

Tsuyu to oki	Like dew I came,
Tsuyu to kicnan	Like dew I go.
Waga mi kana	My life
Naniwa no koto wa	And all I have done at Osaka
Yume no mata yume	Is just a dream in a dream.

Even centuries of Tokugawarule, however, could not wholly obscure Hideyoshi's vision of a larger world in which Japan was to play a part, of a horizon that stretched beyond Asia to Africa and Europe. Two maps he had had made kept this vista constantly before him, one mounted on a folding screen in his palace and the other on a fan with which, while cooling himself, he had fanned the flames of his ambition. During the years that followed the memory of Hideyoshi's exploits lingered on in the consciousness of an isolated, insular Japan, as a reminder of the world beyond her shores and of a destiny which some day would carry her warriors again to the banks of the Yalu.

TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI

Letter to the Viceroy of the Indies

Three years before the date of this letter, Hideyoshi had received a letter from the Viceroy of the Indies (Portuguese Goa) through a Jesuit missionary. This letter, which Hideyoshi wrote in reply, and a similar letter he was to send in 1597 to the Governor-General of the Philippines, reveal his attitude toward Christianity and religion generally, and incidentally his ambition to rule all of East Asia.

[From Akiyama, *Nisshi kōshō-shi kenkyū*, pp. 65-66]

Reading your message from afar, I can appreciate the immense expanse of water which separates us. As you have noted in your letter, my country, which is comprised of sixty-odd provinces, has known for many years more days of disorder than days of peace; rowdies have been given to fomenting intrigue, and bands of warriors have formed cliques to defy the court's orders. Ever since my youth, I have been constantly concerned over this deplorable situation. I studied the art of self-cultivation and the secret of governing the country. Through profound planning and forethought, and according to the three principles of benevolence, wisdom, and courage, I cared for the warriors on the one hand and looked after the common people on the other; while administering justice, I was able

[316 1

to establish security. Thus, before many years had passed, the unity of the nation was set on a firm foundation, and now foreign nations, far and near, without exception, bring tribute to us. Everyone, everywhere, seeks to obey my orders. . . . Though our own country is now safe and secure, I nevertheless entertain hopes of ruling the great Ming nation. I can reach the Middle Kingdom aboard my palace-ship within a short time. It will be as easy as pointing to the palm of my hand. I shall then use the occasion to visit your country regardless of the distance or the differences between us.

Ours is the land of the Gods, and God is mind. Everything in nature comes into existence because of mind. Without God there can be no spirituality. Without God there can be no way. God rules in times of prosperity as in times of decline. God is positive and negative and unfathomable. **Thus**, God is the root and source of all existence. This God is spoken of by Buddhism in India, Confucianism in China, and Shinto in Japan. To know Shinto is to know Buddhism as well as Confucianism.

As long as man lives in this world, Humanity will be a basic principle. Were it not for Humanity and Righteousness, the sovereign would not be a sovereign, nor a minister of state a minister. It is through the practice of Humanity and Righteousness that the foundations of our relationships between sovereign and minister, parent and child, and husband and wife are established. If you are interested in the profound philosophy of God and Buddha, request an explanation and it will be given to you. In your land one doctrine is taught to the exclusion of others, and you are not yet informed of the [Confucian] philosophy of Humanity and Righteousness. Thus there is no respect for God and Buddha and no distinction between sovereign and ministers. Through heresies you intend to destroy the righteous law. Hereafter, do not expound, in ignorance of right and wrong, unreasonable and wanton doctrines. A few years ago the so-called Fathers came to my country seeking to bewitch our men and women, both of the laity and clergy. At that time punishment was administered to them, and it will be repeated if they should return to our domain to propagate their faith. It will not matter what sect or denomination they represent—they shall be destroyed. It will then be too late to repent. If you entertain any desire of establishing amity with this land, the seas have been rid of the pirate menace, and merchants are permitted to come and go. Remember this.

139

[317]

As for the products of the south-land, acknowledgment of their receipt is here made, as itemized. The catalogue of gifts which we tender is presented on a separate paper. The rest will be explained orally by my envoy.

Tenshō 19 [1591]: Seventh Month, 25th Day [signed] The Civil Dictator

Memorandum on the Korean Expedition

The Korean expedition, which was only the initial step in Hideyoshi's grand scheme to bring China and eventually all of Asia under his control, had been launched only a few weeks before the date of this memorandum. This communication from Hideyoshi to his nephew reflects Hideyoshi's supreme confidence of victory and his expectation that China could be governed by the kind of feudal regime he was accustomed to in Japan. Hideyoshi had assembled at Nagoya (now Karatsu) in northern Kyushu a force variously estimated at from 300,000 to 480,000 men, and the division of about 130,000 men which he reports in this memorandum as having reached the Korean capital (Seoul) had achieved its objective within twenty days of its landing near Pusan.

[From Akiyama, *Nisshi kōshō-shi kenkyū*, pp. 55-57]

[1] Your Lordship [Hideyoshi] must not relax preparations for the campaign. The departure must be made by the First or Second Month of the coming year.

[2] The Capital of Korea fell on the second day of this month. Thus, the time has come to make the sea crossing and to bring the length and breadth of the Great Ming under our control. My desire is that Your Lordship make the crossing to become the Civil Dictator of Great China.

[3] Thirty thousand men should accompany you. The departure should be by boat from Hyōgo. Horses should be sent by land.

[4] Although no hostility is expected in the Three Kingdoms [Korea], armed preparedness is of the utmost importance, not only for the maintenance of our reputation but also in the event of an emergency. All subordinates shall be so instructed. . . .

[The next thirteen items deal with supplying, equipping and staffing the expeditionary force.]

