relationship between Yoshiaki and Nobunaga deteriorated, and the former aligned himself with other sengoku daimyō such as the Asai, Asakura, Takeda, and Mori families and with the Honganji temple. In 1570 Nobunaga decisively defeated the combined forces of Asai and Asakura, and the following year burnt down the university-monastery complex at Mt. Hiei on the pretext that it aided the Asai forces.

Document 8 is an account given by Luis Frois, S.J. (1532–1597), a Jesuit missionary who came to Japan in 1563 and, in the course of his missionary activities, gained the confidence of Nobunaga. It described the thoroughness with which Nobunaga destroyed Mt. Hiei, and also showed Nobunaga’s disrespect and distrust of deities and buddhas. The destruction of Mt. Hiei was partly a military move, in that monk soldiers had been a source of concern and threat to the security of the capital city for many centuries. They utilized their privileged position as monks and interfered in politics with impunity. They also exercised disproportionately large power because they were in the position to tip the balance of power among contending military families. Nobunaga’s destruction of Mt. Hiei, along with the destruction of Ishiyama Honganji in 1580, signified the end of the military power of great monasteries. It also meant destruction of idols and of old religions, and symbolically suggested the end of l’ancien régime in Japan.

An effective unification policy called for creating better traveling and transportation facilities and for establishing a stronger and more viable economic system. The sengoku daimyō did remove barriers within their domains to facilitate travel, and Nobunaga extended this policy to a much wider scale (Document 9). Document 10 shows the practice of promoting the free market and of abolishing the za.

**Nobunaga’s Destruction of Hieizan, 1571** On his arrival at Sakamoto he realized that as he was accompanied by an army of 30,000 men he was in a good position to take revenge on the bonzes (monks) of the universities of Hieizan, and so he assembled his whole army to overcome the monks. When the bonzes learnt of his intention and saw that there was no other expedient, they sent word offering him 300 bars of gold (each one worth 45 silver taels) and 200 bars were sent from the town of Katata. But not one of them would Nobunaga accept, declaring that he had not come there to enrich himself with gold but to punish their crimes with all severity and rigor. When the satraps of the universities heard this reply, although they knew that Nobunaga had but scant respect for the kami (Shintō deity) and hotoke (Buddha), they still did not believe that he

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8Sōshū Monjo in ᪼kubo et al., op. cit., p. 8.

would destroy the idol of Sannō, for it was greatly venerated and its punishments were no less feared. And so for this reason they all decided to gather in the temple (which is on top of the mountain) and to abandon all the other monasteries and their treasures. At the same time the bonzes persuaded the people of the town of Sakamoto to go up as well with their womenfolk and children.

Knowing that he had them all on top of the mountain, Nobunaga immediately gave orders to set fire to Sakamoto and to put to the sword all those found within the town. This was on September 29th of this year, 1571, the Feast of the Dedication of the glorious St. Michael. And in order to show the bonzes who were upon the mountain the little regard he had for the chimeras (which they had described to him) and for the punishments of Sannō, the second thing that he did was to burn all the temples of this idol which were below the foot of the mountain: he also destroyed by fire the seven universities so that nothing at all was left of them. Then deploying his army of 30,000 men in the form of a ring about the mountain, he gave the order to advance to the top. The bonzes began to resist with their weapons and wounded about 150 soldiers. But they were unable to withstand such a furious assault and were all put to the sword, together with the men, women, and children of Sakamoto, which is near the foot of the mountain.

The next day, the last in September and the Feast of the glorious St. Jerome, they burnt down the large temple of Sannō, which, as I have said, was on top of the mountain. Then Nobunaga ordered a large number of musketeers to go out into the hills and woods as if on a hunt; should they find any bonzes hiding there, they were not to spare the life of a single one of them. And this they duly did. But Nobunaga was not satisfied with this victory and desired to slake his thirst for vengeance even more and to increase his fame. So he commanded his whole army to go and plunder the remaining houses of the bonzes and to burn down all the four hundred odd temples of those famous universities of Hieizan. And on that same day all of them were destroyed, burnt down and reduced to ashes. Then he ordered the army to the town of Katata, which was unable to offer resistance and was also laid waste by fire. They told me that there had perished about 1,500 bonzes and the same number of layfolk, men, women, and children.

