Kitanomandokoro:

A Lady Samurai Behind the Shadow of Toyotomi Hideyoshi

by

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Abstract

"Your skill is the best, and our wish is always the same – Taiko" (1593)

This is a quote from a private correspondence between Toyotomi Hideyoshi and his first wife, Kitanomandokoro. She had been married to him for thirty-seven years, and was respected not only by Hideyoshi and other vassals who were close to him, but also by Daimyo who lived in remote places. In studies on Hideyoshi and his time, however, this fact has never come into the spotlight; Kitanomandokoro has always simply been referred to as "a wife of Hideyoshi," and very little is known about her. Who is this lady whom Taiko praised as the best and most trustworthy? This study presents the first biographical record of Kitanomandokoro. By reading primary sources from her time, even without believing that Kitanomandokoro was a powerful figure, one would be persuaded that the "lady samurai" behind the male samurai cannot be underestimated in terms of their consolidated and meaningful positions.

The private correspondences of Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro further act as records demonstrating Kitanomandokoro's importance in the castle in absence of Hideyoshi. These letters have generally been taken as love letters and thus have never been analyzed as a significant historical record of women's importance during Hideyoshi's reign. Conditions away from Osaka as well as future military plans were discussed in these private correspondences in great detail. This confirms Hideyoshi's reliance on his first wife and so gives a new insight into the study of both Hideyoshi and his time: The image of Hideyoshi as a solo military dictator undergoes a significant transformation when we consider the contribution of his first wife more carefully. This important lady, who observed the unification of Japan from the time of Oda Nobunaga to the reign of Tokugawa Iemitsu, had connections to a number of Daimyo and their wives, and used her power and alliances to pull strings behind the scenes that affected the politics of the nation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .............................................................................................................. ii

Table of Contents .............................................................................................. iii

List of Tables ...................................................................................................... iv

List of Figures .................................................................................................... v

Chapter I  Introduction ....................................................................................... 1

Chapter II  Life as Nei, Life as Kitanomandokoro, Life as Kōdaïin ...................... 7
  2.1  Life as Nei ............................................................................................ 7
  2.2  Life as Kitanomandokoro .................................................................. 11
  2.3  Life as Kōdaïin .................................................................................. 25

Chapter III  Private Correspondences of Kitanomandokoro ......................... 31
  3.1  Private correspondences between Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro ....... 31
  3.2  Love Letters ...................................................................................... 32
  3.3  Letters to the first wife ..................................................................... 34
  3.4  Information ....................................................................................... 37
  3.5  Reporting .......................................................................................... 39
  3.6  Managing financial issues ................................................................. 46
  3.7  Policing ............................................................................................ 49
  3.8  Kitanomandokoro and Chacha ........................................................... 52
  3.9  Castle sitting: Keep his men in order ................................................. 58

Chapter IV  Testimony of her Conduct: The Date Letters .............................. 61
  4.1  Hideyoshi’s territory ......................................................................... 61
  4.2  From Kōzōsu ................................................................................... 63
  4.3  The Date Ladies ............................................................................... 66
  4.4  Kōdaïin’s letter after the annihilation of Osaka ................................... 69

Chapter V  Kitanomandokoro in Tales: Ehon Taikōki Written in the Kansai Era .... 72
  5.1  Ehon Taikōki .................................................................................... 72
  5.2  Inside of Osaka castle ...................................................................... 73
  5.3  Kitanomandokoro vs. Yodo ............................................................... 74
  5.4  After Ehon Taikōki .......................................................................... 86

Chapter VI  Conclusion: A Lady, and the Lady Samurai in the Sengoku Period .... 87

Bibliography ...................................................................................................... 93
List of Tables

Table 1 Female Attendants of Kitanomandokoro ......................................................... 48
Table 2 Hideyoshi’s adopted children (Previous version) .................................................. 52
Table 3 Hideyoshi’s adopted children (Complete version) ............................................... 52
Table 4 Hideyoshi’s Family ................................................................................................. 55
List of Figures

Figure 1 Daimyo and their lands in 1582 .........................................................62
Figure 2 Daimyo and their lands in 1590 .........................................................66
Chapter I Introduction

Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598) had three hundred women staying in Osaka castle. That number included his first wife, concubines, and attendants. However, not much about these women’s lives was recorded in Hideyoshi’s biographies, stories, and tales. In addition to that, the historical studies on Hideyoshi and his time did not incorporate the ladies around him. As a result, the ladies who lived in Hideyoshi’s time have never been in the spotlight, and Hideyoshi has been seen as a solo figure who united Japan with his militaristic power.

This study focuses on the life of one lady who lived in the Sengoku period – Kitanomandokoro, the first wife of Hideyoshi. Kuwata Tadachika touched on her life in his works on Women in the Momoyama Period (Momoyama jidai no josei) and Letters from Taikō (Taikō no tegami). And Kurumi Akiko wrote a brief novel “Kitanomandokoro” in Pictorial Biographies: Women’s History of Japan (Zusetsu Jinbutsu Nihon no Joseishi). Kishi Hiroko also wrote another short novel “Kitanomandokoro” in Bibliography: Women’s History of Japan (Jinbutsu Nihon no Joseishi). All of these works were published by authors born in the early twentieth century. They put more emphasis on the life of Yodo, a mother of Hideyoshi’s sons, and believed that her life impacted the time, especially a few years before the battle of Sekigahara.
More specifically, Kuwata states that the status of women was much lower than men in the Momoyama period and that the role of women was to satisfy men's sexual desires and to become a hostage to man's political intention.\(^1\) Then, he called Kitanomandokoro, One, and repeatedly expressed pity for her for not being able to bear Hideyoshi's children.\(^2\) Similarly, Kurumi and Kishi emphasized the fact that Kitanomandokoro did not have any children,\(^3\) and thus, they took her life as less important than that of Yodo. These authors' concern for women and their positions was based on whether they had sons or not, and as a result, Kitanomandokoro was not considered to be important at all. She was depicted as a powerless, jealous wife in all of the previous works.

Except Kuwata's work on the letters of Hideyoshi, all other descriptions of Kitanomandokoro were in novels. The writers contrasted her life with that of Yodo, and included the stories about conflicts with Yodo, and told her life story filled with sadness and much jealous. Furthermore, even Kuwata, who studied the letters from Hideyoshi, did not realize the letters' general function and the important information contained in them. Thus, the letters were assumed to be just love letters of Hideyoshi, and no significance was found throughout his study. In addition, there are neither biographical works for this lady, and nor careful gender studies covering women in the late sixteenth century Japan. Hence, my study is lacking in secondary sources and theoretical challenge, but it aims to be the first biographical, historical paper on a lady who lived in the Sengoku period.

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\(^1\) Kuwata, *Momoyama Jidaino Josei*, p.3.
\(^2\) For example, see Kuwata, *Taikō no Tegami*, p.30.
\(^3\) Kurumi, p.95, Kishi, p.63.
The main primary sources used in this study are *Frois’ History of Japan* (Furoisu Nihonshi), private correspondences, and the historical documents collected in the Date House (Date-ke monjo). Luis Frois left detailed descriptions of Hideyoshi’s wives in Osaka castle. His records were based on the information acquired from Christian ladies in the castle, and since he was a foreigner, he reported what he saw in Japan to Europe from a neutral standpoint. However, his mission was to propagate Christianity in Japan, and when Christian missionaries attempted to obtain permission to propagate Christianity in Japan in 1584, he recorded the course of their attempts with his opinions.

At that time, in 1584, the ladies in Osaka castle provided significant help to the Jesuits to acquire permission from Hideyoshi to evangelize. Since the Christian ladies in Osaka were readily approachable, the missionaries, namely Gasper Coelho, contacted the Christian ladies at the castle. Consequently, they successfully won the support of Hideyoshi’s first wife, and she helped the missionaries to draft the permission letters, and persuaded Hideyoshi to sign them. The women’s information line and his first wife’s opinion were both astonishingly strong and well established.

Including the details of this story, Chapter II tells the story of Kitanomandokoro’s life. She changed her name twice, first to Kitanomandokoro, and then to Kōdaiin, and as her name changed, her life faced significant changes too. Thus, the first section aims to see how she lived before she became Kitanomandokoro, and the second section traces her life as Kitanomandokoro. Here, all materials found in Japan that relate to Kitanomandokoro are presented. More sources similar to those presented exist all over Japan, but they have never been discovered nor compiled in an organized fashion.

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4 For example, Tokyo Daigaku Shiryo Hensanjo, Kōdaiji, and Osaka castle.
Finally, the last section covers her life as Kōdaiin. What did she do after Hideyoshi passed away? Who was around to support her? Her life as a widow was, indeed, as important as her previous Kitanomandokoro life. She was involved in the politics of Sekigahara in 1600.

In Chapter III, analysis of the letters examines her life as Kitanomandokoro in depth. As well as the contents of the letter, the general function of the letters will be the centre of focus. She received the letters from Hideyoshi via her writer attendants, and in reply, she let the attendants write and sent express messengers from Osaka castle or Jurakutei. The information in the letters reveals how the unification process was planned and pursued. Also, the exchange of those letters helps us understand how Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro mapped and perceived their land. Moreover, Hideyoshi asked her various favours, and noted gratitude to her in his letters. Then, unlike the letters sent out to his concubines and children, those that Kitanomandokoro received have more details about his military plans and the scope of his future.

From the private correspondences, we can see that Kitanomandokoro had a representative role for Hideyoshi while he was away. From finance to delivering clothes, Kitanomandokoro managed various things in Osaka. And Hideyoshi did not leave his men to castle-sit, but trusted her and deferred some authority to her to censor and police. Rather than men, it was Kitanomandokoro who Hideyoshi could depend on. She was the one who executed official works in absence of Hideyoshi at the castle.

While he was away, however, Kitanomandokoro kept contact with other daimyo independently. One example taken in Chapter IV is the letters sent to Date Masamune (1567-1636) in Ōshu. Masamune had to send his wife to Kyoto after the various internal
conflicts in the house, and when Hideyoshi was about to expand his power to the far north where the Date governed, Masamune was not going to be in full support of Hideyoshi. So, his wife, who went to Kyoto, was about to disclose this fact, but Masamune won over Kitanomandokoro’s help, and escaped a bigger conflict. The content of those letters is translated and presented in full length to show another independent conduct of Kitanomandokoro without Hideyoshi’s knowledge.

Also in Chapter IV, one letter sent to Masamune after 1615 will be examined carefully. This is the only letter that Kōdaiin herself wrote, and was written after the summer battle of Osaka (Osaka natsu no jin 大坂の陣). This letter gives additional evidence of Kitanomandokoro being on the Ieyasu’s side and advising her relatives and son to be on the side of Ieyasu at the time of the battle of Sekigahara (関ヶ原), 1600. She wrote how she felt about the destruction of Osaka in the letter directly. She was involved in this battle with positive attitude to crush the Toyotomi house.

After examining her important position from 1574 to 1615, one last question to answer is why her story did not survive. In order to see the factors that terminated or interfered with the survival of her life story in the later years, Chapter V looks at the first book of pictorial tales of Hideyoshi written in the Edo period. This is called Ehon Taikōki, and two centuries later, this series became popular and the stories from inside Osaka castle were told. In the tales of Ehon Taikōki, more fictional accounts were added, and due to the imaginative and false characterization of persona in this tale, Yodo was starting to gain more attention, and written about as if she enjoyed a higher position than Kitanomandokoro. Since this tale, the tendency to judge Yodo’s life as more important
than Kitanomandokoro's has been observed, and it continued with the authors in the early twentieth century.

The goal of this study is to write the first biographical record of Kitanomandokoro. By reading primary sources from her time, even without believing that Kitanomandokoro was a powerful figure, one would be persuaded that the women behind the male samurai cannot be underestimated in terms of their consolidated and meaningful positions. Who was the first wife of Hideyoshi? And what was her life like?
2.1 Life as Nei

A girl was born in 1549 (Tenmon 天文 17) as the second child of Sugihara Sukezaemon Sadatoshi (杉原助左衛門定利). Her mother’s name was Asahi (朝日). The Sugihara family was in Owari (尾張), and her father Sukezaemon was an unknown Ashigaru of the district. Her older brother was called Sugihara Magobê lesada (杉原孫兵衛家定). The girl became a daughter-in-law of Asano Mataemon Nagakatsu (浅野又右衛門長勝), and she was married to Kinoshita Tōkichirō (木下藤吉郎) in 1561 (Eiroku 永禄 4). She was fourteen years old, and Hideyoshi was a twenty-five years old Ashigaru (足軽) at the time. The marriage ceremony was simple, and Hideyoshi continued to serve Oda Nobunaga (織田信長).

The name of this girl is unclear. Kuwata Tadachika believes that her name was “Ne (祢)” and with a polite suffix “O (お)” attached to “ne,” it might have been be “One (お祢).” Indeed, she wrote one character “Ne (祢)” on her correspondences. This character “Ne (祢)” can be read as “Ne” or “Nei.” Moreover, there are three more documents that record her name. The first document is House genealogy of Kinoshita...
(Kinoshita Keizu 木下家系図), in which her name was written as “子為 (Nei).” In Sugiwara house’s genealogy, there is a sentence, “Mandokoro’s first name was Onei.” Here again, her name was written as “Onei (於祢居).” In Historical documents of Japan (Dainihon Shiryo 大日本史料), her name was written as “Jū ichi Kitanomandokoro Nei (從一位北政所寧子).” The transcription of “寧” is “Nei.” Her name, therefore, was likely “Nei”; the character “Ne (祢)” was written in letters because this is Jibo (字母) for hiragana “ne (ね).”

In 1573 (Tenshō 天正 1), Hideyoshi changed his surname to Hashiba (羽柴), and a year later, in 1574 (Tenshō 2), he started to build Nagahama (長篠) castle in Imahama (今篠). This was after thirteen years of marriage to Nei. Hideyoshi was thirty-eight, and Nei was twenty-seven years old when they finally owned their castle. At that time, Hideyoshi had some vassals, including Toranosuke (虎之助, later 加藤清正 1562-1611) and Ichimatsu (市松, later 福島正則 1561-1624), and they all lived in Nagahama castle. Upon the completion of building this castle, Nei also moved in with other residents of Odani (小谷) where they used to live. The castle town of Nagahama developed quickly, and Hideyoshi only assigned a small annual tribute and other military duties to the residents of Nagahama. When he began to install this generous system, the residents of neighbouring towns grew angry about the unfair burden of annual tributes and duties put

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5 「政所、從一位、諱子為、前關白太政大臣豊臣秀吉公正父」 in 木下家「系図」 in Hitomi Akihiko, p.44.
6 Heijō Sugihara shi on keizu fugen (平姓杉原氏御系図附言). Ibid.
7 Japanese text is “政所湖月君は御譜者於祢居 道松公の御末女なり.” Ibid.
8 vol.12, no.5. Kinoshita Ashimori Kafu, 木下足守家譜. Ibid.
9 Jibo is Chinese character that Hiragana Ne (ね) was derived from. Hiragana Ne (ね) was developed from a Chinese character Ne (祢).
on them. Thus, considering the complaints from the neighbours, Hideyoshi raised the
amount of annual tributes in Nagahama town. It is not surprising that the townsmen in
Nagahama were upset and began to make complaints about him. Indeed, the complaints
reached his wife, Nei, and she wrote to Hideyoshi asking him not to raise the amount of
tributes. In the same year, on the twenty-second day of the twelfth month, he sent a letter
to Nei’s attendant Koho;

Item: We felt pity for the townsmen, and exempted various duties. But
they became arrogant and brought over many people from different towns.
It is wrong.

Item: It is reasonable to send the people back to where they used to live [if
they are not from our domain.] The people who are from Kita no Kōri
should not be brought over, and exempted their duties. The people take
advantage of this, and secretly call over the people from everywhere. This
is because I exempted tributes and various duties for the townsmen [living
in Nagahama.] Thus, I reissued a new order.

Item: Although I issued a new order, since you refused it, I decided to
exempt their tributes and duties in accordance with the previous order.
Please explain the detail of the course, and order the magistrates.

Sincerely, Tōkichirō, Hideyoshi

Twenty-second day of the twelfth month
To Koho

I repeat: I continue to exempt the tributes and duties because you refused
the raise. Please explain the detail of the course [to everybody] very well.
Thank you.

