Yamagata During the Edo Period

In the Battle of Hasedo that broke out during the Sekigahara Campaign (1600), Mogami Yoshiaki sided with the Tokugawa shogunate and achieved victory. He was then ranked among the great daimyo and obtained a domain of 570,000 *koku* (a measurement of daimyo wealth pertaining to the amount of rice considered enough to feed one person for a year).

In the Tohoku region, where many powerful daimyo with large territories were stationed, the Yamagata domain initially played a supervisory role over the other daimyo. Yoshiaki built the foundation of present-day Yamagata Castle and arranged the layout of the castle town. On the east side of the castle, merchant towns were arranged along the Ushu route running from north to south. The merchant towns continued to develop throughout the Edo period (1603–1867). During the rule of the Torii clan, which succeeded the Mogami family, the castle town was renovated and waterways called the Yamagata *Goseki* (Five Weirs) were constructed.

As peace continued under Tokugawa rule, changes of lords in the Yamagata domain became frequent. Throughout the Edo period, there were 11 governing families, and in the castle town where control was difficult to extend, merchants began to prosper. By the end of the Edo period, under the Mizuno clan, the domain had shrunk to 50,000 *koku*, and the number of retainers also decreased. Most areas were sold to merchants or turned into farmland, and samurai residences were contained within the eastern area within the inner citadel.