

Varia

## Local Governance in Kyoto: from the Edo Period to the Present

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**ABSTRACT:** This essay is on the neighbourhoods association's history in Kyoto. The neighbourhoods association (*chō* 町) is formed for the Sengoku period (the 16<sup>th</sup> century) and follows to date. Each neighbourhoods association owned each documents (for example Ancient writings, association archives, headman's personal papers, dispute records and the like). This essay take note of *the chō shikimoku* (old neighbourhood regulations) for research those documents's positions and geographical distribution. Each neighbourhoods association had preserved for a long time. But in late years these can't continue preservation. These are very likely to be scattered and lost. Therefore this essay gives a brief description of seven neighbourhoods association's cases. I want to offer it for the future of the history and reference of the document preservation. Additionally I consider it how neighbourhoods association changed after Meiji Restoration.

**KEYWORDS:** neighbourhoods association, document preservation, Meiji Restoration, neighbourhood regulations

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In 2000, the Aneyakōji Neighbourhood Association (*Aneyakōji kaiwai wo kangaeru kai* 姉小路界限を考える会) drew up a set of community rules called *Aneyakōji kaiwai shikimoku* 姉小路界限式目. The association undertakes initiatives to protect the landscape of the Aneyakōji area in Nakagyō Ku in the city of Kyoto, and the development of a set of these *shikimoku* 式目 rules has prompted scrutiny of similar rules in other *chō* 町 (neighbourhoods). According to the association's homepage, the purpose of these six modern-day neighbourhood rules was to create a comfortable and safe living environment for the citizens of 21<sup>st</sup> century Kyoto; it was inspired by the self-regulation of townsfolk in the Edo period. The Aneyakōji Neighbourhood Association has thus drawn on the historical role of *the chō shikimoku* (old neighbourhood regulations), the gist of which re-appear in the new set of rules. The association's activities have spread to other areas of the city and become an influential force in landscape preservation and town planning throughout the nation.

In the city of Kyoto and elsewhere in Japan, too more and more groups of residents are today drawing up new rules on landscape preservation and town planning in a similar vein to the Association.

The Association decided to name these agreements neighbourhood rules after a local resident showed members of the association a book containing community regulations called *chō gi sadame* 町儀定 (neighbourhood rules), which they had unearthed from among old documents passed down through their family. These neighbourhood rules were unearthed in Matsushita-Chō 松下町, and the knowledge that such agreements had existed in the past served as a great source of motivation for the members of the association, who believed that some sort of residents' agreement was needed now to protect the local landscape.

Just what is *chō shikimoku*? The urban area of Kyoto comprises numerous neighbourhoods called *chō*, each of which is populated by people who run Kyoto businesses or produce handicraft products. Several *chō* neighbourhoods come together under larger districts called *chō gumi* 町組 or neighbourhood groupings. The number of neighbourhoods increased rapidly as economic activity flourished in Kyoto after the Warring States period in the sixteenth century, and records from the early nineteenth century show more than 1800 neighbourhoods in the city if you include the temple towns (*jinai machi* 寺内町) of Honganji 本願寺 and the like. The people of the neighbourhood drew up various agreements to ensure trade and everyday life ran smoothly. These agreements were the neighbourhood rules or *chō shikimoku*.

*Chō shikimoku* is the generic term for an agreement drawn up within a neighbourhood, but they were given various other names during the Edo period, such as *chō sadame* 町定, *chō hatto* 町法度, *chō ki* 町規, and *chō okite* 町掟—all of which use different vocabulary to refer to the same of rules, regulations and provisions and *chō soku* 町則 and *chō kiyaku* 町規約 after the Meiji Restoration. We have already encountered the *chō gi sadame* or neighbourhood regulations from Matsushita-Chō.

In contrast, the *Aneyakōji kaiwai shikimoku* drawn up more recently are an agreement between the multiple neighbourhoods located along Aneyakōji Street. A single neighbourhood is limited in its ability to protect the landscape of the area, and such broad-based initiatives have long existed in one form or another. In this paper, though, I will primarily examine local residents' organizations in Kyoto, through the steps taken by the individual neighbourhoods.

### 1. Neighbourhood rules *or chō shikimoku*

To draw up a set of neighbourhood rules, there needs to be a neighbourhood (also known by the term *machi*) in existence in the first place. In this sense, neighbourhood rules provide important insight into the origins of the neighbourhoods themselves. The Kyoto City Historical Archive (Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan) has been involved in researching old documents from the city of Kyoto for many years, and in 1999 they published a collection of neighbourhood rules from Kyoto that painted an overall picture of these agreements.<sup>1</sup> This publication has also prompted further research. I would now like to refer to this collection in providing a broad overview of the history of local residents' organizations in Kyoto.

The oldest neighbourhood rules to have been discovered date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They are those from Reisen-chō 冷泉町 (1594), Shimohonnojimae-chō 下本能寺前町 (1594) and Niwatoriboko-chō 鶏鉾町 (1596). These are considered the oldest extant sets of neighbourhood rules in Japan.