Nei, as a wife of the lord of Nagahama castle, asked Hideyoshi to continue the
exemptions to the residents of his town. Here, Hideyoshi repeated twice, “you refused.”
At this time when he had just gained his own castle, Nei knew of the changes in his
policies, and suggested to freeze the amount of tributes for the townsmen.
During their stay in Nagahama, Oda Nobunaga visited and saw Nei. After the meeting, he sent a letter to her. This letter is a well-known one, and the text contains a lot of information about Nei.\(^\text{10}\)

As you have invited me, this time, I have been here [Nagahama] for the first time. It was great to see you. Especially, what you brought for me was very beautiful. There was too much to see, and too many wonderful things to write about. In return, I wanted to give you something, but since you have brought so many good things for me, and I had nothing special, so this time, I decided not to give anything. When I visit you next time, I will bring something as nice as what you got me. Among all, your face and body looked ten times or twenty times more beautiful since I saw you last time. Tōkichirō complained so much about insufficiency, but that is unspeakable. It must be a lie. Wherever he goes, that bold rat cannot find someone quite like you ever again. From now on, be happy, and as his first wife, be grave. Don’t be jealous. However, you are a female, so you have to behave well, and know when not to speak up. By the way, ask Hashiba about his opinion on this letter.

Nobu (Read seal)

To A Lady of Tōkichirō

From this letter, we can see that Nei had met Nobunaga before. Furthermore, she prepared many gifts for him, probably not in the name of Hideyoshi but at her own cost. He praised her so much, but an important thing to notice is that she was told not to speak up too much unnecessarily. As it is clear that Nobunaga had heard a lot about her and her jealousy of Hideyoshi’s concubines, he also knew that she often meddled in Hideyoshi’s decisions. This is a very casual letter although the red seal was stamped at the end, and is further evidence of her powerful existence behind Hideyoshi’s Nagahama years.

In the early 1580s, Hideyoshi was promoted very quickly. When Oda Nobunaga died at Hon’nōji (本能寺) in June 1582 (Tenshō 10), he did not have a high rank yet. In

\(^{10}\) Kuwata, *Nobunaga no Tegami*, pp.183-4.
October of the same year, he was given Jū goi ge (従五位下). Then, May of the following year, he was given Jū yon’i ge (従四位下) and acquired a position as Sangi (参議). In November 1584 (Tenshō 12), he became Gon Dainagon (権大納言) with Jū sanmi (従三位). In four months, on March 10, 1585 (Tenshō 15), he was given Jū nii (従二位) with a post of Naidaijin (内大臣). Finally, he became Kanpaku (関白) of Jū ichii (従一位) on July 11, 1585 (Tenshō 13). At the same time Hideyoshi was given Jū ichii, Nei also was given Jū sanmi and a new title Kitanomandokoro (北政所).

Hideyoshi’s mother was ranked Jū ichii with a title Ōmandokoro (大政所), and other vassals of Hideyoshi were given Hu goi ge (附五位下). Although she was female, the first wife of Hideyoshi was officially given a high rank, higher than other male vassals of Hideyoshi.

2.2 Life as Kitanomandokoro

In 1583 (Tenshō 11), Hideyoshi began building Osaka castle, and the construction of the castle was completed in May 1586 (Tenshō 14). Though the completion of the castle was estimated at 1586, Nei and Hideyoshi had moved to Osaka in November 1583 at the latest. Nei started to go by the name of Kitanomandokoro from 1585, and this name quickly spread. Her existence and position was depicted in Frois’ History of Japan. The first passage was written in 1583, and the second one was written in 1587 (Tenshō 15).
Hashiba Hideyoshi had numerous women staying at the Osaka Castle. Among those women, about fifty of them used to be women of Oda Nobunaga and his sons, and therefore they were the daughters of high-class samurai. They were very much loved and respected, but those ladies recognized the ascendancy of Hideyoshi’s first wife.\footnote{Furoisu Nihonshi, p.128.}

I heard that Kanpaku had three hundred concubines in the Osaka Castle. They were the daughters of Daimyo from all over Japan. However, he also had his first wife. She was very considerate and kind, and had a unique skill. The other ladies of Kanpaku followed this first wife, and although Kanpaku did not live with her any more, he admitted that she was the first wife – Ooku. Most of the women were from better houses than the first wife, but even so, they respected the first wife. She was called Kitanomandokoro-sama, and this name was to show the dignity of her current position.\footnote{Furoisu Nihonshi, p.256.}

In 1587, Kitanomandokoro was exposed as the first lady at the Osaka Castle both in name and in reality. She was recognized both by Hideyoshi and by the women in the Castle. In addition to this description with regard to her status, Frois’ \textit{History of Japan} tells the story of how Jesuits tried to get permission to propagate Christianity. The first story takes place right after the audience of Jesuit priests at the Osaka Castle in 1586. Although Hideyoshi saw those priests in person at the castle, Kitanomandokoro missed this chance to see them and had only heard about these visitors from a foreign country.

Later on, we heard from some Christian women at the castle about what happened in the Osaka Castle after we left. ... On that night, Kitanomandokoro told Hideyoshi, “I have been worried so much about how you treated \textit{Bateren} today. They are foreigners, and how you treat them could demean their religion and honour. Besides, they have sent me a messenger, and asked me that they want to be treated well when they see you. So, I have been wishing in my heart that they would be treated well.” ... Both her kindness at that time, and her favour after that occasion are the gifts from our Jesus Christ because she had been an enemy of Christian teachings, and was opposed to Christian propagation, and had been cold and unkind. Indeed, she had clearly stated so on every occasion.\footnote{Furoisu Nihonshi, p. 250.}
From this, we can see three interesting facts. First of all, the goings on inside the Osaka Castle were being leaked to Christians via some Christian ladies inside the castle. According to such reports from Christian women in the castle, Kitanomandokoro said that she had received messengers independently without Hideyoshi’s knowledge. Moreover, the last few lines recorded by Froisu imply that she had communicated with the Jesuits priests more than once. How were the information about Christianity and the messages from Christians passed to Kitanomandokoro? When Christians discussed strategies to obtain permission from Hideyoshi to propagate Christianity, we can see how Kitanomandokoro received another messenger.

[In order to get permission,] many strategies have been taken into consideration, but finally, we consulted Christian ladies in the Osaka Castle, and the best tactic seemed to be taking Kitanomandokoro on our side. With regard to this plan, the Christian ladies thought that it was extremely difficult to find chances to tell Kitanomandokoro [about us], to persuade Kitanomandokoro to be on the side of Christians, and to obtain permission via Kitanomandokoro though the ladies eagerly wanted to get permission for the Jesuits. This is because the wife of Kanpaku was a pagan, and a devout adherent of Buddha and kami. The request to permit propagating Christianity would oppose her faith. ...\(^{14}\)

The attendants of Kitanomandokoro were the information line, and they tried to persuade Kitanomandokoro. And both the Jesuits and the maid believed that Kitanomandokoro was the only one who could influence Hideyoshi on this matter. Her influence was conspicuous and well known.

Indeed, this strategy of the Jesuits proved to be a fruitful one. Although they thought Kitanomandokoro would not cooperate with their plan, she showed interest and

\(^{14}\) Furoisu Nihonshi, p.220.
support for the Jesuits, and eventually proposed a plan to make a draft of permission. She heard of the efforts of the Jesuits from Christian ladies, and sent a messenger to the church in Osaka in order to prepare a draft. After getting a draft permission letter, she successfully negotiated with and persuaded Hideyoshi, and sent two permission letters to Gasper Coelho. Here is a copy of the permission letter issued in 1586 (Tenshō 14).

“A Copy of Permission Letter from Kanpaku-dono”

With regard to the Bateren’s residents in Japan, I permit that they can reside wherever they want to, and I waive some duties from them such as the duty of letting soldiers stay in their church, the duties which were mandatory to other Buddhist temples. This is special permission given to Bateren. Don’t be violent nor disturb Bateren when they propagate their teachings.

Tenshō fourteenth, fourth day of the fifth month, Findeyoxi

The Jesuits contacted Kitanomandokoro via her maids, and Kitanomandokoro independently planned to get a permission letter from Hideyoshi. Hideyoshi did not know she had been communicating with the Jesuits, and the draft was made secretly. AlthoughHideyoshi initially did not oppose the Jesuits, it was still difficult for the Jesuits to obtain permission and waivers. In the end, their plan was successful not through direct contact with Hideyoshi or other Christian Daimyo, but through an indirect communication line to Kitanomandokoro.

After this series of efforts, Kitanomandokoro sent two lady messengers to Coelho, who stayed in Hirado (平戸), and gave him a message and some fruits. The message was, “Bateren are the foreigners, and I am content to be able to make their wish

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15 Furoisu Nihonshi, p.221.
16 One is for domestic use, and another one is to send back to Europe.
17 Furoisu Nihonshi, p.222.
come true as they wanted. From now on, if they ask me again, I will try my best to make
their wish come true."\(^\text{18}\) In addition to this message, there are three more stories in
*Frois’ History of Japan* that confirm the fact that Coelho sent letters to Kitanomandokoro
in Osaka. Furthermore, these records prove that she sent him letters and gifts more than
once.

At first, she was the enemy of our teaching, and she misunderstood us. But since the vice-regional head priest\(^\text{19}\) came to Osaka, and sent a
messenger to her, she totally changed her opinion. This is apparent from
the fact that she wrote another letter to the priest\(^\text{20}\) and she gave us two
beautiful clothes to show her affection to us. One of them had gorgeous
golden stitches on the edges, and the other one was red. She sent her
attendant, Magdalena, to our church\(^\text{21}\) with those gifts and letter. She
showed gifts from *Bateren* to Kanpaku, and even though she has not met
us, she praised our attention and kindness for sending gifts to her from a
far away country.\(^\text{22}\)

The vice regional head priest sent an express messenger to the first wife of
tyrant\(^\text{23}\) from Hirado. He prepared a letter to Kitanomandokoro and some
clothes made from Chinese silk which she long wanted to have, and gave
them to the messenger. The messenger arrived at Osaka five days earlier
than Kanpaku.\(^\text{24}\) She is a pagan, and has not met any of us. She is,
however, warm by nature, and has great compassion. Thus, she wrote
back to the vice regional head, and said that she appreciated the gifts from
him, and that she has sympathy for what happened to us. Also, she
suggested not sending a letter to Hideyoshi in order to make things change
quickly. She thinks that the letter will not help to get something out of
him, and she told us that she herself would find a chance to talk to him
when he comes back.\(^\text{25}\)

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\(^{18}\) *Furoisu Nihonshi*, p.223.

\(^{19}\) Gasper Coelho.

\(^{20}\) This is Coelho, too.

\(^{21}\) Church in Osaka.

\(^{22}\) *Furoisu Nihonshi*, p.257.

\(^{23}\) Frois started to call Hideyoshi a tyrant since he issued a prohibition of Christianity and
expulsion of Bateren from Japan.

\(^{24}\) Hideyoshi was on the way coming back from Hakata to Osaka. He was at the Kyushu
campaign.

\(^{25}\) *Furoisu Nihonshi*, p.363.
Once the reply [from Kitanomandokoro] arrived at Hirado, the priest did not wait even for a minute, but sent another letter to her. He tried to explain how our enemy tried to insult us in front of Kanpaku, and wrote the perfect rationale to defend this incident. Then, he asked [Kitanomandokoro] to tell this story to Kanpaku. ... However, everyone knew that [Hideyoshi] would execute anyone who talked about Bateren. Thus, no one was willing to pass this letter to Kanpaku’s wife or nephew. At the end, this letter was not set, and the messenger came back [to Hirado] with the letters.

The first two passages show that Kitanomandokoro had contact with the Jesuit priests in Osaka and in Hirado, sent her maids to the church in Osaka, and exchanged letters and gifts with Gasper Coelho. Thus, she hereby had independent power to conduct diplomatic communication without Hideyoshi’s knowledge or support. The last passage, however, was written after the expulsion edict came into effect. The exchange of information, letters, gifts, became difficult for both the missionaries and Kitanomandokoro.

In 1588 (Tensho 16), Kitanomandokoro was given Jū ichii, the highest rank, and the same rank as Hideyoshi and Ōmandokoro. At that time, she was given a surname and new first name. She continued to be called Kitanomandokoro, but her new name was, “Toyotomi Yoshiko (豐臣吉子).” In 1590 (Tensho 18), Hideyoshi departed for the Odawara campaign, and in 1592 (Tensho 20), Hideyoshi started to set up station at Nagoya for the Korean invasion. Kitanomandokoro was left at Osaka castle, and sometimes went to Jurakutei. Hideyoshi, being away from Osaka, had been sending and receiving letters with Kitanomandokoro during the Odawara campaign and the invasion
of Korea. The details of the correspondences will be studied in the next chapter, and then, we will see how Nei spent her life in Osaka as Kitanomandokoro.

In 1592, while Hideyoshi was away, a vast amount of fief land or chigyō (知行) was issued from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro. The total amount of her chigyō was 10,001 koku 7 to of rice, and the copy of this red seal letter is attached here. The area of her land spreads to the south of Osaka castle. The amount of more than 10,000 koku of rice for one person, not for one domain, raises many questions. Why did she need this independent land in 1592? And how did she use 10,000 koku of resources by herself?

Hideyoshi in 1595 (Bunroku 文禄 4) issued the next red seal letter, only three years after Kitanomandokoro got her 10,001 koku increased by fifty percent, becoming 15,672 koku 2 to 6 shō of rice. That was due to the census which had been conducted in 1594 (Bunroku 3); the amount of her kokudaka was raised. However, it is not only the amount of the rice that was pulled up. Hiranosho, which was the second largest income sources in the land of Kitanomandokoro, was requested to bring more coins and oil.

### 1st Red Seal Letter
To Kitanomandokoro-dono

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,000 koku</td>
<td>Regularly,27 in a form of 19 gold coins,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 koku</td>
<td>Hiranosho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>369 koku</td>
<td>Regularly, in a form of 269 kanmon of Bitasen,28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>after Hakarimai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hiranosho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3980 koku</td>
<td>Ten'nōji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1405 koku</td>
<td>Kire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 4 shō</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 There were two attempts to invade Korea, 1592-4 and 1596-8. Hideyoshi frequently sent letters to Kitanomandokoro during the first invasion of Korea.

27 Regular, annual amounts.

28 Rough coins, not refined nor purified.
441 *koku* 2 to 2 *shō* Yuya no shima  
391 *koku* 8 to 1 *shō* Tashima  
490 *koku* 9 to 2 *shō* Nakagawa  
418 *koku* 2 *shō* Katae  
305 *koku* 5 to Hayashi dera  
200 *koku* Tama tsukuri  

Total 10,001 *koku* 7 to  
All of above lands are owned [by Kitanomandokoro].  
Twenty-third day of the third month, Tenshō 20

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### 2nd Red Seal Letter

**Tribute list for the land of Kitanomandokoro**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1,000 *koku* | Same amount according to the last census  
Settsu no kuni, Kakeno kōri, Hiranoshō |
| 1140 *koku* | Same amount according to the last census  
In a form of Gold coins (19 coins)  
Exchange rate is 1 Gold coin to 60 *koku*  
Hiranoshō |
| 184 *koku* 5 to | Same amount according to the last census  
Coins 123 *kan*  
Exchange rate is 1 *kan* to 1 *koku* 5 to |
| 4 *koku* 8 to | Same amount according to the last census  
Within a year\(^{29}\)  
Oil, 4 *koku* 8 to |
| 2426 *koku* 1 to 4 *shō* | Additional amount according to this census  
Hiranoshō |

Total amount for Hiranoshō 4755 *koku* 4 *shō* 4 to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4082 *koku* | Same amount according to the last census  
Ten'nōji |
| 2336 *koku* 1 to | Additional amount according to this census |

Total amount for Ten'nōji 6418 *koku* 1 to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1405 *koku* 2 to 4 *shō* | Same amount according to the last census  
Kire-mura |
| 431 *koku* 5 to 5 *shō* | Additional amount according to this census |

\(^{29}\) Indicates the end of the year, December.
Total amount for Kire-mura 1836 koku 7 to 9 shō

441 koku 2 to 2 shō Same amount according to the last census
Yuyajima
20 koku 2 to 9 shō Additional amount according to this census

Total amount for Yuyajima 461 Koku 5 to 1 shō

391 koku 8 to 1 shō Same amount according to the last census
Tajima
84 koku 9 to 4 shō Additional amount according to this census

Total amount for Tajima 476 koku 7 to 5 shō

490 koku 9 to 2 shō Same amount according to the last census
Nakagawa
92 koku 3 to 7 shō Additional amount according to this census

Total amount for Nakagawa 583 koku 2 to 9 shō

428 koku 2 shō Same amount according to the last census
Katae-mura
117 koku 7 to Additional amount according to this census

Total amount for Katae-mura 535 koku 7 to 2 shō

305 koku 5 to Same amount according to the last census
Hayashi dera
165 koku 7 shō Additional amount according to this census

Total amount for Hayashi dera 470 koku 5 to 7 shō

48 koku Same amount according to the last census
Outside of the fosse
Tama tsukuri
86 Koku 9 shō Additional amount according to this census

Total amount for Tama tsukuri 134 koku 9 shō

Total amount according to the last census 9912 koku 1 shō
Total additional amount according to this census 5760 koku 2 to 5 shō
Grand Total 15672 koku 2 to 6 shō

The amount above has to be collected, and brought [to Kitanomandokoro.]