Removal of Barriers, 1568

On the tenth month of the eleventh year of Eiroku [1568] . . . [Oda Nobunaga] abolished many, many barriers and levies (yaku) existing in his domain (bunkoku). This was done in part for the benefit of the entire domain, and in part in consideration of the welfare of travelers going to and returning from one province to another. All the people, high and low, were very pleased and felt grateful [to Nobunaga].

10 Free Market and Abolition of Za, 1577

Regulations for Azuchi Yamashita Machi:

1. Since this place is established as a free market (rakuichi), all za are abolished and the market is hereby exempt from all levies (yaku) and miscellaneous taxes (kufi).

2. Merchants who are traveling must not use the Kamikaidō. Anyone who comes to or leaves Kyoto must come through this town (Azuchi) to stay overnight . . .

3. This town is exempt from supplying horses for official transportation purposes.

4. Any tokusei decrees promulgated in the domain (bunkoku) shall not apply to this town.

5. People coming from other domains and other towns, once they establish their domicile in this town shall be treated equally with those who have been in this town before. No objection shall be raised with regard to their former affiliation with other lords. If anyone claims to be a retainer of Nobunaga, and attempts to impose temporary taxes or services [on others in town], that must be stopped.

6. The following are strictly forbidden: engaging in quarrels and disputes; entering into an agreement which involves seizure of property for non-payment of debts (this prescription is applicable to all agreements whether they be made applicable to particular provinces, localities or counties); forcing a purchase at a lower price, forcing a sale; and forcing a person to stay in a particular inn.

7. Horse merchants must come to this town, and all sales and purchases of horses in this domain must be conducted here.

If anyone violates any of the above provisions, he shall be punished expeditiously.

Fifth year of Tenshō [1577], sixth month.

UNIFICATION BY TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI

When the news of Oda Nobunaga's assassination reached Toyotomi Hideyoshi, he quickly concluded a favorable peace with the Mōri family and returned to the capital region to avenge the death of his master. With a combination of decisiveness, military skills, and good fortune, Hideyoshi quickly rose to the predominant position among former followers of Oda Nobunaga, and by 1590 completed unification of the country by destroying the last major opponents, the Hōjō. While military campaigns were going on, Hideyoshi adopted numerous measures to effect stratification of society which would provide the basis for forming a stable centralized government under his domination.

10 Nobunagokō ki in Kasahara et al., op. cit., p. 105.

In an agrarian society in which farmers comprised eighty percent of the population, the need for effective control of the farmers was paramount. To ensure adequate production of foodstuff, and to maintain sources of annual taxes and of corvée labor, Hideyoshi resorted to the policy of separating farmers from warriors, and decreed that farmers should not move from one village to another to seek another master (1586). In this attempt he was far more successful than the sengoku daimyō before him. The prohibition of owning swords by the peasantry must be understood in this light (Document 11).

Cadastral surveys were conducted by Oda Nobunaga between 1568 and 1582, and this policy was continued by Hideyoshi. The latter improved on the policy by applying it to the entire country and by providing a uniform system of measurement. Document 12 shows the determination with which Hideyoshi pursued this policy. Document 13 is divided into five articles and holds an enormous significance in the history of the land system in Japan. By decreeing that 300 bu should be considered a tan, instead of the previous 360 bu, it increased the number of taxable units by twenty percent. And for the first time a unified unit in measuring rice both for commercial transactions and for the payment of taxes was provided. Once the survey was completed, the data were recorded in triplicate which served as the basis of taxation and of rural control. Technically the cadastral surveys recognized only the right of the cultivator (saku shiki), and rejected the rights of landholders to part of the produce (myōshu shiki). If this policy were implemented to its logical conclusion it could have given impetus to the creation of small owner-cultivators. However, various compromises were made, and in effect, saku shiki and tokubunkenke (the right to share in part of the produce) were granted to landowners who agreed to pay a fixed amount of taxes. For the application of a cadastral survey in Tosa, see Document 6.