Examples dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century have been discovered in the following neighbourhoods: Koromonotana-chō 衣棚町, Horinouchi-chō 堀之内町, Saihōji-chō 西方寺町, Nakano-chō 中之町, Seiwain-chō 清和院町, and Kikuya-chō 菊屋町. These leads us to believe that rules were drawn up in many neighbourhoods in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, there may have been agreements in place in a neighbourhood even if *chō shikimoku* were not drawn up. In fact, it was probably common for local residents' organizations to be administered in accordance with unwritten conventions, and I suspect many of the neighbourhood rules were drawn up to provide a solution and future countermeasure only when a problem arose. In any case, local residents' organizations in the form of neighbourhoods must have already existed when the rules were produced, and provided the basis for activities undertaken by the residents.

Neighbourhood rules comprise a set of written guidelines by which all neighbourhood members must abide: they are broad parameters within which most members would have

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<sup>1</sup> The volume in question is Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan ed., *Kyōto chō shikimoku shūsei*, Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan, 1999. A part of this essay is summarized *Kyōto chō shikimoku shūsei* clearly and added concrete examples.

behaved in going about their everyday lives. Hence, most sets of rules were rarely revised, and some residents may not even have known of their existence. Once they had been drawn up, many would have been forgotten over time and become a mere formality. Others were no doubt more effective, and would have been referred to multiple times before they were revised.

As might be expected, similar agreements existed in villages or *mura* 村 in rural areas. Village rules, though, were broader and date back further in history. They evidence cooperation between peasants, and they must have had an influence on the style of cooperation between city folk that developed subsequently. Village rules existed across the country, but they have yet to be researched in depth in the rural areas on the outskirts of Kyoto so we do not have a good understanding of their influence on the development of neighbourhood rules.

Kyoto was one of the three major cities in Edo Japan besides Edo and Osaka, and stretched across most of present day Kamigyō-ku 上京区, Nakagyō-ku 中京区 and Shomogyō-ku 下京区 and parts of Higashiyama-ku 東山区 and Sakyō-ku 左京区. Yodo 淀 and Fushimi 伏見 in present day Fushimi-ku 伏見区 were separate cities. Neighbourhood rules must have survived in these remoter areas too, but little is known about them. Therefore, in this essay, I will restrict my discussions to those neighbourhoods within the boundaries of the city of Kyoto as it stood during the Edo period.

## 2. Contents of neighbourhood rules

In this section, I explore the contents of Edo period neighbourhood rules.

Agreements were drawn up within a neighbourhood to fix matters relating mainly to the organization and operation of the neighbourhood, and Edo period rules reflect the times.

### (a) Stipulations relating to the members of the neighbourhood

These include terms governing the buying, selling or leasing of premises (*ieyashiki* 家屋敷) within the neighbourhood, processes for approval of succession to the position of family head or a change in residents (e.g. through adoption), and courtesy payments (*aisatsuryō* 挨拶料).

### (b) Organization and operation of the neighbourhood, public order, and duties such as fire fighting

These include the timing and frequency of neighbourhood meetings, the term of office and selection methods for the representative of the neighbourhood's elders (*chō toshiyori* 年寄), night watch, opening and closing of the wooden town gates (*kido mon* 木戸門), allocation of such duties as firefighting, cleaning and street repairs, and the methods and rates for

the payment of neighbourhood expenses. As these duties gradually became more complex, we start to see stipulations relating to neighbourhood assembly houses (*chō kaisho* 町会所) and stewards (*chō yōnin* 町用人) which signaled the start of the employment of dedicated neighbourhood stewards.

**(c) The neighbourhood and rites of passage**

The appropriate conduct and cash gifts (*reigin* 礼銀) for rites of passage including child-birth, death, marriage and coming of age.

**(d) Regulation of customs and lifestyle, and annual events such as Shinto rituals and festivals**

The form of participation in festivals and worship, and apportionment of expenses. We often see lifestyle-related provisions that espouse frugality and prohibit gambling.

**(e) Mutual assistance between inhabitants of the neighbourhood and dispute settlement**

Friendship between inhabitants of the neighbourhood and methods for solving issues that arise.

**(f) Relationships with neighboring neighbourhood and the neighbourhood groupings**

Agreements that transcended the boundaries of the individual *chō*, such as roles within the neighbourhood groupings, the scope of firefighting activity, and how expenses incurred outside the gates of the individual neighbourhood were to be apportioned between adjacent neighbourhoods.

The above are the most common types of stipulations seen in the *chō shikimoku*, but various other items appear, depending on when the agreement was drawn up. For example, some neighbourhood rules are prefaced with a list of the laws and ordinances that had to be observed. With the focus on landscape preservation in recent years, building restrictions have drawn attention even though the number of such examples is fairly limited.

