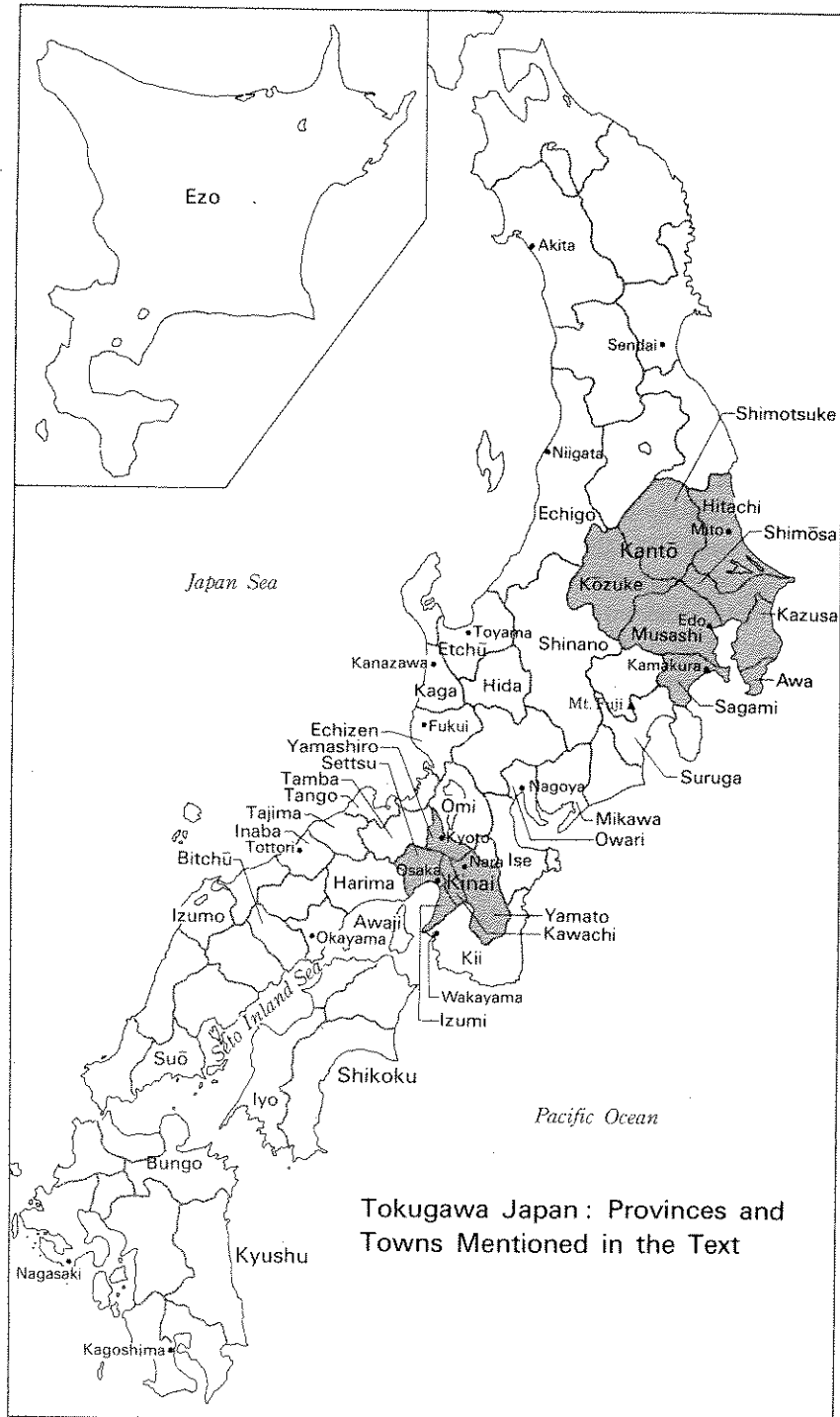
The Bakuhan System

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The epoch known as early modern society is one stage in a general historical periodization that divides Japanese history into ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern eras. It covers the three hundred years from 1568 when Oda Nobunaga, aspiring to unify the country, entered Kyoto, home of the emperor and the Ashikaga shogun, to 1867 when the Tokugawa bakufu fell. Specifically, the 265 years after 1603, when Tokugawa Ieyasu established the bakufu, or military government, in Edo, are referred to as the Tokugawa or Edo period. In other words, early modern society encompasses the thirty-five years when Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi wielded political power and the subsequent 265 years of Tokugawa rule. In the political system of periodization, the period is also known as Edo, which like the Nara, Heian, Kamakura, and Muromachi periods derives from the practice of distinguishing historical eras in terms of the geographical location of the ruling authorities.

1. The Historical Roles Played by Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu

The Muromachi period is so called because the Ashikaga shogun, wielder of political authority, resided in the Muromachi section of Kyoto. During this period, members of the Ashikaga family struggled over succession to the shogunal title, and in 1467 the powerful barons (known as *shugo*, or constable daimyo) who served as pillars of the political system split into two factions and launched a divisive power struggle. The massive civil strife fragmented politi-



cal control, drastically weakening the authority of both shogunate and constable daimyo. Soon the country was plunged into the era of warring states in which regional feudal lords contended for power. This period lasted for approximately one hundred years, with regional lords repeatedly rising and falling. By the mid-sixteenth century, only a small number of constable daimyo, such as the Gohōjō, Uesugi, Takeda, Imagawa, Oda, Mōri, Ōtomo, and Shimazu, survived on domains scattered from the northeast to southern Kyūshū, and they ceaselessly struggled with each other, hoping to bring the nation under their own control.

The regional lord who moved ahead of the pack was Oda Nobunaga. The Oda family served as deputy constable under the Shiba, constable of Owari province. Shiba, like almost all of the constable daimyo, resided in Kyoto, while the deputy constable remained in the domain and served as executive officer on the spot. As a result, Oda Nobunaga began to strengthen his control over Owari. After he defeated Imagawa Yoshimoto, the major regional lord of the Tōkaidō area, in the battle of Okehazama in 1560, he rapidly expanded his power. Proclaiming his loyalty to the shogun, Ashikaga Yoshiaki, Nobunaga soon entered Kyoto. In 1576, he constructed a mighty castle at Azuchi and launched his campaign to unify the country, hoisting a banner emblazoned with the words *Tenka fubu*, "Extension of Military Rule throughout the Land." But in 1582 he was slain by his vassal, Akechi Mitsuhide, at Honnōji temple.

Although death ended Nobunaga's plan for national unification, his achievements were many, adding up to the complete destruction of the social order that had been in existence from the Nara and Heian periods. At the core of this process was his head-on confrontation with Buddhist temple forces that were not only spiritual leaders but also secular overlords. Among the actions he took against Buddhist forces were the destruction by fire of the venerable temple, Enryakuji, on Mt. Hiei just northeast of Kyoto, and an all-out campaign against uprisings by the religious orders of the Ikkō sect, which had extended their influence widely among villages throughout the land. Earlier, he had welcomed the arrival of Christianity, not only because he saw the religion as the bearer of new objects like the musket, but also because he believed it could help him suppress Buddhist forces.

