

In Little Need of Divine Intervention

Twice Kubilai Khan assembled a polyglot armada to conquer Japan, and twice, or so the chronicles say, mighty storms arose, smashing his ships against the rocks or scattering them out to sea.¹ From this flotsam of heroic futility was formulated the idea that these ship-wrecking storms stemmed from divine favor—or a singular lack thereof. The dramatic denouement of these invasions continued to exert a powerful pull on historical imagination. Although belief in their otherworldly annihilation has withered through the ensuing centuries, the trope of “divine winds” or kamikaze (神風) became a leitmotif of Japanese political mythology that persisted through the aerial suicide bombings of the Second World War.²

Relegated to legend, the Mongol invasions have generated little debate: all commentators concur that the chance passing of a typhoon spared Japan from defeat.³ Nevertheless, Takezaki Suenaga never mentions divine succor in vanquishing the Mongols, even though his narrative is replete with prayers, and ends with praise for the Kōsa deity.

¹Kubilai Khan (1215–94) founded the Yuan dynasty in 1271. The armies that he dispatched to subjugate Japan in 1274 were composed of Mongols, “Han” Chinese, Jurchen, and men from Koryo (Korea). Sailors from the surviving remnants of the Sung navy were added for the second invasion of 1281. See Murai Shōsuke, *Ajia no naka no chūsei nihon* (Azekura shobō, 1988), pp. 162–63.

²Allusions to “divine winds” repelling foreign invaders reappeared during times of international crisis from the thirteenth century onward. For an 1863 depiction of the “divine winds” crashing into a “Mongol fleet” resembling contemporary European ships, see *Shibunkaku kosho shiryō mokuroku*, no. 196 (October 1996): 116, illus. 294, Kōan Kamikaze dekisen no zu (弘安神風蒙古溺船の図). Likewise, prayers promulgated in 1853 were based upon thirteenth-century curses for the subjugation of foreign invaders. See the *Chiba ken shiryō, chūsei hen*, comp. Chiba kenshi hensan shingikai (Chiba, 1957), Gaii kitō kiroku 17, pp. 687 and 702.

³For an early study in English, see Kyotsu Hori, “The Economic and Political Effects of the Mongol Wars,” in *Medieval Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), pp. 184–98 and also his “Mongol Invasions and the Kamakura Bakufu” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1967). In Japanese, the most influential monographs include Aida Nirō’s *Mōko shūrai no kenkyū*, 3d ed. (Yoshikawa kobunkan, 1982); Amino Yoshihiko’s *Nihon no rekishi 10: Mōko shūrai* (Shōgakkan, 1974); Kawazoe Shōji’s *Mōko shūrai kenkyū shiron* (Yūzankaku, 1977); and Murai Shōsuke’s *Ajia*.

The term *kamikaze* remains absent from Kamakura documents concerning the invasions as well, and can be only found in the diaries of thirteenth-century courtiers.

Although many aspects of the invasions strain the limits of credulity, they have nevertheless evoked little critical analysis. Even recent monographs routinely assert that the first amphibious assault of Japan in 1274 was 90,000 strong, the second, in 1281, 140,000.⁴ Such figures, if true, indicate that the Mongols had performed a logistical feat that in many ways surpassed that of the Normandy Invasion in 1944. To be sure, the combined Allied strength outnumbered these estimates of the second Mongol invasion force by 16,000 men, but they only had to cross 20 miles of English Channel, whereas the two fleets of the second Mongol armada managed to navigate 116 miles of ocean from Korea and 480 from the Chinese mainland! As we shall see, modern scholarly accounts of the Mongol invasions continue to be laced with exaggerations and inaccuracies. Once the accretions of memory and myth are chipped away, many of the assumptions regarding them crumble. Analysis of surviving sources, translated here for the first time, reveals that the warriors of Japan were capable of fighting the Mongols to a standstill without any explicit divine or meteorological intervention.

Rationales for the Mongol Invasions

Who can really know whether dreams of world conquest or lust for gold propelled Kubilai Khan's desire to conquer the Japanese archipelago. Japan was rumored to possess gold in measureless quantities, which led the Venetian traveler Marco Polo to surmise that "when tidings of its riches were brought to the Great Khan [Kubilai] . . . he declared his resolve to conquer the island."⁵ Surviving records suggest, however, that the Mongols were in fact preoccupied with political hegemony, for such rhetoric pervades their diplomatic missives; the accumulation of wealth seems to have been perceived as a function of this dominance that deserved little explicit attention. Indeed, an aura of absolute supremacy

⁴William Wayne Farris, *Heavenly Warriors* (Cambridge: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1992), pp. 329–35. Ishii Susumu and Kawazoe Shōji also provide estimates of 140,000 for the second invasion. See Ishii, "The Decline of the Kamakura Bakufu," in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 145, and in the same collection, Kawazoe, "Japan and East Asia," p. 418.

⁵*Marco Polo: The Travels*, trans. R. E. Latham (London: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 244. For trade between Japan and the Mongols, which includes a summary of recent archaeological discoveries, see Sugiyama Masaaki, *Sekai no rekishi 9, Dai mongoru no jidai* (Chūō kōronsha, 1997), pp. 9–20 and 264–68.

permeates their diplomatic discourse, which when coupled with their military offensives, led many to conclude that they intended to bring the whole world under their domination.⁶ This notion, readily recognized as far afield as Europe, was commonly accompanied with a sense of bravado, for each who resisted the Mongols imagined themselves to be their mightiest foe. For example, John of Plano Carpini believed that a Mongol offensive was imminent in Europe because "there is no country on earth that they fear with the exception of Christendom," while the Zen priest Tōgen Eian claimed that the Mongols desired to conquer Japan in order to realize their plans of world conquest, for only when the Mongols have added Japanese warriors to their cause, he reasoned, could they successfully conquer China, India, and the rest of the world.⁷

Diplomatic records reveal that the Mongols' quest for regional hegemony determined the timing of their contacts with Japan. The Mongols dispatched a missive to Japan in 1266, which has been characterized by modern Japanese scholars as calling for peace, not surrender.⁸ By Mongol standards, the document was remarkably courteous, with none of the vocabulary implying direct Japanese submission to Mongol rule.⁹ Nevertheless, this "friendly" document names Kubilai the "master of the universe" and ends with the scarcely veiled threat: "Let us engage in cordial relations. Who desires the resort to arms?"¹⁰

Concern over the balance of power in East Asia may have played a role in the timing of this dispatch. When Kubilai sent this document to Japan, his predecessor had only recently subjugated the Korean kingdom of Koryo after thirty years of warfare, and he himself was about to engage in a campaign to conquer the Southern Sung.¹¹ Because Koryo had relatively friendly relations with Japan, providing supplies and transportation home

⁶Such was the view of European commentators. See the thirteenth-century "History of the Mongols" by John of Plano Carpini, in Christopher Dawson, *Mission to Asia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 43-44.

⁷For the former, see Dawson, *Mission to Asia*, p. 44; for the latter, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 14, doc. 10559, Tōgen Eian ikenjō. This has been translated as Document 1.

⁸See Ishii, "Decline of the Kamakura Bakufu," p. 134, and Kawazoe, "Japan and East Asia," p. 414.

⁹Close analysis of the language of the document appears in Sugiyama Masaaki, *Mongoru teikoku no kōbō* (Kōdansha gendai shūsho, 1996), pp. 118-21.