Within type (a) stipulations, we see provisions that prohibit agreements for the buying, selling or leasing of premises being contracted with persons of certain social status and occupations. As early as 1594, the rules from the Shimohonnōjima-chō neighbourhood state that 'houses ought not to be sold to *zatō* 座頭 or *sarugaku* 猿楽等'. The term *zatō* referred to visually impaired people (people who belonged to the *Tōdōza* 当道座 guild of the blind that awarded such people social privileges), while *sarugaku* were entertainers. After this date, we see many neighbourhood rules that restricted the buying, selling or leasing of premises to these people. Some also specifically mention persons subject to special regulation by the

shōgunate including *rōnin* 浪人 (masterless samurai) and Christians, and persons of out-caste status including *eta* 穢多 and *hinin* 非人. It is also interesting to see stipulations that restricted the buying, selling and leasing of premises to certain common trades, for example rice stores, timber merchants, bathhouses, blacksmiths, and dye houses. This may have been because they posed a fire hazard (e.g. bathhouses and blacksmiths), emitted foul odors (e.g. blacksmiths and dye houses), had large numbers of people coming and going (e.g. rice stores), or hindered other trades or traffic (e.g. timber merchants). This is pure speculation as there is no corroboration to prove any of these theories. We also find more ambiguous terms in the rules such as ‘tradesmen unsuitable for the neighbourhood’ (from Manjūya-chō 饅頭屋町) and ‘non-correct business acquaintances’ (from Sakuan-chō 作庵町). Some neighbourhoods even prohibited new business with trades outside the textile and weaving industry, such as Sanchōme 三丁目 (Nakatachiuri-chō 中立売町), which determined that ‘business ought not to be conducted with tradesmen other than thread dealers and drapers in this neighbourhood’. The changes in *chō shikimoku* provisions offer an insight into the way the people of the neighbourhood thought.

The neighbourhood rules contain various other provisions, and each set does not necessarily include all of the types of provisions listed above. In many cases, the type (b) ‘operation’ provisions comprise a list of payment stipulations with no detailed explanation. And in some cases, there are separate sets of provisions governing the arrangement of festivals, tenants, or neighbourhood stewards. *Chō shikimoku* were drawn up and revised to allow the neighbourhood to survive all sorts of incidents and affairs, and they encapsulate the everyday wisdom of the inhabitants of the Kyoto neighbourhood.

### 3. Examining neighbourhood documentation and neighbourhoods as they are today

Figure 1 shows the neighbourhoods recorded in the published volume of Kyoto neighbourhood rules.<sup>2</sup> The volume gives details of the rules drawn up between 1575 and 1897. Most were treated as public documents and passed down within the individual neighbourhood until after World War II. People who tried to study these documents in the 1970s tell of the difficulties gaining access since the documents were kept under lock and key. Approval from neighbourhood leaders had to be obtained in order to access the documents, and approval was often denied. After this time, though, there was a major change in attitude towards these documents. I would now like to draw on my own experiences and use a few examples to describe the neighbourhoods as they are today.

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<sup>2</sup> The figure is based on that given in Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan ed., *Kyōto chō shikimoku shūsei*, Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan, 1999, p. 9.

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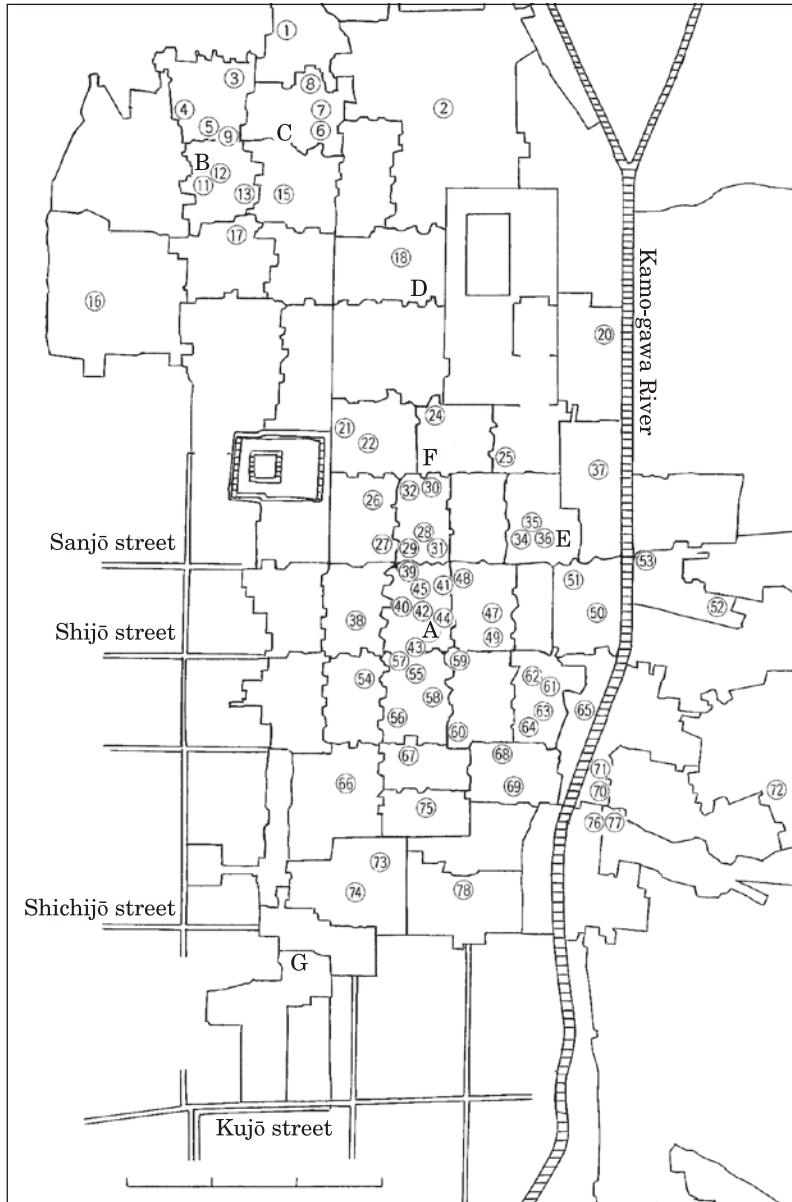