An edict for census-taking was issued in 1591, a year after the completion of unification of the country. This census-taking was in part designed to gain accurate statistical data in preparation for the Korean war which began the following year. However, the main significance of the census-taking is found in Articles 2 and 3 of Document 14. They were intended for the stratification of society, including prohibition of moving from one village to another and of changing from one occupation to another. Change of status was further defined in Document 15. This edict included prohibition of acquiring new masters without permission from the old masters. The first two articles of the edict made separation of peasantry from the warriors complete.

The regime Hideyoshi established was a military regime, but when compared to the Tokugawa bakufu which followed his, it was relatively weak in its power to control the vassals. The daimyō subordinated themselves to Hideyoshi, but in most cases retained most of their old domains and powers. In Document 16 the status of the daimyō was clearly defined, and their forming alliances through marriage or otherwise was strictly forbidden.

In religious matters, Hideyoshi’s policy toward Buddhism was milder than the one pursued by Nobunaga. He could warn Mt. Kōya not to follow the example of Mt. Hiei (see Document 8), and at the same time regulate its affairs to his own satisfaction. The monastery in turn could receive assurance of retaining its temple land (Document 17). In contrast, Hideyoshi was suspicious of Christianity, and while declaring that one could become a Christian if his conscience so dictated, he attempted to limit its propagation (Document 18), and missionaries were ordered to be deported (Document 19). Note the extreme interest Hideyoshi showed in foreign trade, by repeating that black ships could continue to come to the Japanese shores.

11 Collection of Swords, 1588

(a) The Edict:

1. Farmers of all provinces are strictly forbidden to have in their possession any swords, short swords, bows, spears, firearms, or other types of weapons. If unnecessary implements of war are kept, the collection of annual rent (nengu) may become more difficult, and without provocation uprisings can be fomented. Therefore, those who perpetrate improper acts against samurai who receive a grant of land (kyūnin) must be brought to trial and punished. However, in that event, their wet and dry fields will remain unattended, and the samurai will lose their rights (chigyō) to the yields from the fields. Therefore, the heads of provinces, samurai who receive a grant of land, and deputes must collect all the weapons described above and submit them to Hideyoshi’s government.

2. The swords and short swords collected in the above manner will not be wasted. They will be used as nails and bolts in the construction of the Great Image of Buddha. In this way, farmers will benefit not only in this life but also in the lives to come.

3. If farmers possess only agricultural implements and devote themselves exclusively to cultivating the fields, they and their descendants will prosper. This compassionate concern for the well-being of the farmers is the reason for the issuance of this edict, and such a concern is the foundation for the peace and security of the country and the joy and happiness of all the people. In China, in olden days, the sage ruler Yao pacified the country and converted precious swords and sharp knives into agricultural implements. But there is no precedent for such an act in this country. Thus, all the people must abide by the provisions of this edict and understand its intent, and farmers must work diligently in agriculture and sericulture.

All the implements cited above shall be collected and submitted forthwith.

Vermilion seal of Hideyoshi
Sixteenth year of Tenshō [1588], seventh month, 8th day.

12 Kobayakawa-ke Monjo and Tamonin Nikki in Okubo et al., op. cit., p. 38.
(b) Commentary

All the swords possessed by farmers in this country have been collected for the ostensible purpose of making nails for the erecting of the Great Image of Buddha. For this world, this can prevent unnecessary killings resulting from disturbances involving the use of swords. For the next world, merits can be acquired through the use of the nails. It is decreed that the collection of swords will benefit all the people. But truthfully, this is a measure specifically adopted to prevent occurrence of peasant uprisings (ikki). Indeed various motivations are behind this.

