Predators, Protectors, and Purveyors

Pirates and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan

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OVER the course of late medieval Japan (ca. 1333–1590), some leaders of seafaring bands who appear in historical sources as "pirates" (*kaizoku* 海賊) gained widespread acceptance as important figures in the political and economic structure of the time.[1] Japan in this period was subject to two large historical processes: decentralization in the political realm and commercialization in the economic. Contests over the post of shogun and the imperial succession, internecine inheritance feuds, and the rise of local elites resulted in a decentralized political order in which no one could fully enforce a claim to be the ultimate arbiter of sanctioned violence. In such an environment, often only brute force sufficed to resolve disputes.[2] At the same time, the economy was growing increasingly complex. Estate (*shōen* 荘園) networks linking proprietors and producers competed with, intersected with, and sometimes evolved into cash-based regional, transarchipelagic, and overseas commercial networks.[3] In much of Japan, especially the Seto Inland Sea (Setonaikai 瀬戸内海) region, commercialization occurred most dynamically in the littoral. A range of traditional and new authorities established ports, toll barriers, lodges, and other infrastructure

THE AUTHOR is assistant professor of history at the University of Illinois, Springfield. He would like to thank the many people and institutions that made this work possible. Research for it was facilitated by an IIE Fulbright grant, the Northeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies, and the University of Illinois, Springfield. Hitomi Tonomura, Kurushima Noriko 久留島典子, Leslie Pincus, Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen, Vic Lieberman, Yamauchi Yuzuru 山内譲, Mieda Akiko 三枝暁子, and Igawa Kenji 伊川健二 helped the author develop some of the ideas presented here. He is also grateful for comments received when presenting earlier versions of the article at the Asia/Pacific Studies Center at Duke University in 2006 and the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference in 2007. Feedback from two anonymous reviewers proved invaluable in helping to refine ideas and give the article final shape.

[1] The term *wakō* 倭寇, frequently translated today as "Japanese pirates," does not generally appear in Japanese historical sources, but is derived rather from Korean and Chinese sources. Although the populations identified with *kaizoku*, on the one hand, and *wakō*, on the other, overlap to some extent, this article focuses on those seafarers most often labeled *kaizoku*.

[2] Conlan 2004, pp. 216–19.

[3] Sakurai Eiji 桜井英治 emphasizes that gift- and tribute-based systems of exchange continued to coexist and interact with commercial networks. Sakurai 2002b, p. 199.

Monumenta Nipponica 64/2: 273–313

to develop, administer, profit from, and provide support and protection for commercial enterprises.[4]

Our understanding of these processes is incomplete, however, because most historical studies have tended to focus only on the perspectives of land-based participants.[5] The land-based economy was unquestionably central to the feeding and survival of much of the Japanese population. But to grasp comprehensively Japan's late medieval political and economic transformations, we need to embrace a worldview that recognizes waterways, not terrestrial roads, as the dominant means of bulk and long-distance transport. We need to understand the late medieval period as a window of time when the maritime world—in large part due to the efforts of seafarers who appear in the sources as pirates—asserted its autonomy and substantially impacted political and economic developments before being reabsorbed into the agricentric order of early modern Japan. Seafarers labeled as pirates in the late medieval period were in effect entrepreneurs who established control over networks of maritime production, distribution, and exchange, and who sold a variety of services, sometimes involving the use of violence, to land-based patrons. By focusing on the dominion of "pirates" as a key to understanding the late medieval economy, we can gain access to the identities of the actual carriers, protectors, and predators of maritime commerce and move towards reenvisioning Japan's late medieval commercial revolution from the waterline.

Recovering the Economic History of Pirates

Viewed globally, scholarship on pirates tends to fall along a continuum. One end is tethered by the idea that pirates were parasites who impaired the functioning of the economy.[6] Anchoring the other end is the argument that piratical services were indispensable and inseparable from the functioning of premodern economies, whether at the level of subsistence, redistribution, or protection.[7] Discussions of Japanese "pirates" fall along a similar continuum. Piratical violence has been one of the primary subjects of scholars arguing the case for negative impact.[8] Some buttress their perspectives with foundational juridical texts. Inspired by Chinese juridical models, the eighth-century ritsuryō codes outlawed pirates (*kaizoku*) as maritime manifestations of rebellion, robbery, and banditry;[9] laws issued by Japan's first warrior government, the Kamakura bakufu, treated piracy

[4] There are several good works in English detailing these changes: Farris 2006; Gay 2001; Gay 2009; Tonomura 1992; Toyoda and Sugiyama 1977.

[5] Usami Takayuki 宇佐見隆之 makes this critique of Japanese scholarship in Usami 1999, p. 10. Notable recent works in English on maritime exchange include Batten 2003; Batten 2006; Robinson 2000; Soranaka 1997; Verschuer 2006.

[6] Braudel 1995, p. 887; Anderson 2001, p. 82.

[7] Starkey 2001; Lane 1958.

[8] Tokuda 1966, pp. 244–47.

[9] For ritsuryō law and piracy, see Matsubara 1999, pp. 14–16; *Ruiju sandai kyaku* 累聚三代格 contains a decision from Jōgan 9 (867).3.24 that characterizes pirates as a type of evil bandit that waylaid travelers. *Ruiju sandai kyaku*, p. 614.

as a form of illicit violence.[10] Other scholars draw on Japanese, Korean, and Chinese historical sources that speak of pirates primarily as sea-based threats to the social, political, and economic order—parasites living off of the economy, sackers of ships, and extorters of taxes.[11] Shinjō Tsunezō 新城常三 has argued that some land-based authorities considered pirates to be like storms, a lurking natural disaster that might be encountered at sea.[12] The danger posed by the proliferation of pirates has been credited as one impetus for the increase in use of bills of exchange (*kawase* 為替) that helped monetize the late medieval economy.[13]

Those scholars who argue for a more constructive role for pirates have tended to devote their attention to pirates' livelihoods and the services in which they engaged. Benjamin Hazard argued that medieval piracy emerged as a way to meet subsistence needs.[14] Other historians have focused on how pirates worked for religious institutions,[15] protected trading vessels,[16] participated in trade with the continent,[17] and fought sea battles for warlords (daimyo). The evidence for this last form of sponsored violence, in particular, has led many scholars to think anachronistically of *kaizoku* as navies (*suigun* 水軍), vassals incorporated within the institutional apparatus of a daimyo's domain.[18] One especially influential revisionist figure, Amino Yoshihiko 網野善彦, advocated a definition of pirates as leaders of populations of "sea-people" (*ama* or *kaimin* 海民) who sailed in the vanguard of medieval commercialization because they operated outside traditional institutions of authority.[19] More recently, historians have tried to incorporate both ends of the argument, holding that *kaizoku* were seagoing Janus figures—entities with both destructive and protective faces.[20]

To truly understand the phenomenon of piracy in late medieval Japan, however, we should keep in mind that seafarers generally did not describe themselves as *kaizoku* or *ama*. Instead, such terms were almost always labels assigned by land-based authorities. In a context when written sources continued to be imbued with the still potent agricentrist ideologies of eighth-century, Chinese-style ritsuryō institutions, the term "sea-people" denoted an exotic, service-providing

[10] For Kamakura law, see article 3 of the 1232 *Goseibai shikimoku* 御成敗式目, "Shokoku no shugonin bugyō no koto" 諸国守護人奉行事. *Goseibai shikimoku*, p. 4.

[11] For an overview, see Elisonas 1991b.

[12] Shinjō 1995, p. 500. Shinjō cites, for example, a 1313 missive by the estate proprietor Tōji 東寺 that lists "sinking and pirates" as "unexpected [natural] disasters."

[13] Sasaki 1972, p. 292.

[14] Hazard 1967.

[15] Sakurai 1994, pp. 144–45; Katsumata 1996, p. 283.

[16] See, for example, *Mansai jugō nikki*, vol. 2, p. 553, entry for Eikyō 6 (1434).1.30.

[17] Ming sources portray *wakō* as engaging in both banditry and trade depending on the circumstances. See So 1975.

[18] See Udagawa 1981. The term *suigun* does not appear in medieval sources, only those of later periods. It is possible that some medieval Japanese knew of the term *suigun* as a result of their contacts with Koreans or Chinese who did use it to refer to naval forces incorporated directly into a state-administrative structure. Hirase 1994, p. 31, note 6.

[19] Amino 1995, pp. 364–66.

[20] Saeki 1992; Sakurai 1994, p. 113; Yamauchi 2005, pp. 6–10.

"other" that reified the normality of a land-based existence.[21] By using terms like "pirate" and "sea-people," historians run the danger of accepting the points of view of the land-based elites in whose voices much of the extant source material was written.

To some extent, the term *kaizoku* may be interpreted as a subjective "rhetoric of accusation," used, for instance, by litigants in criminal suits.[22] At the same time, however, it bespeaks the existence of autonomous seafarers without whom political authorities could not access the maritime environment or exercise much influence over littoral populations. After the weakening of the ritsuryō imperium,[23] no state institutions resembling a navy or merchant marine existed in Japan until Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536–1598) unified the country and invaded Korea.[24] Only by hiring various bands of seafarers across the realm could traditional authorities achieve violent and peaceful goals on the seas. By the late medieval period, the dependence of land-based authorities on seafarers resulted in the term *kaizoku* being associated with activities sponsors considered licit as well as illicit.[25]

In addition to the various law codes, diaries, folktales, ethnographic accounts, edicts, and other sources that offer descriptions of pirates, during the late medieval period members of seafaring houses produced significant amounts of written materials related to their lives. Despite the largely institutional nature of these sources, correspondence, contracts, and other texts documenting service negotiations illustrate how these figures referred to themselves and how they described their relationship with sponsors. Such sources suggest that in the late medieval period, many leaders of seafaring bands took advantage of the opportunities available for combining commerce and violence to establish themselves as sea lords. Although this specific term does not itself appear in the sources, some scholars have relied on such a notion to depict the leaders of littoral communities. Amino identified those who "ruled over sea-people" as "sea lords"

[21] Amino pushed historians to recognize the agricentrism of much of the extant medieval archive. To represent the agency of seafarers, as noted above, he used the term *ama*, borrowing it from folklore scholarship; see especially Amino 1984. Contemporaneous usage of this term does not seem to me to make such a position tenable, however. I have seen the word used only as a representation for sea-people, not by those "sea-people" to identify themselves. It appears mostly in literary works, but also can be found in some documents as a description of fisherfolk. The noh play *Ama* 海女, by Zeami 世阿弥 (1363?–1443?), for example, has the female lead—the ghost *shite* role—identify herself as a sea-person without the capacity to understand true emotions. See *Ama*, pp. 535, 539; for an English translation, see Tyler 1992, pp. 22–36. For use in historical documents, see *Hata monjo* 2, Kangi 3 (1231).1.21, p. 295. This document describes the position of *tone* 刀禰 as one responsible for "the *ama* and others (*ama nado* 海人等) of Tagarasunoura 多烏浦."

[22] For an argument of this sort, see Morten Oxenboell's recent work on "evil bands" (*akutō* 悪党). Oxenboell 2006, esp. p. 245. Similarly, Tanaka Takeo 田中健夫 suggests that we should understand *wakō* as the sum of their representations in sources. Tanaka 1997, pp. 1–2.

[23] Regarding the ritsuryō naval capacity, see the discussions of provincial naval bases (*funadokoro* 船所) in Amino 1995, pp. 248–50; and Shinjō 1995, pp. 5–7.

[24] See Elisonas 1991b, pp. 271–72.

[25] Amino Yoshihiko dates this change of perception of *kaizoku* to the late Kamakura period. Amino 1995, pp. 256–57.

(*umi no ryōshu* 海の領主),[26] whereas Kishida Hiroshi 岸田裕之, in asking "what history looks like when seen from the sea," employed the phrase "daimyo of the sea" (*umi no daimyō* 海の大名) to describe the "distinctiveness of the institutional structures" established by "pirates" like the Noshima Murakami 能島村上 who "ruled over a wide part of the sea independent of the individual authority of landed daimyo."[27] I interpret the concept of sea lord broadly to represent the identities and ambitions of seafarers who sought to develop hegemony over maritime networks of people, routes, and resources. Both the seafarers themselves and others often adopted land-based discourses to describe their activities,[28] but sea-lord power was rooted not in land tenure (surveying and distributing land),[29] but in sea tenure—regulating access to maritime space and resources.[30]

Instead of acting within the constraints of a generalized lord-vassal relationship, sea lords developed specific, discrete relations of service to a variety of sponsors. Operating outside the institutional frameworks of traditional authorities, sea lords moved between sponsors with impunity, playing factions against each other for maximum benefit. In effect, they were entrepreneurial mercenaries who sold their services as marketable commodities. Although scholars have long noted the ephemeral nature of patron-client relations in late medieval Japan, the activities of sea lords suggest not backstabbing for political gain, but rather the selling of services to multiple bidders simultaneously. Land-based groups also developed entrepreneurial or mercenary-like relations with sponsors in this period.[31] But sea lords had the advantage of greater physical mobility. As Murai Shōsuke 村井章介 notes of the seafarers who sailed between Korea and Japan in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and were identified by Koreans as pirates (*waegu* 倭寇; Jp. *wakō*), they were "marginal" figures who "lived in spaces two centers considered peripheries . . . but who could mediate with either."[32] Nevertheless, although a combination of mobility and indispensability to traditional authorities gave sea lords greater autonomy than land-based mercenaries, whose patrons could more easily punish what they perceived as treachery, this autonomy was tempered by sea lords' need for sponsors to provide legitimacy, customers for shipping networks, and even at times foodstuffs. The relationship was thus at least partly symbiotic.