[18] Since His Majesty is to be transferred to the Chinese capital, due preparation is necessary. The imperial visit will take place the year after next. On that occasion, ten provinces adjacent to the Capital shall be

presented to him. In time instructions will be issued for the enfeoffment of all courtiers. Subordinates will receive ten times as much [as their present holdings]. The enfeoffment of those in the upper ranks shall be according to personal qualifications.

[19] The post of Civil Dictator of China shall be assigned, as aforementioned, to Hideyoshi who will be given 100 provinces adjacent to the Capital. The post of Civil Dictator of Japan will go to either the Middle Counsellor Yamato,¹ or to the Bizen Minister,² upon declaration by either of his readiness.

[20] As for the position of Sovereign of Japan, the young Prince or Prince Hachijō shall be the choice.

[21] As for Korea, the Gifu Minister³ or Bizen Minister shall be assigned. In that event the Middle Counsellor Tamba shall be assigned to Kyushu.

[22] As for His Majesty's visit to China, arrangements shall be made according to established practices for Imperial tours of inspection. His Majesty's itinerary shall follow the route of the present campaign. Men and horses necessary for the occasion shall be requisitioned from each country involved.

[23] Korea and China are within easy reach, and no inconvenience is anticipated for any concerned, high or low. It is not expected that anyone in those countries will attempt to flee. Therefore, recall all commissioners in the provinces to assist in preparation for the expedition. . . .

Hideyoshi [Seal]

Tenshō 20 [1592]: Fifth Month, 18th Day

To: His Lordship the Civil Dictator [of China]

The Sword Collection Edict

Of more enduring significance than Hideyoshi's dreams of conquest were the measures he adopted to solidify his power and stabilize the existing order. Since the twelfth century Japan had been dominated by warriors, but the very warfare which had put an increasing premium on military prowess in medieval times showed little regard for hereditary rights or class distinctions. In the hurly-burly struggles of the sixteenth century peasants and seafaring people fought alongside aristocrats, and through such an exacting test of individual

¹ Hideyoshi's half-brother, Hidenaga.

² His adopted son (*yushi*) Ukita Hideie.

³ Hashiba Hideyasu, a relative by marriage.

merit men of humble origins like Hideyoshi could rise to great power. But Hideyoshi's avowed purpose was to put an end to this disordered state of affairs, and thus to deny others the opportunities which had been afforded to him. One of the many means he had used to accomplish this was his famous Sword Hunt, which deprived the peasantry of their weapons and made fighting the exclusive prerogative of an hereditary class. In justification of this he offered a pious motive as well: the confiscated metal could be used for the casting of a great Buddha image.

[From Kuroita, *Kokushi gaihan*, p. 236]

[1] The people of the various provinces are strictly forbidden to have in their possession any swords, short swords, bows, spears, firearms, or other types of arms. The possession of unnecessary implements [of war] makes difficult the collection of taxes and dues and tends to foment uprisings. Needless to say, the perpetrators of improper acts against official agents shall be summarily punished, but in that event the paddy fields and farms of the violators will remain unattended and there will be no yield of crops. Therefore the heads of provinces, official agents, and deputies are ordered to collect all the weapons mentioned above and turn them over to the government.

[2] Swords and short swords thus collected will not be wasted. They shall be used as nails and bolts in the construction of the Great Image of Buddha. This will benefit the people not only in this life but also in the life hereafter.

[3] If the people are in possession of agricultural implements only and devote themselves exclusively to agriculture, they and their descendants will prosper. Sincere concern for the well-being of the people is the motive for the issuance of this order, which is fundamental for the peace and security of the country and the happiness of the people. In other lands, such as China, the ruler Yao converted rare swords and sharp weapons into agricultural implements after he had established peace. In our country such an experiment has never been made. Thus, all the people should abide by and understand the aims of this act and give their undivided attention to agriculture and sericulture.

All implements mentioned above shall be collected and submitted forthwith.

Tenshō 16 [1588]: Seventh Month, 8th Day

Hideyoshi [Seal]

[320]

Restrictions on Change of Status and Residence

The beginnings of the rigid class system of the Tokugawa Period are found in ordinances such as this issued by Hideyoshi. In the absence of more direct control by a centralized administration, it was essential that the activities and movements of the people be regulated by the feudal lords in each locality and that the responsibility for this be clearly defined. The principle of collective responsibility, so much in evidence here, was also embodied in Hideyoshi's revival of the Five and Ten-man Group Responsibility System, which likewise became an important feature of Tokugawa rule.

[From *Kokushi shiryō shū*, III, 280-81]

[1] If there should be living among you any men formerly in military service who have taken up the life of a peasant since the seventh month of last year, with the end of the campaign in the Mutsu region, you are hereby authorized to take them under surveillance and expel them. If persons of this type are kept concealed in any place, the entire town or village shall be brought to justice for this evasion of the law.

[2] If any peasant abandons his fields, either to pursue trade or to become a tradesman or laborer for hire, not only should he be punished but the entire village should be brought to justice with him. Anyone who is not employed either in military service or in cultivating land shall likewise be investigated by the local authorities and expelled. If local officials fail to take action in such cases, they shall be stripped of their posts for negligence. In cases involving concealment of peasants who have turned to trade, the entire village or town shall be held responsible for the offense.

[3] No military retainer who has left his master without permission shall be given employment by another. A thorough investigation should be made of the man's previous status and he should be required to provide a guarantor.

Those who fail to report that they already have a master are to be arrested for violating the law and returned to their former master. Whenever this regulation is violated and the offender allowed to go free, the heads of three men shall be offered in compensation to the original master. If restitution is not made in this manner, there will be no alternative except to hold the new master responsible and bring him to justice.

[321]