

Local Officials of the Edo Shogunate during the Late Early-Modern Period

—The Case of the Second Conquest of the Choshu Domain—

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Introduction

This report attempts to clarify local military functions in the closing days of the Tokugawa Regime, which was also the time of the Choshu Domain's second conquest from 1865 to 67. To achieve this purpose, we have to consider the global situation surrounding Japanese military system (This reason was revealed in chapter 2). So in this report, I'll pay attention to both local and global situation at this time.

1. Overview-Political and Social Situation in Japan in the Late Edo Period -

In 1854 (Kaei 7), as a result of the peace treaty between Japan and the United States, Japan's Isolation Policy(except China, Holland, Ryukyu and Ainu) that had lasted for 200 years was abolished. Japan began to open to the world, and soon initiated trade with foreign countries. As a result, the Japanese economy changed and some feudal domains gained political influence. With this momentum, the change from the shogunate system to a more modern system has been called the Meiji Restoration. This change occurred from the 1850s to the 1870s in Japan.

There are so many studies on the Meiji Restoration, particularly its political history [Tanaka 1963] [Iechika 1995] [Aoyama 2000] [Kusumi 2005]. And most of these studies' interest is to investigate a power struggle among the various forces in the late Edo era. The political process in this time is investigated in quite some detail. However, the social situation during the Meiji Restoration has not been clarified as Miyaji said [Miyaji 1999]¹. So in this report, I'll explore the social situation during the Meiji Restoration and consider relationship between society and politic.

Through the restoration of Imperial Rule in 1867 and the Boshin War the next year, the Edo Shogunate that had lasted for over 260 years collapsed. Just before this collapse, there was one war in Japan: the conquest of the Choshu Domain. In the Edo era, major warfare never occurred in Japan after the end of the Shimabara War (1637), so this conquest was the first war to occur after a long period of peace in Japan.

Therefore, this report will consider how local communities became involved in wars when there was a state of emergency. In the Edo era, only samurais were given status as combatants in a war, but the global situation in this period forced changes on the military system. So the second object is to clarify the relationship between the global situation in this period and the local situation.

2. The Global Situation Surrounding Japanese Military System

Japan opened to the world due to pressure of western powers and Japan needed to be more active with regard to problems occurring overseas. The shogunate and each domain raised their troop strength to counter the threats from the western powers.

At the same time in the 19th century, new types of firearms were produced rapidly in western countries—a shift from a smoothbore to a rifle, and then from a muzzle loader to a breech loader. Compared to a matchlock which had been mainly used until 19th century in Japan, these new firearms much more improved in accuracy of fire, shooting distance, and so on. These developments in Western countries altered war methods [Headrick 1981] [Hoya 1993a, 1993b].

¹ Recent studies approved Miyaji's argument and insisted that we have to consider the situation of the Kinai region where the center of politics was moved from Edo in the closing days of the Tokugawa regime [Iwaki 2011, 2012] [Aratake 2012].

When military technology in Western countries was introduced to Japan, the samurais' specific physical training and closed schools of Japanese martial arts came to be unnecessary. Instead, if trained uniformly, the number of soldiers determined victory or defeat in war. This change made the shogunate conscript as many soldiers as possible. Not only samurai, but also common people became involved in the military at this stage. Thus, progress in military technology involved local communities to a much greater degree in war.

3. The Local Societies under Japanese Military System

In Edo era, with a government policy called “separation of warriors and farmers”, villagers became non-warriors, but they were positioned as laborers who supplied war materials in wartime. The whole nation was organized into a class system wherein each citizen bore duties in the military according to rank [Takagi 1990].

However, in the last days of the shogunate, the shogun made military reforms such as introducing tactics using the three combat arms that were standard in western countries. And this system needs much more soldiers than before. Not only Samurai but also local people got much more involved in military activity.

4. How the People Acted during the War in the Late Edo Period

1) The governing system in local communities

Before discussing local military functions, we have to keep in mind the governing system in local communities in Edo period.

With regard to the local government in this period, there was a different system in each territory. This report will address the *bakuryo* (幕領) where it was directly controlled by the shogunate. There were two kinds of governing officials in local society. One was the *daikan* (代官), who were the government officeholders. There were about sixty offices in the *bakuryo* scattered all over Japan. They worked with the *daikan*'s servants and so forth. Their work was to undertake local government administrative activities such as the Census, collect the *nengu* (land tax), and carry out irrigation and engineering works during peacetime. In wartime, they transported war materials. Therefore, they had several responsibilities.

During the Edo era, the number of people in each *daikansho* (代官所) was about only 20 to 30, so the *daikansho*'s administrative power was limited. Therefore, other local in the village officials (*murayakunin* 村役人) supported *daikan*. In each village, there were *murayakunin* (like *shoya* or *nanushi*) who were the official representatives for the village, and who assumed responsibility for administering the village.