¹⁰*Kamakura ibun*, vol. 13, doc. 9564, 8.1266 Mōko Kokuchō an. See also Rekishigaku kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihonshi shiryō 2 chūsei*, pp. 136-37. Translations of this passage are based on Ishii, "Decline of the Kamakura Bakufu," p. 132.

¹¹For the best summary of events in English, see Kawazoe, "Japan and East Asia," pp. 412-16.

for castaways,¹² Kubilai attempted to draw Japan into his orbit by using this "friendship" as the basis for contact,¹³ in order to prevent them from aiding the Southern Sung.

In many ways, Japan and Koryo were natural allies. The Koryo structure of governance had resembled that of Japan. Koryo's military regime had first appeared in 1174 and dominated governance from 1196 onward,¹⁴ while the Kamakura bakufu, which oversaw "warrior government" while located in eastern Japan, first appeared as a political entity in 1180 and achieved a nationwide presence after military victories in 1185 and 1221. Like Japan, Koryo possessed considerable military power: fighting alone, it managed to withstand six Mongol invasions over a span of thirty years until finally surrendering to Kubilai's predecessor, Möngke, in 1259.¹⁵

Koryo's military prowess must have impressed Kubilai. Newly elected Great Khan in 1260, he desired to expand his control over these lands and to preclude the possibility of any potent anti-Mongol alliance developing in the process. By using the newly conquered Koryo as an intermediary, Kubilai astutely imposed Mongolian diplomatic objectives on their officials, thereby preventing Koryo from acting with any autonomy. Thus, all dealings with Japan, whether friendly or hostile, effectively solidified Mongol control over Koryo. Kubilai could either peacefully bring Japan into the Mongol sphere of influence through persuasion or, if the Japanese proved intractable, use Koryo as a base for dispatching an invasion force against them.

Japan refused to respond to the Great Khan's overtures, which allowed

¹²For an account of Koryo hospitality for Japanese castaways, see Nam Kihaku, *Mōko shūrai to Kamakura bakufu* (Kyōto: Rinzen shoten, 1996), pp. 197-99. The definitive study of Japan's relations in East Asia remains, however, Murai, *Ajia*, particularly pp. 144-226.

¹³*Kamakura ibun*, vol. 13, doc. 9564, 8.1266 Mōko Kokuchō an. For surviving Koryo diplomatic documents appealing for good relations, see vol. 13, doc. 9770, 9.1267 (Chigen 4) Kōrai kokucho an, and doc. 9845, 1.[1268] Kōrai kokucho an. Reference to another such missive arriving in the Dazaifu during the first month of 1270 appears in vol. 14, doc. 10571, 1.1270 (Bun'ei 7) Nihon koku Dajōkan chō, and doc. 10588, 2.1270 (Bun'ei 7) Dazaifu shugoshō chō.

¹⁴For the rise of the Koryo military regime, see Murai, *Ajia*, pp. 147-49.

¹⁵For the best summary in English, see W. E. Henthorn, *Korea: The Mongol Invasions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), pp. 102-39. Koryo's court likewise took the lead in attempting to repel the Mongol invaders through religious ceremonies, and even had recarved the 81,137 woodblocks required to print the Buddhist Tripitaka (*Taejanggyong* [*Daizōkyō*] 大藏經). As we shall see, the Japanese court would also embark on a similar pattern of religious patronage. For this, and the close resemblance of the Korean and Japanese systems of governance, see pp. 103-4, and Murai, *Ajia*, p. 148.

him to establish a powerful presence in Koryo. The Kamakura *bakufu* instructed its *gokenin* to be vigilant during the second month of 1268, while the court began issuing prayers for protection against the foreigners in the third month of the same year.¹⁶ By the fifth month of 1268, Kubilai ordered the construction of a fleet of one thousand ships to chastise the Japanese.¹⁷ This levy, along with the need to secure three months of provisions, caused festering Korean dissent to erupt into an armed insurrection some thirteen months later.¹⁸ The rebels, led by the remnants of Koryo's military regime, requested aid from Japan and concurrently warned that the Mongols planned to invade the archipelago.¹⁹ Members of the Japanese court considered the supporting the Koryo rebels, but they became locked in a petty debate over whether or not they should be considered the legitimate government of Koryo. This hesitation allowed the Mongols to crush this uprising in 1271 and consolidate their control over the Korean peninsula.²⁰ During this same year, Kubilai adopted the dynastic name of Yuan.

The years 1271-73 set the stage for the later invasions of Japan. Japan continued to ignore Mongol envoys, but at the same time, the

¹⁶For the former document, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 13, doc. 9883, 2.27.1268 (Bun'ei 5) Kantō miogyōsho; for references to the court's prayers, see the *Tohōki*, located most conveniently in *Fukutekihen*, maki 1, pp. 25-26, which describes rituals of destruction performed on 3.23.1268.

¹⁷For Korean reluctance on this endeavor, see Nam, *Mōko shūrai to Kamakura bakufu*, pp. 199-200; for Kubilai's construction of an invasion force, see Ishii, "Decline of the Kamakura Bakufu," p. 135.

¹⁸See Henthorn, *Korea*, pp. 158-62; for the "Rebellion of the Three Patrols," during 1269-71, see pp. 173-93. See also Murai, *Ajia*, pp. 149-50. Furthermore, Mongol accounts state that three months of provisions were transported along with the troops of their armada. See Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 88. The crudely shaped storage jars that were uncovered in the wreckage of the Mongol fleet attest to the strain imposed by these levies. See Nagasaki ken Takashima chō kyōiku iinkai, comp., *Takashima kaitei iseki* (Takashima chō bunkazai chōsa hōkokusho, 1992-96), particularly vol. 1, pp. 58-59 and 117-18. Iron implements were also of poor quality. See *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 97-103. An English summary, and illustrations of recent Japanese archaeological finds, appears in David Nicolle, *The Mongol Warlords* (London: Firebrand Books, 1990), p. 65.

¹⁹Reference to this document appears in *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 14, doc. 10880, 9.1271 Tōgen Eian ganmon. The best coverage of the rebellion can be found in Murai, *Ajia*, pp. 147-88, particularly pp. 163-64. See also Document 57 herein for evidence of Koryo warnings reaching the court.

²⁰See Murai, *Ajia*, pp. 162-64 and Ishii Masatoshi, "Bun'ei hachinen rainichi no kōraishi ni tsuite-sanbesshō no nihon tsūkō shiryō no shōkai," *Tōkyō daigaku shiryōhen sanjōhō* 12 (1978): 4. According to Henthorn, the Mongols first established military control over Koryo in 1269. See *Korea*, pp. 200, 210-11.

Kamakura *bakufu* began warning warriors throughout the land that a Mongol attack was imminent. Kamakura, too, took the lead in organizing defense efforts against the foreign invaders by dispatching its warriors to the western island of Kyūshū.²¹ Conversely, the Mongols embarked on an amphibious invasion of Koryo's southernmost island in 1273 and stamped out the final pockets of resistance to their rule. With the successful breach of a major defensive line of the Southern Sung that same year, Kubilai could now afford to dispatch an army to conquer Japan.²²

Reconstructing the Invasions

The notion of "divine winds" twice smashing into the Mongol fleet has exerted such a strong pull on the historical imagination that other aspects of the invasions have been spared from rigorous analysis. The chronicles describing the invasions, both Mongol and Japanese, must be used with care, for both exaggerate the importance of the storms and the strength of the invading forces. For the Mongols, the typhoons provided the perfect excuse to justify a devastating defeat, for it left their military reputation untarnished, while for the priestly or courtier chroniclers of Japan, these winds "proved" the miraculous nature of their victory over an overpowering adversary. By contrast, documentary sources, letters, prayers, and edicts pertaining to the Mongol invasions provide in their limited and careful way a collage of individual experiences whose prosaic reality contrasts with the expansive tone of the chronicles.

