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East Asia Tradition and Transformation ～Japan's Response to the West～

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テストは、問題用紙と解答用紙が一体になったもので試験終了後に回収された。

ここでは、作成者の記憶に基づいて過去問を書く。

試験時間は 50 分だった。

(1) 次の文章を和訳せよ。

It was clear to some Japanese, however, that foreign naval power was too strong for Japan to resist. Scholars of “Dutch Learning” in particular could see that blind resistance was dangerous. Their voices were not as inconsequential as they had been in the past, since the increasing menace of the West had drawn attention to Western science and military technology.

(2) 次の文章を和訳せよ。

This together with the heavy foreign demand for certain export commodities, particularly silk and tea, the inflow of cheaper foreign manufactures, particularly cotton textiles, frantic efforts to increase armaments, and growing political disruption resulting from the foreign threat, set off a severe inflationary spiral.

(3) 次の文章を読み、薩摩藩と長州藩の天保の改革についてまとめよ。(箇条書きは NG)

Another reason for the emergence of Satsuma and Choshu was their financial strength at a time when most domains were seriously in debt and their samurai under heavy financial pressures. Satsuma and Choshu had the money not only to bolster samurai moral but to the buy Western arms and finance decisive action. Although in the early 19th century Satsuma had been burdened by a crushing debt, it had started vigorous reforms in 1830, at the very beginning of the so-called Tempo Reforms. It had canceled the domain's debts and strengthened its commercial monopolies, particularly of cane sugar, of which Satsuma, for climatic reasons, had a virtual monopoly in Japan. Both efforts had succeeded in large part because of the relative backwardness of the area.

Choshu's Tempo Reforms had started in 1838 and had featured the reduction of samurai debts and the slashing of domain expenditures, in part through the reduction of monopolies, which was more typical of the Tempo Reforms than Satsuma's strengthening of monopolies. But the chief reason for Choshu's financial solvency seems to have

been an unusual institution known as the “nurturing office.” Founded in 1762 as an emergency fund to help the domain’s government and samurai in times of need, it had become an investment organ, particularly successful as a merchandiser of the surplus rice of the domain and as a storer of goods and provider of funds to other domains engaged in transport activities on the Inland sea. By regularly investing part of the domain’s revenues through this office, instead of devoting all its financial energies to repaying its debts, Choshu stumbled into a system of deficit financing. Thus, during this period of creeping inflation, it profited from the gradual diminution of the value of its debt and the enhancement of the value of its investments.

（４）次の文章の冒頭部分（下線部）の内容を、具体例を挙げながら説明せよ。（箇条書きはNG）

One clear and crucial difference lay in the respective attitudes toward the outside world. The Chinese, long accustomed to the idea that China was the unique land of civilization, could not accept the multi-state international concepts of Europe, did not believe that there was much of value to be learned from “barbarians,” and, although outraged by Western presumptions, could not really see the seriousness of the challenge, assuming that these new “barbarians,” like others before them, would come to comprehend the superiority of China and accept it. The Japanese, on the other hand, were linguistically, culturally, and geographically distinct enough from the Chinese to have developed a strong feeling of separate identity and, because of their acute awareness of China, also had a clear sense of the plurality of nations. The European system of equal and independent states was easy for them to accept. Well aware of all that they had learned over the ages from China and even from Korea and India, they could readily see that there was much of great importance to be learned from the West too. Accustomed to thinking of China as far larger, much older, and more advanced than Japan, they had no sublime sense of cultural superiority but rather a nagging fear of inferiority. Thus, when menaced by the West, they did not react with disdain but rather with that combination of fear, resentment, and narrow pride that one associates with nationalism. In fact, their reaction proved extremely nationalistic. Despite the intensity of rivalries among the various domains, most Japanese leaders in the face of the foreign menace seem to have placed national interests ahead of old feudal loyalties.

