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Bureaucracy and Army in Tokugawa Japan

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Bureaucracy and Army in Tokugawa Japan

FUJII JŌJI

Kyoto University

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1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAKUHAN BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM

The administrative structures and the mechanisms of political control operated by the Bakufu and the various domains in the Tokugawa period stand in marked contrast to the formal constitutions and legal systems of modern states. Once the Tokugawa rulers had unified the country militarily, they attempted to consolidate their rule by gradually replacing their system of personal rule by an elaborate administrative bureaucracy. It was an evolutionary process, slowly developing from a system in which the individuals who occupied government posts defined their own roles and functions to one in which detailed rules defined the sphere of activities of each appointee.

In the early period of the Edo Bakufu (from 1603 into the 1630s), what Weber has called "charismatic" leadership—that is, domination by a strong leader—still prevailed. In this type of governing system, public functions such as administration and justice were supervised by the shogun's powerful retainers, called *shuttōnin*. These men were trusted by the shogun and were chosen by him personally to serve as administrators, justices, and other officials—in short, to shoulder the governance of his territories. This made them extremely powerful, and among their number are such famous early Tokugawa names as Honda, Doi, Sakai, Inoue, and Nagai. However, the death of the second shogun, Hidetada, in 1632 brought about a major change in the role and status of these favored retainers.

The change resulted from a conflict between the new shogun's desire to consolidate his own charismatic authority by replacing his predecessor's appointees with his own men, and the existing office-holders' desire to maintain their claim to the various administrative and judicial powers to which they had grown accustomed. Iemitsu, the third shogun, undertook a number of measures to prevent the *shuttōnin*'s posts from becoming hereditary, including appointing a raft of new men to key posts, creating the office of *ōmetsuke* in 1632 to oversee the conduct of

Bakufu office-holders, and formalizing in 1634 the regulations concerning the appointment and duties of the *rōjū*. However, this last was not a general regulation: it covered only the political relationship between the shogun and his three most senior councillors. Accordingly, it was revised in the following year. This time the regulations set out a much more detailed plan for organizing the administration, dividing the office of the *rōjū* into specific posts that were differentiated by the social stratum or kind of institution they regulated or by function: the *daimyō shihai*, the *hatamoto-shihai*, the *shōnin-shihai*, the *kingin osamekata*, the *jisha-bugyō*, *machi-bugyō*, *kanjō-bugyō*, and *sakuji-bugyō*. In 1638 a further set of regulations spelled out the precise relationship of these offices to each other and to the *rōjū*, thereby consolidating the “*rōjū* system” of the Edo Bakufu. The same pattern of gradual consolidation occurred in other offices during the Kanei period (1634–1644). The key characteristic of the development of administrative organization in the Bakufu system was that it was an evolutionary process, with a series of *sadame* and *oboe* (rules and regulations) issued, as the situation required, to define the rights and responsibilities of official posts and offices.

There were two additional structural features of the bakufu bureaucracy: the council system and the monthly rotation system (*tsukiban-sei*). The council differed from its modern counterparts in being set up not to reach shared decisions but to execute the will of the shogun or daimyō and to preclude arbitrary action by officials. In fact, however, it tended to obscure the responsibility of each councillor. The monthly rotation system, in which the responsibility for carrying out policy was rotated regularly among individuals, was devised to avoid the administrative delays and irresponsibility attributed to the council system. However, it created other problems, such as administrative delays and slow judicial processes, the postponement of judgments, efforts by those bringing suits to influence the selection of the presiding official, and an increase in the number of cases, all of which indicated the need for more effective and coherent policies. In consequence, certain restrictions were devised for both structures, and systematic codes were compiled to provide objective standards for each. Both systems were modified in a series of measures, including the adoption in 1664 of a rotation system among the *rōjū*; the creation in 1680 of a special *rōjū* post in charge of agriculture; the creation of more specialized offices within the *kanjō-sho* in 1721; and the appointment of a *goyō-kakari rōjū* in the following year. In addition, the regime of the eighth shogun Yoshimune saw the compilation of increasingly detailed regulations and codes to improve the efficiency and objectivity of the departments of administration and justice; these included the *Kujikata-osadamegaki* (“Rules and Regulations for Kujikata”) and the *Ofuregaki-kampōshusei* (“Collection of Degrees of the Kampō Era”).

