

## From the Traditional City to the Modern City: Based on Studies of Urban Regional Societies in 19th Century Osaka

Ashita SAGA\*

Keywords: traditional city, foreigner settlement, brothel, mint bureau, urban lower-class society

### Explanatory Note

This manuscript, *From the Traditional City to the Modern City*, is based on a report made by the author at the “*Nicchū Ryōgoku no Dentō Toshi to Shimin Seikatsu* (Traditional Cities of Japan and China, and the Lives of their Urban Residents)” Symposium co-hosted by Shanghai Normal University’s *Chūgoku Kindai Shakai Kenkyū Center* (Research Center for Modern Chinese Society) and the Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences at Osaka City University. The symposium was held at Shanghai Normal University on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The report has been partly modified for publication in this journal.

In recent years, it has become customary in research on Japanese urban history to call the city that existed in the hierarchical society before the arrival of capitalization, the “Traditional City.” This was a concept put forth by such people as Nobuyuki Yoshida and Tsuyoshi Ito (refer to *Dentō Toshi* [*The Traditional City*] vol. 1-4 by Nobuyuki Yoshida and Tsuyoshi Ito, University of Tokyo Press, 2010). According to this, the modern city was born in the North American Continent in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and was an urban typology that spread throughout the world along with the capitalist world system based on mass production and consumption. On the other hand, as this modern city spread throughout the world, the cities that had until then been developing a unique society and culture came to rapidly dissolve. In other words, modernization was a process in which unique traditional cities, fostered by traditional societies, changed into uniform and standardized modern cities; it is thus an important issue for modern urban history research to analyze how historic characteristics and social contradictions can be seen in this process.

The author has taken the abovementioned issue raised by Yoshida and others and has developed this along research on Osaka in the shift from early modern to modern times. In it, the author has striven not to lump the megalopolis of Osaka into a single monotonous and *nopperabō* (a no-face ghost) society, but to focus on the regional communities and diverse social groups that formed inside and outside it and to clarify the interior structure and mutual relationships that formed within it. The manuscript, *From the Traditional City to the Modern City*, takes three to four such example communities that experienced a characteristic change in the process of modernization and were located at the peripheries of urban Osaka in the early Meiji period; it elucidates the social relationships in detail and explains the characteristics of their transformation. It is an ambitious piece that attempts to not only analyze the foreign settlements and brothels, governmental factories, and slums from the perspective of a social history analysis on urban spaces, but to also raise questions in various fields of history: the problems of prostitution, factory society, and urban lower-class society.

Lastly, refer to the author’s work entitled, *Kindai Ōsaka no Toshi Shakai Kōzō* (*The Urban Social Structure of Modern Osaka*) (Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha Ltd., 2007), for more details about the historic evidence used for this manuscript.

### Introduction

Bearing in mind the currently progressing research on modern Osaka’s urban social history, the following five perspectives merit attention when examining urban society in the Meiji period (1868-1912):

- 1) A focus on the shift/transformation from the traditional city to the modern city
- 2) An analysis of the social and spatial structures of regions in Osaka specifically using illustrated documents
- 3) A clarification of the forms of social groups (proprietors, regional communities, etc.) in the city

\* Litt.D. Associate Professor, Department of Japanese History, Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences, Osaka City University  
3-3-138 Sugimoto, Sumiyoshi-ku, Osaka-shi, 558-8585 Japan  
a-saga@lit.osaka-cu.ac.jp



- 4) An analysis of “urban regional societies” formed in standardized units inside the inner city
- 5) A multifaceted/overall understanding of urban society that, while based on ownership and production/distribution, stretches into consumer life and culture

Keeping in consideration the abovementioned points, this paper will attempt to shed light on the shift of the Osaka megalopolis from a traditional city to a modern city by examining in detail some of the urban regional societies (see Figure 1) that constituted Osaka in the Meiji period.

The following are the two specific themes of this paper: i) to illustrate the traditional urban society of Meiji period Osaka, focusing on the diverse and unique regional societies that composed it and ii) to examine the shift that occurred due to modernization and the transition to capitalism by giving examples that more conspicuously illustrate the change away from the traditional city and to look at the change in people’s lifestyles and in the regional societies that constituted the city of Osaka. The regions examined here are the following: i) the society of the Kawaguchi Settlement and its surroundings; ii) one of its components, the Matsushima Yūkaku (Matsushima Red-light District or the Matsushima Brothel); iii) the Mint Bureau and its factory society; and iv) the urban lower-class society of Osaka called Nagamachi.



Source: *Osaka Chizu (Map of Osaka)*, the Survey Department of the Staff Headquarters of the Imperial Japanese Army, 1886.

**Figure 1:** The urban regions relevant to this paper.



## 1. The Kawaguchi Settlement and Surrounding Society

First, there will be an examination of the Kawaguchi Settlement founded in 1868 (the first year of the Meiji period). These settlements were places of residence built for foreigners engaged in diplomacy or trade and were located (apart from Osaka) in port cities established in Yokohama, Nagasaki, Hakodate, Kobe, and open markets (markets opened to foreigners) in Tokyo. The Kawaguchi District, where Osaka's settlement was founded, was located between the Aji and the Kizu rivers, to the southwest of the western edge of Nakanoshima. It was an urban district with a highly dense agglomeration of diverse elements such as the Settlement and its associated facilities as well as the Osaka Prefectural Government. In the early Meiji period, it is thought to have formed a regional society centering on the Settlement.