（５）テキストに関する君の意見や感想を書け。（内容次第では加点する）

The Impact of the West

Early Pressures. The Japanese by 1639 had so successfully closed their doors to the outside world that subsequently Japan all but dropped out of the consciousness of Europeans. Even the Catholic missionaries eventually gave up their attempts to re-enter the country, and few Western ships came near Japan. The only important exception was the annual Dutch vessel from the East Indies to the Dutch trading post on the island of Deshima in Nagasaki harbor. Occidentals simply accepted the inaccessibility of the islands as a fact of political geography, and, absorbed in their expansion into other, much larger areas in Asia, came to regard Japan as a remote, poor country of little interest. But increased Western activity in the Chinese area in the late 18th and early 19th drew attention once again to Japan. Western ships started to frequent Japanese waters and demands began to grow in the West that Japan follow China's lead in opening its doors to commercial and diplomatic contact.

The Russians were the first to exert pressure on Japan. During the 18th century Russian and Japanese explorers and traders sometimes encountered one another in the Kuril Islands and Sakhalin, north of Japan's northern island of Hokkaido. In 1809 the Japanese explorer Mamiya Rinzo(1780-1845) had even ventured up the Amur River. Russian representatives attempted to open official relations in Hokkaido in 1792 and at Nagasaki in 1804, but both times they were firmly, though courteously, refused. The Russians in pique raided Japanese outposts in the islands north of Hokkaido in 1806 and 1807, and the Japanese retaliated by capturing some Russians in 1811 and holding

them imprisoned for two years.

Meanwhile the British too were beginning to return to Japanese waters. English vessels visited Hokkaido in 1797, Nagasaki in 1808 in search of Dutch ships under Napoleonic control, and Edo Bay in 1818. An armed clash occurred in 1824 between British sailors and Japanese on a small island south of Kyushu.

By the middle of the 19th century, the United States had replaced both England and Russia as the nation most interested in opening Japan. Large numbers of whaling vessels from New England frequented the North Pacific, and the great circle route across the Pacific brought American clipper ships close to the shores of Japan on their way to and from Canton. The American crews were naturally interested in obtaining supplies in Japanese ports and in reducing the dangers of capture and mistreatment by the hostile Japanese. As steam came into use, moreover, coaling stations in Japan appeared an attractive possibility. For these various reasons, opening the ports of Japan became increasingly important to Americans, just at the time when westward expansion overland was bringing them to the Pacific and “manifest destiny” seemed to beckon them on across the seas.

As early as 1791 two American ships had entered Japanese waters, and in 1797 another visited Nagasaki, chartered by the Dutch authorities in the East Indies to replace their own ships, cut off from them by the Napoleonic wars. An American businessman in Canton dispatched a small vessel, the Morrison, to Japan in 1837 to repatriate seven Japanese castaways and, through this act of good will, to open up relations with Japan, but the unarmed ship was fired on by the Japanese and driven off. In 1846 Commodore Biddle entered Edo Bay and tolerated various

indignities from the Japanese in a vain effort to open negotiations. In 1849 Commander Glynn took a stiffer attitude at Nagasaki but proved no more successful, though he was able to pick up fifteen stranded American seamen.

Japanese Reactions. The Japanese reacted sharply to these invasions of their cherished seclusion. Following the Russian raids in the north, the shogunate for a while took over the Hokkaido domain of Matsumae in order to strengthen defenses in that area. In 1806 it also issued instructions to local authorities to drive off all foreign ships and in 1825 strengthened this stand by ordering that they destroy foreign intruders with “no second thought,” although in 1842 it realistically relaxed these orders to permit the local authorities to provide foreign ships with supplies when this was deemed necessary to avoid violence.

