

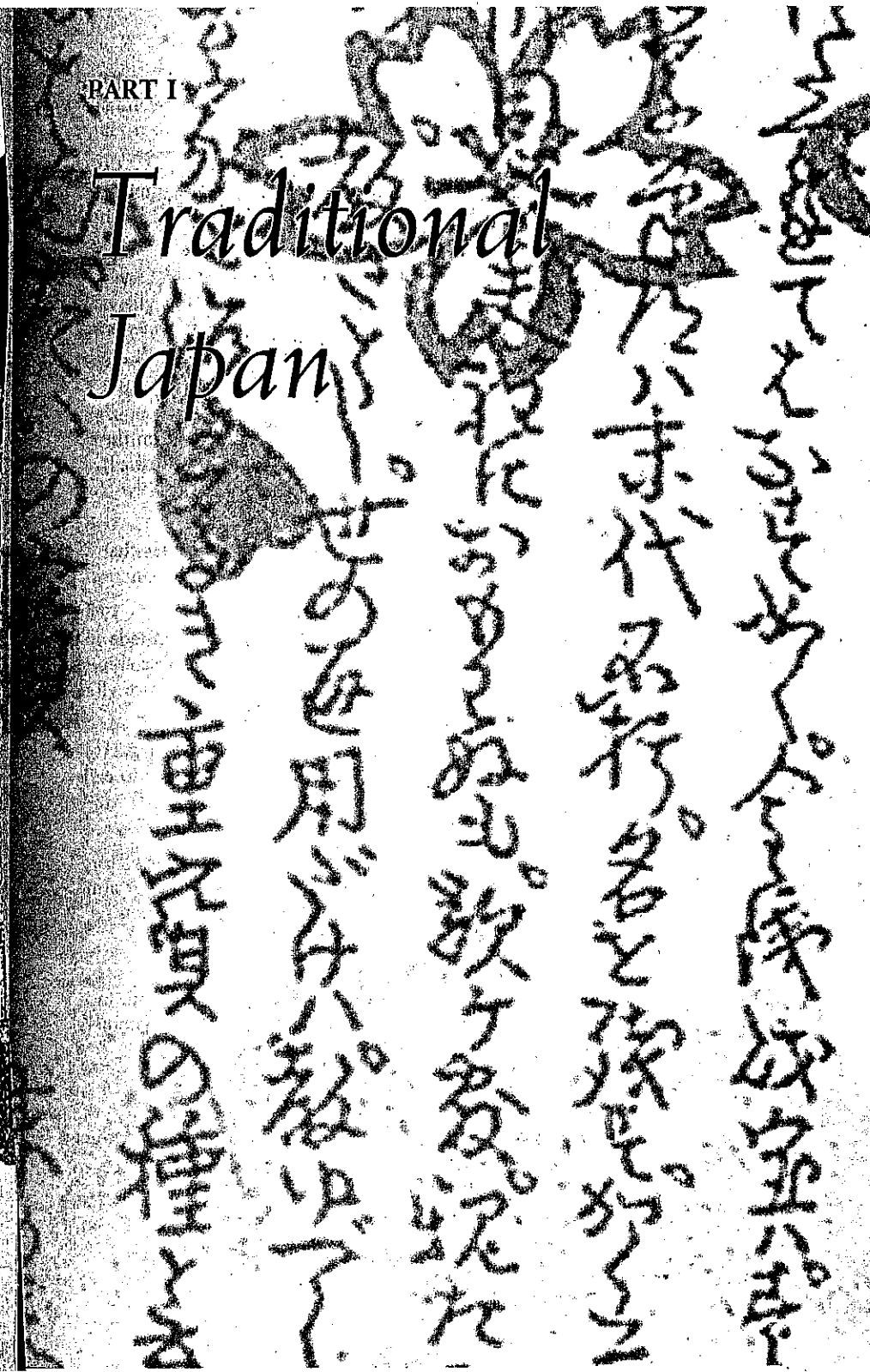
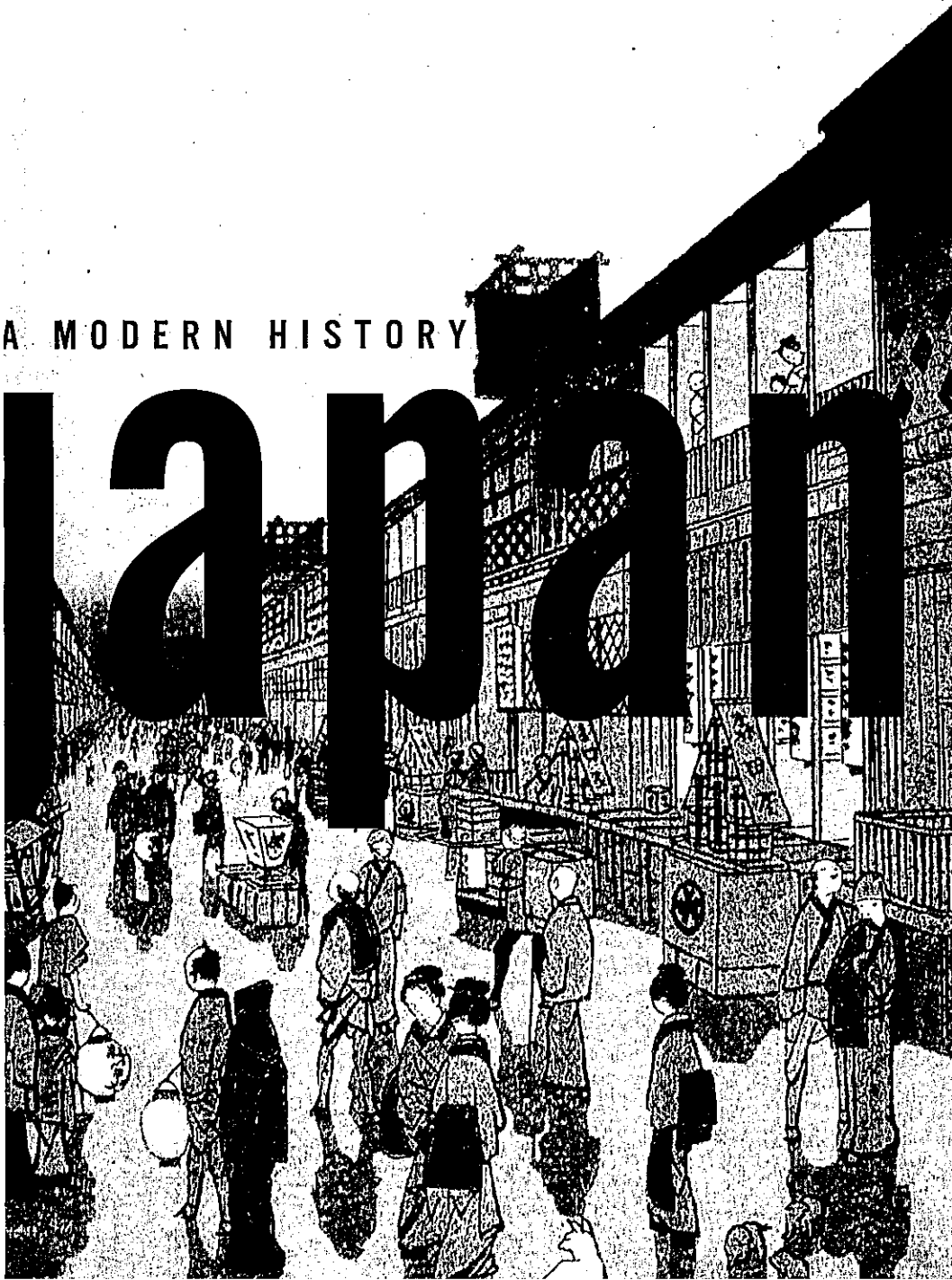
JAMES L. McCLAIN

PART I

Traditional Japan

A MODERN HISTORY

Japan



Chronology

PART I TRADITIONAL JAPAN

646

☐ *First Month, first day* Leaders of the Yamato family purportedly issue the Taika Reform Edict and eventually establish their authority as an hereditary line of Heavenly Sovereigns

712

☐ Scribes in the service of the Yamato Line finish compiling the *Kojiki* ("Record of Ancient Matters")

794

☐ The Heavenly Sovereigns establish their capital at Heian (Kyoto)

1192

☐ Minamoto Yoritomo is appointed shogun and establishes his "tent government" at Kamakura

1274 and 1281

☐ Typhoon gales known as *kamikaze*, "divine winds," ravage Mongol fleets and save Japan from invasion

1333–1338

☐ Ashikaga Takauji overthrows the Minamoto shogunate and is appointed shogun

1467–1477

☐ The Ōnin War leads to the Sengoku era, a century when Japan is "A Country at War"

1543

☐ Portuguese traders land on the island of Tanegashima, south of Kyūshū

1549

☐ Francis Xavier inaugurates the first Christian mission to Japan

1571

☐ The daimyo Ōmura Sumitada opens Nagasaki to Portuguese shipping

1573

☐ The warlord Oda Nobunaga drives the Ashikaga shogun into exile and burns most of Kyoto

1575

☐ Nobunaga scores a major victory at the Battle of Nagashino after arming his troops with new Western-style firearms

1580s

☐ Following Nobunaga's death in 1581, Toyotomi Hideyoshi hammers the daimyo into submission

1590

☐ Ieyasu transfers his domain to the Kantō region and begins to construct Edo Castle

1592

☐ Hideyoshi's armies land at Pusan

1598

☐ Hideyoshi dies, and Japanese armies retreat from Korea

1600

☐ Tokugawa Ieyasu prevails at the Battle of Sekigahara

1603

☐ *Second Month, twelfth day* The Heavenly Sovereign appoints Tokugawa Ieyasu as shogun

1604

☐ The shogunate recognizes the Matsumae family as the daimyo of a domain on the southern coast of Hokkaidō and confirms their right to trade with the Ainu in Ezochi

1607

☐ Ieyasu normalizes relations with Korea

1611

The Ryūkyū Islands become a dependency of Satsuma domain while nominally retaining their autonomy

1615

☐ *Fifth Month* Tokugawa forces overwhelm Toyotomi loyalists at Osaka Castle

☐ *Seventh Month, seventh day* Ieyasu issues the Regulations concerning Warrior Households

☐ *Seventh Month, seventeenth day* Ieyasu and Hidetada issue the Regulations concerning the Royal Court and Nobility

1617

☐ Ieyasu's remains are interred at Nikkō, and he is deified as Tōshō Dai Gongen, "Illuminator of the East, August Avatar of Buddha"

1622

☐ *Eighth Month, fifth day* The shogunate's persecution of Christians begins with the execution of fifty-five believers at Nagasaki

1623

☐ The shogunate begins to appoint allied daimyo as senior councillors

1629

☐ Ieyasu's granddaughter ascends the throne as the Heavenly Sovereign Meishō

1633–1639

☐ The shogunate issues the so-called seclusion laws proscribing Christianity, forbidding Japanese to travel abroad, and regulating foreign trade

1634

☐ *Seventh Month, eleventh day–Eighth Month, fifth day* Iemitsu makes a grand visit to Kyoto

1635

☐ The shogunate undertakes a major revision of the Regulations concerning Warrior Households

1643

☐ The first printed guide to the daily foods of commoners, *Ryōri monogatari* ("Tales of Cooking"), is published

☐ Miyamoto Musashi is said to have retreated to a cave this year to write *Gorin no sho* ("The Book of Five Rings")

1649

☐ *Second Month, twenty-sixth day* The shogunate issues the Instructions of the Keian Era

1656

☐ Yamaga Sokō expounds his version of *Bushidō* in his *Bukyō yōroku* ("Essentials of the Warrior Code")

1669

☐ The Ainu leader Shakushain launches attacks on Japanese settlements in Ezochi

1673

❑ The Mitsui family opens a dry goods store, the Echigoya, in Edo

1689

❑ Bashō completes his *haikai* collection *Oku no hosomichi* ("The Narrow Road to the Deep North")

1700

❑ By this date Edo probably is the world's largest city

1702

❑ The first manual on sericulture appears

1716

❑ *Onna Daigaku* ("Greater Learning for Women") is published

❑ Yamamoto Tsunetomo completes *Hagakure* ("In the Shadow of Leaves")

1724

❑ The Kaitokudō opens in Osaka

1729

❑ Ishida Baigan begins to give public lectures about the essentials of Shingaku (Learning from the Heart)

1785

❑ The shogunate establishes the Baled Goods Office at Nagasaki

1802

❑ Jippensha Ikku begins the serialized publication of *Tōkaidōchū bizakurige* ("Shanks' Mare")

1832

❑ Hiroshige travels from Edo to Kyoto and back and begins work on the wood-block print series entitled *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Highway*

1839

❑ By this date at least three hundred private academies and three thousand *terakoya* are in operation

1842

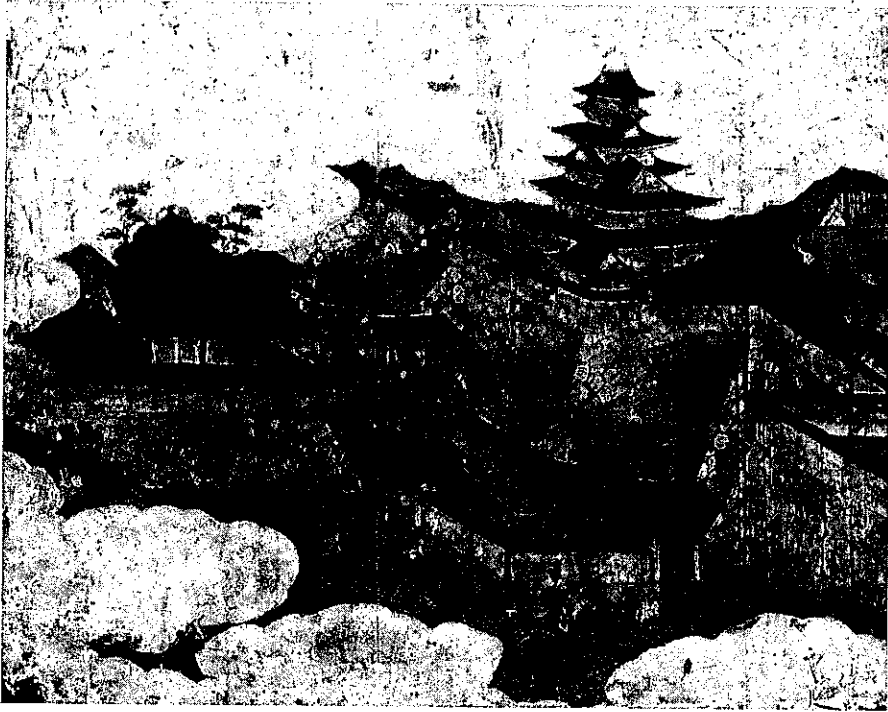
❑ The shogunate employs Ni-nomiya Sontoku to plan several village revitalization projects

CHAPTER 1

The Tokugawa Polity

On the afternoon of the twelfth day of the Second Month 1603, Tokugawa Ieyasu donned a scarlet mantle of ceremony and settled himself on a dais in Fushimi Castle, a Tokugawa fortress just south of Kyoto. Soon a herald appeared, bowed deeply, and struck together two wooden clappers to announce the arrival of high-ranking envoys dispatched by the Heavenly Sovereign, the emperor of Japan. Alighting from their carriages, the imperial representatives approached the dais and, in an elaborate, precisely orchestrated ceremony, presented Ieyasu with an Edict of Appointment naming him the shogun of Japan, the military general entrusted with maintaining order throughout the realm. To show his gratitude, Ieyasu hosted a banquet for the delegates and sent them home to Kyoto with tokens of his appreciation: bags of silver and gold and a horse sporting a raised gold saddle embossed with his crest.