Figure 1 Map showing the neighbourhoods recorded in Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan ed., *Kyōto chō shūkimoku shūsei*, Kyōto Shi Rekishi Shiryōkan, 1999

### A Neighbourhood *Tenjinyama-Chō* 天神山町

Neighbourhood *Tenjinyama-Chō* is known for its involvement in the performances of Kyoto's most celebrated festivals (Gion festival 祇園祭). For this reason, Neighbourhood *Tenjinyama-Chō* still maintains the equivalent of an assembly house, and equipment for the festival is kept alongside public documents in the warehouse. These public documents were once put in order and are now stored in a safe to prevent them being destroyed by fire or the like. The neighbourhood still takes an active role in organizing the festival, so the documentation keeps mounting. At one time, all neighbourhood documents were considered equally important, whether they were old (and had been sorted and stored in the safe) or new (and continued to accumulate in the assembly house). Now, though, they are treated differently, and when the office gets too full of recent neighbourhood documents, they sorted out so that only the important ones are retained.

What struck me when I was conducting my research in the neighbourhood *Tenjinyama-Chō* was how much more cooperative the people were towards external researchers than they had been in the past. This alone indicates how proud the people are of the festival and the activities they undertake to preserve it. They also realize that understanding from outsiders is important if they are to preserve the festival.

### B Neighbourhood *Jyozenji-Chō* 上善寺町

Neighbourhood *Jyozenji-Chō* 上善寺町 once thrived on textiles and participated in a festival for many years. However, the neighbourhood no longer performs at the festival, and members recently disposed of their assembly house, and deposited their disused festival equipment with the Kyoto City Library of Historical Documents. They also deposited neighbourhood public documents that had been stored for many years. Very few of the current residents can remember the neighbourhood's former activities, and there are now a striking number of vacant lots in the neighborhood. Members have started discussing how to revitalize the neighbourhood, and some residents have showed interest in finding out what was written in those old public documents.

### C Neighbourhood *Shibaōmiya-Chō* 芝大宮町

Like *Jyozenji-Chō*, neighbourhood *Shibaōmiya-Chō* once participated in a festival, but had no assembly house so the public documents were stored by the family of a once prominent member. In a neighbourhood with no assembly house, public documents were passed between the elders, and subsequently kept by the chairman of the *chōnaikai* 町内会 neighborhood association. As the neighbourhood *Shibaōmiya-Chō* became less active, though, these documents were kept by one designated family and often forgotten about. This was the case with neighbourhood *Shibaōmiya-Chō*. When the family in charge of storing the public documents moved away from the neighbourhood almost twenty years ago, the



family donated its family-related documents to the Kyoto City Historical Archive. The family couldn't dispose of the old *chō* documents unilaterally, though, so they left it to the residents of the *chō* to decide what to do with them. After discussions, the *chō* members decided to deposit the public documents from the *chō* with the Kyoto City Historical Archive. In this case, the family were clearly aware of the difference between family documents and neighbourhood documents, so dealt with them in different ways. This indicates that the neighbourhood was still operating soundly even though they no longer took an active role in organizing the festival. Interestingly, some of the public documents had become mixed up with the family records over the years that they were stored by this family. The Kyoto City Historical Archive took on the task of sorting all of the documents out into family documents or public documents, which were then donated to the archive or deposited with the archive.

#### **D Neighbourhood *Seiwain-Chō* 清和院町**

Neighbourhood *Seiwain-Chō* was not involved in any festivals or other major events and did not have an assembly house. Public documents were passed between the neighbourhood elders in rotation, so were kept in multiple boxes small enough to be carried. It is thought that the public documents were sorted out many times over the years, and some were disposed of as the boxes got too full.