Inspections and Rewards

Much about the invasions is knowable because numerous records survive. The Kamakura *bakufu* rewarded its warriors for their verifiable military service. By the latter half of the thirteenth century, Kamakura's administrative machinery became finely attuned to judging how well a warrior had fought in battle. Warriors, too, were acutely aware that their deeds had to be witnessed if they were to be compensated.

These precise sources provide a glimpse into the nature of defense efforts during the invasion that remain uncolored by *ex post facto*

²¹For the fruitless efforts of a Mongol envoy, see *Kamakura ibun*, doc. 10884, 9.25.1271 *Mōko no tsukai Chao Liang-pi shōjō*; for the Kamakura *bakufu*'s 1271 orders, see docs. 10873-74, 9.13.1271 *Kantō migyōsho*. See also Murai, *Ajia*, pp. 168-69.

²²Further proof that the invasions were used to solidify Mongol control over Korea can be found in their establishment of "The Mobile Bureau for the Subjugation of Japan," in 1280, which ultimately became the supreme administrative organ in Koryo. Although occasionally abolished, it lingered until 1365. See Henthorn, *Korea*, p. 199.

rationalizations of the outcome. Some documents record how warriors were mobilized; others reveal when and where they served on guard duty. The most illuminating documents consist of petitions for rewards, which were submitted by *gokenin* after battle, recording where they had fought, what they had done, and who had witnessed their actions.²³

One needed tangible "proof" of battle service to receive rewards. When Takezaki Suenaga traveled to Kamakura in search of compensation, he was questioned by Adachi Yasumori regarding whether he had taken any enemy heads or lost any of his own men. When he admitted that he had not, Yasumori informed him that his military service was insufficient. Other warriors, such as Kikuchi Jirō, achieved fame by decapitating as many of the battle dead as possible.²⁴

For warriors lacking the resourcefulness of Kikuchi Jirō, "proof" had to be supplied by several witnesses. Kamakura astutely recognized that the statements of close friends or relatives were unreliable. Hence many relied upon strangers to vouch for their deeds.²⁵ Togō Korechika, for example, did not even know the first name of one of his witnesses.²⁶ Witnesses recorded their statement in the form of an oath and handed this document to the warrior in question, who would append it to his petition describing his deeds.²⁷ Thereupon, *bakufu* administrators summoned these witnesses and questioned them. If all accounts were consistent, then the petition would be approved and dispatched to Kamakura, where rewards might be forthcoming.²⁸ If discrepancies existed, then these men would be questioned once again. Kamakura refused to grant rewards if inconsistencies could not be resolved.²⁹ These records reveal both the *bakufu's* institutional strengths and weaknesses. Although Kamakura possessed elaborate procedures for evaluating an individual's actions in battle, it did not, however, provide any mechanisms for organizing their armies, or any detailed registers delineating how its troops were mobilized for war.³⁰

²³For more on these petitions, see Conlan, "State of War," pp. 14-61.

²⁴The *Hachiman gudō kun* lauds Kikuchi Jirō for collecting many heads, thereby making a name for himself that would last throughout the generations. See *Hachiman gudō kun*, in *Gunsho ruijū*, vol. 1, comp. Hanawa Hokinoichi, 447-97 (Keizai zasshi shū, 1894), p. 468.

²⁵See Document 20.

²⁶Document 23.

²⁷See Documents 21-22.

²⁸Documents 25-28.

²⁹See Document 29.

³⁰One can surmise that *shugo* were responsible for drawing up registers for

Estimating Troop Strength

One of the most important and yet elusive aspects of reconstructing the invasions remains the size of each army. Kamakura officials apparently never recorded the composition of its units that fought against the Mongols, nor did they ever tally the total number of men that were mobilized in 1274 and 1281. By contrast, chroniclers invariably provide an estimate of an army's strength, but their accounts are notoriously prone to exaggeration, often by a factor of ten or more. For example, a twelfth-century courtier had his servants secretly observe an army, noting that a force estimated to have been as high as 10,000 consisted only of 1,080 horsemen.³¹ In another case, one priest calculated that a Kamakura bakufu army that passed by Tōshōdaiji in 1333 consisted of several thousand warriors, but chroniclers exaggerated this figure to include anywhere from twenty-three to sixty thousand men.³² The numbers that appear in such narrative sources are thus better conceived as metaphors for an army's strength than as reliable estimates.

Because duty reports and other administrative documents survive in abundance, scholars have managed to offer credible estimates of the Japanese forces. Ishii Susumu has speculated that anywhere from 3,600 to 6,000 warriors fought against the Mongols, while Kaizu Ichirō has estimated that Kamakura fielded an army that ranged from 2,300 to 5,700 men.³³ Guard duty registers provide some of the most comprehensive

those *gokenin* liable to serve from each province, but unfortunately, no such records survive that pertain to the Mongol invasions.

³¹*Gyokuyo*, 2.7.1183 (Jūei 2), in *Kokushi taikēi*, vol. 2, p. 608, and for an English translation, see Farris, *Heavenly Warriors*, p. 301.

³²A priest recorded an estimate of the army's size in a sutra that he was copying. His notations (*okugaki* 奥書) are most accessible in *Taiheiki*, ed. Okami Masao vol. 1, (Kadokawa Nihon koten bunko, 1975), note 7.7, pp. 448–49. The Jingu chōkokan version of the *Taiheiki*, which contains a Muromachi era colophon (Hasegawa Tadashi, Kami Hiroshi, et al., eds., Izumi shoin, 1994), states that 23,000 warriors were in the force that he witnessed. See maki 6, "Kantō sei jōraku no koto," p. 147. Nevertheless, this version states that this army ultimately swelled to 60,000 men. See maki 7, "Yoshinojō kassen no koto," p. 158. By contrast, the Seigen'in text of the *Taiheiki* (Washio Junkei, ed., Tōei shoin, 1936) provides estimates markedly different from those given in the Jingu chōkokan text. For estimates of this army initially constituting 37,500 men, see maki 6, "Tōgoku sei jōraku no koto," p. 134.

³³See Ishii, "Decline of the Kamakura Bakufu," p. 139. For more detailed analysis, based upon mobilization patterns and the amount of arable land, see Kaizu Ichirō, "Kassen no senryokusū," *Nihonshi kenkyū*, no. 388 (1994): 88–97. The first to hazard estimates of troop strength was Aida, *Mōko shūrai no kenkyū*, particularly pp. 223–24. Farris provides an estimate of 63,600. See *Heavenly Warriors*,

data on the size of Kamakura's forces. A guard duty register of Izumi province warriors reveals that only nineteen *gokenin*, or "housemen" of the Kamakura bakufu and seventy-nine low-ranking followers (*heishi* 兵士) (a total of ninety-eight warriors) served on guard duty in 1272, with the most powerful warrior leading eighteen men, and the five least powerful *gokenin* only one man each.³⁴ Admittedly, Izumi was one of Japan's smaller provinces, but it nevertheless provides an important basis for comparison. Relatively few *gokenin* were mobilized from each province, and of those who were, only a handful were accompanied by more than five men.