Eleventh day of the eleventh month, Bunroku 4
This town, Hiranoshō was an important land for Nobunaga and Hideyoshi. When Norinaga saw the development of growing commercial and financial activities in Sakai and Hiranoshō, he took control of Sakai, and directly governed Hiranoshō. Hiranoshō was under the direct control of Nobunaga (chokkatsuryō 直轄領). Hideyoshi as well made Hiranoshō his land, and assigned an administrator for collecting the tribute. In 1583, Hideyoshi issued an amount of coins that residents of Hiranoshō had to pay. The amount was twenty Gold koban. This is also on the chigyō letter issued to Kitanomandokoro. The fact that Hiranoshō was chosen to be a land for Kitanomandokoro, and that she had been gaining a vast amount of rice and coins in her account are surprising.

Kitanomandokoro had been the first wife of Hideyoshi since they got married. However, Hideyoshi also had many concubines. According to the work of Ōta Gyūichi (太田牛一), the top class concubines seemed to have a hierarchy, which stayed unchanged throughout Hideyoshi’s lifetime. He started writing Taikō Gunki (太閤軍記) while Hideyoshi was still alive, and finished writing it around 1611. This work became the second book of Hideyoshi’s biographical record after Tenshō ki (天正記), and provides detailed information about Hideyoshi’s time. Since Ōta Gyūichi served

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30 Uchida, p.88.
31 Twenty-fifth of the third month, Tenshō 11, To Hiranoshō. In Higashi Sueyoshi monjo.
32 He served both Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, wrote a book called Taikō Gunki. The second half of Taikō gunki remains as Taikō sama gunki no uchi.
33 Kuwata, Taikō ki no Kenkyu, p.85.
Hideyoshi from 1582 and became a guard for one of his concubines, his descriptions give us non-fictional and accurate historical accounts, which conform to other historical records.34

In Ōta’s Taikō sama gunki no uchi, however, the descriptions about Hideyoshi’s wife and concubines are limited. At first, with regard to women around Hideyoshi, Ōta states that he had more than a hundred beautiful concubines.35 Following this, there were no written episodes of his women, and the existence of his concubines only appeared when Hideyoshi departed for remote army stations. For example, in 1590, when Hideyoshi went to Odawara, two concubines Yodo and Kyōgoku accompanied him. For this occasion, he states, “Yodo and Kyōgoku accompanied Hideyoshi, and thirty something horses carried their luggage, and sixty something horse-riding female attendants escorted them.”36

In addition to this trip, according to his Taikō gunki, the ladies seemed to accompany Hideyoshi to Nagoya for the invasion of Korea as well.

On the first day of the third month [when Hideyoshi left for Nagoya], Kitanomandokoro, Kyōgoku, Közōsu,37 and Yodo followed him. At that time, Hattori Tosa, Mimaki Manbyoe, Ono Kishinojō, Inata Seiso, Arakawa Giemon, and Ōta Matasuke38 were appointed to be their guards. Over fifty horses carried their luggage, and more than a hundred horse-riding female attendants made a line. The parade was such beautiful scenery.39

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34 Those include Komai nikki, Tenshōki, and Date Monjo.
35 Ōta, Taikō sama gunki no uchi, p.4 He most likely counted only concubines, and did not include his attendants.
36 Ōta, Taikō sama gunki no uchi, p.34.
37 She is an old attendant of Kitanomandokoro.
38 That was the author of Taikō gunki, Ōta Gyuichi.
39 Taikō gunki no uchi, pp.54-55.
Although the fact that Yodo and Kyōgoku went to Odawara was evident in Hideyoshi's correspondence,⁴⁰ the second description of departing for Nagoya together was only evident in this document. It says that Kitanomandokoro, Kyōgoku, and Yodo all went together.⁴¹

Finally, at the end of his book, there was one more description of women when Hideyoshi held a picnic party under the cherry blossoms.

The Program and the Order of Entrance March

1. Kitanomandokoro-sama
2. Nishinomaru (Yodo)
3. Matsunomaru (Kyōgoku)
4. Sannomaru
5. Kakasama

In the documents above, the order of Hideyoshi’s wife and concubines are, again, obvious and consistent. The first wife, Kitanomandokoro was always written of as the first lady, and Yodo who bore Hideyoshi’s children came second. Then, Kyōgoku, who often accompanied Hideyoshi, took the third place. Thus, although there is not much information with regard to women in Ōta’s Taikōki, there is a consistent record of hierarchy in his writing.⁴²

Also, some names of attendants of Kitanomandokoro were known. The attendant who occupied a very close and important position was Kōzōsu (孝蔵主). She was a nun, and was her secretary who sent out letters on behalf of Kitanomandokoro, or who went to

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⁴⁰ Hideyoshi’s correspondence to Kitanomandokoro, twelfth day of the seventh month, 1590.
⁴¹ It is highly possible that they went together and Yodo and Kyōgoku stayed longer or re-visited there.
⁴² The tendency to leave women out of written accounts is characteristic of historical writings of Hideyoshi in the early Edo period. The other five materials, Tenshōki, Sofuemonogatari, Hōkan, Toyotomiki, and Bukejikki also did not leave many detailed records of Hideyoshi’s wife and concubines. Abe, pp.6-7.
see someone also on her behalf. Her presence was most significant in the record left in
the Date House, and we find her exchanging letters with Date Masamune. After
Hideyoshi’s death, she followed Kitanomandokoro and went to Kyoto. She spent all of
her life serving Kitanomandokoro. Another senior attendant of Kitanomandokoro who
Luis Frois often mentioned in his book is Magdalena. Frois never enclosed her real
name, but as well as Közōsu, she had been sent to the church in Osaka on behalf of
Kitanomandokoro.

In the castle, Kitanomandokoro’s attendants had their own posts. For example,
an attendant Yome has been a financial manager at least in 1588 and 1598. The letter,
which shows the evidence of her position, will be discussed later, but there is a pledge
she wrote one day before Hideyoshi passed away. (Keppanjo 血判書) 1) She promised
to record without error everything in the storage of the castle tower (Tenshukaku 天守閣)
that Hideyoshi had kept. And she also promised to respect Kitanomandokoro. As well
as Yome, an attendant Choho’s duty was to take care of Hideyoshi’s golden tea sets.
(Keppanjo 2) Kitanomandokoro was the first lady, and had her attendant to work for her.

Keppanjo 1

With the highest respect, I hereby state an oath.

I promise not to make any mistakes in reporting what I take care of in the
storage of the Tenshukaku. Those are the various things that Uesama stored, and have been recorded in the notebook. As it was written in the
notebook, I will keep them.

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43 Dainihon Shiryō, vol.12, no.1, p.41. She was sent to see Honganji Mitsusa (本願寺光佐).
44 Yome’s name is seen in the letter 13.
45 Keppanjo is the statement of oath. The one writing the pledge cuts his or her finger
and leaves their blood under their signature.
46 Hideyoshi.
I will take great care of everything about Mandokoro-sama.

Yome
Seventeenth day of the ninth month, Keichō 3

Keppanjo 2

With the highest respect, I hereby state an oath.

No need to mention about the tea sets and Chinese things that Uesama stores, I will keep the golden bowls, mats, and golden tea sets. I make sure that they are the same ones [as Uesama has stored]. I promise not to make any mistakes.

No need to mention, but I will take care of everything about Mandokoro-sama.

Chiyoho
Seventeenth day of the ninth month, Keichō 3

In 1595, daimyo started to sign Keppanjo for Hideyoshi one after another. Why were these Keppanjo for attendants signed on the seventeenth day of the ninth month of 1598? It was already one month after Hideyoshi passed away. And although they mentioned the materials that Hideyoshi had stored in the storage, who were they making promises to? In addition, the second lines of both documents promised that they would support Mandokoro-sama. If these were not written for Hideyoshi, who made the attendants sign these? The attentions are missing, and the attentions could be Kitanomandokoro, Koide Hidemasa, or Kinoshita Iesada. In any case, these documents must have been written for Kitanomandokoro.

47 Ukita Hideie, Maeda Toshiie, Oda Nobuo and twenty seven others (July 20, Bunroku 4), Kato Kiyomasa and twenty-one others (August 6, Bunroku 4), Nagatsuka Daisuke, Ishida Shōsuke, Masuda Uemon, Minbukyo (January 23, Bunroku 5).
2.3 Life as Kōdaiin

Toyotomi Hideyoshi passed away on eighteenth day of the eighth month of 1598 (Keichō 3). Toyotomi Hideyori (秀頼 1593-1615), the only child of Hideyoshi, moved into Osaka castle with his mother Chacha on January 10 of the following year. Kitanomandokoro, in the same month, moved to Sanbongi (三本木) in Kyoto. She stayed in Kyoto, and watched a series of battles including that of Sekigahara in 1600. Her brother Kinoshita Iesada, who had been with her in Osaka castle when Hideyoshi was away, guarded her again on this occasion. Kinoshita Iesada’s first son, Kinoshita Katsutoshi (木下勝俊 1569-1649), was at the Fushimi castle, and noticed that his brother Hideaki was on the enemy side. Then, he escaped from the castle without fighting, and ran to Kitanomandokoro in Kyoto. At the battle, Iesada’s second son, Kinoshita Toshifusa (木下利房 1573-1637), fought on the anti-Ieyasu side, but he later came to talk to Kitanomandokoro, and asked which side he should be on.48 Iesada’s third son, Kinoshita Nobutoshi (木下延俊 1577-1642), was also on the Ieyasu’s side, and followed the order of Hosokawa Tadaoki (細川忠興 1563-1646) in the battle.

Iesada’s fifth son, Kobayakawa Hideaki (小早川秀秋 1582-1602), who was an adopted son of Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro, met Kitanomandokoro before he joined the battle. He was the first general of the Japanese army at the Korean invasion, but he

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48 Later at the summer battle of Osaka, he was on the Ieyasu side.
was accused by his hasting deed at the battle, he was on a trial.\footnote{He was going to be punished (Genpū減封) but Hideyoshi passed away, and left his last order, Hideaki was not punished. Hideyoshi scolded him in the letter, written on the twenty-second day of the sixth month, 1598 (Keichō 3).} He was undecided about which side to be on, and asked his mother, Kitanomandokoro. She said to him, “first, you should go to Fushimi castle, and join the battle with Toshikatsu. Then, wait there till Ieyasu arrives.”\footnote{Her comment was in Yashi, cited in Hitomi, p48. In Kitanomandokoro to Kinoshita ke no Hitobito, p.49.} At the battle site, Katsutoshi had already escaped, and Torii Mototada (鳥居元忠) refused to join him at Fushimi castle. Then, Hideaki had no choice but to crash the Torii troop. This act of fighting against those at Fushimi makes it sound like he was a part of the anti-Ieyasu coalition. However, as soon as he fought and got the castle back for himself, he wrote a letter to Ieyasu, and told him that he would support the Ieyasu side.

At the end, this change of position on the part of Hideaki marked the critical point of the battle of Sekigahara. “On the fifteenth day of the ninth month, at Sekigahara in Mino which is close to the border of Ōmi, two armies fought … for five or six hours. When Kobayakawa Hideaki decided to change his position to the East,\footnote{The East army means the army of Ieyasu.} the East started to win this battle.”\footnote{A brief summary of the battle of Sekigahara in Hideyoshi to Momoyama Bunka, p.118.} Hideaki visited his mother, Kitanomandokoro before this battle, and obtained a suggestion to position himself on the Ieyasu’s side. Moreover, Hideaki and Kitanomandokoro’s correspondences continued even after this battle, as we will see later in this section. Furthermore, this evidence of advising Hideaki to support Ieyasu’s army
inevitably makes one think about the other Daimyo’s change of their positions from the Toyotomi to the Tokugawa side.\footnote{There are some documents which support that Kato Kiyomasa and Fukushima Masanori also asked an advice from Kitanomandokoro. However, there needs more concrete materials to ensure this evidence. At this moment, I am unable to prove that those Daimyo contacted her before the battle.}

Nonetheless, Kitanomandokoro took a consistent position; she had been always on the Ieyasu’s side. Her closeness to Ieyasu is also evident after the battle of Sekigahara. After Tokugawa Ieyasu became Seii taishogun (征夷大将軍), she was given a new name Kōdaian (高台院) from him in 1603 (Keicho 8). And in June of 1604 (Keicho 9), she invited some courtiers to Nijō castle (二条城) and hosted a Noh party.

In 1605, Kōdaian built a temple, Kōdaiji (高台寺), and Ieyasu helped her. She moved some parts from Fushimi castle, and prayed her husband’s last respects. She stayed there the rest of her life, but at times, like in 1606 (Keicho 11), she was invited to Nijō castle. On August 2, 1606, she watched a Noh play again, and in 1611 she was invited to the meeting of Toyotomi Hideyori and Ieyasu. At this time, Kato Kiyomasa and Asano Yoshinaga (浅野幸長 1576-1613), who had both known Kitanomandokoro for a long time, came to the castle together.

During the first decade of Keicho, she kept contact with her adopted son, Kobayakawa Hideaki as well. Around 1601 (Keicho 6), right after the battle of Sekigahara, three letters sent to Hideaki from Kitanomandokoro exist. Moreover, as it is presented here, Hideaki, who became the Daimyo of Okayama, borrowed money from her.
To Okyakujin (Attendant of Kōdaiin)

About Gold which was borrowed [from Kōdaiin]

Total 50 Gold coins
The above will be made and returned in the land of Aki hatta Iyo administrator. Please understand. Thank you.

Twentieth day of the fourth month, Keichō 7
Okayama Chunagon Hideaki

The Daimyo who fought and won the battle of Sekigahara had to borrow money from his mother, Kōdaiin. One gold coin is worth ten ryo. Thus, fifty gold coins are five hundred ryo. Did Kōdaiin keep the savings of Hideyoshi?

Now, we can recall the fact that she had her own land. What become of it? Among the other lands of Hideyoshi which were taken away by Ieyasu, she continued to own her lands even after the death of Hideyoshi. The administrator of her land, Koide Hidemasa (小出秀政 1540-1604) passed away in the third month of 1604. The attention for the letter written in the eight month of 1604 is Kinoshita Iesada who succeeded in the administrator’s position. The previous amount of her land was 15,672 koku 2 to 6 shō of rice, and this time, she lost one village, Tama tsukuri (玉作), but gained three more villages, Uryū ono mura (遠里小野村), Kokubu mura (国分村), and Fukae mura (深江村). The total amount of her land was now 16,346 koku 4 shō 1 to 9 gō of rice.

Memo on the tribute list for Kōdaiin sama’s land in Kakeno County of Settsu

4755 koku 9 to 4 shō 3 gō Hiranoshō
1836 koku 7 to 8 shō 6 gō Kire mura
4847 koku 3 to 4 shō Ten’nōji
1000 koku Uryū no mura
800 koku 2 to Kokubu mura
583 koku 2 to 9 shō 3 gō Nakagawa mura
200 koku is given to Kozosu

Katae mura
Tashima mura
Hayashidera mura
Yuya no shima

Total amount 16,346 koku 4 to 1 sho 9 go
From this, 200 koku is given to Kozosu

Twenty-second day of the eighth month, Keicho 9

Kinoshita Nii Hoin Joei

We can see only a trifling amount of raise in the total amount, but there are two important changes in 1604. Out of 16,346 koku, 200 koku was directly given to her attendant Kozosu: The new village Fukaemura’s 200 koku was specified to be sent to Kozosu in the letter. Also, the second point is that they requested more varieties of food such as rice, miso, soy sauce, pickled vegetables, fish, and also more silver and coins instead of rice itself. This shows that Kodaiin and Kozosu independently managed their husbandry from the tributes.

In addition, during her life as Kodaiin, she sold silk to the merchant in Kyoto. From the letter, we do not know the amount of the silk and how much she acquired from this trade. However, this letter reveals many interesting points:

To Kinoshita Higo no Kami (Kinoshita Iesada)

Please promptly gather the silver in return for the silk that Kitanomandokoro-sama had sold to a merchant in Kyoto as you promised. If things do not go smoothly, and if you have any trouble [collecting silver from the merchant in Kyoto], please tell Naifu-sama, [Tokugawa Ieyasu]. Thank you.

