



Japan in Chaos: Sengoku Period

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Introduction

During the long medieval era, Japanese feudal leaders struggled to achieve independence from each other and dominion over all of Japan.

While the country was nominally unified under the Emperor in Kyoto, actual unification of the entire country was an elusive, usually an impossible goal, a temporary achievement at best.

This ODUMUNC Crisis Brief outlines the political and military history of Japan, from the Kamakura Period in 1185 up to the crisis start in 1574. This brings the simulation to the final era of the *Sengoku period*, Japan's Age of Warring States. Japanese medieval history is extensive and complicated, dominated by strong personalities, multifaceted conflicts and social process that changed land ownership and power relations. This changing landscape is the driving force, the key to the Sengoku Period.

The crisis simulation begins in the year 1574. Oda Nobunaga is four years into another military campaign, against the Ikko-Ikki, a rebellious religious group that opposed power structures within Japan. Members of the Ikko-Ikki are commonly lower in social status compared to the ruling class. The Ikko-Ikki are members of the Jodo Shinshu sector of Buddhism. They held a commitment to continuing the Japanese way of life; including rejecting new western influences. This was a particular issue for Oda Nobunaga as he has a growing interest in Christianity, and other western traditions.

The Ikko-Ikki rebellions also created disturbances in many areas so Oda, who was basically running the Shogunate himself, must quell them quickly. Not only do the Ikko-ikki pose as a political threat but they also contribute greatly to the economy. The most recent clashes

have been around Ishiyama and Nagashima. Both areas hold large Ikko-Ikko populations and fortresses that they continue to hold. Much of their commands and support for other parts of the group are from here, Nagashima specifically.



Battle of Kawanakajima, 1561

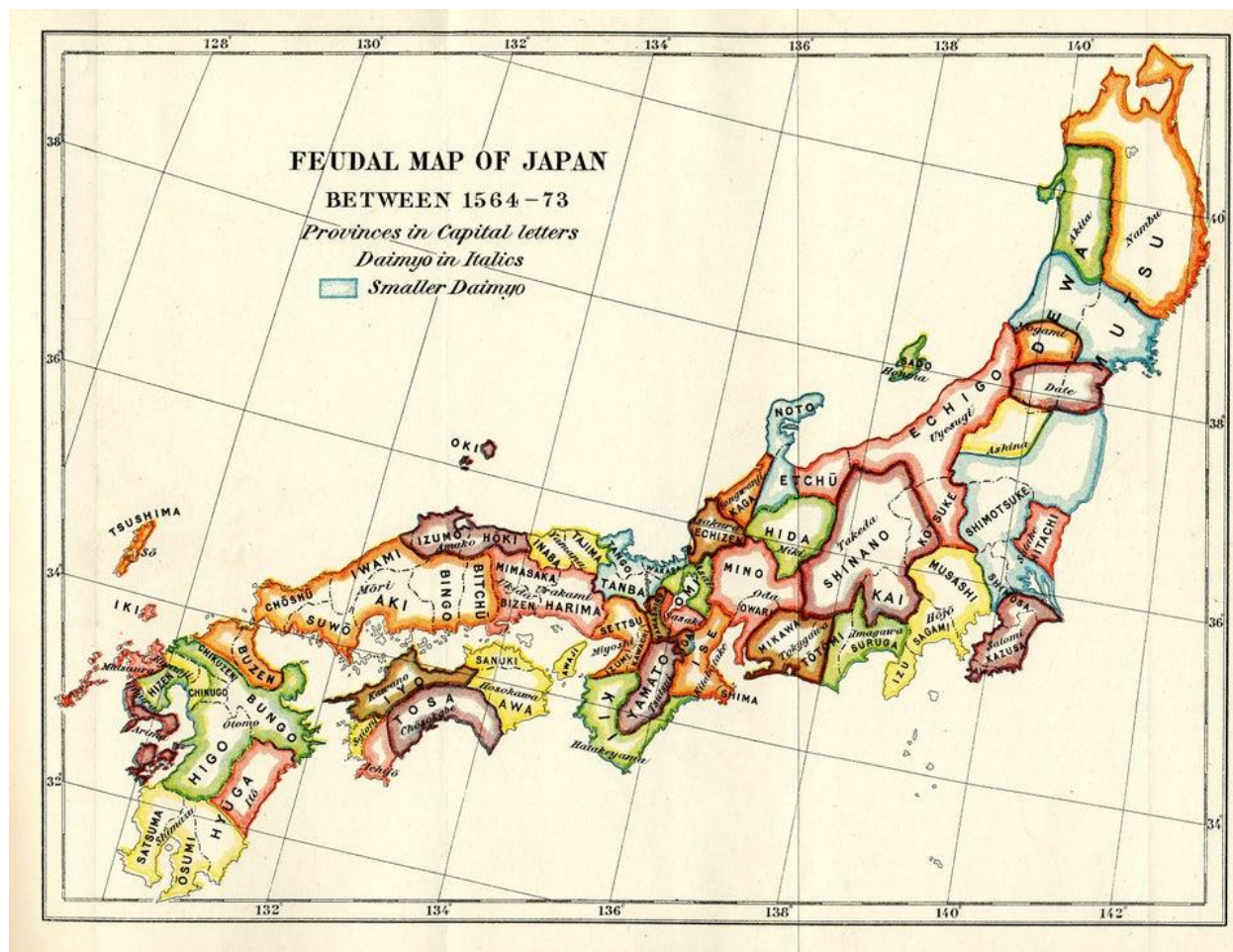
Oda Nobunaga's army has seen very little progress since the beginning of this civil war, but remains hopeful that in due time they will be victorious. The past four years have taken a strain on supplies and soldiers, but the end is far from near.

