

The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN - OCTOBER 1976

THE CODE OF IEYASU

Dear Friends:



THE DRAMATIC CHANGES which transformed Japan from a feudal state to a united modern nation occurred in the interval between 1573 and 1603. The transformation was largely due to the labors of Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598), and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616). Nobunaga was a militarist, Hideyoshi an opportunist, and Ieyasu a statesman. After the death of Hideyoshi in 1598, Ieyasu picked up the reins of government and established a line of prime ministers or shoguns who were the real rulers of the country in 1603 to 1867. Ieyasu was resolved to end forever the internecine strife that had plagued the country for centuries. He realized that Japan must have an enduring symbol that could survive all political change. This already existed in the person of the emperor whose spiritual prestige was universally accepted, but whose political power was virtually nil. He was a culture symbol and his court at Kyoto was the gathering place of poets, artists, musicians, priests, and scholars. Ieyasu believed that there should be a clear distinction between the imperial court and the shogunal government, so he moved the latter to Edo which was renamed Tokyo. He continued to make ceremonial journeys in homage to the emperor, whose glory should not be sullied by involvement in the machinery of politics.

Having solved this matter to his satisfaction, Ieyasu next turned his attention to the feudal lords dwelling in their high castles surrounded by faithful fiefs. These lords or daimyo were ever watchful of each other, resolved to expand their own domains if opportunity afforded. The new shogun took the attitude that no state could run smoothly while the various sections of the country, individually or in combine, were stronger than the national government. He later expanded this thinking to include various institutions or areas of specialized interest which could influence legislation at the expense of the citizens. He issued edicts to forbid the further

building of castles and to curb the ambitions of the feudal lords. He hit upon the happy device of requiring each of them, with an appropriate retinue, to make an annual visit to Tokyo where they were received with all consideration. These visitations were glittering affairs, marked by great pomp and circumstance, and including of course handsome gifts to the shogunal government. This drained away the funds that might be used for conspiracy. He also liked to keep prominent members of the feudal families in Tokyo as permanent guests. By such means Ieyasu gradually extended the shogunal power to the point where revolt against it was virtually impossible. He allowed everyone to keep face, but he kept power.

Ieyasu was deeply concerned over the well-being of the citizenry. He was not a despot nor an autocrat, but a paternal image guarding the security of his countless children. Discipline was necessary, and it must be enforced when any faction by its conduct endangered the common good. In one brief statement his policy could be summarized: "Venerate the emperor and obey the shogun." It came to be assumed that this procedure was "the way of the gods." One of Ieyasu's maxims was "when you eat rice, remember the farmer." He therefore did much to protect the agricultural class, and he elevated its dignities above those of the merchant who bartered the labors of every man, but grew no rice himself.

The shogun realized that the conflict between wealth and poverty led to perpetual unrest. He was not inclined to regulate incomes, but he kept a watchful eye on how the money was spent. When the wife of a rich Osaka merchant paraded the streets in an extravagant costume attended by a retinue of servants, the government seized her wardrobe. Resolved to have her way, she bought a new and more expensive outfit and repeated the offense. At this point the government confiscated her husband's fortune. It was the duty of the more opulent to set a high standard of modesty and propriety.

The Kabuki theatre was heavily patronized by the public and was the principal form of entertainment for all the townsfolk. It followed that certain actors became wealthy and their conduct outraged the shogunal morals. Scandals involving the theatre were increasingly frequent and many of the actors led dissolute lives. They were promptly penalized by being exiled to some insignificant area to repent their mistakes. Some of them were never permitted to return to Tokyo; others could not come back for several years. A watchful eye was also kept on theatre programming. The Japanese are a subtle people and the audience, reading between the lines, noticed various criticisms of the government. The plays were promptly censored and the whole field of performing arts was held accountable for double-meanings that might creep in to their productions.

The graphic arts were also closely supervised. Ukiyo-e artists were a Bohemian lot, and nearly all of them produced pictures with political overtones. To control this situation, censorship seals added on each print indicated government approval. Even with this precaution, artists were frequently reprimanded and some were imprisoned for short terms. Discontent was not forbidden but could not be displayed in public. Legitimate grievances could be presented to proper officials. The same controls were applied to literature. Authors were not permitted to circulate works which were regarded as detrimental to the moral life of the country or respect to a duly established authority. It was assumed that books were to improve the public mind, strengthen national integrity, and be properly informative. For many years, maps of Japan could not be made for general distribution for fear that they might give vital information to foreign powers. A print by Hiroshige showing the Japanese coastline was withheld from circulation as late as World War II, nearly one hundred years after it was originally made.

