

**CAST IN SILVER: THE RISE AND DEMISE OF KYUSHU CORSAIRS IN A  
UNIFYING JAPAN, 1540–1640**

by

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## Abstract

Piracy in Japan was transformed both politically and economically between 1550 and 1640, in the period of Japanese territorial unification. With the advent of the silver trade, what had been an independent economic enterprise became a sponsored one. Japanese piracy increased in the sixteenth century, and in a structurally different manner from what had transpired in previous centuries. It was now structurally organized as a trade enterprise and was often sponsored by landed power holders. For this reason, pirates are defined herein as *corsairs*, since they were sponsored by and dependent on daimyō. With a sole focus on Kyushu, this dissertation examines events affecting the Kyushu daimyō, taking as catalyst the annexation of Ryukyu. Revived by the silver trade in Kyushu, Japanese pirates were allowed to find their own economic and political niches in the territories and coastal areas that they occupied. As their economic circumstances improved under the sponsorship of those in political power, in most cases they also found it necessary to adopt a political demeanour—that is, of corsairs—that fitted the times. Further, legislation that aimed to eliminate piracy let them collude further with local daimyō for political protection; failure to do so resulted in the disappearance of smaller, less powerful, piratical clans. The unification of Japan and adverse economic conditions tied corsairs to local power holders. The Korean wars of Hideyoshi (1592–98), and the subsequent battle of Sekigahara, resulted in the deaths and reallocations of powerful corsair clans. Their piratical endeavours were brought to a close not only by the unification wave and its legislation, but through all-encompassing wars that changed the economic and political conditions such that piracy became less than desirable from the point of view of the central government. It was eliminated, while as an international activity piracy was left to foreign mercenaries such as the Dutch and Chinese.

## **Lay Summary**

The main purpose of this dissertation was to analyze the economic effects the silver trade had on the piratical clans of Kyushu from the mid sixteenth to the early seventeenth century. The need for such an inquiry and analysis lies in the fact that very few studies in English are available on the topic of Japanese piracy. In addition, this study looks at the transformation that brought Japanese pirates closer to local rulers while Japan was being territorially unified as a nation under the Tokugawa regime. The fact that the increasing availability of silver led to pirates becoming corsairs became a challenge to the political will of the new rulers, who consequently suppressed pirates and corsairs by monopolising silver production and imposing strict trading policies.

## **Preface**

This dissertation is an original, unpublished and independent work by the author.

A paper based on Chapter 3 was published in the *Journal of Northeast Asian History*, vol. 10 no. 1 (summer, 2013) as “Salt, Shores and Shipbuilding: the Geo-political, Interpersonal, and Economic Networks of the Ōtomo Corsairs of Northern Kyushu.”

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## **Dedication**

Dedicated to everyone who guides others in the darker moments of their lives, like a lighthouse guides lost seafarers in a tempest.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction: Cast in Silver: The Rise and Demise of Kyushu Corsairs in a Unifying Japan, 1540–1640

This study is an assessment of the major pirate clans of Kyushu and their transformation into corsairs for Kyushu's lords, brought about at first by an increased commercialization and then influenced by the silver trade during the wars of territorial expansion. It is also an assessment of their demise, due to silver and trade regulating policies implemented by the newly established Tokugawa government from 1603, soon after Japan's territorial unification, until 1639. At the same time, it offers an analysis of pirates' (and corsairs') economic realities, both domestic and in dealing with international trade, such as diplomatic or tribute trade and illegal trade, also called piratical trade (*bahan bōeki*); these economic realities allowed piracy in all its facets to co-exist and to thrive within the mainframe of politically established tributary trade systems that in turn underwent drastic changes. Internationally the tribute trade regulated by Ming China clashed with the mercantile trade performed by the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch, especially after the discovery of silver in Japan. Domestically, the competition between the Japanese government (*bakufu*) and local Kyushu lords for maritime routes and new markets in East Asia was fought on the seas, employing pirates (and later corsairs) who carved a niche in such competition for themselves.

Between the late fifteenth and late sixteenth centuries, the maritime routes from southern Kyushu to Ryukyu were one of the main stages of such competition. By taking as a catalyst the kingdom of Ryukyu, from the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century, I intend to demonstrate how pirates were co-opted into becoming corsairs, authorized to undertake their maritime

activities in various geopolitical settings due to the effects of a commercial economy augmented by the silver trade, from the Amami Ōshima and Tōkara archipelago to the coasts of southern and northern Kyushu. Hence, this study analyzes the extent to which the silver trade affected the transformation of pirates into corsairs in Japan from 1542 to circa 1592, coupled with an explanation for why they were not integrated into the maritime trading landscape that emerged in the Tokugawa period, instead opposing it until the battle of Shimabara in 1639, when pirates and corsairs were replaced by smugglers. However, to write in the first place about this transformation and about the use of the term *corsairs* in the context of Japanese history, I find it useful to compare, and in some cases to contrast, the geopolitical environment in which Mediterranean and Japanese corsairs dwelled.

In Japan, as well as in Europe, to engage in the war of *corsa* was a violent but institutionalized maritime activity; the institutional element distinguished it from piracy. Corsairing is here interpreted as a form of alternative commerce cum legitimated maritime violence, influenced by political instability that occurred in time of crisis—a commerce of war, as outlined in the work of historian Gonçal Lopez Nadal, whose conception of corsairing is understood as an alternative to neutral trade and smuggling.<sup>1</sup> My hypothesis is that Japanese pirates, who became corsairs, came to be eliminated at first by the Toyotomi edicts and later by Tokugawa economic policies, and were then replaced by proxy trade or neutral trade and by smugglers. This hypothesis mirrors Nadal’s theory on corsairs, which has shaped my approach.<sup>2</sup> In Kyushu, corsairing began due to political instability; conflicts among various daimyō to expand into each other’s territories were sustained by piratical trade or *bahan bōeki*, trade

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<sup>1</sup> Gonçal Lopez Nadal, “Corsairing as a Commercial System: The Edge of Legitimate Trade,” in *Bandits at Sea* ed. R. C. Pennell (New York: New York University Press, 2001). According to Nadal, neutral trade was trade carried out by a proxy, while smuggling was an enterprise whose political engagements differed from the war of *corsa*.

<sup>2</sup> Nadal, “Corsairing as a Commercial System,” 125-135.

exercised by illegal means by pirates, merchant-pirates, and corsairs.<sup>3</sup> In addition, late sixteenth-century Japanese society was what Nadal would have considered “economically thwarted by an unchallengeable commercial competitor” which was Ming China, due to the maritime bans imposed, off and on, on Japanese trade.<sup>4</sup> Given the impossibility of trading legally, the Japanese became pirates and later corsairs. Historical events in Japan in the early seventeenth century suggest that Nadal’s theoretical model can only be applied to the Japanese case with a twist, as the corsairs, whom Nadal sees as being preceded by a proxy trade and later by smugglers, by the mid-seventeenth century came to be suppressed in favour of neutral trade or proxy trade performed by the Dutch and Chinese—often in conflict with each other—or by smugglers.

My project dealing with piracy reassesses Japanese territorial, political, and economic unification from a southern maritime perspective. Kyushu was very much central to trade in Southeast and East Asia. Internationally, it deals with piracy between Japan and other nations (in political and geoeconomic terms) such as Ryukyu, Ming China, and Korea to a certain extent, while analyzing the causes for piracy and its transformation as rooted in the export of silver coupled with Japanese domestic policy and issues; as such it represents a novelty. Until now, scholars who have dealt with piracy and silver exports, chiefly Kobata Atsushi, have not explored Japanese domestic policies in the transitional period from the late Sengoku to the early Tokugawa period, mostly because to do so is rather cumbersome, as the issue of trade becomes intertwined with domains versus central government policies. On the other hand, scholars who have dealt with piracy have only looked at the life of commoners, like Amino Yoshihiko, or the history of violence; some have treated pirates as naval forces at the service of local lords. By

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<sup>3</sup> In my view, pirates were not authorized to exercise violence and trade by any authority but their own and merchant-pirates were mostly merchants who traded illegally and were perceived as pirates by their own authorities, while corsairs had the backing of powerful rulers to trade and, if necessary, to perpetrate violence.

<sup>4</sup>Nadal, “Corsairing as a Commercial System,”130.

looking at pirates mostly in a static unchangeable environment or when analyzing their environments, they have limited their analysis to the Sengoku period by briefly acknowledging the disappearance of pirates as the new regime took over. These authors have stopped their investigation with the end of the old regime, not dealing with the problematic of what happened to pirates in the new regime.

This dissertation, by portraying the functions and transformation of piracy, geographically from Ryukyu to northern Kyushu and chronologically from the mid-sixteenth century to the mid-seventeenth century, overlaps a conventionally established boundary between the late medieval period and the early modern one, and attempts to demonstrate the dynamic transformations taking place during a period of state formation. Furthermore, it reassesses Japanese pirates as corsairs and as dynamic characters with multiple identities and roles that allowed them to divide their loyalties among various organizations and enterprises.

Therefore, it does so by taking into consideration the economic and political changes affecting Japanese pirates historically termed *kaizoku* (sea gangs or pirates 海賊), *keigoshū* (protection groups 警護衆), *kaihei* (naval militia 海兵) and, to a certain extent, *kaishō* (merchant pirates 海商), often also mistaken as *wakō* (multiethnic pirates 倭寇), and residing in Kyushu. I refer to the pirates of Kyushu as corsairs because no comparable Japanese terminology corresponds to “corsair” as a person, but only in reference to “corsairs’ ship” (*shakusen*).<sup>5</sup>

Second, this project is significant for understanding the historical context of state formation, particularly in regards to the control of sea lanes and the acquisition, control, and export of an important economic resource: silver.

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<sup>5</sup> Ōyama Shigeyuki, “Kaizoku (the Corsairs) ni okeru Bairon no hangyu,” *Hiroshima daigaku sōgō gakakubu kiyo* 5 (1999): 127-147. Ōyama Shigeyuki, a Japanese linguist, claims that the word for pirate is a synonym for corsair because indeed the differentiation can be only made from a European viewpoint.



## 1.2 The Historiography of Pirates (and Corsairs) in Japan

In order to contextualize my enquiry, it is important to first discuss the historiography of pirates and corsairs in Japan and particularly in Kyushu proper, which for centuries represented the gateway for access to the Inland Sea and the centres of consumption such as Kyoto and Osaka, the loci of imperial and military authorities. In addition, Kyushu had several harbours that provided commercial nodes to trade with Chosŏn Korea, Ming China, and in the south, Ryukyu and South East Asia. Its maritime history comprises diplomatic and commercial exchanges intertwined with piracy. Pirates in Kyushu assumed main roles in the above-mentioned interactions and between local rulers and foreign countries.

Extant written records dating back to as early as the ninth century document pirates raiding the Kyushu coast. Silla (Korean) pirates, led by the infamous Chang Pogo, and pirates from the Amami Ōshima Islands attacked Kyushu harbours and looted ships frequently. The *Sumitomo tsuitōki* (Record of the Pursuit and Capture of Sumitomo) demonstrates that Japanese pirates were also active. After his appointment as provincial secretary in Iyo (Shikoku), Fujiwara no Sumitomo, the son of a middle-ranking family of the noble Fujiwara lineage, became the leader of pirates, and in 941 he raided and destroyed the temple complex of Dazaifu, a symbol of imperial power in Kyushu.<sup>6</sup> The episode of Sumitomo is well known because it was recorded and because Sumitomo was tied to the nobility, but it also shows the presence of voiceless and statusless pirates who fought to survive. By the fifteenth century, the *Rōjōdō nihon kōroku* (Record of travelling to Japan) written in 1420 by Song Hūi-gyōng (1376–1446), an envoy to Japan, documents that pirates had become organized. Song wrote of organized Japanese pirate

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<sup>6</sup> Bruce Batten, *Gateway to Japan: Hakata in War and Peace, 500-1300* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 93-95.

gangs extorting toll fees at maritime straits where they resided. In Amakagaseki (nowadays the Strait of Shimonoseki) at 5 *ri*<sup>7</sup> from the toll barrier his ship encountered pirates who boarded at night with smaller vessels and identified themselves as escorting ships.<sup>8</sup> Song expressed doubt about their being pirates instead of naval militia intended here to mean maritime warriors sent by a legitimate ruler in their function as naval protection. They were in fact pirates, controlling the strait that escorted diplomatic envoys. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Tsushima, the Islands of Gotō, Hirado in Hizen, and the islands close to Hakata, had several pirate clans residing there, the so called *wakō* (倭寇) in the modern Japanese language and *waegu* in the Korean language (pirates of mixed ethnicities, mainly Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, some European and Southeast Asians).<sup>9</sup> The word *wakō*, however, was only used to describe pirates who arrived on Chinese and Korean shores in both Korean records, such as *Haedong chegukki*, and the later Chinese record, *Chouhai tubian*, among others. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, *wakō* attacks and pillages on the Korean coast became so intense that the Korean court negotiated with the Sō daimyō of Tsushima to eliminate piracy in exchange for more trade relations.<sup>10</sup>

Chinese scholars, basing their claims on Chinese texts, interpreted *wakō* as mainly composed of Japanese pirates, while Japanese scholars, such as Matura Akira, consider *wakō* to be the pirates that looted ships and villages ashore on the Chinese and Korean coasts.<sup>11</sup> Although

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<sup>7</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol. I, ed. José Wicki (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1976), 23. One *ri* was approx. 4 km. Tonomura Hitomi stated that one *ri* was 3.93 Km. Tonomura Hitomi, *Community and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), xvi.

<sup>8</sup> Song Hŭi-gyŏng, *Rōjōdō nihon kōroku*, ed. Murai Shosuke (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008), 80-81.

<sup>9</sup> In the same record the word for navy (*suigun* 水軍) also appears, but it came to be used in Japan only in the Edo period (1603-1867).

<sup>10</sup> Prominent in the field of piracy between Korean and Japan are scholars like Murai Shosuke, Saeki Kōji, and Kobata Atsushi.

<sup>11</sup> Matura Akira, *Higashi Ajia kaiichi no kaizoku to Ryukyu* (Tokyo: Akira Matura, 2008), 22-23.

Chinese and Korean sources identify *wakō* as Japanese pirates (*wa*), in the early 1980s Tanaka Takeo promoted the distinction between *wakō* as multiethnics and mostly Chinese nationals, and *kaizoku*, or Japanese pirates residing in Japan.<sup>12</sup> Tanaka wrote mainly about Chinese residents in Japan, such as the merchant pirate Wang Zhi, calling him a *wakō* as he engaged in illegal trade between China and Japan. Similarly, Sakuma Shigeo considered *wakō* primarily as merchant pirates who tried to avoid the Ming maritime bans.<sup>13</sup> Another interpretation of *wakō* is offered by the groundbreaking work of Murai Shosuke, who has distinguished his studies on piracy by referring to *wakō* as multiethnic maritime forces comprised also of Japanese people and interpreting them as peripheral men. Those peripheral men, also termed *wajin*, represented those whose nationality or status was unclear, inhabiting Japan's porous borders, islands, and coastal areas, and who interacted either by violent means on their own, or in other cases by being hired as seafarers or naval militia, engaging in piracy to survive.<sup>14</sup> The idea of identifying *wakō* as Chinese in Japan and as non-Japanese or with blurred statuses has been a convention adopted by several scholars to discern Japanese pirates from multiethnic pirates. Matura Akira, who has studied sixteenth and seventeenth century *wakō* through Chinese sources, views *wakō* as predominantly Chinese people who pillaged and ransacked villages ashore, and who resided in the small islands between Japan, Korea, and China.<sup>15</sup> Thus, Japanese pirates, or *kaizoku*, residing in coastal Japan were distinguished from the cosmopolitan *wakō*, who were interpreted as non-Japanese or as having a minority of Japanese people in their ships and located abroad or in the peripheral islands of southern Japan.

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<sup>12</sup> Tanaka Takeo, *Wakō: umi no rekishi*. (Tokyo: Kyoikusha, 1986), 151-160.

<sup>13</sup> Sakuma Shigeo, *Nimei kankei shi no kenkyū* (Hiroshima: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1992), 280.

<sup>14</sup> Murai Shōsuke, "Chūsei no wajintachi," *Kyushu shigaku* 107 (1993): 2-3. See also Watanabe Miki, "Jūroku seiki sue kara jūnana seiki hajime no chugoku tōnan engai ni okeru ryukyujin zō," *Shigaku zasshi* 10 (2007): 3-4.

<sup>15</sup> Matura Akira, *Higashi Ajia kaiichi no kaizoku to Ryukyu* (Tokyo: Akira Matura, 2008), 22-23.

The dichotomy in interpreting only Japanese pirates as *kaizoku* and multiethnic pirates as *wakō* is nevertheless problematic in a region like Kyushu because several *wakō* clans, intended here as multiethnic pirates, resided there and colluded with Japanese pirates at several levels. If we consider *wakō*, as Tanaka Takeo did, Chinese merchant-pirates like Wang Zhi, who colluded with Japanese pirates (*kaizoku*) and became naturalized in Japan, or who intermarried with Japanese as in the Zheng clan, the separation in terms of nationality and in terms of their activities was negligent. As will be demonstrated in later chapters about the Nejime and Tanegashima clans, the Japanese took on various identities and dealt with Chinese merchant-pirates, *wakō*, and seafarers along their maritime boundaries and sea routes. Pirates in Kyushu not only belonged to mixed ethnicities but were also naturalized in Japan and by commercial entities like the Portuguese and Dutch traders, therefore assuming multiple identities and dynamic (not static) roles; as such, they have eluded full treatment by Japanese and western scholars on Japanese piracy.<sup>16</sup> In a region where the written Chinese language was a cultural unifier and where pirates could assume diverse identities according to their provenience, residence, and even their employer, it becomes difficult to distinguish people according to contemporary national boundaries. Until the Edo period, whoever came from east Asia was called a *tōjin* regardless of their country of origin, although it is known that most *tōjin* were Chinese or Koreans, or coming from the continent. Therefore, the distinction between *wakō* and Japanese *kaizoku* has been used to propose certain national discourses by recreating ethnic and maritime boundaries that in the past were rather porous and indistinct.

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<sup>16</sup> Arano Yasunori, "The Formation of a Japanocentric World Order," *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 2, no. 2 (2005): 185-216. See also Iwao Seiichi, "Li Dan Chief of the Chinese Residents at Hirado: Japan in the Last Days of the Ming Dynasty," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 17 (1958): 27-83. Arano Yasunori has dealt with Chinese who assumed Japanese nationalities while residing in Ryukyu or southern Japan. Iwao Seiichi has written about the multiple identities of the Chinese who resided in Hirado while working for Portuguese and Dutch commercial enterprises.

In 1547 the monk Sakugen wrote the *Nyūminki* (Record of Entering Ming China) about a tributary mission to the Ming in which “all the pirates of Japan” were called to escort as protective patrols for the envoys’ ships, showing the participation of pirates in diplomatic trade; he particularly mentioned the “naval protection from all the bays and shores of the country of Tsushima.”<sup>17</sup> This naval protection was provided by the confederated families that were controlled by the Sō house rulers of Tsushima. Tsushima’s pirates, however, were the *wakō*, who were mostly condemned by the Koreans in their detailed documentation. But in Japan they were Japanese pirates, and as the *Nyūminki* indicated, they were already providing services as corsairs tied to the Tsushima rulers. The *Nyūminki* is a valuable contemporary record that validates the services provided by pirates in official diplomatic exchanges, but it does not reveal their voices in the first person.

Genealogies written by Japanese pirates in first person were collected and transcribed during the Edo period in some domains in southern Honshu. Such is the case for the three Murakami pirate clans who became corsairs for the Mōri house, and whose genealogies mention their piratical endeavours by 1644.<sup>18</sup> An earlier source, the *Bukebandaiki kaizoku ke ikusa nikki* (commonly referred as *Bukebandaiki*), assumed to be written by members of the Murakami family, describes the pirate families that fought in Hiroshima Bay (Miyajima) in the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the seventeenth century, a new literary genre dedicated to piratical accounts was created to extol the heroic exploits of loyal samurai and intrepid pirates.

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<sup>17</sup> Sakugen, *Nyūminki*, see Makita Tairyō ed., *Sakugen nyūmiki no kenkyū*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1965), 353.

<sup>18</sup> Sumida Choichi comp., “Santōryū suigun ridanshō,” *Kaiji shiryō sōsho*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Genshodo, 1930), 93. The Santōryū suigun ridanshō, written in 1740, was one of the literary books whose protagonists were the pirates of the sixteenth century.

<sup>19</sup> *Bukebandaiki santō kaizoku ke ikusa nikki* (1740), photos, Yamaguchi Prefectural Library, Manuscript Section, Yamaguchi. This version of the *Bukebandaiki* was the original 17<sup>th</sup> century book. I was unable to consult the printed version, edited by Katayama Kiyoshi in 1997-1998.

Moreover, the resurgence of romanticized warrior tales included the writing of secret piratical histories, and fictional manuals began to be published in the 1740s. Some of these pirate family stories are the extant *Santōryū suigun ridanshō*, the *Noshima keden*, and others.<sup>20</sup>

Contrary to the history of the Seto Inland Sea, in Kyushu, pirates' genealogies are not present, with the exception of the records of Kuki Yushitaka and of his house, which was relocated from central Japan, Awaji Island, to Kyushu during the Tokugawa regime.<sup>21</sup> Kyushu was first conquered in 1586 by the forces of Toyotomi Hideyoshi; after Toyotomi's death, it passed into the hands of Tokugawa retainers. Therefore, the pirates and corsairs who fought in Kyushu did not remain under the patronage of one single daimyō, as did those of the Murakami clan under Mōri's patronage. Yet records of pirates near the coastal area of Hirado exist in a collection of documents from the Edo period not authored by pirates themselves. In northern Kyushu as well, records authored by pirates also exist, not as genealogies but as collected documents often stored in private collections. It is possible that there were pirate genealogies and that those records have been lost, or that the pirates' existence was left unrecorded due to their patrons' defeat, such as with the Ōtomo house. This is why up until now only the Murakami families of the Seto Inland Sea have been interpreted as pirates in Japan, leaving serious gaps in Japanese, as well as Kyushu, centuries-long maritime history. Consequently, their stories can be traced only by studying extant records like prefectural or cities' histories, collected and published from the Meiji period forward, in an attempt to retrace and reclaim local histories.

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<sup>20</sup> Sumida Choichi comp., "Santōryū suigun ridanshō," in *Kaiji shiryō soshō*, vol. 12. See also *Noshima Keden*, in *Kaiji shiryō soshō*, vol. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Kuki Yushitaka's records are stored in the Naganuma Bunko collection of Kyushu University. The authenticity of these 17<sup>th</sup> century books has not yet been validated by contemporary documents.

In the Meiji period (1867–1911), the history of pirates in Japan began to be studied critically with cultural historian Kumi Kunitake (1839–1921),<sup>22</sup> who identified pirates as sea folks (*ama*), and later with Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), who studied peripheral people to better understand how Japanese society dealt with capitalism.<sup>23</sup> In 1942, Takegoshi Yosaburō (1865–1950) examined Japanese piracy within the context of the Japanese imperial expansion overseas as a way to gather economic resources to legitimize historically the role of Japan as leader of East Asian countries.<sup>24</sup> Takegoshi justified piracy to reinforce the Japanese colonial ideology during his time, although instead of Manchuria he envisioned the South Seas as maritime territory open for conquest.<sup>25</sup> In the same period, Aida Nirō (1897–1945), studying within the framework of Japan as a civilizing society, focussed on the study of premodern seafarers and pirates and their economies as controllers of toll barriers.<sup>26</sup> Aida, by looking at pirates' economic enterprises, has promoted the idea that pirates' control of toll barriers and maritime check points did in fact promote commerce, contrary to Tokuda Ken'ichi, who has instead claimed that pirates' activities hindered commerce.<sup>27</sup> It is my view that pirates could have done both. The promotion or hindrance of commercial activities depended on their relationship with major mercantile houses, associations, and in their protection enforcement, as well as their political and religious affiliations.

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<sup>22</sup> Ōyama Kyohei, "The Fourteenth Century in twentieth Century Perspective," in *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World: Courtiers, Clerics, Warriors and Peasants*, ed. Jeffrey Mass (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 363.

<sup>23</sup> Yanagita Kunio, *Kaijo no michi* (Tokyo: Iwanami bunko, 1978), 11.

<sup>24</sup> Takegoshi Yosaburō, *The Story of the Wakō: Japanese Pioneers in the Southern Regions* (Tokyo: The Kenkyusha Ltd., 1940), 2.

<sup>25</sup> J. Charles Schencking, "The Imperial Japanese Navy and the Constructed Consciousness of the South Seas Destiny, 1872-1921" *Modern Asian Studies* 33 (October, 1999): 769-796.

<sup>26</sup> Aida Nirō, *Chūsei no sekisho* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1983), 193-194.

<sup>27</sup> Tokuda Ken'ichi, *Chūsei ni okeru suiun no hattetsu* (Tokyo: Shokasha, 1936), 193.

Postwar Marxist historians, in trying to separate history from supporting politics and government ideologies, have focussed their studies in religious folklore, temple pilgrimages, and the studies of the economies of seafarers in opposition to land-tenured elites such as Shinjo Tsunezō (1911–1997), who studied the documents of the toll barriers of Hyogo in addition to compiling several prefectural histories.<sup>28</sup> It is interesting that mainly postwar historians, defined as “folklorists,” in opposition to those following marked Marxist ideologies, or that came from Marxist ideological backgrounds, in writing the histories of landed lords and courtiers also analyzed Japanese religions—often an inspiration for the militaristic spirit and of purer forms of Shinto—reframed pirates as an integral part of a Japanese past that was composed also of the less influential and by the voiceless, represented not only by peasants but also by the “non agrarian” layers of society. Instead of seeing a dichotomy of scholars, I think that most Marxist scholars evolved their thought by expanding their scope to the landless social strata by looking at religions, ethnographies, ethnologies, and regional biohistories, reinterpreting local documents.

One of these historians was Naganuma Kenkai (1883–1980), whose family had connections with Shinto Shrines. He had first begun to study Shinto and eventually relocated to Kyushu, where he became interested in the echelon of society that comprised “people who sailed ships such as maritime merchants, commercial shipping people, maritime warriors, sailors and pirates,” the latter defined as naval samurai (船上の侍).<sup>29</sup> Naganuma not only collected a vast amount of material on pirates in Kyushu and neighbouring lands such as Shikoku and the Seto Inland Sea, but also seafarers, shipping associations, mercantile houses, temples, and diaries related to Shikoku, Kyushu, and the Seto Inland Sea.

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<sup>28</sup> Shinjo Tsunezō, *Chūsei suiunshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobo, 1995), and see also by the same author, “Chūsei ni okeru sekiji kenkyū no hitotsu,” *Chiiki shi kenkyū Kiyō* 20 (March 1991): 1-34.

<sup>29</sup> Naganuma Kenkai, *Nihon no kaizoku* (Tokyo: Seibundo, 1955), 2-3.



The watershed of Japanese maritime history, however, is represented by Amino Yoshihiko (1928–2004), who revisited social history not in terms of class but as the history of the people, and in the early 1980s reconceptualized the study of pirates as sea people in non-agriculturist roles, mainly looking at their economic enterprises and temple/shrine associations and their roles as temple purveyors (*hijiri* and others). Amino’s view of seafarers who engaged in piracy in meagre seasons has been widely accepted, but this perspective is not devoid of problems. In the first place, Amino deconstructed pirates as “sea folks” (*kaimin*) as a part of a larger social network that included temple, merchants, and local authorities, disengaged from estate-based economies. In addition, by perceiving pirates as sea folks, Amino largely deemphasized their maritime violence. His concept not only portrays a less violent version of sea folk, but it has also dissociated the economic lives of pirates from their political environments.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Sakurai Eiji studied pirates as seafarers in relation to the economy of temples and shrine.<sup>31</sup>

Looking at piratical violence, Katsumata Shizuo (1934–present), who dealt with social history, has interpreted pirates within the larger movement of social violence and resistance to established power in his studies of Ikki rioters.<sup>32</sup> Another group of historians has looked at pirates’ hierarchical ties with established power holders or patrons; among them, Nagahara Keiji redirected his attention to the relationships between the patronage that existed between landed lords and the landless layers of the seafaring population. In Nagahara’s studies of the relationship between pirates and landed daimyō, he claimed the former as expendable naval forces, otherwise interpreted as mercenaries, and at other times as retainers or even as merchant-pirates, according

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<sup>30</sup> Amino Yoshihiko, *Nihon no rekishi wo yominaosu* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shoten, 2005), 345-350.

<sup>31</sup> Sakurai Eiji, *Nihon chūsei no keizai kōzo* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1996), 275.

<sup>32</sup> Katsumata Shizuo, *Ikki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982), 33.

to their relationship with local lords.<sup>33</sup> In the same group of historians, Udagawa Takehisa instead interpreted pirates as mercenary forces,<sup>34</sup> whereas Kyushu historian Toyama Mikio has analyzed the naval forces under the Ōtomo house as retainers.<sup>35</sup>

Conversely, Fujiki Hisashi affirmed pirates to be irregular naval forces and, as such, mercenaries that provided services to lords; they benefited economically and politically from a certain degree of patronage, not as retainers but as semi-independent naval militia.<sup>36</sup> Although Fujiki's view applies to certain clans as they provided alternative or supplementary naval forces as "irregulars"—it was certainly the case in fifteenth century Kyushu—but it can no longer be applied to Kyushu's corsairs in the sixteenth century. Furthermore, Kyushu historians who have dealt with piracy at the local level thought of those pirate clans as very regular naval forces. These opinions will now be considered, beginning with northern Kyushu, where Akutagawa Tatsuo and Fukugawa Kazunori have collected vast amounts of pirate clan documents in the territories of Kunisaki, Hayami, Tsukumi, the Gulf of Beppu, Kitsuki, and other littoral locations in a series of volumes entitled, *Saikoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū* (Collected documents related to warrior groups of the western Provinces).

Fukugawa's interpretation of those clans follows the hierarchical Sengoku daimyō-retainer relationship.<sup>37</sup> Toyama Mikio also seems to rely on daimyō-retainers' relations to explain the type of military forces represented by pirates and corsairs; he went as far as to study the group related subconnections that tied the Ōtomo family to its subordinates. Contrary to such outdated views, recent historians such as Mieno Makoto and Yagi Naoki hold views that

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<sup>33</sup> Nagahara Keiji, *Sengokuki no seiji to keizai kōzō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 167.

<sup>34</sup> Udagawa Takehisa, *Nihon no kaizoku* (Tokyo: Seibundo, 1983), 6 .

<sup>35</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Daimyō ryogoku keisei katei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Shinsankaku, 1983), 526.

<sup>36</sup> Fujiki Hisashi, *Zōhyōtachi to senji: chūsei no yohei to doreigari* (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbusha, 1995), 127.

<sup>37</sup> Fukugawa Kazunori, "Bungo Suigun ni tsuite no Kōsatsu," in Kawagoe Shoji ed., *Kyushu chūsei kenkyū, vol.3* (Tokyo: Bunkyo Shuppan, 1982), 291-366.

Ōtomo's military forces were obeying diverse layers of powers, not necessarily in a vertical hierarchical order but as horizontal organizations that operated across borders and by engaging people across a varied social spectrum in terms of tactical skills.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, southern Kyushu historians have dealt mainly with international relations and the role that pirates played as either a threat to trade or as a complement to it. Among these scholars, Niina Kazuhito, who studied the Shimazu clan and their pirate relations, viewed those pirates as retainers in all aspects, whereas Kuroshima Satoru interpreted them as capably carving their niche, not only for local power holders but also in competition with bakufu-sponsored pirates of the Seto Inland Sea. Other historians, such as Hashimoto Yu and Hamashita Takeshi, have also dealt with Kyushu piracy. Hashimoto dealt with it mainly in relation to the international tribute trade,<sup>39</sup> while Hamashita Takeshi explained the rise of piracy in opposition to the Ming maritime prohibition, viewing private trade as illegal and mostly performed by pirates as interpreted from a Sinocentric view.<sup>40</sup> In that group can be included also Arano Yasunori, who conceived the term “piratical state of affairs” (*Wakoteki Jōkyō*) to refer to the maritime conditions that existed at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of seventeenth century in the maritime areas between Ming China, Korea, Japan, and Ryukyu.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to Japanese scholars, since the late 1970s other scholars have become interested in studying pirates located in Japan, either designated as *wakō* or *kaizoku*, depending upon if they were dealing with Chinese, Korean, or Japanese sources. Early scholarship dealing

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<sup>38</sup> Mieno Makoto, *Daimyō ryogoku shihai no kōzo* (Tokyo: Kokura Shobō, 2003). See also Yagi Naoki, “Bungo Ōtomo shi no seika,” in Yagi Naoki ed. *Bungo Ōtomo shi: chūsei saigoku bushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ebisu-Kosyo Publications, 2014), 19.

<sup>39</sup> Hashimoto Yu, *Nihon chūsei kokusai kankei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2005), 251.

<sup>40</sup> Hamashita Takeshi, *China in East Asia in the Global Economy* eds. Linda Grove and Mark Selden (London: Routledge, 2011) 40-57.

<sup>41</sup> Arano Yasunori, *Edo bakufu to higashi Ajia* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2003), 19.

with Japanese piracy is represented by Charles Boxer,<sup>42</sup> who has touched on piracy in Japan by looking at Portuguese international relations. He was followed by Delmer Brown, who studied piracy in terms of technological exchanges.<sup>43</sup> George Elisonas has looked at the political aspect of piracy coupled with the conquest of Kyushu and the Korean invasions,<sup>44</sup> while Kenneth Robinson has dealt with piracy from a Korean political standpoint by examining Korea's relations with Japan.<sup>45</sup> Worthy of mention is the work of So Kwan-wai, who studied Japanese piracy by looking at Chinese (often inaccurate) records of the Korean wars of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.<sup>46</sup> Adam Clulow has recently touched on the history of Hirado and its piratical background by examining Dutch-Japanese relations.<sup>47</sup>

Rather than looking at the types of hierarchies or patronage, since the early 1990s, Shikoku historian Yamauchi Yuzuru, using archeological evidence of maritime fortresses, has dealt with local pirates' enclaves and their relationship with their environment, in terms of fortress building, management of harbours and toll barriers, and as productive economic local forces that contributed to the expansion of commerce.<sup>48</sup> Yamauchi Yuzuru's work has also been groundbreaking from a local history viewpoint, as he has pinpointed not only the economic enterprises created by piracy in their own environment, but also to international trade and interaction, seen through the diverse maritime routes and their access to the Seto Inland Sea.

Another local historian, Kishida Hiroshi, has analyzed the routes of pirates from Shimane to

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), 248-307.

<sup>43</sup> Delmer Brown, *Money economy in Medieval Japan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), 28-29.

<sup>44</sup> George Elisonas, "Japan's Relations with China and Korea" in *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 4 Early Modern Japan, ed. J. W. Hall et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 253-254.

<sup>45</sup> Kenneth Robinson, "The Tsushima Governor and Regulations of Japanese Access to Chosŏn in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century" *Korean Studies*, 20 (1996): 25-50.

<sup>46</sup> So Kwan-wai, *Japanese Piracy in Ming China during the Sixteenth Century* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1975), 15-16.

<sup>47</sup> Adam Clulow, "From Global Entrepôt to Early Modern Domain: Hirado, 1609-1641," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 6, no. 1 (2010): 1-35.

<sup>48</sup> Yamauchi Yuzuru, *Kaizoku to umijiro* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1997), 12-13.

southern Honshu (Mōri domains) and pirates' independent economic enterprises there located.<sup>49</sup> Like Amino and later Yamauchi, he designated those pirates' clans with maritime protection enforcing strength as "Umi no ryoshū" and "Umi no daimyō" to indicate that their economic efforts had won them legitimacy as "Lords of the Sea," in opposition and by equal status to landed lords, an epitaph adopted by Peter Shapinsky in his excellent work, the first published in English, on the Murakami clans of the Seto Inland Sea.<sup>50</sup>

Shapinsky relates that the pirates of the Seto Inland Sea had created for themselves an economic environment that fostered the littoral commercial economy of which they were an integral part. As the Murakami clan ascended to power, they came to assume most of the rights proper of daimyō and were able to negotiate their role by selling their services, often to multiple patrons. In writing the histories of the Murakami pirates, Shapinsky has reconstructed their economic connections, patronage, and history of violence and commerce by envisioning the Murakami within their environment in the Seto Inland Sea. However, he takes the main location of the three Murakami clans (Noshima, Kurushima, and Innoshima) in their few islands stretching from Imabari, the small Noshima Island, to Yugejima, Innoshima, and the bigger Oshima Island, as representative of pirates in Japan. This dissertation, however, attempts to demonstrate that pirates' formation and conditions differed in the various parts of Japan and particularly in Kyushu and its nearby archipelagos. Moreover, Shapinsky, in analyzing the Murakami clans in such a location as the Seto Inland Sea, a sea as closed as the Mediterranean, has not attempted to compare them to the Mediterranean corsairs, an exercise worthy of consideration given their similarities in both pirates' and corsairs' formation, military strength

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<sup>49</sup> Kishida Hiroshi, *Daimyō ryōgoku no seiji to igi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2011), 332.

<sup>50</sup> Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 13.

and shipping techniques, historical events, and geographical conditions from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century.

### **1.2.1 Why Use the Term Corsairs for Japanese Pirates?**

The term *corsair* to indicate Japanese pirates may at first appear improper because of legal and geographic implications, as it was originally used in Europe to describe the naval forces engaged in the *corsa* (chase) that looted mercantile ships crossing the Mediterranean Sea from the early thirteenth until the seventeenth century. In Europe, the corsairs' and pirates' naval attacks fell within the realm of pre-modern states' and potentates' methods of promoting violence as well as their own jurisdictions over the seas. Janice Thomson has argued in this regard that states' authorization of non-state maritime violence was a way to economize on resources or promote an authority that they would have been unable to enforce on the seas if not through the use of corsairs. She also mentions that in reality, the defining line between corsairs and pirates was rather blurred even if the former had the support of early modern states and state-like regencies. When faced with political obstacles, these states or regencies could play with the concept of "plausible deniability", or the claim that if corsairs' enterprises met their demise, they were indeed private and not state-sponsored operations, thus freeing the latter from any liability.<sup>51</sup> In addition, Thomson asserts that the use of non-state violence shifted from the non-state, economic and international to state, political and domestic domains from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century in Europe.<sup>52</sup> Such a shift did occur as well in Japan, as it was engulfed in a unification process that ended only in the early seventeenth century.

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<sup>51</sup> Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns: State-building and Extra Territorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 11-21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

In the late sixteenth century, the naval forces I term corsairs were authorized to commit violence on the sea by *daimyō* which benefited from their trading activities, particularly in Kyushu, but as Japan unified into a state, corsairs were deemed to be an expendable resource. Lauren Benton has written recently about the jurisdiction that naval forces had over the sea, claiming that there was a fine line between privateers (corsairs) and pirates. Pirates received commissions only in time of war, but when decommissioned in time of peace, they did continue to attack and seize ships, and for this reason, it was necessary to preserve a pretense of legality.<sup>53</sup> Hence, the emergence of writers like Alberico Gentili and Hugo Grotius, who, basing their claims on Roman law, formed their own interpretation of the protection of oceanic spaces, arguing respectively in defense of the Spanish and Dutch fleets regarding control of sea lanes and their right to plunder enemy ships.<sup>54</sup> With the consideration of piratical endeavours as an extension of state power on the seas, corsairs and pirates were redefined as important actors of state-building, as they could offer effective protection whereas regencies, potentates and the state at an early stage in its formation had none. In this regard, Jan Glete justly suggests that states such as Spain, Portugal, France, England and the Netherlands were in effect licensing private persons for public pursuits by issuing permits such as *cartazes* and *lettres de course*, which in effect guaranteed protection against maritime violence done mostly by the protectors themselves.<sup>55</sup> Frederick Lane argues that this arrangement of hiring maritime forces was beneficial in terms of cost to both the states and the corsairs, who profited from the power of

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<sup>53</sup> Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 113.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 130-131.

<sup>55</sup> Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650: Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe* (London: Routledge, 2000), 72.

such sponsors.<sup>56</sup> Such licensing gave corsairs the opportunity to acquire military reputation and legitimacy. This is exactly what occurred in Japan for the Murakami clans and the corsairs of Kyushu, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters.

In reality the differences between pirates and corsairs came down to paper permits to raid the sea, Wolfgang Kaiser and Guillaume Calafat have argued that the Mediterranean was crowded with a sea of such papers, as corsairing was a well-regulated institution. Powerful states never once considered getting rid of it, as its disappearance could indeed have compromised their alliances with other states, and it was a “trading platform that crossed religious, legal and normative boundaries.”<sup>57</sup> In fact, as demonstrated by the recent scholarship of Noel Malcolm in his study of the Bruni and Bruti families, these corsairs acted beyond commonplace trading norms, since they benefited from their Venetian heritage as Albanian residents by crossing various identity lines as merchants, spies, and Jesuit (hence, Christian) corsairs, and ultimately performing their role as “Agents of Empires.”<sup>58</sup> The participants in the corsa were often captives who had risen from being ship slaves to prominent naval positions, having demonstrated skills in naval attacks and in leading people; these individuals were often sponsored by states and principalities. Famous sixteenth century Mediterranean corsairs include Ucciali, a renegade Calabrese turned Muslim, Arju and Khair-ed-Din, better known as the Barbarossa brothers, born to a Muslim pottery maker and a Greek woman, whose enterprises in disrupting European

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<sup>56</sup> F.C. Lane, “Economic Consequences of Organized Violence,” *Journal of Economic History*, 18 (1958): 401-417.

<sup>57</sup> Wolfgang Kaiser and Guillaume Calafat, “Violence, Protection and Commerce: corsairing and *ars piratica* in the Early Modern Mediterranean” *Persistent Piracy*, eds. Stefan Amirell and Leos Müller (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave McMillan, 2014), 77.

<sup>58</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth Century Mediterranean World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 37.



nations' trade on their routes has been well documented, and the Uskok gang of corsairs near Venice. Some scholars also define the Malta Knights of the Hospitaliers Order as corsairs.<sup>59</sup>

Another interesting case of divided loyalties is offered by Emrah Safa Gürkan in his study of the Ottoman Grand Admiral Uluc Hasan Pasha (born Andrea Celeste as a Venetian citizen) and his diplomatic and family ties to the Serenissima while also a Muslim loyal to the Ottoman Empire. Gürkan amply illustrates from a series of documents the fractured loyalties of Hasan Veneziano, demonstrating that his was not a rare case as corsair and agent for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>60</sup> Such examples reveal the dichotomies that existed in the amphibious world of Mediterranean corsairs, who, sponsored by powerful entities, carried out maritime violence to their ultimate benefit.

This world, however, was not unique to Europe or specifically to the Mediterranean. In Asia, from India to Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia and Malacca, and along coastal China, pirates as well as corsairs thrived. There were similarities as well as differences, but overall it is undeniable that pirates were not independent entities riding the seas and looting ships for their own sake. Instead, they had bases, markets for the sale of their booty, and patrons, in the form of either local or state ruling elites. But even when pirates were not politically entangled with local rulers, they had a certain degree of reliance on the local markets. Sebastian Prange writes about the Comorin Coast of India, where pirates were not politically involved with landed lords but were well-known as merchants who traded elsewhere and contributed to local communities through their trading activities. In addition, piracy seems to have been an inherited

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<sup>59</sup> Alberto Tenenti, *Piracy and the decline of Venice, 1580-1615* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967). See also Salvatore Bono, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo* (Torino: A. Mondadori, 1993), as well as more recent scholars such as Phillip Williams, *Empires and Holy Wars in the Mediterranean* (London: IB Tauris, 2014), and Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2010) who described the Mediterranean corsairs.

<sup>60</sup> Emrah Safa Gürkan, "His Bailo's kapudan: Conversion, Tangled Loyalties and Hasan Veneziano between Istanbul and Venice, 1588-1591" *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 48 (2016), 278-319.

occupation in some families, and as Prange states, it was a “trade of no dishonour.”<sup>61</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam writes instead of the Portuguese mercenaries from India to Malacca dealing in the trade in firearms.<sup>62</sup> This particular trade had allowed pirates in China and Japan to find their niches in the production and export of muskets and requisite accessories.

Piracy and the status of corsairs in Ming China were different, as reported by Robert Antony. Here, political affiliations between pirates and local elites were not unknown and became intertwined with certain existing market economies such as well-organized prostitution and gamblers’ racketeering circles.<sup>63</sup> James K. Chin portrays a sixteenth-century cosmopolitan South China Coast (Zhejiang and Fujian) where Portuguese and Chinese merchants (deemed pirates by local authorities) entered into partnerships. Influential merchants-turned-smugglers and pirates like the Xu brothers formed international networks in Southeast Asia and Japan. One of the Xu brothers in particular, Xu Hai, a former Buddhist monk in Hangzhou’s Lingyin Temple had become a pirate in order to pay off a relative’s debt to Kyushu partners in Osumi, a territory ruled by the Shimazu daimyō.<sup>64</sup> Chinese merchant-pirates’ networks like Xu Hai’s in Osumi, Wang Zhi’s in Hirado and those of others in Kyushu colluded with local pirates, merchants and corsairs. It was in this context that Japanese corsairs (here intended as local pirates who had the backing of local warlords) were connected to the maritime environment and markets of East and Southeast Asian countries.

Japanese pirates, as demonstrated in this dissertation, carved out their niche in becoming agents and mediators between Chinese merchant-pirate networks and other countries,

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<sup>61</sup> Sebastian Prange, “A Trade of No Dishonour,” *American Historical Review*, 116 (5) (2011): 1281.

<sup>62</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500-1700* (London: Longman Group, 1993), 258.

<sup>63</sup> Robert J. Antony, *Like Froth Floating on the Sea* (Berkeley: Berkeley University Press, 2003), 7.

<sup>64</sup> James K. Chin, “Merchants, Smugglers and Pirates: Multinational Clandestine Trade on the South China Coast, 1520-1550” *Elusive Pirates, Pervasive Smugglers: Violence and Clandestine Trade in the Greater China Seas*, ed. Robert J. Antony (Hong Kong: Honk Kong University Press, 2010), 51.

economically tying Japan to the Asian maritime world. As initially stated by Janice Thomson, theirs was an economic rather than a political function. The evolution of Japanese piratical gangs into corsairs of local lords was deeply rooted in the changes that occurred both internationally on the maritime routes and transshipment harbours of Asia as well as domestically with the impending unification of the Japanese territory. Those pirates whom I call corsairs differed conceptually, as the authority to use violence on the seas had been conferred upon them by their sponsors. It was between 1542 and 1592, given an economic expansion heightened by the export of silver and coupled with territorial unification conflicts, that Japanese pirates were transformed from economically independent to politically dependent entities. Only after Japan had been unified did the existence of pirates and corsairs enter the political sphere within state-formation parameters.

I adopt the term corsairs to describe pirates in Japan in order to highlight the transformation that the pirates and their enterprises underwent between 1542 and 1592, in light of economic expansion heightened by the export of silver and coupled with territorial unification conflicts. Such events transformed Japanese pirates from economically independent to politically dependent entities, as will be shown in the following chapters. The comparison with the Mediterranean corsairs is relevant to show how the commercial agency of Japanese pirates expanded with the competition for maritime routes, and was augmented by the silver and weapons trade. But once they turned corsairs and became, as such, closer to the power holders, their agency collapsed due to the anti-piracy edicts issued by the Toyotomi regime and later the Tokugawa regime, policies that resulted in both their and their lords' demise.

As contemporary Jesuits encountered the Murakami leaders of the Seto Inland Sea in their maritime travels from Kyushu, they chose to use the term “corsair” to describe the pirate

clans controlling the Japanese waterways from Kyushu to central Japan. One of the first Jesuits to use the term “corsair” to describe the Murakami was the historian Luis Frois.<sup>65</sup> Besides that usage, Rodriguez the interpreter in his *Vocabolario da Lengua do Japam*, translated the term *caizoku* (kaizoku) as *umi no nusubito* (海の盗人), which literally means “thieves of the sea,” or “*corsario*,” otherwise a corsair.<sup>66</sup> As Portuguese and Jesuits, given their European perspective, knew the difference between a pirate and corsair, they called the Murakami clans “corsairs,” and not pirates, which in Portuguese are translated as *piratas*. The European perception that they were corsairs rather than pirates is reflected in the comment of the early Jesuit travellers to Japan. Luiz de Guzman, a Jesuit biographer, in relating the travels of the Vice Provincial Father Coelho from the city of Sakai in central Japan to the domain ruled by the Ōtomo rulers in Bungo, Kyushu, wrote:

As Father Gaspar Coelho left Sakai to go to Bungo, he went to an island that belonged to a Corsair famous all over Japan who was called Xiximadono . . . the corsair received the Father with lots of honour. . . .<sup>67</sup>

Xiximadono was in reality the Noshima pirate (turned corsair), Murakami Takeyoshi, who controlled the maritime access to central Japan in the Seto Inland Sea from his fortress on the Island of Kurushima. Ships’ crews and passengers bound to and from the Seto Inland Sea had to purchase safe conducts issued by his corsairs. The Murakami clans of the Seto Inland Sea are considered “pirates” (*kaizoku*) by Japanese and western scholars, due to their violent methods to

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<sup>65</sup> Yuzuru Yamauchi, *Chūsei Setonaikai no Tabihitotachi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2004), 68.

<sup>66</sup> João Rodriguez Tçuzzu, *Vocabulario da Lingoa do Japam*, ed. and trans. Leon Pages (Paris: Benj. Duprat, 1862). Accessed in Sept. 2016 at [http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10522259\\_00032.html](http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10522259_00032.html). The Japanese-Portuguese vocabulary or Nippo Jisho written by Rodriguez in 1603 was translated in French by Leon Pages.

<sup>67</sup> Luis de Guzman, *Historia del las misiones que han hecho los religionosos de la Compañia de Iesus, para predicar el Sancto evangelio ne la India Oriental, y en los reynos del la China y Japon*, chapter 22 (Alcala: Gracian, 1602), 343.

exact toll fees and to loot ships which did not possess their issued safe-conducts.<sup>68</sup> However, the Jesuits, who observed and reported to their superiors the layers of power holders where they passed or resided, clearly termed them corsairs. Another example, written in the 1580s by Luis Frois about the arrival of Alessandro Valignano, the Jesuit Vice-Provincial in Japan and of his passage through the Seto Inland Sea, states: “Another danger in our path was that word spread that the highest ranking Father from India was coming here and carried with him many treasures. As this news spread to various parts some robbers, which are just like the corsairs of these seas, became determined to profit by looting us.”<sup>69</sup> In this passage, Frois wrote of corsairs and not pirates, knowing that the corsairs of the Seto Inland Sea, such as the Murakami clans, had well-known patrons in the Mōri house and others. As a matter of fact, the differentiation between pirate and corsair is not only a matter of terminology, it has to do with sponsorship and legitimization as well as commercial enterprises. Most of the corsair clans discussed in this dissertation were economically productive in their own controlled locations in addition to having the navigational skills required to survive the ebbing waters of the Inland Sea and its various channels, gulfs, islands, and choke points. These economic enterprises became rooted in violence, as these pirates looted whoever did not pay them a passage fee, allowing them to establish their sea lordship.

Sea lords were indeed corsairs. The term “sea lord,” first coined by Amino Yoshihiko, meant that those maritime forces became lords of the sea. Shapinsky defined their sea lordship by analyzing their acquisition of economic power, coupled with recognition by local and central

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<sup>68</sup> Among western scholars, Peter Shapinsky believes that the terms used by the Jesuits as “corsairs,” “pirates,” and “robbers” were used interchangeably to describe Japanese pirates. That was not the case. Frois himself describes Noximadono “o mayor corsario de todo Japaõ” (the major corsair of all Japan) See Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol.4, ed. José Vicki (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1976), 249.

<sup>69</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, ed. José Wicki, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1976), 246.

authorities who exploited their relation between commerce and violence.<sup>70</sup> In Shapinsky's view, pirates of the Murakami clans became sea lords by offering their services to local authorities, who became Sengoku daimyō; in this manner, they became legitimized in controlling their maritime localities, transforming these locations into regional centres of maritime production and commercial shipping. In addition, as no central authority was capable of enforcing its power in these clan-controlled maritime routes and hamlets, they received their legitimacy by acting as mercenaries for landed authorities as well as for central power holders.<sup>71</sup> Eventually their power functioned as an equalizer to render the corsairs as the equivalent on the sea of landed daimyō.

The above interpretation is problematic for two reasons. First, sea lordship refers to the ability to control the open sea, sea routes, and knowledge of ebbing waters, coastlines, and winds. Europeans were not unfamiliar with the concept, called in Spanish *El señorío del mar*, a term used by the Italian commander Andrea Doria and other captains (as well as by Francis Bacon, who thought of it as historically meaningful), already by the early sixteenth century.<sup>72</sup> Sea lordship referred mainly to the ability of corsairs to cross the sea and to know of its currents and winds while chasing other ships, or to obtain supplies from various territories for which the sea was their connecting route. In summary, being a sea lord involved everything having to do with the sea, including managing ships and shipbuilding, bringing provisions by sea from various territories, but had little to do with land deeds (called *shiki* in Japan) or controlling the economies of certain territories as in the Japanese case. But most problematic of all is the attempt to establish a certain degree of equality between Japanese corsairs, named sea lords, and landed daimyō. In fact, as Shapinsky demonstrated, the Murakami sea lords in the sixteenth century

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<sup>70</sup> Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 69.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 71

<sup>72</sup> Phillip Williams, *Empires and Holy Wars in the Mediterranean* (London: IB Tauris, 2014), 205-206.

came to obtain licenses from provincial governors, or *shugo daimyō*, to control islands as tax collectors and administrators and, as such, they performed the work on behalf of the provincial governors as their subordinates. By the mid-sixteenth century, the Murakami performed maritime services initially for the Kōno, then for the Hosokawa family, close allies of the Ashikaga shoguns, and for the Ōuchi and Mōri families, respectively daimyō of northern Kyushu and southern Honshu.<sup>73</sup> But if the Murakami clans were interpreted as “minor lords” before and after Hideyoshi’s territorial unification, because they had acquired legitimacy via their sponsorships similar in power to landed daimyō, they could have had a certain degree of decisional power in maintaining their independence, as they had to choose with whom to side in the unification process. My research in this dissertation indicates instead that corsairs such as the Murakami, as well as the maritime forces in Kyushu, by having to choose sides were already at a disadvantage because they still had to rely on powerful landed daimyō for their survival. Because their level of political independence did not match their level of economic entrepreneurship, they were dependent on the politically powerful landed daimyō and, thus, corsairs.

Lastly is the examination of similarities and differences between the Mediterranean and Japanese corsair. The main prerequisite for the war of corsa was therefore the support of the state or state-like authorities. State support is what characterized corsairs from pirates, even if in reality the category was rather fictive in terms of the European legal definition.

In Europe, no matter what state or location, the main difference between pirates and corsairs was constituted by the state or regencies’ support of the latter. Both pirates and corsairs needed to sell their booties; therefore, they needed markets and people who worked for them on the coast or in island countries. Corsairs were given harbours to control, such as Djerba, an

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<sup>73</sup> Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 95-115.

island close to Tunis, or the Island of Malta, in addition to coastal locations; their ships were provided by their patrons. Their patrons also provided political authority in exchange for economic and military gains, as corsairs were used by small islands and coastal states to protect their shores and sea routes and, at times, those states could see their international diplomacy threatened by the corsairs. Such was the case of relations between Tripoli and Algiers and the French state in the early seventeenth century; Tripoli's corsairs had agreed to a peace treaty and hostage exchanges with France, but Algiers compromised all that by attacking French ships.<sup>74</sup>

Similarly, in Japan, corsairs controlled the geographical radius surrounding their outlets and villages or islands, particularly controlling the access to maritime routes and harbours situated in their proximity. These corsairs at first offered their services to local rulers. Examples include the pirates between the Amami-Ōshima and Tōkara archipelagos (between Ryukyu and southern Japan). Others, like the pirates of Hizen, only traded overseas. The pirates of the Gotō Islands and Tsushima offered their services as smugglers and intelligence providers alike, as well as being recognized by higher local authorities to work as protective naval forces in their locations, as in northern Kyushu. In all the above-mentioned examples and according to their geographical locations, pirates negotiated their role as mercenaries and skilled seafarers until they were able to acquire power and status by participating on behalf of their patrons in the wars of territorial conquest. Once they acquired stable sponsors in Sengoku daimyō who aggrandized their territories by conquest, these pirates became corsairs who had the support of rulers in domains that were the equivalent of regencies in northern Africa and in Islands like Malta and Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea.

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<sup>74</sup> C. R. Pennell, *Piracy and Diplomacy in Seventeenth Century Africa* (London: Associated Universities Presses, 1898), 50-51.



A second feature legitimizing corsairs' activities in the Mediterranean Sea was a document called "letters of marque" (*lettres de course*) that in England were replaced by "letters of reprisal," by which the corsairs in question were permitted to loot enemy ships and keep part of their cargo as revenue.<sup>75</sup> Originally the "letter of marque" was issued based on an international law of the marches, or border lands, by the sovereign of a traveller, in most cases a shipmaster of a vessel, who had been robbed in foreign territory and sought redress.<sup>76</sup> The document could be issued only in peacetime and to a private person, but in the Mediterranean it became customary also in war time between states, and by state and principalities' representatives. With time it became the legal basis on which corsairs could take their economic revenge on vessels belonging to sworn enemies. Of note is that the letters of marque were the legal documents by which corsairs were authorized to predate other vessels on the sea and adjacent areas (maritime routes, or islands and territories of their targeted enemies). Therefore, such documents gave corsairs the entitlement, a right to commit certain acts on the sea or to raid the coasts. In Japan such entitlement or right was often bestowed in relation not to predatory acts on the sea, but to an entitlement to land revenues given to those corsairs as an incentive, beforehand, for coastal territories that they had an interest to protect, tying them to certain locations. Those who were issued this land confirmation document (*chigyū*) or reconfirmation for successions and inheritances (*andō*) on the strength of their maritime and military skills have often been treated in the same guise as retainers (*kashin*) because they had to adopt the legal language of landed daimyō. In this regard, Shapinsky relates that "sea lords" made conscious choices to use land-based forms of documents to be recognized and accepted and as such by being able to take

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<sup>75</sup> N. A. M. Rodgers, "The Law and Language of Private Naval Warfare," *The Mirror's Mariner* 100 no.1 (2014): 5-16.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

advantage of social, political, and cultural hierarchical statuses, giving them the sought level of authority.<sup>77</sup>

A third feature that distinguished the Mediterranean corsairs was the religious tone assumed by the corsa, as if the Crusades were continuing on the sea, while in reality, what was at stake were the vested economic interests of states and principalities that hired mercenaries to bring economic damages to enemy states or commercial rivals. In this sense, the war of corsa was another type of naval warfare and, in all effects, a private one, sponsored by public authorities such as states and principalities. The famous Knights of Malta, belonging to the religious order of the Hospitaliers, fought the Ottoman Empire and the Berber corsairs in the name of Christianity. Ironically, most of those corsairs were people who had converted to Islam, as it promised them a better way of life and a much more rewarding paradise after death. Michel Fontaney asserts that the Maltese Knights were the counterparts of the north African corsairs, who in the name of Christianity attacked ships for personal profits and also to obtain captives, and were often used by European states.<sup>78</sup> Corsairs fought an economic war, but as Alberto Tenenti claims, corsairs were also political agents on the seas.<sup>79</sup>

Mediterranean corsairs commercially benefited from the sale of captives as one of their main sources of income. In addition to the support and rent given by landed authorities, their main form of revenue was the trade in captives. Even as late as 1625, the Venetian Gio-Battista Salvago, a Relation to the Doge of Venice, stated: “The real source of revenue for the corsa is the

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<sup>77</sup> Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 14.

<sup>78</sup> Michel Fontaney, “The Metamorphosis of the Maltese Corso in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Guerra di Corsa e Pirateria nel Mediterraneo*, ed. Antonello Savaglio (Crotone: Orizzonti Meridionali, 1995), 80.

<sup>79</sup> Alberto Tenenti, *Piracy and the decline of Venice, 1580-1615*, 16-17.

ransom of the captives.”<sup>80</sup> Some of the features that characterized Mediterranean corsairs also appeared in the formation of Japanese corsairs due to their occupation, geographical location, and political organization. In contrast to their Mediterranean counterparts, they did not kidnap people for ransom; however, they did take captives during conflict to work on their ships. In 1562, the Jesuit Father Baltasar Gago and the Japanese lay brother Silvestro were held aboard a large ship bound for the harbour of Hakata (Kyushu), from where they had to depart. According to Gago’s account, they were robbed of all their possessions, including their clothes and all the Church paraphernalia. Gago reported: “we were given one ounce of food and treated as in the galleys of the Turks.”<sup>81</sup>

To conclude, the legitimization of Japanese corsairs usually occurred after they had proven their worth in actual conflicts, by killing enemies and by defending their assigned territory. Those corsairs, by receiving part of the territorial revenue for the part of the coast they controlled, served both their own and their lord’s interests. Among their duties were the control of the littoral assigned to them, harbour control and strategic toll barrier control, as well as shipment of military provisions and goods. Toll barrier control was a function that pirates had claimed for themselves in the Seto Inland Sea at strategic checkpoints from northern Kyushu to the city of Sakai, in the case of the three Murakami houses, and as also described in following chapters in Hizen with the Kozasa and the Fukahori’s clans. Once these pirates became legitimized and were given titles and rights to such controlled locations, they also came to serve powerful daimyō, and as such it is more useful to call them corsairs, rather than pirates.

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<sup>80</sup> Alain Blondy, “La course en mediterranee: les discours sur la captivite et la servitude,” in *Les tyrants de la mer; pirates, corsairs & flibustiers*, eds. Sylvie Requemora et Sophie Linon-Chipon (Paris: Sorbonne, 2002), 47.

<sup>81</sup> Gago Baltasar, *Nuovi Avvisi dalle Indie di Portogallo* (1562), [http://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-bunko/view/kirishitan\\_bunko/JL-1562-KB3-125-56](http://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-bunko/view/kirishitan_bunko/JL-1562-KB3-125-56).

### 1.3 Dissertation Methodology, Structure, and Sources

The methodology used to construct this dissertation was a comparison of the effect of the silver trade on the pirates and corsairs of Kyushu and the nearby archipelagos. I chose Kyushu, as that was the location of the main transshipment harbours from which silver left for the Chinese and East Asian markets. These harbours were the places where pirates, using the language of daimyō, prospered in their economic activities both legal and illegal. In order to compare the effect of silver in the localities where it was shipped and traded, I examined three diverse locations, where maritime forces existed in differing environments. The aim was to understand whether pirates located on far-away islands or archipelagoes were engaging in more independent enterprises than those restricted by geographical and political settings, which were often unfavourable to them. For this reason, I chose to study the pirates of Japan who were situated on the smaller islands of southern Kyushu to establish their degree of independence, as compared with the ones in northern Kyushu, more territorially constrained and limited in their freedom of choice, and with those in more cosmopolitan areas such as Hirado and Nagasaki.

My approach was to investigate whether these corsairs' rise to prominence was due to the silver trade or to other geo-political factors. In practical terms, I looked at several piratical families in the chosen location, and at their extant documents clan by clan, in order to retrace their history and, where possible, even the unique history of particular individuals within these clans. Due to the fact that not all clans possess similar documents, it was not possible to start by looking at documents related to the silver handled by each clan and make a comparison. In fact, this would not have been feasible even if they were to have similar documentation, given the diverse societies they lived in and the dissimilar social status each held. Every domain was ruled by daimyō, who by the sixteenth century had acquired their own economic and political

independence from the central government represented by the shogun and by the decayed Imperial court. The strength of these daimyō was their capability to administer their own resources and to trade. Their maritime forces, either hired or as their retainers, were principal actors in the piratical and trading world of Kyushu.

In practical terms, my study attempts to evaluate the effect of the silver trade on the environment of those maritime forces I define as corsairs and on their development as maritime clans. For this reason, I chose to deal with families whose documents had been already collected and studied, but also tried to gather as many unpublished documents as possible. I sought particularly documents that had to do with their economic situations, although at a domain level, the cadastral survey would have helped only to a certain extent. I also scrutinized information in relation to their extended networks, and endeavoured to evaluate in economic terms such clans and, where possible, individuals within those clans. The main difficulty lay in correlating the documentation about silver with data about each corsair clan. Therefore, my approach has been to look at their resources in economic terms and at their economic enterprises, hierarchical chains of command and social status in order to postulate the possible effect a silver economy would have induced in the maritime world of sixteenth-century Kyushu.

The dissertation is structured in a chronological order that spans from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century. Geographically the dissertation pertains to the pirate clans located on the coasts of southern Kyushu in Shimazu's controlled domains; the coast of Hizen between Nagasaki and Hirado, a long stretch of territory controlled by the Matura clans, the Ōmura, and Arima families; and northern Kyushu controlled by the Ōtomo family. Choice of locations in Kyushu depended on the availability of sources as well as on the geopolitical and historical events that made those clans unique in their own ways as they

responded to particular historical events. Each geographical location offered these clans different opportunities in terms of organization, piratical and commercial enterprises, and political connections related to their social status and legitimization.

Chapter 2 examines changes in Japanese trade to Ryukyu from the early to the mid-sixteenth century, taking into consideration especially the role played by pirate gangs in relations to Chinese and Portuguese traders involved in the trade through the Ryukyu Kingdom. From the international trade standpoint, as the pirate clans located in islands on the archipelago of the Amami-Ōshima and Tōkara islands (stretching from Ryukyu to southern Japan) arose in importance with the tribute trade and in competition for maritime routes and harbours, and later augmented by the silver trade that occurred among Ryukyu, Japan, and Korea, as well as Ming China, redirected trade toward the organization and the ability of Japanese pirates to collude internationally and at the local level with a variety of political and economic entities. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the effects that the Ryukyu trade had in southern Kyushu and among the local Japanese pirates there located. As I have anchored the dissertation on the importance of Ryukyu in the Japanese piratical, later turned proxy trade, I have used known primary sources as the *Rekidai hōan* (Precious Records of Successive Generations 歴代宝案), a collection of diplomatic documents of the kingdom of Ryukyu from 1424 to 1867. These documents were first analyzed by Kobata Atsushi and Matsuda Mitsugu and briefly annotated in their 1945 book, the first to present in English documentation related to the trade going on between Ryukyu and several Southeast and East Asian countries. The voluminous collection is stored in Tokyo University; I have used volumes relative to the time period analyzed in my chapters. Another important primary source is the collection of documents in regard to the inhabitants of Naha city, collected in the *Naha shi shi* (Historical Records of Naha City), first

published in five volumes in 1967 by the City of Naha. An additional source is the Kagoshima Prefectural Records which contain the history of Kagoshima and documents concerning the Shimazu family and their rule as the *Sappan kyūki zatsuroku*. Kagoshima is where all the documents pertinent to the Satsuma domain from circa 1041 to 1865 were collected between 1850 and 1897 by Ijichi Sueyasu, the magistrate of Satsuma, and by his son Ijichi Suemichi for Shimazu Nariakira, their lord. It is one of the most complete collections of domain documents in existence in Japan. It also includes the documents that have been published in the volumes of the *Shimazu kemonjo* (Records of the Shimazu House) in the greater compilation of *Dai nihon komonjo iewake* (The Historical Houses of Great Japan) published by Tokyo University in 1904.

Another similar, relevant primary source used in the second chapter is the *Ehime Kenshi* (Prefectural History of Ehime), compiled between 1970 and 1986 and dealing with the local history of Ehime Province. Its volume on ancient and medieval history deals in particular with the Murakami and other pirates' families connected to the Kōno house. I have also used the *Innoshima shi shi* (History of Innoshima City), published in 1968 and authored by members of the local historical society, to complement the account of the Murakami and related houses with regard to their competition for maritime routes to Ryukyu. In addition, to explain the international competition for maritime routes, I have also used Japanese, Korean, and Chinese records describing maritime routes to Kyushu, such as the *Sakugen nyūminki*, *Chouhai tubian*, *Nihon ikkan*, *Haedong chegukki* and *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk*. Although these are relatively well known, the *Nyūminki* (Record of Entering Ming China), written in 1547 by the monk Sakugen and published by Makita Tairyō in 1965 as an edited work in two volumes, describes not only the maritime routes but the participants, offerings, and problematic for the Japanese government,

daimyō, and temples of putting together such tribute missions to China.<sup>82</sup> The *Chouhai tubian*, written by Zheng Ruozeng in 1562, provides the navigable routes to Kyushu and a detailed account of its geographic locations and rulers. It is similar to the *Nihon ikkan*, which I explored more for its detailed maps than for its content.

Two Korean compilations provide a contrary view. The first is the *Haedong chegukki*, analyzed and published in Japan first by Takeo Tanaka and later by Shosuke Murai, the second is the *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk* compiled by Korean nobles over the centuries. The *Haedong chegukki* was written by the Korean official Sin Suk-chu (1417–75) in 1471, and describes official relations between Japan and Ryukyu and both countries' cultural, historical, and linguistic assets.<sup>83</sup> It is valuable for understanding the diplomatic, mercantile, and piratical efforts that Japan exerted in acting as agent for Ryukyu versus Korea. From an official perspective, the *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk* compilation offers an ample view of the activities of Kyushu daimyō intervention in East Asia.

Furthermore, in Chapter 2, I have also used several primary sources related to particular families or temples to show the competition for the southern Kyushu harbours by the Chinese, Portuguese, and Japanese pirates. One such document collection is the *Nejime monjo*, pertinent to the records of the Nejime house. Collected by Kyushu historian Takeuchi Rizō and by Kawagoe Shoji as a handwritten book in 1958, the *Nejime monjo* is so far the only available collection on the Nejime family, and contains documents that span from the early fifteenth century to the early seventeenth century. As for collections of documents from temples, I used the *Seisuiji* documents stored in Iwami Public Library and the *Amacōji monjo*, housed in the

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<sup>82</sup> Sakugen, *Nyūminki*, see Makita Tairyō ed., *Sakugen nyūminki no kenkyū*, 2 vols. (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1965).

<sup>83</sup> Kang Etsuko Hae-jin, *Diplomacy and Ideology in Japanese Korean Relations: from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 74.



same library but pertinent to the trade of weapons from Macau to Japan. These temple documents, which are almost unknown, have been published in the *Kokutō chihōshi shiryō*, but have not been studied in depth even by Japanese scholars. Their relevance lies in the trade between Japan and Macau prior to the establishment of the Portuguese proxy trade including China, which began between 1560 and 1570.

In Chapter 3, I analyze the organizational level of the Ōtomo corsairs in their formative stage until their ruler's demise in the early 1590s. On the basis of several case studies, I seek to reposition the figure of corsairs in terms of their military and economic engagement in their hamlets, as well as their political involvement with higher-level leaders who incorporated them in a loose military structure. Their resilience nonetheless depended on horizontal organizations and associative networks through which they could make use of their particular skills. The main primary sources used to formulate this chapter, beside single family documents collected in volumes and other manuscript documents located in Kyushu University and the *Ōita Sentetsu Shiryōkan* (Ancient sage archives and manuscript library), were prefectural collected documents as the *Ōita ken shiryō* (Documents of Ōita Prefecture), first collected by Ōita historian Watanabe Sumio and published in 26 volumes between 1952 and 1974 by the Oita Prefecture Historical Committee. The *Ōita ken shiryō*, however, does not contain all the documents related to the Ōtomo house from the Kamakura period to the end of the Sengoku period, previously collected by historians Takita Manabu (1891–1966) and Takeuchi Rizō (1907–97) in the *Ōtomo hennen shiryō narabi Ōita ken komonjo zenshū*, compiled (by the date of their issuance) between 1962 and 1979. Although the latter also contains various temple and shrine documentation such as the *Usa jingu* documents, it is pertinent mostly to the Ōtomo house and its related documents. A similar collection, devoted only to the documents of the *Usa jingu* (the main shrines under the

Ōuchi and Ōtomo houses in northern Kyushu), appear in the collection *Usa jingu shi*, also compiled by Takeuchi Rizō. Other collections used in relation to the pirates' families of northern Kyushu are represented by the series *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū* (Documents related to the warrior groups of the western provinces), edited by Akutagawa Tatsuo and Fukugawa Tatsunori between the 1970s and 1980s, a set of more than thirty volumes, each dedicated to one or more warrior families residing in northern Kyushu from the Kamakura period to the end of the Sengoku period. Although this collection is important, it does not provide an analysis of the documents, nor does it contain most of the available documents that are located in other manuscript libraries; at times it overlaps with the documents already included in the *Ōita ken shiryō*. For example, it was useful to my research for the Kibe and Watanabe families, but did not contain anything related to the Wakabayashi family. I have further looked into city histories like the *Hiji chōshi* (History of Hiji City), which contains only partial documents of the Watanabe, Kibe, and Wakabayashi in relation to the history of the city; these histories were of limited usefulness but were proposed with a certain chronology and historical content as well.

Other compilations used for this chapter were the Yamaguchi Prefectural History, or *Yamaguchi kenshi*, published from 2000 to 2014 by the Historical Research Society of Yamaguchi Prefecture, which contained all the documents regarding the Mōri domains and their retainers; amongst these are the Murakami clans of the Seto Inland Sea. Although the *Yamaguchi kenshi* complements the vast domainal collection, the *Hagi-han batsuetsuroku*, initially compiled in 1720 under the order of Mōri Yoshimoto and first published in 1967, it contains all the documents pertinent to Mōri retainers and family clans, including documents of related families and provinces. During my research I have found that these collections present challenges due to the vast amount of documentation besides these two collections of documents. The prefecture

also has what are called “shadow” documents; although part of the same domain or retainer, families were not included in such compilations, but historians used these to find supporting documents for their claims. These shadow documents are often collected as photocopies of handwritten or transcribed documentation and are rather difficult to read. The Yamaguchi Manuscript Library holds a vast collection of books and documents that are not included in either compilation. After having shown the transformation of pirates into northern Kyushu corsairs from a political and economic standpoint, chapter 3 closes with the rivalry between the Ōtomo, Shimazu and Mōri houses to retain major harbours in Kyushu for trade with Ryukyu, Ming China, and Southeast Asia, previous to the conquest of Kyushu by the Toyotomi.

Chapter 4 turns to the failure of the Matsura of Hirado to make their domain one of the “doors” to the external world once the Tokugawa adopted trade restrictions as one element in their program for unification, despite the relationships that the Matsura had formed with the domestic and foreign pirates residing in their domain. The pirates of the early seventeenth century were in fact mostly foreigners, not because Japanese pirates were absent, but because they had been politically curtailed. This curtailment precluded the possibility of using domestic piracy in the struggle to abide by the new trade policies formulated by the central government. This chapter examines the specific cases of such pirate clans as the Kozasa and Fukahori, which rose to power by the mid-sixteenth century due to foreign and domestic interventions. The Kozasa clan was doomed because it embraced Christianity, and the Fukahori was doomed because it was without a master who could offer protection before the conquest of Kyushu. Illegal trade continued along the coasts of Hirado during the Tokugawa period, yet the Matsura failed to successfully control their domainal finances because, without the pirates, they could not secure as much revenue after 1610 despite the fact that the Dutch and Chinese had settled there.

I have consulted the *Kaseiden*, a collection of transcribed records from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, compiled by Matsura Seizan or Kiyoshi (1760–1821), lord of Hirado by 1775; the Matsura family records, or *Matsura monjo*, and the *Gonhanmotsu onkaku hairyō no mono kakidashi*. The latter provides a record of products imported and exported from Hirado harbour in the seventeenth century; it is also held in the Matsura Museum and Manuscript Library.

In regard to piracy, I have used family histories such as the *Fukahori monjo* and the *Ōmura gōzonki* (Records of the Ōmura Villages), and the “Memoirs of Andō Ichiemon,” a merchant whose family had traded in Hirado since the Korean wars. In addition to Japanese sources, I have also explored Jesuit letters, the *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk* (the Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty from the Fifteenth to the Sixteenth Century), the *Liang Zhe haifan leikao xubian* (Further Compilation of Categorized Sources on Maritime Defense for Zhejiang), written by Fan Lai (1575–1602), the Vice Surveillance Commissioner of Zhejiang Province, as well as the *Riben kao* (Japanese Matters) the record of Ming General Li Yan-gong, who was a contemporary of Andō Ichiemon and recorded Japanese trade in Korea during the Korean invasions, and finally, the always useful *Diary of Richard Cocks*, the English factor at Hirado. Each one of these records provides a subjective, tiny spectrum of what piracy meant for Hirado from a variety of political and economic perspectives.

In dealing with the silver traded at Hirado besides having used the records of various Jesuits, I have once again used as a Japanese source the diary of the medium ranking samurai, the *Komai nikki*, written by Komai Shigekatsu, a retainer of Date Masamune in 1593-95 and edited by Fujita Tsuneharu as a book, published in 1992. In addition, to illustrate the trade in silver I have also used the Diary of the Visit of Mōri Terumoto to Kyoto, *Terumoto kō gōjoraku*

*nikki*, which describes the silver offered while he was in Kyoto; the Mōri Family Records or *Mōri kemonjo*; the Iwami Silver Mines Collected Documents or *Iwami Ginzan shiryō shū*; the documents of the Tada Family or *Tada kemonjo*, who dealt with silver exports to Hakata, as well as the *Diary of Richard Cocks* to determine the amount of silver offered within Japan or/and traded abroad. Their usefulness was rather circumscribed to the issues of silver circulating in and out of Japan.

In Chapter 5 is examined the annexation of Ryukyu as the focus of all the policies that the new Tokugawa government had begun by 1603, such as the implementation of the new Shuin system of trade, the elimination of piracy and Christianity, and the silver currency standardization. By 1609 those policies were fully operational, and culminated in the annexation of Ryukyu. Annexation was facilitated by the fact that the Shimazu daimyō, who had hired pirates to compete for maritime routes and harbours in and around Ryukyu as early as 1527, found themselves in a strong position to negotiate their supervision of the trade with the Ming through Ryukyu with the new government. The Hirado domain, although in a similar position, was unable to perform as well.

For this chapter, in addition to secondary sources, I have used as the main Japanese documentary source the previously mentioned *Kagoshima kenshi kyūki sappan zatsuroku* and the Matsura domain documents, *Matsura monjo*, collected in the Historical Matsura Museum and Manuscript Library in Hirado. In addition, I have also used diaries of the diplomatic type, with regard to foreign trade such as the *Ikoku nikki* and *Tamon'in nikki*. The former was written by the monk Konchiin Sūden (1569–1633), diplomatic counselor of Tokugawa Ieyasu and Ietada, and the latter written by the monk Tamon'in and other monks of the Kofukuji temple in Yamato province between 1478 and 1618. The *Ikoku nikki* provided information on the merchants who

received licenses to trade and in which countries. This diplomatic diary, although relevant, does not contain all the licenses issued for that period taken into consideration in my research and provides no information on the goods traded. On the other hand, the Tamon'in diary provides only generic information on travels and economic conditions, and is limited by the fact that its written details are according to the opinion of its authors, and is therefore less objective.

Other sources of information in regard to the interpretation of Tokugawa's early diplomatic approaches and international trade include letters written by Jesuits of the caliber of Francesco Pasio, Alessandro Valignano, Rodriguez Girano, and Organtino Gneccchi Soldo. Although partisan in their accounts, their opinions are carefully interpreted with the help of other contemporary authors such as Luis de Cerqueira and the Governor of Manila, Pedro Gonzales de Carvajal, or merchants like Francesco Carletti. I have also sparingly used excerpts from the *Ming shih lu* (Ming Dynasty Veritable Records) to relate the Ming interpretation of the annexation of Ryukyu. Chapter 5 deals mainly with an international situation and how the Shimazu were able to overcome their difficult situation in light of the elimination of what was considered piratical trade and by obeying Tokugawa rules which disempowered all those families who previously had been their corsairs in the maritime expansion toward the Ryukyu archipelago.