Another of Nobunaga's accomplishments was the elimination of guilds (*za*), which had been used by such traditional wielders of power as temples, shrines, and aristocrats to maintain their monopolistic control over commerce. In their place, he supported open-market arrangements (*raku-ichi*, *rakuza*) that enabled people to engage freely in the production and sale of goods. He also abolished in many areas the checkpoints (*sekisho*) that had hindered free flow of goods, thus establishing the early modern commercial marketplace.

In Nobunaga's time, the commodities that had the widest commercial circulation were grains, such as rice and wheat. In transactions they were measured with measuring boxes (*masu*), but the size of the boxes was not uniform. Boxes that nominally held one *shō* of grain actually differed greatly in capacity. For example, the *masu* used by a feudal lord to calculate the rice tax he received from peasants (known as the tax collection *masu*) differed significantly from the *masu* he used to calculate his own payments (known as payment *masu*).

Without a uniform system of grain measurement, the extent of economic growth could not be calculated accurately. Nobunaga sought to achieve uniformity by designating the *masu* then used by merchants in the Kyoto vicinity as a standard grain measure, the *kyō-masu*. Toyotomi Hideyoshi completed the process of standardizing by making the *kyō-masu* the official unit for measuring rice throughout the land. With the adoption of a uniform measure, the system of calculating rice production in terms of the *koku* was introduced nationwide. By this system (the *kokudaka* system), a daimyo who is referred to as a 100,000-*koku* lord is one who rules a domain that produces 100,000 *koku* of rice, as measured by the *kyō-masu* standard. Needless to say, Tokugawa Ieyasu retained this system.

Compared to Nobunaga and Ieyasu, Hideyoshi came from an extremely humble social background. The common view that he was a child of a lowly peasant in the village of Nakamura in Owari is probably stretching the truth a bit. That he came from the lowest rank of the samurai class is probably closer to the truth. He could not get along with his stepfather and left home as a youngster and experienced much hardship. He thus became streetwise about human nature and acquired a unique ability to win over the hearts of people. He rose rapidly as Nobunaga's follower. When Nobunaga

was killed by Akechi Mitsuhide in 1582, Hideyoshi returned from his campaign in the Chūgoku region (western Honshū), engaged Mitsuhide in battle at Yamasaki in Kyoto, and slew him. He then defeated his rivals, Oda Nobutaka and Shibata Katsuie, in the struggle for supremacy after Nobunaga's death.

At this time, Nobunaga's ally, Tokugawa Ieyasu, was extending his power from his home base in Mikawa into neighboring regions. In 1584, however, he came up against Hideyoshi at the indecisive battles of Komaki and Nagakute and, after some negotiations, agreed to submit to his authority. Hideyoshi then went on to defeat the Chōsokabe in Shikoku in 1585, the Shimazu in Kyushu two years later, and in 1590 the Gohōjō of Odawara, thus completing the task of national unification. One would have expected him at that point to concentrate on strengthening the internal political order, but almost before taking up this task he sought to realize his dream of building an empire that would encompass all of continental China. He launched two reckless invasions of the Korean peninsula and in 1598 died at the age of sixty-three amidst reports of military defeats in the Korean campaign.

Besides completing Nobunaga's policy of unifying the country, Hideyoshi also adopted his economic policies, refining them and applying them throughout the land. Among these policies were the extension of open-market arrangements, the minting of a currency for use throughout the land (the large and small gold coins of the Tenshō era), and the systematizing of foreign trade (the licensing of vessels engaged in foreign trade with documents stamped with red seals).

The most significant of Hideyoshi's policies was the nationwide cadastral survey (known as the Taikō Kenchi) that he conducted using a uniform standard of measurement. The survey not only shaped the foundation of feudal landholding but also facilitated the separation of military and peasant classes, thus expediting the formation of feudal class distinctions. Needless to say, the *kyō-masu* was used nationwide as the standard measure in implementing the land survey.

A popular ditty goes, "Oda pounds the national rice cake, Hideyoshi kneads it, and in the end Ieyasu sits down and eats it." It was Tokugawa Ieyasu who inherited and made peaceful the land that Nobunaga and Hideyoshi had unified. Ieyasu was born heir to

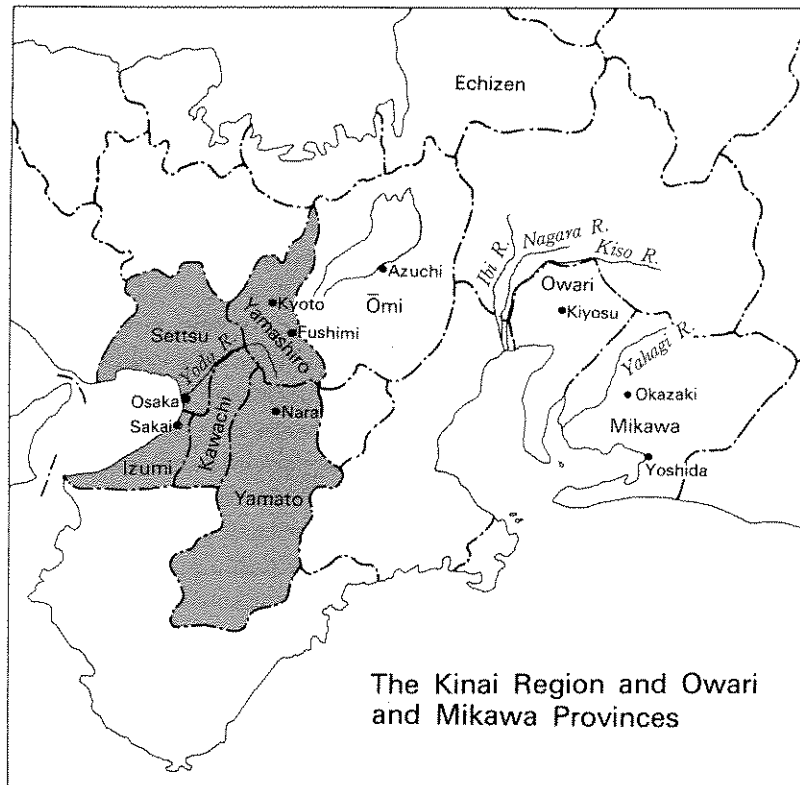
the lord of Okazaki Castle, a military chief who, as head of the Matsudaira family, wielded power in the heart of Mikawa province. To the east were the Imagawa of Suruga; to the west, the Oda of Owari. Hemmed in by these two powerful daimyo, the Matsudaira were subject to constant pressure from them, with the consequence that Ieyasu served as a child hostage first to the Oda and then to the Imagawa. He also experienced domestic misfortune: he lost his mother early in life, and when he was seven, his father was slain by a vassal during an internal family conflict.