The Japanese leaders thus remained firmly determined to maintain the traditional policy of isolation and opposed to any capitulation to what seemed to them to be Western affronts to Japan’s national dignity. Men from the collateral Tokugawa domain of Mito, which had long been a center of strong nationalist sentiment with pro-emperor overtones, led in advocating a hard line. In 1825 Aizawa Seishisai(1782-1863), in a document called *New Proposals*, urged the shogunate to “smash the barbarians whenever they come in sight.” He argued that foreign trade was economically injurious to Japan, that foreign contacts would undermine Japanese morale, and that the only sound defense was to build national strength through greater unity and the judicious use of Western techniques, while excluding Westerners themselves. This general position was subsequently developed further by Fujita Toko(1806-1855),

another influential Mito intellectual. In 1830 Tokugawa Nariaki(1800-1860), the daimyo of Mito, called for political reform, emphasizing these Mito views. He argued for continued isolation to be backed up by greater national unity and military renovation. Specifically he urged the shogunate to relax the controls which had kept the daimyo militarily weak and financially impotent. He started vigorous reforms within his own domain, borrowing Western military techniques to strengthen the domain army.

It was clear to some Japanese, however, that foreign naval power was too strong for Japan to resist. Scholars of “Dutch Learning” in particular could see that blind resistance was dangerous. Their voices were not as inconsequential as they had been in the past, since the increasing menace of the West had drawn attention to Western science and military technology. In 1811 the shogunate itself had established an office for the translation of Occidental books, which in 1857, under the name of Institute for the Investigation of Barbarian Books, became a school of Western science and languages. Similar schools were established by several of the larger domains, notably Mito, Satsuma, Choshu, Tosa in Shikoku, and Hizen(Saga) in Kyushu, all of which were to play significant roles in the following years. Some scholars of “Dutch Learning” spoke out boldly. In 1838 Takano Choei(1804-1850) issued a pamphlet urging the opening of Japan to foreign contact, but was imprisoned for his audacity and eventually was forced to commit suicide. Sakuma Shozan(1811-1864), an expert on Western-style gunnery, in an effort to justify the technological changes that he realized were necessary, coined the slogan “Eastern ethics and Western science,” a concept which, like its counterpart developed in China, was to prove comforting to a whole generation of

modernizers.

The Opening of Japan The United States eventually determined to take decisive action to open Japan's ports. It chose for the purpose Commodore Matthew C. Perry and assigned him three steam frigates and five other ships – a quarter of the American navy. Perry, proceeding by way of the Indian Ocean, reached Japan in July 1853. After several days of diplomatic sparring at Uraga near the mouth of Edo Bay, he forced the Japanese to accept a letter from the president of the United States to the emperor of Japan and then departed, promising to return the next spring for the answer. Perry never discovered what had been well known in the Occident two centuries earlier – that the “emperor” he was attempting to deal with was actually only the shogun.

The Japanese realized that their small vessels and antiquated shore batteries were no match for the fleet at Perry's command or the still larger British naval forces in Asian waters. Edo lay exposed to the superior guns of the West, and the water-borne food supply of this city of over a million was completely vulnerable to blockade. The shogunate authorities were also aware of what had happened to the Chinese in the recent Opium War, and the Dutch had repeatedly advised them through Nagasaki that they would have to give way to foreign demands.

One might imagine that, since the exclusion policy had been created by the Tokugawa shoguns in the 17th century, they could abandon it with impunity in the 19th. But the policy meanwhile had become sacrosanct and the shogunate flabby and irresolute, pulled in a variety of directions by the “house” daimyo who staffed its higher posts, the collateral

domains which controlled much of its military power, and the “public opinion” of its own retainers. Being divided itself on this intensely controversial problem, the shogunate could present no united front to the rest of the nation or to the West.

Since 1845 the chief figure among the shogunate “elders” had been Abe Masahiro, an able, young “house” daimyo. Abe realized that general understanding would be necessary for the extremely unpopular but unavoidable policy of opening the country to more foreign contact. He therefore referred the problem posed by Perry to all of the daimyo. This was a momentous step, unprecedented in two and a half centuries of shogunate rule. It opened the door to discussion and criticism of all shogunate policies, thus starting a rapid erosion of Tokugawa prestige and authority. The last years of Tokugawa rule, from 1853 until the ultimate collapse in 1868, are fittingly known as the *bakumatsu*, or “end of the shogunate.”