12 Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s Vermilion Seal Letter to Asano Nagamas on Cadastral Survey, 1590

Concerning your surveying of the lands, on matters such as determination of the expected amount to be harvested (todai), you must follow the intent of this vermilion seal letter, as you were commanded to do so the day before yesterday. In everything, given scrupulous care. Do not make a careless mistake, nor go beyond the authority which is given you.

I hereby command you that thoroughly communicate to local samurai (kokuji), and farmers, so that they can understand [the intent of this measure]. If there is anyone who does not obey this order, if he is a master of a castle, besiege him in his castle, and after due deliberation amongst you, have everyone in his castle killed. If disobedience is spread even among the farmers, slaughter every one of those living in one or two counties (go). This order is to be strictly obeyed in the more than sixty provinces of this country, and no careless mistake is to be permitted even in [such remote provinces as] Dewa and Ōshū. It is acceptable if [pursuant to this order] lands without cultivators are created. You must understand the intent of this letter, and do your utmost in the places as far as the deepest reach of the mountains and the farthest point the oars can go in the seas. If you slacken your efforts, the Kamakura (Hideyoshi) himself will come to oversee the matter.

It is hereby ordered. Answer immediately if it can be done accordingly.

Eighteenth year of Tenshō [1590], eighth month, 12th day.

Vermilion seal of Hideyoshi

Asano Nagamas dono.

13 Cadastral Survey, 1598

Criteria for the survey [Preamble missing]. . . .

The following articles must be observed in surveying the land.

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15 Previously no set standard was available for the length of ken. Tan was normally 360 bu before, but with Hideyoshi’s edict, it was reduced to 300 bu. One ken equals 1,818 meters or 1.987 yards. One tan equals 9.915 acres or 0.245 acre.

16 Todai means the amount that is expected to be produced by each tan of land belonging to a specific grade. In this way, the amount of tax can be fixed without resorting to the equivalent monetary valuation by kan, to the size of the land expressed in chō, tan, or bu, or to the exact amount harvested each year.

17 Masu is a measure containing one shō, which is about 1.638 quarts. One ton of brown rice is about 5.01 bushels.

18 Hereafter the term nengu is translated as annual tax or taxes, reflecting the nature of the payment which by this time was no longer the rent paid to those with certain rights (shiki), but a tax paid to the central and local authorities.

19 One ri traditionally represented about four-tenths of a mile. (This is not the modern unit which represents 2.445 miles.)

Addendum: However, if he has a guarantor, he may write an oath before a deity and deposit it with a seal of blood, stating that while remaining [in the village, etc.], he will behave responsibly. Further addendum: The reasons for persons from other provinces taking up residence and the number of years involved must be clearly stated.

The seventh month of last year shall serve as the basis, and no one who has entered after that time shall be permitted to remain [in the new place]. . . .

Nineteenth year of Tensho [1591], third month, 6th day.

Ankokuji Ekei, monogram
Sase Motoyoshi, monogram

**15 Edict on Change of Status, 1591**

1. If there should be among you men who were in military service including those who served Hideyoshi (hokonin), higher ranking warriors of the daimyo (samurai), those who took their order from samurai (chugan), lowest ranking warriors (komono), and those who performed miscellaneous chores for samurai (arashigo)—who have assumed the identity of a townsman (chonin) or farmer after the Oshu campaign which took place the seventh month of last year, they must be expelled. The townspeople and farmers must investigate [to see that this order is carried out]. If anyone as described is kept concealed, the entire town or village shall be held responsible and punished accordingly.