Even as a youngster, then, Ieyasu had to worry about how to sustain the Matsudaira family and strengthen its position. From his youth, therefore, he concentrated his thoughts on the problem of how to maintain and expand the political system. In this respect, the difficulties that confronted him differed greatly from Toyotomi Hideyoshi's troubles, which had to do with sustaining his daily existence and dealing in general with human relationships. Hideyoshi's daily experience had little to do with theories of political organization, such as how to establish tranquillity in the land over which he had gained control. This truly was Ieyasu's primary concern. It was Tokugawa Ieyasu, then, who succeeded as the ruler of the land unified by Nobunaga and Hideyoshi. He consolidated order throughout the land, thereby inaugurating the Tokugawa period and its 265 years of peace. And the organization of the bakuhan system, with the bakufu as the central government of a federation of over 270 daimyo domains (*han*), provided the political and administrative framework with which the Tokugawa shogunate held power.

2. Why the Forces for National Unification Emerged from Owari and Mikawa

Of the three leaders who created the early modern society of Japan, Nobunaga and Hideyoshi emerged from the central region of Owari, while Ieyasu emerged from the heartland of Mikawa. One might ask why early modern Japanese society emerged from the Owari-Mikawa region. There is no simple answer, but one might address the issue in the following way.

History does not progress in a linear fashion. Nor do changes in



the seat of political authority. For example, the ancient government, with its former capital at Heijō in Nara, was revived following the transference of the capital to Heian. The *bushi* (samurai), who emerged as private soldiers organized to defend the *shōen* (estates) of the Heian aristocracy in Kyoto, extended their authority, consolidated their position under the leadership of Minamoto no Yoritomo, and in 1192 established the Kamakura bakufu with its capital at Kamakura in the Kantō region. During the 1330s, however, this government was destroyed by Ashikaga forces. The Ashikaga shunned the city of Kamakura and established their bakufu in the Muromachi district of Kyoto. Thus, with successive changes in political authority, the political center shifted from Nara to Kyoto to Kamakura and back to Kyoto. The reason the seat of political power changed in this fashion was that even though the old political

authority had weakened, its influence remained strong near its seat of government, making it difficult for the new regime to develop there. This could be said of the new political force that emerged in place of the Muromachi bakufu. It did not rise from that regime's power base, the Kinai region (the provinces of Yamato, Yamashiro, Kawachi, Izumi, and Settsu), but from along its outer rim in the Owari-Mikawa region.

But why did the new political forces arise in Owari and Mikawa rather than some other part of the Kinai rim? Although it may not be a wholly satisfactory explanation, the key surely lies in the great agricultural richness of those provinces, as the following reasoning suggests. The *bushi* who built the new era were not yet sharply distinguished from farmers. In time of peace they worked on the land as farmers, and in time of conflict they traded their farm tools for weapons and went into the battlefield. If we examine carefully the battles fought in the era of warring states, we find that, except under extraordinary circumstances, fighting was avoided during busy seasons such as planting and harvesting.

Because battles interfere with farm work, before class divisions between warriors and farmers were established, *bushi* could not engage in warfare whenever they chose. The policy of separating military men from farmers was designed to distinguish those who were indispensable for warfare from those who were essential for farming. Under this system, while peasants engaged full time in farm work, *bushi* could concentrate fully on military training and warfare. Naturally, the feudal lord who commanded an army of full-time *bushi* would have a military advantage over the lord whose *bushi* lived under a system in which the duties of warrior and farmer were not separated.

What circumstances determined whether class divisions between warriors and farmers could be instituted? The deciding factor was the productive capacity of the land held by a given lord, because only rich lands could support nonproductive armies. The area where Nobunaga and Hideyoshi emerged was the rich alluvial plain in the lower reaches of the Kiso, Nagara, and Ibi rivers. And Ieyasu came out of the broad coastal region of Mikawa, which was watered by the Yahagi River and other streams. In those years these areas had extremely high levels of agricultural production and could support such standing armies. Moreover, the muskets that were being

imported from Europe were phenomenally expensive compared to the bows and arrows that had been basic weapons till then. But these regions had such enormous productive capacity that their lords were able to purchase large quantities of these expensive weapons.

3. Constructing the Tokugawa System: Ieyasu's Role

In August 1598, Toyotomi Hideyoshi died. He had launched his reckless campaign in Korea before completing the task of establishing a solid socio-political system, and as a result his political structure began to disintegrate promptly upon his death. One power center formed around Tokugawa Ieyasu and another around Ishida Mitsunari.

The task confronting Ieyasu after Hideyoshi's death was to wipe out the rival faction and unify the nation under his own authority. This opportunity arrived sooner than expected, and he achieved his objective in the battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Three years later, he was designated shogun, that is, *sei taishōgun* (barbarian-subduing generalissimo) by the imperial court, which title gave him a status that no daimyo could challenge, and he established his headquarters, the bakufu, at Edo, the heart of his own vast Kantō domain. Of the tasks remaining for Ieyasu, one was to dispose of Toyotomi Hideyori, Hideyoshi's heir, who was ensconced in Osaka. Another was solidifying the Tokugawa grip on the shogunate by making it the Tokugawa family's hereditary office.

It appears that Ieyasu initially attempted to integrate Toyotomi Hideyori into the Tokugawa political system as one of the daimyo. But ensuing events led to the Osaka campaigns of the winter of 1614 and summer of 1615, which resulted in Hideyori's death and the liquidation of the Toyotomi family. In the outcome, all the forces that might have posed a military threat to the Tokugawa family were completely eliminated.

The remaining task was to make the position of shogun, lord of the realm, the hereditary possession of the Tokugawa family. Oda Nobunaga had heirs, but his vassal Toyotomi Hideyoshi succeeded him. And when Hideyoshi died, even though Hideyori was alive, his

vassal Tokugawa Ieyasu had followed as wielder of supreme political power. In light of these precedents, Ieyasu had to consider ways to ensure that the shogunate would become the Tokugawa family's hereditary office. In less than three years after being appointed shogun, Ieyasu passed the office to his son Hidetada. He then retired to the background but managed political affairs from behind the scenes. This practice of ruling from retirement was referred to as *ōgoshō* government. Ieyasu had transferred the title of shogun to Hidetada and put him in nominal charge of affairs at Edo to let all Japan know that the shogunate was the hereditary possession of the Tokugawa family.

Ieyasu had established the principle of a hereditary Tokugawa right to the shogunal title, but he still had to decide how a choice was to be made among several children. He had eleven sons, and it was his third son, Hidetada, who became the second Tokugawa shogun. His eldest, Nobuyasu, had married Nobunaga's daughter, but Nobunaga later suspected him of being secretly in league with the enemy Takeda and ordered him to commit suicide in 1579. Ieyasu's second son Hideyasu was adopted by Hideyoshi and became the heir of the Yuki family, a prominent family in the Kantō region. In 1600, he resumed the Tokugawa family name and became the lord of Fukui in Echizen with a holding of 670,000 *koku*. He was alive in 1605, when Hidetada became shogun, and it would not have been out of line if he had been appointed shogun instead of Hidetada.

