

CHAPTER 4

THE POSITION OF LEADERS in JAPANESE-STYLE ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter examines the position of leaders in Japanese-style organizations through examples of two individuals from the Tokugawa period, Tokugawa Yoshimune and Uesugi Yōzan. The goal is to ascertain the relationship between a leader and an organization. Both of the individuals under consideration were active in the eighteenth century. Tokugawa Yoshimune was the eighth shogun of the Tokugawa bakufu. Uesugi Yōzan was a daimyo of Yonezawa domain, which is now part of Yamagata prefecture.

Leaders in Japanese-style organizations are different from those in China and the West and can be characterized as managerial directors. The role of Japanese leaders is to put aside their own preferences and take into account the opinions expressed by different groups within their organization as well as the ideas of their subordinates. They seek to manage the relationships between these groups for everyone's benefit, while trying to reach reasonable decisions that as many people as possible will concur with. Leaders of organizations in Japanese society may seem incongruent with prevailing notions of leadership in other societies. Some leaders in Japan, such as Oda Nobunaga, described in Chapter 2, were the embodiments of strong autocrats who pressed for sweeping social reforms. However, the political system that Nobunaga established, which used absolutism and force, provoked the opposition of his vassals who eventually destroyed it. Such systems were not able to endure for a long period of time.

During the Tokugawa period, there were more than a few daimyo who sought to enact reforms through autocracy and force. However, most of these daimyo encountered opposition from their retainers, and, as seen in the examples described in the previous chapter, these conflicts often ended with the daimyo forced out of his position as head of the domain through the imposition of *oshikome*. To the extent that domainal organizations in the Tokugawa period were characterized by a disavowal of despotism and autocracy, it can be argued that these same organizations fostered democracy. Accordingly, since leaders of these organizations were restricted by such measures as *oshikome*, to what degree were they able attempt to take a firm hand in their rule and carry out sweeping reforms?

Tokugawa Yoshimune and Uesugi Yōzan are two representative examples of individuals who continually exhibited the traits of leadership appropriate to the political structure of Japanese society. These two leaders did not give commands and initiatives in conflict with a political structure based on the principles of society and modes of social organization. Instead, Yoshimune and Yōzan grasped the importance of these structures and harmonized their actions with them, allowing for the actualization of a remarkable mode of leadership. How were they able to realize this achievement? Beyond being a simple form of management, what are the characteristics of leadership that are appropriate to Japanese-style organizations? The examination of these questions forms the primary goal of this chapter.

The two individuals profiled in this chapter were both excellent leaders, but they were also reformers in the context of eighteenth century society whose roles in reconfiguring the modes of Japanese-style organizations were especially influential. The political system that developed at the beginning of the Tokugawa period at the start of the seventeenth century reached an impasse after a century of continuous peace due to greater social complexity resulting from trade and economic activity at a countrywide level. This deadlock initially caused the financial impoverishment of the bakufu and the domains. However, this problem was an even more fundamental threat to society, which rested on a social status

order that ensured rights to individual samurai correspondent to their own social status, as described in Chapter 3.

Society may have fallen apart if not for the appearance of talented individuals who adapted to the conditions of an increasingly complex social setting and took crucial positions in domainal governments. These men possessed talent, although they were of low birth and were consequently outside of the ranks of the people who enjoyed hereditary privileges in the status system. The social system as well may have lost its salience if the domains had organized themselves simply to work for the collective good of the samurai, instead of being mechanisms that were able to reform themselves, with the ability to rule the territory of the domain effectively and deal with the commoner inhabitants appropriately.

Both Tokugawa Yoshimune and Uesugi Yōzan recognized the gravity of these circumstances, and both men pressed firmly for social reforms. However, they did not rely on the force of autocracy to accomplish their goals. Instead, they put into practice effective leadership traits that were appropriate for Japanese-style organizations. Consequently, they can serve as ideal models of leaders of such organizations. Moreover, the deeds and reforms of these men also reveal the course of the development of Japanese-style organizations.

Tokugawa Yoshimune and the Kyōhō-Era Reforms

The eighth shogun of the Tokugawa bakufu, Tokugawa Yoshimune 徳川吉宗, is the first representative example of a leader of a Japanese-style organization who will be considered in view of his enormous contributions to the development of these organizations, and to the history of Japanese society as a whole. (It should be noted that the Tokugawa bakufu reigned over and dominated various domains throughout the country, but the bakufu's structural organization was the same as that of the domain: namely, the household).

Tokugawa Yoshimune was born in the first year of Jōkyō 貞享 (1684),

in Kii (modern Wakayama prefecture), the fourth son of Tokugawa Mitsusada 徳川光貞, who was the second daimyo of the Tokugawa house of Kii domain (one of the three branch houses, *gosanke* 御三家, of the household of the Tokugawa shogun).¹ Yoshimune's mother was said to be the daughter of Kose Rokuzaemon, a samurai in Kii domain, but she was actually a farmer's daughter. She worked as a water girl in the daimyo's castle residence, where she caught Mitsusada's eye and became his concubine, later giving birth to Yoshimune. She was a large and healthy woman, which blessed Yoshimune with a sound constitution and taller-than-average height.

In the eighth year of Genroku 元禄 (1695), Yoshimune, at the young age of twelve underwent the ceremony of coming of age. Two years later, in the fourth month of 1697, Yoshimune received a 30,000-*koku* landholding in Niu district in Echizen. If everything had gone as intended, Yoshimune would have lived his life as a minor daimyo of a branch house of one of the *gosanke*. However, two major events occurred in 1705. Earlier, Yoshimune's elder brother, Tsunanori, who had succeeded to the post of daimyo and the headship of the Tokugawa family of Kii domain, had taken ill and died. Thereafter, Yoshimune's other elder brother, Yorimoto, who had taken over Tsunanori's legacy, also died unexpectedly. The position of daimyo fell to Yoshimune, and he took over the Tokugawa household of Kii domain, worth 550,000 *koku*.

In the period of his rule of Kii domain, Yoshimune reformed agricultural administration, granted promotions, and made numerous reforms in the government in a variety of areas. Many of the circumstances surrounding the reforms he later enacted in the bakufu can be seen on a smaller scale here. For these accomplishments in Kii alone, Yoshimune would have to be included as one of the most famous rulers of the mid-Tokugawa period. His fame as a capable daimyo helped in launching him to his next position.

In the first year of Kyōhō 享保 (1716), the seventh shogun Tokugawa Ietsugu died at the young age of eight, causing a problem over his successor. As the heir to Tokugawa house of Kii, one of the three shogunal collateral houses, and already winning great renown for his

administrative record as daimyo of the Kii domain, Tokugawa Yoshimune became the eighth shogun.

As the new shogun, Yoshimune reformed the corrupt aspects of the existing political structure, which had suffered from cronyism in the earlier regimes. Declaring that he sought a return to the era of Ieyasu and the founding of the bakufu, he worked to involve the cooperation and backing of the bakufu's key administrators, the senior council (*rōjū* 老中, who were equivalent to domainal elders) and the samurai of *batamoto* rank from among hereditary vassals, *fudai*. Yoshimune also promoted the development of the warrior arts and wanted to fortify the character of the samurai. He undertook all these measures in the attempt to revitalize the bakufu administration, which had grown stagnant in recent years. Yoshimune's reforms are referred to as the Kyōhō reforms, named after the Kyōhō reign (1716–1735).

Society in the Genroku and Kyōhō Eras

The latter part of the seventeenth century, called the Genroku period (1688–1703), witnessed enormous growth in production and trade, which led to a mercantile economy throughout society in both cities and rural areas. This had enormous impact in manifold ways on society and wrought many changes.²

Yoshimune sympathized with the problems of samurai who were forced to live in Edo due to the alternate attendance system (*sankin kōtai* 参勤交代) and with those living in castle towns. Samurai increased their spending when surrounded by all of the splendors available in urban life and with the wealth of goods available to them. However, the amount of income that they derived from yearly taxes on harvests from their estates and landholdings peaked in the middle of the seventeenth century and then leveled out. As a consequence, samurai were forced to borrow money from merchant moneylenders to meet their large expenses. Samurai went deeper into debt as they tried to pay back the high-rate of interest on their loans.

The cultivation of cash crops stimulated the growth of a market economy in which competition and profit became ever more important. At the

level of the cultivators, the gap between rich and poor widened greatly. Appearing at one extreme were parasitic landlords and wealthy peasants who monopolized resources and farming land. At the other extreme were increasing numbers of people who pawned their lands and became indebted to local landlords, sought employment with wealthy farmers and merchants as indentured servants, or left for other lands and the cities in search of employment.

All of these circumstances wrought structural changes on Japanese society. Social turbulence and strains developed in both urban and rural areas. Administrative and judicial responses to these unfamiliar problems became focal points of concern.

Financial Restructuring and Agricultural Reforms

The most acute issue facing the bakufu was its financial restructuring. The shogunate was deeply in arrears due to profligate spending during the late seventeenth-century Genroku period.³ Yoshimune immediately promoted frugality and curbed spending. As an emergency measure, he communicated the bakufu's poor financial situation to all of the daimyo and requested that they grant the bakufu a payment in rice of 100 *koku* for every 10,000 *koku* of territory they controlled. This step temporarily resolved the bakufu's financial worries.

Because this last step was unprecedented, the bakufu was unclear about how it should issue the order to the daimyo. At the time, Yoshimune took it upon himself to draft the order about the tribute rice, purposefully writing that "he ignored this humiliation as shogun," and stressing unequivocally that he wanted to bring an end to the circumstances in which he was forced to make such a demand. The senior councilors in the bakufu disapproved of this move, exclaiming that they had never heard of a shogun bowing his head to make a request of the daimyo. But Yoshimune persisted in his own style of government. He completely avoided taking an approach that would invoke his authority as shogun and forcibly demand the tribute rice from the daimyo.

Another way to resolve the bakufu's problems with its financial revenues was to reform the existing tax laws. Yoshimune sought to stabilize

revenue from taxes by employing a tax law that would fix the collection of revenue based on a set yearly rate of taxation, a rate that would remain constant regardless of the quality of the harvest. Freezing the tax rate would serve to raise production demands, and thereby reap profits from the increased agricultural production and excess revenues generated by the peasantry.

Additionally, Yoshimune aggressively encouraged the opening of new lands for cultivation, and he worked to increase the amount of arable as a further means of increasing tax revenues. Wet paddy rice agriculture is the cornerstone of Japanese society, and its development requires more than simply using hard labor to clear scrub lands. Irrigation ditches need to be built, and the ground has to be leveled, which requires a high level of technical skill over a long period of time to control the course of waterways and construct sturdy dikes.

Yoshimune confronted this problem by creating a new office in the bakufu administration which was in charge of building irrigation works and developing new agricultural lands. And, he fostered groups of officials who held specialized technical skills within this office. Besides technical skills, an enormous amount of financial capital was needed to develop new agricultural lands. Consequently, Yoshimune enlisted a wide range of merchants and wealthy townsmen and did not neglect to draw upon the resources that these groups could provide. The merchants who invested in these projects collected rents from the farmers who cultivated the new fields.

Reforms of the Municipal Government in Edo

Many of the administrative systems in Edo also saw reform during the Kyōhō era.⁴ In the second year of Kyōhō (1717), Shogun Yoshimune appointed Ōoka Tadasuke, who served a long term as magistrate of Edo until 1736 and won fame for his many accomplishments. Administrative changes occurred at many different levels at that time, but the most important of these dealt the establishment of fire fighters in city wards and with the formation of merchant and craft associations (*nakama* 仲間) and groups (*kumi* 組).

The city of Edo expanded in the seventeenth century, and in the Kyōhō era the population grew from 700,000 to one million. Due to the system of alternate attendance, all of the daimyo from throughout the country and the warriors in their service came to live in Edo. To provide for the many and great demands of the samurai, merchants, craftsmen, and day laborers, especially carpenters and workers in the building trade, grew in number and made their homes in the wards of Edo. Further exacerbating the population problem were the impoverished farmers who flooded into Edo, resulting from the increasing gap between wealthy and poor farmers. The high concentration of people in Edo coupled with the proximity of the buildings made the risk of fire very high.