The investiture of Tokugawa Ieyasu as shogun was a seminal event in Japanese history, and the pageantry surrounding his elevation to the highest military office in the land reflected the power and glory of the samurai estate at the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth. Across Japan at that time, some 250 mighty daimyo lords ruled over autonomous domains, and their majestic citadels, many exceeding in size the largest castles built in medieval Europe, loomed over the countryside as awesome symbols of their prodigious strength. No daimyo family stood on a par with the House of Tokugawa, however, and its fortress at Fushimi was among the grandest in the land. Built between 1592 and 1596 by a fellow warlord, Fushimi's invulnerable stone walls and broad moats protected a towering donjon, residences for a garrison force of two thousand samurai, of-



Fushimi Castle

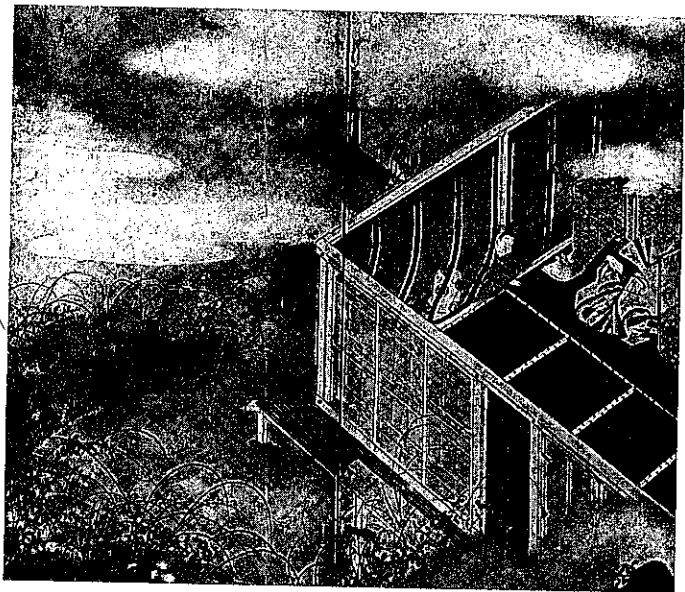
fice compounds, and warehouses for food and weapons, all distributed among a half dozen spacious enclosures, each protected by its own internal walls and fortified gates.

Like other daimyo fortresses, Fushimi Castle was as much a palace as a military redoubt. Ever mindful that rituals and symbols added immeasurably to the substance of power, Japan's overlords designed alcazars that dazzled with their opulence and aesthetics as well as their impregnable might. At Fushimi, Ieyasu flaunted his wealth and paraded his cultural aspirations in a manner that exuberantly proclaimed the ability of the House of Tokugawa to command the material and human resources of the land. When daimyo allies visited, Ieyasu greeted them in an expansive reception chamber that measured nearly one hundred feet on each side. There, while discussing affairs of the day, Ieyasu could direct his guests' admiring eyes to graceful wooden transoms richly decorated with carvings of sage rulers of antiquity and sliding petitions adorned with paintings of auspicious birds and flow-

ers executed by leading artists of the day. Out-of-doors, the warrior elite could take its leisure in a handsome landscape garden and even appreciate classical *noh* drama performed on the castle's own stage.

The riches and splendor on display at Fushimi recalled the previous grandeur of Kyoto. Several centuries earlier, at the start of a new millennium, the emperor's capital was one of the greatest cities the world had known. Following East Asian ideals of imperial urbanism, streets and avenues laid out in meticulous geometric order crisscrossed the metropolis, creating rectangular neighborhoods that were home to more than 100,000 people. Intersecting the very center of the city, a magnificent boulevard lined with willow trees ran nearly three miles south to north, leading from the main entry gate, the famous *Rashōmon*, to the Imperial Palace. On occasion, Kyoto's residents might catch sight of the Heavenly Sovereign, seated in an ornate ox-drawn carriage and accompanied by hundreds of gaily costumed outriders, as he progressed down that thoroughfare on his way to visit famous sites in the pleasant countryside around the capital. Mostly, however, the imperial figure remained inside his vast palace compound, where he performed sacred rituals that honored Japan's protective deities and simultaneously identified him as the ultimate source of moral and political authority. Also cloistered inside that sanctuary was the emperor's personal residence, a deceptively simple building whose unpainted timbers, raised wood floors, and graceful shingle roofs defined the epitome of Japanese architectural preferences and offered subtle testimony to the majesty of the Heavenly Sovereign.

At the height of Kyoto's glory in the early eleventh century, nearly two thousand aristocratic households arched necklacelike to the east and south of the palace. The grander noble estates spread over an acre or more and included a main house, expansive gardens filled with carefully selected trees and flowering plants, an artificial lake, dwellings for servants, and numerous storage and service buildings. Dressed in delicately embroidered silks, the courtiers enjoyed the finest crafts produced in Kyoto's artisanal workshops. Narrative scrolls depicting daily life show the early use of tatami mats, spread out on wooden floors for seating purposes; and sliding partitions decorated with exquisite paintings of the changing seasons and the passage of human life. In that refined setting, Kyoto's nobles created a sophisticated cultural tradition that transcended the bonds of time and space. Murasaki Shikibu's fictionalized diary of court romance and intrigue, the renowned *Tale of Genji*, belongs to that moment, an era when haughty aristocrats considered themselves the only legitimate patrons and practitioners of *tanka* poetry, courtly *gagaku* music, and the other patrician arts that for them represented the apogee of Japan's cultural accomplishments.



Aristocrats in Kyoto

The envoys who conveyed the title of shogun to Ieyasu in 1603 returned to a capital where the emperor and many dispirited aristocratic families lived in penury. Over the centuries the emperor and courtiers saw their wealth erode steadily, and in the 1470s the city was devastated in fighting that touched off a long civil war that was only reaching its denouement with Ieyasu's appointment as shogun. Impoverished, his palace in disrepair, one emperor had to postpone his coronation ceremonies for nearly two decades at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and many once-proud nobles moved into humble back-street tenements or sought refuge in temples. Kyoto's merchants and artisans also faced precarious times; warfare destroyed their neighborhoods, thieves roamed the streets, and in 1573 one daimyo set fires that ravaged the better part of the city once again. It was a sad decade when aristocrat and commoner alike might well remember the opening lines of a famous warrior epic:

The sound of the bell at Gion Shōja echoes the impermanence of all things;

The hue of the teak-tree flowers reveals the truth that the prosperous must decline.

The proud do not endure; they are like a dream on a spring night,
The mighty fall at last, they are as dust before the wind.¹

Life in the middle of the sixteenth century also was filled with tribulations for the overwhelming majority of Japanese who lived their entire lives in self-contained hamlets. For those families the outside world began just a few steps down the village lane, and everywhere the emphasis was on self-sufficiency. Some households owned enough land to live comfortably, but most men and women worked long hours through endless days growing their own crops, sewing their own clothes, and making and repairing the tools necessary for their survival. For them, living in houses made of thatch and mud plaster and clothed in crude garments fashioned from hemp and other local fibers, life was short and usually did not rise much above subsistence level. Seasonal festivals—to ask the gods' favor at the spring planting and to thank them for the autumn harvest—broke the solitary passage of the months, and occasionally a peddler might make his way into the village, bearing curious stories about mysterious happenings in far-off Kyoto and offering for sale or barter seaweed, salt, and other valued commodities that villagers could not grow or produce for themselves.

For all the despair wrought by warfare, sprouts of renewal were pushing their way to the surface when Europeans first journeyed to the Japanese islands in the decades surrounding the turn from the sixteenth century into the seventeenth. Jorge Álvares, a Portuguese merchant who produced the earliest European eyewitness report after visiting Japan in 1546, found "a beautiful and pleasing country, with an abundance of trees, such as the pine, cedar, plum, cherry, laurel, chestnut, walnut, oak, and elder. There is also much fruit not to be found in our country; they grow the vegetables which we have in Portugal, except lettuces, cabbages, drills, corianders, and even mint; all the rest they have. They also cultivate roses, carnations and many other scented flowers, as well as both sweet and bitter oranges, citrons, pomegranates and pears."² A half century later the Florence native Francesco Carletti agreed that "[t]he country is very pleasing to the eye and produces large crops of rice and corn and all sorts of cereal crops, vegetables and fruits," while Alessandro Valignano, a Jesuit born in Naples, praised the ordinary men and women of Japan when he visited from 1579 to 1582 and again from 1590 to 1592. "They are very capable and intelligent," Valignano wrote, and "cultured" as well: "Even the common folk and peasants are well brought up and are so remarkably polite that they give the impression that they are trained at court. In this respect they are superior not only to other Eastern peoples but also to Europeans as well."

No less than the countryside, the merchant quarters of Kyoto appeared on the road to recovery by the time Ieyasu received his Edict of Appointment. A genre of elaborately painted screens depicting *Scenes in and around the Capital* reveal a lively city of plentitude at the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth. In one rendition, men and women, the young and the old—aristocrats, samurai, priests, merchants, artisans, beggars—have swarmed onto Kyoto's streets to admire a procession of magnificent floats decorated with memorable incidents drawn from Japanese history and mythology. The floats are the highlight of the Gion'e, a festival honoring a deity who protected the city from plague, and the crowds have settled into every nook and cranny of the parade route. On the banks of the Kamo River some samurai gentlemen unpack a picnic lunch, along Shijō Avenue a merchant family—father, mother, three toddlers, and a grandfather—admire the pageant of floats from their prosperous street-level shop; farther along, refined aristocratic ladies view the proceedings from the ornate entry gate to their estate. All across the cityscape people stop to chat with friends and neighbors and pause to enjoy something to eat: The picnicking samurai buy melons from a peddler, a kneeling servant dispenses tea and snacks to the guests of a temple priest, and a man clad only in a loincloth smiles to himself as he fillets a plump sea bream.

The revitalization of Kyoto calls to mind the tenacity of Japan's past. Just as the city survived the warfare of the sixteenth century, so the imperial line endured as the impervious, eternal locus of political legitimation, and in 1603 the throne's powers of appointment conferred upon the House of Tokugawa both the duty to return peace to the realm and the prerogative to help rule the country. But while history's influence was persistent, the patterns of the past did not merely replicate themselves, for Ieyasu and his successors as shogun presided over what contemporaries came to call the *Taibei*, a "Great Peace" that made subsequent economic, social, and cultural innovations possible. Initially, Ieyasu had only a tenuous hold on power, but during the seventeenth century the Tokugawa shoguns moved decisively to strengthen their hand, shape order out of chaos, and create sophisticated mechanisms of governance that gave them unparalleled civil authority even while permitting the country to flourish. As they did so, they created an environment in which all of Japan's social classes could contribute to unprecedented changes, and by the time the last Tokugawa stepped from office in 1868, Japan had become a very different country from what it had been in 1603. During those two and a half centuries, farm production multiplied severalfold, hundreds of cities sprang up across the countryside, new social classes came into existence, commerce flourished, and the Japanese

came to enjoy one of the world's most advanced standards of living. At the same time, scholars and teachers formulated new codes of social behavior, and the merchant and artisan families in Japan's urban centers popularized new amusements and artistic accomplishments—Kabuki, haiku poetry, and wood-block printmaking—that now are heralded as the quintessential elements of Japanese culture.

The Origins of the Japanese State and the Appearance of the Samurai

The evolutionary appearance of the warrior class in Japan was an unanticipated by-product of the formation of a centralized polity in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. Prior to that time, chiefdoms comprised of numerous village hamlets and presided over by ascendant lineage groups dominated most of the central and western portions of the island of Honshū and spread across Kyūshū and Shikoku as well. Such clans were highly independent; each functioned as an autonomous entity that ruled itself, determined its own codes of behavior, protected its homes and fields against rapacious neighbors, and produced the food and crafts necessary for continued existence. In addition, the paramount of each chiefdom conducted rituals of worship that honored the supposed progenitor deity of the lineage, thus combining in a single leader powers that were sacred as well as secular.