2. If any farmer abandons his wet and dry fields and engages in trade or offers himself for hire for wages, not only is he to be punished, but also his fellow villagers. If there is anyone who neither serves in the military nor cultivates land, it is the responsibility of the deputies and other local officials to investigate and expel him. If they do not take action, those local officials shall be stripped of their posts on account of negligence. If a townsman is disarmed as a farmer, and that fact is concealed, that county or town shall be regarded as committing a culpable offense.

3. No employment shall be given to a military retainer—be he a samurai, or komono, the lowest rank of warrior—who has left his former master without permission. In employing a retainer, you must investigate thoroughly his background, and insist on having a guarantor. If the above already has a master and that fact is discovered, he shall be arrested for not following this provision, and shall be returned to his former master. If this regulation is violated, and the offender is willfully set free, then three persons shall be beheaded in place of the one, and their heads sent to the offender's original master. If this threefold substitution is not effected, then there is no alternative but to punish the new master.

These are the provisions, as set forth, in the above articles.

Nineteenth year of Tensho [1591], eighth month, 21st day.
Vermilion Seal of Hideyoshi

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**16 Control of Daimyō, 1595**

An Edict:

1. The daimyō, when contracting marriage among their houses, must first receive the approval [of Hideyoshi], and then proceed to complete the arrangement.

2. The daimyō and shōmyō (lesser lords) are gravely warned that it is strictly forbidden to enter into contract or swear an oath among themselves.

3. If a quarrel or dispute arises among you, let forbearance be your guide to allow reason to settle the matter.

4. If someone falsely accuses another, and brings a suit before you, ask both parties to be present, and investigate the matter thoroughly.

5. Those who are permitted to use a palanquin are: Tokugawa Ieyasu, Maeda Toshiie, Uesugi Kagetsugu, Mori Terumoto, Kobayakawa Takakage [all except the last named are members of the five elders], old court nobles, priests in charge of Zen monasteries, other famous monks, and those who took the tonsure. All others, even if they are daimyō, cannot use a palanquin. However, if the daimyō are young they may go on horseback. If they are over fifty years of age, and if the distance to be traveled is over one ri, they may be permitted to use a palanquin. When ill, they may be permitted to use a palanquin.

If there is anyone who disobeys the articles above, he must be punished very severely forthwith.

Fourth year of Bunroku [1595], eighth month, 3rd day.
Names of the five elders and their monograms.

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**17 Control of Mt. Kōya, 1585**

Aide Mémoire:

1. The lands which belong to Mt. Kōya, whose title is clearly established through a document written by Kōbō Daishi, may continue to be treated as a temple estate (jiryo).

2. If Mt. Kōya invades another's estate, the provisions in the document written by Kōbō Daishi shall become no longer applicable. Thus anyone attempting such an act can cause the demise of Mt. Kōya. Use good judgment in this matter.

3. It is said that temple priests, those engaged in ascetic exercises, and other monks who do not have a taste for study resort to the use of weapons, guns, and the like. There is no greater treachery or misdeed than these.

4. As set forth in the regulations by Kōbō Daishi, temple priests, those engaged in ascetic exercises, and all others must encourage another to concentrate their efforts on Buddhist masses and other religious services.

5. The temple is forbidden to offer sanctuary to traitors and other criminals who regard the entire country as their enemy. While they may claim to be the

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21 Kobayakawa-ke Monjo in Ōkubo et al., op. cit., pp. 40–41.
22 Asanoke Monjo in Ōkubo et al., op. cit., p. 31.
23 Kōyasen Monjo in Ōkubo et al., op. cit., pp. 46–47.
ones who are forsaking the world, if they kill their parents and children, what use is there for the lord? If the mountain (Mt. Kōya) harbors someone who is disgraced and has to cut off a paper-cord which ties his hair and thus loses his manly appearance, will it not be an embarrassment for Mt. Kōya?

6. Mt. Hiei and Negoroji were destroyed by making the nation their enemy. This you have witnessed. Therefore use your good sense in these matters.