[26] Amino 1984, p. 263.

[27] Kishida 2001, p. 352.

[28] As discussed below, those I describe as sea lords frequently adopted titles and terms of self-reference typically associated with samurai. Because in this period there was as yet no strict division of status tied to occupation, such practices do not mean that they sought to present themselves as "warriors" or "vassals." For a discussion of the wide-ranging populations recognized as "samurai" in this period, see Ikegami 1994, pp. 101–109; Sakurai 2002a, p. 118.

[29] The classic account in English of the development of land-tenure-centered political power is Hall 1966.

[30] Kalland 1995, pp. 2–5.

[31] For warriors who followed such a strategy, see the discussion of *tozama* 外様 in Conlan 2004, chapter 5; for commercial agents (*toi* 問), see Usami 1999, pp. 140–42; Sakurai 2002b, p. 208; for villagers and warriors, see Fujiki 1995.

[32] Murai 1993, p. 39.

Many sea-lord attempts to regulate access to maritime space and resources utilized the threat and deployment of force, and among the chief services they purveyed were ones related to naval combat. In an age of decentralization and insecure sea-lanes, violence was not necessarily inimical to the parallel conduct of economic activities. Across the premodern world, "violence . . . was not a trait of piracy but more broadly of the commerce of that age."[33] When states lacked powerful navies, they hired pirates and other transborder manifestations of non-state armed power.[34] For sea lords, the use of force constituted part of a spectrum of occupations—commerce, salt-making, fishing, extorting protection money from passing ships in exchange for safe passage, mercenarism, sea-based raiding, etc.—in which their bands engaged and for which they were hired by sponsors.

Although groups associated with such activities operated in several maritime networks throughout the archipelago,[35] some of the most extensively documented networks are those from the region known today as the Seto Inland Sea. Premodern Japan's aortic passage for seaborne traffic, the Inland Sea was a dynamic region in terms of commercialization and also—due to the prevalence of chokepoints where ships could be intercepted for the extortion of protection money or plunder—an area where autonomous seafaring bands established themselves in strength. Furthermore, because many Inland Sea bands served powerful warlord houses such as the Mōri 毛利 that survived into the Edo period, the archives of this region are relatively rich. To trace the growth of the commercial dominion of Inland Sea sea lords, this study focuses on materials related to two of the best-documented islands in the area, Yugeshima 弓削島 and Shiwaku 塩飽.[36] Both are small mountainous islands that, as parts of compact island chains, create chokepoints along major Inland Sea shipping lanes. Yugeshima is located near the northeastern end of an island chain stretching south across the Inland Sea from Onomichi 尾道 to Imabari 今治.[37] Together with a small collection of other mountainous islands, Shiwaku is situated between the provinces of Sanuki on Shikoku and Bitchū across the Inland Sea on Honshu (see figure 1).[38] Both

[33] Pérotin-Dumon 2001, pp. 29–30.

[34] Thomson 1994.

[35] Shippers from Ise and Kii served as both commercial and military agents for Sengoku daimyo like the Hōjō 北条. Nagahara 1992, pp. 88–121. Seafarers from the port of Katata 堅田 used protection rackets to control shipping lanes on Lake Biwa in the sixteenth century. Sakurai 1994, p. 129. The Andō 安藤 and Nanbu 南部 families dominated the maritime trade linking northeast Honshu with Ezo and northeast Asia. Bay 2005.

[36] Littoral estates in fact abounded in medieval Japan; Yugeshima and, to a lesser extent, Shiwaku are significant as well-documented rather than unique examples. In addition to Yugeshima in Iyo (as discussed below), the imperial princess Sen'yōmon-in 宣陽門院 (1181–1252) alone held at least partial proprietary title to several central Inland Sea maritime estates, including Aio Futajima 秋穂二島 in Suō, Innoshima 因島 in Bingo, Kitanoshō 北庄 on Ikuchijima 生口島 in Aki, and Kutsuna 忽那 and Mishima 三島 as well.

[37] Yugeshima measures 8.8 square kilometers in area and around 20 kilometers in circumference. Yamauchi 1985, p. 1.

[38] The historical island of Shiwaku has been incorporated into Honjima-chō 本島町, administered by the city of Marugame 丸亀. Twice the size of Yugeshima, Shiwaku measures 16.4 kilometers in circumference.

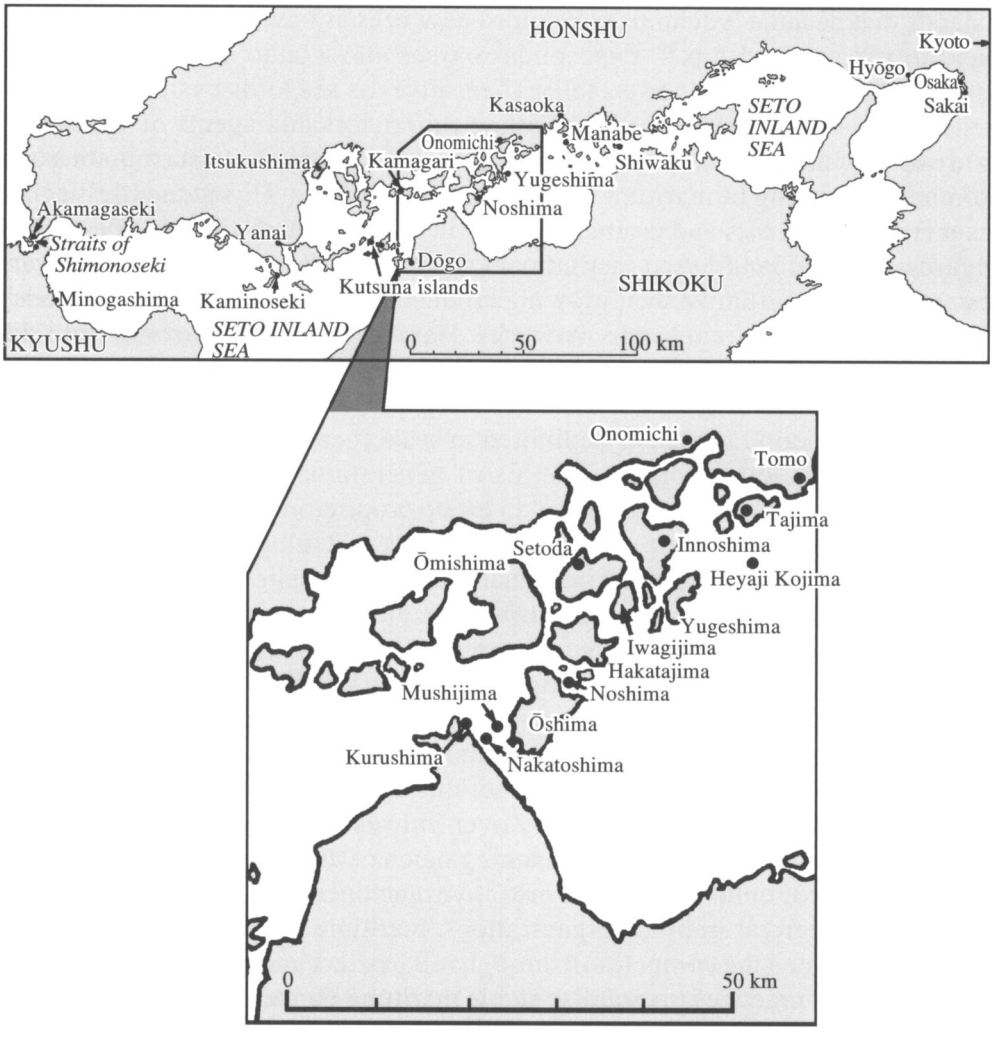

Figure 1. The Seto Inland Sea region in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Adapted from *Hyōgo kitazeki irifune nōchō*, pp. 261–62.

islands first appear in historical sources as estates specializing in salt and other maritime industries.[39]

The history of the activities concerning these two islands by figures whom the documents often label as *kaizoku* reveals a pattern of commercialization that increased as the scope of sea-lord authority did. Sources for Yugeshima provide detailed information for the early stages of this process, while Shiwaku sources offer insight into later developments. Although older scholarship wrote off

[39] For Yugeshima's proprietary history, see below. Shiwaku estate's head proprietor was the Fujiwara (later Konoe 近衛) family. *Heian ibun* 2847, Hōgen 1 (1156).7; *Kamakura ibun* 7631, Kenchō 5 (1253).10.21. By 1344, the estate seems to have passed to the control of the Ogasawara 小笠原, shugo of Shinano. *Dai Nihon shiryō*, Kōei 3 (1344).11.12.

islands that became lynchpins of sea-lord networks as having insufficient arable land to support lordship,[40] Yugeshima sources allow us to see that local maritime magnates were able to establish themselves as sea lords by capitalizing on tensions in littoral estates between estate proprietors and agents of Kamakura warrior stewards (jitō), and by taking advantage of conflicts surrounding the commercial selling of maritime products of these estates. Hiring themselves out as mercenary fighters and estate managers in the fourteenth century, these local figures acquired land-based institutional titles (*shiki* 職) to positions on littoral estates so as to legitimize their growing influence over estate residents, maritime industries, and local exchange networks. Having inserted themselves into the estate structure, such local magnates adapted estate-based methods of sea tenure to extend their authority over a wider territory. The degree of control they established in this period tended to be limited in scale (generally consisting of intraregional exchange networks), in terms of generational continuity, and in the number of patrons (generally limited to estate proprietors). By the mid-fifteenth century, however, some seafaring magnates had developed into transgenerational sea lords. They parlayed mercenary naval and estate managerial services for several sponsors into recognition of their authority over former estates, which they then worked to transform into transregional centers of maritime production, distribution, and exchange. Competing militarily with other local magnates, they set up sea-based toll barriers to regulate access to their networks, protect their shipping, and intercept the shipping of competitors.

In the sixteenth century, some successful sea lords, such as the Noshima Murakami, who gained sole authority over Shiwaku, established themselves as dynasts who controlled networks spanning much of the length of the Inland Sea. They developed sophisticated administrative machinery for managing protection rackets, commercial shipping organizations, maritime production, and multiple ports. They ended the competition through toll barriers and began to use barriers and protection practices to establish stable maritime domainal boundaries and to reduce the number of jurisdictions to which trade would be answerable. They thereby stimulated domestic exchange and facilitated overseas trade. Their activities in this regard were invaluable to warlords who wished to develop regional maritime economies in their own domains. And, although such independent, maritime military power could not survive Toyotomi Hideyoshi's unification of the country, commercial shipping and other economic developments initiated by sea lords continued into the Edo period.

Yugeshima: Maritime Estates in Medieval Japan

In the early thirteenth century, proprietary title to Yugeshima was held by the Princess Sen'yōmon-in 宣陽門院, who in 1239 bequeathed the island to the temple of Tōji 東寺. For most of its history as an estate, Yugeshima's head proprietor

[40] See Amino Yoshihiko's excoriation of earlier scholarship on Yugeshima—such as that of Watanabe Norifumi 渡辺則文. Amino 1978, pp. 329–30; Watanabe 1952.

was thus the Assembly of Eighteen (*jūhakku gusō* 十八口供僧), one of the ruling bodies of monks of the temple complex.[41] From the time of the earliest extant records, Yugeshima residents specialized in maritime industries. Wet and dry fields seem to have been for subsistence. By the early fourteenth century, three main types of maritime industries could be found on the island: salterns (*shio-hama* 塩浜); shipping; and "net-sites" (*amiba* 網場 / *aminiwa* 網庭), where large-scale cooperative fishing took place.