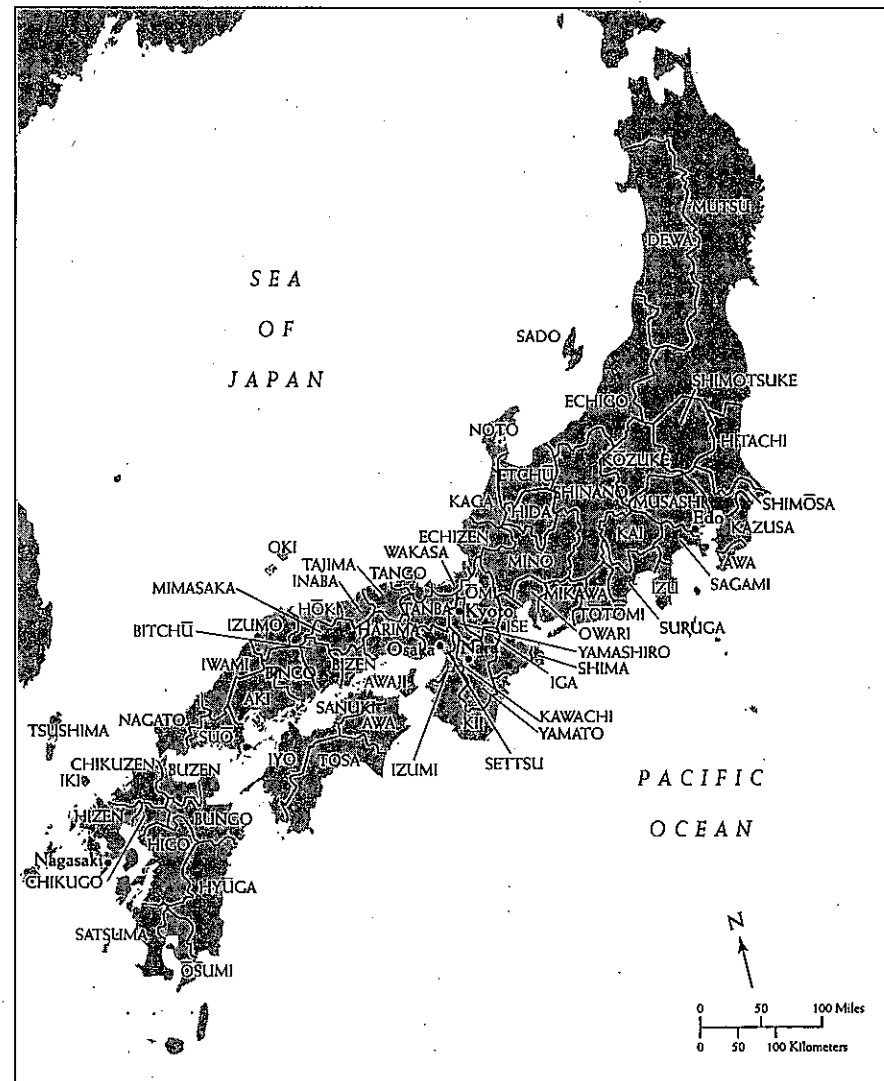
By the late fifth century one powerful family had asserted a recognizable, though decidedly fragile, hegemony over several other chiefdoms around its headquarters in the Yamato region, at the eastern end of the Inland Sea. Known alternatively as the Yamato Line or Sun Line, after its progenitor deity, Amaterasu Ōmikami (the Sun Goddess), that family subsequently used diplomacy, marriage alliances, patronage, and occasionally brute force to buttress its claims to power in central Japan and then extend a degree of authority over other clans to the south and west. By the beginning of the seventh century the Sun Line had emerged as *primus inter pares* among paramounts, ruling somewhat precariously over a federation of subordinate allies and satellite chiefdoms.

Dissatisfied with their still-incomplete grasp on power, enterprising Yamato leaders searched for new ways to augment their strength and influence. In the Sixth Month of 645, the most daring of the inner circle invited prominent rivals to a lavish banquet and then massacred them in the drunken hours of the late evening. Several months later, on New Year's Day

646, according to traditional accounts, the head of the Yamato Line announced the epochal Taika Reforms. Inspired by sophisticated concepts of statecraft that the Japanese had observed on embassies to Tang China, the goal of the reform program, implemented in steps over the next several decades, was to break the power of the remaining chieftaincies and transform the Sun Line into a powerful monarchy that possessed uncontested and direct authority over the people and resources of the Japanese islands.

Emblematic of the momentous changes at hand, the Yamato chieftain became the country's *tennō*. Historians typically have translated that newly coined term as "emperor" to signify the *tennō*'s ambitions to wield absolute power. The more literal rendering of Heavenly Sovereign, however, better captures the notion that the Yamato family used its mythological descent from the Sun Goddess to validate its claims to rule as a "sacred and inviolable" sovereign in a dynasty that would reign forever, in a line "unbroken for ages eternal." The legends included in the *Kojiki*, the legendary "Record of Ancient Matters" commissioned by the Taika reformers and completed in 712, depicted Amaterasu as an especially influential deity who in the murky depths of the prehistoric past had entrusted a mirror, jewel, and sword—the blessed Three Regalia—to her grandson Ninigi no Mikoto when she sent him down from the High Celestial Plain to pacify the Japanese archipelago. Jimmu, Ninigi's great-grandson and the scion of mixed mortal and divine parentage, completed the conquest of Japan, the "land of luxuriant rice fields," in 660 B.C.E. according to the canons of mythohistory, which fictitiously anointed him as the islands' first ruler. In that manner, the Yamato monarchs conjured up the hoary traditions of the religious past and played on their supposed divinity to sanction their new and expanded claims to worldly kingship.

More concretely, the Taika reformers created elaborate central and provincial bureaucracies to manage affairs of state on behalf of the Heavenly Sovereign. At the apex of the new administrative hierarchy stood the Grand Council of State, or *Dajōkan*. Directed by a grand minister, the *Dajōkan* oversaw the activities of more than seven thousand officials assigned to eight principal ministries (Central Affairs, Personnel, Civil Affairs, Popular Affairs, Military Affairs, Justice, Finance, and the Royal Household). To extend the new polity's authority over all the Japanese islands, the Taika Reforms further divided the country into sixty-six provinces and assigned a civil governor and support personnel to each. In a move designed to win the allegiance of former rival chieftains and simultaneously to create a pool of administrators to staff the new organs of government, the Yamato monarchy converted the former clan lineages into a hereditary aristocracy, with those highest in the social hierarchy made eligible for appointment to the



MAP 1.1 The Traditional Provinces of Japan

more important government posts. A series of legal and administrative edicts, most notably the *Taihō* and *Yōrō* Codes of 702 and 757 respectively, helped anchor the new monarchy by reinforcing the proposition that authority derived singularly from the Heavenly Sovereign and by meticulously spelling out the duties of all officeholders.

Still other measures rounded out the Taika Reform effort. Recognizing the necessity of securing a sound financial base, the fledgling monarchy claimed all Japan's agricultural land as its own, specified procedures for distributing paddy to farm families as tabulated in periodically conducted censuses, and decreed that those families pay annual taxes to the government. To provide a home for itself and the attendant aristocracy, the Yamato Line constructed a succession of capital cities. In 710 the court occupied Heijō (present-day Nara), and then in 794 the monarch and nobles moved their palaces and homes permanently to newly founded Heian, "Capital of Peace and Tranquillity," today's Kyoto.

With the machinery of state functioning smoothly, the Heavenly Sovereigns increasingly retreated from participation in routine decision making and filled their days conducting sacred rituals and sacerdotal acts considered essential to the well-being of the country. Thus, before the planting season each spring, the *tennō* instructed his ritualist staff to distribute offerings to priestly subordinates in the provinces, who would then lead a prescribed prayer: "Before the mighty ancestral gods and goddesses who augustly reside on the High Celestial Plain, we humbly raise our words of praise even as we bring choice offerings from the divine descendant at this moment of the majestic and brilliant dawning of the morning light. Before the presence of the deities who govern the crops we do humbly speak, praying that they will grant a late-ripening harvest of grain."³ In such a manner, over time the Heavenly Sovereign came to be considered the personification of religious morality and the fount of political legitimacy, the semi-divine monarch who reigned while aristocratic officeholders managed affairs of state in his name.

Viewed in the long sweep of Japanese history, the Taika Reforms established important philosophical norms, legal principles, and fundamental institutions that continued to shape the nature of governance in meaningful ways throughout Japan's premodern history. They also ushered in an era of stability when the court and aristocracy flourished. As the nobles settled into the routine of officeholding and policy making, they acquired titles to private landed estates, or *shōen*, that brought them enormous incomes. Blessed with wealth and power, aristocratic men and women of Kyoto built their palatial mansions, patronized the arts, and created what many have hailed as the golden age of Japanese high culture.

Despite the best efforts of the new monarchy, not all reform efforts worked as intended. Conspicuous in that regard was the stillborn attempt to create a permanent conscript army. In the early eighth century the new government asserted its authority to induct all males, sons of aristocrats ex-

cepted, into provincial military regiments, which the monarch could call up in rotation for guard duty in provincial capitals or in Kyoto. But many young men were reluctant to abandon their families, and women were just as sad to see their sons and husbands go. As one pair of poems from the *Man'yōshū*, the oldest anthology of Japanese verse, put it:

A frontier-guard

I set out in the morning,

And at the door—

How she wept, my darling wife,

Unwilling to let go my hand!

I will think of you, love,

On evenings when the grey mist

Rises above the rushes,

And chill sounds the voice

Of the wild ducks crying.⁴

With desertions making it impossible to recruit a dependable conscript army, the young regime began calling on certain local families that had trained themselves to be skilled fighters to maintain law and order. At first, such bands of warriors, known interchangeably as *bushi* or samurai, were family-based and took up their swords and bows only occasionally, when officials in Kyoto deputized them to preserve peace in provincial capitals and quell outbreaks of banditry in the countryside. By the eleventh century, however, the legions of warriors had evolved into large-scale, permanently armed organizations allied under the umbrellas of the Minamoto and Taira families. Adorning both family trees were the offspring of various Heavenly Sovereigns, surplus sons cut off from the royal line in order to reduce the possibility of succession disputes in an age when primogeniture was not the standard practice. In compensation for having to leave Kyoto, those transplanted offshoots received land and official appointments in the provinces that permitted them to thrive and attract adherents to their banners. By the twelfth century the Minamoto family (sometimes referred to as the Seiwa Genji) had made their headquarters in the Kantō region in eastern Japan, while the Taira (or Heike) nestled along the Inland Sea to the west of the capital.

Tokugawa Ieyasu and the Office of Shogun

In the second half of the twelfth century a standoff between feuding claimants to the throne brought the *bushi* into Kyoto and eventually propelled the Minamoto family into the ranks of the country's ruling elite. As tensions between rival cliques in the capital deepened in the 1150s, one faction prevailed upon the Taira family for support, and the other side countered by asking the Minamoto to move their samurai into the city. After bitter fighting in 1160, forces commanded by Taira Kiyomori prevailed, and the Minamoto beat a sad retreat back to eastern Japan. With peace at hand, the court expected the Taira to return to its Inland Sea homeland, but to the chagrin of the aristocracy, Kiyomori settled down in Kyoto, had himself and many of his kin appointed to high office, appropriated titles to hundreds of the nobles' *shōen* estates, married his daughter into the royal household, and in 1180 even had his infant grandson enthroned as the Heavenly Sovereign. Increasingly frustrated with Kiyomori's power play, disgruntled courtiers asked the revitalized Minamoto to reenter the fray, and in the bloody Genpei War of 1180 to 1185, Minamoto Yoritomo and his followers dealt a stunning blow to their old adversaries, wiping out the Taira virtually to the last man.

Sensitive as never before to the need for dependable military support, in 1192 the court named Minamoto Yoritomo as the *sei tai shōgun* ("Great Barbarian-Subduing Field Marshal"). The position was an ancient one, dating back to the last half of the eighth century. At that time peoples known as Emishi, a word written with ideographs signifying "Eastern Barbarians," continued to resist the imposition of Yamato rule in northern Honshū, and the Kyoto government from time to time commissioned certain nobles as *sei tai shōgun*, instructing them to muster forces and subdue the recalcitrant inhabitants of the frontier. Although the title fell into disuse after Kyoto officially declared the remote northern regions secure early in the ninth century, the court resurrected the position after the Minamoto victory in the Genpei War. Rather than require Yoritomo to subdue barbarians, however, the monarchy henceforth entrusted the shogun and his descendants with heading a *bakufu* ("tent government") that wielded military and police powers designed to complement civil authority everywhere in Japan.

Among other responsibilities, the Heavenly Sovereign delegated to the *bakufu*, commonly rendered as "shogunate," standing authority to take up arms against anyone posing a threat to the monarchy. In addition, the Kamakura shogunate, so called because the Minamoto settled into that seaside town in eastern Japan, was supposed to maintain discipline over the samu-

rai estate, adjudicate disputes involving conflicting claims to landownership, and ensure that public tax receipts and *shōen* rents flowed from the rural countryside into the state bursary and aristocratic coffers in Kyoto. So that the shogun could discharge his responsibilities competently, the court authorized its new police deputy to appoint higher-ranking warrior followers as military governors, assigned to serve alongside traditional civilian counterparts in the provinces, and to post vassal samurai as land stewards throughout the country.

Although the Kamakura shogunate worked in tandem with the civil bureaucracy in Kyoto to provide domestic stability for more than a century, eventually certain powerful military governors, supported by growing numbers of disaffected land stewards, came to believe that Kamakura did not sufficiently recompense them for their services. The warriors' sense of injustice suffered further aggravation when the shogunate dispensed few rewards to the samurai it stationed along Kyūshū's beaches to fend off invasion attempts by Kublai Khan in 1274 and again in 1281, when the Mongol leader set sail more than four thousand ships bearing nearly 140,000 men to lend meaning to his demand that the Japanese acknowledge his suzerainty. On each of those two occasions the Mongols gained a toehold on Japanese soil, but then *kamikaze*, a "divine wind" supposedly stirred up by Japan's protective deities, ravaged the invasion fleets and forced the Mongols back to their continental bases. However fortunate the appearance of those typhoon gales, the enormous cost of erecting fortifications and maintaining a defense alert for twenty years thereafter brought great economic distress to the warrior estate. With frustrations mounting, in 1333 Ashikaga Takauji, a military governor and distant clansman of the Minamoto's, raised the banner of rebellion and destroyed the Kamakura shogunate.