It is generally assumed that the administrative organization of the Tokugawa period was highly centralized; some Western scholars have referred to it as “centralized feudalism.” In fact, however, the Bakufu had neither the organizational systems nor the financial institutions needed to rule the entire country. Within the

Bakufu's own territory, its authority was implemented through a chain of command stretching from the *rōjū* through the *kanjō-bugyō* down to the *daikan* (the regional administrators). In the daimyō domains, the *rōjū* or *ōmetsuke* transmitted the will of the shogun to the daimyō or his deputy in Edo, and it was then, in theory, carried out through the administrative organization of the domain, which was responsible to the daimyō.

Although the system functioned well within the Bakufu's own territory, its effectiveness within the domains was at the mercy of the daimyō, because the Bakufu had no administrative organization that really penetrated the domains. There were some instances where Bakufu policy was effectively carried out by the daimyō domains: the investigation of Christians under the edicts proscribing Christianity, the control of rice for the making of *sake*, and the regulation and standardization of weights and measures. However, with no administrative apparatus of its own that covered the whole nation, the Bakufu could not enforce a nation-wide tax collection system. The Bakufu did not levy taxes on the daimyō domains, except for extraordinary levies on the occasion of the construction of temples, shrines, or the repair of rivers and other public works. For example, in 1701 contributions were requested from all the domains for the construction of the temple of the Daibutsu; again, in 1708 a levy was imposed to cover the costs of reconstruction after the eruption of Mount Fuji. Such decrees were effective at raising funds on a temporary basis, for specific projects. However, they did not help the Bakufu develop a permanent system of tax collection nation-wide.

A similar situation obtained in the administration of justice. Within each domain, the administration of justice was the responsibility of the daimyō. The only lawsuit in which the Bakufu could legitimately intervene was in cases of disputes over the succession or over territory, where the Bakufu's *hyōjo-sho* had jurisdiction. However, since the basic legal principle of those days was that the first judgment rendered was the final judgment, the Bakufu's *hyōjo-sho* could not play the role of the highest court of appeal. In the courts of the European Middle Ages, courts were largely self-supporting financially and therefore independent of the local magnates: they held lands in their own right and charged legal fees to render judgment. They were centered around the king, and became an important vehicle for promoting the development of absolute monarchies and national states. In Tokugawa Japan, with her very different judicial practices, the courts had no such significant historical role.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

A salient characteristic of the administrative organization of Tokugawa Japan was the monopoly of government posts by the samurai class, and the assignment of posts in accordance with the gradations in the samurai hierarchy. The Bakufu excluded *ichimon* (daimyō related to the Tokugawa family) and *tozama* (the "outside lords" who were latecomers to the Tokugawa forces) from all government posts

within the Bakufu. Those posts were monopolized by the *fudai* daimyō (liege lords), *hatamoto* (the shogun's direct retainers), and *gokenin* (the low-ranking retainers). The administrative system had a clear gradation system, symbolized by the use of the terms "*daimyō-yaku*" (signifying a position to be occupied by a daimyō) and "*hatamoto-yaku*" (to be occupied by a *hatamoto*). Any non-samurai wanting to become a public servant had to be adopted into the samurai class.

In order to increase the social legitimacy of its offices, the Bakufu decided to follow the practice of Toyotomi Hideyoshi and to make use of the system of old court ranks derived from the old *ritsu-ryō sei* of the seventh century. Under Hideyoshi, the court ranks of the daimyō were determined by their political strength and influence. The five magistrates (*go-bugyō*), whose status was equivalent to that of the *rōjū* of the Edo Bakufu, were given the fifth court rank. In contrast, the Bakufu, which as a general principle separated the ranking system of the samurai class from that of the court nobility, gave the daimyō the same absolute rank but lowered it relatively by naming the *rōjū* to the fourth rank. The Bakufu administrative posts such as *machi-bugyō*, *kanjō-bugyō*, and so on, given to *hatamoto* with fiefs of 10,000 koku or less, were appointed to the fifth rank, equivalent to the daimyō. The new order clearly indicated the superiority of the *rōjū* over the daimyō, and at the same time established equivalence among the *rōjū* themselves.

In addition, the consolidation of the hierarchy for the new ruling class helped to redefine the principles on which the feudal relationship between lord and vassal was based. Traditionally, each promotion to a higher post meant an increase in the size of the appointee's fief. But the new system established the appropriate scale of fief size, rank, and office. In addition it discouraged further growth in the power of the *rōjū* and set limits to the financial burden imposed on the Bakufu, at least in staffing its top administrative positions. As we shall see below, in a feudal society that tried to make some room for promotion of able men to office, that burden was not inconsiderable.