Note: No historical events *following* the crisis start that occurred in real history can be assumed to occur in this simulation.



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Key Terms:

Shōgun 将軍 (Shogunate): Is the military dictator of Japan during most of the period spanning from 1185 to 1868. Nominally appointed by the Emperor, shōguns were usually the de facto rulers of the country, and were arranged by a ruling clan. The members of the Shōgunate were usually all part of the same family or clan.

The Daimyō 大名: Powerful Japanese feudal lords who ruled most of Japan from their vast, hereditary land holdings. Subordinate to the shogun and nominally to the Emperor and the Kuge, Daimyō ruled from the 10th Century to the middle 19th Century in Japan.

Kuge 公家: Japanese aristocrats who work in the Imperial court in Kyoto.



Kamakura Period (1185 – 1333 CE)

1185: Minamoto no Yoritomo chooses to rule alongside the Imperial Court while setting up his own government in Kamakura in the Kanto region of Japan which was supported by the imperial court. In 1192 Yoritomo acquired the title seii tai-shogun. The Imperial Court gave legitimacy to the shogunate but in reality, the shogunate were only de facto rulers of the country.

1199: Minamoto no Yoritomo dies and his son Minamoto Sanetomo becomes Emperor but is in reality being puppeted by Hojo Masako and her father Hojo Tokimasa who went on to become regent in 1203CE essentially turning the Minamoto shoguns to be controlled by the Hojo regents.

1221: The Jokyu War, a rebellion against the shogunate, is instigated by retired Emperor Go-Toba leading to the exile of himself and two other retired Emperors, Tsuchimikado and Juntoku, each of which were exiled to separate provinces and islands allowing the shogunate to consolidate more power.

1250: The people of rural Japan saw much prosperity and growth starting around this time as iron tools became more widespread as well as with the increased use of improved irrigation and fertilizers. At this time Zen Buddhism spread widely amongst the samurai class instead of being held only for the elite.

1274, 1281: Two failed invasions by the Mongols who were equipped with superior weapons and numbers but were cut short by typhoons, resulting in the destruction of their navies. This advantage allowed the Japanese to win but the military costs were too high and the shogunate were unable to pay their vassals for their help, creating harsh consequences on their relationship with the Shogunate.