In 1338 the Heavenly Sovereign appointed Takauji shogun, and the Ashikaga family established its tent government in Kyoto. Despite their pedigree and imperial sanction, however, the Ashikaga shoguns never were able to muster sufficient wealth and prestige to keep other major warrior families at heel. Increasingly, military governors began to amass titles to lands and to act autonomously, obeying or disregarding Kyoto's injunctions as they pleased. In the mid-fifteenth century a factional dispute over shogunal succession upset the delicate balance between the Ashikaga family and its military governors and provided the excuse for ambitious rivals to fall upon one another in a struggle for military supremacy. Fought between 1467 and 1477, the frightfully destructive Ōnin War brought about the downfall of nearly all provincial military governors, left Kyoto smoldering in ashes, and ushered in a century of disunity known as the Sengoku age, an era when Japan was "A Country at War."

TABLE 1.1 *Japan's Three Shogunates*

SHOGUNAL FAMILY	HEADQUARTERS	DATES OF SHOGUNAL RULE
Minamoto	Kamakura	1192-1333
Ashikaga	Kyoto (Muromachi district)	1338-1573
Tokugawa	Edo	1603-1868

Although the royal court and shogunate survived the Ōnin War, they were left as empty shells, a government in name only with scant ability to influence events beyond the confines of the devastated capital. Outside Kyoto, local military lords referred to as daimyo gathered samurai around themselves and staked out control over tightly organized domains that they ruled with savage independence. Aggressively, daimyo built rustic forts and then imposing castles, taxed the peasants on their holdings, and fended off other marauding lords even while attacking neighbors in the hope of expanding their territorial holdings. The period of political decentralization reached a peak in the middle of the sixteenth century, when hundreds of daimyo domains blanketed most of the Japanese archipelago.

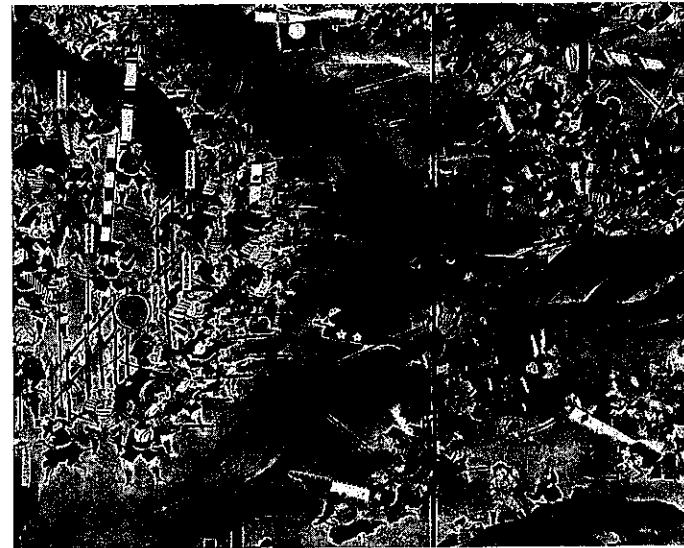
Despite the extreme fragmentation and chaos of the Sengoku age, the ideal of a centralized sovereign polity remained alive, and in the latter half of the sixteenth century three powerful warlords knitted Japan back together. The first to dream of national reunification was Oda Nobunaga. The son of a minor daimyo based in Owari Province, Nobunaga burst into prominence in 1560, when his armies overwhelmed those of a vastly stronger neighbor. Eight years later he led his samurai into Kyoto, the sovereign center, and installed Ashikaga Yoshiaki as a puppet shogun. When the usually weak-willed Yoshiaki had the temerity to oppose him, Nobunaga in 1573 burned much of Kyoto and chased the unfortunate Yoshiaki into exile, thus bringing the Ashikaga shogunate to a formal end.

A brilliant tactician and tireless campaigner, Nobunaga kept his armies constantly in the field, ever expanding his circle of authority. He also was among the first to grasp the potential of firearms, introduced by Portuguese traders when they landed on the small island of Tanegashima to the south of Kyūshū in 1543. Within a few years Japanese merchants were importing the new arms, artisans were busy turning out replicas of the "Tanegashima musket," and in the early summer of 1575 Nobunaga's newly organized corps of three thousand musketeers brought him a spectacular victory in the Battle of Nagashino, which extended his control to the north and east of Kyo-

to. By 1582 Nobunaga had brought some twenty-two provinces in central and eastern Japan under his domination when suddenly a treacherous vassal ambushed him at the Honnōji temple in Kyoto. Wounded, Nobunaga withdrew to the depths of the main hall of worship, and as flames consumed the building, he disemboweled himself rather than suffer the indignity of death at the hands of another.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi quickly avenged his master's death and then turned to the task of hammering the remaining daimyo into submission. Born of humble parentage, the son of a foot soldier in the service of the Oda family, according to the most likely account, Hideyoshi rose through the ranks to become one of Nobunaga's leading generals. When Hideyoshi assumed the mantle of unifier in 1582, he had more than 250,000 samurai, musketeers, pikemen, archers, and foot soldiers under his command, one of the largest armies known to the contemporary world. Boldly he led those battalions into Shikoku and Kyūshū, wiping out some daimyo and winning over others by intimidation and persuasion. After securing hegemony over those two islands in 1587, Hideyoshi wheeled to the north, taking the Kantō provinces in the fall of 1590 and accepting the surrender of daimyo in the far north of Honshū soon thereafter. The military reunification of Japan was

Samurai using Western firearms in the Battle of Nagashino, 1575



then complete: Hideyoshi either held all territory directly or entrusted it to surviving daimyo, who submitted oaths of loyalty to Japan's new hegemon in return for documents of enfeoffment.

Hideyoshi's death in 1598 opened the doors of opportunity for Tokugawa Ieyasu. A resolute campaigner himself, Ieyasu traced his origins back to a warrior family that by the early sixteenth century had fought its way to control over portions of Mikawa Province in central Japan. After Ieyasu inherited the family headship, he continued to wage war against neighboring daimyo, teamed occasionally with Nobunaga, and by the end of 1582 had emerged as one of the dozen or so largest daimyo of the land, with a fast grip over Mikawa and four adjoining provinces. From the mid-1580s Ieyasu allied himself with Hideyoshi, and in 1590 some thirty thousand Tokugawa troops joined the push into the Kantō region. Hideyoshi rewarded his supporter handsomely by more than doubling the size of Ieyasu's holdings, assigning to the House of Tokugawa most of the expansive Kantō Plain, Japan's greatest rice-producing region and the historic homeland of the samurai class. Ieyasu quickly transferred his samurai to their new domain, and as summer turned to fall in 1590, he began construction of an enormous new castle headquarters at the tiny village of Edo along the upper reaches of the bay with the same name.

Just before he died in 1598, Hideyoshi made five major daimyo, Ieyasu among them, swear to manage affairs on behalf of the House of Toyotomi until his infant son Hideyori, resident at Osaka Castle, came of age. The pull of ambition and the lure of national hegemony, however, quickly seduced Ieyasu and the other great overlords, who fell into bickering and plotting that pitted Tokugawa and his followers against an alliance of daimyo from western Japan. The two sides collided in the climactic Battle of Sekigahara, fought in the middle of the Ninth Month 1600. Ieyasu's army of seventy thousand men promptly routed its foes, and on the afternoon of his triumph Ieyasu donned a special ceremonial helmet to view the severed heads of thousands of enemy troops slain in battle. The next month the victorious warlord began to accept pledges of loyalty from daimyo across Japan. Less than three years later, in the Second Month of 1603, the Heavenly Sovereign recognized Ieyasu's feat by elevating him to the office of shogun.

Securing the Realm

Following Ieyasu's appointment as shogun, the House of Tokugawa created a new and vastly more powerful kind of tent government than had existed in the past. Like their predecessors, the Tokugawa shoguns shouldered an

obligation to supervise the warrior estate and preserve domestic tranquillity. But Ieyasu and his immediate successors, Hidetada and Iemitsu, also asserted the supreme right to proclaim laws, levy taxes, and adjudicate disputes. When the process of state building reached completion in the second half of the seventeenth century, the Tokugawa shogunate embraced an imposing assemblage of new duties that made it the center of national governance.

The House of Tokugawa built its superstructure of power on twin cornerstones: unassailable armed strength and an unquestioned monopoly over the office of shogun. To ensure the office would remain within his own family, Ieyasu officially retired in 1605 and arranged to have the Heavenly Sovereign confirm his son Hidetada as the new shogun. A decade later, in 1614 and 1615, Ieyasu and Hidetada led their armies in a final campaign against Hideyori and nearly 100,000 Toyotomi loyalists who had taken refuge with him at Osaka Castle. In some of the bloodiest fighting in an era that already had seen more than its share of unrestrained violence, the Tokugawa regiments reduced the great fortress and its surrounding merchant community to ashes, exterminated the defenders of the Toyotomi name, and drove the hapless, desperate Hideyori to suicide. The following year Ieyasu went peacefully to his grave, content that he had laid the foundation for an enduring regime.

The acquisition of wealth also helped the Tokugawa line of shoguns tighten their grasp on power. Victory on the battlefield permitted the House of Tokugawa to confiscate the holdings of many opponents, and by the time of the third shogun, Iemitsu, the family claimed for its own about one-quarter of all agricultural land in Japan. The annual rice production on shogun-

TABLE 1.2 *Tokugawa Shoguns*

Ieyasu, ruled	1603–1605	Ieshige	1745–1760
Hidetada	1605–1623	Ieharu	1760–1786
Iemitsu	1623–1651	Ienari	1787–1837
Ietsuna	1651–1680	Ieyoshi	1837–1853
Tsunayoshi	1680–1709	Iesada	1853–1858
Ienobu	1709–1712	Iemochi ^a	1859–1866
Ietsugu	1713–1716	Yoshinobu (Keiki) ^b	1867–1868
Yoshimune	1716–1745		

^a Appointed shogun on Ansei 5.12.1 (January 4, 1859).

^b Appointed shogun on Keiō 2.12.5 (January 10, 1867); removed from office on Keiō 3.12.9 (January 3, 1868).

al lands amounted to approximately 6.8 million koku (with koku being a dry measure equal to approximately five bushels, theoretically enough unhulled rice to feed one adult male for one year). The shogunate used the taxes levied on that output to finance its operations and to pay annual stipends to its approximately twenty-two thousand direct retainers, the five thousand bannermen and somewhat more than seventeen thousand housemen who supervised thousands upon thousands of lower-ranking warriors. In addition, shogunal officials directly administered such important ports and emerging cities as Nagasaki and Osaka, and they also controlled the mines that produced the gold, silver, and copper used for the nation's coinage.

As part of the effort to ensure the supremacy of their house, the Tokugawa shoguns maneuvered to extend their authority horizontally over other elites—the monarch and courtiers, the Buddhist clergy, and daimyo overlords—whose cooperation was crucial to the survival of the new regime. Although Kyoto's nobility had suffered grievously during the long decades when Japan was A Country at War, the semidivine Heavenly Sovereign remained the primal source of political legitimation. Consequently, the Tokugawa shoguns understood that they could enhance their own reputations by refurbishing the prestige of the throne and its attendant aristocracy. To that end the shogunate rebuilt long-neglected palaces and mansions and set aside sustenance lands for the royal family and courtiers.

But if Ieyasu enriched, he also enchained. In the Seventh Month of 1615, fresh from crushing the last Toyotomi holdouts at Osaka Castle, Ieyasu and Hidetada issued the Regulations concerning the Royal Court and Nobility. The seventeen clauses in that document represented an audacious attempt by the military hegemony to regulate the behavior of the Heavenly Sovereign and his court and to isolate them from other elites. Pointedly, several clauses instructed the courtiers on the finer points of proper decorum, prescribing a lifestyle devoted to ceremonial pursuits so that the aristocrats would behave like the dignified custodians of traditional culture that they were supposed to be. Article 1 even went so far as to tell the monarch how to spend his time: "The Heavenly Sovereign is to be engaged in the arts, the first of which is scholarship."⁵ Lest there be any misunderstanding about the court's subordination to the military overlords, the Tokugawa shoguns already had stationed a military deputy in Kyoto and garrisoned samurai in the massive, newly constructed Nijō Castle located in the middle of the city.

The same blend of patronage and coercion characterized the Tokugawa shogunate's relationship with the Buddhist establishment. Buddhism had made its way to the Japanese archipelago in the sixth century, after having

spread from India across the Asian continent to China and Korea. Japanese embassies to Tang China in the seventh century could see the physical manifestations of Buddhism's universal appeal: networks of awesome temples and monasteries, volume upon volume of scripture that pointed the way to salvation, and a corpus of magnificent art and iconography. In addition, Japan's Taika reformers realized that the Chinese emperors had harnessed the influence of the Buddhist priesthood behind the government by lavishing patronage on individual sects in exchange for the recitation of prayers and the performance of rituals intended to enhance imperial rule and grandeur. Not surprisingly, when the Japanese monarchy settled into Nara at the beginning of the eighth century, it encouraged several major denominations to build extravagant temples there, making the new capital a major center of world Buddhism.

Although royal patronage of Buddhism declined after the monarchy moved to Kyoto, two sects founded at the beginning of the ninth century became leading centers of religious training and scholarship. One, the Tendai sect, built its home monastery of Enryakuji on Mount Hiei, just to the northeast of Kyoto, while the other, the Shingon sect, located its central temple on Mount Kōya in Kii Province. Later the Kamakura shogunate helped sponsor the introduction of Zen sects into Japan, and in the thirteenth century spellbinding evangelists associated with such popular denominations as the Pure Land and the True Pure Land sects fanned out from Kyoto, searching for converts in villages and country marketplaces across Japan. Many warriors became Zen adherents, while both warriors and common people flocked to the popular sects after hearing the simple message that heartfelt trust in the mercy of Amida, the Buddha of the Western Paradise, would bring salvation to the faithful.