To administer these industries, proprietors and managers adapted estate-system institutions to the littoral environment. A 1313 estate survey reveals that the estate's administrators and production-unit chiefs (*myōshu* 名主) organized residents (*hyakushō* 百姓) and unfree labor (*genin* 下人) in several work units (*myō* 名) primarily devoted to salt production. By this period, Yugeshima's dues were paid almost entirely in salt—estate residents even used salt as a substitute for levies on other items.[42] Tōji assigned responsibility for shipping the rents to the capital via the port of Yodo 淀 to *myōshu* and other "shipmaster-residents" (*kandori ken hyakushō* 梶取兼百姓).[43] The combination of the terms *kandori* and *hyakushō* suggests that perhaps shipmasters or estate proprietors attempted to replicate the estate hierarchy aboard ship: those sailing under the shipmaster would have been other *hyakushō* or unfree labor attached to particular production units.[44] The listing of the location of production units within communities indicates as well that Yugeshima residents identified not only with their *myō*, but also with the villages in which they lived and worked.[45] Many of the names were connected to maritime livelihoods: Tsurihama 釣浜 (Fishing Beach), Kujira 鯨 (Whale), and Kushi 串 (Pole—used to mark net-sites or an estate's maritime boundaries) all suggest sites for community-based fishing operations.[46]

Maritime industries like salt production and shipping also depended on timber resources. In the 1313 survey, each work unit (*myō*) included a share of a contiguous upland timber stand (*yama* 山) in addition to salterns.[47] Like other salt-production centers throughout the Japanese archipelago in this period, Yugeshima residents made salt by collecting salt-encrusted sand in "salt wells" (*shio ana* 塩穴), washing the salt crystals off the sand by pouring more sea water into the wells, and then boiling the resulting "brine" (*tareshio* 垂塩) in cauldrons

[41] Yugeshima's earliest records date from 1135. Yugeshima first appears as an estate belonging to the "Genji nun (Genji ni 源氏尼) Shinsei 真性, who . . . deeded it to her adopted daughter Fujiwara no Mōshi 藤原網子 in 1171." Yamauchi 1985, p. 19. Soon after, it entered the retired emperor's holdings, where it passed from Go-Shirakawa 後白河 (1127–1192) to his daughter Sen'yōmon-in. For a good overview of Yugeshima history, see Amino 1978, pp. 318–41; Yamauchi 1985.

[42] This exchange system was known as *okawashi* 御交.

[43] NET 173:1; NET 173:2. Both are dated Shōwa 2 (1313).9.8. Reference to this and other document collections cited extensively is by document number rather than page.

[44] Shinjō 1995, p. 71.

[45] Kristina Troost shows that permanent villages were becoming established throughout the archipelago by the fourteenth century. Troost 1997, p. 93.

[46] NET 166, Ōchō 1 (1311).7. For the meaning of Kushi, see Hotate 1981, pp. 26–27.

[47] NET 166, Ōchō 1 (1311).7.

over a wood fire.[48] As *myōshu* and other wealthy residents owned and captained the ships used for delivering rents, the work-unit-linked timber stands likely also supplied Yugeshima's shipping industry. By the fourteenth century, hollowed-out log vessels had given way to partially and fully planked ships capable of carrying several hundred koku in lading.[49] Ship construction and maintenance thus required significant amounts of timber.

As a maritime estate remote from the capital, Yugeshima was vulnerable to incursions from local powers, and the introduction of Kamakura warrior stewards (jitō) from the end of the twelfth century created additional tensions. Over the course of the thirteenth century, warrior stewards such as the Komiya 小宮 family and their deputies attempted to force Tōji to accede to successive acts of aggrandizement. In response, the Assembly of Eighteen ceased relying on its own officials dispatched from Kyoto to manage the estate. Instead, to limit the influence of the stewards' agents and press Tōji's claims in Kamakura courts, it hired local littoral elites expert in estate management.[50] In a resulting compromise dividing the estate (*shitaji chūbun* 下地中分) in 1303, Tōji retained proprietary authority over two-thirds of the estate, with the warrior steward gaining one-third.[51] Such conflicts represented opportunities for local littoral elites to expand their role within the estate. The 1303 division of the estate constituted a semivictory for Tōji in that it led to a gradual diminution of Kamakura warrior power on the island. Eventually the position and attendant income accruing to the warrior steward (*jitō shiki* 地頭職) became simply one proprietary title among others. On the other hand, the local managers Tōji hired to counter the warrior stewards ended up gaining significant influence over the island.

Figures 2 and 3, which reproduce an early fourteenth-century chart of the island, provide insight into the nature of the resources and industries over which Tōji (designated as "proprietor"—*ryōke* 領家), the warrior steward, and the local

[48] NET 60, undated; NET 179, Shōwa 3 (1314).12.3. Scholars think that Yugeshima residents in this period practiced an intermediate form of salt production between "raised beach" (*agehama* 揚浜) and "channeled beach" (*irihama* 入浜). In the labor-intensive *agehama* method, the salt-makers repeatedly poured seawater over a bed of sand. In *irihama*, tidal forces were used to channel seawater directly into the beds. In both methods, the salinated sand was collected in central vats where more seawater was poured over it to create the brine solution. Many salt-producing regions began developing *irihama* technology in the late medieval period. Other Yugeshima records indicate that residents used cattle to ease the burdens of transporting seawater, salt, wood, and other products. NET 170, Shōwa 2 (1313).6; NET 165, Ōchō 1 (1311).7; Yamauchi 1985, pp. 78–79.

[49] One koku = approx. 0.278 cubic meters. Ishii Kenji 石井謙治 has suggested that the decrease in large-girth trees due to deforestation may have stimulated this transition in methods of ship construction. Ishii 1983, p. 44.

[50] The Komiya family served as warrior steward for Yugeshima from (at the latest) 1239 until 1296. As a result of the suits brought by the estate-manager experts hired by Tōji, the Komiya eventually lost their holdings on Yugeshima and were replaced by another warrior steward (name unknown). Yamauchi 1998, pp. 5–6; Yamauchi 1985, pp. 97–100.

[51] NET 139, Kangen 2 (1303).1.18. Jeffrey Mass has argued that such divisions were not the optimal outcome for most stewards. Mass 1974, p. 171. The receipt of only a one-third share of the estate indicated a relatively weak warrior steward presence on Yugeshima.

manager (*azukaridokoro* 預所) vied. The chart contains inscriptions of boundaries and text detailing in-process negotiations over the division of income from various net-sites for large-scale fishing operations and residential and production areas, showing that the parties sought dominion over Yugeshima's spaces of maritime production, not its rice paddies.[52] The ambiguity of the actual location of net-site installations hints at limitations in land-based forms of documentation for sea tenure. That said, according to this chart, proprietors, managers, and residents all agreed that Yugeshima estate extended some five kilometers offshore to the small island of Heyaji Kojima 辺屋路小島 (probably the present-day Hyakkanjima 百貫島); in other words, they considered Heyaji Kojima, the island of Yugeshima, offshore fishing sites, and the interstitial sea space all to constitute part of the estate. The inscriptions of net-sites in particular epitomize the possibilities for sea tenure on Yugeshima. They extended from the shoreline out to sea, were subject to administrative regulation (such as temporary prohibitions against killing), and became objects of dispute.[53]

The extension of boundaries offshore into shipping lanes also intimates the participation of Yugeshima residents in wider networks of exchange. Insufficient wood supplies and other necessities likely first stimulated exchange with other locales in the area.[54] Yugeshima residents seem to have had particularly close relations with nearby Innoshima 因島,[55] and they sold fish in regional markets.[56] By the early 1300s, Yugeshima shipmasters began expanding local exchange networks by embezzling part of the dues they carried and selling them on their own. Edicts by the Assembly of Eighteen against "nonpayment by shipmasters" (*kandori mishin* 梶取未進) specifically identified the latter as culprits—sometimes by name, as with "resident and shipmaster Gyōbunojō Shigehiro 刑部丞重弘 who owes nine sacks (*hyō* 俵) of salt."[57] In contrast to many other littoral estates near Yugeshima, where proprietors provided shipmasters with tax-exempt fields and other grants, Tōji does not seem to have compensated Yugeshima shipmasters for the expenses they incurred shipping the salt and other goods to the capital. Yugeshima residents thus had to outfit and maintain the ships themselves, pay for their own food and lodgings, and arrange their own protection.[58] Some scholars believe that the lack of sufficient arable land on Yugeshima may have

[52] Amino 1978, pp. 335–36.

[53] NET 66, not dated. Yugeshima was not unique in extending its boundaries offshore to enclose maritime space. As Hotate Michihisa 保立道久 has demonstrated, the need to secure fishing rights drove estate administrators and proprietors in various regions to take similar actions. Hotate 1981, pp. 21–22.

[54] Thomas Keirstead has shown that estates were not the self-sufficient, isolated entities their proprietors wanted them to be. Keirstead 1992, p. 56.

[55] Residents claimed to have fled across to Innoshima to escape the depredations of Ben no Bō Shōyo 弁房承誉, whose activities are discussed in the following section. NET 170, Shōwa 2 (1313).6.

[56] NET 173:2, Shōwa 2 (1313).9.8.

[57] NET 173:5, 173:1, Shōwa 2 (1313).9.8.

[58] Shipmasters from Yanai 柳井 estate in Suō, Ōta 太田 estate near Onomichi, and Ōmishima 大三島 in Iyo all seem to have received extra compensation. Shinjō 1995, pp. 41–42; 75–76.

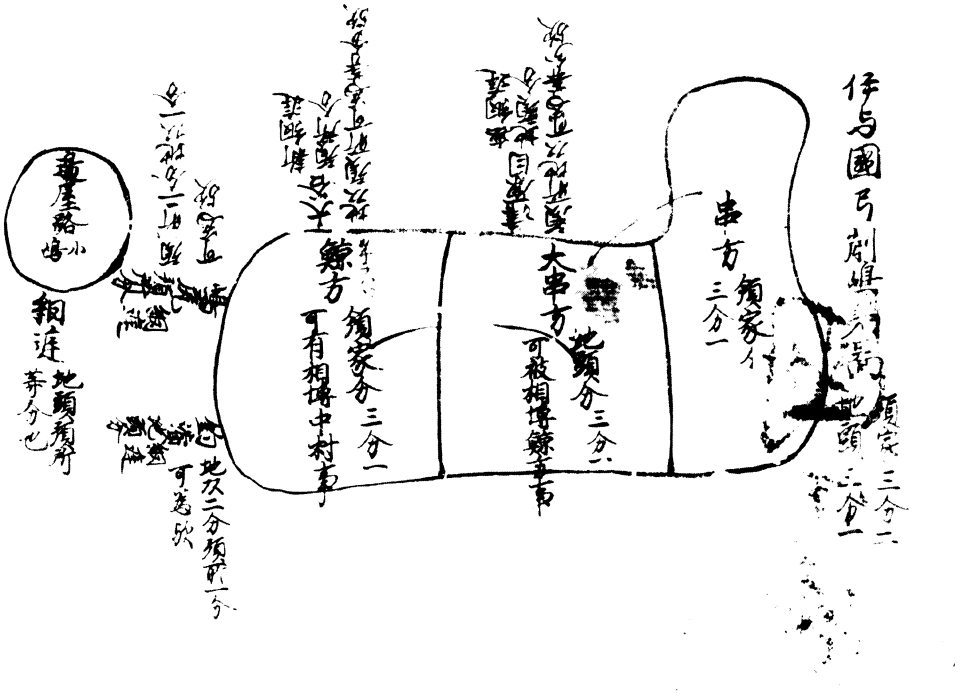

Figure 2. Fourteenth-century plan depicting adjustments in the division of Yugeshima estate between the proprietor and the warrior steward; oriented with the south at the top. The original document is part of Tōji hyakugō monjo 東寺百合文書 and is held by Kyōto Furitsu Sōgō Shiryōkan 京都府立総合資料館. The photograph is reproduced courtesy of the Shiryōkan.

contributed to the Assembly of Eighteen's policy,[59] but there is also no record of Tōji allowing Yugeshima shipmasters to augment their income by contracting their services to other estates or by paying in cash as was permitted by other proprietors in this period and would become the practice of Yugeshima shippers in the fifteenth century.[60] Given the contacts possible in regional ports like Onomichi and central ports like Hyōgo 兵庫 or Yodo, it would be naïve to think that people from these nearby estates did not communicate with one another. To be sure, as receiving exempt fields or cash payments did not stop other estates' shipmasters from engaging in extracurricular commercial activities, extra payments from Tōji likely would not have done much to dampen the entrepreneurial spirit of those from Yugeshima. Nevertheless, the absence of compensation undoubtedly encouraged the expropriation and marketing of some of the salt meant as dues. In response, Tōji, holding all—"residents (*hyakushō*) and others"—liable

[59] Shinjō 1995, pp. 40–42.

[60] Ise 伊勢 shrine permitted its shipmasters to contract out their shipping, and Mt. Kōya 高野 rewarded shipmasters on Minabe 南部 estate with cash. Fujimoto 2004, pp. 22, 27.