1333: Growing discontent from the samurai class leads Emperor Go-Daigo to launch a rebellion in hopes of overthrowing the shogunate. When the shogunate sent their General, Ashikaga Takauji to fight off the revolt, he and his men instead joined the rebellion and helped overthrow the Kamakura shogunate themselves.

Muromachi Period (1333-1568 CE)

1338: Ashikaga Takauji and other samurai were dissatisfied with Emperor Go-Daigo's Kenmu Restoration so, they led a rebellion that successfully captured Kyoto. When there, they installed a rival member of the imperial family to the throne who was then named Takauji shogun. Go-Daigo fled and set up a rival government in the southern city Yoshino creating conflict between the Northern and Southern courts. Takauji set up his shogunate in the Muromachi district of Kyoto and appointed allies to rule the provinces of Japan, but these men decided to instead act on their own as feudal lords called daimyos and would often refuse the orders of the shogun.

1368: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, Takauji's grandson, came to power as Shogun.

1392: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu established peace between the Northern and Southern Courts by ending the civil war, allowing the shogunate to keep a close grip on the Emperor.

Sengoku Period (1467 - 1600 CE)

1467-77: The Onin War breaks out to determine who would succeed the ruling shogun. The daimyos take sides as the shogun lost all control. During this time, the Daimyos ruled hundreds of independent states throughout Japan, consisting



of other Daimyos, rebellious peasants, and Buddhist warrior monks. Each independent state raised their own armies.

1543: A Chinese ship was blown off course and landed in Japan. The three Portuguese traders who were aboard became the first Europeans to step foot in Japan. With their arrival came Japan's introduction to gun powder and firearms.

1548: The Matsudaira clan is attacked by neighboring Oda clan in a major show of force. The Matsudaira, in an attempt to survive, try to form an alliance with the Imigawa who, as payment, required the Matsudaira heir, Matsudaira Motoyasu, to be taken to the Imigawa lands to be held hostage. On the way to Imigawa lands, Motoyasu is taken and held hostage by the Oda forces instead.

1556: In the last 8 years the Daimyo of the Oda passes away, as well as the old head of the Matsudaira. Imigawa forces have recaptured Matsudaira Motoyasu and raised him to be the head of the Matsudaira clan, while Imigawa and Matsudaira forces invade Oda lands. When all seemed lost, the new Daimyo, Oda Nabunaga, launched a master plan that effectively killed the Imigawa head as well as most of his forces. After the devastating loss, Matsudaira Motoyasu decided to join forces with Oda Nabunaga. After this battle, Matsudaira Motoyasu became Tokugawa Ieyasu and his clan became the Tokugawa clan.

1561: Following the destruction of the Imigawa, Oda Nabunaga began to consolidate his newly gained power by marrying off his sister to the head of the Azai and tries to make an alliance with his father-in-law, who was the head of the Saito. The Saito and Azai were the two clans who ruled the area between the Oda and Kyoto the capital. Before any agreement could be made however, the son of Saito struck down his father and became the Daimyo, Saito Yoshitatsu. Yoshitatsu declined the alliance with Nobunaga. During this time Nabunaga recruits Toyotomi Hideyoshi as a sandal bearer. It was in the year

1561 that Nabunaga would begin the invasion of Saito lands.

1563: After 3 years of fighting, Oda Nabunaga had made headway but was unable to fully take over the Saito lands. Since it would take more than brute force, Nabunaga pulled out his trump card, *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*. Hideyoshi used his skills in diplomacy to turn most of Saito's retainers against him weakening the Saito forces enough that it would just take one more thing to establish dominance and win. It was there in the shadow of Saito's last fortress that Hideyoshi built his own fortress at Nabunaga's request and then uses a small force of men to infiltrate the Saito fortress. After this successful attack, the Saito are no more and Hideyoshi is gifted some of their land to be a lord of his own. Still under Nobunaga's leadership of course.