As the shogun and the daimyō held the power of appointment to office, the relationship between the appointing authority and the office-holder was based upon the feudal relationship between lord and vassal. This was symbolized by the written oath taken by all appointees to government posts: "...having the honor of being appointed to the office of _____, I shall value my public duty and devote myself first and foremost to the lord, doing nothing but that which keeps my conscience clear." For each official, "service to the lord" was the highest standard in carrying out his duty. Like its modern counterpart, the Bakufu had a system of internal promotion. However, that system was constrained within ranks determined by one's rank in the social order. The pattern of advancement from one post to another was generally determined by family status and class. However, there was more flexibility in the system than is generally believed. There are many instances of promotion to the relatively high-ranking posts of *kanjō* or *daikan* of men whose rank would normally restrict them to the lower-ranking posts of *torimi*, *tenshūban*,

shihai-kanjō, *kachimetsuke*, and *hi-no-ban*. Kusumi Hiroaki, for example, started his career as a trainee for the post of *shihai-kanjō*, but eventually rose to the post of *kanjō-bugyō*.

The son of a man promoted to higher posts could qualify for the last post held by his father without being obliged to start from the lower-ranking post to which his rank would normally relegate him. Take for example, a man whose father started as *shihai-kanjō* and advanced to *kanjō* and ultimately to *kanjō-kumi-gashira*. His first post could be either *kanjō* or *banshi* of a *kojūnin-gumi*, posts which were normally reserved for those of higher rank. Clearly, the very real limits on upward mobility notwithstanding, promotion within the Bakufu hierarchy was not always rigidly constrained.

Furthermore, while social status was inherited, posts in the Bakufu hierarchy were not basically hereditary. Yet in a feudal society based on a fief-holding system, a certain fiscal strain could be put on the central authority when there was an officeholder who rose to a higher position in the administrative system than was usually occupied by someone of his social status (and therefore income). Tradition held that the size of his fief should be increased. However, several ingenious measures were devised to minimize the financial strain imposed by even the limited measure of upward mobility in the Tokugawa system. One was the *yakuryō-sei*, which was a system of payment in which an individual's fief remained unchanged when he was promoted, but he was paid a certain additional amount of money commensurate with the level of his post. The eighth shogun, Yoshimune, devised a variant of this system, the *tashidaka-sei*. Another method was the *segen-sei*, a system of inheritance by which the hereditary stipend was reduced at each succession. The application of this system varied from domain to domain. Some domains applied it across the board, while others created important exceptions. Some domains, for example, separated a stipend based on status from that based on office, leaving the former to be inherited intact. Others allowed vassals whose length of service exceeded a certain period to pass on the entire hereditary stipend to their heir.

However, despite the modifications to the status system, the decisive role played by rank and social status in the bureaucratic system of Tokugawa Japan is clearly revealed in the samurai monopoly of government posts, and in the stratified ranks within the samurai class which affected both employment and promotion. The contrast with medieval Germany is instructive. There, the colleges provided a mechanism for providing aspiring government officials with a path into the administrative system, whereas in Tokugawa Japan, government officials were strictly recruited from the warrior class.

Medieval Germany provides yet another ground for contrast with the Bakufu. There, the efforts of the aristocratic knights to monopolize and bureaucratize government offices was an aspect of their resistance to the authority of the king. In Tokugawa Japan, the development of the Bakuhan bureaucratic system was originally an attempt to check the influence of the *shuttōnin*, the shogun's principal

vassals. It therefore built on and emphasized the importance of the lord-vassal relationship, which in turn was premised on social status, and "for the sake of the lord" was the moral imperative on which every service in the administration was built. Despite an increasing tendency towards a fixed payment system in which an official was paid an income attached to the office he held, his basic stipend was still preconditioned by the size of his hereditary fief, and as such it stood at the root of and continuously reinforced the relationship between lord and vassal. Clearly the basic feudal principle was maintained in the bakuhan bureaucratic system. The *shuttōnin* emerged as officials whose power depended on the personal will of the shogun or the daimyō. Once the system of bureaucratic offices was established and routinized, the *shuttōnin* themselves never desired a return to the preceding system, a sufficient demonstration of the extent to which the execution of power had come to depend on the existing administrative bureaucracy. However, *shuttōnin* politics in turn prevented the bakuhan bureaucracy from becoming too rigid, providing flexibility and strength to the system as a whole. Nevertheless, this system did not change the nature of administration from a basically personal structure to an institutional one. The historical role played by the patrimonial bureaucracy in Europe, which played a major part in converting the feudal polity from one that was personally controlled to an impersonally ordered system, was not one that was played by the Tokugawa system.

3. MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND MILITARY POWER

Military forces in the bakuhan system can be divided into two categories: those under the direct control of the shogun, and those of the daimyō. The former included the troops of the *fudai* daimyō and the *hatamoto*, which were originally incorporated into the military forces of the Tokugawa. In the beginning, the organization of these forces was very similar to that of other major daimyō. The troops of the *hatamoto* were organized under *fudai* daimyō, while lower-ranking troops were assigned as *yoriki* to some of the *fudai* and the higher-ranking Tokugawa retainers.

In the 1630s, as the bakuhan bureaucratic system was beginning to take shape, the army of the shogun was being dismantled and reorganized in order to fit it for an era of peace. The first step in this transformation was the creation of the *fudai* daimyō as lords of territories of 10,000 koku or more, and the separation of the *fudai* forces from the military units of the Tokugawa clan. The *Buke Shohattō*, promulgated in 1635, formalized this change. But just prior to its issue, the army under the direct control of the shogun had been increased and strengthened. Between 1632 and 1634, the size of the *ōban* (the largest military corps in the Tokugawa army) had been increased from six units to twelve, that of the next largest, the *shoin-ban*, from four units to eight and then to ten, the *kojūningumi* from four to eight, and the *koshō-kumiban* from six to eight. The number of these last three continued to increase over the following decade, and in addition, a new band of

guards, the *shin-ban*, was created in 1643. By the mid-1640s, the basic structure of the forces that would serve directly under the shogun's command for the rest of the Tokugawa period had been put in place. During the same period, squadrons of archers and gunnery units were also reinforced. With the increase in the numbers of various guard units went an increase in their stipends. These measures therefore both relieved the financially hard-pressed *hatamoto* and raised the military power of the shogun.

The legal aspects of this transformation also deserve mention. Beginning with the *Shoshi-hattō* (1632), various regulations concerning the military service of the samurai were issued by the shogun, and in 1633 regulations were issued that covered the daimyō as well as the shogun's own forces. These continued in force until the military was drastically reorganized in the Bakumatsu period.

How was this army distributed? The *ōban*, which had until then been charged with guarding Edo castle, were relieved of this duty and instead became the guards of the strategically important castles in Osaka, Kyoto, and Sunpu. The *shoin-ban* and the *koshō-kumiban* guarded the shogun at Edo castle. One of the distinctive features of the military forces under the shogun was that, except for the few times when the shogun needed a military escort for an official progress (to Nikko, for example), the sole function of his army was to guard the principal castles in his territories. The army engaged in no other military duties. The troops of the *ōban* sent to guard Nijo Castle in Kyoto also had the responsibility for guarding the court, a function which in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods had been assumed by the *shugo* and the *jito* but which now was taken over by the troops under the direct control of the shogun. This arrangement was designed to avoid a potential alliance between the daimyō and the Imperial court.

The other military power in the Tokugawa period was that of the daimyō. The most important function of the daimyō's troops was, obviously, maintaining order in the domains. Their other major duty was travelling to Edo in the system of "alternate attendance"—that is, *sankin kōtai*. Generally viewed as a measure to control the daimyō, *sankin-kōtai* also served a military purpose: it forced the daimyō to maintain a fixed portion of their military power in Edo, and it thereby served to display the great military power of the Bakufu to all classes in the society. The system was formalized by the *Buke shohattō* in 1635, but the formalization made little real difference to the system, which continued to operate as it had before the regulations: the daimyō in the eastern and western provinces, most of them *tozama* daimyō, resided alternately in Edo, spending one year in the capital and one year in their domains. In the 1640s, the *fudai* daimyō also began to participate in the system.

A significant change in the *sankin kōtai* system began in the 1640s. In 1643, the Matsudaira of the Takada domain in the province of Echigo, one of the collateral houses of the Tokugawa, and the Maedas, the *tozama* daimyō of Kaga domain, were ordered to come to Edo alternately instead of in the same year, even though both were from the eastern provinces. Thereafter, several pairs of daimyō

from nearby domains were named to alternate in their attendance at the capital: the lords of the castles in Karatsu and Shimabara in Kyushu, those of the castles of Kishiwada and Amagasaki, Yoshida and Kariya, Kakegawa and Hamamatsu, Takatsuki and Kameyama, Funai and Usuki, and Omura and Goto. As this pairing demonstrates, the principle of alternate attendance by daimyō from the eastern and western provinces was replaced by that by daimyō from the same region. The motivation for the change came from the Shimabara Rebellion of 1637.