The city magistrate of Edo, Ōoka Tadasuke 大岡忠相, sought to make townsmen members of fire-fighting groups. These groups had previously consisted mostly of samurai. In 1720, he laid the groundwork for the “*iroba* いろは forty-seven group” system. This urban fire-fighting system gained complete authority over fire fighting in the wards of Edo, except for the areas around samurai mansions.

Prices and Steps to Curb Inflation

The sixth year of Kyōhō (1721) marked the first time that the bakufu enacted a positive initiative toward merchants and workers associations.⁵ The purpose of this plan was to economize on expenditures by regulating luxury items and by heading off a sudden rise in the price of various goods. This period was characterized by the imbalanced tendency for the price of rice to remain at a low level while the price of other goods were high. This brought suffering to samurai who subsisted by selling off their yearly tribute rice, and it was the major cause for the worsening financial difficulties of the bakufu and domains.

The city magistrate undertook a study of the various commodities that had seen dramatic increases in price, such as clothing, food, miso, tea, tobacco, saké, and lamp oil. He ordered that various trades should create associations. Thus, the formation of groups and associations in the Kyōhō era was a policy that the bakufu believed would control prices and the production of goods. It did not aim to grant special profits to these same

groups. These associations did not restrict the number of members, and people entering the respective trades were allowed to join.

Currency Reforms and the Nagasaki Trade

The backdrop to the problem over prices was the currency dilemma.⁶ In the Genroku era, the bakufu devalued the gold and silver currency under orders of the fifth shogun, Tokugawa Tsunayoshi 徳川綱吉. Decreasing the amount of gold and silver in the coinage was originally intended to reap profits from reminting the currency and thereby make up for the deficits in the bakufu's finances. Reminting was also meant to increase the supply of currency to offset the demands for currency which came from the upsurge in trade at that time. Nevertheless, the simple act of devaluing the currency proved to be a seductive temptation in light of the windfalls it reaped and was a difficult practice to stop. Enacted without consideration of the economic needs of society, the result of the continued devaluation of the currency was inflation. The trading system fell into dangerous confusion.

The resolution of the currency problem was one of the most important achievements of Yoshimune's reign. Even if the bakufu were to stabilize the amount of precious metal in the coinage at a fixed level and thereby staunch inflation, the demand for currency had increased due to the development of trade and the commercialization of society. Consequently, if the bakufu simply returned the amount of precious metals in the coins to the levels of the Keichō 慶長 era (1596–1614), the result would cause the rapid deflation of the currency. In fact, the decline in rice prices in the Kyōhō era was caused largely due to this situation.

Thus, strict control of the currency and the shortage of money would severely damper economic activity. The only response appropriate to these circumstances was to increase the demand for currency, while maintaining the levels of precious metal, thereby creating a shortage of gold and silver bullion. At the beginning of the early modern period, Japan was a leading country in terms of the output of its silver and gold mines, but by the Genroku era, the output of the mines fell, and the enormous amounts of gold and silver which had already been mined

drained out of the country in the foreign trade through the port of Nagasaki.

In short, the countrywide currency and economic crises were linked to the foreign trade problem. At first, measures were taken to stop the flow of currency out of the country through reactive restrictions on trade. Later efforts shifted to produce the goods in Japan which had once been imported in the foreign trade, and proactive measures were enacted to systematically encourage domestic production. This process was comparable to the enactment of systematic measures in the West which promoted domestic production and marked the shift from bullionism to mercantilism. In the West, political and economic development followed nearly the same course as they hastened modernization. But in eighteenth-century Japan, the government of Yoshimune carried out these same policies.

Emphasis on “National Wealth” and Steps to Grow Medicinal Plants

Yoshimune’s Kyōhō-era reforms did not end with the problems associated with rebuilding the bakufu’s finances. He showed great concern not only for the financial stability of the bakufu but also for the economic situation of the entire country and for its wealth. He began by addressing the trade policies at Nagasaki. He sought to stem the outflow of precious metals, especially of silver and gold, in the Nagasaki trade and ordered that as many once-imported goods as possible be produced domestically. The seventeenth century witnessed progress in the domestic production of raw silk and of finished silk goods. Medicinal plants constituted the remaining high-end imported item.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, medicines had long been a valuable import item, and demand for them remained high in Yoshimune’s time. One reason for this high demand was the domestic situation which witnessed the economic development of society during a century of lasting peace. There was also a widespread concern for better health and improved standards of living. The population in that period peaked at one million in Edo, and cities grew throughout Japan. The numbers of people living in urban areas rose dramatically, but sanitary conditions in

these crowded cities were poor, and contagious diseases spread easily. Moreover, in contrast to rural villages where family and relatives all lived close at hand, life in the cities produced a situation where many more of the infirm and aged lived alone. All of these factors reveal the underlying causes for the high demand for effective medicines.

Medicinal plants produced abroad, such as ginseng from Korea, were rare, and their prices were exorbitant. A popular saying in this era declaims, "Take ginseng and hang yourself." This saying joked that using ginseng might cure a disease, but acquiring ginseng required borrowing an enormous amount of money that could not be repaid, which meant that the person would eventually commit suicide. This expression was certainly not far from the truth. Indeed, in cases in which someone was told by a doctor to take ginseng to relieve an affliction, the cost was the equivalent of around 100,000 yen in modern currency.

With the idea of fostering national wealth by encouraging domestic production of high-quality but inexpensive medicines, Yoshimune's administration inaugurated a massive project on a countrywide scale. A large number of doctors, pharmacists, and merchants dealing in medicines were selected to carry out this task. Yoshimune himself maintained a deep interest in medicines and medicinal plants. The project, from start to finish, advanced under his direction.

Yoshimune dispatched envoys in search of medicines throughout Japan and employed them to discover and collect medicinal plants. At the same time, he attempted to cultivate the collected medicinal plants in the bakufu's herb gardens. He endeavored to improve the potency of the medicines and to develop high-quality medicinal plants equal to those from abroad.

Another aim of this project to produce medicinal plants domestically was the decision to cultivate and produce high-quality Korean ginseng in Japan. Many viewed this as an extremely foolhardy attempt. Ginseng grew wild and had to be gathered even in its native locale in Korea. Even the effort to cultivate ginseng on a small scale was generally believed to be impossible. Ginseng growing in the wild was partially cultivated using techniques to speed growth, but cultivation outside of a natural setting

was considered to be impossible. If such cultivation was possible, then ginseng would not be such an extraordinarily expensive product.

Yoshimune obtained Korean ginseng roots, and he attempted to cultivate ginseng in select locations such as Nikkō 日光, where the climate and environment resembled the Korean peninsula. However, these attempts ended in failure. For almost ten years Yoshimune repeatedly tried to procure and then transplant ginseng roots, but he never met with any success.

Then Yoshimune attempted to have ginseng cultivated from seeds, although this approach was not thought to be very likely to succeed. After several attempts over a period of almost eight years, the ginseng finally took root and produced seeds. This occurred in the third year of the Genbun 元文 era (1738), nearly twenty years after Yoshimune had begun this project. The success of this project was attributed largely to the efforts and continued perseverance of botanical specialists including Tamura Motoo 田村元雄 (Ransui 藍水) and Abe Shōō 阿部将翁.

The bakufu distributed seeds and instruction books for their cultivation to people in many areas who wanted to cultivate ginseng. It also assisted in transplanting and production. Nevertheless, the bakufu decided not to take a commission from the cultivation of ginseng and returned the profits to the cultivators. The cultivation of ginseng spread widely to areas throughout Japan, which was ironic, given the chronic shortage of ginseng in its native Korea. At the same time that this policy succeeded in providing ample income to the farmers who cultivated ginseng, it met the demands for people using ginseng for medical needs with an inexpensive and reliable product. The type of cultivated ginseng that Yoshimune developed was distinguished from the natural variety and called “*otane* 御種 ginseng,” and this is still its proper name today. The word *otane* means “seed,” and this variety of ginseng received its name largely out of respect to Shogun Yoshimune who had developed it.⁷

Yoshimune’s plan to develop medicinal plants domestically exhibited great success that transcended the realm of medicinal plants, drawing larger attention to many natural goods and products in areas throughout

the country. Representative of this trend was the inauguration of a comprehensive, countrywide survey of natural products, known as the *Shokoku sanbutsu torishirabe* 諸国産物取調. This work illustrates that there was great interest at this time in potential sources of wealth. The survey, along with the censuses that took place every six years after Yoshimune assumed office, demonstrate the great concern that he had for both the strength of the country and its wealth. Yoshimune's approach took the profits and welfare of the entire country as its aims, for he did not simply undertake policies with only the interest of the bakufu as the fundamental goal. Consequently, Yoshimune's rule is characterized by its transcendence of the management of the bakufu in its unmistakable contribution to the advancement of Japan as a unified and modernizing country.

The Encouragement of Science and the Introduction of Foreign Culture

Shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune gave his support to applied science that promoted manufacturing. To obtain scientific knowledge, he took steps to substantially relax the restrictions on the importation of Chinese translations of Western books, which had been regulated to prevent the introduction of Christianity to Japan. In addition, he promoted imports of foreign animals and plants through Chinese and Dutch intermediaries. These included an Asian elephant, which was transported to Japan by a Chinese ship in the fourteenth year of the Kyōhō era (1729), an achievement that symbolized the vitality of cultural exchange between foreign countries at this time.

Yoshimune guided efforts to cultivate foreign medicinal plants domestically at the same time that he spurred scientific advances. He relied on traditional Chinese herbal medicine to facilitate this scientific project. The field of Chinese herbal medicine refers to traditional forms of Chinese pharmacology, which relied mostly on medicinal plants along with medicines derived from minerals and even animals.

For the project to cultivate medicinal plants domestically, Yoshimune assembled leading scientists and prominent specialists in the field of Chinese herbal medicine at the time and had the project carried out

under their scientific direction. When these specialists held a conference with the bakufu's support, the intended conference place became so crowded with doctors and researchers interested in Chinese herbal medicine that the conference site was quickly moved to a different location with a larger capacity, allowing the proceedings to take place. This demonstrates the widespread support and the ardent hopes of many people supporting Yoshimune's project to produce medicinal plants in Japan.

Although the project served to deepen knowledge about traditional Chinese medicine, more importantly it fostered scholarly approaches that favored drawing conclusions through scientific evidence: approaches that determined truth and error by acquiring verifiable knowledge based on experiential data and the analysis of the workings of nature. Traditional herbal medicine explained natural phenomena systematically and inclusively, but it could not escape its nonscientific characteristics. The approach of traditional Chinese herbal medicine was characterized more by the continued annotation of classical texts on herbal medicine written by sages long ago, rather than by advances made through the recognition of analogies among natural phenomena. In contrast to this approach, the knowledge gained through Yoshimune's efforts to cultivate medicinal plants domestically was more experiential and based on substantive evidence, as opposed to relying on classical authorities. Thanks to this project, Japanese herbal medicine departed from the practice of simply annotating old texts to take steps toward modern natural science. This situation illustrates the internal development of scholarly knowledge through Yoshimune's efforts. His project also produced a lasting effect on science, namely the creation of the field of Western learning called *rangaku*, literally Dutch studies, which focused on Western knowledge imported to Japan as part of the efforts to cultivate medicinal plants domestically. In fact, Yoshimune took the initiative in this endeavor as well.