The extant documents can be broadly divided into those dating back to the start of the Edo period and those produced after the Meiji Restoration. The Meiji documents include a neighbourhood diary (*chō nikki* 町日誌) that was kept by each of the neighbourhood (*chō sōdai* 町総代) during the 1880s, notices and various other documents which circulated during the war, and receipts for expenses incurred by the *chōnaikai* neighbourhood association. The neighbourhood itself very deliberately preserved the extremely old documents and the diary and other documents from the 1880s safely, but the other documents seem to have just been left in the boxes by chance. From this set of documents, it is evident that neighbourhood *Seiwain-Chō* was active after the Meiji Restoration. The documents were still rotated for a time after World War II, but they were subsequently stored by one prominent neighbourhood member in the same way as neighbourhood *Shibaōmiya-Chō*. The descendants of this person later moved away, and the documents were deposited with the Kyoto City Historical Archive.

#### **E Neighbourhood *Shimohonnōjimaie-Chō* 下本能寺前町**

As in *Shibaōmiya-Chō* and *Seiwain-Chō*, at some point the public documents from neighbourhood *Shimohonnōjimaie-Chō* came to be stored by one prominent neighbourhood member. They were subsequently passed down through this person's family, who understood their importance and allowed researchers access to them for the purposes of research into

the history of Japan after the war. They became well-known, and were later donated to the Kyoto City Historical Archive. There were a few personal documents from the person's family in amongst the public documents, but they were all stored together as the property of neighbourhood *Shimohonnōjimaie-Chō*. There is no evidence that neighbourhood members discussed the idea of donating the public documents to the Archive, and few of the current residents seem aware that the documents exist.

### F Neighbourhood *Reisen-Chō* 冷泉町

It was known that public documents from neighbourhood *Reisen-Chō* existed from the prewar days, but after the war they were rediscovered by the family of a once prominent neighbourhood member. He had no idea how his family had come to be in possession of the documents. Many were subsequently published as a historiography, and the documents were deposited with the Kyoto City Historical Archive. As in the case of neighbourhood *Shimohonnōjimaie-Chō*, there is no evidence that neighbourhood members discussed the idea of transferring the public documents to the Archive.

### G Neighbourhood *Kanegae-Chō* 金換町

Since neighbourhood *Kanegae-Chō* had no assembly house records—together with the equipment for the Jizōbon festival 地藏盆—were passed between the neighbourhood officers in rotation. There are very few old documents remaining for this reason, and it is possible that neighbourhood rules were never drawn up here. More recently, when student residences were built within the neighbourhood, regulations were produced to clarify neighbourhood conventions for the benefit of new residents.

By looking at the circumstances under which rules have been drawn up in recent years in *Kanegae-Chō* and elsewhere, we can get some idea of the origins of the old neighbourhood rules. We may also learn why so many sets of neighbourhood rules contained provisions of type (a) (cited above) relating to neighbourhood members. Neighbourhood rules continue to be created to this day, even if they are no longer known as such. It is difficult to assess these modern-day rules comprehensively, so the afore-mentioned compendium of rules, namely *Kyōto chō shikimoku shūsei*, only contains those produced before 1897, and thus does not contain the rules from neighbourhood *Kanegae-Chō*. It is important to bear this in mind when looking at the map in Figure 1 above.

As I have shown above, the current circumstances of each neighbourhood and its set of rules varies greatly across Kyoto. Until some time ago, awareness amongst the neighbourhood communities was key to the preservation of their documents and it was typically at the wishes of the neighbourhood that documents were donated to or deposited with the Kyoto City Historical Archive or other public institutions. More recently, though, more and more documents are being donated by the individual person in charge of storing the documents

without any prior consultation within the neighbourhood. The sense that these are public documents is fading.

Whether or not extant *chō shikimoku* are unearthed (as shown in Figure 1) is also dictated by the level of research that has been carried out in a given area. Many neighbourhood rules have been discovered in the area from Sanjō street 三条通 to Shijō street 四条通, for example, which is partly because people take a keen interest in the Gion festival 祇園祭; as a result, the neighbourhoods that supply *yamahoko* 山鉾 floats for the festival procession have been thoroughly researched. There is still a great deal of interest in the Gion festival, and historical research is still being conducted alongside research in various other fields including sociology and anthropology. The festival is well known even outside of Japan, but Gion is just one of many festivals held within the city of Kyoto, and the neighbourhoods that have been most thoroughly researched are located within just one quarter of the central city.

Returning to the topic of this essay, the Gion festival is characterized by the fact that the magnificent *yamahoko* floats are supplied by individual neighbourhoods. The Araretenjin-yama 霰天神山 float is supplied by *Tenjinyama-Chō* neighbourhood and kept in the neighbourhood assembly house. In this sense, the festival floats are public neighbourhood property much the same as public documents, and are usually kept together with the public documents in the assembly house. Gion is not the only festival of its kind in the city of Kyoto. Each neighbourhood is responsible for constructing spear-like ceremonial poles (*kenboko* 剣鉾) that are carried at the of Imamiya-sai and Imahie-sai festivals and at the Kasuga festival that takes place at Saiin shrine on the outskirts of the city. The preservation of the poles is one of the neighbourhood's major responsibilities.