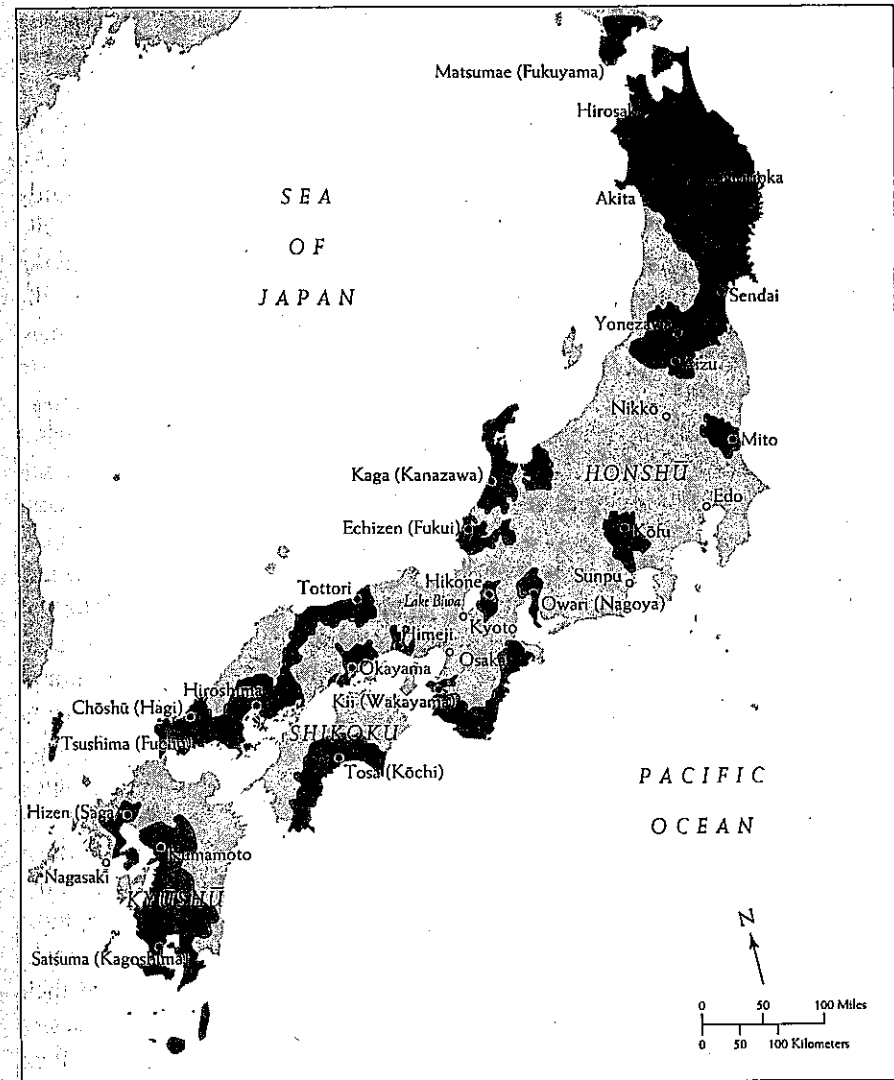
In time certain Buddhist sects became secular powerhouses. Even before Minamoto Yoritomo founded the Kamakura shogunate, Tendai's clerics had taken advantage of their influence at court to gain proprietary control over vast numbers of *shōen* estates and had organized a militia of "rowdy monks" to protect their economic interests. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, adherents of the Honganji branch of the True Pure Land denomination seized control of several provinces in central Japan and along the coast of the Sea of Japan. From their great temple-fortress of Ishiyama Honganji, near the center of modern-day Osaka, the sect's abbots ruled over a far-flung religious confederation that was as wealthy and powerful as the domains of many leading daimyo.

Oda Nobunaga saw the great Buddhist sects as a formidable obstacle to his efforts to reunify Japan. When the clerics at Enryakuji opposed his in-

trusion into Kyoto, the warlord in 1571 unleashed his samurai against Tendai's monastery on Mount Hiei, putting the torch to some three thousand buildings and slaughtering thousands of monks. He then turned his troops against Hōnganji and, after nearly a decade of often savage fighting that claimed tens of thousands of lives, accepted the surrender of the sect's fortress headquarters in 1580. With the secular power of the major sects broken, Tokugawa Ieyasu and his successors moved swiftly to consolidate political and economic control over the Buddhist establishment. In a series of regulatory directives issued between 1610 and 1614, the new regime established its right to intervene in the administration of the major sects and limited priests strictly to the study of religious doctrine and the maintenance of monastic discipline, even while it endowed important temples with landholdings sufficient to sustain themselves as centers of religious devotion and learning.

The House of Tokugawa also strove to impose its will over the two hundred or so daimyo who survived the wars of reunification. Learning from the practices of Hideyoshi, Tokugawa Hidetada in 1617 established the principle that upon succession each and every daimyo would swear a pledge of fealty to the House of Tokugawa, in return for which the national hegemon bestowed upon the regional lord a patent of investiture that defined his holdings and entitled him to rule. Thus, while the old provinces continued to exist on paper, the effective unit of local administration became the daimyo domain. At the same time, the shogunate asserted the right to transfer daimyo to different territories, reduce or even confiscate the domains of troublesome or incompetent lords, and reward worthy followers with new or expanded holdings. The first five Tokugawa shoguns were especially intrusive, depriving 213 daimyo of all or a portion of their holdings for some offense real or imagined, promoting 172 trusted followers to daimyo status, and ordering 281 transfers from one domain to another. As a consequence, some 540 different warrior families held the rank of daimyo during the early modern period, with roughly 250 to 280 coexisting at any given moment.

The shogunate sorted the various daimyo into categories that corresponded to the lord's relationship to the Tokugawa family. Closest to the head of the House of Tokugawa were twenty-three daimyo descended by birth or adoption from Ieyasu and known as *shinpan* ("cadet families"). Three of those, the lords of Kii, Mito, and Owari domains, constituted the *gosanke* ("Three Successor Houses"), whose offspring could be named as shogun in the event that some hegemon died without a suitable direct heir. Assured of their absolute loyalty, the shogunate assigned the cadet houses to domains in the Kantō region or at other strategically important locations. The average cadet daimyo ruled over a substantial domain whose villages col-



MAP 1.2 Major Domains and Castle Towns, circa 1660

lectively produced approximately 50,000 koku of rice a year, while the Three Successor Houses administered larger territories assessed at 619,000 (Owari), 555,000 (Kii), and 350,000 (Mito) koku respectively.

Next in status came 150 or so *fudai* daimyo, "house" or "allied" lords, who attained that rank under Tokugawa patronage and who, for the most

part, had taken the field with Ieyasu at Sekigahara. The majority of *fudai* domains were assessed between 10,000 and 100,000 koku, and the shogunate situated its trustworthy allied daimyo at critical places across the country where they could parry any potential threat against shogunal interests. In contrast, the 100-odd *tozama* ("outside") daimyo, many with domains in excess of 100,000 koku, had achieved their status independently or under the aegis of Oda Nobunaga or Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and most did not swear allegiance to the House of Tokugawa until after 1600. Assuming them at best to be neutral and at worst hostile to Tokugawa authority, the shogunate generally left them in their traditional homes on the periphery of the Japanese islands.

Whatever their status, all daimyo were subject to various expressions of Tokugawa authority. Although it did not tax the daimyo directly, the shogunate expected military service from the various lords upon demand, and whenever the national overlord saw fit, he obligated the daimyo to contribute manpower, material, and money to construct and maintain Tokugawa castles and to carry out public works projects, such as building and repairing roads. In pace with the regulatory measures imposed on the nobility and priesthood, in 1615 the shogunate issued the Regulations concerning Warrior Households. "Law," the code stated, "is the foundation of the social order," and it made daimyo marriages, inheritance, and castle construction or renovations subject to shogunal approval.⁶ Other decrees restricted daimyo to a single castle and specified the exact number of samurai and other troops each lord could maintain.

Even while the shogunate moved aggressively to assert paramount authority over the daimyo, the regional lords preserved as best they could the prerogative of managing the internal affairs of their domains. Indeed, most daimyo preferred to conceive of their holdings as autonomous principalities; there they proudly commanded a body of loyal samurai, policed their own borders, oversaw religious institutions, and were free to levy taxes of their own choosing upon peasants and merchants, issue legal codes whenever they saw fit, enforce laws with whatever rigor they deemed necessary, encourage commerce enterprises that benefitted the local economy, and interfere at will in the personal lives of the inhabitants of the domain in order to preserve peace. Within that context, each daimyo had the unilateral right to forbid people to travel outside the domain, move away from their native villages, or even hold festivals or religious celebrations that he considered unacceptable, for whatever reason.

The daimyo were figures of formidable stature, but as one scholar has noted, their "discretionary power was discretionary only up to a point."⁷ By

demanding pledges of fealty, confiscating and reassigning domains, promulgating codes of expected conduct, and placing limits on the size of armies and the use of force, the first three Tokugawa shoguns made it abundantly clear that the daimyo existed only at their sufferance. Moreover, however much latitude the daimyo enjoyed in governing their domains, the shogunate increasingly expected them to rule in a manner consistent with its practices. The regional lords, as a second version of the Regulations concerning Warrior Households put it in 1635, were to "follow the laws of Edo in all things." Consequently, while daimyo autonomy was to remain a vital and legitimate part of the political system in the early modern era, by the middle of the seventeenth century the regional lords "were no longer absolute masters of their own house."

The daimyo had good reason to take their cues from the House of Tokugawa. By paying allegiance to the shogun and following his guidance, the regional lords received confirmation of their existence and realm-wide recognition of their territorial borders. Tokugawa rule also provided the daimyo with security—after generations of warfare, no lord any longer had to fear aggression from a neighbor—and the shogunate usually provided food, loans, and other aid to domains struck by typhoons, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. The shogunate too obviously profited from the bifurcated nature of governance during the early modern era. First and foremost, the regime in Edo could not have ruled successfully without the cooperation of the daimyo, whose domains covered nearly three-quarters of the country. Similarly, pledges of armed support permitted the shogunate to maintain peace, just as financial contributions enabled it to build castles and carry out public works projects. As ultimately crafted, mutual advantage and interlocking interests undergirded the complex, multidimensional shogun-daimyo relationship.

Reciprocity also formed part of the shogunate's interactions with the court and clergy. To be certain, obvious risks discouraged any shogunal leader from acting too arbitrarily or perhaps even letting his thoughts drift toward pushing Japan's other elites off history's stage. Just as the daimyo almost certainly would have united against any move to abolish them as a class, potential popular opposition cautioned against further suppression of Buddhist sects that had won millions of adherents at all levels of society. Beyond any fear of resistance, however, Ieyasu and his successors foresaw the positive benefits that would flow from choosing to live in symbiotic harmony with Japan's other national elites. Only the Heavenly Sovereign, after all, could appoint someone shogun, with all the privileges of authority that implied, and by providing proper incentives, the shogunate could hope

to shepherd the Buddhist clergy back to their traditional role of mustering spiritual support for the nation and its leaders.

Extending Authority Vertically

The complementary, interdependent nature of rule by shoguns and daimyo became more clearly defined during the early decades of the seventeenth century as both components of government initiated policies that penetrated downward into society, securing control over the people and resources of their respective realms. One of the key concerns of the overlords was to fashion a dependable form of taxation that would permit them to claim a share of the annual rice crop. Consequently, the shogunate and daimyo carefully honed extractive mechanisms designed to maximize tax revenues: Officials conducted censuses, dispatched cadastral survey teams to measure the land and assess its output, and imposed systems of taxation that put a third or more of the crop into the hands of the government.

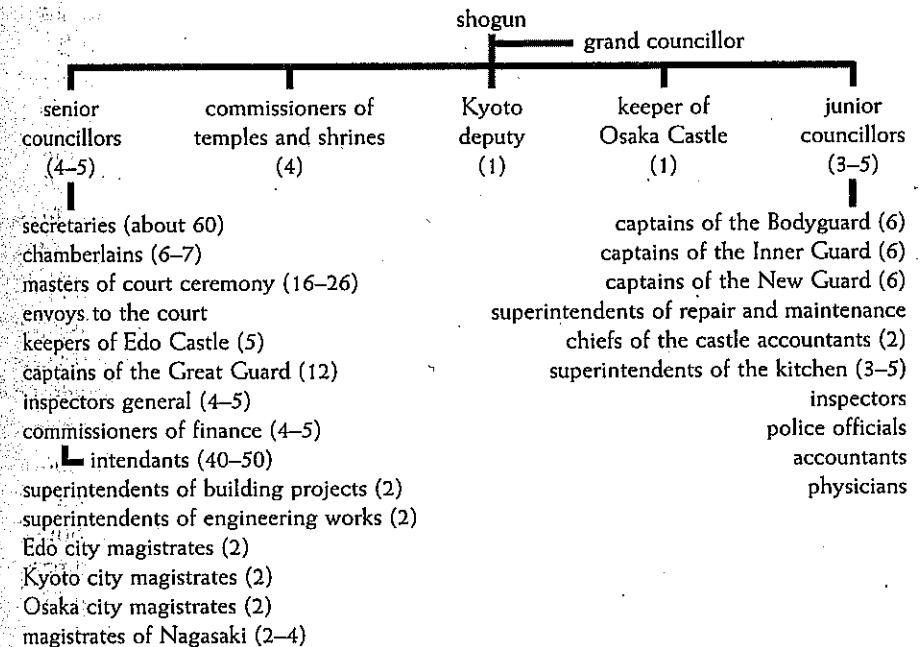
The shogunate and regional daimyo also issued a steady stream of ethical admonitions, practical advice, and legal proclamations intended to serve as guides to everyday conduct for the people on their holdings. The shogunate's Instructions of the Keian Era constituted one of the more famous compilations of such ordinances. Directed specifically toward farmers and issued in 1649 by Iemitsu, the code's thirty-two clauses admonished people that "shogunal law must be observed in everything," lauded such virtues as frugality and self-reliance, exhorted farm families to work industriously, and made it clear that everyone had to submit the annual tax assessment promptly and in full. "As long as he pays his taxes," the document intoned, "no one's life is as carefree as that of a peasant."⁸

In addition to resting their authority on a mix of military might and legal codes, the leaders of the new regime developed sophisticated bureaucracies to help them maintain peace, guide agricultural development and other forms of economic activity, and generally rule more effectively. For advice and assistance in policy making, the shoguns relied on two major advisory boards. First appointed in 1623, the senior councillors were middle- and high-ranking *fudai* daimyo who met in Edo Castle during their tenure in office. As the chief advisers to the shogun the senior councillors exercised authority over matters national in scope, including defense against foreign attack and supervision of the court in Kyoto, as well as over the people, land, villages, and towns and cities within the shogunate's own domain. The junior councillors, also stationed in Edo and named from among

fudai daimyo of lesser status beginning in 1633, handled the more domestic aspects of shogunal life and at the same time took responsibility for the peacetime training and assignment of military guard units, as seen in Figure 1.1.