While the task of domestically cultivating medicinal plants led to intensified study of Chinese herbarology, Yoshimune came to the conclusion that he might be able to gain new knowledge applicable to this problem by looking to the West. Consequently, he ordered his chamberlains to

search the bakufu's book repositories to see if there were any Western writings about plants. The book that Yoshimune's chamberlains discovered was *Cruydtboek, The Book of Medicinal Plants*, authored by Dodoens, a fifteenth-century botanist from the Netherlands. The name Dodoens has been completely forgotten in the modern West, but he was a leading authority on botany in Europe before Linnaeus and the appearance of the modern field of botany. *Cruydtboek* was a well-known compilation of information on botany of the era. This important text arrived in Japan through Dutch traders at Nagasaki in the mid-seventeenth century, and it was offered in tribute to the shogun. However, at that time there were no Japanese who took interest in this work written in strange Western print, and there was no one who could even read and understand it. Consequently, the text was set aside in a bakufu storeroom where it gathered dust for many years.

The work came to Yoshimune's attention around 1740. Before that time, Yoshimune had never heard about Dodoens. Yet, the book's exact, illustrated reproductions of medicinal plants that carefully depicted details of the petals, leaves, stems, roots, and fruit bore a resemblance to Yoshimune's many years of actual observations derived from studying the real world and were incomparable to the botanical illustrations in Chinese and Japanese books. Yoshimune found this book to be of great value and marveled at it.

Yoshimune trusted his intuition, and he decided to have a new directive carried out to interpret the contents of the Western writings in this book for the use of the scholars involved in the project to cultivate medicinal plants domestically. This task had lasting ramifications, since it was an important moment in the early history of Western learning in Japan. Plans were made for a new project to translate Western books. Yet, up to that time there was no experience in Japan with deciphering the letters of the Western alphabet. Since the task of translation could not begin without a dictionary, the translators had to start from that fundamental point. There were a few translators at Nagasaki, the station for trade with Holland. But, they could only hold conversations and were unable to read Western books.

The herbalogists Noro Genjō 野呂元丈 and Aoki Kon'yō 青木昆陽 both worked on this translation project. Noro Genjō visited the attendants and translators for the head of the Dutch trading legation at the Nagasakiya Inn in Edo, when they came to Edo every year to pay tribute to the bakufu. Noro brought Dodoens's book with him, and he questioned the Dutch about its contents. He continued in this work for several years beginning in the first year of the Kanpō era (1741). After a decade, he presented Yoshimune with the *Oranda honzōwage* (the translation of a Dutch herbal book) in eight volumes. This book determined the appropriate Chinese and Japanese words for the Latin and Dutch words for varieties of plants, using a simple format that only offered a few notes, mostly on the medicinal uses of the plants. Although this text was a rather primitive attempt at translation, it marked the first step in the attempt to decipher Western writings.

The successors of Noro and Aoki, namely Hiraga Gennai 平賀源内, Sugita Genpaku 杉田玄白, and Maeno Ryōtaku 前野良沢, made their fame in the field of Western learning. Thus, *rangaku* came into full bloom in Japanese society in the latter half of the eighteenth century at the same time that the premises of experiential and objective analysis that had appeared earlier were evolving and becoming powerful catalysts to the development of modern learning.⁸

Judicial Arrangements

In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the monetary economy of the Genroku era and increased commercialization gave rise to a range of complex problems and conflicts, which dramatically increased the number of lawsuits involving the bakufu. Foremost, the commercial economy produced more conflicts over the lending and borrowing of money. In farming villages the tensions between landlords and laborers became more acute as farmers put their fields up as collateral in loans and then had to either pay back their loans to gain return of their lands or else forfeit their properties if they defaulted. When new lands were open for cultivation, a multitude of conflicts flared over boundaries rights, revenues to the new lands, irrigation, and water use.

All of these problems were complicated and multifaceted and were compounded by the fact that they extended over a wide area that transcended lands controlled by the bakufu and daimyo domains. Therefore, these issues demanded a single, unified judicial response as well as modifications in the legal system. In response to these demands, and as part of the Kyōhō reforms, the bakufu compiled a legal text, *Kujikata osadamegaki* 公事方御定書.⁹ This text of a 103 articles was organized into two volumes. The first volume covered the legal responsibilities of the bakufu judicial office and was a compilation of earlier laws covering criminal cases. The second volume described the proceedings for criminal and civil lawsuits and listed civil regulations as well as the standard punishments for a variety of crimes.

Yoshimune employed the magistrate of Edo, Ōoka Tadasuke, to reform the judicial system. Ōoka collected earlier legal precedents, including judicial rulings and sanctions. In 1724, he compiled the *Hōritsu yose* 法律寄, which he presented to Yoshimune. Following this, much greater efforts were made to unify judicial standards. In 1738, Sugioka Yoshitsura 杉岡能連, the magistrate in charge of bakufu finances who also held jurisdiction over judicial affairs in the bakufu's territories, became the principle official in charge of a new editorial department to begin the compilation of a legal code. This office later completed a provisional draft text. Yoshimune ordered that the draft be used as the basis for a larger text that was to be compiled under the direction of the three departments of the bakufu's judicial office: the magistrate in charge of religious affairs (*jisha bugyō* 寺社奉行), the city magistrate of Edo, and the finance magistrate.

The draft underwent several revisions. Yoshimune himself gave his own concrete opinions and guidance, returning the manuscript again and again to the bakufu judicial office for further work. Finally, in the third year of Kanpō 寛保 (1743), the compilation was completed. As this text, *Kujikata osadamegaki*, neared completion, the same three magistrates created a compilation of laws from the earliest period of the bakufu beginning with the twentieth year of Keichō (1615). They categorized approximately 3,500 bakufu laws by separate headings. This work, titled the

Ofuregaki shūsei 御触書集成, became the most trustworthy and foundational legal text in the Tokugawa period.

By his legal reforms, Yoshimune took a leading role in guiding bakufu officials in creating a bureaucratic system that could respond to the many complex problems facing society, especially economic issues. The shogun occupied the top position in the bureaucracy, which resembled a pyramid in structure. He led and managed the bakufu, but in order for this type of large organization to function harmoniously and impartially, it was absolutely necessary to revise the laws that ensured its underlying functions. The fundamental revision of the legal system was absolutely necessary to handle the many conflicts and take diverse administrative actions in response to the complex social conditions that accompanied commercialization and the monetization of the economy. Yoshimune recognized the actions needed to suit the period and was the first shogun to reform the legal system to achieve these ends.¹⁰

Internal Discord over Administrative Decisions

Most of Yoshimune's reforms proceeded smoothly, but four to five years into the Kyōhō reforms after Yoshimune assumed the office of shogun, in the intercalary fourth month of the ninth year of Kyōhō (1724), three magistrates, Magistrate in Charge of Religious Affairs Makino Hidenari, City Magistrate of Edo Ōoka Tadasuke, and Finance Magistrate Komakine Masakata, were all summoned to appear before the bakufu senior council (*rōjū*). When the three magistrates appeared, Andō Shigenobu and the rest of the four senior councilors convened and proclaimed the following directive.¹¹

The senior councilors declared that whereas when the three magistrates reported or consulted about any matter that was in their jurisdiction they had thus far made suitable and appropriate reports; but henceforth they must always report directly to the senior councilors. They were charged with reporting all matters to the senior council, even issues of little significance, and even if operations were behind schedule.

Then the senior council made a further directive that recognized the uniqueness of the proposals in which the shogun had made direct inquiries of the magistrates via his chamberlains, but nevertheless demanded that the senior council be informed beforehand of any matters proposed by the three magistrates. Previously, the shogun's chamberlains Arima Ujinori 有馬氏倫 and Kanō Hisamichi 加納久通 had reported to the senior council only after they had made their reports to the shogun. In other words, they reported only to the shogun without informing the senior council of any matters of business. Consequently, the senior council demanded that henceforth the shogun's chamberlains should agree to report first to the senior council to avoid any problems in governance.

The three magistrates who heard these demands constituted the central core officers of the bakufu administration responsible for governance, namely the magistrate in charge of religious affairs, who had jurisdiction over spiritual issues and religious institutions; the city magistrate of Edo, charged with the administration of Edo where the bakufu was located; and the finance magistrate, who administered lands held by shogunate. The senior council's pronouncement directed against these three magistrates addressed an extremely contentious issue. The events leading up to this pronouncement indicate that the three magistrates, although they were officers of the bakufu, had used the shogun's chamberlains to report directly to Yoshimune. This meant that administrative matters which had occurred, as well as legal judgments and directives, had bypassed the senior council and went directly to the shogun for his consideration.

An analysis of the process of policy making at this time reveals the following characteristics.¹² Directives for the senior administrators, such as the three magistrates just mentioned, were issued mostly by the senior council. But, when items such as proposed legislation and other policy matters were sent by the magistrates to their superiors for review, after 1720 more than half the time the shogun's chamberlains, such as Arima and Kanō, were dispatched to receive and report these directions and legal decisions to and from the shogun, which marked a dramatic increase compared to previous cases. The proposals that administrators

such as the magistrates did submit to the senior council dealt mostly with matters of ceremony, including territories to be used for hawking, guard duties, and samurai residences. Yoshimune's chamberlains handled all of the substantive issues dealing with civil administration and the affairs of urban governance. In the early Kyōhō era, the bakufu administration subverted the senior council and functioned through the network of the shogun, his chamberlains, and the top administrators. This situation provides a perspective of one aspect of the Kyōhō reforms undertaken with Yoshimune's direction.

After the senior council issued the aforementioned edict, aside from the legal directives pertaining to a case of wholesalers in medicinal plants, there were no more instances in which Arima and Kanō served as intermediaries between the shogun and top administrators, such as the three magistrates. Clearly, the usual procedure changed, and proposals from administrative officers were presented to the senior council, who then used the shogun's chamberlains to forward matters to the shogun.

The aforementioned directive from the senior council illuminates the resolution of an internal struggle over the handling of policy making and the management of bakufu affairs at the time. Judging from the tone of the senior council's directive, there was a jurisdictional conflict between the senior council and the shogun's chamberlains. The directive presented the position of the senior council as a whole and was drafted to take a firm stance on the issue of the authority of the senior council over the administration of the bakufu. In typical practice, one member of the senior council was appointed for a period of roughly one month, and he carried out all of the duties associated with responding to most laws and government directives. The senior councilors rotated in this post of "monthly senior councilor" (*tsukiban rōjū* 月番老中), who was responsible for everyday administration. Hence, when all of the senior councilors issued a directive together, as in this case, it gave great importance to the contents of that directive and can be interpreted as an expression of the resolute determination of the senior council as a group.

Given this situation, the following cases bear special consideration.¹³ One incident occurred in the first month of the fourth year of Kyōhō

(1719) when the senior councilor Kuze Shigeyuki 久世重之 summoned and rebuked all of the inspectors (*metsuke*). The inspectors had tried to curry favor with the shogun's chamberlains Arima and Kanō and used improper channels to convey government business, bypassing the senior council. Kuze severely chastised the inspectors for this. Many applauded Kuze for taking this position.¹⁴

In another case, Hori Toshikatsu, the newly appointed magistrate of Shimoda, who was responsible for the administration of the port of Shimoda on the cusp of the Izu Peninsula, had just taken up his appointment, and chamberlain Arima Ujinori made a unilateral decision on a matter of the senior council's jurisdiction. Usually, newly appointed magistrates of Shimoda followed a sea route when traveling to or from Shimoda, but Hori hated boats and asked senior councilor Kuze that he be allowed to take the land route. Hori relied on Arima in his capacity as chamberlain to convey this request to the senior councilor. But Arima viewed this as only a minor issue, and gave his own permission to Hori. Senior councilor Kuze became enraged at this arbitrary usurpation of authority on Arima's part. The senior councilors as a group summoned Arima Ujinori and forced him to apologize.¹⁵

These incidents form the backdrop for the senior council's directive in the intercalary fourth month of 1724, and they were in response to the abuse of power on the part of the shogun's chamberlains who had formed an alliance with top administrators to conduct the business of government by bypassing the senior council. The senior councilors united and worked to reassert their authority in the government. Until 1724, the proposals and drafts of declarations that were submitted by top administrators, including the three magistrates, were in most instances handled by the shogun's chamberlains Arima and Kanō, allowing Yoshimune greater latitude in decisions. Since the senior council was for the most part involved in decisions only after the fact, government policies were established without its input. After the issuance of the 1724 edict in response to this situation, excepting the particular law drafted for the case of wholesalers in medicinal plants mentioned earlier, almost all of the proposals and plans for legislation thereafter were submitted to the

senior council, and direct petitions to the shogun's chamberlains ended.¹⁶

Thus, the senior council's protests ended in apparent success. In the many attempts to reform domainal governments in this period, and in the case of the bakufu's Kyōhō reforms as well, strife within the pre-existing political order had to be overcome. Whenever reformers were unable to surmount problems and discord, changes had to occur. In the case of domainal rule, the political order was divided into two fiercely opposing camps. On the one hand were the forces opposing the daimyo's chamberlains and other newly appointed officials; and, the daimyo himself might be removed from office through the act of *osbikome*, as described earlier. But, on the other hand, daimyo could behave arbitrarily in their rule and suppress high-level vassals and their relations.