Japanese peasant soldier posing with an early Japanese cannon



1568: Ashikaga Yoshiaki, who was cast out of Kyoto after his brother was killed, asks Oda Nabunaga for help in reclaiming his rightful spot as Shogun. Nabunaga agreed and marched on Kyoto and overthrew the false shogunate. Things seemed like they would be great until Yoshiaki realized that he was not going to actually get to be Shogun as Oda Nabunaga tried to use him as a puppet, and relations got heated.

1570: Asakura Yoshikage refuses a summons by the shogun, secretly sent from Oda Nobunaga. Their public dismissal allowed Nabunaga to call them traitors and war was formally declared. Oda Nabunaga marched through the Azai lands into the lands of the Asakura but once in position the Azai revolted and joined the Asakura.

Nabunaga was outnumbered but with the help of his retainers split his forces and retreated. An attempt on his life was made but the two bullets that shot at Nobunaga lodged in his armor instead. Oda Nabunaga managed to get back to Kyoto and rally his forces and using the combined forces of Toyatoma Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, they push back into Azai lands and grasp a desperate victory, forcing them to retreat back to Kyoto to recover.

The Miyoshi clan, who had previously been kicked out of Kyoto by Oda Nabunaga, seized this opportunity and joined forces with the Ikko-ikki who were occupied in the temple fortress Ishiyama Hogan-ji. The Nobunaga forces laid siege but were unable to take the fortress. The Azai and Asakura, who were recovering from their defeat, allied with warrior monks of Enryaku-ji; seeing the stalled Oda forces went on the offensive.

1571: Oda Nabunaga begrudgingly makes peace with the Azai and Asakura. Nabunaga decides to take care of the monks from Enryaku-ji though and encircles their temple at which sat on Mount Hiei. The Oda forces surrounded the mountain and lit the treeline ablaze. The fire burned up the mountain to the summit destroying the temple

and forced all inhabitants to flee. Nabunaga ordered his soldiers to kill every man, woman, and child that fled. After the inhabitants were slain, Nabunaga and his forces continued their campaign against the Asakura and Azai.

1572: Takeda Shingen, at the behest of Ashikaga Yoshiaki, sees the warring clans and decides to make way towards Kyoto by way of Mikawa, the home province of the Tokugawa. A quick battle with Ieyasu leaves him only 5 men by the time they make it back to the Tokugawa castle. But with those meager numbers and a good plan, Ieyasu manages to scare off Takeda.

1573: Takeda Shingen sees another opportunity for Mikawa to wipe out the Tokugawa once and for all but during a minor castle siege a lucky shot kills Takeda Shingen leaving the Takeda for his less capable son Takeda Katsuyori. Takeda Katsuyori lays siege to a small castle, Nagashino. Here the garrison is forced back up to keep and holds out as long as possible. At the last possible moment Nabunaga and his forces arrive and are able to destroy the Takeda forces forcing them to retreat to their home province, when all seemed lost for them, the Takeda formed an alliance with their rivals the Uesugi and the warrior monks of Ishiyama Hogan-ji.

Characters



Sir Heishiro Mitsurugi (御剣平四郎): A samurai for the Murakami clan who owes their allegiance to the Uesugi clan. An honorable warrior who now holds the respect of his fellow soldiers and samurai. He worked his way up the rankings with devotion and has a sizable following within the lower ranks. With his spreading fame he has now gained the opportunity to form a clan of his own that would remain loyal to the Uesugi. He dreams of one day becoming a Daimyo of great renown but for now, he remains a wheel in the cog.

Admiral João Cena: The 2nd son of a wealthy trader in Portugal, Admiral Cena sailed to Nagasaki in search of fame and wealth. His large and hairy appearance—compared to typical Japanese—sets him apart. He comes with his fleet of three carracks and one galleon and brings many trade goods including spices from India, silk from China, as well as firearms and cannons from Europe. The firepower that his trade vessels can bring to bear far outclass almost any native ship within the Sea of Japan. With this wealth and power João Cena brings with him, many possibilities are available, all he must do is seize them.

