

“Taking up the Gun”: Early Modern Japanese Firepower and the Siege of Hara Castle

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INTRODUCTION

Lord Matsudaira, senior member of the Tokugawa Council of Elders, looked on from a raised platform as a young peasant mother tearfully examined a parade of severed human heads. Among them she identified the head of her emaciated son. Thus, the events of past months concluded for the mother of Amakusa Shirô, figurehead of the Shimabara Rebellion. This grisly scene played out against a backdrop of human bonfires and mass executions by decapitation and drowning as Tokugawa forces eliminated most of Shimabara's Christian rebels following the 1638 siege of Hara Castle.

In the autumn of 1637, peasants on the Shimabara Peninsula in southwest Japan (750 miles from modern Tokyo) rebelled in the face of economic despair, religious oppression, and exploitation at the hands of local lords. Within days, the rebellion spread until more than 30,000 peasants were embroiled in the only large-scale challenge to the central authority of the Tokugawa Shogunate since its consolidation

in 1615. Although the Tokugawa war machine had been unused for over twenty years, within two weeks the Shogunal government had been informed and developed a strategy to deal with the rebellion. In less than a month the Tokugawa amassed one of the largest siege armies in the early modern world – nearly 150,000 troops strong – to confront the rebels. The Tokugawa managed to keep their massive army in the field for the next three months; and when the rebels finally broke from hunger and exhaustion, the Tokugawa massacred nearly all of them.

Following the slaughter of the Shimabara rebels, Tokugawa authority did not face another significant military threat for almost 250 years. The Tokugawa display of power in response to the Shimabara rebellion helped to ensure that its authority would not be challenged again until internal decay and foreign pressure (*naiyû-gaikan*) finally brought about its downfall in the late 19th century. Simply put, by projecting power through immense violence committed against its own subjects, the Tokugawa state inaugurated one of the longest periods of state peace in human history.

Throughout the siege, each side liberally employed gunpowder weapons – both shoulder arms and cannon. Arquebus (or harquebus) more than cannon played an important role in the siege, particularly on the side of the Shimabara rebels. This study will examine the national and local contexts of the rebellion, the battle narrative of the siege, and the

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role guns played at a time when some scholars believe that Japan had backed away from its newly acquired technology and “given up the gun.”¹

THE SETTING

The unrest in Shimabara broke out during the third Tokugawa Shogun's political-military campaign for national authority. In the 1620s, the Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu embarked on an aggressive campaign to secure Tokugawa supremacy through the projection of public authority, or *kôgi*.² Upon investiture as shogun in 1623, Iemitsu began to rebuild the shogunal headquarters, Edo Castle, by drawing upon the resources of the *daimyô* (feudal lords or barons).³ In 1634, Iemitsu marched through the Imperial city of Kyoto with a force of over 300,000 troops as a symbolic demonstration to the nation of Tokugawa supremacy.⁴ One year later Iemitsu tightened control over the *daimyô* by re-issuing an expanded version of the *buke shohatto*. In 1636 he completed the construction of a grand mausoleum honoring the posthumously deified first shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu. To inaugurate his mausoleum, Iemitsu traveled to his grandfather's grave in Nikkô (north of Tokyo) with a flamboyant procession of *daimyô* and retainers, again displaying his right to rule as head of the Tokugawa house. That same year he persuaded Korean envoys to extend their visit to Edo to Ieyasu's mausoleum.⁵ The grandeur of the Nikkô mausoleum, and its significance for shogunal prestige, is evident from the construction costs. At “an estimated one-seventh of the treasury” Iemitsu inherited from his father, Nikkô was easily the most expensive Japanese construction project of the 17th century.⁶

It was during this period that Shogun Iemitsu liberally exercised one of the most powerful *bakufu* prerogatives: transfer and attainder of *daimyô* domains. Beginning with Ieyasu, the Tokugawa Shogun used the confiscation, redistribution, and forfeiture of land holdings to control the *daimyô*. Iemitsu used this Shogunal privilege with more fervor than even his father or grandfather had: during his reign, he confiscated lands from forty-six *daimyô* – more than any other shogun.⁷ The ability to trim, redistribute,

or even revoke entirely the landholdings of Tokugawa vassals to the degree practiced in early 17th-century Japan was unique to the early modern era. No other ruler of the day wielded similar control over the nobles who helped make up the structure that kept the ruler in power. Iemitsu in particular used transfer and attainder to control the *daimyô*, and as one more method of consolidating power in the person of the Shogun.

Shogunal authority was further buttressed by the system of alternate attendance conceived by Ieyasu and begun under the second Shogun Hidetada. *Sankin kôtai*, or ‘alternating attendance,’ required the *daimyô* to journey from their domain at regular intervals and pay homage to the Shogun in Edo. Under the system, the *daimyô* were further required to maintain residences not only in their home province, but also in the capital. Most *daimyô* maintained two Edo mansions, or *yashiki*, and some many more. *Daimyô yashiki* in Edo numbered more than 600 and occupied over one-half the land in the capital city.⁸ Mansions in Edo were necessary because *sankin kôtai* required that each *daimyô* travel periodically to the capital and reside in their *yashiki* for a fixed duration as well as leave their wives and heirs there perpetually. The interval of travel and duration of stay in the capital for each *daimyô* were determined by the *daimyô*'s relationship to the shogun, the distance of travel, and his economic capacity. Although the system was not legislated until 1635, it was already being practiced prior to Ieyasu's death in 1616.⁹ It is important to note that most *daimyô* traveled with a large retinue of their best and most loyal samurai. It was amidst all these efforts by the Shogun to enhance his personal political and military authority that peasants and a few samurai on Shimabara Peninsula challenged local, and eventually national, authority of the ruling military class.

A few words about the local setting help to underscore the causes and consequences of the rebellion and the Tokugawa response to it. Hara Castle, built during the Muromachi period (1392-1573) as the Arima family headquarters, stretched across a cliff on the southern tip of Shimabara Peninsula.¹⁰ The Arima survived the *sengoku* (era of warring states 1474-1598) period as *daimyô* family of the Shimabara *han* (feudal domain) in Hizen province. By exposing his father's plot to defraud the shogun, Arima Naozumi rose to power as head of the Arima family in 1612 and was rewarded with his father's fief.¹¹ A third-generation

The Battle of Nagashino (detail of a screen painting, 17th century).

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Christian (baptized as Miguel), Naozumi ruled Arima for two years before being transferred to a fief in Hyuga Province in central Japan because of his failure to curb the local growth of Christianity.¹²

Soon after the *daimyô* Matsukura Shigemasa replaced the Arima family in Hara Castle in 1618, he abandoned the old fortress in favor of Shimabara Castle approximately fifteen miles to the north.¹³ Before taking over Shimabara *han*, Shigemasa had been *daimyô* of Futami, which was a reward granted in 1578 for his loyalty to Toyotomi Hideyoshi.¹⁴ Shigemasa, renowned for his service to the Tokugawa at the Battle of Sekigahara, ruled as lord of Shimabara *han* until he was succeeded by his son Katsuie in 1634.¹⁵ Unlike Shimabara's previous lords, the Matsukura were neither scrupulous nor Christian. To the contrary, Lord Matsukura was unsympathetic and cruel to the largely Christian population left behind by the Arima. Nor was Terazawa Katataka, *daimyô* of the Amakusa Islands twenty-six miles south of the Shimabara Peninsula, a sympathetic figure.¹⁶ From Karatsu Castle, Terazawa ruled the Christian population of Amakusa as harshly as Matsukura did Shimabara.¹⁷

The period of Christian influence—primarily through the missions of the Society of Jesus—in early modern Japan was both brief and vigorous. From the arrival of Saint Francis Xavier in 1549 in southwest Japan through the series of edicts between 1639 and 1650 that closed the nation to outside influence, the Jesuit Order enjoyed a number of successes in proselytizing.¹⁸ Historiographically speaking, the brief influence of Christianity in pre-modern Japan has been of interest to Western scholars since the opening of Japan during the Meiji period. Although virtually