Abe’s appeal to the daimyo produced no national consensus. The replies were overwhelmingly antforeign but ambiguous. About a third of the leading domains realized that Japan must make some concessions on trade, the profits of which could then be used to strengthen defenses. Some opposed trade but advised making enough concessions to give time for further military preparations. The rest demanded that no concessions be made and the Americans be driven off. The shogunate’s Confucian scholars, who had also been consulted, took the same line, and the imperial court, insulated from foreign pressures in its inland capital of Kyoto, was also known to be strongly isolationist.

Perry returned in February 1854 and insisted on conducting negotiations further up Edo Bay at Kanagawa, now part of great port city of Yokohama. The Japanese finally accepted what they felt were the minimum American demands. In the Treaty of Kanagawa, signed on March 31, they agreed to open two quite unimportant and isolated ports to American ships for provisioning and a limited amount of trade. These were Shimoda at the end of the mountainous Izu Peninsula and Hakodate in Hokkaido. They also agreed to the stationing of an American consul at Shimoda and promised to give good treatment to shipwrecked American sailors. One element of the Chinese treaty system was included, the most-favored-nation clause, stipulating that additional privileges granted to other nations would automatically come to United States as well. The shogunate concluded similar treaties with the British on October 14, with the Russians at Shimoda on February 7, 1855, and subsequently with the Dutch. The Russian treaty added Nagasaki as an open port and another aspect of the Chinese treaty system – extraterritoriality.

These treaties were hardly the full commercial agreements the Western powers desired, and so they kept up their pressures for increased trade relations. The outbreak of the Anglo-French War in China in 1856 and the announcement by the British that they intended to negotiate a commercial treaty with Japan made the shogunate realize that the Perry treaty had given only a brief respite. To forestall greater demands, it signed agreements with the Dutch and Russians in October 1857 for carefully regulated trade at Nagasaki and Hakodate, but it was left to the American consul, Townsend Harris, to force Japan fully open to trade.

Harris, who had arrived in Shimoda in 1856, gradually convinced the shogunate authorities that it would be better

to conclude a full commercial treaty with a relatively peaceful and friendly United States before a less favorable treaty was wrung from them by the stronger and more demanding European powers. The resulting treaty, signed on July 29, 1858, called for an exchange of ministers; the immediate opening to trade of Kanagawa and Nagasaki in addition to Shimoda and Hakodate; the opening between 1860 and 1863 of Niigata on the west coast and Hyogo (the modern Kobe) to trade and Edo and Osaka to foreign residence; moderate limitations on import and export duties; and extraterritorial privileges for Americans. Within the next several weeks the Dutch, Russians, British, and French made similar treaties, but heightened the inequities of the treaty relationship by fixing Japanese import duties at relatively low levels.

Even before the Harris treaty went into effect in the summer of 1859, foreign traders began to settle in large numbers at the harbor of Yokohama, close to Kanagawa, and this unimportant fishing village soon grew into the chief port for foreign trade. Since the gold-silver ratio in Japan was 5 to 1, in contrast to the worldwide 15 to 1 ratio, and also because the value of Japanese coinage was fixed by the shogunate and was not dependent on the metallic content of the coins, the injection of foreign currency thoroughly disrupted the Japanese monetary system. This together with the heavy foreign demand for certain export commodities, particularly silk and tea, the inflow of cheaper foreign manufactures, particularly cotton textiles, frantic efforts to increase armaments, and growing political disruption resulting from the foreign threat, set off a severe inflationary spiral. The shogunate did its best to limit foreign trade by every possible tactic but was frustrated by the determination of the Westerners and the

eagerness of commercial groups in Japan for quick profits.