Chapter 6 examines the political events at the beginning of Tokugawa rule (1603) that led to the expulsion of the Portuguese from Japan in 1639, analyzing how each corsair group met its demise. Some managed to survive by politically supporting Hideyori as the legitimate ruler of Japan until 1615, but were annihilated in the battle of Shimabara. This battle is interpreted by most scholars as a Christian riot, but in actuality had its roots in the mercantile environment of the economy of southern Japan. Thus it was that the Japanese pirates who had seen their apogee during the latter part of the sixteenth century by taking advantage of the silver trade met their

demise at the onset of the Tokugawa regime because trade regulations had changed to their disadvantage. The Tokugawa's silver policies, coupled with the expulsion of Christianity from Japan, caused the corsairs to be replaced by Chinese and Dutch merchants even on the Ryukyu silver-exporting routes. However, the Dutch and Chinese attacked each other and hindered the Ryukyu trade in such a way that the Tokugawa had to send warnings to both, while the Japanese corsairs engaged in smuggling activities with or without daimyō authorization in the wake of the rise of the Qing and the demise of the Ming dynasty, which continued to exist only and ironically with the support of Chinese pirates.

In chapter 6 I have used some of the primary sources mentioned previously, such as the *Sappan kyūki zatsuroku* for the relations between Satsuma and Ryukyu, and the *Nejime monjo* to determine the whereabouts of the Nejime corsairs in the Tokugawa period, and on the *Saigoku bushidan shiryōshū* series and on the *Hiji chōshi* to elaborate on the Watanabe corsairs, together with the *Kokura han jinshiku aratame chō*, collected in the *Dai nihon kinsei shiryō*, published in 1953 as a multivolume collection containing documents from the year 1603 to 1867 in various forms, such as diaries, memoirs, or ordinances. One such example is the case of the *Kokura aratame chō*, used to individuate the various families who moved from northern Kyushu to Kokura. This chapter in particular discusses the silver offering between the Toyotomi and Tokugawa families and retainers, as described in diaries like the *Mitsutoyo kōki*, written by a court-bakufu liaison or *buke tenso*, Kanshuji Mitsutoyo, and in the *Tōdaiki* written by the Tokugawa retainer, Matsudaira Tadaakira. These two sources give an insight into the gesture of offering silver as a replacement for other precious goods or even the much-sought silk clothing, by the time of the Tokugawa era. The down side of using diaries is that the perspectives are always partisan and not objective, but they can still be considered as good historical sources.

Similarly, I have used the *Tanimura Yūsan oboegaki* (the Memoir of Tanimura Yūsan), a merchant of Nagasaki, written in 1719, in which he recalled events of his youth in Nagasaki to report Dutch endeavours as perceived by contemporary merchants. I have also dealt with family documentation such as the *Bōsho Nabeshima kemonjo* for documents pertinent to the Fukahori family in the early seventeenth century in the Saga City Prefectural Library, as well as the *Ōiwa kemonjo*, a manuscript stored now in the Nagano Castle Museum. At times it was difficult to find documentation, or even more than one document, related to the same event of a family; in such cases I have supported the document in question with secondary sources or with primary sources of Jesuit origin, such as Frois' *Historia* or letters from the collection held at the Royal Academy of History in Madrid, such as the document of Matheus de Couros that dealt with the reported events.

In other cases, I have consulted primary sources online. Although several libraries in Japan are now opting for online documents, only well-endowed libraries such as the National Diet Library and others of the same caliber are able to digitize and offer parts of their collections online. While all the above-mentioned primary sources are essential to the history of piracy and maritime trade in Japan, in the case of primary sources regarding the Kingdom of Ryukyu very few can be found outside Okinawa. It is difficult to get primary sources from Okinawa without being physically there.

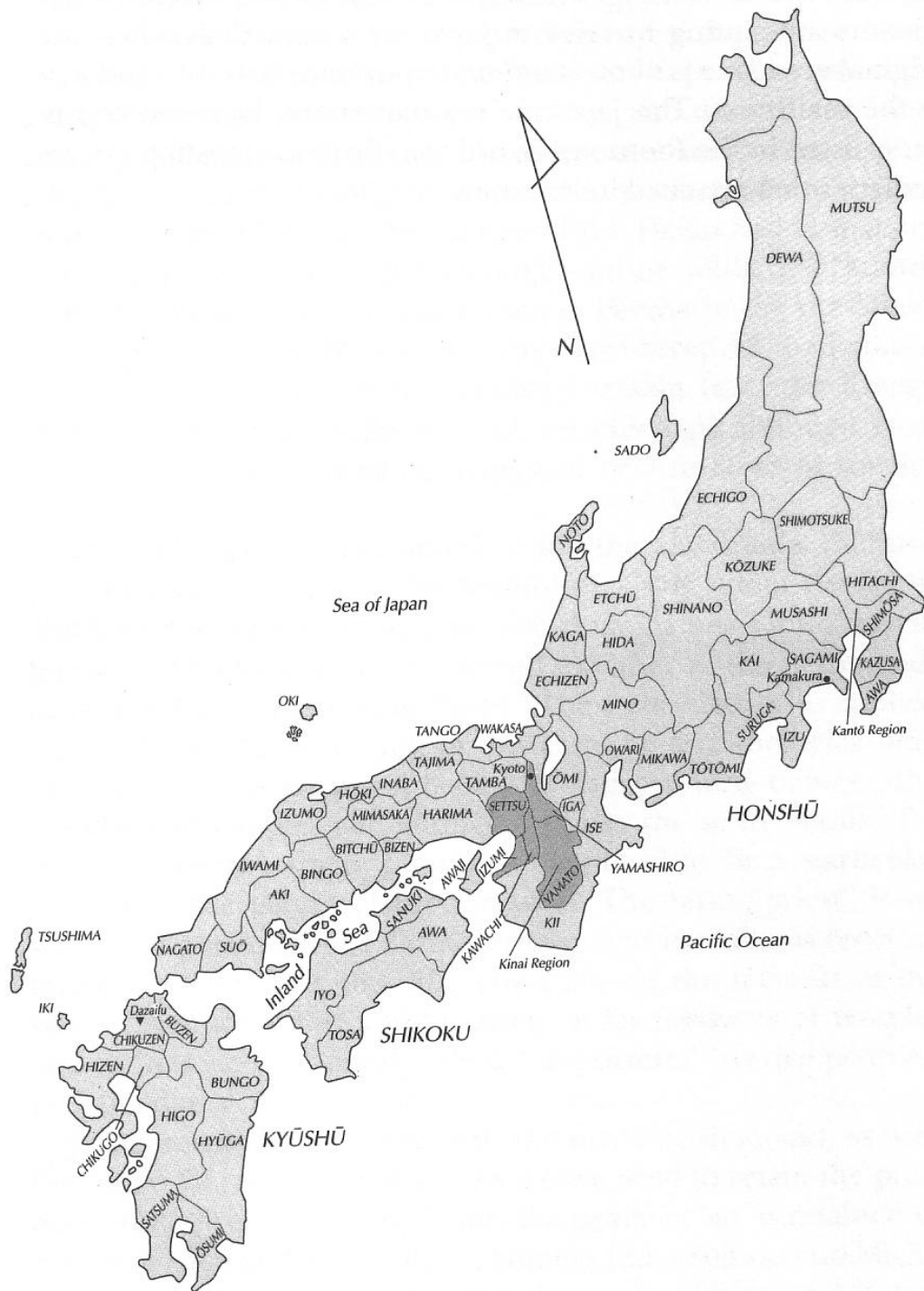
Chapter 7 concludes this dissertation by restating the initial goals and how these goals were dealt with chapter by chapter. In addition, it shows the manner in which this dissertation has contributed to the field of Japanese maritime history by bringing to the fore a novel concept in interpreting the transformation of Japanese pirates into corsairs as an effect of the silver used as currency in a monetized economy. It also presents the economic policies that impeded the



existence of corsairs and of their economic endeavours. Furthermore, it assesses the strength and limitation of this dissertation by looking at its methodological structure and targeted areas of investigation. It also suggests future research direction.

**Table 1-1.**  
*Table of Weights, Measures, and Currency*

Unit	Conversion
Currency	1 kan (貫) = 1 kanme = 1 kanmon = 1,000 mon (文) 1,000 mon was equivalent to 1 caxa (copper coins cash string) = 3.75 kilograms 1 mon (文) = 1 sen (錢) = 3.75 grams 1 mon (匁) in silver 1 hiki (疋) = 10 mon
Area	1 chō (町) = 10 tan = 9,917 square metres 1 tan (反) = 360 bu = 991.7 square metres 1 bu (歩) = 2.75 square metres 1 gō (合) = 0.275 square metres
Volume	1 koku (石) = 180 litres 1 tō (斗) = 18 litres 1 shō (升) = 1.8 litres 1 gō (合) 0.18 litres 1 shaku (勺) = 0.018 litres 1 hyō (表) = 72 litres



**Map 1-1. Map of Japan**

## Chapter 2: The Development of Japanese Pirates as Corsairs on the Maritime Routes from Japan to Ryukyu, 1520s–1570s

### 2.1 Introduction

Kyushu in the sixteenth century had several transshipment harbours that were used to import goods from East Asia and export Japanese manufactured products. As official trade was a prerogative of kings and the state as a diplomatic tool, it was insufficient to meet the demands for foreign goods made by the nobility, local warriors, and religious institutions.<sup>84</sup> Private trade, often interpreted as illegal and therefore piratical, supplied these demands of the elite.

Arano Yasunori created the concept of *wakoteki jyōkyō* (piratical condition) to indicate the illegal exchange of goods that existed in East Asia as an alternative to the diplomatic tribute trade formulated by Ming China to which most countries, except Japan, adhered. Arano asserts that individual endeavours of piratical trade existed and thrived only when the Ming government promulgated the maritime prohibitions (1547–1568) that prohibited diplomatic trade.<sup>85</sup> Due to the prohibitions illegal trade carried out by pirates and merchant-pirates flourished. Murai Shosuke defined Japanese pirates—particularly the pirates of Kyushu—who engaged in such trade using Amino Yoshihiko’s theory of “sea people,” as peripheral people whose identities were blurred. Their lives were at the mercy of local elites in the best of cases, or at the mercy of poor economic conditions in the worst of cases, and they took advantage of the opportunities presented to them by resorting to piracy.<sup>86</sup> Specifically regarding Kyushu piracy, scholars such

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<sup>84</sup> Hamashita Takeshi, *China, East Asia and the Global Economy*, eds. Mark Selden and Linda Grove, (NY: Routledge, 2008), 18.

<sup>85</sup> Arano Yasunori, “The Formation of a Japanocentric World Order,” *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 2, 2(2005): 186-187.

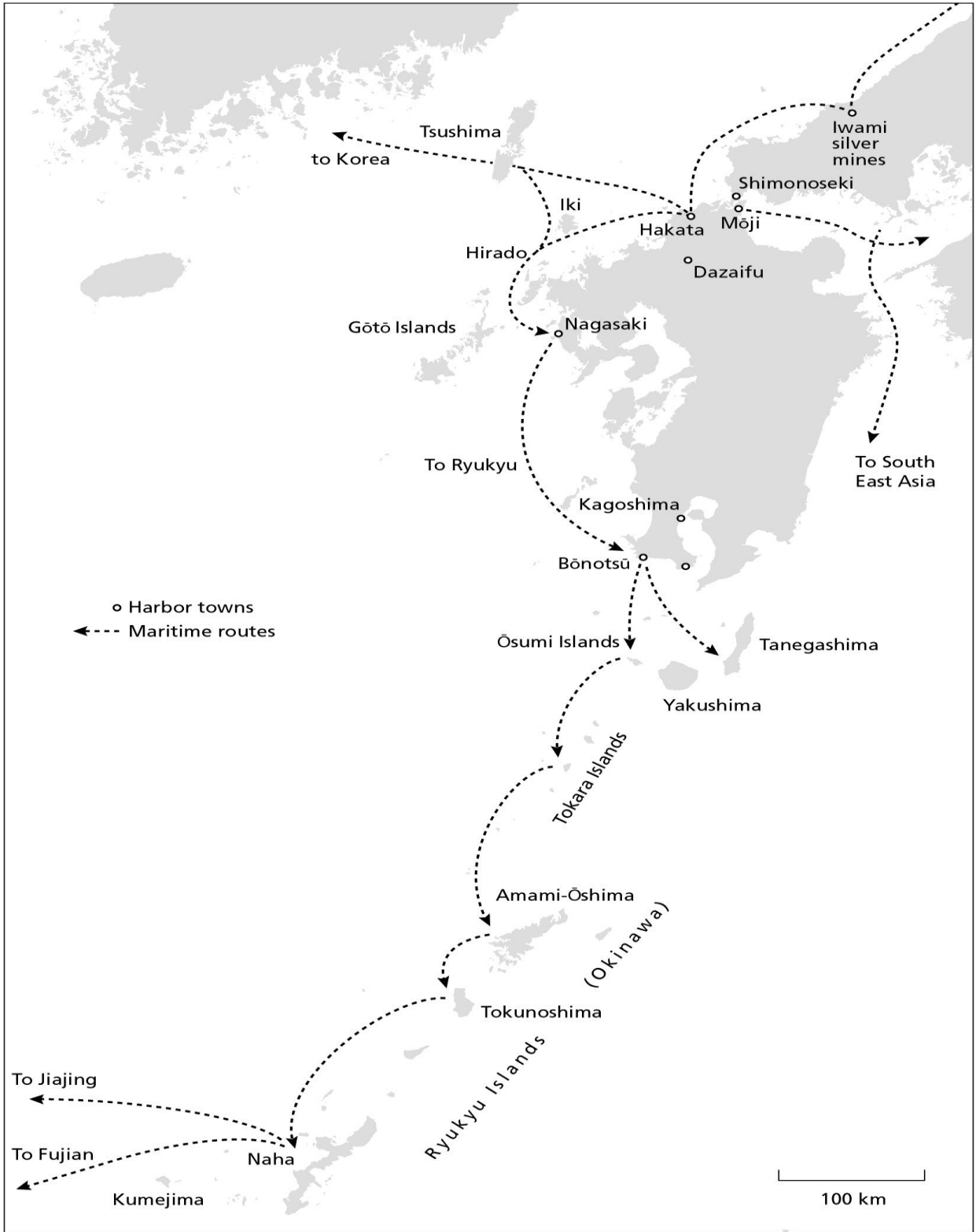
<sup>86</sup> Murai Shosuke, “Chusei no wajintachi” in *Kyushu shigaku*, 107 (1993): 3-4.

as Niina Kazuhito, who deals with the Shimazu's competition and piracy in the early sixteenth century, and Kuroshima Satoru, who has instead interpreted the role of Japanese pirates and of the Japanese government as becoming more entrenched in Ryukyu affairs, interpreted pirates respectively as Kyushu daimyō's forces, and as government tools, but have not considered pirates as fundamental players.<sup>87</sup>

In this chapter, I challenge the research of previous scholars. I analyze the competition for maritime routes and the Ashikaga shoguns' tributary trade policies towards Ming China and Ryukyu from the maritime perspective of Kyushu pirates. I argue that Arano's view implies a Sino-centric view of both diplomatic trade and piracy, in which pirates existed in relation to illegal trade. However, Japanese pirates existed not only in relation to Ming maritime policies, but also in relation to internal conflicts. In the first place, the competition for maritime routes between Japan, Ryukyu, and East Asia increased as a result of the silver trade, which gave Japanese pirates the opportunity to profit, not only in terms of wealth, but to carve a niche as agents of local Kyushu daimyō. Their commercial agency allowed them to take advantage of the competition for maritime routes to Ryukyu. This enabled them to gain status as mediators between the centre and the peripheries and to shift the commercial focus from Ryukyu to Tsushima once Japan became the locus for the exchange of weaponry for silver and silver currency. This monetization of the local economy enabled the transformative process that turned pirates into corsairs. Far from being peripheral, they were key actors in beginning a process of Japanese economic integration much earlier than the historical events that produced Japan's political and territorial unification.

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<sup>87</sup> Niina Kazuhiko, *Satsuma Shimazu shi* (Tokyo: Eibun-sha, 2014), 6. See also Kuroshima Satoru, *Umi no bushidan* (Tokyo: Kuroshima Satoru, 2013), 39.



**Map 2-1. Maritime routes from Satsuma to Ryukyu.**

### **2.1.1 The Competition for Maritime Routes in the Yamato–Ryukyu Trade: Piracy as a Gateway to Foreign Markets, 1490–1590**

Japan in the early sixteenth century was divided into sixty-six provinces ruled by warlords (*daimyō*) who financed territorial conflicts by having their merchants and retainers engage in trade. Two of the most influential *daimyō* families who sponsored courtiers and shoguns were the Hosokawa and Ōuchi families, in central Japan. They had risen in prominence at court and within the military government (*bakufu*) of the Ashikaga shoguns, whom they sponsored. By shogunal orders, both families carried on diplomatic trade with Ming China, competing with each other. In the 1530s, the discovery of silver in Japan and its export, whether for legal (official) or illegal (hence piratical) trade, heightened their conflict. The stage for such conflict became the maritime routes from Kyoto to southern Japan. Pirates became the agents of this competition.

In 1516, a nefarious murder occurred in the harbour of Bōnotsu, which was controlled by one branch of the Shimazu family of Satsuma. The victim, Miyake Kunihide, was described as a pirate leader of twelve vessels that had approached the harbour and been given permission to dock en route to the Ryukyu Islands. Miyake Kunihide was attacked and killed after a brief armed conflict with another warrior gang, and his ships were burned.

This particular incident affected shogunal policies related to trade via the Ryukyu archipelago until Ryukyu's annexation and even afterward, as Tokugawa Ieyasu tried to reopen trade and diplomatic negotiations with Ming China. Although the killing of Miyake Kunihide in itself was a grave matter, as we shall see later, it did not resonate in the shogunal court, nor amongst the warrior families who sponsored the Ashikaga shoguns. At least, it did not affect them right away. However, without doubt the killing of Miyake Kunihide was related in the first

place to the tribute trade performed between Japan and Ming China, and in the second place to the competition for maritime routes used by pirates. In the third place, it was related to both diplomatic and commercial relations that existed between Japan and Ryukyu.

The tribute trade from Japan was carried out via the tally system (*kangō bōeki*). As originally implemented, this consisted of trade regulated by tallies cut in two parts, one to be left with the issuant (the Korean, Ming or Ryukyu court) and the other owned by the Ashikaga shogun, as “king” of Japan. Hashimoto Yu claims that problems with the tally system arose by the mid-fifteenth century, when Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–1490) owned the tallies but was granted trading rights only close to the year of his death. In 1490, when he died, Ashikaga Yoshitane rose to power, only to be ousted in 1493, when Shogun Ashikaga Yoshizumi, sponsored by Hosokawa Masamoto, came to power.

Yoshitane regained his power in 1508 and held it until 1521, backed by both Hosokawa Tadakuni and Ōuchi Yoshioki.<sup>88</sup> Both the Hosokawa and the Ōuchi houses sponsored the shogun who best favoured their commercial interests. The Hosokawa established and modified the tally trade. In fact, as they managed the trade with Ryukyu, the tallies came to be exchanged as commercial rights for trading in certain commodities.<sup>89</sup> The consequence of considering the tallies to be a commodity was that they could be sold or given to supportive warlords who engaged in trade on behalf of the shogun, and this occurred every time there was a change of shogun supported by a courtier’s or daimyō’s house. In this manner, the Hosokawa and the Ōuchi houses rose in prominence and carried out international trade by supporting the shogun of

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<sup>88</sup> Araki Kazunori, “Jūgo, jūroku seiki no Shimazu shi Ryukyu kankei” *Kyushu shigaku*, 144 (2006): 179.

<sup>89</sup> Hashimoto Yu, *Chūsei Nihon no kokusai kankei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2005), 179–180.



the day, although both houses competed fiercely to obtain the tallies, which were issued only by the shoguns.

Further complicating the trading tally issue, Shogun Ashikaga Yoshizumi released a second set of tallies in 1504, invalidating the ones previously issued and thus causing problems in the receiving countries, which now possessed the matching tallies for the invalidated ones only. Due to this double issuance of tallies, a severe diplomatic incident arose, involving both Hosokawa and Ōuchi houses. In 1523, two missions led respectively by the Ōuchi and the Hosokawa houses arrived at Ningpo, both claiming to be rightful shogunal missions. The Ming accepted the Ōuchi mission carrying the newest set of tallies, while the Hosokawa faction carried the older tallies.<sup>90</sup> In the ensuing fight, several Japanese and Chinese were killed, and the Ming prohibited the Japanese from trading on their shores.

Both Ōuchi and Hosokawa houses competed for direct maritime routes to the only available Chinese harbour open to them, Ningpo. However, according to Kuroshima Satoru, the Hosokawa had, in fact, set up their own trading seal (inhan 印判). This seal, nominally on behalf of the *bakufu* and the whole of Japan, was, however, practically exclusive to them, enabling them to control foreign trade to their benefit.<sup>91</sup> In 1508, the year in which Shogun Ashikaga Yoshitane regained power; the Shimazu in southern Japan obtained the use of the trading seal on behalf of the bakufu Hosokawa faction, creating a Hosokawa–Shimazu trading route to the Kingdom of Ryukyu. The route was interrupted after the 1523 Ningpo incident, but reestablished via Ryukyu in 1530 to trade with Ming China.

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<sup>90</sup> Araki Kazunori, “Jūgo, jūroku seiki no Shimazu shi Ryukyu kankei,” 180.

<sup>91</sup> Kuroshima Satoru, “Ryukyu Ōkoku to chūsei Nihon,” *Shigaku zasshi* 109 (2000): 42.

In 1527, four years after the Hosokawa clan's disastrous attack on the Ōuchi tribute ships at Ningpo, the Ming court restored proper diplomatic and trade relations with Japan, using the Ryukyu Kingdom as a mediator in sending an official letter to the "king of Japan," Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiharu, backed by the Hosokawa, to reestablish diplomatic and trade relations via Ryukyu. The Hosokawa explained that in 1523, the Ōuchi carried the "right" tallies only because they had stolen them. Hence, the Hosokawa had resorted to sending a trading mission with the "wrong" tallies. There is documentary evidence that the Ōuchi tried in vain to curtail the Hosokawa–Ryukyu–Ming route by sending an envoy from the Tenkaji temple to discuss the matter in Ryukyu.<sup>92</sup> The Hosokawa began using Ryukyu to trade with China in 1530, while the Ōuchi would trade directly with the Ming.<sup>93</sup> In this way, a two-pronged channel of trade was created, using different routes with the support of the Ryukyu monarchy. This precedent enabled the stabilization of diplomatic relations with Ming China after the annexation of Ryukyu.

The Ryukyu monarchy had high standing in Ming's diplomatic traditions and was becoming relevant to Japanese diplomatic culture as well, mainly because of the breakup of and loopholes within the tribute system of trade, to which Ashikaga Yoshimitsu had adhered in 1408. However, by 1530, when the Ashikaga bakufu-sponsored Hosokawa-Ming relations were reestablished via the Ryukyu Kingdom, disputed maritime trading routes became the stage for piratical competition, backed by the Ashikaga bakufu via its sponsor daimyō clans, against the emerging powers of the Kyushu daimyō. Japanese pirates hired as mercenaries fought hard to control trading routes on behalf of their respective employers.

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<sup>92</sup> Hashimoto Yu, *Chūsei Nihon no kokusai kankei*, 226–227.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 223–224.

This was the framework within which the incident of Miyake Kunihide was mentioned again in the 1530s. After the reestablishment of Hosokawa trading rights via Ryukyu, Imaoka Ninbu Daishu Michiaki wrote to Tokunaga Hayatoso in 1533 to report that Miyake Izumi no kami Kunihide, a pirate of Tsurashima (in Bicchū, now Okayama, Japan) had died in the harbour of Bōnotsu while at the command of a coastal patrol ship en route to the Ryukyu Kingdom. He claimed that Miyake Kunihide had been traveling to Ryukyu to “use military strategy toward the Ryukyu Kingdom.”<sup>94</sup> This particular sentence has been interpreted by postwar scholars to mean that the Ashikaga shogunate had already envisioned the annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom by the early sixteenth century. In the same document, it is also written that Imaoka Michiaki, the sender, was actually requesting permission from Tokunaga Hayatoso, the recipient, to use several harbours along the route to Ryukyu. Hence, the document was not relaying news on a possible piratical invasion of the kingdom of Ryukyu but requesting the use of harbours and maritime routes controlled by Shimazu clan retainers.

The key to understanding the document is the motive behind why it was written in 1533 about a murder that had occurred in 1516, and the identities of the parties involved: the victim, Miyake Kunihide; the writer, Imaoka Michiaki; and the recipient, Tokunaga Hayatoso. Miyake Kunihide had been hired in 1516 as a trading envoy to lead twelve ships belonging to the bakufu on behalf of the Hosokawa clan. According to Niina Kazuhiko, the murder occurred over trading rights and the control of harbours in southern Japan.<sup>95</sup> Miyake Kunihide was killed by Shimazu

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<sup>94</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen*, vol. 2, doc. 2227 (Tokyo: Shūendo Shuppan, 1985). See also Kuroshima Satoru, *Chūsei no kenryoku to rettō* (Tokyo: Kōshi shoin, 2012), 137. The mentioned documents are also in the original source, namely, the *Shimazu kemonjo mokuroku* as doc. 4607 (written in 1533) and doc. 4603 (written in 1535).

<sup>95</sup> Niina Kazuhiko, “Miyake Kunihide Imaoka Michiaki no Ryukyu tōsen keika wo meguru shō mondai,” *Kyūshū shigaku* 144 (2006): 55.

Tadakata (1497–1519), of the Shimazu Oushu clan, to punish another branch of the Shimazu clan ruling Bōnotsu for allowing the Hosokawa to use the harbour.

However, Miyake Kunihide was also the administrator of Sakai city—the Venice of Japan, according to the Jesuit Vilela, who visited there in 1562.<sup>96</sup> Sakai was the wealthiest harbour in all of Japan because of its closeness to the capital, Kyoto, and to the mercantile city of Ōsaka. The goods passing through Sakai fetched the highest prices, as those goods were to be used by the elite residing in the capital city. Hence, the murder of Miyake Kunihide was politically and economically motivated for both the Shimazu- and the bakufu-sponsored pirates. It is possible that the Shimazu Oushu clan, as peripheral daimyō, were fighting the central government for control of maritime trading routes to the centres of commerce and trade in East Asia and Ryukyu. Kuroshima Satoru states that the Shimazu of Oushu may have had fewer trading rights than previously thought.<sup>97</sup> If that was the case, it is rather obvious that they would not have wanted the interference of bakufu-sponsored pirates on their maritime trading routes.

To understand why this incident was mentioned fifteen years later within the historical context of the competition to obtain dockage in southern harbours, and thereby control maritime routes, we must also unlock the identities of the sender and the recipient of the letter, namely Imaoka Michiaki and Tokunaga Hayatosa. Imaoka Michiaki was a pirate of Oshima Island in the Seto Inland Sea. He was an ally of the Noshima Murakami pirates, who controlled the toll barriers from Hiroshima to Sakai.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Gaspar Vilela, *Cartas que los padres y hermanos de la Compañía de Jesúus, que andan en los reynos de Japón escrivieron a los de la misma Compañía, desde el año de mil y quinientos y quarenta y nueve, hasta el de mil y quinientos y setenta y uno. En las quales se da noticia de las varias costumbres y idolatrias de aquella gentilidad: y se cuenta el principio y successo y bondad de los christianos de aquellas partes.* (Alcala: Casas de Jua Iniguez de Leguerica, 1575), ff.164-166.

<sup>97</sup> Kuroshima Satoru, “Ryukyu ōkuni to chūsei nihon,” *Shigaku zasshi* 109 (2000): 41–42.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

In 1551, Sue Harukata, a retainer of the Ōuchi family, wrote to both Murakami Tarō and Imaoka Hōki no kami, reporting that Murakami Takanori, another member of the Murakami clans, had to levy taxes—or protection money, to be exact—on goods imported by Sakai and Kyoto merchants trading in southern Kyushu, namely in the Shimazu domain of Satsuma, rather than exacting the toll fees, or in addition to the toll fees merchants had to pay for passage at certain checkpoints controlled by the Murakami pirates.<sup>99</sup> Previously, Noshima Murakami Takashige had won the right to operate a protection business from the island of Itsukushima (Hiroshima Bay) and could assess his protection fees from the international ships' lading of goods (sponsored by Ōuchi Yoshitaka), intending to economically hurt the merchants of Sakai (protected by the Hosokawa). Yoshitaka allowed the Noshima to charge protection money from international ships except for the ones coming from Hyuga and Satsuma, ruled by the Shimazu houses.<sup>100</sup> By 1551, Sue Harukata, was interfering in Shimazu-ruled territory, requesting that the Noshima Murakami clan exact protection money there. Murakami Tarō, one of the recipients of the document, was the young leader of the Noshima clan, Murakami Takeyoshi.<sup>101</sup> The Imaoka family were members of the Kōno pirates, with their base at Amazaki Fortress in Shikoku which, as allies of the Noshima Murakami clan, collected protection money on their behalf.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ehime Kenshi Hensan Iinkai, *Ehime kenshi kodai chūsei*, doc. 1770, (Matsuyama: Ehime Ken, 1983), 954.

<sup>100</sup> Peter Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 112-113.

<sup>101</sup> Ōta Gyūichi, *The Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*, eds. George Elisonas and Jerome Lamers (Leiden: Brill, 2011), XV. Rogriguez, the interpreter, related that the Japanese had different names at different stages of their lives. Tarō was the *jitsumyō*, or personal proper name, of Murakami Takeyoshi when he was young and had not assumed a title.

<sup>102</sup> Yamauchi Shinji, *Kōno Jōzoin monjo ni tsuite (ge) shiryō shokai*, (Matsushima: Ehime ken Rekishi Bunka Hakubutsukan Kenkyū Kiyo, 2006), 109. Imaoka Minbu appears in the *Ishoki* as harbour deputy (*hikan*) of Amazaki Fortress in Shikoku, with a hatamoto status, and having under him a total of five ships. In addition, the Imaoka family is listed as part of the eighteen great generals of Kōno Michinao. Furthermore, in the *Jōzōin monjo*, there is a reference to an Imaoka Minbudaibu as being part of one of the pirate groups under Kōno Michinao. That is not all: there is an interesting link to the Miyake family as part of the Kōno clan. Hence, the document may not only reveal the motivation for gaining more harbors but also a link between the genealogy of the Kōno clan and the Miyake. However, scholar Miyake Kazuhiro doubts that Imaoka Michiaki was part of the Kōno clan because the “Michi” part of his name was written in some documents with the character for “way,” while the Kōno clan used the

The 1533 document written by Imaoka Michiaki can be interpreted as a request for reparations for the damage caused by the killing of a shogunate mercenary by someone of the same status. Imaoka may have been seeking redress through the use of southern Kyushu harbours to exact protection money. The document is addressed to Tokunaga Hayatosa, who Niina Kazuhito identified as belonging to a family of record keepers for the Tanegashima clan, which ruled over the harbours of the Tōkara archipelago stretching between southern Japan and Ryukyu.<sup>103</sup> But the associations of the Tokunaga family were not limited to the Tanegashima clan; they also had connections with the Itō clan of Hyuga (later to become Ōtomo retainers and famous Christians) and with the Shimazu, as the Tanegashima had established marriage relations with retainers of the Shimazu Oushu clan.

In 1533, southern Kyushu was not unified under the Oushu Shimazu clan; this would take place in 1547. Therefore, shipping to Ryukyu and China from southern harbours had to be diverted between the 1530s and 1540s because of internal conflicts. Hence it is possible that the Ōuchi, via their sponsored pirates, the Noshima Murakami and their retainers, the Imaoka house, were seeking alternate maritime routes and harbours, and to hinder the Hosokawa-Shimazu trade with Ryukyu.

In 1542, in an attempt to exclude the Tanegashima from dealing with the Ryukyu trade, Ōuchi Yoshitaka, through his magistrate Sagara Taketou, sent a letter to the Ryukyu magistrate of Naha Harbour to request that ships coming from Tanegashima be detained in Satsuma.<sup>104</sup> The letter could be interpreted as an attempt to stop the Hosokawa-sponsored trade, since the Ōuchi

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character for “expert, connoisseur.” In my view, since the documents were written by different people in different regions, it is possible that those who wrote the documents were simply using the characters phonetically.

<sup>103</sup> Niina Kazuhiko, “Miyake Kunihide-Imaoka Michiaki no Ryūkyū tōsen keika wo meguru shō mondai,” 61. In the Kamakura period, the Tanegashima family was a cadet branch of the Ashikaga shoguns. Later, this chapter explores the function of the Tōkara Islands in this type of negotiation.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 202.

clan anticipated that the Satsuma–Ryukyu route would soon fall under their control. (This attempt was previously mentioned in the case of Imaoka Michiaki, who had requested and most likely obtained permission to trade via Tanegashima with Ryukyu.)

Sue Harukata's 1551 letter shows a changed political setting: in that year, he staged a coup that led to the suicide of Ōuchi Yoshitaka, his lord, who had tried to obtain control of the Ryukyu maritime route.<sup>105</sup> By writing directly to a henchman of the Murakami pirates and to a retainer of the Tanegashima, Sue was most likely trying to obtain what his lord, Ōuchi Yoshitaka, had not been able to establish in the 1540s—namely, the rights to use a trading route to Ryukyu via the corsairs of the Seto Inland Sea in connection with the Shimazu corsairs, the Tanegashima.

However, we should first consider the role played by the Tanegashima in the maritime environment of southern Kyushu. This clan came into contact with the Shimazu during the latter wars of conquest to unify southern Kyushu, which they had been fighting since the mid-fifteenth century. The Tanegashima had revenue of one thousand *koku* and in 1511, Shimazu Tadaji gave them one hundred households. They practised marriage alliances, much sought after in the period of civil wars to secure economic and geopolitical relationships. The Tanegashima allied themselves through marriages with all three main Shimazu clans ruling southern Kyushu as they expanded their territories and were even able to gain rule over two other main islands, part of the Tōkara archipelago, in return for their alliances.<sup>106</sup>

The relationship between the Tanegashima and the Shimazu clans was not one of dependency, as the Tanegashima were not yet Shimazu retainers but were more or less hired

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<sup>105</sup> Itoh Kōji, “Ōuchi shi no Ryukyu tsūkō,” *Nenpyō chūsei shi kenkyū* 38 (2003): 202–203.

<sup>106</sup> Yara Ken'ichirō, “Chūsei goki no Tanegashima shi to minami Kyushu to chiiki,” *Shigaku zasshi*, 121 (2012): 11.

forces. For example, in 1521, Hosokawa Tadakuni hired Tanegashima Musashi no kami as a maritime patrol guard (*keigōshū*) to defend a ship bringing tribute to the Ming.<sup>107</sup> This fact reveals that the Tanegashima as skilled seafarers, also engaging in piracy, sold their services to daimyō who could afford them.

Similarly, the Innoshima Murakami clan of the Seto Inland Sea were hired in 1443 to escort tributary ships of the Ōuchi to Ming China.<sup>108</sup> That tradition had not died by 1547, when Sakugen revealed in his *Nyūminki* (Record of Entering Ming China), that the tributary ships, a total of nine vessels sponsored by various southern Japanese daimyō, were escorted en route to the Ming by “all the pirates of Japan,” hired on that occasion as maritime patrols.<sup>109</sup>

The piratical endeavours of the Tanegashima did not stop at sea. In fact, their genealogy (*Tanegashima Kafu*) indicates that on at least one recorded occasion (but most likely on several others as well), they confiscated goods from Chinese who were shipwrecked on their islands. In an attempt to situate the Tanegashima historically as fief holders in the Japanese hierarchy, Yara Keichirō has described them as wanting to seize land and expand their authority to other islands in the Tōkara archipelago, namely Kajiajima, Iōjima (Sulphur Island), and Takeshima.<sup>110</sup> Previously, it has been shown that the Tanegashima, via their Tokunaga retainer, had been contacted in 1533 by the Murakami pirates of the Seto Inland Sea to gain access to the southern harbours and routes under Tanegashima control. Hence, by that time, they had already established their control over the maritime routes between the Tōkara archipelago and Ryukyu, preventing other daimyō from interfering in their territories. Because of this, they likely

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<sup>107</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen*, vol. 4. Tanegashima Kafu, (Tokyo: Shūendo Shuppan, 1985), 4, 25.

<sup>108</sup> Morimoto Takeshi, *Innoshima no rekishi* (Innoshima: Innoshima Bunkazai Kyokai, 1994), 17.

<sup>109</sup> Sakugen, *Nyūminki*, see Makita Tairyō ed., *Sakugen nyūminki no kenkyū*, vol. 1, 353.

<sup>110</sup> Yara Ken'ichirō, “Chūsei goki no Tanegashima shi to minami Kyushu to chiiki,” 5–6.



provoked the ire of several daimyō who traded in sulphur, such as the Ōuchi, who tried to implement an embargo on the Tanegashima in 1542, as they relied on Iōjima for tribute offerings. On the other hand, the still politically unstable Shimazu chose to obtain their collaboration, particularly after the arrival of the Portuguese at Tanegashima in 1543.

After the arrival of the Portuguese and the introduction of musket technology in 1543, the Tanegashima became central to the Nanban trade. However, before that, as rulers of Tanegashima and through their retainers in the Tōkara Islands, they played an essential role in the commercial activities that took place between the Shimazu, the lords of Satsuma, and the kingdom of Ryukyu. Ryukyu and Japan maintained tribute relations; however, Japan was also a mediator between Ryukyu and Chosŏn Korea. Therefore, private trade relations and piracy occurred throughout the islands between those countries because of the high level of trade taking place in Naha. The competition for Ryukyu maritime routes, sponsored by the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiharu, was in reality fulfilled by pirates hired by the Hosokawa. The demise of the relevance of Ryukyu maritime routes resulted from several factors, among them the discovery and trade of Japanese silver. This took place in the span of less than a century.

## **2.2 The Rise and Fall of the Ryukyu Kingdom as a Transshipment Centre, 1450–1530**

In this section, I explain that the trade with Ryukyu through the harbours of Hakata and Tsushima lost its importance because of the silver trade, which was first handled by pirates. Several factors caused it to lose predominance, among these Ming maritime bans, fake missions, and a lack of shipping resources. The demise of Ryukyu trade meant an increase in the importance of maritime locations in Ryukyu, Japan, and Korea, given that silver was traded through the Japanese archipelagos and Chinese networks.

It is relevant here at first to introduce the role of Ryukyu in East Asia as a transshipment harbour. The Ryukyu archipelago originally comprised three kingdoms, which had been unified by the middle kingdom (the late fourteenth century). According to the *Rekidai hōan*, the kingdom of Ryukyu had already established connections with Yuan and Ming China as a tributary kingdom, as well as with several other countries, such as Japan, Chosŏn Korea, Siam, Malacca, Indonesia, and Sumatra.

Takara Kurayoshi has proposed several reasons for the commercial relevance of the Ryukyu kingdom between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. First, the maritime bans imposed in the early Ming period, with their trade restrictions on Southeast Asia, forced merchants to find new markets for their goods. This fact allowed the Ryukyu people to ship goods originating in Southeast Asia elsewhere, making great profits. Second, the small and timber-poor kingdom of Ryukyu received an offer to have its trading ships built in China. For those reasons, Kobata relates that there was only one tribute mission with a ship built in Naha, as, in the mid-fifteenth century, Japanese merchant vessels were used for that purpose.<sup>111</sup> Third, the Chinese community in Ryukyu established the town of Kumemura on an island adjacent to the harbour of Naha, mainly inhabited by expatriate Chinese from Fujian and nearby regions engaging in trading missions.<sup>112</sup> Those advantages were not given freely, as the Ming, anxious to eliminate piracy along their coastal areas, incentivized other countries to deal with piracy by providing them with resources.

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<sup>111</sup> Kobata Atsushi, Matsuda Mitsugu, *Ryukyuan Relations and South Sea Countries* (Tokyo: Kawakita Printing, 1969), 58.

<sup>112</sup> Takara Kurayoshi, *The History of Overseas Expansion* (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1942), cited in Hiromichi Okamoto, "Foreign Policy and Maritime Trade in the Early Ming Period: Focussing on the Ryukyu Kingdom," *Articles of the Tōhō Gakkai* (2007): 36.

A form of “country trade” (as it would be called by the Dutch in the early seventeenth century) was what maintained Ryukyu as a trade centre for more than a century. For example, Siamese trade was conducted primarily with Ming China, under the tribute system. Siamese goods were handled by Ryukyuan traders, as middlemen, before they reached Japan. Ryukyu exploited that to its own advantage, engaging in exchanges of Siamese goods in other countries and reselling other countries’ goods in Siam or in Naha itself, which acted as a transshipment harbour for goods manufactured elsewhere. However, the Ming’s maritime ban and trade restrictions could not have had long-lasting effects, chiefly because the Siamese did not travel to Ryukyu.<sup>113</sup>

In addition to these restrictions on Siamese and Japanese trade, in 1440 the Ming only allowed one mission a year from Siam and Champa, and in 1453 they restricted the missions from Japan by two-thirds.<sup>114</sup> Ryukyu could maintain its centrality only as middleman in the Asian trade. Once new players began trading directly with Siam and on the Chinese coast, Ryukyu’s trading supremacy declined. Among those new players were the Sino-Japanese pirates.

The second factor in Ryukyu’s relevance was the construction of ships in China for Ryukyu missions. Although interpreted as a benefit, it could also have acted as a hindrance. In fact, Ming China allowed the construction of large-tonnage ships for tribute purposes; we can imagine that these were not easy to manoeuvre when dodging pirate attacks. Okamoto Hiromichi reports that from 1446 until about 1510, Ryukyu seafarers used ships built in Fujian province that had a tonnage of 1,260 Japanese *koku* and carried crews of three hundred. This changed

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<sup>113</sup> Kobata Atsushi, Matsuda Mitsugu, *Ryukyuan Relations and South Sea Countries*, 53–54.

<sup>114</sup> Okamoto Hiromichi, “Foreign Policy and Maritime Trade in the Early Ming Period: Focussing on the Ryukyu Kingdom,” *Articles of the Tōhō Gakkai* (2007): 47.

drastically in 1510, when they shifted to much lighter, four-hundred *koku* cargo ships crewed by one hundred men.<sup>115</sup>

Because of their smaller size and greater speed, these Fujian-built vessels could avoid pirate attacks in dangerous waters, although bigger vessels could withstand pirate attacks. However, the main reason for the change in ships' size was probably due to the changed trading routes and the arrival of newcomers. By 1510, the Portuguese had entered the Strait of Malacca and taken over the Gujarati merchants' routes. Their arrival in waters navigated by Ryukyu traders may well have driven the latter to change their trading routes for safer coast-to-coast trade rather than long-haul voyages at sea. Perhaps this is the reason why, from 1510, Ryukyu shifted to the lighter vessels.

As proposed by Takara Kurayoshi, the third factor favouring the commercial relevance of Ryukyu was the Chinese settlement of Kumemura on the island of Ukijima, which comprised several families who originated from China and retained their Chinese language and customs. These families formed a link between the kingdom of Ryukyu and Ming China by participating in the tributary missions, assuming several important functions. The *Naha shi shi* (History of Naha City) emphasizes Chinese families such as the Mo, Ma, Cheng, Sai, Shi, Wang, Lin, and others.<sup>116</sup> From 1506 on, we find that several of these families participated in tributary missions to China and elsewhere, mainly carrying sulphur, silver, decorated golden swords, and often barrels of gold and copper, as well.

The Chen and Cheng families from Kumemura participated in almost all the tributary missions as envoys, captains, and in other functions; their names appear in several documents

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<sup>115</sup> Okamoto Hiromichi, "Ko Ryukyu kino Ryukyu okoku ni okeru 'kaisen' wo meguru shosō," *Higashi Ajia bunka kōshōgaku kenkyū* 1 (2008): 221–248.

<sup>116</sup> Naha Shiryōhen Iinkai, *Naha shi shi*, shiryōhen dai 1, maki 6 jō, (Naha: Naha Shishi, 1980), 433.

spanning almost two centuries. For example, Chen Zoku (陳賊) and his father, Tsunanari (陳繼成),<sup>117</sup> whose names appear in the *Naha shi shi*, seemed to have participated in several tributary missions from 1530 on, together with other envoys.<sup>118</sup> Chen Zoku appeared in a diplomatic mission in 1552, and his father was recorded on a previous mission. They also travelled together later.<sup>119</sup> It is possible that those positions were inherited, as in a family business, due to their years of experience on the sea and as envoys.

According to Maehira Fusaaki, the use of such settlers by the Ryukyu kings was not only a method to expand the kingdom's centrality in East Asian commerce but also an attempt to limit the influx of Chinese merchants from the mainland, regulating official trade by having it handled by expatriate Chinese.<sup>120</sup> Although it is doubtful that such a policy could have limited the arrival of Chinese into the harbour of Naha, it may indeed have increased the connection between mercantile families in Ryukyu and their contacts in China and elsewhere. Using these families as envoys was a practical trading necessity, as it was advantageous to have people and intelligence in foreign territories. They constituted a link between Ming China and the Ryukyu Kingdom. Although it is certain that not all of these people worked as merchants or envoys, the Chinese occupied all sorts of social layers, and due to their services, they were also given fiefs when working for the Ryukyu government.<sup>121</sup> Even if, with time, they intermarried with people of the Ryukyu Islands, new immigrants to Kumemura are documented to have arrived after the

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<sup>117</sup> I use the Japanese reading of Chinese names, but it is very possible that their names were pronounced also in Japanese, as we know that Ryukyu language of the sixteenth century could be understood by Japanese.

<sup>118</sup> Naha Shiryōhen Iinkai, *Naha shi shi*, 488.

<sup>119</sup> Okinawa Kenritsu Toshokan, *Rekidai hōan*, (Okinawa: Okinata Kenritsu Toshokan Hen, 1992), 249–250.

<sup>120</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, “Minchō no kaikin seisaku to Ryukyu kaikin: wakōron wo chūshini,” *Historical Review of Transport and Communication* (2008): 64.

<sup>121</sup> Fukuzawa Akito, “Kinsei Ryukyu ni okeru wata shi no seisan,” in *Retto shi no minami to kita*, eds. Maehira Fusaaki (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2006), 58–59.

establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate and the annexation of Ryukyu by the Satsuma domain. This appears to strengthen the argument that those families were vital to Ryukyu's trade.<sup>122</sup>

Kumemura was but one of four foreign settlements on the island of Ukijima that hosted not only a Chinese community but also Japanese, Koreans, and people of mixed origins (the *wajin*, not necessarily recognized as Japanese but as seafaring people living in nearby islands and engaging in trade and piracy).<sup>123</sup> In records such as the *Wanbao quanshu* (万宝全书 *Compilations of Ten Thousand Precious Things*), written in 1628, it is clear that the *wajin* were not distinguished by deportment, physical attributes such as hairstyles, or a spoken language that could be recognized by countries that dealt with them, and therefore they were deemed “pirates” or “seafarers” in the best of cases.<sup>124</sup> The *wajin* appear to have been Japanese who were residing on islands at a distance from Japan and not in Japan proper. There were also cases where even the identities of Ryukyu people came to be misinterpreted. Hence, *wajin* status was easily manipulated in case of conflicts or shipwrecks. The *wajin* also took refuge in Kumemura (as did those who had been shipwrecked) for protection against pirate attacks. The island itself seems to have been surrounded by a protective wall.<sup>125</sup>

Teisai wrote in the Tenna era (1681–84) about events that occurred between 1573 and 1592. With regard to the Japanese living in Ukijima, older records like his *Teisai hōshi den* (the memoirs of Teisai) show that there were Japanese merchants who arrived from Kagoshima, Bōnotsu, Yamakawa, and the Tōkara archipelago to trade, and that some resided there in a town

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<sup>122</sup> Fukuzawa Akito, “Kinsei Ryukyu ni okeru wata shi no seisan,” 228.

<sup>123</sup> Murai Shosuke, *Chūsei no wajinden* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993), 23. Murai Shosuke has defined “*wajin*” as “marginal men,” often used to refer to the pirates traveling the Korean shores since the fourteenth century. In the sixteenth century, “*wajin*” referred to migrant people living off the sea, on ships, who might occasionally act as pirates.

<sup>124</sup> Watanabe Miki, “Jūroku seiki sue kara jūnana seiski hajime no chugoku tōnan engai ni okeru ryukyujin zō,” *Shigaku zasshi* 10 (2007): 3–4.

<sup>125</sup> Uezato Takashi, “Ko Ryukyu-Naha no wajin kyoryuchi to shinakai seikai,” *Shigaku zasshi* vol. 114 (2005): 4–5.

of two to three hundred households.<sup>126</sup> Uezato Takashi confirms that the Japanese community was not tightly knit; however, aside from having their own quarters in the north of Ukijima in a place called Wakasamachi, the Japanese also lived in Izumizaki and Tomari, the latter off the island but connected to it by a long bridge. They engaged in diplomatic, cultural, and commercial activities with southern Japan (both legal and illegal).<sup>127</sup>

The Japanese community of Kumemura was active in trading between Ryukyu and southern Japan, often utilizing Buddhist temple communities that had been established in certain locations to foster cultural and religious ties. From the middle of the fifteenth century, monks from several powerful religious sects built new temples in Ryukyu. At least two main branches of the powerful temples of Kyoto, the Sanrin and Tetto sects, found permanent bases for their trading and religious activities in Kumemura, as did the Kyoto Rinzai sect, famous for its trading and travelling monks, and the Satsuma branch of Tofukuji. Also, Sakai merchants exported a branch of the Daitokuji Buddhist sect to Ryukyu.<sup>128</sup> Exporting religious ideas and building temples for residents meant that there was a Japanese community or at least a cosmopolitan community of worshipers affiliated with various temples. Temples promoting commercial enterprises had subtemples in several locations, stretching from Kyoto to southern Japan and along the maritime routes connecting Ryukyu to the harbours of southern Japan.

The Shimazu of Satsuma tried to capitalize on the community of Kumemura by establishing close cultural and trading connections along with tribute relations. In the late fifteenth century, the monk Ichijōin (一乗院) settled in Bōnotsu and traded from there with

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<sup>126</sup> Teisai, “Teisai Hōshi Den” (1681), *Dai nihon kaishi henshū shiryō*, 4-5-27, accessed on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at <http://gazo.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/kaishi/pages/4-1-22.html>.

<sup>127</sup> Uezato Takashi, “The Formation of the Port City of Naha in Ryukyu and the World of Maritime Asia: From the Perspective of a Japanese Network,” *The Articles of Tōhō Gakkai* (2008): 62–66.

<sup>128</sup> Itoh Kōji, “Jūgo jūroku seiki no Nihon to Ryukyu,” 9.

Ryukyu on behalf of the Shimazu clan. His records note that that timber was traded to build temples, and a commercial ship brought gold and silver objects from Ryukyu.<sup>129</sup> Ichijōin participated in the tributary missions to China from Japan in 1453 and 1469 as vice envoy under the name Tōrin (東林). He was originally from Ōmi province in central Japan and was part of the Sasaki Genji family clan. By 1493, he had made a connection with the Ankokuji temple in Miyazaki city in Kyushu province of Hyuga, because his family had sided with the Rokkaku clan against shogun Ashikaga Yoshitane during his coup. Ichijōin later moved to Satsuma, where he came to control the activities on the coast with regard to the ships going to and from China, first on behalf of the daimyō Shimazu Tadamasa, and later on behalf of Tadakane.<sup>130</sup> Ichijōin, as a retainer of the Shimazu, served as a political and cultural channel between Satsuma and Ryukyu.

Monks, as learned people sharing cultural commonalities and as skilled envoys with personal connections, were instrumental in establishing diplomatic and commercial ties. However, monks also projected the economic will of the powerful clans with whom they were affiliated, being the leaders of religious institutions and therefore closely connected with land-based lords. Hence, religious institutions colluded with local Kyushu daimyō to trade abroad and

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<sup>129</sup> Fujita A., “Chusei goki no Bōnotsu to higashi Ajia kaiichi koryu,” in *Sakai kara mita uchi to soto*, (Kyushu: Iwata shoten, 2008), 373.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. 383–385.





according to the tributary system using corresponding tallies. On that occasion, he went as a representative of the Ryukyu King, Shō Taikyū.<sup>131</sup> However, despite the fact that trade between Ryukyu, Japan, and Korea occurred at an official level, Japanese merchants who did not possess such seals also went to Korea on several occasions, claiming to be envoys of Ryukyuan kings.

In 1493, a delegation led by two Japanese men, Bongyō and Yajirō, requested as offerings for the king of Ryukyu several precious Buddhist sutras and also, in addition to the licence to trade in precious minerals and spices, money to rebuild Buddhist temples in Ryukyu. The Korean court found their letter suspicious, as the seal was not the proper one and they lacked the tally with a corresponding number for the mission.<sup>132</sup> The Korean government therefore decided not to send the requested material and to reduce the status of the king of Ryukyu in their list of tributary states as an incentive to stop fake embassies at their places of origin. This was just one of a string of impostor tribute missions that began as early as the mid-thirteenth century.<sup>133</sup> It is significant that the fake Ryukyu tributary missions to Korea ended between 1509 and 1527,<sup>134</sup> the period in which official trade relations between the Ming and the Hosokawa clan, on behalf of the bakufu, reopened via the Ryukyu Kingdom. In this regard, Kenneth Robinson specifies that one or more fake missions sponsored by bakufu factions were sent in 1471 and 1480, revealing that the competition for foreign markets was led not only by pirates and merchant clans, but by politically-minded individuals in the top echelons of their societies.

Fake missions were not the sole method to trade outside of the boundaries of officialdom; the return of shipwrecks was often used as an informal method to open trade. International

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<sup>131</sup> Kobata Atsushi, Matsuda Mitsugu, *Ryukyuan Relations with Korea and South Sea Countries*, 13.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>133</sup> Kenneth Robinson, "Centering the King of Chosŏn: Aspect of Korean Maritime Diplomacy, 1392–1592" *Journal of Asian Studies* (Ann Harbor: Association for Asian Studies, 2000), 109–125.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

relations in the region reached their apex with the practice of returning shipwrecked sailors to their own countries. The cost of returning these persons was borne by the government of the country in which they were found. This became a customary practice that was further institutionalized when Tokugawa Japan designated only four major harbours to deal with foreign countries: Nagasaki, Tsushima, Ryukyu, and Matsumae.<sup>135</sup> Returning shipwrecked people was vital, because the sailors could easily have been sold into slavery. The show of goodwill upon their return helped countries forge connections at diplomatic and commercial levels.

However, when maritime prohibitions were enforced, this custom became a way to trade semilegally. Tanaka states that the repatriation of shipwrecked people entered a new phase between 1470 and 1500. Originally, shipwreck survivors were taken in by pirates and either sold or returned for ransom, but the pirates were gradually replaced by imposters setting up fake missions, and they in turn were replaced by the merchants of Hakata and Tsushima.<sup>136</sup> This took place until 1500, when the king of Ryukyu, Shō Shin (1476-1526), interrupted tribute relations after four fake missions occurred between 1460 and 1500, thereby putting a stop to fake missions altogether.<sup>137</sup>

In the mid-fifteenth century in Southern Japan, several shipwrecked people were returned to Tsushima, Imazu, Hidagun (Bungo), and Akagamaseki (Nagato).<sup>138</sup> In 1483, the Hakata merchant Shinjirō returned Ryukyu sailors who had been shipwrecked near the coast of Japan. After he was received by the king of Ryukyu, he also obtained permission to trade in Ryukyu,

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<sup>135</sup> Tashiro Kazui, Kobata Atsushi, Tanaka Takeo, Murai Shosuke, Uezato Takashi, and other scholars have dealt with this customary practice, in particular Tashiro Kazui, who has focused on the returnees via Tsushima in the early seventeenth century.

<sup>136</sup> Tanaka Takeo, *Chūsei taigai kankei shi* (Tokyo: Tohyo Daigaku Shuppan, 1975), 307–309.

<sup>137</sup> Murai Shōsuke, “Chūsei no wajintachi,” *Kyushu shigaku* 107 (1993): 2-3.

<sup>138</sup> *Haedong Chegukki*, ed. Tanaka Takeo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 152–153, 171, 202, 217.

according to one Korean among the shipwrecked present at the event.<sup>139</sup> By returning these people, Shinjirō was able to trade his cargo of camphor, sulphur, white cloth, pepper, timber, and gold dust, as he was a purveyor for the house of the Ōuchi daimyō ruling Hakata.<sup>140</sup> He expanded his trading network as he travelled between Korea, Tsushima, Hakata, and Ryukyu, positioning himself as a diplomatic and commercial link between the two countries—in direct competition with pirates who frequented the maritime routes of southern Kyushu.

Recently, scholars such as Saeki Kōji and Hashimoto Yu have asserted that a shift away from Ryukyu to Tsushima as a commercial transshipment node, thus replacing Ryukyu in importance and trade volume, occurred due to the aggressive mercantile behavior of Hakata merchants in cooperation with Kyushu and Tsushima rulers.<sup>141</sup> Although their claim is not contested here, other factors precipitated this shift, causing the temporary demise of Ryukyu trade between 1530 and 1590; namely, the increased role of the Tōkara and Amami Ōshima Islands as a maritime area economically connecting Ryukyu and Japan. This was a maritime border of great importance for reinventing pirates as coastal patrols and mercenaries for either Ryukyu or Satsuma, playing both roles according to the occasion, and where Chinese merchant pirates increased their presence in response to the discovery and trade of silver from Japan.

### **2.3 The Role of the Tōkara and Amami Ōshima Islands: From Seven Islands to Treasure Islands**

This section shows the role played by the pirates inhabiting the archipelagos between Ryukyu and southern Japan, during the trade shift from Ryukyu to Tsushima. Along the maritime routes

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<sup>139</sup> Tanaka Takeo, *Chūsei taigai kankei shi*, 305. This event is also reported in Hashimoto Yu, *Chūsei Nihon no kokusai kankei*, 304.

<sup>140</sup> Hashimoto Yu, *Chūsei Nihon no kokusai kankei*, 83–87, 104–107.

<sup>141</sup> Saeki Kōji, “Haedong Chegukki no Nihon – Ryukyu zū to Ryukyu kuni ezu,” *Kyushu shigaku* (2006): 80-90. See also Hashimoto Yu, *Chūsei Nihon no kokusai kankei*, 304.

connecting Korea, Kyushu, and Ryukyu, there are several small archipelagos, including the Amami Ōshima and Tōkara Islands, also known as Seven Islands (Kuchinojima, Nakanojima, Kajajima, Tairanojima, Suwanosejima, Takarajima, and Kikaijima). Ships were frequently wrecked there, due to the northern and southern winds and strong currents. Between the mid-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, those islands had the rather ambiguous status of serving as the border between Ryukyu and southern Japan. In 1450, the *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk* shows that four Korean people were shipwrecked in Kajajima, one of the islands north of the Amami Ōshima archipelago, also known as Iōjima or Sulphur Island. In the fourteenth century, the northern part of the islands belonged to the Shimazu and the southern part to Ryukyu, since they lay between those two countries. Two Korean sailors fell ill and died, while the other two were aided by the islanders, who lived in a village of thirty households. Later on, they were taken to a place called Kasari, where they were sold to people from Ryukyu.<sup>142</sup>

The population of these islands was, in effect, polarized between southern Kyushu and Ryukyu, and they manipulated the situation to their benefit when they could, to obtain wealth and status. Landowners of Kajajima went as far as Ryukyu to request titles in exchange for obeisance and annual tax shipments.<sup>143</sup> The island of Kajajima, one of seven in the Tōkara archipelago, was reclaimed by the Shimazu at the end of the fifteenth century. However, evidence shows that Shimazu control was somewhat lax because of their wars of territorial unification in southern Kyushu.

The Tōkara Islands' inhabitants, aside from being pirates, became well connected to their mainlands of choice, namely southern Kyushu, the Shimazu domains, and the Ryukyu Kingdom,

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<sup>142</sup>Ishigami Eiichi, "Ryukyu no Amami shōtō tōji no shudankai," *Shigaku zasshi*, 110 (2001): 2–15.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid., 8.

by playing the role of carriers and middlemen. Since the 1550s, pirates from the coast of Hyuga in southern Kyushu had found refuge at Nakanojima, and as those islands had no women, they kidnapped women to take there. Nakanojima was also the place Sino and Japanese pirates took Chinese abductees from the coast of Fujian en route to Bungo, where they were sold.<sup>144</sup> In 1578, a document reported that a regular service ship connected those islands with Satsuma and Ryukyu to the north and to Kumemura in the south en route to Fujian as well. In this document, the Shimazu permitted the Tōkara ship to service the route between Hyuga and Ryukyu, bringing envoys and greetings to the king of Ryukyu.<sup>145</sup> Even before that, the islanders had paid tribute to the Ryukyu Kingdom; a certain Hirata Muneyoshi's grandfather had transported three hundred buckets of sugar to offer to the Ryukyu king.<sup>146</sup> All of this demonstrates that the islanders were conscious of their location and could turn it to their advantage, playing on their obeisance to both Ryukyu and Satsuma to retain their independence.

The Hirata family is an example of how the Tōkara inhabitants exploited their potential to their benefit. During the Kōji and Tensho periods (1555–92), the clan pledged loyalty to the Shimazu and worked as corsairs under the command of the Isshūin house, direct retainers of the Shimazu in Kagoshima (Bōnotsu Harbour). Hirata Shinsaburō Mitsumune fought in the conflicts for the territorial unification of Satsuma and Ōsumi, and then rose in his military career in 1572 when he fought against the Itō clan of Hyuga, assuming the title of Umanosuke. By 1576, he had risen in status and prominence again, as Mino no kami.<sup>147</sup> He fought together with his clansmen

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<sup>144</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, "Tōkara kaiichi shi no shiten," in *Gakuhō*, 5 (2001): 177.

<sup>145</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen*, vol. 1, doc. 968 (Tokyo: Shūendo Shuppan, 1985), 540.

<sup>146</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, "Tōkara kaiichi shi no shiten," 179.

<sup>147</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen*, vol. 1, doc. 960, 530.

Hirata Tōkurō Katsumitsu and Hirata Shinnirō.<sup>148</sup> It is known that Hirata Mitsumune had under his command three ships and engaged in naval battles as a corsair for Isshūin Kichizaemon, then military magistrate of Kagoshima.<sup>149</sup> Once again, we find a Hirata man, Hirata Tarōsaemon, of the Tōkara group spearheading the troops sent by Ryukyu in the Korean wars in 1592.<sup>150</sup>

Through commerce and military skills, the Tōkara islanders gained a mediating position between the Satsuma domain and the Ryukyu Kingdom, notably with regard to financial matters. In 1579, the Tōkara group requested financial help from the Shimazu on behalf of the Ryukyu Kingdom. The Ryukyu government borrowed 250 *kanme* in silver currency to supply its deficit, to be returned with five percent interest on its capital. The mediators for this financial transaction were the Tōkara group.<sup>151</sup> As the diplomatic and commercial conduit between those countries, they also provided a secure, trusted network for Japan against an increased Chinese presence in those maritime areas. Since the discovery of silver, Japanese merchants, pirates, corsairs, shipwreck rescuers, and Chinese merchant-pirates had frequented the area to conduct commercial transactions. The presence of merchants increased in Kagoshima, Yamaga, and the Tōkara Islands from the mid-fifteenth century. Thus, these islands were not commercially and politically isolated but constituted the core of a maritime area economically integrated by legal and illegal transactions, where pirates-turned-corsairs engaged both militarily and commercially and often negotiated their roles for one or the other domain or country.

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<sup>148</sup> Beginning in 1573, other two clans of Shimazu corsairs cooperated with the Ito family to defeat the Shimazu of Bōshū in their fight against the Shimazu of the Satsuma Oushū clan. These were the Ijichi and Nejime clans of Miyazaki (Southeastern Kyushu). They also worked in close maritime combat with the Hirata men.

<sup>149</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku gohen*, vol. 2, 105.

<sup>150</sup> Matsushita Shiro, Toshimi Shimono, *Kagoshima no minato to sannan shōtō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2002), 96–97.

<sup>151</sup> Harada Nobuo, *Shi Ryukyu roku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2001), 402.

Even after the establishment of the Tokugawa regime and the annexation of Ryukyu by Satsuma, the role of the Tōkara Islands remained unchanged. In 1632, a document written by Kawakami Mataemon, the first Satsuma domain magistrate residing in Ryukyu, to Kawakami Sakon Shōgen and Kiire Settsu no kami, Satsuma domain retainers, showed that if the Tōkara group provided a loan to the domain, the domain of Satsuma would recognize Ryukyu trading rights for their merchants en route to China. The document itself is in the form of a memorandum (*oboegaki*) containing nine clauses: clauses one and two refer to a ban on Chinese trading ships carrying silver currency overabundantly; clauses three, four, and six made clear that the domain of Satsuma could stop trade by not allowing ships to enter Ryukyu if the Tōkara group refused to loan silver currency to the domain.<sup>152</sup> These documents attest to the financial relevance of the Tōkara and Amami Ōshima archipelago from the mid-fifteenth century, not only economically as financial markets and commercially viable places, but also in terms of what occupations the islanders were involved in and how they tried to benefit from the opportunities presented them, both by their proximity to the domain of Satsuma and as a conduit for the Ryukyu and Fujianese trade networks.

The discovery of silver in Japan in 1526 encouraged Chinese merchant-pirates to expand their networks in those islands and from there to southern Kyushu. The functions of those islanders as human capital—either *wajin* or other military and seafaring people such as pirates—underwent a drastic transformation: to ensure their survival, they had to choose which network they would belong to. In this way, pirates dwelling in Kyushu's coasts were coopted into the military groups of southern daimyō retainers. Until the mid-seventeenth century, those pirate-

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<sup>152</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen* vol. 5. (Tokyo: Shūendo Shuppan, 1985), doc. 521.



descendant retainers located in the chain of islands north of Ryukyu and south of Satsuma found their niche as mediators and manipulated to their own advantage their available resources in order to trade. However, in the 1530s, with the discovery of silver, an economic shift toward Tsushima and southern Japanese harbours caused the decline of the Ryukyu-Satsuma maritime route.

#### **2.4 The Economic Shift from Ryukyu to Tsushima Caused by the Discovery of Silver, 1540–60**

The resource-poor island of Tsushima, close to southern Kyushu and to the Iwami silver mines, had been ruled from the mid-thirteenth century by the Sō family. Their environment was such that, during the fourteenth century, islanders resorted to piracy and pillaging of the Korean and Chinese coasts. The Sō, by cooperating with Korea and the Japanese shogunate, reduced the problem of piracy by the mid-fourteenth century, when, amid fake embassies and Hakata merchants working as mediators between the Korean court and the Ryukyu Kingdom, the pirates of Tsushima colluded with several landowning families ruling the island.

Saeki Kōji and Murai Shosuke have demonstrated that the identities of pirates in Tsushima were somewhat blurred, as they had multifaceted roles. The Sōda family, whose main exponent, Sōda Rokurōjirō, acted as an envoy in Tsushima–Korea diplomatic relations between 1428 and 1460, held the reins of several pirate groups in the islands of Iki and Tsushima. He was involved in several missions to Ryukyu to rescue shipwrecked sailors, and epitomized the envoy-merchant-pirate of his time. The Sōda comprised Rokurōjirō, Tarō, and Tōkuro, whose father, Toshichi, was identified as a *wajin* and hired by the Korean court as a minor official (*uketoshonin*). He was supplied with a copper seal to trade on behalf of the Korean court as a

Japanese in Iki, taking care of the Korean castaways' records.<sup>153</sup> Tōkuro worked as an official trader from 1428 to 1442, when records show him being accused of colluding with the pirate Mando Rokurōjirō and his associates in Iki. In 1442, Tōkuro was officially designated a pirate in Korean records; however, while in office for the Koreans, he engaged in piracy on the coast of Ming China. By 1445, he is alleged to have captured slaves on Korean shores and made connections to the harbour of Hakata in Kyushu, where he resold his stolen and pillaged goods and captives.<sup>154</sup>

The Sō daimyo of Tsushima capitalized on people such as Tōkuro and pirates in general by doing nothing to eradicate them but instead allowing his retainers—the Shisa, Sashi, Yobuko, Kamochi, and Shiotsuru living on Iki Island—to use them to forge economic alliances to increase trade. Due to resource scarcity, Tsushima and Iki had to import agricultural products and salt. Therefore, they took turns engaging in trading missions to Korea on behalf of, and with the permission of, the Sō daimyō.

By coordinating piracy and official trade between Japan and Korea, the Sō of Tsushima further strengthened their position. They put Tsushima at the centre of commerce and trading routes to Korea and positioned themselves as sole agents for the Korean trade. In order to gain this position, the Sō implemented three main policies. First, Sō Sadamori received trading rights from the Korean court that made the Sō sole agents for trade from Japan; they could now issue licenses to daimyō wanting to trade with Korea. Second, they used minor officials

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<sup>153</sup>Saeki Kōji, “Tsushima no bōeki ni okeru Sōda ichizoku tokujitsu,” *Tsushima to kaikyō no chūsei rettō* (2008): 239–244. Saeki Kōji claims that the function of an *uketoshonin* can be compared to that of a purveyor in charge not only of trade but of assuring the utmost legality of supervised transactions. He was an emissary of the Korean court and had been admitted into the tributary framework, but at the same time he was less dependent on his Japanese daimyō and more reliant on the Korean court.

<sup>154</sup>*Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk*, (Kyongii-do: Kuksa Pyonchan wiwon hoe, 1993), cited in M. Matsu, “Muromachi ki ni okeru Iki Tōkuro no Chosen tsuko,” *Kyushu shigaku*, 124 (1999): 24-39.

knowledgeable about both environments to gather intelligence. Third, they issued promissory notes to Tsushima merchants to trade with Korea.<sup>155</sup> All these activities, in reality, centralized trading power in the hands of the Sō, who exploited these policies to their advantage with the advent of the silver trade.

Silver was discovered by 1526 in Iwami, a region close to the islands of Oki and Tsushima, both midway between Japan and Korea. The discovery was attributed to the merchant Kamiya Jūtei, who, as the story goes, had been surveying the mountains of Iwami for copper.<sup>156</sup> According to the *Iwami ginzan kyūki* (Iwami mines' previous records), Jūtei and two other partners, Mishima Seiemon and Yoshida Yasaemon, extracted silver and earned the right to sell it from the Ōuchi clan, who ruled the territory of Iwami.<sup>157</sup> Kamiya travelled to China to learn the cupellation technique to separate silver from its ore and, in 1534, invited Koreans skilled in the ash-blowing (*haifuki*) technique, which permitted a higher ratio of silver extraction from the ore. Kamiya Jūtei became one of the wealthiest merchants in Hakata. His brother, Kamiya Kazue, and his son travelled in their ship to Macau and Southeast Asia to sell commodities produced in Japan, such as swords and fans, and to trade pepper and silver.<sup>158</sup>

Between 1530 and 1540, Japan began to trade silver. The export of silver from Japan coincided with what Dennis O. Flynn has termed the globalized Potosí-Japan cycle of silver (1540-1640), in which 50 tons of silver left American shores annually to reach Manila Harbour,

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<sup>155</sup> Hashimoto Yu, *Chūsei Nihon kokusai kankei*, 165.

<sup>156</sup> Saeki Kōji, in his “Hakata shōnin Kamiya Jūtei no jissō” a biography of Kamiya Jūtei, relates the possibility that it was not really he who discovered the mines, as the extant documentation shows several gaps and most of that documentation was produced during the Edo period.

<sup>157</sup> Shimane Ken Kyoiku Iinkai Hen, “Seisuiji monjo,” *Iwami ginzan kyūki: Iwami ginzan shiryō kaidai* (17th century), photo, manuscript document, Matsue Public Library, Matsue.

<sup>158</sup> Sakugen, *Nyūminki*, see Makita Tairyō ed., *Sakugen nyūminki no kenkyū*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1965), 22–24.

in the Philippines, and from there was traded to China.<sup>159</sup> In China from 1409 to 1487, silver production was unable to supply the demand for silver to be used in tax payments, and by 1588, all silver mines in China were shut down, as there was a sustained supply from the Korean peninsula as well as, since the 1530s, from Japan.<sup>160</sup> Arthur Attman has estimated that at its peak, Japan was exporting 200 square metres of silver annually, while the mines of Potosí produced 300 square metres per year.<sup>161</sup> In the sixteenth century in Europe, the ratio of silver to gold was 1:12, while in China, it was only 1:6. Consequently, while China became a global importer of silver, it also began exporting gold, which was traded in East Asia by the Chinese and later by the Dutch in the early seventeenth century. Although Europeans did not import gold from China, the arbitrage created by the price difference in China compared to other East Asian countries was sufficient to permit extraordinary profits.

As early as the 1530s, the Portuguese were permitted to trade on the coasts of Zhenjiang and Fujian by Ming China in exchange for getting rid of pirates who were defying maritime prohibitions and pillaging the Chinese coasts. The maritime prohibitions lasted from 1547 to 1568 for every nationality, but even after 1568 were still applicable to the Japanese, who, as Frois stated in a letter of 1555, were attacking the Chinese coast from Kagoshima Kyushu. In 1557, in order to fight against the pirates, the Portuguese had negotiated with Ming China to establish a settlement in Macau.<sup>162</sup> Thus the Portuguese began trading Japanese silver even before Potosí silver could reach China from Manila, as that city was officially created only in

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<sup>159</sup> Dennis O. Flynn and Marie A. Lee, "East Asian Trade Before/After 1590's Occupation of Korea: Modelling Imports and Exports in Global Context," *Asian Review of World Histories* 1:1 (January 2013), 113.

<sup>160</sup> Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 114.

<sup>161</sup> Arthur Attman, "American Bullion in the European World Trade, 1600-1800," *Acta Regiae Societatis Scientiarum et Litterarum Gothoburgensis: Humaniora*. (Gotheborg: Kungl. Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets Samhället, 1986), 76.

<sup>162</sup> Richard Von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 118.

1571 to trade silver from New Spain via expatriate Chinese merchants dealing in silver from Chinese harbours like Haicheng.<sup>163</sup> The English merchant Ralph Fitch, who was active between 1583 and 1591 in East Asia, reported that every year, the Portuguese exported to China 600,000 *cruzados* of silver (1 *cruzado* was the equivalent of 37.5 grams of silver) from Japan in addition to 200,000 from India.<sup>164</sup> It was in this East Asian trading context that Japanese silver began to be exported between 1530 and 1540.

By the 1530s, silver was being traded from the harbour of Hakata by the Kamiya and by merchants from Iwami, such as the Tada (also known as the Yūya). In 1528, two *kan* and two *bu* (almost seven kilograms of silver) could be extracted from a silver ore of six *shō* (one *shō* being 1.8039 litres), although it is possible that the location in Iwami from which the Tada exported silver had not yet been fully exploited.<sup>165</sup> Already, in 1539, the Ōuchi daimyō, who controlled the mines, were able to obtain five hundred *barre* of silver (equivalent to 82.5 kilograms).<sup>166</sup> By 1533, the production of silver had increased. The significant amount of silver traded from Japan attracted merchants from all over Asia. The *Ōuchi Yoshitaka ki* (Record of Ōuchi Yoshitaka 大内義隆記), written by Yoshitaka, a daimyō who controlled the Iwami silver mines, provides the following passage: “In Iwami, district of Oda there are silver mines, these mountains became like treasures, the courts of China, India and Korea to hear of it have sent several ships [to trade] .”<sup>167</sup>

Traders in silver using the maritime routes to Iwami had to pass close to Tsushima and Hakata, areas controlled by the Sō daimyō. The Sō by colluding with local pirates, and

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<sup>163</sup> Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 119.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>165</sup> *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk*, (Kyongii-do: Kuksa Pyonchan wiwon hoe, 1993), Chūsō Jitsuroku 23nen 20 nichī, maki 64.

<sup>166</sup> Shimane Ken Kyoiku Iinkai Hen, *Iwami ginzan kyūki: Iwami ginzan shiryō kaidai*. (Matsue: Shimane Ken Kyoiku Iinkai, year of publication unknown), manuscript document.

<sup>167</sup> Ōuchi Yoshitaka, *Ōuchi Yoshitaka ki*, (16<sup>th</sup> century) Yamaguchi Kenritsu Monjokan, photos, manuscript document. Yamaguchi.

particularly with *wajin* traders on Korean shores, had contributed to the export of silver to such a degree that by 1538–1539 the overflow of silver into Korea provoked inflationary prices, with a consequent prohibition on silver imports.<sup>168</sup> However, as further documents in 1541–1542 indicate, people wanted silver to hoard and to trade, so they did risk incurring heavy penalties.<sup>169</sup>

*Wajin* and Hakata merchants traded silver on the coast and nearby islands en route to Japan where they met people from China and Southeast Asia. The Chinese merchant-pirates who scouted southern Japan followed the maritime routes from the coasts of Jiangsu, as well as Fujian and Zhejiang, to the islands of the Tōkara archipelago and Amami Ōshima. In those islands, there may have been some degree of governmental control, but it occurred sporadically, only with the sending of the annual tax ship, as previously mentioned, making those islands illegal trading havens. Hence, Chinese merchant-pirate networks had already started to frequent those places.

The fortuitous arrival of the Portuguese in Tanegashima in 1542 on a vessel of the well-known pirate Wang Zhi has been extensively documented. Relevant to this chapter is the relationship Wang Zhi and his network began with the people ruling the island, the previously mentioned Tanegashima clan, and the effect this connection had on those islanders in relation to the powerful daimyō ruling Kyushu.

The export of silver by Hakata merchants to Korea and China had awoken the interests of the Chinese merchant-pirate networks traveling to the offshore islands en route to Japan in the 1540s, namely the Tōkara and Amami Ōshima archipelagos. In 1543, Wang Zhi transported in his vessel the Portuguese who introduced musket technology to the Japanese of Tanegashima.

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<sup>168</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Kingin bōeki no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Hosei Daigaku Shuppan Kyoku, 1976), 110–113.

<sup>169</sup> *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillŏk*, Chūsō jitsuroku, (Kyongii-do: Kuksa Pyonchan wiwon hoe, 1993), maki 95.

His extensive merchant network was well known on the coasts of Fujian and Zhenjiang, as he came from a merchant family trading in salt that defied the Chinese maritime prohibitions (promulgated from 1547 to 1568) by trading items such as saltpetre, sulphur, silk, and cotton in Siam, Cambodia, Japan, and other Southeast Asian countries.<sup>170</sup> In particular, Chinese records, such as the *Chouhai tubian*, compiled in 1562 by Zheng Ruozen, reveal the character of Wang Zhi as a person who cared for people and was highly respected, as he provided livelihoods for entire villages that worked to build weapons and armour for him on the Chinese coastal areas.<sup>171</sup> Wang Zhi's association with the Japanese did not stop with the Tanegashima rulers, as he was able to settle in the domain of Mutsura Takanobu, daimyō of Hirado, and interact with other Japanese daimyō.

The Tanegashima were quick to realize the importance of musket technology, and, by capitalizing on it, they also became interlocutors for Wang Zhi with other Kyushu daimyō through their retainers, particularly through the Nishimura clan, as I will mention later in the chapter, while fighting with other Japanese pirates to maintain the control of maritime routes and harbours. One of such pirate clans were the Nejime.

In the mid-fifteenth century, Tanegashima Tokiuji married into the Nejime pirate clan, as did Tanegashima Tokitoki in the mid-sixteenth century, although his main wife was a woman of the Shimazu clan.<sup>172</sup> The Tanegashima included pirates like the Nejime clan among their retainers. However, the Nejime had been offering their mercenary services as pirates between the southern coast of Miyazaki and Kagoshima since the late fifteenth century to the early sixteenth

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<sup>170</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Kingin bōeki no kenkyū*, 110–113. The information on these maritime routes are also available in primary sources as the *Riben yi jien (Nihon Ikkan)* as well.

<sup>171</sup> Zheng Ruozen, *Chouhai tubian*, (Loudong: Zheng family edition, 1693), maki 24. See also *Ningpo Fushi*, maki 15 and 21.

<sup>172</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen*, vol. 4, Tanegashima kafu.

century under the patronage of Shimazu Tadaharu, *shūgo* of the provinces of Osumi, Hyuga, and Satsuma between 1508 and 1515.<sup>173</sup> It was under Tadaharu, who died the next year in 1516 at only twenty-seven years of age that the Nejime fought for their patrons the Shimazu of Oushu, at Kagoshima in the conflict that resulted in the murder of Miyake Kunihide, for competition on the Ryukyu maritime routes.