Conflicts and struggles such as these served as tests that could not be resolved by the use of force but had to be solved by a variety of techniques. That is to say, new modes of organization had to be created that could adapt to changes in the social-political context but were rooted in a political order that incorporated the different existing social groups each with their own rights and networks of authority. Such developments produced the growth and fruition of a distinct Japanese-style organization.

Yoshimune's Organizational Reforms: Progressiveness, Conservatism, and Harmonious Development

To create new policies suited to changes in social conditions, the content of government policies was important, but new systems also had to be created that had the potential to respond to the changing social and political climate. Officials had to be recruited and employed, and if greater emphasis was not placed on the personal ability of the members of these organizations, then in all possibility these organizations would grow stagnant and collapse.

However, if similar due consideration was not given to the preexisting political order and power relations, then these same organizations could

not reform themselves. Generally speaking, daimyo who sought political reform by attacking the prerogatives of those who enjoyed their office by long-held custom and familial relations and replaced these people with others might occasionally be hailed as great lords. In most cases, however, it was highly problematic if reforms were enacted unconditionally based on some great daimyo's personal commands which would in a single stroke immediately destroyed the traditional rights, power relations, and agreements reached with long-standing vassals.

At the most superficial level, reforms were supposed to be for the betterment of society; yet, when these same reforms lead to authoritarianism, the suppression of personal rights, and the denial of group political action, then ultimately the terrible conditions that resulted would destroy any good done earlier. This poses an enormous contradiction and incongruity. On the one hand stands the decision to modernize and improve society through an absolutist form of government in which the power of the leader becomes preminent. On the other hand is the choice to retain and preserve a society that values democracy and individual rights. Needless to say, following both of these courses exclusively would be unsound. How then should this contradiction be resolved? Reform, in its purest meaning, must overcome this deadlock, and the role of the leader becomes the critical issue in the resolution of this contradiction.

The Tokugawa bakufu under the leadership of Yoshimune was the first organization to confront this problem by attempting to revamp existing social institutions. Regardless of the perspective on the situation, there were two key issues that the bakufu focused its attention on as it tried to visualize approaches to confront the development of society and to resolve the contradiction just described. The first was the system for the selection and promotion of official appointments in its organization. The second dealt with the decision-making process in the organization.

The Supplemental Salary System: Reforms in Hiring and Promotion

The supplemental salary (*tashidaka*) system for hiring and appointing officers was representative of Yoshimune personnel policies during the Kyōhō reforms. Introduced in the sixth month of the eighth year of Kyōhō (1723), this system set standard levels of stipends as a guide for determining how to appoint retainers to offices. Officers were appointed

Standard Salary (<i>kokū</i>)	Office
5,000	Chamberlain (<i>sobashū</i> 側衆), Keeper of Edo Castle (<i>rusui</i> 留守居), Captain of the Guard (<i>ōbangashira</i> 大番頭)
4,000	Captain of the Bodyguard (<i>shoin bangashira</i> 書院番頭), Captain of the Inner Guard (<i>kosbōgumi bangashira</i> 小姓組番頭)
3,000	Senior Inspector, City Magistrate of Edo, Finance Magistrate, Captain of the 100-man Musket Group (<i>hyakuningumi gashira</i> 百人組頭), Overseer of the Construction and Repair Groups (<i>keobushingumi sbibai</i> 小普請組支配), Master of Kōfu Domain (<i>Kōfu kinbanshibai</i> 甲府勤番支配)
2,000	Banner Magistrate, Pike Magistrate, Magistrate of Works (<i>sakuji bugyō</i> 作事奉行), Magistrate of Construction (<i>fushin bugyō</i> 普請奉行), Magistrate of Small Construction (<i>keobushin bugyō</i> 小普請奉行), Magistrate of Nikkō, Captain of the New Guards (<i>shinbangashira</i> 新番頭)
1,500	Head of the Shogun's Musketeers (<i>mochizutsu gashira</i> 持筒頭), Captain of the Archers, Captain of the Musketeers, City Magistrate of Kyoto, City Magistrate of Osaka, City Magistrate of Sakai
1,000	Inspector, Herald (<i>tsukaiban</i> 使番), Master of the Body Guard (<i>shoinbankumi-gashira</i> 書院番組頭), Master of the Inner Guards (<i>kosbōgumi kumigashira</i> 小姓組組頭), Master of the Shogun's Outriders (<i>kojūningashira</i> 小十人頭), Master of the Shogun's Foot Guard (<i>keachi gashira</i> 徒頭), Magistrate of Nagasaki, City Magistrate of Suruga, City Magistrate of Ise Yamada, Magistrate of Uruga, Magistrate of Nara, Magistrate of Sado Island

Figure 7. The Supplemental Salary (*tashidaka* 足高) System and Standard Salaries for Bakufu Offices

depending on their appropriate status or the amount of stipend they were entitled to by custom. (See Figure 7.) However, when a bakufu retainer of low status was appointed to an office, and the amount of their household stipend (the amount of stipend belonging to all bakufu retainers which was handed down patrilineally in a household) was below the fixed standards for stipends for a certain appointed office, then the bakufu made up the difference between the amount of the official's family stipend and the amount required for the office. This amount was called the supplemental salary, or *tashidaka*, and it was granted only for a person's term of office.

For example, the standard stipend, or *kokudaka*, required for an administrative official in the post of the city magistrate of Edo or for the office of finance magistrate was 3,000 *roku*. If a person with a household stipend of 1,000 *roku* was appointed to either post, then their supplemental salary would equal 2,000 *roku*. If a person with a household stipend of only 500 *roku* received either post, then he would be given a supplemental salary amounting to 2,500 *roku*.

This system allowed for the appointment to high office of retainers who did not possess lucrative household stipends but who had demonstrated talent. It enabled the bakufu to appoint the officers it wished. In addition, the bakufu's finances benefitted because household stipends were not raised, since salary raises were only temporary. Consequently, the supplemental salary system had the effect of reducing bakufu expenditures, and for that reason, it has received the praise of modern scholars.

The conclusions of modern scholars are not necessarily incorrect, but when the supplemental salary system is considered from a political context, the meaning of the system requires further investigation. Specifically, the distinct characteristics of the supplemental salary system are evident in its ability to resolve the bakufu's organizational problems of appointing officers and its need to emphasize ability over status. Historians, however, view the supplemental salary system as only nominally adhering to the principles of the status system that formed the basis for official appointments.

However, in actuality it maintained the rationale for the status system, despite increasing the numbers of appointments of officials on the basis of their abilities and allowing the recruitment of men of low status. For instance, in the aforementioned case of the bureaucratic posts of city magistrate and finance magistrate, the stipend required for these offices was 3,000 *koku*. This amount marked a major division within the bakufu's stipend system. Anyone who held a stipend of more than 3,000 *koku* held the high rank of great bannerman, which was a much higher rank than an ordinary banner men. A great bannerman need not accept the appointment of *bangashira* 番頭 in the army, because he was entitled to lead his own followers into battle by himself.¹⁷

An officer in the rank of *bangashira* enjoyed a salary of 4,000 to 5,000 *koku* for his post. *Monogashira* who led foot soldiers armed with bows and muskets in the advance wing of the army possessed stipends of 1,500 *koku*. Accordingly, *monogashira* were the men suited to be appointed to the posts of city magistrate of Kyoto and Osaka, which required a 1,500 *koku* stipend. Magistrate posts administering construction projects which required 2,000 *koku*, such as the magistrate of works in charge of construction of castle keeps, gates, and towers, and the magistrate of public works who built castle walls and moats, were posts filled by people with the appropriate status outside of the *monogashira* rank.

From this perspective, the supplemental salary system's schedule of minimum stipends required for an office was none other than a rationale for determining appointment by hereditary rank. The supplemental salary merely fixed the different amounts of *kokudaka* for each appointment.

The standard rates of *kokudaka* in the supplemental salary system for official appointments had two distinct meanings. The first represented a standard for making salary compensations to appointed officials who possessed low family incomes. However, the other meaning of the system expressed the principle that all bakufu officials regardless of their appointment would have to assume a place in the traditional status order predicated on a military organization. Thus, while the supplemental salary system furthered the selection of officials based predominantly on

their abilities, at the same time the system embodied the fiction of status consciousness, which reinforced existing power relationships.

In addition, the supplemental salary system was only for temporary appointments for government offices. Once the term of an office was completed, the appointed officers' status reverted to the original level. The system did not spell the destruction of either the status order or the hereditary nature of family stipends. The system did not threaten the honor of the Tokugawa shogunate's most powerful and long-standing vassals, yet it allowed for organizing in such a way as to provide for the freer development of the allocation of positions appropriate to changed circumstances. The supplemental salary system was a clever, albeit peculiar, approach to promotion.

Table 3 presents the values for appointing and employing officials according to the supplemental salary system. The most pronounced results indicate that appointments to prestigious military posts, such as the captain of the guard, remained the same since they emphasized a hereditary family salary based on status. Yet, in the case of such administrative positions as city magistrate and finance magistrate, the historical situation

Table 3. The Appointment of Officers Following the Supplemental Salary System

	Senior Inspectors Before/After		City Magistrates Before/After		Finance Magistrates Before/After	
to 500 <i>koku</i>	0	13 (26%)	0	6 (27%)	1	22 (40%)
500– 1,000 <i>koku</i>	4 (10%)	12 (24%)	0	6 (27%)	2	8 (14%)
1,000 <i>koku</i>	11 (28%)	15 (30%)	15 (65%)	7 (32%)	18 (47%)	19 (35%)
2,000 <i>koku</i>	12 (31%)	6	3	2	6 (16%)	3
3,000 <i>koku</i>	3	3	2	1	6 (16%)	2
4,000 <i>koku</i>	5	0	1	0	1	1
5,000 <i>koku</i>	4	1	2	0	4	0
Total	39	50	23	22	38	55

Izui Tomoko, "Tashidakasei ni kansuru ichi-kōsatsu," *Gakushūin Shigaku*, no. 2, 1965.

demanded that people with administrative talent be employed for these posts, and a discernable tendency appeared for men of relatively low rank to gain these offices.

Appointments for the finance magistrate are especially surprising. After the enactment of the supplemental salary system, more than half of the officials appointed to the post of finance magistrate required a 500 *roku* raise to bring their salaries in line for the post. The supplemental salary system was the most successful procedure for making appointments introduced by the Tokugawa shogunate.

The late-eighteenth-century workings of the appointment system following the implementation of Tokugawa Yoshimune's organizational reforms are described in a record of observations, *Okinagusa* 翁草,¹⁸ authored by Kanzawa Tokō 神沢杜口 a mid-level official working in the city magistrate's office in Kyoto in the late 1700s. Kanzawa made the following observation about the appointment process for bureaucrats in the bakufu finance office.

As for employment in the bakufu finance office, even a small amount of work is praised and advancement comes quickly. After the Kyōhō era, the men within the finance office included Sugioka Yoshitsuru, Hosoda Tokiyori, Kamiya Hisayoshi, Kanno Haruhide, and Hagiwara Yoshimasa. They were all retainers of low status or else farmers. There were many others besides them, so many in fact that it is impossible to count them all. There was a reason for their being there.