Captain Oaken Skildpadden: Sailing in 1569, Capt. Skildpadden arrived in Japan in 1572 to open trade relations between the Dutch and the Japanese. On arrival, local samurai confiscated all that was on the ship, most notably guns and books on various Western advancements, including science, mathematics, literature, and language. The contents of their cargo caught the attention of the local daimyo, who then decided to pay Skildpadden for his wares (with an involuntary discount of 100% off). But the Daimyo did not imprison him and his crew under the condition that they return to Japan and sell Dutch goods. Realizing the potential profit that he can make, he returned to Japan in 1574, sailing the Japanese coast (with ample protection), selling to any daimyo that is willing to pay.



Daimyō Honda Tadakatsu (本多忠勝): A peerless warrior, and loyal retainer of the Tokugawa Clan, Daimyō Tadakatsu is one of Ieyasu's finest generals. He is considered one of the best samurai by some of the most powerful



and influential individuals in Japan and is a coveted guest in many gatherings. Such are his skills that he has never once received a serious injury nor been defeated by another samurai in combat. His most recent military action was serving his lord at the Battle of Mikatagahara, where the Tokugawa forces led by Ieyasu were defeated by the Takeda, led by Naito Masatoyo. He is the Daimyo of the Honda clan, who are retainers to the Tokugawa.

Father Caesarini Machismocho Bruteneli

Zucchini: A career Catholic missionary from Italy, Father Caesarini has seen his fair share of the world. Father Caesarini joined the Society of Jesus in Goa, 1556, and was shortly after chosen to accompany the Society's highest Asian official, Antonio de Quadros on a tour of India. At the request of Francisco Cabral, Father Caesarini visited Japan with the intention of destroying Buddhist infrastructure and converting as many followers to the true faith. A prominent religious leader for the Arima clan, he is scheduled to perform the baptism of Arima Yoshisada in 1576.

Admiral Sao Feng (嘯風): The Chinese captain of a small fleet of Wokou who has been raiding the coasts of Japan and China for the past ten years. His tall and gaunt form has made his exploits seem of legend as he is now heralded the "Umihebi," or Sea Serpent. He and his men see great opportunity in the trade being done by the endless supply of European ships coming to trade with Japan. He leads an experienced fleet of junks and atakebune with a combined force of thousands of men and hundreds of horses and has begun to branch out his endeavours onto land. Word of his raids has begun to spread as he sets out to raid coastal villages and cities taking all he can. The Shogunate has begun to notice and have set high rewards for anyone who can take him down.

Shōgun Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川家康): The child of a family of eleven children, Shōgun Ieyasu has continued to strive for his own success. But beginning his life as a captive of

the Oda clan instilled a ruthlessness and strength that has remained with him to this day. One of the most cunning figures in the Sengoku era, he is willing to use any means necessary in order to increase his power. These actions include; betraying newly established alliances for land and power grabs, securing alliances with other clans through marriage, and crushing the religious *ikko* peasant revolts. By 1574, his alliance with Oda Nobunaga has existed for 14 years, and with the recent death of Takeda Shingen, he sees the opportunity to further expand his holdings.

Daimyō Takeda Katsuyori (武田 勝頼):

Following the death of his father Takeda Shingen in 1573, Daimyō Katsuyori is the true heir to the Takeda family as well as the head of the Suwa clan. Even though they control a sizeable area of land away from Kyoto, the Takeda are surrounded by enemies and rivals on all sides and suffer a continuous war against the allied forces of Oda Nobunaga and Tokugawa Ieyasu. Daimyō Katsuyori desires to continue checking the threat of aggressive Oda expansion. With his new position, he seeks to make a greater name for himself. His wife is the sister of the Hojo daimyō, Hojo Masako, whose marriage secured an alliance with the Takeda, Imagawa, and Hojo clans.