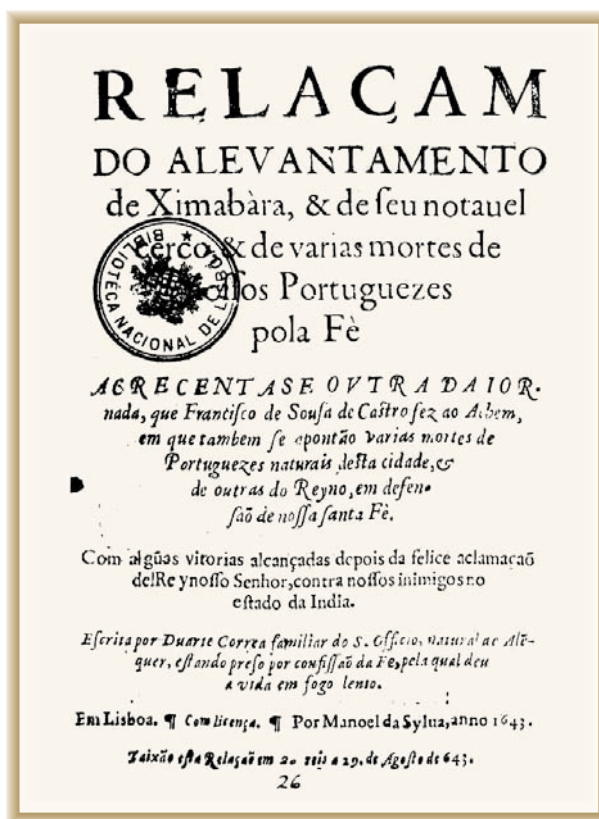
every study of late *sengoku* and early Tokugawa Japan touches on Christianity, Papinot, Murdoch, Sansom, Boxer, Reischauer, and Elison in particular devoted a great deal of attention to questions of how successful the Jesuits were in Japan, what effect their works had on contemporary politics and culture, and what if any lasting effect their efforts had.

Counter-Reformation evangelism in Japan differed in that the missions were largely Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits who represented Rome in a more

doctrinally pure effort to create indigenous churches than missions elsewhere, which were part and parcel of larger military, political and economic efforts. Hideyoshi largely ignored the Christians except where their efforts intersected with his campaigns in Kyushu and Korea.¹⁹ Beginning around 1600 under Ieyasu, the first Tokugawa shogun, the Jesuits enjoyed nearly a decade to do their work undisturbed by national authorities. However, under his son and heir Hidetada, the *bakufu* began targeting *daimyô* who had converted, the Jesuits, and their native sectarians, known collectively as *bateren*, for suppression.²⁰ Especially in Kyushu, and in Arima province in particular, conversion to Christianity

had been successful – up to and including the baptism of the Arima *daimyô*. Hidetada, followed by his son Iemitsu, viewed the influence of Christianity by local authorities with more suspicion and began combating Christianity by both refuting Jesuit doctrine and transplanting regional leaders.

It was not until the Shimabara Rebellion, however, that Iemitsu fully realized how potent this foreign ideology could be among the populace. Following its suppression, he turned his attention to outlawing Christian practice not just among the



Frontispiece of *Relaçam do Alevantamento de Ximabara*, by Duarte Correia, Lisbon, 1643.

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regional elites who influenced the people, but among townspeople and villagers as well.²¹ This effort at ridding Japan of all Christian influence culminated in the *sakoku* and *shûmon aratame* edicts of 1639 and 1640 respectively.²² The *sakoku* edicts closed Japan to foreign intercourse, except under specific shogunal direction; the *shûmon aratame* edict required each and every Japanese to declare in writing his or her allegiance to the Shintô and Buddhist religions. By forcing a declaration of non-Christian faith, Iemitsu ended the open practice of Christianity and pushed the remaining few Christians underground where they became known as *kakure kirishitan* (hidden Christians). By choking off the external and internal inroads of Christian influence, Iemitsu brought Japan's "Christian Century" to a close.

In examining the national and local efforts of the military class to solidify control, it is important to remember that early modern Japan experienced a total of only four years of warfare during the entire 17th century.²³ That is a significant contrast to modern Europe, which saw only four years of peace in the 1600s. In addition, Europe in this period experienced uprisings, rebellions, and revolts on every scale and in almost every locale. The first half of the 17th century saw several drawn-out, multinational wars. The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) involved Spain, the Dutch Republic, France, Switzerland, Poland, and the German states. The later part of Spain's Eighty Year War with the Dutch (1621-48) pulled in, at various times, France, Denmark, England, and Switzerland. The later 17th century also witnessed three Dutch-Anglo wars, French-Spanish conflict, and numerous disputes over transoceanic possessions.

Rebellion also affected every major European power. The English Revolution raged from 1642 to 1660. Revolt in the Fronde consumed France from 1648 to 1653. The Spanish Habsburgs experienced revolt in both Catalonia and Portugal from 1640, at the same time they were fighting the Dutch. However, not all rebellions were as grand or prolonged as these. For example, Provence in the south of France experienced 375 distinct rebellions and uprisings from 1596 to 1715.²⁴ That is an average of more than three rebellions each year for more than a century. Ubiquitous 'crisis' was not, however, limited to Europe. The Ming Chinese experienced political and popular unrest in the 17th century, as did the Indian Empire under Aurangzeb.

Contemporary observers were well aware of the times they lived in. In 1643 the count-duke of Olivares, formerly chief minister of Spain, provided one of many commentaries on the general unrest of the 17th century in the *Nicandro*, written by his librarian:²⁵

Sometimes Providence condemns the world with universal and evident calamities, whose causes we cannot know. This seems to be one of the epochs in which every nation is turned upside down, leading some great minds to suspect that we are approaching the end of the world. We have seen all the north in commotion and rebellion, its rivers running with blood, its populous provinces deserted; England, Ireland and Scotland aflame with Civil War; the Ottoman Sultan dragged through the streets of Constantinople; the Turks, after fighting the Persians, at war with each other. China invaded by the Tartars, Ethiopia by the Turks, and the Indian kings who live scattered through the region between the Ganges and the Indus raging with rivalry. What area does not suffer, if not from war, then from earthquakes, plague and famine? How is Olivares to blame because the world suffers from these misfortunes?²⁶

It appears that contemporary Europeans were well aware of the 'crisis' that was all around them. The one area they all overlooked was Japan. Nevertheless, even with only four years of warfare to show for the 17th century, the only popular uprising of national severity in the entire early modern period there occurred in 1637-38.

Just as in Europe, in the early 17th century Japan's peasants, too, suffered from harsh weather, natural calamities, crop failure, social and political restrictions, and financial hardship. Between 1590 and 1640, 198 rebellions occurred across Japan.²⁷ During the 1630s and 40s, small peasant rebellions dotted Japan.²⁸ These rebellions were brought on by a combination of famine, extreme weather, zealous spending by the Tokugawa and *daimyô*, and the disadvantageous inter-Asia silver trade.²⁹ Natural causes of the famines included disease in livestock, floods, cool summers, and infestations.³⁰ Although the *kan'ei* era famine (*kikin*), or crisis (*kiki*), was underway by the time of rebellion in Shimabara, famines did not affect the whole country until 1641-42. However, in the years immediately preceding the rebellion, Kyushu experienced floods and disease that



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reduced the area of land under cultivation and the animal power for farming.³¹ Though the rebellion was over by the time the famine peaked on a national scale, the area was nonetheless affected by those same climatic factors that eventually left 500,000 dead of starvation in most parts of Japan.

To compound the effect of famine on the area, the *daimyô* of Shimabara, Matsukura Katsuie, overburdened the productive capacity of the peasantry for years by building the luxurious Shimabara Castle, and with his expensive displays of wealth during mandatory trips to Edo. Matsukura's fiscal irresponsibility and brutal collection methods tragically exacerbated the effects of the famines, leaving the region's population so strained that in 1637 rebellion became their only perceived option.