The patronage of the Shimazu toward the Nejime clan, however, was not always a convenient one. In fact, between 1534 and 1536, when Nejime Shigenaga was born, his father, Kiyotoshi, was dispossessed of his fief given by Shimazu Tadanaga. As it was his only means of survival, he offered his services to the Kimotsuki clan, another local pirate family.<sup>174</sup> In 1543, the Nejime clan was located on the island of Yakushima (close to Tanegashima), and supported the rebellion of Tanegashima Tokinori and his ally Kawachi Tokiyuki against the Shimazu with more than two hundred men. Their ships were defeated and sank, and those Tanegashima still loyal to the Shimazu took possession of the Nejime-controlled island.<sup>175</sup>

These events took place between the third and fifth month of 1543. By the eight month, the Portuguese were shipwrecked on Tanegashima Island, bringing with them musket technology. This fact altered the rivalry between the Nejime and Tanegashima houses. Although historian Olof Lidin has mentioned these episodes, as related in the *Teppōki*, with the aim of glorifying the Shimazu, according to a document in the *Nejime monjo*, it was a Nejime pirate, Yajirō (renamed by the Portuguese and by Francisco Xavier as Anjirō), who brought Xavier to Japan and precisely to Nejime Harbour, close to Kagoshima. The document records that:

“Ikehata Motokiyo son of Uemon Kiyoshu, who is the son of Yajirō Shigetoki, was killed by a

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<sup>173</sup> Takeuchi Rizō, *Nejime monjo*, doc. 963, (Kyushu: Kyushu Shiryō Gyōsho, 1965).

<sup>174</sup> Nejime Kenichi, *The Encounter Between Japanese and European Renaissances* (Tokyo: Toshindo, 1998), 61–62.

<sup>175</sup> Olof Lidin, *Tanegashima: the arrival of Europe in Japan* (Copenhagen: Nias Press, 2002), 44–51.



musket at Takadate at the time when Chinese and Namban people fought at the harbour of Ko Nejime . . . ”<sup>176</sup>

Besides revealing the identity of Yajirō as a member of the Nejime house, the document also reveals the conflict between the Chinese and Portuguese, who fought to gain access to the harbours of southern Japan. Apparently, those conflicts had not been resolved even by 1560, when another accident involving the death of the Portuguese captain Alfonzo Vaz caused a ruckus for which the Tanegashima called for Shimazu intervention in taking away the harbour from the Nejime house.<sup>177</sup> However, the conflict between the Shimazu and Nejime houses did not end there.

In 1564, the Nejime house was led by Shigenaga, who had succeeded his father under the Kimotsuki family. The contentious relations between the Nejime and Tanegashima houses can only be deduced through the remaining documentation, which shows a conflict based on the control of trade routes. However, that may have been only the tip of the iceberg, as, in reality, those pirate clans aimed at maintaining their own independence by engaging in trade between their controlled territories, such as islands and harbours, and main commercial nodes, such as Naha in Ryukyu, the main harbours of Kyushu, such as Bōnotsu in Kagoshima, and Hakata in Chikuzen. In addition, they fought to be able to provide novelty items that brought higher profits, such as weaponry, spices, and silk, in exchange for silver, which was used as a commodity, while importing Hongwu and Yongle Chinese copper coins. Proof of such trade was a discovery that occurred in 1969 in the ruins of Shigenaga’s tea house, where two vases of copper coins

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<sup>176</sup> *Nejime monjo*, Kawagoe Shoji ed., vol. 22, docs. 711-712, (Fukuoka: Kyushu daigaku bungakubu and Kyushu shiryō kankōkai, 1955), 149.

<sup>177</sup> Kishino Hisashi, *Zabieru to Nihon* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1988), 285.

were discovered.<sup>178</sup> Among these were coins from Fujian and Ryukyu. It was this profitable trade that prolonged the conflict between the Nejime and Tanegashima clans.

A document written by Tanegashima Tokitoki and addressed to Mashida Koreyuki records all the events prior to 1568. One entry related to the year 1567 reports that Nejime Shigenaga crossed the island of Takeshima with his troops, as his base at Yakushima had been attacked by the Nishimura and Kamitsuma clans, retainers of the Tanegashima, and set on fire. Several people had been taken captive by the enemy, and Shigemasa was able to return to the island only several years later.<sup>179</sup> The perennial conflict between Nejime and Tanegashima, regardless of all the marriage alliances and family relations, subsided only in the 1570s as a result of Shigenaga's negotiations.

Shigenaga's mother was a sister of Shimazu Iehisa, according to the sixteenth-century practice of political alliances by matrimony, which often led to family tragedies. Shigenaga continued that tradition as well. In 1571, Nejime Shōnirō, together with the Ichiwa and Itō houses, attacked the Shimazu at Kagoshima with more than two hundreds ships and caused great damage to the Shimazu forces. Shimazu Yoshihisa sent envoys to Shigenaga to negotiate a truce, which he welcomed by stating his own conditions, amongst them marriage with a Shimazu woman and the position of retainer.<sup>180</sup> By 1581, he had received from the Shimazu the license to trade with Ryukyu, the license having been issued for the Nejime Harbour to a certain merchant purveyor called Ōgawa.<sup>181</sup> In 1582, another license was issued to the merchant Isonaga Tsushima

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<sup>178</sup> Nejime Gyōdoshi Hensaniinkai, *Minami Ōsumichō*, vol. 2 (Ōsumi: Gyōdoshi Hensan, 1974), 256.

<sup>179</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku maehen*, vol. 4, doc. 34 and 38, Tanegashima kafu.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> Nejime Kenichi, *The Encounter Between Japanese and European Renaissances*, 65.

Nori to depart from Nejime Harbour, on the official trading ship of the Shimazu called Kotakamaru. The license document reports:

Ōsumi Nejime Harbour	Kotakamaru
Ship Captain Isonaga Tsushima Nori	Ryukyu Seal
Yoshihisa monogram,	Tenshō 10, 9 <sup>th</sup> month, 15 <sup>th</sup> day. <sup>182</sup>

The following year, a letter from the Ryukyu court addressed to Nejime Shichirō dono allowed ships from Nejime Harbour to trade to Ryukyu until 1613.<sup>183</sup>

The Nejime family not only gained a certain degree of stability within the Shimazu military hierarchy but retained its mercantile characteristics as corsairs for the Shimazu. It was in this function, as retainers in charge of maritime trade with Ryukyu, that the Nejime mediated their position in the Shimazu military hierarchy by ending the strife that had characterized their relationship with the Tanegashima house. Both Tanegashima and Nejime were competing for the same southern maritime routes and harbours that brought Chinese and Portuguese trade to Japan. However, the Tanegashima ended up having the upper hand due to the transmission of musket technology provided by their retainers, the Nishimura family.

The Tanegashima seized the opportunity to produce muskets in their territories, which gave them leverage over other pirate clans. Although the way the musket spread has been contested in recent years by Japanese scholars, the Tanegashima retained the monopoly on musket technology for a rather long time.<sup>184</sup> In the first place, the spread of musket technology,

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<sup>182</sup> Nejime Gyōdoshi Hensaniinkai, *Minami Ōsumichō* vol. 2 (Ōsumi: Gyōdoshi Hensan, 1974), 257.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>184</sup> Kirino Sakujin, “Tanegashima no ryutsu” in *Satsumajin kokushi* (2016): 1. Accessed in June 2016 at [https://373news.com/\\_bunka/jikokushi/kiji.php?storyid=6927](https://373news.com/_bunka/jikokushi/kiji.php?storyid=6927), has stated that musket technology spread from the south of Japan but not only from Tanegashima, as the Chinese pirates were already in possession of such technology. See Nakajima Yoshiaki, “1540 nendai no higashi Ajia kaiichi to sei kushikihiki,” in *Nanban komori tōjin*. Nakajima Yoshiaki ed., (Tokyo: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2013), 99-176. According to recent studies by

as presented by scholars such as Murai Shosuke, Utagawa Takehisa, and Hora Tomio, followed a linear pattern from the transmission of Portuguese technology to the Tanegashima. It was then acquired according to the *Teppōki* by a merchant of Sakai who provided his expertise to the monasteries. Under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, muskets were then created in the Kunitomo musket factory. However, there are documents showing that the spread of muskets occurred not in a linear fashion but simultaneously by the Nishimura, who contacted several Kyushu daimyō, such as the Ōtomo, interested in acquiring the new technology. In 1571, Nishimura Jigen, following alliance protocol, married into a cadet branch of the Ōtomo family, the Kuroki.<sup>185</sup>

Not only the Nishimura contributed to the spread of the musket, new documents related to the Kamitsuma family, who were Kyoto courtiers and later scribes for Ōda Nobunaga, tell a different story.<sup>186</sup> Ōda Nobunaga, in fact, seemed to have purchased his muskets via the Kamitsuma family, who had contact with a temple in Shimane, the Mangyōji temple, where monk Shōrin, together with his abbot, Shōkichi, purchased muskets directly from Macau in exchange for silver. The purchases are dated Tembun 8 and Tenshō 8, respectively, in 1539 (three years before the arrival of the Portuguese at Tanegashima, which renders the document suspicious but not impossible) and 1580–1581. The person in charge of selling muskets to the Mangyōji monks from Macau was a certain Simon (whose name characters are written in Japanese as 新門). Regarding the payment for such weapons, it was reported, “For this person

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Nakajima Yoshiaki, Japan imported several muskets that were instead produced in Southeast Asia by Portuguese and Siamese and possibly by Indonesians, via an investigation of the various matchlock manufacturers.

<sup>185</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku vol. 4*, 34.

<sup>186</sup> It is most likely that a branch of the Kamitsuma family also fought with the Nishimura against Nejime Shigenaga not only for maritime routes but for the possession of Nejime Harbour, in which weapons were traded. As new routes were developed after 1575 for silver from Shimane, muskets could be purchased elsewhere as well.

within the year hurry to settle the matters related to silver,” and again in the same document, “Please do not be careless in regard to the date to bring the payment in silver.”<sup>187</sup>

Hence, the relationship between musket technology and the silver trade was strong, particularly as the Portuguese in Macau traded exclusively in that precious metal for their survival on the island. Since it is well known that the Portuguese reached Ryukyu before they arrived at Tanegashima, all the southern harbours that hosted them became places of contention, not only between Portuguese and Chinese but amongst Japanese pirate gangs, who sought to control such harbours. The Tanegashima, being geographically independent, could more easily manage to control who arrived on their shores and traded in their territory. They began to export their locally-produced weapons as well, and in 1579, Tanegashima Danjōtada sent a small cannon of “namban” (Portuguese) production to Ōtomo Yoshishige.<sup>188</sup> Hence, the Tanegashima held their production monopoly for a rather long time. Due to their weapon monopoly, they were able to establish connections with noblemen and elite families close to the shogun. Furthermore, by the 1580s, silver had already entered the Japanese economy and was used not only as offerings but was hoarded to finance military expeditions by daimyō caught in the power struggle of territorial unification. Temples also used it to finance their wars; hence, the Tanegashima link to Japanese centers of power, if understood in this light, was extremely important.

In 1583, offerings of Ryukyu textiles were made to the Honnōji in Kyoto (via a person called Honganji-dono and the brother-in-law of the shogun, Konoe Taniie, who personally knew Tanegashima Hisatoku) from one of his retainers, Nishimura Jigen. Nishimura offered three

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<sup>187</sup> Kokutō Chihōshi Shiryō, *Amacōji mangyōji monjo*, docs. 7-8-9, (1549-1557), photocopies, Shimane Public Library, Matsue.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 41.

hundred *mon* of silver and two thousand *hiki*, and one hundred *tan* of red-flowered damask, plus another one hundred *mon* in silver for temple construction on behalf of Hisatoku. Nishimura Jigen added also his own offerings, consisting of 320 *mon* of silver, one *tan* of textile from Ryukyu, and one *tan*<sup>189</sup> of damask produced in the Tōkara archipelago, for which he received a letter of receipt.<sup>190</sup> The Nishimura, as Tanegashima retainers, were transporting Chinese and Ryukyu goods to Kyoto. This is significant as the Nishimura hold the key to the Tanegashima's economic successes. The Nishimura had been retainers of the Tanegashima since the mid-fifteenth century. In 1543, when the ship of Wang Zhi landed in Tanegashima, it landed close to Nishimura village, in Nishimura clan-controlled territories. The Nishimura became elite forces capable of using muskets in various conflicts, as at least three members of the Nishimura clan, namely Nishimura Echizen no kami, Sukesamon, and Kenemon, were awarded muskets, fifty in total, with one hundred kin of gunpowder and one thousand bullets.<sup>191</sup>

In fact, as late as 1624, the Nishimura clan, via their lords the Tanegashima, received an order from Shimazu Iehisa for one hundred muskets and ninety *kin* of gunpowder.<sup>192</sup> Earlier than that, they presented a musket to the Hosokawa daimyō via the temple Honnōji, for which the Tanegashima were procuring Chinese and Southeast Asian products such as pepper, silk, and other textiles.<sup>193</sup> Several Nishimura retainers fought side by side in unification wars for the Tanegashima and subsequently for the Shimazu. A certain Nishimura, Matanirō Tokikane, died fighting Sumiyoshi warriors in Higo. He fought in Bungo, kingdom of Ōtomo Sōrin, and in Higo

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<sup>189</sup> Nakajima Keiichi, "The establishment of silver currency in Kyoto," *International Journal of Asian Studies* vol. 5 (2008): 228. One *tan* of textile was approximately eight square metres.

<sup>190</sup> Fujii Manabu, *Honnōji shiryō* (Kyoto: Sobunko Shuppan, 2006), 161–162.

<sup>191</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku* vol. 4, doc. 78, Tanegashima kafu. The Nishimura belonged to the elite forces and it meant that their skills were adaptable, and, as the Mōri clan's document reveals, they became part of the Mōri musketeers at the onset of the Tokugawa regime.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 24.

<sup>193</sup> Yara Ken'ichirō, "Chūsei goki no Tanegashima shi to minami Kyūshū to chiiki," 6–7.

together with his brother Nishimura Tokiyasu. Tokiyasu was a direct retainer of Tanegashima Sakon Daibu Hisatoki and with him fought several battles, including the Korean wars of Hideyoshi in 1592. Although some scholars believe that Tanegashima Hisatoki did not participate in the invasion of Kyushu in 1609, his retainer Nishimura Sukesemon was one of the commanders in the invasion of the Ryukyu Kingdom.<sup>194</sup>

Furthermore, in the *Gohanmotsu goshobai no ryo no mono shoshutsu* (御判物御書拝領の者書出), which is a record of Hirado domain's inventory of traded goods, written in 1736, there are records of merchants trading goods for the Oranda Kapitan or the leader of the Dutch factory at Hirado, one of whom was a certain Nishimura Gohei, indicating that at least a branch of the Nishimura clan had become merchants for the Matura of Hirado during the Tokugawa period.<sup>195</sup> This represents a metamorphosis through which warriors and retainers such as the Nishimura took advantage of the military and commercial network characteristic of their maritime environment to redefine their identities between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

By analyzing the relationships of the Tanegashima clan, their affiliations with their own retainers, such as the Nishimura, and their marriage links and rivalry with the Nejime clan, as well as their alliances with the Shimazu, it is possible to affirm that their musket production, maritime route control, and business endeavours generally gave them a certain leverage in being connected to the main daimyō of Kyushu and to the Ryukyu Kingdom as financial mediators. Their wealth allowed them to incorporate in their retinue local pirates, mainly via family ties, and is an example of how the silver trade, coupled with new weapons technology and the demand for foreign goods in Japan, allowed for the integration of smaller pirate gangs into

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<sup>194</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku* vol. 4, Tanegashima kafu.

<sup>195</sup> *Gohanmotsu goshobai ryo no mono shoshutsu*. 御判物御書拝領の者書出 (1736), photo, manuscript document, Matura Museum and Manuscript Library, Hirado.

military forces and families of skilled rulers in a maritime environment that, while often considered hostile and “peripheral,” was where Japanese economic integration began, much earlier than did territorial unification, which itself became possible only with the supply of silver financing the wars of territorial conquest.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The trade between Japan and Ryukyu, both at a diplomatic level as well as piratical trade, became the catalyst for changes that led to the incorporation of pirates within Japanese society, as corsairs, for the Shimazu daimyō as powerholders in southern Kyushu by the end of the sixteenth century. These pirates, by taking advantage of the opportunities presented to them in colluding with Chinese merchant-pirates and Portuguese, at first in Ryukyu and later in the Islands of southern Japan, in exchanging silver for musket technology, became closer to Kyushu power holders as well as to the elite classes of central Japan.

The murder of Miyake Kunihide in 1516 was used in the 1530s to claim maritime routes and the use of harbours in southern Kyushu, controlled by the Tanegashima clan, corsairs of the Shimazu house. This incident shows how important the maritime competitions of corsairs sponsored both by the Shimazu and by the shogunate were in order to gain the access to foreign markets. It does also reveal that these corsairs as economic agents for their lords were able to become mediators between Ryukyu and southern Japan, and in doing so, they found a role for themselves as mediators between power holders, whether these were countries or local lords. Secondly, they came to control important maritime routes by supplying the demand for maritime services. Thirdly, they operated their own business as technology providers. The Tanegashima



clan had their retainers the Nishimura building matchlocks on their controlled islands and due to that capability, were able to cater to daimyō who fought wars of territorial expansions.

In considering Ryukyu's relevance for Sino–Japanese trade cum piracy, this chapter has delved into the connections brought to the fore by the Chinese and Japanese communities working in Ryukyu and engaging in tributary missions with Ming China and Chosŏn Korea in order to show how tributary trade could be manipulated by unscrupulous individuals and institutions and, at the top layers, by the shogunate itself, the rulers of which vied for power and were sponsored by powerful factions.

It was indeed the competition between the shogunal factions and the southern daimyō that gave pirates the opportunity to become corsairs and to choose where to stand in this competition. The pirates of the Tōkara were able to retain their independence, given their geographical position between Ryukyu and southern Japan, exploiting to the best of their abilities their role as negotiator and financial managers on behalf of the kingdom of Ryukyu. The Tanegashima as well as the Nejime and Hirata clans, on the other hand, chose to side with the Shimazu house.

The silver trade was essential in all the above mentioned cases, but what they demonstrate above all is that these peripheral regions were actually core maritime areas, where legal and illegal trade took place in response to the needs of supply and demand, such trade, from a mercantile perspective, rendered obsolete the insufficient trade occurring at a diplomatic level via the tribute trade, showing not only the flexibility of corsairs in providing goods and services but also their centrality in integrating Japan economically into international trade with East Asia and domestically as suppliers of the ruling elites.

Overall, however, these cases show that an economic unification took place between those maritime areas often considered peripheral to the political centres of Kyoto and Edo long before a territorial unification could take place. This fact is further borne out in the organization of piracy and pirate gangs in northern Kyushu under the rule of the Ōtomo clan, who, unlike the Tanegashima, were not geographically independent but rather tied to their local economies and therefore less free to take advantage of their own environment, given the same conditions. However, the Ōtomo corsairs did thrive in their environment, using diverse methods to engage in their maritime economy.

## **Chapter 3: The Political and Economic Networks of the Corsairs of Northern Kyushu**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter analyzes the formation and integration of three main corsair clans under the political rule of the Ōtomo family in sixteenth-century Japan: the Kibe, the Watanabe, and the Wakabayashi, in relation to their economic, religious, and cultural associations. Their integration occurred during the period of territorial conquest influenced by the financing of new weapons technology through trade in silver. The naval forces of northern Kyushu differed in many aspects from the pirates of the Tōkara and Amami-Ōshima archipelagos and the corsairs of southern Japan.

First, they had arrived there in the Kamakura period, by order of the central government, to fight against the Mongols. Over three centuries, some of these families retained their military and naval skills and engaged in piracy as well as in mercenary services for local warlords. Second, geographically they were near other pirate gangs and came to serve warlords who expanded territorially. Third, by using their economic skills and their networks, they became part of daimyō naval forces connected to territories through land revenues and increased use of monetary currency. Furthermore, due to their ameliorated status, they came to be close to the Japanese political centres, here understood as the shogun and his supporters, together with influential courtiers' families. And last but not least, they were participants in naval warfare as Ōtomo's corsairs in the conflicts leading to (or, more aptly, preventing) territorial unification by controlling strategic straits and maritime routes so that their patrons benefited from international trade. Historically, the corsairs of the Ōtomo house played a significant role even after the

territorial unification of Japan under Toyotomi Hideyoshi and later, during the Tokugawa regime, which they strove to oppose.

Pre-war scholars such as Takita Manabu, have mainly analyzed the military structure of Ōtomo retainers. They were often interpreted, in a feudal, quasi-European style, in terms of lord and vassal, highlighting the fact that their revenues in a medieval economy were tied to land production. Also, while analyzing in Marxist terms Ōtomo's clan from its beginning to its demise, Toyama Mikio considered the clan operating on the coastal areas of northern Kyushu as “retainers,” following the discourse of other eminent scholars such as Nagahara Keiji.<sup>196</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo and Fukugawa Kazunori took a similar approach as editors of several documents related to Ōtomo cadet families, their retainers, and corsairs.<sup>197</sup>

More recently, Kage Toshio has reinterpreted the naval forces of the Ōtomo, by calling them anachronistically a “navy” (*suigun*), as “Daimyō of the Sea,”<sup>198</sup> following the reevaluation of pirates as lords of the sea. Spearheaded by Amino Yoshihiko and other scholars in the 1980s and 1990s, “pirates” were reinterpreted as naval forces at the service of local daimyō.<sup>199</sup> However, besides analyzing them as naval forces that operated locally in a context of daimyō territorial expansion, I also analyze their economic enterprises as tools for their economic

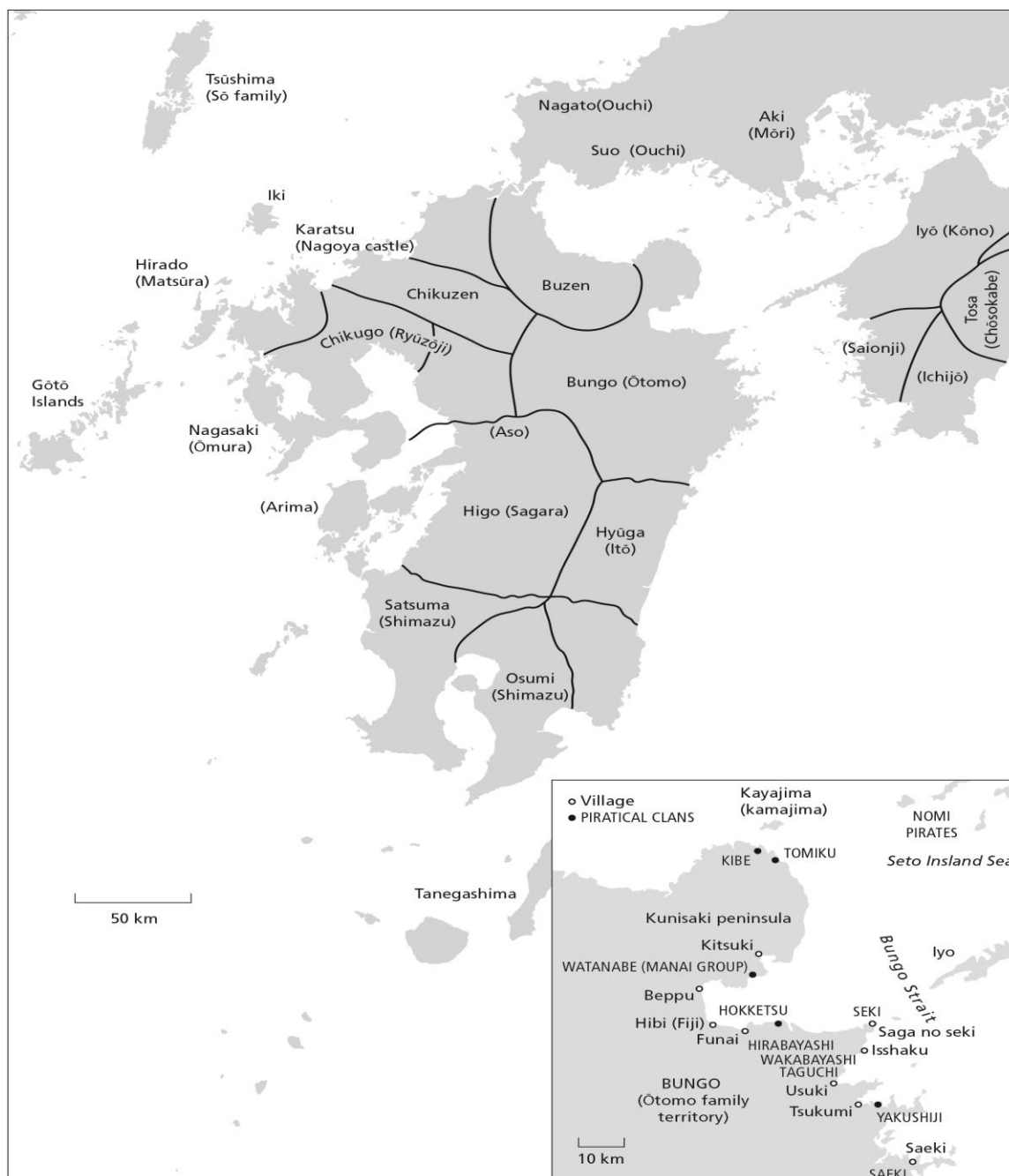
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<sup>196</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Daimyō ryogoku keisei katei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yuzankaku, 1983), 443. See also Akutagawa Tatsuo, *Ōtomo Sōrin no subete* (Tokyo: Shin Jimbutsu Oraisha, 1986), 19.

<sup>197</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū*, 2 (Tokyo: Bunken Shuppan, 1992). Akutagawa and Fukugawa are the editors of several collections of documents published under the serial title *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū*. This collection gathered documents of the families whose fiefs were located on the coast of northern Kyushu, and who were in the service of the Ōtomo warlords. Takita Manabu, ed. *Hennen Ōtomo shiryō: narabi Ōita-ken komonjo zenshū* (Ōita-shi: Takita Manabu, 1962-1979).

<sup>198</sup> Toshio Kage, *Sengoku daimyō no gaikō to tōshi ryūtsū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2006), 130. The problem with using the word navy (*suigun*) is that it is a modern term first appearing in 18<sup>th</sup> century documents. Moreover, it implies a military structure, often with the state at its core and with a set of laws and rules, as well as disciplined soldiers in uniforms; a structure that did not exist by the sixteenth century among these piratical gangs, tied by marriage or alliances of convenience.

<sup>199</sup> Amino Yoshihiko, *Akutō to kaizoku*, (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppan Kyoku, 1995), 365-366.



**Map 3-1. Kyushu, showing a detail of Kunisaki Peninsula.**

integration within the Ōtomo naval forces, as well as their vertical and horizontal associations in the context of larger territorial control on the part of the Ōtomo house. In so doing, I aim to tie this chapter to the overall thesis framework by analyzing how the various corsair clans' formation and integration under Ōtomo military forces were enabled by a commercialization of

trade speeded up by the introduction of silver as currency used to purchase top-notch weapon technology. This was a commercialization that could not be sustained if local industries did not adjust rapidly. Thus, this chapter portrays also the connection of corsair clans to local economies and religious institutions, which further contributed to their transformation.

### **3.2 The Ōtomo Corsairs' Geopolitical Integration and Associations in Northern Kyushu**

Most of the clans that are here defined as corsairs under the patronage of the Ōtomo family arrived from Kyoto and its surrounding areas to the shores of northern Kyushu in the early thirteenth century by Kamakura shoguns' order. They were led by Imagawa Ryōshun, by then the appointed deputy of Kyushu, to defend southern Japan from Mongol attacks. In time, they settled there. Some clans opted for new patrons; others tried to improve their lives as best they could by changing their occupation; but most of the clans retained their naval and military skills. Between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, they turned to piracy, and were hired by local warlords in times of conflict. Being hired as naval forces did not place them in conflict with their role as economically independent pirates; and, as noted in previous chapters, they assumed different roles according to the occasion and locations.<sup>200</sup> In Japan, pirates hired to perform the services of coastal patrols were termed *keigo-shū*, here more precisely interpreted as *corsairs*.

In northern Kyushu, the coastline is formed by a series of interlocked gulfs, bays in the shapes of opened fans, and promontories culminating in the Kunisaki Peninsula adjacent to the Gulf of Funai and subsequent Strait of Bungo. The toll-fee barrier of Saga descended to Usuki

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<sup>200</sup> Peter Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 20-21. In this regard, Peter Shapinsky relates that sea lords were hired as mercenaries driven by the ambition to be autonomous entities within a non state-controlled environment. Japanese pirates were therefore not acting to obtain political gains; hence, in their economic role, it was perfectly compatible for them to serve as mercenaries in exchange for economic gains. Holding a different view is Kenneth Andrews, who, researching the English privateers, stated that the distinction between a privateer and a pirate was a legal one, as the privateer had a commission from a legal authority, while the pirate had none. See Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering, English Privateering during the Spanish War, 1585-1603*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 5.

Bay, contributing to the settling of clans who could naturally control limited and variegated coastal environments. These clans established close relations with the Ōtomo house, who by then had the authority of local barons (*kokujin ryōshū*). From the Kunisaki Peninsula, close to the Island of Kayajima (Kamajima) and Urabe between 1456 and 1471, the Kibe clan rose to prominence under the patronage of Ōtomo Michinao and Ōtomo Chikashige. Similarly, lands along the Gulf of Funai in Hiji (Fiji) were settled in the fourteenth century by the Watanabe clan, who by 1389 had established close relations with Ōtomo Chikayo, and resettled in the harbour of Manai and Nakamura villages, respectively, in the areas of Amabe-gun and Hayami-gun. The Wakabayashi clan, further down past the Saga Strait, rose from the harbour of Isshaku in 1486 under Ōtomo Masaharu. These three are just the more historically prominent corsair clans of northern Kyushu. In between were minor clans who were interspersed along the coast. Others settled there between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including the Tomiku, Hokketsu, Saeki, Mizaki and others.<sup>201</sup> However, all in all, beginning in the early fourteenth century, the northern Kyushu corsairs established various degrees of power relations with local rulers by protecting their own power base and by being authorized to do so in exchange for their legitimization.

In this section, I provide an overview of the development of these three main corsair clans under the Ōtomo house—the Kibe, the Watanabe, and the Wakabayashi—and describe their role during an increased commercialization of the economy, from the end of the fifteenth century, followed by the territorial unification of northern Kyushu by their warlord in the early sixteenth century. But first, in order to understand how these clans, as corsairs, differed in Japan from pirates of the level of the Murakami, we must consider their interaction with their sponsors.

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<sup>201</sup> M. G. Petrucci, “Salt, Shores, and Shipbuilding: the Geo-political, Interpersonal, and Economic Networks of the Ōtomo Corsairs of northern Kyushu,” in *Northeast Asian History Foundation*, 10 n. 1 (2013): 71, 75, 77, 84.

For example, the Murakami clans, being recognized as pirates, have been interpreted as being economically and territorially independent from the landed daimyō who sought their services. They retained a high degree of autonomy in controlling their commercial enterprises, and consequently differed from locally-hired naval forces such as the corsairs of the Ōtomo house. The latter were restricted to the coastal areas, straits, and bays they protected, as their incentive was the revenue obtained from these coastal villages and littoral areas in exchange for protection. They were legitimized to do so by the authority bestowed on them by their sponsors.

From the above-mentioned perspective, there are two interconnected issues to consider: the method of payment for the services provided by corsairs; and the direct chain of command leading to the understanding of how pirates became corsairs between 1542 and 1582. First, I consider the cost of these clans as corsairs for the daimyō, and for their direct commanders, a feature that has been poorly studied so far. Second, I analyze their chain of command and its relevance to their given status in horizontal organizations, such as family-related groups (*yoriai*) and military groups (*shū*), in a monetized economy.

The payment method used by daimyō to procure the services of these maritime warriors did matter. The difference between pirates and corsairs was determined by the fact that pirates were politically, economically, and territorially independent, while corsairs were given land rights (*chigyō*) in coastal areas they protected, which tied them to the land. Depending on the system used to evaluate the yield obtainable from such territories, their revenues were paid in rice or currency, and with an increase in revenues collected in currency, corsairs became integrated into the naval forces of their sponsors. On the other hand, pirates came to be further detached from landholdings since they were economically self-reliant and, as such, more mobile in offering their services. These changes in power relations between corsairs and pirates and their



respective sponsors occurred due to the increased frequency of paying such forces with currency, mainly in copper coins.

Nagahara Keiji and Kozo Yamamura, taking as an example the Hōjō house and their domain in central Japan, have explained how by paying salaries in currency to their retainers, the Hōjō were able to capitalize on the Erizeni Order, which allowed the collection of commercial or tax obligations to be paid all or partially in currency. The currency used was 80 percent in pure copper currency and 20 percent with bad coins, usually ruined coins or coins with low copper content, issued by the Ming and used as currency in Japan. Farmers and vassals respectively had to produce more and pay their lord in the form of more corvee service to receive the desirable amount of sound currency. In this way, the lord controlled his farmers and vassals and extended his authority to the lower echelons of his retainers.<sup>202</sup> Corsairs, paid in currency for their services, became tied to their lords and to the productive system of the land they protected and controlled directly. On the other hand, pirates, who were independent from land grants and revenue bestowed upon them by sponsors, were not tied to the territories controlled by any daimyō.

This is an important point, because as a monetized economy grew exponentially by the middle of the sixteenth century, corsairs were included in the informal military hierarchy of daimyō, by protecting his ruled territories, while pirates, by becoming more mobile in offering their services, were only able to retain territories already conquered. Shapinsky asserts that between 1540 and 1580, the Murakami pirates of the Seto Inland Sea switched their loci of employment and patrons at least ten times, and received in payment some forms of currency (of

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<sup>202</sup> Keiji Nagahara and Kozo Yamamura, “The Sengoku Daimyō and the Kandaka System,” in *Japan Before Tokugawa: Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1500-1650*. (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 2014), 27-63.

any kind).<sup>203</sup> In doing so, their controlled territories became not only the only place where they could take refuge, but also a maritime-contained territory, further restricted by the incipient control of daimyō's corsairs, who could instead benefit by patrolling limited coastal areas and adjacent markets, and offering services for maritime and fluvial transport of people and goods as part of a commercially developed and interconnected coastal area.

An example of maritime forces paid in cash by the mid- to the late sixteenth century is related in the documents of the Kajiwara house, corsairs of the Hōjō from 1558 to circa 1590, who were exacting toll fees in copper coins at checkpoints under their control. In 1559, they came under the patronage of the Hōjō house and by 1573, they were paid annually with a total salary of 159 *kan* and 544 *mon*,<sup>204</sup> which they had to share among their sixty crew members in fixed quotas.<sup>205</sup> Their being hired for an annual wage was due to the maritime battles that were taking place between the Hōjō and the Takeda houses for the control of the Bay of Suruga, in central Japan. By 1575, the Kajiwara were levying taxes on their controlled shores as harbour deputies (*hikan*). As such, they can be interpreted as corsairs of the Hōjō, but given the temporality of their assignments, Udagawa Takehisa interprets them as being merchant-pirates, while Nagahara Keiji thinks of them as retainers that in time underwent a decline in their status and turned to piracy. However, in both interpretations there is the consistency of seeing the Kajiwara as hired naval forces.

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<sup>203</sup> Peter D. Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 20.

<sup>204</sup> Nagahara Keiji and Kozo Yamamura "The Sengoku Daimyō and the Kandaka System," 27-63.1 *kan* was equivalent to 1000 *mon* and 1 *mon* of copper coin is comparable to 100 *yen* today. According to Nagahara and Kozo, the *Kandaka* tax exaction was calculated per paddies of rice fields called *tan*, and from 1 *tan* could be levied 500 *mon* in copper coins, or if the paddy was located in the uplands and less productive, only 165 *mon*. Corsairs were paid with the revenues from lands or *chigyō*.

<sup>205</sup> Udagawa Takehisa, "Hōjō suigun Kagemune Kajiwara ni tsuite," in *Kokushigaku*, n. 81 (1970): 51.

In 1575, the Kajiwara, with a fleet of four ships and a total crew of forty sailors were paid a total of 240 *kanme*.<sup>206</sup> In 1580, five years later, a large ship of the Miura Kurihama was hired to engage in a naval battle for 150 *kanme*.<sup>207</sup> In similar fashion, other piratical gangs such as the Okabe and Obama found patronage under the Takeda in central Japan, and, like the Kajiwara, they were also paid in land rights for their patrolling and rice transport services, as well as for being coastal guards.<sup>208</sup> The Kajiwara under the patronage of the Hōjō house received land revenues (*chigyō*) measured with the *Kandaka* system, a method to calculate rice paddy yield in unit of *tan*. For each *tan* of yield, the farmer was taxed 500 *mon* in copper coins. Consequently, the *Kandaka* expressed rice tax and such revenue was paid in terms of copper coins.<sup>209</sup> Therefore, by being paid in coins, the Kajiwara had to provide the required service as requested by their lords. As salaried forces, they controlled toll barriers in the domain of their sponsor, a territory where they now exacted protection fees and were also tied to it, being obliged to defend it from external conquest. In this way, they were called on to defend territories under Hōjō's rule and as a result, they become corsairs.

Although it is known that central Japanese domains adopted the *Kandaka* system and paid salaries in currency to their military and naval forces, in northern Kyushu there is evidence that land grants paid in currency began with Ōtomo Chikaharu in the fourteenth century and increased by the sixteenth century under the rulership of Ōtomo Yoshimune. Toyama Mikio has calculated that in the province of Bungo, mainly in the Kunisaki Peninsula, in the coastal districts of Hayami, Tsukumi, and Amabe, there was a high concentration of land grants paid in

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<sup>206</sup> One *kanme* corresponded to 3.75 kg., hence they were paid a total of 900 kg. of silver. This was a considerable amount of silver even for that time. See Hitomi Tonomura, *Community and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), xiii.

<sup>207</sup> Utagawa Takehisa, "Sengoku daimyō Ōtomo shi no suigun hensei," in *Nihon shigaku ronshū* (1983): 230.

<sup>208</sup> Nagahara Keiji, *Sengoku ki no seiji keizai kōzō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 183-194.

<sup>209</sup> Kozo Yamamura. "From Coins to Rice: Hypothesis on the *Kandaka* and *Kokudaka* Systems" in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 14, n. 2 (1988): 341-367.

currency.<sup>210</sup> The Kibe clan under Ōtomo Yoshiaki were already receiving land grants (*chigyō*) in the Kunisaki Peninsula by the 1530s, as attested in the following document:

To Kibe Yatarō dono,  
In Kunisaki district keep two towns in usufruct (written on a separate document)  
as it is a land grant. (Year unknown), twelfth month, thirteenth day. [monogram].  
Yoshiaki.<sup>211</sup>

Kibe Yatarō was a member of the Kibe clan recruited to fight against Kikuchi Yoshitake, a son of Ōtomo Yoshinaga and younger brother of Ōtomo Yoshiaki, who in 1533 rebelled against his elder brother in an attempt to gain his ruled territories. Kibe Yatarō, in another document, appeared to be working together with Kibe Mokunosuke, known to be a corsair hired as coastal patrol on several occasions.<sup>212</sup> In 1537, Ōtomo Yoshiaki also granted land revenues to the Watanabe clan located at Manai in the Kunisaki Peninsula, adjacent to the Gulf of Beppu in a similar document. In this same document, Yoshiaki granted land revenues consisting of one town (*ichi chō*) in the form of usufruct (*tsubōtsuke*) to Watanabe Totomi no kami dono.<sup>213</sup>

The granting of land revenues in cash to naval forces located in the Kunisaki Peninsula in the 1530s was part of a larger political shift that brought to the fore two large political factions whose armies comprised also local naval forces with seafaring, shipping, and naval warfare skills under the military hierarchy of the Ōtomo house. In 1533, when the Kibe and other naval forces were hired as corsairs, Ōtomo Yoshiaki was fighting against the Shōni house, whose stronghold was located at Dazaifu (Hakata's Interior). Yoshiaki's younger brother, Kikuchi Yoshitake, waged war in the southern provinces of Kyushu against Yoshiaki in an attempt to dominate northern Kyushu. Yoshitake allied with Ōuchi Yoshioki, daimyō of Yamaguchi, who also had

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<sup>210</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Daimyō ryogoku kasei katei no kenkyū*, 477- 478.

<sup>211</sup> Ōita Ken Shiryō Kyoiku Kenkyūjō, *Ōita ken shiryō*, vol. 10, doc. 32 (Ōita; Meibundō, 1950), 174.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 34, 175.

<sup>213</sup> *Watanabe monjo*, (1537), photo, Ōita Kenritsu Sentetsu Shiryōkan, doc. 2, manuscript document, Ōita.

territorial revenues from lands in northern Kyushu and thus had an interest in expanding his authority there. Being attacked from all directions, Yoshiaki contracted a series of alliances with Ōuchi's enemies (namely the Amako of San'in, the Takeda of Aki, and the Kumagai clan in Kyushu). It would be this set of alliances, as will be explained below, that brought the Ōtomo house closer to the daimyō of central Japan as allies of another clan under Ōtomo Yoshimune, the Wakabayashi corsairs.

However, in the 1530s, Ōtomo Yoshiaki accelerated a process of incorporating naval forces under his rulership as corsairs, by granting them land revenues mostly paid in copper and later also in silver currency. As previously mentioned, the *Kandaka* system allowed daimyō to strengthen their control over their retainers by levying taxes in good and bad currencies. Although at this time the Kibe, Watanabe, and Wakabayashi clans were not yet retainers of the Ōtomo, and were operating semi-independently, they were hired for military purposes and so appeared in the larger military structure of the Ōtomo.

Toyama Mikio relates that the retainers of the Ōtomo house were divided into sixty-two families, grouped according to their status, in crested families (*mon*), landed warriors of antique descent (*kunishū*),<sup>214</sup> and new warriors (*shinzanshū*), in addition to thirty-nine additional families commanded by the Ōga family, a cadet house of the Ōtomo. This distinction is based on a document issued in 1584, when some of the Ōtomo retainers went their own way.<sup>215</sup> However, even Toyama thinks this categorization rather problematic, as in other texts, retainers are categorized differently. However, even when corsairs were employed, they were not fully at the service of the Ōtomo, but rather, as in a federation of allies obeying the orders of Ōtomo's main retainers, were called to fight when occasions arose. Spoils could be divided among those landed

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<sup>214</sup> Kunishū is also translated in English with the term baron, as he had less ruling authority than a daimyō.

<sup>215</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Daimyō ryōgoku keisei katei no kenkyū*, 442.

or naval forces. The corsairs of Kunisaki Peninsula were mostly under the rule of four main Ōtomo retainers and house allies—the Tawara, Betsugi, Shiga, and the Usuki. According to historian Yagi Naoki, these families had all been branches of the Ōtomo house since the Kamakura period (1086–1333), maintaining marriage or blood ties with the Ōtomo house.<sup>216</sup> Unlike Toyama Mikio, Mieno Makoto suggests that the Ōtomo had two layers of government in their domains. One layer took on the administrative duties for the good functioning of their political apparatus, while the second was of a transitory nature, set up during emergencies or conflicts. Moreover, Mieno states that at the local level, the Ōtomo house let their retainers have a certain degree of autonomy.<sup>217</sup> It was within this scenario, with a double layer of governance and within transitional methods of government that the corsairs of northern Kyushu operated.

The reasons for regional daimyō like the Ōtomo to recruit among bigger and smaller clans of corsairs, besides their naval and military scopes, lay in the need for the Ōtomo to expand their authority and control over their retainers. Jeff Kurashige, in his PhD dissertation on the retainer corps (*Kashindan*) for the Hōjō and Mōri daimyō of central and southern Honshu, explains that daimyō granted land revenues in exchange for military assistance. Increasingly, land revenues in cash were given to smaller retainers widely dispersed in their domains. No retainer was awarded more than 50 *kan* of land in the same region, so that they were unable to build a solid power base in one territory. In addition, Kurashige proved that lower retainers joined daimyō to receive protection under their authority, while retainers were paid cash salaries, in a symbiosis that benefited both.<sup>218</sup> To further add to the connection that existed between land

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<sup>216</sup> Yagi Naoki, “Bungo Ōtomo shi kenkyū no henka,” Yagi Naoki ed., *Bungo Ōtomo shi; chūsei saikoku bushi no kenkyū shirizu 2*. (Tokyo: Ebisu-Kosho Shuppansha, 2014), 22.

<sup>217</sup> Mieno Makoto, *Daimyō ryūgoku shihai no kōzō* (Tokyo: Kokura Shobō, 2003), 75.

<sup>218</sup> Jeffrey Y. Kurashige, “Serving Your Master: The Kashindan Retainer Corps and the Socio-Economic Transformation of the Warring States Japan” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2011), 130-133. Accessed in Aug., 2016 at <http://search.proquest.com/docview/879089301>

grants, hired forces, and (I would also add) payment in cash currencies, Kurashige affirms that the trend of salaried retainers spiked between 1543 and 1570s. His estimated period coincides with the period I have indicated (1542–82) as the one when pirates were turning into corsairs supported by the authority of local daimyō.

One of the reasons for such an increase in daimyō's lower retainers and hired forces was the imbalance caused by the conflicts of territorial expansion. As competitors, daimyō had local lords (*kokujin*) and local magnates (*dogō*), but often these were also their closest allies, as they were powerful in military and economic terms. Lower-level retainers and hired groups, such as pirates or naval forces that were legitimized by the daimyō as corsairs, had a more stable relationship of hierarchical dependence. In addition, Marxist historians Nagahara Keiji and Kozo Yamamura interpret the transition that saw the *shugo* daimyō, whose powers and land deeds were bestowed upon them by the shogun, transforming into sengoku daimyō. They, as sengoku daimyō, consolidated their powers, claiming their own authority aided by military power in the territories they ruled. In this period, the role of land proprietors, their rights and the role of resident proprietors (*zaichi ryōshu*) changed. Land rights were transferred by the sengoku daimyō and not by the shogun, while the figure of resident proprietor disappeared.<sup>219</sup>

However, in my view, the role of resident proprietors underwent a transformation and did not completely disappear. Resident proprietors were also the samurai residing (*jizamurai*) in the land they administered. The *jizamurai* in effect acquired more power in socio-economic terms since they could command various strata of people, including farmers and artisans, located in their territories. In this category, there were also the harbour deputies (*hikan*), who commanded corsairs and regulated shipping in their ruled harbours. They had in most cases piratical as well as commercial backgrounds and had the role of regulating access to particular harbours as well

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<sup>219</sup> Kozo Yamamura. "From Coins to Rice: Hypothesis on the Kandaka and Kokudaka Systems," 341-367

as managing lower-echelon people or groups in their territories. The figures of harbour deputies had a mix of commercial and seafaring skills, and often had blurred or multiple identities. Studies have been conducted on harbour deputies' functions in various domains, and all of them have some degree of commonality, such as in the regulation of harbours in commercial terms, the handling of currency (in any form), and the resolution of disputes among various groups.<sup>220</sup>

In northern Kyushu, all the clans analyzed in this chapter had members who were appointed as harbour deputies. The harbour deputies of other domains were usually chosen from local militia with commoner backgrounds. However, this is not the case in the domain of the Ōtomo family, where harbour deputies had to have a certain status, at least as village leaders, as in Kibe clans' case.<sup>221</sup> Ashikari Masaharu has defined the role of harbour deputies as hierarchically subordinate to the daimyō, but participating actively in associations of people having dissimilar status but same purposes as like-minded groups (*dōshin*). Over time, the status of harbour deputy came to be inherited.<sup>222</sup> Harbour deputies served local lords, not regional lords like the Ōtomo; in Kunisaki, for example, the Kibe worked for the Tawara, together with the Kayajima and Tomiku clans, also corsairs. The functions of harbour deputies also encompassed managing the farmers in the lands from which they derived their revenues.

The position of harbour deputy in the coastal setting brought together various social strata. Hirayama, by taking as an example the domain of Kai under the Takeda, claims that during the Sengoku period, the harbour deputies played a greater role in defusing situations of conflict between local lords and their farmers, and to a certain degree, controlled lower classes of people.<sup>223</sup> The people they controlled belonged to diverse occupational and military associations

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<sup>220</sup> Hirayama Masaru, "Sengoku kinsei shoki no hikan genin ni tsuite," in *Shien*, 59, n.-2(1999): 33-35.

<sup>221</sup> Ashikari Masaharu, "Ōtomo shi no hito hikan ni tsuite," *Ōita ken chihō shi*, 109 (1983): 4.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.* 2.

<sup>223</sup> Hirayama Masaru, "Sengoku kinsei shoki no hikan genin ni tsuite," 30-55.



in such a way as to cement or stabilize relations among the lower socio-economic groups ruled by the same regional lord, such as the *ikki*, *yoriai*, and *shū*.

There were several like-minded groups of people with similar occupational status in the Kunisaki Peninsula at Hayami and Yamago. Among these were the *ikki* (一揆), a word translated in English as groups, but used to describe rioters in peasant revolts, as the *ikki* organized their members, people with similar status and common goals, in protests. In the territories ruled by the Ōtomo, these *ikki* groups were incorporated into the organizational structure of non-military groups and were allowed to exist; they were forbidden in other localities.<sup>224</sup> As demonstrated by Carol Tsang, the *ikki* (or leagues) were politically active groups of villagers, samurai, or townspeople who had a common purpose.<sup>225</sup> Similar to the *ikki*, there were non-military organizations called *yoriai* (寄り合い). *Yorai* were organizations whose participants were often connected by blood and family relations but whose members lacked a high social status. The *yoriai* leaders were village leaders (*myōshi*). Hence, these organizations were present in every territory, and they connected more than one village together by family ties and common interests. In Kunisaki, the Kibe and Watanabe families created *yoriai* based on blood ties among clans; it is said that the Kibe and the Watanabe were indeed so tightly united by familial ties that they produced several men who rose in status under the Ōtomo family. An undated document signed by Ōtomo Yoshiaki in which he orders various *yoriai* located in the Kunisaki Peninsula to fend off a “pirates’ ship” was addressed to Kibe Noto no kami, Kibe Tajima no kami, Kibe Mokunosuke, and the leaders of the *yoriai* of Imi, Takedatsu and Kayajima.<sup>226</sup> The above-mentioned document shows how these corsairs used their horizontal organization to cope with

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<sup>224</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Daimyō ryōgoku keisei katei no kenkyū*, 527-529.

<sup>225</sup> Carol Tsang, *War and Faith* (Harvard: Harvard East Asia Monograph, 2007), 3-5.

<sup>226</sup> Ōita Ken Shiryō Kyoiku Kenkyūjō, *Ōita ken shiryō*, vol. 10, doc. 32 (Ōita: Meibundō, 1950), 172.

piratical attacks on their shores, and how these organizations were also summoned by the regional lord during emergencies.

Steps above the *yoriai* were organizations also called groups (*shū* 衆) whose member statuses were of fief rightholder (*kokujin ryōshu*) origin.<sup>227</sup> These organizations were often requested to act when conflicts arose and in case skilled expertise was required. Toyama Mikio takes into consideration those groups based on status and territorial locations, as they received orders to act directly from the Ōtomo family.

They often crossed territorial boundaries and as dynamic actors interacted between various groups and associations. For example, in some documents regarding the Kibe family, there is a reference to other forms of employment than corsairs. In the early years of Ōtomo Yoshishige, when he signed Shiohōshi, he ordered Kibe Noto no kami to cut and transport lumber using cavalry horses if necessary and, to accomplish this task, to also request the counsel of the “*Manhōshū*” (万角衆).<sup>228</sup> Kibe Noto no kami had at his disposal timber, most likely for shipbuilding or fortress building, and he could ask for expert knowledge from the *Manhōshū*, which was a group of elders with technical skills and knowledge of certain territories to which other groups could refer to in case of necessity.<sup>229</sup>

Requests for the counsel of the *Manhōshū* appear in several documents reporting the need for skilled know-how, often in cases of domestic or interdomain conflicts. It is not certain what their exact skills were or who was taking part in the group. Mieno Makoto states that in interventions in Kunisaki they often gave counsel to warriors, local rulers, and other commanders of various groups to defuse situations that could escalate into conflicts.<sup>230</sup> In my

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<sup>227</sup> Ōita ken kyōiku Kenkyūjō. *Ōita ken shiryō*, vol. 10, doc. 32 (Ōita : Meibundō, 1950), 172.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 51, 183.

<sup>229</sup> Mieno Makoto, *Daimyō ryōkoku shihai no kōzō*, 86.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

view, it is most likely that their counselling was not limited only to advice, given that they were a group of active strategists who could act fast as a team and in various territories joined by local associations and organizations.

In addition, the *Manhōshū* provided the purchase of weapons paid in silver or gold currencies, as attests a document written in 1574 by Ōtomo Yoshishige to one of his retainers in the harbour of Takase (Hyuga) who had purchased five *ryō* of azurite (green gold) and matchlocks.<sup>231</sup> The *Manhōshū* was mainly operating in Ōtomo's ruled territories (Hyuga, Kunisaki, Tsukumi, Higo, Chikugo, and Buzen), except on a few occasions in which they were operating elsewhere. As in the case of the *Manhōshū*, these groups often specialized in particular technical skills, and took the name of the location where their members resided, as in the case of the *Manaishū*, the Watanabe shipbuilding group.

However, the main characteristic is that these groups, to which the corsairs of the Ōtomo house were part, shared their know-how with their hierarchically superior commanders, blurring their organizational relationship statuses. Since they operated among other groups in a horizontal fashion, it did not matter who rose in status militarily, as they all could benefit from the shared know-how. This fact became even more important as various corsair clans rose in importance, overlapping others. Here I consider the Kibe clan, which specialized in foreign trade and metal-smithing as one of the earlier corsair clans under the Ōtomo; the Watanabe clans, for their shipbuilding skills; and the Wakabayashi, in commerce and naval battles during the last phase of northern Kyushu corsairing. Their local commerce brought them close to the Ōtomo house initially as their purveyors. As corsairs, they fought in naval battles against the Mōri house and in the Korean wars (1592–98), and were well connected with Ōtomo's allies in central Japan,

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<sup>231</sup> Kage Toshio, *Ajia sengoku daimyō Ōtomo no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2011), 112.

namely with the Urakami house, in such manner becoming closer to the political centres formed by retainers of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

### 3.3 The Ōtomo Corsairs' Economic, Strategic and Religious Networks

#### 3.3.1 The Kibe

The Kibe had been corsairs at the service of the Ōtomo house since the mid-fifteenth century. At first, they assumed the function of harbour deputy (*hikan*), then they became retainers. By the early sixteenth century they had managed to gain wealth in international trade and as coastal patrols and manufacturers of weapon; they were still connected to the Ōtomo but in a semi-independent way.

The Kibe clan, of the Urabe-kii lineage, originally became retainers of the Ōtomo house in the period of the Southern and Northern Courts (1336), which lasted for approximately ninety-two years. By 1437, there are records pertaining to a certain Kibe Yamashiro no kami Yasuhiro (岐部山城守泰弘), who was a harbour deputy and from 1456 to 1571 worked for Ōtomo Chikashige.<sup>232</sup> Yasuhiro became a retainer with signatory power as part of a decisional group called *kahanshū* (加判衆).<sup>233</sup> That occurred at a time when the Ōtomo were still fief holders (*kokujin ryōshu*) possessing land rights and were trying to establish themselves as military governors (*shugō daimyō*), via campaigns of territorial conquest and the assumption of new retainers. *Shugō daimyō* were warlords who had under their control more than one province and could levy taxes on their controlled territories. Another way to take advantage of their newly conquered territory was through trade.

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<sup>232</sup> Jeffrey P. Mass, *Antiquity and Anachronism in Japanese History*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 84. Jeffrey P. Mass classifies a “hikan” as a vassal or a warrior of low rank and sufficient affiliations. However as will be clarified later, these warriors usually were in charge of harbour towns, towns with toll barriers and so on, therefore the term used to indicate a “hikan” will here be interpreted in a narrow sense as a harbour master.

<sup>233</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, *Ōtomo Sōrin no subete*, (Tokyo: Shimbutsu Oraisha, 1987), 90.

The Ōtomo exploited their territories economically, giving rights to mercantile houses to trade their products from Kyushu to other Japanese domains, and by engaging in international trade. They engaged in trade with Ming China and the Korean peninsula and gained access to main Japanese harbours in Kyushu such as Hakata, in Chikuzen province. In order to trade with Korea, they had to request permits from Sō Sadakuni, daimyō of Tsushima, as he had centralized under his own control trade to and from Chosŏn Korea. In those years, Kibe Yasuhiro assumed the position of military magistrate (*shugō daikan*) under Ōtomo Chikashige (1411–82) and started to trade with Korea. The *Haedong chegukki* reports that in 1466, Kibe Yamashiro no kami Shigejitsu (木部山城守茂実) travelled to Korea as a trade representative (*jukenin*).<sup>234</sup> In the same record, it is written that he was originally from Bungo, in the district of Usa-shi.<sup>235</sup> It is unclear whether Kibe Yasuhiro and Kibe Yamashiro no kami were indeed the same person, but around the same period, the Kibe received the rights to a parcel of land in the same district, Usa-shi, as proprietors.<sup>236</sup> An inscription on a wooden board (*mokkan*) dated 1499, found at the Machida Shrine of Kokura (northern Kyushu), demonstrates that the Kibe clan was involved in international trade not only for the Ōtomo house but also for the shrine.<sup>237</sup> The board shows that the Kibe clan was part of the mercantile association of Machida Shrine (*ton'ya*).<sup>238</sup>

Under Ōtomo Yoshinaga, Ōtomo Sōrin's grandfather, the Kibe activities expanded to include coastal protection as corsairs of the Kunisaki group at Urabe gun led by seven families and about twenty persons. These families were the Tomiku, Kibe, Madama, Kushiku, Wada

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<sup>234</sup> Tanaka Takeo, trans. and ed., *Haedong chegukki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 178.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.* 178.

<sup>236</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū*, 2 Kibe monjo, 115.

<sup>237</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Daimyō ryōgoku keisei taisei no kenkyū*, 392-392. Toyama stated that those two persons namely Kibe Yasuhiro and Kibe Shigejitsu could have been indeed the same person. Yasuhiro could have indeed received one character from his patron, Ōtomo Shigechika in honor of his flawless performances. However, I was unable to confirm this by looking just at the available documentation. Hence there is still the doubt that they may be instead two different people of the same family or clan.

<sup>238</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū*, 2, Kibe monjo, 116.

(Hata), Tairyō, and Tokō. In 1512, after mutinies aboard two of Ōtomo Yoshinaga's tributary ships from China, Yoshinaga ordered Kibe Yatarō, Kushiku Tōkurō, and Tomiku Sansaburō to retrieve those ships from a bay in Hyūga.<sup>239</sup> The document addressed to the Kibe and their associates ordered them to “retrieve two ships that came from the China trade [that were in mutiny at Hyuga] and to . . . alert from bay to bay all the coastal patrol ships.”<sup>240</sup> Yoshinaga ordered three of his corsairs—Kibe, Kushiku, and Tomiku—to go and transport the ships to Bungo. The reward for these services consisted in land revenues. For example further documentary evidence proves that by 1518, Kibe Gorozaemon was given a usufruct on a parcel of land (*tsubouchi*) in Higo province as an elder in Ōtomo Yoshinaga's council.<sup>241</sup>

In 1530 Ōtomo Yoshiaki, Yoshinaga's son, deployed the Kibe to control pirates roaming the seas close to their shores. On that occasion, the Kibe did patrol the coasts with the cooperation of the Kushiku, Imi, Araki, Takedatsu, Yoshihiro, and Himejima families. Again in 1544, Kibe Mokunosuke led the patrol ships that safely carried Yoshiaki's daughter to meet her future husband, a member of the Isshiki family.<sup>242</sup>

Starting in the mid-sixteenth century, various members of the Kibe family offered the Ōtomo valuable gifts such as short and long swords and metal as well as currency in pieces of gold or silver. In one case, Ōtomo Yoshiaki, Sōrin's father, received from Kibe Noto no kami five pieces of cut iron as currency (*kurokane*) after having received the ores.<sup>243</sup> This is meaningful, since the Kibe were expanding their trade as blacksmiths to the nearby island of Kayajima (Kamajima) where they became acquainted with the ruler, the house of Kayajima. By then, Kibe Chindai no kuma had received land previously possessed by Kayajima Toji, by

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<sup>239</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigokubushidan kankei shiryōshū*, vol. 2, Kibe monjo, 28-29.

<sup>240</sup> Ōita ken kyōiku Kenkyūjō. *Ōita ken shiryō*, vol. 10, doc. 7, 164.

<sup>241</sup> Ōita Ken Sentetsu Kyōiku Iinkai, *Pedro Kibe Kasui*, doc. 1 (Ōita: Ōita ken Sentetsu Gyosho, 1995), 71.

<sup>242</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigokubushidan kankei shiryōshū*, vol. 2, Kibe monjo, 66.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 32, 60.

Yoshiaki's order.<sup>244</sup> Although only few records mention Kibe Chindai, in 1550, Kibe Naizōnoshō Shigenori wrote a letter to request a permit to become a metal master from the powerful blacksmith association leader, Matsugi Hisanao, who was well connected in the Kyoto court.<sup>245</sup> It is not surprising that the Kibe may have acquired blacksmith skills, as in the several islands of the Seto Inland Sea as well as Kyushu, pirates did engage in other types of business, such as how to extract and sell salt from the sea.<sup>246</sup>

In 1552, Ōtomo Yoshishige sent a musket, locally produced using Portuguese technology, to the shogun, and it is possible that it was manufactured by the Kibe.<sup>247</sup> In 1589, Kibe Shinzaemon, from Hiji, a harbour long associated with Portuguese ships and commerce, received a fief in Kunisaki in an area called Ise. His fief included a forge in the village of Nansannishi no hara and a residence in Yamano.<sup>248</sup> The Kibe metalworking skills allowed them to work under the jurisdiction of the Hachiman Shrine complex located in Usa-gun, once under the Ōuchi, then by 1533 under the Ōtomo, whose metalworkers produced cannon in the Tenshō era (1573–92).<sup>249</sup>

The relation of the Kibe to the Hachiman Shrine of Usa-gun was not a casual one. In fact the shrine was under the jurisdiction of the Tawara family, specifically of Tawara Chikahiro, leader of the main family branch of the Tawara and direct commander of the Kibe. Thus, in Usa-gun, some of the Kibe members assumed important positions as harbour deputies who could muster manpower on short notice. The harbour deputies of other domains were usually chosen from local militia with commoner backgrounds, however this is not the case in the domain of the

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<sup>244</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigokubushidan kankei shiryōshū*, vol. 2, Kibe monjo, 49.

<sup>245</sup> Nagoya Daigaku Bungakubu Kokushi Kenkyūkai, *Chūsei imonoshi shiryō* (Tokyo: Fuji Seihan, 1982), 64.

<sup>246</sup> Hattori Hideo, *Tosushi shishi: Chūsei-kinsei hen*, (2008): 13-171. <http://hd.handle.net/2324/17856>.

<sup>247</sup> Fukugawa Kazunori, "Bungo Ōtomo shi to teppō ni tsuite," *Nihon rekishi*, 353 (1977): 81.

<sup>248</sup> Nagoya Daigaku Bungakubu Kokushi Kenkyūkai, *Chūsei imonoshi shiryō* (Tokyo: Fuji Seihan, 1982), 74

<sup>249</sup> Fukugawa Kazunori, "Bungo Ōtomo shi to teppō ni tsuite," 81.

Ōtomo family; they had to have a certain status, at least as village leaders, as in Kibe clans' case.<sup>250</sup> The association between the Kibe and the Tawara family was also a religious one, as both families were Christians and they both fought together in several occasions.

Tawara Chikahiro, elder brother of Tawara Chikakata, accumulated merits and fought several battles. These included the naval battles against the Mōri at Mōji, where the Kibe participated with the Watanabe, conquering the strategic harbour for Ōtomo's control of the Bungo strait. Consequently, in 1561, he was included among the signatory warlords (*kahanshū*) surrounding Ōtomo Yoshishige. However, in 1565, four years later, his territories and signatory powers were transferred to his brother Tawara Chikakata, brother-in-law of Ōtomo Yoshishige, who continuously made efforts to please Yoshishige in order to gain status and wealth. This caused a rift within the Tawara family that escalated in 1578 with the conversion to Christianity of Tawara Chikatora, Chikakata's sixteen-year-old adopted son and only heir.

By then, Tawara Chikahiro had sided with Ōtomo's enemies but the Kibe clan chose to side with Chikakata, hence with Ōtomo Yoshishige. Yoshishige protected Christianity so their reason may have been partly religious, since several members of the Kibe family had converted to Christianity and were in close contact with missionaries through trade and seafaring issues. However, I argue that their main reason was in fact economic. The Kibe family demonstrated that they were supportive of the policies of Yoshishige, who chose to be baptized and converted to Christianity only after having abdicated in favor of his son Yoshimune in the second month of 1579.

Both Japanese and western scholars have interpreted Yoshishige's baptism as a move to boost trade internationally in order to obtain powerful weapons and ammunition. While this is partially true, the timing of his conversion must also be considered, and I have concluded that he

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<sup>250</sup> Ashikari Masaharu, "Ōtomo shi no hito hikan ni tsuite,"4.



was baptized in 1579 to diminish the power of and to destroy temples that he had been unable to force under his economic umbrella. By becoming the patron of well-known temples and shrines, Ōtomo Yoshishige levied taxes on their premises. Nakano Hatayoshi states that the shrines and temples were paid Tahōtō towers as a form of prayer, so that they kept performing rituals for their patrons, as in the case of the Ōtomo clan, which had sponsored the Usa Hachiman Shrine since the early sixteenth century. The shrine, which was related to the Kumano Gongen complex, established its stronghold in Bungo in the Kunisaki Peninsula where the practice of *Yamabushi* was popular.<sup>251</sup> Ōtomo Sōrin's becoming a Christian undermined the revenue taken from the Usa Hachiman Shrine. In fact, during Ōtomo Yoshishige's reign, several temples and shrines were given as fiefs to his closest retainers, including the Tawara, Takita, and Ichimanda, who become their magistrates.<sup>252</sup>

The Usa Hachiman Shrine in Usa district led all the shrines of Kunisaki and of other regions, and therefore possessed an extensive religious network. Before 1557, it fell under the jurisdiction of the Ōuchi house in northern Kyushu; after that year, the shrine was conquered by Tawara Chikakata and Nata Akimoto. From that date on, it was religiously ruled by the Nata family, and had Ōtomo Yoshishige's wife—known to the Jesuits as Jezebel—as their leader, while it was militarily defended by the Tawara. Both the Nata and Tawara families were related to Ōtomo Yoshishige by marriage ties. However, until 1577, the family in charge of the shrine (大宮可) and of its religious rituals was the Yusuvara, previously under the command of Ōtomo retainers, the Garai and Ōga houses.<sup>253</sup> It is uncertain to which extent the Kibe were associated with the Usa Hachiman Shrine past the rule of Sōrin, but even during the rule of his son

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<sup>251</sup> Nakano Hayatoshi, *Hachiman shinkō no kenkyū*, vol 2 (Tokyo: Yohikawa Kobunkan, 1975), 736-742, 492-3, 880-5. *Yamabushi* were wandering monks, residing in hermit mountain places and martial arts experts.

<sup>252</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Chūsei Kyushu shakai shi no kenkyū*. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan 1986), 266.

<sup>253</sup> Ōtsuka Suguru, "Bungo no kuni hitotsu miya Yusuvara no hōseikai to Ōtomo shi," 45-47.

Yoshimune, the Yusuhara ordered ships to be built there for 200 silver *mon*.<sup>254</sup> That was a sign that the shrine's administrators via their corsairs had the skills to build ships and supply the required materials in situ.

The Usa Hachiman Shrine was also a major source of economic wealth, which is why Ōtomo Yoshishige chose to keep it within his own family. It dealt in silver currency and had banking functions, and its magistrates also levied tax in silver. A document issued by Tashibu Shigetomi, the shrine's land proprietor, to Tokō dono, a corsair under the Kibe, demonstrates that Tashibu Shigetomi was exacting taxes in silver for a total of forty-four *monme* of silver currency by the tenth month of 1578.<sup>255</sup> Another example of a contract indicating the use of silver currency by the shrine is a document related to a transaction in 1564 by Nagahiro (Michinori?) stipulating that in the span of ten years he had to return five hundred *monme*, of which 300 were payable in rice (unhusked) and the last 200 in debased silver coins (*erizeni*).<sup>256</sup> Furthermore, attesting to the silver currency used to pay the shrine, in an undated document, Ōtomo Yoshiaki requested Garai Minbu dono, one of his retainers, to obtain silver from the temple attendants (*kyunin*) in charge of collecting the silver currency.<sup>257</sup> Again, in 1577, the shrine's monks were charged taxes "including 715 silver *monme*."<sup>258</sup>

The use of silver as currency in Kyushu was already in place by the end of the 1560s but it spread further by the early 1570s, and in Bungo, silver as a currency was accepted as a common form of payment. Silver used in trade by the Ōtomo house, which had a long history of maritime trading with Ming China, was also brought into Japan by Chinese settlers. There is further evidence of the use of silver in tax payments in the Kunisaki Peninsula among the corsair clans

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<sup>254</sup> Ōita Kyōiku Kenkyūjō, *Ōita ken shiryō*, vol. 9, doc. 199, 247.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid. Vol. 6, doc. 2491, 345.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid. Vol. 6, doc. 2401, 292.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid. Vol 9, doc. 173, 224.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid. Vol. 9, doc. 195, 244.

that worked with the Kibe, namely the Tomiku, Wata, and Himejima families. In the *Yusuhara monjo*, it is recorded that Tomiku Sanjirō was asked to pay two *monme*, Wata Sakon Shogen one *mon* five *fun*, and Himejima the same for residence they used in the shrine.<sup>259</sup> Hence, the Yusuhara document indicates that the various groups of corsairs in the Kunisaki Peninsula also had at their disposal silver currency for various payments. Kobata Atsushi has demonstrated that silver payments were common among Ōtomo retainers, as Betsugi Hōki no kami Michiyuki, who commanded corsairs as the Kibe, in the Tenshō period (1573–92) had paid 10 *kan* of silver to purchase rice, gunpowder, and muskets.<sup>260</sup>

In addition to the economic power given by the influx of silver exchanged for goods in international trade, shrines like Usa Hachiman supplied manpower in cases of conflict as well, not only as coastal patrols to defend from pirates and bandits, but also as military units formed by monks themselves. The Usa Hachiman Shrine was in fact the protector of *yamabushi*, and therefore could muster several hundred acolytes if the need arose, as demonstrated by a letter written by Luis Frois dated 1587. In this period, Satsuma (Shimazu) forces invaded Bungo. Frois wrote of a man attempting to gather forces to rescue his family, as follows: “a man called Joan, twenty-three years old, coming from Funai, saw his mother and wife taken captives. As he was in pain for his loss, he decided to wait in his home hoping to meet secretly with a bonzo *yamabushi* captain of four hundred warriors [to rescue his family].”<sup>261</sup> Such document shows the military manpower of the *yamabushi*, who were not the only force at the service of the Usa-gun shrine. The Kibe and their allied clans, interacting with the Usa Hachiman Shrine and working as gunsmiths and as corsairs patrolling the coast of Usa-gun, were part of the greater economic

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<sup>259</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Nihon kahei ryūtsu shi* (Tokyo: Rikie Shobo, 1969), 453.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid. 438.

<sup>261</sup> Matsuda Kiichi, Kawazaki Momota, *Nihon kankei Iezusukai monjo*, (Kyoto: Domeito shuppan, 1987), 83.

mechanism formed by several military, financial, and religious networks, as opposed to being just a corsair clan at the service of one or more sponsors.

The Kibe, however, are better known for having been associated with Christianity. In 1589, Frois mentions Quibedono Sacon (Kibe dono Sakon 岐部殿左近), as being “one of the principal tono of Urabe (on the coast of Kunisaki and Taketazu) who became a Christian during the war and who was “a person of very good understanding.” His wife approached Frois “having heard of Christianity from her relative and a very good Christian, Quibe Roman.” Frois continues: “Quibe Roman baptized her as he had the license from the Fathers to perform such office.”<sup>262</sup>

Kibe Roman was the father of Kibe Pedro Kasui, a major Christian exponent. Several Jesuit fathers wrote of his accomplishments and of his martyrdom in July 1639 (other sources date it to the previous year, or to 1644). Probably one of the most reliable contemporary sources is the letter written by Father Mattheus de Couros from Goa in regard to the Christians of Higo, in which he said that in 1612, Inhemon Roman, a good Christian, had allowed his son, Pedro, to become Christian and to study with the Jesuits.<sup>263</sup> Since the Kibe were also located in Higo, it is possible that Kibe Roman, being a corsair, would be rather mobile in his occupation, but we cannot overlook the inaccuracy of the information, since other Jesuits located him in Ōmura, while Japanese sources have Roman working with a smaller corsair group, the Imi, in Kunisaki under the Takita house. Given the complexity of the available documentation, it is difficult to trace Kibe Roman’s life.

However, it is known that Kibe Roman’s son, Pedro Kibe Kasui (1587–1639) left Japan for Macao in 1614 when Tokugawa Ieyasu’s anti-Christian edicts spread and caused persecutions

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<sup>262</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol. V, ed., José Wicki, (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1976), 177.

<sup>263</sup> Ōita Ken Sentetsu Kyōiku Inkaï, *Pedro Kibe Kasui*, 104-105.

in Kyushu. Pedro travelled from Macao to Goa, then from Goa to Jerusalem and Syria to arrive in Rome, where he studied in the Novitiate of St. Andrew from November 20, 1620. He was thirty-three years old and his only possessions on his arrival are described in Jesuits records: “he came on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, brought with him a hat, a long vest and a mantle of cotton cloth, a pair of trousers and socks made of diagonally woven fiber (saietta), a pair of shoes and a lined shirt with threads.”<sup>264</sup>

Pedro completed his studies in Rome. From there, he went to Portugal and to Manila, where he reached Luban Island. From there, he wrote a letter on June 12, 1630 to Juan Lopez, director of the College of Manila, while he was at Luban waiting to enter Japan. He reported that sailors there built ships, since the island was “full of bitumen, iron, and timber.” Pedro found employment that he described as “*modicum nautarum labore*” (plain sailor worker).<sup>265</sup> Other Jesuits have described his decision to re-enter Japan as a slave at oars as a “sacrifice,” probably because it sounded extremely dramatic and more reasonably Christian. But as Pedro wrote in his letter to Nuño Mascarenas, his travel to Luban was not without perils, as due to Dutch vessels harboured at Singapore, the Portuguese vessel he was embarked on could not enter Malacca. Therefore, they had to stay, surrounded by thieves, in a land without food until they were able to move on and arrive at Luban in May, 1630.<sup>266</sup>

Pedro Kibe re-entered Japan in 1635 as an oarsman because as such, he could not be suspected of being a Christian. However, by 1638, he was caught in Nagasaki and brought to Edo, where he was killed in July of the next year.<sup>267</sup> His life story is meaningful in showing how

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<sup>264</sup> Ōita Ken Sentetsu Kyōiku Iinkai, *Pedro Kibe Kasui*, 57.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid. 90-91

<sup>266</sup> Peter Borschberg, “Maritime Singapore in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” (Lecture, National Museum of Singapore, Singapore, June 2015), 1-16. Borschberg suggests that Singapore existed before the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a Shabandar outpost for the navy of the sultan of Johor, but that Singapore’s current location was built in the first two decades of the seventeenth century.

<sup>267</sup> Peter Borschberg, “Maritime Singapore in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” 125.

international encounters changed the life of commoners in Japan. In this case, the son of a corsair, who achieved a Jesuit education, travelled as far as he could, bridging the cultural gap between eastern and western thought. He brought back to Japan his experiences and taught what he learnt abroad to others. His was not an isolated case.

The Kibe association with Christianity in Japan allowed them to be part of an extensive network that was not only restricted to Kyushu. However, the Christian persecution did extensive damage to part of such networks in terms of trade and religious associations. The Urabe-kii lineage with Kibe Sakon fought first in the Korean wars of Hideyoshi and then at Sekigahara for the Western faction led by Ishida Mitsunari and Konishi Yukinaga. In 1658, in the genealogy of the Matsuno house in Kanto, central Japan, it is written that Kibe Seibee's two sons, Kibe Yamato no kami Gobee and his younger brother Jibee, were employed by the Hosokawa family in Kokura, and that their descendants intermarried with the Nata family so that their lineage did not disappear.<sup>268</sup>

Geographically and economically, the Kibe took advantage of their extensive networks among other seafaring clans along the coast of northern Kyushu, and shared a long history with some of those families. This was the case with the various clans of the Watanabe, who migrated to Kyushu during the Kamakura period and settled first in the Kunisaki Peninsula (see Map 3-2).

### **3.3.2 The Manai Group Led by the Watanabe Clan**

The Watanabe clan was composed of five different families: the Higashi Akiyoshi, Nishi Akiyoshi, Higashi Seisho, Hirabatake and Iwakado-Kawauchi. These lineages had formed since the Watanabe clan had arrived in Kyushu from Kyoto during the Kamakura period, following bakufu orders to repel the Mongols. In 1351, the Watanabe had settled in Hayami, on the Gulf of

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<sup>268</sup> Fukugawa Kazunori, "Bungo Suigun ni tsuite hitotsu kōsatsu," Kawagoe Shoji ed., vol. 3, *Kyushu chūsei shi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Bungei Shuppan, 1982), 300.

Beppu. Here, the Higashi Seisho lineage, who had worked as corsairs for the Ōtomo Chikayo since 1398, had obtained the rights to a parcel of land at Manai, close to Hiji (known as Fiji by the Portuguese). The Watanabe also obtained lands in the districts of Hayami-gun, with fifty houses and seventy more in Amabe-gun.



**Map 3-2. Kunisaki Peninsula, Keichō Kuniezu circa 1610, Usuki shi bunkazai kanri senta.**

By 1415, the Watanabe Higashi Seisho clan was struggling to stay in Manai due to conflicts that arose with Ōtomo's enemies. Only once the Watanabe submitted to the Ōga and Betsugi, who were Ōtomo retainers, were they able to return to Manai.<sup>269</sup> They continued to work as corsairs for the Ōtomo family even in periods of conflicts over internal succession so

<sup>269</sup>Hiji Chōshi Hensan Inkai, *Hiji chōshi*, vol. 2, (Hiji machi: Ōita ken Hayami-gun Hiji Chō, 1986), 622.

that they gained authority over their supervised areas over time. The Watanabe, similarly to the Kibe, managed and gained access to timber as a main resource for shipbuilding; later, they specialized in fortress building. Subsequently, their technical skills brought them to the fore and gave them leverage as founding members of the Manai group. By the 1530s, they were engaging in naval conflicts as corsairs under Ōtomo Yoshishige's retainer Tawara Chikahiro, fighting in the conflicts of territorial expansion.

In 1484, Watanabe Hyōgo no suke settled a succession dispute at Kutami when the beneficiary of Kutami land rights died in battle.<sup>270</sup> Kutami was a highly forested land. Having settled the dispute, proving that they had jurisdictional rights there delegated to them by the Ōtomo, the Watanabe could take care of Ōtomo's economic interests in that area as well. In fact, until 1501, they were in charge of supervising territories under the Kutami clan because of the Ōtomo clan's economic interests in foreign trade and shipping. By the middle of the fifteenth century, Ōtomo Yoshisuke (1459–96) ordered Takita Rokurō to levy timber for the construction of ships from all the domains controlled by his retainers.<sup>271</sup> The Takita were Ōtomo retainers controlling the village of Yamakado in Kutami district. In a letter, Ōtomo Masachika, successor of Yoshisuke, reconfirmed that Watanabe Hyōgo no suke was the heir of the land of Kutami and Ichikawa fiefs upon the death of his father, Watanabe Musashi no kami, in battle.<sup>272</sup> Although the document does not specify a date, it is believed to have been issued in the late fifteenth century. Kutami became the Watanabe's main building location. Hence, it was a centre to which timber was brought from other mountain locations to be utilized as construction material.

Between 1518 and 1532, the Ōtomo fought intradomain as well as internal conflicts. Between 1532 and 1536, the Watanabe as leaders of the Manai group constituted a new type of

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<sup>270</sup>Ibid., 355-256.

<sup>271</sup> Ōita Ken Kyoiku Kenkyūjō, *Ōita ken shiryō*, vol. 26, doc. 47.