The most serious consequence of the treaties was the presence in Japan of considerable numbers of Westerners, whom most Japanese regarded with great distrust and hostility. Troubles inevitably resulted between fervid samurai activists and Western diplomats and traders. There were several assassinations in 1859, and in 1861 Harris' Dutch interpreter, Heusken, was cut down. The British legation in Edo was attacked that same year and burned down in 1863. In 1862 four Britishers riding in the hills back of Yokohama were attacked by samurai in the procession of the daimyo of Satsuma, and one of them, Richardson, was killed. Such incidents resulted in heavy indemnities, which strained the shogunate's finances, and they further eroded Edo's authority, ground as it was between the arrogant, demanding Western powers and intransigent native isolationists.

☆ as it is の用法

①文末におく Leave the room as it is. (そのままに)

②過去分詞に後置 Written as it is in plain English, this book is suitable for beginners. (このように)

③文頭におく (前文は仮定法) I wish I would join you. As it is, I have a previous engagement. (ところが実際は)

※現在分詞に後置 : as it does → Standing as it does on a hill, this house commands a fine view.

Political Ferment in Japan

Japanese Responsiveness. To observers at the time, Japan's position seemed even more precarious than that of China. Divided among more than 260 autonomous feudal regimes and united only under a shogun whose authority and power were fast disintegrating, Japan seemed politically more backward and less capable of effective action than the centralized and thoroughly bureaucratic Chinese government. Its feudal class society seemed ill prepared to respond to the challenge of more modernized Western nations. Its preindustrial economy was no match for European machine production. It lacked the great continental solidity of the vast Chinese Empire, and its small islands were pathetically exposed to Western sea power.

And yet, Japan responded to the challenge of the West with much greater speed and far more success than China. No wars were fought, no smuggling trade developed, no territory was lost. There was turmoil, but out of it soon emerged a radically changed political system under which the Japanese moved rapidly toward becoming a modern power. Obviously Japan in the mid-nineteenth century, even though it had derived a large part of its higher culture from China, was a very different country, capable of very different responses to the Western challenge.

One clear and crucial difference lay in the respective attitudes toward the outside world. The Chinese, long accustomed to the idea that China was the unique land of civilization, could not accept the multi-state international concepts of Europe, did not believe that there was much of value to be learned from "barbarians," and, although outraged by Western presumptions, could not really see the seriousness of the challenge, assuming that these new

“barbarians,” like others before them, would come to comprehend the superiority of China and accept it. The Japanese, on the other hand, were linguistically, culturally, and geographically distinct enough from the Chinese to have developed a strong feeling of separate identity and, because of their acute awareness of China, also had a clear sense of the plurality of nations. The European system of equal and independent states was easy for them to accept. Well aware of all that they had learned over the ages from China and even from Korea and India, they could readily see that there was much of great importance to be learned from the West too. Accustomed to thinking of China as far larger, much older, and more advanced than Japan, they had no sublime sense of cultural superiority but rather a nagging fear of inferiority. Thus, when menaced by the West, they did not react with disdain but rather with that combination of fear, resentment, and narrow pride that one associates with nationalism. In fact, their reaction proved extremely nationalistic. Despite the intensity of rivalries among the various domains, most Japanese leaders in the face of the foreign menace seem to have placed national interests ahead of old feudal loyalties.

The very decentralization and diversity of the Japanese political and social system also permitted a greater variety of responses than appeared in China, and out of this diversity, through a rough process of trial and error, some responses emerged that proved successful. For example, while most of the domains were too small or too politically divided to react effectively, enough could to provide a variety of responses. Sharp class divisions had the same effect. While the samurai, with their feudal military background, showed a much keener appreciation of the superior military power of the West than did the Chinese civil bureaucracy, Japanese peasant entrepreneurs and city merchants, with

their emphasis on personal economic goals, responded quickly to the new opportunities for foreign trade. The broad and functionally stratified samurai class, constituting around 6 percent of the total population and including many men close to the grubby minor details of the economy and administration, also produced a much wider spectrum of responses than did the relatively narrow higher bureaucracy and elite of gentry degree-holders in China.