In general, several villages in the same territory formed groups called *kumiamura* (組合村), and several *kumiamura* formed a *gunchu* (郡中). Each *kumiamura* would select a *gunchusodai* (郡中惣代) from among *murayakunin* as their representative. They supported the *daikansho* in local government administration and acted for the *daikansho* as intermediaries in the government machinery to facilitate control during peacetime [Kurushima 2002].

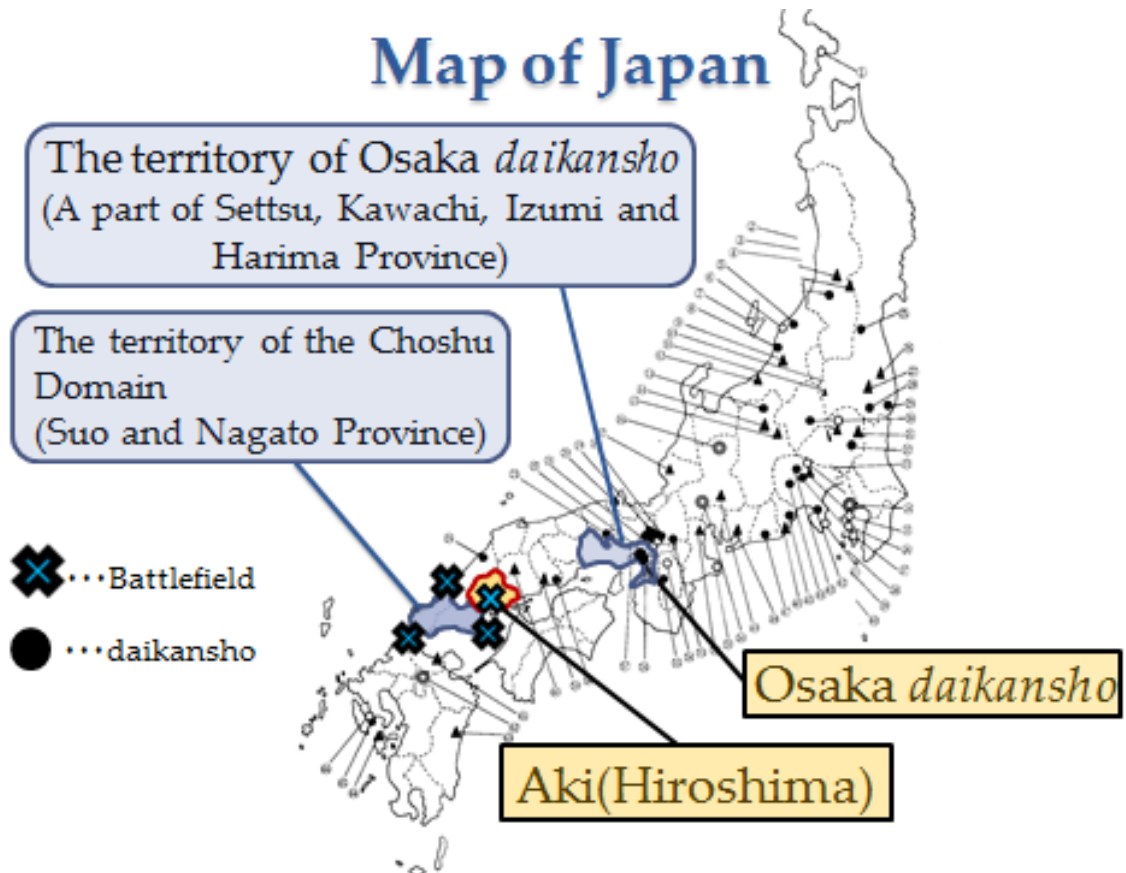
In contrast to the peacetime arrangements just discussed, local officials functioned differently during wars. After the shogunate's military reforms, deploying of military forces in battle by the shogunate occurred during the Choshu Domain's conquest. At that time, local communities had to deal with emergencies during wartime.

2) Local community's functions during wartime

The Choshu Domain's conquest was a war with the shogunate from 1864 to 1867. At first, fighting was avoided. However, the conflict between the shogunate and the Choshu Domain escalated around March 1865, and so the shogunate began to prepare for war in his territory including Osaka.

Table 1 : Details of the Choshu Domain's conquest

Date	Year	Incident
7.19	1864(genji1)	<i>The Kinmon Incident</i> (禁門の変) : The Choshu domain came to attack the Imperial Palace.
7.23		The Imperial Court ordered the shogunate to track down and destroy the Choshu domain. →The shogunate prepared for war. →The Choshu domain made an apology to the shogunate.
		The shogunate military withdrew its troops.
		However, the conflict between the shogunate and the Choshu domain got worse. →The shogunate prepared for war again.
around March~	1865(keio1)	The shogun, <i>Tokugawa Iemochi</i> informed each domain of his decision on another Choshu Expedition.
		The War broke out.
6.7	1866(keio2)	The Shogunate army was at a disadvantage against the Choshu domain's army.
7.20		The shogun, Tokugawa Iemochi died.
9.2		The shogunate arranged a cease-fire agreement with the Choshu domain.
1.23		1867(keio3)



From now on, I'll discuss local community's functions by showing an example in the territory of Osaka *daikansho*. As we can see from the map, a part of Settsu (摂津), Kawachi (河内), Izumi (和泉) and Harima (播磨) was the territory of Osaka *daikansho* and Aki (安芸) was the one of the main battlefield during the Second Conquest of the Choshu Domain.