THE REBELLION

On 11 December 1637, the peasants of Arima Village in southern Shimabara, outraged over the torture of a villager's daughter, murdered the local magistrate.³² Gathering supporters and supplies the following day, the mob of angry villagers, joined by former samurai retainers of the Arima family – the former lords of the region – attacked the Matsukura garrison at Shimabara Castle. Although unable to take the Castle, the villagers were able to pin the Matsukura forces inside and burn the castle town surrounding it. Free from threat by the forces trapped inside the castle, the growing number of rebels then turned their attention toward local villages, gathering supporters and punishing those who would not join them.³³ From Shimabara, the peasants' armed outrage spread to nearby Amakusa Island. A young farmer named Masuda Shirô, who, at age sixteen, claimed to be the reincarnation of Christ, led the peasants of Shimabara and Amakusa. Shirô became the spiritual leader and symbol of the rebellion. He eventually took the name of the island of his birth: Amakusa Shirô.

By mid-January 1638, the rebels learned that the *bakufu* had ordered their Lord Matsukura to leave Edo and return to Shimabara with a punitive force to quell the rebellion. En route to Shimabara, the troops of the *daimyô* Nabeshima, also of Kyushu, joined

Matsukura.³⁴ The villagers and samurai headed for the abandoned Hara Castle, their only available refuge. In preparation for the coming siege the rebels "carried the entirety of rice from [surrounding] villages back to the old [Hara] castle. In addition, about five thousand *koku* of rice was taken from Lord Nagamon's [Matsukura Katsuie's] storehouse at Kutchinotsu."³⁵ On 17 January, Amakusa Shirô escaped Amakusa Island and joined the Shimabara rebels at the castle. Over the next several days, the Shimabara rebels were situated within the castle walls.³⁶ The castle inhabitants then began to reconstitute the castle defenses, culminating in the raising of Shirô's famed Christian flag on 22 January. The following day 2,700 peasants and samurai who had survived skirmishes with the *daimyô* Terazawa's garrisons on Amakusa arrived by boat to join the Shimabara rebels in Hara Castle. By 23 January the fortress was sealed and the rebels prepared for a siege.

The total number of castle defenders is a matter of some debate. Estimates range from 20,000 to 60,000 rebels.³⁷ Likewise, estimates of the number of samurai among their number vary anywhere from forty to two hundred. The generally accepted figure of 37,000 rebels (20,000 men / 17,000 women and children) is difficult to accept. This figure, which is found throughout early modern and modern sources, appears to originate from an account of the rebellion recorded by a jailed Jesuit who overheard Japanese criminals recount the tale. The various primary accounts, as well as the capacity of Hara Castle, suggest rebel numbers at a total closer to 25,000.³⁸ It should be noted however, that during the siege the *bakufu* forces estimated the rebel population to be in excess of 50,000 people.³⁹

Supplies of food and water are of primary concern in siege warfare. Fortunately for the rebels, Hara Castle afforded them a fresh-water well within the compound.⁴⁰ Food supplies, however, were initially limited to what was stored in the castle before 23 January. The amount of wood that could be used for cooking fuel and weapons was also limited to the amount of firewood stored within the castle and that taken from trees growing within the compounds. Although there is no extant record of the exact amount of wood stored before the siege, no indications in primary accounts suggest that wood supply, or lack thereof, was an important factor.

The castle arsenal is another matter for speculation. It is clear from accounts of the siege that the rebels

The Battle of Nagashino (detail of a screen painting, 17th century).

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possessed shoulder arms, bows and arrows, spears and swords. The quality and quantity of these weapons is somewhat less clear. One account written in 1729 (by an unknown author related to the Matsukura family) records the castle's arsenal as follows: 1480 matchlocks (of various calibers), 100 bows, 500 long swords, and 300 pikes.⁴¹ A report by a Matsukura retainer one month after conclusion of the siege confirms these figures.⁴² However, two other independent sources place the number of shoulder arms in rebel hands closer to five hundred.⁴³

The interior of Hara Castle consisted of four compounds. A main citadel, inner compound and outer compounds were arranged in concentric circles, with an additional Amakusa compound that faced Amakusa Island. The castle's outer wall stood thirty-two meters tall at an angle almost perpendicular to the ground, as would be expected of castle construction during the Muromachi period.⁴⁴ Defensive walls in turn protected the inner compounds and main citadel. The castle did not however, possess a defensive moat. The castle's single most important defensive feature was its unapproachable sides above cliffs that dropped to the Pacific Ocean. With most of three sides butted against the cliffs, Hara Castle left but one side, the north wall, of 1.2 kilometers, exposed.⁴⁵ At its widest point, the castle measured some 255 meters across.⁴⁶ Although the castle was an irregular shape, by adding the area of each compound and the citadel, the area of the castle totals 238,957m².⁴⁷ However, the inner compound and main citadel each consisted of multiple stories, adding to the usable area within the castle.

The castle's physical dimensions provide insights into the circumstances of rebel entrenchment. First, if we consider for now the 12,000 men of fighting age (15-59) among the rebels, ten men could be devoted to the defense of each meter of the 1.2 kilometer wall facing into the peninsula. This does not suggest that the rebel defenses, or the troops attacking the castle, were uniformly distributed. Rather, a man/meter ratio indicates the minimum distribution of rebel manpower. Likewise an estimated 1480 firearms, if evenly distributed, amounts to 1.2 matchlocks for each meter of exposed castle wall. Add the other weapons available to the rebels and we can discern that rebels possessing matchlocks, swords, bows, lances, and those dedicated to repelling escalade by dropping stones adequately manned the north wall.

The Christian heritage of the Shimabara certainly augmented the rebel call to arms and helped sustain them throughout the siege. More importantly, the Christian nature of the rebels and rebellion was one of the motivating factors of the *bakufu*'s response. However, if we look beyond the Christian elements of the rebellion, several other factors appear to have significantly influenced both the rebels and the *bakufu*.

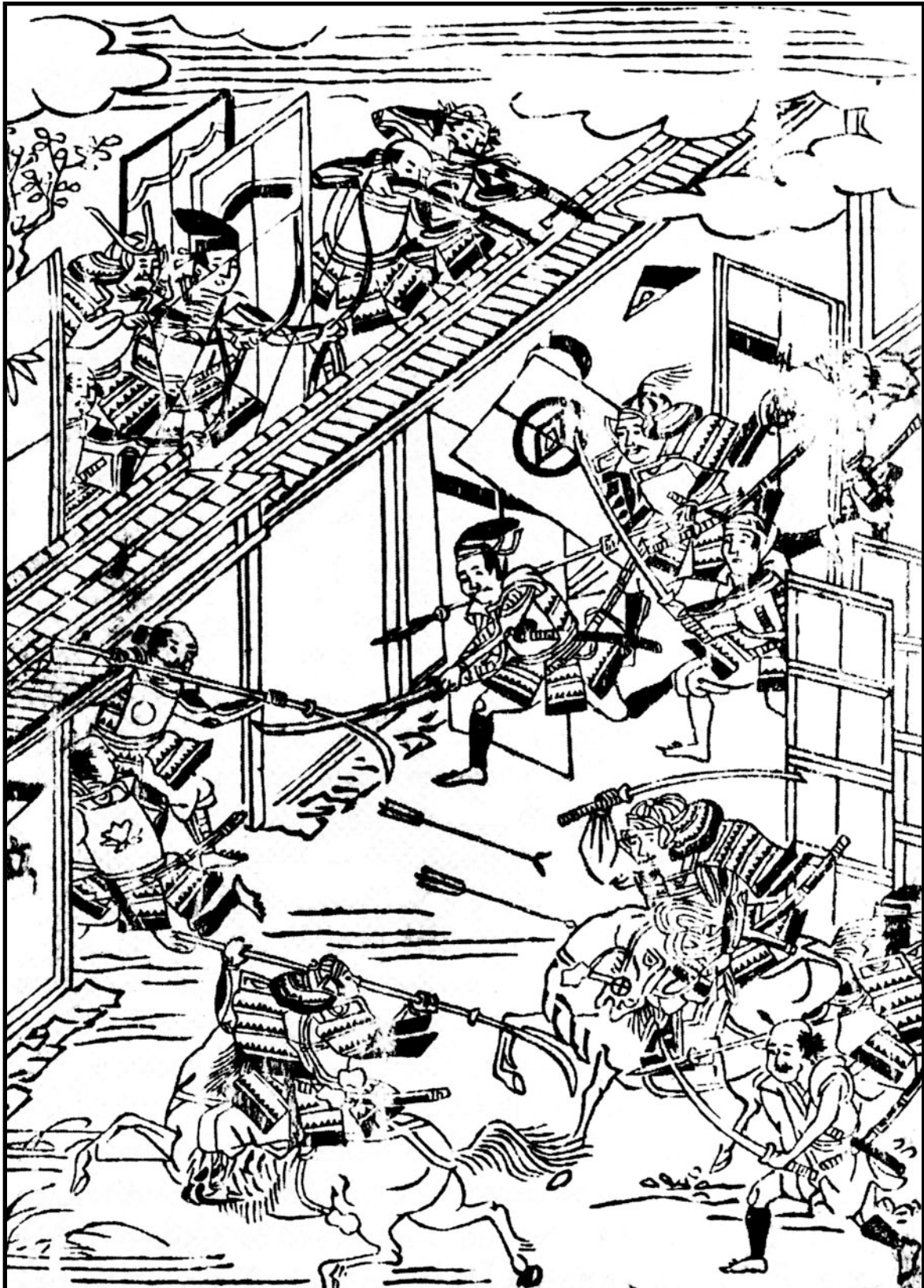
Five of the factors critical to the Shimabara rebels' ability to challenge Tokugawa authority had long since been recognized as threats, and outlawed as such by the *bakufu*: Christianity, cruelty, a coalition force, weapons, and a castle. It was this combination of factors, the sum of Tokugawa fears, not the spectre of foreign influence embodied by Christianity alone, that caused the Tokugawa to react politically and militarily.