At this time succession within military families was moving toward the practice of primogeniture, but the memories of the era of warring states, when ferocious power struggles continued unceasingly, were still strong. Consequently, the practice of passing on the family leadership to the most able and suitable son was still prevalent. It is said that Ieyasu chose Hidetada as successor because he was the most obedient and docile of the sons; he was most acceptable to Ieyasu, who planned to exercise power while retired. Thus, Ieyasu's choice of Hidetada appears to have been a logical move. But if this way of choosing the shogun's successor were continued, internal strife over succession could divide the family, as the example of the Ashikaga shogunate—as well as many other lordly family disputes—clearly demonstrated. Should that occur, the Tokugawa family's control over the shogunate would be endangered.

Ieyasu settled this last dynastic problem, the principle of succession, when the question of Hidetada's heir came up. Hidetada had three sons: the eldest, Iemitsu; the second, Tadanaga; and the third, Masayuki. Of the three, Iemitsu and Tadanaga were sons of Hidetada's primary wife, Oeyo (the youngest sister of Yodogimi, Hideyoshi's favorite consort). Masayuki was borne of Hidetada's concubine, and at birth he was turned over to the Hoshina family as their adopted son.

The choice for third shogun thus lay between Iemitsu and Tadanaga. Iemitsu, the older, lacked promise from early childhood, appearing listless and even dimwitted. By contrast, Tadanaga showed quick intelligence and comported himself properly in all respects. His mother showered him with affection, and because of her ardent support, both his father, the shogun, and high Tokugawa officials inclined toward selecting him as the third shogun. This turn of events upset Iemitsu's wet nurse Kasuga no Tsubone, and late in 1611 she appealed directly to Ieyasu. He came to Edo from his retirement home in Sumpu and chose Iemitsu as Hidetada's heir.

Thus the practice of primogeniture was established for the Tokugawa shogunate. Ieyasu had decided that rather than choose a successor on the basis of personal characteristics by weighing the intelligence and physical condition of potential heirs, the goal of sustaining the Tokugawa polity would be better served if the order of birth was made the deciding factor. This would ensure the continuity of the Tokugawa regime.

Besides instituting the practice of primogeniture, Ieyasu attempted to endow future shoguns with absolute authority over their brothers. Immediately after deciding on Iemitsu, he wrote a letter of admonition to Oeyō: "Daimyo view the eldest son with special regard. Younger sons are considered to be akin to servants. . . . For the second son to have greater influence than the oldest is the root cause of family troubles." Ieyasu was well aware that in watching developments in the daimyo families, as well as his own, one must be especially alert to the relationship between brothers.

This awareness is seen in the way Ieyasu and Hidetada dealt with Hidetada's brothers. The older brother Hideyasu died in 1607 at the age of thirty-four, and he was succeeded as the lord of Fukui by his son Tadanao. Tadanao collided with Hidetada soon after Ieyasu's death, and in 1623 his domain was confiscated, and he was exiled to

Bungo. Misconduct was given as the reason for his punishment, but soon afterward the shogun's office was passed from Hidetada to Iemitsu. It is likely that Hidetada considered the presence of his older brother's family line a worrisome matter, and one can imagine that Hideyasu, had he not died so soon, might also have challenged the second shogun, perhaps following Ieyasu's death.

Ieyasu's fourth and fifth sons posed no problems, dying respectively in 1608 and 1602. In 1610 the sixth son, Tadateru, became a leading lord in north-central Japan as the daimyo of Takada in Echigo, where he held a 600,000 *koku* domain. It is said that he had a fiery temper and committed many intemperate acts, and in 1615 Ieyasu became angry at him following an incident in which Tadateru's men slew one of the shogun's liege vassals (*hatamoto*). In 1616 Tadateru was exiled to Asama in Ise; later he was sent to Hida, and in 1626 he was put under the custody of the daimyo of Suwa in Shinshū.

Although he submitted thoughtfully formulated petitions for clemency, he was never forgiven. He remained under house arrest for fifty-eight years until he died in 1683 at the age of ninety-two. Of course the basic problem was Tadateru's violent temper, but his treatment by the bakufu must have been based on the judgment that the presence of such a hot-tempered person in the shogun's family circle would be inimical to the Tokugawa polity's stability.

Ieyasu's seventh and eighth sons both died in childhood. The ninth, Yoshinao, was enfeoffed at Nagoya in Owari, the tenth at Wakayama in Kishū, and the eleventh at Mito in Hitachi. These three sons became the founders of the *gosanke*, the major collateral houses of the Tokugawa bakufu. Of the three sons, Yoshinao was closest to Hidetada in age, but there was over a twenty-year age difference between the two.

Iemitsu's younger brother, Tadanaga, who early in youth had been a rival for the shogunal succession, was made the daimyo of a 500,000 *koku* domain headquartered at Fuchū in Suruga province. He became known as the grand councillor of Suruga, but within months of his father's death in 1632, Iemitsu confiscated his domain and ordered him to commit suicide. The founder's policy of ruthlessly eliminating anyone who might possibly threaten the security of the shogunate was continued in this way by Iemitsu, who ruled until his death in 1651.

4. Perfecting the Tokugawa System

One can say that the task of establishing the Tokugawa polity, the bakuhan system, on a firm basis was completed during the reign of Iemitsu, who consolidated policies begun by his predecessors. The key policies were manipulating daimyo, managing the imperial court, controlling foreign relations, and sacralizing the Tokugawa legacy.

The essential characteristic of the Tokugawa bakuhan system is that it placed daimyo, who formerly were peers of the Tokugawa, under their absolute authority. To this end the results of the battle of Sekigahara were utilized as fully as possible. Ieyasu abolished the military houses of Ukita Hideie, Chōsokabe Morichika, and others who opposed him at Sekigahara, ninety-one in all, and confiscated their holdings, which totaled over 4,200,000 *koku*. In addition, four families, including Mōri Hidenari and Uesugi Kagekatsu, saw more than 2,210,000 *koku* of their holdings confiscated. By these measures, Ieyasu succeeded in gaining control over domains worth over 6,420,000 *koku*, which he used to strengthen his political authority. That is, he distributed the confiscated land to the lords who sided with him at Sekigahara and to his own retainers. In distributing it, he used the pretext of increasing their holdings to relocate many of the daimyo. This policy of “transplanting” daimyo to new land removed them from the power base they had established in their former domains and served to weaken their position.

These measures of abolishing daimyo houses or transferring them to other domains, carried out by the first three shogun, were put into effect not only in wartime but also in time of peace. Iemitsu was particularly aggressive in transferring daimyo, resulting in a decrease in the number of *tozama* lords, meaning those whose ancestors had not been vassals of Ieyasu in 1600, and an increase in daimyo whose families had been in Ieyasu's service, the *fudai* daimyo.

