

14. Feudal domination of the Tama region

14.1 The Oishi family's control of the Tama region

The Ashikaga family vassals had succeeded as *shugo* (military administrator) of Musashi Province during the Muromachi Period. However, after the 1361 appointment of YAMANOUCHI-UESUGI Noriaki, the Uesugi family took over the Musashi Shugo role. In 1368, UESUGI Yoshinori, a son of Noriaki, became Kanto Kanrei and Shugo of Kozuke, Musashi and Izu provinces simultaneously. OISHI Yoshishige became *Shugodai* (assistant shugo). The shugodai had important roles in the enforcement of the shogun's and shugo's orders in the local area. In practice they dominated instead of the shugo. Trusted shugo subordinates or prominent local lords tended to be appointed. OISHI Yoshishige served as shugodai also under UESUGI Norikata, younger brother of UESUGI Yoshinori, establishing the foundations of the Oishi family's power.

The Oishi family is believed to have come from Shinano Province (Nagano Prefecture) and to have advanced into the Kanto region during the Nanbokuchō Period in the 14th century. The Oishi family maintained ties with the Bushu-minami-ikki, a locally powerful Tama County group also influential in the province where the Yamanouchi-Uesugi family was shugo of the time. This family extended its power beyond Tama County, influencing the Kanto Kanrei inauguration of Norishige, a son of OISHI Nobushige. However, after the tenure of Noriyoshi (a son of Norishige), the Oishi family failed to acquire further shugodai or *mokudai* (private representative of an absentee shugo) positions.

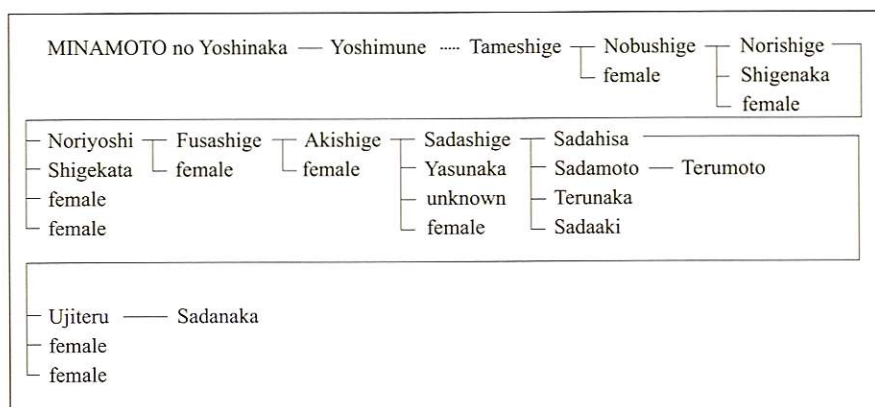


Fig.95 Summary of the Kiso Oishi family genealogy.

The Kamakura Kubo ASHIKAGA Shigeuji killed the Kanto Kanrei UESUGI Noritada in 1454 in allout confrontation with the Uesugi family. This led to a full-scale war, called the Kyotoku-no-ran insurrection. Repeatedly Shigeuji's army fought fierce battles with the Uesugi army at Bubaigawara (Fuchu City) the following year. The Uesugi army failed, and OISHI Fusashige(a son of OISHI Noriyoshi), who fought for the Uesugi side, died in battle. OISHI Fusashige's son was Akishige, and Akishige's son was Sadashige. Sadashige built Takiyama Castle in 1521, on the hill across the Tama River from Fussa. Sadahisa succeeded Sadashige to become the last Oishi family head.

After his succession in 1527, Sadahisa adopted HOJO Ujiyasu's third son Ujiteru, transferring family headship to him in 1538 so as to become a priest before dying in 1549. The Oishi family dominion at that time extended south to Zama in Sagami Province and north to Tokorozawa in Musashi Province.

14.2 The Hirayama family's control of Fussa

It is thought that the Hirayama family was the first to rule the Fussa area. During the Muromachi Period, the Hirayama family collected land taxes from the *Funakida-no-sho* (a fief in Hachioji and Hino cities) and delivered these to the owners, the Tofukuji Temple at Kyoto. This role is thought to have continued from the Kamakura Period, as the Hirayama family had lived in this area since then, and the family name "Hirayama" is derived from a place name in the Funakida-no-sho (in Hino City). It is further speculated that the Hirayama family fought on the ASHIKAGA Mochiuji side because, in 1417, the Kamakura Kubo praised the Hirayama along with the Bushu-minami-ikki for distinguished service in the UESUGI Zenshu-no-ran insurrection, granting them five years' exemption from all public duties.



Fig.96 Katsumuma Castle Ruins. This castle is also called Ryugatani Castle. It served as the Mita family's base in Ome City for 200 years.