Eighth day of the tenth month,

54 Kinoshita Iesada. He became Nii hoin on the twenty-first day of the ninth month, Keicho 9.
55 Sueyoshi monjo, Hugashi Sueyoshi monjo, in Uchida, p.90.
Asano Dansho Nagamasa

First of all, it is interesting to think about why she had silk, and sold it to merchants in Kyoto in exchange for silver. Then, Asano Nagamasa wrote this letter to her brother Daimyo Kinoshita Iesada, and he advised Iesada that he could consult Ieyasu if there were any trouble. After the battle of Sekigahara, before the summer battle of Osaka, Kōdaiin had been well protected by Asano Nagamasa, Kinoshita Iesada, and the most powerful Daimyo, Tokugawa Ieyasu.

In 1614 (Keichō 19), the winter battle of Osaka (大阪冬の陣) broke out. This time, the battlefield was moved to Osaka, where the late Hideyoshi’s castle was. Kōdaiin had moved out of the castle, and lived in Kōdaiji, but she still had a vast land in the south of the castle. Among those, Ten'noji (天王寺) area was the closest to the castle, and was chosen to be the main station of Ieyasu’s army. One temple in Ten’noji, which was called Isshinji (一心寺), was the centre of his force, and thus, Ieyasu had to write letters to Kōdaiin and the master of Isshinji in order to discuss the usage of her land.56 As well as Hiranoshō, Tennoji was the important land located the south of the castle, and Kōdaiin’s responsibility and maintenance of these lands are apparent.

In 1615 (Genna 元和 1), Osaka Natsu no jin (大坂夏の陣) resulted in the end of Toyotomi house when Hideyori committed suicide with Yodo at Osaka castle. Then, Ieyasu also passed away in 1616 (Genna 2), and Kōzōsu had passed away before him. But Kōdaiin lived in Kodaiji until 1624 (Kan’ei 寛永 1). She was seventy-six years old. It was already the reign of the third Shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu (徳川家光).

56 Kōdaiin Isshinji Okitegaki (高台院一心寺揃書).
3.1 Private correspondences between Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro

Life as Kitanomandokoro is further exposed in the correspondence between her and Hideyoshi. Previously, two scholars reviewed the private correspondence of Hideyoshi. The first work was by Kuwata Tadachika. He collected the letters at The University of Tokyo Historiographical Institute (Tokyo Daigaku Shiryo Hensanjo 東京大学史料編纂所), and tried to identify the content, name and addresses, and the dates. He later organized the letters in chronological order, and published two books Correspondence of Taikō (Taikō shoshin)\textsuperscript{57} in 1930, and Letter of Taikō (Taikō no Tegami)\textsuperscript{58} in 1960. And, based on Kuwata's primary work, an English translation of 101 letters of Hideyoshi's private correspondence can be found in Adriana Boscaro's book, \textit{101 Letters of Hideyoshi}.\textsuperscript{59}

Both of these scholars targeted the study of Hideyoshi's private correspondences, and they treated them separately from other official documents that Hideyoshi issued. However, there are two questions unanswered in their studies. What kind of information did the letters transmit from Hideyoshi's army station to Osaka? And why only Kitanomandokoro received the numerous numbers of letters from his army station? The

\textsuperscript{57} Kuwata Tadachika, \textit{Taikō Shōshin}, Tokyo: Chijin shōkan, 1943.
\textsuperscript{58} Kuwata Tadachika, \textit{Taikō no Tegami}, Tokyo: Bungeishunjūsha, 1960.
treatment of this subject was not adequate if one assumes that Hideyoshi was writing love letters to his wife. Or, if one only sees the letters as a reflection of Hideyoshi’s glorious life story, as both Kuwata and Boscaro did.

In this section, the letters are reviewed differently for two reasons. Looking at the contents closely, the aim is to extract the information that the letters carry. By doing so, we can see that there are many letters which were sent to Kitanomandokoro that do not sound like mere love letters. There are some of love letters sent to his concubines, and comparing the ones sent to his concubines with those to his first wife, we can clearly see the difference in purpose: Hideyoshi communicated more with Kitanomandokoro by mail. Consequently, from this study, the information flow from his army station to Osaka castle is traced. Secondly, when one employs this interpretation, the English translation of those private correspondences changes. Thus, although Boscaro picked up 101 letters, and translated them, her translation of most of the letters is problematic. Thus, this section includes a different translation of the letters sent from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro, and an attempt to translate the correspondences with more accuracy and fidelity.

3.2 Love Letters

Before starting to look at the letters sent to Kitanomandokoro, this section examines the “love letters” from Hideyoshi. Kuwata and Boscaro did not see the distinction between the letters to Hideyoshi’s concubines and children, and to
Kitanomandokoro. In order to make a sharp contrast between a love letter and a letter that includes more detailed and practical information and discussion, this section presents some letters that Hideyoshi wrote to his concubines and children.

Before 1590 (Tenshō 18), no letters addressed to his concubines have been found. The only two letters in existence were sent to Go (豪), his adopted daughter. In 1590, he finally wrote one letter to Ochacha (お茶々), who is also known as Yodo. After the birth of Sute (捨), he wrote to Ochacha at Yodo castle. All the letters sent to his concubines, and the ones with the dates are written between 1593 and 1594. That was the time he was at Nagoya, and he also sent the letters to Kitanomandokoro. The letters sent to concubines are, however, much simpler, and do not include many updates about his military plans.

Letter 1
To Kaga-dono
Twenty-sixth day of the twelfth month, 1592

Receiving two sets of cloths for New Years from you, I wished the fortune would last for a long time. When the spring comes, I will go to Korea, and make orders to everyone about everything, and I will be back shortly. Please do not worry at all. I am pleased to hear that you felt much better after visiting a hot spring. Here is a crane from when I hunt at hawking, and I give this one to you. Please admire it. I am also happy to hear that Magoshirō’s mother is healthy as well. It is really great. Thank you.

Taikō

Letter 2
To Ochacha
Twenty-fifth day of tenth (or eleventh) month, 1593

On the first day [of this month], I received a letter from you. Although I intended to answer it, I have been so busy with many things that I could not write back to you. Does O-Hiroi become more and more in good

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60 Only one letter was sent on twenty-sixth day of the twelfth month of 1592.
shape? Does he drink a lot of milk? I would like to see you soon, but I have some things to clear up. After that, I will visit you. If I see you now and leave this matter unsolved, I would be angry later, so let me first send you a letter. After everything is settled, I will certainly visit you. Thank you.

Taikō from Fushimi

The first letter, which was written to his concubine, Kaga-dono, does not contain much detailed information about Hideyoshi’s military plans. He states that “when the spring comes, I go to Korea.” In the second letter, as well, there is a lack of specific information with regard to his military plans and goals. Furthermore, he does not even tell O-chacha the nature of the important “matter”, which he is attempting to solve before he sees her. However, in the letter, which was written to Kitanomandokoro, as we will see in the next section, he provides detailed information about heading to the Korean capital and Ming China.

3.3 Letters to the first wife

The tendency to give detailed information to Kitanomandokoro started in 1587 when Hideyoshi left for Kyushu. There are two such letters in 1587, and again in 1590, in which he wrote about his plans when he was on the Kanto campaign. Then, when he was stationed in Nagoya from 1592 to 1594, most of the private correspondences were sent to Kitanomandokoro, and contained information about the current circumstances and
future plans. Thus, from those frequent exchanges of letters, Kitamonandokoro, who had been at the Osaka Castle or in Jurakutei, knew about Hideyoshi’s condition and his military plans in a timely fashion. The details of information and the time it took from his army station to reach Kitamonandokoro.

In Kuwata’s book, there are twenty-six letters sent to Kitamonandokoro. However, this number includes those letters sent to his wife’s attendants. Kuwata assumes in his book that those letters sent to Kitamonandokoro’s attendants are also directed to Kitamonandokoro, not to her maids. Sending private correspondences to someone’s attendants was supposed to be a respectful deed, and was customary during the Sengoku period. For Kitamonandokoro, as well, that is true and obvious once we take a look at the contents of the letters. For example, a conversation continued throughout a few successive letters, but they were sent to two different attendants. My observation for this is that Kitamonandokoro also had some attendants to write letters on her behalf. Kitamonandokoro let those attendants write and send letters, and that is why Hideyoshi’s letters were sent back to each of those attendants. Later, when we look at the letters sent to Date by Közōsu, this fact is clear. Közōsu, an old attendant of Kitamonandokoro, wrote and sent a letter on her behalf, and the letters were sent back to Közōsu and directed to Kitamonandokoro.

Moreover, one letter sent to Matsunomaru shows the fact that Kitamonandokoro checked letters from Hideyoshi to other concubines in the castle. In the letter,

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61 Almost all letters are “in reply” to Kitamonandokoro. Therefore, though the letters of Kitamonandokoro have never been studied, those letters should be discovered and studied carefully in my future research.
62 See Letter 4 and 5.
63 Yūhitsu (祐筆), a post specialized in letter writing. Koho is most likely one of Yūhitsu of Kitamonandokoro.
Matsunomaru wrote the following to Kitanomandokoro; “The reply [from Hideyoshi] is like this. This was such a little thing, so please do not worry. I am replying to you and would like you to think that this [reply] was a great thing.”

Here, she added these lines above in the letter she received from Hideyoshi. Not only the letters that the attendants received from Hideyoshi, but also the letters written to his concubines were checked. Furthermore, Kitanomandokoro had access to what Hideyoshi wrote when he was in the castle. Hideyoshi’s letter that was secretly written and hidden from Kitanomandokoro was also discovered. It seemed to be very difficult for Hideyoshi when he wanted to hide the letters from his attendants and One, Kitanomandokoro.

Letter 3
To Ogura and Oku [unknown ladies]
Eleventh day of the twelfth month

I read a letter you sent to Kōzōsu. I felt awful, and sent some servants to invite you here. It is a good chance, so please come here with Ogo at Nishinomaru. Please hurry up. This letter to both of you was secretly written, and hid from contraries. I also hid it from One, so please keep it secret that I sent you this letter when you arrive here. Please go to Nishinomaru, [and pick Ogo up]. Thanks.

Tai[kō]

P.S. This letter was secretly written, and has been sent to you. It was a very difficult thing to do. You just say that you are going to see [Ogo] at Nishinomaru. Please make sure to hide the fact that you are coming to see me. [I am sorry if] both of you are criticized [for this]. I am waiting for you.

Kitanomandokoro was, therefore, in the position to check letters sent to someone, and letters received from Hideyoshi. Also, from the first sentence, it is now clear that Kōzōsu, an attendant of Kitanomandokoro, was close to Hideyoshi as well. In the

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64 Piece 117, in *Hideyoshi to Momoyama Bunka*. 
following sections, we will examine what was written in the private correspondences from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro.

### 3.4 Information

Hideyoshi was not only sending letters to Kitanomandokoro, but was also frequently receiving letters from her. The dates written on his letters tell us how long it took to reach Hideyoshi’s army stations from Osaka. The first example too sees the time it took for a letter to arrive at Toyama.

**Letter 4**  
To Koho (Attendant of Kitanomandokoro)  
Seventh day of the eighth month, 1585 (Tenshō 13)

I read your letters written on the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth together at once. With regard to the issues written in these letters, Kuranosuke apologized and gave me many excuses. Thus, I allowed him to govern his domain, and spared his life. All of his dependents were [also saved their lives, and] sent to Kyoto yesterday early in the morning. I gave them a little subsistence. His castle in Toyama was completely destroyed. For the replacement, I appointed Matazaemon to govern the Etchū area. I became free from this [Kuranosuke related issues] earlier, I have come back to Tonamiyama. Today, I should plan to go to Kanazawa. I will stay in Echizen Kitanoshō for four or five days, and issue regulations for the domain. I will go back to Osaka around the twentieth, so please do not worry. Also, I am doing well. It was such a hassle to write a letter by myself, so I let [someone] write [for me], and send it over.

Best wishes,  
Hideyoshi from Toyama

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65 Sasa Narimasa.  
66 Maeda Toshiie.
The letter written on the twenty-ninth arrived to Toyama on the seventh of the next month. It took nine days. An interesting fact is revealed right after the first sentence. According to what he wrote, “with regard to the issues written in those letters, Kuranosuke...,” Kitanomandokoro had written either concern or opinion on what to do with Kuranosuke. The letters that she wrote to him have not been discovered, but it is clearly evident that she was keeping up with the recent news and exchanged thoughts on a daimyo like Sasa Masanari.

In addition, this letter contains detailed information about his trip plan. He let her know what he planned to do in the near future. This act of reporting what he did was indeed very important for both Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro. That is, this schedule was written not because he wanted to give her a vague idea of his plans, but because he was giving her a rather accurate estimate of when he would come back home and how he was doing. The next letter ensures this point.

Letter 5
To Iwa (Attendant of Kitanomandokoro)
Eleventh day of the eighth month, 1585 (Tenshō 13)

I am replying to another letter you have sent me. I became free from the matters in Etchū much earlier, so I sent men to Hida domain, and ordered them to govern [Hida]. And [finally, as I said,] I came to Kitanoshō in order to issue the regulations in Echizen yesterday. [Since I have been dealing with Hida,] it took ten extra days. I will quickly move to Wakasa, and will make a good arrangement for Etchū, and before soon, I should be back around twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth. Please do not worry. Thank you.

Tenka from Kitanoshō

67 After the letters written on the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth of the seventh month, Kitanomandokoro must have sent another letter between twenty-ninth to the beginning of the eighth month.
P.S. I will make a strict order to the domains here to prevent any happenings for a long time. This takes so much energy, and now I am darker, skinnier, and have a little trouble with my eyes. I should have sent a reply to Gomoji, but due to my bad eyes, please understand [why I could not write to her]. Please give my best regard to Kingo as well.

The last letter (Letter 4) was written on seventh day of the eighth month, and this letter was written only four days after the previous one. He was going to be back in Osaka around twentieth, but now that he needed ten more days, he let her know that his plans had changed, and he would be back in Osaka a week later. The topic is continued from the previous letter, and although he sent one to Koho and one to Iwa, the letter is directed to Kitanomandokoro. This was also evident to see the last few sentences about his adopted children, Gomoji and Kingo.

3.5 Reporting

Correspondences carry the function of reporting. This is not just in the direction from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro, but also Hideyoshi’s letters imply that Kitanomandokoro had been reporting some news from Osaka to wherever he had gone. Hideyoshi was away for many reasons. In the early years, he was away in Kyushu, and arranging the laws in North, but in 1586, he was away from Osaka in order to build Jurakutei in Kyoto. Although he was not in the battle, he was away from Osaka, and exchanged letters with Kitanomandokoro.

Letter 6
To Koho (attendant of Kitanomandokoro)
Twenty-fourth day of the third month, 1586 (Tenshō 14)
I received your letter. And I read it very carefully. I moved to Ōtsu from Kyoto quickly, and ordered the details of construction. I will go [to Kyoto to check] around the first day [of the fourth month.] Also, I am doing well. Please take good care of yourself. Thanks.

Tenka
P.S. The construction in Kyoto has come close to the end. Please do not worry.

Letter 7
To (Kitanomandokoro)
Date unknown (in 1586)

The construction of here [in Jurakutei] is almost done so far. Please do not worry. Has Gomoji been eating well? Are Kingo, Yome, Gomoji doing well? Make sure that everyone takes care of stomach. Also, have you been eating well? This Hiwari is for you three. Please admire it. Also, I am worried about Ōmandokoro to hear that she is slightly sick recently.

Tenka from Kyoto
P.S. Again, these Hiwari is sent for Gomoji, Kingo, and you. Please admire it. Be careful with fire. Thank you.

When Hideyoshi went to Kyushu to subjugate Shimazu, it took more time for the letters to arrive at Hideyoshi’s station, but they exchanged letters with a vast amount of important information.

Letter 8
To Koho (Attendant of Kitanomandokoro)
Ninth day of the fifth month, 1587

I received and read your letter written on the eighth day of the fourth month today, on the ninth day of the fifth month, at Taihei temple along the river of K unin sendai in Satsuma. You reported that nothing has happened, and that you are doing well. I am glad to hear that.

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68 This must be a child’s name. Boscaro thinks that this name might mean “a wife” of Kingo. However, Kingo is only 4 years old at this time. So, it is difficult to assume that Yome refers to his wife.

69 Carpentry made of hinoki wood.
Item: I ordered men around Tsukushi area to station five or six ri away from Shimazu’s castle in Kagoshima. I also ordered him to behead Shimazu. However, Shimazu shaved his head, and gave up his life and became a Buddhist priest. So, there was nothing to be done. I spared his life.

Item: I will go over to Kagoshima in a few days, and arrange the domain. Then, around the twenty fourth or fifth, I will go to Hakata in Chikuzen domain. [Hakata is] the place where ships arrive from Daimin and Nanban. I shall ask them to build a strong castle, and will leave some men in Hakata.