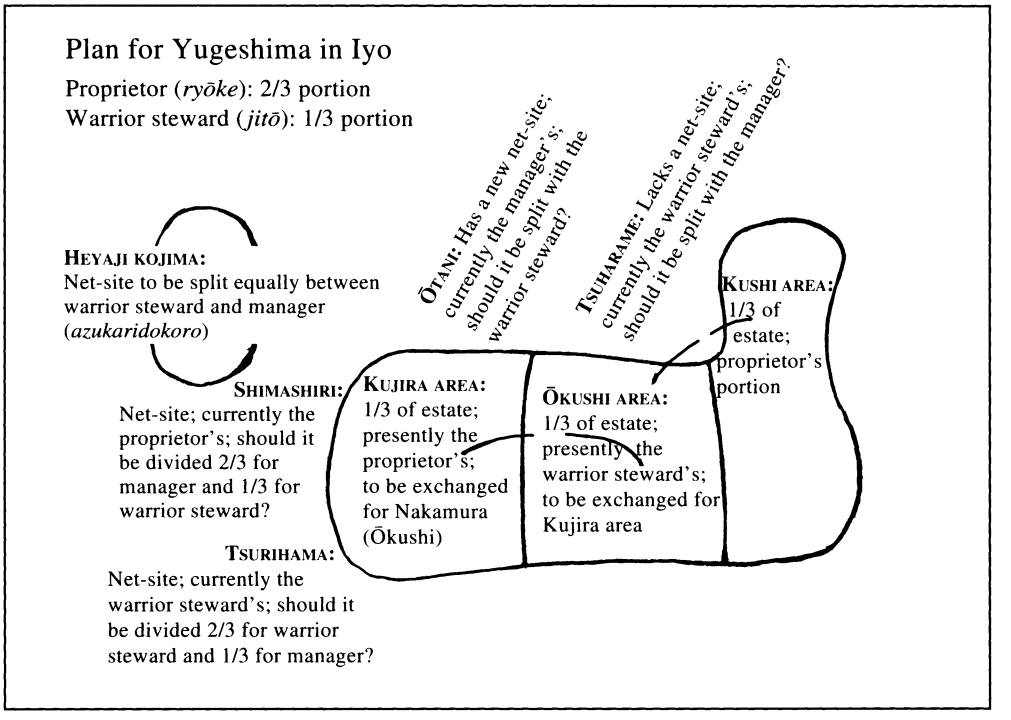

Figure 3. A translation of the contents of the plan depicted in figure 2; adapted from NET 169.

for the actions of the shipmasters, ordered its on-site managers to enforce the payment of dues in arrears.[61]

The Assembly of Eighteen also actively sought to interdict the commercialization of Yugeshima's salt. Beginning in the late thirteenth century, various authorities—shoguns and their wives, temples and shrines, the imperial court, and local elites—all began to assess tolls on cargoes as ways to raise revenue.[62] To contest such actions, especially in the Yodo ports where Yugeshima ships offloaded cargoes, beginning around 1305, Tōji issued repeated orders that tax shipments be labeled with toll-exemption passes they called "umbrella tallies" (*kasafuda* 傘符), denoting their holy and noncommercial purpose.[63] The assertion that the salt bales submitted by Yugeshima were, as one monk put it, "most assuredly not worldly, salable goods," and thus should be immune from tolls was, however, seemingly to little avail.[64]

[61] NET 173:1, 173:2, Shōwa 2 (1313).9.8.

[62] Aida Nirō 相田二郎 noted early on that this function of medieval barriers makes them qualitatively different from those of the ancient and early modern periods. Aida 1943, chapter 1.

[63] NET 148, Kagen 4 (1306).9.11.

[64] *Issai seken baibai suru mono ni arazu* 一切非世間売買物. NET 150, no year.3.5. Salt was used for purification and presented to the gods. Amino 1994, pp. 56–58.

Tōji blamed Yugeshima's shipmasters for increased perceptions of Yugeshima salt as a commercial commodity upon which tolls could be assessed. In 1307, the Assembly warned the administrators (*satanin* 沙汰人) of Yasaka Hōkanji's 八坂法観寺 barrier at the Yodo port of Watanabe 渡辺 to report shipmasters who sought to sell salt.[65] The growing number of toll barriers provided shipmasters with one excuse for the missing dues, but it seems likely that they may also have blamed attacks from "pirates" and the ravages of "storms." As part of an attempt in 1313 to stop "nonpayment by shipmasters," the Assembly ordered that "even in cases of pirates (*kaizoku*), capsizing (*nyūkai* 入海), or other natural disasters, [dues] are to be paid according to precedent."[66] Tōji's strict policies regarding Yugeshima salt likely made local shipmasters willing to join in the attempts by littoral magnates to carve out autonomous commercial-shipping networks.

Initial Stages of Sea-Lordship: Ben no Bō Shōyo and Yugeshima

The local magnates Tōji hired succeeded in reducing the power of Kamakura warrior stewards, but they did not necessarily carry out another of the temple's aims: suppression of shipmasters' entrepreneurial activities. Some of the magnates, coming into the estate from outside, used it as a foothold to extend their own influence over Yugeshima's maritime industries and shipmasters. Gradually they supplanted the estate-proprietor nexus with wider regional-exchange networks, which they sought to bring under their sway. In the process, they carved out a role as sea lords. Amino characterizes this kind of nascent sea lord as a type of professional estate manager who knew the local sea-lanes and possessed the nautical and military skills necessary to protect seaboard holdings from incursions and estate rents from extortion and embezzlement. They sometimes concurrently held positions in several estates, which enabled them to increase connections among estates and so to engage also in commercial activities.[67] Such figures did not always work against the proprietor. As the power of Kyoto and Kamakura waned in the early fourteenth century, proprietors increasingly looked to local maritime magnates to secure control over littoral space and populations and were sometimes willing to make common cause with them to ensure the continued flow of rents. Such give-and-take reflects a degree of flexibility on both sides, but the tensions also bespeak the tenuous nature of central authorities' control over local hires.

One of the earliest and best-documented outside estate officials active on Yugeshima was a certain Ben no Bō Shōyo 弁房承誉. Based on Oyama in Iyo,[68] Shōyo accepted a managerial appointment (*azukaridokoro shiki* 預所職) on Yugeshima from the Assembly of Eighteen around 1313 and soon acquired title

[65] NET 153, Tokuji 2 (1307).10.29.
[66] NET 173:1, Shōwa 2 (1313).9.8.
[67] Amino 1998, p. 236.
[68] The exact location of Oyama is unknown. Part of the problem is that Oyama is written in at least two ways: 小山 and 大山. See NET 170, Shōwa 2 (1313).6; and NET 176, Shōwa 3 (1314).9.

to the warrior steward's portion as well.[69] Although his actions on Yugeshima caused some Tōji officials eventually to label him "[that] infamous pirate, Shōyo,"[70] he consistently emphasized his possession of officially recognized managerial posts.[71] Shōyo took advantage of these managerial positions to appropriate Yugeshima rents along with forwarding them to Tōji, but he was less interested in establishing dominion over one island than in using his posts and titles to integrate Yugeshima into networks of production and exchange across sea-lanes and to link the estate with his Oyama base—as if the channels were thoroughfares instead of boundaries. He also incorporated some Yugeshima shipmasters into his band and burgeoning commercial dealings. Evidence for Shōyo's commercial activities exists mostly in the form of complaints by Yugeshima residents, requiring that we read them against the grain. The information that can be culled from petitions submitted to Tōji by Yugeshima residents suggests, however, that Shōyo, on the one hand, employed new methods of sea tenure and coercion to keep Yugeshima's shippers under his sway, while, on the other, he lured them with ways to avoid higher toll costs in the Yodo estuary by selling salt regionally. He also may have been partly responsible for Yugeshima residents submitting dues in cash and as bills of exchange instead of, as hitherto, in kind. In effect he used at least some of what he appropriated to develop commercial enterprises just as other authorities in this period assessed tolls on shipping to develop ports and related maritime infrastructure.[72]

Shōyo created the foundations for networks linking Yugeshima to his base at Oyama by drawing on the precedent of warrior stewards and forcibly exacting corvée labor to augment his maritime workforce.[73] In 1314 some residents complained, "Lord Ben claimed that it was imperative for numbers of people to be at his home in Oyama in Iyo; he crossed over with from four or five to seven or eight or ten at a time. Then he forced them to work for several days."[74] By 1324, his labor pool and shipping networks established, Shōyo tried to gain control over ships on Yugeshima through purchase and borrowing, a practice that contradicted the existing arrangement in which shipmasters owned and outfitted their own ships. Shōyo's new business practices expanded the scope of Yugeshima's shipping to include ships and sailors from other ports: "Although he did buy ships, he also forcibly borrowed our ships without compensation as well as ones from Bingo and Aki."[75]

[69] NET 179, Shōwa 3 (1314).12.3.
[70] NET 204, Genkō 4? (1324).4.19.
[71] In one letter, possibly seeking to strike a sympathetic chord with his religious sponsors, he does identify himself as "monk" (*sō* 僧). See NET 199, Genkō 4 (1324).1.
[72] For more on this, see Wakita 1999, pp. 30–31.
[73] NET 179, Shōwa 3 (1314).12.3.
[74] NET 176, Shōwa 3 (1314).9.
[75] NET 205, Genkō 4 (1324).9. The ports involved were most likely Onomichi or Innoshima in Bingo and Setoda 瀬戸田 or Mihara 三原 in Aki.

Shōyo captained these ships carrying goods that included Yugeshima dues to regional entrepôt such as the port of Dōgo 道後 in Iyo, where he used his connections to exchange Yugeshima salt for cash at a better rate than at other ports:

> We had no salt to load so he abused us and forced us to give him the dues for next year. . . . For sixty or seventy days, he loaded our goods and shipped them away. . . . Regarding the dues for this year. . . . instead of taking them from your domain to Kyoto, he transported the dues in a borrowed ship to a place called Dōgo in Iyo. At that place, cash costs less salt than it does in Kyoto. . . .[76]

Through such maneuvers Shōyo made a tidy profit. But he also sent dues to Tōji to meet his obligations to the proprietors. In a 1324 letter, Shōyo bragged that, in contrast to others who had been appointed manager of the Yugeshima estate, only he possessed the skills requisite to deliver rents:

> In Shōwa 4 [1315], I was appointed manager (*shomu shiki* 所務職). . . . I correspondingly forwarded the requisite 35 *kanmon* and fulfilled my managerial obligations. To the best of my ability, I left not one grain of the yearly rents and other duties unpaid. Next, Nasu Gorō nyūdō [Rengan] 那須五郎入道 [蓮願]—who sought illicit gain—was named to be a manager (*azukaridokoro shiki*). Over the course of two short years, he had trouble controlling the island and completely failed to deliver the rents, whereas I loyally performed services.[77]

Tōji may have regarded Shōyo's commercial dealings dubiously, but his continued delivery of rents seems to have led the Assembly of Eighteen to overlook his perhaps overzealous exactions and unorthodox practices. As the historian Yamauchi Yuzuru 山内譲 has argued, the Assembly responded to many of the residents' complaints, at least initially, by issuing platitudes like "cherish the people and stop being excessive in your various managerial duties."[78]

Similarly, although Shōyo's new sea-tenurial practices evidently awakened stiff resistance among some Yugeshima residents, others seem to have welcomed his ventures. A 1324 residents' petition claims that "some, high and low, went with him for about a hundred days."[79] It is also possible that the residents were simply trying to hide their own complicity. As noted above, Tōji was already wary of shipmasters selling salt on their own.[80] Residents perhaps sought to play on Tōji's limited knowledge of maritime matters and geography to conceal their

[76] NET 205, Genkō 4 (1324).9.
[77] NET 199, Genkō 4 (1324).1.
[78] NET 177, Shōwa 3 (1314).10.15; Yamauchi 1998, pp. 10–11.
[79] NET 205, Genkō 4 (1324).9. Because there is no extant list of signatories to this petition, it is not clear how many of the residents both signed and also sailed with Shōyo and how many signed out of real distress. Presumably, those residents who owned ships were of higher rank than those who did not, but available information is insufficient to come to any firm conclusion as to the identity of those who went with Shōyo.
[80] See also Matsuoka 1966, p. 83. Tōji did recognize the possibility for duplicity in residents' complaints. In one case, they sent the residents' petition back for a sworn list of signatories. NET 172, Shōwa 2 (1313).7.22. On another occasion, Tōji had Yugeshima residents sent representatives to Kyoto to testify against Shōyo in person. NET 179, Shōwa 3 (1314).12.3.

own entrepreneurial activities with the rhetoric of victimization. They portrayed Shōyo's commercial voyages to Dōgo, for example, as harrowing expeditions compared to the safe, well-known routes to the ports of the capital region. In doing so, they alluded to a common perception among land-based elites that calm seas represented political stability, and rough ones chaos:[81] "Dōgo is a place difficult to reach and a place of limitless evil. Compared to the sea route to the capital, the route to Dōgo is much more dangerous."[82] In this formulation, Dōgo equaled illegality, thus danger; Kyoto represented a legal vector of exchange, thus that route was safe and peaceful. Describing the situation in this way, the residents left unmentioned the fact that Shōyo probably chose Dōgo because it lay near his power-base of Oyama. If this were the case, he presumably could ensure security on the interstitial sea-lanes between Dōgo and Yugeshima. In any case, the trip to Dōgo was shorter than that to the capital and consisted entirely of coastal tramping.