Few records survive pertaining to the *gokenin* of Takezaki Suenaga's home province of Higo. Seno Sei'ichirō could only find references to fourteen "eastern" *gokenin* in all of Higo.³⁵ If these men were capable of enlisting followers at a similar rate to Izumi *gokenin*, then one can extrapolate that they brought only 58 men to battle. Undoubtedly this figure represents a low estimate because Seno does not record the Takezaki and the Oyano, two local Higo *gokenin* families that appear in Takezaki Suenaga's scrolls, and because Higo *gokenin* were generally more powerful than their Izumi brethren.³⁶ By contrast, the relatively comprehensive records from the neighboring province of Hizen reveals that 72 out of 279 prominent local families were *gokenin*.³⁷ If Hizen *gokenin* mobilized according to a rate comparable to that of Izumi, then they would have led 299 warriors, while if one were to include the 279 prominent non-*gokenin* families of Hizen as well, then an army surpassing a thousand men could be mobilized from this province alone.³⁸ Nevertheless, because the sum of these transplanted

p. 334.

³⁴Indeed, twelve of the nineteen *gokenin* mobilized three or fewer *heishi*. For more on this list, see *Takaishi shishi*, vol. 2, *shiryōhen 1*, comp. Takaishi shi (Takaishi, 1986), doc. 60, 10.6.1272 (Bun'ei 9) Izumi no kuni *gokenin* ōban'yaku shihaijō an, pp. 499-500. Another transcription of this document appears in *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 15, doc. 11115.

³⁵Seno Sei'ichirō, *Chinzei gokenin no kenkyū* (Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1975), pp. 258-70.

³⁶Although the record is spotty, surviving sources reveal that Kyūshū warriors mobilized anywhere from five to ten men. For a *gokenin* mobilizing five followers for an aborted invasion of Korea, see Document 18; for another leading three on horseback and seven on foot, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 16, doc. 12276, Chikuzen Nakamura zoku gunzei chūshinjō.

³⁷*Chinzei gokenin no kenkyū*, pp. 165-208; for the figure of seventy-two *gokenin* houses, see p. 188.

³⁸Assuming that Hizen could mobilize followers at an analogous rate to *gokenin*, then this province alone could have supported a force of 1160 men. This figure is, however, undoubtedly an overestimate, because non-*gokenin* were generally less powerful than their *gokenin* brethren.

eastern *gokenin*, the ruling strata of Kyūshū, and their immediate retainers can be estimated as constituting approximately 750 men, then a total force of two or three thousand Japanese defenders seems more plausible than even an army of five thousand troops.³⁹

Suenaga's account supports the assertion that the Japanese forces were not particularly large. Not only did Suenaga serve with nearly every prominent Japanese commander, but rank-and-file warriors such as Takuma Jirō Tokihide also appear in both the documentary record and in Suenaga's narrative, thereby suggesting a relatively small cohort of defenders. Nevertheless, the Mongol chronicles estimated Japanese forces as consisting of 102,000 men!⁴⁰

Mongol estimates of their own forces appear to be relatively conservative when compared to their extravagant claims regarding the Japanese defenders—only 15,000 Yuan soldiers and 8,000 Koreans set off for Japan in 1274⁴¹—but this number should elicit skepticism as well. Judging from the Mongol's inability to roam far from their boats, it seems likely that they were outnumbered by the Japanese, which was in fact asserted in the *Yuanshi* (元史).⁴² Perhaps only two to three thousand fought against a similar number of Japanese defenders in 1274.

The 1281 armada was, by all accounts, significantly larger than the first. The *Yuanshi* depicted it as consisting of well over 100,000 men,⁴³

³⁹A figure of 747 warriors was extrapolated from the Izumi registers by assuming that the average number of followers was the same for the *gokenin* of Izumi and the nine provinces of Kyūshū. No evidence exists to suggest that non-*gokenin* formed the backbone of Japan's army in 1274 or 1281, which is why estimates of up to five thousand are too high. Nevertheless, these figures also reveal that an army drawn solely from *gokenin* possessed insufficient manpower to provide adequate defense against the Mongols.

⁴⁰The Yuan account is most accessible in Tsunoda, *Japan*, pp. 73–105. This estimate appears on p. 81. For the original Chinese text (元史記事本末), I consulted *Li-Tai-chi-shi-pen-mo Chung-hua shu-chū-pien*, (歷代記事本末) (Pei-ching: Chung-hua-shu-chū, 1997), pp. 2056–7 and also compared this with passages transcribed in Yamada An'ei's dated but still useful compilation, the *Fukutekihen*. Ishii Susumu acknowledges the Mongol exaggeration in "Decline of the Kamakura Bakufu," p. 139.

⁴¹Tsunoda, *Japan*, pp. 81.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 82. The *Hachiman gudō kun* declares, however, that the Mongols outnumbered the Japanese by a ratio of ten to one. See *Hachiman gudō kun*, p. 466.

⁴³Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 88 for the Southern Army's numbers of 100,000. This same figure appears in the *Hachiman gudō kun*, p. 475.

while the *Kamakura nendaiki uragaki* claimed that 150,000 soldiers arrived on 3,500 ships.⁴⁴ Both accounts clearly overestimate the size of this army. It remains doubtful that even as many as ten thousand invaders attacked a reinforced Japanese contingent of several thousand men in 1281.

Tactics

Did the Mongols compensate for their insufficient troop numbers by utilizing effective tactics? One can infer from the *Hachiman gudō kun* that their forces were tightly organized.

The Mongols left their ships, raised their flags and attacked. The general of the Japanese forces, Shōni nyūdō Kakuei's grandson, a mere lad of ten or twelve years, unleashed whistling arrows (*kaburaya* 鑓矢) [as was customary for the onset of battle, but] the Mongols all laughed. Incessantly beating their drums and gongs, they drove the Japanese horses leaping mad with fear. Their mounts uncontrollable, none thought about facing [the Mongols].⁴⁵

The Mongols coordinated their cohesive units through gongs and drums. Their troops were not so tightly packed as to present a solid wall, thereby causing horses to shy away, but they were grouped closely enough to be able to use hooks or other weapons to pull charging Japanese warriors from their mounts. According to the *Hachiman gudō kun*, of those who galloped into the enemy forces, none returned alive, but this exaggerated portrayal of Japanese weakness served to highlight the power of the deity Hachiman's protection.⁴⁶ Takezaki Suenaga's account reveals to the contrary that some, such as Shiroishi Michiyasu, managed to pass through the Mongol forces and return unscathed.

The Japanese defenders were not as outclassed on the battlefield as the passage regarding Shōni Kakuei and his grandson implies.⁴⁷ Harrying

⁴⁴*Kamakura nendaiki*, p. 54, the seventh month of 1281. By contrast, this source laconically characterizes the 1274 forces as "arriving" in Tsushima and, at the battle of Dazaifu, being "defeated." See p. 53, the tenth month, fifth day of 1274.

⁴⁵*Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 466-67.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 467.