Another Japanese advantage was its extraordinary cultural homogeneity and economic and intellectual centralization. This was in part the result of Japan's geographic isolation and much smaller size terrain and population than China. But homogeneity and centralization were even more the product of the whole Tokugawa system of control, particularly the institution of "alternate residence" of the lords at Edo. Unlike China, where inland areas were often quite unaware of the foreign threat, all parts of Japan responded immediately, even if in diverse ways. This situation, together with the relatively large size of the Japanese ruling class and the high levels of political administration and economic integration, which rising standards of living and high literacy rates had made possible, meant that Japan was far more capable than China of carrying out a unified, effective response to the West, once one had been decided upon.

Ironically, the very erosion of the foundations of the Tokugawa system also proved advantageous for the Japanese. In China, dynasties had come and gone, but the basic political, social, intellectual, and even economic system had remained extraordinarily stable for a millennium. It was hard to imagine, much less adopt, any other system. But in Japan the feudal social and political structure of the early 17th century was clearly outmoded by the 19th. The economy,

society, and culture had evolved beyond it. Both the Confucian concept of the right of the man of personal merit to political leadership and the ancient Japanese tradition of imperial rule were fundamentally subversive to the Tokugawa policy. Thus other systems of political organization were not only imaginable but were secretly desired by some. There was a certain restiveness in society, particularly among the lower samurai. The rigid political structure was seriously undermined, and, beneath the surface calm, pressures were building up along dangerous fault lines within the society. A relatively light external blow thus could set Japan in motion in a way that much heavier blows could not move a basically far more stable China. As a consequence, Japan got off to a more speedy start in adjusting to the new world conditions, and this in turn gave it a decisive advantage during the following century.

The Emergence of the Imperial Court. Abe had placed the shogunate in an anomalous position when he was forced to conclude the treaty with Perry against the expressed opinions of most of the daimyo and the known disapproval of the imperial court. To strengthen his position he took the novel step of having the court give formal sanction to the treaty. He also brought powerful collateral and “outside” daimyo into the inner councils of government, putting Nariaki of Mito in charge of coastal defenses.

The “house” daimyo, who traditionally dominated the Edo government, resented the role of these outsiders. Under Hotta Masayoshi, who replaced Abe late in 1855, they reduced Nariaki’s influence and attempted to regain full control over the government. They also moved toward further concessions to the Western powers because, being

more fully involved in the situation at Edo, they were more aware of Japan's serious plight than were the great lords from less exposed areas.

Before concluding the commercial treaty with Harris in 1858, Hotta again asked the daimyo for their opinions. Again the response was largely negative, even if somewhat more realistic than in 1853. Hotta also took the unprecedented step of going to Kyoto to obtain the emperor's approval in advance. But the imperial court was awakening from its long political slumber. The revived interest during the Tokugawa period in Japan's ancient history and the growing emphasis on the unbroken imperial line as the chief source of Japan's assumed superiority over other countries, had gradually called attention to the emperors and built up their prestige. Now both the shogunate and many of the domains were turning to Kyoto at this moment of crisis in the nation and uncertainty in Edo. Bolstered by the opposition of some of the largest domains to Hotta's policies, the court gave an ambiguous reply, which amounted to a refusal.

At this juncture, on May 30, 1858, Ii Naosuke, the lord of Hikone, the largest domain among the "house" daimyo, assumed the post of "great elder," the shogunal premiership which was filled only in times of crisis, usually by the head of the Ii family. Ii adopted a strong stance in an effort to regain control over the country. He signed the treaty, refused to go to Kyoto when summoned by the court, forced it to give its approval to the treaty, and decided a dispute over the shogun's heir in favor of the immature daimyo of collateral domain of Wakayama over Nariaki's adult and able son, keiki, who was the candidate of a faction that looked toward reform of the shogunate. When these acts were

greeted by violent criticism and an upsurge of subversive, pro-emperor agitation, he responded by placing Nariaki, Keiki, and a few other major daimyo in domiciliary confinement, punished several court nobles and shogunal officials, and carried out a purge of pro-emperor intellectuals in Mito.