Shōyo's independent, entrepreneurial endeavors may well have extended to actions that Tōji officials interpreted as fencing stolen goods. During Shōyo's tenure, Tōji ordered investigations into Yugeshima's managers and warrior stewards because, as Assembly officials described it, "pirates (*kaizoku*) had stored stolen goods on Yugeshima."[83] Shōyo's connections to other markets and ability to utilize his relationship to Tōji as a cover suggest the likelihood of his complicity.

In addition, Shōyo clearly understood the commoditization of violence. He recognized that members of the Assembly of Eighteen valued him because of his ability to protect Yugeshima. In a report to Tōji in the first month of 1324 he emphasized his indispensability by describing his defense of the island from "outlaws (*akutō*) from Sanuki . . . [who] forced their way onto the island and performed all sorts of evil deeds and committed outrages." In response, he asserted, "Using my own resources, I personally outfitted a force of several hundred. Heedless of our own lives, we gave battle and drove the bandits away, performing loyal service."[84] But the same ability to forge a band out of those willing to engage in nautical violence could also be held against him: When Shōyo rallied Yugeshima residents and other members of his band against representatives of those factions who sought to displace him as manager, his opponents accused him in turn of being a "pirate" (*kaizoku*) and turning Yugeshima into a "haven for pirates."[85] Residents and officials claimed that Shōyo and other "evildoers" "conspired to assemble a force of several hundred people from here and other provinces, and on [1324] 2.20, he pushed his way onto" Yugeshima.[86]

[81] See, for example, Plutschow and Fukuda 1980, p. 28.
[82] NET 205, Genkō 4 (1324).9.
[83] NET 189, undated. NET 188, Bunpo 1? (1317).10, provides possible chronological markers for dating NET 189 to Shōyo's tenure.
[84] NET 199, Genkō 4 (1324).1.
[85] NET 204, Genkō 4 (1324).4.19.
[86] NET 203, Genkō 4 (1324).3.

Shōyo disappears from recorded history after 1324, possibly indicating that he failed to retain the island by force or to acquire patronage sufficient to ensure his hold on it. The presence of Shōyo and other maritime magnates seems to have had a lasting impact, however. After Shōyo's tenure, Tōji permitted Yugeshima residents to continue submitting dues in cash and as bills of exchange instead of in kind.[87] Perhaps it had limited choice, but by acquiescing to the increasingly commercialized nature of Yugeshima's maritime industry, the Assembly of Eighteen also managed to retain a modicum of influence over the island.

Transgenerational Sea Lords and Commerce in the Muromachi Period

In the Muromachi period, nascent sea lords continued to follow Shōyo's precedents, but also began to establish themselves as transgenerational masters of maritime networks. Continuing to amass titles and recognition generally associated with lordship on land, such as the use of surnames, they consolidated their authority at sea and sought to elevate themselves in the eyes of patrons who might otherwise see them as "sea-people." Such developments can be seen in the changing meanings attached to the service commodity of violence as sold by sea lords. Just as the Muromachi bakufu acknowledged "the legitimacy of violence" when framed as "defensive warfare,"[88] sponsors and sea lords alike often identified the use of force with ambiguous euphemisms like "protection" (*keigo* 警固). *Keigo* originally meant a type of violence sponsored and authorized by an authority. But by the mid-fifteenth century, usage had broadened considerably. The term sometimes indicated actions perpetrated by enemies as well as by allies,[89] and, taking on an increasingly mercenary character, was frequently used to mean the extortion of payment at a toll barrier in the name of protection for traveling ships. Local maritime magnates seem to have utilized such maritime toll-barrier-based protection as a way to compete for and extend influence over commercial networks. To this end, some fortified themselves in strongholds overlooking chokepoints where barriers could be established.[90] The impact of such practices can be seen in the prevalence in contemporaneous sources of variants on the term "barrier-erector" (*sekidachi* 関立) as a synonym for pirate. At the same time, however, maritime magnates also took advantage of the multiplicity of meanings toll barriers had for the people of late medieval Japan. Although the widespread erection of barriers is generally seen as having increased protection costs and hindered commerce,[91] tolls and protection rackets were part of the landscape and were often tacitly accepted if perceived as

[87] Yamauchi 1998, p. 31.
[88] Conlan 2004, p. 216.
[89] See, for example, the use of *keigo* as referring to enemy ships in EK 1417, Kanshō 6? (1465).9.3.
[90] Yamauchi 1997, chapter 1.
[91] Tonomura 1992, pp. 98–101; Gay 2001, pp. 164–65; Farris 2006, pp. 146–47, 237.

having legitimate precedent.[92] By using toll barriers to regulate access to shipping routes, sea-lord bands institutionalized such practices as part of their mode of operation. Sustaining this strategy across generations, they asserted a hereditary authority to exercise violence and extort protection in exchange for safe passage.[93] Those who erected barriers where protection might be extorted also could gain a comparative advantage by raising the costs of their competitors.[94]

The case of Yugeshima suggests that the increased scope of commercial trade from the time of Shōyo led to heightened competition for Yugeshima's marine resources and shipping networks, making it necessary for Tōji to grant its estate managers leeway in determining the degree of force required to retain control over the island and its industries. The Assembly of Eighteen initially attempted to stem the growing tide of managerial autonomy by requiring its permission, based on investigation of the circumstances and evidence from estate residents, for any significant act of "protection." Such strictures suggest that local littoral magnates hired as managers were becoming notorious for using violence without Tōji's consent. In 1340, for example, one new manager swore as part of his "service contract" (*ukebumi* 請文) not to act unilaterally in exercising force:

> Regarding protection (*keigo*): If it is a small matter, it falls under my purview. If a large matter that requires tens of troops and large amounts of provisions, I will send an express messenger and a report signed by the residents (*hyakushō*) within three days to report the incident to the temple. At that time, the temple will dispatch an agent to determine the veracity and extent of the incident.[95]

Unfortunately for Tōji, these arrangements proved unworkable. By 1348, the contract for one new manager on Yugeshima permitted immediate action when the matter was too urgent to wait for the messenger to go and return.[96] The commercial character of protection also appears to have increased in the Muromachi period as estate proprietor-sponsors paid for it with foodstuffs and cash as well as *shiki*. Payments made by Yugeshima officials or Tōji for protection were sometimes described as "gifts" (*shukōryō* 酒肴料),[97] a term that can be understood as bribes, wine, or food. By the sixteenth century, some protection payments to sea lords were called "protection rice."[98]

[92] The economic historian Usami Takayuki has argued that often it was not so much the existence of a barrier, but whether it had legitimate precedent that sparked conflict. Usami 1999, pp. 20–21. People might look upon the payment of tolls as a necessary transaction cost or even as an act of religious piety if the tolls were designated to be a source of temple reconstruction funds. Aida 1943, chapter 1; Usami 1999, pp. 29–42.

[93] See a 1483 bequeathing of rights to charge "harbor fees" (*sappo* 札浦) among the Innoshima Murakami 因島村上 family based on an island next to Yugeshima. EK 1519, Bunmei 15 (1483).11.15.

[94] Frederic Lane calls this differential in protection costs "protection rent." Lane 1958, p. 409.

[95] NET 214, Ryakuō 3 (1340).1.23.

[96] NET 230, Jōwa 4 (1348).12.6.

[97] NET 139, Jōwa 5 (1349).12.

[98] EK 1733, Tenbun 12? (1543).9.16.

As they competed to secure their hold on Yugeshima and its commercial networks, sea lords also took advantage of greater demand for their services, seeking links with multiple patrons, including military provincial governors (shugo) and shogun. By the Muromachi period, sea lords associated with Yugeshima and its environs had developed such a powerful reputation as dealers in "protection" that the bakufu sought their services to protect ships engaged in the China tally trade. In the early fifteenth century, the Muromachi bakufu asked Tōji to mediate in hiring the "barrier masters" (*sekikata* 関方) on Yugeshima to guard the China trade fleets.[99] In 1434, "pirates (*kaizoku*) from Iyo . . ." were hired "to provide protection (*keigo*) at the time of the [China trade ships'] return."[100]

The development of multiple channels of patronage enabled Yugeshima sea lords to assert a growing degree of autonomy towards their erstwhile primary sponsor, Tōji. A letter the sea lord Kurushima Murakami Jibunoshin 来島村上治部進 sent Tōji in 1456 regarding the delivery of rents well illustrates this situation.[101] From the 1420s through the 1460s, Tōji officials relied heavily on the Kurushima Murakami band to manage the island and protect rent shipments,[102] and in his letter, Jibunoshin brags of his expert knowledge of the region, emphasizing his ability to mediate with other maritime magnates because of his ties to the Hosokawa 細川, military governors of Sanuki and powerful shogunal officials, whom he referred to as his "lord" (*tonosama* 殿さま).

> Regarding Yugeshima, . . . it is located close to my home, so I am well aware of the situation. . . . Koizumi Kobayakawa 少泉小早河, Yamaji 山路, . . . and both villages of [the island of] Noshima 能島 all hold [some part of Yugeshima]. The Koizumi Kobayakawa and Yamaji are each in the employ of my lord Hosokawa. . . . Regarding Noshima. . . . If you were to order that dues were to be paid, even a little, I would be willing to mediate.[103]

Despite Jibunoshin's reference to the Hosokawa as his lord, Kurushima ties with the Hosokawa were also mercenary, as they had links as well with Kōno Norimichi 河野教通, who at that time was at war with the Hosokawa.[104]

[99] NET 278, no year.8.18.
[100] *Mansai jugō nikki*, Eikyō 6 (1434).1.20.
[101] There has been some debate about the identity of this Murakami. Historians identify three main late medieval Inland Sea houses using the surname Murakami and based on three different islands: Innoshima, Noshima, and Kurushima. Because in 1456 Murakami Jibunoshin provided protection and interceded for Tōji against the Noshima Murakami and because the Innoshima Murakami in this period tended to use quite different titles, Jibunoshin probably belonged to the Kurushima Murakami house. For an example of Innoshima Murakami titles, such as Murakami Bitchū no kami Yoshisuke 村上備中守吉資, see EK 1297, Bun'an 6 (1449).6.14. As both Jibunoshin and Tōji refer to the precedent of a Murakami Uemonnojō 村上右衛門尉 (presumably from the same house as Jibunoshin), who held a post on Yugeshima in 1420, we can assume that the Kurushima Murakami exercised some authority over Yugeshima from 1420. NET 284, Ōei 27 (1420).8.1; 287:9, Kanshō 2 (1456).9.21.
[102] NET 284, Ōei 27 (1420).8.1.
[103] NET 285, Kōshō 2? (1456).5.8. Koizumi Kobayakawa is usually written 小泉小早川.
[104] In EK 1304, Hōtoku 3? (1451).2.23, Kōno Norimichi names the Kurushima as an ally. In NET 285, Kōshō 2? (1456).5.8, Jibunoshin discusses Norimichi as if they were on the same side.

A 1462 explanation by a Tōji official identifying those the Kurushima were supposed to protect Yugeshima from provides further evidence of how sea lords capitalized on affiliations with multiple patrons to assert claims to sea-based dominion: "Those engaging in extortion (*ōryō* 押領) on Yugeshima [include] the Koizumi Kobayakawa (members of the shogunal guard, *hōkōshū* 奉公衆), Noshima (pirates, *kaizoku*), and Yamaji (the same, [pirates]). Of these three extorting gangs, the Koizumi are the most nefarious."[105] Parts of the extensive Kobayakawa family had held some degree of proprietary title to Yugeshima since the 1370s at the latest,[106] and, as indicated in Jibunoshin's 1456 letter, could call at times upon Hosokawa patronage to protect their holdings. The 1462 Tōji letter identifying them as members of the shogunal guard suggests that the Koizumi had succeeded in using that status to exert a degree of control over Yugeshima greater than that of other local maritime magnates, whom Tōji described as no more than "pirates."

For sea lords like the Kurushima Murakami and Koizumi Kobayakawa, links with multiple patrons might be adduced to counter assertions that they were engaging in piracy. In his 1456 letter Jibunoshin noted that he was seeking Tōji's sanction for his "mediating role" because "previously, we have undertaken these mediating roles, and it has seemed to others that we are arrogating the profit for ourselves, not dealing with the profits as dues."[107] At the same time they, too, employed the rhetoric of piracy against their competitors. In 1464, Kurushima Murakami Zushonosuke 来島村上図書助 submitted a report in which he admitted that his efforts to suppress pirate incursions on Yugeshima had failed (or perhaps he wished to give Tōji that impression to hide his own occupation of the island). This letter is also notable for its depiction of sea-lord techniques for establishing sway over maritime networks. It shows that sea lords engaged in conflicts to establish domains not on one island, but over maritime networks connecting several contiguous islands. Some used estate titles to bolster their claims, as Shōyo had, while still others made use of fortifications and toll barriers.