7. The above articles as described, if fully accepted by all the monks and by those who engage in ascetic exercises, then each of them must write a letter guaranteeing his own conduct. If the monks and all others can without reservation accept these articles, Hideyoshi will do his utmost to protect and maintain Mt. Kōya.

Thirteenth year of Tenshō [1585], fourth month, 10th day.
Hideyoshi, monogram

18 Limitation on the Propagation of Christianity, 1587

1. Whether one desires to become a follower of the padre is up to that person's own conscience.

2. If one receives a province, a district, or a village as his fief, and forces farmers in his domain who are properly registered under certain temples to become followers of the padre against their wishes, then he has committed the most unreasonable illegal act.

3. When a vassal (kyūnin) receives a grant of a province or a district, he must consider it as a property entrusted to him on a temporary basis. A vassal may be moved from one place to another, but farmers remain in the same place. Thus if an unreasonable illegal act is committed [as described above], the vassal will be called upon to account for his culpable offense. The intent of this provision must be observed.

4. Anyone whose fief is over 200 chō and who can expect two to three thousand kan of rice harvest each year must receive permission from the authorities before becoming a follower of the padre.

5. Anyone whose fief is smaller than the one described above may, as his conscience dictates, select for himself from between eight or nine religions.

8. If a daimyō who has a fief over a province, a district, or a village, forces his retainers to become followers of the padre, he is committing a crime worse than the followers of Honganji who assembled in their temple [to engage in the Ilkō riot]. This will have an adverse effect on [the welfare of] the nation. Anyone who cannot use good judgment in this matter will be punished.

10. It is illegal to sell Japanese people to China, to the South Seas, or to Korea [as slaves]. Henceforth, sale of persons in Japan is forbidden.

Fifteenth year of Tenshō [1587], sixth month, 18th day.

Vermilion Seal

19 Expulsion of Missionaries, 1587

1. Japan is the country of gods, but has been receiving false teachings from Christian countries. This cannot be tolerated any further.

2. The [missionaries] approach people in provinces and districts to make them their followers, and let them destroy shrines and temples. This is unheard of outrage. When a vassal receives a province, a district, a village, or an other form of a fief, he must consider it as a property entrusted to him on a temporary basis. He must follow the laws of this country, and abide by their intent. However, some vassals illegally commend part of their fiefs to the church. This is a culpable offense.

3. The padres, by their special knowledge [in the sciences and medicine], feel that they can entice people to become their believers. In so doing they commit the illegal act of destroying the teachings of Buddha prevailing in Japan. These padres cannot be permitted to remain in Japan. They must prepare to leave the country within twenty days of the issuance of this notice. However, the vassals must not make unreasonable demands on the padres, which shall be treated as a culpable offense.

4. The black [Portuguese and Spanish] ships come to Japan to engage in trade. Thus the matter is a separate one. They can continue to engage in trade.

5. Hereafter, anyone who does not hinder the teachings of Buddha, whether he be a merchant or not, may come and go freely from Christian countries to Japan.

This is our wish, and so ordered.

Fifteenth year of Tenshō [1587], sixth month, 19th day.

JAPAN'S CHRISTIAN CENTURY

St. Francis Xavier (1506–1552), the apostle to India, came to Japan in 1549 and opened a new chapter in the history of Christian missions. He was favorably impressed by the Japanese (Document 20), and so was Cosme de Torres, S.J. (d. 1570), whom Xavier left as Superior of the Japanese mission. He believed that the Japanese were governed by reason, and showed enormous optimism for the success of the Japanese mission (Document 21). Alessandro Valignano, S.J. (1539–1606), who visited Japan three times in 1579–1582, 1590–1592, and 1583–1603, thought the Japanese were prudent (Document 22) and patient (Document 23), but were too addicted to sensual pleasures and sins (Document 24).

25Gosho in Ōkubo et al., op. cit., pp. 50–51.