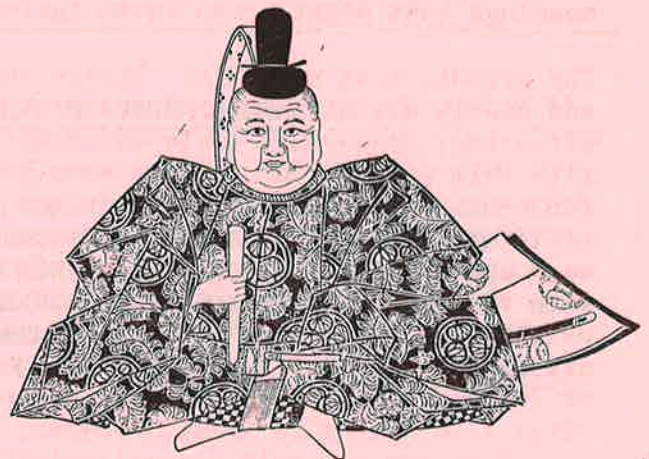
In spite of these restrictions Japan under the earlier Tokagawa shoguns prospered greatly. Much fine art was produced and old feudal soldiers made many of the beautiful objects now highly prized by collectors. Folk art also experienced a golden age, and Japan enjoyed an enduring peace for over 250 years. Ieyasu was a patient man. One of his favorite sayings was "Life is like a long journey with a heavy load. Let your steps be slow but steady and you will not stumble." In his personal life he practiced forbearance and inner quietude, and considered anger as man's greatest enemy. He also maintained that whenever he was inclined to find fault with others, it was best to first find fault with himself. In many ways he was a unique figure in Japanese history. His ambitions were for his country and not for himself.

Ieyasu's attitude on religious matters was tolerant and conciliatory. He realized that the spiritual beliefs of the people were part of the enduring foundation. Having supported the mystical virtues of the emperor he did everything possible to unite Shintoism and Buddhism through the functions of the imperial court. When Ieyasu died in 1616, the Tokugawa family began to contemplate the building of a mausoleum in his honor. In 1622, the emperor conferred upon him the posthumous title, Toshio-Daigongen, or the "East Illuminating Incarnation of Bodhisattva." This designation clearly revealed a combination of Shinto and Buddhist honors. The Toshogu Shrine at Nikko is one of Japan's most popular tourist attractions. The magnificent group of buildings, with their red and gold decorations and intricate carvings, are indeed a splendid tribute to the great shogun. Here, it is fondly believed that the spirit of Ieyasu lives in peaceful grandeur, and memorial services in his honor and in honor of the third shogun are held annually. The buildings are in a grove of huge cryptomeria trees. Some of the subordinate fiefs paid their respects by planting small trees. After three centuries, fifteen thousand cryptomeria trees overshadow the sacred precinct. They line the highway leading to the shrine for miles like an army of faithful guardians. Ieyasu would have been the first to point out that mortals endure for only a short time, but trees live on to remind us always of the wonders of nature.

Ieyasu's philosophy of government was simple. First we must know what is necessary, not only for today, but for the future. Leaders must have the authority to enforce just laws, for if there is any weakness in governmental structure the people will be left to their own devices and will fall into confusion and dissension. Principles must never be compromised.

Always most sincerely,

Mary V. Hall



TOKUGAWA IEYASU

The following list of books is recommended reading. These books may be ordered from The Philosophical Research Society, Inc. (address on page one). Please add 35¢ for handling. California residents, include sales tax. Note: Prices are subject to change without notice.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
Fixed Stars & Constellations in Astrology	Vivian Robson	\$ 6.50
Folk Art	Shoya Yoshida	(p) 3.25
Folk Arts of Japan	Hugo Munsterberg	9.75
Footprint of the Buddha	E.F.C.R Ludowyk	5.00
Forerunner, The	Kahlil Gibran	5.00
Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism	Lama Govinda	(p) 4.50
Fragments of a Faith Forgotten	G.R.S. Mead	10.00
Freud & Psychoanalysis (#4)	Carl G. Jung	15.00
From Messmer to Christian Science	Frnk Podmore	10.00
From Pioneer to Poet (Signs of the Zodiac Analysed)	Isabelle M. Pagan	8.95
Future Is Now, The	Arthur W. Osborn	(p) 2.50
Field of Zen, The	D. T. Suzuki	(p) 1.00
First & Last Freedom, The	J. Krishnamurti	(p) 1.95
Fancy Paper Flowers (Japan)	Kiyo Sekiye	5.25
From Intellect to Intuition	Alice Bailey	(p) 2.25
Finding of the Third Eye, The	Vera Alder	(p) 3.50
Farther Reaches of Human Nature, The	A. H. Maslow	(p) 2.95
Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy	G. de Purucker	(p) 3.50
Footprints of Gautama the Buddha	Marie B. Byles	(p) 1.75

BOOKS BY MANLY P. HALL

Adventures in Understanding	\$ 6.50	Self-Unfoldment	6.50
The Guru	5.50	The Story of Astrology	6.50
Healing, the Divine Art	8.00	Twelve World Teachers	6.50
Journey in Truth	6.50	The Way of Heaven	5.00
Pathways of Philosophy	6.50	Words to the Wise	6.50

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