> The clerk (*kumon* 公文) of [the nearby island of] Iwagijima 岩城島 allied himself with barrier-erector pirates. They fortified themselves in Iwagijima fort, but this month, he and all around him were killed by pirates (*kaizoku*) who then holed up in the fort. . . . This island [of Yugeshima] especially has constantly been a target of pirate incursions. In the past two or three years, the residents have fled, and the dues from this place have not been delivered.[108]

The fate of Yugeshima after the 1460s is unclear, but the next extant reference to it, more than a century later, when it appears as a holding of the Kurushima Murakami,[109] indicates that the latter did eventually wrest control of the island

[105] NET 291:3, Kanshō 3 (1462).5.17.
[106] NET 266, Ōan 4 (1371).7.19.
[107] NET 285, Kōshō 2? (1456).5.8.
[108] NET 297, Kanshō 5? (1464).5.26.
[109] EK 2333, Tenshō 10? (1582).9.1.

from their competitors. In the process Tōji's hold on the island also came to an end.

Sea-Lord Commerce

Sea lords involved with Yugeshima in the Muromachi period did more than use violence to expand their power. They also actively administered and participated in regional trade networks. Archaeological excavations of trade pottery suggest that sea-lord commercial and protection operations shifted shipping lanes away from the Shikoku mainland to their own chokepoint bases.[110] Although the fifteenth-century records of Tōji convey an image of constant struggle, the various sea lords active on Yugeshima—the Yamaji, Koizumi Kobayakawa, Noshima Murakami, Kurushima Murakami—seem to have been developing it into a major commercial shipping center. Between the first month of 1445 and the first month of 1446, in the midst of turmoil over the island's management, twenty-six ships claiming Yugeshima registry are recorded as having passed through the northern barrier of Hyōgo carrying shipments of salt and other products to the capital as commercial goods.

An extant log, kept by officials from Tōdaiji 東大寺, the temple that regulated access to Hyōgo through its northern toll barrier, provides details about all the ships that passed through that barrier in the year from 1445.1 to 1446.1. This log, *Hyōgo kitazeki irifune nōchō* 兵庫北関入舩納帳 (Hyōgo Northern Toll Barrier Shipping Register) presents the reader with a snapshot of late medieval, commercial Inland Sea shipping. In over 1,900 entries, it records the arrival in Hyōgo port of ships from 106 ports of registry, together with the shipmasters, cargoes, barrier fees, and designated commercial agents (*toi* 問) for each ship. Ships ranged in size from small craft carrying a few tens of koku to huge dromonds capable of carrying upwards of 1,000 koku.[111] Scholars agree that two types of networks can be seen in the Hyōgo register: smaller, intraregional shipping, and larger, transregional shipping.[112]

Yugeshima shipmasters participated in both networks. The same names appear repeatedly as shipmasters carrying similar amounts of cargo, indicating that some made repeated runs over the course of the year.[113] The ships carried a total of 3,713 koku of salt to Hyōgo, ten times the largest estate shipment to Tōji.[114]

[110] Shibata 2005, pp. 251–73.

[111] *Hyōgo kitazeki irifune nōchō*. It should be noted that scholars have argued that 1445 was a slow year. Bakufu-sanctioned violence against the Akamatsu 赤松 of Harima had thrown the surrounding provinces into chaos. Imatani 1981, p. 282. In addition, ships that passed through the southern barrier operated by Kōfukuji 興福寺 might not have passed through the northern one. Mutō 1981, p. 237.

[112] Mutō 1981, pp. 246–54.

[113] For example, the shipmaster Hyōetarō 兵衛太郎 captained a ship five times through the Hyōgo barrier carrying between 160 and 180 koku each time. Tarōemon 太郎衛門 transported seven shipments of between 150 and 170 koku. *Hyōgo kitazeki irifune nōchō*; Yamauchi 1998, p. 36.

[114] At its height as an estate, Yugeshima sent only a few hundred koku of salt to Tōji in annual dues. Yamauchi 1998, pp. 31–32.

Not all of this salt came from Yugeshima itself. Rather, the Yugeshima shippers seem to have acquired much of it via their participation in the intraregional carrying trade.

It appears that Yugeshima shippers first carried salt from their home base to a port, probably Onomichi, in Bingo, where they sold it for cash. At the time Onomichi was one of the largest and busiest ports in the region.[115] Yugeshima shippers then transported loads of salt that they obtained at Onomichi to Hyōgo. The log's authors referred to this cargo as "Bingo salt," alluding to the province in which Onomichi was located. Other ships registered on islands surrounding Yugeshima also carried products identified as being from Bingo.[116] Such evidence suggests that various producing centers transported salt to Onomichi to be exchanged for cash, whereupon shippers such as Yugeshima's carried the amalgamated bundles of salt to the capital.

Information from the log also points to Yugeshima shippers having developed commercial links to other estates and ports in the region. It records a Yugeshima shipmaster named Shirōzaemon 四郎左衛門 as having captained ships that went through Hyōgo in 1445, and a "Shirōzaemon of Yugeshima" also appears in a record from Ōta 太田 estate in Bingo captaining a ship of similar size from Onomichi to Sakai 堺 in the eleventh month of 1444.[117] If it is the same person, Shirōzaemon presumably undertook to ship goods for Ōta estate as well as from Yugeshima. Ōta estate maintained a warehouse at Onomichi and sometimes hired shipmasters from the surrounding region to ship dues to its proprietor, the temple Kongōbuji 金剛峰寺. Yugeshima shippers' experience with the protection business may well have made them attractive to estate proprietors and residents as commercial carriers.

Documents pertaining to Shiwaku offer further evidence of the expansion of sea-lord commerce in the Inland Sea in this period. Shiwaku had already developed as a regional market by the late Heian period. The twelfth-century poet-monk Saigyō 西行 (1118–1190) described merchants from Kyoto—not estate-proprietor agents—island-hopping between Shiwaku and nearby Manabe 真鍋 in Bitchū province: "There is an island called Manabe. Merchants from Kyoto travel there heavily laden with goods, ready to deal. They also cross to Shiwaku, where I have heard they engage in commerce as well."[118] In the Hyōgo log of 1445–1446, Shiwaku is the fifteenth most often named port of registry

[115] As early as 1319, Onomichi was reportedly a port town of one thousand buildings, including religious structures and homes, capable of handling several tens of large ships at once. *Kongōbuji monjo* 17, Gen'ō 2 (1319).8.

[116] These islands included Hakatajima 伯方島, Iwagijima, Innoshima, and Tajima 田島.

[117] See the entry for 1444 (Bun'an 1).4.15 in *Bingo Ōta no shō nengu hikitsuke* 備後太田荘年貢引付, in *Kongōbuji monjo* 164; Yamauchi 1998, pp. 32–33. Yamauchi has argued that Onomichi was the site of transshipment because the inclusion of soybeans on one Yugeshima ship in the Hyōgo log (11.26 entry) suggests that the cargo had been transshipped from Onomichi. Yugeshima did not grow soybeans, but Ōta estate produced them in large quantities. Yamauchi 1998, p. 32.

[118] Quoted from *Sankashū* 山家集 in *Kasaoka-shi shi*, p. 435. Saigyō traveled to Shikoku in 1168, and this anecdote may date from that trip.

(out of 106), having sent thirty-seven ships through the barrier in that year. The wide range of goods the ships carried—salt, rice, wheat, barley, soybeans, and perilla for the Ōyamazaki 大山崎 lamp-oil merchants—suggests that Shiwaku was a major transshipment market where smaller intraregional carriers delivered goods to be transported longer distances by Shiwaku shippers. Shiwaku's status as an important entrepôt can also be deduced from the fact that ships registered at other ports, like Tsurajima 連島, carried goods labeled with the shorthand term "Shiwaku," similar to the label "Bingo" on salt carried by Yugeshima shippers.[119] Lying astride the central shipping lanes connecting Osaka bay with the Inland Sea basins leading to Itsukushima 厳島 and the straits of Shimonoseki, Shiwaku was also well situated in regard to overseas trade.

Shiwaku administrators used patronage by powerful figures in the Muromachi bakufu to help develop the island commercially. In particular, Shiwaku shippers often received toll-exemption passes (*kasho* 過所) as a result of sponsorship from the Hosokawa. The Hyōgo log records eleven Shiwaku ships with passes for Yodo barriers.[120] The perceived value of such passes for Inland Sea shipping merchants can be seen in records of shipping merchants misrepresenting their port of registry in order to secure toll exemptions, sometimes with the possible complicity of sea-lord overseers.[121] The ability of sea lords to secure such passes must have helped to alleviate shipping merchants' concerns about sea-lord dominion. Although examples of falsifying registries cannot be found in sources for Shiwaku, local administrators and sea lords based on Shiwaku worked hard to secure and retain such passes. In 1478, for example, after the Muromachi bakufu canceled Shiwaku shippers' rights to a toll-exemption pass for Hyōgo's southern barrier, a "local administrator" (*zasshō* 雑掌) of Shiwaku named "Dōkō Genzaemon 道光源左衛門 launched a suit about the exemption passes [to Hosokawa sponsors] . . . and with allies from [Shiwaku's] various harbors traveled up to the Hosokawa in Kyoto, bringing various folded-paper orders [i.e., previous *kasho*] and other documents and gifts (*shukōryō*)."[122] After this cancellation of Shiwaku's passes in 1478, Shiwaku shippers or administrators may even have participated in violent retaliation led by the deputy military governor for Sanuki in which an attempt was made to "seize ten westbound ships."[123]

[119] For example, the *Hyōgo kitazeki irifune nōchō* entry for 1445.1.6 records a ship registered to the port of Tsurajima passing the Hyōgo barrier carrying "200 koku of Shiwaku"; which particular product the term refers to is not clear.

[120] See *Hyōgo kitazeki irifune nōchō* entries for 1445.11.2 and 12.19.

[121] The possible complicity of sea-lord overseers in the falsification of port-registry information can be seen in a 1423 Muromachi bakufu edict canceling a *kasho* issued to the Kobayakawa of Setoda (a port near Yugeshima) only four months after issuing it: "large numbers of merchant ships from Setoda and other places rushed to pass through [the toll barrier], calling themselves Setoda ships." *Setoda-chō shi*, doc. 14, Ōei 30 (1423).3.17; for the original *kasho*, see *Setoda-chō shi*, doc. 13, Ōei 29 (1422).12.2.

[122] *Tamon'in nikki*, vol. 1, Bunmei 10 (1478).2.27.

[123] All we know is that upon cancellation of the pass, "foot soldiers (*ashigaru* 足軽) of the Yasutomi 保富 [deputy shugo of Sanuki] and others plotted to seize ten westbound ships." *Tamon'in nikki*, vol. 1, Bunmei 10 (1478).2.27.

It was under the unitary administration of the Noshima Murakami sea-lord family, however, that the former estate of Shiwaku developed into the hub of a mature maritime network. An exploration of their activities thus will enable us to explore the fusion of commerce and violence in the development of protection and shipping operations overseen by a single, dynastic sea-lord family.

Unitary Sea-Lord Control of Commerce: The Noshima Murakami and Shiwaku

The Noshima Murakami first appear in records related to Shiwaku in the mid-fifteenth century and began to influence the island's shipping patterns at the latest in 1434. In the summer of that year, a shogunal official wrote to the Kobayakawa, "we would be grateful for your help with the Shiwaku matter as we will be leaving from Shiwaku in Sanuki soon, and the Noshima barrier-erector pirates (*seki-dachi*) . . . have been perpetrating illicit acts."[124] Such language suggests that the Noshima were attempting to establish toll barriers without official sanction in the region around Shiwaku. Soon after, the Noshima began to acquire Hosokawa patronage for their protection practices and efforts to acquire title to littoral estates like Yugeshima. A split in the Kōno house over the inheritance of the military governor (shugo) title for Iyo province sparked a conflict lasting from the 1440s through the 1470s that provided opportunities for the Noshima and other sea lords to develop ties with sponsors—including the Hosokawa—needing their naval services to secure parts of Iyo.[125]

Unfortunately, from that point the record is blank until sometime in the 1520s, when the Hosokawa officially recognized Noshima control over Shiwaku by confirming their possession of the "administrator post (*daikan shiki* 代官職) for the Sanuki provincial holding (*ryōsho* 料所) of Shiwaku."[126] Over the next sixty years the Noshima Murakami transformed the former estate and shipping center of Shiwaku into a hub of commercial shipping and protection networks extending across the Seto Inland Sea.