Several other officials also reported directly to the shogun. Selected from middle-ranking allied lords beginning in the 1630s, the commissioners of temples and shrines regulated religious establishments and maintained law and order on certain shogunal lands lying outside the Kantō region. First appointed in 1619, the keeper of Osaka Castle was also a middle-size *fudai* daimyo, typically with a domain assessed in the range of fifty to sixty thousand *koku*. During his tour of duty, each keeper of Osaka Castle resided in the imposing fortress that the Tokugawa shoguns rebuilt in Osaka following their victory over Toyotomi forces in 1614 and 1615 and functioned as the shogun's senior military officer in central Japan, standing watch against potentially troublesome daimyo. The grand councillor, by way of contrast, was a ceremonial figurehead, and the post often went unfilled.

FIGURE 1.1 Selected Offices in the Tokugawa Shogunate



Among subordinate officials within the shogunate, the various city magistrates and the commissioners of finance were especially notable. The shogun generally assigned two *fudai* daimyo or bannermen of some consequence as magistrates to oversee the activities of the merchants and artisans in each of the larger cities that the shogunate administered directly. The commissioners of finance (who, like the city magistrates, reported to the senior councillors) supervised tax collection and attended to civil administration within the villages on the shogun's direct landholdings. Assisting them were dozens of intendants, appointed from among the shogun's bannermen, who generally resided in Edo while traveling periodically to the villages under their jurisdiction to ascertain that all was in order.

Although local conditions spawned considerable regional variation, daimyo generally created bureaucratic structures similar in nature to those of the shogun, with high-ranking and trusted retainers advising the lord and making policy, while lesser vassals served as the functionaries who looked after tax collection, policing, and the day-to-day management of affairs. The pervasiveness of the new bureaucratic tradition held great significance. Remarkably, within one or two generations at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the samurai transformed themselves from fierce warriors into learned and competent civilian administrators. More than that, however, the shogun and daimyo, who had risen to power through brute strength and conquest, came to base their mandate to rule on the attributes of law, regulation, precedent, rationality, and eventually even public interest.

Legitimations of Power

The Tokugawa shoguns went to great lengths to articulate an ideology of legitimacy that validated their new form of governance. According to the *Tokugawa jikki* ("True Records of the Tokugawa"), a documentary compilation that paid homage to the accomplishments of the first ten shoguns, "Ieyasu had conquered the nation on horseback, but being an enlightened and wise man, realized early that the land could not be ruled from a horse. He wisely decided that in order to govern the land and follow the path proper to man, he must pursue the path of learning."⁹ Ieyasu and his successors did far more than tread a scholarly path; they chased after social status, manipulated religious images, and even turned to an imported set of ethical and philosophical teachings in order to persuade the daimyo, samurai, and ordinary people to accept—without question or reservation—the control mechanisms and instruments of governance that they were imposing on the country.

The House of Tokugawa began to spin a web of legitimacy by constantly reinforcing its close relationship with the Heavenly Sovereign, and the first three shoguns personally journeyed to Fushimi Castle to receive investiture as the *sei tai shōgun*. In addition, Hidetada visited Kyoto in 1617, in the company of "innumerable daimyo," and again in the autumn of 1619 to pay respects to the reigning monarch, Go-Mizunoo. Less than a year later the shogun wed his daughter Kazuko to the monarch, and when Go-Mizunoo abdicated in 1629, an offspring of that particular union of court and camp ascended the throne as the Heavenly Sovereign Meishō, the first woman to reign since the eighth century.

In the Sixth Month of 1634 Iemitsu swept into Kyoto at the head of a grand processional of nearly forty thousand persons. Many daimyo brought their own large retinues of family and samurai retainers into the city for the occasion, pushing the total number of visitors to Kyoto over the 300,000 mark. With great pomp and circumstance, the shogun basked in the image of legitimacy that Meishō's ascension had wrought, made lavish displays of wealth, and seized every opportunity to remind the court and assembled daimyo that the nation's destiny did not stand separate from the fate of the Tokugawa family itself. Although Iemitsu's memorable journey was the last in the tradition of personal visits to Kyoto, every future shogun reaffirmed the blueness of Tokugawa blood by procuring wives and consorts from the royal family and from high-ranking Kyoto nobility.

Proximity to the royal line, however, offered no ironclad guarantee that the Tokugawa line could hold the office of shogun in perpetuity. After all, the Minamoto and Ashikaga shogunates had fallen after losing their martial dominance, and should the Tokugawa somehow falter, the monarch might well sprinkle his favors on some other warrior family capable of providing stable rule. Conscious of their vulnerability, Ieyasu and his successors pulled a religious shroud around their shoulders. Ieyasu developed a keen interest in Buddhism after taking up residence in his retirement castle at Sunpu (modern-day Shizuoka) in 1607, according to Tenkai, a Tendai monk and the ex-shogun's spiritual adviser. One afternoon, while on an outing in nearby mountains, Ieyasu strayed from his companions and, as nightfall approached, overheard a hermit muttering, "This day has passed. My life has lessened. We are like fishes in shallow water. What pleasure could this be?"¹⁰ Ieyasu suddenly realized the vanity of life, in Tenkai's account of events, and in 1614 the holy man supervised the warlord's conversion to the Tendai faith.

Shortly before his death in the Fourth Month of 1616, Ieyasu confided to his priestly mentor: "After I die, I first shall be buried on a mountain near Sunpu, and then, after one full year has passed, be moved to Nikkō, where

my spirit will abide, forever able to protect my country and my descendants."¹¹ Located in a mountain range some seventy-five miles north of the shogunate's Edo headquarters, Nikkō reputedly was the abode of numerous benevolent deities, and Tenkai had established a small temple there some time earlier. In accordance with Ieyasu's wishes, in the spring of 1617 his body was disinterred from its original grave and transported in an elaborate processional across the Kantō provinces to the mausoleum prepared for it at Nikkō. On the first anniversary of the great warlord's death, Tenkai presided over a solemn consecration ceremony, and a proclamation issued by the Heavenly Sovereign in Kyoto deified Ieyasu, bestowing upon him the posthumous title Tōshō Dai Gongen ("Illuminator of the East, August Avatar of Buddha").

Japan's Buddhist sects asserted that Buddha could assume different forms: the historic Gautama Siddhārtha (Sākyamuni), who supposedly lived from 563 to 483 B.C.E. and founded the religion in his native India; the universal, eternal, all-embracing Buddha known in Japanese as Dainichi, and *nyorai*, transcendent figures, such as Amida, the Buddha of the Western Paradise, and Yakushi, the Buddha of Healing. Ranking just below the Buddhas were bodhisattvas, beings of great spiritual virtue and boundless compassion who had achieved enlightenment but refrained from entering paradise so they could help others find salvation. As Tōshō Dai Gongen the canonized Ieyasu became an avatar of Yakushi, able to illuminate the pathway to enlightenment for the people of the Japanese islands.

Ieyasu's transformation to Tōshō Dai Gongen also gave his consecrated spirit a place within the pantheon of native Shinto deities. Often referred to as Japan's indigenous religion, Shinto beliefs began to coalesce around an organized set of practices in the sixth and seventh centuries, just as Buddhism was being introduced into the country. The core values that made up the "Way of the Gods" were much older, however, and centered on a deep reverence for *kami*, spirits or deities that animistically inhabit nature. Written with the same ideograph as the *shin* in Shinto (whose second ideograph means "way"), the term *kami*, in the formulation of one prominent eighteenth-century scholar, denoted "the deities of heaven and earth that appear in the ancient texts [such as the *Kojiki*] and also the spirits worshipped at shrines; furthermore, among all kinds of beings—including not only human beings but also birds, beasts, trees, grass, seas, mountains, and so forth—any being whatsoever which possesses some eminent quality out of the ordinary, and is awe-inspiring, is called *kami*."¹²

Kami were omnipresent across the Japanese islands, and all had the capacity to intrude upon events in the material world. The scope and potency

of their interventions varied considerably, however. A great goddess like Amaterasu possessed powers that extended nationwide and could affect the lives of everyone, while lesser *kami*, venerated at local shrines, made their presences felt only within a single village or urban neighborhood. Moreover, since each *kami* had a potentially malevolent side as well as a serene, altruistic one, humans had to devise rituals and ceremonies that would induce them to use their powers in a manner beneficial to the human community. For that reason, the Heavenly Sovereigns left the day-to-day management of political affairs in the hands of others so that they might concentrate on conducting elaborate rituals to Amaterasu and other important deities. Similarly, farm families periodically hosted festivals at village shrines, at which they offered special foods, set out casks of sake, and arranged performances of music and dance to persuade the local deity to provide an abundant harvest, protect the community against disease, keep natural disaster at bay, or otherwise help people overcome the travails of daily life.

If Shinto creed rested on the assumption that people could be happy and perhaps even prosper in this life if they worshiped *kami* properly, Buddhist doctrine promised a world of inevitable sadness and profound sorrow. Common to the teachings of all Buddhist sects was the uncompromising proposition that humankind's painful and often perplexing existence stemmed from people's emotional attachments, to others and to material possessions. But since everything—emotions, the physical world, existence itself—is transitory, ephemeral, and in constant flux, it is extremely difficult to acquire what one desires, and virtually impossible to keep what one does manage to possess: Beauty fades, fortunes dissipate, death awaits. Moreover, the doctrine of karma ("idea and effect") held that acts in previous existences enmeshed people tightly in a web of desire and suffering, thus frequently condemning them to repeated cycles of rebirth and sorrow. Against the bleakness of that message, Buddhism held out the ultimate hope: By extinguishing desire and individual consciousness, by accepting impermanence and realizing the ultimate oneness of the universe, a person could break the chain of desire, suffering, and karma and enjoy the eternal beatitude of nirvana. For adherents of the Tendai sect, intense study of the Lotus Sutra, purportedly Gautama's last sermon, would light the pathway to enlightenment, while the Zen sects stressed seated meditation as a way to stifle one's ego and overcome acquisitiveness, and the popular faiths urged followers to call on the mercy of the compassionate Amida Buddha.

Whatever their metaphysical and cosmological differences, Shinto and Buddhism coexisted peacefully throughout Japan's premodern history. One

reason for that perhaps had to do with the complementary nature of the two systems. Since Shinto rituals, by and large, focused on openhearted supplications to *kami* for assistance in this world, whereas Buddhism dealt with the fate of one's soul after death, a person could participate in both faiths. Moreover, most Japanese seemed to possess a relaxed tolerance for alternative versions of religious truth, as revealed in attempts to harmonize the two traditions. In the centuries after Buddhism had been introduced into Japan, religious authorities and lay followers alike came to view *kami* as incarnations of specific Buddhas and bodhisattvas. In that regard, Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess and central figure in the Shinto pantheon, became equated with the cosmic Buddha, Dainichi, whose Sanskrit name, Mahāvairocana, meant "Great Sun," and well before the Tokugawa period, most major religious institutions contained both Buddhist and Shinto chapels.

The enshrinement of Ieyasu at Nikkō transformed him from a mortal warlord into a powerful deity whose brilliance shone from the east and cast its protective aura over all the Japanese islands. As an avatar of Yakushi he was a leading Buddha who would work for the salvation of fellow Japanese, and his final resting place recalled that connection, for Nikkō was the name of an important bodhisattva who often appeared beside Yakushi. Drawing upon Shinto beliefs, Ieyasu also was venerated as a *shinkun*, a "divine ruler." Written with the ideographs for *kami* (and, again, pronounced *shin* as in Shinto) and "master" or "ruler," the term implied that Japan's gods vouchsafed the temporal authority of the House of Tokugawa and that Ieyasu's Shinto spirit would protect his descendants, the Heavenly Sovereign and court, the samurai estate, and the entire nation. In a culture that attached great significance to the meaning of names, Tōshō Dai Gongen brought together various prized connections: Ieyasu was a "divine ruler," and he was Buddha Incarnate, the great Illuminator of the East, whose title, for good measure, contained a character, *shō*, that also appeared as the *terasū* in Amaterasu.

The Tokugawa political elite also turned to Confucianism to legitimate further their claims to authority. A Chinese contemporary of the Indian Gautama Siddhārtha, Confucius constructed an ethical system that in his calculations would enable humans to create stable, orderly, and gratifying patterns of living in this world. Subsequent reinterpretation and modification of the original construct brought to the fore two fundamental propositions that later drew the attention of Japanese scholars: Society was divided into hierarchical strata of rulers, peasants, artisans, and merchants, and everyone, regardless of status, was enmeshed in one or more of the basic Five Relationships—ruler and subject, husband and wife, father and son, older brother and younger brother, friend and friend. Moreover, social harmony

could prevail only when each person carried out his assigned social function (the ruler to govern, peasants and artisans to produce goods, merchants to bring commodities to market) and faithfully discharged the obligations inherent in the dualistic pairings (the subject to obey the ruler, the wife to honor her husband, the son to be filial to the father, and so forth). Thus, it was the responsibility of each individual to cultivate his own moral and intellectual capabilities by acquiring knowledge of rituals, poetry, and music, thereby becoming "a person of virtue" who contributed to the greater good of all by understanding and fulfilling his duties.