⁴⁷Kakuei and his grandson were laughed at by the Mongols, lampooned by their comrades, and perished defending Iki Island in 1281. For this ridicule, see *Hachiman gudō kun*, p. 470. Their deaths on Iki Island are recorded in *Fukutekihen*, maki 4, p. 19. Ōtomo Yoriyasu, the other Chinzei commissioner (*bugyōnin*), was also mocked for his aversion to fighting in the *Hachiman gudō kun*, but surviving records attest to his administrative skill.

the enemy from afar proved to be far more effective a stratagem than engaging in a frontal assault. For example, one Japanese warrior named Yamada sensibly preferred picking off scattered soldiers. After selecting his most powerful archers to fire "distant arrows" at the Mongols, Yamada and his men unleashed their arrows (after praying "Hail the Hachiman Boddhisatva," *Namu Hachiman bōsatsu*) and killed three Mongols, thereby causing the Japanese to laugh while the Mongols, who had previously enjoyed the spectacle of Shōni Kakuei's grandson and his humming arrows, silently collected their dead and departed.⁴⁸

Both Japanese and Mongol accounts refer to the prowess of Japanese archers. Shōni Kagesuke, for example, was lauded by the Mongols as a warrior "adept in horsemanship and archery," because he shot the Mongol commander Liu Fu-hsiang in the face and captured his horse.⁴⁹ From this episode alone, one can infer that the skirmishing skills of the Mongols and the Japanese were roughly comparable.

The Mongols appear to have preferred skirmishing to hand-to-hand combat, a sentiment reflected in contemporary European accounts of their tactics as well.⁵⁰ Such comments suggest that the Mongol infantry formations were not as cohesive as has been commonly assumed. In spite of their close coordination of units, one can find little evidence that they fought *en masse*. Indeed, whether or not the Mongols can be accurately characterized as being capable of massing their forces and engaging in "group tactics" deserves further research.

Surviving sources suggest that military parity existed between the Mongol invaders and the Japanese. Although the Mongols enjoyed naval superiority, they lacked sufficient forces to occupy northern Kyūshū and accordingly avoided close confrontations with the Japanese defenders. For example, according to Takezaki Suenaga's account, the Mongols set up camp in Akasaka (赤坂), an area of poor terrain, but could not hold off a Japanese attack and so were forced to retreat. The Mongol sources also

⁴⁸*Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 467-68. The copy of this text dating from the *bunmei* era (1469-87) states that two Mongols were shot to death. See *Fukutekihen*, maki 2, pp. 16-17. "Distant arrows" were fired at a distance of approximately 50 to 100 yards, which marked the effective limit of a bow's range.

⁴⁹*Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 468-69, and Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 82. References also appear in Kagesuke's genealogical record. See *Fukutekihen*, maki 2, pp. 30-31 and maki 4, p. 19.

⁵⁰See the thirteenth-century "History of the Mongols" by John of Plano Carpini, in Dawson, *Mission to Asia*, p. 37, which states: "The Tartars do not like to fight hand to hand but they wound and kill men and horses with arrows; they only come to close quarters when men and horses have been weakened by arrows."

suggest that their 1274 retreat from Japanese waters was premeditated.⁵¹ After Liu Fu-hsiang was seriously wounded, he withdrew his forces and returned to the ships. The *Yuanshi* claims that thereupon, "a great storm arose and many warships were dashed against the rocks and destroyed."⁵²

These storms certainly provided a convenient excuse for commanders to explain their defeat at the hands of the Japanese.⁵³ Continental sources emphasize the severity of the 1274 storm more than the Japanese sources do. The *Hachiman gudō kun*, otherwise devoted to finding a miracle at every possible opportunity, fails to mention any storms at all, which led the meteorologist Arakawa Hidetoshi to postulate that no typhoons struck the first Mongol fleet.⁵⁴ Supporting evidence appears in the *Kanchūki* (勘仲記), a diary by the Japanese courtier Kadenokōji Kanenaka.⁵⁵ On 11.6.1274 he described meteorological conditions as merely a "reverse wind."

Someone said that several tens of thousands of invaders' (*kyōzoku* 凶賊) boats came sailing in on the high seas. Nevertheless, suddenly, a reverse (easterly) wind blew them back to their native lands. A few of the [enemy] boats were beached. The retainers (*rōjū* 郎従) of Ōtomo shikibu taifu⁵⁶ captured fifty of the invaders (*kyōzoku*), bound them, and are escorting [them] to the capital. The reverse wind must have arisen [as a result of] the protection of the gods. Most wonderful! We

⁵¹Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 82.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³In another passage of the *Yuanshi* pertaining to the second invasion of 1281, a certain Fan Wen-hu "made false representations . . . that he had reached Japan and was about to attack . . . when a storm struck and destroyed the ships." Ibid., p. 89.

⁵⁴Arakawa Hidetoshi, "Bun'ei no eki no owari o tsugeta no wa taifu de wa nai," *Nihon rekishi*, no. 120 (June 1958): 41-45. See also Amino, *Nihon no rekishi* 10, pp. 161-64, and *Hachiman gudō kun*, p. 470. No one has doubted the existence of a typhoon that slammed into the second Mongol armada in 1281.

⁵⁵The *Kanchūki* (勘仲記), a diary of the courtier Kadenokōji Kanenaka (1243-1308), originally spanned the years of 1274 until 1300, but only fragments of the original survive at the Tōyōbunko. Kanenaka, who had been appointed to minor court post in 1259, became chamberlain (*kurōdo*) in 1284, Lesser Controller of the Right (*ushōben* 右少弁) in 1287, Lesser Controller of the Left in 1288, and finally, Provisional Major Counselor (*gon dainagon* 大納言) in 1293. Kanenaka also served as a scribe for the Fujiwara regent. Hence, his diary represents one of the most valuable records chronicling both the Mongol invasions and internal political developments during the late thirteenth century. Although published in the *Shiryō taisei* (史料大成), the 1274 portion of the text, which contains significant references to the first invasions, has not yet been transcribed.

⁵⁶Ōtomo Yoriyasu.

should praise [the gods] without ceasing. This great protection can only have happened because of the many prayers and offerings to the various shrines . . . throughout the realm.⁵⁷

Northeasterly winds provided the Mongol fleet with an unusual opportunity to sail back to the continent. In 1274, perhaps both the Japanese and Mongols perceived this wind to have been a godsend. Oddly, neither side believed that the 1274 encounter had been decisive. The Mongols attributed their initial failure simply to insufficient manpower, while the Japanese, uncowed by the Mongols, initiated preparations for an invasion of Korea in order to belatedly aid anti-Mongol forces.⁵⁸

The Japanese defenders realized that their success stemmed from their entrenched fortifications. Although the Mongols burned the coastal city of Hakata (博多), they were unable to attack the fortified hills surrounding the Dazaifu (太宰府).⁵⁹ Slightly less than a year and a half after the first invasion had been repulsed, Kamakura commenced construction of stone walls on coastal beaches.⁶⁰ These fortifications decisively influenced the course of the second invasion.

During the fifth month of 1281, Yuan forces once again departed for Japan. Quickly overwhelming Tsushima (対馬) and Iki (壱岐) Islands, their northern fleet sailed to Hakata. Here, the surprised Mongols discovered that they could not disembark because all suitable beaches were hemmed in by walls.⁶¹ Although some defenders, such as Kawano Michiari, fought in front of the walls in order to prove their bravery, most preferred the relative safety of entrenched positions.⁶² Thwarted in their initial objective,

⁵⁷This passage was not transcribed with the rest of the *Kanchūki*. For an explanation, and a transcription of the text, see Ryōsusumu's *Mōko shūrai* (Chūbundō, 1966), p. 101. For a published version of the remainder of this diary, see the *Kanchūki*, in *Shiryō taisei*, vols. 26–28 (Naigai kabushiki kaisha, 1935–36).

⁵⁸See Documents 16–18 and Aida, *Mōko shūrai no kenkyū*, pp. 128–47. This invasion of Koryo was aborted in the planning stages.

⁵⁹Reference to the 1274 fortifications appears in *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 469–70.