A combination of factors and opportunities, in addition to Christianity, were present in Shimabara in 1637, without any one of which the rebellion most likely would not have developed as it did. First, the immediate motivating factor to rebel was the cruel and oppressive treatment they received at the hands of their local lords, intensified by crop failures. As George Elison states, "The peasants of Shimabara and Amakusa were goaded beyond the breaking point by extortions and famines."⁴⁸ Nicholas Koeckebacker in Hirado, just 75 miles from Shimabara during the rebellion and siege, agreed:

[The Lord of Shimabara]... imposed moreover upon [rustic samurai] and other farmers more taxes, and forced them to raise such a quantity of rice as was impossible for them to do. Those who could not pay the fixed taxes ... not only received burns, but some were burned to death ... This revengeful tyrant, not content with his cruelty, ordered women to be suspended quite naked by the legs, and caused them to be scoffed at in various other ways.

The people endured this ill treatment of the said prince as long as he was present amongst them, but as his son the present lord, who resides in Yedo [Edo], feels also inclined to follow in the foot-steps of his father, and forces the farmers to pay far more in taxes than they are able to do, in such a manner that they languish from hunger, taking only some roots and vegetables

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Siege of Hara Castle. From *Shimabara-ki*, 1640.

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for nourishment, the people resolved not to bear any longer the vexations, and to die one single death instead of the many slow deaths to which they were subjected.⁴⁹

Though Christianity influenced the Shimabara region for more than fifty years, it was economic deprivation and social oppression that made the peasants rebel. In addition, several other non-Christian factors allowed the peasants to militarily challenge the Tokugawa. The first of these was the coalition of samurai and peasant. The leadership and experience of even a few hundred trained military men provided the peasant army with tactical skill it would not have possessed otherwise. Further, without the numbers of peasants involved, a handful of samurai, no matter how skilled, could not have challenged the Tokugawa. The peasant numbers were necessary to defend the vast castle wall.

A prohibition on samurai leading weapon-wielding peasants was in effect even before Tokugawa rule. In 1588 the second of Japan's three unifiers, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, issued what Mary Elizabeth Berry credits as the signal of early modern Japan's political settlement: the *katana gari*, or "sword hunt," edict.⁵⁰ The sword hunts were designed to strip the peasantry of all weapons. This was the first in what are called the "class separation" edicts. By denying peasants weapons, Hideyoshi was at the same time limiting the resources for popular rebellion and forcing a choice between life as a farmer and life as a soldier. Three years later Hideyoshi issued another edict stratifying and freezing Japan's social order; the *heinô bunri*, or "separation of peasant and farmer" edict.⁵¹ This class edict not only defined the farmer and the soldier but also forbade one to become the other. A samurai could no longer give up the sword for the hoe, nor could the farmer earn a sword and a surname. The classes were separated. The Tokugawa *ikkoku ichijyô rei* (one castle per province order), refined this policy by forcing the *daimyô* to centralize their administration in one castle per domain, thereby drawing the samurai away from the countryside. Hence the classes were also segregated. However, despite these three regulations, almost fifty years later armed peasants and rustic samurai united in defiance of Tokugawa law. As Philip Brown argues, not all central Tokugawa directives were adopted completely or uniformly throughout Japan.⁵² Certainly the number of men who had once

been samurai among the peasant rebels suggests that the Tokugawa edicts aimed at preventing just this sort of collusion were not entirely effective.

The next factor was the combination of firearms and a stronghold. When the *bakufu* dispatched Itakura Shigemasa to Shimabara to quell the rebellion, they were expecting either guerrilla or open field engagement from the rebels of the sort that harassed Shimabara Castle. In either case, Itakura's troops would probably have proven sufficient. However, by the time Itakura arrived, the rebels were firmly in place within Hara Castle. In addition, the rebels in the castle were armed with matchlocks with which to defend the castle walls.

Each of the factors which contributed either to the rebellion or to the rebels' success represented a breach of one or more social or political controls implemented by early modern Japan's hegemony. As numerous authors have noted, the Tokugawa recognized Christianity as a dangerous influence on the peasantry and banned it long before the Shimabara rebels took up arms. From 1614, the Tokugawa vigorously strove to expel Christians and Christianity from Japan.⁵³ Despite the Tokugawa's effort, however, the Shimabara region of Kyushu remained Christian and eventually contributed to the cohesion of the rebels.

From the outset of their rule, the Tokugawa recognized the danger of unnecessarily burdening or persecuting the peasantry. The Tokugawa proscribed the very practices engaged in by Matsukura and Terazawa decades earlier. The *buke shohatto*, or 'Laws for Military Households,' was first formally issued following the fall of Osaka Castle in 1615. Among other regulations, it forbade *daimyô* from acting irresponsibly towards the peasants under their care in order to avoid planting the seeds of peasant unrest – i.e., they were warned of the need for benevolent rule.⁵⁴ In the same year, the *bakufu* issued the *ikkoku ichijyô rei*, or 'one castle per province' order, which limited *daimyô* to one fortified stronghold each.⁵⁵ In addition the *buke shohatto* required that any construction in, or modifications of, the *daimyô*'s one castle first be approved by the *bakufu*. Emerging victorious from Japan's longest period of civil war, the Tokugawa were well aware of the military advantages of castles. They attempted to deprive *daimyô*, and other would-be challengers like the Shimabara rebels, of that advantage.

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Banner of the Christian rebels in the Shimabara Rebellion. Painted silk, early 17th century.

Iemitsu's policies also played a key role in precipitating the revolt of Shimabara. First, the transfer of the hereditary Arima lords and the installation of a new master severed traditional ties and removed experienced eyes. Second, the *sankin kôtai* system removed the lords of Shimabara and Amakusa at a crucial time. Their subjects chose to revolt at a moment when both their lords had gone to Edo, over 700 miles away, knowing that this gave them a few weeks to organize resistance before their lords could return. Matsukura could not do so until 14 January 1638. By then the sum of Tokugawa fears had materialized. A coalition force of peasants and samurai had taken up arms in the face of malevolent local lords. Before Tokugawa forces could reach Shimabara and suppress the beginnings of peasant rebellion, the peasants

armed themselves and occupied a defensive position in an abandoned castle. Although cramped within the castle walls, the rebels had fresh water, a supply of food, weapons, and enough manpower to effectively defend the castle's one exposed wall. They also boasted a powerful ideology to justify their cause – Christianity – and their own Messiah, Amakusa Shirô.