~In the case of Osaka *daikansho*²~

In September 1865 (keio1), the shogunate commanded each *daikan* to conscript non-combatant laborers (5 laborers per *kokudaka* 1,000 *koku*) to assist with the war [Kurushima 2002]. The *daikansho* notified the *gunchusodai* of this command on November 10³. The next day, the *gunchusodai* held a meeting to determine how each village would conscript laborers and fix their allowance. The laborers' jobs were mainly transporting weapons, food, and fuel to the battlefield. On November 15, the laborers and their managers left for the battlefield, Aki. And then until February, they had transported weapons or fed soldiers in Aki.

This indicates that the *gunchusodai* managed to conscript enough laborers within the four-day period. However, they had difficulties, in that, people who wanted to go to the battlefield as laborers were rare.

Of course, the shogunate gave a specific sum of money to each laborer, but the laborers were not satisfied with it. So each *gunchu* had to pay additional money. As we can see from the table 2, *gunchu* gave laborers much more money than the shogunate.

The *gunchusodai* calculated the amount of money and apportioned the expenses to each village among the *gunchu*. Even after they departed as laborers, the people asked for money or other things from the *gunchu*, so the *gunchusodai* sometimes rebuffed their demands, but at other times, they asked the *daikansho* for better work conditions.

Although the number of laborers that the villages handed over was less than what the shogunate commanded, as shown in table 3, the *gunchusodai* made great efforts to conscripting laborers, and the shogunate was able to requisition them effectively.

Later, the shogunate started to collect people from villages not only as laborers but also as soldiers. However, conscripting soldiers from villages was an exception to the system in the Edo Era, so the villagers tended to resist being conscripted as combatants to a greater degree than they resisted being conscripted as non-combatants. Due to the existence of farmer-soldiers conscripted in various regions for defending the country, they insisted that if they were to be soldiers, it would be "double service" and thus unfair. At that time, the *gunchusodai* also tended to fiercely resist conscripting soldiers to their *daikan* as representatives of the villages [Kurushima 1986]. Moreover, the quality of the soldiers conscripted was not high. The villagers tended to avoid becoming soldiers even though the pay was higher, and so villages had to employ non-villagers who were often lower-class people from cities as soldiers. As a result, the shogunate could not conscript more soldiers [Hoya 1991, 1993b].

² There were two Osaka *daikansho* at that time. One was at Tanimachi(谷町) and the other was at Suzukimachi(鈴木町).

³ In this section, main references is "Documents of the Misugi family" A-6; in case of other references, they are indicated respectively.

Table 2: Money paid to the laborers

Items	Money (<i>ryo</i> 両 a year)
An allowance(the shogunate gave)	20
An allowance(<i>Gunchu</i> gave)	20
In time of departure, an allowance of travel preparations(<i>Gunchu</i> gave)	7
// (<i>Gunchu</i> gave by additions)	3

- ※ They receive money by calculation on daily pro-rate actually.
- ※ Source: “Documents of the Misugi family” 「三枚家文書」A-6
- ※ ■ = the shogunate gave / ■ = *Gunchu* gave

Table 3: The number of laborers who were conscripted

		The number of laborers per 1000 <i>koku</i> (石)	Source
The number the shogunate commanded		5.00	[Kurushima 1981]/ “Documents of the Misugi family” 「三枚家文書」A-334-9
Actual number that were conscripted	<i>Osaka Suzukimachi daikansho</i> territory	about 2.68	“Documents of the Misugi family” 「三枚家文書」A-306
	<i>Kurashiki daikansho</i> territory	about 3.22	[Kurushima 1981]

5. Conclusion

The intermediary government took part in eliminating conflicts between the rulers and those who were ruled during the Edo Era, and even during the war at the end of the Edo Era, the system worked [Kurushima 2002]. In other words, the system made it possible for the rulers to fight the war. However, when military technology in Western countries changed the way that the wars were fought, the new military system adopted by the shogunate needed more foot soldiers [Hoya 1993b].

At this stage, villagers started to be conscripted, not only as non-combatants but also as combatants.

However, villagers tended to resist being conscripted as soldiers because such was against the standard of the feudal system under the shogunate [Hoya 1991]. Therefore, the next issue was to overcome the feudal system itself. Military technology brought from Western countries involved local communities in the war, and this change created a background for introducing universal conscription in the next Meiji period.

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