In areas where few *chō shikimoku* have yet to be discovered, it is quite possible that more may surface if the areas are subject to the same level of research as the Gion festival region. Kyoto escaped large scale air raids during World War II and has seen few large scale disasters like the Great Kantō Earthquake or the Great East Japan Earthquake, so there are probably countless undiscovered documents in the city. These public documents may have got scattered and lost by now, but rather than being destroyed by war or disaster, it is more likely that they would have simply been thrown away or disposed of by neighbourhood members unaware of their public, historical import. The development of urban areas and decline in traditional industries in recent years has led to an outflow of old established families from the area, which has left these public documents in a precarious situation.

#### 4. Neighbourhoods since the Meiji Restoration

Empirical research into neighbourhood is impossible once the public documents have been lost, so above, I introduced the current status of documents as evidence of neighbourhood management in the city of Kyoto during the Edo period.

In this section, I examine modern Kyoto since the Meiji Restoration, which is the main topic of this essay.

**(1) The revision of *chō gumi* (neighbourhood groupings) and the formation of school districts**

Following the Meiji Restoration, the offices of the shogunate's military governor in Kyoto and the town magistrate were abolished, and responsibility for maintaining public order fell to the individual domains. The people of the neighbourhood retained autonomy over civic life. The neighbourhood framework that had been in place since the middle ages was preserved after the Meiji Restoration and persists until the present day. This is one explanation for how neighbourhood documents have been preserved and passed down through the generations.

In the Edo period, larger districts called *chō gumi* or neighbourhood groupings were formed from multiple neighbourhoods. The different neighbourhood groupings evolved in differing historical circumstances from the middle ages onwards so they varied in size and scope, but few isolated enclaves remained. In some quarters, there was insistence on lineage or social standing, with old neighbourhoods only banding together with other old neighbourhood. When Kyoto Prefecture came into being after the Meiji Restoration, the government decided it was necessary to rearrange these *chō gumi* groupings in order to establish the new administration, and the groupings were reorganized on two separate occasions. In January 1869, the city of Kyoto was subdivided into sixty five neighborhood groupings of standard size and population that incorporated over 1700 neighborhoods. Figure 2 shows the process of reorganization in one grouping, called Shimogyō Sanbangumi 下京三番組.<sup>3</sup>

The Shimogyō Sanbangumi or Grouping Three from Shimogyō ward was finally consolidated in 1869 as shown in diagram ③ in Figure 2, and was located at the center of Kyoto's economic zone, bordered by the streets of Karasuma-dōri 烏丸通 to the east, Nishinotōin-dōri 西洞院通 to the west, Sanjō-dōri to the north, and Shijō-dōri to the south. As shown in diagram ①, there was a complex network of neighborhood groupings in the region during the Edo period; this complexity was not solved by the rearrangement undertaken in the first year of the Meiji period (1868), but was eliminated by the rearrangement undertaken the following year (1869). There were issues with the old system of groupings, and the new system was ushered in within less than a year of the Meiji Restoration, but not without resistance from neighborhood residents who were used to the old conventions.

These newly formed neighbourhood groupings constituted the new elementary school districts. Kyoto was the first place in the country to establish an elementary school system,

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<sup>3</sup> The volume in question is Kyōto Shi Shiseishi Hensan Inkaei ed., *Kyōto shiseishi (vol. 1)*, Kyōto Shi, 2009, p. 59.