THE SIEGE

Records suggesting when the Tokugawa *bakufu* became aware of the rebellion at Shimabara are sketchy. Using Portuguese sources, C. R. Boxer, in *The Christian Century in Japan*, states that the *bakufu* first became aware of the events on Shimabara Peninsula on 17 December, less than a week after the

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uprising began.⁵⁶ Ivan Morris, relying on modern Japanese studies of the rebellion, cites the same date.⁵⁷ An account of the rebellion and siege left by the magistrate of Shimabara City's Arima District (who was subsequently commended for meritorious service in the attack on the castle) states that Hosokawa Tadatoshi, the lord of neighboring Higo Province, learned of the rebellion by reports of "great fires" and "the sound of gun shots" on the evening of 13 December, as the rebels rioted.⁵⁸ The Dutch Factory at Hirado became aware of the rebellion in the "county of Arima" on 17 December.⁵⁹ The *Tokugawa Jikki* (True Records of the Tokugawa) reports that the *bakufu* was made aware of the rebellion on 25 December by a *bakufu* inspector in Higo placed within the Hosokawa government.⁶⁰ The *Tokugawa Jikki* then indicates that the *bakufu* council issued several orders. First, it ordered Itakura Shigemasa, assisted by Ishigaya Sadakiyo, to lead an expeditionary force to suppress the unrest at Shimabara. Next, it ordered Matsukura Katsuie, *daimyô* of Shimabara, to return "hurriedly" to his fief. The Arima District magistrate confirms the dispatch of Itakura, Ishigaya, and Matsukura from Edo on 25 December 1637.⁶¹ Finally, the remaining *daimyô* of Hizen province, Nabeshima Katsunari and Terazawa Takakata were ordered to prepare their troops to aid Itakura. Shigemasa was a personal assistant to Tokugawa Ieyasu; he acted as negotiator during the Winter and Summer Sieges of Osaka Castle in 1614-15, and traveled with the second two shoguns on all pilgrimages to Nikkô and marches to Kyoto.⁶² He presented a truce to Toyotomi Hideyori's faction during the siege of Osaka Castle in 1615.⁶³ After destroying the defenses of Osaka Castle, Ieyasu promptly broke the truce and sacked the castle. By taking Hideyori's oath, Itakura played an instrumental role in sealing the fate of the Toyotomi line. Trusted by the Shogun, and with considerable military experience, Shigemasa was charged with directing *daimyô* troops to end the rebellion in Shimabara. Ishigaya Sadakiyo, a shogunate censor (intelligence agent), accompanied Shigemasa as a junior partner in managing the siege.⁶⁴

It was over a month after the rebellion had started before *bakufu* forces reached the Shimabara Peninsula. The Shimabara *daimyô* Matsukura arrived on the peninsula on 14 January.⁶⁵ By 22 January the *bakugun* (*baku(fu)* army), comprised of Matsukura,

Itakura, Ishigaya, and Nabeshima's forces, formed on the peninsula, and on the evening of 29 January the *bakugun* pushed to within four miles of the castle, where they slept for the night.⁶⁶ Early the following day, the *bakugun* closed the gap to the castle and attempted to storm the walls, but were repulsed, with heavy casualties, by rebel gunfire.⁶⁷ Throughout the afternoon and evening of the twelfth, the rebels and *bakufu* forces traded gunfire to no avail but expending gunpowder and ammunition. During the next several days, the *bakufu* forces were joined by the *daimyôs* Tachibana and Arima (the previous *daimyô* of Shimabara).

A combination of factors and opportunities, in addition to Christianity, were present in Shimabara in 1637, without any one of which the rebellion most likely would not have developed as it did.

As the refreshed *bakufu* forces prepared for a second attack, harassing gunfire from within the castle continued. At approximately 1000 hours on the morning of 3 February the *bakugun* assaulted the castle for a second time.⁶⁸ Again the rebels repelled the escalade – again with heavy loss to the *bakugun* troops. The *Tokugawa Jikki* records that nearly 4,500 *bakufu* troops were killed or injured in the attack on the third.

Before Itakura failed a second time, the *bakufu* dispatched the *rôjû* (senior *bakufu* elder) Matsudaira Nobutsuna at the head of a coalition of *daimyô* troops to take over where Itakura had failed. However, in an attempt to grab the glory before Matsudaira could arrive at Shimabara, Itakura launched a third assault. Mid-morning on 14 February (New Year's Day by the Japanese calendar), Itakura's forces attempted yet again to storm the castle. Morale was lost when the troops led by Arima Toyouji crumbled under rebel gunfire.⁶⁹ In a last heroic effort to spur the *bakufu* forces to victory,

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Itakura himself charged the castle wall and was struck in the head by a bullet and killed. With the death of Itakura, the assault collapsed. By the early afternoon the fighting had ceased except for sporadic gunfire. Although the third assault was a brief encounter, *bakufu* forces again suffered heavy casualties. When the gunfire finally stopped, sixty-two *bakufu* troops lay dead and some 3,210 were wounded.

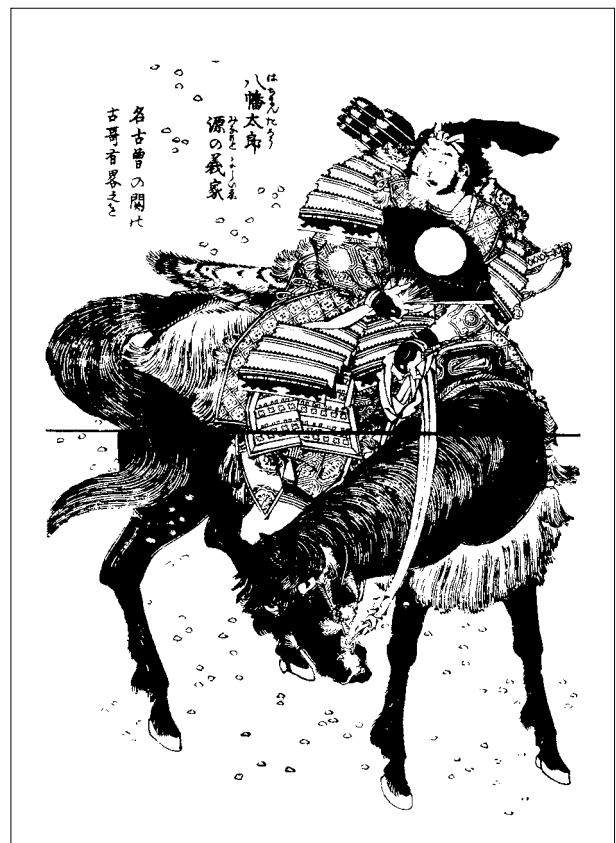
Itakura Shigemasa had led the *bakugun* coalition army on three failed assaults on the rebel position in Hara Castle in just twenty days, with casualties approaching 10,000 men. Less than a month after taking refuge in the castle, the peasant and samurai rebels repeatedly bested the forces of the Tokugawa *bakufu* – which would not have been possible without the aid of gunfire.

Itakura Shigemasa failed three times in his rush to assault Hara Castle and defeat the rebels so that he could claim personal glory before the Shogun's appointed generals Matsudaira and Toda could arrive. Within days of Itakura's third – and fatal – attempt to end the siege, the generals took over and began imposing the Tokugawa's will. When the *rôjû* Matsudaira Nobutsuna arrived at the siege line on 17 February, he began deploying the troops he had brought with him in front of the exposed north castle wall.⁷⁰ As a senior member of the *bakufu*'s council of elders, Matsudaira's arrival signaled the seriousness with which the *bakufu* now regarded the rebel challenge. Matsudaira was joined most notably by the great *daimyô* Hosokawa Tadatoshi (of Higo Province) and Toda Ujikane (of Minô Province). In the wake of Itakura's defeat, Matsudaira did not order another assault on the castle, but rather that the troops begin preparations to wait the rebels out. This was not, as C. R. Boxer has suggested, a decision made solely by the “notoriously foxy” Matsudaira.⁷¹ The failure of Itakura to take the castle was an embarrassment to the Tokugawa *bakufu*. Shogun Iemitsu, Matsudaira's only mortal superior, ordered him to find a solution that would not risk further failure by the *bakugun*. A messenger brought word to Matsudaira from Edo reinforcing his prime directive to the generals: “[Shogun] Iemitsu has ordered that suppression [of the rebellion] must take place without injury to the troops.”⁷² Koeckebacker concurs, noting that, “...His Majesty [the Shogun] has ordered the subjugation of the rebels to be conducted in such a manner that little or no loss should occur among the imperial troops.”⁷³

The order was clear, and Matsudaira embarked on a new strategy to deal with rebels in Hara Castle.