⁶⁰The first reference to the walls appears in the Fukae monjo on 3.10.1276 (Document 41). See *Chūkai*, *Genkō bōrui hennen shiryō*, pp. 147–48. See also *Fukutekihen*, maki 3, pp. 27 and 52. For a fine study of recent archaeological excavations of the wall, see Yanagida, "Genkō bōrui to chūsei no kaigan sen," pp. 180–94.

⁶¹*Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 474–75, and *Fukutekihen*, maki 4, p. 14. Yanagida Yoshitaka explains the importance of walled fortifications in his "Genkō bōrui," p. 194.

⁶²*Yosōki*, in *Gunsho ruijū*, vol. 17, kassen bu 2 bukebu 1 (Naigai shoseki

the Yuan landed at the Shiga island, but this position too proved untenable. Harried by defenders attacking in small boats, the northern armada retreated to distant Iki Island during the middle of the sixth month in order to wait for reinforcements coming from the south. The second flotilla, composed of ships from the recently conquered Sung navy, arrived in the seventh month. The combined forces launched an invasion of Takashima Island in Hizen province, just off the main coast of Kyūshū, but could advance no further. Continually harried by the Japanese, the Mongols again were forced to withdraw from Takashima.

The second invasion proved less successful than the first, for the Mongols only managed to occupy a few outlying islands after a campaign of six weeks. Hakata, which had been burned in 1274, remained unscathed. Inland Kyūshū might as well have been on the moon. Fighting was confined to the outlying islands or the sea itself on terms increasingly unfavorable for the invaders. A few intrepid warriors, such as Kawano Michiari, boarded the Yuan ships during the night and killed their occupants with longswords and *naginata* (長刀),⁶³ slipping away on their skiffs in the cover of darkness before others realized anything was amiss.⁶⁴ Yuan losses mounted, and their supplies were inexorably depleted. According to lore, Kawano Michiari managed to capture a Mongol commander, while another warrior took twenty-one heads.⁶⁵ Takezaki Suenaga, depicted in his scrolls as meeting

kabushiki kaisha, 1930), p. 255. The Kawano, who are depicted in Scene 11, had been on the losing side in the 1221 Jōkyū war, so they, like Suenaga, perceived the Mongol invasions as an opportunity to advance their standing. See Jeffrey Mass, *Development of Kamakura Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979), pp. 20–21 for a brief history of the family. More translated documents pertaining to the Kawano can be found in Mass, *The Kamakura Bakufu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), doc. 172, p. 182; and Mass, *Development of Kamakura Rule*, doc. 32, pp. 183–84.

⁶³A *naginata* is depicted in Scene 3, where one warrior has impaled a Mongol head on a curved blade that is attached to a long wooden shaft.

⁶⁴For the impressive deeds of Kawano Michiari, see the *Yosōki*, pp. 255–56, and *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 474–75. Michiari was severely wounded during the second invasion when fighting from ship to ship but survived. Takezaki Suenaga's scrolls also imply that Michiari fought valiantly. Further proof of Michiari's valor can be found in the Ōyama zumi shrine of modern-day Ehime prefecture, where the Mongol bows and helmets that he collected remain to this day. Kawano Michiari received lands that were, in all probability, rewards for his action against the Mongols. See *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 20, doc. 15612, 6.25.1285 (Kōan 8) Shōgun ke mandokoro kudashibumi. A good summary of the Kawano's role in the Mongol invasions can be found in *Zennōji monjo*, comp. Kageura Tsutomu (*Iyo shiryō shūsei* 2) (Matsuyama, 1965), pp. 73–82.

⁶⁵See *Yosōki*, pp. 255–56, and *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 475–76. For textual comparison, see *Fukutekihen*, maki 4, pp. 15–16.

Michiari, likewise behaved with similar élan.⁶⁶ The sudden onset of a typhoon merely provided the coup de grace for a defeat that had been long in the making.⁶⁷

Aftermath

Kamakura's need to mobilize an army and build an extensive wall exacerbated tensions within Japanese society. Those dissatisfied with the status quo believed that the crisis provided an unprecedented opportunity for advancement. By serving generals and provincial constables (*shugo* 守護), these men could ignore the commands of their family chieftains (*sōryō* 惣領), who were responsible for mobilizing their families and members of collateral lineages for war.⁶⁸ Takezaki Suenaga, for example, disobeyed the commands of his relatives in order to receive lands and rewards from ranking *bakufu* officials such as Adachi Yasumori. Likewise, Shōni Kagesuke also fought with unusual bravery, while his *sōryō* brother, who had been appointed *shugo*, preferred wielding the brush to the sword. *Sōryō* generally resented the creeping autonomy of some family members, which they perceived to stem from encroaching *bakufu* authority.

The 1281 invasions also generated increasing anti-foreign sentiment. Although Kamakura never codified regulations regarding the treatment of prisoners, attitudes hardened between 1274 and 1281.⁶⁹ While some prisoners were initially taken,⁷⁰ Mongols captured in 1281 were mostly killed. The *Yuanshi* states that "twenty to thirty thousand" (two to three

⁶⁶Suenaga had an audience with Kawano Michiari after Michiari was wounded in a naval encounter. This was first revealed by Ikeuchi Hiroshi, *Genkō no shinkenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōyō bunko, 1931). See also *Zennōji monjo*, p. 78.

⁶⁷Excavations at Takashima island have revealed that only the wood surrounding the Mongol anchors has survived. This indicates that the ships were so light that they did not sink deeply into the mud, thus providing powerful evidence that the Mongol fleet was close to exhausting its provisions. See *Takashima kaitei iseki*, vol. 3, pp. 131-33. For a contrary example of a heavily-laden merchant ship, dating from the early fourteenth-century, that was discovered virtually intact off the coast of Korea, see Sugiyama, *Dai mongoru no jidai*, pp. 9-20 and Amino et al., eds., *Yomigaeru chūsei I Higashi ajia no kokusai toshi Hakata*, pp. 23-30 and 120-122.

⁶⁸See Jeffrey Mass, *Lordship and Inheritance in Early Medieval Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), for the definitive survey of the *sōryō*. The parameters of *sōryō* authority varied according to time and region, and were often contested by relatives attempting to assert their own autonomy.

⁶⁹See Document 36.

⁷⁰See the diary of Kadenokōji Kanenaka translated in the previous "Tactics" passage.

thousand?) were slaughtered by the Japanese while only a few recruits were spared.⁷¹ Terrified captives resorted to a variety of desperate stratagems. For example, three men claimed to be a Mongol general to their captor, Kawano Michiari. Michiari, unable to establish the truth, simply cut down all three.⁷²

The defenders' desire for vengeance had been inflamed by the brutal occupation of the outlying islands. The Mongols murdered most men and cruelly pierced the center of the palms of captured women and tied them to the sides of the ships.⁷³ From this point on, little quarter was taken. Suenaga and his cohorts coolly killed most sailors and soldiers captured on the high seas.

Kublai Khan had succeeded all too well in drawing Koryo into the Yuan sphere of influence. Koreans were portrayed as being indistinguishable from Mongols in Japanese accounts of the second invasion, and its people were treated accordingly.⁷⁴ Koryo sailors were killed indiscriminately along with Mongols, although castaways from the Southern Sung were spared.⁷⁵ This disparity in treatment can also be attributed to the fact that apparently the combined Mongol and Koryo fleet managed to find safe harbor, for few of their ships were sunk, while the ex-Sung navy bore the brunt of the storm's fury.⁷⁶

This difference in treatment also suggests that the Japanese desired to punish those that they perceived as aggressors rather than to attack all foreigners per se. Pejorative epithets reflect this animosity quite well. The Japanese defenders mocked Mongol myths of descent from blue wolves, and instead declared that the Central Asian invaders were born from dogs.⁷⁷ These insults came to include Koreans, who became also known as "the dogs of Japan" in fourteenth-century chronicles.⁷⁸ Nevertheless,

⁷¹Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 90.