A lord could lose part or all of his domain in peacetime by failing to maintain order, but the most common occasion for such a loss was the absence of an heir in the daimyo's family. In principle, the domain assigned to the daimyo was given by the shogun to a specific person. If the daimyo had no heir, his land escheated to the giver. There were many instances in which daimyo houses expired

because they lacked an heir. This is seen even in Ieyasu's sons' cases. His fourth son Tadayoshi and fifth son Nobuyoshi were daimyo of Kiyosu in Owari and Mito in Hitachi, respectively, but they both died without heirs at an early age, and their holdings were abolished. In such instances, the deceased lord's surviving family members and vassals found themselves turned out homeless or unemployed into a cold world. This was one cause of the emergence of *rōnin* (masterless samurai) and the problems that accompanied them.

Even if a daimyo had an heir, succession was not automatic because the heir had to receive formal bakufu approval before he could inherit the domain. An adopted son could gain recognition as heir, but again it was necessary to have the bakufu's approval before the daimyo's death. Initially, the bakufu refused to recognize an heir adopted hastily after the unexpected death of a daimyo. But because so many heirless daimyo houses were being abolished, the *rōnin* problem became exacerbated. Consequently, the bakufu decided in 1651 to recognize heirs adopted at the last minute, which practice came to be known as “deathbed adoption” or “emergency adoption.”

The most important measure for keeping daimyo under control was adoption of the *buke sho-hatto* (laws pertaining to the military houses). In 1615, within weeks of destroying Toyotomi Hideyori, Ieyasu convened the daimyo at Fushimi Castle and issued a thirteen-article directive to them. It consisted of restrictions on repairing castles, a requirement to obtain permission for marital arrangements, and so on. This was the origin of the *buke sho-hatto*. In 1635, the third shogun, Iemitsu, revised and expanded the thirteen articles, issuing a total of nineteen. These constituted the basis for subsequent laws pertaining to the daimyo. The central mechanism of bakufu control over daimyo consisted of these laws, regulations requiring their wives and children to remain in Edo, and the system of *sankin kōtai* (alternate attendance) that was instituted in 1634 and 1635.

The custom of daimyo visiting the shogun's castle in Edo had begun decades earlier. Many of them traveled the Tōkaidō route to visit the shogun, and it was customary for him to greet and send them off at Shinagawa, the first rest station south of Edo. In the documents of the Myōkokuji Temple near the Shinagawa rest sta-

tion is a record titled "The Third Shogun's Visits," and its last entry is that of November 11, 1635, Iemitsu's forty-fourth visit. Thereafter, with the alternate attendance system institutionalized as a daimyo's duty, it was no longer necessary for the shogun to proceed to Shinagawa to greet or send them off.

Next in importance to dealing with the daimyo was arranging the bakufu's relationship with the imperial court. Toyotomi Hideyoshi gained control of the land, but he governed the country as imperial regent and grand chancellor, an official status obtained from the imperial court. Hence, when he conducted the national cadastral survey, he submitted some of the cadastres (land survey ledgers) to the emperor, who was the most prominent landholder, for approval. In contrast, Tokugawa rulers took the position that the imperial court and all its lands were under the jurisdiction of the bakufu. They asserted this in practice as well as in their formal relationship with the court, first of all by issuing the "laws pertaining to the imperial court and court nobles" (*kinchū narabi ni kuge sho-hatto*) as the courtly equivalent of the *buke's sho-hatto*. Like the latter, Ieyasu issued this set of directives soon after Hideyori and his mother Yodogimi perished in Osaka Castle in 1615.

These directives combined the provisions in the "laws on court nobles" (*kuge sho-hatto*) and the "laws on imperial awards of purple gowns" (*chokkyo shūi hatto*) that were issued in the previous year, and added regulations on the conduct of the emperor himself. Among the provisions of the *kuge sho-hatto* were these: (1) court nobles must devote themselves to scholarship in accordance with imperial tradition; (2) those who violate the rules of proper conduct will be sent into exile; (3) one must not neglect one's daily duties; (4) one must not roam idly about the city; (5) servants who indulge in gambling and games, and those who engage in improper conduct must not be employed. It concludes by stating that the right to punish courtiers who violate these provisions resides with the military authorities. "The laws on imperial awards of purple gowns" had to do with presentation of purple gowns of office to those being promoted to the highest rank of the Buddhist priesthood. Prior to this, the imperial court had controlled such awards, but the *chokkyo shūi hatto* stipulated that henceforth bakufu approval must be obtained before any such award was made.

The *kinchū narabi ni kuge sho-hatto* of 1615 consists of seventeen

articles. To get a flavor of the document, Article I stipulated that the primary duty of the emperor was scholarship. The distinction in functions of court and bakufu was clear: political affairs were the bakufu's responsibility while the emperor's function was to engage in scholarship. Articles II and III dealt with the court ranks of imperial princes, high court nobles, and retired court officials. Articles IV and V stipulated that in making court appointments one should give greater weight to ability than family background. Article VII held that official ranking of the military class was unrelated to court ranking and was to be decided entirely by the bakufu.

If all seventeen articles were followed strictly as stipulated, the court and nobility would be under complete bakufu control. However, the court-bakufu relationship did not go as smoothly as Edo wished. In 1615, Ieyasu's plan to have Emperor Gomizuno'o marry Hidetada's daughter, Kazuko, was realized, but the high-handed measures that Edo employed to accomplish this caused resentment among Gomizuno'o and his attendants and contributed finally to the purple-gown incident and Gomizuno'o's abdication in 1629. The purple-gown incident had to do with the defrocking of some seventy Buddhist prelates who had been awarded purple gowns by the emperor. The bakufu held that awarding the gowns violated the provisions of the "laws pertaining to the imperial court and court nobles." Four monks, including the priest of Daitokuji temple, Takuan, protested the defrocking and were sent into exile.

Under these strained conditions, Tokugawa Iemitsu visited Kyoto three times: in 1623, 1626, and 1634. On each occasion he entered Kyoto with a large army. On his third visit in 1634 he proceeded with an immense force of 307,000 men. To convey a sense of this army's size, if we estimate the space between each warrior as one meter, the first group of warriors would have reached the castle town of Yoshida in Mikawa before the tail of the retinue had left Edo. Iemitsu's aim was to intimidate the court with his huge army and thus solidify bakufu supremacy.

Among the important policies adopted by Iemitsu was that of national seclusion. Because the bakufu had managed only with great difficulty to subdue the Shimabara Rebellion a year before this policy was put in its final form in 1639, the policy of seclusion is usually linked to the bakufu's policy of banning Christianity.

Christianity entered Japan in 1549 when Francis Xavier arrived

in Kagoshima and began his missionary work. The new religion was accepted by daimyo in western Japan and spread very rapidly not only because it was new but also because it was accompanied by muskets and other new items. Nobunaga actively supported the missionaries' work because he saw it as an instrument to help him suppress deeply entrenched Buddhist forces, and also because of the new products that the missionaries brought with them. Consequently, the religion took root swiftly in many areas.