With the rebels pressed within the castle, Matsudaira and his generals knew that supplies would eventually run out. Although the rebels did not have a renewable source of provisions, the *bakugun* did, and could withstand a stalemate. It was reasonable to think that the *bakufu* army could afford to wait the rebels out, and this was the strategy that Matsudaira followed.

Matsudaira did not, however, passively wait for the rebels to capitulate from hunger. In the following weeks, his forces employed several alternative strategies to a frontal assault on the castle. First, they relied heavily on the Dutch merchants at Hirado and Nagasaki. Despite reluctance to become involved in Japanese internal affairs – let alone aid an attack on fellow Christians – the Dutch supported the siege with ships, cannon, powder, and expert advice on siege works. The Frenchman and traveler Jean Baptiste Tavernier accused the Dutch of playing traitor to the Christians inside Hara Castle simply to maintain economic relations with Japan, and he was probably right.⁷⁴ That being





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said, the Dutch did not throw themselves completely behind the siege. When the Tokugawa requested he send both Dutch ships from Hirado to Shimabara, Koeckebacker ordered his compatriot Francois Caron to leave Hirado with one ship (the *Petten*), anchor it out of sight, and avoid being seen around Nagasaki.⁷⁵

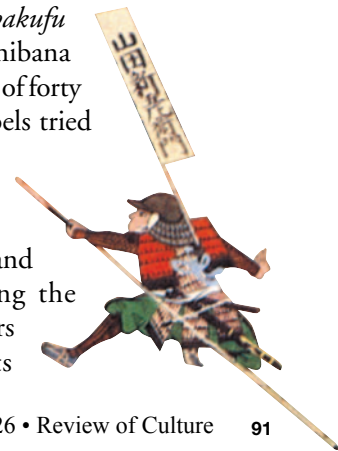
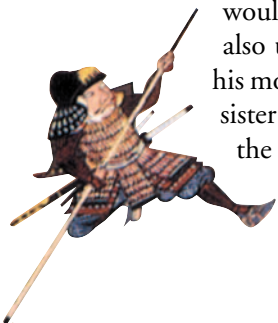
On 24 February, the Dutch ship *De Rijk* (or *de Ryp*) arrived off the coast of Shimabara,⁷⁶ and after unloading their most uniform five-pound cannon and gunners, circled around behind Hara Castle.⁷⁷ With landed cannon in front and seaborne cannon to the rear, they bombarded the castle. In the encounter, three Dutch sailors lost their lives; one was shot down from a ship's mast killing another he landed on, and one died when a landed cannon exploded.⁷⁸ The Dutch cannon fire also created a danger to Tokugawa troops. While firing at the citadel from the *De Rijk*, the Dutch often overshot the castle walls causing their cannon balls to land amid the besiegers. The Dutch also fired from the ship at the homes of the rebellious farmers.⁷⁹ Despite firing 426 cannonballs over two weeks from twenty guns, both from the sea and ashore, Koeckebacker lamented the ineffectiveness of gunpowder weapons on a fortress as solid as Hara. Not only were the five-pound field guns useless against a fortress like Hara, he even claimed that larger guns would not have been any more effective. Likely due to a combination of ineffectiveness, "friendly fire," and the rebels' taunting of samurai who would need foreign assistance, Matsudaira asked the Dutch to withdraw by 12 March.⁸⁰ Despite uncertainty concerning how much damage the artillery inflicted on the castle, it is clear that Dutch assistance by means of cannon fire did not play a decisive role in resolving the siege.

The *bakugun* also employed psychological tactics. *Yabumi*, arrows with letters attached, were fired into the castle. The *bakufu* letters advised the rebels to consider carefully their actions and offered amnesty to those who surrendered—offers that the Tokugawa would not honor.⁸¹ The *bakufu* leaders also used the family of Amakusa Shirô, his mother (baptismal name Martha) and sister (Regina), in an attempt to persuade the young leader to lay down his arms and lead his followers out of the castle.⁸² These tactics did not,

however, weaken rebel resolve in any discernible manner. The *bakufu* had to rely on other tactics to continue softening up the rebels. One of the more aggressive tactics employed during the interim weeks was a sapping project undertaken by the Hosokawa troops. They dug a broad ditch perpendicular to the east end of the north wall.⁸³ Upon reaching the castle, the Hosokawa troops chiseled a hole in the castle wall in which ten *roku* (1800 liters) of gunpowder was packed and detonated.⁸⁴ It is likely that the Japanese gunpowder mixture reacted more like flash powder than an explosive, and again, as with the Dutch cannon, the *bakufu*'s gunpowder tactics proved indecisive: the explosion did not significantly damage the castle wall. In any event, Matsudaira was careful, despite the eagerness of *daimyô* troops for action, not to recreate the ill-advised escalades of Itakura. Even Koeckebacker noted how slowly and carefully the *bakugun* siege lines advanced.

By mid-March 1638, although the *bakufu*'s alternative tactics had proven ineffective in routing the rebels from the castle, according to the account of Yamada Uemonnosuke—a rebel samurai turned traitor who provides the sole reliable account of the siege from inside the castle—the rebels' food and gunpowder had run low.⁸⁵ Just as significant, the records of the Hosokawa troops state that the *bakufu* forces were aware of this fact by 14 March.⁸⁶ *Bakufu* patience was bearing fruit. Without food or powder, it appeared to the *bakufu* army that it was only a matter of time before the castle could be stormed without casualty, in accordance with Iemitsu's wishes. It would be another month, however, before the *bakufu* troops were committed to action.

On the evening of 4 April, a group of starving rebels attempted a sortie from the castle to steal food and supplies from the *bakufu* encampments. That evening, Tachibana Tadashige spotted the burning wicks of forty to fifty rebel matchlocks as the rebels tried to sneak between his encampment and that of Matsukura Katsuie to the west. In the ensuing skirmish, several hundred rebels were killed and scores captured. Upon examining the bodies of fallen rebels, the besiegers noted that the castle inhabitants



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Scene from the final assault on Hara Castle. In Kuwata Tadachika (ed.), *Sengoku kassen e Byōbu shūsei*, Vol. 5. Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1988.

were starving: “And when the stomachs of the dead enemy were cut open, it was discovered that they had been eating seaweed, tree leaves, unripe barley, and suchlike. Not one was there whose stomach had rice in it.”⁸⁷ Within a week, Matsudaira launched a full-scale assault on the castle.