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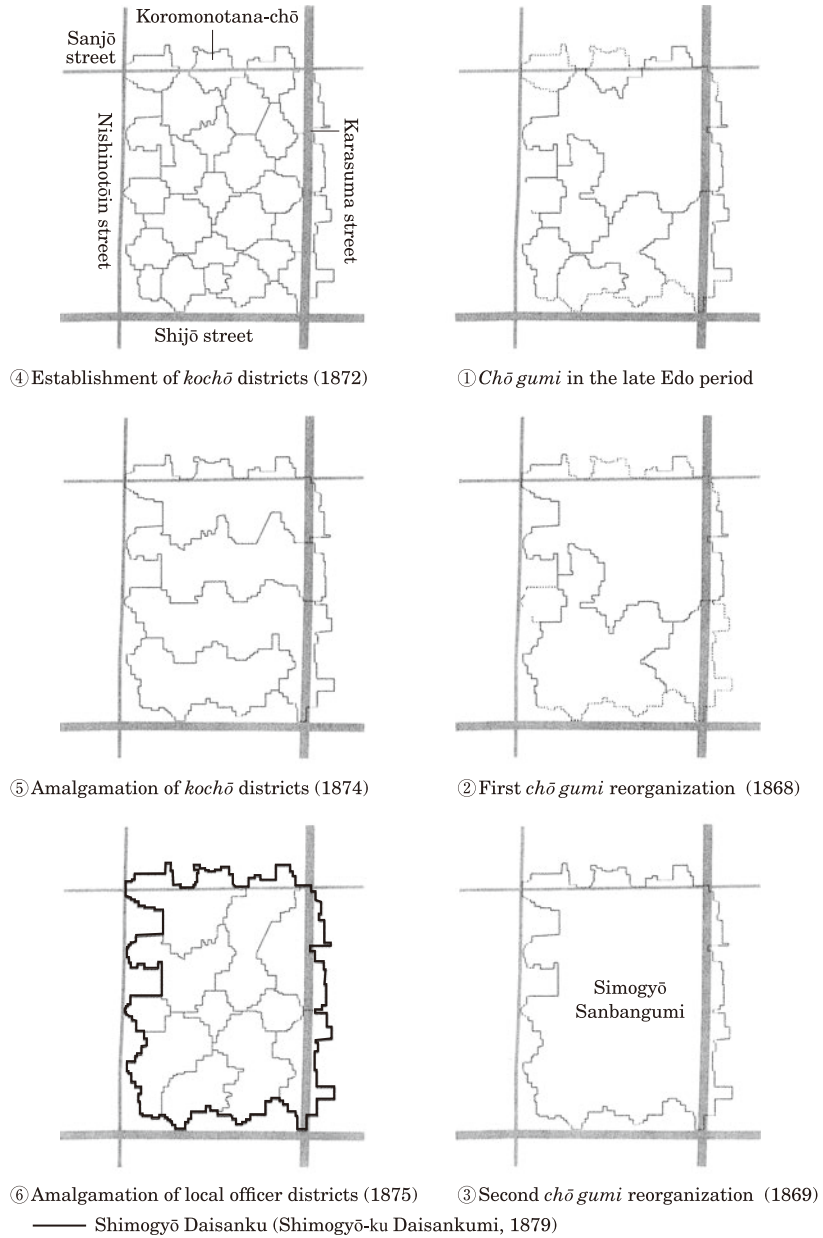


Figure 2 Chōgumi and kochō districts

and this was only made possible by the fact that education was deeply ingrained in neighbourhood residents. This in turn was a consequence of the private schools and *terakoya* 寺子屋 elementary schools that had existed since the Edo period. It was easy to obtain funding for the schools since neighbourhood residents were still active within the neighbourhood unit; and the administrative districts had been standardized through the rearrangement of the neighbourhood groupings.

In 1872, a new household register (*koseki* 戸籍) system was introduced and a new local officer (*kochō* 戸長) was established in each district. In the city of Kyoto, these local officers were stationed within the neighbourhood units, with more than twenty such neighbourhoods situated in the school district of Shimogyō Daisanku 下京第三区, as the afore-mentioned Shimogyō Sanbangumi 下京三番組 was renamed that year. (See diagram ④ in Figure 2). This complex system required a staggering 1700 people in the role of local officers across the city of Kyoto, so there was a reorganization in 1874 and again in 1875; it was a process of trial and error. The Law for Reorganization of Counties, Wards, Neighbourhoods, and Villages (*Gun ku chō son hensei hō*) was passed in 1879, and in this year a single local officer was stationed in Shimogyō-Ku Daisankumi 下京区第三組 (the new name for Shimogyō-Ku Daisanku). The number of officers employed was thus reduced from one per neighbourhood 1872 to one per neighbourhood grouping in 1879. This meant that there was one local officer per school district, and the local officers' headquarters also came to be located within elementary schools. It has often been noted that the school districts in Kyoto are highly autonomous units, and it was this process by which school district activity was established.

## (2) Renaming the neighbourhood representative

The representative of the neighbourhood was known by the neighbourhood elder during the Edo period, but in 1872, many of these elders were re-appointed as the local officers known as *kochō*. Thus, in many neighbourhoods the title of elder fell out of use, and the representative came to be known as the local officer or *kochō*. (These years are known as the age of the neighborhood local officer.)

Over the next few years, the local officer *kochō* districts were amalgamated so that there was no longer one officer in each neighbourhood. Nevertheless, the title of elder did not come back into use, and the representative came to be known by the title of representative or *sōdai* 総代 in most neighbourhoods. (These years are known as the age of the neighbourhood representative.) The neighbourhoods thus persisted with tenacity following the Meiji Restoration, and maintained their autonomous activity despite the annual changes to their administrative position and to the title of their representatives. In these years, the *chō* neighbourhoods were supposedly no longer responsible for official duties, such as administering the household register, and their role became voluntary in nature. But in years with a diminished administrative role, many tasks were in fact entrusted to the neighbourhood, and the

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neighbourhood representative or *chō sōdai* was thus responsible for such everyday duties as collecting taxes, as well as sanitation during infectious disease epidemics.<sup>4</sup>