At their height in the early 1580s, the Noshima controlled a vast maritime domain—comprising perhaps one thousand sailors, shipping merchants, and fighters—built on networks connecting forts at chokepoints like their home base of Noshima (a tiny island less than a kilometer in circumference)—to ports and barriers like Shiwaku and Kaminoseki 上関 and fishing villages and harbors such as the Kutsuna 忽那 islands.[127] Although they kept their headquarters on Noshima,

[124] "Ashikaga shōgun gonaisho narabi ni hōsho dome" 足利将軍御内書併奉書留, Eikyō 6? (1434).7.4, quoted in Hashizume 2000, p. 207.

[125] For background on the conflict involving the Kōno, see *Ehime-ken shi*, pp. 499–512. EK 1417 Kanshō 6? (1465).9.3 describes a naval advance by the Noshima into the Kutsuna archipelago against Kōno Norimichi.

[126] EK 1663, no year.4.13. Without a year, the dating of this document is difficult, but the author, Hosokawa Takakuni 細川高国 (1484–1531) was shugo of Sanuki 1508–1531 and deputy shogun (*kanrei* 管領) 1521–1531; the document most likely dates from the latter period.

[127] Calculating numbers is, of course, tricky, and it is only possible to make a rough estimate. In 1600, a Tokugawa survey recognized 650 "mariners" (*funakata* 船方) as resident on Shiwaku, and it is plausible to assume a similar population under the Noshima. *Shiwaku ninmyō kyōyū monjo*

the Noshima Murakami based many of their commercial and protection enterprises on Shiwaku.

The Noshima developed the port of Shiwaku into a stopover point, a place for travelers to take lodgings, change ships, wait for favorable winds (the sail design of Japanese ships of the time prevented tacking against the wind), and to arrange for "pirate" protection if they had not already done so. In the winter of 1577–1578, for example, Jesuits en route to Kyushu

> arrived in Shiwaku, the only port that had ships. But having arrived, we ran into some difficulties. As it was near New Year's, everyone was busy with rituals. In addition, it was bitterly cold, and there were countless reports of pirates haunting the sea-lanes. We knew the owner of an inn for those going to and from the capital, and so he arranged lodging for us and twelve or thirteen rowers of a small ship to await the arrival of a minion of the pirate chieftain in eight days.[128]

As the Jesuit account illustrates, by the latter half of the sixteenth century, the Noshima had expanded the protection practices built up by preceding generations of sea lords. Maintaining an array of military equipment at ports like Shiwaku, they commanded fleets consisting of large dreadnoughts (*atakebune* 安宅船) for sieges, blockades, battles, and commerce-raiding together with smaller, faster "barrier ships" (*sekibune* 関船).[129] Weaponry included firearms and grenades (*hōrokubiya* 焙烙火矢) as well as swords, pole-arms, and bows and arrows. As Shiwaku was located at the eastern border of what the Noshima considered their domain, they used the island as a base from which to deploy this arsenal in order to prevent other ships from extorting protection within their territory, to supply mercenary forces, and to provide protection for sponsors.

In the summer of 1550, for example, one Genzō 源三 of Shiwaku sailed as "captain" (*funabito* 船人) on a ship carrying three hundred passengers. One passenger, a monk named Bairin Shuryū 梅霖守竜, recorded in his travelogue that another vessel, which Bairin labeled a "pirate ship" (*zokusen* 賊船), approached theirs. "They engaged us in some negotiations [probably regarding a toll], and then shot arrows at us. Our crew evaded and mocked their arrows, firing guns that wounded many on the pirate ship, and they soon ran away. . . . We came ashore at Shiwaku in Sanuki, where we procured lodgings."[130]

The extensive warfare of the mid- to late sixteenth century made it possible for the Noshima to profit alike from providing mercenary naval services and from protecting ships endangered by such fighting. They carried valuable passengers and cargoes for a variety of sponsors. In 1546, for example, while sea lords—including the Noshima Murakami—fought a proxy war in the seas con-

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6, Keichō 5 (1600).9.28.The extensive paper trail from Hideyoshi's war in Korea also provides useful data as Hideyoshi required daimyo to supply on average five samurai/sailors, etc., per 100 koku of holdings. As the Noshima were assigned a *kokudaka* of 18,000 (Yamauchi 2005, pp. 162–74), we might surmise that the Noshima could provide a support force of nine hundred men. For numbers in the Korean campaign, see Miki 1966; Elisonas 1991b, pp. 271–72.

[128] *Iezusukai Nihon hōkokushū*, vol. 5, p. 4, 1578.9.30.

[129] For more on these ships, see Ishii 1983, pp. 60–67.

[130] *Bairin Shuryū Suō gekō nikki*, p. 467.

necting Iyo and Suō on behalf of two competing sponsors, Ōuchi Yoshitaka 大内義隆 and Kōno Michinao 河野通直,[131] the Daitokuji 大徳寺 branch temple Hōsenji 宝泉寺 of Suō province entrusted Shiwaku shippers (under Noshima protection) with the transport of cash dues and monk passengers through that same region.[132] In 1569 and 1570, at the same time that the Noshima were busy offering their services as naval mercenaries to both Mōri Motonari 毛利元就 (1497–1571) and Ōtomo Sōrin 大友宗麟 (1530–1587),[133] Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiaki 足利義昭 (1537–1597) and Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534–1582) entrusted a Shiwaku shipper with the safety of an envoy sent to broker a peace deal between Motonari and Sōrin.[134]

The Noshima extended their protection operations in two notable directions, both of which bring to mind similar strategies employed by land-based daimyo of the time. First, the Noshima worked to tighten their control over their subordinates. By interceding to prevent quarrels among shippers, for example, the Noshima Murakami ensured that Shiwaku shippers directed their violence where the Noshima wanted, not internally. In a 1570 letter, Noshima Murakami Takeyoshi 能島村上武吉 admonished "shippers of Shiwaku" that "[t]here should be no dispute regarding the passenger service" of a sponsor's agent to the port of Sakai.[135] The Noshima also issued regulations limiting the autonomy of individual shipmasters, as with the code they promulgated in 1582 for the newly conquered Kutsuna archipelago, in which they prohibited the operation of "protection ships" (*keigosen* 警固船) unsanctioned by them and "commoners (*hyakushō*) riding along with retainers."[136]

Second, in addition to preying on each other's ships and competing militarily, the Noshima and their peers moved to carve out and mutually recognize territorial spheres of authority. Song Hui Gyong 宋希璟, Korean ambassador to Japan in 1420, who passed through the Kamagari 蒲刈 region of the Inland Sea, described an early example of such an arrangement:

> In this region, there are pirates of the east and west. If a ship coming from the east has an eastern pirate on board, then the western pirates will not harm it. If a ship coming from the west has a western pirate on board, then the eastern pirates will not harm it.[137]

[131] EK 1752, Tenbun 15 (1546).3.7. The Noshima switched sides from the Kōno to the Ōuchi in 1542 and probably continued to participate in campaigns. EK 1720, Tenbun 11? (1542).4.6; EK 1760, Tenbun 16? (1547).4.25.

[132] *Daitokuji monjo* 2298, Tenbun 15 (1546).2.14.

[133] EK 1838, Eiroku 4? (1561).11.9; EK 2070, Eiroku 12? (1569).6.12; EK 2071, Eiroku 12? (1569).6.13; EK 2073, Eiroku 12? (1569).6.13; EK 2087, Eiroku 13? (1570).2.13.

[134] Okuno 1969, vol. 2, pp. 854–55, supplementary doc. 21, Eiroku 12? (1569).10.26. It is also possible that Nobunaga and Yoshiaki knew that the Noshima had helped mediate a cease-fire between the Ōtomo and Mōri on behalf of the Ashikaga in 1563. EK 1903, Eiroku 6? (1563).3.22; EK 1904, Eiroku 6? (1563).3.22.

[135] EK 2086, Genki 1? (1570).6.15.

[136] EK 2302, Tenshō 10 (1582).4.25. For parallels in the efforts of Sengoku daimyo to limit unauthorized violence in their domains, see Katsumata 1981, pp. 104–11.

[137] *Nosongdang Ilbon haegnok*, pp. 154, 224. Song consistently refers to the Inland Sea pirates as *kaizoku* (*haejeok* in Korean).

The Noshima Murakami may have secured similar arrangements with other Inland Sea bands, including the nearby Kurushima Murakami, with whom they had marriage alliances in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[138]

Instead of seeking profit by levying tolls, the Noshima also began to try to attract patrons and traffic by eliminating or at least reducing tolls within their jurisdiction and offering safe passage on the sea-lanes they controlled. In 1570, for example, their sponsor Ōtomo Sōrin wrote to thank the Noshima Murakami for their "provision of protection for the transport of people to Sakai" and for "an exemption from the tolls at Shiwaku harbor."[139] Similar to the free-market policies (*rakuichi rakuza* 楽市楽座) that land-based daimyo implemented to eliminate guilds, barriers, and other commercial restrictions,[140] the Noshima in effect stimulated commerce by streamlining protection costs, while simultaneously enhancing the attractiveness of cooperating with their operation.

Institutionalization of their protection business further contributed to these developments. On sea and land during the sixteenth century, both parties selling and buying protection sometimes found it convenient to regularize payments into annual "gifts" disbursed to the protection-bestowing organization. One Jesuit's description of the Noshima lord, Murakami Takeyoshi, as "exceedingly powerful . . . all are afraid of him and so every year send him tribute,"[141] suggests that the Noshima Murakami may have established a similar system. In return for such payments, protected parties would receive "toll-exemption passes" (*kasho*).[142] In developing their own arrangement of this sort, the Noshima would have been able to draw on experience administering Yugeshima (Tōji's umbrella tallies) as well as Shiwaku (Muromachi bakufu passes).

Noshima toll-exemption passes took the form of flags with their family crest emblazoned in the middle—what the Noshima called "crest pennants" (*monmaku* 紋幕)[143]—and the Noshima issued them from the 1560s through the 1580s (see figure 4). The Noshima flag-pass system operated as the reverse of standard barrier practice. No longer did the Noshima intercept ships to charge protection money. Instead, people from daimyo to merchants requested the passes in advance. Recipients would fly the flags as a type of toll-exemption pass to make it clear to any ship that the bearer sailed under the paid protection of the Noshima Murakami and was immune from any other toll barrier or piratical interference in what the Noshima considered their domain.[144] In 1585, for example, Noshima

[138] EK 1645, Daiei 4 (1524).8.14.

[139] EK 2087, Eiroku 13? (1570).2.13. The Ōtomo had connections to *wakō* trading and raiding networks and close relations with Portuguese merchants. They seem to have been heavily involved in the trade in saltpeter, an important ingredient in gunpowder. Elisonas 1991b, p. 260; Elisonas 1991a, pp. 316–18; Kishida 2001, pp. 4–5.

[140] For a good discussion of *rakuichi rakuza*, see Sasaki 1981, pp. 125–48. On the positive effects of the consolidation of daimyo domains on commercial exchange, see Farris 2006, pp. 235–42.

[141] *Iezusukai Nihon hōkokushū*, vol. 7, pp. 140–41.

[142] Kitai 1987, pp. 4–5.

[143] "Murakami Motoyoshi gechijō," quoted in Kishida 2007, p. 198.

[144] For more on the sea-tenure implications of this flag, see Shapinsky 2007, pp. 232–34. Magnates in other parts of the country also used flag passes. For example, seafarers located in the

Figure 4. Noshima Murakami flag pass. This flag pass is held by Yamaguchi-ken Monjokan 山口県文書館 and is reproduced with the Monjokan's permission. The flag is hemp, 52.6 cm × 42.3 cm. The Murakami crest is painted in the center in black ink. To the right is the name of the recipient (a priest of Itsukushima in Aki) and to the left, the date of issue, Tenshō 9 (1581).4.28, followed by the signature of the issuer, Noshima Murakami Takeyoshi.

Murakami Motoyoshi 能島村上元吉 sent a pass to Sakō Tōtarō 佐甲藤太郎 of Akamagaseki 赤間関 in western Honshu. The accompanying letter stated: "Regarding the flag pass, we send it according to your petition. It is to be used to ensure that nothing untoward occurs as you travel to and fro on the seas."[145] The operational reach of the flag passes was limited, however, to the networks under Noshima administration. As a Jesuit account of negotiations for a "crest-pennant" relates, after leaving Noshima Takeyoshi's domain, "there were pirates who did not recognize his sway."[146] By the last quarter of the sixteenth century, land-

Lake Biwa port of Katata used them in their "administration of their domain of forty-nine harbors" to mark their protection of shipping. *Honpukuji atogaki* 本福寺跡書; quoted in Sakurai 1994, p. 129. There are no known direct links between the Noshima Murakami and Katata. Possible precedents for the Noshima flag pass include the symbolism of poles as markers for maritime territory in the estate system (Hotate 1981, pp. 26–28) and a 1272 flag pass issued by Hōjō Tokimune 北条時宗 for a Tagarasunoura ship. *Hata monjo* 19, Bun'ei 19 (1272).2, p. 306.