The fighting began by accident early in the evening on 11 April, when a signal fire was mistakenly lit and *daimyō* troops rushed to action. Fighting continued through the night as the *bakugun* twice assaulted the castle, as depicted in a folding screen series commissioned by the Kuroda *daimyō* of Fukuoka in the 1830s (see illustrations above and on page 89). By the morning of the twelfth, the *bakufu* forces had breached the castle defenses all the way through to the main citadel. Upon entering the castle, *bakufu* forces

found 23,000 rebels, only 13,000 of them ambulatory. However, despite the weakened condition and reduced numbers, the defenders managed to inflict extremely heavy losses on the besiegers in the final encounter: 7,841 *bakufu* troops suffered injuries, and 1206 troops died.⁸⁸ These losses raised the *bakufu*'s total casualties for the siege of Hara Castle to over 20,000, or a 13% casualty rate among the 150,000 total troops involved.⁸⁹

CONCLUSION

From the moment the rebels sealed themselves into Hara Castle, they were doomed. If not routed by *bakufu* forces, they would eventually run out of necessary provisions. The *bakufu* army could not likely

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have taken the castle early in the first month of 1638, as evidenced by the heavy casualties it suffered even two months after the rebels were weakened by starvation and isolation. Nor could the peasants escape the castle and elude the 50,000 troops of Itakura's army. It was a standoff: a standoff that only the *bakufu* could win. Why then, were nearly 150,000 troops—a number that approximates the armies on both sides of the battle at Sekigahara, from which the Tokugawa emerged as the rulers of Japan in 1600—devoted to the siege? Such a large number of troops was necessary because Itakura's failures transformed the siege of the castle into a display of national authority by the Tokugawa. Itakura made it necessary for the Tokugawa to make a show of force where such force should not have been necessary. It was necessary because Tokugawa hegemony was predicated on exactly this kind of projection of authority. The *bakufu* did not need the capacity to take the castle; it needed merely to appear to have that capacity. The significance of the siege of Hara Castle surpasses its Christian dimension by further enlightening our understanding of early modern national authority and social control.

In 1637, natural calamities, oppressive rule, and religious restrictions led the otherwise peaceful peasants of Shimabara Peninsula and Amakusa Island to rebel not only against local authorities, but against the fabric of Tokugawa national control in the midst of the Shogun Iemitsu's drive to make the Tokugawa the symbol of national authority. Before the third assault on the rebels failed, the Shogun ordered the mobilization of one of the largest field armies in the early modern world to ensure control of the damage inflicted on Tokugawa authority not only by the rebels but also by their own general, Itakura.

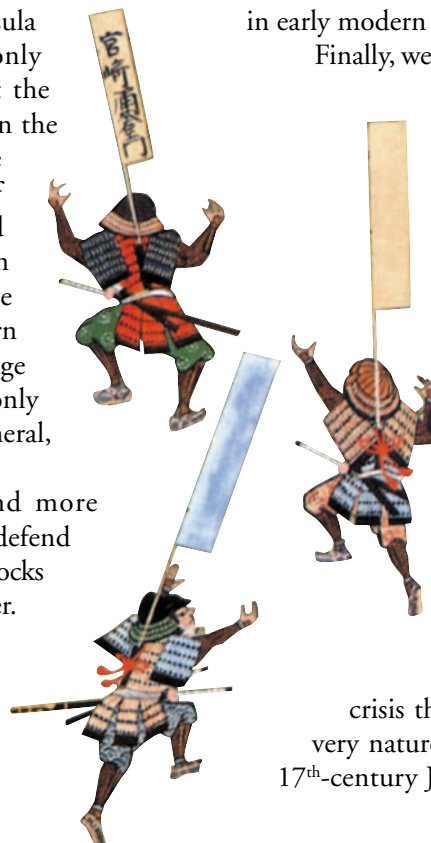
At the heart of the siege, and more importantly of the rebel's ability to defend themselves, were the nearly 1500 matchlocks with which they began the encounter. Although Dutch cannon – tried from land and sea – proved ineffective, and Tokugawa sapping fared no better, shoulder arms allowed the rebels to repulse the first three attacks

on the castle led by Itakura. Those first defenses of the castle by the rebels changed the entire calculus of the siege. By repelling Itakura with gunfire, the rebels embarrassed the Tokugawa and led Iemitsu to a change in strategy and tactics.

Iemitsu ordered Matsudaira to pursue the siege with no more losses to government troops. The only option was to wait the rebels out – forcing the Tokugawa to keep their huge composite army in the field for three months, and turning a regional uprising into a national event. Even after having weakened the peasants through hunger and exhaustion, the shogunal army still suffered significant casualties at the hands of rebel gunfire. This tells us several things. First, shoulder arms were available in the Shimabara countryside despite nearly fifty years of government policies aimed at stripping the peasantry of weapons. Further, the *daimyô* troops in Shimabara Castle maintained an arsenal of matchlocks that the peasants helped themselves to. So at least in the late 1630s, Japan had not yet given up the gun. Second, those weapons were used with tremendous effect before and during the siege. Taken together, Itakura's three failures and the losses suffered during the final assault on the castle suggest that *bushi* (military class) or former *bushi* with the skill to use the firearms were still present in early modern Japan.

Finally, we know that the Tokugawa did not have siege cannon, nor did they know that the small Dutch five-pounders would have no effect on a solidly built castle like Hara. It seems that since the Portuguese introduced the 'harquebus' on Tanegashima Island almost a century earlier (in 1543), Japanese mastery of the manufacture and deployment of shoulder arms had survived but had not progressed to include siege guns. Finally, if the rebels had not had guns, which Japan had clearly not "given up," Itakura likely would have taken Hara Castle on his first assault, and the Shimabara Rebellion would not have developed into the national

crisis that it did – thereby transforming the very nature of one of the major events of early 17th-century Japan. **RC**



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NOTES

- 1 Noel Perrin, *Giving Up the Gun: Japan's Reversion to the Sword, 1543-1879* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1979).
- 2 For an excellent discussion of the development and meaning of *kôgi* under Hideyoshi and Ieyasu, see Mary Elizabeth Berry, "Public Peace and Private Attachment: The Goals and Conduct of Power in Early Modern Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Summer 1986), pp. 248-50, 269-71.
- 3 Harold Bolitho, "The Han," in John Whitney Hall, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 4, Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 197.
- 4 Bolitho, "The Han," p. 198.
- 5 Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 97.
- 6 Karen Gerhart, *The Eyes of Power: Art and Early Tokugawa Authority* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), pp. 74, 105.
- 7 Hall, *Cambridge History*, IV, 153. See also Fujino Tamotsu, *Shintei bakuban taisei no kenkyû* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kôbunkan, 1975), and Conrad Totman, *Politics in the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1600-1843* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).
- 8 Toshio George Tsukahira, *Feudal Control in Tokugawa Japan: the Sankin Kotai system* (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 91. For a discussion of the cultural aspects of the *sankin kôtai* system, see Constantine N. Vaporis, "To Edo and Back: Alternate Attendance and Japanese Culture in the Early Modern Period," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Winter, 1997), pp. 25-67.
- 9 Tsukahira, *Feudal Control*, pp. 28, 36.
- 10 Nakajima Masayuki, ed., *Nihon rekishi daijiten*, 10 vols. (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 1969), Vol. 8, p. 116.
- 11 C. R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan: 1549-1650*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), p. 313.
- 12 Nakajima ed., *Nihon rekishi daijiten*, Vol. 8, p. 116.
- 13 "Hayashi shizaemon oboegaki" in Hayashi Senkichi ed., *Shimabara hantôshi II* (Nagasaki: Nagasaki Ken Minamitakagun Shi kyôiku kai, 1956), p. 63. When possible, measurements and geographical directions are taken from primary accounts. In this case, six *ri* is converted to 23.58 kilometers.
- 14 E. Papinot, *Historical and Geographical Dictionary of Japan* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1972), p. 362.
- 15 Nakajima ed., *Nihon rekishi daijiten*, Vol. 8, p. 664.
- 16 "Hayashi shizaemon oboegaki" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 63.
- 17 Nakajima ed., *Nihon rekishi daijiten*, Vol. 7, p. 93.
- 18 George Ellison, *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Harvard East Asian Series (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 14.
- 19 Berry, *Hideyoshi*, pp. 89-93, *passim*.
- 20 Elonas, "Christianity and the Daimyô," in John Whitney Hall, ed. *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 4, Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 365-6.
- 21 Ohashi Yukihiko, "New Perspectives on the Early Tokugawa Persecution," in John Breen and Mark Williams, eds., *Japan and Christianity: Impacts and Responses* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), p. 66.
- 22 Hall, "The Bakuhan System," *Cambridge History of Early Modern Japan*, p. 160.
- 23 These four years were 1600, 1615-16, and 1638. By the Japanese lunar calendar, fighting in the Shimabara Rebellion occurred almost entirely in the New Year of 1638.
- 24 Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, eds. *The General Crisis of the 17th Century*. 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 1997): Introduction.
- 25 In the introduction to Parker and Smith, eds., *The General Crisis of the 17th Century*, Parker lists nearly a dozen poignant quotes from contemporaries about a self-evident 'crisis' in 17th-century Europe.
- 26 See J. H. Elliott and J. de la Peña, eds., *Memoriales y cartas del conde-duque de Olivares*, II (Madrid, 1981), p. 275. The *Nicandro o antidoto contra las calumnias que la ignorancia y envidia ha esparcido por deslucir y manchar las heroicas y inmortales acciones del conde-duque de Olivares después de su retiro* appeared in Madrid in May 1643, and was probably written during the previous four months, under Olivares' inspiration, by his librarian (*ibid.*, p. 227). The Inquisition almost immediately banned it. I thank Geoffrey Parker for drawing this text to my attention and for providing a translation.
- 27 Herbert Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. xxi.
- 28 Endô Motoo, *Kinsei Seikatsushi Nempyô* (Tokyo: Yuzankaku, 1982), pp. 49-68 *passim*.
- 29 William S. Atwell, "Some Observations of the 'Seventeenth-Century Crisis' in China and Japan," in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Feb., 1986), pp. 223-237.
- 30 Yamamoto Hirofumi, *Kan'ei jidai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1989), pp. 197-8.
- 31 Yamamoto, *Kan'ei jidai*, p. 199.
- 32 Hayashi Senkichi ed., *Shimabara hantôshi II*, 5. Note that Ivan Morris places the rebellion beginning several days later, on 17 December 1637. See Morris, *The Nobility of Failure*, p. 153. No source is given.
- 33 Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 5.
- 34 "Yamada Uemon no suke kosho utsushi" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 190.
- 35 Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*: 190. One *koku* approximates 180 liters.
- 36 Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 190.
- 37 These estimates include men, women, and children, peasant and samurai alike.
- 38 "Shimabara ikki matsukura ki" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*: 157, gives 23,888 total peasants (12,336 men / 11,552 women), while "Hayashi shizaemon oboegaki" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi*: 63, gives 24,842 total peasants (12,943 men / 11,899 women). These totals are not presumed, as was the early modern Japanese tradition, to include children under 15 or the elderly over 59.
- 39 Tokyo Daigaku Hensanjyô, *Dai nihon kinsei shiryô: Hosokawake shiryô*. vol. 12 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 1990), p. 167.
- 40 "Haranojin onko rokuzen" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi*, p. 246.
- 41 "Shimabara ikki Matsukura ki" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 157.
- 42 "Shimabara ikki kachu zengo niccho oboe" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 123.
- 43 "Yamada saemon no suke kosho utsushi" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 191, puts the estimate at 500 matchlocks; "Hizen no kuni arima takakigun ikki rojo no kokugoku nikki" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 399, puts it at 530 matchlocks.
- 44 "Haranojin onko rokuzen" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, pp. 246-247.
- 45 "Haranojin onko rokuzen" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, pp. 246-247.
- 46 "Haranojin onko rokuzen" in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, pp. 246-247. Note that Fujino Tamotsu estimates the castle dimensions