<sup>272</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū*, vol. 15, 26.



naval militia. They were assigned tasks that included not only the control of coastal territories and naval warfare, but also the supervision of other corsair groups such as the Kibe. They became resource managers so that their group could be self-sufficient in ship and fortress building. The funds for such resources were exacted from wealthy landowners in areas where construction occurred. A 1535 document records that Ōtomo Yoshiaki issued an order for the construction of Shikaetsu Fortress to various retainers, who were at the service of the magistrates residing in Yamaga village, near the harbour of Hiji.<sup>273</sup> These magistrate families were the Ōga, Kimura, Tawara, Yoshihiro, and Hayashi. By strengthening Shikaetsu Fortress, Yoshiaki had intended to fortify the borders against the attacks of the Ōuchi forces. Funds for such works fell on the shoulders of local landowners like Hirai Saemon, who had benefited from land grants from Yoshiaki.<sup>274</sup> The purpose of requesting funds from local wealthy landowners was to reduce their economic power in order to diminish conflicts among retainers locally. Local funds allowed the Watanabe to obtain timber for their fortresses and shipbuilding enterprises.

Their shipbuilding work is attested to by exchanges of documents between Ōtomo Yoshiaki and the Manai group, whose leaders were the Watanabe clan. Initially, the Watanabe began as corsairs by defending their controlled maritime and coastal areas. Fukugawa Kazunori wrote that they received land and fiefs in the Kunisaki Peninsula and in Hayami, on the Gulf of Beppu in exchange for their services; these land revenues tied them to certain controlled areas.<sup>275</sup> For example, Watanabe Sakyōbe received from the Ōtomo a usufruct in Manai that extended to forty towns.<sup>276</sup> In 1548, Ōtomo Yoshiaki, in an extant document, requested the Manai group to patrol the coast and to request the aid of his retainers if necessary—a sure sign that their coastal

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<sup>273</sup> Hiji Chōshi Kyoiku Iinkai, *Hiji chōshi*, vol. 2, 385, 365.

<sup>274</sup> Manabu Takita, ed., *Hennen Ōtomo shiryō*, vol. 16, 126.

<sup>275</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigoku bushidan kankei shiryōshū*, vol. 15, 91.

<sup>276</sup> Hiji Chōshi Kyoiku Iinkai, *Hiji chōshi*, vol. 2, 355.

protection was backed by their landed forces as well.<sup>277</sup> Also in the same year, Yoshiaki requested the Manai group led by the Watanabe to begin building ships. In a document dated the third day, second month of 1548, Yoshiaki wrote:

Call an immediate meeting at the usual place in regard to the construction of a number of ships by today at the usual place, bring this memo and advise when these can be ready to arrive. Do not mishandle this matter. Regards, Yoshiaki.  
[initials] —to the Manai group, 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 3<sup>rd</sup> day.<sup>278</sup>

The Watanabe shipbuilding enterprise had just begun. In the 1540s, Yoshiaki ordered several ships to be built to guard the coast, and these were ready to sail in the space of almost three months. Although the Watanabe needed their shipbuilding skill to fulfill their primary function as corsairs and patrols for the Ōtomo in naval battles, they also were required to manage a larger number of people such as labourers, technicians, carpenters, and builders. Hence, they needed the cooperation of several territorially spread groups.

In Hiji Harbour as well as at Kutami, in the interior of Bungo, they came in contact with Portuguese missionaries and Japanese Christians. The Watanabe also followed the path of intercultural and technological exchanges that were taking place in Ōtomo's ruled territories between Japanese, Portuguese, and Chinese, but it is particularly among Japanese Christians that they would play a major role in the years to come, as will be discussed in Chapter 6.

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<sup>277</sup> Ibid. 368.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid. 367. See also Ōita Kenritsu Sentetsu Shiryōkan, *Watanabe monjo*, doc.24 (year unknown), photo, Ōita Kenritsu Sentetsu Shiryōkan, Ōita.



**Figure 3-1. Watanabe monjo, Ōita Kenritsu Sentetsu Shiryō Kan.**

The construction industry in Kutami attracted people from other places in Kyushu, such as Hakata or Hirado, since Kutami was a post station town. Its interior road led to the southern harbours of Hirado (in Hizen province) and Takase (in Hyuga province). Jesuit records indicate that a carpenter baptized as Lucas lived in Kutami. He had built a temple in Hakata, and was now building the fortress at Kutami. Frois described Lucas as follows:

In this year of 1554 Father Balthassar Gago went to Cutami, that is nine leguas away from Funai, by request of one of the main persons of that land; and having prayed he was baptized with all his house people, who are more than one hundred persons, he was called Lucas. . . . Near his house he built a Church, the first one to be built in the Kingdom of Bungo.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol. 1, 76-77.

Kutami and his residents welcomed the Jesuits. Balthazar Gago had begun converting Japanese people to Christianity in Kutami by 1554. Father de Almeida and Luis Frois both visited Kutami between 1563 and 1565 and had a Jesuit residence there except when they had to flee the fief in 1579 due to conflicts. The relation between Christianity and the Watanabe clans did not end at Kutami. There is evidence proving the conversion of some of the Watanabe clans' members to Christianity. The relation between Christianity and foreign trade is well known; the Portuguese traded using the Jesuits as mediators, as they had knowledge of Japanese use and customs, and who had as their goal the conversion of the Japanese to Christianity. Therefore, it is possible that the Watanabe interacted with the Jesuits at Hiji Harbour or at Kutami. After 1586, the year of the conquest of Kyushu by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the Watanabe found employment as corsairs during the Korean wars (1592–98) under the leadership of Konishi Yukinaga, also a Christian daimyō, ruler of half of Higo Province. Until then, the Watanabe were in the service of Ōtomo Yoshimune, son of Yoshishige who was baptized in 1579 as Don Francisco.

After the death of Konishi Yukinaga in 1600 and the unification of Japan under Tokugawa Ieyasu, some members of the Watanabe clans continued to be Christians, notwithstanding the religious persecutions that took place, on and off, from 1597. Jesuit documents record Watanabe that had converted and died as martyrs. Among those was one Watanabe Tirozaemon Constantino. He lived in Hakata and was the leader of the Misericordia association in that city.<sup>280</sup> In 1603 Frois, in a letter to Father Organtino, stated:

The Christians of Yatsushiro were helped by three other Christians, very devoted people, called Isshaku, meaning officers of the Misericordia. Those Isshakus are in charge in every place where there are Christians; to help them with their daily

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<sup>280</sup>Matsuda Kiichi, *Nanban shiryō no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Nakauchi Shuppan, 1967), 357.

spiritual needs. . . . The names of these Isshakus are Watanabe Tirozimone Giacchino, Fattori Tingoro Giovanni and Mircuixi Ficoiemone Michele.<sup>281</sup>

In addition to their participation in religious associations, the Watanabe families of corsairs benefited from their international relationships in terms of ideas, skills and technologic know-how.

Watanabe Genzai (1632–1715), author of the “tales of gathered stories” (拾集昔語), lived in the Genroku period (1688–1704), a time when Japanese literature and theatre flourished. He wrote about the Watanabe clan of the Aso region, who fought in the Korean wars under the leadership of Konishi Yukinaga.<sup>282</sup> Hence, it is very likely that the Watanabe clans of the Aso region under Konishi were also Christians. To further prove their association with Christianity, and by consequence, their stake in the silver trade, we must look into the writing of Genzai, who recorded the fate of some of the Watanabe under Konishi Yukinaga. He reveals part of Watanabe history in relation to Furukawa Fortress under the rulership of Furukawa Nagamasa, a minor daimyō in the Aso region, and the Watanabe clan’s role in the Korean wars. Postwar historian Yoshida Kogoro, in studying the Christianity of fiefs in the Aso area, realized that they had connections with the harbour of Tsuruzaki in Hyuga, under Ōtomo’s rule. (Although Tsuruzaki belonged to Hyuga, it was geographically situated in northern Kyushu.)

In 1580, Ōtomo Yoshishige sent four envoys to Rome. He had a hidden agenda for that voyage. Watanabe Sōkaku, who had moved from nearby Mount Aso to the harbour of Tsuruzaki where he resided, had become a skilled blacksmith, building cannon with Ōtomo Sōrin’s monogram (FRCO) on them. In his role of gunsmith, Watanabe Sōkaku left for Rome with a

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<sup>281</sup> Luis Frois, *Lettera Annuā*. (December 1603). Folio 173-176, JL-38-37-2. Lares Bunko, Sophia University Digital Library, Tokyo. In this document, Watanabe Torozaemon is described as an Isshaku, an officer of the Misericordia association. However, the term Isshaku defined a status within Japanese social ranks.

<sup>282</sup> Watanabe Genzai, *Shūshū shakugo*, vol. 4, (1693), Photo, Kumamoto University Manuscript Library, Kumamoto. *Shūshū shakugo* can be translated as the “tales of stories thrown away.”

huge amount of silver to exchange for military know-how.<sup>283</sup> Kanda Takashi, in his studies about cannon produced in Ōtomo's fief, relates that the prototype of cannon produced in Bungo was slimmer and had characteristics that differentiated it from its Southeast Asian counterpart built with Portuguese technology.<sup>284</sup> Such cannon were hybrid products manufactured in Bungo as a result of cultural and technological exchanges. One of the cannon locally produced in Ōtomo Sōrin's fief of Bungo is still visible in the Ōtomo kan of Nyūjima (now part of Usuki city).



**Figure 3-2. Ōtomo Sōrin's cannon at Ōtomo kan Park, Usuki city.**

The Watanabe corsairs interacted also with the Chinese merchants who resided in the several Chinatowns that existed in Bungo, in the city of Funai on the Gulf of Beppu. Besides trading domestically and internationally, the Ōtomo hosted various *tōjin machi* (foreign settlements) in Bungo province. Kage Toshio wrote that as of 1506, there were various *tōjin machi* in Kyushu, in Hizen at Sonogi Morizaki, in Higo at Matsubashi, and in Bungo at Funai. A document addressed to Watanabe Sanjirō dono, dated 1592, reported that in the two cities of the

<sup>283</sup> Yoshida Kogoro, *Kirishitan shūmon shū*, 48-49.

<sup>284</sup> Kanda Takashi, "Roshia kokuritsu gunji shiryokan shozai no ko shiki gosei ni tsuite," in *Gazō shiryō kaiseki senta hitotsu tsūshin*, 56 (2012): 13-20.

*tōjin* in Funai, Inarimachi had a group composed of six leaders controlling their community, and the other *tōjin machi* had two Japanese leaders, Fukuma and Kageyu dono, who were part of the Chinese settlement as well.<sup>285</sup> Watanabe Sanjirō dono was in charge of the Chinese settlement of Funai.

Foreign trade sustained the Ōtomo house's expansionistic goals, supplying Ōtomo retainers and their warriors with much-needed top-notch technological weapons and gunpowder. The Watanabe families of corsairs benefited from their international relations in terms of ideas, skills, and technological know-how; as part of the Manai ships and fortresses building group, they used these as confirmation of their skills and ingenuity. Although the Watanabe continued their service as corsairs under the Ōtomo, by the 1570s their notoriety was surpassed by another clan: the Wakabayashi.

### **3.3.3 The Last Phase of Corsairing: The Wakabayashi in the Changing Economic and Political Environment of Northern Kyushu**

The Wakabayashi occupied themselves by living off the littoral as purveyors, pirates and corsairs, as did several other clans in Kyushu who had followed the troops of the Hōjō there in the late Kamakura period. The earliest extant documents about the Wakabayashi are dated around the middle of the fifteenth century (1435–36), when the forces of the Ōtomo started their wars of expansions against other Kyushu rulers such as Shōni and Ōuchi. During the period of civil wars (1477–1603), the Wakabayashi, who at first had been purveyors—as a matter of fact, fish suppliers—for the Ōtomo house since the mid-fifteenth century, diversified their occupation into coastal protection. Consequently, they were awarded several land revenues in various places along the coastal areas of northern Kyushu. Their revenues came from scattered fiefs in Ono,

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<sup>285</sup> Kage Toshio, *Ajian kokujin daimyō Ōtomo no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2011), 108-109.

Ōita, Amabe-gun in Bungo, and Takeno-gun in Chikugo Province. They became managers of economically scattered fiefs.

The Wakabayashi started as corsairs by passing through the gates of commerce. This may lend some justice to the theory of Amino Yoshihiko, who asserts that pirates were in essence seafarers who in bad times turned to looting in order to survive. In the Wakabayashi's case, possessing a vessel for their enterprises was essential. They were sponsored in their endeavours by local power holders, and were thus corsairs to all intents and purposes.<sup>286</sup> Fujita Tatsuo has conceived the idea that the status of “pirates” depended on their sponsors, the warlords of southern Japan.<sup>287</sup> His concept that daimyō who exercised their power to sponsor pirates (better to call them corsairs) should be called “pirate-daimyō,” as they were providing the necessary resources for corsairs to engage in naval battles and loot other ships, taking captives and engaging in maritime violence, in conceptual terms, matches the idea of Janice E. Thomson and Gonçal Nadal. Nadal claims that corsairs were agents of communities marginalized from economic progress at an international level. Indeed, officially, the Japanese were forbidden to trade with China, due to the maritime bans (1547–68); domestically, internal conflicts made commerce quite a perilous activity. The Ōtomo house sponsored corsairs for tribute missions, as naval escorts, and used them domestically in naval warfare and as coastal patrols (fitting out their vessels for such purposes). They benefited the most from the Wakabayashi.

Under Ōtomo Yoshiaki, Wakabayashi Echigo no kami served on coastal patrols ships. Then, under Ōtomo Chikaharu, another Wakabayashi (Shigeoki) was awarded fiefs in places close to Usuki, Tsukumi village, and Takamatsu. Shigeoki received a ship to use as his living

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<sup>286</sup> Amino Yoshihiko, *Nihon chūsei no hinōgyōnin to tennō*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984), 263-267.

<sup>287</sup> Fujita Tatsuo, *Hideyoshi to kaizoku daimyō*, (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron, 2012), 24-26.



space, and became a maritime purveyor (*kaijō gōyō*).<sup>288</sup> Until 1571, Wakabayashi Genroku at Usuki supplied the Ōtomo with fresh fish.<sup>289</sup> However, other branches of the same family were recruited as naval forces. In the available documentation, they appear as corsairs between 1568 and 1592, fighting for the Ōtomo and providing coastal security. They also shipped war provisions during the naval conflicts that occurred between Ōtomo Yoshishige versus the Ōuchi, Ryōzōji, Mōri, and Shimazu for territorial aggrandizement and control of strategic straits and maritime routes.

Mōri Motonari (1497–1571), the ruler of Aki domain, had obtained the control of a major part of the Seto Inland Sea, from Hiroshima to Sakai, in 1555. From 1559 until 1569, attempting to control the straits that led to East Asia from northern Kyushu, he made incursions into Hakata and fought with Ōtomo Yoshishige’s retainers.<sup>290</sup> On the eight month, ninth day of 1570, Wakabayashi Shigeoki led an expedition in the harbour of Aio no ura in Suo Province ruled by the Mōri, and attacked his corsairs’ ship, informing Ōtomo’s forces as follows:

Eiroku 12 (1570) 8 month 9 day there was a naval battle and Aio no ura was taken, [we] destroyed it, Wakabayashi Nakatsukasa shojo Shigeoki by himself captured a warrior “with an high name,” perhaps their leader or harbour deputy, some people have been wounded as reported here:

Has taken one head	Wakabayashi Nakatsukasa Shojo
Has taken one head	Wakabayashi Danjō tada
Has taken one head	Wakabayashi Tōbee no sho
Has taken one head	Tsugushi Samanosuke
Musketeers	
Has taken one head	Aizawa Ichisuke

<sup>288</sup> Ōita Kenritsu Senketsu Shiryō Kan, *Ōtomo suigun: umi kara mita chūsei Bungo*, (Ōita: Ōita Kenritsu Senketsu Shiryō Kan, 2003), 59-60.

<sup>289</sup> Ōita Kenritsu Senketsu Shiryō Kan, *Ōtomo suigun: umi kara mita chūsei Bungo*, 2.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

Wakabayashi Ōkasuke	wounded by shot
Kida Shudensuke	wounded by arrow
Uchida Shinjurō	wounded by spear
Ninbee	wounded by shot. <sup>291</sup>

As noted here, the attack in Mōri's territorial waters added one of the few victories to Ōtomo Yoshishige's belt. He replied directly to Shigeoki one week later, on the sixteenth day, with a letter apprising him that the man that Shigeoki captured was none other than Yoshioka Echizen Nyūdo, one of Mōri's admirals. His crew had taken more than five enemies' heads.

Shigeoki's victories in the naval conflicts against Mōri's forces and previously in Shikoku and Hyuga contributed to his increase in fame in naval battles. In 1572, while fighting the Mōri, he twice crossed the Bungo Strait that divides northern Kyushu from Shikoku Island as ordered by Ōtomo Yoshishige. The purpose was to attack the Saionji family of Shikoku, but in reality, the attack took place within a larger scheme. Yoshishige attacked Mōri's allies to compete for the control of maritime routes and to gain local authority and prestige. The Wakabayashi, of whom three members went armed as musketeers, joined the Saeki, Fukae, and Tsuruhara to attack the two fortresses located at Uwa-gun Nagayakisan in Shikoku. In the battle, Shigeoki lost six of his men.<sup>292</sup>

Again, in 1578, Wakabayashi Shigeoki was dispatched on a mission to deal with the Ito clan, who had rebelled and formed an alliance with the Shimazu. In this campaign, he emerged victorious in a naval battle against his enemies. Two years later, he fought the Tawara, who were close retainers of the Ōtomo but had rebelled against the rule of Ōtomo Yoshimune. When it was discovered that the Tawara had sought an alliance with the Mōri and Kobayakawa, Shigeoki led

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<sup>291</sup> Ōita Kenritsu Senketsu Shiryō Kan, *Ōtomo suigun: umi kara mita chūsei Bungo*, 61.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

more than ten ships to attack the Mōri stronghold in Suo Province. He was able to sink one of the enemy ships, losing two of his own family members and three comrades in battle.<sup>293</sup>

In 1587, Wakabayashi Shigeoki assumed the Buddhist name Dōkan. Earlier, he had married the daughter of Urakami Dōsatsu. The Urakami family was originally from Okayama, under the Ukita, and were well connected. They knew the Kyoto elite and the mercantile movers and shakers of their time such as Nakaya Sōetsu, with whom Shigeoki and Dōsatsu had travelled in 1585 to Kyoto to accompany Yoshimune on a visit to Hideyoshi. Urakami Dōsatsu was a tea connoisseur and a master of the tea ceremony.<sup>294</sup> By association, Shigeoki benefited from the political networks of his time by sharing its cultural pursuits. Urakami Dōsatsu wrote a letter to Shigeoki in which he described all he had experienced in the tea ceremonies performed in the presence of the Kampaku Hideyoshi.<sup>295</sup> The document shows a different facet of Shigeoki's life, which superficially at least does not match with the image of a rough corsair. The historical image as corsair alone does not do him justice without the understanding that Shigeoki rose from nothing to stand close to the highest political echelons of his day.

Three years later, in 1589, Wakabayashi Shigeoki received the title of Echigo Nyūdō as harbour deputy of Saga no seki, and with it a set of eleven rules to govern the entrance to the two toll barriers that comprised Saga no seki, Uwa no ura (Upper Bay) and Shimo no ura (Lower Bay). Those regulations (*Ōtomo Yoshimune Saga no seki oboegaki*) set the standards for the toll barriers under Ōtomo's house rule as follows:

To Wakabayashi Echigo Nyūdō dono,

Regulations

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<sup>293</sup>Saga Shi Hensan Kyoiku Iinkai, *Saga shi shi*, vol. 2 (Saga: Saga Shi Shi Hensan Iinkai, 1977-1982), 145.

<sup>294</sup> Saga Shi Shi Kyoiku Iinkai, *Saga shi shi*, vol. 1, 143.

<sup>295</sup>Ibid. 145-146.

1. Matters regarding both toll barriers' towns, crossing from East to West and across and matters regarding payments in silver;
2. The weight (balance)<sup>296</sup> of merchants must be the same in both bays, to all members the required fees in silver must be standardized to the one used in Usuki.
3. If a fire occurs, within three blocks everything must close; the [arsonists] must be heavily punished.
4. The main magistrate must catch criminals . . .<sup>297</sup>
5. The lower class people (*chigenin*) entering must be stopped by the harbour deputy who has to inspect their travelling documents; whoever contravene the law must be punished.<sup>298</sup>

Those rules were imposed to control people passing through the toll-barrier town, but they were also there for newcomers to be inspected and to make sure that they abided by the stated rules. Rules 7 to 11 regulated mainly how to deal with document inspections and people who belonged to certain temples, shrines and foreigners.

Rule 8 is of major interest as it regulated the travelling ships as follows:

8. The ships arriving at this harbour must use [our] local mercantile associations [*ton'ya maru*] and by consequence these will be permitted to stay and the people to trade.<sup>299</sup>

These rules regulated the behaviours of travellers to Saga no seki, but they also ensured that those travellers brought wealth to the harbour, by standardizing measurements of goods and

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<sup>296</sup> Kage Toshio, *Sengoku daimyō no gaikō to toshi, ryūtsū* (Kyoto: Shibinkaku Shuppan, 2006), 147. Kage Toshio wrote that the *Hakariya* (as written in the original text) were merchants who sold goods by weight, hence they used a scale (*hakari*) to sell their goods. Often the weight on the scale was off, falsifying the quantity sold and causing problems for merchants, hence the need to standardize the scales of merchants and mercantile associations.

<sup>297</sup> Ōita Kenritsu Senketsu Shiryō Kan, *Ōtomo suigun: umi kara mita chūsei Bungo*, doc. 79, 66.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 79, 66.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

payments done in silver. It is not known what fees that ships had to pay at Saga no seki, but there are contemporary records for other areas regulated by the Mōri in Aki Province. In 1587, Hideyoshi eliminated the toll-fee barriers in the Seto Inland Sea, but fees were collected by corsairs operating under his daimyō allies. In the same year, on the first day of the sixth month, three retainers of the Mōri house, Katsura Saemon Daibu, Awaya Motomasa and Watanabe Iwami no kami, issued an order to Amano Motomasa. The order set out rules, to be applied from that day on, regarding the payments of toll fees as follows: “levy for one person travelling from the south to the capital is five *mon*; fees for cargo are eight *mon*; [one] horse being transported with cargo is twelve *mon*, without cargo only eight *mon*; ships without cargo are exempt from levies.”<sup>300</sup> The fees applied in Mōri-controlled harbours must have been similar to the ones applied in Ōtomo-controlled harbours. However, these fees were collected only until the 1590s, since Hideyoshi by then had issued a nation-wide decree for the elimination of toll fees everywhere.<sup>301</sup> In practice, Hideyoshi’s decree was not fully implemented. It proved difficult to enforce where local power holders controlled waterways with high traffic density, such as Saga no seki.

Saga no seki was a trans-shipment harbour from which tribute ships left to go to Ming China, Chōson Korea, and to the Ryukyu Kingdom as far as Southeast Asia. This harbour had two toll-fee barriers placed in its upper and lower bay where passage fees were collected to finance the Ōtomo clan and his local retainers. Saga no seki stands on the opposite side of the long peninsula of Sada with the myriad smaller islands used as strongholds by corsairs on both sides of the Strait. Ōtomo corsairs fought their counterparts sponsored by the local wealthy landowners and powerful clans of Shikoku such as the Kōno, Saionji, and Ichijō—who also

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<sup>300</sup> Yamaguchi Kenshi Chūsei Shiryōhen, vol. 3, *Migita Mōri monjo*, doc. 165 (Yamaguchi: Yamaguchi Prefecture, 1996), 482-483.

<sup>301</sup> Shibata Keiko, “Kaizoku iseki to ryūtsū” *Chūsei Setonai ryūtsū to kōryū* (Tokyo: Katai Shōbō, 2005), 725.

claimed control over the Bungo Strait, and whose importance was paramount in order to have access to international trade routes.

### **3.4 Ōtomo Corsairs in Yoshiaki and Yoshishige's Territorial Aggrandizement, 1530–86**

Between the 1530s and 1586, Ōtomo Yoshiaki and his son Yoshishige fought to defend their territories from other daimyō and to expand their own rule over their boundaries to gain further resources, total control of the Bungo and Shimonoseki Straits, and political authority and prestige. As previously mentioned, in the 1530s, Yoshiaki had sought allies with the Amako of San'in, the Takeda of Aki, and the Kumagai clan of southern Kyushu, to engage in defensive battles against enemy forces. The employment of Ōtomo corsairs in naval battles extended beyond Kyushu and their maritime boundaries with Shikoku, as their set of allies fought to defeat Ōtomo's enemies in their own territories as well, extending their fight for control, prestige, and authority closer to the shogunate. The Ōtomo in northern Kyushu faced the threat of the Kōno (and their allies, the Ōuchi), while from the south there were Kikuchi and Shimazu, and from the west the Ryūzōji and Mōri.

On the shores of Shikoku, Yoshiaki's set of alliances led to the formation of a faction that comprised the corsairs under the Kōno family, and the Kurushima Murakami clan: the pirates of the Seto Inland Sea (allied with the Ōuchi). This was to counter the maritime forces of Ōtomo Yoshiaki. On the third day of the twelfth month of 1532, Yoshiaki sent a letter to Mizaki Aki no kami, of the Mizaki pirate clan, explicitly requesting the recruitment of a crew to man a ship that would face the naval forces of Kōno Michinao.<sup>302</sup> The Mizaki by then were not under the leadership of Ōtomo Yoshiaki. Instead, they had relocated on the shoreline of Shikoku at Uwa-

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<sup>302</sup> Takita Manabu, ed., *Hennen Ōtomo shiryō*, vol. 16, doc., 101, 49. The above-mentioned event is also narrated in the *Nankai tsūki* which corroborates the abovementioned document, although the latter was written in the Edo period.

gun. In fact, according to the *Uwa Kyūki*, a record of Uwa city, the main Mizaki stronghold was at Doi Fortress, led by Sasaki Minbu, a retainer of the Saionji family. Hence, Ōtomo Yoshiaki did not use his own corsairs to prevent conflicts in Shikoku, but wisely decided to use allies in situ to prevent an attack on northern Kyushu.

This was not his only strategy, as he also requested the naval support of the Hōkōetsū. The Hōkōetsū, like the Mizaki, later followed Yoshiaki and relocated to northern Kyushu in his service. But by the early 1530s, they were both serving the Saionji clan in Shikoku. Ōtomo Yoshiaki also thought to employ in his service a member of the Noshima Murakami family, namely Murakami Saburōsaemon, who brought with him a fleet manned with corsairs mainly from the Yoshida, Yoshihiro, Sada, Matsunaga, Sakuru, and Kibe clans of northern Kyushu.<sup>303</sup> In 1533, the Kōno faced an internal succession struggle; Kōno Michinao was betrayed by his military retainers, who chose instead to support Kōno Michimasa from a collateral branch of the family. Michinao requested the help of Kurushima Murakami Michiyasu, of the Murakami pirates' clan, as he was related by marriage to Michinao. In 1540, the Ōuchi, trying to exert their authority over Shikoku, turned against the Kōno and sent their corsairs, led by Shirai Fusatane, to conquer Kurushima's fortresses. By 1541, the Kōno's conflicts had attracted the attention of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiharu who, supported by the Hosokawa family, stopped the conflict with the mediation of Ōtomo Yoshiaki.<sup>304</sup> The Hosokawa family had vested interests, as land-rights owners, in Shikoku and also on that front they were in competition with the Ōuchi.

The turning point for Yoshiaki came in 1542, when he was able to negotiate a truce between the Kōno factions supporting Michinao and his son Harumichi.<sup>305</sup> Yoshiaki was able to negotiate a favourable set of alliances with the Saionji and later with the Ichijō of Tosa. In 1544,

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<sup>303</sup> Takita Manabu, ed., *Hennen Ōtomo shiryō*, vol. 16, 43-45.

<sup>304</sup> Kageura Tsutomu, *Kōno shi no kenkyū* (Matsuyama: Seki Kabugaisha, 2007), 203-205.

<sup>305</sup> Yamamoto Hiroki, *Saikoku no sengoku gassen*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2007), 105.

he sent his daughter, escorted by the Kibe corsairs, to be married to Ichijō Kanesada. That persuaded other minor fief holders in Shikoku to become Ōtomo allies.

In 1550, the Ōtomo clan had a major internal conflict in which Yoshiaki lost his life and was succeeded by his son Yoshishige. Yoshishige's policies toward Shikoku tightened. He tried by all possible means to control the Bungo Strait, which was vital for international trade. In Shikoku between 1556 and 1566, the situation deteriorated to the point where internal strife brought conflicts and piratical raids causing farmers to flee cultivable land. Severe famines were not uncommon.

The incursions of Ōtomo corsairs and their raids into Shikoku are described in a detailed account in a document entitled *Seiryōki*.<sup>306</sup> It was written in the late Sengoku period (1568–1603) by Doi Kiyoyoshi or Seiryō (1546–1629) and co-authored by Matura Sōan, one of his retainers. Here, I address the importance of this text. I analyze it innovatively: I argue that piratical attacks served to mask commercial and political interests that went beyond interdomain trade and warfare to emerge in the larger context of daimyō international trade and domestic policies.

Doi Kiyoyoshi lived in the transitional era between the civil war (1467–1602) and the beginning of the Tokugawa Period (1603–1867). The Doi family had the status of fief holders (*ryōshu*) in northern Uwa-gun in the service of the Saionji family of Shikoku. The Saionji ruled over several landed lords: the Misho, Tsujima, Sakajima, Hokketsū, Arima, and Doi. The Doi originally held a fief in Mima-gun, but later they were awarded other surrounding territories.

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<sup>306</sup> Doi Kiyoyoshi, *Seiryōki*, see Matura Ikurō ed., *Seiryōki* (Kita Uwa-gun: Sagawa Inpansho, 1975). The *Seiryōki* is mainly a treatise on agricultural improvements and techniques, and was used in the early Tokugawa period, 1642–1658, as a manual to improve agricultural output in order to obtain faster harvests that could support the local population. To date, post-war Japanese scholars such as Matura Ikurō have studied the *Seiryōki* just as a treatise on the improvement of agricultural crops during the Sengoku period, and as such, it is indeed an invaluable source of information. But it is only recently, with Hokazono Toyochika and the extensive work of Matura Ikurō, that the *Seiryōki* has been taken into consideration as a source for the study of piratical attacks on the coast of Shikoku by naval forces under the Ōtomo's clan of Bungo (modern day Ōita prefecture).



They had under them a cavalry of fifty men, and a yearly income of 2652 *koku* of rice.<sup>307</sup> By any measure, they were a medium-size clan. They were surrounded by powerful lords who could become powerful enemies, such as the Ichijō of Tosa, the Ōtomo of Bungo, the Mōri of Aki, and in the north, the Chosokabe and Miyoshi as well. At least sixteen chapters of the *Seiryōki* contain references to the intermittent invasions of Shikoku's shoreline areas, including the territories ruled by the Doi family and the Ōtomo clan and their corsairs.<sup>308</sup> These incursions occurred often in retaliation to Ōuchi and Mōri's attacks in northern Kyushu.

By 1562, the Mōri, who had taken over Ōuchi's territories in Yamaguchi after Ōuchi Yoshitaka was betrayed by his retainer Sue Harukata and forced to commit suicide in 1557, tried to conquer territories in northern Kyushu and came into conflict with Ōtomo Yoshishige. The Mōri, as well as conquering Ōuchi's territory were also after their extensive trade with Ming China, Ryukyu, and Korea, since it was trade that sustained daimyō's warfare. In that same year, the Mōri donated their controlled silver mines to the shogun as a guarantee that they could continue to administer them without other daimyō being able to claim authority over the mines.<sup>309</sup> Such a step was necessary, as silver paid for matchlocks and imported gunpowder. For their part, the Ōtomo benefited from Chinese and Portuguese merchants in their territories in order to trade internationally and to obtain silver as well as Chinese minted coins.

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<sup>307</sup> Kageura Naotaka, *Iyo shi seigi*, (Tokyo: Kageura Shuppan, 1972), 373-374.

<sup>308</sup> Peter Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 122. See, for example, Peter Shapinsky, who considers the Murakami clans pirates who gained the parvence of legitimacy through the establishment of their protection business while choosing their sponsors, versus Udagawa Takehisa who considers them instead part of the military structure of daimyō military forces. See also Takehisa Udagawa, *Nihon no kaizoku*, (Tokyo: Hoshino Kabu Gaisha, 1983), 159-164. My position lies in between, as these naval forces were able to act in their own interests, but were often tied to local retainers in the service of daimyos who did provide patronage and extensive resources.

<sup>309</sup> Saeki Tokuya "Sengokuki Iwami no kuni ni okeru chiiki ryōshu shihai to chiiki keizai" *Hisutoria* vol. 135 (1992), 44-72. Between 1540 and 1562, the administration of the silver mines fell alternatively in the hands of several daimyō who claimed the control of the mines and fought in their territories, such as the Ōuchi, Sue, Fukuya, Ogasawara, Masuda, Amago and Mōri.

Both daimyō, Ōtomo and Mōri, fought for the control of important harbours and maritime routes, to maintain their share of domestic and international trade and cause damage to each other by using embargoes on food supplies and weaponry. Domestic trade was a necessity, since areas where conflicts occurred could not produce the necessary staples (rice or other grains), because farmers fled when soldiers pillaged the land, as witnessed by Doi Kiyoyoshi. Rice therefore needed to be imported from elsewhere. International trade also supplied the necessary gunpowder. By 1567, Ōtomo Yoshishige was buying gunpowder and cannon abroad. This is attested to in a letter written to Belchior Carneiro, the Archbishop of Macau.<sup>310</sup> By 1574, Yoshishige was offering a barrel of saltpetre as gift to his ally Maki Hyogo no suke, who was a retainer of the Miura house in central Japan and who had connections to the merchants of Sakai that supplied the Ōtomo.<sup>311</sup>

The alliances established by the Ōtomo and Mōri houses had significant repercussions on the coast of northern Kyushu and Shikoku. As shown in the *Seiryōki*, piratical raids on the coastal area of Shikoku brought death and famine to local villagers. During Yoshiaki's time, the Ōtomo traded extensively with Ming China and Korea.<sup>312</sup> In the *Seiryōki*, Kiyoyoshi refers to sweet potatoes imported from Ryukyu and Satsuma as crops growing in his fields. Several types of beans from Awaji and other parts of Japan also grew on his lands, in addition to the cotton most likely imported from Korea.<sup>313</sup> Naval conflicts between the two coasts could cause not only disruptions in trade but also the destruction of entire fields. This had dire consequences. The loss

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<sup>310</sup> Charles Boxer, *O Grande Navio de Amaçãu*, (Macau: Fundação Oriente, 1989), 296.

<sup>311</sup> Kishida Hiroshi and Hasegawa T., *Okayama ken chiiki no sengoku jidai shi kenkyū*, doc. 9 (Hiroshima: Hiroshima University Press, 1995), 116.

<sup>312</sup> Kage Toshio, *Sengoku daimyō no gaikō to toshi ryūtsū*, 230. See also, by the same author *Ajia no naka no sengoku daimyō* (Tokyo: Kage, 2015).

<sup>313</sup> Matsura Ikurō, "Seiryōki." in *Nihon nosho zenshū*, vol. 10. (1980): 432.

of human capital and direct cultivators left the fields unproductive, so that starvation and famine were likely to occur periodically.

Doi Kiyoyoshi reports that in 1564, young boys from six to ten years of age were bought from local samurai families in exchange for food, and even a member of his own family, Doi Yatarō, was sold at the age of ten for twenty *kanme*.<sup>314</sup> In those years, Doi Kiyoyoshi, according to his own account, came into contact with the naval forces of Kurushima Murakami Danjō no kami and was allowed on his ships, to counterattack Ōtomo naval forces.<sup>315</sup> Upon his return to Mima-gun Kiyoyoshi with twenty-seven other men, began to patrol the coastline close to Oshima Island. While Kiyoyoshi related that the outings in those maritime areas were dangerous, he also claimed to have had fun, fishing and going around the smaller islands on his boat. He did not feel threatened, as his patrols possessed muskets and could fire if attacked by smaller gangs of pirates.<sup>316</sup>

But Doi Kiyoyoshi did not stop there. He travelled to Harima to learn how muskets were made, and ordered a ship big enough to carry standing horses which could be used as transport on enemy shores.<sup>317</sup> That proved to be an advantage. In 1565, Ōtomo Yoshishige's retainers, the Hoshino, launched an attack on the Iyo in Shikoku, and among the forces that counterattacked were Kōno's corsairs, the Kutsuna and Murakami clans, the Wada, the Mitsu, as well as the Doi, who waited for their enemies at Wakihama. This time they were able to fend off the attacking armies. However, the latter kept attacking once they were able to reorganize their forces.<sup>318</sup> In 1569, Kiyoyoshi writes, a big ship carrying a force of more than a thousand men landed at Uwa-

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<sup>314</sup> Doi Kiyoyoshi, *Seiryōki*, see Matsura Ikurō ed., *Seiryōki* (Kita Uwa-gun: Sagawa Inpansho, 1975), 129.

<sup>315</sup> The Kurushima Murakami sided with the Mōri in most conflicts, unlike their other clan led by Noshima Murakami Takeyoshi (and later Motoyoshi), who switched sides and became Ōtomo allies.

<sup>316</sup> Doi Kiyoyoshi, *Seiryōki*, see Matsura Ikurō ed., *Seiryōki*, 230.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid. 231

<sup>318</sup> Kageura Tsutomo, *Kōno kemonjo* (Matsuyama: Sekiyo Shiten 1967), 111.

gun and fought with Doi forces and their allies. Kiyoyoshi's surprise is evident in his comment about the Ōtomo being capable of building a ship large enough to contain and transport such an army.<sup>319</sup>

The following year, Ōtomo's corsairs attacked again. They were also equipped with muskets but were sent back across the strait.<sup>320</sup> The attacks of Ōtomo's corsairs on the coast of Iyo occurred mostly in retaliation to Mōri's naval warfare in northern Kyushu in 1569. The Mōri had by then one of the largest naval fleets comprising at least two of the Murakami pirate houses (Kurushima and Innoshima) and various corsairs such as the Nomi and the Kodama.

Again in 1572, Ōtomo Yoshishige attacked with full force at Uwa-gun with all his corsairs, aided by hired forces such as the Noshima Murakami (Takeyoshi)<sup>321</sup> and the Futagami of Nakajima,<sup>322</sup> both from Iyo. Wakabayashi Shigeoki, the harbour deputy of Saga no seki, himself led the expedition followed by members of his clan such as Wakabayashi Kurō (bowman) and Wakabayashi Genjirō (musketeer), as well as the Yakushiji (a corsair clan in Usuki), and the Saeki of Tosa.<sup>323</sup> More attacks on the shores of Iyo took place the following year and more naval forces were called to fight. Saeki Korenori was recalled to fight in Iyo, as Yoshishige's corsairs by themselves were not sufficient. (Korenori had been in the service of the Saionji family in exile after he was wrongly accused of betrayal by Ōtomo Yoshishige.) The Watanabe and Kibe, first under the command of Tawara Chikahiro and later under Chikakata, were deployed to fight in Akamagaseki (now Shimonoseki) Strait.<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Doi Kiyoyoshi, *Seiryōki*, see Matsura Ikurō ed., *Seiryōki*, 168.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid. 169

<sup>321</sup> Matsubara Katsuya, "Tenki nenkan ni okeru Ōtomo shi no seijiteki gunjiteki dōkō," *Ōita ken chihō shi*, 194 (2005): 1-31.

<sup>322</sup> Ehime Kenshi Hensan Iinkai, *Ehime kenshi*, Chūsei 3, doc. 2240, (Matsuyama: Ehime ken, 1982-1989), 1165.

<sup>323</sup> Hokazono Toyochika, *Sengokuki zaichi shakai no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kokura Shobo, 2003), 217.

<sup>324</sup> Matsubara Katsuya, "Tenki nenkan ni okeru Ōtomo shi no seijiteki gunjiteki dōkō," 12.

Akamagaseki and the harbours of Kaminoseki and Mōji were extremely important not only for trade but also for shipping silver and other currencies in exchange for muskets and gunpowder, and rice as staple food for troops. Therefore, the Mōri's merchant houses were also stationed there as main suppliers. In Akamagaseki, the Sakō worked as a mercantile house (*ton'ya*) and as they were of low status (*chigenin*), they often offered their services as hired naval forces. The Sakō were not the only mercantile house. They also worked with Nakamaru under Hotate Naomasa, the magistrate of Akamagaseki. Kishida Hiroshi states that Sakō Tōtarō, the family's major exponent under the Mōri, dealt with several other mercantile organizations located in other harbours and had connections with the Murakami pirates. Tōtarō himself possessed six ships, and offered his services as corsair. In 1570, the Mōri used embargo tactics to deprive the Ōtomo of food supplies, as the fortress of Noshima Murakami in Iyo was under attack.<sup>325</sup>

As previously mentioned, gunpowder and matchlocks were produced in Harima, but from Harima passed via Akamagaseki, and the Ukita house was an important player, as the ammunitions had to be shipped from Harima to Bicchū in Ukita's controlled territory, before arriving at the final purchaser. In addition, since 1562, the Mōri had contacted the Sō of Tsushima to trade silver in Korea via the Shimane harbours of Yunotsu and Okidomari,<sup>326</sup> but by 1571, the Mōri were at war with the Ōtomo. They then shipped their silver from the silver mines to the harbours of Tomo no ura and Ō no michi, both in the Seto Inland Sea, as well as to Itsukushima Shrine. From there, it would be shipped by sea elsewhere. This was to avoid circumnavigating the southern tip of Honshu from Yunotsu and Okidomari in Shimane, as

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<sup>325</sup> Kishida Hiroshi, "Chūsei no naikai ryūtsū to daimyō kenryoku," *Umi no michi kara chūsei wo miru II* (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan, 1996), 152.

<sup>326</sup> Kage Toshio, *Ajia no naka no sengoku daimyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2015), 190-191.

indicated in documents of Mōri's retainers, the Ihara clan.<sup>327</sup> The shipped silver was also used to pay the hired pirates, according to a document of the Innoshima Murakami. By 1576, the Mōri had begun paying them with silver currency; in one document, Murakami Sukeyasu is recorded as being given five silver coins for his patrol services for shipping military supplies; and he had taken an enemy ship with more than one hundred people on board at the battle of Kitsugawaguchi against Oda Nobunaga.<sup>328</sup> It was not until Oda's threat to Mōri's territories that the Ōtomo were freed from conflicts on their western front.

Ōtomo Yoshishige's alliances and military targets were well calculated. Having extended his alliance to the Urakami clan, whose territorial boundaries were close to the Mōri, Yoshishige rallied anti-Mōri factions able to fight in his stead in Mōri's controlled domain. But he also placed embargoes on the supply lines of the Mōri. The supply lines were for food supplies or silver supplies to pay for hired naval forces and weaponry. Last but not least, he meant to threaten Mōri's allies in their controlled harbours.

In Suo province, Amako Katsuhisa, an ally of the Ōtomo, fought against the Mōri and allied himself with Ukita Naoie of Bicchū, a cadet family of the Miyake clan, which was allied to the Ōuchi, relatives of the pirate Miyake Kunihide killed at Kagoshima in 1516.<sup>329</sup> Via the Ukita, Ōtomo Yoshishige forged his alliance with Urakami (Totomi no kami) Munekage, who was stationed at Akamagaseki. Munekage provided maritime patrol services together with the

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<sup>327</sup> *Ihara kemonjo*, (1573). Photo, Yamaguchi Manuscript Library, Yamaguchi.

<sup>328</sup> Innoshima Kyoiku Inkai, *Innoshima Murakami monjo*, doc. 47 (Innoshima: Innoshima Shi Kyoiku Inkai, 1965), 573. Previous to that date, Ōtomo Yoshishige hired the Noshima Murakami by paying a consistent amount in silver negotiated by his retainer, a member of the Nakajima house.

<sup>329</sup> Shimane Ken Kyoiku Inkai, *Iwami ginzan rekishi buncho chōsa hokokusho III, Yasuhara kemonjo*, (Shimane: Shimane Ken Kyoiku Inkai, 2007), 61. The Miyake lineage of Bicchū had its roots in Iwami. Their role is unclear, but they must have held an administrative position in the copper and silver mines at Iwami for a long period of time, as when the mines passed into Mōri's hands, the Miyake continued to have a stake in the silver trade as demonstrated by a wooden *mokkan* with their name. (*mokkan* = wooden stripes with written offers to Shimane temples). The Miyake were related to the Yasuhara family originally from Bicchū Hayajima (Tsurushima), whose members were involved in the extraction of silver from the mines by then under Ōuchi control.

Noshima Murakami as support for Ōtomo's corsairs. On that occasion, the Urakami became acquainted with the Wakabayashi, with whom they established marriage ties. By 1574, Wakabayashi Shigeoki was wounded by an arrow<sup>330</sup> and replaced by the Hokketsu clan to fight in Iyo, while in the west Mōji Harbour was lost to the Ōtomo; as well, Akamagaseki continued to be ruled by Mōri corsairs.<sup>331</sup> However, the naval warfare of Ōtomo's corsairs did not end there. By 1577, in southern Kyushu, Itō Yoshisuke, daimyō of Hyuga and Yoshishige's ally, was invaded by Shimazu Yoshihisa. In retaliation, Yoshishige, in what some historians think was bad strategy, intervened against the Shimazu in Hyuga, incurring a tremendous defeat.<sup>332</sup> In the second month of 1578, the Wakabayashi (Shigeoki and Kurō) fought naval battles in the Hyuga Sea at the mouth of two rivers, the Yagamineguchi and Azusaguchi (now in Miyazaki, eastern Kyushu). The corresponding landed troops were late in arriving and the defence of Tawara Chikakata proved to be easy to overcome.

In the fifth month of 1578, Shigeoki captured a ship from Satsuma but by the eleventh month of the same year the Ōtomo troops were defeated at Mimigawa.<sup>333</sup> While the Ōtomo reached a truce with Shimazu by 1580, they were attacked from the west by Ryūzōji Takanobu, who was defeated in 1584 by an allied force of Arima and Ōmura daimyō of Hizen province aided by the Shimazu, who now were aiming at the territories left by Ryūzōji and also targeted by the Ōtomo. Once again, this brought about a confrontation between the two daimyō houses. But by 1585, the real threat became Toyotomi Hideyoshi who, summoned by Ōtomo Yoshishige, ordered a truce between Ōtomo and Shimazu—not before having sent his troops to Kyushu and having laid out his plan to conquer the whole island.

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<sup>330</sup> Kamizaki Nobufumi, *Ōtomo suigun no ken: Isshakuya Wakabayashi shi* (Ōita: Saeki Kabugaisha, 2011), 74-78.

<sup>331</sup> Yagita Ken, *Kita Kyushu sengoku shi* (Kita Kyushu: Imai Shoten, 1999), 264.

<sup>332</sup> Jurgis Elisonas, "Christianity and the Daimyō," *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 4 Early Modern Japan, ed. J.W. Hall et al., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 338.

<sup>333</sup> Kamizaki Nobufumi, *Ōtomo suigun no ken: isshakuya Wakabayashi shi*, 74-78.

### 3.5 Conclusion

The story of several clans—the Kibe, Watanabe, and Wakabayashi—as corsairs for the Ōtomo family in a transformative period illustrates the territorial and political aggrandizement occurring between 1542 and 1582 in Kyushu. Private trade (legal and illegal) responded to the increased demand for foreign-made weaponry and gunpowder in exchange for Japanese silver, and also monetized the local economy, which in turn changed the relationship between daimyō and their hired naval forces. Most of these naval leaders, in their employment as corsairs, were appointed as harbour deputy. By analyzing this, I intended to show how the relation between the land resources and a monetized economy tied these pirate gangs to the service of daimyō as corsairs in a balancing act between higher status retainers (who hindered and often rebelled against the Ōtomo house) and hired forces (that were made more dependent by receiving currency as their payment). These hired naval forces tried to maintain a certain independence whenever possible while still being open to the possibility of working with military organizations in pillaging expeditions in enemy territories. They were made up of several non-military organizations such as *yoriai*, *shū*, and even religious organizations. Their services, indispensable to international trade on behalf of the Ōtomo, were used in domestic conflicts, not only for political reasons but also to exploit resources economically. The Kibe and the Wakabayashi in particular rose from lowly stations to positions as corsairs, with close ties to the Ōtomo family forged through their skills.

As I have shown, these corsair clans took full advantage of their environment to create economic, geopolitical, and interpersonal networks that brought them to the fore as participants in the coastal economy that flourished between the fourteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Chronologically, some clans overlapped others, as the Kibe, Watanabe, and other minor clans



cooperated with each other and absorbed other coastal clans; others, as corsairs, decreased in importance. The rise of the Wakabayashi as corsairs was destined to wane due to tighter political control and to Hideyoshi's conquest of Kyushu in 1586.

However, their activities on the sea continue to render them important in the maritime history of Sengoku Japan. What they shared under Ōtomo rule was their authority over the territories of the coastal areas, bestowed upon them by the Ōtomo clan, which included the right to patrol the coast to manage shipping and related industries such as shipbuilding, metalworking, gunsmithing, salt production, shipbuilding, and woodworking, as well as the right to make policy in their localities. In addition, the Kibe, Watanabe, and Wakabayashi clans stood out politically by gaining the position of harbour deputy and the even more prominent position of magistrate. This clearly illustrates that their rule was not only over the sea but extended from coastal harbours of historical note such as Hiji, Saga no seki, Usuki, Tsukumi, Hayami, and Kitsuki.

Beyond their geographic locales, the corsairs acquired a mastery of international trade routes as they escorted tributary ships to foreign lands. The Kibe and Watanabe adopted Christianity, a foreign religion at the time, and interacted with Portuguese missionaries and merchants. Christian communities were a major part of the Kibe's network, and the Watanabe were involved in both Christian and Buddhist networks. The Wakabayashi arose from mere purveyors to military might, after their victories against the Mōri armies at sea. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi and his subordinates occupied Kyushu to quell conflicts, these forces did not suddenly disappear. In fact they became further factionalized under their patrons as Hideyoshi galvanized the geopolitical landscape of Kyushu in preparation for his planned conquest of Korea.

## **Chapter 4: The Closing Door: The Effects of the Silver Trade on Hizen and Hirado's Piracy**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Hirado has always been considered a “Pirate’s lair” in Japanese and foreign scholarship, but this definition most suited Hirado after silver excavated in Iwami was traded abroad by merchants and looted by pirates on the way to international trading harbours such as Hakata and Kagoshima. Hirado acquired the status of international harbour after Chinese and Portuguese settled there and on its adjacent small islands. During the Ming maritime prohibition (1547-1568), several Chinese merchant-pirates settled in Hirado, the most prominent being Wang Zhi, hosted by Hirado’s daimyō, Matsura Takanobu. At least until 1562 and 1564, Portuguese carracks as well used to arrive at Hirado and Hizen’s smaller islands. However, Chinese and Portuguese trade competition in Japanese harbours, as previously dealt with in Satsuma, was also felt in Hizen, where the Matsura hosted foreign merchants and pirates who wished to trade in their territories. Attacks on Portuguese vessels and people was not uncommon by both Chinese and Japanese pirates, and for this reason, the Matsura, who relied mostly on Chinese trade, due to the conflicts between the two groups, could not avoid the Portuguese leaving Hirado as they negotiated the use of different Hizen harbours in order to trade their goods, mostly silk for silver and other Chinese luxury items.

My assertion in this chapter is that the silver outflow from Japan heightened the competition between Chinese and Portuguese traders and changed the dynamic of local pirates, who became factionalized toward one group or the other. Hideyoshi’s invasion of Kyushu and his anti-piracy laws reduced the gang of independent pirates and increased the number of

corsairs who fought in his Korean wars, financed by the Iwami and other mines' silver in Kyushu. Between the invasion of Kyushu and the Korean wars, a huge economic and financial strain was put on the domain of Hizen and on the Matsura of Hirado as Hideyoshi occupied Karatsu. The Matsura, who permitted pirates to engage in economies of war, felt the effects of Hideyoshi's anti-piracy laws, under which those pirates in Matsura domain became corsairs or even retainers. I further assert that as Hirado used Chinese and Dutch traders as foreign traders to comply with and in response to the Tokugawa anti-piracy edicts and trading policies, and due to Dutch and Chinese conflict on the sea, the Matsura failed to augment their trading revenues. Their main mistake was to rely only on foreign mercantile networks, the Chinese network of Li Dan and the Dutch, in order to open up trade relations directly with Taiwan, and indirectly with Ming China. Since both the Dutch and the Chinese consisted solely of networks, they could guarantee only trade, without any diplomatic relations that could have augmented the status of the Matsura in the new regime. Hence, unable to rely on stable trade with a country rather than mercantile companies, they lacked both the backing of foreign rulers and stable trading relations, unlike the Sō of Tsushima in dealing with Korea, and the Shimazu of Satsuma in dealing with Ryukyu. Therefore, the Matsura, by detaching themselves from local pirates and from the corsairs of Hizen, and responding to Tokugawa's orders by substituting local pirates in their domain with foreign ones, incurred counterproductive economic and financial results detrimental to Hirado's economy.

Although pre-war scholars such as Naganuma Kenkai<sup>334</sup> have dealt with Hirado as peripheral to the pirates of the Seto Inland Sea, post-war scholars such as Tanaka Takeo have seen it as a lair of Chinese pirates' networks.<sup>335</sup> Matsura Akira, who has written extensively on

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<sup>334</sup> Naganuma Kenkai, *Nihon no kaizoku* (Tokyo: Kyushu University Press, 1965), 92-112.

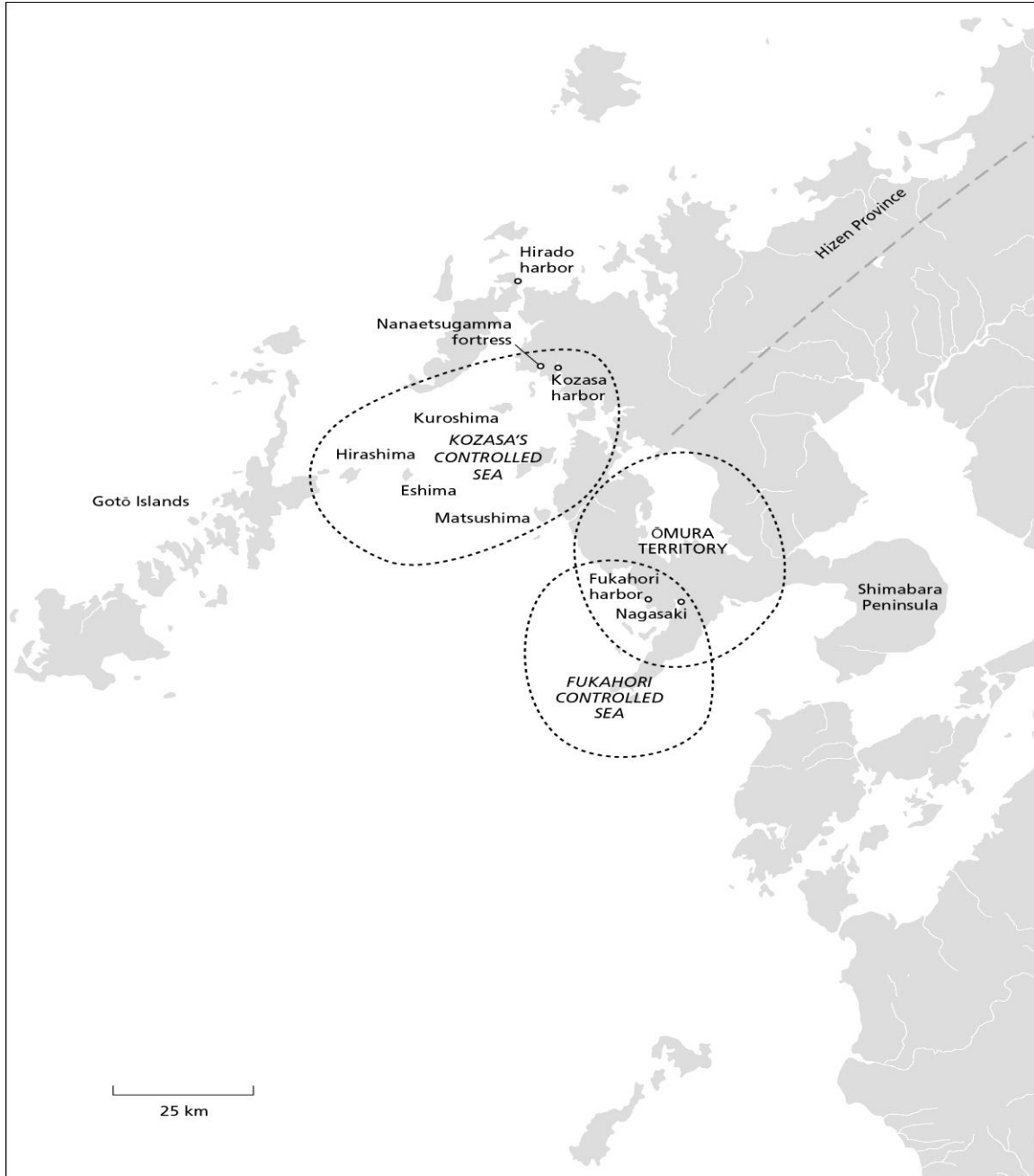
<sup>335</sup> Tanaka Takeo, *Wakō: umi no rekishi* (Tokyo: Kyuikusha Rekishi Shinsho, 1982), 132-154.

the topic of Chinese piracy in Japan as well, has located several Chinese-language texts in which Japanese piracy is well described and where Hirado is described as a location offering natural protection to foreign pirates, given its geographic configuration as a harbour surrounded by several smaller islands. However, Murai Shosuke, followed by Saeki Kōji, has linked Hirado to the pirates of Tsushima Island, who were under the Sō family but resided all over Hizen and Hirado proper as well as in the Gotō Islands. Among western scholars, Jurgis Elisonas (aka George Elison) addressed the problem of the sixteenth-century second wave of *wakō* in Kyushu by pointing out that Hizen was curiously not mentioned, in the *Chouhai tubian* as a location where the notorious Wang Zhi resided, as a pirate lair, probably because it was already well known for hosting pirates.<sup>336</sup> Adam Clulow, who has dealt with Hirado's piracy in the early-seventeenth century, has relegated the Japanese pirates to the level of small gangs that dwelled in and around Hirado.<sup>337</sup> None of these scholars, however, have dealt either with the fact that the competition between Chinese and Portuguese for silver in exchange for weapons to pursue trade and harbours led to the factionalization of Hizen pirates, or with the burden that overcame the Mutsu due to their hosting of foreign traders and pirates in the new Toyotomi and Tokugawa regimes.

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<sup>336</sup> Jurgis Elisonas, "The Inseparable Trinity: Japan's Relations with China and Korea," eds. J.W. Hall et al, *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 4., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 255.

<sup>337</sup> Adam Clulow, "From Global Entrepôt to Early Modern Domain: Hirado, 1609-1641" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 65, n. 1 (2010): 1-35.



**Map 4-1. Map of Kozasa and Fukahori's controlled territories**



**Map 4-2. (Nanaetsugamma. Particular of Blaeus map of Japan, Iaponia Regnum, 1655. Copia Digitalis Publica. Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal).**

#### **4.2 The Conflictual Aspects of Hirado: Sino-Japanese Piracy Rivalries in Hizen**

In the competition for territorial expansions leading to the control of more resources and waterways, Ōtomo Yoshishige had relied on several allies to surround the Mōri and the Shimazu, and between 1562 and 1569, he with the aid of his corsairs took back all of northern Kyushu as the Mōri capitulated. However, in Hizen, those years were also rather dramatic for the Matsura and for other minor players such as the Arima, Ōmura and Saigō families, who, being opposed to the Matsura, sought the military aid of the Portuguese and of their weapons to gain status against their enemies. The Matsura had relied since the beginning on Chinese trade, and even if initially,

from 1550 to 1560, Portuguese landed at Hirado, they came into conflict with the Chinese there as well. The Matsura wished to retain Portuguese trade in Hirado but were not able to obtain the trust of the Portuguese Jesuits, who were mediators for their merchants.<sup>338</sup> Matsura Takanobu (Dōka) from 1541 to 1568 relied on trade and piracy to bring wealth to Hirado by accepting Chinese merchant-pirates and their extensive networks. First among them was the network of Wang Zhi, at Hirado since 1543, and the Portuguese carracks from Macau that brought wealth in the form of commerce to their domain, complementing their agricultural resources. In reality, Hirado and the Matsura clan had benefitted from the silver trade since 1538, when Japan became an exporter of silver, gradually increasing the export quantities of the precious metal, to China via pirates and merchant-pirates who traded in Hirado. Already by 1542, Antonio da Faria reported three pirate vessels loaded with what corresponded to 80,000 *ryō* of silver departing from Hirado for the coastal areas of Jiangsu Province.<sup>339</sup> However, silver in the 1540s was relevant solely to Chinese and Korean merchants and to pirates who sought to import it from Japan. In Japan itself, silver was only being used as bullion to exchange for primary minerals such as saltpetre from China in order to have steady supplies of gunpowder for matchlocks. Ōta Kōki has argued that Chinese merchant pirates of Wang Zhi's calibre had been instrumental in the formation of a triangular trade, with sulphur being exported from Japan, saltpetre imported from China and the matchlocks made in southern Japan and East Asia bought with silver exported from Japan.<sup>340</sup> In this regard, Nakajima Yoshiaki has added that the commercial centre for buying matchlocks made in Southeast Asia became the city of Ningpo, where they could be

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<sup>338</sup> Okamoto Yoshitomo, *Jūroku seiki nishi okotsu shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Rokko Shobō, 1942), 397-398.

<sup>339</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Kingin bōeki shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppan to, 1976), 59. I doubt that such quantity would have been available since the early 1530s. Most likely, the amount has been grossly exaggerated but it does show that as early as the 1530s, there were consistent exports of silver from the Iwami silver mines to the Chinese coastal areas of Zhenjiang, Jiangsu and Fujian.

<sup>340</sup> Ōta Kōki, *Wakō* (Tokyo: Bungeisha, 2004), 261.

bought with silver and smuggled to Japan.<sup>341</sup> In 1543, Wang Zhi settled in Hirado to partner with local Japanese merchants, and extended his already large network under the rule of Matura Takanobu, who benefited greatly from the saltpetre-sulphur-silver trade Wang brought to his domain. By the mid-sixteenth century the domain, which was producing 63,200 *koku* of rice annually, was consolidated under the leadership of Matura Shigenobu Hōin (1568-1601).<sup>342</sup> The Matura welcomed trade, but Takanobu by 1558 had expelled the Jesuits, who requested the burning of Buddhist temples and images, to the great disappointment of the Jesuits and of Portuguese merchants who had to find alternative harbours in Hizen.<sup>343</sup> The territory west of Hizen between the 1560s and 1570s was engulfed in territorial conflicts in which minor lords such as the Arima and their collateral house the Ōmura sought the military help of the Portuguese against Ryūzōji Takanobu. This series of conflicts factionalized eastern and western Hizen maritime areas from the 1560s to the 1580s, as Takanobu directed his attention to the west of Hizen once he was able to stall Ōtomo Yoshishige, threatening the Matura, Gotō and Arima houses. Ryūzōji was able to put east Sonogi under his control. The Sonogi Peninsula was a territory where two main pirate clans of Hizen resided, the Fukahori and the Kozasa, who gravitated toward the spheres of influence of Ryūzōji and Ōmura respectively.

### 4.3 The Fukahori Pirate Clan

The Fukahori clan had arrived in Kyushu in the wake of the Mongol invasion as part of the forces under the Hōjō house, and were warrior overseers in charge of tax collection in their assigned territories. By 1261, the Fukahori clan had settled in the Sonogi area, at Tomachinoura,

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<sup>341</sup> Nakajima Yoshiaki, “1540 nendai no higashi Ajia kaiichi to sei kushikihiki,” in *Nanban komori tōjin*, ed. Nakajima Yoshiaki (Tokyo: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2013), 106.

<sup>342</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Matura tō shi to Hirado bōeki* (Tokyo: Kokusho Rikokai, 1989), 150-151.

<sup>343</sup> Jurgis Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyo,” 322-323.



and began ruling that territory in the Kamakura period by acting as deputies.<sup>344</sup> In 1281, Fukahori Yagorō Tokinaka, sent to defend Kyushu coastal areas, turned to piracy.<sup>345</sup> The Fukahori continued their coastal patrol duties as they did during the Mongol invasions at least until the Nabokuchō era (1334-1392), when Fukahori Nakaie possessed more than ten ships patrolling from bay to bay.<sup>346</sup> Around the same period, they became acquainted with other warrior families such as the Kawahara and Isahaya, and expanded their control into nearby territories and some islands close to Nagasaki.<sup>347</sup> In the early part of the sixteenth century, the Fukahori clan established various types of relations with the Isahaya and the Shimabara houses, described by Father Organtino, an Italian Jesuit, as two of the most powerful lords of Kyushu.<sup>348</sup> The real name of the Fukahori clan was Saigō; they took the name Fukahori from the land they controlled, as land administrators (*kokunin ryōshū*) for the Isahaya house. The first such administrator was Saigō Tokichi, whose son Sumihisa bore three sons; one of them became the well-known pirate Fukahori Sumimasa.<sup>349</sup> Sumimasa was born in 1537 and received a Buddhist education under the monk Unzen Ōshūin, a secretary of the Temple Manmyōji, as he was destined to take the tonsure.<sup>350</sup> It is possible that his hatred for Christians and their trade derived from his religious visions, as claimed by Taira Kōji, but it likely stemmed also from practical factors, one being the threat that the Portuguese posed to local and international trade.

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<sup>344</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Chūsei Kyushu shakai shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1986), 52. According to Toyama, there are two diverse scholarly factions that interpret the arrival of the Fukahori, as many others, in Kyushu and one is Seno Kyoichirō's theory of the Kamakura bakufu gokenin that in time assumed positions in Kyushu, while the second line of thinking, by Professor Kogo, follows the idea that, as in the Kanto areas, there were riots and revolts during the Kamakura bakufu with the Mongols' invasions and later through the Ashikaga bakufu, several houses moved into frontier territories such as Kyushu and Shikoku.

<sup>345</sup> Ōita Kyōiku Iinkai, *Kyushu jiranki hōbisenshi*, (Ōita: Aosesha, 1930), 7.

<sup>346</sup> Ōmura ke oboegaki: *Fukahori kafu*, doc. 54 (Edo Period), Manuscript Library, Kyushu University, Fukuoka.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-72.

<sup>348</sup> Organtino Gnechi Soldo, *Copia di due lettere scritte dal Padre Organtino Bresciano della Compagnia di Gesu dal Meaco del Giappone al Molto Rev. In Cristo Padre Claudio Acquaviva Preposito Generale* (Roma: Luigi Zanetti, 1587), 82.

<sup>349</sup> Taira Kōji, *Hizen no kuni Fukahori no rekishi* (Nagasaki: Nagasaki Shinbunsha Shuppan, 2014), 180. Sumimasa can be read also Sumikata, hence in some texts (See Elisonas), he is called Fukahori Sumikata.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

By 1565, the arrival of the Portuguese in the harbour of Fukuda, in Ōmura's territory, was encroaching on Sumimasa's maritime trade and control, as his fortress was also located in the Sonogi Peninsula. Originally, Fukahori's territory was in the northern part of Ōmura's fief, with its boundary to Hirado inland, but near Nagasaki, he had a stronghold at Takagi. Sumimasa, much like the Kozasa in west Sonogi, had a rent of three hundred *koku* by the time he sided with Ryūzōji Takanobu, lord of Hizen.<sup>351</sup> As the Ming maritime ban against private traders was lifted in 1567, several Chinese established their trading posts in Hirado, as well as in other parts of Kyushu such as Saga, Bungo and in the littoral trading towns. Kyushu daimyō eager to trade, such as the Ōtomo, fought to control maritime routes and territories adjacent to their own. By 1570, Ōtomo Yoshishige, by openly sponsoring the Jesuits and Christianity, had obtained top-notch weapons to expand into eastern Hizen, a territory controlled by Ryūzōji Takanobu. Consequently, Ōtomo Yoshishige also threatened the territories belonging to western Hizen daimyō such as Ōmura, Saigō, Arima and Matsura. In March of the same year, Isahaya, via his Saigō clan retainers, attacked Ōmura's retainer Nagasaki Sumikage. In July, Ōmura retaliated against Fukahori, who had been engaged by Ryūzōji Takanobu to fight, by using a Portuguese carrack with cannon on board.<sup>352</sup> These types of attacks and skirmishes seemed to have become constant events, as Fukahori intended to undermine the trade in Nagasaki by looting ships that entered its harbour. Frois described the attack that took place at Nagasaki in 1572 as follows:

... In this period Fucafori, brother of Ysafai, was against Nagasaki, so he tried his best to kill some of the Fathers [residing there] in order to satisfy his desire. Father Francisco Cabral was going to Bungo, and since there are no other passages, it was necessary in the uttermost silence to pass through the strait controlled by Fucafori, close two *legoas* to Nagasaki. In order to

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<sup>351</sup> Taira Kōji, *Hizen no kuni Fukahori no rekishi*, 186.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

pass safely the Christians got hold of seven vessels furbished with ammunitions, to face the enemies in case of an encounter...but Fucafori who did not sleep was waiting for this occasion to kill the Father Superior of Japan, so he arrived with his ships no less equipped with matchlocks and warriors [than ours] and attacked with fury those vessels killing five or six men and taking one vessel; the others could escape by the strength of their rowers...<sup>353</sup>

In this dramatic passage, Frois describes Fukahori Sumimasa's attack on the Portuguese ships entering Nagasaki, as he controlled the entrance of the toll barrier close to Nagasaki. Fukahori was also known to attack Chinese vessels in and out of Japanese waters as they, unlike Portuguese ones, were free to sail in any harbours in Japan. Frois' description of Fukahori as being an "ugly and ridiculous man" befitted the Jesuits' slanders that he was a "gentio," a Japanese pagan, and "enemy of the laws of God" who "had become a public pirate<sup>354</sup> and great corsair by looting not only the ships that belonged to his countrymen, but also ones that belonged to unfortunate Chinese merchants arriving in Japan to trade. Since these were foreigners privileged to move freely in the harbours of Japan to do their business, he with dishonesty and greediness, waited for them on the high seas to kill and loot their belongings by taking their ships."<sup>355</sup> The aggressive role played by Fukahori Sumimasa—in comparison to the Kozasa, for example—was not only due to his character as alluded to by the Jesuits. He did constitute a hindrance for the harbour of Nagasaki and to foreign merchants. In Sonogi, as Fukahori threatened the Portuguese, they found an ally in Ōmura Sumitada, who had embraced Christianity, and according to Elisonas, had capitalized on it by exchanging silver for weapons so that he could elevate his status from petty baron to daimyō as he gained victories against Ryūzōji

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<sup>353</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, ed. José Wicki, vol. II (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1981), 375.

<sup>354</sup> "Public pirate" is the literary translation from the Portuguese of *Pirata publico*; his counterpart was a privateer or a corsair, hired to deal on behalf of others.

<sup>355</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol. II, 392.

Takanobu.<sup>356</sup> In 1580, a truce negotiated by Oda Nobunaga and Konoe Sakihisa was reached between the forces of Ōtomo Yoshishige and the Shimazu, and the Mōri retreated from northern Kyushu. The Ōmura, in order to avoid a conflict with Ryūzōji Takanobu, had donated Nagasaki and Mogi Harbours to the Jesuits in 1570, and ten years later submitted to Takanobu.<sup>357</sup>

The climax of the rivalry between Ryūzōji and Ōmura occurred in 1584, when Ryūzōji, allied with the Shimazu of Satsuma, fought against the Arima lords, and Takanobu's forced allies, the Ōmura and Matura, contributed with a force of 25,000 warriors, but arrived as Takanobu had already capitulated.<sup>358</sup> In the meantime, Fukahori Sumimasa took control of Fukuda Harbour away from the Fukuda house before trying to take control of Nagasaki as well. Then, not satisfied, he also attacked his overlord Ryūzōji Takanobu. The death of Takanobu left ample space to maneuver for the Shimazu, who were eager to conquer all of Kyushu.

The turning point of this conflict occurred in 1586 with the entrance on the scene of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, whose participation in quelling the conflict with the Shimazu was requested by Ōtomo Yoshishige. Hideyoshi used his influence to reshape the balance of power in Kyushu by leading a contingent of 150,000 men to Hakata and requesting the Wada, Arima, Matura and other houses to host these men in their territories. He was helped by one of Fukahori's retainers with knowledge of shipping to cross the strait from Honshu to Kyushu in foul weather. Hideyoshi also held a meeting at Hakozaki Shrine at which Fukahori Sumimasa was also present.<sup>359</sup> In the summer of 1586, before his famous anti-piracy edit of 1587 and after his conquest of Kyushu, Hideyoshi issued a document addressed to two of his retainers in Higo

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<sup>356</sup>Jurgis Elisonas, "Christianity and the Daimyo," 329.

<sup>357</sup> George Elison, *Deus Destroyed; The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 93-98.

<sup>358</sup> Seno Seiichirō, *Nagasaki ken no rekishi* (Nagasaki: Yamagawa Shuppansha, 1975), 118-119. Elisonas estimates the participation in the conflict from 25,000 to 50,000 men.

<sup>359</sup> Taira Kōji, *Hizen no kuni Fukahori no rekishi*, 209.

Province, Asano Danjō Nagayoshi and Toda Minbu Katsutaka, ordering them to go to the provinces of Chikuzen, Chikugo, and Hizen (an area that covers from modern Hakata to Hirado) to build residences (for troops) except in areas where they could use still-standing fortresses, and to “eliminate pirates and the like” in those provinces. The message continues: “In Hizen, inside Korai-gun look into the matter regarding Fukahori, who resides on the coastal area, but not limited [to him] and also [eliminate] the Chinese and Portuguese merchant ships coming to trade.”<sup>360</sup> This document shows Hideyoshi’s concern in wanting to control the shores of Kyushu in matters of piracy and trade. However, Fujita Tamotsu claims this message was issued having in mind the politics of “castle demolition” (*shirōwari*) to eliminate the power bases of previous fief holders and to control coastal trade in those fiefs.<sup>361</sup> Fukahori, a powerful pirate, was a threat to Hideyoshi’s economic and military control of major Kyushu harbours, such as Nagasaki.<sup>362</sup>

In reality, it is rather difficult to assess how this castle demolition order translated on a practical level in terms not only of territory but of the negotiation for power in various places. In effect, several fortresses at toll barriers were not eliminated, and neither were the pirates eliminated from those areas. In 1588, Toyotomi Hideyoshi issued his anti-piracy edict, in which he first prohibited piracy in Iyo, Itsukushima, and Bingo Provinces; secondly, ordered all seafaring people to swear an oath not to engage in piracy; and third, decreed that all people engaging in piracy were punishable, and that if the daimyō protected these pirates, they would have their domains confiscated. As the main target was to eliminate pirates not already under his command, his intent was to facilitate international trade<sup>363</sup> without the obstacle of having to pay

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<sup>360</sup> Matsuo M. and Nabeshima N., *Fukahori monjo: Sagaken shiryōshūhen*, vol. 4, doc. 381, (Saga: Sagaken Hakubutsukan, 1959), 238.

<sup>361</sup> Fujita Tamotsu, “Kaizoku kinshirei no seiritsu kaho” in *Shohokukii no seiji kozo*, ed. Miki Seichirō (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2000), 287.

<sup>362</sup> Fukahori’s status as “corsair” changed only during and after the Korean campaigns of Hideyoshi (1592-1598), when he was forced to join the naval forces of Nabeshima Naoshige.

<sup>363</sup> Fujiki Hisashi, *Toyotomi heiwarei to sengoku shakai* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1985), 225–226.

toll fees, hence the elimination of pirate gangs that controlled such regions, in particular some of the Murakami pirates' affiliated houses.<sup>364</sup> For these reasons, as Hideyoshi conquered Shikoku in 1585 and Kyushu a year later, he tried to eliminate squabbles among local power holders reliant on maritime warfare and piracy by rendering their subordinates responsible for the presence of pirates in their domains. Therefore, pirates, in order to survive, had to be listed as retainers of daimyō or find other alternatives in the maritime merchant world.<sup>365</sup> Even though these steps were not enough to substantially curb powerful pirate clans like the Murakami of the Seto Inland Sea, they did deter pirates from acting on their own, as they were now retainers and could be punishable by law.

Therefore, through a sweeping and sudden change of titles, pirates who had backed Hideyoshi's wars of conquest remained in their posts and strongholds, as did the Murakami clans, now acting as retainers for the Kobayakawa and Mōri houses.<sup>366</sup> In fact, by 1582, as the Murakami pledged their alliance to the Mōri (and were thus considered retainers), they became administrators of the toll barrier of Shimonoseki, and the fees exacted now belonged to the Mōri, but were taken by the Murakami as "administrators" of the territory.<sup>367</sup> This was not the case for Fukahori Sumimasa.

In a twist of irony, Fukahori's piratical power was not reduced by Hideyoshi's anti-piracy edict but by the main force that had backed Hideyoshi's military endeavours, namely the merchants of Sakai, whose business was disrupted by piracy and maritime barriers. With his

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<sup>364</sup> Peter Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 248.

<sup>365</sup> In this chapter, I will only relate examples of the latter types of merchant-pirates, as it was under Hideyoshi and, chronologically, by 1588, that the former became part of the local daimyō military organizations in certain areas. Examples of the former types will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>366</sup> Peter Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 242.

<sup>367</sup> Taira Kōji, *Hizen no kuni Fukahori no rekishi*, 237.

edict, Hideyoshi aimed to eliminate the levies previously taken by pirate clans at their controlled toll barriers, and by consequence, ended up enriching the financiers backing his own power.

Proof of the rivalry between local pirates like Fukahori and Hideyoshi's financiers lies in the record called *Naoshige kō fukōho*, (the Genealogical Record of Lord Naoshige), where it is written that Fukahori Sumimasa "in the land of Ōmura did not bring peace, when merchant ships entered Nagasaki and did not make any offerings, they could not easily pass in the waters of Fukahori, naturally the merchants from Kyoto, Osaka, Sakai, Hakata and Shimonoseki all of them made their offers until this fact came to be known to the magistrate of Sakai, Konishi Ryūsa, who stated that Fukahori was a wicked man, and reported the facts to Kanpaku dono."<sup>368</sup> Konishi Ryūsa was not only the magistrate of Sakai but also a prominent member of the Naya (warehouse association) of Sakai and Kyoto financiers who backed Toyotomi Hideyoshi's military and political power, besides being also a prominent Christian.<sup>369</sup> They were the ones who supplied matchlocks and gunpowder, and allowed the silver and gold currency to circulate among Japanese provinces. Taking the control of toll barriers from Sakai along the Seto Inland Sea to Kyushu and beyond away from pirate clans meant that their capital could be reinvested in other more financially productive (as well as status-elevating) enterprises.

Furthermore, the same record reports that Fukahori Sumimasa had his land confiscated and was instead given land with a rent of one thousand *koku* in Chikuzen. With his power base taken away, Fukahori Sumimasa's piratical strength was removed. He complained that the rent

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<sup>368</sup> Taira Kōji, *Hizen no kuni Fukahori no rekishi*, 215. See also Fujiki Hisashi, *Toyotomi to heiwa rei to sengoku shakai* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1985), 227.

<sup>369</sup> Torizō Ryōji, *Konishi Yukinaga massazu sareta kirishitan daimyō no jizō* (Tokyo: Yagi Publisher, 2010), 7. Maria Grazia Petrucci, "In the Name of the Father: a Reappraisal of Konishi Yukinaga and His Father Ryūsa" (UBC MA Thesis, 2005), 38. Accessed in July 2016 at <https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0092484>

received was insufficient, and did receive some costly but rather inconsequential gifts from Hideyoshi.<sup>370</sup>

The true element that would bond Sumimasa and many other pirates like him as retainers of Hideyoshi's military forces under Nabeshima Naoshige in the second contingent following Konishi Yukinaga would be their participation in the Korean wars. Now, as a retainer of Nabeshima Naoshige, Fukahori Sumimasa formed an alliance through matrimonial ties between the families of his lord, and as such, the Fukahori family survived not only the Korean wars but also the turmoil of the Edo period. Fukahori Sumimasa himself died at the venerable age of eighty-three. His participation in the Korean wars allowed his descendants to rise to the status of retainers, and his son's family in particular would assume important posts in the Tokugawa administrative domains. It was indeed the Korean wars that kept pirates, corsairs and the like occupied with their skills at the time of war, and then in the war economies that sustained those troops for the following seven years.