Item: I will send some people to Korea, and will let that country know that they belong to me. During that time [of those messengers’ travel,] I will stay in Hakata to wait for the reply.

Item: All the residents of Tsushima and Iki domains have arrived to serve me.

Item: I shall come back to Kyoto with all the relatives of Shimazu. I will issue the above order, and will be back at the beginning of July. Please do not worry. Thank you.

Hideyoshi

P.S. Again, I am doing well, and being careful. I ordered my men to keep everything in good order, so please do not worry.

This letter traveled for a month: from April 8th to May 9th. Hideyoshi was in the southern most domain, in Satsuma, to subjugate Shimazu. He gave the details of his future military plans there. And in this letter, it is noticeable that he had decided Hakata should be the port to contact Ming and Korea. With the dates and distance mentioned in the next letter, it is apparent that he had accurate geographical information as he went to Kyushu, and informed Kitanomandokoro about it, too.

Letter 9
To (Kitanomandokoro)

70 It is about 20 to 24 km.
71 Ming China.
72 European countries.
Twenty-ninth day of the third month, 1587

I saw the letter dated on the tenth day of the fifth month, and on the eighteenth of this month at Sajiki of Higo domain. Tomorrow, I should arrive in Yatsushiro. Shimazu retreated, and here I explain how it went.

Item: A hostage of Shimazu is an only daughter of him, about the age of fifteen.
Item: Shimazu Yasuhisa should live in Kyoto.
Item: Ten of the elder vassals of Yoshihisa were captured.
Item: Shimazu Hyogo no Kami was taken as a hostage, and his successor who is fifteen should live in Osaka, and his eight years old son also became a hostage.
Item: Shimazu Chushō is in Osaka with his daughter, so I let him take over both Satsuma and Ōsumi, and forgive him...

P.S. Yesterday, I came back to Higo domain from Satsuma domain. So, do not worry. Around the fifth day of the sixth month, I shall go to Hakata in Chikuzen domain. By that time, I will have been back on the half way. It is only a half way to go to Osaka. I will order to begin construction in Hakata, and I will be in Moji in the sixth month, and around the tenth day of the seventh month, I shall be back in Osaka. Please do not worry. I will ask Iki and Tushima domain to send hostages and to promise to serve me. Also, I will build a hayabune and tell Korea that they should come to Japan to greet the Emperor. If no one comes from Korea [to greet the Emperor], I will inform them that I will conquer them next year. I shall take control over China during our lifetime. If [either Korea or China] look down on me, it will be difficult work. During this [Kyushu] campaign, more and more grey hairs have grown, and I have not plucked them out. I would not want to see anyone, but I know that you would not mind. But I hate this [grey hair].

Hideyoshi was staying in Higo when he wrote this. Unlike the time he was in the southernmost domain in Satsuma, the letter took eighteen days to arrive at his army station. Following up the news about the subjugation of Shimazu, the details of treatment were also relayed to her. This must have been the second item from the previous letter, which is about "arranging the domain." He reported the details back to

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73 Shimazu Yoshihiro, a brother of Yoshihisa. 
74 Shimazu Iehisa, also a brother of Yoshihisa. 
75 The rest is missing. 
76 Fast boat.
Kitanomandokoro. Members of Shimazu’s family and what was done to them became something that she knew of. And the plan in Hakata, and a future plan to expand his power to Korea and Ming was clearly stated here in this letter.

Hideyoshi estimated the distance between Satsuma, Higo, Hakata, and Osaka. He expected the travel to be smooth, and had only one plan in his mind; to stay in Hakata and start construction and to make sure that Iki and Tsushima domains were under his control. In the letter, the length of the trip from Higo to Hakata was about a week, and departing from Moji in mid June, he estimated that it would take another month to go back to Osaka. As he acknowledged, Hakata was the midpoint. Thus, Osaka being at the centre, it took two months to go to the southernmost domain, Satsuma.

On the way back from Satsuma, as Hideyoshi mentioned in his letter, he decided to stay in Hakata, and started the construction in Nagoya in order to build an army station for the Korean invasion. In the letters written in 1587, his intention to go to Korea is clear, but this plan became more concrete and was about to be realized in 1593. This letter, indeed, states his plans to cross the sea, and made Kitanomandokoro worried. She worried so much that she asked Kinri (禁裏), namely Emperor Goyozei (後陽成天皇), to issue an imperial edict to stop Hideyoshi.

Letter 10
To One
Sixth day of the fifth month

Thank you for preparing various katabira for the seasonal festival. I was happy and wished the happiness would last long, so please do not worry. I think I will be receiving [gifts for] September’s seasonal festival in China. So far, we have occupied many castles in Korea. To the Korean capital, it will take about twenty days from the port we just took over. I have already sent many soldiers to take over the capital of Korea. So, before soon, we should be able to get the capital. Please do not worry. I will get more ships and will send the rest of soldiers [staying here]. I shall
obtain the capital of China, and send people to welcome you [to Chinese capital.] Thanks.

Taikō from Nagoya

P.S. I am glad that you sent me various clothes. However, I do not need *dofuku* without sleeves. Those are only good for armors. I do not need it now. Please ensure that everyone is careful with fire in Osaka. I will get the capital of Korea for sure, and I myself will be there shortly.

Hideyoshi not only sent letters from his army station far away from Osaka, but he also sent letters from Kyoto to Osaka when he was away for a little while. An express messenger must have sent the letter because Hideyoshi was going to be back in Osaka in four days.

Letter 1
To Chiku (Attendant of Kitanomandokoro)
Second day of the twelfth month

Thank you for sending me *kosode* with the letter. It did not start now, but you have been quite special. Also, I send the papers for *renga* in return. Also, we are going back on the 6th day or 7th day, and we will send the old year out and the New Year in at your place. Please be ready. Please give my best regard to Ohime, Gomoji, Kingo. Thanks.

Tenka

P.S. We will make sure to be back by the sixth or seventh day. Thanks.
P.S. On the third day, I will go to Shōha’s house and play *renga*. Thanks.

Even between Osaka and Kyoto, they sent letters and gifts in a few days span. Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro frequently exchanged these letters and gifts. It is also noticeable that he always asked her to give his best regard to their adopted children. This is unique to the correspondence between them, and helped to identify other pieces whose recipients have not been identified.

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77 It might be a gift to Kitanomandokoro or a reward for Chiku for sending him *kosode*.
78 *Renga* master, Satomura Shōha (里村紹巴).
Reporting from Kitanomandokoro to Hideyoshi was probably more frequent than from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro. This is certain because Hideyoshi added “in reply” to the attention, and Hideyoshi often wrote one reply for two letters. At this moment, none of Kitanomandokoro’s letters to him have been studied though some should still exist.\textsuperscript{79} When Kitanomandokoro sent letters to Hideyoshi, how did she send them? In fact, she sent messengers separately, and exclusively to carry the letters.

In one letter attended by her maid, Go-sa, Hideyoshi wrote that, “I received messengers again and again.”\textsuperscript{80} And in another letter attended by her maid, Koya, He also wrote, “You have sent me letters again and again. I have not replied to you every time one came, but I have read them all with much affection.”\textsuperscript{81} The letters discovered and studied were only one way, from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro, but the other way, from Kitanomandokoro to Hideyoshi, is even greater in number and in information. Kitanomandokoro sent messengers to carry her letters often and reported what was happening inside the castle and in Osaka.

\textsuperscript{79} Kōdaiji has some more letters, and both a man working in Osaka jō Tenshukaku and a lady at Kōdaiji think that some letters exist but have not been discovered or paid much attention. For my future research, it is important to find both letters written by Kitanomandokoro and her attendants. In this thesis, some letters written and sent by Kōzōsu were found in the Date collection.

\textsuperscript{80} Eighteenth day of the fourth month, Tensō 18 From Tenka to Gosa.

\textsuperscript{81} In Boscaro, L63, pp.67-68.
3.6 Managing financial issues

Kitanomandokoro had kept records on Hideyoshi’s financial transactions.\(^{82}\) In 1586, when Ōmandokoro fell sick, Kitanomandokoro was allowed to use his money without asking Ōmandokoro. The letter below shows that the letter was likely sent to Kitanomandokoro since she was the one who took care of Ōmandokoro, and also was always asked to take care of their adopted child, Gomoji.\(^{83}\)

Letter 12
To (Kitanomandokoro)
Fourth day of the seventh month, 1586

This time around, don’t hesitate to use Gold and Silver without asking Ōmandokoro. You told me that you run short of silver coins, so I send you a hundred of them for the time being. If you still need more, I will give you more. Thank you.

Hideyoshi

P.S. As always, I appreciate your kind effort to take care of Ōmandokoro when she fell sick. I greatly appreciate it. Please do everything you can to make her happy. Please let Ohime and Gomoji stay close to her for recreation. Please do not hesitate to ask me anything if I can be of your help.

Also, in 1588 when Hideyoshi was away for hawking, Kitanomandokoro at Jurakutei was asked about missing coins.

Letter 13
To Iwa (Kitanomandokoro’s attendant)
Fifth day of the tenth month, 1588

I write this letter with some important purpose. I have been hawking in Tsu province,\(^{84}\) and I will be here for five or three days. During my stay here, let two or three servants bring things for night and a teeth-

\(^{82}\) Hideyoshi’s financial notebook, Kin gin memo cho (金銀メモ帳), was discovered in Ashimori Kinoshita house, but it has not been presented anywhere yet.

\(^{83}\) O-hime must be their adopted daughter too.

\(^{84}\) Settsu.
blackening set. Also one of the servants should be either Kōzōsu or Chaa. At your earliest convenience, ask them to come to Ibaraki at the fifth hour of the eighth day. Also, these quails were hunted by our men. I give you five. From these five, please give one to Ōmandokoro, and send one to Mrs. Go in Bizen. You can admire the rest of three. Thanks.

Ten

P.S. Recently, I have been hawking every day. So, I have more appetite. Please do not worry. At the field, I forget everything, and at night, I have sound sleep. However, I have been talking with others until two candles burn down completely. Also, when I checked the gold again, I remembered wrapping them and left them all. It was ten pieces of gold. What has happened to them? I did not have a proper measurement tool, so I remembered leaving them. I wonder what happened to the ten pieces of gold. For this detail, please ask Yome, and report back to me.

Hideyoshi kept track of the missing gold, and this is good evidence that Yome, Kitanomandokoro’s attendant kept his financial notebook, and that Kitanomandokoro had access to financial matters.

Money and valuables such as Hideyoshi’s golden tea sets and silk were stored in either Osaka castle or Jurakutei; wherever Hideyoshi decided to live, they were also stored in either storage. The ladies who lived at the castle all the time were the best suitable to take care of those valuables. And therefore, instead of appointing Hideyoshi’s male vassals to look after his valuables, an attendant of Kitanomandokoro was chosen for this duty. And in case of financial trouble like the case above, Kitanomandokoro was asked to check with her attendant and report the details of the matter.

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85 Go was his adopted daughter. She has married to Ukita Hideie in Bizen.
86 *Sunagane* 砂金, gold dust.
87 She is the same lady who wrote the pledge one month after Hideyoshi passed away. See pp.23-24. (*Keppanjo* 1)
Many of Kitanomandokoro’s attendants showed up in the letters. Including other attendants who will be examined in different chapters, here is the list of her attendants, and their roles.

Table 1: Female Attendants of Kitanomandokoro

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendants-in-mobile</th>
<th>Kōzōsu 幸蔵主 (Contacting Daimyo)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magdalena マグダレナ (Contacting Christians)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okyakujin お客人 (Contacting Kinoshita-house)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chaa ちゃん</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higashi ひがし (Contacting Ukita-house)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Attendants (Banshu 番衆)(^88)</td>
<td>Sanmi 三位</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chushō 中将</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yura ゆら</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tora とら</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiku きく</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To とう</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbitrator</td>
<td>Chunagon 中納言</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers</td>
<td>Koho こほ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iwa いわ</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chiku ちく</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koya こや</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go 五</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Yome よめ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td>Chiyoho ちよほ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kitanomandokoro had been in touch with Hideyoshi and, at her place in Osaka or Kyoto, she watched her attendants. The previous letters were written before the 1590s, but here is one more letter to confirm Kitanomandokoro’s involvement in financial matters both for public and private use.

Letter 14 (The latter half)
To Nemoji

\(^88\) Banshu no Okitegaki (番衆の箋書) in Kuki monjo (九鬼文書). Refer Kuwata, pp.145-6.
Date Unknown, 1592

Responding to your request, I am sending you the following items: 100 strings of copper coins for official use; 100 pieces of silver; dōfuku; a fan; two covering bags, and two hakuchō. Please give me a reply when you receive these. Thanks.

Taikō

Hideyoshi clearly stated that a hundred strings of copper coins were for official use. And he separately gave Kitanomandokoro a hundred pieces of silver. During the time he spent in Nagoya, Kitanomandokoro was in need of some money for official use, and requested him to send it. Dōfuku and hakuchō were for the gifts, and thus, it is likely that Kitanomandokoro wanted to give them to someone, most likely for male warriors who could possible wear these army clothing.

3.7 Policing

In Frois' History of Japan, Frois depicted one episode that shows Kitanomandokoro's responsibility and leadership when it came to criminals. This story took place when Hideyoshi was away in Kyushu, and she was at the castle awaiting his return.

As situations in Satsuma become close to the end, one Buddhist monk came to Osaka castle with a letter from Hideyoshi without his signature. The content of the letter was to report the critical condition on Kanpaku's army, and thus, the monks of Mt. Koya were sent this monk [to Osaka castle.] The wife of Kanpaku was asked to pray and to tell this monk to

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89 Kuwata thinks that this letter was written in 1594, but considering the fact that Kingo visited Kitanomandokoro to say good-bye, this letter was written right before Kingo left for Nagoya. Thus, this letter was probably written in 1592.
pray to the Buddha and to give any possible sacrifice in order to bring good luck on Kanpaku’s side.

The wife of Kanpaku was suspicious about this letter, and noticed that the letter did not have Hideyoshi’s signature. Then, she arrested this monk to put him to torture. This monk, being arrested and noticing the danger of his life, confessed that he had told her a lie. He said that he was poor and wanted to get some silver by presenting this letter to her. Then, he was put into a public jail, and has been waiting for Kanpaku to come back and execute him. ... In front of him, there was a big pot with melted steel to boil him alive, or to fry him alive when Kanpaku comes back.

Kitanomandokoro, again, had the privilege to read the letter from outside and was responsible for the incidents in Osaka. In addition, she had been informed enough not to believe in such wrong information that the monk presented. In addition to this episode, there is another record of her taking care of issues in the Osaka castle when Hideyoshi was away.

Letter 15
To Chiku (attendant of Kitanomandokoro)

Twenty-seventh day, 1589

I have received your letter concerning Banshū. I read it and understand the issue. Upon consultation with Chunagon, if she thinks that you can send back six head lady attendants to their residence, please do so. If there are some inexperienced or cunning persons, you should let them go back. In any case, ask Chunagon and return them. Thanks.

Tenka

P.S. On the [twenty-] sixth day, I came to Yodo. I order the construction of Yodo castle, and will head back [to Osaka] on the same day. Thanks.

Chūnagon was an old female attendant of Kitanomandokoro. She had an arbitrator position for this issue, but in the absence of Hideyoshi, Kitanomandokoro could decide

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90 Translators of Frois Nihonshi inserted the phrase here; “because she was getting the news from her attendants about Hideyoshi’s army every day.”
91 Frois Nihonshi, volume 1, pp.296-7.
92 Kitanomandokoro’s attendant.
93 Month is missing, but it is probably around the first to the third month. Kuwata, p.144.
94 Guards staying at the castle. Here, they are probably ladies.
on the treatment of some attendants upon consultation with Chunagon. As Hideyoshi said in the last sentence of his letter, this issue was not so small. He said that he would be in Osaka within a day.

Finally, Kitanomandokoro gave her opinion on Hideyoshi’s judgment or comment even after the birth of Hideyoshi’s first son, Tsurumatsu (鶴松). In this letter, Hideyoshi replied to her letter, and clearly stated that Kitanomandokoro had an opinion against what he was about to do.

Letter 16
To Koya
Date Unknown, 1589 or 1590

I read your letter. I understand that those three fools gave me sincere apologies. It was a good occasion, so I endured [their wrong-doing] and released them to take a rest. However, you were concerned, and also worried about those three, and said the complaints to me. Thus, this case is referred to you. In addition, you have been quite concerned about my mood, so I refer this case to you. Thanks.