Ii's effort to restore Edo's authority seemed for a while to be succeeding, but it collapsed when a group of extremist Mito samurai assassinated him on March 24, 1860. It has been argued that, had Ii lived, the shogunate might have survived under his strong leadership to play a major role in Japan's subsequent modernization, but this seems improbable, because the shogunate, heavily burdened by tradition, was less capable of revolutionary change than were other groups. And Ii's reassertion of Tokugawa absolutism was more apparent than real. Actually, Edo's prestige and authority had both been greatly reduced. All over the country samurai activists were expressing their opinions freely on all matters of national policy. Despite long-standing prohibitions, daimyo and their agents, and even samurai acting on their own initiative, now felt free to approach the court in Kyoto to win it over to their views. Imperial sanction was becoming necessary for any major policy decision.

The imperial court thus emerged as the focus not only for opposition to Edo's foreign policies but for efforts to reform the government and society in the face of the foreign menace. The slogans of "honor the emperor" (*sonno*) and "expel the barbarians" (*joi*) became the twin rallying cries of the opposition. Both had strongly anti-shogunate overtones and were therefore taken up with particular enthusiasm by the samurai of some of the "outer" domains that had always nurtured resentment of Tokugawa rule. So strong was the appeal of these slogans that even Ii had

been forced to give to the court vague promises that the “barbarians” would be expelled as soon as Japan was strong enough.

There was also a definite breakdown of feudal discipline as the domains began to assert their independence of Edo and restless samurai acted independently of their domain governments. Many samurai became “masterless samurai” in order to be free to agitate in Kyoto or elsewhere in behalf of the policies they supported. Known as *shishi*, or “men of determination,” it was activists of this sort who killed Ii and went on to leave a wide trail of political assassination throughout Japan.

The shogunate was clearly in a hopeless position. Edo could not withstand foreign pressures for trade, yet was forced by public opinion to make promises to “expel the barbarians.” Its authority over the domains and control over the individual samurai was fast ebbing. The shogunate had been forced to recognize the ultimate political authority of the imperial court. Both the political order and the economic system on which it stood were giving way under the Western impact. Ii had sought to shore up the tottering structure, and his death removed its last firm support.

The Rise of Satsuma and Choshu. No new “great elder” was appointed, and the shogunate floundered around indecisively. The initiative was lost to the imperial court and some of the “outer” domains. In particular Satsuma in southern Kyushu and Choshu at western tip of Honshu came to the fore. They were among the largest domains, being ranked officially as the 2nd and 9th in income. Their samurai forces were proportionately even larger, since

both domains had been drastically reduced in geographic area but not in retainers as a result of the wars at the end of the 16th century.

Choshu and Satsuma – particularly the latter – were relatively backward areas economically and socially, being located on the periphery of the nation, but this was an advantage rather than a handicap. It meant that the moral and cohesiveness of their samurai were less eroded than in the more advanced central parts of the country, where the bulk of Tokugawa power lay. They also had the advantage of strong anti-Tokugawa traditions dating back to their defeats more than two and a half centuries earlier. Mito, in contrast, being part of the Tokugawa power structure, faded from the political scene after the death of Nariaki in 1860, when the anti-Edo movement started to become truly revolutionary. Some other great domains were also inhibited from taking a strong stand because of traditional loyalty to the Tokugawa.

Another reason for the emergence of Satsuma and Choshu was their financial strength at a time when most domains were seriously in debt and their samurai under heavy financial pressures. Satsuma and Choshu had the money not only to bolster samurai moral but to buy Western arms and finance decisive action. Although in the early 19th century Satsuma had been burdened by a crushing debt, it had started vigorous reforms in 1830, at the very beginning of the so-called Tempō Reforms. It had canceled the domain's debts and strengthened its commercial monopolies, particularly of cane sugar, of which Satsuma, for climatic reasons, had a virtual monopoly in Japan. Both efforts had succeeded in large part because of the relative backwardness of the area.