In the past, bakufu retainers with 5,000–6,000 *roku* stipends were appointed to posts in the finance office. However, in the Kyōhō era, the supplemental salary system came to be applied for all of these posts. The standard amount of stipend for an office in the finance ministry was set at 3,000 *roku*. Consequently, even people of mean birth with low hereditary stipends were increasingly recognized for their ability and were employed in the office without regard to their birth status or other restraint. Thereafter, all of the employees in the finance ministry applied themselves with great

diligence to their work. Ordinary workers in the finance ministry desired to rise in their appointments in that ministry.

The head of the finance ministry worked to become chief auditor of the same ministry, while the chief auditor wanted to rise to the post of finance magistrate. All of these men sought promotions and worked diligently. In recent years, the post of finance magistrate has become something unique because it is filled by men transferred from different offices within the same ministry. Most finance magistrates began as ordinary officers and were gradually promoted to higher offices in the bureaucracy until they finally received appointment as finance magistrate.

All of the five people Kanzawa mentioned were finance magistrates who lived in the first half of the eighteenth century. As a result of the implementation of the supplemental salary system, these men received appointments that allowed them to rise from the rank of lower level retainers with 100 *kokū* salaries to finance magistrate with a stipend approximating 3,000 *kokū*. The fact that the finance ministry, which was the core of the bakufu's administration and its civil bureaucracy, successfully implemented a system for appointing officials that enabled the lowest officers to rise to the highest position of finance magistrate deserves great attention for the upward mobility it allowed.

The finance office was representative of the bakufu's administrative and financial system, and its offices and duties deserve explanation. The development of the organization of the bakufu's finance ministry is the subject for detailed discussion in the next chapter; consequently, the present discussion will focus only on a simple explanation of the offices and of their jurisdictions, relying on Figure 8.

The finance office supervised the collection of yearly taxes on the bakufu's domains, which were spread throughout Japan and totaled eight million *kokū*. The finance ministry dealt comprehensively with the bakufu's fiscal administration and was responsible for supplying the revenue for all of the shogunate's expenses, relying on the income from the bakufu's

domains. Nevertheless, the finance ministry was not just a specialized department for fiscal affairs comparable to the Ministry of Finance (*ōkurashō*) in the Japanese government today. It also carried out a wide range of civil and judicial programs that included the opening of new agricultural lands, water management and irrigation, the maintenance of trade routes and government checkpoints, the trade and distribution of manufactured goods, and famine relief. In addition, the ministry held jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases involving farmers living within the bakufu's territories. The finance ministry was, in the broadest meaning possible, the core office within the bakufu's system of administration.

Figure 8 illustrates the organization of various offices within the finance ministry, and the standard salaries for each post.

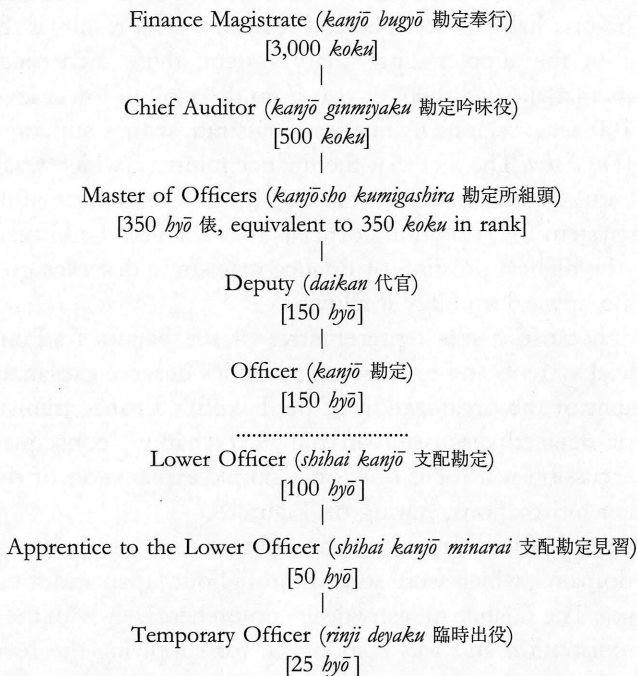


Figure 8. Offices and Standard Salaries in the Finance Ministry

The finance magistrate headed the ministry and had the largest salaried position of 3,000 *koku* in the finance ministry. The magistrate was a bakufu retainer, but at the same time he received honors comparable to a daimyo. There were four finance magistrates, two held responsibilities for financial management while the other two specialized in legal matters.

The chief auditor was in charge of inspecting accounts. He watched for any irregularities in the ministry's activities and held wide authority that allowed him to petition the finance magistrates for any number of reforms and even to petition senior councilors, who were the highest officials in the bakufu. There were two chief auditors. This post also garnered high rank in the bakufu, providing for special honorary recognitions.

The masters officers (*keumigashira*) numbered around ten and were section chiefs in charge of different divisions of officers in the finance ministry. Deputies were regional officers who were spread throughout the country and were in charge of the bakufu's landholdings. The extent of the intendants' authority was great, encompassing tax collection, judicial decisions, and policing, yet their status was relatively low. They were appointed from among the best members of the finance ministries officers, and numbered about twenty in total.

Finance officers, also called "finance ordinaries", were the typical workers in the finance ministry. Their numbers varied over time, but they numbered around 100 to 150 men. As the figure of standard salaries for offices illustrates, this post was rather low in status. The post of finance officers was appropriate for ordinary samurai, the *hirashi*, who were at the lower ranks of the warrior status group, as described in Chapter 3. The *hirashi* were close to the bottom, but they belonged to the distinct group of upper level samurai who were set apart from the lower level foot soldiers of the *ashigaru* and *kachi* classes.

All the positions below the rank of lower officer formed the lower level officers of the finance ministry, and these jobs were occupied by low-ranking samurai. The post of lower officer was suitable for a samurai of *kachi* rank, and there were about 100 of these officials. They assisted in the duties of the officers, but they often took over most of the duties of these officers including the creation of complicated, lengthy, and var-

ied fiscal registers. The apprentices to the lower officer were in many cases appointed from among lower officers' sons. They followed their fathers to the finance ministry and worked with them, learning the duties of fiscal administration and legal affairs. Temporary officers were of particular low status and worked as part-time assistants. This post relied on bakufu retainers from the *ashigaru* class as temporary officials who functioned primarily as security guards.

The standard salary levels for all of the offices in the finance ministry reflected the salary system for samurai during the Tokugawa period, as described in the previous chapter. *Kokudaka* refers to the level of production of a distinct parcel of land which had been given as a fief in payment to officials and high level retainers. It formed the fundamental unit of the feudal system. Excepting the highest level of retainers, most retainers received their salary expressed in units of rice sacks (*tawara*, *hyō* 俵) — the units that the bakufu and domains used to pay salaries in rice drawn from storehouses. Thus, the salaries of most officers, apart from the those of the highest ranks, were paid in *tawara*. In the case of the supplemental salary system, if a bakufu retainer with a hereditary stipend of 200 *hyō* was appointed master of officers of finance, he would receive a supplemental salary of 150 *hyō*.

As illustrated in Figure 8, it was a slightly complicated task to convert the amount of salary paid in rice (*tawaradaka* 俵高), into the equivalent amount in *kokudaka* (refer to p. 56). But, the following formula was used for this purpose. In the example of a retainer who held a domain worth 100 *kokū*, the amount of yearly tax collected from the farmers in the territory was a percentage of 100 *kokū*. The bakufu set the yearly rate of taxation at 35 percent. Therefore, the amount of taxes a person with a 100 *kokū* territory collected each year was 35 *kokū*. In the case of retainers who were paid a salary in 100 *hyō* of rice, the entire 100 *hyō* was their share. The bakufu decided that one *hyō* contained 63 liters of rice (3 to 斗 5 *shō* 升 = 0.35 *kokū*). Therefore, 100 *hyō* equaled 35 *kokū*.

By applying the ratio of 35 *kokū* to 100 *hyō*, it was possible to measure amounts in *kokudaka* and *tashidaka* according to a common standard. This method provided a simple way to convert *kokudaka* into *tashidaka*

(and vice versa), and resolved problems arising from the fact that amounts were expressed in different units, namely *tashidaka* paid as a salary and *kokudaka* as the revenue derived from fiefs, both of which were clearly distinguished from one another in the feudal system. The bakufu's use of such a conversion system mitigated the difficulties associated with promoting someone from a position of low status and office to high office by transforming the problem into the simple issue of advancement in rank, avoiding any gap in the entire promotion system between officers paid in *tashidaka* and those paid in *kokudaka*.

Okinagusa makes the following observation regarding this point:

The aforementioned men who became finance magistrates were all from the status of finance officers with family stipends amounting to 150 *hyō*, but they received promotions and gained supplemental salaries (*tashidaka*), progressively advancing through the posts of master and auditor to become finance magistrates. In this manner, the bakufu ministry of finance in the Kyōhō era was not restricted to customs of rank and status but had great leeway in establishing a promotion system that emphasized talent.

Okinagusa offered a profile of Ono Kuniyoshi 小野一吉, who was a finance magistrate, and his case provides a concrete example of promotion in the bakufu's finance ministry.

Ono Kuniyoshi's father was a lower level bakufu retainer, a man with the extremely low rank of foot soldier (*ashigaru*) in the bakufu's office of handiwork, which crafted such items as sword fittings and utensils. Kuniyoshi himself was an employee of the same class engaged in conveying tribute goods to the private quarters of the shogun. Yet, through contacts he later came to work for Matsudaira Norisato 松平乗邑 who was a senior councilor in charge of finance. With the senior councilor's recommendation, Ono won transfer to the post of lower officer.

He then advanced to the higher status of finance officer in 1737. Subsequently, he was appointed shogunal Deputy (*daikan* 代官) of the Chūgoku region (the area surrounding modern Okayama prefecture). Later, Ono's patron, Matsudaira Norisato, fell out of power for political

reasons in 1745, and Ono realized that he had lost his long-time backer.

Yet, in 1748, important Korean envoys arrived to Japan bearing a message for the shogun, and Ono, in his capacity as intendant, played a key role in entertaining them at checkpoints on the trip to Edo. With the successful completion of this critical task, the Edo office of the finance ministry ordered Ono to conduct an accounting of the various expenses related to the entertainment of the visiting Korean delegation and then create a comprehensive financial record for submission. Ono accepted this order, and he immediately completed the financial reports, which he forwarded to the ministry. The finance ministry in Edo was surprised at the speed of his response, and they asked Ono how he was able to quickly draw up the records of fiscal expenses for such a large and complicated affair. Ono replied that soon after he was ordered to assume his temporary duties in the service of the shogun, he recorded the prices and names of all of the items purchased on a small record book he carried with him. He added that he completed his notes for daily expenses on the evening of the same day. He separated the financial problems which were more difficult to resolve and left them for later. Then, when he calculated the totals, he arranged the amounts sequentially in account books. When his appointment ended, he tabulated the totals by himself once more and recopied his own record books later. Ono told his story in a nonchalant manner. When the upper level officers of the finance ministry heard this, they clapped their hands and were deeply impressed by his ability.

Afterward, Ono was summoned to Edo for the post of master. Then in the fifth year of Hōreki 宝曆 (1755), he advanced to the post of chief auditor, gaining a salary increase of 50 *hyō* to raise his salary to 100 *hyō*. In 1760, his salary increased 200 *kokū*, and it was no longer paid in *tawara* because he received a fief valued at 300 *kokū* in Musashino province (modern Tokyo).

Ono's next lucky chance came with a case of misconduct in the office of the Osaka city magistrate. In his capacity as chief auditor, he traveled to Osaka with an inspector to investigate the officers involved in this affair. The pair reported to the central government that everyone in-

criminated deserved the death penalty. However, Ono and his fellow inspector faced criticism for the excessively harsh penalty they advocated. He told his friends that as a result of his mission, he would either be forced to commit suicide, or he would receive the highest appointment in the administration.