The Bakufu had found it unexpectedly difficult to get this revolt in Kyushu under control. One of the principal reasons for the difficulty was a provision of the *Buke Shohattō* of 1635, which prohibited the daimyō from dispatching troops without explicit instructions from the Bakufu. Even in the case of serious disturbances, they were required to guard their own castles and encampments and await orders. This meant that the response to a major uprising like the Shimabara Rebellion was often perilously slow. Therefore this provision of the code was later revised so that a daimyō could dispatch troops to other areas in order to suppress an uprising against the Shogunate and its order, after adequate consultation with daimyō in neighboring provinces.

However, the delay in responding to the Shimabara Rebellion was not attributable solely to the provisions of the code, although that was certainly a factor. Another major element was the disposition of military power in Kyushu, which had serious inadequacies from the strategic point of view. Except for the ailing Shimazu of Satsuma, who was exempted from attendance that year because of illness, all the daimyō from the Kyushu region were in Edo in the winter of 1637, when the insurrection erupted at Shimabara. The Bakufu had officials stationed in Nagasaki and Bungo, but none controlled military forces that could deal with the uprising. This meant a considerable delay before troops could be moved to the scene of the rebellion, and allowed it to take a firm hold before effective steps were taken to repress it.

This fiasco forced the Bakufu to revise the patterns of the *sankin kōtai* system. The earlier pattern of alternating the daimyō from the eastern provinces with those of the western provinces was replaced by a system which paired two daimyō from the same region. New military forces were also stationed in Kyushu, not only to contain any future local disturbances but also to defend against possible foreign incursions. The largest of these forces was a band of guards based in Nagasaki. The Bakufu ordered the Kuroda of Fukuoka domain and the Nabeshima of Saga domain to alternate in dispatching men to serve as members of the Nagasaki guard, and for this service their year-long *sankin kōtai* stay in Edo was shortened to six months.

These changes in the disposition of military power reflected the interests of the daimyō as well as the Bakufu itself. They demonstrated that the military forces of the daimyō not only acted as an escort for their lord and an agent for maintaining order within the domain, but extended to the defence of every region and the maintenance of general public peace. This role in turn reflects the fact that the

Bakufu, while it maintained considerable military power within its own extensive territories and in key strategic castles in various locations around Japan, did not maintain a military force adequate to maintain order outside its own jurisdiction on a national basis.

4. MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND THE ROLE OF THE CASTLE

The castle was a critical element in the military strategy and organization of Tokugawa Japan, and control of the castles was a key factor in military power. The central authority began to try to regulate the building and control of daimyō castles in the time of Hideyoshi. After his conquest of northeastern Japan in 1590, which ended a long series of campaigns to unify the country, Hideyoshi ordered the Nanbu daimyō to destroy all the castles in the domain except for one, which would serve as residence and headquarters for the daimyō. However, this practice was not extended to the rest of the country.

The first Shogun, Ieyasu, occasionally intervened with the daimyō to direct the siting of new castles, but even after he assumed the title of shogun in 1603, he lacked the power to prohibit the daimyō from constructing new castles. In 1615, however, immediately after the siege of Osaka castle which finally eliminated the last of Hideyoshi's forces, Ieyasu issued a decree forbidding a daimyō to hold more than one castle within his domain. This marks the beginning of the shogun's control over the building and maintenance of castles throughout the country.

For the vassals of the daimyō, the new edict also meant the monopoly of the castle by the daimyō and the loss of their own power bases, which meant that they could no longer effectively function as independent military powers. The month after this edict was promulgated, the *Buke Shohatto* prohibited the daimyō from building any new castles, and required a daimyō to obtain approval from the shogun for any repair work on the existing castle. While the revised code of 1635 maintained the prohibition on new castle construction, it made the repair of existing castles subject to approval by the *bugyō* or the *rōjū*, and demanded shogunal approval only for the construction of new castle walls; repairs to watchtowers, walls, and gates could be repaired without shogunal approval. These changes were concurrent with the creation of the office of the *rōjū* and the development of the administrative bureaucracy of the bakuhan system. The requirement for shogunal approval of new construction, however, remained a demonstration of the shogun's power over the daimyō castles and his position at the apex of the feudal hierarchy.