⁷²*Yosōki*, p. 256.

⁷³Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 81.

⁷⁴Murai, *Ajia*, pp. 169-75 and Nam, *Mōko shūrai to Kamakura bakufu*, p. 201.

⁷⁵For leniency toward the Sung sailors, see Tsunoda, *Japan*, p. 90 and Nam, *Mōko shūrai to Kamakura bakufu*, p. 201.

⁷⁶Sung artifacts constitute the lion's share of those excavated at Takashima. See *Takashima kaitei iseki*, vol. 1, pp. 117.

⁷⁷For the Mongol mythology, see Paul Khan, *The Secret History of the Mongols* (Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, 1998), p. 3. Being called a dog was not necessarily an insult. According to the *Secret History*, Chingis Khan referred to his four greatest generals as his "four dogs." See pp. 101-2. For the Japanese use of the term to describe the Mongols, see *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 477.

⁷⁸*Taiheiki*, maki 40, "Kōraijin raichō no koto" (Izumi shoin, 1994), p. 1185. The text refers to the three seventh-century kingdoms of Silla, Paekche, and

these attitudes were neither strong enough, or widespread enough, to significantly impact a thriving trade that continued between Japan, Koryo, and the rest of the Asian continent throughout much of the Yuan era.⁷⁹

Nowhere in Takezaki Suenaga's account can one uncover evidence of a "national" consciousness, whereby "Japan" existed as a transcendent entity worthy of defense. Although Takezaki Suenaga explained in his audience with the high-ranking *bakufu* official Adachi Yasumori that normal "rules" of precedent did not apply when fighting foreign invaders, he stated so in order to convince Yasumori to grant him rewards that otherwise did not appear to be forthcoming. Rather than fighting for the defense of Japan, personal and familial goals—the desire to be first to charge, to have an audience with his lord, and to receive ample rewards—propelled him to risk his life in battle. Even his grim determination to behead as many enemy as possible stemmed more from the need to have proof of his "valor" than to extract revenge from foreign invaders.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, the memory of the Mongol invasions caused Koreans and Mongols to be perceived as "enemies" and ultimately provided fertile ground for the courtly notion of Japan as a divinely favored land to spread throughout the archipelago.

Society, Religion, and War

Little evidence exists that the belief in Japan as the "land of the gods" had spread beyond a small coterie of courtiers and priests throughout the thirteenth century. Takezaki Suenaga referred to the protection of the gods, but he was merely explaining how divine succor allowed him to be granted rewards rather than how these deities spared Japan from foreign invasion. From the final passage of his Mongol scrolls, one can infer that Suenaga came to believe that the deity of Kōsa shrine had spoken directly to him in a dream, thereby causing him to set off for Kamakura and,

Koguryo. Conversely, Koryo supporters of the Mongols referred to the Japanese as "ugly island barbarians." See the thirteenth-century sources transcribed into Japanese by Nam in his *Mōko shūrai to Kamakura bakufu*, pp. 230–31.

⁷⁹For an excellent summary of Yuan-Japan trade during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see Sugiyama, *Sekai no rekishi* 9, pp. 264–68. Further evidence of liberal Yuan trading attitudes appears in Nam, *Mōko shūrai to Kamakura bakufu*, pp. 188–92. Nam suggests, however, that some evidence exists of increasing regulation during the final years of Kubilai's reign. Trade was restricted further in the fourteenth century, thereby leading to an increase in "armed merchants," or *wakō* (倭寇).

⁸⁰As the wars of the fourteenth century would reveal, the warriors of Japan had no qualms about inflicting such indignities on their own countrymen. Compare Suenaga's actions to those of Nomoto Tomoyuki in the fourteenth century, recounted by Conlan in "State of War," pp. 14–56.

ultimately, to receive his rewards. Rather than perceiving Japan as the land of the gods in a purely nationalistic sense, Suenaga simply attributed the outcome of battle and his worldly success to the designs of divine will.

In the inherent uncertainty of war, all desperately searched for patterns of divinely inspired order. Some warriors who attempted to curry otherworldly favor and success prayed to the gods before unleashing their arrows, while others prayed in order to muster enough courage to face the Mongol armada in small boats.⁸¹ During the thirteenth century, even routine administrative matters were based on what might be characterized as "religious" beliefs. Witnesses' statements were recorded through oaths (*kishōmon* 起請文), which possessed special meaning as the ultimate instrument for pledging one's word. They were not lightly disregarded. When the helmet-less Suenaga attempted to "borrow" the helmet of another warrior's retainer in the midst of battle, this man evaded Suenaga's request with various excuses. Suenaga was finally silenced when the resourceful retainer replied that he had written an oath preventing him from giving the helmet to another.

"Otherworldly" forces were perceived as being the wellspring of causality. The courtier Kadenokōji Kanenaka attributed the typhoon that smashed the second Mongol fleet to divine intervention. On the fourteenth day of the seventh intercalary month in 1281, Kanenaka wrote as follows:

A report arrived from Dazaifu. On this past first day [of the seventh month] a typhoon sank most of the foreign pirates' ships. Several thousands were killed or captured. Not one [enemy] boat remains at Iki or Tsushima. Most of the foreign invaders who came [to Japan] lost their lives or were captured. This event reveals unprecedented divine [support]. A source of great rejoicing in the realm—what could exceed this? This is no random event (*tadanaru koto ni arazaru nari*). Even though we live in the final age (*matsudai* 末代) [of the Buddhist law], the gods' support has not ceased. One must more fervently worship the gods and buddhas.⁸²

The Mongols also apparently attributed their defeat to the potent prayers

⁸¹For prayers to Hachiman for firing arrows, or praise for collecting heads, see *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 467–69. Kawano Michiari prayed to "all of the great and small" gods of Japan, including the Hachiman deity of the Mishima shrine, which was closely tied to the Kawano family. *Yosōki*, p. 255. See also *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 475, and *Fukutekihen*, maki 4, p. 26.

⁸²*Kanchūki*, vol. 1, (Naigai shoseki kabushiki kaisha, 1936), p. 140. This passage is also found in *Nihonshi shiryō 2 chūsei*, pp. 149–50.

of the Japanese court. The *Yuanshi* describes how shortly after the Japanese ruler visited the Hachiman shrine, and had a rescript read at Ise shrine imploring that the country be saved in exchange for his own life, the Mongol soldiers "saw a great serpent appearing on the surface of the water, and the water smelled of sulphur"—unambiguous signs of impending doom.⁸³

Because of this belief in otherworldly causality, offering prayers for the destruction of foreigners was perceived as a military act.⁸⁴ Although courtiers and warriors alike prayed for success in war, Kyōto, and not Kamakura, took the lead in mobilizing the gods. The court ignored the initial Mongol missives of 1266, but began enacting esoteric rituals of destruction against foreigners (*ikoku chōbuku* 異国調伏) during the third month of 1268, shortly after establishing the precedent for such rituals to be performed on a national scale.⁸⁵ By contrast, Kamakura monopolized diplomatic intercourse but engaged in only desultory attempts to secure otherworldly intervention before the first invasion.⁸⁶ After the 1281 invasion, the court (and the retired sovereign Kameyama in particular) took the most active role in cursing the Mongols.⁸⁷ The Kamakura *bakufu* belatedly

⁸³Tsunoda, *Japan*, pp. 87–88.