During the Song dynasty (960–1279), philosophers in China began to emphasize certain metaphysical concepts that elaborated upon Confucianism's traditional concern with practical ethics. Neo-Confucianism, as the new doctrines were called, drew particular attention to the *ri-ki* dualism. *Ki* was "ether" or "material force," a kind of vapor capable of metamorphosing itself into the five elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water). Moreover, *ki* could combine with *ri*, and when that happened, *ki* was condensed, producing living beings as well as physical objects. Similarly, when *ki* and *ri* separated, things ceased to exist. While *ki* acted as the life-giving force, *ri* remained forever as "principle," an elusive abstraction that contained within itself natural law and social norms. Further, *ri* endowed man with his nature, determined the property of things, and steered the course of worldly events. By comprehending *ri*, people could replicate on earth the social hierarchy and personal relationships that defined the perfect moral order.

At the dawn of the early modern period, Japanese intellectuals began to pay close attention to Neo-Confucianism. In particular, the establishment of a new polity and the inauguration of the Great Peace heightened interest in questions about the nature of society and government and the most desirable relationship between the two. Fujiwara Seika, a Kyoto monk and cultured recluse, usually is credited as being the first Japanese to teach Confucianism openly as an independent philosophy, and his student, Hayashi Razan, explicated its doctrines for Tokugawa Ieyasu.

During the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Neo-Confucian thought won considerable backing from Japan's political elites. Hayashi first lectured to Ieyasu in 1605 and two years later became a permanent adviser to the shogunate. As he moved closer to the center of political affairs, Hayashi drafted official documents, counseled shoguns on ceremonial rituals, participated in historiographic projects, and authored the 1635 revision of the Regulations concerning Warrior Households. In return for his services, Tokugawa Iemitsu helped Hayashi establish a school of Neo-Confucian studies in Edo. In 1797 that academy was reorganized and named the Shōheikō, which

served thereafter as the official college for sons of bannermen and housemen, the shogun's direct retainers. Concurrently, most daimyo also established domain schools to provide a Confucian-based education for their samurai. By the nineteenth century there were more than two hundred such institutions nationwide, and nearly all sons of samurai spent several years learning the Confucian ABCs and such martial skills as archery and horsemanship.

The appeal of Neo-Confucianism to Japan's shoguns and daimyo seems self-evident. After a century of warfare and chaos, the doctrine's emphasis on order, obedience, duty, and service to the family, community, and state arrived as welcomed concepts. So too did the notion that a universal moral order required all subjects to be loyal to their rulers. Moreover, in China scholars schooled in the Confucian classics served as state officials and belonged to the category of "rulers," the highest rung of the social hierarchy. As warriors turned bureaucrats, the new samurai of the early modern era could equate themselves with the scholar-officials who served the state in China, privileged as a social class and entitled to rule simply by the very nature of things.

Neo-Confucianism, however, was a double-edged instrument that also made good governance an expectation. If subjects were to be obedient, they likewise were entitled to hold their officials to high moral standards. As Confucius himself once averred, worthy men need not serve unworthy rulers. Accordingly, the shogunate and daimyo were obligated to be righteous, moral, and benevolent governors who exercised their considerable powers on behalf of the people of the realm. Any daimyo who failed the litmus test of virtuous action might have his domain reduced in size or even confiscated. By extension, shoguns who did not rule in a manner that enhanced the well-being of the people ran the risk of dismissal. A corollary observation rounded the circle: Exemplary rulers deserved unswerving loyalty. Articulated in that manner, Neo-Confucianism added another underpinning to Tokugawa legitimacy, combining with the moral authority derived from serving as the delegate of the Heavenly Sovereign and the religious sanction of Ieyasu's deification to create a compelling ideological structure that otherwise would have rested merely on the proposition that might made right.

Symbols and the Substance of Power

The Tokugawa shoguns crafted symbols that added an aura of tangible visibility to their legitimacy. With deliberate forethought, the new regime invented ceremonies that honored its founders, created rituals that added tensile strength to the ties running between Kyoto and Edo, and set in motion a cul-

ture of movement that made palpable to the court and regional lords the pre-eminent position held by the House of Tokugawa. The regalia of power gave physical, concrete substance to claims to authority that otherwise would have remained abstract and theoretical, and they furnished compelling evidence about the durability of the shogun's mandate to rule. In that context, the new symbols of legitimacy were not mere ornaments or decorations; rather, ritual and ceremony became an integral part of the praxis of rule itself.

Between 1634 and 1636 Tokugawa Iemitsu rebuilt and expanded his grandfather's mausoleum at Nikkō. That tribute to the twentieth anniversary of Ieyasu's death became one of the most expensive architectural projects undertaken during the early modern period, consuming an amount equal to nearly four years' output of the country's gold and silver mines. Only those invited by the House of Tokugawa could visit the grand new Nikkō, and they approached the site through a Shinto torii, or gateway, and then walked gently uphill along a pathway that brought into view a sacred stable and three storehouses containing the shrine's most precious treasures. After admiring those buildings, guests passed through a second torii and paused to pray at the Honchidō, a hall of worship that enshrined Yakushi, Ieyasu's Buddhistic manifestation.

Looming ahead was the enormous and extravagantly ornamental Yōmei Gate, the highlight of any pilgrimage to Nikkō. Replete with carvings of auspicious birds and flowers, teeming with sculptures of fearsome dragons and protective gargoyles, and finished with gold leaf and glittering metalwork, Yōmei Gate inspired the famous expression "Do not utter the word 'magnificent' until you have seen Nikkō." Of greater symbolic note, as visitors shifted their gaze to the lintels immediately above the gate's main doors, twenty-two figures celebrating painting, calligraphy, music, and the other accomplishments of Confucian gentlemen-scholars came into view, together with thirty scenes of Chinese children at play illustrating parables that taught moral values. No guests, whatever their rank or distinction, could proceed beyond Yōmei Gate—only mausoleum priests and members of the Tokugawa family enjoyed that privilege—but they could catch a glimpse of another, inner gate that featured a sculpture of the "Duke of Zhou," extolled by Confucius as the paragon of virtuous rule. Beyond that gate stood a Shinto hall dedicated to Ieyasu's *kami* spirit, and to the right a pathway led up the mountain to his funeral urn.

The largess that Iemitsu expended on Nikkō was an act of conspicuous piety that redounded to his political advantage. Beginning with the reconsecration ceremony in 1636, the shogunate periodically required daimyo to join grand processions to Nikkō, where the regional lords bowed in hum-



Yōmei Gate at Nikkō

ble obeisance in front of Yōmei Gate. Moreover, in 1645 the court in Kyoto recognized Nikkō as having the same status as Ise Shrine. Located about as far to the southeast of Kyoto as Nikkō is to the north of Edo, Ise is the abode of Amaterasu, and shogunal envoys to Kyoto annually stopped at Ise to offer respects to the Sun Goddess. Beginning in the late 1640s, the monarch reciprocated by dispatching emissaries to Edo and Nikkō. Each year, as the Heavenly Sovereign's delegation gathered at the Honchidō and then at the steps to Yōmei Gate, priests chanted sutras, burned incense, and offered prayers in a solemn ritual that exalted the apotheosis of Ieyasu and reaffirmed the sanctity of Tokugawa rule.

Ritualized movement, such as that seen in the pilgrimages to Nikkō, had great symbolic importance in early modern Japan, and it acquired additional prominence when Iemitsu regularized the *sankin kōtai* system of "alternate attendance." From the very early days of the shogunate, some daimyo visited Edo from time to time to pay homage to the House of Tokugawa, and by the 1610s a few even had constructed residences near Edo Castle,

where they spent their sojourn. The 1635 revisions to the Regulations concerning Warrior Households, however, instructed all *tozama* daimyo to reside in Edo every other year, and the shogunate extended that requirement to all daimyo in 1642. Subsequently, the shogunate divided the lords into different groups so that approximately half the *tozama* and a like proportion of *judai* daimyo resided in Edo in any given year.

The regional lords made the best of the situation, progressing back and forth to Edo in grand cavalcades that permitted them to vaunt their wealth and grandeur. A major daimyo traveled with a thousand or more warriors and servants. Typically, flag bearers and pikemen carrying tall halberds decorated with exotic animal furs marched at the front of the column, followed by mounted samurai, porters bearing handsome lacquered boxes emblazoned with the daimyo's crest, high-ranking domain officials, the daimyo seated in his own palanquin and attended to by valets and other personal attendants, and a rear guard of warriors and servants. With the *tozama* daimyo moving in and out of Edo during the Fourth Month, and different groups of allied lords filling the country's roadways in the Second and Eighth months, ordinary Japanese had ample opportunity to admire what one observer called the "pomp and magnificence" of daimyo processions.¹³

However gratifying parades across Japan may have been for lordly egos, ultimately the rhythmical coming and going of the processions affirmed Edo's political centrality. As everyone knew, the daimyo were moving about because the shogunate had ordered them to do so. Moreover, the shogunate required the lords to perform various ritualized acts of service and homage while in Edo, including periodic visits to Edo Castle or to Hidetada's mausoleum, a short distance away in the southern part of the city. Gifts too entered the equation. Upon arrival in Edo, the lords presented to the shogun carefully bred horses, exceptional swords, finely crafted suits of armor, and other tokens of gratitude for having received the Original Gift of a domain and for enjoying the benefits of the Great Peace that had settled over the land. Finally, as part of the alternate attendance system, each regional lord had to maintain a lavish residential estate in Edo, where he left a permanent staff and, as a surety of good behavior, his principal wife and heirs.

Japan and the World

The Tokugawa shoguns claimed for themselves the prerogative of acting as the arbiter of Japan's foreign relations, and, in doing so, again mixed symbols with substance to reinforce further their domestic political legitimacy.

Japan's longest and richest ties were with its continental neighbors, China and Korea. During the era of the Taika Reforms, Japanese learned key principles of statecraft from China, and later generations of Kyoto aristocrats took great delight in Chinese art and poetry. The cultural debt to Korea was no less great. Even before the Taika coup d'état of 645, Koreans helped introduce Buddhism to Japan. Moreover, during the fifth and sixth centuries many scribes, potters, weavers, and metalworkers moved from the peninsula to the islands. Those migrants brought with them advanced technical skills and new forms of knowledge, and some became heads of powerful chiefdoms that supported the Yamato Line when it fashioned its hegemony over other clans. Indeed, so important were the migrants' contributions to the formation of the Taika polity that perhaps a third of the newly created aristocratic families that populated Nara and Kyoto had roots that extended back to the peninsula.

Japan lived in peace with its nearest neighbors for a thousand years, until Hideyoshi decided to extend his power beyond Japan's borders. To this day no one understands his motive. Perhaps it was to acquire additional lands to distribute to daimyo loyal to him, or perhaps it was just an insatiable thirst for power, megalomania run wild. After all, in one letter to the king of Korea, Hideyoshi wrote that he was conceived when the Wheel of the Sun entered his mother's womb in a dream, an unequivocal sign that the glory of the Toyotomi name should illuminate the Four Seas, just as the sun shone throughout the universe. He had pacified Japan and demonstrated his invincibility there, Hideyoshi signaled, and now he would invade Korea and China, even India, and introduce Japanese customs and values to those countries.

Hideyoshi's expeditionary army of nearly 160,000 men landed at Pusan in southern Korea on the twelfth day of the Fourth Month 1592 and took that city in a single day. The Japanese sped up the peninsula, arriving at the gates of Seoul in just three weeks and reaching the Tumen River by summer's end. The farther north the invasion force ventured, however, the more trouble it found. Korean fleets kept Japanese supply ships out of the Yellow Sea, forcing Hideyoshi's quartermaster corps to carry arms and food on the backs of men and horses up the entire length of the peninsula over unsecured roads that merely led from one hostile village to the next. Guerrillas harassed the troops every step of the way, disrupting supply efforts and driving the Japanese into fortified garrison towns. By the end of the year Hideyoshi's armies were bogged down and dared not venture outside their forts in bands of fewer than three hundred; north of Seoul, it was said, five hundred were needed for safety. Massive Chinese intervention in the First Month of 1593 overwhelmed the Japanese armies, which retreated to en-

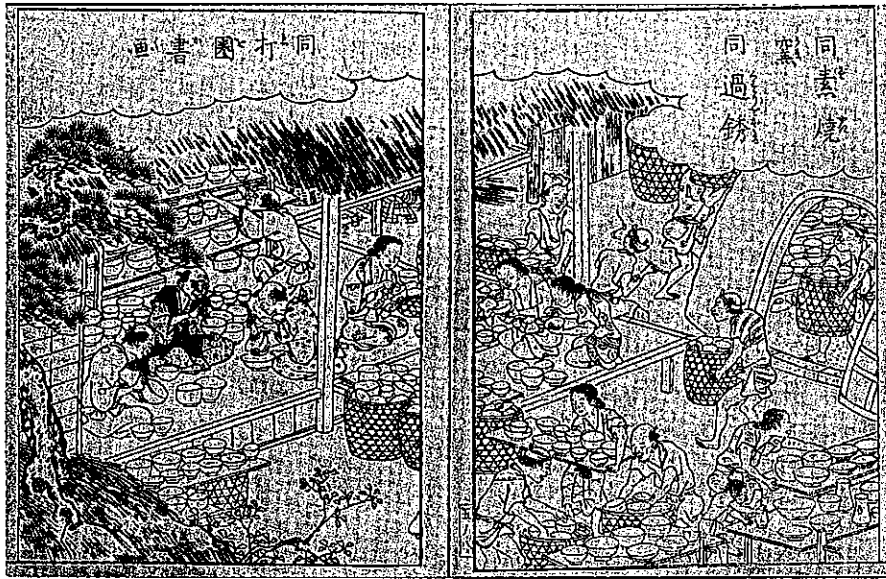
claves around Pusan. Hideyoshi renewed the war in the Seventh Month of 1597, and the new expeditionary force fought its way to within forty-five miles of Seoul. After key losses on land and sea demoralized Japanese forces, however, they again retreated to the Pusan redoubt and then returned to Japan after Hideyoshi died in the Eighth Month of 1598.