Hideyoshi continued Nobunaga's policy of supporting Christian missionaries, and harmonious relations between his regime and Christianity continued for a while. Christian chapels were built in the castle towns of western daimyo and in Kyoto and Azuchi. And Christian converts emerged among the daimyo, including Ōtomo Yoshishige, Ōmura Sumitada, Konishi Yukinaga, and Takayama Ukon. However, when Hideyoshi entered Kyushu to launch his campaign against the Shimazu, he was disturbed by the large number of Christian converts. Understanding that converts believed Christ to be superior to all things, higher even than the national conqueror Hideyoshi himself, he concluded that Christianity was incompatible with his plan to establish his own political hegemony. Accordingly, he issued a decree to expel the missionaries in 1587. However, the decree stipulated that foreign trade was not included in the order, and in fact no serious effort was made to deport the missionaries, so the decree proved ineffective.

Ieyasu was aware of the profits foreign trade would bring to Japan and actively fostered it after 1600. At that time, the trade was mainly handled by Portuguese (Catholic) merchants who had close ties with the Toyotomi family and daimyo in western Japan. To compete with these groups, Ieyasu sought trade through English and Dutch (Protestant) merchants and therefore employed an Englishman, William Adams, and a Dutchman, Jan Joosten van Lodensteijn, as advisers. Japanese themselves also were actively engaged in overseas trade, and Ieyasu issued Red Seal permits to license their ventures. Among the initial recipients of these permits were such great daimyo as Shimazu, Matsuura, Arima, and Nabeshima, all of Kyūshū. Gradually, however, Ieyasu limited Red Seal permits to merchants with ties to the Tokugawa family.

Initially trade was carried on at many places, including Hirado, the castle town of the Matsuura clan, but by 1635, when Iemitsu was

in control, it was limited to one port, Nagasaki, which was under the bakufu's direct control. At the same time, Iemitsu prohibited overseas trade and travel by Japanese. Meanwhile, foreigners came under closer control: in 1624 the Spanish were prohibited from coming to Japan, and in 1639 Iemitsu extended the ban to the Portuguese. The English had already withdrawn voluntarily, so the Dutch survived as the only Europeans permitted in Japan.

This situation is referred to as national seclusion, or *sakoku*, but as is clear from this account, it did not mean that the entire nation was sealed off from the outside. It meant that: (1) foreign trade—with Europe and China—was restricted to the single port of Nagasaki where the bakufu had direct jurisdiction and (2) the only foreigners allowed to come and trade at Nagasaki were the Dutch and Chinese. In effect, the bakufu had instituted a policy of monopolizing foreign trade, and in fact, compared to earlier years, the volume of foreign trade increased after the policy of seclusion was adopted. In return for receiving the exclusive European right to trade with Japan, the Dutch provided the bakufu with an annual report about significant world developments. In light of this, we can say that the policy of national seclusion was a policy designed to give the bakufu a monopoly in foreign trade and on information from abroad.

How then are the policy of seclusion and the ban on Christianity related? In 1587, Hideyoshi issued a decree expelling Christian missionaries, but because he valued foreign trade, he did not enforce the ban rigorously. Ieyasu continued to place foreign trade above concern about Christianity. However, there were an estimated 700,000 Christian converts at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and he began to worry that if this situation were allowed to continue, a second epidemic of Ikkō-like uprisings might break out. So in 1612 he issued a decree banning Christianity and set out to eradicate the religion from the country. He started by first destroying the chapels in Kyoto, ordering the Christian daimyo Arima Harunobu to commit *seppuku* (harakiri), and exiling Takayama Ukon. He then had ordinary Christian converts arrested and pressured into apostatizing. Those who refused were executed. There were many Christians among those who fought on the losing Toyotomi side in the winter and summer campaigns at Osaka Castle, and Hidetada broadened the persecution substantially, continuing it aggressively through the 1620s. Then in 1637 a peasant uprising

broke out in Shimabara and Amakusa in Kyushu. Among the insurgents were many Christians, so the uprising took on the cast of a Christian uprising. After the uprising was crushed, the policy of hunting down and rigorously suppressing Christians was renewed. But it was not till 1671, more than thirty years after Shimabara, that the policy of establishing *shūmon aratame-chō* (registry of religious affiliation) was instituted nationwide. As a means of uncovering Christians and preventing the propagation of Christianity, this policy required every household to affiliate with a Buddhist sect and register annually with the local temple.

Finally, to complete the consolidation of Tokugawa authority, Iemitsu set out to sacralize Ieyasu. He regarded his grandfather with a respect akin to religious worship because it was Ieyasu who had ensured his succession to the shogunal position. As an expression of his sentiments, Iemitsu rebuilt the small shrine in Nikkō which his father Hidetada had built to enshrine Ieyasu. The result was the sumptuous edifice that we see today. For this reconstruction Iemitsu expended 570,000 *ryō* of gold, 100 *kan* of silver and 1,000 *koku* of rice. The labor devoted to the construction, it is estimated, came to 4,543,000 man-days. In 1645, upon Iemitsu's request, the imperial court upgraded Ieyasu's shrine in Nikkō, and it has thereafter been called Nikkō Tōshōgū. From the following year, the court commenced dispatching imperial pilgrimages to Nikkō.

5. The Administrative System

The history of the Tokugawa bakufu can be divided into three periods in terms of its administrative structure: (1) from 1603 to 1632; (2) from 1633 to 1854; and (3) from 1855 to 1867. The first period extends from Ieyasu's founding of the bakufu to the death of Hidetada. This was the period in which governmental affairs were conducted under the personal direction of extraordinarily talented administrators who were in the inner circle of Ieyasu and Hidetada's regimes. Among them were the father-and-son team of Honda Masanobu and Masazumi and the Buddhist priests Tenkai and Konji'in Sūden. There was also the merchant Chaya Shirōjirō who had supported Ieyasu from the days when he was a daimyo of

Mikawa. Even the English navigator William Adams (Miura Anjin), who served for a time in a capacity that might be called Ieyasu's foreign policy adviser, can be included in this circle.

The person who changed these administrative arrangements to a more regularly structured system, that of period two, was the third shogun, Iemitsu. He became shogun in 1623 but his father was still alive and was exercising authority as retired shogun, so he was unable to formulate his own policies. Iemitsu's own preferences began to surface following his father's death early in 1632.

At the top of the administrative structure were the *rōjū* (senior councillors) and immediately below them the *wakadoshiyori* (junior councillors). In 1634, the bakufu defined the limits of their authority and functions, with ten articles pertaining to the senior councillors and seven to the junior councillors. According to these regulations, the latter were to oversee affairs relating to *hatamoto* and *gokenin* (shogunal retainers with stipends of less than 10,000 *koku*), while the senior councillors' duties concerned daimyo (those lords with holdings of over 10,000 *koku*), foreign affairs, and financial matters. The office of *tairō* (great councillor) was not a standing position, and its functions were first defined in 1638 in the charge issued to senior councillors Doi Toshikatsu and Sakai Tadakatsu. It stated, "You are excused from concerning yourselves with minor administrative matters. You need attend the shogun's castle only on the first and fifteenth of the month. However, if matters of grave political importance should arise, you must attend the castle and confer with the senior councillors."