The Korean wars did indeed create a situation where pirates who had been forced to become corsairs due to Hideyoshi's anti-piracy edicts were now subjected to the military command of Kyushu daimyō under Hideyoshi's orders. But not all of these corsairs became directly involved in the Korean conflicts. As initially mentioned, due to the conflicts between Chinese merchant-pirates and their network and the Portuguese captains, the Jesuits and their merchants, Hizen's pirates became factionalized between the two. As the Fukahori gravitated toward the sphere of the Matsura and Ryūzōji Takanobu, hence indirectly favouring the Chinese merchant-pirates as opposed to the Portuguese traders and the Jesuits, another Hizen pirate clan had taken the opposite side.

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<sup>370</sup>Taira Kōji, *Hizen no kuni Fukahori no rekishi*, 228.



#### 4.4 The Kozasa Clan

In the fourteenth century, the Kozasa, whose line derives from the Kozasa-Sasaki lineage in Ōmi Province in central Japan, came to be part of the federation of Matsura domains and controlled the northern part of Hirado coastal area, such as west Sonogi at Taira no ura and Imasato no ura (now in Hirado city), extending their control to the harbour towns of Nanaetsugamma and Naka no ura (Nagasaki Prefecture) as estate managers (*ryōshū*). The Blaeus Dutch map of 1655 shows Nanaetsugamma on the coastal area opposite the Islands of Gotō with its northern boundary in Hirado's proper territories. Kozasa's location and building styles give a hint not only of their maritime activities but also reflect their acquired status belonging to the Matsura pirate confederation and later as corsairs for the Ōmura.

Kozasa's main fortresses, as mentioned, were located on the peninsula of Sonogi at Taira no ura and Nanaetsugamma. Taira no ura consisted of separate castles divided by the Taira River. Facing the Taira no ura fortresses are several small islands of which one group forms a protective arc in front of Taira no ura: these islands are Oshima, Kakinourashima, Zakitojima and Matsushima, with three smaller islands stretching all the way to the Gotō archipelago, namely Otachishima, Eshima and Hirashima. Said islands came to be controlled by the Kozasa clan between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. The ruins of Taira no ura Fortress reveal that it was protected by earthen walls, mostly made of hardened tuff bricks, a skill demonstrated most often in the defensive walls against the Mongol invasions. Furthermore, the fortress had moats whose shape resembled the style of the Korean fortresses of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>371</sup> However, Kozasa's fortress also presented characteristics of the new types of castles whose base and walls were made of huge rocks. The walls of rock up to five metres tall were an

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<sup>371</sup> Coincidentally, perhaps, the characters for Nanaetsugamma are (七ヶ釜), including the number 7 (七) and the initial character of the town of Pusan (釜山) in Korea.

improvement on building methods adopted by Kozasa Sumitoshi, who in 1563 ordered the stone and masonry walls at Taira no ura Fortress. It has been estimated that the fortress, which originally had a defensive purpose, also became a centre for the display of power acquired by the Kozasa precisely in that period.<sup>372</sup>

The Taira no ura Fortress shows a strong Korean influence in its construction as a legacy of Kozasa's trade that can be traced in its architectural style. Indeed, in the early fifteenth century, the Kozasa clan's piratical existence was also confirmed by Korean documentation as they began to trade with China and Korea. Taira no ura is also mentioned in the *Haedong chegukki*, as an envoy from there called Osushige Minamoto Ason Danjo Shoyahiro arrived in Korea and promised to send one or two shipbuilders.<sup>373</sup> In 1429, the Korean envoy Park Sosaeng among the pirate territories controlled by the various lords of the Islands (later in the Matura confederation) wrote that there were pirates of Iki, Matura, Shisa, Sashi, Yobuko and Taira dono.<sup>374</sup> By 1474, the Kozasa clan's major exponent was Kozasa Sadanobu, who married a daughter of Matura Yoroshi and established his territory in Taira no ura, in west Sonogi Peninsula. Earlier in 1467, Sadanobu had established his fortress at Nanaetsugamma on the Terashima Strait.<sup>375</sup> In that period, the Arima clan, a cadet branch of the Ōmura clan, rebelled against their lords Ōmura Suminao and Sumiaki, who took refuge in Taira no ura. There, Sadanobu, who at the time was already leading a group of pirates, granted them asylum and fought for their cause, establishing political connections with the Ōmura. According to Toyama

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<sup>372</sup> Kozasa Manabu, "Kozasa suigun no shiro to saikai no shiro," *Kairō*, vol. 11 (2013): 76-77.

<sup>373</sup> Tanaka Takeo ed., *Haedong chegukki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 184.

<sup>374</sup> *Chosŏn wanjŏ sillok*, vol. 46, Sejong 11 (Kyonggi-do: Kuksa Pyonchan wiwon hoe, 1993), 14a.

Kobata Atsushi, *Chusei nisshi tsūkō bōeki shi no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Shuppan, 1942), 66-68. The Kozasa leader was called Taira dono from the name of his fortress location.

<sup>375</sup> Kozasa Manabu, "Kozasa suigun no shiro to saikai no shiro," 72.

Mikio, the Ōmura invaded Kozasa's territory and took it.<sup>376</sup> However, that seems implausible given the downturn experienced by the Ōmura clan. But the result was that the Kozasa as a clan worked for the Ōmura as corsairs.

In the early sixteenth century, Kozasa fortresses were part of a defensive line of fortifications lining the coastal area between Nagasaki and Hirado, built in the style of the fortresses of the corsairs of the Seto Inland Sea, open on three sides toward the sea, such as Sakura Castle and Mihara Castle, constructed in the 1560s by the Yamana clan and Mōri clan respectively.<sup>377</sup> Nishigaya Yasuhiro claims that this style was used after 1592, when Hideyoshi ordered the construction of the huge complex fortress of Nagoya (Nagoya jō) in today's Karatsu, Kyushu.<sup>378</sup> These walls, built with relatively big stones, attested to the fact that the Kozasa may have indeed arrived from Ōmi Province. Ōmi was the homeland of the Ano stonemasons group (穴太石工衆), builders of the main castles of the Ōda-Toyotomi period, such as Azuchi, Jyūrakutei and Fushimi Castles.<sup>379</sup> Hence, as the Kozasa as a clan acquired status as pirates and corsairs, their power was such that they were able to call in stonemasons and labourers from other provinces. Valignano mentioned that buildings like churches were often built by volunteer or corvee-like serfs who were supplied by the local lord. However, we can suppose that the islands where these fortresses were built did not host a large enough number of inhabitants to gather sufficient labour for monumental buildings. Furthermore, Farris Wayne has estimated that between 1460 and 1550, Japan suffered a series of famines. While he took into consideration mainly the Kanto regions, southern Japan was also engulfed in wars of conquest that put the

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<sup>376</sup> Toyama Mikio, "Sengoku daimyō to shite no Ōmura Sumitada," in *Kirishitan daimyō Ōmura Sumitada no nazo* (Tokyo: Nishi Nihon shimbunsha, 1989), 56.

<sup>377</sup> Nishigaya Yasuhiro, "Nihon no shiro ishigaki no rekishi to Kita Kyushu no sengoku shohokoki no shiro ishigaki," *Kairō*, 11 (2013): 44.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.* 40-43. The first mention of the Ano stonemasons appeared in 1576 in the records of the Sanada family and in 1577 in the diary of Yoshida Kanemi.

yearly harvest at risk, resulting in famines.<sup>380</sup> It is true that islanders could exact their livelihood from sea resources and beaches, however, as Arne Kalland explains, not everyone living in seaside villages or towns had access to such resources.<sup>381</sup> He further explains that the allocation of corvee labour depended on the *yukudaka*, a duty amount allotted to fishing villages; *kakodaka*, number of *kako* or sailors; and *funadaka*, or the number of boats owned and used in the village.<sup>382</sup> Due to the lack of extant documentation on the Kozasa Islands in the period of civil war, we can only imagine that skilled labour had to be “imported” and hosted locally for food and fees, while the Kozasa extracted resources such as sea products, timber and other commodities from the local islanders, as did pirates in other domains. In addition to importing skilled labour, the Kozasa established patron-like “connections” with daimyō, religious and occupation-based associations.<sup>383</sup> Kozasa’s wealth, besides the exploitation of tolls and foreign commerce, derived also from their association with the Portuguese and Jesuits that began by the middle of the sixteenth century with the conflict between the lords of Arima and Ōmura.

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<sup>380</sup> William Farris Wayne, *Japan's Medieval Population* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 184.

<sup>381</sup> Arne Kalland, *Fishing Villages in Tokugawa Japan* (Richmond Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995), 152.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>383</sup> Peter Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea*, 33. Peter Shapinsky relates that the Murakami of the Seto Inland Sea extracted resources and taxable levies on products from villages they were controlling economically. The situation in the Seto Inland Sea was not different from the area controlled by the Kozasa clans as, much like the Murakami clans, they may have prospered by taking advantage of their harvested resources, by giving and receiving rights on goods produced locally.



**Figure 4-1. Detail of tuff bricks of the Kozasa Fortress, influenced by Korean architectural techniques**

The conflicts in Hizen between the Arima, whose lord was the Ryūzōji clan, and the Ōmura houses that began in the 1540s and concluded in the 1570s, saw the Ōmura, who were requesting Portuguese merchants' trade in ammunitions, favoured by the participation of Jesuit missionaries. The Portuguese, who had traded at first with Arima, began to send their Jesuit missionaries to convert in the domain of Ōmura Sumitada, who accepted in order to obtain weapons. The Portuguese in Hizen negotiated with both, trying to benefit from the Arima and Ōmura houses alike.

The leader of the Arima house from 1521 to circa 1546 was Arima Haruzumi (also known as Sadazumi), whose second son was adopted by the Ōmura house and was named Ōmura Sumitada. Toyama Mikio states that from 1552 to circa 1570, the Kozasa controlled a toll barrier at Sonogi as retainers for the Arima.<sup>384</sup> However, as the Kozasa became allied to the

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<sup>384</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Hizen Arima ichizoku*, 56.

Ōmura, it is very possible that they switched their alliances according to their best interests in order to remain as independent as they seemed to be, as pirates and eventually as corsairs. In fact, not all the branches of the Kozasa clan were corsairs for the Ōmura. Between 1558 and 1570, Kozasa Mitsunobu and his son Tokinobu were hired by the shogunate as coastal patrol (*keigō*) to “protect” the entrance to the Seto Inland Sea and given a fortress at Okinota, and for that service they both received titles as retainers, respectively as Ōmi no kami and Bicchū no kami.<sup>385</sup> In this way, they were legally exercising their right to maritime violence with the aim of controlling the area under their protection with the aid of their own retainers, namely the Terakubo, Ogawa, Kaminoura and Tagawa clans. The Kozasa in the Terashima Strait may also have exercised the same rights for themselves, and at times on behalf of the Ōmura and Arima families.

Aside from the fact that the Arima and Ōmura were connected by family ties, there were also conflicts for control of territories, trade and manpower. The coastal area from Sasebo to Hirado was mostly under the control of the Arima house, who led their army and the ones of their close allies and their fortresses. For example, the fortress of Shimabara had a harbour that could contain fifty ships at once and a fleet of five thousand men.<sup>386</sup> Contiguous gulfs and bays were directly controlled by minor leaders—often pirates—who benefited from military and matrimonial alliances with longstanding warrior houses, such as the Arima clan who had acquired the status of military deputies (*shugo*).<sup>387</sup> However, these minor clans had independent economic and military capabilities although they sought convenient alliances with higher-status warriors, as did the Kozasa in Taira no ura.

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<sup>385</sup> Kozasa Manabu, “Kozasa suigun no shiro to saikai no shiro,” 73.

<sup>386</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Hizen Arima ichizoku*, 149.

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-49.

The year 1552 was significant as a turning point for the Kozasa. This was the year in which Arima Haruzumi was succeeded by his son Yoshisada, and a period in which the Portuguese were welcomed in Hirado, following the path opened by Chinese traders and pirates. The expansion of these two economic forces along the coastal area had repercussions. One of them was the sprouting up of mercantile settlements in temporary harbours that could be reached by navigating along the coastline. One such harbour was Sannengaura, a town with only seven houses whose name literally means “Three Years Bay,” where Chinese sailors would hide so that they could reside in Japan. After giving the matter some thought, local authorities gave them permission to remain only for three years.<sup>388</sup> Sannengaura was located on the Kozasa-controlled shoreline, which denotes their contact with Chinese traders. Over time, the small town became permanent. In 1562, the opening of Yokoseura Harbour to the Portuguese brought troubles between Hirado, the Gotō Islands and Kozasa’s shoreline. According to Luis Frois, that year a “somber event” occurred in Hirado. During negotiations between a Japanese merchant and a Portuguese vendor over a piece of cotton cloth worth two to three *tangas*,<sup>389</sup> the friendly and well-respected Capitan Mayor Fernan de Souza decided to intervene to mediate the negotiation, but he and thirteen other Portuguese were killed by what Frois termed “cruel Japanese.” This event led to the need to seek a safer harbour. Frois relates the participation of Luis de Almeida in negotiating the opening of the new harbour of Yokoseura.<sup>390</sup> Juan (Giovanni) Fernandez wrote that Luis (de Almeida) and brother Melchior negotiated with “Baradono” (Shimabaradono) “...who is the brother of the yacata king of Arima, Arimadono, who sent his brother and two other men with one letter and five pieces of silk to thank him....He will build a church in his lands and the house for the Company (of Jesus) in a certain harbour, where often arrive ships

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<sup>388</sup> Fujino Tamotsu, *Ōmura gōzonki*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Kokusho Rikyosha, 1982), 392.

<sup>389</sup> *Tangas* were copper coins used in Goa; one *tangas* corresponded to two *pardos*, a subdivision of the *real*.

<sup>390</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, ed. José Wicki, vol.I (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisbon, 1976), 274.

from China and Japanese with their goods to be traded...”.<sup>391</sup> According to Okamoto Yoshitomo, Ayres Sanchez had explored Yokoseura before suggesting that site as a possible harbour for the Jesuits to Luis de Almeida, who quickly negotiated to secure it by 1561, so that in 1562 the Portuguese were allowed to enter it.

However, this did not happen right away. Portuguese ships continued to anchor at Hirado until 1564.<sup>392</sup> Once the Portuguese reached Yokoseura in 1565, they were attacked by the Matsura of Hirado, who had hired Gotō pirates, as they still wanted the wealth brought into their domains by Portuguese traders, so at least until 1565 the Portuguese landed in both harbours, Hirado first and Yokoseura as the final destination on their long trip.<sup>393</sup> It is my assertion that by being hostile to Ōmura’s domain, the Matsura lost the opportunity to gain a fruitful alliance, or even a retainer, since the Ōmura were militarily weak and needed Portuguese trade to increase their domain income and finance their wars. Such an opportunity was instead taken by Ryūzōji Takanobu fifteen years later.<sup>394</sup> Furthermore, the opening of Yokoseura Harbour hindered the interests of the merchants of Bungo domain, ruled by Ōtomo Yoshiaki, who had been benefiting from the Portuguese trade since 1545, having reached an agreement to exchange weapons for three thousand ducats annually, and who had a longstanding relationship with the Jesuits hosted in his own territory.<sup>395</sup> In what was perceived as an anti-Christian attack, merchants of Bungo, to hinder Portuguese commerce in other harbours, tried to cause a fracas in the newly-opened harbour by attacking Portuguese ships entering the harbour of Yokoseura. It must not be

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<sup>391</sup> Juan (Giovanni) Fernandez, *Cartas, Yocoseura* (17 April 1563), transcription, Naganuma Bunko II, Kyushu University, Fukuoka.

<sup>392</sup> Okamoto Yoshitomo, *Jūroku seiki nicho ō kōtsū shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Rokuko Shobō, 1942), 397.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, 398-400.

<sup>394</sup> George Elison, *Dues Destroyed; The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*, 416. Elison commented on the military weakness of the Ōmura by stressing how the Portuguese indeed helped Sumitada in gaining the status of a daimyō, but on the other hand, how such military weakness may have been an important factor if the Matsura saw an opportunity in such an alliance.

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, 417.



forgotten that wars of territorial expansion between clans were still ongoing and, as the Portuguese would help one or the other of the factions militarily, they caused further trouble. In a letter to Rome written in Nagasaki in March 1589 referring to the conflicts that took place between the Arima and Ōmura clans in 1564-1565, Organtino Gnechi Soldo stated:

In these kingdoms of Ximo even the Superior is beginning to be [perceived as] an enemy by these [people] thinking that with temporal power and the power of weapons [he] could destroy them... and two to three times he delved in that enterprise...in the past years in this [part of] Ximo the lord of Higen [Hizen = Ryūzōji Takanobu] wanted to made Arima his vassal, but Arimadono could not stand the game of the lord of Higen and decided instead to rebel against him. Arima requested the military support of the king of Satsuma against the lord of Higen, a war began...and he received the love of God and the help of the artillery that we sent from our own house to Arimadono.<sup>396</sup>

With these words, Organtino summarized the military help in the form of weaponry that the Jesuits were giving to the Kyushu lords who would accept Christianity and their conversions on their own territories. We might assume that the passage of these weapons from Portuguese ships to the retainers of Arimadono occurred through maritime transportation; however, that may have not been the case. In 1564 and 1565, Ōmura Sumitada offered the Portuguese ship whose captain was Don Juan Pereira permission to enter Fukuda's harbour in a territory controlled by his retainer Fukuda Kanetsugu. Toyama Mikio reports that by 1585 Fukuda Kanetsugu became the harbour deputy of Fukuda and a Christian. But the control of this harbour by 1565 must have come under Kanetsugu. At that same time, the Kozasa came to be in control of the maritime barrier in the Terashima Strait so that merchandise from Hirado could reach Ōmura's territory

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<sup>396</sup> Organtino Gnechi Soldo, *Lettera da Nagasaki*, (10th March, 1589). Jap-Sin., vol.11, folio 69, photo, Sophia University Kirishitan Bunko, Tokyo.

without hindrance. Once the harbours of Fukuda and later Yokoseura were under the control of the Ōmura house, the Kozasa clan established a marriage alliance between Kozasa Danjo Sumisada and a woman of Nagasaki Iesumi's house who was a retainer of Ōmura Sumitada.<sup>397</sup> By 1563, Kozasa Sumiyoshi became an ally of Ōmura Sumitada, while Kozasa Sumitoshi became an ally of Ōmura Sumisada.<sup>398</sup> This alliance brought wealth as well as expanded control of other villages of the Kozasa clan-controlled coastline. In addition, by 1564, one branch of the Kozasa moved closer to Nagasaki,<sup>399</sup> to a harbour called Naka no ura (Nakaura), two *li* distant from Nanaetsugamma, and five *li* from Taira no ura.<sup>400</sup>

In this manner, the Kozasa moved closer to Nagasaki and their fate became intertwined with the fate of the Ōmura house. In 1563, the conflict between Arima and Ryuzoji Takanobu (the Lord of Hizen) saw the Shimabara, Saigyō and Matura houses siding as allies and fighting by using their maritime forces as corsairs. But the 1565 attack at Yokoseura was not an isolated one. The Portuguese also came under attack in the harbour of Fukuda, where there was a galeotta led by Dom Diogo de Menezes, a captain of Malacca, as well as a junk belonging to Chinese traders. The Japanese attacked the Portuguese in the harbour with muskets made in Sakai, shot Captain Pereira in the head as they boarded the galeotta, and looted the ship of his weapons, killing eighty people and injuring another hundred and twenty.<sup>401</sup> The conflicts in Ōmura Sumitada's territory sprang from local rivalries for territorial expansion financed by trade. Even the Ōmura initially had hired the pirates of Hirado, controlled by the Matura, to stop the Portuguese from aiding their enemies. The Kozasa became allies with the Ōmura once the

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<sup>397</sup> Itō kazumi, "Chusei Kozasa shi to suigun no jō to jōka kitō," *Kairō*, 11 (2013): 57.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-58.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>400</sup> One *li* was approximately 3,927 km almost 4 km; hence eight kilometers from Nanaetsugamma and twenty kilometers from Nakanoura (see *Monumenta Historica Japoniae*, p. 1212 for *legoa Japonica*). Hitomi Tonomura as previously noted reported one *li* (or *ri*) at 3,93 km.

<sup>401</sup> Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol. II, 73.

Portuguese interceded for a truce with the Arima clan. As late as 1566, Frois related their ongoing conflicts and alliances as follows:

...that in the land where we enter, there is war and everything gets destroyed ...like the city of Miyako, Yamaguchi and Hakata, also the kingdom of Arima was almost destroyed before we entered in it. And being this island the most peaceful that there is in Japan, there were some corsairs of Hirado that assaulted the ones of the Islands of Gotō, killing and injuring several people, robbing them and taking as many as twenty-seven people as captives. Those in Gotō, having seen the things that were done, asked their lord to prepare a fleet formed by corsairs and went to a place in Hirado to call them.<sup>402</sup>

The Ōmura house rewarded the Kozasa with a fief in Nakaura, but it is not clear if the Kozasa already controlled that coastal area and were granted that land afterward or if they came to have it after their success in battle. Between 1570 and 1573, the Kozasa were also present in the Islands of Gotō, as a certain Kozasa Sumitō, a younger brother of Sumikatsu, who was granted a fief in Nakaura, was also given a fief in the Gotō archipelago.<sup>403</sup> In the *Gōzonki*, (the Record of Ōmura Domain Villages), written in the Edo period, it is recorded that Kozasa Mino no kami Sumikore and Kozasa Danjo (Sumitoshi) relocated to Nakaura, as they had a fief there previous to 1570; after that date, Nakaura was ruled by Kozasa Gobei (Sumikatsu).<sup>404</sup> The *Gōzonki* reports that only by the 1570s were the Kozasa clan given rights by the Ōmura house to their controlled fiefs.<sup>405</sup> But given that the *Gōzonki* was written in the Edo period, it aimed at showing a certain uniformity in the control of Ōmura's territory, while it is known that the Kozasa effectively retained a certain degree of freedom of action. It is not possible to establish a

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<sup>402</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, vol. II, 138.

<sup>403</sup> Itō Kazumi, "Chusei Kozasa shi to suigun no jō to jōka kitō," 59.

<sup>404</sup> Fujino Tamotsu, *Ōmura gōzonki*, vol. 5, 374.

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*, 392.

clear hierarchical status for the Kozasa clan under the Ōmura house previous to the 1570s from the available documentation. Toyama Mikio considers the Kozasa retainers of the Ōmura, but he was only able to establish a link via the various groups they participated in such as *yoriai* (groups based on blood relations or familial ties) and *dōshin shū*, groups of like-minded people getting together to perform certain functions.<sup>406</sup> But similarly to the corsairs of the Ōtomo, the exchange of silver for weaponry and the Chinatown in their territory brought more currency exchanges either in copper or silver that tied the Kozasa to land revenues, as this occurred in Ōtomo's territory, making them economically more dependent on their patrons. It is known that the Kozasa effectively became part of the Ōmura military hierarchy as retainers only in the 1590s, during the Korean wars (1592-1598), and even in that event, they contributed to the wars by providing ships but no manpower.

By 1570, when Nagasaki was handed to the Jesuits by Ōmura Sumitada, there was a string of coastal villages and fortresses interconnected by trade creating a pathway for goods, people and ideas from Hirado to Nagasaki. In Kozasa's territory between the villages of Taira, Nanaetsugamma and Setō was a road called the Blacksmith Path (Tetsujidō 鍛冶道)—it is possible that it existed before 1565 but is not a coincidence, given that during the subsequent Edo period a few families of blacksmiths continued to live in Nanaetsugamma, still producing muskets and being charged taxes.<sup>407</sup> Through the Blacksmith Path passed weapons and ammunition, activities and transactions made easier with silver payments, as well as technical know-how and religious ideas.

The Kozasa became Christians to take advantage of Portuguese trade and technology, but not without difficulty. Attacks by the Fukahori clan of Takagi-gun on the blacksmiths did

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<sup>406</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Chūsei Kyūshū shakai shi no kenkyū*, 186.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, 458. In the Nanaetsugamma area, there continued to be records of taxes taken from blacksmiths from the Edo period up to circa 1860.

occur in the 1580s as the latter looted ships and weapons from Kozasa's coastal territory. Fukahori's attacks were not directly related to his will to expand territorially or to dispossess the Kozasa, as much as they served to control the maritime areas close to Portuguese Nagasaki with the intent of disrupting trade there. In fact, if we take into consideration Kozasa's wealth, aside from their fortresses, it did not amount to a great sum in terms of rent. Based on the *Gozōnki*, Itō Kazumi has calculated that they received from all their fiefs rent corresponding to three hundred and forty *koku* of rice. Considering that in order to be a *hatamoto*, the lowest samurai rank, in the Edo period one needed a rent of ten thousand *koku* per year, the difference is significant. Less rent also meant a smaller number of retainers or sailors. To have an idea of the maritime strength of the Kozasa, it is possible to compare them with the Shirai clan, who arose as corsairs for the Takeda of Aki, Ōuchi and later Mōri houses between 1426 and 1600.

In 1526, under the Ōuchi house, Shirai Fusatane and his two sons were given fiefs in Suo Province for three hundred *koku* and in Aki Province for three hundred *kanme*; furthermore they controlled the Ninpo Island toll fee barrier facing today's Hiroshima Bay.<sup>408</sup> In 1541, the Shirai fought in Iyo against their ex Kōno allies<sup>409</sup> and by 1555, they participated in the battle of Itsukushima, leading a fleet of five hundred ships from Ōshima Island on behalf of the Mōri against Sue Harukata.<sup>410</sup> Undoubtedly, three hundred *koku* seemed to be the average remuneration for smaller corsair clans by the middle of the sixteenth century, and while it is not possible to estimate the number of vessels owned by the Kozasa clan, we can argue that they were a force to be reckoned with. Even in the Edo period, when only one ship per domain was

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<sup>408</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, *Buke monjo no kenkyū to mokuroku (ue)*, doc. 7, (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Toshokan, 1988), 192. One *koku* was a unity of measure for rice production in a certain land and corresponded to 180 litres. One *kanme* was a unity of measure for weights and money and corresponded to 3.75 kilograms.

<sup>409</sup> Kageura Tsutomu, *Kōno shi no kenkyū* (Matsuyama: Seki Kabugaisha, 2007), 207-208. It is also reported in the *Hagi han batsuetsuroku*, a six volumes Document Collection of Mōri Aki domain, under *Shirai monjo*.

<sup>410</sup> *Bukebandaiki Mishima kaizoku ke*, 2, collection of Fujii Satoyoshi (Yamaguchi: Yamaguchi Manuscript Library, 1923), no page number.

allowed, in Nanaetsugamma there were seventy-two ships; among those were two with eight sails, two with seven sails, one with six sails and four with five sails. These must have been rather large ships, and would pay an anchorage fee of one hundred pieces of silver and two hundred and thirty *mon*.<sup>411</sup> By the Tokugawa period, starting in 1627, silver was extracted on the Island of Eshima, with a production of thirty kilos of gold and 260 kilos of silver annually. Permission to extract the precious minerals was given to the Chaya and Okamura houses, both tied financially to the Tokugawa, for a period of five years, and the person in charge of silver extraction was a certain Nishida Shinzō, a moneylender from Ōsaka.<sup>412</sup> However, it is probable that the locals knew of the mines and extracted some quantities of the precious metal during the second part of the sixteenth century. There is no concrete proof that silver was extracted earlier, but Portuguese trade in weapons did bring silver into the area as well.

The turbulent conflicts of first the unification wars and later the Korean wars brought the Kozasa clan closer to the Portuguese, to their silver trade and to the Jesuits, as well to Christianity. In 1586, with the invasion of Kyushu by Hideyoshi's forces, Kozasa Gobei Sumikatsu was reconfirmed in his landholding as a grant (*chigyō*) in the harbour of Nakaura.<sup>413</sup> The Nakaura-Kozasa line became well known after Julian Nacaura (whose Japanese name was Kozasa Jingō) sailed at the young age of thirteen, in 1586, with three other young Japanese representatives of the Kingdoms of Kyushu and with the Jesuit Vice Provincial Alessandro Valignano to Europe and to Rome to meet the Pope. As reported by Cooper, while Valignano had intended to present to the Church the evangelization work done in Japan in order to gather funds and practical support, he did exaggerate the status of these four young envoys to make

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<sup>411</sup> Fujino Tamotsu, *Ōmura gōzonki*, 413-415.

<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>413</sup> Fujino Tamotsu states that during the conquest of Kyushu by Hideyoshi the Kozasa were dispossessed of their fiefs, while recent scholarship believe that they followed Ōmura's vicissitudes.

them appear as “princes” and noblemen of some sort.<sup>414</sup> Although it is possible that their families held statuses for which they were granted land revenues, their backgrounds were diverse and of lower origin, as in the case of Nacaura Julian, whose family dealt in piratical endeavours as corsairs. Julian or Jingō had attended the Jesuit seminar of Arima previous to his appointment as representative of the “noble houses of Kyushu’s Lords.”

In the Kozasa main fortress of Taira no ura, there are still the ruins of a Catholic Church (南蛮時) with a nearby Catholic burial place, alleged to belong to Kozasa Sumitoshi, father of the more famous Julian Nakaura. In addition to the church and cemetery at Taira no ura, it is known that by 1592, the territory of Sonogi hosted a Jesuit Residence subject to the House of the Principal of Ōmura, with at least two Jesuits; Father Manoel Borralho, Portuguese (who could hear confession in Japanese) and Brother Kazusa Miguel, who spoke only Japanese.<sup>415</sup> The following year, the Residence hosted two fathers and five Japanese brothers.<sup>416</sup> But even after Hideyoshi’s conquest of Kyushu, Kozasa’s territories fell under the supervision of the Christian daimyō Konishi Yukinaga, one of the main daimyō in Hideyoshi’s military entourage and in the first division to enter Korea. A letter of Father Valentin Carvalho written in Nagasaki on 25 May 1601 confirms that when the persecution against the Christians, and in particular against the followers of Konishi Yukinaga in Kyushu was most felt in Hirado and Higo, Shimadono, who had family ties with the Matsura of Hirado and Matsura Shigenobu Hōin in particular, had arrived to take possession on behalf of Tokugawa Ieyasu of all that belonged to Konishi Yukinaga after his execution, and had to make the Christians in his territories renounce their faith. In 1601, Christian believers in Higo and Hirado fled to Ōmura’s territories near Nagasaki

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<sup>414</sup> Michael Cooper, *The Jesuit Mission to Europe; 1582-1590*, (Folkstone, UK: Global Oriental, 2005), 14.

<sup>415</sup> *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* Vol. XXXIV Missiones Orientales (Rome: APUD, 1975), 288.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, 234.

and could not be captured.<sup>417</sup> Hence, the Kozasa were protected at Nakaura under Konishi Yukinaga until the end of the Korean wars. Still, the preparatory events for the invasion of Kyushu that led to the Korean wars left an indelible mark all over Kyushu, but particularly in Hizen, where the drafting of human capital such as corsairs became a must, as Hideyoshi used Kyushu as a platform to conquer Korea.

#### **4.5 The Boost to the Silver Economy and its Effects in Hirado and Hizen**

The Korean wars cost a tremendous amount not only in human capital but also in material resources and silver. A concentration of all these resources was created in Hizen, in Matsura territory. The Matsura had their fief reconfirmed by Hideyoshi but at the same time they had to supply fifty thousand *koku* and three thousand men to the war effort.<sup>418</sup> Before the invasion of Korea began, Hideyoshi envisioned and completed the construction of an imposing castle at Nagoya (in Karatsu, Hizen), making the Karatsu shores bustle with economic activity before the conflicts took place. The fortress complex was on top of a mountain facing Tsushima

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<sup>417</sup> Valentin Carvalho, *Lettera da Nagasaki*, (5 May 1601), Nagasaki, photo, folio 61, Naganuma Bunko Collection II, Kyushu University Library, Fukuoka.

<sup>418</sup> Toyama Mikio, *Matsura to Hirado bōeki* (Tokyo: Toyama Mikio, 1967), 143.





**Figure 4-2. Tomb of Kozasa Sumitoshi, located at Taira no ura Fortress. Photo: Wolfgang Michael**

Island, from which it can be seen even today on clear days, and was originally planned by Hideyoshi's strategist Kuroda Kanbei and his son Nagamasa. An array of stonemasons and artisans built it in approximately five months. The castle compound measured 600 metres from east to west and 360 metres from north to south, with three layers of stone walls surrounding it. It was surrounded by more than 160 samurai houses.<sup>419</sup> Those samurai houses financed and supervised the work, and 200 meters below in the adjacent valley and shores, rose a castle town with merchants and labourers. The Matsura, who had given the land for the construction, were relocated to a nearby castle.<sup>420</sup>

Nagoya Castle was not just a temporary settlement from which to launch troops into battle but a true military capital, strategically situated facing East Asia, which Hideyoshi meant to put under his control from there. With regard to its supply line, it was in an optimal position to

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<sup>419</sup> Saga ken kyōiiku iinkai, *Saga kenritsu Nagoya jō hakubutsukan; sogo annai* (Saga: Saga Kenritsu hakubutsukan, 1999), 32-34.

<sup>420</sup> Kuroda Keiichi and Kasaya Kazuhiko, *Hideyoshi no yabō to gozan* (Tokyo: Buneidō, 2000), 35-37.

receive rice and silver from the coasts of Shimane and northern provinces, while exchanging it at the opposite end in Nagasaki for military technology and gunpowder. All these transactions enriched certain mercantile groups from Hakata to Hirado, Nagasaki and as far as Kagoshima and beyond. Besides excluding trading groups which were not affiliated with him, Hideyoshi was trying to curtail those military groups who had not sided with his interests in war, including pirates; he was particularly concerned with the Chinese and Portuguese, at Hirado and Nagasaki respectively. In the third month of 1590, Hideyoshi sent a document to Matura Hōin in Hirado stating:

...I have heard that this spring the Chinese merchant ship that was in your fief, [belongs] to a great Chinese [Easterner] general called Tekkai, practicing Hachiman,<sup>421</sup> his mercantile ships contains looted [pirated] goods...<sup>422</sup>

Hideyoshi commanded that Tekkai be detained until the arrival of Konishi Yukinaga, who would see to the matter. Tekkai, appear as recorded in the *Sunpuki*, *Gaikoku nikki*, *Kaihentai*, *Tei seikōden* and the *Nagasaki jitsuroku*, and has been identified as Tei Ikkan, later known as Zheng Zhilong, the Chinese merchant-pirate leader of an inter-Asia maritime network, father of Zheng Zengong and successor of Li Dan at Hirado, who was beginning to use Hirado as a safe harbour for his illegal trade and piratical endeavours.<sup>423</sup> Although recent scholars claim that Zheng Zhilong appeared in Japan much later as he was born between 1592 and 1599 hence he could not have been Tekkai. The document revealed the determination with which Hideyoshi interpreted piracy as an obstacle to his retainers' and associates' mercantile profits. But most of all, Chinese and Japanese pirates were obstacles in the procurement of goods necessary for the upcoming wars—ships, timber, muskets, gunpowder, silver and rice—as the pirates could not be

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<sup>421</sup> This sentence meant that Tekkai was practicing Hachiman's trade or Bahan trade, namely piracy.

<sup>422</sup> *Hirado Matura ke shiryō*, Atsushi Kobata ed., doc. 61, (Kyoto: Kyoto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokushi Kenkyushitsu, 1951), 119.

<sup>423</sup> Patrizia Carioti, *Cina e Giappone sui mari nei secoli XVI e XVII*, 119.

directly controlled in the way Hideyoshi controlled all his retainers. In fact, prior to the Korean wars, Hideyoshi had financially mobilized all the Japanese daimyō and their purveyor mercantile houses to offer him silver in great quantities for the purchase of weapons, saltpetre and gunpowder and most of all for the purchase of rice to feed his troops going to conquer China via Korea.<sup>424</sup>

The majority of the silver that sustained this enterprise came from the mines of Iwami, Ikuno, Settsu, and Sawa. Already in 1586, Hideyoshi had at his disposal 3000 *kanme* of gold and 30,000 *kanme* of silver annually.<sup>425</sup> By 1585, when he obtained the title of *Kampaku* (or regent for the emperor), hence becoming a nobleman (*kuge*), he received silver offerings from daimyō with whom he had formed alliances, in exchange for fief reconfirmations, coming of age ceremonies and so on. Notably the largest amount of silver, 1800 coins, was offered by the Mōri clan during Kobayakawa Takakage and Kikkawa Motonaga's visit to his Jōraku residence. Mōri Terumoto sent another large gift to Hideyoshi three years later. In his own account, Terumoto wrote that on the twenty-second day of the seventh month of 1588, gold, silver, and coins were sent in more than fifty ships led by Awaya Ichikore, his magistrate, and Kuroda Kanbei, arriving in Jōraku residence, and crossing the Yodo river at Osaka on the twenty-fourth of the same month. Hideyoshi received 3000 coins of silver, one horse and golden equipment, ten tiger skins, one long sword, 100 *ryō* of perfume, and for his wife Nene another 200 silver coins, 300 *kin* of white silk thread and other gifts.<sup>426</sup> The Mōri kept up with the ceremonial gift-giving, increasing their amounts of gifted silver, which Hideyoshi planned to use to conquer China. Apparently he had begun to mobilize Japan's resources in the early spring of 1590.

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<sup>424</sup> Kitajima Manji, *Hideyoshi no Chōsen shinryaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1995), 32.

<sup>425</sup> Kobata Atsushi, Hasegawa R., *Sawa kinginsanshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kintō Shuppansha, 1992), 17.

<sup>426</sup> Mōri Terumoto, *Terumoto kō gojōraku nikki*, (1582), folio 6-8, National Diet Library digital archives accessed on August, 2015 at [Kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/782073](http://Kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/782073).

In the tenth month of the same year, Hideyoshi sent fifteen silver coins to Matsura Hōin Shigenobu on the occasion of the latter's birthday, but not before having ordered Shigenobu two months previously to regulate the entrance of *tōjin* (Chinese and Korean merchants) at Hirado by assigning permits.<sup>427</sup> By 1592 Hideyoshi had assigned two of his retainers, Terazawa and Kumagai, to oversee the Matsura, and he had specifically ordered Matsura Takanobu Dōka to assign 1350 *koku* of rent to Kumagai, who was in charge of arranging the procurement of ships from Iki Island for the Korean wars. Hideyoshi wrote:

In order to send food to the troops in Korea, bay by bay in the province of Iki [find] ships and sailors...I have sent Kumagai for this purpose...it is going to be problematic if there are no ship captains.<sup>428</sup>

The economic effects of the preparations for the Korean wars were especially felt in the maritime areas between Korea, coastal Ming China, the archipelagos linked to the Ryukyu Islands, and the islands of Gotō, Iki and Tsushima facing Hirado and southern Kyushu. These effects were exacerbated by the silver that poured out of Japan to pay for goods, illicit and private if not piratical endeavours. In the *Liang zhe haifang lei kao xubian* (兩浙海防類考續編 Further Compilation of Categorized Sources on Maritime Defense for Zhejiang), written by Fan Lai, the Vice Surveillance Commissioner of Zhejiang, in charge of the levy of taxes used to construct military vessels to protect the coasts, reports several payments in silver for ships built in various Chinese provinces and bought by islanders of Gotō, Iki and Tsushima, who were said to be pirates.<sup>429</sup> In the fourth month of 1592, Hideyoshi had accomplished what he started in the

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<sup>427</sup> *Hirado Matsura ke shiryō*, Kobata Atsushi ed., docs. 58-59, (Kyoto: Kyoto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokushi Kenkyushitsu, 1951), 118.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*, docs. 67-71, 121-122.

<sup>429</sup> Fan Lai, "Liang zhe haifang leikao xubian," in *Siku quanshu*, reprinted edition, (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 1996). Also, *Liang zhe haifang leikao*, vol. 2, photos, Naganuma Bunko Collection 029, Kyushu University Historical Manuscript Library, Fukuoka.

early months of 1590 by having all the corsairs of Japan working to gather resources to build or procure ships for his war plan. Hideyoshi secured a fleet of 515 ships by ordering the former pirate clans of the Seto Inland Sea and Shikoku, led by three of his retainers, Kuki Yoshitaka, Wakizaka Yasuharu and Kato Yoshiaki, to lead his composite fleet to Iki Island from whence the attack would begin.<sup>430</sup> In addition to Chinese records stating the purchases of ships in Ningpo, the Japanese record *Bōchu kokikō* (Ancient Record of Suo and Nagato) reveals that, in the third month of 1592, Mōri Terumoto put one of his retainers, Sō Saemon Motokane, in charge of purchasing ships in Fujian Province to use in the Korean invasions.<sup>431</sup> The two abovementioned records demonstrate that the purchasing of ships abroad, and precisely in China, needed a great number of silver exchanges to take place before the Korean wars began.<sup>432</sup>

In Kyushu, the use of silver as currency had spread since the late 1560s due to the silver mines of Iwami, whose silver was exported to Korea, China and Southeast Asia. The Korean wars had further increased in Kyushu the use of silver to trade internationally. Morimoto Masahiro claims that the southern daimyō exchanged silver for silk, which sustained the use of silver as currency in the southern provinces and allowed it eventually to spread to domains in central Japan and to the Court.<sup>433</sup> While Morimoto is certainly right with regard to the expansion of silver as a currency in circulation, Kawato Takashi has proven, based on the contemporary diary of Yoshida Kanemi (1535-1610), the head priest of the Yoshida Shinto Shrine in Kyoto, that in fact during the Toyotomi period, although silver currency circulated widely in the Japanese provinces, it was only used for large payments within domains and for quantities that

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<sup>430</sup> Taira T., *Hideyoshi no bunroku, keichō no eki*, doc. 58 (Saga: Saga kenritsu Nagoyajo Hakubutsukan, 2007), 40.

<sup>431</sup> Akiyama Nobutaka, "Hotate shomonsha ni tsuite," *Bulletin of the Institute for Cultural Studies of the Seto inland Sea*, n. 16 (1988): 75.

<sup>432</sup> Fan Lai, "Liang zhe haifang leikao xubian," in *Siku quanshu*, reprinted edition, (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 1996). Also *Liang zhe haifang leikao*, vol. 2, photos, Naganuma Bunko Collection 029, Kyushu University Historical Manuscript Library, Fukuoka.

<sup>433</sup> Morimoto Masahiro, "The Circulation of Gold and Silver during the Toyotomi Regime," *Bulletin of the National Museum of Japanese History* 83 (2000): 25-56.

were beyond simple daily purchases, for which people and merchants would still use the copper coins widely circulating in their domains.<sup>434</sup>

However, it must have required a huge amount of silver to purchase weapons and food provisions for an army of 185,000 men. To carry out such task, Hideyoshi's administrators would supervise magistrates' groups in certain areas for the procurement and payment of goods. Two of them left outstanding records of their activities. One administrator was Kamei Korenori (1557-1612), a retainer of the Amako clan in Inaba Province until 1578 and later in the service of Hideyoshi. In charge of shipping silver where it was needed and exchanging it for rice, Korenori oversaw and controlled the magistrates' group at Iwami silver mines and later at Hino silver mines in Inaba province. By 1595, Korenori had received Hideyoshi's order to have the silver from West Hino mines in Inaba extracted and shipped by workers in charge, to whom he relayed Hideyoshi's orders.<sup>435</sup> This silver of Inaba, as well as the silver obtained from Iwami, was shipped from the coastal towns of Inaba following the routes to Shimane (Yunotsu and Okidomari Harbours) down to the harbours of Hakata, where mercantile associations were exchanging silver for rice bought from various provinces and sending it to Nagoya Castle. The purchasing of weapons occurred at Nagasaki.

The other administrator, in charge of purchases at Nagasaki, was Komai Shigekatsu. A retainer of Hideyoshi and also his secretary since 1591, he kept a diary of the events that occurred during the Korean wars. By the eighteenth day of the first month of 1591, Hideyoshi had ordered Mōri Terumoto to release the supervision of the Iwami silver mines to two of his

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<sup>434</sup> Kawato Takashi, "Jūroku seiki gohan ni okeru kahei no shiyō jōkyō," *Shiryō hensanjo kenkyū kiyō* (Tokyo: Shiryō hensanjo, 2010), 40-58.

<sup>435</sup> Yuasa Takeshi, *Iwami Kamei ke monjo*, doc. 40, (Tokyo: Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan, 1992), 438.

magistrates, namely Hayashi Hizen no kami Terunaga and Yanagizawa Motomasa.<sup>436</sup> Both magistrates responded to the demands of Komai, as is proven by a document issued during the ongoing Korean wars. The document in question was issued on the fourth day of the third month of 1594 by Komai Shigekatsu and addressed to Hayashi Hizen no kami Terunaga stating the following:

For the supplies of lead and saltpetre, send the silver to Nagasaki and at the same time send the rice to the warehouse at Iwami, the silver can be immediately distributed to the troops stationed there, consult with the magistrate Konoma Yoshibee as he arrives without any mishandling...<sup>437</sup>

A postscript to the above document shows that 13,000 *koku* of rice were sent to the Iwami magistrate, who duly sent the silver to Nagoya, and with that silver Komai purchased the needed gunpowder ingredients in Nagasaki. The purchase of goods in Nagasaki was not restricted to Hideyoshi's retainers, every daimyō who had responded to Hideyoshi's call to reside at Nagoya was free to buy goods in Nagasaki. Surely, if on one hand, the arrival of so many retainers at Nagoya Fortress gave a boost to Kyushu's economy, on the other, it set the price of silver at lower levels in comparison to provinces where the precious metal was not so available. In 1592 Satake Yasunobu had responded to the call to be at Nagoya Fortress; however, as the following year he needed to return to his domain in Mito, he summoned one of his subordinates, financial official Owada Shigekiyo, to Nagoya to purchase goods on his behalf at Nagasaki. Owada's diary is not only a chronicle of his stay at Nagoya Castle but also a fine account of his silver expenses. Ordered to go to Nagoya (Kyushu), Shigekiyo left Mito domain upon the new year of 1592 to arrive at Nagoya in the second month of 1593, carrying with him silver he had

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<sup>436</sup> Tokyo Daigaku Shiryo Hensanjo, *Dai Nihon komonjo iewake: Mōri kemonjo*, vol. 3, doc. 937 (Tokyo: Shiryo Hensanjo, 1904).

<sup>437</sup> Komai Shigekatsu, *Komai nikki*, Fujita Tsuneharu ed., (Tokyo: Bunken Shuppan, 1992), 150.

purchased in Kyoto for an amount of twenty-four silver *monme* (匁) five *fun* (分) and two *kan* in copper coins (錢 or *zeni*) and ninety-five *mon* (文) at the exchange rate of one *kan* to eight *monme* of silver and four *fun*. But in Nagoya, the exchange rate of one *kan mon* was equivalent to eleven silver *mon* six *fun* and one *kanmon* in copper coins. So with one *kan* in Nagoya, he obtained eleven silver *monme* instead of eight. This meant that in Kyoto, silver cost more due to its scarcity.<sup>438</sup>

In Kyushu, the sudden affluence of silver brought price inflation, increasing particularly the price of rice that was still the main staple of elite warriors. By 1592, ten silver coins (*Ōban*) bought 80 *koku* of rice in Hakata, but the same price only bought 70 *koku* of rice in Nagoya. By 1593, the price of rice in Nagoya had increased 58 percent.<sup>439</sup> Hence, the Korean wars were made necessary to feed the large military population stationed in Kyushu as well. As silver circulated in larger quantities and was relatively cheaper, it had lost its buying power; therefore daimyō needed more silver to purchase expensive goods than they would have needed in other central regions. During the Korean wars, silver was the currency also used among the warriors who crossed to Korea and the merchants who dealt with them from both sides of the Tsushima Strait.

Japanese merchants in Korea sold goods and food supplies in built fortified camps on Korean shores (*wajō*), where they also traded with Korean and Chinese merchants. In 1593, Ming General Li Yan-gong (李言恭), who became the Military Commander of Nanjing, in his record *Riben kao* (日本考) wrote that one silver *ryō* corresponded to 333 copper *mon*, while a small copper coin of three *mon* was equal to one white silver *fun*. The record also mentions that

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<sup>438</sup>Morimoto Masahiro, "The Circulation of Gold and Silver during the Toyotomi Regime," 46-47.

<sup>439</sup>Kitajima Manji, *Hideyoshi no chōsen shinryaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1995), 33. See also, *Kyoto daigaku kinsei bukka shi no kenkyū* for the price changes between 1589 and 1610.



the Japanese had created a system where the old Chinese copper coins were traded in both Korea and Ryukyu in the same period.<sup>440</sup> Merchants made their fortune selling rice and providing all the necessary items to the warriors. But shipping was costly and they also found effective ways to choose among the service providers that offered the best deal, especially in terms of shipbuilding and shipping of goods. The *Riben kao* shows that ship captains from China would request several thousand pieces of gold to build a ship; however, the Japanese carpenters would ask as much as 10,000 silver pieces to construct one, but first there was a down payment of 2000 *ryō* and there were no taxes on the cargo, as Li states “... because the Japanese merchants had to report everything, but having been taxed one thousand *ryō* were free to trade as they pleased.”<sup>441</sup> Chinese merchants and shipbuilders also took advantage of that lucrative conflict. Hence, Kyushu daimyō, like the Shimazu and Matsura, took advantage of the war economies that had been created over eight years of ongoing conflicts. Hirado was at the centre of the economic dynamo created by the Korean wars.

However, in 1598, the Korean conflicts were soon to end with the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Japan was left in the hands of Hideyoshi’s appointed five regents, namely Maeda Toshinaga, Uesugi Kagekatsu, Mōri Terumoto, Ukita Hideie, and Tokugawa Ieyasu. The regents trod carefully so as not to show that Japan was experiencing a domestic power struggle that could have had international repercussions, and instead tried to focus on domestic policies while re-establishing international order. In the eighth month of 1599, the five regents issued a second edict, the first having been addressed to the Shimazu in the third month of the same year, forwarded to Matsura Shigenobu, lord of Chikuzen stating that since piratical trade (*bahan*

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<sup>440</sup> Li Yan-gong, *Riben kao*, vol. 1 Bōeki (1593), Korean Digital Library, accessed on May 15, 2016 at <https://archive.org/stream/02087139.cn#page/n104.mode/2up>.

<sup>441</sup> Li Yan-gong, *Riben kao*, vol. 1 Bōeki (1593), Korean Digital Library, accessed on May 15, 2016 at <https://archive.org/stream/02087139.cn#page/n110.mode/2up>.

*kaizoku*) had been prohibited the previous year, he was reminded that the anti-piracy policy was to be applied by not allowing unauthorized traders to put anchor at Hirado, but to let them go as soon as they arrived.<sup>442</sup> However, due to the revenues the domain enjoyed from hosting merchant-pirates, the 1599 edict fell on deaf ears, or at the very least, the Matsura did try to comply by assigning licenses to trade to coastal ex-pirates in their controlled littoral. In the *Kaisenden* (家世伝), a collection of small traders' and ship captains' writings of the late Sengoku and early Edo period, several incidents related to piracy at Hirado in the early seventeenth century are recorded, clearly a sign that corsairs and merchant-pirates were still thriving on its shores.

Dohi Tarōsaborō, a ship captain under Matsura Hōin (Shigenobu), as he participated in supplying the troops in Korea during the wars, did meet pirates at sea as shipmaster, but he had enough presence of mind in such perilous events to show them a wooden tablet on which there were written the twelve characters of his name and affiliation – “Matsura Hizen no kami uchi Dohi Tarōsaborō (松浦肥前守内土居太郎三郎),” meaning “Doi Tarōsaborō of the Matsura lord of Hizen.” He was allowed to proceed by what seemed to be corsairs working for the same patron. Another example written in the *Kaisenden* is the one of a ship captain called Yariemon, who was threatened by pirates at sea. One more incident involved a certain Toda Yasuke, a merchant for the Matsura, whose merchandise was rejected when he arrived at his destined harbour, so while trying to sell the goods elsewhere, he did meet “western” pirates and worried that had he not been in possession of a safe-conduct, he would have been in trouble.<sup>443</sup> All these described encounters and events that took place from the period of the Korean conflict onward are clear indications that piracy was still practiced in and around Hirado's maritime area even in

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<sup>442</sup> Naganuma Kenkai, *Nihon no kaizoku* (Tokyo: Kyushu University Press, 1965), 65.

<sup>443</sup> *Kaisenden*, (17<sup>th</sup> century), photos, folio 30-32, maki 64, Matsura Museum and Manuscript Library, Hirado.

the early seventeenth century, notwithstanding the anti-piracy edicts. The main reason for this was the economic and financial strain caused by the Korean wars in Kyushu domains.

The financial distress of Hirado further tore the domain of Hizen in two opposite directions: daimyō and their corsairs close to Nagasaki and to Portuguese trade converted to Christianity in order to trade, while in Hirado proper, the Matsura, who were anti-Christian and had long established relations with Chinese traders, favoured the latter to finance their domain losses after the Korean wars. Until 1599, the territories controlled by the Ōmura house and its allies, including Kozasa's fiefs, were a refuge for Christian escapees. But, as soon as all the lords who had fought in the Korean wars had returned, there were more conversions than ever: some 70,000 people became Christians, to the great joy of the Jesuits. The reason is to be found in the economic downturn that Japan was experiencing at that time. Valignano expressed it as follows: "The construction of further churches especially right at this moment is a necessary remedy because those lords who fought in the Korean wars for seven years, lack money; and for the same reason also their retainers are in the same [poor] conditions, so that this year some of them died in poverty; they can do nothing about it."<sup>444</sup> Valignano reported that most of the daimyō returning from the Korean wars, including the Shimazu, converted to Christianity. These conversions were due to the effects of the war but mostly tied to economic reasons, as the daimyō now needed sources of income, and trade was the fastest solution to bolster their depleted resources.<sup>445</sup> Unfortunately, the Portuguese ships that left Nagasaki in 1599 never arrived in Macao; Valignano lamented the loss of ten missionaries and goods worth four hundred

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<sup>444</sup> Alessandro Valignano, *Lettera del Padre Alessandro Valignano, visitatore della Compagnia di Gesù nel Giappone e nella Cina, del 1599*, (Venetia: Gio. Battista Ciotti, 1603), folio 32.

<sup>445</sup> Japanese scholars such as Matsuda Kiichi although studying the sudden increase in Christian baptisms after the Korean wars, justified those as due to an increased activity on the part of Jesuit missionaries, and of the same view is also Ikuo Higashibaba. See Higashibaba Ikuo, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan*, vol. 16 (Leiden; Brill, 2001), 136. Alvarez-Taladriz dealt with an increased conversion number by analyzing the situation of Korean slaves in Kyoto after the Korean wars, based on Jesuits' documentation, but others like George Elisons avoided dealing with such enquiry.

thousand *scudi*.<sup>446</sup> His missive also related the volatile situation due to the vacuum of power in Japan and reported on the political lead of Tokugawa Ieyasu in wanting to end the war, but he was surely mistaken in thinking that Ieyasu, at that time sixty years old, would not choose the “unsure path of a war” over his quiet living.

Valignano wrote the above on October 10, 1599, unaware that a year from that date, Japan would be split into the two factions that fought at Sekigahara. In 1599, while the southern daimyō hurried to augment revenues in their domain by trading internationally, using the economies of war and piracy to increase their revenues and to control maritime routes, they were opposed by the interim government that, led by Ieyasu, constituted a strong trade competitor in the search for new markets in East Asia. Ieyasu quickly strengthened his government’s international economic and political ties. The economic rivalry on the seas of East and Southeast Asia was subdued by his trading and anti-Christian policies curtailing unauthorized trade and thus pirates and corsairs. By then, the Christian daimyō who had fought at Sekigahara could not avoid renouncing their faith either, as they now had inferior economic or political prospects. Their subordinates also reverted to Buddhism, and in the case of the Kozasa, became officials controlling Christians, as testified in the *Kokunin uketorichō* (国人受取帳), a document written by 1658 that reported all the Christians captured at Hirado and in Ōmura-controlled villages, listed by gender, number and village names, addressed to four administrators for the Ōmura, two of whom were named Kozasa.<sup>447</sup> In the Tokugawa period (1603-1867), various Kozasa families, although still residing in the same territory, were given subordinate roles, not as retainers but as administrators in their former fief. Their main fortress of Taira no ura passed into the hands of the Ide house. While in Hizen, the political changes did not favour the Portuguese and their

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<sup>446</sup> Alessandro Valignano, *Lettera del Padre Alessandro Valignano, visitatore della Compagnia di Gesù nel Giappone e nella Cina, del 1599*, (Venetia: Gio. Battista Ciotti, 1603), folio 34.

<sup>447</sup> *Kokunin uketorichō*, vol. III of 11 (4) 3, (1658), photos, manuscript, Matsura Museum, Hirado.

trading associates, at Hirado, the Chinese trading community, which was long established, survived the vicissitudes of the Korean wars.

The Chinese presence at Hirado during the Korean conflict was strained first by the previously mentioned Tekkai incident, and later by the intervention of Ming China in the conflict itself. But Chinese merchants and merchant-pirates were still very active, as Hideyoshi's document written in the eighth month of 1590 demonstrates. In this document, Hideyoshi allowed the Chinese merchant Kodō to reside in the town of Yoshino (in Hirado) after he built a Buddha hall.<sup>448</sup> This proves that by not adhering to Christianity, the Chinese community at Hirado was allowed to continue to trade from there. Documents on Kodō's identity and activities are rather scanty, but the extant ones prove that at least from 1579 to 1609, he resided at Hirado. His presence at Hirado shows that there was a continuity in the existence of the Chinese mercantile network that linked Hirado to East Asia during the Korean wars. Soon after, the five regents' anti-piracy edict tried to put a stop to piratical trade, or rather to 'unregulated' trade performed by individuals as well as linked networks of merchants and pirates. In 1606, Li Dan, a rich merchant leader of the Hokkien community of Manila, fought with the Spanish there and escaped, relocating his piratical network to Hirado.<sup>449</sup>

#### **4.6 Sino-Dutch Piratical Networks as a Legitimate Trading Option, 1609-1625.**

By 1610, Li Dan, the leader of the Chinese piratical network in Hirado, while exploiting his relationship with the English by promising them the markets of Taiwan and China, fought against local Japanese pirates who had been already outlawed by the Tokugawa regime. In the

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<sup>448</sup> *Hirado Matsura ke shiryō*, Kobata Atsushi ed., doc. 31, (Kyoto: Kyoto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokushi Kenkyushitsu, 1951), 110.

<sup>449</sup> James K. Chin, "A Hokkien Maritime Empire in the East and South China Seas," *Persistent Piracy*, Stefan Amirell and Leos Müller ed., (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 96.

following passage telling of a pirate attack on Li Dan's ship, Richard Cocks, the English factor residing at Hirado, wrote:

The China Capt. Received a letter from his brother in Langasanque (Nagasaki), of a China junck (or soma) which departed from thence for China with 77 or 78 men in her, but were met by theevs at sea, who cut all their throtes and carid away all that was good, and soe the junck was driven upon the coast of Goto with 7 or 8 dead men in her, the rest being throwne over board.<sup>450</sup>

Although the Chinese piratical network of Li Dan was prey to the smaller Japanese pirate gangs operating from the peripheral islands surrounding Hirado, it stood in stark contrast to such gangs in terms of manpower and ships. Li Dan controlled maritime routes from Japan to the coastal areas of Southern China, Tonkin, and Siam. Iwao Seiichi has interpreted the character of Li Dan as the leader of a self-made enterprise who had worked his way up by taking on several identities such as Nicholas Iquan for the Portuguese, Andrea Dittis among the English, and finally Li Dan or Captain China to the Dutch and Japanese respectively, and who created a supranational trading network together with his brother (Capitan Howe or Hua-yu) in Nagasaki and his son Augustin I-kwan.<sup>451</sup> In Japan, Li Dan's power lay in his capacity as a mediator to coalesce diverse groups according to their interests, particularly the Europeans and the Matura daimyō (among his personal connections was the Nagasaki Magistrate Hasegawa Gonroku Morinao).<sup>452</sup> The English factor, Richard Cocks, beginning in 1615, had lent Li Dan several thousand ounces of silver in the hope that Li Dan and his brother would help him establish trade relations with Fujian in China, but to no avail. In reality, as Timothy Brook suggests, the chances of the Li brothers' helping the English trader gain access to China's markets were slim. They

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<sup>450</sup> Richard Cocks, *Diary of Richard Cocks*, Edward Thompson ed., vol 1 (London: the Hakuyut Society, 1883), 83.

<sup>451</sup> Iwao Seiichi, "Li Dan Chief of the Chinese Residents at Hirado; Japan in the last days of the Ming Dynasty," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 17 (1958): 27-83.

<sup>452</sup> Patrizia Carioti, *Zheng Chenggong*, 48-49.

may have hoped for opportunities for political change that would reopen coastal trade, and one such opportunity may have been, as Brook states, the death of Emperor Wang-li, upon which a series of promotions and demotions at court may have opened up a spiral of hope for the Li brothers and their English interlocutor.<sup>453</sup> However, the missed chance to access the Chinese markets was also a missed chance for the Matsuura of Hirado, who lacked steady commercial relations with at least one country on a regular basis. Li Dan offered the Matsuura trading revenues and expensive gifts but no country to rely on directly, even when he dealt with the Dutch, whose aim was to establish a settlement in Taiwan.

The relationship between the Chinese mercantile network of Li Dan was one of cooperation with the Dutch. His connection with the Dutch arose from their shared objective of opening trade in Taiwan; but he was forced by the Ming, who had taken his business partner in Xiamen, Xu Xinsu, hostage, to persuade the Dutch to relocate from Penghu Island to Taiwan by 1623-1624.<sup>454</sup> In the end, by helping the Dutch to rule in Taiwan, he had guaranteed himself a market for trade without having to deal with political issues, while the Dutch were finally a step closer to Ming China and to disrupting Portuguese and Spanish trading networks to benefit themselves and their associates. This worked well for the Matsura daimyō only to a certain extent, as trade did not directly involve the Japanese mercantile community at Hirado, nor it was conducted via diplomatic channels involving the Matsura. It was instead well received by the Tokugawa government, which was trying to let the Dutch and Chinese play a larger role as importers of silk and high value goods.

The Dutch in Japan had to diplomatically portray their company and themselves as legitimate representatives of a European crown which was present only in the writing of Prince

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<sup>453</sup> Timothy Brook, *Mr. Selden's Map of China* (Toronto: Anansi Press, 2013), 79-86.

<sup>454</sup> James K. Chin, "A Hokkien Maritime Empire in the East and South China Seas," *Persistent Piracy*, Stefan Amirell and Leos Müller ed., (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 98.

Maurits, as a *stadhouder* of the pre-companies that were the embryonic Dutch East India Company or VOC.<sup>455</sup> Hence, their relations with the Tokugawa were not always smooth, but with time, as they achieved a stable base in Batavia, they were able by paying a yearly visit to the Tokugawa to establish diplomatic and trade relations without the hindrance of Christianity or of foreign missionaries. Hence, although their settlement as foreigners was always precarious depending on the policies of the Tokugawa government, the Dutch by using caution and tactics were able to remain and trade at Hirado Harbour. Nevertheless, outside Japanese waters, they functioned as pirates, attacking both Portuguese and Spanish ships with the intent of disrupting their trading routes and trade in order to deter Portuguese business in Asia. By the late 1590s, the Dutch and the Portuguese/Spanish were engaged in a fierce battle for control of Asian maritime routes. On February 24, 1603, near the coastal areas of Johor, the Dutch attacked the *Santa Catarina*, a large carrack returning to Europe from Japan, in retaliation against the Portuguese for preventing the Dutch from trading in China. Following that attack, there were several others in 1605 and 1606, targeting carracks from Macao and resulting in significant losses for the Portuguese.<sup>456</sup> It was the Portuguese desire to protect their monopoly that induced them to face the ire not only of their Dutch counterparts in Asia but also of the Japanese who travelled abroad. The Tokugawa government was not as yet ready to abandon the Portuguese and their trade, as their revenues greatly surpassed the profits brought into Japan by the Dutch.

The Dutch East India Company has been interpreted by some scholars as a semi-independent business company, or a quasi-state representative, depending on the scholars' viewpoints. Niels Steensgard argues that it was a company that developed "war-like policies"

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<sup>455</sup> Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 33.

<sup>456</sup> Peter Borschberg, "The Seizure of the Santa Catarina Revisited: The Portuguese Empire in Asia, VOC Politics and the Origins of the Dutch Johor Alliance, (1603-1616)," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 33, n. 1 (2002): 31-62.



aligned to those of the Netherlander confederation of states.<sup>457</sup> Initially, their trade volume was not significant, and they survived on “country trade” by swapping goods from country to country in East and Southeast Asia. They were also trading pirated goods, because in fact by 1610, the Dutch East India Company was running a trade deficit.<sup>458</sup> Further, as Adam Clulow claims, the company factory in Japan was established as a default of failed privateering enterprises, as often the Dutch East India Company gave maritime predation higher priority than trade.<sup>459</sup> The Dutch aggressively interfered in Portuguese shipping with several acts of piracy, seeking to disrupt other trading networks to their own advantage. In 1615, the Dutch were even accused by the daimyō of Hirado of an attack on a Portuguese ship, the *San Antonio*, for which the Dutch were summoned to Edo.<sup>460</sup> Clulow interprets their summoning as being due not to the act of piracy proper but to the fact that the Dutch had attacked the Portuguese vessel close to Meshima Island, a marker of Japanese maritime waters and therefore within Japanese maritime boundaries.<sup>461</sup> However, they did not stop acting as pirates on the sea against Portuguese vessels even when their economic situation had improved, in the 1620s. But while the Dutch presence at Hirado benefited the Tokugawa and the Matsura daimyō in economic terms, relations between the Matsura and the Tokugawa were not the best.

The Tokugawa were not always on friendly terms with the Matsura; even if the Matsura did try hard to lean on the Tokugawa politically, they were not always well received. Between 1604 and 1611, Ieyasu did demonstrate an ambivalent policy toward the Matsura as well, because even when he had given Matsura Shigenobu five licences to trade in Annam, he

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<sup>457</sup> Niels Steensgard, *Companies and Trade: Essays on Overseas Trading Companies During the Ancien Regime*. Blusse-Gaastra Eds. (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1981), 55-56.

<sup>458</sup> Yasuko Suzuki, *The Japan-Netherland trade 1600-1800* (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2012), 2.

<sup>459</sup> Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 152.

<sup>460</sup> Nagazumi Yoko and Takeda Mariko, *Hirado shokan Igirisu shokan nikki* (Tokyo: Soshietesha 1981), 22.

<sup>461</sup> Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 153.

infringed on their trading conditions by not allowing them more licenses, thus weakening their reliance on official trade revenues while prohibiting them from trading illegally.<sup>462</sup> The downturn for the Matsura at Hirado was created first, as mentioned above, by the trading restrictions imposed by the Tokugawa regime; secondly by the loose economic policies that characterized Hirado domain; and third, by the economic capabilities of the Dutch.

The Tokugawa politically used the Matsura, who were commercially engaged in East and Southeast Asia, to further control trade, while trying to disempower them in commercial terms. In fact, goods that arrived from foreign ships at Nagasaki and Hirado were itemized and all the paperwork sent to Edo by the magistrate, and the actual sale could take place only after the goods and prices had been allocated by the distribution cartel, a monopsonistic institution that regulated the price and distribution of silk (*pancada*) at Nagasaki. The Tokugawa regulated foreign business in such a way that merchants would not profit too much, and the domain where the trade took place was allotted units of merchandise for trade within the domain and could not exceed the fixed quota. The Matsura of Hirado were allotted ten units of silk from that profitable trade, while Nagasaki received one hundred.<sup>463</sup> Nevertheless, the Matsura managed to get silver from Iwami to trade; a 1619 document written by the group of elders at Iwami silver mines which regulated the maritime transportation of silver and the warehouses as well as the residences of traders so that nobody could smuggle silver out was also addressed to Matsura Heibee dono.<sup>464</sup> Although it is difficult to establish the identity of this particular individual by the available documentation, it cannot be denied that members of the Matsura clan did take part in

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<sup>462</sup> Komiya K., “Keichō kihei Hirado han Matsura shi no dōkō,” in *Bakuhatsu taisei no shinkenkyū*, Maruyama ed. (Tokyo: BungenShuppan, 1982), 240-241.

<sup>463</sup> Michael S. Laver, *The Sakoku Edicts*, 102.

<sup>464</sup> Shimane Ken Kyōiki Iinkai, *Kinsei shoki Iwami ginzan shiryō shū* (Iwami: Hokosha, 2006), 76-77.

the shipping of silver to Hirado—silver to be exchanged for the silk quota allotted to the Matsura.

Aside from that quota, they did not receive income in the form of taxes from mercantile ships docking in their harbour, but they did request valuable gifts from their hosts. Both the English and Dutch recorded their gifts to the Matsura accurately. Adam Clulow states that the English felt “milked” by the Matsura, who became more and more demanding with their requests not only to provide the shogunate with extravagant and curious gifts but also to line their own pockets with gifts that could be converted into cash.<sup>465</sup> However, although Clulow perceives those ‘gifts’ as being the main source of income for the Matsura, in reality at least at the onset of the Tokugawa regime, the gifts must have been filling the gap between the income allowed to the Matsura by the selling of the allotted silk and the extra funds needed to manage their domain affairs and to pay shogunal taxes. In this regard, the Nagasaki magistrate and deputy, in the persons of Hasegawa Sabyōe Fujihiro and his brother Hasegawa Tadabee Fujitsuna, played a very significant role in allowing the Matsura to profit from their foreign guests.<sup>466</sup>

These two men, who were close to the magistrate of Nagasaki Gonroku, were involved in the licensed ship trade, and Fujitsuna in particular would turn a blind eye to the “presents” that the Matsura received via foreign merchants.

The culture of gift giving was entrenched in Japan and had become a business for the Matsura, who had dealt with incoming legal and piratical merchants previous to the establishment of the Tokugawa regime. The Dutch and the English adjusted to the “gift giving” practices as a way to carve a space for themselves in the mercantile environment of that domain and to gather access to other harbours. Richard Cocks, the English factor, did engage in art

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<sup>465</sup> Adam Clulow, “From Global Entrepot to Early Modern Domain: Hirado 1609-1641,” in *Monumenta Nipponica*. 65 n. 1 (2010): 10.

<sup>466</sup> Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankei shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1984), 346.

dealing by selling portraits and European and erotic paintings in an attempt to satisfy or appeal to the Japanese sense of beauty, which to his dismay happened to appreciate other and less demanding imagery.<sup>467</sup> But this policy of favouritism and gift giving did temporarily benefit the rulers while disengaging their mercantile power base from serious taxation and stable domain revenues. Furthermore, the arrival of the Dutch at Hirado as well as political changes in the house of the Matura did cause the bankruptcy of several Japanese merchants.

#### **4.7 The Losses of Japanese Mercantile Entrepreneurs versus the Foreign Pirate Networks**

The Tokugawa favoured the Dutch and English, who traded goods in Japan that they had purchased in Asia. The volume of the trade promised by the Dutch must have been particularly attractive to the eyes of the shogunate, as they did not realize that consequently Japanese merchants who had been supplying major harbours in Kyushu were now in danger of losing their business to the Dutch. A combination of market demand and the readiness to have such supplied goods traded in volumes which required the use and the storage capacity of larger vessels, hence shipbuilding technology, all worked to the detriment of the small mercantile houses that also dealt in the silver trade as financiers for local daimyō. One such merchant was Andō Ryūemon.

Between 1609 and 1613, Andō Ryūemon was a long-standing merchant, financier and shipbuilder who had been active since the late 1590s in Kyushu. By 1586, Ryūemon was already a merchant in Uto, a city in the domain of Konishi Yukinaga, lord of Higo, and Toyotomi Hideyoshi's general in the Korean wars. As Ryūemon possessed a ship, he travelled and worked as a purveyor of food supplies when he served Matura Shigenobu during the Korean campaigns (1592-1598). By 1609, as the Dutch settled in Hirado, Ryūemon was working with them as a

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<sup>467</sup> Timothy Brook, *Mr. Selden's Map of China*, 79-86.

“comprador,” a Portuguese term that meant he was a buying merchant, for the Matsura.<sup>468</sup> Sent to purchase goods, he ran into trouble and his ship was confiscated. After this incident, the Andō mercantile family steadily declined as important merchants, as new players emerged in the Matsura political entourage.

By 1617, in fact, a cadet branch family of the Matsura rose in power and gave the position of “comprador” and main purveyors to their own mercantile affiliates.<sup>469</sup> This was not the only change; in fact, Matsura Sōyō Takanobu wanted to take charge of shipbuilding in his domain and let it be known that it was to be regulated by the Matsura at Hirado. Although this probably did not greatly affect the English and Dutch, it did represent a *cōup de grâce* to medium and to smaller size local Japanese companies. Andō’s economic decline began when the Matsura lord, in order to respond to market demands for higher volumes of foreign goods to be transported, ordered a large-tonnage ship to be constructed in Hirado by contracting a shipbuilder from the Osaka region, Yamazaki Yaemon.

Yoshimura Masami asserts that this policy change took place between 1615 and 1624, which may well have been the time when the shipbuilding process took place.<sup>470</sup> By 1629, it seems that the ship was already at sea. Iwao Seiichi, citing a missive from Corneliis Nijenroode to the governor of Taiwan, relates that the junk first built at Hirado with the purpose of exploring the northern Sea of Japan was sold and ceded to the son of Capitan China (Li Dan), Augustin I-kwan.<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> Andō Ichiemon, “Andō Ichiemon genjōgaki,” (Andō Ichiemon’s Memoirs 安藤市衛門言上書) (17th century), in *Gohanmotsu onkaku hairyō no mono kakidashi*, Matsura Museum and Manuscript Repository, Hirado. See also *Kaseiden* (家世伝), “Andō,” (安藤), folio 21-23, maki 64. The *Kaseiden* was written in 1709 based on facts related to Hirado and the Matsura House; however, documents reporting the existence of Andō are also the 1694 *Konishi ichiyuki nikki* and *Sasa gunki*.

<sup>469</sup> Yoshimura Masami, *Kinsei Nihon no taigai kankei to chiiki igi*, (Osaka: Seibundo, 2012), 21-29.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.* 29

<sup>471</sup> Iwao Seiichi, “Li Dan Chief of the Chinese Residents at Hirado; Japan in the last days of the Ming Dynasty,” 37.

With the fierce trading competition out of Hirado and the alliance overseas between Li Dan's network, the Dutch and their allies, the English, local Japanese entrepreneurs had little chance to survive on their own. By 1640, Andō Ichiemon, a descendant of Ryūemon still working as a merchant from Hirado, wrote in his memoirs regarding his family service as purveyor merchant in the Korean wars and even in later years:

From Japan several people were stationed for seven years in military camps in Korea, we worked to feed them. As there were no magistrates we would carry sailors in various harbours [we did it] and built thousands of ships without resting. When there was no magistrate we would return to sell rice. With the silver I have received in twenty–thirty years of work I have lent money as well. Since the arrival of the Dutch me being just one man I fell under their yoke....<sup>472</sup>

Indeed, in these memoirs, Andō Ichiemon reported the hardship of his family as a merchant and how they lost business once shipbuilders from other domains were brought to Hirado. But by 1615, Matsura Takanobu, in calling shipbuilders from Hizen, was likely responding in defiance of the action taken by Tokugawa Hidetada in 1612, who had ordered the construction of ships at Uruga Bay, closer to Edo, in an attempt to relocate international trade in order to control it directly.<sup>473</sup>

The mistrust that the Tokugawa government felt toward the Matsura lords was not totally unjustified, as they, together with the Kuroda, Shimazu, Kato, Nabeshima and Shimazu, were the remaining last loyal guard of the Toyotomi, who regarded Ieyasu as a usurper. But the reason for the lack of trust toward the Matsura was their failure to manage to the fullest their trading partners, namely the Dutch and Chinese, who, being foreigners, were expected to bring in higher profits in exchange for their trading outpost at Hirado. In essence, the Tokugawa, although ready

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<sup>472</sup> Andō Ichiemon, “Andō Ichiemon genjōgaki,” (Andō Ichiemon's Memoirs 安藤市衛門言上書), (17<sup>th</sup> century) document 22, *Gohanmotsu onkaku hairyō no mono kakidashi*, Matsura Museum and Manuscript Repository, Hirado.

<sup>473</sup> Komiya K., “Keichō kihei Hirado han Matsura shi no dōkō,” 242.

to accept foreign trade, did not put their trust solely in them, but given their maritime skills, used them in place of the corsairs of Kyushu, who by now had been nearly eliminated, as the better remedy to strengthen the government's political power. Unlike the Dutch, the Chinese community faced rapid changes, as in 1625, the death of Li Dan and the succession of Zheng Zhilong to his vast networks changed Hirado's economic landscape. As the Matsura put themselves in an antagonistic position toward the Tokugawa by not being able to please the new rulers to the fullest of their ability, they did not impress the Tokugawa with acts of loyalty, as had been the case for the Shimazu.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

The Matsura of Hirado in Hizen had profited from trade and piracy since the early fourteenth century. In the early and mid-sixteenth century they hosted Chinese pirates in Hirado proper, while, surrounding Hirado's coasts, Japanese pirates continued to survive by looting ships entering the various harbours. The silver trade had allowed pirates to thrive, especially in the Gotō Islands and Hizen. But, as in Satsuma, the competition between foreign traders and pirates, namely between the Portuguese and Chinese, for Japanese harbours, had factionalized Japanese pirates toward one or the other, or both, depending on the circumstances. The exchange of silver for top-notch weaponry was the catalyst for this transformation. In the process, Japanese pirates controlling the toll barriers in Hizen Province, beyond Hirado's backwaters, strengthened their positions by allying themselves with whichever local and foreign power groups could enhance their territorial control. The Kozasa pirate clan locally swore alliance to the Arima and Ōmura houses as corsairs, and through trading with the Portuguese, became Christians. They came under fire due to their Christian connections but survived the upheaval of their times.

On the other end of the piratical spectrum, Fukahori Sumimasa, who had become a menace for Portuguese traders entering Nagasaki, had his power reduced economically and territorially by Hideyoshi as he conquered Kyushu and became a corsair for the Nabeshima house in the Korean wars that followed. Both the Fukahori clan and the Kozasa clan, as pirates and corsairs, were replaced by the Chinese and Dutch, who also created problems for Japanese merchants, whose fortunes were to change in the Tokugawa period.

In Hirado, a turning point came between 1610 and 1615, when the Matura as ruling clan did not take full advantage of the domain's economic and financial potential by restructuring the way in which trade was conducted. Furthermore, they were penalized by the Tokugawa, who curtailed their income while expecting foreign goods and the total elimination of Christian priests and merchants in their domain. These were the main reasons that precluded Hirado from becoming a "door" to international "diplomatic trade," a door that was shut in 1641, as I explain in Chapter 5. In contrast, the Shimazu, via the official channel of Ryukyu, profited greatly from the export of silver. In 1609, Tokugawa Ieyasu understood that in order for his commercial and financial plans to be successful, he needed to capitalize on the export of Japanese silver in the Chinese market, and thus used the annexation of the Ryukyu as a launching platform to strengthen his power domestically and internationally.



## Chapter 5: The Annexation of Ryukyu as a Catalyst for the Transformation of Piracy in the Southern Domains of Satsuma, 1599–1620s

### 5.1 Introduction

In 1598, upon the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Japan was ruled by a coalition of five regents appointed by Hideyoshi to take care of his son Hideyori until he reached adulthood. The five regents decided to end the Korean wars and recall all troops from Korea. The Shimazu of Satsuma, like every Kyushu daimyō, bore heavy losses. Kyushu was now in poorer condition than when the conflict had started; as a result, many daimyō had resorted to trade and to dabbling in piracy in order to restore their finances. In 1599, the regents issued anti-piracy edicts directed to the Shimazu of Satsuma and to the Matura of Hirado trying to curb piratical trade in fear that, given the vacuum of power, such trade could finance rebellions. Tokugawa Ieyasu, *primus inter pares* in the coalition of regents, and one of the wealthiest among them, was clearly giving signs of filling the vacuum of power left by Toyotomi Hideyoshi. By 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1600, Japan was politically divided into two factions who fought at Sekigahara, the western faction led by Ishida Mitsunari and the eastern faction led by Tokugawa Ieyasu. The Shimazu sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu and lost, but were quick in declaring their loyalty to the new regime. Nine years later, Tokugawa Ieyasu, taking advantage of the long-standing relations the Shimazu had with the Ryukyu Kingdom, quickly annexed it to Japan.

