

Until the twelfth century, the Mirokuji-Usa Jingu shrine-temple complex was the center of political power on the Kunisaki Peninsula. By the early seventeenth century, political control of the Kunisaki Peninsula was split up into three domains: Kitsuki, Hiji, and Nakatsu. Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), the man who unified the country under his rule in 1603, gave control of the region to a loyal retainer, Hosokawa Tadaoki (1563–1646). Tadaoki maintained control by placing his allies and family members at the three castles. The ruling clans changed over the centuries, but the towns remained. After the Hosokawa clan, other clans were given control of the region in accordance with their service to the Shogun and their own political successes.