Choshu's Tempo Reforms had started in 1838 and had featured the reduction of samurai debts and the slashing of domain expenditures, in part through the reduction of monopolies, which was more typical of the Tempo Reforms than Satsuma's strengthening of monopolies. But the chief reason for Choshu's financial solvency seems to have been an unusual institution known as the "nurturing office." Founded in 1762 as an emergency fund to help the domain's government and samurai in times of need, it had become an investment organ, particularly successful as a merchandiser of the surplus rice of the domain and as a storer of goods and provider of funds to other domains engaged in transport activities on the Inland sea. By regularly investing part of the domain's revenues through this office, instead of devoting all its financial energies to repaying its debts, Choshu stumbled into a system of deficit financing. Thus, during this period of creeping inflation, it profited from the gradual diminution of the value of its debt and the enhancement of the value of its investments.

Politics in Choshu, as in many other domains, had become a matter of rivalries between samurai factions, which alternated in power by winning the support of the daimyo and his major retainers, the so-called house elders. In 1857 a moderate reform faction replaced the conservative faction in power and decided that Choshu should take part in national politics. But it was not until 1861 that it took a specific step, proposing to the Kyoto court that the emperor should order the shogun to embark on a policy of "expansion across the seas," thus achieving a "union of court and shogunate" (*Kobu gattai*). Both Kyoto and Edo were agreeable, the one because the proposal was an open recognition of the emperor's political primacy, the other because it won the court's support for the shogunate's foreign policy.

Nothing, however, came of Choshu's effort to mediate between Kyoto and Edo, and it was soon eclipsed by a more specific set of proposals for a "union of court and shogunate" put forward by Satsuma in May 1862. As a result, Satsuma was authorized by the court to bring order to Kyoto by suppressing the many extremist "masterless samurai" who were active there. It also persuaded Edo to make Keiki the guardian of the young shogun and appoint the collateral lord of Echizen, Matsudaira Keiei, as a sort of acting prime minister. Matsudaira, in an effort to win a broader national consensus, relaxed the last shogunate controls over the domains, abandoning the old hostage system and reducing the presence of daimyo at Edo under the "alternate attendance" system to a meaningless 100 days every 3 years.

Meanwhile Choshu had become more radically pro-emperor in its stance. This was largely because of the influence of a young teacher of military tactics, Yoshida Shoin(1830-1859). Yoshida had studied "Dutch Learning" in both Nagasaki and Edo and had been deeply influenced by the pro-emperor Mito thinkers. He had also attempted to smuggle himself out of the country on one of Perry's ships in 1854 but was imprisoned instead. Back in Choshu, he opened a school and implanted his radically pro-emperor thoughts in a number of young men who were to play an important role in building the new Japan. Although he himself was executed in 1859 for having planned to assassinate the Edo representative in Kyoto, one of his disciples, a high-born samurai named Kido Koin(1833-1877), became an important figure in the domain government and helped swing it toward an openly "honor the emperor" and "expel the barbarian" policy.

Because of Choshu's new radicalism, the court shifted its support away from Satsuma to Choshu, which started to organize a rudimentary government in Kyoto as well as small bodies of "imperial troops." Choshu was supported for a while in its strong pro-emperor stand by Tosa, a major "outer" domain in Shikoku, but a more moderate Tosa faction regained control of the domain early in 1863 and adopted a more cautious policy. Swarms of activist "masterless samurai" in Kyoto, however, gave strength to the imperial cause by assassinating moderates, and meanwhile a body of some 2,000 peasants, the so-called Heavenly Chastising Force, aroused by samurai radicals, attacked the shogunate authorities in the Nara area south of Kyoto.