Historians of the Ryukyu Kingdom in the early Tokugawa period have dealt with the annexation from various standpoints, most notably from the diplomatic standpoint of international relations with the Ming. Such is the case with Arano Yasunori, who has conceptualized trade in the sixteenth century as a “piratical condition” (*wakoteki jōkyō*) and argued that there was a clearly individuated tribute system network, categorized as “official”

trade, versus a “pirate” one, which operated alternatively in relation to the activation or deactivation of Ming China’s maritime prohibitions.<sup>474</sup> Yasunori’s perspective, however, is still informed by a Sinocentric world view. Elsewhere he has argued that the piratical conditions created by the Ming anti-piracy bans transformed East Asia into a free trading area.<sup>475</sup> In a similar vein, Akira Matura has researched Japanese piracy in Ryukyu from the Sinocentric perspective of Ming-Ryukyu relations and records.<sup>476</sup> More grounded in Japanese Ryukyu relations are scholars such as Gregory Smith, who has explored Ryukyu identity in relation to Japan,<sup>477</sup> and Uehara Kenzen, and, more recently, Uezato Takashi, who have instead dealt with the political aspects of the subjugation of Ryukyu by Shimazu daimyō, focusing their attention on the political events leading to the annexation.<sup>478</sup> However, their study of piracy has not so far been linked to domestic economic policies implemented by Tokugawa Ieyasu and his successors in the transitional period during the early Tokugawa regime. Only Takeda Mariko’s research on Tokugawa policies of international diplomacy and trade with regard to Southeast Asian countries has touched on the anti-piracy policies of the interregnum period, which began with the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1598 and ended with the beginning of the Tokugawa government in 1600, without linking them to the domestic realm.<sup>479</sup> Maehira Fusaaki has also dealt with piracy, focusing his research mainly on the piratical relations between Satsuma and Ryukyu.

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<sup>474</sup> Arano Yasunori, “The Kingdom of Ryukyu and the East Asian World Order in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” in *Ryukyu in World History*, ed. Josef Kreiner (Bonn: Bier’sche Vewrlangsanstalt, 2001), 117–142.

<sup>475</sup> Arano Yasunori, *Edo bakufu to higashi Ajia* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2003), 71.

<sup>476</sup> Matura Akira, *Higashi Ajia kaiichi no kaizoku to Ryukyu* (Okinawa: Matsuura A., 2008), 78.

<sup>477</sup> Gregory Smith, *Visions of Ryukyu* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 33.

<sup>478</sup> Uehara Kenzen, *Shimazu shi no Ryukyu shinryaku* (Okinawa: Uehara Kenzan, 2009). Uehara has written several books on the diplomatic history of Ryukyu, while Takashi Uezato has looked further at the relationship the Ryukyu had with the Shimazu daimyo of Satsuma, particularly during the conquest of the Ryukyu Kingdom. See Uezato Takashi, *Ryūhi sensō 1609* (Okinawa: Kenshi Shuppan, 2010).

<sup>479</sup> Takeda Mariko, “Kaizoku shojorei to zaigaiminshū no kikoku konnan,” *Kaijishi kenkyū* 66 (2009): 1–18. Takeda Mariko has studied the relationship that Tokugawa Ieyasu had with merchant families (both Japanese and Chinese) dealing with Southeast Asian countries in their correspondence with Ieyasu at the onset of his regime.

In this chapter, I interpret Tokugawa anti-piracy policies in connection with the annexation of Ryukyu as the chronological apex of a set of economic and military strategies aimed at the eradication of piracy as a threat to the new regime. By taking into consideration how the Tokugawa silver exports and trade affected the Shimazu, who had taken a main role in the annexation of Ryukyu, I examine the reasons why, at the outset of the Tokugawa government, the pirates and corsairs of Kyushu were excluded as trading agents by the new regime. The Tokugawa government, in annexing the Kingdom of Ryukyu, meant to deter domestic rebellions by further weakening the finances and military strength of southern daimyō and, internationally, to deter western powers (Portugal and Spain) from interfering in Japanese affairs while projecting its own political supremacy within Japan. Commercially, the annexation also meant the gaining of new trading outposts that gave semi-official access to the Ming and Southeast Asian markets in the age of the silver trade, thereby signifying at once the end of the Sinocentric tributary system and the use of official and piratical channels.

## **5.2 The Condition of the Shimazu Lords at the Outset of Tokugawa Rule**

In 1599, the five regents issued two anti-piracy edicts three months apart, directing the first to the Shimazu clan and the second to the Matura clan. The aim of those edicts was not to eradicate piracy but to strengthen their domestic and international authority, if not to show Tokugawa Ieyasu's position as *primus inter pares* among the regents at an international level.

The first of these edicts was issued in the fourth month of 1599, to the lords of Satsuma, Shimazu Yoshihiro and Tadatsune Iehisa warning them that according to the anti-piracy edict they had to comply by eliminating pirates and their associates. Then, in the same month another edict only addressed to Shimazu Tadatsune Iehisa was issued as follows:

Although piratical activities have been prohibited since last year, this year there are [again] people who violate the law by going abroad to engage in piracy.

Therefore we [have decided] to take further measures [against them]. From now on, please understand that [who may have such unlawful pirates on their territory, like] you lord Shimazu should take measures [against piratical activities] according to the rules from the previous year. You [also] should be careful and pay great attention to departing ships and those [ships] that come back [to Japan], and should strictly inspect them [= all the departing and coming ships and their crew]. Keichō four, fourth month.<sup>480</sup>

Domestically, these edicts were intended to reduce the volume of illicit trade, or piratical trade (*bahan bōeki*), that brought wealth directly or indirectly to the southern domains. Thus, they were a method to reduce the economic power of the southern daimyō while consolidating the sovereignty of the five regents over those domains conquered by Hideyoshi, at a time in which the vacuum of power in the central government could have led to further conflicts stemming from Kyushu. In addition, the five regents re-conceptualized the concept of piracy as a threat to the state. Hence, pirates became perpetrators against state regulations and state power. Furthermore, by renewing a policy that had been already established by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, they did show a certain degree of continuity in projecting their authority as legitimate power holders.

Given the 1599 renewed prohibition of piracy, and consequently of illicit trade, the Shimazu clan were being strangled financially; and, with time, they were enticed by financial needs to think seriously about annexing the kingdom of Ryukyu as ordered by Tokugawa Ieyasu, even if they saw their economic monopoly on sea routes as being threatened by him. On the Shimazu side, domestic matters had sidelined Ryukyu diplomatic and trade issues until the new regime came to the fore offering a persuasive solution to Shimazu's economic problems. In fact,

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<sup>480</sup> Tokyo Daigaku Shiryo Hensangakari, *Dai Nihon komonjo iewake: Shimazu kemonjo*, vol. 2, doc. 1090 and doc. 1091 (Tokyo: Shiryo Hensanjo, 1904), 382-383. The above document is the translation of the author of doc. 1091. See also Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku*, vol. 3, doc. 714 (Tokyo: Shūendo Shuppan, 1985), 371.

an entire series of events substantially decreased the finances of the Shimazu clan and helped set an irreversible course toward annexation.

The first of these events were the wars against the Ōtomo clan in the 1580s, the war against the unification under Hideyoshi in 1586, and Hideyoshi's Korean wars (1592–1598), in which the Shimazu sustained heavy economic burdens, and, last but not least, the battle of Sekigahara. By 1602, the Shimazu clan had been forced to borrow forty *kanme* in silver from Fukushima Masanori, the lord of Aki, to manage their fiefs and pay their dues to the Tokugawa government.<sup>481</sup> Because of their economic situation, they were withholding as much as 110,800 *koku* of rice in revenues from the Tokugawa, which they were able to keep hidden by annexing the Ryukyu Islands. Uehara claims that this was the main reason for the annexation.<sup>482</sup>

According to Ishigami Eiichi, the Shimazu were also relying on the Amami Ōshima Islands and the Tokara (Seven Islands) archipelago, located midway between Ryukyu and Satsuma, as previously described in chapter 2, for tax revenues.<sup>483</sup> However, the relationship with the Tokara Islanders was one of financial reliance, given that in 1579, to sustain their territorial conflicts, the Shimazu had requested of their Tokara financiers a loan of 250 *kanme* in silver at 5 percent interest, a sum they were certainly not able to repay.<sup>484</sup>

A second main reason was the gradual collapse of Shimazu's monopoly over the trading routes, in both the piratical and legal trade, from Satsuma to the Ryukyu Kingdom. Leading to the collapse were both the high profits spurred by the private trade performed with Chinese merchant-pirates, and the competition for markets in Shimazu's controlled Ryukyu routes by Europeans as well as other Japanese private domain traders. The Shimazu controlled Kagoshima

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<sup>481</sup> Uehara Kenzen, *Sakoku to hanbōeki*, 25.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>483</sup> Ishigami Eiichi, "Ryukyu no Amami Shotō tōchi no shodankai," *Rekishi hyōron* 603 (2000): 8.

<sup>484</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku, Ryukyu iri no ki*, vol. 4.

and Bōnotsu Harbours, two main commercial nodes in southern Kyushu. Bōnotsu in particular directly connected southern Japan to Fujian and the Ryukyu Kingdom, and this harbour, along with Yokoseura, was where the Portuguese docked their ships from the 1560s on, before being given Nagasaki as a safe harbour from which to conduct trade. Bōnotsu's nearby coastal area and archipelagos as well as its southern islands had been a location for pirates and Shimazu-controlled corsairs since earlier centuries. But during the interregnum governance after the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, by the eighth month of 1598, those harbours were mainly employed in the repatriation of Shimazu troops and in the trafficking of Korean slaves to Ryukyu.

The third reason, related to the financial strain caused by the wars, was the reliance on war economies and, in particular, on the profitable slave trade. As many men were drafted, and few were left to till the fields, the slave trade provided much-needed manpower where it was lacking. The slave trade in Japan was carried out by several groups of people across all social strata— the capture of people in the Korean wars involved the cooperation of military troops and the merchants who catered to them. Either persons were tricked into slavery, or troops captured slaves and let the merchants handle the economic aspect of the business. Of the diverse people conducting the slave trade, many were tricksters (*hitokadoi* 人勾引) or middlemen buyers (*hitoakibito* 人商人). Others who played a part were often exiled people or war refugees, seen as fleeing people (*rulo* 流浪), who, needing to make a living, provided the service of carrying slaves from the harbours where they were captured to designated ships for shipment abroad.<sup>485</sup> The buyers were foreigners, such as Portuguese or Chinese merchants, although some slaves were taken by pirate ships as rowers. It was such trade, as it occurred in several Kyushu domains, which sustained Shimazu finances. The two Korean conflicts increased both piracy and the slave

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<sup>485</sup> Lucio de Sousa, “Slavery and the Iberian Legislation,” Conference presentation, International Christian University, Tokyo July 2016.

trade now carried out by various agents who sought to capitalize on the conflicts by taking advantage of the economies of war in the southern domains closest to Korea, namely all of southern Kyushu.

Hideyoshi's previous anti-piracy edict, issued in 1587, as well as his previous prohibition against enslaving Japanese people, were both immediately contravened by the Korean wars and their economic effects. The 1587 anti-piracy edict had the effect of penalizing only those pirate gangs that had no powerful affiliations, either militarily or commercially, while his anti-slavery edict was intended to restrain the trade of Japanese people taken abroad. Ironically, it was the Korean wars that increased not only the number of people profiting from piracy and from the slave trade, but also the taking of Japanese, as a great many of them died abroad. By 1598, as Japanese troops retreated from Korea, many Korean captives were enslaved to work in agriculture or as domestic servants in Japan.<sup>486</sup> An early account of this human tragedy during the Bunroku era (1592-96) was described by the Buddhist monk Keinen (1534–1611), one of the few Buddhist monks assigned to follow the troops. Keinen followed the troops of Ota Kazuyoshi, lord of Usuki, in order to take care of the administer Buddhist rituals and to erect temples in Korea as part of the administrative war plans, and his diary is the only one in existence today that objectively described the events of the war without glorifying the Japanese enterprise.<sup>487</sup> He was an acute observer whose dislike for traveling in the mysterious and frightening land that was Chosŏn Korea found a place in his travel descriptions. In regard to the slave trade, Keinen reports the following:

From Japan even merchants buying people arrived, they are in the rear of the troops and take all sorts of people; men, women, young and old, they tie them by

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<sup>486</sup> Kitajima Manji, *Toyotomi Hideyoshi no chōsen shinryaku*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1995), 53.

<sup>487</sup> George Elison, "The Priest Keinen and His Account of the Campaign in Korea, 1597-1598: An introduction" *Nihon kyōiku shi ronso: Motoyama Yukihiro kyōju tainan kinen ronbunshū henshu iinkai*, Yukihiro Motoyama ed., (Kyoto: Shinbunkaku, 1989), 26.

their necks with a rope lining them up. If they fell down and do not hurry the merchants push them with sticks to have them move. This looks like a scene from hell where sinners are devoured by demons.<sup>488</sup>

Keinen vividly commented that such merchants had to be bred to do such terrible work, as no human being would willingly enter into this awful trade to hurt people on purpose.

The number of Korean captives is not known, but it is estimated that from 20,000 to 100,000 people were displaced during war time.<sup>489</sup> The Japanese motivation to possess slaves was apparently clear to Hideyoshi and to those generals who needed manpower to build fortresses in Korea and to supply their war needs. Sought for their labour as servants, the captives all initially suffered hard times, and although high numbers survived in Japan, probably many more died while being shipped there. Slaves were sold to Portuguese and other foreigners as well, who became main buyers in the harbours of Kyushu.

Corroborating the story of Keinen, in 1594 Francesco Carletti, a Florentine merchant, bought a Korean boy in the harbour of Nagasaki for the very cheap price of five coins. The boy would first travel with him to Amsterdam and then move on to Italy, where he grew up and died years later.<sup>490</sup> In regard to slaves brought to Japan from Korea, Carletti wrote:

The country is divided into nine provinces, namely Ciascien, capital of that kingdom and royal city, Quienqui, Conguan, Hanhoy, Ciuala, Hiensian, Tian, Cian and the last is called Piancin, and from those maritime provinces [they] brought an infinite number of women, men, boys and girls of any age and all of them were sold as slaves for a very low price.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> Keinen, *Chosen inamiki*, Chosen Kenkyukai ed., (Tokyo: Chosen Kenkyukai, 2000), 49.

<sup>489</sup> Nam-lin Hur, Lecture "Korean Diaspora," lecture, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, January 24, 2003.

<sup>490</sup> Francesco Carletti, *Ragionamenti del mio viaggio intorno al mondo*, 84.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*, 111–112.



Funai and Usuki became well-known slave markets and, at times, places for transporting and selling slaves elsewhere. The Shimazu of Satsuma profited from the slave trade, as did other daimyō whose purveyors and troops were involved in it, by bringing Koreans to Satsuma and selling them in Kagoshima or other harbours in the islands of the Tokara archipelago used by pirates to ship captives to Ryukyu.<sup>492</sup>

Pirates who were in possession of their own ships and worked individually may not have been the norm in Japan, but merchants turned pirates were not uncommon. The same was true for pirates or seafarers who had no choice but to enter into the merchant world to exploit their skills while taking advantage of merchant group associations, with benefits from the purchasing of ships to the marketing of foreign goods within their domains. The case of Tsuruya Sukemori (or Shōgen) attests to the multiple identities pirates and merchants assumed in various localities.

In 1595, while the Korean wars were in full swing, Tsuruya Sukemori raided the coast of Fujian, abducted several Chinese, and transported them to Kyushu. Two of his abductees, Chen Chao So and Chen Yagozaemon, were taken to the harbour of Tsuruzaki in Bungo, then under the Ōtomo clan. Tsuruzaki Harbour was controlled by Yoshioka Akioki, a retainer of the Ōtomo house who had at his service the corsair Kibe Noto no kami.<sup>493</sup> Tsuruzaki, as a location, was close to Saga no seki, ruled by the Wakabayashi family, as mentioned in Chapter 3, corsairs of the Ōtomo. Although it is difficult to prove that the Wakabayashi corsairs as harbour deputies were involved in the slave trade, it is certain that on behalf of their daimyō, they supervised ships that left for Ryukyu and other East Asian countries. On the mercantile side of the spectrum, merchant pirates like Tsuruya in Bungo sold the abovementioned Chinese captives in northern

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<sup>492</sup> Ishigami Eiichi, “Ryukyu no Amami shōtō tōji no shudankai,” 2–15. Volume 4 of the *Tamonin Nikki* also reports such activities by the Shimazu at the end of the Korean wars.

<sup>493</sup> Tsuruzaki chō ed., *Bungo Tsuruzaki chōshi* (Tsuruzaki: Toshosha, 1978), 129.

Kyushu, and after a few years, they resettled in Naha, Ryukyu.<sup>494</sup> Chen Yagozaemon even adopted a Chinese character from the name of his abductor, possibly a sign that he had become a retainer of some sort. Previous researchers, who have written about Tsuruya Sukemori, although confirming that he was a slave merchant and used piracy, did not place him within Japan.

In my research, the identity of Tsuruya Sukemori has surfaced from fragmentary information in various Japanese provinces. He was not a merchant pirate operating on his own, but a prominent member of the mercantile association of Fujiyoshida (presently in Shizuoka prefecture), and as such he was working together with the Tamaya family.<sup>495</sup> The Tamaya, also a merchant house, received shrine land revenues from Katō Mitsuyoshi (ruler of Fujiyoshida from 1591 to 1593). A surviving document records that Tsuruya Sukemori, being a purveyor, received a written order to pay the Tamaya on Katō Mitsuyoshi's behalf.<sup>496</sup> Placing Tsuruya Sukemori in Japan is important, as his location bears out the fact that merchant pirates were not single entities working on their own in a time of business downturns. Instead, they were seeking specific profits; and, in Japan, were backed by entire merchant associations, putting into question the concept of the “entrepreneurial merchant pirate.”

It also reveals a more complex reality in which merchant networks played a significant role in trading legally in Japan and acting as pirates elsewhere. In view of their varying status according to geographical location—pirates abroad and merchants domestically—it is often difficult for researchers to separate the roles played by individuals backed by warlords or merchant organizations, as they were engaged in both legitimate and piratical activities. Tsuruya Sukemori, as well as several other slave traders, had used the harbours of northern and southern

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<sup>494</sup> Naha Shiryōhen linkai, *Naha shi shi*, dai 1, maki 6 jō.

<sup>495</sup> Fujiyoshida Hensan linkai, *Fujiyoshida shi shi shiryōhen*, 1 (1992): 117-118.

<sup>496</sup> Kikuchi N., “Yoshida no Himatsuri,” *Fujiyoshida Museum of Local History News*, (2003): 6–7.

Kyushu as loci for his business, and as such contributed to the reputation of Kyushu as welcoming piratical trade.

Therefore, the five regents' edicts of 1599, meant to curtail piratical (private) trade, were intended primarily to reduce the economic revenues of the southern domains of Satsuma and Hirado, which had colluded with pirates and allowed private trade to take place within their borders. However, the anti-piracy edicts did not eradicate piracy, which was merely relocated. The fact that by 1599, there were still Japanese corsairs and pirates lurking in the Philippines and looting vessels carrying goods and silver shows that these edicts were just a palliative and did not really solve the problem. Pirates and corsairs from Kyushu continued to be active even after both edicts, addressed to the Shimazu and to the Matsura, were promulgated. In the same year, 1,400 Shimazu corsairs raided and pillaged the coastal area of the Philippine Islands with six vessels and, while en route, also seized two Chinese ships entering the harbour of Manila.<sup>497</sup> Consequently, the daimyō of Satsuma, who had sponsored Sino-Japanese piracy in earlier centuries, as well as the daimyō of Hirado, who survived on such trade, were now considered primary targets of the newly formed coalition of regents.

Further discrediting the Shimazu standing vis à vis the Tokugawa was the fact that the Shimazu, like other Kyushu daimyō such as the Ōtomo and Matsura, had sided with the western faction led by Ishida Mitsunari at Sekigahara. Upon the death of Hideyoshi, his young child Hideyori was to succeed as a ruler of Japan while five regents in fact reigned over the country. Discord amongst the five regents led to the battle of Sekigahara on the 21 of October, 1600, fought between the western and eastern factions, respectively led by Ishida Mitsunari versus Tokugawa Ieyasu. Sekigahara was the watershed event that strategically tipped the balance of

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<sup>497</sup> Antonio de Morga, *Historical Events of the Philippine Islands*, ed. Jose Rizal (Manila: Centennial Edition, 1962), 142.

power that, until then, had been built up within Japan. Tokugawa Ieyasu was now ruler of all Japan.<sup>498</sup>

The battle of Sekigahara has so far been interpreted mainly as political when, in reality, it was a clash of two different economic blocs: the liberal merchant economies of the south versus the more agrarian and traditional north. As demonstrated in previous chapters, the southern daimyō had for centuries relied on trade and piracy to increase their revenues. In the northern domains, daimyō relied on agricultural trade and inter-coastal maritime trade, as did Tokugawa Ieyasu, who established himself in Mikawa domain (nowadays Tokyo and Tokyo bay area) in 1590.<sup>499</sup> All daimyō closely managed their local resources and mercantile power, which sustained their military expenses.<sup>500</sup> My interpretation is that daimyō's mercantile associations and proximity to international trade markets did matter. At the outset of the Tokugawa shogunate, Ieyasu's main financial basis consisted of 2.5 million *koku* in agricultural income, it was only in 1604, after having in his hands the trading harbours of Kyushu as well as silver, gold, and iron mines located across the country, that Ieyasu established his international trade policies and increased the trading power of his financiers.<sup>501</sup> In agreement with Iwahashi Masaharu, who relates that political power on a grand scale was intertwined with the expansion

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<sup>498</sup> By 1600, the discord among those regents brought the western faction, led by Ishida Mitsunari, to attack the eastern faction led by Tokugawa Ieyasu, who had also considered Japan open for the taking. Mitsunari, who openly supported Hideyoshi's heir, Hideyori, capitalized on a discord between Uesugi Kenshi and Ieyasu Tokugawa in order to gather the faction opposed to Ieyasu to sponsor Hideyori as heir. Ieyasu Tokugawa was one of Hideyori's five regents, but his actions soon after the death of Hideyoshi were interpreted as moves to unite the whole country under his rule. The eastern faction, led by Ieyasu, was against Mitsunari (though not necessarily Hideyori). Before the battle of Sekigahara, Ishida Mitsunari attempted to murder Ieyasu, and the latter's chief advisors advised him to retire in his castle at Edo. From Edo, Ieyasu planned his next moves of attacking Gifu Castle, one of Ishida's allies' strongholds. At the same time, Ishida and his allies were advancing but due to foul weather had to retreat at Sekigahara, where they regrouped in a defensive position. Ieyasu before the decisive battle bought the loyalty of six commanders belonging to the western faction, thus tipping the balance of military forces in his favour in the last battle that resulted in his victory.

<sup>499</sup> Kitajima Masamoto, *Edo bakufu no kenryoku kozō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1964), 169-175.

<sup>500</sup> Kitajima Masamoto, *Edo bakufu no kenryoku kozō*, 170.

<sup>501</sup> Soranaka Isao, "The Dilemma of Power in Tokugawa Japan," *Zinbungaku kenkyusho* (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1989), 56-57.

of commerce, I assert that the formation of military power blocs was backed by locally-based mercantile associations aspiring to extend their networks internationally.<sup>502</sup> An example of such was the Naya (wealthy warehouse association merchants), which sponsored Hideyoshi's power and his conquest of Kyushu, and eagerly obstructed the piratical endeavors of Fukahori in the proximity of Nagasaki, a harbour the Naya mercantile association meant to use to trade internationally, as shown in Chapter 3. Tokugawa Ieyasu was backed up by a few Kyoto merchants but he had until then mainly relied on agricultural revenues to finance his war enterprises. He needed to acquire, by any means, the trading power of the southern daimyō and of their financiers, not to mention their mines and valuables, in order to control the whole country. In the opposite camp, Kyushu daimyō wished to protect their own assets, including their maritime trade, which included pirates and corsairs in their multiple roles of agents and financiers as one of their most valuable resources.

The western faction, led by Ishida Mitsunari, besides having a larger number of warriors and greater resources to cover their war expenses,<sup>503</sup> was financially supported by the influential merchant and financier families of Sakai, Osaka, Nagasaki, and Hakata. Kyoto merchants like the Chaya were connected to the Tokugawa and “natural” allies of the eastern faction.<sup>504</sup> In addition, Ishida Mitsunari had further allies in the Portuguese and their trade, as it carried their hopes to make a Christian country out of Japan once Mitsunari took command. The Jesuits and Portuguese merchants were a significant commercial ally for the southern daimyō, due to their trade in Nagasaki and their churches, colleges and hospitals established in main Kyushu

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<sup>502</sup> Masaru Iwahashi, “The Institutional Framework of the Tokugawa Economy,” *The Emergence of Economic Society in Japan 1600-1859*. Eds. Akira Hayami, Ōsamu Saitō and Ronald P. Toby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 93.

<sup>503</sup> Owada Tetsuo, *Tokugawa Ieyasu daizen* (Tokyo: KK Inong publishing, 2016), 210. Owada claims that the western faction had resources for 4,160,000 *koku* and 88 retainer houses, while Ieyasu could count on 2,500,000 *koku* and only 40 retainer houses at his command.

<sup>504</sup> Owada Tetsuo, *Sekigahara no tatakai* (Tokyo: Mikasa Shobo, 1993), 97.

domains, and fully supported the daimyō who embraced their Christian missionary cause. On the maritime side of the western faction, Kyushu daimyō forces also included the Murakami pirates, allied to the Mōri, and the forces of Kuki Yoshitaka (Oda Nobunaga's corsairs).

But the outcome of the battle of Sekigahara could not be easily predicted. For that reason, several families split their forces between camps in order to survive. Hedging their bets, the corsairs of Japan, like several daimyō, fought for both sides by having at least one member of the family in the opposite camp. For example, the Kuki corsairs had the support of the nearby Kadoya merchant family, of Awaji Island in the Seto Inland Sea, and were allied to the western faction with Kuki Yoshitaka, but close to the battle, Yoshitaka's father allied with Ieyasu. The same occurred with Murakami Yasuchika, a member of the Murakami pirates siding with the western faction, who had been in the Korean wars under Fukushima Masanori, an ally of Ieyasu, and by consequence fought for Ieyasu at Sekigahara. However, after Sekigahara, he obtained land in Bungo, for 140,000 *koku*, in the village of Mori, Kusu district, thirty kilometers from the sea.<sup>505</sup> As the trading and piratical world of Kyushu remained a threat for the new Tokugawa regime, several corsairs were in practical terms beached, as had happened with Murakami Yasuchika.

Ieyasu, however, remained suspicious toward those who had ceded to his power after Sekigahara, like the Shimazu. After the battle, the Shimazu rapidly submitted to the Tokugawa in order to re-stabilize international relations by creating a certain degree of trade fostering diplomatic connections. However, the Shimazu were aware that their monopoly over the commercial routes of the south could not be sustained for long independently from the new regime.

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<sup>505</sup> Yamauchi Yuzuru, *Toyotomi suigun kyōbō shi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2016), 224-230.

By 1600, the Shimazu successfully reopened relations between their domain and Ming China using their elite merchants. One of these, Itamiya Sukejirō, as a purveyor for the Shimazu, had his base in Kagoshima and had supplied the Shimazu during the Korean wars. Itamiya was captured in 1601 on the charge of piracy. However, his merchant family established itself in Sakai and became rather successful in the following years under Ieyasu's rule. Another Shimazu merchant, Torihara Kamon no suke Kiemon Sōan, traded often with the Chinese in Ryukyu.<sup>506</sup> He was given the commission to return Ming General Mao Guoke, captured during the Korean wars, as well as captured pirates, so as to restore the tally trade with coastal Ming China.<sup>507</sup> Although initial diplomatic relations failed, because Sōan's ship was dismissed from the Grand Coordinator of Zhejiang, Liu Yuanlin, and sent to Fujian where the mission was disregarded as it was Ieyasu's official letter to reopen trade with the Ming. Such event however showed the strength of the Shimazu maritime merchants' network and their dominant relations with the Ming and Ryukyu.

Ryukyu's merchants, on their part, wished to enter into commercial relations with several other daimyō, not only with the Shimazu, without being preceded by the traditional tribute-bearing ships. Consequently, the trouble for the Shimazu began in 1602, when a ship from the Ryukyu Islands directed to the domain of Dewa and Mutsu, ruled by Date Masamune, sank close to Japanese shores. The incident was reported to the bakufu, and the Shimazu became aware of their several competitors. As if that incident was not enough, in 1605, another ship piloted by the same captain from Ryukyu and sent to carry tributes to the Ming, was shipwrecked off the coast of Hirado, Mutsu domain. The Mutsu notified the bakufu about the shipwreck. The bakufu,

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<sup>506</sup> Watanabe Miki, "An International Maritime Trader – Torihara Sōan: The Agent for Tokugawa Ieyasu's First Negotiations with Ming China, 1600" Angela Schottenhammer ed., *The East Asian Mediterranean: Maritime Crossroads of Culture, Commerce and Human Migration* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2008), 173.

<sup>507</sup> Masuda Wataru, *Japan and China: Mutual Representation in the Modern Era*, trans. Joshua A. Fogel (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 173. See also Takashi Uezato, *Ryūhi Sensō 1609*, 187–188.

using the excuse of *lèse-majesté*, as it considered the Ryukyu Kingdom to be one of its own tributary states, accused the Ryukyu merchants of having acted without previous authorization to engage in private commerce in Japan, as more than often shipwrecked sailors did engage in illicit trade. The bakufu thereby confiscated the cargo of medicinal herbs, and let the Shimazu deal with the diplomatic aspects of shipping the crew back to the Ryukyu Islands.<sup>508</sup> Both incidents gravely affected the perception of the Shimazu clan, who had a monopoly of trade with Ryukyu. Therefore, as the Shimazu clan did not want to be cut off as a major conduit, they tried to act swiftly on behalf of the bakufu in order to retain control of the Ryukyu trade as an “official channel” to foreign markets.

### **5.3 The Annexation of Ryukyu as the Apex of the Tokugawa Economic Policies**

By the sixth month of 1606, the Shimazu had already received an order to annex the Ryukyu Kingdom. However, due to lengthy preparations and a Ming mission to Ryukyu four days prior to the planned annexation, the Shimazu had to postpone their attack. A Ming tribute delegation arrived in Ryukyu, followed by an exceptionally high number of merchant ships wanting to trade privately. The Ming envoy, Xia Zhiyang, in his report observed that the Ryukyu inhabitants were not trained in warfare and had poor weaponry, so they could easily be threatened by their northern neighbour, Japan.<sup>509</sup> His comment was surely a response to the Ming regarding the fact that Shō Nei in 1602 had dismissed a Shimazu letter warning of a possible annexation. Xia’s fact-finding mission, however, was most likely gathering intelligence on the Shimazu rather than Ryukyu, and, for this reason, downplayed the fact that Ryukyu people could defend themselves. In reality, the king of Ryukyu had at his disposal more than a thousand armed men, and the ratio

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<sup>508</sup> Uehara Kenzen, *Shimazu shi no Ryukyu shinryaku*, 19.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.



between men armed with bows and arrows and men armed with muskets was 5:2, whereas the same Shimazu ratio was 7:1.<sup>510</sup> Therefore, both trained military men and weaponry were present in the castle of Shuri. As Uezato claims instead, it could also be that Xia wrote things he had heard while not in Ryukyu, or perhaps he did not analyze the situation carefully and had no intelligence news on the capability of Ryukyu weapons.<sup>511</sup> Probably they had no intelligence on the imminent attack either.

In the fourth month of 1609, the Kingdom of Ryukyu was invaded by Satsuma forces led by the Shimazu daimyō, comprising three thousand men in one hundred ships, carrying 734 muskets, ammunition, and more than one hundred bowmen.<sup>512</sup> The same troops had fought in the Korean wars, but their composition had changed. They now belonged to lower social classes and had to provide their own maintenance and weaponry. Their incentive was rewards in terms of their military careers and the spoils of war.<sup>513</sup> The Kingdom of Ryukyu was pillaged of all its resources on the path to the castle of Shuri, and the castle was also looted of all its precious items.<sup>514</sup> The Ryukyu king and his retinue were kept captive for almost two years in Kagoshima, Satsuma, ruled by the Shimazu clan.

The *Rekidai hōan* (Precious Documents of Successive Generations) reports that in the fourth month of 1609, King Shō Nei sent a missive to the Ming advising that a piratical army of three thousand men, using Satsuma trading ships, had invaded Ryukyu.<sup>515</sup> While it is possible that King Shō Nei requested Ming China's military protection, the document is not worded as a distressed request for military intervention but rather as information. Therefore, it was most

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<sup>510</sup> Uezato Takashi, *Ryūhi sensō 1609*, 234.

<sup>511</sup> *Ibid.*, 236.

<sup>512</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku*, vol. 4, doc. 494 and 557, 184-185, 212-215. See also Uehara Kenzena, *Sakoku to hanbōeki* (Tokyo: Yobundo, 1981), 24-29.

<sup>513</sup> Uezato Takashi, *Ryūhi sensō 1609*, 229. Uehara is in agreement with Kirino Sakujin's claim that the composition of manpower had changed since the Korean conflicts.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>515</sup> Okinawa Ken Kyōiku Iinkai, *Rekidai hōan*, vol. 5, (Okinawa: Okinawa Kenritsu Toshokan Hen, 1992).

likely issued after the invasion had taken place under the watchful eyes of the Shimazu daimyō. One plausible reason for the issuance of such a document, as related by Uehara Kenzen, is the fact that the Shimazu had pledged to intervene in favour of the Ryukyu if they were ever attacked by pirates, given their longstanding commercial and diplomatic ties.<sup>516</sup>

Arguably, in 1606 the huge retinue of vessels escorting the tributary Ming envoys were called merchant vessels, but they were in fact merchant pirates coopted into escorting the mission with promises of great profits. They may have served to protect the official vessel, but they may also have been deployed to signal to the southern Japanese daimyō that Ming China and the Fujianese traders were a real force to be reckoned with. This warning was ignored by the Shimazu and by the Tokugawa bakufu, who sent off exactly the same message of military prowess in order to reopen diplomatic and commercial relations with Ming China on equal footing.

Strangely, the annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom did not cause uproar in the tense environment of East Asian relations. East Asian countries had just witnessed, eleven years earlier, Japanese aggression during the Korean wars (1592–1598) of Hideyoshi. China's reaction to the invasion of Ryukyu should have been much stronger, as Ryukyu was a tributary nation of Ming China and, to some extent, of Chosŏn Korea as well; however, China did not raise any objections, as Japan was feared. One of the main reasons for China's silence, as portrayed by Uezato Takashi, was that the position of Shō Nei as king of Ryukyu had not been secured via traditional tributary relations with Ming China. As such, he was, from a Chinese perspective, only a legitimate crown prince. In addition, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the ruler of Japan, had sought in 1591 and 1594 to establish diplomatic and commercial relations, he had interpreted the Ryukyu Kingdom as being a Japanese vassal domain. Wanting to get to Ryukyu resources and

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<sup>516</sup> Uehara Kenzen, *Shimazu shi no Ryukyu shinryaku*, 113.

harbours, he had requested the cession of the Amami Islands by Shō Nei, and had sent him four hundred ingots of silver in exchange for such a concession. Shō Nei accepted the gift as a tributary homage, but the cession envisioned by Hideyoshi never occurred.<sup>517</sup> Therefore, Ming China was weary of Ryukyu, as it had sided with the enemy during the Korean conflict.

On the Ming side, Chen Zizhen (1547–1611), the military governor of Fujian province, reported to the throne that in the seventh month of 1610, Shō Nei had sent two envoys with tribute to let the Ming know of the Japanese invasion of Ryukyu, but they got only as far as Zhejiang, and news of the annexation did not reach the court until 1612.<sup>518</sup> However, it is possible that by 1609 the thirty six Chinese merchant families residing in Naha had already reported unofficial news of the annexations, given that by 1611 they became the mercantile agents of the Shimazu as one of the conditions set by Iehisa to reestablish trade with the Ming.<sup>519</sup>

Foreigners residing in Japan as well as envoys from countries that had commercial and diplomatic relations with both Japan and the Kingdom of Ryukyu not only expressed concern regarding the pressing threat of further Japanese conflict in the area but also hinted at the economic and political directions in which Japan was heading. Europeans and Chinese reacted to the annexation by framing it commercially and diplomatically according to their own interests. In 1610, Jesuit father João Girão Rodriguez, in his annual report to the Roman curia, stated:

Not far away from the kingdom of Saxuma toward north, there are some Islands called Liuquiu by their people, and Seiches by the Portuguese, and since in these islands there is all that is necessary to human life in abundance, they always traded with Japan trade; even if their inhabitants' language is different from the Chinese, and partially also from the Japanese, they can communicate with both.

Now those Islands having refused in first place to be subjects and then having let

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<sup>517</sup> Uezato Takashi, *Ryūhi sensō 1609*, 177–178.

<sup>518</sup> Zheng Liangsheng, *Mingdai wokou shiliao* (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1987), 738-739. See also *Shenzong Shilu*, chapte 473 Gengwu 6<sup>th</sup> month of 1612.

<sup>519</sup> Uezato Takashi, *Ryūhi sensō 1609*, 218.

go of the tribute that they used to pay to Japan, happy to maintain just commercial relations with the Japanese, they aroused the ire, to the point of disdain, of the Cubo [Tokugawa Hidetada]. He taking the chance, ordered to the Jacata of Saxuma to march to the conquest of those islands with a big army without any concern. An order was swiftly obeyed by the Saxuma lord who was victorious by taking the king and all the Kingdom's nobles.<sup>520</sup>

The above passage in Rodriguez' annual report summarizes the perception held by Europeans in Japan of the forceful conquering of Ryukyu by the Shimazu daimyō of Satsuma. Their view was that the Ryukyu kings had interrupted their tributary relations with Japan, wanting to maintain only commercial relations, and that it was for this reason that Japan was punishing them. This interpretation is not entirely correct as it did not portray the full extent of Tokugawa bakufu–Satsuma and Ryukyu–Satsuma relations. Although foreigners in Japan framed the event in economic terms, the Tokugawa wanted legitimization of its regime abroad and, most of all, wanted to deter any other powerful daimyō from resisting or even rebelling against the newly-established regime. Otherwise, it is inexplicable that the Tokugawa, just eleven years after the Korean wars of Hideyoshi and just nine years after the battle of Sekigahara, which saw Tokugawa Ieyasu emerge as the ultimate victor and ruler of the whole of Japan, would want to engage in a conflict that could have severely damaged the reestablishment of diplomatic relations in East Asia, particularly with Ming China.

The Tokugawa bakufu, in fact, had planned to use Ryukyu as an East Asian platform to target Chinese markets and maritime routes leading to mainland China.

In 1610, Rodriguez further reported:

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<sup>520</sup> Rodriguez João Girão, *Lettera Annuale del Giappone del 1609 e 1610 scritta al M.R.P. Claudio Acquaviva Generale della Compagnia di Giesu* (Rome: Bartolomeo Zanetti Publishing House, 1615), 5. Text translated by the author.

Furthermore, the Cubo [Tokugawa Hidetada] awaited to strike a friendship [with the Europeans in Japan] in order to trade with the Island of Formosa, whose trading route are more famous, and that is abounding in richness and food. Formosa, being located between Macau and Japan near the Chinese frontier, is a precious location to the ships from Japan, Macau and China. The goal of this prince [Hidetada] is nothing else but greed, as he thought that if he would have obtained a harbour in that island, it would have been lucrative for the trade of all his kingdoms...<sup>521</sup>

In effect, from 1610 to 1616, the Tokugawa bakufu had toyed with the idea of having a harbour in Taiwan to deal with Ming official trade, trying in vain to establish a viable commercial link with the Philippines and China. Already by the end of the sixteenth century, private merchants and Japanese pirates were flocking to the shores of Taiwan in search of new markets and harbours closer to Ming China.<sup>522</sup> But by 1616, Shogun Hidetada had ordered Murayama Tōan, in his position as Nagasaki Magistrate, to invade Taiwan, as he owned thirteen ships and mustered three thousand men. However, the invasion ended up in failure and the crew disemboweled themselves.<sup>523</sup> Hence, the annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom effectively allowed for a proxy tributary trade with Ming China that benefited Tokugawa Japan overall by displacing the Portuguese trade via Macau and by rendering the Philippine trade inconsequential. In summary, Hidetada aimed to replace the Portuguese with the Chinese using Ryukyu, but that was a hard-fought victory for the Shimazu, rulers of Satsuma.

Even if, by 1609, it seemed that Shimazu Iehisa and Tokugawa Ieyasu were following the same path toward unification policies, this only lasted until their interests diverged. From the

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<sup>521</sup> Rodriguez João Girão, *Lettera Annuale del Giappone del 1609 e 1610 scritta al M.R.P. Claudio Acquaviva Generale della Compagnia di Gesu*, 6.

<sup>522</sup> Takase Koichirō, *Kirishitan jidai taigai kankei no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1994), 631-637. One of such merchants was Murayama Tōan the future Nagasaki Magistrate, who arrived to Taiwan to trade in 1599 as dealt with in chapter 6.

<sup>523</sup> Charles Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan 1549–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 298.

very beginning, the Shimazu, even though they had pledged their loyalty to Ieyasu, had been a force to reckon with. Until the second month of 1609, Shimazu Iehisa, although preparing an army since the summer of 1608, did not have the intention to attack Ryukyu if Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations via Ryukyu were going to be restored. He promised protection for Ryukyu if such a deal with the Ming Court could be reached.<sup>524</sup> However, once the Ryukyu mission to the Ming failed to obtain the hoped-for results, as the Ming did not send any reply, Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered the invasion of Ryukyu.

Shimazu Iehisa tried his best to retain as much local authority as he could, and to negotiate his way out of Tokugawa's authoritative control. In order to do so, he needed a victory. Shimazu Iehisa brought Shō Nei to Kagoshima, where he resided with members of the latter's court for almost two years. The purpose was to negotiate the state of Ryukyu with the Tokugawa regime. The Shimazu, on their part, staged a forced "tributary mission" during which the king of Ryukyu brought tribute to the Tokugawa, namely the massive amount of looted items and precious metals the Shimazu had been able to handle in their ships. Shogun Hidetada received one long sword, forty-three *kanme* of silver, one hundred *ryō* of silver currency, one hundred and thirty *kanme* of silver pieces (wherein each parcel contained one hundred and thirty *monme*), ten tiger skins, and six other *kanme* of silver pieces divided into six hundred *monme*. The regent Tokugawa Ieyasu, in his residence of Sunpu (presently Shizuoka), received one hundred rolls of damask, two hundred *hiki* of large cloth, thirteen silver *kanme* (each parcel containing one hundred and thirty *monme*), silver currency of one hundred thousand *ryō*, and another forty-three pieces of silver.<sup>525</sup> The Tokugawa bakufu thereby gained legitimacy, while the Ryukyu rulers were allowed to rule their kingdom as a minor vassal of the Tokugawa and under Shimazu's

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<sup>524</sup> Uezato Takashi, *Ryūhi sensō 1609*, 224.

<sup>525</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku*, vol. 5, doc. 721, 287.

control. In this regard, Ronald Toby states that among Japanese historians, there are several diverging views on the diplomatic interpretation that the Ryukyu kingdom was a tributary of both Japan and China and equal to neither.

It is my view, in agreement with Yamamoto Mieko, however, that the relationship between the Shimazu and Ryukyu was one of semi-colonialism. The Shimazu requested a cadastral survey from the Ryukyu kingdom for taxation purposes, treating Ryukyu as a Japanese province, and as such, Ryukyu's sovereignty had been severely curtailed.<sup>526</sup> The Shimazu, as their part of the bargain, gained prestige, further rents from lands, and the trust of the Tokugawa government's key people. Shimazu Iehisa negotiated the fate of his own trade monopoly on the southern maritime routes leading to Ryukyu. Ryukyu, for its part, did continue its tribute-bearing missions, and in fact increased them from one every ten years to one every three to five years after 1644.<sup>527</sup> The Tokugawa bakufu negotiated a tribute system focused on Japan in which the Ryukyu kingdom became one of its minor tributary countries. Lower in status than Korea but whose real importance was the fact that it became a platform for Tokugawa-Ming international trading policies.<sup>528</sup>

### **5.3.1 Tokugawa International Trade Regulations: The *Shuinjō***

In 1609, Ryukyu's annexation fit the Tokugawa plan of using it as a platform for international trade, as Ieyasu had begun to implement foreign relations policies on a grand scale since taking power in 1601.<sup>529</sup> His aim was to invite several countries to reopen relations after the Korean wars and in so doing to reform international and domestic commerce first through the official establishment of the red seal license system (*shuinjō*), and then through a system to regulate the

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<sup>526</sup> Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 49–52.

<sup>527</sup> Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan*, 48–49.

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>529</sup> This point will be explained within this chapter and the next, as the Tokugawa implemented policies that needed foreign markets, and Ryukyu became a platform to launch Japanese silver in China.

import of silk versus the export of silver. He also envisioned stabilizing the domestic economy by minting a standard silver currency.<sup>530</sup>

The first of these three interconnected policies, the *shuinjō*, was masterminded in 1603 by Tokugawa Ieyasu's top advisor, the abbot Konchiin Sūden, as a tool to expand and regulate trade on Ieyasu's own terms. In this regard, Takeda Mariko argues that between 1599 and 1615, the Tokugawa rulers tried to eliminate piracy from Japanese shores by instituting licensed trade, such that only by owning legal permits could trading ships approach countries with whom the Tokugawa government had established diplomatic relations and then return to Japanese territories.<sup>531</sup> The licensed trade did offer guarantees to other states, as now, by Ieyasu's orders, merchants engaging in piracy in other countries could be punishable under the laws of those countries.

One example is evident in the correspondence sent to the king of Cochin China, Nguyễn Hoàng, whom Ieyasu allowed to punish Japanese merchants who had committed crimes.<sup>532</sup> Hence, all the Sino-Japanese pirates who had chosen as their bases the southern domains of Chikuzen, Satsuma, and so on were obliged to resettle abroad, as they could no longer enter Japanese waters without permits. In theory, this system had the aim of alleviating foreign states' concerns that Japan was harbouring pirates. In practice, it did not eliminate pirates but allowed for a distinction between legitimate merchant ships and pirate ships. For example, as early as 1582, the governor of Manila had requested that Toyotomi Hideyoshi provide his trading ships

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<sup>530</sup> Michael S. Laver, *Japan's Economy by Proxy* (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2008), 51. Laver asserts as I do that Ieyasu made the Shuin system one of the cornerstones of its foreign policy, just as Nakata Yasunao asserts that the Shuin trade system as a political tool for international relations did originate with Tokugawa Ieyasu when he masterminded his policies starting from 1601. See also Nakata Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankei shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1984), 31. Nagazumi Yoko, *Shuinsen* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2001), 48. Nagazumi Yoko interprets the Shuin policies as a continuation from Hideyoshi's practices that were further institutionalized under Ieyasu.

<sup>531</sup> Takeda Mariko, "Kaizoku Chojirei to Zaigaiminshu no Kikoku Konnan," 1–18.

<sup>532</sup> Adam Clulow, "Like Lambs in Japan and Devils Outside their Land: Diplomacy, Violence and Japanese Merchants in Southeast Asia," *Journal of World History* 24 (2013): 337.



with licenses so they could be distinguished from Japanese pirate ships, and Hideyoshi therefore initiated the practice of issuing red seals.

The *shuinjō* system was implemented first under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who used it so as to distinguish his merchant ships from pirate ships and permit his retainers to trade abroad and procure goods and war provisions from Siam, Vietnam, Malacca, Pattani, Cambodia, and Manila.<sup>533</sup> The *shuinjō* system as conceived by the Tokugawa bakufu consisted of approving merchants who traded internationally on behalf of the Tokugawa regime by giving them documents with a seal that proved their newly-obtained right to trade.<sup>534</sup> Ieyasu's licensed trade seal implied a more strict control on mercantile trade. In fact, the system permitted the Tokugawa inspectors and bakufu to exert their control from the moment trading ships left Japan. The same occurred with the tally trade but the main difference between the tally trade (*kangō bōeki*) regulating official tribute missions and the license system (*shuinjō*) was that with the former, control over the ships occurred at their port of destination, while the latter had ships and contents checked at their port of departure. Scholars such as Laver and Nagazumi claim that the difference between the tally trade and the *shūin* system was merely due to poor control of the tallies, which were often fake, and to extensive bribery. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, it was not the nature of the tally that rendered that system ineffectual but the competition and rivalry at the shogun level, as demonstrated by Hashimoto Yu.

The main impetus for the Tokugawa regime to implement this license system was to assert its legitimacy not abroad but domestically. The Tokugawa licenses were backed by the

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<sup>533</sup> Nakajima Yoshiaki, "Maritime Trade between Kyushu and Southeast Asia in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century: The Case of Kato Kiyomasa's Luzon Trade," *Shigaku zasshi* 8 (2009): 19. Others such as Nakada Yasunao interpret Hideyoshi's seal as simply a "ship's crossing permit" without the aim of regulating private trade in itself, as private traders were free to act as they wished on the seas.

<sup>534</sup> Nagazumi Yoko, *Shūinsen*, 10. Although the licensed trade system existed under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Nagazumi interprets the new licensed trade system of the Tokugawa as much more structured than in the previous era.

veiled threat of Japanese military prowess, which proved to be essential to the expansion of Tokugawa's political and commercial prestige as well as to the expansion of shogun authority on the seas. As merchants were trading on behalf of the bakufu, they projected the Tokugawa government's power and authority abroad.<sup>535</sup> In this regard, contrary to Arano Yasunori, Takeda Mariko and Nakada Yasunao affirm that the *shuinjō* licenses were used to recognize ships coming back to Japan, not outbound ships, as legitimate. Ieyasu's licensed seals were similar in certain ways to Portuguese *cartazes*, authorizing ships to dock in harbours of countries with commercial and diplomatic relations with Japan, and hosting Japanese merchant settlements abroad.<sup>536</sup>

The power of issuing licenses to trade abroad had ripple effects within Japan. First, it strengthened Tokugawa ties with merchant power circles, and secondly it weakened the power of daimyō, such as the Shimazu of Satsuma and the Matsura of Hirado, who for centuries had acquired their wealth by having their own purveyors and merchants trading abroad. Between 1605 and 1617, the Tokugawa bakufu issued 356 licenses, and, of these, 195 were issued to Japanese merchants only leaving for various destinations.<sup>537</sup> Merchant houses who had made their fortunes abroad, such as the Takagi, the Suehirō, the Sumiyoshi, the Itōya, and others that had started their businesses as wealthy purveyors in previous generations, became the financial backbone of the Tokugawa regime.

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<sup>535</sup> Arano Yasunori, *Edo bakufu to higashi Ajia*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2003). Arano Yasunori has proposed the idea that the bakufu was indeed projecting authoritative power on the seas by certifying those preferred merchants dealing with various Southeast and East Asian countries.

<sup>536</sup> Nagazumi Yoko, *Shūinsen*, 19.

<sup>537</sup> Iwao Seiichi, *Nan'yo nihonmachi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966), 15.

### 5.3.2 Tokugawa Domestic Policies: The Itowappu Nakama and the Coinage of the Silver *Chōgin*

Domestically, the Tokugawa bakufu aimed at consolidating its own political status while tightly controlling international trade and domestic finances so as to further restrict the economic capabilities of its subordinate daimyō. The bakufu applied Ieyasu's motto "*shinanu youni, ikinu youni*" meaning: "Living to the extent of not dying, not dying to the extent of continuing to live," the one he had once applied to the lower peasants in his own domains, who were kept alive with the bare essentials, in order to produce tax revenues. This same rule he applied to the daimyō by exacting resources as long as the daimyō continued his duties and remained loyal, without giving him any means to be able to increase his wealth, even by trading.<sup>538</sup> Trade was left in the hand of purveyors, most of whom had been previously loyal merchants of the Tokugawa, or at the most, powerful financiers who had submitted to Tokugawa's rule. Several of these belonged to the Itowappu Nakama, or silk consortium, the association of wealthy merchant houses who dealt with the monopsony of silk in Nagasaki. Silk paid mainly in silver, monopolized by Tokugawa Ieyasu who, by trying to regularize its export, had the double purpose of stabilizing the economy while preventing wealth from falling in the hands of his main opponents, supporters of the previous Toyotomi regime. Amongst the late-sixteenth century old elite financiers from Sakai and Osaka, as well as Nagasaki, who backed Ieyasu Tokugawa's political power, were six of the wealthiest merchant families in Japan. These were Imai Soetsu, son of Sokyū and provider of firearms and gunpowder; the Tennōjiya, famous financiers of Kyoto; Date Masamune, lord of the Mutsu and Dewa regions; Kamiya Sōtan, the grandson of

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<sup>538</sup>Owada Tetsuo, *Tokugawa Ieyasu daizen*, 201.

Jyūtei, who discovered the silver mines of Iwami in 1526; and Chaya Shirōjirō and his son Matajirō, merchants in Siam and CochinChina.<sup>539</sup>

Chaya Shirōjirō, who was from Mikawa and as such a countryman of Tokugawa Ieyasu, had been a purveyor for the latter. The Chaya supported the Tokugawa military campaigns financially from the late-sixteenth century for three generations.<sup>540</sup> Further ties between Ieyasu and the Chaya family occurred when Ogasawara Ichian, a retainer of Ieyasu, and later to become the magistrate of Nagasaki, married a woman of the Chaya family. This association between political and mercantile power continued, as several Nagasaki magistrates in the early Tokugawa era were related by family ties with the Chaya.<sup>541</sup> By 1604, the Nagasaki magistrate controlled most of the foreign trade and was in charge of dealing with the silk consortium, which decided the price of silk in exchange for silver.<sup>542</sup>

The Itowappu, established in 1604, had as prominent members merchants from Sakai, Kyoto, and Nagasaki. According to the *Shiranki* (糸乱記), an account of the consortium written in 1685 by Takaishiya Muneiwa, descendent of one of the original ten merchant families from Sakai, reported that the decision makers for the Itowappu of Sakai were Shinya Shirōsaemon, Takaishiya Shirōsaemon, Iwashiya Kurōjirō, Agaya Kuroemon, Zeniya Heisamon, Surugaya Yasaemon, Tsuruya Tarōsaemon, Sakuya Jibee, Shōya Tōsaemon, and Itamiya Rokuemon.<sup>543</sup> It is unclear whether Tsuruya Tarōsaemon was related to the previously mentioned merchant pirates serving the Association of Fujiyoshida in Shizuoka, but the Itamiya were closely related to the merchant pirates who had served the Shimazu in Kyushu. Although I was not able to find

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<sup>539</sup> Izumi Chōichi, *Sakai to Hakata sengoku no gōshō* (Osaka: Seibundō, 1976), 216–239.

<sup>540</sup> Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankei shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1984), 133.

<sup>541</sup> *Ibid.*, 134

<sup>542</sup> Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankei shi no kenkyū*, 130.

<sup>543</sup> Nakada Yasunao ed., *Shiranki* (Tokyo: Kintō Shuppansha, 1979), 19.

further documentation to prove such connections for Tsuruya, it is rather hard to imagine otherwise.

These Itowappu merchants were the only ones allowed to go to Nagasaki to purchase silk from Portuguese, and later Chinese, ships, and they dealt with the payments for the batches of goods in silver. After receiving approval from Tokyo, they distributed quotas of silk via a network of merchants in various cities. It is possible that merchant houses like the Chaya were facilitators in these exchanges because of their affiliations both political and commercial. Although Nakada Yasunao has asserted his doubts that the Chaya were members of the Kyoto Itowappu Nakama, they did have special rights to import raw silk thread, being *shiraito* (白糸) merchants.<sup>544</sup> Chaya's main location for the distribution of thread was the castle town of Sumpu (Ieyasu's residence), with rights for five thousand *ryō* of thread.<sup>545</sup>

Furthermore, it is certain that the Chaya belonged to the association of used kimono dealers, or *gofukushi*. This fact is significant, as kimono dealers in the Edo period were customarily pawn brokers.<sup>546</sup> Hence, at a macroeconomic level, they had access to funds in silver in order to conduct their business abroad trading with foreigners, while as members of the Itowappu Nakama, domestically they were reinvesting in used silk garments at a micro level, exchanging them for copper coins or domain coins. International payments were made in minted silver pieces. Until 1601, silver in pieces flew out of Japan, but to restrict the outflow of pure silver, Ieyasu ordered the issuing of a debased standard coin, the silver *chōgin*.

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<sup>544</sup> Nobuhiko Nakai and James McLain, "Commercial Change and Urban Growth in Early Modern Japan," in *The Japanese Economy in the Tokugawa Era*, ed. Michael Smitka (New York: Garland Publishing and Co., 1998), 169.

<sup>545</sup> Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai shi no kenkyū*, 316–317.

<sup>546</sup> Suzanne Gay, *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 336.

In 1601, Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered Gotō Atsusaburō,<sup>547</sup> the main administrator of the Iwami and later also of the Sado mines, to mint in Fushimi the silver *chōgin* currency.<sup>548</sup> With a silver content of 80 percent and a copper content of 20 percent, it was considered a standard currency for trade. In order to produce the amount of silver currency needed for export, Gotō had to purchase cupellated silver from other domains. In 1604, Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered merchants to use only his newly-minted silver currency in international payments. He also forbade the export of pure silver, as the new coins replaced it.<sup>549</sup>

However, the fact that elite merchants were able to adjust readily to the export of the Keichō *chōgin* is rather problematic.<sup>550</sup> Such debasement policy is normally used when the intrinsic value of silver is more than the nominal value of the coin, but as there is no archeological proof that silver had been minted previously to produce standardized coins, it is difficult to explain how merchants readily accepted the new coin instead of silver pieces.<sup>551</sup> In addition, evidence suggests that during the span of the Korean conflict in Japan, the value of silver compared to rice had decreased.<sup>552</sup> However, silver was in high demand internationally, as its value compared to gold had increased, and profit prospects were decreasing by the Tokugawa period. Hence, there was the need for large silver quantities to be exported in order to make up for losses. Economically speaking, to use the silver *chōgin* instead of silver pieces was a burdensome change. Merchants had to pay with a larger quantity of coins than the previously used silver pieces, for the same prices. Kobata Atsushi relates episodes of merchants recasting

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<sup>547</sup> Gotō Atsusaburō in other texts is referred also as Gotō Shosaburō (See Murdoch James and Yamagata Isoh, *A History of Japan*, 1903).

<sup>548</sup> Takagi Hisashi, "Coin system in the fourth quarter of sixteenth century Shikoku," *Yasuda joshi daigaku kiyō* 39 (2011): 80.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>550</sup> Keichō is the name of the period from 1596 to 1615 hence the silver currency took the name of the era in which it was issued.

<sup>551</sup> Ralph George Hawtrey, *Currency and Credit* (London: Longman and Green and Co., 2001), 280–281.

<sup>552</sup> Takagi Hisashi, "Coin System in the Fourth Quarter of Sixteenth Century Shikoku," 80.

the coins into pure silver pieces on their ships or in the harbours of Cochinchina, Siam and Vietnam in order to trade with pure silver pieces as bullion and not as coins abroad.<sup>553</sup> But even with the additional cost of recasting silver *chōgin* into pure silver pieces, merchants were still trading profitably. Otherwise, the only benefits that these merchants could have obtained from trading with the newly-minted silver coins were the privileges associated with their trade bestowed upon them by the Tokugawa rulers.

In this manner, by issuing the silver *chōgin*, the bakufu established a tight connection between silver and the export of other goods from Japan, import and domestic distribution, and the monopoly of minting a standard silver coin that could also be used intradomain. As a matter of fact, at the outset of the Tokugawa era, each of the sixty-six domains into which Japan was divided territorially used their own minted coins, mostly made of copper. Between domains in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the currency used were coins of the Yongle era (1403–24), *eiraku sen* (永樂錢), which had been imported from China since the early Ming dynasty; however, silver pieces were also used as currency. The introduction of a twenty percent tax exaction paid in silver over a certain amount of taxes due was introduced by the end of the fifteenth century in Ōuchi-controlled domains. In the southern domains of the Shimazu, Ōtomo, Matsura, Ōuchi, and Mōri houses, accustomed to international trade, the usage of silver had become standard, but within their own domains, lower-value currencies were used for daily transactions. These were mostly made of copper, with various degrees of copper content. For example, *hagi sen* circulated in the Mōri domain, *kajiki sen* in Satsuma, *kesen* in Kagoshima, and *eiraku sen* in the Kyoto region, along with *bita sen*, *kyosen* and various other currencies.<sup>554</sup> The domains were still economically compartmentalized through their use of locally-minted coins

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<sup>553</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Kingin bōeki no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Hosei Daigaku Shuppan Kyoku, 1976), 107.

<sup>554</sup> Kobata Atsushi, Kuroda Akinobu, Honda Hiroyuki, and Yasukuni Ryōchi have all demonstrated the usage of diverse coins in the different southern domains as well as in the capital of Kyoto.

unusable in other domains. These were known as *akusen* or “bad currency.”<sup>555</sup> The *seisen*, a coin with a higher degree of purity in copper content, was used as intradomain currency along with rice. Domain mints were still in operation, and it was still within the power of each daimyō to mint coins within their ruled territories.

At the outset of the Tokugawa era, Ieyasu wanted to spread the use of a standardized silver coin throughout the Japanese domains with the intent of putting their economies under his control by stabilizing domestic prices. The need to revamp local and international trade and domestic economies was particularly felt after the huge conflicts that took place with Sekigahara in 1600, the annexation of Ryukyu in 1609 and the battle of Osaka in 1615, which had further destabilized Japan economically. All those events were followed by coinage debasement policies which promoted suspicion about the financial stability of Japan. There was high unemployment (especially of defector militia turned into masterless samurai), low economic growth due to the great number of warriors from all social classes that participated in the conflicts without tending their fields, and relatively low incomes due to the lack of sustainable trade. Ieyasu’s policy of minting a standard silver coin to improve intradomain trade may have been initially a way to improve commerce, but in reality it created further problems for local economies by depriving local lords of minting rights. The debasement policy also brought the disappearance of lower value copper currencies.

Initially, numerous lower-value coins were replaced by the silver *chōgin* between 1601 and 1608, when the Tokugawa bakufu finally decided to eliminate the *eiraku sen* from circulation and further debased other various local currencies.<sup>556</sup> Hence, purposely in 1608, just a

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<sup>555</sup> Yasukuni Ryōichi, “Regional Versus Standardized Coinage in Early Modern Japan: The Tokugawa Kan’ei Tsūhō,” *International Journal of Asian Studies* 7 (2010): 137.

<sup>556</sup> Yasukuni Ryōichi, “Kahei ni chiiki sei to kinseiteki tōgō,” in *Kahei no chiiki shi*, Suzuki Kimio ed., (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), 249.



year before the annexation of Ryukyu, a currency debasement took place, and the *eiraku sen* was ousted from circulation together with four other minor currencies,<sup>557</sup> while lower-grade circulating currencies were pegged to gold and silver *ryō*, where one *ryō* of gold was equivalent to 44 silver *mon*, and 1 silver *mon* was equal to 3.75 grams of silver<sup>558</sup> (in currency one gold *ryō* was the equivalent of one *kanmon* of *eiraku sen*, or four *kanmon* of *kyosen*, the currency of Kyoto, which was approximately fifty *mon* of silver).<sup>559</sup> The *eiraku sen* was therefore used for trade with China via Ryukyu and Southeast Asia, once again following the reverse course so that it could flow out of Japan. In addition, by 1610, the various domains' daimyō were forbidden to mint their own coins, and a stop was put to their production of refined silver.<sup>560</sup>

Thereafter, the minting of coins became a prerogative of the Tokugawa regime and, as such, was monopolized. In theory, the integration between international trade policies, restriction of silver exports, and minting of the unifying currency had helped in stabilizing the domestic economy and had centralized power in the hands of the Tokugawa houses. Nevertheless, despite all these restrictions, daimyō found loopholes in the system to oppose such power or at least to retain some degree of authority within their domains. The degree of opposition to Tokugawa rule was not overtly demonstrated. However, one example that indicates the will to retain the right of using domain minted coins is described in the documents of the Hosokawa house. In 1632, Hosokawa Tadaoki reprimanded his son for accepting *kyosen* (Kyoto's interdomain currency) within their domain without having it exchanged at the post-station within his domain boundary. This shows that even Tokugawa bakufu rules had their limitations being implemented elsewhere as it depended on the power the bakufu held vis-à-vis the single daimyō. Yasukuni Ryoichi states

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<sup>557</sup> Takagi Hisashi, "Coin System in the Fourth Quarter of Sixteenth Century Shikoku," 79.

<sup>558</sup> Kyoto Daigaku Kinsei Bukka Shi Kenkyukai, *15-17 Seiki ni okeru bukka endō no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nakamura Kabugaisha, 1962), 3-4. One *ryō* of silver was the equivalent of 43 silver *mon* (161.25 grams circa).

<sup>559</sup> Yasukuni Ryōichi, "Kahei ni chiiki sei to kinseiteki tōgō," 249.

<sup>560</sup> *Ibid.*, 246-247.

that as Hosokawa Tadaoki considered the Tokugawa as *primus inter pares*, he did not attribute a legal enforcing authority to the Tokugawa bakufu political supremacy, while his son did.<sup>561</sup> This episode also demonstrates that at the outset of the Tokugawa period, Ieyasu and, his son Hidetada's supremacy over other ancient daimyō families was not easily accepted. The Shimazu after Sekigahara did accept Tokugawa's supremacy in order to keep their territories and finances more or less viable, but in doing so, they did try to gain as much as possible in return, aiming particularly at controlling the Ryukyu trade as they had done in previous centuries.

#### **5.4 Shimazu's Objectives in the Tokugawa International Trade Policies**

After the annexation of Ryukyu, the Shimazu gained prestige; still, their objective remained the restoration of trade under their control as a way to finance their compromised economic situation. Though the Shimazu continued to recognize Tokugawa's authority, they sought ways to obtain trading licenses to trade with the Philippines, for example, as they had during the Toyotomi regime. However, due to trading policies, namely the usage of Keichō silver coins in conjunction with the abuse of favouritism that the Tokugawa licensing system fell prey to, and the unfavourable position that Christianity came to have in Tokugawa's circles, the Shimazu were able to fulfill their wishes only halfway by regaining instead control of the Ryukyu-Satsuma trade.

The minting of the silver *chōgin* domestically and the licensed seal trade internationally coupled with the creation of the Itowappu cartel provided strong political and economic backing to Tokugawa Ieyasu's authoritative regime. It was least welcomed by southern daimyō, who had their economic and political power curtailed after losing to the Tokugawa at the battle of Sekigahara. Even if several daimyō did not openly reject those policies, they did try to retain as

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<sup>561</sup> Yasukuni Ryōichi, "Regional Versus Standardized Coinage in Early Modern Japan: The Tokugawa Kan'ei Tsūhō," 139

much autonomy within their domains as they could, often creating friction between Tokugawa policies and their own veiled interests.

Tokugawa trading policies had their flaws. The licensed trade was open to favouritism and abuses of power within the Tokugawa government, and to the disadvantage of southern daimyō like the Shimazu. Already the year previous to the battle of Sekigahara, the Satsuma daimyō, Shimazu Yoshihiro, had sent two ships to the Philippines to engage in trade. His ships returned to Japan just a month before the conflict. Most likely, they had been buying weaponry and ammunitions from the Spanish at Manila. After Sekigahara, however, the Shimazu continued to trade in Southeast Asia with the licenses provided by the Tokugawa government, except in 1607, when Shimazu Iehisa, to whom Yoshihiro had entrusted matters related to the Manila trade since 1604, had to deal with Yamaguchi Naotomo, a retainer of Ieyasu, to have his license issued.

Iehisa's reliance on Yamaguchi Naotomo is problematic, as the chief advisor of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who had also conceived the institutionalization of the licensing system, was Zen Rinzai sect abbot Konchiin Sūden (1569–1633), who dealt with international trade and the registration and the licensing of ships, as recorded in his diary, the *Ikoku nikki* (*Chronicles of Foreign Countries*). This proves that aside from the licenses issued by Monk Sūden, others in charge may have abused the system and in reality have issued a higher number of licenses than the ones registered. Nagazumi Yoko asserts this to be a way in which the license system was based on personal preferences and connections rather than fairness.<sup>562</sup> In fact, Shimazu

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<sup>562</sup> Nagazumi Yoko, "Shimazu Yoshihiro no tōnan Ajia bōeki," *Nihon rekishi* 775 (2005): 94–102.

Yoshihiro's license to trade with the Philippines released by Yamaguchi Naotomo does not appear in the *Ikoku nikki* of Monk Sūden.<sup>563</sup>

The Shimazu of Satsuma were allowed to trade with Southeast Asia, with the Ming via Ryukyu, and with the Ryukyu Kingdom, but, as reported in the *Ikoku nikki*, they only received two licenses to trade with Portuguese carracks (*Namban fune*), one to trade with Luzon, and five to six to trade with Ryukyu and Ming China between 1605 and 1617.<sup>564</sup> Even if, as Uehara points out, several daimyō were permitted to trade abroad, the Shimazu were given fewer opportunities, and it seems that Shimazu's Philippines connection had been severely damaged by an incident in 1608 caused by the conduct of the daimyō Arima Harunobu.

In November 1608, a licensed ship belonging to Arima Harunobu and commanded by two of his retainers entered the harbour of Macau to trade. The Japanese began touring the city armed to their teeth, and the local Chinese asked the Portuguese Senate to expel them, fearing pirate attacks. However the Portuguese only advised the Japanese to moderate their behavior by sending a Portuguese magistrate to warn them. The magistrate was wounded, as result of his intervention, while his subordinates were killed. Andrea Pessos, acting as governor, in retaliation attacked the Japanese and some were killed while fifty survived and were induced to surrender. Pessos requested them to write an affidavit in which they assumed all responsibility for the incidents. In 1609, Pessos arrived in Nagasaki and was poorly advised by Hasegawa Sahyōe, the magistrate of Nagasaki, to avoid reporting the whole incident. However, the next year, the survivors of the Macao incident arrived at Nagasaki and reported the incident in full to

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<sup>563</sup> The episode of Yamaguchi Naotomo has been reported by several authors, such as Uehara Kenzen, Takeda Mariko, Nagazumi Yoko, and Iwao Seiichi, but each offers a different explanation without really addressing why Yamaguchi had assumed such a role as license dispenser for the Tokugawa and why those licenses were not registered in the official log.

<sup>564</sup> Konchiin Sūden, Nakamura Tadashi ed., *Ikoku Nikki: Konchiin Sūden gaikoku monjoshūsei* (Tokyo: Migyū Shuppan, 1989), 76, 117–118, 121–124, 126, 127.

the authorities so that it reached Ieyasu's ears. In 1611, Ieyasu communicated to the Senate of Macau that Japanese licensed ships were no longer going to trade there.<sup>565</sup> Therefore, he decided to let Arima Harunobu take Pessoas' ship and cargo.<sup>566</sup> As reported by Francesco Pasio, by July 1609, Andrea Pessoas had not properly communicated the events to Ieyasu, who had dealt with the Macau incident when he arrived in Nagasaki aboard the *Nossa Senhora de Graça*. By 1610, Tokugawa Ieyasu sent investigators to enquire about the Macau incident, and gave permission to Arima Harunobu to inspect Pessoas' ship at Nagasaki and take its cargo. However, Pessoas, having refused the Tokugawa invitation to explain his behaviour, burned the cargo and sank the vessel.<sup>567</sup> Luis Cerqueira's version of events is rather different and probably more credible—that the burning of the ship was an accident caused by some gunpowder barrels which were hit and exploded after four nights of fighting with the Japanese, who wanted to inspect and steal the ship's cargo. Cerqueira also points to another event which was the turning point for Portuguese trade dismissal by Ieyasu. By 1607, Ieyasu had received a visit from the Franciscan friar Vizcaino and two noblemen from a shipwrecked Manila carrack in Tosa, and they had offered both a better deal in terms of shipping larger quantities of goods, “two to three ships per year,” and better contractual conditions and goods.<sup>568</sup> Hence, Ieyasu was enticed to deal with the Spanish rather than the Portuguese. It was in that context that Ieyasu decided to get rid of Pessoas' ship and to disdain Portuguese trade.

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<sup>565</sup> Charles R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 272. The original document shows the date Keichō 16 (1611) fall season, and is reported in Hirokazu Shimizu, *Kirishitan Kankei Hōsei Shiryō Shū*, doc. 22 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kobunkan, 1977), 280.

<sup>566</sup> *Ibid.*, 272-285.

<sup>567</sup> Francesco Pasio. *Cartas*, (1610), ARSI Jap-sin. Vol. 2B, folio 151.

<sup>568</sup> Luis de Cerqueira, *Lettera ao Papa*, (Nagasaki 5 de Marzo 1610), ARSI Jap-sin., vol. 21, folio 210. Cerqueira reports that the loss of the ship amounted for the Portuguese to the loss of a trade initiated sixty years prior in addition to the 3,000 picul of silk and other miscellaneous goods as well as 200,000 taels of silver stored in the ships for advance payments received and goods already paid. All the men that escaped the shipwreck and fire were later captured by Ieyasu's henchmen and their goods confiscated.

However, the deal with the Philippines' governor broke down in 1612 due to the anti-Christian ban that was enacted by the eleventh month of 1611.<sup>569</sup> In fact, two events prevented Ieyasu from accepting the Manila trade. The first event was the fact that the Spanish ambassador Sebastian Vizcaino, who visited Ieyasu in 1611–12, told him that the missionaries were helping to spread Christianity as a method to colonize countries.<sup>570</sup> The second event, a consequence of the first, was the dismissal of Ieyasu's consultant and translator, namely the Jesuit Portuguese Rodrigues Tçuzzu (1561–1633) and his replacement by the Englishman William Adams (1564–1620).<sup>571</sup> Although the threat to Ieyasu's new government was remote, the rationale for expelling the Portuguese and Spanish was the colonization being pursued via Christian missionaries. There was also, however, a more closely related threat with regard to the Christian traders and the silver trade that will be discussed in Chapter 6, and that I believe strongly affected Ieyasu's decision to curtail Iberian trade. Furthermore, the hiring of Adams in Ieyasu's retinue was pertinent, as Adams, who favoured Englishmen and fellow Dutch traders in Japan against the Portuguese from Macau and Spanish traders from the Philippines, was introducing Ieyasu to the Europeans' religious and commercial rivalries. Even so, Ieyasu could not afford to neglect the Portuguese trade in favour of the English or of the Dutch due to the amount of trade they brought to Japan.

The Portuguese, who had a longstanding history in the silk for silver trade between Ming China and Japan, due to the Ming ban on Japanese traders in China now controlled silver shipments arriving in Japan in order to maximize their profits.<sup>572</sup> Macau as a transshipment city

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<sup>569</sup> Luis de Cerqueira, *Lettera ao Papa* (1610), 151. It is worth noticing that Murdoch stated the anti-Christian bans were issued on the 11<sup>th</sup> month of 1613 in Edo, and an earlier one implemented in Arima's territory by 1612. See James Murdoch, *A History of Japan* (Kobe: Office of the Chronicles, 1903), 500.

<sup>570</sup> Charles R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 312–313.

<sup>571</sup> Ikuo Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 137.

<sup>572</sup> Michael Cooper, "The Mechanics of the Macao-Nagasaki Silk trade," *Monumenta Nipponica* 27 (1972): 431.

survived solely on that trade, therefore it was imperative for the Portuguese to maintain it for as long as they could despite the adversities faced in Japan. It has been estimated that each year the Portuguese left Japan with a cargo of four thousand *taels* of silver in exchange for silk. In this exchange, each merchant would profit from 70 to 185 percent.<sup>573</sup> Kobata Atsushi relates that between 1560 and 1600, the amount of silver shipped from Japan to China varied annually between 22,500 and 37,500 kilograms. The rate of exchange between gold and silver was 1:8 or 1:10, and this increased in the seventeenth century to 1:13, allowing the Portuguese to make huge profits by exploiting the arbitrage among East Asian economies.<sup>574</sup> The Portuguese used alternative precious items such as pepper to buy Chinese silk in exchange for silver, greatly augmenting their Asia trade.<sup>575</sup> By 1600, the Portuguese were able to bring to Japan approximately five hundred to six hundred *picul* of silk, each *picul* corresponding to sixty kilos.<sup>576</sup> In order to protect their precious cargo for the survival of Macao and the profit of its citizens, the Portuguese not only limited the silk traded with Japan, but also monitored Japanese ships in other Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Cochin, and Siam in order to enforce their monopoly.<sup>577</sup>

Fewer silk imports may also have had an effect on Ieyasu's decision to curtail Portuguese trading ships in Japan. In fact by 1610, the Portuguese had incurred heavy losses. Francesco Pasio, the Jesuit Vice Provincial in Japan, emphasized in a letter addressed to the Father General in Rome the need to revise the contract of *respondencia*, as he saw that losses were being sustained only by the Portuguese and Jesuits in the case of shipwreck, as the daimyō accepted no

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<sup>573</sup> Ibid. 432.

<sup>574</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Kingin bōeki shi no kenkyū*, 44–70.

<sup>575</sup> Takase Koichirō, *Kirishitan jidai taigai kankei no kenkyū*, 241; Oka Mihoko and Michael Cooper also discuss those minor merchants selling goods other than silk.

<sup>576</sup> Oka Mihoko, *Shōnin to senkyōshi, nanban no bōeki to seikai*, (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, 2010), 99–101.

<sup>577</sup> Cooper, “The Mechanics of the Macao-Nagasaki Silk Trade,” 92.

financial responsibility when such cases occurred.<sup>578</sup> Pasio was attempting to devise a mechanism by which there would be a more balanced sharing of the losses, such as having Japanese merchants pay more for the silk, rationing the markup among all of them. If Pasio's plan were to be approved, the Portuguese would have had to negotiate with the Itowappu merchant elite higher prices for imported silk.

In reality, even with a decreased supply due to years during which Portuguese carracks had not reached Japan (namely 1600, 1601, and 1603),<sup>579</sup> the prices of silk had declined steadily within the country. This had been the case since 1600 due to the battle of Sekigahara, which saw all of the Japanese daimyō at war, meaning no merchants had gone to Nagasaki to buy silk, but particularly in 1603, when the Portuguese carrack *Santa Caterina* was attacked by the Dutch near Johor, causing heavy losses to both Portuguese and Japanese merchants.<sup>580</sup> In addition, the lag in economic growth due to the war economy may well have set in motion a deflationary cycle within Japan, which explains why Ieyasu had tried to stabilize the prices within the country by not allowing pure silver to leave Japanese shores. Since silver was traded for silk imported into Japan, Nakada Yasunao explains the creation of the Itowappu silk consortium in 1604 as being due to Ieyasu's desire to regularize the sale and price of the silk traded only with silver *chōgin*.<sup>581</sup> Thus the minting of a silver currency whose content in silver was only 80% of its nominal value had been an attempt to increase the prices of imported goods by restricting their import quantities within Japan. Furthermore, from 1601 to 1616, problems regarding the circulation of currency were related to the frequent debasements.<sup>582</sup> However, even if at the

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<sup>578</sup> Francesco Pasio, *Cartas* (1610), 151.

<sup>579</sup> Gono Takashi, "Keichō jūyūnen (1609) ni seiito bōeki ni tsuite," in *Shigaku zasshi* 11(1972): 38–39.

<sup>580</sup> Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankei shi no kenkyū*, 27.

<sup>581</sup> *Ibid.*, 24–26.

<sup>582</sup> A debasement policy is usually favoured when a deflationary spiral is occurring in the country, with high unemployment, low economic growth, and low incomes due to lower prices.



outset of the Tokugawa period an economy of war existed, the prices of goods should have been high, as resources had become scarce. It seems that the deflationary spiral had instead rendered the prices of goods low. Hence, because imports were lacking, prices may have fluctuated periodically at least in the domestic sphere, and were followed by debasement policies after years of major conflicts.<sup>583</sup>

After the battle of Sekigahara, the first debasement policy brought an increase in the price of goods; the second occurred after the annexation of Ryukyu. After Sekigahara, a price increase was recorded in most goods, from textiles to food such as grains and vegetable oils. However, it is somewhat hard to determine whether such a general increase in prices was due to the issuing of a currency with an intrinsic metallic value lower than its nominal value, or due to falling imports. The following table 2, based on documented prices for goods such as rice, grains, beans, sake, and vegetables produced in Japan versus others that were imported such as cotton and damask, shows that there was an increase in prices notably between 1599 and 1601 for staples such as grains, vegetables, oil, and sake. The price of textiles also increased, though it is not possible to estimate the increase in the price of silk, the main foreign import in Japan. But a similarly expensive textile such as damask went from 1800 *mon* in copper coins in 1589 to 60 silver *mon* in 1601, a possible indicator also of an increase in the price of silk.<sup>584</sup> Overall, there was a steep price increase between the years 1599 and 1601, when Sekigahara took place. Although this price increase may have been due to the currency issue with a lower silver content, as all prices of goods increased, it is not possible to conclude that the increase in price was due

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<sup>583</sup> In 1600, the battle of Sekigahara, one of the bloodiest conflicts in terms of manpower and loss of resources, took place, but as the Tokugawa took over by 1601, the new silver *chōgin* was minted and its value debased. In 1609, a new debasement occurred after the annexation of Ryukyu, followed by another in 1616, after the battle of Osaka, when the remnants of the western faction from Sekigahara lost forever their claims against the Tokugawa.