Daimyō Mori Terumoto (毛利 輝元):

Daimyō Mori Terumoto is the Daimyo of the Aki province following his father who died when he was only ten years old. Coming from a prominent family due to his grandfather's fame as a strategist, Daimyō Terumoto is well versed in strategy. But on the battlefield he became famous for his lacking motivational speeches, his passion always appearing elsewhere. Known to be a very flirtatious man, Daimyō Terumoto has been known to steal the hearts of many a woman. But he is young, and with the strength of the Mori clan behind him, he may rise to prestige yet.

Minister of War Kasai Sho (葛西笑): A samurai in the court of the emperor, Minister



Kasai Sho has spent his life balancing his loyalties between the Emperor and the Shogun so that he and his family could live in peace. Careful not to incur the wrath of either, he treads the line with every action. He has connections throughout the capital of Kyoto, which he uses to keep up to date with the local goings on. He truly believes that Emperor Ogimachi is the one to lead Japan to a united future where it is a world power. Minister Kasai Sho is known to share a close rapport with the Emperor, and they are often found in the Castle gardens playing Go.

Ambassador ChangChang Zhao (着 常常):

ChangChang Zhao is a senior Chinese ambassador sent to Japan by the new crowned Wanli Emperor. Her official duty is to negotiate a cease to the Japanese aggression towards Korea by any means necessary. Arriving with a small host of security and assistants, she is currently staying as a guest within the Shogunate. The shogun has eyes on her but as tensions rise between Nobunaga and the Ikko-Ikki, many things can occur under the shogun's gaze.

Master Yi I (이이): Master Yi I is one of the most prominent leaders of Neo-Confucianism in Joseon. He has many years of experience in multiple levels of the Korean government in a wide variety of positions. He has gained the trust of the Korean king as well as his ear. A proven savant in a wide band of studies, his brand of Confucianism stresses the importance of learning and experience, believing that these ideals are part of an effective government. He keeps watch of the actions happening in Japan, as he believes that a unified Japan provides a big threat to the Korean Kingdom, as the proximity between Korea and Japan offers the Japanese a close target for invasion.

Daimyō Tachibana Reih (橘れい): Daimyō Tachibana Reih is the surviving wife of the Tachibana family who, in response to the attempted takeover of the house by an uncle with a weak claim, gathered a contingent of

loyal warriors, her husband's armor, and her modest treasury and left to seek support from the other Daimyōs. She is not well known, so her warrior troops have been navigating the Japanese countryside with ease even through enemy territory. Her ability to spur people to action has been noteworthy and she credits it with her love of literature and poetry.

Rōnin Sakai Akira (酒井明): Rōnin Sakai Akira is a samurai who lost his title in the battle of Okehazama where his lord, Imagawa Yoshimoto, lost his life to the hands of Oda Nobunaga. Wounded and believed dead after the battle, Rōnin Akira lived quietly in small towns for many years until he was fully healed and able to wield his katana once more. Hoping to find redemption for himself and Imagawa, Akira now wanders Japan looking for work worth the fight.

Sir Hattori Hanzo (服部 半蔵): Sir Hattori Hanzo is an acclaimed fighter, so skilled in his craft that his effort in stealth have been spreading across Iga province as legend. Successfully fighting his first battle at the age of sixteen in 1562, Sir Hanzo has maintained his reputation as an honorable and distinguished fighter in the battles of Anegawa (1570) and Mikatagahara (1572). Greatly contributed to Tokugawa Ieyasu's rise as shogun by bringing down Imagawa Ujizane who was holding Ieyasu's wife and children hostage in 1561. He has earned the nickname Oni no Hanzo (Demon Hanzo) due to the fearlessness he has displayed in battle.