Tenka

P.S. Please take a good care of your self, and don’t let me worry [about you]. Please eat well. Don’t be unwary. Ōmandokoro-sama has been in a small place, so she may feel gloomy. Please visit her often. However, if the wind is strong, you will be cold, so you do not have to [visit her]. Please say [my best wishes] to Tsurumatsu-dono and Ohime.

This letter is an important piece because it is often said that after Chaha gave birth to Hideyoshi’s son, Kitanomandokoro lost her authority. After the first son’s birth, Hideyoshi called both of them “Okakasama.” Then, although Hideyoshi called Chaha, “Kakasama,”^95 he still reserved a respectful name for mother, “Ofukurosama,” for Kitanomandokoro. The relationship between Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro after the birth of his son will be discussed in the next section, but to conclude this section, it is

^95 In the letter from Hideyoshi to Tsurumatsu, date unknown.
important to notice that Hideyoshi continued to listen to Kitanomandokoro’s opinion in 1590. The first letter with regard to Nagahama’s townsman was in 1574, and even sixteen years later, she was still in the position where she can state her opinion.

3.8 Kitanomandokoro and Chacha

Kitanomandokoro had four adopted sons, and two adopted daughters. Kuwata Tadachika published many books related to Hideyoshi, but in his books, he always emphasizes the importance of studying adopted sons and daughters in addition to the first wife, concubines, and other relatives. His studies started to be published in the 1920s and other scholars who worked on Hideyoshi always referred to Kuwata’s study when it comes to someone’s name and relationships. However, Kuwata missed one adopted daughter, and did not accurately analyze the word “Go” to identify a lady’s name. Thus, in this section, I first introduce Kitanomandokoro’s adopted children, and then discuss this mysterious person, “Go.” Finally, how Hideyoshi treated Kitanomandokoro and Chaha after the first son and the second son’s births will be examined.

To begin with, here is the common genealogical tree one can find in the books that have been published previously.

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96 For example, see Kuwata, Taikō no tegami, p.44.
97 Examples are Nene to Kinoshita ke monjo, and Toyotomi Hideyoshi Daijiten.
Table 2. Hideyoshi's adopted children (Previous version)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaha</th>
<th>Hideyoshi</th>
<th>Kitanomandokoro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First son, Tsurumatsu (Hiroi)</td>
<td>First adopted son, Hidekatsu (秀勝)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second son, Hideyori (Sute)</td>
<td>Second adopted son, Hidekatsu (秀勝)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third adopted son, Hidetsugi (秀次)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth adopted son, Hidetoshi (秀俊)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the books published previously do not mention the names of adopted girls nor some adopted sons who were not biologically related to Hideyoshi or Kitanomandokoro except for their first adopted son, Hidekatsu. Including all of those who were adopted by Hideyoshi, either boys or girls, here is the complete version of the genealogy of his adopted children.

Table 3. Hideyoshi’s adopted children (Complete version)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaha</th>
<th>Hideyoshi</th>
<th>Kitanomandokoro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tsurumatsu (Hiroi)</td>
<td>Hidekatsu (秀勝)</td>
<td>Go (豪)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hideyori (Sute)</td>
<td>Hidetsugi (秀次)</td>
<td>Hime (姫)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hidekatsu (秀勝)</td>
<td>Kingo (金吾)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hideie (秀家)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hideyasu (秀康)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hachijo gu (八条宮)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since Hidekatsu (1568-1586) is the fourth son of Oda Nobunaga, all genealogy charts include him as an important adopted son of Hideyoshi. Another Hidekatsu (1569-1592) and Hidetsugi (1568-1592) are Hideyoshi’s sister’s second and first sons respectively. Thus, they are biologically related to Hideyoshi. Then, the fourth son in
the old chart is Hidetoshi (1582-1603), who later succeeded Kobayakawa house, and is known as Kobayakawa Hideaki. These four are written in most of Hideyoshi’s genealogical charts, but there are more in-law sons. Hideie (1573-1655) is a son of Ukita Naoie (宇喜田直家), and became a part of Toyotomi house because he married Hideyoshi’s adopted daughter Go. Hideyasu (1574-1607) is the second son of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and he became an in-law son when Hideyoshi and Ieyasu made a peace treaty after Komaki-Nagakute battle in 1584. Finally, the last adopted son was Hachijō gū Toshihito Shin’nō (智仁親王 1579-1629). He was a son of Sanehito Shin’nō (誠仁親王) and a grandson of Ōgimachi Ten’nō (正親町天皇). His brother was Goyōzei Tenno, and this adoption took place with the intention of making a biological connection with the imperial house.

Five out of six adopted sons were not considered to be a part of his family. In the letters from Hideyoshi to Kitanomandokoro, there was always concern for only one son, Kobayakawa Hideaki, who had been called Kingo and lived in Osaka castle with Kitanomandokoro. Including another two adopted girls, Hideyoshi thought that three children were in his family.

Kuwata failed to identify a lady, Hime, as his adopted daughter. However, her name appeared with Gomoji, another of their adopted daughters. Go left the house in 1588 when she married Ukita Hideie in Bizen. However, even after Go left, Hime remained in the house and Hideyoshi greeted her at times. Names of his family in his letters are as follows;

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98 Fourth day of the seventh month, 1586 (Tenshō 14), Second day of the twelfth month, 1587 (Tenshō 15), Fourteenth day of the fifth month, 1590 (Tenshō 18), and the sixth month, 1590 (estimated.)
1. 1586 6th month 25th day: Gomoji, Kingo, and Kitanomandokoro
2. 1586 7th month 4th day: Ohime, Gomoji
3. 1587 12th month 2nd day: Ohime, Gomoji, Kingo
4. 1590 5th month 14th day: Ōmandokoro, Go, Ohime, Kingo, Kitanomandokoro
5. 1590 7th month 12th day: Tsurumatsu, Kingo, Ohime
6. 1590:99 Ōmandokoro, Kitanomandokoro, Tsurumaru, Ohime, Kingo
7. 1590:100 Tsurumatsu, Ohime
8. 1590:101 Tsurumatsu, Ohime
9. 1594:102 Gohime and Kingo
10. 1594:103 Kingo

From this record, we can see that Ohime was adopted after Go. Go and Kingo left the house in 1588 and 1589 respectively, but she stayed in the house with Tsurumaru in 1590. Thus, Hideyoshi’s family, in a practical sense, consisted of his mother, Ōmandokoro, his wife, Kitanomandokoro, and two adopted daughters Go and Hime, and an adopted son, Kingo until 1590.

Table 4. Hideyoshi’s Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaha</th>
<th>Hideyoshi</th>
<th>Kitanomandokoro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tsurumatsu (Hiroi)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hideyori (Sute)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go (豪)</td>
<td>Hideie (秀家)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hime (姫)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingo (金吾)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

99 Date and Attention unknown. Kuwata estimated this to be sixth month of 1590.
100 Date and Attention unknown. Kuwata estimated this to be eighth month of 1590.
101 Date and Attention unknown. Kuwata estimated this to be ninth month of 1590.
102 They are grown, and this letter discusses about them after they left the house.
103 Again, it is about Kingo after he left the house.
Go (葉) was sometimes called Gomoji (五もじ) and there are five of her letters remaining now. The first letter was from “father, ototosama (おととさま)” and thus Kuwata identified this letter as a letter for his adopted daughter Go. Also, there are three more letters, which Kuwata thinks were sent to his concubines Nishinomaru. These three letters are, however, directed to his adopted daughter. The first letter mentions “mother, ofukurosama (おふくろさま),” and this person is no one but Kitanomandokoro. Furthermore, in the same letter, there is the name of her attendant Közōsu. Another two letters were written within a month of the first letter. There is no contradiction if three of them were sent to his adopted daughter. Lastly, one more letter from when Hideyoshi fell sick remains, and the attention is again, Gomoji (五もじ). The last letter is a farewell letter to her, and he was longing to see her one more time.

Another “Go (葉)” related person who Kuwada failed to identify was “Gosa (五さ).” Boscaro suggests that she might be an attendant of Kitanomandokoro, but from the two letters below, we can confirm that she is an attendant of Kitanomandokoro and the content is directed to Kitanomandokoro.

Letter 17
To Gosa
Thirteenth day of the fourth month, 1590

I am glad that you sent me messengers again and again. We surrounded Odawara with two or three rings, and built double moats and walls. So, not a single enemy can escape. People form the eight domains in Kanto stayed [in Odawara castle], so if everybody starves to death, the way to Ōshū will be wide open. I cannot express how content I am. [Kanto and Ōshū are] the third of Japan, so I will be patient. Though it might take time, I will give strict orders and make this [pacification] last forever. This is what all people believe to be good. So, this time, I will achieve

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104 Kuwata only identified one out of four.
105 Date unknown, To Nishinomaru Gomoji (in reply) from Taikō.
my best in battle, will stay here as long as it may need, and will spend as
many soldiers, gold, silver as it possibly needs. I will make sure that my
name will remain in history, and make a triumphal return. Please be ready.
And please tell everyone about this.

Tenka

P.S. I have caught my enemy in a birdcage so far, so there is absolutely
no danger. Please do not worry. I miss my young prince, but for the sake
of our future, and because this country should enjoy peace, I forget about
missing him. Please do not worry. We are applying moxa, and taking
care of ourselves. So, you do not have to worry. I have talked to
everyone here, and asked Daimyo to invite their ladies here in Odawara.
As I said, I expect this battle to be a long one. For this, I will call a lady at
Yodo, so please order her to come over here from you, and to arrange the
trip. If we let you know [about Yodo coming to Odawara], she will
prepare everything as we wish, so please do send a people and ask her to
come over. We both are getting old, but I will visit you at least once
before this year ends, and will see Ōmandokoro and young prince. Please
do not worry.

As in the previous letters written from Hideyoshi’s army station, the details of his plan
are presented in the body. Then, there are many important points in the latter half of this
letter. First of all, he was inviting Yodo, but he made Kitanomandokoro contact her and
order her to go to Odawara. He states that if Kitanomandokoro knew that she was
invited, she would feel better. In this year, 1590, Hideyoshi was fifty-three, and
Kitanomandokoro was forty-two years old. As Hideyoshi said in his letter, both of them
were getting old, and Kitanomandokoro stayed in Kyoto and took care of Ōmandokoro
and the young prince, Tsurumatsu.

In addition, to ensure that the letter was intended for Kitanomandokoro, there is
another letter to follow up this letter that was written two months later. Hideyoshi, this
time, reported to her that Yodo went back first, and he would be back in Kyoto in
September. In this letter, as usual, he reported to her what was happening in Odawara,
and what had happened to Hōjō Ujimasa (北条氏政) and Mutsu-no-kami (陸奥守), and his future army plan to go to Aizu (会津) was also informed.¹⁰⁶

While Kitanomandokoro turned forty-two in 1590, Yodo was still twenty-three years old. Kitanomandokoro had been the mother of Ohime, Go, and Kingo, and had previously been called a mother, “Ofukuro-sama.” In contrast, Yodo was called another name of mother, “Okaka-sama.” For example, in the letter attended to Hideyori, Hideyoshi wrote, “I should send a letter to Okaka-sama, but please convey my best regard to her.”¹⁰⁷ “Okakasama,” which means literally “a mother of baby” applied to Yodo, and “Ofukurosama,” which was used for a more mature senior person was used for Kitanomandokoro. Thus, they were both respected as mothers of his children, and indeed, Kitanomandokoro had been with him all the time from the birth of Hideyori until Hideyoshi passed away in Fushimi in 1598.

### 3.9  Castle sitting: Keep his men in order

While Hideyoshi was away, Kitanomandokoro stayed in either Osaka or Kyoto, and kept exchanging letters with him. Hideyoshi got much information from her, and Kitanomandokoro also received recent news from Hideyoshi. She was also responsible for supervising her attendants to watch Hideyoshi’s valuables and storage. Finally, there are some critical lines in Hideyoshi’s letters that showed his trust for her and that deferred his authority to her.

¹⁰⁶ Twelfth day of the seventh month, 1590 To Mandokoro.  
¹⁰⁷ Second day of the twelfth month, Year unknown. To Hideyori-sama, From Hideyoshi, toto.
Letter 18
To Koya,
Twenty-second day of the sixth month, 1594

During my absence, please make a firm order to keep everything working, and also be careful with the danger of fire.

Fragment
To [Kitanomandokoro]
...Very soon, I shall see you and we will talk together. During my absence, you must give orders to people, even down to the lowest, so that nothing untoward may occur.¹⁰⁸

Hideyoshi was clearly concerned about his absence from the castle. Hideyoshi, however, did not leave anyone to castle-sit while he was away. There were only Kitanomandokoro and other ladies, and some men from the Kinoshita house. As a head, her brother, Kinoshita Iesada, who had his own castle in Himeji (姫路) stayed in Osaka castle with her. He was namely the owner of Himeji castle with 25,000 koku, but he was assigned as a guard for Kitanomandokoro during Hideyoshi’s absence in Kyushu.¹⁰⁹ Hideyoshi did not leave some other Daimyo at the castle, but instead, asked Kitanomandokoro and her family to castle-sit.¹¹⁰

Lastly, there are two quotes from Hideyoshi’s letter that are surprising, but ensure the importance of Kitanomandokoro for Hideyoshi. These two quotes show how much he trusted her, and loved her as his wife.

Letter 19
To Go-sa (Kitanomandokoro’s attendant)
First day of the seventh month

¹⁰⁸ Boscaro, p.84. Translation is slightly corrected by Tomoko Kitagawa.
¹⁰⁹ Himeji castle was, therefore, owned by his third son, Nobutoshi.
¹¹⁰ Yodo, who stayed at Yodo castle also got a responsibility to order his men in Yodo castle. A letter sent from Tenka to Ochaha. Date unknown, probably in 1590.
Even when I was a *ronin*¹¹¹ you were really kind. I recall it now, and cannot forget about it. Recently, I heard that you were ill, and I am very worried. I feel sorry, and to let you know that I am concerned, I send you a letter right away. Thanks.

Tenka

Letter 20
To One
Date unknown, 1594

Also, I received a hand-made pen case. I am so flattered. It did not just start now, but you are so special. Your skill is the best in this world, and our wish is always the same. I know so.

Taikō

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¹¹¹ *Ronin* indicates when he was a low class samurai.
4.1 Hideyoshi’s territory

In 1582, Nogunaga was assassinated at Hon’nōji (本能寺). At this point in time, the border of Nobunaga’s land was drawn as in Figure 1. Here, the information that was contained in the correspondence from Hideyoshi to Kobayakawa Saemonsa Takakage (小早川左衛門佐隆景 1533-1597) has items that show the area of Hideyoshi Japan.

Letter 21
From Hideyoshi to Kobayakawa Takakage
Fifteenth day of the fifth month, 1583 (Tenshō 11)

Item: The easternmost domain of Japan is ruled by Hōjō Ujimasa, and the northernmost domain of Japan is under the rule of [Uesugi] Kagekatsu, and both of them trust Hideyoshi’s competence. If Mōri ume-no kami [of the westernmost domain] will recognize Hideyoshi’s competence, and defer their power to Hideyoshi, the state of Japan will be bigger than when [Minamoto no] Yoritomo governed. So, your opinion is important. Please understand this by next July, and don’t hesitate to tell me your opinion. Since Hideyoshi understands Hachiman Daibosatsu [and its intention], it is great to talk to each other.
Item: The above things should be reported to Mōri Terumoto. Please send messengers and report these items.
The eastern most domain of Japan was Hojo Ujimasa's land in Kanto plain, which included Sagami (相模), Izu (伊豆), Musashi (武藏), Shimosa (下総), Kazusa (上総), and Kōzuke (上野). The northern most domain of Japan was Uesugi Kagakatus’s Echizen (越前) han in Hokuriku (北陸). The attention of this letter is Kobayakawa Takakage in Aki (安芸) when Hideyoshi was in negotiation with Mōri Motonari (毛利元就). Thus, the westernmost domain of Japan was that of Kobayakawa, and about to be Mōri’s land.

From this point, while Hideyoshi went to Kyushu and later to Odawara, and attempted to take over their lands by military power, Kitanomandokoro in Osaka heard of this expansion of territory directly from him, and also sent messengers to the border domains.

In this chapter, the letters sent to the northeastern-most domain, which was governed by Date Masamune (伊達政宗 1567-1636), will be examined. These letters are left in Great Japan Archives (大日本古文書 Dainihon kononjo) in classical Japanese
in brush pen font. Upon careful review, there are two letters sent by Kōzōsu, Kitanomandokoro’s attendant, that have been found so far. Then, Date Masamune himself was concerned about the issues mentioned in Kōzōsu’ letters, and he asked his mother to talk to them. While Kōzōsu wrote letters to Date Masamune in the 1590s, one more letter was written by Kōdaiin after the summer battle of Osaka in 1615. This letter contains the most surprising information regarding the battle of Osaka and the end of Toyotomi house.