Little good came of the conflict. Looted scholarly texts pirated to Japan stimulated interest in Neo-Confucianism, while Korean craftsmen taken captive and resettled in Japan began to manufacture Arita (Imari) and Hagi pottery, still famous today. More overwhelming, however, was an enduring legacy of mutual bitterness. Nearly one-third of Japan's 150,000-man army perished in the winter of 1592–1593, killed by guerrillas or dead from exhaustion, hunger, cold, and disease. Koreans suffered almost beyond imagination. Japanese troops burned Seoul to the ground in 1593, and when Hideyoshi renewed the invasion in 1597, he ordered his generals to kill anyone who resisted them—combatants and noncombatants, men, women, and children alike—and to hack off and pickle their noses for shipment to Japan. In Kyoto, Hideyoshi piled tens of thousands of those grisly trophies into a sizable hill beside his mausoleum. Planted with cherry trees, the misnamed Mound of Ears remains today a favorite site for springtime picnics and blossom viewing.

A different testimonial to the horrors of the 1590s came from the diary of Keinen, a Buddhist priest and physician who accompanied his daimyo lord to Korea. Keinen's *Chōsen himikki* ("Korea Day by Day") presented an intense, distraught portrayal of soldiers infected with what he called the Three Poisons: covetousness, anger, and the ignorance of right and wrong. "The very fields have been put to the fire," he wrote one day, "not to speak of the forts. People are put to the sword, or they are shackled with chains and bamboo tubes choking the neck. Parents sobbing for their children, children searching for their parents—never before have I seen such a pitiable sight." To that observation he attached a poem:

The hills are ablaze
with the cries of soldiers
intoxicated
with their pyrolatry—
the battleground of demons.

Keinen watched aghast as slavers rounded up "men and women, young and old alike," part of the fifty to sixty thousand Koreans forcibly taken to Japan. "Having tied these people together with ropes about the neck, they drive



Men and women potters at Arita

them along before them; those who can no longer walk are made to run with prods or blows of the stick from behind." When the priest witnessed the brutal attack on Namwŏn he sadly noted, "All in the fortress were slaughtered, to the last man and woman. No prisoners were taken." With such scenes burned into his memory, Keinen concluded: "Hell cannot be in some other place apart from this."¹⁴

Despite the agonies of the time, considerable numbers of Westerners began to arrive in Japan during the last half of the sixteenth century, carried there on the last wave of Europe's great maritime explorations. Just six years after the Portuguese came ashore at Tanegashima in 1543, the Jesuit apostle Francis Xavier inaugurated the first Christian mission to Japan, and by the time Ieyasu became shogun, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and English traders and adventurers had become common sights in port towns in central and western Japan. Impressed by physical differences, many Japanese tended to refer to the English and Dutch as Red Hairs. Since the Iberians sailed to Japan from the south, in particular Macao and the Philippines, they got lumped together as *nanban* ("Southern Barbarians"), a term sometimes applied to all Europeans and their customs and products.

Initially, most Japanese gave the Europeans a hospitable reception. In part, of course, some simply were curious about the external aspects of different, far-off civilizations, such as the exotic clothes Westerners wore and the strange but intriguing foods they ate. Indeed, at this time the Japanese came to enjoy unfamiliar fruits and vegetables, such as watermelon and sweet potatoes, and, it is said, learned how to make bread and tempura from the Portuguese. New knowledge that the Europeans possessed about geography, cartography, shipbuilding, and navigation attracted others. For daimyo still fighting to secure a place in the emerging political order, access to muskets and other military technology was reason enough to greet European arms dealers warmly. Finally, a few intrepid Japanese traders themselves were venturing abroad to establish trading outposts and small "Japan towns" as far afield as the Philippines, Cambodia, and Siam, and they were happy to exchange goods for a profit with their European counterparts.

Japanese also listened attentively to the proselytizing of Francis Xavier and other Christian missionaries. By 1600 Jesuit, Franciscan, and Dominican apostles claimed to have converted 300,000 Japanese. Doubtless, many Japanese sincerely believed in the message of Christ, but faith and trade were intimately interwoven. Some Portuguese sea captains dropped anchor only at ports where the local daimyo welcomed Christianity. That message was clear too, and a few daimyo had every person in their domains embrace the Christian God in order to attract Portuguese shipping. Perhaps the most prominent Christian daimyo was Ōmura Sumitada. Baptized in 1563, that warlord took the name Dom Bartolomeu and opened his port at Nagasaki to Portuguese trade in 1571.

It did not take long, however, for Japan's unifiers to become suspicious of a foreign religion whose First Commandment demanded exclusive loyalty to a jealous God. As early as 1587 Hideyoshi issued a decree instructing all Jesuit missionaries to leave "within twenty days." Although the warlord did not enforce the order immediately, a decade later he accused six Franciscan friars, three Jesuits, and seventeen converts of subversion and had them publicly executed upon the cross in Nagasaki. In explanation of his anti-Christian attitude, Hideyoshi wrote to the governor of the Philippines that he could not allow missionaries to propagate a foreign creed in his realm any more than the kings of Spain and Portugal would tolerate Shinto or Buddhist priests moving about their countries.

Even with the example of the Twenty-six Martyrs fresh on their minds, Roman Catholics continued to spread the faith until the Tokugawa shoguns stepped up the persecution of Christians. In 1614 Ieyasu again ordered all missionaries to depart the country. The "pernicious doctrine" of Christian-

ity, his decree read, merely taught people to "contravene governmental regulations, traduce Shinto, calumniate the True Law, destroy righteousness, corrupt goodness."¹⁵ When many foreign apostles ignored the shogun's rage and continued to proselytize under cover, the shogunate launched a merciless persecution, executing fifty-five Christians at Nagasaki in 1622 and hunting down Catholic priests and their followers everywhere. By the time the attack on the Catholic Peril ended in the late 1630s, as many as four thousand believers had met their deaths, and Christianity survived only in isolated rural hamlets on Kyūshū, far from the zealous eyes of shogunal officials.

Iemitsu made the persecution of Christianity part of a broader exclusionary ban on Europeans in Japan. In the mind of the third shogun, the West was synonymous with Christianity, and the propagation of the foreign faith constituted not only a threat to Tokugawa attempts to anchor its legitimacy in the Shinto and Buddhist creeds but also an assault on all native traditions, just as his grandfather's decree had stated. Moreover, trade was a consideration: Shogunal advisers remained aware that in the past daimyo in southwestern Japan had used foreign trade as a means to build strength. In addition, unrestrained trade drained the country of its precious gold and silver reserves. Its mines yielded considerable amounts of silver, perhaps one-third of the world's output annually at the beginning of the seventeenth century. At the same time, however, Portuguese traders in Japan were loading as much as twenty tons of silver a year onto their galleons for shipment to their headquarters in Macao. "Had the Portuguese enjoyed the trade to Japan but twenty years longer," one foreign observer later wrote, "such riches would have been transported out of this Ophir to Macao, and there would have been such a plenty and flow of gold and silver in that town, as sacred writ mentions there was in Jerusalem in the time of Solomon."¹⁶

Consequently, between 1633 and 1639 the shogunate issued five so-called seclusion edicts that totally proscribed Christianity, forbade Japanese to travel abroad, banned Portuguese ships from entering Japanese ports, and strictly regulated foreign trade. When the Portuguese sent an embassy from Macao in a futile attempt to get trading privileges reinstated, the shogunate ordered "that the ship shall be consumed by flames and the principal ambassadors shall be put to death along with their companions so that nothing may remain of this harbinger of evil."¹⁷ A sixth edict, issued in 1641, confined the Dutch to Dejima, an artificial island constructed in the middle of Nagasaki Bay, and effectively authorized only Dutch and Chinese traders to operate in Japan.

Apart from the Chinese and Dutch, the only other outsiders permitted to enter Japan during the Tokugawa period were diplomatic envoys periodically dispatched by the kings of Korea and the semi-independent monarchy that ruled over the Ryūkyū Islands. In 1607 Ieyasu agreed to normalize relations with Seoul, and the Korean king sealed the negotiations by promising to send ambassadorial missions to Edo on appropriate occasions. In addition, the Ryūkyū Islands became an "emissarial country" during the early modern era. The Shō dynasty had reigned over that archipelago from the fourteenth century, but the daimyo of Satsuma domain invaded the islands with fifteen hundred samurai in 1609 and overran the headquarters of the Ryūkyūan king. A treaty concluded in 1611 nominally preserved the kingdom's autonomy but in reality made the islands into a dependency of the Shimazu daimyo family, lords of Satsuma domain. On fifteen occasions between 1634 and 1806, the Shō monarchs dispatched embassies to Edo to confirm the suzerainty of the Shimazu daimyo and the Tokugawa shogunate.

The seclusion edicts and the treaties with Korea and the Ryūkyū Islands augmented the shogunate's arsenal of powers. The Minamoto and Ashikaga shoguns had been anointed as the defenders of the country, but the Tokugawa rulers moved beyond that to claim exclusive responsibility for formulating foreign policy. Symbolically, the shogunate employed the ritual of movement to represent its ascent to the apex of national affairs. Significantly, most corteges of foreign ambassadors rushed through Kyoto without stopping to pay respects to the Heavenly Sovereign. Their arrival in Edo, in contrast, was a grand event marked by lavish ceremonials, special performances of classical orchestral music, and exhibitions of mounted archery and other martial skills. There was also considerable symbolic gift giving; from the Korean ambassadors, the shogun could expect to receive bolts of silk, cattles of ginseng, jugs of refined honey, and the skins of tigers hunted in the peninsula's rugged mountains.

Moreover, on several occasions between 1636 and 1655 many of the foreign delegations from Korea and the Ryūkyū Islands proceeded to Nikkō, suggesting that Ieyasu had become a universal god whose authority extended even beyond the shores of Japan. That notion received visual representation in 1643, when the king of Korea shipped a large bronze bell to Nikkō. An inscription on the gift celebrated Ieyasu's splendor: "The Hall of Religious Practices at Nikkō was constructed for Tōshō Dai Gongen, the August Avatar of Buddha. Possessed of infinite merit and virtue, the August Avatar receives infinite reverence. The filial piety inherent in succeeding to his work and expanding thereupon increasingly glorifies the illustrious deeds of this ancestor. Our king has heard of this and, overjoyed, has caused this

bell to be cast."¹⁸ Officials constructed a belfry just to the right of Yōmei Gate, where each daimyo and royal envoy who made the pilgrimage to Nikkō could read this tribute to the sweeping, irresistible majesty of the Tokugawa shogunate.

Starting in 1633, representatives of the Dutch trade mission stationed in Nagasaki also traveled yearly to Edo. The shogun did not always treat those merchants with dignity, however, preferring to make his point about shogunal eminence with blatant crudeness. One member of a Dutch delegation in 1691 recalled waiting "upwards of an hour while the shogun seated himself in the Hall of Audience."¹⁹ Finally a chamberlain ushered the foreigners into the presence of the shogun, where, according to one, "we all had to show our submission in Japanese fashion with heads to floor and crawl in the direction" of the overlord. With the pecking order firmly established, "the farce began." After posing "a number of meaningless questions," the shogun instructed his guests "to take off our *kappa*, or ceremonial robes, and sit upright so that he could inspect us; had us now stand up and walk, now pay compliments to each other, then again dance, jump, play the drunkard, speak Japanese, read Dutch, draw, sing, put on our coats, then take them off again." In the end, one young man noted resentfully, "I join'd to my dance a love-song in High German."

The capacity to dictate foreign policy added to the growing number of governing prerogatives exercised by the Tokugawa shogunate. During the first half of the seventeenth century the new regime in Edo made the Heavenly Sovereign and his court dependent on its favors, subordinated the Buddhist establishment to secular discipline, and tamed the daimyo. As it compelled the regional lords to participate in the alternate attendance system and claimed the right to speak for all Japanese in dealing with the outside world, the shogunate emerged as the focal point of central governance in Japan. Moreover, its ability to dominate other elites and formulate policies that affected the entire nation eclipsed the powers previously exercised by the Heavenly Sovereign and Dajōkan in Kyoto and by the earlier Kamakura and Ashikaga shogunates.

Initially, the House of Tokugawa relied on brute strength, on the coercive power of its armed might and economic wealth, to advance its claims to rule the country. By the time of Iemitsu's death in 1651, however, the image of a ruler on horseback had given way to a new ideological legiti-

macy that derived moral authority from Buddhism and Shinto and drew additional philosophical support from Neo-Confucianism. At the same time, new structures and techniques of authority came to the fore. By mid-century it was not an individual shogun but, rather, the shogunate, an organization of trained officials, that managed affairs, and it did so in accordance with legal codes, bureaucratic regimentation, and recorded precedent.

The regional lords also maneuvered to tighten their grips over their individual domains during the first half of the seventeenth century. Daimyo were not deified in the manner of Ieyasu, but they did augment their claims to authority by patronizing local religious institutions and sponsoring schools that propagated Neo-Confucian doctrine. Furthermore, by participating in the Tokugawa rituals of power—by residing alternately in Edo and swearing an oath of fealty in exchange for a document of investiture—daimyo announced their inclusion in a realm-wide system in which legitimacy ultimately flowed from the Heavenly Sovereign. As the daimyo became strong civil governors, they began to intrude more visibly into the lives of the inhabitants of their domains. Just like the shogunate on its direct holdings, the daimyo on their domains issued legal codes, imposed taxes, and crafted administrative systems that brought their authority into every village and each household. In that regard the early seventeenth century was an important epoch in Japanese history when state control—both the ability of the center in Edo to dominate other elites and the ability of shogun and daimyo to impose their will on their subjects—became more evident and pervasive than ever before in Japanese history.

As powerful as the Tokugawa shoguns and regional lords became, however, they were not autocrats. For all of their pretensions to power, the Japanese hegemon and their officials did not have unlimited resources, and sometimes they found that their reach exceeded their grasp. At other times, as improbable as it might seem, samurai bureaucrats showed little appetite for dictatorially controlling economic and social developments. As much as it might appear on the surface as the Age of the Samurai, in many significant ways the early modern period eventually became as well the Age of the Commoner, an era when the ordinary men and women of Japan—peasant, merchant, and artisan alike—shaped the character of Japan's commercial, social, and cultural life in a multitude of significant ways.