Lady Saigo (西郷局): Lady Saigo first befriended Tokugawa Ieyasu around 1569. In the early 1570s, they would develop a friendship and mutual attraction to each other that led to an especially close relationship. Lady Saigo's real power comes from the fact that Ieyasu at times came to her for counsel on various matters, whether they be political or martial in nature. Lady Saigo is religious and devoted to the Pure Land sect of Buddhism which brings about her charitable nature. She is also very near sighted



so most of her charity focuses on helping blind women. Her pride is her work in creating a school for the blind as well as donating money, food, or other necessities to them. The school's goal is to help teach the women how to play the *shamisen*, a particular skill that could help them find jobs. These women were known as *goze*.

Daimyō Asakura Yoshikage (朝倉 義景):

Daimyō Asakura Yoshikage is a shrewd negotiator who has ruled the Echizen province as head of the Asakura clan after succeeding his father in 1548. Militarily he supported Ashikaga Yoshiaki in becoming the Shōgun, but it failed. He was sided with Nobunaga until 1570 when he refused a request to meet him in Kyoto leading to a fallout between the two clans. Not known for his military tactics, Asakura Yoshikage was instead a strong politician and diplomat with a talented brain for personal connections.

Daomyō Uesugi Kenshin (上杉 謙信): Born Nagao Kagetora on 18 February 1530 to the Nagao clan who ruled Kasugayama Castle in Echigo. Kagetora would later be adopted into the Uesugi clan and take over Kasuayama castle as its lord in 1548, changing their name to Uesugi Kenshin, thus consolidating control of Echigo to the Uesugi with the Nagao as retainers. Later Daimyō Kenshin would be famed for his honorable conduct and military expertise, as well as his long-standing rivalry with Takeda Shingen. Being a devout believer in Bishamonten, the Buddhist god of war, Kenshin does not shy from conflict and chaos. Currently the Uesugi wage war against the Takeda and the Hojo for control of the Kanto region. There are rumors that this "God of War" is a woman, but they have yet to be proven.

Sir Hosokawa Yusai (細川 幽齋): Sir Hosakawa Yusai, also known as Hosakawa Fuijutaka, is the second son of the Hosakawa clan. Unable to become daimyo himself, he worked to become a prominent retainer for the Ashikaga Shogunate. His calm demeanor sets him apart from other Daimyo's as well as his

focus on the welfare of the Japanese people. Using his Buddhist faith to guide him, he works with the shogun to expand Japanese culture as well as bring gaps between the people and their leaders. This has given him wide acclaim as being a kind man, a "samurai of the people."

Emperor Ogimachi (正親町天皇): Succeeded the throne after his father, Emperor Go-Nara's death in 1557, and became Japan's 106th emperor. At the start of his reign, the royal court was at its lowest; financial struggles over the strength of Japan's military leaders. But, with the support of Oda Nobunaga, the courts fall has slowed. In 1573, however, there were growing calls, led by Nobunaga, for Emperor Ogimachi's abdication.

Daimyo Hōjō Ujiyasu (北条 氏政): Born in 1538 to Hōjō Ujiyasu and later became daimyō in 1571, after many years serving as a talented general in his father's military. He supported his father in many campaigns that expanded Odawara lands and made it a formidable force in Japan. Tutored and well versed in the ways of war, Daimyō Hōjō Ujiyasu leads his domain with pride and devotion to the Japanese way of life. In service to the Shogunate and his own house, he continues to focus on expanding his houses power. He also has ties with the Takeda family, as his sister is the wife of the current Daimyō.

General Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣 秀吉): Born in March of 1537, General Toyotomi has risen to become one of the most prominent and powerful samurai, generals and politicians in Japan. He now serves under Oda Nobunaga but had humble beginnings in Owari Province. Despite being a part of the Oda clan for a short period of time, General Toyotomi has proven his worth and skill among the Oda samurai and has garnered quite the reputation. As the first samurai of his family lineage, General Toyotomi Hideyoshi takes pride in his work and desires to bring honor to the Oda clan. His loyalty is unquestionable, and he once battled a fellow



officer for questioning a superior's decision. He won the battle.

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