<sup>584</sup> Kyoto Daigaku Kinsei Bukka Shi Kenkyukai, *15-17 Seiki ni okeru Bukka endō no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nakamura Kabugaisha, 1962), 148.

only to the lower metallic value of the currency and unrelated to the lack of imports. More likely, it was a combination of the two factors.

Therefore, even if Ieyasu intended to follow a policy of price stabilization, as current scholars believe, by issuing a currency with a metallic content lower than its nominal value, such a policy would have brought a further price increase to outpace the low economic growth that existed in wartime. Imports could thus have helped in maintaining the high prices of goods in demand.

Table 5-1.  
*Prices for Textiles Calculated per 1 Tan*

Prices in <i>mon</i> (文/匁)	Silk	Cotton\ White cotton	Damask	Pepper	Rice	Grains	Beans	Sake	Vegetables	Oil
1599		225		15		740	30	87	30	367
1600										
1601		8.1 匁	60 匁		14 匁					400
1602									40	
1603						1000		250		
1604										
1605										
1606										
1607						1500				
1608		6		5						
1609		11 匁		15	20 匁	1300	90		30	187
1610	35 匁									
1611										
1612		91								
1613								300		
1614										
1615					30 匁			500		

Note: Source: *15-17 Seiki ni okeru bukka endō no kenkyū*, 1962.

It may be possible, though, that even with a decrease in the quantity of imported goods, the amount would still have been sufficient to supply the demand, as Takase Koichirō states by relating a letter written by the Spanish friar Ile de Mata, who wrote that by 1595, the Portuguese were importing as much as 250,000 *pardos* of silk.<sup>585</sup> Oka Mihoko, citing Takase, mentions that until 1600, the Portuguese were importing 2,500 *picul* of silk cloth at 140–150 *ryō* per picul. That amount of imports could not be rivaled even by the Dutch in 1615,<sup>586</sup> but the lower prices and currency exchanges may have affected not only the Portuguese but also the Itowappu consortium.

The problem with regard to the decreased quantity of silk imports was not only economic but also political, as the Itowappu silk consortium did undergo further changes when Ieyasu appointed Ogasawara Ichian as Nagasaki magistrate.<sup>587</sup> The negotiation of silk prices had increasingly empowered the Itowappu members, to the detriment of the Portuguese, who found themselves in problematic situations, not only being paid less than requested but also having to pay a 5–10 percent custom duty. Further obstacles were created by the Portuguese Captain Mayors themselves, as they often put aside silk (not included in the *baque*, the cargo to be sold at once without being rationed to the Itowappu association), thus breaking one of the clauses established by the city of Macau and thereby engaging in the illegal smuggling of silk.<sup>588</sup> The Portuguese themselves became smugglers of imported silk when need arose. Even if only two

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<sup>585</sup> Koichirō Takase, *Kirishitan jidai taigai kankei no Kenkyū*, 179.

<sup>586</sup> Oka Mihoko, *Shōnin to senkyōshi, nanban bōeki no seikai*, 101.

<sup>587</sup> Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankei shi no kenkyū*, 134. According to Nakada Yasunao the appointment of Ogasawara Ichian as Nagasaki Magistrate was not a casual choice, in fact Ichian, who had been involved in the riots of Macau and returned to Shizuoka as a masterless samurai, reported the events to Ieyasu's henchmen who dealt with the case. He had obtained by then the position of Nagasaki Magistrate, as according to Nakada, the events that are recorded as having taken place in 1606 did indeed occur much earlier, between 1600 and 1603. Although it might be possible, there are no clues about falsified dates in such reports.

<sup>588</sup> Cooper, "The Mechanics of the Macao-Nagasaki Silk Trade," 431.

cases have been reported, as the persons who committed the crime were discovered, it is not farfetched to imagine that it occurred with a certain frequency.

As previously mentioned, making the situation worse was the decision on the part of the bakufu to first deal with the Spanish and just a few months later to implement the anti-Christian bans, from late 1611 to 1614, causing tumult not only among Portuguese missionaries who acted as middlemen in the silk trade for Portuguese merchants but also among the Spanish missionaries and Philippine governors. Internationally, the Tokugawa bakufu was sending a mixed message that trade without Christianity was welcomed while Christians in Japan were going to be persecuted and banned. Historians have always focused on Tokugawa Ieyasu's policies but seldom considered that in reality shogun Hidetada, although young, had been reigning since 1605 and what appeared to be a 'mixed' message vis-à-vis the Portuguese, Spanish and their missionaries was in fact the disposition of Hidetada and of his cohort of retainers.

Hidetada, backed by Ieyasu to a certain extent, ideologically framed his trading policies with the anti-Christian bans of 1611 and 1614, his main reason for doing so being the fear of rebellions against the Tokugawa regime by Toyotomi supporters. Indeed, this threat was quite real, given the building up of support around Toyotomi Hideyori, Hideyoshi's son and legal heir to the shogunate, by Toyotomi loyalists who disapproved of Tokugawa's supremacy. Although the buildup of military forces around Hideyori must have been done with circumspection, the Battle of Osaka Castle that occurred in the summer of 1615 proved that Hidetada was facing real opposition to his rule.

Moved by the conviction to have just trade without missionaries but being unable to obtain a high volume of goods without the Portuguese and their religion, he vacillated in these policies until issuing between 1612 and 1614 a series of edicts banning Christianity. The edict to

expel the Christian missionaries (*bateren tsuihō rei*) had domestic and international repercussions. Domestically, it affected areas in which there were the most converts, namely Kyoto, Sakai, and most of Kyushu (the domains of Ōtomo, Arima, Shimazu, and Matsura), where daimyō reverted to anti-Christian policies by expelling and persecuting Christians at all layers of society to demonstrate their adherence to shogun policies and loyalty to the Tokugawa.

Internationally, the Spanish and Portuguese tried in vain to persuade Hidetada to change his course, hoping to be able to trade as in previous years. The inconsistency of the Tokugawa regime in terms of trade had its embodiment in the embassy of Date Masamune, one of Ieyasu's advisors and allies. In fact, on May 22, 1614, the embassy of Date Masamune, daimyō of Mutsu and Dewa, reached Mexico via the Philippines loaded with trading goods and expecting to strike diplomatic deals before arriving in Spain. The Spanish in Manila expressed concern about the trading exchanges and intentions of the Japanese to the point that they ordered all Christians in Asia including the Portuguese not to divulge any information on shipbuilding and weapons technology. The Spanish mistrust of Japanese intentions grew, even as between 1611 and 1613 two Japanese embassies reached Mexico City to trade and open diplomatic relations. However, the Spanish feared a possible invasion of the Philippines. Pedro Gonzales de Carvajal around that time reported:

It is well known that the Emperor of Japan has a lot of manpower and weaponry, and that his people are very energetic as they are building two hundred ships and casting a large number of weapons. This is occurring only at four hundred leagues' distance from the Philippines on a maritime route taking just fifteen to twenty days to get here. Upon his friendship depends the preservation of the Philippines and of 200,000 Christians that are located in the same kingdom of Japan... When I was in Japan with the Fathers we came to know for certain that some high ranking Japanese requested the Emperor [Tokugawa Hidetada]

permission to conquer the Philippines since it was at no cost to him, to which he replied that he was not going to deal with that issue. I would suggest Y.M. send word to the Bishop of Macau and the Jesuits that if they are sending any ships to Japan they should not send people who do not hold in good esteem the concept of Christianity and fidelity; because that emperor has a great wish to get people who can teach them how to build ships and weapons like ours...<sup>589</sup>

Since the edict ordered the expulsion of the missionaries, Christian merchants also felt threatened, and ships were not loading their cargo in Nagasaki. The consolidation of domestic power was thus a disincentive for foreign traders such as the Spanish and Portuguese. However, in order to continue their missionary aims and to trade with Japan, they eyed Ryukyu as an entry point. Several Spanish missionaries and Christian Japanese had re-entered Japan via Ryukyu between 1622 and the 1630s. Ryukyu's trade since 1611 had been carried out by the Shimazu, who had negotiated their role as middlemen between Ryukyu and the Tokugawa government at the right time, since the Arima Harunobu incident in 1608 and the anti-Christian edicts of 1611–1612 had precluded their obtaining trading licenses for the Philippines.

### **5.5 Changes in the Shimazu-Ryukyu Trade**

By 1611, the Shimazu had been put in charge of the Ryukyu trade, and Satsuma began to regain control of the Ryukyu maritime route as Ryukyu became one of the four trading doors to the outside world. This status gave the Tokugawa international legitimacy and the Shimazu much-needed trade to sustain the livelihood of the domain, which had from 1601 to 1609 become further indebted to the Tokugawa government from an initial amount of forty to five hundred

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<sup>589</sup> Pedro Gonzales de Carvajal, *Cartas* (no date), folio 2, photo, copies of Spanish documents from Manila, Naganuma Bunko Collection II, Kyushu University Library, Fukuoka. This concern of Pedro Carvajal was not the only one expressed to the Spanish crown. In fact, Pedro Chirino wrote a similar correspondence from the Philippines in 1593, as Toyotomi Hideyoshi had executed his invasion of Korea in full force.

*kanme*.<sup>590</sup> Shimazu's indebtedness, initially caused by war expenses, could not be repaid, given the restriction on official trade as well as the impossibility of reestablishing its piratical trade under the Tokugawa. While piracy may have been an issue that interfered with international relations, it is my interpretation that it became the excuse for the Tokugawa regime to restrict the control of the daimyō over international trade.

As of the 28<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month of 1611, the day of the promulgation of the decree that restricted the arrival of foreign ships to Nagasaki Harbour (*Nagasaki shūchū rei* or the Edict to restrict ships at Nagasaki), the Shimazu who had controlled Chinese trade and ships approaching their shores through their Chinese ship magistrates (*tōsen bugyō*) were forced to relinquish their authority to the Nagasaki magistrate.<sup>591</sup> Previously, Chinese ships that arrived on Shimazu's controlled shores trading in silver were neither being reported nor sent to Nagasaki, and even after the Tokugawa issued the Edict to restrict ships at Nagasaki (*Nagasaki shūchū rei*), local deputies in Satsuma questioned what to do when ships approached, as those ships' trade meant advance cash for the domain rulers, and to send them to Nagasaki would mean to lose income from trade.

Uehara has demonstrated that between 1606 and 1611, the control of the Tokugawa over the arrival of ships at Shimazu-controlled ports solidified.<sup>592</sup> However, the reality must have been rather different from what is portrayed by the available documentation, which shows the increased control of the Tokugawa and the willingness of the Shimazu to obey written rules and decrees. Documents issued to report the approach of ships from China attest to the unwillingness

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<sup>590</sup> Arano Yasunori, *Edo bakufu to higashi Ajia*, 37. As per Arano Yasunori's theory, Satsuma became a "door" to the Ryukyu trade, the other doors that gave access to Japan trading-wise were Matsumae domain in the north, Nagasaki Harbour to East Asia, Tsushima domain toward Korea, and Ryukyu toward China and Southeast Asia.

<sup>591</sup> Uehara Kenzen, "Shoki Tokugawa seiken no bōeki tōsei to Shimazu shi no dōkō," *Shakai keizai shigaku* 71 (2006): 512–513.

<sup>592</sup> *Ibid.*, 518.

of the daimyō to relinquish not only their control over trade but their profits from the silver trade. For example, in the summer of 1612, Shimazu Yoshihiro, in an order issued to Ota Kazukichi, one of his retainers, stated the following:

A Chinese ship arrived in order to trade in silver. Lately there have been not [many] arriving like in this case. As soon as it sent a bark to come ashore, [we] had to advise Lord Hasegawa Sabeesuke. We cannot deal with them as before. Nowadays merchants continue to come here to trade, but the issue of disposing of the silver must be referred to Honda Gen'emonnojō...<sup>593</sup>

Although Yoshihiro and his retainers did follow the instruction to send each arriving ship to Nagasaki, if a ship approached at large but left soon after without making contact with the local authorities, the magistrate was not going to be informed. Such a matter, if discovered, had to be dealt with by the Nagasaki magistrate alone. The Shimazu had just found a loophole in the restrictions imposed by the bakufu. Two years later, another document shows that the Shimazu were no longer obligated to send arriving ships to Nagasaki; instead, they received two subordinates of the Nagasaki magistrate in their harbours to inspect ships' cargoes and relieve the Shimazu of such trading burden as it was the inspection process. The Shimazu were strictly controlled and had to obey the Nagasaki magistrate. However, once the ships were not landing in their harbours, the magistrate could not enforce such laws.

In this manner, piratical trade continued in the hands of smugglers, as they could meet ships anchored at large and passing by to smuggle goods by escaping the strict Tokugawa control and punishment. It is not farfetched to assume that people who were once pirates and corsairs, who had lost income and their livelihood, now given the few alternatives, would become smugglers.<sup>594</sup> Smugglers increased in number and replaced corsairs in this politically changed

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<sup>593</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku*, vol. 4, doc. 925, 367.

<sup>594</sup> Yamawaki Teijirō, *Nukeni* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai shinbunsha, 1965), 73.



maritime environment, and this further transformation now served the shared interests of the local daimyō against the centralizing power of the Tokugawa.

Hence, for the Shimazu, their trade with the Ryukyu archipelago as a piratical channel, an official channel, or both was vital to its sustenance as a domain. Although smugglers were not as conspicuous at the beginning of the seventeenth century, they increased in number, and their trade to and from Ryukyu would be a constant factor for Satsuma revenues, as will be discussed in the next chapter. Ryukyu, being the first stop on the routes to several East and Southeast Asian ports, particularly the Philippines and Taiwan to access the Ming harbours and markets, was extremely important to Japan. Japanese and Chinese merchants trading with Tonkin, for example, reached Japan via Ryukyu.<sup>595</sup> From 1603 to 1617, about 394 merchants traded with Ryukyu, which became an important market to send silver to Ming China.<sup>596</sup> In fact, from 1613 to 1635, Japanese merchants alone exported a staggering 1,053,750 kilograms of silver from Satsuma via Ryukyu, a trend that had begun in 1613.<sup>597</sup>

The Tokugawa regime, by 1613, was benefiting from the export of silver provided by Satsuma via Ryukyu. The Shimazu regulated the silver trade between Ryukyu and the Ming, as recorded in a memorandum issued by Shimazu Iehisa on the first day of the sixth month of the eighteenth year of Keichō and addressed to the Provincial Governor of Ryukyu. In the memorandum is written: “Regarding the quantity of silver that has to be sent to China, from next time silver and copper send down [to Ryukyu] will be only 10 *kanme* of silver and 10,000 *kin* of copper.”<sup>598</sup> Kishaba Katsutaka interprets the amount of silver decided upon in this clause as being the initial capital given to Ryukyu merchants to invest in Chinese silk, as in the same

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<sup>595</sup> Takeda Mariko, “Kaizoku chōjirei to zaigai minshū no kikoku konnan,” 2.

<sup>596</sup> Iwao Seiichi, *Nan'yo nihonmachi no kenkyū*, 15.

<sup>597</sup> Arano Yasunori, *Edo bakufu to higashi Ajia*, 32.

<sup>598</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku* vol. 4, doc. 1015, 399. The weight in kilograms corresponded to 37.5 kgs of silver and 6000 kgs of copper.

document there is a reference to raw silk being exchanged for silver.<sup>599</sup> The export of silver via Ryukyu was also due to the increased production of the Iwami silver mines, which was high enough to permit increased export. In 1601 alone, the mines' four administrators had offered the Tokugawa 23,000 pieces (*mai* 枚) of silver, corresponding to 3709 kilograms.<sup>600</sup>

In the middle of the seventeenth century, 150,000 kilograms of silver were exported each year from the harbour of Yunotsu,<sup>601</sup> where a city of 3,000 people alone working in the silver mine had created a silver economy even locally. The records from the Tada family, who had operated first in the silver extraction process since 1593 and later as merchants shipping silver from Iwami to Kyushu, show that by 1628, the captains and sailors who transported silver (*mizu agari gin yaku*) from Yunotsu to other harbours in Kyushu were paid in silver themselves.<sup>602</sup> The payment of sailors in silver meant that silver was already widely circulating among commoners as it had already penetrated the market economy at the local level.

This is a feature that distinguished what Suzuki Atsuko has defined as “the block economy” that existed in the Sengoku period due to limited exchanges among various domains.<sup>603</sup> I am rather skeptical of her interpretation, as the Sengoku period presented a more fluid and less class-based society. Commoners such as ship captains or pirates and corsairs had always been the first to handle the silver they looted and transported; it was not given to them based on their performance. Thus, the use of currency may not have been class-based but have varied according to trades and occupations differentiating the use of money between local or interdomain usage, as well as the private versus public usage of currency at a domestic and

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<sup>599</sup> Kishaba Kazutaka, *Kinsei Satsu-Ryu kankei shi no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1993), 522.

<sup>600</sup> Yunotsu Chōshi Hensan Iinkai, *Yunotsu chōshi*, (Yunotsu: Keibundo, 1994), 21–23. 1 *mai* was equivalent to 43 *monme* = 161.25 grams of silver. 23,000 *mai* were equivalent to 989,000 *monme* or 3,708.95 kilograms.

<sup>601</sup> Nakano Yoshifumi, *Iwami ginzan no rekishi shiryō de miru* (Iwami: Iwami Ginzan Shiryōkan, 2008), 15.

<sup>602</sup> Iwami ginzan rekishi bunko chosa dan, *Kinsei shoki iwami ginzan shiryō shū* (Shimane: Kabugaisha Hokosha, 2006), 77.

<sup>603</sup> Suzuki Atsuko, *Nihon chūsei shakai no ryūtsū kōzo* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2000), 14.

international level. One example of a local and private usage of the silver currency is given by the existence of private mints, which offered their services to merchants and commoners. There are records of a valley in Echizen, Fukui region, called Nishitani, where the minting of silver into ingots or other shapes occurred not due to the presence of mines but because it was a merchant (most likely private) minting place where sailors brought their silver to be melted down into higher-purity ingots or coins to trade.<sup>604</sup> The existence of such private mints indicates that silver as currency had penetrated the lower classes as well, but it does also reveal that the Iwami mines, were a public domain and as such, “government-owned”, serving state purposes and fitting the goals of the regime. One of these goals in 1613 was to mint a particularly produced type of silver exported to Ryukyu by the Shimazu in Satsuma for the Chinese market and called Satsuma hallmarked silver (literally silver for official use, *Gokōyōgin* 御公用銀).<sup>605</sup>

The silver export via Ryukyu seems to have gradually increased. As reported in *Kagoshima kenshi* (History of Kagoshima Prefecture) in 1614, a ship transporting silver to Ryukyu to exchange in China transported ten *kan*<sup>606</sup> of silver and ten thousand *kin* in copper; in 1618, thirty *kan* of silver was traded for silk; in 1623, approximately one hundred *kan* was spent to purchase silk at ten *momne* for six hundred grams. Again in 1626, one hundred *kan* was spent on silk from China. The amount in 1630 skyrocketed to seven thousand *kan*. The quantity of the silver exported gradually increased, but two ships loaded with silver were also sent in 1622 for a congruous amount of four hundred *kan*.<sup>607</sup> However, the *Rekidai hōan* documented an increase in shipping silver only from 1624 onward, the year in which the Dutch established the fortress of

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<sup>604</sup> Enomoto Sōji, “Shokoku haifuki gin yori,” in *Kinsei ryōgoku kahei kenkyū* (Tokyo: Heikawa Kogyosha, 1977), folio 31.

<sup>605</sup> Umeki Tetsuto, “Satsuma han Ryukyu kuni no chugoku bōeki ni okeru nihongin no chōtatsu ni tsuite,” *Hosei University Repository* (2013): 39.

<sup>606</sup> One *kan* in the Edo period was equivalent to 3.75 kilograms of silver, and one *kin* was equivalent to six hundred grams.

<sup>607</sup> Kagoshima Kyoiku Iinkai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku*, vol. 2, 689-695.

Fort Zeelandia on the southern coast of Taiwan.<sup>608</sup> Ryukyu and its maritime routes had come a long way from their past of pirate lairs, as they were now not only a market for Japanese goods but also a diplomatic and commercial area from which Tokugawa Japan spread its trading wings toward the maritime markets of coastal China and Southeast Asia, thereby connecting the southern domains of Satsuma to the world.

## 5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have analyzed the situation of Satsuma domain and of its rulers, the Shimazu house, at the outset of the Tokugawa regime, and the reasons why Shimazu corsairs and the merchant pirates who were in Shimazu's territory by the end of the Toyotomi regime were banned from performing piratical activities and private trade by the five rulers even before the start of the Tokugawa regime. With the establishment of Ieyasu Tokugawa as shogun in 1603, his three main policies, consisting of the red seal licenses to trade abroad, the establishment of the Itowappu silk consortium and the minting of the Keichō *chōgin* as the only silver currency to be exported abroad, aimed at legitimizing and strengthening his supremacy over other daimyō.

My analysis comprised revealing what had pushed the Shimazu to agree to annexing Ryukyu by 1609, given that they were in a weak position and unfavoured by the new rulers, who first denied them sufficient licenses to continue their trade with the Philippines and then issued anti-Christian edicts severely punished Christians in Japan, which disincentivized the governors of both Portuguese Macao and the Spanish Philippines from trading with the Japanese. The lack of piratical trade and insufficient legally carried out trade did not leave the Shimazu many alternatives. Their soaring debts brought them to agree to annex Ryukyu. However, their weak position was not sufficient reason to obey the Tokugawa, which was demonstrated by the clever staging of the Ryukyu embassy that was prepared by the Shimazu from 1609 to 1611, when they

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<sup>608</sup> Okinawa Ken Kyōiku Inkaï, *Rekidai hōan*, vol. 5, maki 37.

were received at Sumpu and Edo. Hence, with the annexation of Ryukyu, which represented the apex of several Tokugawa policies directed toward consolidating central government power into the hands of Tokugawa Ieyasu and of his successors, the Shimazu were given an opportunity to regain their status vis-à-vis the Tokugawa rulers but also to re-establish control of the Ryukyu maritime route and its trade. Although Tokugawa trade restrictions did affect Shimazu's revenue, as they were given fewer licenses than other lords, the control of the Ryukyu trade guaranteed them more income, especially given the fact that by 1613 they had become an official channel to trade silver via Ryukyu with Ming China.

Such trade opportunities did not come without restrictions, as the Shimazu had to send all arriving ships to be inspected in Nagasaki; however, this restriction lost its enforcing power, and by 1613 Nagasaki officials would travel to Shimazu harbours to check ships arriving there. In the same year, the Shimazu gained control over Ryukyu trade, in particular the silver trade, by managing it on behalf of the government. Overall, the Shimazu, who had survived on the piratical trade and in particular hosted pirates in their territories in the earlier part of the seventeenth century, succeeded in regaining their status and taking charge of one of the four doors to the external world, namely the Kingdom of Ryukyu, under Tokugawa hegemony. In the meantime, loopholes in the system allowed former pirates and corsairs to transform into smugglers.

## Chapter 6: The Disappearance of Kyushu Corsairs

### 6.1 Introduction

Kyushu daimyō and their maritime forces, corsairs and retainers suffered huge losses after the 1586 “pacification” of Kyushu by Toyotomi forces who forcibly restrained them territorially. Next were the Korean wars, devastating them in terms of human capital, and then the battle of Sekigahara, where the western daimyō lost and their maritime forces capitulated to the Tokugawa house. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the political and economic reforms of the Tokugawa regime aimed at curtailing the trading power of Kyushu daimyō, whose trade was mostly carried out by their purveyors, merchant pirates and corsairs. At the outset of the Tokugawa regime, Kyushu daimyō were further restricted in their income from trade due to the anti-piracy prohibition they had to obey, followed by trading policies favouring *fudai* (close Tokugawa allies) daimyō, which caused them to receive fewer trading permits and to lose access to international maritime routes and harbours. As a result, their maritime forces were severely curtailed and impoverished. Of all the Kyushu daimyō, only the Shimazu could negotiate their position vis-à-vis the Tokugawa due to their conquest of Ryukyu as a way to control maritime routes once again and to present the Tokugawa with a new tributary state. In all other cases, daimyō had their domain taken away or reduced. Although Kyushu daimyō’s maritime forces were decimated or absorbed in their military hierarchy and no longer constituted a threat to the new regime, they contributed to sustain a certain political attrition against the Tokugawa regime. Such attrition had built up following the coming of age, in 1607, of Toyotomi Hideyori, Hideyoshi’s heir, to whom Tokugawa Ieyasu had no intention of relinquishing the rule of Japan.

This chapter, while dealing with the integration of corsairs and former pirates in the military cohorts of Kyushu daimyō during the early years of the Tokugawa regime, analyzes to

what extent those maritime forces, once disengaged from piratical trade, became an obstacle to the Tokugawa regime, as supporters and close allies of Toyotomi's heir, Hideyori. The war of attrition between the Tokugawa and Toyotomi ended in the battle of Osaka, which is here interpreted as the last opportunity western daimyō and their retainers had to regain their political and financial freedom. As mentioned in Chapter 1, according to the theory of Janice Thomson and also of Gonçal Lopez Nadal, corsairs as a phenomenon arose in times of political and economic crisis to overcome an unchallengeable commercial competitor. In Japan, that competitor in the Tokugawa period became the government itself, which challenged the existence of corsairs at the service of daimyō by replacing them at first with neutral (or proxy) trade carried out by the Chinese and Dutch.

Furthermore, this chapter claims that Tokugawa trading policies backfired, failing to produce the desired effects, namely the prohibition of piracy with the consequent implementation of the *shuin* system, the emission of the debased silver *chōgin* that prohibited maritime traders from dealing in un-minted silver, and the Itowappu silk consortium, created to concentrate power in the hands of the Tokugawa house, as discussed in Chapter 5. Although some of the symptoms of the ill effects of these policies were present already by 1613 and 1614 when the anti-Christian edicts were issued, the full blow of their effect was felt in the 1637–38 Shimabara rebellion. The Shimabara rebellion here is interpreted as the apex of the failure of the Tokugawa policies in Kyushu. It also represented a turning point for Portuguese trade in Japan, coupled with the disappearance of Japanese corsairs and the rise of Japanese smugglers. Meanwhile, foreigners such as the Dutch and Chinese continued to trade in Nagasaki by replacing Japanese pirates and corsairs in their commercial function until their reciprocal interests collided.

## 6.2 Japanese Corsairs: Further Constraints in the Early Tokugawa Period

In 1586, the invasion of Kyushu by Toyotomi's forces not only meant the limitation of piratical activities with his nationwide anti-piracy edict of 1587, it also meant limiting all aspects of daimyōs' public activities, from bestowing titles to arbitration, as Toyotomi Hideyoshi put their territories under his public authority (*kōgi*). In this way, he was able to coerce Kyushu daimyō into co-operating and sending their military and maritime forces to fight in his planned Korean wars. The relationship of Kyushu daimyō to their retainers and subordinate groups, with Hideyoshi as their superior, was transformed.

For example, in Ōtomo's territories, where a higher degree of freedom existed between private groups and public authority figures, due to the availability of semi-private groups, such as *yoriai*, *shū* and the think tank *Manhōshū* to which Ōtomo's corsairs belonged, this interference was felt the most. Semi-private groups did not figure in the hierarchy as "retainers" but could be summoned within the "private" sphere of powers shared by Ōtomo's close retainers (*kachū*); therefore, to use them, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's forces had to intervene with force and diplomacy. Yagi Naoki had distinguished retainers who could lead an army as well as those who were simply junior commanders or proxy. The latter were not sent outside Ōtomo's ruled territories to fight.<sup>609</sup> This distinction was left to Ōtomo's direct retainers. But with the rule imposed by Hideyoshi, privately-controlled groups came to be absorbed into the public sphere of daimyō power; consequently, they were subject to scrutiny, incorporation, and utilization by the ruler of Japan. In brief, Hideyoshi's laws had reduced the power of the daimyō in their "private" sphere, among their subordinates, and thus the "public" sphere and authority from Hideyoshi's government became the centralizing force of the new regime. Sasaki Junnosuke has stated that

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<sup>609</sup> Yagi Naoki, "Sengoku daimyō Ōtomo shi no gunji hensei to gassen," ed. Kage Toshio, *Ōuchi to Ōtomo: chūsei nishi nihon no nidai daimyō* (Tokyo: Kage Toshio, 2013), 63-96.



Hideyoshi's Odawara battle against the Go-Hōjō family occurred because the latter were trying to manage their own retainers and peasants privately instead of relinquishing their power to the higher "public" sphere ruled by Hideyoshi.<sup>610</sup> In the same way, Kyushu daimyō's authority to deal with their private sphere had been relinquished to Hideyoshi.

This intrusion into Kyushu daimyō's authority and particularly into their private sphere is important in understanding to what degree corsairs, who were already at the service of such daimyō, could be used by higher authorities by being absorbed into their military apparatus, or could be discarded or demoted by giving them menial tasks, positions, or even unproductive territories. Such incursion became even more pronounced during the Tokugawa regime, as Ieyasu and Hidetada struggled to consolidate power in their hands. In the case of Shimazu's corsairs, such as the Nejime, because of the Shimazu's will to appease the new regime by showing a certain degree of loyalty to Tokugawa's rule, the intrusion into their private sphere is not clear.

The Nejime, Shimazu's maritime forces, who had fought so fiercely to remain independent, by 1575 had negotiated their retainer status in exchange for Ryukyu trading permits, and traded overseas as Shimazu corsairs. During the Korean wars, Nejime Shigetora received an order from Shimazu Yoshihiro, dated the twenty-eighth day of the third month of 1598, to prepare ships to bring his army from Kagoshima to Korea.<sup>611</sup> However, from a document dated 1595 (Bunroku 4, sixth month, tenth day), Nejime Shigetora does not appear to have fought in the Korean wars but was only used for transportation of troops. The document reports:

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<sup>610</sup> Junnosuke Sasaki, "The Changing Rationale of Daimyō Control in the Emergence of the Bakuhan State," ed. John Whitney Hall, Nagahara Keiji, Kozo Yamamura, *Japan before Tokugawa: Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1500-1650* (Princeton: Princeton Press, 1981), 271-294.

<sup>611</sup> *Nejime monjo*, ed. Kawagoe Shoji, vol. 22, doc. 730, (Fukuoka: Kyushu Daigaku Bungakubu and Kyushu Shiryo Kankokai, 1955.), 168.

Again in that country the troops have to stay very long [sustaining] hardships, although [this situation] is none of our mistake...toward the Nejime family [your] intentions [lord Shimazu] have been of kindness...<sup>612</sup>

This suggests that Shigetora may have been spared fighting in the Korean wars, as he was in charge of transporting troops from Korea to Japan and back. Just three months later, however, his position within Shimazu's hierarchy changed for the worse due to Hideyoshi's order that he and 170 of his retainers be relocated to Yoshiki, whose land was infertile, and removed from the maritime exchange business that his clan had long been actively leading. In the available documentation, the cause for the relocation is unclear, but on the third day of the ninth month of 1595, Shigetora received a letter signed by Honda Shimosa Nyūdō and Isshuin stating that he was to receive 3273 *koku* of land, of which 136 were in the location of Isshuin, which Shigetora swiftly distributed among his retainers.<sup>613</sup> According to Ken'ichi Nejime, this uprooting occurred only for the branch of Nejime Shigetora (Shichirō), as others still resided in Ōsumi and continued their activities from there.

The Nejime, as corsairs for the Shimazu, did participate in the battle of Sekigahara, but by then had become severely impoverished and had to borrow money for the purchase of military supplies and food. In a document written by the monk Kuon dated 1622 (Genna 8, tenth month), it is reported that at the time of the battle of Sekigahara, troops also left the village of Ewaza (where Nejime Shigetora resided) to go to Sekigahara. They had no silver, however, and it became problematic for the Nejime family to travel there. In 1609, Kuon mentioned loaning

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<sup>612</sup>Kagoshima Kyoiku Inkaikai, *Kagoshima ken shiryō sappan kyūki zatsuroku* vol. 2, doc. 1536, (Tokyo: Shūendo Shuppan, 1985), 889.

<sup>613</sup>*Nejime monjo*, ed. Kawagoe Shoji, vol. 22, doc. 733 (Fukuoka: Kyushu Daigaku Bungakubu and Kyushu Shiryō Kankokai, 1955), 170-189.

them money as follows: “There was not enough money, they [Nejime Shigetora and his warriors] were not able to go to the battle, which was a matter of grave concern to the family.”<sup>614</sup>

In the same document, Kuon wrote that he also provided food for Shigetora’s troops.

Shigetora himself was performing military duties and stated that he had a land rent of twenty *koku* but had to repay a debt of 300 silver *mon*. He went to a place called Taira and invested his leftover money, 100 *mon* in copper coins, in building a small ship with a sail of nine *tan* that he resold for five hundred *mon*.<sup>615</sup> One entry on the same document mentions that, in order to build the ship, Shigetora went to Yoshiki (his own land) to obtain the needed trees. Following that, Kuon gave him some clothes and currency amounting to eight *kan* and six hundred and twenty *mon*.<sup>616</sup>

By 1622, the Nejime had still not resolved the matter by paying him back, so Kuon continued to keep the memorandum. This shows the vicissitudes undergone by Shigetora, a former corsair, after he was let down by the Shimazu who had opted to obey Hideyoshi’s anti-piracy laws. It relays the information that Shigetora, as a corsair, had to provide for himself and his troops to fight for the Shimazu at Sekigahara as a point of family honour. From this document it does appear that Shigetora indeed participated in the battle of Sekigahara and that he was experiencing currency shortages due to war preparations and exaction.

In 1609, when Shimazu attacked Ryukyu, Shigetora built and sold a ship at a profit, indicating that his level of entrepreneurial skills was matched by the level of hardship he had to face. In 1610, Shigetora passed his fief to his son Shigemasa.<sup>617</sup> As his own family continued to reside in Yoshiki, another branch of the Nejime clan, who had marriage ties to the Masuda

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<sup>614</sup> *Nejime monjo*, ed. Kawagoe Shoji, doc. 742, 170-189.

<sup>615</sup> This corresponds to 2.2045 acres or 0.0089 square km.

<sup>616</sup> *Nejime monjo*, ed. Kawagoe Shoji, doc. 742, 170-189.

<sup>617</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 743, 171.

house, had one of his members, a certain Nejime Shigenaga, in attendance in Edo at the time of Iemitsu. In effect, by then Shigetora and his Nejime clan had already been dissociated from the life of corsairs and were Shimazu retainers.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, the Kozasa along with several other pirate groups in Hizen, also controlled by the Matura house, had become retainers of the lords assigned to their fiefs in the Tokugawa period. By the Tokugawa period, Fukahori Sumimasa, the pirate of Nagasaki Harbour, and his family were already full-fledged retainers of the Nabeshima family. As well, in Ōtomo's ruled territories, corsairs had followed diverse paths. The Kibe had diversified their occupation, as had many other smaller clans; though some were more successful than others. However, the main actors of the Sengoku period, namely Kibe Sakon, Kibe Kichiemon and Tomiku Sakuemon, as well as others of the same family, perished in the Korean wars.<sup>618</sup>

The Wakabayashi who had ruled Saga no seki, besides fighting in Korea where Shigeoki lost his life, separated into two main clans: the Nayoshi lineage and the Yasuichi lineage. The latter lineage, in the person of Wakabayashi Tadaemon worked in Nagasaki for Matsudaira Sadakatsu (1560–1624), Tokugawa Ieyasu's half brother, but in 1616 returned to Bungo to become a magistrate for the Inaba house of Usuki.<sup>619</sup> According to the same documentation, in the Genroku era (1688–1704) the Yasuichi lineage, once corsairs for the Ōtomo, specialized in commercial fishing from Hokkaido to Taiwan.<sup>620</sup> However, such a claim is unlikely to be true because, from 1635, commercial fishing was limited to Japanese coastal waters; if they were capable of leaving Japanese shores, most likely they had become smugglers. In addition, soon

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<sup>618</sup> Ibid., 396-397.

<sup>619</sup> Chūsei no Buke Monjo Purojecuto Iinkai, *Chūsei no buke monjo* (Sakura shi: Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan, 1989), 144.

<sup>620</sup> *ibid.*, 146.

after the Tokugawa regime began, territories once under Wakabayashi's control were given to Murakami Yasuchika, a corsair for the Mōri house, who had switched sides at Sekigahara to side with Ieyasu. According to Yamauchi Yuzuru, Yasuchika was relocated so that he could not be a corsair any longer.<sup>621</sup> However, from the documents of the Matsui house, retainers of the Hosokawa, it appears that in 1601 Kurushima (Murakami) Uemon ichi Yasuchika was paid a rent of 3,212 *koku* in the districts of Bungo-Hida, Kusu district (in the harbour of Hiji), and Hayami.<sup>622</sup> Those three districts were locations where the Watanabe, Kibe and Wakabayashi corsairs had their residence and commercial enterprises at the end of the Sengoku period. Hence, the Kurushima (Murakami) under Yasuchika, now loyal to the Tokugawa, were given direct control of areas where corsairs who had opposed Ieyasu at Sekigahara resided. Several corsairs of the Ōtomo after Sekigahara, however, had relocated or served different lords in the same areas. Many lacking employment had also become masterless samurai, others offered their services to Tokugawa's retainers in Kyushu, while some, like the Watanabe clan, became Toyotomi Hideyori's supporters, opposing the new Tokugawa regime.

The Watanabe houses claimed their origin from the Seiwa Genji Imperial house and traditionally engaged in four occupations that varied from shrine managers to pirates, both maritime pirates in Kyushu, in the domains of Bungo, Higo, and Mutsu, and fluvial pirates in Settsu and Kawachi regions.<sup>623</sup> The Watanabe clan's ties with the Ōtomo house, as one of the northern Kyushu corsair clans, have already been analyzed, but here it is interesting to note their connections to the more central regions of Settsu and Kawachi and their reason for supporting Hideyori.

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<sup>621</sup> Yamauchi Yuzuru, *Toyotomi suigun kōbō shi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2016), 226-227.

<sup>622</sup> Yatsushiro Shiritsu Hakubutsukan Shiryō Chōsa, *Bungo no kuni no nai on chigyō mokuroku* (1601), photocopy, manuscript document 3-2-3, folio 5, Yatsushiro Museum, Yatsushiro.

<sup>623</sup> Konishi Hiroshi, "Settsu Watanabe tō to yamashito makishima shi to koma shi," in *Osaka Shoin University Journal* (2005): 49-64.

As did many clans of northern Kyushu, the Watanabe participated in the Korean conflicts following Ōtomo Yoshimune. Records of the Watanabe houses at Manai report that by 1592, Watanabe Ensho no suke, Jirōemon, Hyogo no suke, Jibunoshō, and two more left for Korea.<sup>624</sup> Several of the Watanabe clan members returned to northern Kyushu after the wars following various troop leaders, since Ōtomo Yoshimune had been disgraced when he failed to rescue the escaping troops of Konishi Yukinaga retreating from Korea. The majority of Yoshimune's warriors ended up returning with the troops of the Christian daimyō Kuroda Josui. Under Kuroda, they were led by the Ōga clan, who were previous Ōtomo retainers in the Kunisaki Peninsula, where Matsui Yasuyuki (1550–1612), Ieyasu's ally, relocated in 1600. During the Korean wars and before Sekigahara, Ieyasu's allies had taken posts in Kyushu by Hideyoshi's orders. When Hideyoshi died in 1598, Kyushu daimyō fought to regain their lost territories. In the ninth day of the ninth month of 1600, the battle of Ishigakibaru was fought in what is now Beppu (Ōita prefecture) between Ōtomo Yoshimune and Kuroda Josui, allied with Matsui Yasuyuki. There, the Watanabe of the Manai group lost to Matsui, who was well prepared strategically and had supplies of muskets and musketeers. Those who were skilled were taken as captives and re-employed at Matsui's service in the domain of Kokura in order to eradicate them from their power bases. The Watanabe leaders of the Manai group were relocated as well, as indicated in the *Kokura han jinchiku aratame chō*, an account of village revenues and people written during the expulsion and persecution of Christians in northern Kyushu.<sup>625</sup>

However, it seems that not all the Watanabe fought under Ōtomo Yoshimune; some switched sides. In the genealogy of Watanabe Sukezaemon, who on the thirteenth day of the ninth month of the year 1600 fought with Ōtomo forces, it is reported that the “Manai rōnin”

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<sup>624</sup> Ibid., 395.

<sup>625</sup> Tokyo Daigaku Shiryo Hensanjō, “Kokura-han jinchiku aratame chō” *Dai nihon kinsei shiryō*, vols. 1-5 (Tokyo: Daigaku Shuppankai, 1953), 100-378.

fought for Matsui against the Ōtomo, a sign that they had sold their mercenary services as corsairs to the Kuroda and the Matsui. It is said that after the Korean wars ended with the death of Hideyoshi, Kuroda Josui, by paying large amounts of silver, had begun to hire all the masterless samurai he could recruit, which amounted to 3,600 men.<sup>626</sup> Watanabe Shingorō Danjotada, who had fought in the Korean wars under Ōtomo Yoshimune and had worked in Korea as a naval deputy (*hikan*) for Mōri Terumoto, returning to Japan via the Mōri domain, as had men of his clan previously, had been hired by Kuroda. He joined Kuroda Josui to fight against Ōtomo Yoshimune, who lost. Shingorō together with other six others, of the Nishi Akiyoshi, Kawachi and Iwakado lineages, went to reside in Matsui's land at Kitsuki Castle.<sup>627</sup>

Another Watanabe, whom Japanese scholars had previously identified as belonging to an Ise branch of the Watanabe clan, was Watanabe Gobyōe, or Magozaemon, who had fought with Kuroda Josui and Matsui Yasuyuki.<sup>628</sup> However, Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon was from Kyushu and his importance is related to the fact that he was the father of Toyotomi Hideyori's first concubine, Icha. Further investigation of Watanabe Gobyōe's identity reveals that he was not from an Ise branch of the Watanabe clan as thought. Watanabe Magozaemon had fought with Kuroda Josui and before 1597, was stationed at Himeji in Harima with a fief of two hundred *koku*. In 1597, Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon followed the relocation of his lord Ikeda Terumasa (like Matsui Yasuyuki, Terumasa previously had a fief in Tango and Hōki, then in Harima) to Okayama. Due to the Christian persecution, however, he moved to Hiroshima under a fake identity (Shichibe).<sup>629</sup> Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon's association with the Watanabe clan, as leader of the Manai group in Kyushu, is quite important, as is his relation with his lord

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<sup>626</sup> Akutagawa Tatsuo, Fukugawa Kazunori, eds., *Saigoku bushidankankei shiryōshū*, vol. 15, *Watanabe monjo*, 18.

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>628</sup> Konishi Hiroshi, "Settsu Watanabe tō to yamashito makishima shi to koma shi," 49-64.

<sup>629</sup> Murai Sanae, *Kirishitan kinsei no chiikiteki hatten* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2007), 134-137.

Ikeda Terumasa. Although I was not able to trace his whereabouts after he escaped to Hiroshima, it is very likely that he may have looked for protection in the fief of the Hosokawa under Matsui Yasuyuki in Kokura, where other Manai members were located,<sup>630</sup> or with his allies the Nakagawa in Bungo Taketa, the location of several hidden Christians.<sup>631</sup> Lord Ikeda Terumasa was an ally of Tokugawa Ieyasu by marriage, and, like Matsui Yasuyuki and Nakagawa Hisahide, belonged to the old guard of Oda Nobunaga and of his successor Toyotomi Hideyoshi. All of them frequented the intellectual circles of Hosokawa Yūsai, and the Nakagawa had as their secretary a member of the Oribe family, famous for his tea master and artist Oribe Furuta.<sup>632</sup> Therefore, their connections ran deeper than their pragmatic alliances to the Tokugawa; in fact, besides their families' marriage alliances, both Ikeda Terumasa and Matsui Yasuyuki had their previous fiefs in the region of Tango and Hōki, where Yasuyuki had been supervising corsairs.<sup>633</sup> Ikeda Terumasa, Nakagawa Hisahide and his son Hisamori were all Christians; actually, the Nakagawa were cousins of the Christian daimyō Takayama Justo Ukon, one of the major leaders in spreading the Christian faith under the Toyotomi.<sup>634</sup> With such connections, it is not impossible that Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon had his daughter Icha sent as concubine to Hideyori. Icha bore Hideyori a son, Kunimatsu, who was killed in 1615 at the age of eight<sup>635</sup>. However, one must ponder what circumstance must have arisen to have a lower retainer such as Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon's daughter as Hideyori's concubine, beside the fact that he was a Christian. The pervasive connection to Christianity and to Kyushu corsairs,

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<sup>630</sup> Tokyo Daigaku Shiryo Hensanjō, "Kokura-han jinchiku aratame chō," 100-378.

<sup>631</sup> Yoshida Kogoro, *Nihon kirishitan shūmon shi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 13-18.

<sup>632</sup> *Ibid.*, 38

<sup>633</sup> Taketa Shi Kyoiku Iinkai, *Nakagawa shi go nenpyō betsureku* (Ōita: Saeki Inpan Kabugaisha, 2007), 85.

<sup>634</sup> Yoshida Kogoro, *Nihon kirishitan shūmon shi*, 13-18. Yoshida based on Frois letters and Crasset determined that Nakagawa Kiyohide father of Hisamasa and Hisahide, who died in the Korean wars, was at the service of Oda Nobunaga, and both his sons became Christians in 1585 in the Province of Settsu.

<sup>635</sup> Watanabe Hisanori, "Osaka no jin de keishi shita Hideyori no musuko," in *Oita gōdō shinbun*, 6 October, 2016. Recent discoveries disprove Kunimatsu's death, as based on a document found in the Historical Archives of Hiji City (Hiji Rekishi Shiryōkan) it is reported that Kunimatsu lived in Hiji, Kyushu, until his adulthood.



who carried on seafaring trade with the Portuguese and the Spanish, linked Hideyori to his supporters.

The connections between Hideyori, Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon, and the Kyushu corsairs, did not end there. The Watanabe at Manai consisted of five lineages plus the Kawachi house, but since 1583 (Tenshō 11) they have included four more houses: the Yazaka, Ōiwa (or Ōishi),<sup>636</sup> Miura, and Futamiya.<sup>637</sup> It may not be a coincidence that the second concubine of Hideyori was from the Ōiwa house. Her father was Ōiwa Gobyōe, also known as Murai Gobyōe (being a Ōiwa he was still of the Kyushu Watanabe-Manai clans).<sup>638</sup> In the genealogy of the Ōiwa house, it is written that Murai Gobyōe, a minor retainer of Hideyori, was the son of Ōiwa Yoshiemon and a woman from the Murai family.<sup>639</sup> Murai Gobyōe was Ōiwa no Kata's (also known as Oishi no Kata) biological father. Ōiwa no Kata bore Hideyori a daughter, Tenshūin. In 1615, when she was seven years old, Tenshūin was taken to a monastery and remained there until her death in 1645.

Ōiwa no Kata was also known as Ai no kata, or person of the Ai house, because she was adopted by Ai Shinzaemon of the house of Ai Ryūsa Simon, the secretary of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and raised as a Christian.<sup>640</sup> The position of Ai Ryūsa Simon was reported by Frois in his *Historia*; however his social or military status was not disclosed.<sup>641</sup> Documents of the Nakagawa house show that Ai Ryūsa Simon, whose Japanese name was indeed Hisaemon

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<sup>636</sup> Ōiwa is written both 大岩 and 小石 the characters are different, as are the meanings - “big stone” and “small stone”. Although in both sets of characters, the pronunciation can be Ōiwa, the second set can also be pronounced Oishi.

<sup>637</sup> Fukugawa Kazunori, “Bungo Suigun ni tsuite no ikkosatsu” ed. Kawagoe Shoji, *Kyushu Chūsei Shi Kenkyū*, 3 (Fukuoka: Bungen Shuppan, 1982), 320. See also Hiji Chōshi Dankainai, *Ōga sōnji*, ed. Sato (Ōita: Hayami Inkansho, 1965), 59 where it is written that in 1583 in the Manai group there was Gudai Kanshi Ōishi (Ōiwa) Goryō Daibu.

<sup>638</sup> It is a coincidence that also Ōiwa was called Gobyōe, like Watanabe Magozaemon. Ōiwa Gobyōe is said to descend from the Narita house but it proved difficult to locate documents regarding that family.

<sup>639</sup> *Ōiwa ke komonjo*, (17<sup>th</sup> century), photocopy, Nagano Prefectural Museum, manuscript document, Nagano.

<sup>640</sup> Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, ed. José Wicki, vol. 4 (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1976), 404-405.

<sup>641</sup> Akatsuki Kanenari, *Settsu meiso zue taisei*, (1855), National Diet Library, Tokyo. Accessed on July 2016 at <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/959908/196>

(hence, Simon or Shimon) Katsuhide, left in the entourage of the Nakagawa clan to take up residence in Kyushu, Bungo province, at Oka Castle. In the new year of 1594 (Bunroku 3), the Nakagawa clan received Hideyoshi's order to move with all their retainers and were given 1,000 *koku* to purchase ships to travel and relocate to Kyushu. Ai Ryūsa Simon departed from the harbour of Sakoshi in the service of the Nakagawa, travelling with more than 4,000 people in their entourage. Records show that after having offered the amount due in silver to the ship magistrate Shigayama Shigesuke at Sakoshi Harbour, they arrived in Kyushu, at Hayami (a harbour ruled by the Watanabe corsairs) in the second month of the same year.<sup>642</sup> The main reason for the forced relocation was indeed the need for fresh troops in the Korean wars. The Nakagawa were no exception. In fact, several other daimyō had received similar orders and the Fukuhara were assigned to Usuki, the Hayakawa went to Funai, the Takenaka also arrived at Taketa, and the Kunisaki Peninsula was occupied by the Kumagai.<sup>643</sup>

In Kyushu, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's retainers not only occupied local lords' territories, but began a land survey in 1592 to exact more taxes. By 1593, Ōtomo Yoshimune, who resided at Nagoya Castle in Karatsu, was ordered to switch the mode of exacting tax from the land from the *kandaka* system to the *kokudaka* system, which taxed land according to its productivity instead of its produce, with which peasants often absconded.<sup>644</sup> By assessing a tax quota according to land productivity, peasants were less inclined to abscond with the produce, although they did find ways to pay less tax. In that context, initially the Nakagawa were called to Kyushu to quell a peasant riot, although that may have been just an excuse to exploit the land resources in order to sustain the ongoing Korean wars. Gotō Shigemi states that the riot in Taketa domain was due to

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<sup>642</sup> Shigemi Gotō, "Han Seiritsu ni okeru 2-3 Mondai ni tsuite," *Memoirs of Beppu University*, 22 (1981): 91.

<sup>643</sup> Hiji Chōshi Hensan Inkaï, *Hiji chōshi*, vol. 2 (Hiji machi: Ōita-ken Hayami-gun Hiji-chō, 1986), 681-690.

<sup>644</sup> Hiji Chōshi Hensan Inkaï, *Hiji chōshi*, 654-655.

the new taxation based on land productivity.<sup>645</sup> Among the administrators of the new Nakagawa domain there was also Ai Ryūsa Simon (Hisaemon) Katsuhide.

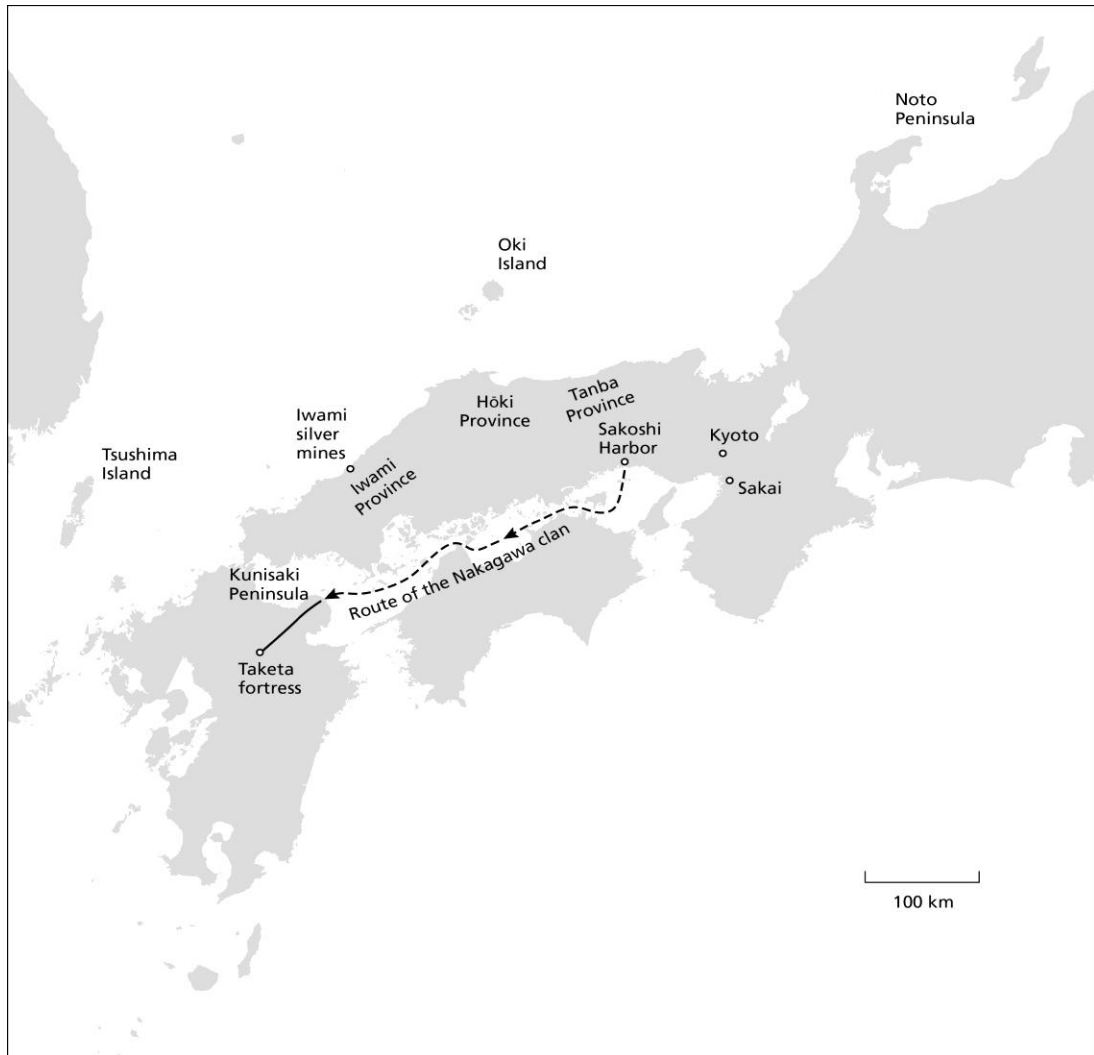
Ai Ryūsa's close association with Hideyoshi made possible the relationships between Hideyori and Ai no Kata, whose biological father belonged to the Ōiwa (or Ōishi) family, a cadet branch of the Manai group of corsairs, and possibly also with Icha, daughter of Watanabe Gobyōe Magozaemon, previously at the service of the Ōtomo house. This Nakagawa alliance with the Ōtomo house lasted until 1597.<sup>646</sup> That year, the Nakagawa helped the forces of Ōtomo Yoshimune to defend against the united forces of Kato Kiyomasa and Matsui Yasuyuki, who aimed to conquer his territories, while Yoshimune was engaged in the Korean wars troop deployment. However, Ōtomo's retainers, Tawara and Munakata, who were supposed to arrive to aid Nakagawa Hideshige in battle, left him to fend for himself, as both suddenly left him to fight the entire battle alone. From that moment, Hideshige had reasons to distrust the western faction and decided to ally with the Tokugawa at Sekigahara.<sup>647</sup> This event would turn out to become the safety valve for Hideyoshi's heir at the onset of the Tokugawa regime.

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<sup>645</sup> Gotō Shigemi, "Han seiritsu ni okeru 2-3 Mondai ni tsuite," 33-44.

<sup>646</sup> Yoshida Kōgorō mentioned that Watanabe Daigaku was the head of a Watanabe clan that had moved in the early 1570s from Settsu Province to northern Kyushu (Bungo) at the service of the Ōtomo until its destruction and then moved to Taketa passing at the service of the Nakagawa with a rent of 1,000 *koku*.

<sup>647</sup> Hiji Chōshi Hensan Iinkai, *Hiji chōshi*, 688.



**Map 6-1. Route of the Nakagawa house to Kyushu.**

### **6.3 The Political Environment after Sekigahara leading to the Battle of Osaka, 1600–14**

The economic and political reforms brought about by Ieyasu as he became shogun in 1603 were drastic. He began by redistributing land previously belonging to the daimyō of the western faction to his supporters, initiating the financial drain that brought friends and foes under his control. According to estimates, Ieyasu came to possess eighty percent of the Japanese territory. He seized from his enemies 4,464,000 *koku* that he swiftly redistributed among his loyal retainers and those forming his closest family. He also rewarded the daimyō who had submitted to him after Sekigahara, like the Shimazu. The Mōri clan suffered the biggest territorial losses,

going from a rent of 1,205,000 *koku* to a mere 369,000 *koku*. Uesugi also lost a great deal of territory, going from 1,200,000 *koku* in Aizu to 300,000 at Yonezawa.<sup>648</sup> Furthermore, Ieyasu's allies were rewarded with Kyushu territories that had belonged to the Ōtomo, Matsuura and others; for example, Matsuura Shigenobu retained half of his 60,000 *koku*, Nabeshima Naoshige was reduced from 350,000 to 70,000 *koku*, while Ieyasu's ally Kato Kiyomasa retained his territories and augmented them with another 520,000 *koku*.<sup>649</sup>

Having reduced the income of his potential enemies, and implemented the economic and financial policies regarding trade and silver coinage, mentioned in Chapter 5, in the political arena, Ieyasu accepted the title of shogun, to which Oda Nobunaga did not aspire and which Toyotomi Hideyoshi could not attain due to his low birth. But due to his role as one of the five elders, as *Primus inter pares*, he was competing with daimyō who had longer pedigree, military experience, and political clout; therefore, he could not discard Hideyori, the son and heir of his previous lord. In his position of regent for Hideyori, with Maeda Toshiie as an ally, Ieyasu took command of the realm (*tenka*). Ieyasu tried to keep his political enemies at bay by embracing, with the intent of controlling, their leader Hideyori, whom he forced to marry his granddaughter Senhime and to whom he left titles and land revenues.<sup>650</sup> This created a two-layered shogunal court, that of Hideyori, who still maintained his own retinue and retainers in Osaka, and that of Ieyasu, who commanded actual power until 1605 in Fushimi, and then in Sumpu as retired shogun. Ieyasu could not eliminate Hideyori for two main reasons, the first being that he had been entrusted to him as regent, to continue Hideyoshi's legacy. Comments from Dutch records

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<sup>648</sup>A.L. Sadler, *The Life of Tokugawa Ieyasu* (Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 1937), 167.

<sup>649</sup>Kasaya Kazuhiko, *Sekigahara gassen to Ōsaka no jin* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2007), 160-161.

<sup>650</sup>*Ibid.*, 192. In 1601, Hideyori had assumed the court title of second upper rank Chūnagon, and in 1603, had assumed the title of Kampaku, and later assumed the title of Naidaijin, which corresponded to the first rank and was at the same level of the shogun, who was also a first rank Seiidaijin (or generalissimo who subdued the west). The two were basically on the same hierarchical pedestal. However, as in 1605, Hidetada became shogun and Ieyasu retired from active political life, Hideyori assumed the title of Udaijin (Minister of the right).

and Japanese documents show that several daimyō as well as the foreign presence in Japan expected that the rule of the realm was going to pass to Hideyori once he became an adult in 1607.<sup>651</sup> Even so, in 1605 the shogunate had passed into the hands of Hidetada, Ieyasu's son, while Ieyasu controlled the realm from behind the curtains of Sumpu (Shizuoka).

The second reason for not eliminating Hideyori was that several of Hideyoshi's loyal and powerful retainers were still alive. While they were not in a position to confront Ieyasu militarily, they could have instigated a *côup d'état* against the Tokugawa. For this reason, it was of the utmost importance for Ieyasu to consolidate his power before Hideyori became an adult.

In 1608, when Hideyori reached adulthood, the ruling power did not pass into his hands. Instead, he was ordered to stay at Osaka because of the suspicion that western daimyō were visiting him in secret to plot an insurrection. In 1610, those rumors became alarming, as the *Tōdaiki*, a contemporary diary written by Edo samurai Matsudaira Tadaaki (1583–1644), reports groups of western daimyō, with Hideyori's approval, building a big ship to attack Sumpu.<sup>652</sup> Nothing of that sort had happened, although Ieyasu could not easily discount increased rumours of a possible rebellion ideologically sustaining Hideyori's interests. Hideyori, for his part, having reached adulthood, was more visible and thus constituted a threat. Another event that sparked Tokugawa's fear occurred in 1611 when Hideyori "visited" Ieyasu. The normal procedure was to "receive" Ieyasu's visit. The opposite would have had to be "ordered" by Ieyasu, who was in essence forcing Hideyori, who aimed at being visible and supported by the previous Toyotomi retainers, to stay in his own quarters. Even if retainers like the Shimazu visited Hideyori regularly on their way to Edo, by 1611 Ieyasu prohibited daimyō visits to Osaka. Courtesy was

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<sup>651</sup> Fukuda Chizuru, *Toyotomi Hideyori* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2014), 146.

<sup>652</sup> Matsudaira Tadaaki, *Tōdaiki* (c. 1620) printed in *Shisen zassan*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: National Diet Library, 1911), 154.

still in place between the Tokugawa shogun and Hideyori, who had the status and almost the function of a courtier, although titled as *kampaku*.

Ieyasu's consolidation of power was carried out in two stages. The first was the gradual political isolation of Hideyori. One method of doing so was to request extreme financial sacrifices from Hideyori's supporters, and from any possible allies within the shogunate, at court or elsewhere. The second stage was not to let Hideyori amass any wealth beyond that required for his and his retainers' sustenance. Although Hideyori was considered an aide to Ieyasu's political and economic hegemony, Ieyasu made sure that Hideyori could not wield any political or economic power. Hideyori could have found alliances within the nobility and the Imperial family, but he was guarded by Ieyasu's men. Ieyasu already had a plan to marry his granddaughter Wako, Senhime's sister (and Hideyori's sister-in-law), to the Emperor Go-Mizunoo, which occurred in 1614.<sup>653</sup> In doing so, Ieyasu established firm control over the Imperial family, leaving Hideyori no chance for an alliance. In fact, in 1611, when Hideyori visited Fushimi he did not visit the Imperial court right away, as he knew this would further alert Ieyasu. In the meantime, Hidetada did not waste any time and sent one of his retainers, Kira Yoshimitsu, on the fourth month, sixteenth day of 1614 to the emperor to pay his respects and bring further silver homage. One week later, Hideyori also sent one of his trusted retainers, Katagiri Katsumoto, to visit the Imperial court to bring homage. In the *Mitsutoyo kōki*, written by the courtier Kanshuji Mitsutoyo, who had worked as an Imperial liaison to the warriors (*buke tensō*) since 1603,<sup>654</sup> it is recorded that Hidetada brought silver for several groups of people: a hundred pieces of silver for the courtiers, fifty pieces for the retired women, and thirty pieces for

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<sup>653</sup>Kasaya Kazuhiko, *Sekigahara gassen to Ōsaka no jin*, 193.

<sup>654</sup>Lee Butler, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan: 1467-1680* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 180.

the spouses of the Imperial family and various other precious gifts.<sup>655</sup> In contrast, Katagiri gave to the same parties a maximum of three pieces of silver each, a very limited quantity considering the gifts of Hidetada. Hence, the powerful Tokugawa also swayed the Imperial court.<sup>656</sup> It is perhaps because the Imperial household was forbidden to Hideyori that he decided instead to use religious institutions to gather support. Andrew Watsky has analyzed the fact that Hideyori was trying to make an effort to patronize several temples and shrines to improve his political standing; he gained “momentum” by projecting his image into the realm of the “sacred,” by sponsoring temple constructions, and by sponsoring Buddhist sects, in particular the Enryakuji branch and Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s house temple of Toyokuni.<sup>657</sup> By then, according to Jesuits records, Hideyori’s mother, Yodo dono, had become a Christian.<sup>658</sup> Although this fact cannot be confirmed, neither can it be easily discounted, since Hideyori’s retainers and their fiefs, were early converts to Christianity. If the Portuguese at Nagasaki were afraid of losing their settlement due to Tokugawa’s persecutions of Christians, which increased from 1609 until the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1639, they may have offered their support to Hideyori.

Hideyori’s limited access to land revenue did not allow him to finance more retainers to foster his cause, since Ieyasu had gradually decreased Hideyori’s revenues. Until 1614, Hideyori benefitted from the land revenues of Kawachi, Settsu, and Izumi, where he had his major retainers and supporters. In 1614, the total land revenue of these fiefs was 657,400 *koku*, as its productivity had decreased since Hideyoshi’s time, when it was able to produce an income of 739,685 *koku*. However, Hideyori also had at his disposal other minor land revenues in Bicchu,

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<sup>655</sup> Kanshuji Mitsutoyo, *Mitsutoyo kōki* (Tokyo: Shiryohensanjo Manuscript Library, 1887), folio 28-29.

<sup>656</sup> Lee Butler, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan: 1467-1680*, 183. This point has been well demonstrated by Lee Butler, as in 1610, Tokugawa Ieyasu did not follow the plans of emperor Goyozei to finance his retirement and become an “Insei” fully supported by Ieyasu’s wealth. Ieyasu made him promise that he would retire within the same year, however left the point of monetary support very ambiguous as, in effect, he had no intention to finance Goyozei’s retirement.

<sup>657</sup> Andrew Watsky, *Chikubushima* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 198.

<sup>658</sup> Fukuda Chizuru, *Toyotomi Hideyori*, 146.



Ōmi and Osaka, where he resided.<sup>659</sup> Hideyori also benefited from silver produced by the Tada mines located in Hyogo province, Kawanishi town. Fukuda claims that those mines were totally under Hideyori's control and their silver was used to hire armed forces for the battle of Osaka.<sup>660</sup> However, the mines which were initially producing copper, had just begun to produce silver, and, as Kobata Atsushi states, by 1598 the Tada mines produced only up to seventy-six kilos of silver annually, not at all comparable to the thousands of kilos produced at Iwami.<sup>661</sup> Although such production was insufficient to pay for an army, it is possible to argue that Hideyori had an interest in capitalizing his own wealth, probably by allowing his purveyors to trade in Nagasaki or even Hirado. In 1602, Ieyasu had bestowed the management of the Iwami silver mines upon Ōkubo Iwami no kami. In the third month every year, Ōkubo would travel to the Sawa mines and visit Fushimi on his way back, then from the eight to the tenth month he would return to Iwami after giving a great deal of silver as homage to his Tokugawa patron.<sup>662</sup> The silver trade and its management had become an exclusive monopoly of the Tokugawa. From 1604, silver had to be minted before being exported, and merchants dealing in un-minted silver sold by unauthorized mines were severely punished.

As previously discussed in Chapter 5, merchants dealing in international trade were supposed to use only the silver produced at Iwami (debased to eighty percent of its value) and stamped with the mine's mark. However, until 1614, merchants did not follow this rule diligently, since they could lose money in their trades. In particular, merchants from Nagasaki and Kyoto were targeted by these severe policies with terrible consequences. In 1614, several

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<sup>659</sup> Fukuda Chizuru, *Toyotomi Hideyori*, 142-143.

<sup>660</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>661</sup> Kobata Atsushi, *Nihon kozan shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1968), 713.

<sup>662</sup> Matsudaira Tadaaki, *Tōdaiki*, 92.

Jesuits reports showed that those merchants still did not obey Ieyasu's silver policies. On the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1614, the Jesuit Father Pietro Morecion reported:

I have heard that several Christians came out of their own homes to pray for a citizen of Nagasaki named Iirobioye, who was killed by the hand of Justice in that city, because he had disobeyed the law that forbid to everyone to buy un-minted silver. He claimed that such law is diabolic ...so he was crucified for his crimes.<sup>663</sup>

And again a certain Gotō Xorza informed the same Father Morecion of an event that took place the year before, in 1613:

...In the month of November of the previous year 1613 a certain Christian was put on the cross because he went against a law that prohibited severely the purchases of un-minted silver.<sup>664</sup>

Gotō Xorza, was actually Gotō Shosaburō Mitsutsugu, the person in charge of minting at Iwami. The information Padre Morecion received, therefore, was most likely a warning from the Tokugawa government, which suspected that the Portuguese were dealing with Japanese merchants illegally. Murdoch attributes Ieyasu's sudden change in dealing with the Spanish and the Portuguese by banning Christianity between 1612 and 1614 to the fact that the administrator of his silver mines, Okubo Nagayasu, at his death, on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the second month of 1613, was discovered to be a Christian upon an audit of his books. Not only that but, according to documents in his possession, it was also discovered that he had siphoned off large amounts of silver to finance a foreign attack to overthrow the Tokugawa regime.<sup>665</sup> Whether such a conspiracy was real or merely another excuse to eliminate Christianity from Japan as a threat to

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<sup>663</sup> Pietro Morecion, *Lettera Annua del Giappone scritta dal Padre Pietro Morecion* (1614). Translated by the author and accessed on 19 August, 2016 at [Laures.cc.sophia.ac.jp/laures/pageview/id=JL-1617-KB7-331-214/page0007/zoom/](http://Laures.cc.sophia.ac.jp/laures/pageview/id=JL-1617-KB7-331-214/page0007/zoom/).

<sup>664</sup> Ibid. page 0009/zoom/.

<sup>665</sup> James Murdoch and Isoh Yamagata, *A History of Japan*, 492-494.

the regime, is uncertain, but clues suggest that it was perceived as a real threat by the Tokugawa. One such clue is found in the 1614 document containing the Edict to expell Christians (*Bateren tsuihō rei*), which also reports: “The arrival of the Black ship (*kurofune*) is forbidden, merchants [needing to trade] must arrive in small ships and report to the Nagasaki magistrate Hasegawa Sahyōe.”<sup>666</sup> This clause is a clear indication that the Tokugawa feared a possible attack from a foreign force sponsoring Hideyori and therefore had prohibited the arrival of the big galleon; however, since trade had to continue, only smaller ships were allowed to dock in Nagasaki.

Such fear brought the Tokugawa to consolidate their power by financially reducing the trading power of the Kyushu daimyō, whom they believed could sponsor Hideyori as their future leader. In reality, Hideyori came to be considered as a possible leader only because Kyushu daimyō’s financial burden increased versus their inversely proportional trade permits.

Ieyasu’s Edo Castle construction, for example, drained resources and manpower from all (*tozama* and *fudai*) daimyō requiring resources and maritime shipping from as far as Kyushu. In the *Tōdaiki*, one entry for 1608 shows that several Kyushu daimyō had put their fleet at Ieyasu’s disposal to ship material used in construction, particularly wood, from Kyushu; Kato Kiyomasa sent forty-six ships, Kuroda Josui thirty ships, Nabeshima 120 ships.<sup>667</sup> In the same year, another entry shows that several merchants could not find space for their goods to travel to the capital, as all of the ships were being used mainly for construction materials. This caused several mercantile associations (*ton’ya*) to go bankrupt.<sup>668</sup> The following year, as the *eiraku zeni* was eliminated from the market in favour of the silver *chōgin* and other minor currencies, several groups of

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<sup>666</sup> Yoshida Fumiharu, *Nagasaki kogenki* (Kyoto: Nishikawa Shuppan, 1928), 42-43.

<sup>667</sup> Matsudaira Tadaaki, *Tōdaiki*, 82.

<sup>668</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

minor merchant houses became impoverished in the Kanto region.<sup>669</sup> Some mercantile groups thus suffered from Ieyasu's rapid economic and political changes.

But if Kyushu daimyō like the Kuroda and Nabeshima, who had submitted to the Tokugawa after Sekigahara, were being drained financially, the pinch must have been felt much more by poorer daimyō whose rent was not as great. The big daimyō of Kyushu tried to supplement their income with trade, as already noted for the Shimazu of Satsuma. The Nabeshima, for example, who had employed the Fukahori pirates, welcomed Spanish trade from the Philippines, even if Christian missionaries from different orders kept arriving to try and convert the local Japanese.

In 1606, Father Alonzo de Mena arrived in Fukahori's harbour on a Spanish ship captained by Francisco Moreno Denoso, who was a believer in their [Dominican] order. Father de Mena described his encounter as he stated, "went immediately to visit him...in such place they also encountered a major person of the king of Figen and his good captain called Nichizaemon."<sup>670</sup> Two years later, in 1608, the Dominicans received permission to build a church in Fukahori's harbour, a town of more than one hundred households, and baptized there more than 600 people.<sup>671</sup> The Dominicans continued converting people but were told that the daimyō, although their friends, could not convert, as it was prohibited by law.

The commerce that took place in Fukahori with the Spanish from the Philippines is confirmed by a document written by Nabeshima Katsushige, possibly between 1608 and 1609. He mentions that the Fukahori captain had a talk with the Spanish and asked the price of white silk (*shiroito*), so Katsushige sent two of his men to negotiate and was going to report the matter

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<sup>669</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>670</sup> Hilario Mario Ociay, *Reseña Bibliografica de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Santissimo Rosario de Filipinas* (Manila: Colegio Santo Thomas, 1891), 201-202.

<sup>671</sup> Saga Shi Hensan kyoiku linkai, *Saga shi shi*, vol. 1, (Saga city: Fukuhakain Kabushikigaisha, 1977), 703.

to the Nagasaki magistrate, Ogasawara Ichien.<sup>672</sup> It is obvious that, like many other Kyushu daimyō, the Nabeshima house, previously a Ryūzōji retainer, meant to trade internationally to obtain wealth and status. Jesuit records report that by 1606, Fukahori Sumimasa, the former pirate and corsair for the Nabeshima, had even sympathized with Christianity and some of his subordinates had become Christians; however, he thought that to embrace Christianity at that time would compromise his own status. In 1605, a Jesuit house and residence were built in Hamamachi (now Kashima city) before the arrival of the Dominican Father De Mena to attest that the Nabeshima had already previously dealt with the Jesuits and foreign traders. As Tokugawa's retainers, the Nabeshima and Fukahori, between 1605 and 1613, the year the anti-Christian edicts were promulgated, tried to gain from foreign traders coming from the Philippines.

The Kuroda, who had occupied the region surrounding Fukuoka and Hakata during the Korean wars, had Kuroda Kanbei Simeon, Hideyoshi's war strategist, and his son Nagamasa as their main leaders. Kuroda Kanbei was a Christian and was on good terms with the leader of Hakata's wealthy merchants association (*Hakata Egoshū*) and later with the Nagasaki magistrate, Suetsugu Heizō, who dealt with Chinese and Portuguese traders. Kuroda Kanbei and Nagamasa's purveyor in Nagasaki was Tokunaga Sōya, who received *shuin* trading permits to Korea. However, as Takeno Yoko pointed out, Hakata was not a territory controlled by the Tokugawa bakufu; the mercantile association of Hakata had been powerful since the early fifteenth century. They comprised sixteen wealthy merchants who could finance an entire ship to go abroad to trade, upon receipt of *shuin* permits from the government. They dealt in silver currency to pay for silk brought by the Dutch, Portuguese, and Chinese and until 1635, financed

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<sup>672</sup> Ibid., *Bōsho Nabeshima kemonjo*, 705.

ships to go abroad to trade, making high profits.<sup>673</sup> According to Takeno, Kuroda's controlled fiefs dealt differently than other domains with the distribution of *shuin*; the approach to trade was left in the capable hands of traditional trading houses at all layers of society. This meant that in Hakata, there was no main purveyor for the domain; all merchants co-operated and competed for the best trading outcome and profits, as had occurred at the time of Hideyoshi. This was possible due to the personal ties that the Kuroda had with the Hasegawa at Nagasaki (Gonroku and Sahyōe) and with the leader of their mercantile association Suetsugu Heizō, who like the Kuroda was also a Christian. The Kuroda disagreed strongly with Tokugawa economic policies and avoided dealing with the commercial policies of the Tokugawa by cementing their connections with likeminded daimyō such as the Shimazu and Nabeshima.<sup>674</sup>

Even if the Nakagawa house had sworn loyalty to the Tokugawa, due to the increased Christian persecutions, they had trouble getting their peasants to keep cultivating their fief. In fact, when the anti-Christian edict was issued, several peasants fled their land, leaving it uncultivated. In order to have peasants to pay annual taxes out of their cultivated fiefs, Nakagawa Hisahide had allowed Christian families to settle and gave permission to have at least one member of the family be Christian. Furthermore, he had been increasingly pro-Christian as the persecutions persevered. From 1604 to at least 1612, the Nakagawa had been building cannons in their foundries and had built the Hospital of Santiago, clearly a Jesuit Misericordia sponsored institution.<sup>675</sup> In Kyushu, several daimyō houses did not agree with restrictive Tokugawa policies that did not allow them to prosper in a land where maritime trade had been carried out for centuries without restriction.

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<sup>673</sup> Takeno Yoko, "Kuroda shi no bōeki-kirishitan seisaku," Fujino Tamotsu ed., *Kyushu gaikō bōeki kirishitan* (Tokyo: Kunisho Kankōkai, 1985), 157-160.

<sup>674</sup> Takeno Yoko, "Kuroda shi no Bōeki-kirishitan seisaku," 176.

<sup>675</sup> Yoshida Kogoro, *Nihon kirishitan shūmon shi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 17.

Fortunately for the Tokugawa, several Kyushu daimyō who were an obstacle to their consolidating political and economic power, and who could have supported Hideyori in his quest to rule Japan, had died by the end of 1612. Most of Hideyoshi's retainers, witnesses to Ieyasu's doings, died of natural causes: Asano Nagamasa, brother of Hideyoshi's wife Nene, passed away in the fourth month of 1612. In the sixth month, Sanada Masayuki and Horio Yoshiharu, who fought at Sekigahara for the westerners, died as well, followed by Kato Kiyomasa in Kumamoto, who was one of the last true supporters of Hideyori. By then, Fukushima Masanori was also on his deathbed.<sup>676</sup> Besides the possible foreign help, the only supporters that Hideyori had available were his own retainers. These were mostly people from his mother's side, lady Asai Chacha (Yodo dono), previous retainers of the Asai house, or from the Toyotomi, who had fought against the Tokugawa at Sekigahara and had been dispossessed of their original larger domains and were left with inconsequential rents. Of these, several were Christians who had been at the service of Konishi Yukinaga, like the Tannowa and Ikoma.<sup>677</sup> Seizing the moment, by 1612, Tokugawa Ieyasu had ordered twenty-two daimyō to sign an oath of alliance, mainly directed toward Kyushu daimyō like the Shimazu; he asked everyone except Hideyori.<sup>678</sup> Although Ieyasu did not overtly show his hostility to Hideyori, he thought the time to be ripe for his disappearance. In fact, only twenty days later, Ieyasu sent his army close to Osaka. The Battle of Osaka was in reality a series of battles in several places from November 2, 1614 to the summer of 1615 when Hideyori and his mother were finally defeated in the siege of Osaka

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<sup>676</sup> Fukuda Chizuru, *Toyotomi Hideyori*, 169-170.

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid.*, 168-169. The highest incomes amongst Hideyori's retainers were those of Oda Minbunōjō Nobukane, fourth son of Oda Nobunaga, with 36,000 koku annually in Tanba; Katagiri Katsumoto with 30,000 koku in Yamato and Settsu; Ishigawa Higo no kami with 15,000 koku in Mino; and Itō Nagatsugu with fiefs in Settsu, Kawachi, Bicchū and seven other places and an annual rent of 10,300 koku. Only four other minor daimyō had 10,000 koku, which qualified them as hatamoto; all the rest had much less. Amongst the very minor retainers, Murai Ukon Daibu had a rent of 1,000 koku, Yoshida Gensō with 1,500 koku, Ai Settsu no Kami with 1,000 koku and others like Watanabe Chikugo no kami Katsu with 1,500 koku.