One circumstance which required the mobilization of the daimyō military forces in peacetime was a change in the control of a castle. Especially in the early Tokugawa period, the shogun continued to consolidate his power by transferring daimyō across domains to make sure that potential threats to his dominance were isolated in a ring of staunchly allied daimyō and vassals. Some powerful traditional enemies were also dispossessed from their domains once the shogunate was sufficiently established to make this possible without a major confrontation. Each

time this occurred, however, the shogun faced the problem of maintaining control over the castle which was the key to the domain.

Officially the Bakufu recognized two variants of the change-over in the responsibility for a castle: *shiro-uketori* ("the take-over of a castle" from a dispossessed daimyō) and *zaiban* (the temporary maintenance of a castle for an incoming daimyō). For example, in 1643, Katō Akinari, the lord of the castle of Aizu-Wakamatsu with a fief of 600,000 koku, was removed from his domain. On this occasion, five forces were dispatched to the castle, their leaders charged with responsibility for assuming control of it as *shiro-uketori-yaku*. The five men included four daimyō from nearby domains in the north: Sakai Tadakatsu, a *fudai* daimyō with a domain of 140,000 koku; Mizoguchi Nobunao, a *tozama* daimyō of 50,000 koku; Niwa Mitsushige, another *tozama* daimyō of 150,000 koku; Toki Yoriyuki, a *fudai* daimyō of 25,000 koku; and a leading vassal of Uesugi Sadakatsu, the *tozama* daimyō of Yonezawa, a domain of 350,000 koku. The role of the first of these men, Sakai Tadakatsu, gives some important insights into the nature of this action.

On May 2, Tadakatsu, the daimyō of Shōnai domain, received the order assigning him the duty of *shiro-uketori*. He in turn notified his vassals, and on May 9 they began mobilizing. The following day an advance party left the domain, and was joined by Tadakatsu near Aizu on May 18. Together with the four other daimyō he entered the castle on May 22. After the other forces departed, Tadakatsu and his army remained in Aizu as *zaiban* until August 2.

The costs of these military duties amounted to 100,000 koku, equivalent to seventy per cent of the annual income of his domain. According to the military code of 1633, this sum was estimated to be the maintenance for an army of 350 men armed with guns, 60 archers, 150 spearmen, and 170 mounted warriors. But the army actually mobilized by Tadakatsu consisted of 350, 150, 200, and 214 respectively. In other words, it was considerably greater than that demanded by the regulations. This was far from being unusual: in general, the scale of the forces mobilized by the daimyō for *shiro-uketori* was, with some exceptions, never below the standard prescribed by the code, and it was usually nearly twice what was officially required.

The Bakufu paid five *gō* of rice a day for each soldier mobilized for these duties. It was insufficient to cover the expenditure necessary to mobilize and support the men, but it was more than a symbolic gesture: the Bakufu provided support for the troops mobilized to carry out its orders. The same system prevailed when the Bakufu's own retainers—*jōshi*, *metsuke*, *kanjō*, or *daikan*—were dispatched on similar duties.

The orders for such military actions were issued in the form of a black-stamped document, which signified the authority of the Bakufu over military affairs. It also demonstrated the shogun's claim to extensive and highly centralized power over the military in Tokugawa Japan.

During the 1630s, the Bakufu enjoyed an overwhelming military superiority over the *tozama* daimyō. At this time, the vassals of the Tokugawa who held fiefs

assessed at 10,000 koku and over were made daimyō, which removed their vassals from the direct control of the shogun. On the other hand, the size of the forces which the shogun commanded directly was substantially increased. The army of the shogun was divided across six locations, to guard the shogun himself and to man the key Bakufu-controlled castles. It functioned as a military unit only when the shogun himself undertook military action.

The system of *sankin kōtai* contributed to the concentration of military strength in Edo. But that system, which developed so as to assign different periods of residence in Edo to daimyō from the same region, helped to avoid a military vacuum in the provinces, because it enabled the daimyō to keep a portion of their army ready for an emergency in their home base. The daimyō's military forces acted primarily as guards for their daimyō, but they also served to defend the common interests of the ruling samurai class in maintaining public order, defending the realm, and undertaking the role of military surrogates for the shogun in their roles of *shiro-uketori* and *zaiban*.

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