Just as Ono predicted, when he completed his duties, he was promoted to the office of finance magistrate in 1762, finally able to reach a glorious position as a high-level bakufu retainer with a salary of 3,000 *koku*. Thanks to his talent with numbers, Ono Kuniyoshi advanced up the ranks from an ordinary foot soldier to the post of finance magistrate with a 3,000 *koku* emolument.

Okinagusa reports that there was considerable criticism of Ono's cunning but that only a man with obvious talent could rise from the rank of foot soldier. Ono could disregard such criticism because very few people were as qualified for special government assignments as he was. The shogun and senior councilors had only praise for him, and he produced great results, which made his influence grow. Ono's case succinctly demonstrates the possibility of even a low-level retainer gaining promotion to a high office on the basis of talent and power.

Ono was born a retainer of low status, but an even more startling case is evinced by the author of *Okinagusa*, Kanzawa Tokō. Among his aforementioned descriptions of five men who became finance magistrate, Kanzawa provides evidence that one was a farmer, Kanno Haruhide 神尾春央. Kanno was a farmer from Mishima in Izu province (modern Shizuoka prefecture), but he left for Edo where he purchased rank as a foot soldier (*kachi*), becoming a lower level bakufu retainer with a salary of 100 *hyō*. Afterward, he applied himself to a variety of positions with the result that he received appointment in the office of the finance ministry. Thanks to his luck, he advanced in his appointments, finally reaching the post of finance magistrate.

One fact deserving attention in Kanzawa's account was something that did not appear in Kanno's official career history. Whether Kanzawa was implying something when he made the following observation is besides the point: it should be noted that he wrote that it was not un-

usual, but even natural, for an ordinary person to have the opportunity to purchase rank as a bakufu retainer and thereby enter the samurai class. This trend which appeared in society from the late eighteenth century deserves attention, and it is the subject for more thorough analysis in the next chapter.

The case of Negishi Yasumori 根岸鎮衛 who served as finance magistrate and Edo city magistrate closely approximates Kanno's, although Negishi lived in a slightly later period. Negishi is well known as a prominent man of culture and editor of a collection of essays, *Mimibukuro* 耳袋. Consequently, his career has been fairly well researched. Evidently Negishi's father was a farmer from Sagami province (modern Kanagawa prefecture), who purchased the rank of *kachi* and became a lower level bakufu retainer. Negishi's father then became the adopted son of the Anjō 安生 family, who were bakufu retainers.¹⁹ His son, Yasumori, was adopted by the Negishi family, who held higher rank as bakufu retainers. Thus, Negishi Yasumori, who worked as finance magistrate and Edo city magistrate, was originally from the rank of farmer.

In this way, in one generation men from the farming class advanced to the highest financial position in the bakufu, namely the finance magistrate. They became living examples of fantastic success stories. These cases did not occur at the collapse of the bakufu, when the status system itself was destroyed, but in the middle of the early modern period in the eighteenth century. Such cases were possible because a process existed that allowed it.

Aside from the case of men who were originally farmers such as these, in general, lower level retainers rose to the ranks of lower officer officer; and, depending on their ability and efforts, they received appointments to master and chief auditor, followed by a regional office affiliated with the finance ministry, such as the magistrate of Sado 佐渡 Island (who managed the gold mines there) and the magistrate of Nagasaki (who was responsible for foreign trade). These officers received progressively higher offices until they gained the highest post, the finance magistrate. Such cases confirm the existence of a system of graduated promotion that gave preference to ability.

An even more important point is that the advancement of these men was neither pure accident nor on an *ad hoc* basis in which selection was made by patronage relations through a superior's favor or at the efforts of someone more powerful. With the support of the formal system of supplemental salaries, a promotion system whose rationale gave preference to talent became accepted within the bakufu's organization, taking a rational and logical form.

The System for Decision Making: Duality in the Process of Policy Formation

In retrospect, the most important characteristic of Yoshimune's administration was the process of policy making. This operation is visually described in Figure 9.

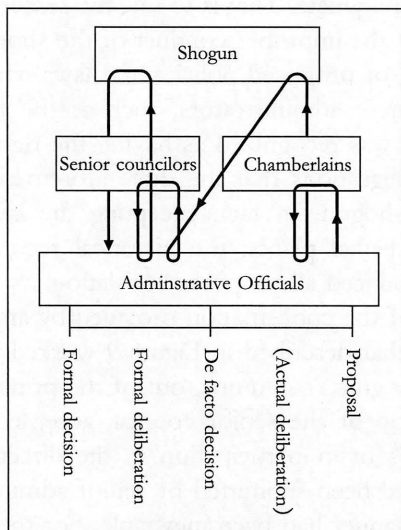


Figure 9. The Structure of Decision Making in Yoshimune's Administration
Source: Ōishi Shinzaburō, *Ōoka Echizen no Kami Tadasuke*, p. 166.

An examination of the process for policy formation during the Kyōhō-era reforms reveals that a focal point of debate was the drafting of proposed laws by the bureaucratic administrators responsible for the actual running of the government, namely the magistrate for religious affairs, the city magistrate of Edo, and the finance magistrate. These magistrates submitted their proposals to the shogun via the shogun's chamberlains. This informal exchange between the shogun and the magistrates allowed them to continually refine their ideas and polish their proposals. When they began to formulate definite plans, the magistrates publicly presented proposals to the senior council for its approval. The senior council then formally presented them to the shogun, and he then approved them, at which time the senior council ordered these proposals enacted.²⁰

What was the meaning of this overly complicated process for policy making? In fact, it emerged from the power struggle between the shogun and his chamberlains against the senior council and its allies, the hereditary vassals in the shogunate. That is to say, the senior council reasserted its authority against the improper conduct of the shogun's chamberlains over their handling of proposed policies and laws which had been submitted by government administrators, such as the finance magistrate. The senior council was recognized as having the right of first deliberation over policy suggestions that the three aforementioned magistrates submitted to the shogun. In fact, excepting the law for the case of wholesalers in medicinal plants, the historical records verify that the senior council introduced all proposed legislation.

Yet, regardless of the confirmation provided by any particular case, a process similar to that described in Figure 9 worked below the surface. In other words, Shogun Yoshimune, out of the principle of respect for the political position of the senior council, accepted its opinions and decided to stop his overt participation in the direct reception of any proposals which had been submitted by senior administrators, although his action in this manner had been inevitable. For their part, in cases of actual deliberation over policy, the three magistrates who constituted the level of senior administrative officials had to rely on the decisions and

guidance of such people as the shogun and chamberlains, who had authority to rule and held discretionary powers.

Since the political position of the senior council was fundamentally based on precedent, it was liable to take a negative and reactionary posture toward new proposals. The senior council was also an awkward mechanism for making rapid decisions about new proposals. Economic development during the Genroku and Kyōhō eras was incongruous with previous experience and continually engendered problems involving currency, exchange, new commercial transactions (as well as conflicts and legal concerns pertaining to commerce), the development of new goods, a thriving print culture, natural disasters and fire fighting, the development of new lands and water management issues, trade in medicines, and concerns over medical treatment. Administrative and legal responses were needed in all of these areas. Therefore, a systematic method of management was required that could rapidly formulate a wide range of new proposals.

The administration of the senior council was completely unsuited for such circumstances, and so the shogun reached a point where he decided to make swift decisions freely, without the constraint of having to follow precedent. This approach allowed for policy formation in a creative and progressive manner. Since talented people were selected to become the shogun's aides, they could appropriately handle problems that demanded specialized skills, such as those related to recent economic issues. In summary, it was unavoidable for the three magistrates to bypass the senior council in matters of rule pertaining to recent crises so as to obtain guidance and rulings from the shogun and his chamberlains. Even if the magistrates had consulted the senior council, it seems likely that the latter would have only been perplexed at that time over how to decide over the new proposals which dealt with unfamiliar circumstances.

Ultimately, the shogun did not act in an unilateral fashion, since he followed the decree made by the senior council. The central aim of the shogun's administration came to reside in the revision and reconciliation of key proposals dealing with current issues which had been submitted by senior administrators. It did this by making proposals more feasible

by scrutinizing the prevailing conditions in society on the one hand, while considering how to work harmoniously with the powers of the senior council, on the other. One point that deserves special attention is Yoshimune's efforts toward reconciliation in the wake of the struggle over the policy-making process. His ultimate concession does not reflect a gap in his powers of leadership. Rather, Yoshimune respected the principles of bakufu rule which gave centrality to the senior council in the system of administration. He viewed his place as shogun as having an influential role in upholding the proper system for reaching decisions.

Yoshimune achieved a great number of accomplishments during his thirty-year term of office as shogun. He usually took the initiative in confronting many of these issues, yet he did not act willfully. For all of the problems he faced, he recruited bureaucrats, officials, and scholars and made them formulate concrete policy measures. Yoshimune guided the comprehensive investigation of any issue by listening attentively to the opinions and proposals submitted as well as to criticism of his own ideas. He then revised ideas and returned them to his advisors. He dealt with problems in this manner by fully allowing his advisors the opportunities to draft original ideas and discuss them, which in turn facilitated the progressive development of projects through the individual efforts and initiative of top administrators. Such an approach was indicative of the great achievements of the K \ddot{y} ōhō era and was indeed responsible for them. Yoshimune's ingenious political administration provides evidence of an exemplary leader in the context of a Japanese-style organization.

Uesugi Yōzan and the Reforms of Yonezawa Domain

Uesugi Yōzan 上杉鷹山, the daimyo of Yonezawa 米沢 domain of Dewa province (modern Yamagata prefecture) from the latter half of the eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, is representative of reform-minded daimyo. In 1751, Yōzan was born the second son of Akizuki Tanemi 秋月種美, the daimyo of Takanabe 高鍋 domain in Hyūga province (Miyazaki prefecture).²¹ His grandmother on his mother's side was the daughter of

Uesugi Tsunanori 上杉綱憲, the seventeenth-century daimyo of Yonezawa domain, and through that connection, in 1760 Yōzan became the adopted son of Uesugi Shigesada 上杉重定, the daimyo of Yonezawa domain (150,000 *koku*). In 1767, at the age of seventeen (fifteen by modern reckoning), Yōzan succeeded to the post of daimyo.

His name was Harunori 治憲, and he took the name Yōzan only after he retired. However, the name Yōzan will be used here, because that is the name by which he is best known. Yōzan differs slightly from the example of Tokugawa Yoshimune, although in light of all of his achievements Yōzan ought to be included among the leaders who worked in congruence with Japanese-style organizations. Indeed he is a representative example illustrating the type of leadership appropriate for Japanese-style organizations. But, what does that mean in concrete terms?

From the age of eighteen years when he rose to the post of daimyo to the moment of his retirement in the fifth year of Tenmei 天明 (1785), Yōzan guided the reforms of Yonezawa domain. Even after he retired, until his death in 1822, he served as advisor to his successors Haruhiro 治広 and Narisada 斉定, promoting the development of the domain's government.

However, that was not an easy road for Yōzan. The Uesugi house still basked in the glory of its ancestor Uesugi Kenshin 上杉謙信, the outstanding military leader of the Warring States period. Kenshin's territory once equaled one million *koku*, but through changes wrought by fighting and conflicts over succession, the territory shrank to the level of a mid-ranking domain of 150,000 *koku*. Unfortunately, the numbers of retainers did not decrease and remained consistent at around 5,000 men. High-ranking retainers of long-standing and prominent lineages including the Chisaka 千坂, Irobe 色部, and Suda 須田 endured and continued holding key positions. By tradition, these families held administrative offices in the domainal government. The traditional status system and the great number of retainers greatly impeded the progress of Yōzan's reforms.

The Rebellion of the Seven Houses and the Battle for Reform

At the time Yōzan was adopted into the Uesugi house, the economic

situation of Yonezawa domain had fallen into more desperate circumstances than other domains. The domainal government had reached an impasse, and some thought that the only way to resolve this situation was to relinquish the domain to the bakufu. Ultimately, the plan to deed the domain to the shogunate did not reach fruition, but the severe condition of the domain's finances remained as dire as ever.