The Hirayama family is believed to have later come under the control of the Mita family who dominated the upper Tama River area. The Mita family territory included the upper Tama River basin in northwestern Tama County, and land in Iruma and Koma counties to the north, all centering on their Katsunuma Castle in Ome City. Their territory spanned present Ome City as well as Hanno, Hidaka and Sayama cities in Saitama Prefecture.

14.3 The Mita family's control of the upper Tama River

The upper Tama River area, called Soma-no-ho from the Ancient Times to the Medieval Times, was rich in forest resources. Mita family heads prevailed over Soma-no-ho, serving the Kamakura Shogunate as gokenin (vassals). The family served Kamakura Kubo ASHIKAGA Motouji of the Kamakura-fu, in alliance with the Kanto Kanrei Uesugi family during the Nanbokuchō upheaval. Residing in Katsunuma Castle (Ome City) in those times, the Mita family was known as the *Katsunuma-dono* (Lords of Katsunuma).

MITA Ujimune, attached to the Yamanouchi Uesugi family, dominated the upper Tama River, Iruma and Koma regions during the Sengoku Period. These combined regions were known as *Mitadani* (Mita Valley). Ujimune and his son Masasada were known as educated men, on friendly terms with the poet Saiokuken Socho, who was a favored pupil of the *renga* (linked poem) master IIO Sōgi (1421-1502).

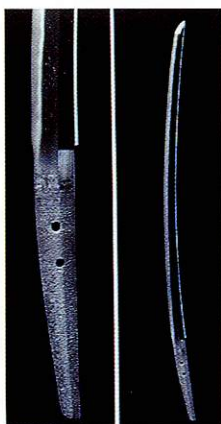


Fig. 97 Sword forged by Bushu Shitaharaju Yasushige. Yasushige was a sword smith at the Shitahara smithy in Jofukuji Castle town (in Shimo-Ongata, Hachioji City). This smithy was under the patronage of the Oishi family. It is said that after HOJO Ujiyasu granted him one of his kanji names "yasu" he named himself "Yasushige."

14.4 Odawara Hojo's invasion of Musashi Province

The locally powerful Oishi and Mita families greatly influenced the Tama region in the late Medieval Times. Later, the Hojo family gained ascendancy over them. The founder of this Hojo family was HOJO Soun, and, like the famous general SAITO Dosan, he was a representative character in the *Gekokujo* period characterized by inferiors overthrowing their superiors. HOJO Soun sought to seize the whole Kanto Plain after he captured Odawara Castle in 1495. This Hojo family is known as the Odawara Hojo, or Go-hojo (Later Hojo), in order to distinguish it from the completely different Kamakura Shogunate Hojo family.

After Soun's son Ujitsuna captured Edo Castle in 1524, the Hojo family attained full influence over the Tama region. The Oishi and Mita families maintained friendly relations with the Hojo family at first. However, as the Hojo family's power gradually rose, confrontations emerged. The Mita family suffered suppression then ruin in 1561 under HOJO Ujiteru, because the Mita family had supported NAGAO Kagetora (UESUGI Kenshin), who had waged war in the Kanto and opposed the Hojo family in 1560. Meanwhile OISHI Sadahisa transferred family headship to his adopted son, HOJO Ujiteru, in order to retire in 1546. The Hojo family gained control of this region through the Oishi family's transfer of authority.



Fig.98 Restored shoji-bori moat of Yamanaka Castle (Mishima City, Shizuoka Prefecture). The Odawara Hojo family built this castle in the late Sengoku Period as a western defense for their castle at Odawara. The most important structural element of mountain castles is the dry moat. The ridged moat (shoji-bori moat) existed to block movement of enemy soldiers who might reach the moat floor. Frame-like barricades were constructed in the moat. The elaborate Yamanaka Castle ridged moat shows the full development of this technology.

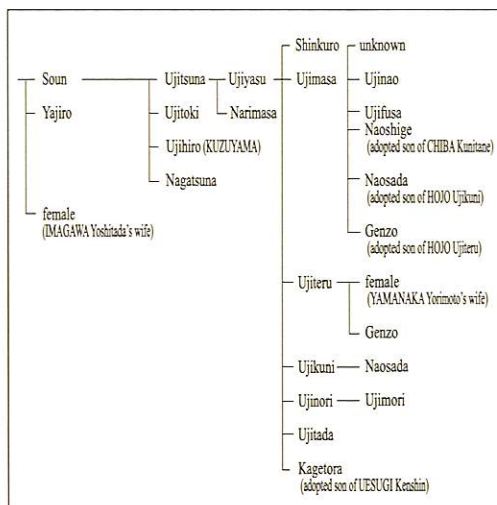


Fig.99 Summary of the Odawara Hojo family genealogy.