[145] "Murakami Motoyoshi gechijō," Tenshō 13 (1583).3.10, quoted in Kishida 2001, p. 198.

[146] *Iezusukai Nihon hōkokushū*, vol. 7, p. 141.

based figures' unfamiliarity with such maritime domainal boundaries seems to have led some elite travelers to rely entirely on the shipmasters to navigate the toll barriers,[147] suggesting that the buying and selling of protection had become routinized, an accepted part of any sea voyage.

The geographical and occupational distribution of the recipients further indicates the widespread acceptance of the Noshima's flag passes. Although the actual number of flag passes the Noshima issued is unknown, two actual flags and some record of six other flag-pass transactions survive. The Noshima bestowed passes upon other maritime lords, such as the Matsura of northwest Kyushu;[148] harbor officials from Akamagaseki and the northern Kyushu port of Imazu 今津; a representative of the important religious and commercial center of Itsukushima; shipping organizations from Kii province; and travelers, such as Jesuits, seeking safe passage.[149] Under the Noshima, then, Shiwaku went from being a recipient of toll-exemption privileges issued by central authorities to being itself an arbiter of toll exemptions on the seas. On the sea-lanes within the Noshima domain, for the cost of the flag pass, commercial shippers had to deal with only one jurisdictional interest—that of the Noshima.

All of the above strategies figured in the development of ties between the Noshima and Sengoku daimyo. As mercenaries, the Noshima shifted patrons regularly,[150] making them less than trustworthy in the eyes of potential patrons. Daimyo were nevertheless drawn to the services they offered and seem to have regarded them as desirable partners. In 1540, for example, the Noshima Murakami and other sea lords received sponsorship overtures from the powerful western daimyo Ōuchi Yoshitaka.[151] At the time the Noshima were part of a coalition of sea lords fighting against Yoshitaka on behalf of the Kōno, a daimyo based in Iyo, but Yoshitaka sought a connection with them so as to develop and ensure security for the shipping networks of Hiroshima bay centered on the important religious and commercial center of Itsukushima.[152] In exchange for switching to Ōuchi sponsorship, Noshima Murakami Takashige 能島村上隆重 (as well as the Imaoka 今岡 band) won the right to intercept and "examine at Itsukushima and other inlets and bays" trading vessels and to extract "protection money assessed according to a ship's lading (*dabetsuryō* 駄別料) of goods related to trade with the continent (*karani* 唐荷)."[153] While the Ōuchi must have seen

[147] A scion of a powerful Kyushu daimyo house, Shimazu Iehisa 島津家久, recorded in his diary that he encountered toll barriers off the coast of Hibinoseki 日比の関 in Bizen, Naoshima 直島 in Sanuki, and Ushimado 牛窓 in Bizen. In each instance, he noted, it was the responsibility of the shipmaster to handle such affairs. *Chūsho Iehisa-kō gojōkyō nikki*, p. 290.

[148] "Matsura Takanobu shojō an," no year.9.26; quoted in Kishida 2001, p. 348.

[149] See Takahashi 1999; Takahashi 2000.

[150] Between 1541 and 1582, the Noshima served at various times the Ōuchi, Kōno, Ōtomo, Mōri, Miyoshi 三好, and Amako 尼子; they also negotiated with Oda Nobunaga.

[151] EK 1713, Tenbun 10? (1541).7.28.

[152] For more on the networks centered on Itsukushima, see Matsuoka 1952; Suzuki 2000, pp. 82–106.

[153] EK 1730, Tenbun 11? (1542).5.21.

advantages in enrolling the Noshima and their protection services, the Noshima gained sanctioned access to the port of Itsukushima and lucrative overseas trade. The Noshima did not simply stop overseas trading ships at Itsukushima and other sites, but directed them to make anchorage at Itsukushima.[154] In so doing they helped to transform that island into a nexus of archipelagic and overseas commercial networks where silks, damasks, and other luxuries from the China trade were available for purchase.[155]

The Noshima also gained backing against rivals. When merchants from the port of Sakai (chief port for the China trade after the Ōnin conflicts of the 1460s) brought a suit to Yoshitaka against the Noshima, Yoshitaka found for the latter, giving them the right to charge protection money based on the lading of all China trade ships except those from the southern Kyushu provinces of Hyūga and Satsuma (not coincidentally, Sakai merchants were in league with Yoshitaka's rival, the Hosokawa).[156] The Sakai merchants thereupon adopted another strategy. They handed 10,000 *hiki* 疋 of copper coins to the Ōuchi vassal Sue Harukata 陶晴賢 (1521–1555) as part of their backing for his 1551 coup d'état against Yoshitaka.[157] In return Harukata abrogated Noshima toll-taking rights.[158] Soon after, the Noshima resorted to assertive measures in concert with other aggrieved bands, dispatching vessels to intercept Sakai shipping. A Sue intermediary for the Sakai merchants reported that "pirate ships (*zokusen*) are on the increase, and those from Muro 室 and Shiwaku repeatedly have been causing unforeseen incidents that create difficulties (*meiwaku* 迷惑) for the Kyoto and Sakai merchants."[159]

A similar pattern of patrons overlooking sea-lord mercenarism to maximize the commercial benefits that accrued from sea-lord businesses can be seen in late sixteenth-century relations between the Noshima and the Mōri and between the Noshima and Oda Nobunaga. Despite the fact that in 1569 and 1570 the Noshima Murakami served a Mōri enemy, namely, the Ōtomo,[160] later in the 1570s Mōri Terumoto 毛利輝元 (1553–1625) seems to have allowed the Noshima to administer part of the important Mōri port of Akamagaseki by overseeing the protection activities of the Mōri Akamagaseki magistrate, the Sakō.[161] Thus, in

[154] This is suggested by Sue Harukata's 陶晴賢 specific notation of Itsukushima in the order abrogating this protection business after he overthrew Ōuchi Yoshitaka in 1551: "What the Sakai merchants call lading tax (*dabetsuryō*) has in recent years been collected for Murakami. . . . Takashige around Itsukushima in Aki." EK 1770, Tenbun 21? (1552).4.20. In an earlier edict directed at Itsukushima, Harukata went on to interdict "the stopping of passing shipping vessels and forcing them to come to Itsukushima to lay anchor." *Daiganji monjo* 65, Tenbun 21? (1552).2.28.

[155] Suzuki 2000, pp. 86, 89.

[156] EK 1730, Tenbun 11? (1542).5.21. The provinces of Hyūga and Satsuma, the home of the Shimazu family, were traditional tolling preserves of Sakai merchants. For Sakai, the Hosokawa, and the Miyoshi, see Morris 1977, pp. 145–58. For good accounts of the competition between the Ōuchi and Hosokawa in the China trade, see Hashimoto 2005, chapter 5.

[157] *Daiganji monjo* 68, Tenbun 21? (1552).8.26.

[158] EK 1770, Tenbun 21? (1552).4.20.

[159] *Daiganji monjo* 68, Tenbun 21? (1552).8.26.

[160] EK 2088, Eiroku 13? (1570).2.22; EK 2086 Genki 1? (1570).6.15.

[161] Some historians have considered not just Hakata but also Akamagaseki to have been a major "gateway" to Japan. Suda 2004.

1574, Noshima Murakami Takemitsu 能島村上武満 confirmed the inheritance and succession of Sakō Tōtarō as magistrate for the port, stating, "Regarding the investigation and passage [of ships] at this toll barrier, you have inherited this [function] from Sakō Saemonnojō 佐甲左衛門尉."[162] For the Noshima, oversight of the Sakō should have proven profitable, as the Sakō were influential commercial agents who dealt in copper, took charge of organizing local antipiracy measures for the Mōri, and ensured safe passage in the port.[163] In return, as we saw with the flag pass, the Sakō (and by extension the Mōri) presumably enjoyed lower protection costs.

Oda Nobunaga, too, recognized the profits to be gained from Noshima shipping based on Shiwaku. Although a coalition of sea lords partly led by the Noshima dealt his ambitions a stern blow in 1576 by defeating his maritime blockade of the Osaka Honganji 本願寺 citadel,[164] the following year he issued an edict to the Sakai port magistrate authorizing the entrance of Shiwaku ships: "Regarding ships from Shiwaku traveling to and from the port of Sakai. As before, there are to be no difficulties. If by some chance, there are those who cause conflict, they will be punished."[165]

Conclusion

Mainstream historiography has tended to ignore the histories of seafarers and to overemphasize the development of land-based institutions. This article has sought to step away from such analyses and to consider history from the waterline. To do so, it has focused on seafarers who appear in sources as pirates (*kaizoku*), and in an attempt to write history from their perspective, has identified them as sea lords. Through case studies of the islands of Yugeshima and Shiwaku, it has traced sea-based narratives of two major late medieval historical transformations: the shift from an estate-based economy to a commercial one and the establishment of local lordship. This article has demonstrated that from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries, local littoral magnates transformed themselves into sea lords in considerable measure by specializing in the intersections of commerce and violence. They exploited patrons' needs for services related to estate management and used dominance of chokepoints and protection rackets to forge domains consisting of sea-based networks of production, distribution, and exchange. Although early sea-lord competition may have hindered commercial development by increasing protection costs, armed protection was a necessary adjunct to shipping in the late medieval period. Sea-lord activities in this area ultimately seem instead to have helped foster the transition from an estate economy to one centered on commercial shipping.

By the fifteenth century, as transgenerational sea lords established stable dominion over various shipping networks and rerouted them through chokepoints

[162] Quoted in Kishida 2001, p. 198.
[163] Kishida 2001, pp. 189–99.
[164] EK 2183, Tenshō 4? (1576).7.15; *Shinchō-kō ki*, pp. 212–13.
[165] Okuno 1969, vol. 2, pp. 276–77, doc. 704, Tenshō 5? (1577).3.26.

under their control, authorities came to recognize them as indispensable for safe shipping, as can be seen in the evolution in usage of the word *keigo* and in authorities' readiness to work with people they termed *kaizoku*. By the sixteenth century, sea lords controlled sprawling trade networks, established relatively stable maritime boundaries, formed links with other sea lords, and hired themselves out to develop and protect shipping connections for daimyo sponsors. Warlords and other land-based authorities are often credited for many of the reforms that improved commerce in the period, but the semiautonomous networks created by sea lords like the Noshima Murakami played an important part in the expansion of domestic and overseas trade and in enabling daimyo to extend their presence out into the littoral.

The autonomous fusions of commerce, politics, and violence embodied by sea lords could not, however, survive the forging of a new level of state power under Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the Tokugawa. The Toyotomi and Tokugawa moved persistently to base the state on a reorganized agricentrist foundation, to eliminate independent local military power below the level of daimyo, and to establish central control over the maritime world. After unification, the daimyo, who now owed fealty to the national hegemon, and the bakufu undertook the responsibility of guaranteeing the safety of the sea-lanes, making sea-lord protection businesses superfluous. Under the new regime, many sea lords, including the Noshima Murakami, parlayed their high status into positions within the retinues of larger daimyo, but their domains did not survive this transition intact. The Noshima Murakami's insistence on continuing their protection practices well into 1587, for example, led Hideyoshi to remove them from their home territory astride Inland Sea chokepoints and shift them to locations of equal value, such as holdings in Nagato, on the Japan Sea coast, and Chikuzen in Kyushu.[166]

Although they may have lost their position as the foundation of sea-lord dominion, many former maritime hubs continued as lucrative production and commercial centers. Yugeshima prospered as a site famous for salt well into the Edo period. The German doctor Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716) wrote of it in 1691: "Shioya [lit. salt-maker's house], a village of some hundred houses on an island to our right is worthy of mention, because it produces a lot of salt, and this is why it was given that name. Close by was the small village of Yuge, with some rich farmers and a residence or manor."[167] As for Shiwaku, the Jesuit Luis Frois put it succinctly in 1588: "Shiwaku is a port famous throughout Japan and is a base for many ships."[168] Even after the departure of the Noshima, Shiwaku shippers received recognition from the Toyotomi and later the Tokugawa as specially licensed carriers (*ninmyō* 人名),[169] and as such they continued to play an important role in the development of the archipelago's shipping industry.

[166] A good discussion can be found in Kishida 2001, pp. 365–88; Fujiki 1985, pp. 217–37. It was, of course, Hideyoshi's use of the standardized *kokudaka* system for establishing the fiscal worth of domains that made such shifts possible.
[167] Bodart-Bailey 1999, p. 305.
[168] *Iezusukai Nihon hōkokushū*, vol. 7, p. 173.
[169] *Shiwaku ninmyō kyōyū monjo*.

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