THE REORGANIZATION OF THE FEUDAL RETAINER SYSTEM IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY JAPAN

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A re-examination of the origins of feudal power in Tokugawa Japan is urgently needed in order to understand the feudal system of this period. The seventeenth century, which is thought of as the first stage in the history of the han system, is divided into two periods. In the first half the feudal vassals were originally organized by kinship relationships for the purpose military power. In the second half, however, they were reorganized into a bureaucracy.

Taking the Suwa clan, a small fudai han in Shinshū, as an example, this article examines this process of reorganization of the feudal retainers mainly through two economic and institutional changes: 1) the unification of feudal dues into rent inkind; 2) and the change in the military system. Thus the author describes the transition from fief (jikata chigyō) to stipend (hōroku) with the accompanying increase in the number of vassals dependent upon the lord for their income, the diversification and institutionalization of the bureaucracy, and enlargement of the han financial base.

Although such a transition was an inevitable process in the history of the feudal system in the second half of the seventeenth century, it by no means meant a change in the basic character of the retainer system which had been established in the first half of the century.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHUMBRIA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

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Differences have been noted between developed and underdeveloped areas in the course of the transition from feudal to bourgeois economy. This article attempts to make clear such points by treating Lancashire county of Northumbria district, which was known as an economic frontier in the sixteenth century.

In the south-west, we can point out the fact that this transition was much retarded, although remarkable progress had been made in the feudal economy, and the "land market" had already been established. In the southeast, on the contrary, the transition could be seen clearly despite the fact that no economic progress had been made until the sixteenth century. The author attributes this mainly to the greater fertility of the land and the nonexistence of rural industry in the south-west.