When Yōzan took over the post of daimyo, he immediately undertook reforms to resolve the dangers facing the domain. At that time, there was a group within the domain that sought reforms. This group of intellectuals, called the Seigasha 菁莪社, was led by the Confucian scholar Warashina Sadasuke 葺科貞祐. They supported Yōzan's reforms, and the group's members formed the core of his reformist administration.

A chief member of this group, with a 1,000 *roku* fief, was Takenomata Masatsuna 竹俣当綱, who belonged to a noted lineage within the Uesugi clan and was appointed to the office of *samuraigumi* 侍組 (a post reserved for high-ranking retainers in the Uesugi household). In spite of his high status, Takenomata demonstrated great enthusiasm for reforms. He won appointment in the domainal administration in the office of magistrate, the equivalent of a post in the council of domainal elders, and supervised the course of reforms with Yōzan's cooperation and guidance. (Cases such as these where reform policies are undertaken by both the daimyo and the retainers are called "cooperative models" of reform.) Other influential members of this pro-reform faction included Nozoki Yoshimasa 荏戸善政, Satō Bunshirō 佐藤文四郎, and Shiga Hachiemon 志賀八右衛門, who served as Yōzan's chamberlains.

The reforms began by Yōzan's advocating total frugality. He drastically cut the amount of spending for his expenses as daimyo by one-seventh. To set an example, he restricted his regular meals to one soup and a vegetable, wore cotton clothes, and reduced the amount of correspondence he exchanged to a minimum. He also exhorted the domainal elders to practice frugality, obligating them to wear nothing fancier than cotton clothes.

The economic ruin of farming villages had caused the domain's fiscal problems, and Yōzan's response was to establish granaries for use in

combatting famines and poor harvests. He followed this step by enacting policies to boost agricultural production. Yōzan was attracted to the ideas of Confucianism, and he performed the *sekiden no rei* 籍田之礼 ritual, which had been used by Chinese emperors of the Chou 周 and Han 漢 dynasties to stimulate agricultural production. He also sent written proclamations throughout the domain to exhort greater agricultural production.

Plans were then laid to reclaim lands and develop agricultural villages within the domain. Yōzan promoted the development of farming lands in several tens of hectares of area, and he employed farmers as well as samurai retainers in the Uesugi domain to undertake this task. He even went against precedent to enlist the aid of upper level retainers of the *samuraigumi* and mid-ranking bannermen of the *sante* 三手 rank. The public works projects undertaken by domainal retainers, along with their efforts to create irrigation works, construct bridges, and build granaries, were carried out on a grand scale.

The reforms of Yonezawa domain proceeded through the efforts of literally the entire domain, but Uesugi Yōzan himself directed the reforms. Still, the progress of the government reforms faced the danger of opposition at every turn. The so-called revolt of the seven houses of Yonezawa domain illustrates this point.

The revolt occurred in the second year of An'ei 安永 (1773), when Uesugi retainers began public works projects within the domain.²² On the twenty-seventh day of the sixth month at approximately 7:00 A.M., seven retainers of the Uesugi house convened and proceeded to the castle where they sought an audience with Yōzan. The seven retainers were all from the most honored families serving the Uesugi house: the high-level administrators Chisaka Takaatsu 千坂高敦 and Irobe Terunaga 色部照長; Suda Mitsutake 須田満主, who was the domainal elder stationed in Edo; and Nagao Kageaki 長尾景明, Kiyono Sukehide 清野祐秀, Imokawa Nobuchika 芋川延親, and Hirabayashi Masaari 平林正在, all of whom held the office of *samuraigashira* which was the head post in the *samuraigumi*.

At their meeting with Yōzan, the seven retainers jointly presented him with a written remonstrance. This long document consisted of forty

clauses, and it criticized Yōzan's reformist policies. In particular, the document listed the crimes and misdeeds of the administrator Takenomata Masatsuna and his clique, decrying the practices that had inflicted suffering on both the retainers and the commoners in the domain. The retainers pressed their demands on Yōzan, demanding the dismissal of Takenomata and his supporters and seeking a return to the former patterns of government. Yōzan was taken aback by these sudden demands. He explained that given the gravity of the situation he would confer with the retired daimyo, Shigesada. Still, the seven retainers would not be moved until Yōzan had issued an order granting their demands. The discussion grew more heated, and four hours passed without any resolution, ending when Yōzan walked out by losing his patience.

One of the seven retainers, Imokawa Nobuchika, followed Yōzan out and snatched the end of Yōzan's formal trousers. According to the historical records, he grabbed hold of Yōzan, struggling to prevent his escape.²³ One of Yōzan's attendants who was accompanying him, Satō Bunshirō, knocked aside Nobuchika's hand, and Yōzan used that opportunity to escape, fleeing to the inner keep of the castle and to Shigesada's protection.

Perhaps the seven retainers had sought to carry out an *oshikome* against Yōzan to force him out of office, but unfortunately it is difficult to know for certain if this was the case. The record notes that Nobuchika grabbed hold of Yōzan, and this suggests an attempt to arrest him, but the entire circumstances do not support this contention.

Were the retainers to proceed with forcibly removing Yōzan from office (*oshikome*), the four-hour debate that had preceded that point would then have been superfluous. Moreover, the forces necessary to imprison Yōzan were conspicuously absent from the company of the seven retainers. Since Yōzan was only attended by Satō Bunshirō and was still able to escape, it seems unlikely that an attempt to imprison Yōzan was in the works. The seven retainers did not follow the form of an *oshikome*, which entailed making a united, public declaration. Apparently they felt confident that they could succeed in their demands by making a joint show of force.

The retired daimyo, Shigesada, learned about the situation from Yōzan, and he immediately summoned his advisors and went with Yōzan to meet the seven retainers. In a loud voice he ordered them to stand down, and they finally withdrew around noon. Thereafter, all seven feigned illness and remained at their residences, causing the business of government to come to a halt. Yōzan implored the seven retainers that he wanted to meet with them and that he would improve his relations with them and remove Takenomata and his group from the government. But, the retainers did not yield. This change in circumstances reveals the same basic pattern that developed in most instances of *oshikome*, described in the previous chapter, especially in the case of the Mizuno house of Okazaki, albeit that the circumstances leading to both cases were completely different, since in Yōzan's case they developed from his own participation in government.

The former daimyo Shigesada became totally enraged at this situation, and he forcefully demanded that the ignoble retainers who had turned against their lord should commit suicide. Yōzan, however, vetoed this idea and declared that the proper action was to determine the course of decision by seeking the opinions of a broad group of retainers, since this weighty issue would determine the fate of the entire domain.

On the twenty-ninth day of the sixth month, Yōzan appeared in an audience with Shigesada, and they summoned the officers (excepting Takenomata supporters), which included the chief inspectors (*ōmetsuke*) and the heralds (*tsukaiban*). They exhibited the petition written by the seven retainers and asked that the arguments described in it be debated. The chief inspectors replied that the charges against Takenomata's faction distorted the truth, since some were harboring resentment to the reformist policies that both the domainal elders and the inhabitants of the domain supported. Yōzan then summoned retainers from the *kumigashira* and *monogashira* ranks and put the same question to them. Their reply gave additional proof that the seven retainers' petition was simply untrue.

Having heard these responses, Yōzan summoned Takenomata Masatsuna and further ordered about one thousand various officials and

samurai to the castle immediately. The *monogashira* who headed the musket troops guarding the main castle and donjon kept a strict guard, while the city magistrates maintained order outside of the castle to prevent rebellion. After taking these precautions, Yōzan summoned the seven retainers, and he judged and then pronounced punishment on them.

Suda Mitsutake and Imokawa Nobuchika, who were the ringleaders of the group, committed suicide the next day, and the Suda and Imokawa households were forced to dissolve. The two administrators Chisaka and Irobe had to relinquish half of their landholdings, while Nagao, Kiyono, and Hirabayashi paid a 300-*koku* fine. All five of these men were forced to retire from office and were subject to house arrest.

All of Yōzan's careful precautions and his thorough preparations ensured that none of the retainers was able to oppose his actions. The rebellion of the seven houses ended as a political victory for Yōzan, and it did not divide the retainers in the Uesugi household, but produced a conclusive resolution. With this spectacular political victory behind him, Yōzan succeeded in promoting government reforms.

Two years later, in the fourth year of An'ei (1775), Suda Heikurō and Imokawa Isouemon succeeded to the headship of their households, which they were permitted to reestablish. They both received new holdings equaling 200 *koku* and were given employment in the *samuraigumi*. In the case of remaining five households whose family heads suffered household arrest, each of their heirs was allowed to assume the headships of their families and their original landholdings were restored. These actions were taken in light of the meritorious deeds of their ancestors.

Political Reform and Public Discussion

Yōzan's approach to the revolt of the seven houses was distinctive in the way he surmounted this political challenge. In response to a forceful remonstrance on the part of the seven retainers that threatened to force him from office, Yōzan did not resort to force to suppress them by invoking his authority as daimyo. Instead, he referred the problem to the inspectors and *monogashira* who held policing duties and to mid-ranking retainers for their judgment. Reassured of the support of these officers,

Yōzan moved to punish the seven retainers, drawing upon the assistance of his supporters. The many cases of the forced removal of daimyo by *oshikome* explored in Chapter 3, especially the case of Mizuno Tadatoki of the Mizuno house of Okazaki domain, warrant comparison in the actions of Tadatoki and other daimyo and of those who opposed them. The political pressure on Yōzan was comparable to the situation that daimyo of other domains faced in their forced removal from office. However, Yōzan recognized the political dynamics at play and succeeded in defusing them.

Yōzan created a new power dynamic for his organization. The manner of his approach as leader was innovative and the organization developed accordingly, facilitating the growth of Japanese-style organization and to defining the role of a leader in this organization. Yōzan achieved this by making broad-based inquiries into the opinions of different ranks of domainal retainers and by ruling through the incorporation of these differing opinions. This approach is termed rule by public discussion (*shūgi* 衆議), and it approximates a form of democracy. Yōzan's plan of governance records that "the daimyo exists for the domain and the people; the domain and people do not exist for the daimyo." The intellectual basis for this document is of great importance and will be analyzed in greater detail later. The present discussion will merely trace the concrete aspects of Yōzan's rule.

Yōzan fended off the revolt of the seven retainers, succeeded in winning the support of the different ranks of people in his domain, and promoted government reforms and improvements by drawing upon men such as Takenomata Matsuna and Nozoki Yoshimasa. His reforms sought to maintain and develop existing farming villages while planning to increase the cultivation of lacquer, mulberry, paper mulberry, and indigo. Silk production boomed with policies to encourage the making of products within the domain.

Yōzan established an office within Yonezawa Castle which promoted increased production within the domain with technology and capital. The domain created its own textile-manufacturing plant that used hemp from the domain. It also operated a wax factory. Women in the domain par-

participated in the production of these goods after learning the necessary techniques.²⁴ Despite the enactment of this series of positive reforms, which involved the people of the domain, there were no instances of opposition and violence on the part of the samurai. The reforms proceeded by drawing upon the assistance of a great number of people. Yōzan's reforms were a model of ideal government, which won wide praise outside of the domain. In 1787, Shogun Tokugawa Ienari 徳川家斉 awarded Yōzan with a special commendation. This was an unprecedented honor.²⁵

Yōzan's government reforms could not defeat the damages wrought by nature. The great Tenmei famine, which had struck cruelly in the northern part of Honshū from the second year of Tenmei 天明 (1782), dealt a severe blow to Yonezawa domain. The Tenmei famine was so serious that it effectively nullified the hard-won successes of Yōzan's reforms. Moreover, it forced the domain into 500,000 *ryō* 両 of debt. Ultimately, the only recourse was for Yōzan to take the extreme step of having his retainers remit a portion of their salaries. And, the efforts to rebuild the domain's finances had to start over.