As the neighbourhoods assumed a more voluntary nature, they gradually relinquished responsibility over administrative affairs. This was inconvenient for the city of Kyoto, which was keen to establish a special role for the neighbourhoods and so in 1897 pressed for the establishment of *kōdō kumiai* 共同組合 or local residents' unions through a resolution of the city assembly (*shikai* 市会). This urged the establishment of local residents' unions within the neighborhood units. Local residents' unions were created in many neighborhoods as a result, but the *chō sōdai* or neighborhood representative held the post of local residents' union boss (*kōdō kumichō* 共同組長) concurrently, which meant there was no actual change to neighbourhood activities. Local residents' unions were not established in every single neighbourhood, but federations of unions were created within the school districts, which were to serve as a point of contact with the administration.<sup>5</sup>

Many of Japan's cities lacked the organization and tradition of self-rule as seen in the neighbourhoods of Kyoto. In some cities, responsibility for systemizing neighbourhoods lay with associations charged with coordinating activities by the Japanese Red Cross or sanitation organizations. In light of this, the Kyoto local residents' unions (*kōdō kumiai*) attracted attention for their comprehensive coverage of almost the whole city. As noted above, though, these unions were not responsible for neighbourhood autonomy, which had existed before they ever came into being. Thus the establishment of the local residents' unions was a somewhat superfluous addition.

In 1940 as the war intensified, the central government was keen to impose rationing and mobilization throughout the nation. Using the neighbourhood network in Kyoto as a model, they established a nationwide system of *chōnaikai* 町内会, and *burakukai* 部落会 to assist the administration. These neighbourhood associations now encompassed whole cities that had previously lacked any kind of neighbourhood organizations. In Kyoto, though, the traditions of self-rule hindered wartime mobilization so the local residents' unions were temporarily disbanded and special neighbourhood associations *chōnaikai* established in their place. There was no change to the neighbourhoods themselves, but the purpose of maintaining the neighbourhood changed entirely. The neighbourhood representative came to be known as the neighbourhood association head (*chōnaikai chō* 町内会長).

After the war, the neighbourhood associations were strongly linked to the memory of

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<sup>4</sup> Kobayashi, "Kyōto no chō soshiki no saihentō kōkyōteki jigyō," Itō Yukio ed., *Kindai Kyōto no kaizō*, Minerva Shobō, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> See Kyōto Shi Shiseishi Hensan Inkaï ed., *Kyōto shiseishi (vol. 1)*, Kyōto Shi, 2009, pp. 565–566, Ueda Tadaichi, "Kindai ni okeru toshi chōnai no tenkai katei," in Iwasaki Nobuhiko et al ed., *Chōnai kai no kenkyū*, Ocha no Mizu Shobō, 1989.



wartime mobilization, and thus they were disbanded by GHQ. They were disbanded in Kyoto, too, and a liaison officer was appointed to communicate between the citizens and the city administration. The original purpose of disbanding the neighbourhood associations was to negate the enforced systemization of residents rather than to negate the autonomous and independent management of the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood organizations gradually revived under such names as *Gyōji hozon kai* 行事保存会 (Association for the Preservation of Ceremonial Events) and *Shinboku kai* 親睦会 (Friendship Association) to organize such events as field days and the Jizōbon festival, and these have survived to the present day. In the neighbourhood where I live, the representative is known as president or *kaichō* 会長, and the president also holds the post of city government liaison officer. We also have an accountant, an auditor, representatives responsible for the promotion of physical training, for the protection and guidance of young people, for traffic safety, for health, for disaster prevention, and for taking care of children's palanquin (子供みこし) deployed in local shrine festivals. Field days within the school district are organized mainly by the representative for the promotion of physical training.

### **To conclude**

In the present day, neighborhoods continue to organize the Gion festival and preserve the old public documentation from within the neighborhood, and these activities demonstrate that activity by the neighborhood as a single unit dates back to the end of the middle ages. One could point out for instance, that Naginataboko-Chō 長刀鉾町 (the neighbourhood that provides the Naginata hoko float for the Gion festival) has survived within the very same boundaries since the end of the middle ages. But the real state of affairs has changed through the ages. It is particularly difficult to comprehend the changes that took place after the Meiji Restoration due to the dizzying pace of change. I have attempted to describe this process as accurately as possible in this paper.

Post-war research of the neighbourhood has offered very different interpretations. Research conducted shortly after the war emphasized the outdated conventions and shackles imposed by the neighbourhood, with management by land owners seen as 'rules'. This may have been partly true, since the stipulations excluding persons of certain social status and occupations that appear from the Edo period indicate a function long played by the neighbourhood. However, as researchers started to focus more on festivals and relief during times of natural disaster, neighbourhoods were increasingly seen as places of mutual assistance in an urban society where individuals were divided, and poverty and loneliness rife. This also contains a certain truth.

As I mentioned right at the outset, the residents' groups that are currently working assiduously on town revitalisation tend to emphasize autonomy and mutual assistance in



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an attempt to understand the history of their neighbourhoods. However, these groups are looking for unity in the form of a school district, a street or a neighbourhood rather than the neighbourhood. These ventures look set to continue, so no doubt the form they take will undergo further changes over time.

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