4.2 From Kōzōsu

Two letters written and sent by Kōzōsu have been found. They are with regard to Masamune’s position: whether he was on Hideyoshi’s side or not. This was written in 1590 (Tenshō 18). In 1590, Hideyoshi was at the Kanto-Odawara campaign. He crashed Odawara castle, and sent Ieyasu for Hōjō’s replacement. After that, on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, he left Odawara, and on the twenty-sixth day, he arrived at Utsunomiya. On the ninth day of the eighth month, he moved to Aizu, and on the 12th, he started to make his way back home to Kyoto. When he arrived, it was already the first day of the ninth month.

The first letter, which was previously believed to be written by Kōzōsu on behalf of Hideyoshi in August 1590, was not sent from Hideyoshi but from Kitanomandokoro. While Hideyoshi was on the trip to Aizu and returned to Kyoto, Kōzōsu stayed by Kitanomandokoro in Kyoto. The letter was, therefore, not to express what Hideyoshi
thought, but to state what Kitanomandokoro was feeling. This fact will be, again, proved by examining the contents of her second letter, but here is what Kōzōsu wrote to Date Masamune in the first letter:

**Letter 22**
**From Kōzōsu to Date Masamune**
**Third day (of the eighth month), 1590**

This time around, too, I am pleased to hear that you are healthy and doing well. We wanted to see you for a little while, but time has passed by while saying so. It is very unfair. ... About your wife coming to Kyoto, I understand your concern, but please do not worry. Please set your mind at ease.

Recently, I heard about you expressing [ill] feelings in Odawara. Also, I received your letters. That was such a trouble. You are not in the position to do such an impolite thing. You are giving me pain.

In any case, I am sending some gifts for you. Here is a bag, scent bag, sake cup, *katabira*, and some flowers. Please do not feel bad, and accept the gifts. Thank you.

As was mentioned in the first paragraph of this letter, Date Masamune’s wife, Megohime (愛姫 1568-1653) went to Kyoto in 1590. Then, Kitanomandokoro, who was not in Odawara and stayed in Kyoto, said that she knew what Date Masamune stated to Hideyoshi in Odawara, and separately obtained the letters from him. Two sentences here, “that was such a trouble,” and “you are giving me pain,” are directly expressed in this letter. Why did she feel that? The key information is in the second letter written by Kōzōsu. This time, Hideyoshi was back in Kyoto, and the letter was written to report what was going on when Masamune’s wife arrived in Kyoto and met both of Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro.

**Letter 23**
**From Kōzōsu to Date Masamune**
**Twenty-sixth day of the twelfth month (1590)**

You have sent us many express messengers. You do not need to [send any messengers.] Your wife does not need anything either. Also, at times,
Uesama and Kitanomandokoro-sama expressed their thoughts [of you] to her. Please do not worry. Although many people report that you have changed your mind, Uesama still believed that “no matter what I hear about Masamune’s change of his mind, I think that is wrong, and I do not want to hear such reports.” Thus, if you forget our kindness, remember there will be a reckoning. Even your wife repeatedly received a tremendous amount of rice, and her attendants are thankful.

On the twenty-eighth day of the twelfth month, Dewa-no-kami-dono visited us to celebrate the end of the year together with us. He also went to Okazaki in Mikawa, and saw Uesama and expressed his willingness to support him. When I talked to him, I heard that Masamune is coming to Kyoto soon, and everyone will celebrate the New Year together. I heard that the road is quiet, so please do not worry.

Dewa-no-kami told me to convey his thoughts of you, Masamune. Everyone says that if [someone (subject unidentified)] hears that you have changed your mind, it will threaten your house. I heard that everyone wishes that you could come to Kyoto and explain everything. Please appease your wife too. Everyone is worried here. Her [impolite] deed is unsightly. Best wishes,

Kōzōsu from Juraku

His wife, Megohime came to Kyoto and stated the ill feelings that Masamune had in his mind. These feelings were supposed to be hidden from Hideyoshi, so Masamune contacted Kōzōsu and Kitanomandokoro several times. However, she still did not understand their effort to hide it, and she had not shown any consideration yet. This letter reported such matters to Masamune, and in order to understand what is behind this scene, two ladies in Date houses should be introduced in the next section.

Kōzōsu’s letters, however, show the capability of Kōzōsu to gather information from many places. Though it was written in Kyoto, she knew what happened in Odawara in the first letter. In the second letter, she knew information about Masamune’s uncle, Yoshiaki, and what he had done in Mikawa. She was asked to convey best regards.

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112 Mogami Yoshiaki.
113 This Uesama refers to Hidetsugi.
114 The road from Masamune’s castle to Kyoto. It indicates that there were not any fights or anyone who would possibly interfere Masamune’s travel.
from Yoshiaki to Masamune, thus the exchange of letters between Yoshiaki and Kyoto are easily imagined. Both letters expressed real emotion, reported the news, and gave suggestions. Though the Date lived in the northern most domain, in the 1590s, the information exchange was frequent, and the territory of Japan had been expanded to the far north.

Diagram 5 Daimyo and their lands in 1590

4.3 The Date Ladies

As for the ladies in the Date House, there are two important persons regarding Közōsu’s letters we have just seen. One lady is Yoshihime (義姫 1547/48 - 1623), mother of Date Masamune and sister of Mogami Yoshiaki (最上義光 1546-1614) who
was mentioned in Kōzōsu’s letter as Dewa-no-kami (出羽守). And another lady is this “impolite” wife of Masamune, Megohime.

Yoshihime had been worried to see the conflicts of two armies, one of her brother Yoshiaki’s and another one of her son Masamune’s. In February 1588, Masamune was fighting against the army of Ōsaki Yoshitaka (大崎義隆 1548-1603). At that time, Yoshiaki tried to support the army of Yoshitaka and sent troops for him. However, Yoshihime appealed to Yoshiaki to stop the fighting in order not to lose her son, Masamune. They made a peace treaty, but in the same year, Masamune and Yoshitaka faced each other again. This time, she was about to see her brother and son trying to kill each other. Then, she went to the battlefield and let her carriers put her palanquin between the two armies. Yoshiaki tried to persuade her to draw back, but she stayed in the middle, and both armies had to stop fighting. This was in 1588, and as the letter told the story of Yoshiaki, he tried to support Masamune after the unfinished battle of 1588.

Megohime, the first wife of Masamune, was accused of hiding the assassination plan from Masamune in 1590. Masamune killed Megohime’s nursing mother and top attendants, so she was unhappy before she left for Kyoto. Thus, she was supposed to let Hideyoshi know that Masamune was on their side, but instead, she exposed Masamune’s unsupportive position to Hideyoshi. In order to hide the fact that Masamune did not obey Hideyoshi from the bottom of his heart, Masamune asked Kōzōsu and Kitanomandokoro for help while Hideyoshi was in Odawara.

Thus, the first letter shows the fact that Masamune wrote Kōzōsu many times until he became bothersome. This was done before Megohime was sent to Kyoto. In the second letter, which was written in late twelfth month, both Hideyoshi and Megohime
were in Kyoto with Kitanomandokoro and Kōzōsu. While Megohime tried to expose Masamune’s feelings, Kōzōsu and Kitanomandokoro tried to hide it and to call that wrong news. Kōzōsu therefore wrote in a report form, and said, “Uesama still believes that no matter what I hear about Masamune’s change of his mind, I think that is wrong, and I do not want to hear such reports.” And she also told him to thank them for their efforts. Finally, in the end, the wrongdoing of Megohime was written of as “unsightly,” and he was asked himself to come to Kyoto to clearly state his position and to stop Megohime.

In response to this, Masamune wrote a letter to his mother, Yoshihime. In this letter, he let her know that there were two attendants close to Hideyoshi, and asked her to send letters to Kyoto. From the sentence, it is unclear whether he asked her to write directly to Kōzōsu or Ochaa, or to write to Megohime. However, this letter shows another fact of his mother’s involvement, and ensures the fact that Kitanomandokoro’s attendants contacted him several times.

Letter 24
From Date Masamune to his mother’s attendant, Koshōshō
Twenty-fifth day of the eleventh month, 1593

P.S. Both Uesama gave me a kind thought. [However,] as for Hime, she is such a shameful person. There are Kōzōsu-sama and Ochaa-sama near Taikō-sama, and they gave me a thought [on this issue]. I would like you to exchange letters. Please, do me a favour [to write].

This time, I am sorry for asking you [a favour] in rush. This person does not even do a favour for me [in Kyoto]. I feel bad. ... I am sorry for not sending anything to you and your attendants. Please do me a favour [to write.] We are absent [for Korean invasion], but please do not be bored, and tell us anything. Thanks.

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115 Hideyoshi and Hidetsugu, or Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro.
116 Megohime.
Megohime started to live in Kyoto after she left. This letter was written two or three years after the first two letters. Not only Kōzōsu but also Ochaa, another attendant of Kitanomandokoro, had sent him a letter with regard to his wife. Masamune was deeply bothered by his wife’s impoliteness in Kyoto, and asked his mother to send a letter either to tell Megohime to correct her deeds, or to thank Kōzōsu or Ochaa for taking care of her. Masamune was participating in Hideyoshi’s invasion project, and wrote this letter from Nagoya. He stated that “he is absent” in the last sentence as well. The letters from Kōzōsu and Ochaa, therefore, must have been sent to Nagoya with an attention of Masamune. Thus, Kitanomandokoro, who stayed in Osaka and Kyoto during Hideyoshi’s absence, took care of issues and let her attendants contact Daimyo.

4.5 Kōdaiin’s letter after the annihilation of Osaka

In the collection of letters in the Date House, one surprising piece from Kōdaiin to Date Masamune was discovered. The previous letters were written in 1590 and 1593, but their contacts did not end with the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. This letter was sent to Date Masamune after the summer battle of Osaka. Date Masamune must have visited Kōdaiin in Kyoto around the battle, and this letter was to follow their meeting. Since this letter contains astonishing information, and was written by Kōdaiin herself, both Japanese and English translations are presented here.
Letter 25

I happily recalled your visit to Kyoto. I cannot say anything about what happened in Osaka. It was something that I cannot even say a word to give my sympathy. I hasten to write you, although I believe that my thoughts were conveyed [in Osaka], since you are living far away, I am truly pleased to send you a letter and to tell you how happy I feel [about what happened in Osaka]. Being here, if we can be of your help, or if you have something you need, please feel free to tell me. Also, twenty katabira here are not so beautiful, but in case you like them, I let you see them. They are all in rare colours. I wish you the best.

Nineteenth day,
Kōdaiin Ne

This letter expresses her feelings about the battle in Osaka – She was happy. She did not have a word to give her sympathy. This is proof of her position on Ieyasu’s side at the battle of Sekigahara, telling her close people, including her son Kobayakawa Takakage, to be on the Ieyasu’s side. Eventually, she allowed Ieyasu to use her land of Ten’nōji as

117 Dai nihon komonjo Dateke Iewake 3 no 2 (大日本古文書伊達家家分け 3 の 2).
118 It sounds like Onnen (怨念), but judging from the usage of this word in other letters, this word does not refer to grudge.
the headquarters of Ieyasu’s army for the battle. She was not supportive of Chacha and Hideyori. However, she was not only negligent of them, but also helpful and happy to see the annihilation of Osaka.

This chapter, based on two letters of Kōzōsu, one letter of Date Masamune, and one letter written by Kōdaiin, reveals solid evidence of Kitanomandokoro’s conduct during Hideyoshi’s glory days and after his death. She was not just a wife of Hideyoshi. This is clear in that she had been in contact with a Daimyo, and had been manipulating Hideyoshi with regard to Date Masamune’s fake support from the northernmost domain. After the death of Hideyoshi, she was on Ieyasu’s side, and congratulated the total destruction of Osaka castle. Her conduct throughout her life is no less important than any other Daimyo of her time. In fact, it is not far fetched to say that her life was more interesting than the lives of other samurai of her time. She was not just a wife of Hideyoshi, nor the first wife of the unifier of Japan. She was the lady samurai who managed political and financial matters, who ordered her attendants and men around her, and who lived with money and power during the Sengoku period.
Chapter V: Kitanomandokoro in Tales: *Ehon Taikōki* Written in the Kansei Era

5.1 *Ehon Taikōki*

Why did a life story of Kitanomandokoro not survive? Though her life as Nei, Kitanomandokoro, and Kōdaïin, and her significance in her time was apparent, this fact has been in the shadows of the glorious story of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Aside from being a wife of this samurai, there is one more conspicuous factor that has overshadowed her life story. This section therefore studies the tale written in the Edo period, which was well spread and contains popular stories that people know even now in the twenty-first century.

The tales of Hideyoshi became fictional in the Edo period. In *Ehon Taikōki*, the episodes are exaggerated, and stories about women also increased in number. This work combined both historical narratives and pictures for almost every single episode. Although this story is not a useful source of historical accounts, it caught a wider range of audience in the Kansei era (1789-1800). Thus, more than a century later, the figures of Hideyoshi and the men and women around him were distorted; this tale embroidered the characters, and inserted many fictional episodes. In *Ehon Taikōki*, the inside stories of Hideyoshi’s women were the most apparent examples, and it embedded the false recognition of the women who lived at the time of Hideyoshi.
Unlike the early writings on Hideyoshi such as Ōmura’s, Ōta’s, Kawazumi’s works,119 Ehon Taikōki inserted more fictional accounts of Hideyoshi’s wife and concubines, which cannot be found elsewhere. The first Ehon Taikōki was published in 1798, and the series was completed in 1802. Takeuchi Kakusai (竹内確斎) was the author of this first pictorial tale of Hideyoshi with illustrations done by Okada Gyokusan (岡田玉山). Due to the added effect of the illustrations, this book attracted a wider audience and was thus more widely read.120

5.2 Inside of Osaka castle

In this book, for the first time, the inside story of Osaka castle was told. From the first historical record, Tenshōki, other Taikōki such as Ōta’s, Kawasumi’s, and Oze’s, reveal practically nothing about the relationship between the first wife and the other concubines. Either those stories were kept private or they were omitted, but in any case, there were no such descriptions in the writings between 1580 and 1630. Here, Ehon Taikōki tells the story of a bad relationship between Kitanomandokoro and Yodo. The story in volume five, number nine is summarized as follows:

Kitanomandokoro loved black lilies, which only grew up in Shiroyama. She loved them so much that she asked Sasa Masanari to send them to her often. Knowing this fact, the daughter of Sen no Rikyū, secretly told Yodo about Shiroyama’s rare lilies. Then, Yodo decided to get those lilies from Sasa Narimasa secretly, and showed off at a tea party in front

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119 All of them, Omura, Kawazumi and Oze, wrote books called Taikōki. Omura Yuko’s (大村由己) work is known as Tenshōki (天正記), Kawasumi Saburōbei (川角三郎兵衛) wrote Kawasumi Taikōki (川角太閤記), and Oze Hoan (小瀬甫庵) wrote Taikōki.
120 Kuwata, Taikō ki no kenkyū, p.213.
of Kitanomandokoro. Apparently, Kitanomandokoro was indignant with Yodo. She was so furious that Sasa Masanari and Sen no Rikyū had to commit seppuku by helping Yodo to get those lilies.\(^{121}\)

For two hundred years, how had this story been handed down? Without answering this question, there is a fatal contradiction in this story, which shakes its very creditability. The key is in when this incident happened, if it really was a true story. Sasa Narimasa (佐々成政), who caused this trouble by sending black lilies to Yodo, committed seppuku in 1587. However, Yodo only became Hideyoshi’s concubine in 1588. A lady who was not even close to Hideyoshi in 1587 could not have caused this trouble. Moreover, this story sounds credible since some well-known figures are involved, and it does satisfy the audience’s curiosity about why Sasa and Sen no Rikyū (千利休) had to commit seppuku. However, in fact, in the previous versions of Taikōki, either there were no such stories or they give different reasons for both Sasa and Sen’s deaths.\(^{122}\)

5.3 Kitanomandokoro vs. Yodo

The first story in which Kitanomandokoro appeared is in the scene where Hideyoshi, whose name was Tōkichirō (藤吉郎) at that time, married. She was written of as a daughter of Ashigaru, Fujii Mataemon (藤井又右衛門) who served Oda Nobunaga. Her name was Yae (八重), and a long fictional story of their marriage is

\(^{121}\) Ehon Taikōki Chū, vol.5, no.9.

\(^{122}\) Sasa’s reason for committing suicide was to accept blame his false strategy in Kyushu campaign, Hōan’s Taikōki. And for Sen, there are varieties of reasons presented in each book. No such book pre-dated to this work that tells the black lilies’ story.
written over two pages (Picture 1). This chapter is about fourteen years old girl, and does not tell much about her character. Then, this story ends with a brief introductory line to her life; “this lady was Kitanomandokoro when Tōkichirō took control of all Japan, and was given a name Kōdaiin later.”