Uesugi Yōzan planned to boost morale in the domain with his retirement at the young age of thirty-five, in the second month of the fifth year of Tenmei (1785). He relinquished the post of daimyo to the fourth son of his adopted father, Shigesada. Yōzan probably thought to reassure the people within the Uesugi house as well as Shigesada himself by returning the post to a rightful heir of the Uesugi house. There is no reason to doubt Yōzan's good intention. In fact, while many might attempt to usurp control of the domain for themselves, after he was adopted, Yōzan showed an exemplary attitude in his opinion that only a son of a daimyo should succeed to the post of head of the domain, and that people outside of the family who had been adopted into it were prohibited from that office. Yet, he still sought to take a leading role in the governance of the domain. After he officially retired, Yōzan became the advisor to the next two daimyo, until he died in 1822, thus managing the domainal government for the long span of almost fifty years.

The reforms of Yonezawa domain under Yōzan's guidance entered a

second phase beginning in 1819. The domainal finances, which appeared to have been restored to a sound financial footing, were devastated by the severe Tenmei famine, which demanded the need for a second wave of reforms. In the eleventh month of 1819, Yōzan issued an edict that encouraged all of his retainers to express their opinions about the current crises. He ordered that these opinions be compiled in written form, both for his perusal and for the public. *Kaikei ichiienchō* 会計一円帳 (Total Accounting of Accounts) described the expenditures of Yonezawa domain for a year. Yōzan's retainers submitted 340 documents for this text.²⁶ After he received this work, Yōzan summoned the domainal elders, middle councilors, chief inspectors, and other senior officers to describe the findings of the text. He then conferred with them about the current state of the domainal government as reflected in the text. At this meeting, Yōzan made the case for carrying out reforms to fundamentally restructure the domainal government.

While the debate about the key plans to reform the government continued, the decision was made, following the advice offered in many of the documents submitted by retainers, to reinstate the retired Nozoki Yoshimasa 荻戸善政 to office due to his importance in the reform process. In the first month of the following year, Yōzan restored Nozoki to the office of middle councilor and ordered that he take over the dual posts of administering the domain's finances and its agricultural policy. Nozoki became the chief person in charge of the restoration of the domainal economy.

The strength of Nozoki's rule was his willingness to listen to so-called unorthodox ideas, and he made popular opinion the basis for his approach to managing government.²⁷ He created a suggestion box where people could submit their petitions, and he requested farmers and townspeople to submit their ideas concerning governing policy — a practice that imitated the suggestion boxes implemented by Tokugawa Yoshimune. In attendance of the daimyo Uesugi Haruhiro, Nozoki frequently summoned the senior administrators, middle councilors, chief inspectors, *samuraigashira*, and *kumigashira* for conferences. Nozoki was determined to formulate policies by freely consulting the opinions of these officers.

Parallel to these efforts, Nozoki solicited the aid of retainers and produced a document entitled *Sōbi* 総批, which consisted of forty-seven clauses and gave a general outline of the political reforms. The work advocated restoring the domainal finances, which were more than 100,000 *ryō* in debt (the equivalent of eight billion yen today), through the establishment of a sixteen-year plan to restructure the domain's economy.

The reforms in Yonezawa domain, which Nozoki Yoshimasa was responsible for, concentrated on reviving farming villages and improving production, and went further in these areas than the earlier period of reforms directed by Takenomata Masatsuna, notwithstanding the fact that the first wave of reforms had drastically increased the scale of businesses, contributing a large amount of capital to the domain's coffers, which the subsequent economic downturn only served to undermine. The restoration of the domain's economic health was a chief concern of Yōzan's, but he did not intend to undertake these plans by depriving the lower orders of their due revenues. Accordingly, he avoided taking shortcuts to financial retrenchment, and he took a long-term view toward proper and lasting management, proceeding with his policies with consistency.

Among the policies of Nozoki's reforms, one that deserves special attention is the emphasis on the utilization of products created within the domain.²⁸ Soon after Nozoki began his reform efforts, he established an office for domainal products, which handled all varieties of goods produced within Yonezawa domain, including silk, paper made from hemp, and tea. The office managed the supply of these goods within the domain as well as the transport and sale of them outside of the domain and throughout the country as a means to gain cash revenue. The domain also established standards for products and closely inspected the goods to detect defects and careless manufacturing. These policies to encourage production within the domain were successfully enacted. Whereas retainers had once imported their clothing from Kyoto and the daimyo had used high-quality textiles and glossy silk for his formal clothing, all these were replaced by domainal products. Moreover, domainal manufacturers increasingly supplied the articles used in daily life within the domain.

Wealth within the domain increased through these efforts to secure revenue at the same time as fostering production, serving to improve manufacturing techniques and bring profits to the workers involved and the farmers who supplied the raw goods. As the living standards of the commoners within the domain improved and their wealth increased, that brought new demands for goods and stimulated production. Production within the domain developed even further.

Overall, Nozoki's reform policies proceeded smoothly. From the outset, his attempt to incorporate discussions into this process enabled decisions to be accepted and successfully implemented to their full extent in the end. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Yonezawa won renown as the "preeminent domain within Dewa in which the domain and its people were equally wealthy."²⁹

Yōzan's Admonitions: The Development of the Concept of the Public

When Yōzan's rule is examined in retrospect, one of his most significant and salient accomplishments was his text *Denkokū no kotoba*, a series of admonitions for the domain.³⁰ When he retired from office in the fifth year of Tenmei and handed over his office to his successor Haruhiro, he also presented him with this document. The three clauses of the text cover the general principles of government, and it constitutes one of the most important works dealing with the philosophy of rule written in Japan.

The text presents a distillation of the secrets of Yōzan's political power which have been under consideration here. The document expresses these points with such precision and conciseness that it represents an intellectual masterpiece of Japanese political thought. It reads:

- Because the domain (*kokka* 国家) is handed down from the ancestors to their descendants, the lord cannot manage it for his personal benefit.
- The people reside within the domain and not at the personal discretion of the lord.
- The lord exists for the domain and the people; the domain and people do not exist for the lord.

A daimyo must not forget these three clauses.

Tenmei 5, year of the snake, second month, seventh day.

Harunori (Yōzan)

These admonitions were presented to the new daimyo when he took office, and were thus handed down the generations in the Uesugi family of Yonezawa domain from Yōzan's time. The work wonderfully expresses the characteristics of a politician such as Yōzan who accomplished his governmental reforms of Yonezawa domain. The expression "the lord exists for the domain and the people" suggests a step toward the culmination of modern democracy. Of course, the democratic notion of the concept of public rule did not originate with Yōzan, since it was found throughout early modern political thought. Yōzan merely inherited this concept, as the following examples illustrate.³¹

In the case of the orthodox Neo-Confucian scholars of the Hayashi 林 family, who served as the tutors for the bakufu, their founder Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657) researched the Chinese classics for Tokugawa Ieyasu and put forth the idea that "the realm does not belong to one person: the realm is its own entity" (*tenka wa hitori no tenka ni arazu, tenka wa tenka no tenka nari*). The notion of realm (*tenka* 天下) was a focal point of early modern political discourse evident in a variety of intellectual views and appearing repeatedly in various forms. Razan's formulation was one of the earliest examples.

Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619–1691) was born the son of a masterless samurai in Kyoto. In the eleventh year of Kan'ei 寬水 (1634), he entered the service of the daimyo of Okayama 岡山 domain, Ikeda Mitsumasa 池田光政, and directed the domainal government. Kumazawa's ideas were also Confucian but emphasized study of governance over the pursuit of personal moral cultivation. In his view of the economic relationship between a lord and his retainers, since the retainers were supplied with a fief that provided them with men, horses, and equipment, he declared that "the goods of the retainer are those of his lord." This view supported the daimyo's rule of his territory. In the same way, the daimyo

received his domain from the shogun; and, similarly, the shogun was entrusted with his rule by heaven.

Thus, because all landholdings belonging to all ranks of retainers did not constitute private holdings, government was a public institution, in Kumazawa's view. Accordingly, he redefined the virtues of loyalty and filial piety according to his views on governing the realm. Instead of unconditional subordination to the ideas of a single lord, "loyalty is the idea of following principles." The divine position of the lord is to "undertake a benevolent rule," while the place of the retainers is "to aid their lord and help him undertake a benevolent rule." He promoted the idea that the office of the lord was a public one, and that there was a division between private and public spheres.

Yamaga Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622–1685) was from Aizu and came to Edo to study Confucianism under Hayashi Razan. He also studied the military arts from Obata Kagenori and Hōjō Ujinaga, becoming famous and gaining many students. He later turned to ancient learning (*kogaku* 古学), which emphasized the study of classical texts by Confucius and Mencius, and criticized the explanations put forth by Neo-Confucian scholars, including Ch'eng-Chu. The bakufu punished Yamaga by placing him under house arrest. Yamaga's most noted writing is *Yamaga gorui* 山鹿語類, which contains the following passage: "Since a ruler serves all of the people in the realm, the supreme position of the ruler is not a private office belonging to the lord. . . . The lord is established when the people come together; and, with the lord established the country is established. Therefore, the people are the foundation of the country."

The ruler is a political organ charged with safeguarding the peace and welfare of all of the people of the realm, and the people of the realm do not belong to the lord. A retainer's "loyalty" is not directed toward his lord in the interest of profit and gain but is instead the actualization of a feeling for the realm. This is the true form of loyalty, serving the public.

Another key figure who cannot be omitted in discussions of the public is Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728). Sorai's scholarship attempted to fundamentally criticize the ideas of Neo-Confucianism and their empha-

sis on nurturing human virtues. His ideas had a tremendous impact on intellectual currents in the early modern period. According to Sorai's thought, the Way referred to the political system created by the sages of ancient China to rule the country and pacify the people. In concrete terms, the Way meant rites, music, law enforcement, and political administration. By delineating his ideas in this manner, it was possible for Sorai to develop a political philosophy at a countrywide level, as opposed to employing Confucianism in a Neo-Confucian fashion to promote the morality of individuals. The Way, for Sorai, was none other than the intellectual method to build an ideal bureaucracy.

Sorai succeeded in his attempts to redefine the concept of the public, which was rooted in a political reading of Confucianism put forth by Kumazawa Banzan and Yamaga Sokō. He wrote, "The affairs of government are not the private matters of a lord but are constituted in an office instituted by heaven. . . . The extent to which retainers take part in the affairs of government is determined provisionally in the same manner as the office of the lord. Retainers need to show a degree of respect to their lord."

In other words, both a lord and his retainers are officers with posts in the government. High and low statuses are not an expression of elevated and base character but refer instead to the hierarchy of ranks in a bureaucracy.

A key aspect of Sorai's ideas about bureaucracy held that a daimyo's retainers alone did not compose the administrative system, but that this system included all of the members of the daimyo's household, including the daimyo. The purpose of this organization was not to serve one daimyo, but to seek to establish a rule benefitting all the people who encompass the public. For Sorai the expression "the people are the foundation of the country" had the same meaning as it did for Yamaga Sokō who coined it.

The intellectuals examined thus far, Hayashi Razan, Kumazawa Banzan, Yamaga Sokō, and Ogyū Sorai, constructed a notion of the public derived from Confucianism. For all of them, the domain, retainers, and landholdings did not belong to the daimyo nor to individual warriors:

these resources were for the benefit of public rule. The domain was a public political organ, the daimyo was the leader of an administration, and his retainers were officials holding offices within the government.

The reason that all of these people existed was not as a self-evident function of their hereditary place as rulers, but as bureaucratic officers carrying out public duties for society. Consequently, the standard for their activities and actions was founded on the basis of the public's benefit. Their views can be paraphrased as "the lord holds a post to serve the people of the realm" while the retainers hold their offices "to aid their lord and help him undertake a benevolent rule."

Uesugi Yōzan's thinking was part of this developing concept of the public in the government, but he did more than simply receive and articulate these notions. His three admonitions surpassed these ideas and went further. He thought through the concepts of his predecessors in his political practices and through the problems of governance. He thereby refined the contents of these ideals and made them work for a higher purpose and succeeded in formulating a powerful and highly refined political statement