⁸⁴For references to a deity, the Amano daimyōjin, setting off to join a military encampment in order to fight with the other gods of Japan against the Mongols on 4.5.1281 (Kōan 4), see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 23, doc. 18134, 3.28.1293 (Shō-ō 6) Dajōkan chō. The topic of divine participation in war is addressed with more detail in Conlan, "Sacred War" in "State of War," pp. 170–202.

⁸⁵The *Tohōki* describes rituals of destruction performed on 3.23.1268. See *Fukutekihen*, maki 1, pp. 25–26. One can find references to a need to establish the precedent for such prayers of destruction in *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 13, doc. 9889, 3.15.[1268 (Bun'ei 5)] Sōshun shōjō, and vol. 14, docs. 10600 and 10601, 3.15.[1270 (Bun'ei 7)] Sōshun shōjō, and doc. 10602, *Ikoku o-inori senrei ch ūshinjō*. A comparison of the documents reveals that they were written at the same time. Because the *Tohōki* reveals that prayers were promulgated during 1268, all of the above documents should be dated to that same year of 1268. Finally, for more references to such cursing by the court, see *Fukutekihen*, pp. 23, 33, 43, and 51, and the *Hachiman gudō kun*, pp. 476–78.

⁸⁶For reference to Kamakura bestowing a sword to Itsukushima shrine for prayers to subjugate the Mongols, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 15, doc. 11766, 12.2.1274 (Bun'ei 11) Fujiwara Chikasada kakikudashi, which has been translated as Document 58.

⁸⁷*Fukutekihen*, maki 4, pp. 64–78, which even includes references (on p. 78) to a *garan* built at Gokurakuji, in southwestern Kamakura, for the purpose of "protecting the country [with Buddhist] law." By contrast, see p. 70, where one can infer that retired sovereign's prayers possessed more prestige than those of the Kamakura shōgun's. The *Hachiman gudō kun* also refers to the court's prayers as being performed throughout Japan.

promulgated prayers in eight of Japan's sixty-six provinces in 1283⁸⁸ and did not apparently start issuing nationwide prayers throughout Japan until 1290.⁸⁹

Contrary to common assumptions, warriors did not begrudge the preponderance of rewards granted to religious institutions, for they themselves believed that victory and defeat were subject to the will of the gods. Although the historian Kyotsu Hori dismisses the petitions of shrines and temples as fabrications designed to extract better rewards,⁹⁰ few contemporaries mustered such cynicism. On the contrary, the policy of favoring temples was initially promulgated by the Kamakura official Adachi Yasumori in 1284 and was reasserted by the *bakufu* during the years 1301 and 1312.⁹¹ Takezaki Suenaga supported this policy of restoring shrines, for as his precepts revealed, he devoted considerable attention to rebuilding the Kaitō and providing for the upkeep of the Kōsa shrine. This policy of favoring religious institutions by both Kamakura and the Kyōto court did not lead to any changes in warrior attitudes regarding religion per se. Disputes that arose between warriors, temples, and shrines tended to focus on the propriety of particular land transfers.⁹² The necessity of restoring temples and shrines was never questioned.

In fact, only the slightest stirring of skepticism can be discerned from, ironically, members of religious institutions. The sovereign,

⁸⁸See *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 18, doc. 13815, 12.28.1279 (Kōan 2) Suruga no kami bōhōsho an, and vol. 20, 12.28.1283 (Kōan 6), Kantō migyōsho, for prayers pertaining to Musashi, Izu, Suruga, Wakasa, Settsu, Harima, Mimasaka, and Bitchū provinces. The document attributed to 1279 appears in fact to have been written in 1283. See *Nihonshi shiryō 2 chūsei*, p. 151. See also *Fukutekihen*, maki 5, pp. 9–11, 25, 29, 41–54, 58–67 for prayers by Go Fukakusa and Fushimi.

⁸⁹*Kamakura ibun*, vol. 22, doc. 17277, 2.23.1290 (Shō-ō 3) Utsunomiya Michifusa jūngyōjō. For evidence of a more systematic incorporation of all Ichinomiya shrines, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 23, doc. 17564, 3.6.1291 (Shō-ō 4) Shimazu Tadamune shigyōjō, and doc. 18075, 12.21.1292 (Shō-ō 5) Shimazu Tadamune shigyōjō. See also *Fukutekihen*, maki 5, pp. 49–53 and Documents 60–63 herein.

⁹⁰Hori, "Economic and Political Effects," pp. 186–87.

⁹¹*Chūsei hōsei shiryōshū*, vol. 1 (Iwanami shoten, 1955), pp. 257–58, amendment 544 of 6.25.1284 (Kōan 7); for its revocation in 1286, after his death, see p. 277, amendment 602 of intercalary 12.9.1286 (Kōan 9). For references to Kamakura orders for the shrines of Kyūshū to be rebuilt and their lands to be restored once again, see p. 302, amendment 681 of 2.24.1299, and p. 346, for the document of 12.2.1312 (Shōwa gannen). Kaizu Ichirō has devoted considerable attention to these issues in his *Chūsei no henkaku to tokusei* (Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1994) and *Kamikaze to akutō no seiki* (Kōdansha, 1995).

⁹²For one typical dispute, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 32, docs. 25015–6, 10.12.1313 (Shōwa 2) Chinzei gechijō an.

Hanazono, referred to a shrine attendant who doubted the veracity of another's prophecy, but these sparks of disbelief were snuffed out by the attendant's sudden death.⁹³ Such skepticism was not, however, directed toward the notion of otherworldly agency per se, but rather the veracity of particular claims of otherworldly influence. For example, upon hearing the priest Eison's claims of having generated the 1281 storms, Nichiren acidly remarked that "little more than an autumn wind and a tiny amount of water" destroyed the Mongol fleet.⁹⁴ To most, however, the importance of otherworldly agency remained unquestioned and indeed apparently rose in the aftermath of the Mongol invasions.⁹⁵

The thirteenth-century Japanese did not perceive superior tactics or cunning strategies as the ultimate "cause" of victory. Other sources suggest that the Japanese provided stiff resistance to the Mongols. Nevertheless, even those who fought with considerable skill attributed their successes to the gods. Suenaga certainly believed so: not only do his prayers constitute a major theme in his narrative, but his account ends with praise for the deity of the Kōsa shrine. Hence, although one can argue that military skill and not the storms proved decisive in the encounter, the very same facts led Takezaki Suenaga and his contemporaries to conclude that their victory had been caused by divine intervention. And herein lies, perhaps, the distinction between the modern and the medieval mind-sets.

⁹³See Document 65.

⁹⁴*Kamakura ibun*, vol. 19, doc. 14491, 10.22.[1281 (Kōan 4)] Nichiren shōjō. See also Kawazoe Shōji, *Nichiren to sono jidai* (Sankibō busshorin, 1999), p. 219. I am indebted to Jacqueline Stone for bringing this to my attention.

⁹⁵For example, the *Hachiman gudōkun* was written sometime between 1308 and 1318, when rewards to temples and shrines for their services were most common. See Sakurai Tokutarō et al., eds., *Jisha engi* (Iwanami shoten, 1975), pp. 492-93. For an informative document concerning this, see *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 22, doc. 17073, 7.22.1289 (Shō-ō 2) Ikoku kōbuku kitō kuyōhō chūshinjō an.