Picture 1

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123 *Ehon Taikōki Jō*, pp.60-4. Picture 1 is on page 61 and 62.
124 *Ehon Taikōki Jō*, p.64.
125 *Ehon Taikōki Jō*, pp.61-2. Picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
More descriptions of her character are in Vol.5, no.8, more than five hundred pages after she was first introduced. The time is now in 1587 (Tenshō 15), and she, a daughter of Ashigaru who had served Nobunaga, is described as follows:

Her wisdom is absolutely amazing, and other samurai at that time would never be smarter. Hideyoshi’s success from the poor status is much indebted to her help. Thus, Hideyoshi himself often praised her wisdom and said that no mediocre person can beat her perception. In general, as a characteristic of the time, everyone from both high and low status loved a wise wife, and after asking her about things, one made a final decision. Also, Sen no Rikyū’s wife was a wise woman. ... [He was convinced by her opinions, and followed her words. Having a great wife] was the fashion of this time, and everyone did the same. As such, Mandokoro of Hideyoshi was chosen to be the wisest, and her wit is not ordinary.\footnote{Ehon Taikōki Chū, vol.5, no. 8, pp.637-8.}

In contrast, Yodo is described as follows:

Above all, she equaled Kitanomandokoro in intelligence. They were both smart, but Kitanomandokoro’s wisdom was practiced while Yodo-dono’s intelligence ceased without seeing the light. If we took away Kitanomandokoro’s wisdom, and let Yodo-dono alone practice [the politics,] she would be able to handle better than Tang’s Empress Sokuten and our country’s Nun-Shogun Masako. For this reason, Mandokoro and Yodo-dono were at the far end of right and left, and competed with their intelligence. At the end, they reigned as two Shogun of the house, and all other women followed on either side. ... although no one knew about this fight in the house, they competed like Sengoku daimyo’s fight over their lands.\footnote{Ehon Taikōki Chū, p.638.}

While the documents in the early seventeenth century did not leave many stories about the women in Osaka castle, or about Kitanomandokoro and Chaha, *Ehon Taikōki* described their characters in detail, compared the two, and called them two Shogun. Kitanomandokoro was praised, but this story even favours Yodo by claiming that she could have operated the country much better. Then, Kitanomandokoro and Yodo’s pictures follow this story; they are depicted as two rival Shogun (Picture 2).
Picture 2

128 *Ehon Taikōki Chū*, vol. 5, no. 8, pp. 640-1. Picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
In Picture 2, Kitanomandokoro is shown to have higher status. She sits on the higher mattress, and her clothes are thicker than Yodo’s. Also, Kitanomandokoro has a gesture of winning, laughing with her hand and fan under her chin. Yodo does not show emotion on her face, but she has a dragon circling over her head. Moreover, their figures are depicted as the same size, compared to Picture 3 in which Yodo is bigger than a samurai and much bigger than her attendant. Thus, unlike the hierarchy we observed in Ōta’s Taikōki, they were depicted and drawn as having the same status.

Picture 3

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129 Ehon Taikōki Chū, vol.6, no.10, pp.262-3. Picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
As for the picnic party in Daigo, the hierarchy has been changed from the previous record. In Ōta’s Taikōki, the order was,

The Program and the Order of Entrance March
1. Kitanomandokoro-sama,
2. Nishinomaru (Yodo),
3. Matsunomaru (Kyōgoku),
4. San’nomaru,
5. Kakasama

In contrast, Ehon Taikōki says,

The Program and the Order of Entrance March
1. Kitanomandokoro-sama,
2. Sanjō,
3. Matsunomaru (Kyōgoku),
4. Taikō and Wakagimi,
5. Yodo,
6. Kaga

Taikō Hideyoshi was also put in this order, so this is no longer a hierarchy of the ladies. Instead, the first, second, and third are treated as curtain raisers, and after Taikō, his son and wife followed. This was a significant modification, and implies that Yodo’s position as a mother made her higher than anyone else.

Yodo seemed to enjoy her position after the birth of the second son, and her position was raised to the highest among ladies in this tale. However, when Hideyoshi fell sick, Yodo started to suffer since her son was too young to take over from Hideyoshi and she knew that Kitanomandokoro had many samurai supporting her. Here is the passage concerning Yodo when Hideyoshi fell in bed in Fushimi.

[When Hideyoshi fell sick,] two lady Shogun, Kitanomandokoro and Yodo-gimi, faced each other in case something happened to him. Some Daimyo and Shōmyo started to help Kitanomandokoro, and others supported Yodo. Everyone shouted and panicked to think about the chaos that could happen [following Hideyoshi’s death]. In particular, Yodo had a deep jealousy of Kitanomandokoro since Kato, Fukushima, Kuroda, and other strong Daimyo regularly visited Kitanomandokoro. In addition,
even the strongest people of that time, Kingo Chūnagon, Yamato Chūnagon, Kinoshita Wakasanosuke Katsutoshi, who was also called Choshō, Uemon Taifu Nobukatsu, Kinoshita Sakyō no suke, Kinoshita Naiki, and Kinoshita Geki followed her and made a strong branch. [Yodo] was afraid of their power, and had been feeling uneasy.

The tale suggests that Kitanomandokoro would have better support from all the samurai who followed, supported and respected her. The real son of Hideyoshi, Hideyori, was too young to take over Hideyoshi and Hidetsugu’s current positions. Yodo, who used to be called the most beautiful woman in Toyotomi house, now worried about her appearance, and one picture (Picture 4) of her looking into a mirror follows this story. Finally, after worrying about losing position, and getting ugly looking, Yodo in the next picture (Picture 5) was possessed by a big snake. She scared her attendants, and exposed a disgraceful appearance. Her story ends here.

This long story of Taikō Hideyoshi, over two thousand pages, ends with a happy ending for the widow, Kitanomandokoro. Her background, which was introduced earlier as a daughter of Ashigaru, and her name, Yae, are revealed to be wrong. It says, “the first wife of Taikō Hideyoshi, Kitanomandokoro, was indeed an in-law daughter of Ashigaru Fujii Mataemon.” The real origin of her is a daughter of Sugihara Nagafusa (杉原長房), who succeeded as the fourteenth generation of Taira no Hidehira (平 秀衡), a grand son of Taira no Kiyomori (平 清盛), a son of Sanmi Koremori (三位惟盛). After Hideyoshi’s death, she was called and respected by other Daimyo as a lady Shogun. She lived it up, and enjoyed the picture painted by Kanō (Picture 6), started

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130 In this tale, the son is also suspected to be someone else’s son, not Hideyoshi’s.
131 *Ehon Taikōki Jō*, p.638.
132 *Ehon Taikōki Ge*, vol.7, no.12, p.522.
133 *Ehon Taikōki Ge*, vol.7, no.12, p.523.
Kabuki (Picture 7), organized Bodaiji of Toyotomi Hideyoshi at Kōdaiji (Picture 8), and passed away peacefully.

Picture 4 Yodo concerning her appearance

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134 Ehon Taikōki Ge, vol.7, no.12, pp. 516-7. This picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
Picture 5 Yodo possessed by a big snake

135 *Ehon Taikoki Ge*, vol.7, no.12, pp. 518-9. This picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
Picture 6 $^{136}$ Kitanomandokoro enjoying a Kanō's painting

$^{136}$ Ehon Taikōki Ge, vol.7, no.12, pp. 526-7. This picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
Picture 7 Kitanomandokoro and Kabuki

137 *Ehon Taikōki Ge*, vol.7, no.12, pp. 528-9. This picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
Picture 8\textsuperscript{138} Village of Kōdaiji

\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Ehon Taikōki Ge}, vol.7, no.12, pp. 532-3. This picture was taken at Harvard Yenching Library.
Kuwata further speculates that the re-writing of this tale by Nakayama Kyūmu (中山休夢) in 1885 made this story famous and widespread. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to assess the impact of Nakayama’s work here, but at this moment in 1802, we can clearly point out evidence of new tales having been inserted after two centuries.

Previously, stories of Hideyoshi and other samurai in Ōta’s Taikō sama gunki no uchi have great conformity to the other historical records and writings. The only problem of the seventeenth century tales was that they were told overly masculine and omitted any stories related to Hideyoshi’s wife and concubines. In the early Edo period, the tales of war, the battle of Sekigahara in particular, tend to tell the courageous stories of male samurai and the clever strategies of some daimyo. Even in the paintings, fighting warriors in the battlefield were sketched and exposed. Did the stories related to females leave an accurate record? - No, they did not.

Accordingly, the new story inserted in Ehon Taikōki created a false conception of Yodo’s position in the house. Yodo gave birth to two sons of Hideyoshi, however, Kitanomondokoro had never been a powerless figure for Hideyoshi or for the people in the Osaka Castle. This tale ends with awarding some credit on Kitanomandokoro’s side, but other fictional stories added flamboyant character to Yodo, and hid Kitanomandokoro’s consistency and accomplishment as well as independency. She was treated a wife of Hideyoshi, but her life was not just being a “wife” of a samurai.
Chapter VI: Conclusion: A Lady, and the Lady Samurai in the Sengoku Period

Whether true or not, tales create a persona, and add more character instead of describing the real personality. Kitanomandokoro, too, has been known as a sad wife of Hideyoshi who did not bear his children. Right after the Sengoku period, major historical figures such as Nobunaga and Hideyoshi had been repeatedly studied and written of. However, without looking at their private correspondence, what could possibly show the true characteristics of both Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro? What could tell the real story of the unification of Japan? Hideyoshi’s study is incomplete without considering the significance of his wife. The image of Hideyoshi is a mere creation of the tales, and the story of Japanese unification as well is just another tale told by historians who kept looking at the male samurai of the time.

In this study, Kitanomandokoro’s life was traced chronologically. In 1574, she appealed to Hideyoshi to reduce the amount of tributes assigned to the residents of Nagahama. The correspondence from Hideyoshi to Nei and a letter sent from Nobunaga to Nei show the fact that she frequently commented on Hideyoshi’s decisions. Was it possible for her to alter Hideyoshi’s policy because Hideyoshi was just one Daimyo at that time? Indeed, her involvement did not stop even after Hideyoshi became Kanpaku, and Frois' History of Japan added more evidence of her association and interest in national issues, and proved her establishment of independent communication lines.
Furthermore, Date Masamune, like the time the Jesuits tried to win her over, also contacted her with regard to concealing his real intention.

Date Masamune, who governed the northern-most territory of Japan, was believed to show his submission to Hideyoshi. He went to Odawara and Korea to make Hideyoshi believe that he was Hideyoshi's adherent. However, as his wife tried to disclose his unfaithful intention, and as Masamune himself attempted to cover it up with Kitanomandokoro, the subjugation had been formally done, but had not completed. The words of Kōzōsu such as "Uesama still believed," and that she wanted Masamune to thank her indicate the fact that Hideyoshi was deceived by Masamune as well as Kitanomandokoro. From these two episodes, Frois' tactic and Date's superficial obedience, Kitanomandokoro and her attendants in Osaka castle did have some power to manage outsider's opinions taken into Hideyoshi's national policy.

There are two major points that introduce a new perspective in the history of the Sengoku period. The first point is the separation of Hideyoshi's adopted sons and daughters into two different groups in order to see who was considered to be a part of Hideyoshi and Kitanomandokoro's family, and who was not. Previously, the emphasis was on the paternal line, and the house genealogy was always written by who succeeded the house next. Hideyoshi, as well, did not have his children until late, but adopted many sons and daughters. Among all, there were some in-law sons such as Nobunaga's son or Miyoshi's sons who did not grow up in Osaka castle, and were lawfully adopted. Their names were not mentioned at all in the private correspondences from Hideyoshi; he did
not care too much about them, and evidently, his son Hidetsugu was ordered to commit suicide by Hideyoshi later on.

While these in-law sons were treated lightly, one son and two daughters were considered to be family members, and Hideyoshi was frequently concerned about their health in private correspondences. Two daughters, Go and Ohime, were previously confused, and either thought to be one person, or Ohime was seen as his concubine. Go was Hideyoshi’s favourite daughter, and sent out to Ukita house, and Ohime herself ended up staying in the house much longer. As such, Hideyoshi dearly supported one son, Kingo, from the time he was young. Hideyoshi even asked Kitanomandokoro to treat him as their own child. Indeed, Kitanomandokoro took great care of this son, and only this son. Until he passed away from illness, he had been in constant contact with Kitanomandokoro.

Kitanomandokoro ordered the sons of Kinoshita Iesada to be on Ieyasu’s side in the series of battles after Hideyoshi’s death. She did the same to her son, Takakage, when he visited her before the battle. At the end, he followed her words and changed his mind to support Ieyasu. This was the turning point of the battle of Sekigahara, and the fact of this mother-son relationship should not be neglected. He was the only son who Kitanomandokoro raised.

The second point is the question of whether Kitanomandokoro was on Ieyasu’s side or the Toyotomi side after Hideyoshi’s death. Although she was out of the castle, she was a lady who used to be at the very top of Toyotomi house. Thus, whether she really supported Ieyasu or not had been questioned. In this study, there is new evidence
to support the view that Kitanomandokoro positively supported Ieyasu: the location of Kitanomandokoro’s land and the letter sent from Kōdaiin to Date Masamune.

A person who owns more than 10,000 koku was supposed to be a Daimyo, and Kitanomandokoro as well had land in Osaka. The amount was 10,001 koku in 1585, 15,672 koku in 1594, and 16,923 koku in 1624. The interesting fact is that this land of hers contained the important towns of Hiranoshō and Ten’nōji. Hiranoshō was a centre of merchant activity, like Sakai, and Ten’nōji was the place where Ieyasu used this land to lay siege to Osaka castle in 1615. She could have used money that Hideyoshi got from Hideyoshi’s land, but instead, she owned over 10,000 koku for herself, and let Koide Hidetoshi and Kinoshita people directly govern the land. Ten’nōji, as well, was the place that was important to defend Osaka castle. As Ieyasu chose this land, and was indeed successful in stationing his army to fight against the Toyotomi, Ten’nōji’s location needs considerable attention.

At last, in the letter from Kōdaiin to Date Masamune, she clearly stated that she was pleased to see that the battle in Osaka led to the discontinuation of Toyotomi house. Reading this letter solved many speculations on her position after Hideyoshi’s death; whatever the reason was, she was on Ieyasu’s side. The conflict between Yodo and Kitanomandokoro, which had been written of in the tales published in the Edo period, was an attempt to make sense of why Kitanomandokoro was in the opposing position around the battle of Sekigahara. This tale indeed caught the attention of a large audience and the problems between Yodo and Kitanomandokoro became the fact the readers believed in. However, the hierarchical order of Kitanomandokoro and Yodo had never been overturned in their real lives, and the maneuvers of Kitanomandokoro did not start
after Hideyoshi's death. Kitanomandokoro had been able to manipulate various things behind Hideyoshi, and Hideyoshi indeed was tricked at times.

Overall, this study asks one major question. What is the definition of samurai? Wasn’t she one of them? Kitanomandokoro had an official title of Jū Ichii, the second highest court rank. She had land, more than 10,000 koku for her self. She also carried many attendants who “served” her. She contacted many Daimyo, rulers, and the emperor. Except for one fact, which was that she was a female and did not fight in the battles, her conduct and life were the same as other male samurai who lived during her lifetime.

Life as Kitanomandokoro, especially when Hideyoshi was away from Osaka or Kyoto, proved that she was as important to him as, or more important than his other male vassals. She managed to organize her attendants to keep the valuables in the storage, and to watch the financial transactions. And she had the power to take criminals into custody, and castle-sit with the respect and trust of Hideyoshi. Samurai was all about fighting? Samurai had to deal with finances, law, and maintain the castle when they did not have to go to the battlefield. She did just the same.

Also, looking at her contemporary ladies, being a female, however, did not always mean that they did not fight. One example was the mother of Masamune. Yoshihime did go to the battlefield to stop the fights. Another example was committing suicide with other male samurai, such as Oichi, Tama, and thirty-nine ladies of Hidetsugu. Five wives in Bukō zakki, and thirty ladies in Amakusa indeed fought in the battle. Also, other wives of Daimyo such as Isabella of Bungo did interfere with politics, and let

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139 Bukō zakki, p.130
her vassals fight for her. The time right before the year 1600 was a unique time in
Japanese history where females were not completely powerless. The study on samurai
culture has focused on strong male figures, such as unifiers of Japan and powerful
Daimyo. Like Kitanomandokoro, it is important to recognize that there were also lady
samurai in the Sengoku period.
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