The officials who performed day-to-day administrative duties under *rōjū* authority were the "three magistrates" (*sanbugyō*); that is, the superintendents of temples and shrines, the city magistrates, and the superintendents of finance. As for the superintendents of temples and shrines, the first appointments were made in 1635 when Andō Shigenaga, Matsudaira Katsuoka, and Horii Toshishige were ordered to adjudicate legal disputes involving temples and shrines and areas beyond Edo. Several cities and towns under bakufu control, such as Osaka, Nara, and Yamada, were administered by magistrates (*machi bugyō*), and the magistrate of Edo was first appointed in 1631 when Kaganouri Tadasumi and Horii Naoyuki were placed in charge of the northern and southern districts of the city.

The chief duties of superintendents of finance were collection of taxes and management of expenditures. Those tasks were being performed from the early years of the bakufu by such men as Ina Tadatsugu and Ōkubo Chōan. Not until after 1633, it appears, were these tasks organized as a regular office of finances within the bakufu.

The important office of *ōmetsuke* (inspector general), which investigated a person's loyalty to the Tokugawa family and evaluated the performance of bakufu officials, was first filled in 1632 when Yagyū Munetsune, the shogun's instructor of swordsmanship, and two others were appointed to the position. The three magistrates constituted the chief members of the *hyōjōsha*, the Tribunal, which was instituted in 1635. When assembled as the Tribunal, these officials served as the bakufu's highest judicial body, and also studied and formulated plans concerning important legal and administrative affairs.

Besides this official governmental organization, there were arrangements in the interior of the shogun's household that concerned his personal life. The organizing of the inner court (*Ōoku*, the "great interior") occurred during this period, and the architect of the system was Kasuga no Tsubone, the wet nurse who had taken care of Iemitsu since his childhood.

The construction of this administrative system that buttressed the Tokugawa bakufu for 220 years until 1854 was accomplished by Iemitsu during the decade or so following his father's death. The third and final phase of bakufu organizational history started with the breakdown of the "seclusionist system," which had come to be regarded as the law of the founding fathers. This breakdown was precipitated by the policy of opening Japanese ports to the outside world, which was adopted in the 1850s because of the pressures coming from foreign powers. Prior to that time, the bakufu had not had to meet internal or external threats by resort to military force. As a result, it scarcely had a military system. Nor did it have a government agency that dealt exclusively with foreign affairs. Following the opening of Japanese ports, the bakufu attempted to cope with its rapidly changing circumstances by adding new government offices and positions to deal with military affairs and foreign relations. These included the superintendents of military education, warships, and foreign relations; general superintendent of foreign

relations; and chancellors of the army, navy, and foreign affairs. Despite this flurry of institutional reform, the bakufu failed to meet the challenges of the swiftly changing times and collapsed in less than fifteen years.

6. The Capacity of the Tokugawa System to Cope with Problems

The administrative system that took shape under Iemitsu and sustained the Tokugawa polity thereafter had a number of special features. Most notably the rank order of official positions and the social status of their occupants dovetailed. In addition, most government positions were staffed by more than one official.

In modern society, a person's occupation and income are theoretically dependent on each individual's preferences and ability, but in the status-based order of the Tokugawa-period samurai, occupation and income were determined not by one's personal ability, but by the standing of one's *ie* (household). This term *ie* does not refer simply to a family's dwelling place or members but also to its pedigree. That is, the standing of a family was determined by how well its ancestors had served the Tokugawa government. For example, whether an individual was qualified to serve as a city magistrate or superintendent of finance depended first of all on whether he was born in a *hatamoto* family with a stipend equivalent to 3,000 *koku* or more. Being talented or lucky was of lesser importance.

Inevitably a status-based social system is subject to numerous criticisms, but one also must acknowledge that the bakufu-centered social structure of the bakuhan system contributed to the stability and order of the time. Can we say, then, that the Tokugawa system succeeded in maintaining general social stability for 250 years because it managed to preserve the class linkage of social rank and government office? No, not at all. Rather, revisions and adjustments were made whenever necessary.

If we construct a chart of bakufu retainers, we find, quite naturally, that the higher one moves up the ladder of family standing, the fewer the number of families. This means that the higher the official position, the fewer the families from which the position could be filled. Viewing this situation in simple terms of probability,

the higher the official position, the fewer men of talent there were to fill it. This was a major worry for the bakufu and it was overcome by invoking the shogun's absolutist authority to promote and employ men of ability. However low a person's family standing, as long as he had the shogun's confidence and backing, he could acquire authority superior to that of the senior and junior councillors. This practice served as a relief valve that compensated for the administrative ossification produced by the basic system of status differentiation. It was Tsunayoshi, the fifth shogun, who incorporated this practice into the political system.

Iemitsu's third son, Tsunayoshi, was born in 1646 and died in 1709. His older brother Ietsuna became the fourth shogun in 1651, but he had no offspring, and when he died in 1680, Tsunayoshi succeeded. When the question of succession arose, a serious controversy allegedly broke out in the bakufu's inner circle. It was during Ietsuna's reign that Iemitsu's recently organized status-based administrative system functioned most smoothly, with the government controlled by Sakai Tadakiyo and others who served as great councillor or senior councillor. These were men whose families enjoyed, as *fudai* daimyo, the highest pedigrees among shogunal retainers. It has been said that they wished to solidify the status-based administrative system and bring real control of the bakufu into *fudai* daimyo hands by making a young imperial prince the successor to Ietsuna. Hotta Masatoshi, who had just been appointed senior councillor the previous year, was the only one who insisted adamantly that Tsunayoshi should become shogun because he was a mainline descendant of the Tokugawa family. The councillors failed to resolve their differences, however, and Tsunayoshi succeeded to the shogunate in accordance with a stipulation in Ietsuna's will. There is some question about the authenticity of this story, but in any case Tsunayoshi does not appear to have been bound very much by the political arrangements established during prior administrations.

First of all, Tsunayoshi established a new position called senior councillor in charge of fiscal affairs (*katte-gakari rōjū*). Strictly speaking, *katte* means kitchen and, by extension, it refers to practical financial matters. So *katte-gakari rōjū* meant a senior councillor in charge of financial affairs. The usual number of senior councillors was four, and hitherto the four had managed the bakufu's political

affairs by deliberating together. Tsunayoshi, believing that financial management should be based on long-term considerations, and that one official should assume full responsibility for them, established the new post of *katte-gakari rōjū* and placed its holder in complete charge of economic and fiscal affairs. He then assigned the duty to Hotta Masatoshi, who had earlier helped him win appointment as shogun. But in 1684 Hotta was slain in the castle by a junior councillor, and Tsunayoshi transferred the duty to his *soba-yōnin* (grand chamberlain). The *soba-yōnin* was a variation of the personal attendants (*sobashū*) who took care of the shogun's personal needs and served as his confidants. These *sobashū* did not have any authority to deal with political matters, but the *soba-yōnin*, being at the shogun's side, acted as a messenger, conveying the shogun's political views to the senior councillors and bearing councillor's reports to the shogun.