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid.* 165

Castle.<sup>679</sup> The defeat of the Toyotomi house also meant the impossibility of returning to a maritime trade, freer of restrictions, in Kyushu. The battle of Osaka was preceded by numerous incidents involving the punishment of Christians, which very likely was used as a deterrent against Spanish and Portuguese involvement.

#### **6.4 The Anti-Christian Edicts and the “Christian” Shimabara Rebellion**

Between 1612 and 1614, Tokugawa Hidetada issued several anti-Christian edicts, with the intention of deporting prominent Japanese Christians and Jesuits. The proclamation of these edicts occurred before the battle of Osaka, which resulted in the annihilation of the Toyotomi family. Initially the Christian persecutions began with “placards” enticing Japanese people to denounce their Christian peers or tenants, as well as “*bateren*” (Jesuit fathers). Hubert Cieslik reports on, a letter of Friar Louis Sotelo, which stated that, for each Christian denounced, a person could receive thirty pieces of gold, or 1,500 *scudi*.<sup>680</sup> Although Hideyori may have received promises of support from Christians, and from particular religious orders, in Kyushu no real evidence of such support came to the fore, except for a document denying such support to the late Hideyori. This document, written on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1616 by Matteus de Couros, responded to an accusation of conspiracy following a string of incidents involving Christians, beginning with the Hara Mondo affair, which involved a young samurai of the noble and ancient Hara family in Chiba, who had an affair with a court woman. Cieslik notes that various bakufu reports on the matter do not agree on what crime he was punished for, as he was already known for his rowdy behaviour and for being a Christian; hence, it seemed he was made accountable for a crime that had no real relevance.<sup>681</sup> This incident was followed by the *San Felipe* galleon

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<sup>679</sup> James Murdoch and Isoh Yamagata, *A History of Japan*, 507-553.

<sup>680</sup> Cieslik, Hubert. “The Great Martyrdom in Edo 1623: Its causes, courses and consequences” (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 2010), 32 also available at <http://pweb.ccsophia.ac.jp/britto/xavier>.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.



incident and the arrival of the friars from the Philippines, and by the Okamoto Daihachi incident. Okamoto Daihachi, a Christian by the name of Paulo, was a retainer of Honda Masazumi (1565–1637) who on a visit to Arima Harunobu in Kyushu had promised to be able to give him three districts under Ryuzoji Takanobu's rule upon the payment of a substantial sum of gold and silver, which Arima paid. During Arima's tour (*sankin kotai*) in Edo Castle, he enquired with Honda Masazumi about these dealings. Honda, unaware of such illegal practices, had his retainer brought to justice and Arima Harunobu was sentenced to exile.<sup>682</sup>

This time, the incident involved two very prominent Japanese Christians in Nagasaki. Suetsugu Heizō João, a wealthy merchant of Nagasaki and Hakata, accused the Nagasaki magistrate Murayama Antonio Tōan of taking money from the Portuguese Fathers in exchange for having their people with artillery stationed inside Osaka Castle to support Hideyori's campaign in 1615.<sup>683</sup> The Jesuit Vice Provincial Matheus de Couros, in a letter written in March 1616, clearly denied the accusation and also denied the fact that other orders including the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians had committed such crimes of treason against the Lords of all Japan (meaning the Tokugawa). But as Reiner Hesselink writes, that may well have been a plan devised by the Jesuit Vice Provincial to let go of Tōan and ally with Heizō, who had replaced Murayama Tōan as Nagasaki Magistrate.<sup>684</sup>

Heizō was motivated in his accusation by his resentment toward Tōan for an old debt which had never been repaid, and had accumulated several documents over the years to prove Murayama a thief and murderer.<sup>685</sup> Murayama Tōan on his part had indeed participated in supporting Hideyori's campaign with men and ammunitions during the Battle of Osaka Castle,

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<sup>682</sup> This incident is reported in several sources beginning with Murdoch (History of Japan) and ending with John Whitney Hall et al. (Cambridge History of Japan, vol. 4).

<sup>683</sup> Matheus de Couros, *Cartas* (1616), Photo, Royal Historical Academy, Madrid.

<sup>684</sup> Reiner Hesselink, *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co. Inc., 2016), 171-174.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

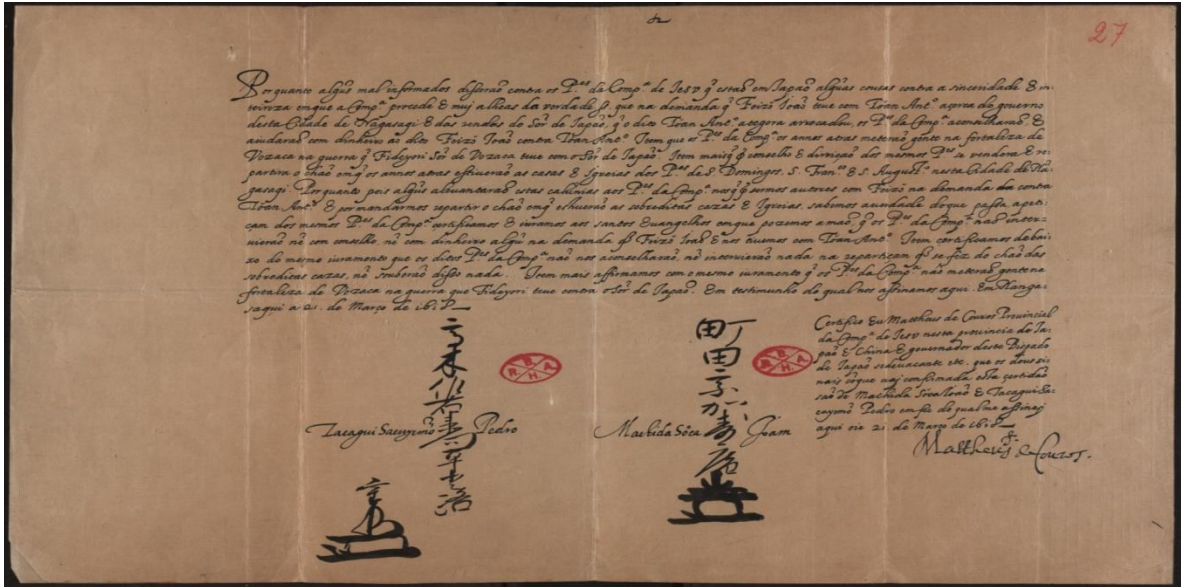
but sensing that all was lost, had switched sides right away. In addition, Tōan had also lost one of his sons in the battle of Osaka, to which Father Apollinaire, a Franciscan who escaped the Osaka Castle, and Father Hernando de Saint Josef, an Augustinian, were witness. Furthermore, the Italian Cristoforo Porro and another in his company took refuge in the house of Akashi Muneshige, a general at the service of Hideyori after his defeat.<sup>686</sup> The presence of the Fathers in Osaka Castle and the fact that they escaped with Hideyori's subordinates call into question the reliability of the document produced by de Couros regarding the non-involvement of Christian religious orders in the battle of Osaka. However, these facts do support Hesselink's supposition that Tōan was now an obstacle not only for the Jesuits but also for the Tokugawa bakufu.

There was certainly some truth to the fact that Suetsugu Heizō had dealings in importing gunpowder via Macau to secretly supply Hideyori's supporters, and that he may have undermined Tōan to get his share of the lucrative business.<sup>687</sup> Although such suspicions cannot be verified, Suetsugu had a vast network in Kuroda's domain, he was a member of the mercantile and independent elite of Hakata, and he may have been the only person capable of dealing on behalf of the Japanese Christians with the Portuguese Captain Mayors of the galleons arriving in Nagasaki.

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<sup>686</sup> Murdoch James and Yamagata Isoh, *A History of Japan*, 542. Richard Cocks, *Diary of Richard Cocks*, ed., Edward Thompson, vol 1. (London: the Hakuyut Society, 1883), 6. An account of the escape of Father Apollinaire from Osaka Castle is also mentioned by Richard Cocks.

<sup>687</sup> Takase Koichirō, *Kirishitan jidai taigai kankei no kenkyū*, 631-637.



**Figure 6-1. Mattheus De Couros, Cartas Rejecting Jesuit Involvement in the Battle of Osaka (1616).**

The involvement of Christians in support of Hideyori's cause further increased their persecutions. After 1623, the bakufu in the person of Iemitsu, who had succeeded Hidetada, gradually extended the persecutions to all domains, and the forms of punishment consisted not only of corporal injuries such as slashing or losing limbs, but also of deportation or death at the stake, or by beheading or hanging.<sup>688</sup> In 1623, Iemitsu increased the level of persecutions to relay a message to daimyō visiting Edo, particularly those from Kyushu and from the northern provinces, as they had to assist with the killings. The daimyō of Kyushu and Mutsu secretly hosted missionaries like Christoforo Porro, Francisco Perez, and the Jesuit Father De Angelis in their domains. Iemitsu intended to deter daimyō from hiding missionaries, and such spectacles were meant to be a demonstration of power by the Tokugawa rulers.<sup>689</sup> In fact, in 1623, there was no real threat to the Tokugawa rule, unlike in 1612 and 1614 when the anti-Christian edicts were

<sup>688</sup> M.A. Steichen, *Shimabara* (Tokyo: Kokubunsha, 1898), 8; several of the horrific methods of torture are also reported by Pages and Caron, and Murdoch.

<sup>689</sup> Hubert Cieslik, "The Great Martyrdom in Edo 1623: Its causes, courses and consequences" (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 2010), 28 also available at <http://pweb.ccsophia.ac.jp/britto/xavier>.

promulgated to deter the supporters of the Toyotomi. Hence, Iemitsu used these anti-Christian measures to strengthen his own rule, and that of the Tokugawa clan.

Although the persecutions continued, between 1622 and 1637 several missionaries who came via Ryukyu and the Philippines were still able to enter Japan incognito, as was the case for Pedro Kibe Kasui, the Japanese Jesuit whose father had been a corsair in northern Kyushu under the Ōtomo. Others, like the Portuguese priest Juan Baeza, were able to hide themselves. Baeza remained hidden from 1615 to 1626 in Nagasaki, continuing his missionary work. Some were put to death when discovered, and others never left.<sup>690</sup> In addition, the institutions created by the Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans like the confraternities continued to be present in great numbers in Kyushu. Besides the confraternities (*confrarias*), there were also brotherhoods managed by Japanese priests and lay people, all underground and hidden from public scrutiny from 1615 on.

In 1612, several confraternities existed in Bungo, Kyushu, numbering as many as 4,000 members.<sup>691</sup> By 1623, several churches of Edo, Kyoto, and Nagasaki had been destroyed, but in Kyushu institutions like the House of Misericordia,<sup>692</sup> the Dominican Third Order, the Confraria of Nuestra Senora, and several other charity groups that also founded leprosaria and hospitals, were left in the territories that had traditionally hosted missionaries. These territories included Hizen, Higo, and Hyuga (Omura and Arima's territories including Shimabara and Amakusa), Bungo, Bizen, Chikuzen, and Chikugo, (territories under Kuroda, Nakagawa, Matsui and Hosokawa daimyō). There was also a Misericordia in Hirado in the fief of the Matura lords and

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<sup>690</sup> Ibid., 17-21.

<sup>691</sup> Kawamura Shinzo, "The Process of Introducing the European Christian Confraternity into 16<sup>th</sup> Century Japan," *Katorikku kenkyū*, 67, (1998): 50.

<sup>692</sup> Kawamura Shinzo, "The Process of Introducing the European Christian Confraternity into 16<sup>th</sup> Century Japan," 1-57.

in various other insular parts of Kyushu.<sup>693</sup> The Misericordia in Nagasaki had functioned as hospital and as leprosarium only since 1609; before that year it was organized to provide its members with houses and colleges.<sup>694</sup> Furthermore, the hospital built in 1612 in Nakagawa territory was also part of the confraternity of the Misericordia. These confraternities were organized before the Fathers were expelled from Japan and, if no Jesuit Father could be present, they could still be fully functional and organized as lay brotherhoods.<sup>695</sup> Several of these brotherhoods were present particularly in the territory of Bungo; Taketa hosted the main loci of the Misericordia, but by 1635, it operated from Usuki as a clan organization due to the fact that most of its members were related by blood ties.<sup>696</sup> According to an annual letter written on March 14, 1613, signed by Giron João Rodriguez, and sent to the General Acquaviva in Rome, there were also confraternities led by women.<sup>697</sup> One such leader was Mary, the wife of Murayama Tōan Andres, son of Murayama Tōan Antonio, known to be one of the most powerful men in Nagasaki.<sup>698</sup> It seems that the previously analyzed accusation of Suetsugu Heizō João against Murayama Tōan Antonio was a feud dictated by personal revenge on both sides due to the loss of two family members for Murayama and regarding old debts never paid for Suetsugu, but there may have been also real religious and monetary interests at stake. In particular, if we look at the distribution of other religious orders in Kyushu, the Augustinians had occupied northern Kyushu in what were Ōtomo Yoshimune's territories, while the Jesuits operated from

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<sup>693</sup> Gonoï Takashi, *Shimabara no ran to kirishitan* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2014), 89-101.

<sup>694</sup> *Monumenta Historica Iaponia*, Textus Catalogorum Japonia I, Monumenta Missionum Societatis Iesu, (Roma: ARSI, 1975), 520.

<sup>695</sup> Joao Paolo Costa, "The Brotherhoods (confrarias) and Lay Support for the Early Christian Church in Japan" *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 34 n. 1 (Tokyo: Nanzan Institute, 2007), 77.

<sup>696</sup> Kawamura Shinzo, "The Process of Introducing the European Christian Confraternity into 16<sup>th</sup> Century Japan," 52.

<sup>697</sup> Giron J. Rodriguez, *Lettera Annua* (14 Marzo 1613). ARSI, Jap.-sin., vol. 15 II, folio 257-258.

<sup>698</sup> Joao Paolo Costa, "The Brotherhoods (Confrarias) and Lay Support for the Early Christian Church in Japan," 77. For Confraternities led by women, see also Haruko Nakata Ward, *Women's Religious Leaders in Japan's Christian Century, 1549-1650*. (UK; Ashgate, 2009), 297-350.

Nagasaki and the Shimabara area, and the Dominicans from Hirado and Hakata. By consequence, there may have been rivalries between such orders in practical financial terms that did not emerge in the available documentation.

The Confrarias of the Misericordia had seven primary functions, one for each of their leaders (*mordomo*): 1) to visit the sick, 2) to hold funerary services, 3) to visit prisoners, 4) to redeem people, 5) to help the poor, 6) to host travellers, and 7) to manage the assets of the confraternity (*confraria*).<sup>699</sup> Their finances depended on local rather than external sources, or it could have been a mix of both; however, the seventh duty of the confraria, the management of its assets, also included the management of its members' funds. The confraria acted as a bank in lending money, for which it had its own separate institutions called "mount of piety" (*monti di pietá*). Although I was not able to find any documents linking the support of Shimabara Christians to their source of funds, that possibility cannot be excluded. Besides, from 1615 on, the confrarias were also brotherhoods managed by Japanese priests and lay people, all underground and hidden from public scrutiny. Father Giovanni Giannone, an Italian Jesuit, also established a confraria at Shimabara.<sup>700</sup> Between 1615 and 1630, Christians were persecuted with cruelty. The capture and torture of Christians that previously sought to have them renounce their faith, now had the aim of killing them. In those years, the main function of the confraria was to shelter persecuted Christians. They, even after being persecuted so cruelly, did not rebel.

However, evidence points to confraternities relying mostly on local funds bestowed on them by daimyō and wealthy Christians, which became officially scarce at the time the

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<sup>699</sup> Maria Grazia Petrucci, "In the Name of the Father, Son and the Land of the Gods: a Reappraisal of Konishi Ryūsa, a merchant, and of his son, Konishi Yukinaga, a Christian Samurai in Sixteenth Century Japan" (MA Thesis: UBC, 2005), 113.

<sup>700</sup> Joao Paolo Costa, "The Brotherhoods (Confrarias) and Lay Support for the Early Christian Church in Japan," 79.

persecutions began.<sup>701</sup> In addition, with the purge of Hideyori's supporters at the battle of Osaka Castle, no one of high status confronted the Tokugawa openly. Even prominent Christians involved in trade were turning against each other. Arguably, there may have been no Christian daimyō left after the battle of Osaka, as their political motives had died with the Toyotomi. Middle-ranking retainers and small fief daimyō were not able to withstand the power gained by the Tokugawa houses. Hence, these Christian confraternities could only remain as secret organizations to support the socially poor and weak. The 1630s saw the disenfranchisement of a large population in the maritime trade, as in 1635, Iemitsu issued an edict prohibiting Japanese merchants from trading abroad officially, several middle-ranking samurai became masterless, and a large sector of the maritime seafaring population (particularly in Kyushu) was affected. Those middle-ranking samurai and commoners could rely for help on the confraternities, whose members cared for the poor and sick. Hence, the support the confraternities could give in the Shimabara and Amakusa rebellions was to organize people to secretly communicate their intentions to riot to members in diverse parts of the country and among all layers of society, including the masterless samurai of Kyushu.

### **6.5 The Economic Rebellion and the Expulsion of Portuguese Traders (1637–39)**

Between 1622 and 1633, Christian persecutions increased and were tightly connected with the arrival of Jesuit Fathers incognito from the Philippines. One route for such priests would be to enter Nagasaki under a false identity and, if they were allowed to enter and take lodging in the house of Portuguese traders, the next step was to have them sent to Amakusa to learn the Japanese language.<sup>702</sup> Although he well knew what was going on, the Nagasaki Magistrate

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<sup>701</sup> Helena Rodrigues, "Local Sources of Funding for the Japanese Missions," *Bulletin of Portuguese Japanese Studies*, 7 (Lisbon: Universita Nova de Lisboa, 2003), 128.

<sup>702</sup> Charles Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), 366.

Hasegawa Gonroku was willing to close his eyes to such matters, but, as with the 1621–22 attempted rescue of several missionaries from a prison in Hirado by a Portuguese Captain



**Map 6-2. Shimabara and Amakusa.**

Mayor, this attracted bakufu attention to further regulate Portuguese and Spanish trade. By 1621, the Macanese Senate wrote to the bakufu about their concerns regarding the piratical activities of the Dutch in the East Asian seas that put the arrival of their smaller ships in Nagasaki in danger.<sup>703</sup> The bakufu official replied that the Tokugawa government had prohibited the Dutch from engaging in piracy, although that did not prevent them from acting like pirates abroad. The real problem occurred after an embargo was put on Dutch and Portuguese ships between 1628

<sup>703</sup> Charles Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 370.



and 1633 due to an incident involving the governor of Fort Zeelandia, Peter Nyuts, in Formosa. During those two years, the Japanese mercantile houses, represented by the Chaya, Nakano, Suetsugu and others, replaced foreign traders and made huge profits by investing money in the Macau trade and by hiring the surplus masterless samurai and ex-corsairs of Kyushu. In 1633–35, a series of edicts promulgated by Iemitsu prohibited the construction of large-tonnage ships for long-haul voyages and imposed the return of Japanese nationals abroad, with the final ban on Japanese merchants trading abroad by 1635–36.<sup>704</sup> Hence, by 1635, the prohibitions had hit them hard.

Previous to the 1635 maritime trade prohibitions, the Shimabara rebellion had begun to simmer slowly in the early 1630s, when the Christian persecution increased. The territories most affected were those of Hizen, ruled by the Arima and Omura houses, as well in the Shimabara Peninsula, Isahaya territory, and the Island of Amakusa, a former refuge for Christians that had been part of the domains ruled by Konishi Yukinaga until his death in 1600. Some Japanese scholars, such as Kanda Chisato, view Shimabara as a samurai rebellion; in fact, he claims that it was perceived by the bakufu at the same strength as the *ikki* league of the fifteenth century, in which several warrior monks, villagers, and lower-level samurai participated. Tsuruta Kurazō recently analyzed the Shimabara and Amakusa rebellions in light of the restrictive policies that impoverished the population in addition to the anti-Christians bans on a population mainly composed by Christians and organized by the Misericordia association set up originally in 1617 by Matheus de Couros himself and formed by lay Japanese Christians.<sup>705</sup> In agreement with Tsuruta it is also my view that the origin of the Shimabara rebellion is complex and due to more than one single factor. However, I do sustain that it was the apex of the inadequate financial and

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<sup>704</sup> Ibid., 372-3.

<sup>705</sup> Tsuruta Kurazō, *Amakusa Shimabara no ran to sono sengo* (Kamiamakusa city: Oyano chohen san, 2005), 56-58.

trading policies implemented in the early years of the Tokugawa bakufu to consolidate its power, which deprived middle-layer warriors and commoners of a sustainable income. In Shimabara, there was the support of masterless samurai, mostly from Kumamoto and the areas previously ruled by the daimyō Konishi Yukinaga and Arima Harunobu (predominantly Christians), and even from the magistrate of Amakusa, Kokuwara Tarosaemon, led by the charismatic Amakusa Masuda Jirō Tokisada and his associates.<sup>706</sup> His father was Masuda Kanbee Pedro; his elder sister Regina had married Watanabe Denbee Sancho. Watanabe Sancho and Watanabe Kozaemon also played a role in the rebellion. Even if there is no clue as to what lineage of the Watanabe clan they were from, it is certain that after the Korean wars, the Watanabe, as corsairs under Konishi Yukinaga, settled in Uto and in the Shimabara Peninsula.<sup>707</sup> Therefore, because Masuda Jirō's father was a Christian of Ōyano Island, ruled by a retainer of Konishi Yukinaga (Ōyano family), it is very likely that Watanabe Denbee Sancho's family was also a retainer of Konishi in Uto.

The Shimabara rebellion was not a Christian rebellion even if many of their adherents were Christians. Under Christian banners, they gathered from various Kyushu locations at Hara castle in the Shimabara Peninsula, stocking food and ammunition with the co-operation of local village leaders vexed by taxation and the abuses of the local lord, Matsukura Katsushige, and his henchmen. Based on Duarte Correa's document, Takashi Gonoï argues that it all started when the father of a teenage girl attacked and killed the tax collectors, Matsukura daimyō retainers, who had tortured the girl with the intent of extorting more taxes.<sup>708</sup> Hence, according to Gonoï the rebellion assumed a "Christian" tone only after these officials were killed. The government

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<sup>706</sup> Kanda Chisato, "Shimabara no ran jissō," *Tochigi shigaku*, 27 (2013): 1-15.

<sup>707</sup> Gonoï Takashi, *Shimabara no ran to kirishitan*, 193. I have dealt with the Watanabe under Konishi Yukinaga in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

<sup>708</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

took advantage of the fact that these regions were predominantly Christian to call it a Christian rebellion when in reality it had little to do with Christianity and much more to do with malgovernance, both of the local and central government, which indeed had an interest in promoting it as a Christian rebellion.

The Portuguese Capitan Duarte Correa, who arrived at Nagasaki and was captured on November 4, 1637, wrote that it was clearly not a Christian-fuelled rebellion. From his smuggled letter addressed to the Jesuit Antonio Cardim in Macau, Correa was able to be the only European witness to the siege of Hara Castle and gave a detailed account of the forces on both sides (the rebels with 37,000 men and government forces with 200,000 men). In the end, the government had the upper hand and killed all the rebels.<sup>709</sup>

There are conjectures that the Shimabara rebellion could have been funded by the Portuguese merchants at Nagasaki, but they may not have had any motive since from 1635 to 1637, the Portuguese reached their apex in exporting silver from Japan. Kobata Atsushi wrote that three ships with a cargo of 1,500 cases of silver left Nagasaki for Macao in 1635, the next year, four ships and a cargo of 2,350 cases, and in 1637 (the year of the rebellion) six ships with 2,600 cases of silver.<sup>710</sup> The Portuguese had no reason to finance a rebellion if they intended to continue to trade as they did, but local daimyō did not deny that the rebellion was not sponsored by foreigners; on the contrary, they blamed the Christians instead of their tax exaction methods.

Locally, the malgovernance of the Matsukura daimyō did not go unnoticed. Several daimyō including Hosokawa Tadatoshi in a document addressed to his son, commented on the failure of Matsukura as a daimyō. The same wrote Nabeshima Naoshige with the following:

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<sup>709</sup> Geoffrey C. Gunn, “the Duarte Correa Manuscript and the Shimabara Rebellion” Accessed on 22 Oct. 2015 at [www.uwosh.edu/home\\_pages/faculty-staff/earns/correa.html/](http://www.uwosh.edu/home_pages/faculty-staff/earns/correa.html/) See also M.A.Steichen, *L'insurrection de Shimabara* (Tokyo: Imprimerie du Kokubunsho, 1898), 1-38.

<sup>710</sup> Kobata Atsushi, “The Production of Gold and Silver in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Japan,” *Economic History Review* n.s. 18, 2 (1965): 256. Each case corresponded to 10 *kan*, equivalent in weight to 1,000 *taels*.

“[Katsushige] Nagato no kami is not like his father, he forgets his warriors, he does not care for several of his samurai, he loves to drink and does not manage his fief properly.”<sup>711</sup>

Therefore, the rebellion was caused by Matsukura Katsushige’s mismanagement of his own fief and the exploitation of its peasants and seafarers. The extreme poverty of the peasants in these territories had not gone unnoticed by the Jesuits either, who wrote that “they had no grains to eat, only soups made with few gathered herbs.” The Dutch reports of Antonio Van Diemen corroborated those reports by stating that the peasants were heavily vexed.<sup>712</sup> The extreme poverty of the peasants did not allow for tax exaction. Once the peasants began to rise and gathered at Hara Castle (also known as Ficuno Castle), several groups from other parts of Kyushu joined them. Matsukura Katsushige, like several other Kyushu daimyō, had to cope with other problems imposed by the shogunate as well.

In 1635, Tokugawa Iemitsu had prohibited all Japanese merchants from going abroad to trade once he had the guarantee that the Dutch could supply as much as the Japanese did. Mostly, as Asao Naohiro wrote, due to the increased trade capacity of the Kyushu daimyō, he not only forbade Japanese merchants to trade abroad, but linked the expulsion of the Southern Barbarians (Portuguese) to the Japanese trading communities in such a way that whoever had a mixed family or had adopted mixed children would be expelled from Japan.<sup>713</sup> If deportees communicated with people in Japan, they would be killed.<sup>714</sup> The edict meant to completely cut off the foreign presence in Japan, but it also meant to disenfranchise a large part of the maritime population, including the long-standing mercantile houses, whether they were seafarers, villagers who made a living by fishing, or merchants owning ships and shipyards, who now had to resort

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<sup>711</sup> Gonoi Takashi, *Shimabara no ran to kirishitan*, 166.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>713</sup> Charles Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 439.

<sup>714</sup> Michael S. Laver, *The Sakoku Edicts*, 120.

to different types of occupations. In doing so, however, it was also cutting off Kyushu daimyō from a substantial part of revenues from trade.

As if the expulsion edicts of 1635–36 were not sufficient, the Tokugawa bakufu approved the minting of the new Kan'ei Tsuhō nationwide; the new copper coin had to be bought by each daimyō, who had to collect and return the old copper coins circulating widely in their domains from four years previous to 1636.<sup>715</sup> This put several domains in financial straits, as the new coin had to be circulated by the first day of the sixth month of 1636, ending the usage of old coins the previous day. Not every daimyō was prepared. The Shimazu of Satsuma requested a moratorium on the usage of the new coin or the capability of minting it in their territories, but that was denied. In the 1630s, eight new mints had been approved and the only one in Kyushu was in the territory of the Nakagawa daimyō.<sup>716</sup> Hence, the poverty in the territories of the Shimabara Peninsula and Amakusa, but also in many adjacent territories, was not created only by Matsukura Katsushige's mismanagement of his own territory. It was part of a larger economic problem. Indeed, there were economic motives behind the rebellion of Shimabara but these were entirely domestic in their content, not having to do with international traders such as the Portuguese, whose financial support for the rebellion would not have been reasonable if they intended to continue exporting silver from Japan. However, the Japanese used the organization of the confraria to converge at Shimabara in order to escape the extensive persecutions that began in the territories under the control of Matsukura Katsushige. He, in turn, intensified his persecution in Ariie, Kazusa, Amakusa and various other territories between 1626 and 1633 with the aim of

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<sup>715</sup> Ryoichi Yasukuni, "Regional Versus Standardized Coinage in Early Modern Japan: The Tokugawa Kan'ei Tsuhō," 131-157.

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-157.

eliminating Christians in those territories still belonging to the Arima house in order to conquer them.<sup>717</sup>

To “dress” the rebellion as Christian served not only Tokugawa purposes, but also those of Matsukura Katsushige. Takashi Gonoï wrote that by looking at the cadastral survey of land productivity executed by Matsukura in Arima’s territories (in four villages), it shows that he stole at least 10,000 *koku* of produce to pay for construction to take place during his routine visit to Tokyo, namely from the second to the eighth month of 1636.<sup>718</sup> Matsukura’s misgovernment was not reported by any of his retainers, and it was convenient for the Tokugawa bakufu to treat the rebellion as Christian; consequently, more than 200,000 men were sent to fight under Matsukura. After he died in battle, he was replaced by Matsudaira Nobutsuna, who was able to conquer the castle and end the rebellion.

The bakufu sent an exaggerated number of troops to lay siege to Hara Castle, whose defense lasted from the winter of 1637 to the spring of 1638. To highlight the momentum against the Christian rebels, the bakufu called in the Dutch, who bombarded the castle walls for ten days in an attempt to demonstrate their loyalty to the shogunate and be able to continue to trade with Japan.<sup>719</sup> Their fellow Portuguese in Japan, who would be banished from Japan the following year in 1639, obviously took this as a betrayal. As Laver has mentioned, based on Boxer’s and Elisonas’ studies of the Shimabara rebellion, by blaming the Portuguese for that ‘Christian’ uprising, the Tokugawa bakufu never really looked for the real causes of the rebellion.<sup>720</sup> In fact, the reasons for the rebellion had been misappropriated and misinterpreted by the bakufu so that it could hide its own faulty economic policies.

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<sup>717</sup> Ryoichi Yasukuni, “Regional Versus Standardized Coinage in Early Modern Japan: The Tokugawa Kan’ei Tsuhō,” 121-126.

<sup>718</sup> Takashi Gonoï, *Shimabara no ran to kirishitan*, 163-164.

<sup>719</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>720</sup> Michael S. Laver, *The Sakoku Edicts*, 138.

## 6.6 Foreign Corsairs: The Chinese and Dutch at Hirado (1620–40)

The restriction on trade imposed to eliminate illegal trade and piracy began gradually to tighten until in 1635, Japanese merchants were forbidden entirely from going to trade abroad. In agreement with Kimura Naoki, who wrote that the restriction on foreign trade stemmed from domestic economic problems, I claim that the trade restriction actually began in 1631 with the issuing of the *hōshojō* permits, issued by the Nagasaki magistrate, set in place to restrain Kyushu daimyō from legal and illegal trade activities.<sup>721</sup> These activities constituted a threat to the Tokugawa regime, whose control of trade had become pervasive. In part, this was a response to perceived offenses against the shogun and the Japanese people such as the Peter Nuyts incident, when the new governor of Fort Zeelandia reversed the policy that had until then favoured the alliance between the VOC and the Zheng piratical network. In what Xing Hang sees as the will of the governor Peter Nuyts to liquidate the Zheng network since it had grown too big for comfort, Peter Nuyts negotiated with the Ming the elimination of Zheng Zhilong in exchange for direct access to Chinese goods and markets.<sup>722</sup> In order to prevent the Japanese from trading in Taiwan, Nuyts had applied a 10 percent tax on Japanese vessels as an anchorage fee, which created a diplomatic incident that interrupted Dutch trade at Hirado from 1628 to 1633. The Dutch were able to restore trade only after having handed Peter Nuyts over to the Tokugawa authorities, who imprisoned him for 4 years.<sup>723</sup> Moreover, such incidents provided a political opportunity for the Tokugawa regime to implement its own authority by restraining and further controlling foreign and domestic traders.

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<sup>721</sup> Kimura Naoki, “17 seiki nakaba bakuhansei kokka no ikokusen taisaku,” *Shigaku zasshi*, 29 (2000): 55-77.

<sup>722</sup> Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 46.

<sup>723</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

The Tokugawa bakufu, after the issuing of 5 edicts between 1633 and 1639 that proscribed Japanese traders to leave Japan and Christianity, in 1639 expelled the Portuguese traders in Nagasaki based on the assumption (and on more or less verified facts) that they were still smuggling priests into Japan. This event threatened the Dutch, who reconfirmed their non-religious stance with the Tokugawa government, but it also constituted a windfall, as they were now the only European institution still trading with Japan since 1609 bound to Hirado aside from Chinese merchant pirates of the calibre of Li Dan and the Zheng.

In Hirado, the Chinese presence of the Li Dan network was at its peak until 1625, when Li Dan died and his business successor became Zheng Zhilong, who was adopted by Li Dan as a son but who was also in a sexual relationship with the magnate.<sup>724</sup> It is recorded in the *Sumpuki* that in 1612, Tokugawa Ieyasu received at his residence of Sunpu a Chinese pirate by the name of Ikkan.<sup>725</sup> Ikkan was later identified as Zheng Zhilong, who had worked previously for the Portuguese and later for the Dutch, assuming several identities. He was baptized as Nicolas Iquan (hence the Ikkan of the Japanese). There are no contemporary documents regarding his activities in the Matsuura domain records, but his first biography appears in eighteenth-century books. Among recent Japanese books, the Zheng Chenggong Critical Biography by Naito Shirō reports that Zhilong was the eldest son of his father's legitimate wife, with whom he had four more boys. Zheng Zhilong's date of birth has been estimated to be 1604; however, that date is

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<sup>724</sup>Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 43.

<sup>725</sup>Kondō Heijo ed., "Sunpuki," *Shiseki shuran*, 2, (Tokyo: Kondō Shuppanjo, 1900-1903), 215. This event is reported in the *Sumpuki* or chronicle of Sunpu. Several studies on Zheng Zhilong by Dutch (Blusse and others) to Chinese and Japanese scholars have been already presented; therefore, it is not the purpose of this chapter to reiterate his life, but to point to some relevant events that linked him and his family to Hirado and to his relations with the Dutch.



improbable, as he would have been only eight years old when he met Ieyasu.<sup>726</sup> Instead, it is possible that he may have arrived for the first time in Japan in 1604. In 1610, Zhilong had entered the Chinese community of Hirado under Li Dan's leadership. Xing Hang relates that he was introduced to Ieyasu only in 1612 when accompanying Li Dan there. Zhilong was favoured by Tokugawa Ieyasu, as he donated his own incomplete manuscript, "Grand strategy for ordering the country"; in exchange, Ieyasu granted him a long-term residence in Nagasaki.<sup>727</sup>

In 1624, at the suggestion of Li Dan, Zheng Zhilong was recruited as an interpreter of Portuguese for the Dutch, and as a spy reporting to Li Dan on Dutch movements. Upon Li Dan's death, which occurred in 1625 in Taiwan, after Li Dan was forced by the Ming to negotiate with them the Dutch relocation from the Pescadores Islands to Taiwan, Zhilong faked certain documents in order to inherit Li Dan's network.<sup>728</sup> Co-operation with the Dutch was assured in 1626, when Zhilong donated to them ships that had previously belonged to Li Dan at Hirado.

Between 1626 and 1630, Zhilong, who had married into a Japanese mercantile family, left Hirado's business to his family and mercantile members in order to take care of his business in China. He relocated several coastal people from Xiamen and Fujian to Taiwan by providing transportation and livelihood. He also gathered all the pirate gangs that infested these regions under his maritime commercial group. By 1630, Zheng Zhilong controlled the coastal area of Fujian; two years earlier, he had received the title of "Patrol Admiral" by Xiong Wencan, superintendent general of Fujian.<sup>729</sup>

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<sup>726</sup> Naito Shirō, *Tei seikō hyōden*, (Kyoto: Koshokajimu Kyoku, 2010), also cited in Kawamura Tetsuo, *Ryūō no Umi* (Tokyo: Kaichosha, 2010), 44-45. Recent scholars such as Xing Hang believe that Zheng Zhilong may have been born between 1592 and 1599, and that he accompanied Li Dan to Sumpu to visit Ieyasu.

<sup>727</sup> Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 44.

<sup>728</sup> Patrizia Carioti, *Zheng Zhenggong* (Napoli: University of Napoli Orientale, 1995), 54.

<sup>729</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.



**Figure 6-2. The tomb of Zheng Chenggong at Hirado. Photo: the author.**

In Hirado, Zheng Zhilong was active from circa 1613 to 1629. It is possible that his collaboration with the Dutch helped him to eliminate rival Chinese traders who aimed to enter the Japanese market. The *Diary of Richard Cocks* reports that on June 6, 1618, the Dutch attacked a Spanish ship and six Chinese junks out of Hirado.<sup>730</sup> The Tokugawa bakufu strictly forbade the Dutch to engage in piracy in Japanese waters; however, they were aware that the Dutch acted as pirates elsewhere. Cocks recorded in his diary his visit to Fushimi and the response of shogun Hidetada upon the information that the Chinese were seeking redress for having been attacked in Manila:

...after many words of complement, he told me that he thought themperour would let us have any thing that in reason we would demand; and that the Hollanders had their dispatch, and was that, notwithstanding the petitions put up

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<sup>730</sup> Michael S. Laver, *Japan's Economy by Proxy in the Seventeenth Century* (Amherst NY: Cambria Press, 2008), 15.

against them, both by Spaniardes, Portingals, and Chinas, to have them banished out of Japon as pirattes and sea rovars, he gaine said it, and tould them his cuntrey was free for all strangers, and that, yf any private quarrel weare betwixt them, they might seeke remedy at their own princes. But the Chinas replid, and said they had no private quarrel with them. “well,” said themperour, “where took they your goodes from yow?” and they answered at Manillas. “Whie then” said he, “goe to the Manillas for your redresse. But yf they come within my jurisdiction, I will see you righted.”<sup>731</sup>

Hidetada acknowledged that the Dutch did commit acts of piracy on Spanish and Chinese maritime routes. Between 1615 and 1621, the Dutch began looting perceived or real “enemies” on the seas to make up for the poor profits that their European trade brought at Hirado. The Dutch were able to balance their trade at Hirado by acting as pirates and selling their looted goods in Japan at a great profit. By 1621, as Adam Clulow states, they were even ready to defend their piratical manoeuvres by stating that they were not committing anything illegal or beyond the law in what Clulow had defined as the “bureaucratization of violence.”<sup>732</sup> This perception on the part of the Dutch allowed them to greatly increase their profits illegally, as the seven Chinese junks that they captured in 1617 alone gave them 800,000 guilders in profit.<sup>733</sup> The Dutch also sought various economic alliances and partners and by 1620, they had forged an alliance with the English at Hirado, against the “papist” Portuguese and Spanish.<sup>734</sup> This, however, did not prevent them from collaborating with Zheng Zhilong’s group to have access to Ming Chinese markets. The collaboration between the Zheng network and the Dutch lasted at least until 1628, as shown in the June 16, 1628 letter of Pieter Nuyts (Taiwan’s governor from 1627–29) from Fort

Zeelandia:

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<sup>731</sup> Richard Cocks, *Diary of Richard Cocks*, vol. 1 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1883), 306.

<sup>732</sup> Adam Clulow, “The Pirate and the Warlord” *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16 (2012): 533.

<sup>733</sup> *Ibid.*, 533.

<sup>734</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, “17 seiki no higashi Ajia ni okeru kaizoku mondai to Ryukyu,” *Keizai shi kenkyū*, 4 (2000): 36-47.

No vessels can show up on the coast of China that I-quan held under his power.

We are waiting here powerless with three hundred and fifty men; and if we are not relieved immediately, I doubt whether your honour will receive anything from here except perhaps a ship to repair.<sup>735</sup>

Obviously, in Taiwan, Pieter Nuyts relied on Zheng Zhilong's network in order to trade indirectly with Ming China, but, as previously mentioned, that arrangement did not suit Nuyts. As the Dutch did not want to abide by Zheng's rule, they resorted to kidnapping Zhilong's younger brother Zhihu, releasing him only after the Zheng group signed a three-year commercial treaty in exchange.<sup>736</sup> This was already a sign that the co-operation between the Dutch and Chinese was at that point a "forced" one. Only when Zheng Zhilong was called to fight in the mountains did the Dutch try whenever possible to undermine Chinese ships en route to Manila and Japan and to deal directly with Ming China, but in vain. Their co-operation ended on October 22, 1633, when the Dutch decided to attack the fleet of Zheng Zhilong on the coast of Quemoy and lost.<sup>737</sup> The Chinese competition for Japanese silver had become strong since the Zheng network was consolidated under Zhilong's control by 1630.

In the *Kaihentai* (華夷變態 Chinese Metamorphosis), a record of ships entering Japan written in 1640 by Hayashi Nobutatsu (1618–80), it is recorded that between 1634 and 1644, at least fifty-seven Chinese ships entered Hirado and Deshima, the artificial island in Nagasaki harbour, to trade.<sup>738</sup> While the *Kaihentai* shows a picturesque and cosmopolitan maritime traffic between Nagasaki and Batavia, it also reports the numerous pirate vessels threatening

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<sup>735</sup>Patrizia Carioti, *Zheng Zhenggong*, 59.

<sup>736</sup>*Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>737</sup>Adam Clulow, "The Pirate and the Warlord," 61.

<sup>738</sup>Hayashi Nobutatsu ed., *Kaihentai* (1640 circa) (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko Sokan, 1958), 4-6.

commercial ships. The maritime environment of Ming China was beginning to change for the worse.

The reasons for the closed country policies (*sakoku*) can be explained by the occurrence of several factors, along with those already mentioned. According to the same *Kaihentai*, since 1627, Japanese merchants had been approached by Manchu traders, as the Manchu had planned to invade the Korean Peninsula and were eager to trade weapons and intelligence reports.<sup>739</sup> The Tokugawa bakufu approach was one of neutrality but with the proviso of being prepared militarily in case of a possible intervention in Korea. However, that was not their first choice. The Tokugawa still considered the Ming as legitimate, due to their Ryukyu relations. Hence, to the extent that the Zheng as supporters of the Ming could control pirates on the coast of Fujian and keep the maritime routes open, they were of course welcomed in Japan.

Domestically the price of goods increased due to fewer imports; as a countermeasure, the bakufu decided to debase the currency by issuing the Kan'ei copper coins and silver chogin at 50 percent of their metal content. This maneuver was supposed to make more currency available in the markets, but ended up creating more inflation and a vicious cycle of high prices. Hence, the Kyushu daimyō, faced with fewer imports and lower profits, began to raise taxes to levels that the peasants and commoners could not afford to pay. Such was the economic environment of the Shimabara rebellion.

In addition, by 1639, as the Portuguese were forbidden to trade with Japan, the Dutch took over their trade as well. In a letter dated April 17, 1640, to the Superior of Manila Sebastian Furtado de Mendoza, the Superior of Macau, Antonio Torres, expresses his disappointment at the turn of events with Japan:

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<sup>739</sup> Hayashi Nobutatsu ed., *Kaihentai* (1640 circa), 22.

Our country's King had greatly profited from the Japan trade and now it has been crushed. In regard to the lack [of silver] Macau and all the provinces are in great danger. The Chinese expect silver and the people of Macau kept paying for silk but if the silver is lacking, we must hand over our silk to the Dutch...because the people of Macau relied completely only in managing this [type of] trade.<sup>740</sup>

The Portuguese by then had no choice but to hand over their silk supplies to the Dutch, hoping to recuperate part of their expenses. This was not a disadvantage to the Dutch as they sought to enter the Chinese market at all costs, now more than ever since their relationship with the Zheng group had collapsed by 1633.

However, the Dutch defeat by the Zheng group made the Dutch reconsider their position at Hirado; the Zheng competition in the Chinese market was fierce. The Dutch were also exporting silver from Japan, and between 1630 and 1639, had reached an exporting peak of 2.5 million *taels* of silver.<sup>741</sup> This huge amount can be accounted for by the fact that not only were Japanese traders out of the picture, but so were the Portuguese, and the Dutch had by default cornered the silver supply. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the Japanese merchants trading from Hirado found their niche as “compradors” (whose leader at the time was Ogawa Rizaemon) for the various Japanese wholesale companies that relied on Hirado's trade; between 1634 and 1639, the Dutch sold a total of 13,790 *taels* of goods to these compradors.<sup>742</sup>

Furthermore, since 1634, the Dutch had been exporting copper coins minted with a high grade of copper from the Sacamoto mines (close to Mount Hiei) from Osaka traders. The “sacamotta” coin fetched a high return on the South East Asian market as in Japan one hundred sacamoto coins would be worth 8 silver *mon* 5 *fun* whereas in Asia they would be bought at 10

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<sup>740</sup> Shimane Kyoiku Iinkai, *Iwami ginzan kankei hennen shiryō* (Matsue: Hōkoshū, 2002), 122.

<sup>741</sup> Michael S. Laver, *Japan's Economy by Proxy in the Seventeenth Century*, 125.

<sup>742</sup> Yoshimura Masami, *Kinsei nihon no taigai kankei* (Osaka: Seibundo, 2012), 54.

silver *mon*.<sup>743</sup> The Dutch were exporting not only huge quantities of silver to exchange in the Chinese overseas markets but also copper traded in Batavia; their profits were immense. Their business, however, was not limited to commerce; as mentioned previously, they began attacking anyone who threatened their commercial activities.

By 1636, the Dutch had already launched a system previously used by Japanese pirates of extorting protection money in exchange for a safe conduct flag that would be recognized by other seafarers. Caron, a VOC employee who travelled from Japan to Ryukyu on a Satsuma ship, wrote about this in the ninth month of 1636:

This is a report from our envoy Ichiemon. The previous year the Satsuma Magistrate sought the authorization for the passage and the flag for the ship, receiving without problems 1000 *picul* of raw silk that arrived from China to Ryukyu, since the magistrate there had it in abundance, [he] is sending some to Hirado.<sup>744</sup>

The Dutch from Hirado provided certificates of passage and safe conduct for the Ryukyu ships to travel; without them, these ships could be attacked even by the Dutch. The Ryukyu ships had even become a target of the Zheng group, as co-operation between the Zheng and the Dutch had ended. But trade with Ryukyu also became rather profitable in terms of exporting silver to China—and not only silver; Ryukyu became a filter for whatever trading inconvenience or item the Japanese wanted to eliminate from their country.

Regarding copper currency and silver, by 1636 to 1639, the issuing of the copper Kan'ei currency, widely circulated in Japan, required the elimination of the *erakusen* and other

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<sup>743</sup> Yasukuni Ryoichi, “Kahei no chiikisei to kinseiteki tōgo,” Suzuki Kimio ed., *Kahei no chiiki shi chusei kara kinsei he* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), 254.

<sup>744</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, “17 seiki no higashi Ajia ni okeru kaizoku mondai to Ryukyu,” 38.

currencies lower in value still circulating internationally and shipped via Satsuma to Ryukyu.<sup>745</sup> As for silver, by the Kan'ei period, the silver produced according to Tokugawa minting policies had been downgraded, as the silver currency of the Kan'ei period only contained fifty percent silver and was used as international currency to pay for goods imported from China via Ryukyu.<sup>746</sup> However, given the lower silver grade, it brought problems to countries receiving such silver, like Ryukyu. In essence, the Tokugawa, to compensate for the lower worth of the low-grade silver currency, had allowed the reintegration of copper and rice currencies by beginning what has been defined by several monetary scholars the “three currency system.”

Ryukyu became an outlet for unused currency, for silver, for weapons produced in Japan and forbidden there, and for eliminating even Ryukyu's weapons, which could be a threat to the Tokugawa. In 1634, Shimazu Hisamichi had formed a group of seven people in charge of selling weapons outside the controlled market places, but in Kagoshima on land controlled by local temples. Most of these weapons were smuggled to Ryukyu and sold in Southeast Asia.<sup>747</sup> Most notably, there was a migratory influx of people, in particular seafarers, merchants, and pirates who established their residences in Ryukyu to the extent that the Tokugawa bakufu, perceiving a piratical threat to its China trade, in 1639 forbade Japanese people to reside on the Tokara Islands or in the village of Kumemura in Naha, Ryukyu.<sup>748</sup>

The Tokugawa shogun had been careful to eliminate Japanese piracy by continuing Hideyoshi's anti-piracy policies and by implementing further policies for their control of domestic and international trade. In addition, the Tokugawa bakufu had agreed to let the Dutch

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<sup>745</sup> Honda Hiroyuki, “Toitsu seiken no tanjo to kahei,” Suzuki Kimio ed., *Kahei no chiiki shi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), 233.

<sup>746</sup> Umeki T., “Satsuma han Ryukyu kuni no chugoku bōeki ni okeru nihongin no chotatsuni tsuite,” *Okinawa bunka kenkyū*, 35 (2009): 25-103.

<sup>747</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, “16-17 seiki ni okeru Ryukyu kaiichi to bakufu sei shihai,” 64.

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.



continue their piratical acts as long as it did not interfere with Tokugawa trading policies. So the Dutch continued their piratical endeavours outside of Japanese waters. Only in 1673 did the bakufu issue an edict that prohibited the Dutch from harming Ryukyu ships. The regulation stated that the Dutch had to stop conducting “*bahan* trade,” meaning, as in the previous edicts, “piracy or piratical acts,” or they would be brought to Edo to respond to any accusations and possibly be punished. It further stated that “Ryukyu is a friendly country we do co-operate with [*aishitagafu kuni*]...hence it is prohibited to harm their ships.”<sup>749</sup>

The Tokugawa bakufu issued this edict thirty years after the Dutch had begun to harm ships in and around Japan, and such an edict constituted just a warning to the Dutch. The bakufu had indeed permitted the Dutch to act as foreign pirates with its full knowledge, as a deterrent to Spanish and Portuguese ships entering Japanese territorial waters. The delay in issuing a warning to the Dutch may be explained by the fact that in 1643, one Dutch ship had sunk at Nanbu in the north of Japan because the Dutch had begun exploring the northern part of the Sea of Japan.<sup>750</sup>

The *Tanimura Yūsan oboegaki* (the Memoir of Tanimura Yūsan), written in 1719 by Tanimura Yūsan, a merchant from Hirado, reported events that occurred when Tanimura was a Nagasaki comprador for the Dutch. One of his entries states an event that occurred in 1679 or earlier as follows:

A Dutch ship arrived at Nanbu inquiring about the Island of Silver and Gold. They had three years of provisions, when they arrived to the Golden Island a typhoon diverted the Dutch ships’ course and caused them to shipwreck in the

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<sup>749</sup> Maehira Fusaaki, “17 seiki no higashi Ajia ni okeru kaizoku mondai to Ryukyu,” *Keizai shi kenkyū*, 4 (2000): 40.

<sup>750</sup> Reiner H. Hesselink, *Prisoners from Nanbu: Reality and Make Believe in Seventeenth Century Japanese Diplomacy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 79.

northern part of Japan while searching for this island where even the sand and stones are made of foreign gold...”<sup>751</sup>

While it is easy to discern the fantastic from the real purpose, which was to find a northern passage, it is possible that the Dutch were also trying to search for mines such as those on Sado Island. Such stories became known to the Tokugawa government, ever alert in protecting its shores, so it sent the warning to the Dutch, accusing them of committing “piratical acts.” In reality, the Dutch were never punished for their piracy outside of Japanese waters. Instead, the Tokugawa bakufu relied on them to fight against other foreign vessels perceived to be pirates. By 1640, the Dutch as well as the Chinese were relocated to Nagasaki. The Dutch inhabited the small artificial Island of Deshima and continued to trade with Japan, fulfilling Tokugawa expectations of their diplomatic and limited trading world. Japanese pirates did exist and acted outside of Japan in Southeast Asia, as the Dutch recorded in documents from Batam, Amboina, and other Southeast Asian places. In Japan, however, from the mid-seventeenth century, piracy was no longer an economically profitable enterprise; much was left to smugglers instead.

By 1631, as the bakufu restricted the export of silver, the Dutch also began smuggling gold out of Japan, while Japanese smugglers began importing all sorts of Chinese goods from Ryukyu, in particular seafood, medicinal herbs, and red matter used to make lacquer. Between 1652 and the 1660s, the Portuguese from Macau turned to smuggling, as their trade was officially forbidden. But after 1640, the Portuguese were banned from Japan. Records about smuggling for the period between 1640 and 1689 are almost non-existent for two main reasons; first, Japanese smugglers did not write legible annotations of their imported/exported goods, and although there

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<sup>751</sup> Tanimura Yūsan, *Tanimura Yūsan oboegaki* (1719), photo, manuscript, Matsura Museum and Manuscript Library, Hirado.

are records of sales, they are very difficult to decipher, as particular shorthand symbols were used.<sup>752</sup> Second, government officials such as the Nagasaki magistrate only began to record cases of sailors who arrived in uncontrolled territories to smuggle goods in the late-seventeenth century. The first of these criminal records is the *Hankachō*, which records cases of smuggling within Japanese coastal waters. There are many records indicating that smuggling via Ryukyu had been very active since 1689, when the first case of an illegal silk import by a Kyoto mercantile association was recorded.<sup>753</sup> Fukase Koichirō states that Ryukyu-Satsuma smuggling took place from the end of the seventeenth century, peaking at the end of the eighteenth century, a period in which smugglers were often domain purveyors trading with people from abroad. Coincidentally Tashiro Kazui has pointed out that by the end of the seventeenth century, the Tsushima authorities caught Korean smugglers in high numbers. The peak in Ryukyu-Satsuma smuggling occurred between 1778 and 1844, but the goods smuggled no longer included silver. Silver was the item that had contributed to the rise and transformation of pirates into corsairs two centuries earlier, allowing pirates and corsairs to play an essential role between Kyushu and Ryukyu in their various capacities. It was again silver and its trading policies in the Tokugawa era that brought Kyushu corsairs to their demise, while transforming them, as merchant-pirates and seafarers, into smugglers.

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter describes the integration of former Kyushu pirate clans discussed in previous chapters, into the Tokugawa regime and its economic policies. By analyzing how some of these corsairs were integrated in Kyushu as retainers of local daimyō, such as the Fukahori clan, the Toyotomi family and Hideyori, in the case of the Christian Watanabe, who also had a role in the

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<sup>752</sup> Yamawaki Teijirō, *Nukeni* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1965), 42-43.

<sup>753</sup> Fukase Koichirō, “Nagasaki bugyō sho no kankei shiryō no nukeni kiroku ni miru Ryukyu bōeki,” *Nagasaki rekishi bunka hakubutsukan kenkyū kiyo*, n. 2, (2007): 36.

Shimabara rebellion as masterless samurai, I have shown that the economic motives for corsairs' activities weakened. The policies of the Tokugawa regime eliminated the corsairs of Kyushu under its bureaucracy and military machine. Corsairs and pirates were absorbed into the social layers of the time, as the Tokugawa did not include them in their international policies, which aimed mainly at the stabilization of the domestic economy and the strengthening of their own hegemony both within and outside of Japan. In fact, the Tokugawa regime, unlike the Ming court, who by imposing its maritime bans on Japanese seafarers allowed pirates to thrive, proved to be the greater obstacle to Kyushu (and Japanese) corsairs and to their livelihood. The destruction of the Toyotomi family, and the elimination of Christianity via the Shimabara rebellion, and the consequent expulsion of Portuguese traders and Christian missionaries, further diminished the possibilities of a resurging lifestyle based on mercantile policies where piracy thrived. Although piracy did not disappear completely from Japanese shores, it did transform into smuggling that did not include looting or violence on the high seas. The Dutch now became the pirates, an action they claimed to be "legal" in the role of "protector," mainly of their own business and of Tokugawa interests along Japanese shores and the maritime routes from Satsuma to Ryukyu once protected by Japanese pirates and corsairs.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion

### 7.1 Dissertation Goals

The goal of my dissertation was to interpret the extent to which the silver trade influenced pirates and corsairs in Kyushu from the end of the fifteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century. By looking particularly at the trade that took place between the Ryukyu archipelago and Kyushu, I have traced a trajectory in time and space to shed light on how pirates were able to take advantage of the silver trade, and in the process become corsairs in the service of the Kyushu daimyō.

Ryukyu was the catalyst for this transformation. Over the centuries, it played an important role in defining Japanese trade, both official and piratical. In Japan, piracy could not be differentiated from trade—often, piracy was part of official trade deals. For example, it had its place in the official trade mission of 1547, as recorded by the Monk Sakugen in his memoirs, *Entering Ming China*. The competition for sea routes and East Asian markets positioned Kyushu pirates in the spotlight of historical events, and not as peripheral characters as they have previously been understood. As several recent authors such as Janice Thomson and Lauren Benton have demonstrated, in practice and in legal terms, there were very slight differences between pirates and corsairs. Janice Thomson's model of pirates as state building agents as well as Gonçal Lopez Nadal's interpretation of corsairing as an economic endeavour caused by an economic crisis suited conceptually the transformation of Japanese pirates into corsairs. In regard to Nadal's theory, the Ming maritime bans of the mid-sixteenth century, and the Tokugawa economic policies of the early seventeenth century, which constrained Kyushu corsairs and the Kyushu daimyō in their trading efforts, comprised two such obstructions.

Agreeing with Nadal's argument, I have demonstrated that corsairs were replaced by the two other methods of trade— by the Dutch and Chinese proxy trade and by smugglers.

In Chapter 2, I analyzed the piratical clans that came to the fore in the age of the silver trade and traced their historical development over one century and two eras. I limited the analysis to the three territorial coasts of Kyushu: the maritime territory and the archipelagos between Kagoshima (Satsuma) and Ryukyu; the territory of Hizen, with Hirado as its main harbour; and northern Kyushu, comprising the Kunisaki Peninsula and Saga no seki, the Bungo Strait. I demonstrated how Japanese pirates came to the fore as a byproduct of the Ming maritime prohibitions, and increased their activities with the export of silver from Japan. These pirates acted as agents for the Chinese merchant pirates who had arrived to trade on the shores of Japan and in the archipelagos between Japan and Ryukyu.

The Tanegashima pirates, who ruled their own island, took full advantage of their geopolitical position when the Portuguese arrived with their matchlocks, but this opportunity did not come without trouble. They adopted the new technology and profited from it, and gained advantageous alliances with the Shimazu daimyō of Satsuma, but they also found competitors in the Nejime house, who aimed at controlling the Ryukyu maritime routes by remaining independent, at least until the middle of the sixteenth century. Apart from the conflicts between the Nejime and the Tanegashima, the Portuguese also proved to be formidable adversaries.

As well as engaging in their own conflicts, the pirate clans were also hired as mercenaries, to carry out the will of the centre of power against the territorial peripheral Kyushu daimyō and their military and naval forces. In one example, when the Ashikaga shogun allied with the Ōuchi house, trying to undermine the Hosokawa-Shimazu controlled maritime routes, they were used in “official trade.” Embargoes, power politics, murders, and the 1523 Ningpo

incident were the results. They were thus significant players in Ryukyu's role in Japanese trade policies. Later, pirates were recruited by the Kyushu daimyō to perform maritime patrols and official trade escorts, as well as to act as corsairs in their naval battles.

The Tanegashima took advantage of their alliances and their geographic position to rise in status. They controlled their own and other nearby islands in terms of human capital and resources. As such, they were able to become mediators for the Shimazu and the inhabitants of the Tōkara Islands, while the Nejime gained status as purveyors in the Ryukyu trade. The Shimazu came to gain the rights over maritime routes to Ryukyu and to control the Ryukyu trade from southern Japan. They accomplished this culturally by enlisting Buddhist monks; technologically, using blacksmith workers; and economically by cooperating with the Japanese merchants who had settled in the village of Kumemura.

The discovery of silver in 1526 allowed for a switch of focus in trade routes from Ryukyu to Korea, which lasted for fifty years. Until the 1590s, when Ryukyu military forces were recruited for Hideyoshi's Korean campaigns, the Kyushu silver trade brought with it the development of several "Chinatowns." Chinese traders bought silver in exchange for silk and other precious items, and Chinese and other East Asians were allowed to reside in Kyushu daimyō's domains. Local pirate clans assumed the role of coastal patrols, as they also did in the maritime environment of northern Kyushu, where several clans aimed at economic independence by performing a variety of services that brought them close to local power holders. In northern Kyushu the power holder was the house of Ōtomo that, in the person of Yoshiaki, had sought a series of alliances to protect its domain from attacks by several other daimyō. Yoshiaki made extensive use of these alliances with piratical gangs on the shores of his own domain.

In Chapter 3, I looked at three of the many piratical clans that had settled in northern Kyushu: the Kibe, Wakabayashi, and Watanabe. I examined their rather similar development as corsairs, and analyzed the particular interactions of these diverse groups at vertical and horizontal levels as they developed a variety of businesses from blacksmithing to shipbuilding. As the main issue of the chapter, I sought to understand their degree of affiliation with the military hierarchy of the Ōtomo house as well as their method of receiving payments, whether in land revenues or in cash.

The slow but certain process of minting silver currency by the middle of the sixteenth century affected the clans' maritime world. By being paid in currency instead of land revenues, some pirates were affected by the fluctuations in market prices. As corsairs, they also became more dependent on local rulers, and had to look for a variety of patrons. Maritime forces that were paid in land revenues were less autonomous in their actions. The relation between land revenues and cash was a consequence of the changed relation that local rulers had with the central government; that is, with the expansion of authority through which local rulers came to be designated as sengoku daimyō. This authority permitted them to create a layered governing structure with expandable military and naval forces that could be called on to serve when required. These were thought to be more reliable than military troops under commanders who could betray their rulers at any time. Creating the role of harbour deputy was rather indicative of the collapsing structure of the shūgo daimyō and the advent of the sengoku daimyō, whose authority increased proportionally to his military capability, including, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, his capability to command corsairs.

Pirate clans and corsairs had contacts with temple and shrines, which traded abroad and therefore used silver as well. The interaction among corsair groups and their exchanges,



particularly intercultural and religious exchanges, brought them to experience a world that was rapidly expanding. Portuguese traders and Jesuit missionaries introduced them to Christianity. Pedro Kibe Kasui, the son of a Kibe corsair, became a Jesuit who travelled extensively and contributed to religious and cultural exchanges of the time. Similarly, Kozasa Jingo Julian Nakaura, son of a Kozasa corsair, went as an envoy to the Pope in Rome. Even the domestic cultural interaction of Wakabayashi Shigeoki with the cultural elite of his time gives us a different measurement unit to interpret the lives of the elite members of the maritime corsairs of northern Kyushu. But in particular, for some of these clans, such as the Watanabe (of the Manai group) adopting Christianity brought them close to supporting the Toyotomi house, in the early Tokugawa period as Hideyori's supporters, and later in the Shimabara rebellion of 1637.

Under the Ōtomo house, the Kibe, Watanabe, and Wakabayashi provided innumerable services as corsairs. They attacked and kept enemy forces at bay, and later were sent as naval forces in the Korean conflicts of Hideyoshi, after which they lost their strength, their territories, and their lives. The Korean wars caused a great loss in naval forces, but even so, the worst was yet to come. That arrived with the anti-piracy edict of the five regents against the corsair forces that still operated in Kyushu, which was directed particularly at the two daimyō who could still rely on corsair forces at their disposal: the Shimazu and the Matura.

The Matura traditionally were a confederation of pirate gangs whose leaders had risen to power in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, during the infamous *wakō* raids into Korea and Ming China. Since then, they had based their wealth on foreign trade. However, the Matura were not connected to any of the countries for which they could have played a mediating role in the trade with Japan, as happened with Ryukyu in the case of the Shimazu, or Korea in the case of the Tsushima daimyō. Consequently, they suffered a financial demise under

the Tokugawa regime. This lack of a sure conduit to the international market made them particularly vulnerable to the economic burden imposed by the Tokugawa regime. They were also deeply affected in this by the expatriate Chinese merchant pirates and (after 1609) by the Dutch presence in their territory, especially after the Portuguese settled in the harbours of Yokoseura, Fukuda, and then Nagasaki.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, two pirate gangs, the Kozasa and the Fukahori, were affected by events that took place in Hizen and Hirado as well as in Nagasaki. I chose them with the purpose of demonstrating the effect of the interaction with the Portuguese and Chinese respectively at different levels. The Kozasa, who interacted with the Portuguese, adopted Christianity while trying to remain economically independent by performing coastal patrol services and by charging fees in their controlled toll barriers located between Nanaetsugamma and the Gotō Island. They became close to the Ōmura and the Arima daimyō, who were also Christians due to the exchange of weapons with which Portuguese merchants were supplying them, with the help of the Jesuits. Although it was not possible for me to confirm this, it seems that during the Portuguese interlude at Nagasaki, the Kozasa became relatively wealthy, as well as independent enough to challenge the call to send troops to the Korean wars of Hideyoshi by 1592. On the opposite side of the Hizen spectrum, the Fukahori pirates, represented by Sumimasa (or Sumikata), were inherently Buddhist and anti-Christian. Their main income was from looting ships docking at Nagasaki, Portuguese carracks in particular.

With the conquest of Kyushu by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1586, the Kozasa relocated near Nagasaki, following the Portuguese traders. They had as their main Christian exponent Julian Nakaura. They withstood the turbulent times of the Korean wars and the Christian persecution, but were not unscathed. In fact they lost their fiefs and were given minor posts in their former

territories. Meanwhile, the Fukahori aligned themselves with Hideyoshi's war policies and anti-Christian policies. Counting on the new ruler, they became corsairs for the Nabeshima house, first in Korea and then until the Nabeshima relocation in the Saga domain, where they remained as retainers for the entire Edo period.

In this chapter, I wished to compare two different outcomes under the Toyotomi regime. The regime exacted resources and manpower, and pirates who could not be controlled were annihilated at a domain level to comply with Hideyoshi's anti-pirates edict and later the five regents' edicts. In Hirado after 1609, the Tokugawa regime took advantage of the presence of both the Chinese merchant-pirates' network as well as the Dutch. But given the financial burden that the Tokugawa had imposed on the Matsura, the revenues collected from these two trading groups did not seem to have been relevant to increase the domain's finances. By using the pirate networks of Li Dan and of the Zheng as well as the Dutch, the Matsura in Hirado failed to support the Tokugawa ideal of having Taiwan as a place to launch Japanese silver directly into the Ming market without intermediaries. In 1640, the Tokugawa took away their harbour rights to host these foreigners, a move from which the Matsura never recovered financially. For their part, the Shimazu were instead able to take advantage of the opportunities that were presented to them at the beginning of the new regime.

In Chapter 5, I readdressed the question of the anti-piracy edicts and the lack of financial income brought by piratical trade in Satsuma. I analyzed the economic reasons for the Shimazu annexation of Ryukyu, concentrating on how they had aligned themselves with the new economic policies promoted by Ieyasu Tokugawa to consolidate his power over other daimyō, in his bid to rule Japan. During and after the Korean wars, the Shimazu, like the Matsura, relied on an economy of war that favoured the slave trade, as documented by several foreign and Japanese

contemporaries. But the slave trade was not only a prerogative of Shimazu's pirates and corsairs; it was also carried out by individuals who were respectable retainers and merchants within Japan, people who assumed diverse identities and whose only purpose was to profit from such trade. These new types of commercially-endowed merchant pirates allowed the Shimazu to continue unofficial trade with the Ming, even after the Korean wars.

I also analyzed how the Tokugawa's economic policies worked perfectly to create a platform to get to the Ming markets, namely Ryukyu and Ryukyu's Chinese community of Kumemura. The Tokugawa regime aimed at projecting an image of peace and prosperity among foreign nations, which it did by issuing *shuin* (trading permits) that guaranteed that the vessels carrying them were legitimate traders and not Japanese pirates, and allowed for punishment according to foreign laws if transgressions occurred in foreign territories. Hence, this new trading policy criminalized Japanese who did not carry *shuin* and who could therefore be treated as pirates if caught. In this way, ships belonging to peripheral islanders could be taken and their seafarers taken as captives. This did happen, particularly in the stretch of sea between Satsuma and Ryukyu, where the Tokara Islands and other islands connected Satsuma to Ryukyu. Moreover, the rigid regularization of the Itowappu mercantile association that handled the payment in silver for silk purchased from abroad further restricted the number of people who could handle large amounts of silver, leaving daimyō, their traders, and pirates out of this domestic enterprise.

Ieyasu's *shuin* trading system, the minting of the silver *chōgin*, and the creation of the silk consortium had as their purpose not only to control trade, but also to restrict the trading practices and piratical trade of the Kyushu daimyō. The annexation of Ryukyu allowed the Shimazu to regain their status with the Tokugawa regime, since the Shimazu had opposed Ieyasu

at Sekigahara and were considered *tozama* (peripheral daimyō) in the control of the Ryukyu trade. However, foreign trade in Japan had been inherently understood as coupled with the Christian missionaries, so the policies on trade were coupled also with an anti-Christian bans. These bans, issued in 1612–14, expelled the Jesuit fathers and other religious men who had meddled in trade. Although such bans caused worries in Macau and in the Philippines, the bakufu was adamant. Ieyasu did not expel Portuguese traders until he was convinced that the Dutch could replace the volume of silk brought in by the Portuguese, which did not occur until the 1630s. My analysis of Ieyasu and his policies considered the processes used to obtain the final outcome.

The expulsion of Christian missionaries occurred only after a series of incidents related to Japanese Christians and missionaries who were found to disobey bakufu's laws. Although ideologically framed, the bans were actually put in place to restrict access to the unminted Japanese silver market, which was not officially controlled by the Tokugawa. This had to do with traders in Nagasaki, where the Tokugawa had implemented a strict customs system regulated by their henchmen now working as Nagasaki magistrates. Basically, Tokugawa Ieyasu's economic policies were aimed at controlling trade under his household and its associates so that large amounts of wealth could pass into his hands—wealth that was used to curtail any possible uprisings against his regime.

In Chapter 6, I dealt with how the five regents' anti-piracy edicts followed by Tokugawa trading and financial policies disenfranchised not only corsairs who had become Kyushu daimyō retainers, but also warriors and naval forces who returned masterless from the Korean conflicts and Sekigahara. Between 1609 and 1614, the Tokugawa anti-Christian bans and trading policies supported having the Dutch and the Chinese piratical networks replace not only the Portuguese

and Spanish traders, but by 1635, also the Japanese mercantile elites as well. The Tokugawa government hoped that they could produce the same volume of trade that the Portuguese had managed.

Kyushu, a mostly Christian territory, had been sustained for centuries by piratical trade. However, both the Dutch and Chinese pirates had no real links to Kyushu and therefore they could be treated as loyal but expendable forces, unlike the former corsairs of the Kyushu daimyō. Pirates previously considered corsairs, such as the Nejime corsairs, were now destitute because of the Shimazu aligning with Tokugawa's policies; they lost their maritime business. Fukahori Sumimasa, like other pirates, became a retainer of the Nabeshima, complaining that his revenue was not as high as when he was a pirate. Similarly, Wakabayashi Jinnai began a commercial shipping business and moved to Nagasaki. It is important to understand how much these restrictive trade policies (including those on trading silver) affected such seafarers after the disastrous outcome of the Korean wars. Corsairs who depended on their patrons for trading rights and livelihood were uprooted from their previous power bases and in most cases became retainers of daimyō who relocated them elsewhere, their power as maritime forces taken away.

Christian corsairs still played a role in supporting the Toyotomi house, particularly in the person of Hideyori. Most interesting is the case of Watanabe Gobyōe, former corsair of the Ōtomo house at Manai, and a Christian. His daughter was one of the concubines to Toyotomi Hideyori. Hideyori's second concubine also had an association via her biological father to the Manai group and to the Christian councillor of Hideyoshi, Ai Ryusa, who later became a retainer of the Nakagawa house of Bungo, Taketa. By 1612, most of Hideyori's supporters had died. Kyushu daimyō were prevented from fighting for Hideyori by an oath sworn to Tokugawa Ieyasu. At the battle of Osaka, however, Hideyori's supporters poured into Osaka castle.

This battle can be defined not only as the end of the Toyotomi house but also as the last event in which daimyō and middle-rank retainers openly demonstrated their hostility to the Tokugawa rulers. The Tokugawa suspected Portuguese merchants and religious fathers of militarily supporting that war campaign. Their 1612–1614 edicts aimed at eliminating any financial support of Hideyori by Portuguese merchants and by Jesuits or Japanese Christians, including deporting leaders like Takayama Justo Ukon, and sought to destroy their financial resources.

Indeed, the battle of Osaka did have the support of Portuguese Jesuits and men of other religious orders. They supplied Hideyori's retainers with weapons and troops, using their financial resources from trade; religious associations such as the Misericordia also provided members for their cause. No such support is evidenced in the available documentation, a letter from Matheus de Couros denying any possible involvement in such war, but this does not align with the in-depth knowledge of the events that the accused, the Nagasaki deputy Murayama Tōan Antonio, had possibly given about his and his family's involvement with Portuguese traders and Christian associations. But if the battle of Osaka saw the demise of the hopes of Kyushu daimyō and of their seafarer retainers for better trading conditions and lifestyles, the final opposition put up by commoners and masterless samurai reached its climax with the Shimabara rebellion.

I have interpreted the Shimabara rebellion here, in a larger context, as the long-term result of the restrictive economic policies implemented by the Tokugawa government to sustain its own goal of strengthening its rule in Japan. Although often presented as a Christian followers' rebellion, it actually had very much to do with the impossibility for the Kyushu daimyō of coping with economic, trading, and monetary policies implemented by Ieyasu and Hidetada. The

Matsukura daimyō, lords of Shimabara, were accused of mismanaging their domain resources and of having alienated the local population in requiring more taxes. An acute shortage of revenues, including tax revenues, had its roots in how it was impossible for the Kyushu daimyō to trade within the several restrictions imposed by the Tokugawa regime. The 1631 edict that forbade the private export of silver, followed by the 1635 edict prohibiting Japanese merchants from going to trade abroad, heavily penalized the Japanese mercantile and seafarers' world. Of course, the edict had also been dictated by the changed maritime environment previous to the fall of the Ming and by the increased secret interaction by Kyushu daimyō, like the Shimazu, with Qing weapons' smugglers. Records of smuggling in the late seventeenth century show that the Ryukyu, as a main partner in the Japanese maritime world, accomplished their activities by colluding with Japanese domain purveyors and shipping agents. By then, such individuals had replaced pirates and corsairs in interactions that took place close to Japanese shores.

To the question as to why Japanese pirates were not included in the Tokugawa maritime vision of their current world, I reply that if Japanese corsairs' groups were going to be resurrected in their original occupations, Tokugawa hegemony—and what is more, Tokugawa trade policies and the control of silver as bullion and as a currency—might have suffered a huge setback. Even so, the policy of allowing foreign powers, even if tightly controlled in Hirado as well at Deshima (from 1640) in Nagasaki, backfired once the Zheng group's and the Dutch commercial interests ran across perpendicular lines, or, to use maritime language, crossed their respective longitudes and latitudes. By 1644, the Tokugawa regime had been consolidated into a dynasty, Japanese pirates had been relocated abroad or were transformed into smugglers, and Chinese and Dutch traders were confined to Deshima. Hence, Japanese pirates, who had been active in the silver trade in the middle of the sixteenth century, reached their doomsday by the



middle of the next century, as the silver that flew out of Japan was monopolized by the Tokugawa bakufu and channeled by its economic policies, hence casting Japanese pirates' rise as well as their demise within the parameters of the silver trade.

## **7.2 Limitations and Delimitations**

My dissertation's goal was to understand to what extent the silver trade had affected Japanese pirates, particularly Kyushu pirates. It is possible to affirm that it did affect their rise in status, as they were able to position themselves as maritime agents of daimyō who wished to pursue trade in the markets of East Asia, particularly with Ming China via the Ryukyu archipelago. For this reason, I have taken into consideration the period from the late fifteenth century and the development of piracy within the parameter of the tribute system; followed by the transformation of trade as mostly private, and as such, piratical, by the mid-sixteenth century; to the restriction imposed on the silver trade by the Tokugawa at the beginning of the seventeenth century. I have taken into consideration the moment in time in which pirates could really benefit from the silver trade by controlling toll fee barriers, offering their services as maritime patrol, controlling sea routes, pillaging mercantile vessels, and colluding with merchants and daimyō. This period lasted until Japan was unified, at first under Toyotomi Hideyoshi and then under the economic and political reforms imposed by Tokugawa Ieyasu and his successors. In doing this, I have wanted to show a parabolic trajectory in time in which silver functioned as a bow from which sprang the arrow that transformed pirates into corsairs or retainers, while the Tokugawa silver trade policies caused them their demise.

It is known that pirates and corsairs disappeared after the unification of Japan, but my intent was to show what had produced their demise. Already weakened in their capability to

produce wealth and as such to survive independently from these warlords, they became corsairs and later retainers of Kyushu daimyō. To understand these events, I had to look at the anti-piracy edicts, first Hideyoshi's and later Ieyasu's, and at the restricting silver policies. To understand the economic and political reasons behind the demise of these important actors in the Japanese maritime historical field, as they were indeed weaker actors, I studied how pirates used the silver trade as a medium of exchange for top-notch technology, which had an immediate effect on their status and wealth. But it was the subsequent silver trading policies that brought about their demise within Japan as they possessed no political strength.

The novelty of this dissertation lies in the way in which I have portrayed the pirates and corsair clans of Kyushu. I chose the Kibe and Fukahori among the most notorious of the clans and the Kozasa and Watanabe among the lesser known. I traced their ascent to power and their demise against a backdrop of government policies involving silver, as bullion and as currency. These policies transformed the ways in which they related to their lords and territories, as noted in the chapter on the Ōtomo corsairs of northern Kyushu. The corsairs' affiliation with Christianity and Christian associations further inspired me to look into their horizontal associations and support networks, aside from their economic ones, as the silver trade was intrinsically intertwined with the events related to Portuguese merchants, Captain Mayors, Jesuits, and men of other religious orders. As such I could not ignore the anti-Christian policies that shed light on certain events and situations related at least to the seafarers of Kyushu in diverse layers of society, who supported Hideyori at first and who later became the leaders of the Shimabara rebellion.

The strength of this dissertation lies in a novel perception of pirates as corsairs and as such weaker actors in the political events that took place during the Toyotomi and Tokugawa

regimes. In addition I have interpreted the Tokugawa policies as fallible in light of the Shimabara rebellion, economic in nature and not a Christian rebellion per se; it was something like the tip of an iceberg that showed the fallacies of restrictive economic policies. These policies performed well at first, but then failed to serve most layers of the then current society, from daimyō to commoners.

This dissertation is also one of the very few existing in English on Japanese pirates, and the only one analyzing Kyushu corsairs. Given the fact that this field is relatively new, there is still much to be done. I have merely scratched the surface of an analysis of Kyushu corsairs that is based on known primary sources and some less known ones as well. In addition, the difficulties in researching all the sources for various parts of Kyushu that are described in my work have been considerable, as well as their appropriate translations and placing them in their historical context.

On the other hand, by portraying Japanese corsairs only in their functions as naval forces I have perhaps restricted any understanding of them to their military endeavours. I have neglected to portray them as littoral people who had lives outside of their warrior endeavours. With this in mind, I have mentioned aspects of the character of Wakabayashi Shigeoki, a man who was in touch with the literati of the time and who had a sense of the top-echelon cultural summit via his father-in-law, a tea connoisseur and secretary of Ōtomo Sōrin. I have also portrayed the Kibe as corsairs and metalworkers for the Kayajima family with their own business pursuits on their eponymous island.

Furthermore, my dissertation is dispersive, analyzing various clans. This may seem to indicate a lack of focus, by not concentrating on just one pirate clan, but it was done intentionally so as to find commonalities and differences among actors across Kyushu's territories and

warlords. But due to this dispersion, it had to be written in a way that engaged the larger context—looking at rulers’ policies and affected localities and clans. Furthermore, because I took the framework of the kingdom of Ryukyu into consideration after I had already concluded my research period in Japan, I was able to obtain only a limited amount of documents regarding Ryukyu by being located abroad. Moreover, because I was analyzing and bringing to the fore various clans, little time remained for an in-depth search of several other documents that may lie still untouched in the repositories of Kyushu, Shikoku, and across central Japan.

On a concluding note, it must be noted that the piratical field in Japan has not been fully explored, and I have been able to analyze only the corsairs whose patrons were dealing directly in trading abroad, while a different outcome would have resulted from analyzing corsairs of daimyō who owned silver and gold mines; this will be a project for future studies.

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