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- to be 700 by 300 meters; see Fujino Tamotsu, *Saga han no sôgô kenkyû: Han sei no seiritsu to kôzô* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1981), p. 436.
- 47 “*Haranojin onko rokuzen*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, pp. 246-247. The breakdown of the castle area is: Amakusa compound, 23,650.5m²; main citadel, 34,184.0m²; inner compound, 93,674.7m²; outer compound, 87, 447.4m². This total is exclusive of second and third stories and of the citadel’s keep (or *tenshu*).
- 48 George Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 220.
- 49 Nicholaes Koeckebacker to A. van Diemen, Governor General at Batavia, from the Dutch Factory at Hirado, January 18, 1638, in A. J. C. Geerts, “The Arima Rebellion and the Conduct of Koeckebacker,” *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, XI (1883), pp. 57-59. For a particularly vivid and horrible account of the torture of unrepentant Japanese Christians, see Manual de Faria y Sousa, *Portuguese Asia: or the History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese*, Part III (C. Brome: London, 1695), p. 193-94.
- 50 Berry, *Hideyoshi*, p. 102.
- 51 Berry, *Hideyoshi*, p. 106.
- 52 Philip Brown, *Central Authority and Local Autonomy in the Formation of Early Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 233.
- 53 Jurgis Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyô,” in John Whitney Hall ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan*, p. 368.
- 54 John David Lu, *Sources of Japanese History*. Vol. 1 (New York: McGraw Hill, 1974), p. 200.
- 55 John Whitney Hall, “The *bakuhau* System,” in John Whitney Hall ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 4, Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), p. 148.
- 56 Boxer, p. 379.
- 57 Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (New York: New American Library, 1976), p. 153.
- 58 “*Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 87.
- 59 Geerts, “The Arima Rebellion,” p. 5.
- 60 Kuroita Katsumi ed., *Tokugawa Jikki*, Vol. 40 of *Shintei zoho kokushi taikei*. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1964), p. 72. Details of the account of the rebellion and siege in the *Tokugawa Jikki* were taken from the *Shimabara Kassen*, an official Tokugawa record created just after the siege ended. N.b. that the *Tokugawa Jikki* was compiled toward the end of the early modern period from primary as well as secondary sources.
- 61 “*Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 87.
- 62 Kokushi Daijiten Iinkai ed., *Kokushi daijiten* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1979-1997), Vol. 1, p. 609.
- 63 Nakajima ed., *Nihon rekishi daijiten*, vol. 1, p. 328.
- 64 *Kokushi daijiten*, Vol. 1, p. 503.
- 65 “*Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 88.
- 66 “*Hayashi shizaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 54.
- 67 “*Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 89.
- 68 *Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 89.
- 69 *Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 89.
- 70 “*Betto mokuzaemon oboegaki*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 90.
- 71 Boxer, p. 381.
- 72 Tokyo Daigaku Hensanjo, eds. *Dai Nihon Kinsei Shiryô: Hosokawake shiryô*, Vol. 12 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 1990), p. 169.
- 73 Nicholaes Koeckebacker in a letter to A. van Diemen, Governor General at Batavia, from the Dutch Factory at Hirado, January 18, 1638, in A. J. C. Geerts, “The Arima Rebellion and the Conduct of Koeckebacker,” *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, XI (1883), p. 60.
- 74 Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *A Collection of Several Relations & Treatise Singular and Curious of Jean Baptista Tavernier, Baron of Aubonne. Not Printed among his first Six Voyages* (London, 1680), p. 22.
- 75 Nicholaes Koeckebacker in a letter to A. van Diemen, Governor General at Batavia, from the Dutch Factory at Hirado, January 18, 1638, in A. J. C. Geerts, “The Arima Rebellion and the Conduct of Koeckebacker,” *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, XI (1883), p. 48.
- 76 Morris, *The nobility of failure*, p. 167.
- 77 C. R. Boxer, “Notes on Early European Military Influence in Japan (1543-1853),” *Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 8, (Second series, 1931), p. 76. Please note that this article contains a typographical error that places the Shimabara Rebellion in 1627.
- 78 Morris, *The Nobility of Failure*, 167; Boxer, *Notes*, p. 76.
- 79 Nicholaes Koeckebacker in a letter to A. van Diemen, Governor General at Batavia, from the Dutch Factory at Hirado, January 18, 1638, in A. J. C. Geerts, “The Arima Rebellion and the Conduct of Koeckebacker,” *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, XI (1883), p. 52.
- 80 Morris, *The Nobility of Failure*, p. 167.
- 81 Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 7.
- 82 Morris, *The Nobility of Failure*, pp. 168-9.
- 83 “*Harajin onko rokuzen*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 247.
- 84 *Hosokawake shiryô*, vol. 12, p. 175.
- 85 “*Yamada Uemonnosuke kosho utsushi*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 191.
- 86 *Hosokawake shiryô*, Vol. 12, p. 167.
- 87 George Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 366. Translation from an anonymous chapter of *Kirishitan monogatari*.
- 88 “*Harajin onko rokuzen*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 245.
- 89 “*Harajin onko rokuzen*” in Hayashi, *Shimabara hantôshi II*, p. 243.