After Hotta's death, Makino Narisada and then Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu served in this capacity and ran affairs for Tsunayoshi. Yanagisawa was the son of a minor finance officer who served Tsunayoshi when the latter was still daimyo of Tatebayashi in Kōzuke province. In terms of pedigree, this ancestry utterly failed to qualify Yoshiyasu for high-ranking position, but his personal connection to the shogun overcame that disability.

This arrangement—in which a person such as Yanagisawa, who lacked proper pedigree but enjoyed complete shogunal confidence, required sufficient power to surpass the high-born senior and junior councillors and direct political affairs—is referred to as *soba-yōnin seiji*, or government by grand chamberlain. This pattern of control continued during the brief reigns of the sixth and seventh shoguns, Ienobu and Ietsugu, when Manabe Akifusa and Arai Hakuseki served as influential attendants. During Yoshimune's rule, Arima Ujinori and Kanō Hisamichi served in that capacity, and under his successors Ieshige and Ieharu, Ōoka Tadimitsu and Tanuma Ogi-tsugu did so. Of these men Manabe was formerly a Noh actor, and Arai a Confucian scholar. Arima and Kanō had been Yoshimune's vassals when he was still the lord of Kishū. Ōoka Tadimitsu came from a branch of the liege-vassal Ōoka family, and Tanuma was the son of a foot soldier (*ashigaru*) of Kishū.

The officials who actually managed bakufu finances under the direction of senior councillors, *katte-gakari rōjū*, and grand chamber-

lains, were the superintendents of finance, normally four officials who were appointed from among the shogun's *hatamoto* with stipends of 3,000 *koku* or so. There were some 5,200 *hatamoto* families, but only about 250 had stipends of 3,000 *koku* or more. So the superintendents of finance were chosen from a fairly small pool, meaning the probability of able people filling that position was fairly low. Since the *katte-gakari rōjū* served as a general director of finances, he did not need great practical ability in the subject. But the superintendents of finance did handle details, so they had to be well-versed in economics and computation. Because only about 5 percent of the *hatamoto* could serve in this capacity, inevitably there was a paucity of qualified men to fill the post.

Tsunayoshi solved this problem by asserting that in filling the superintendent of finance position, ability rather than pedigree was to be the deciding factor. The first person to emerge as a superintendent of finance under this guideline was Ogiwara Shigehide. He, in cooperation with Yanagisawa, managed bakufu finances during the Genroku period (roughly the years of Tsunayoshi's shogunate), an era generally seen as a turning point in Tokugawa history. With a family stipend of about 100 *koku*, he came from the lowest ranks of the 5,200 *hatamoto* families.

Ogiwara was the first of three famous superintendents of finance during the Tokugawa period. His currency policies, notably reminting of coinage, are regarded as the birth of modern monetary policy in Japan. The second most famous superintendent of finance was Kamio Harunaka, who managed bakufu financial affairs during the latter half of the eighth shogun Yoshimune's reign. He is credited with the haughty assertion that "with peasants and sesame seeds, the more you squeeze them the more you get from them." He thus symbolizes the ruthlessly exploitative superintendent of finance, but in reality he was an extremely able financial officer who did much to shore up the bakufu's finances. The third superintendent of finance who contributed greatly to the fiscal revitalization of the bakufu was Matsumoto Hidemochi who, as assistant to Tanuma Okitsugu, conducted a survey of Hokkaido, among other important measures. Kamio and Matsumoto both came from families that were even lower than Ogiwara's in status, being from *gokenin* (housemen) families, the lowest category of liege vassals.

Nearly one hundred years passed between the founding of the

Tokugawa bakufu and Tsunayoshi's heyday. The economy, which had grown at a phenomenal pace during that century had more or less reached its zenith. The abundant financial resources of the bakufu were just about depleted, and the regime was entering an era when budget deficits were to plague it. No longer could the bakufu spend its money freely on whatever project seemed worthy; instead, expenditures had to be weighed carefully against revenues. Hence, it no longer sufficed to select financial officers on the basis of family standing. It was necessary to search broadly and recruit capable men, and Tsunayoshi's policy of employing men of ability in his financial office was a response to that situation.

The bakufu employed investigative officials such as inspectors general (*ōmetsuke*) and inspectors (*metsuke*) from its early years. Tsunayoshi established an additional supervisory position to deal only with financial affairs, the *kanjō gimmi-yaku* (budget examination office), which was similar to a present-day board of audit. Ogiwara Shigehide started his career as a minor official in the finance office, later became budget examiner, and subsequently moved up to become the superintendent of finance.

Most of the bakufu's administrative positions employed more than one official per position. For example, there were four senior councillors, two (at one time, three) city magistrates, and four superintendents of finance. Unlike today's administrative arrangement, in bakufu offices judicial and administrative functions were not separated. For example, in their management of bakufu funds, the superintendents of finance handled legal disputes, tax collection, and management of expenditures. Yoshimune improved the efficiency of the office by separating these matters into judicial and financial affairs. He assigned legal and judicial matters to two superintendents of finance who were responsible for judicial affairs, and all fiscal matters to two superintendents of finance in charge of financial affairs.

In this fashion, even though the Tokugawa bakufu was constructed around a system of status differentiation, it invoked the shogun's authority, as necessary, and adapted to the movement of history by boldly employing men of talent regardless of their social status. This is what enabled the Tokugawa system to survive for 265 years in the midst of violent shifts in the historical current as the mode of production was changing from feudalistic to capitalistic. However,

this practice in which men of talent were employed regardless of social status under the shogunal system changed as political authority shifted from Tanuma Ogitsugu to Matsudaira Sadanobu after the rule of the eleventh shogun Ienari from 1787. A conservative reaction unfolded as men of high pedigree recaptured political power. This hampered the bakufu's ability to cope with the rapidly changing historical tide, and as a result, it ended up treading the path of decline and disintegration.

(Translation by Mikiso Hane)

Tokugawa Villages and Agriculture

TSUNEO SATŌ

The Tokugawa period constituted Japan's final stage as an agriculture-based society. The population at the end of the seventeenth century was approximately thirty million, and it remained stable until the later years of the nineteenth century, which encompassed the Meiji Restoration and the advent of modern Japan. Approximately 80 percent of this population consisted of peasants. It can be said, therefore, that the historical character of Tokugawa society was deeply shaped by the nature of agriculture, farm villages, and the peasantry.

1. Specific Features of Agricultural Villages

Most people in Tokugawa Japan were villagers, and most villagers were engaged in agriculture. It should be noted, however, that besides agricultural villages (*nōson*), which will hold our attention, there were mountain villages (*sanson*), whose members relied heavily on upland and forest production, and fishing villages (*gyoson*), whose residents worked the sea as well as the land. Throughout the period, farm work remained the foundation of rural society and determined village structure, but as time passed, agriculture experienced substantial commercial and technological advances.

Cadastral Surveys and Updating of Temple Registrations

The transition from medieval to Tokugawa society took place during the violent years of the era of warring states, when "those below challenged those above" and lower-level members of society forcefully overthrew their superiors. The social transformation that took