### (1) The Social Structure of the Kawaguchi Settlement

First, let us consider the process of the Settlement's establishment. The Ansei era (1854-1860) *Gokakoku Tsūsho Jōyaku* (Five Country Treaty of Commerce) of 1858 was an agreement to open the Edo (current-day Tokyo) and Osaka markets. The date set to launch the open market, January 1<sup>st</sup> 1863, was once delayed but was realized on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1868 (at the same time as the opening of the port in Hyogo); its port was further opened in September of 1868. After this, an auction for a settlement was put into effect, giving rise to the birth of the Kawaguchi Settlement.

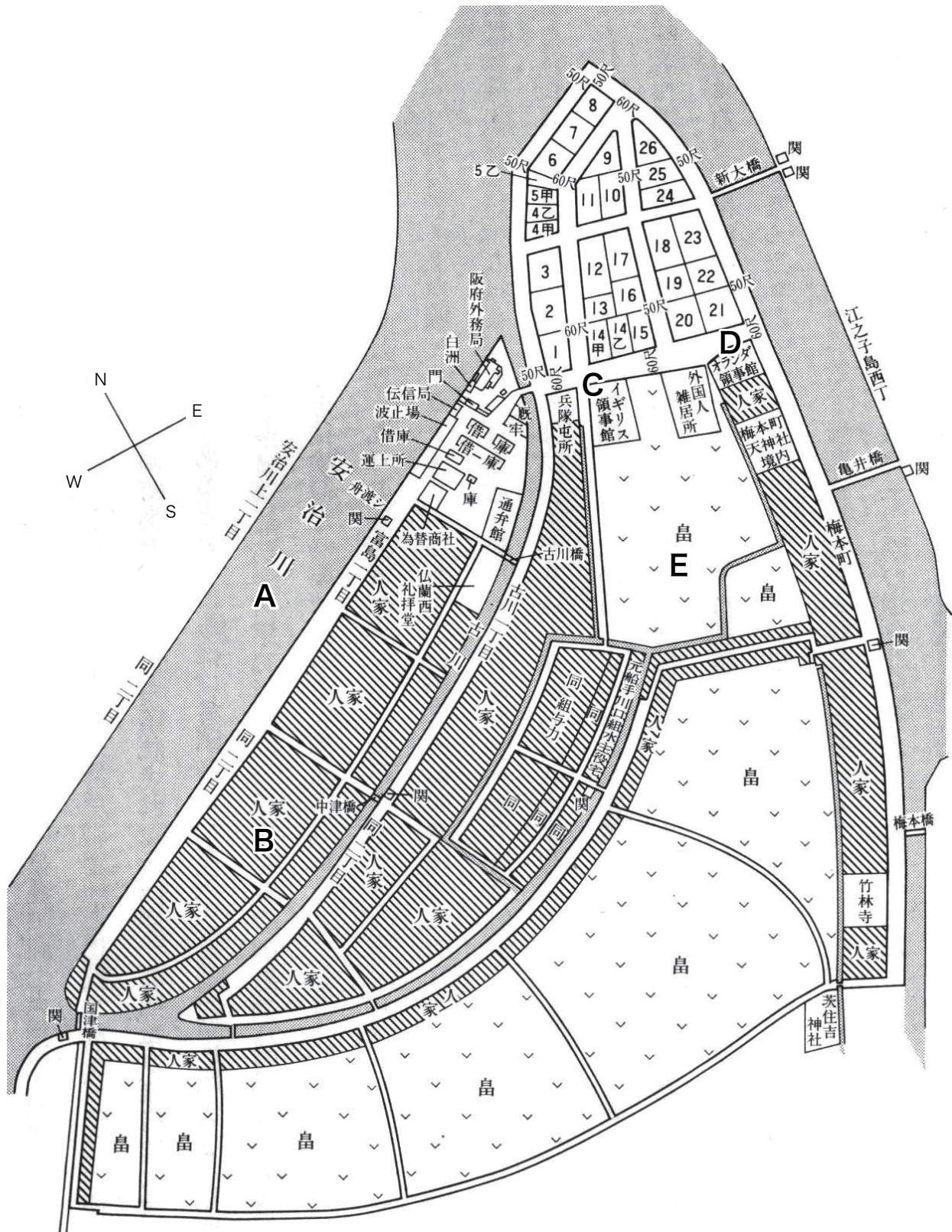
What the foreigners bought at the auction was a perpetual lease and a "land certificate" (property lease certificate) was issued to them by the Japanese government, the landowner. A land tax (land rent) was collected, but the sale was basically unrestricted. The costs for town planning as well as the *Kyōryūchi Tsumikin* (Settlement Funds for further town planning) were managed from the sales value of this perpetual lease.

Examining the spatial structure of the Settlement, it can be seen that it was divided in two. One half was a foreigners' settlement (in the narrow sense of this word). This is the pentagon-shaped area composed of numbered divisions located at the top (northernmost tip) of Figure 2. This was where the foreigners holding the perpetual leases lived, and was land that Japanese people could not lease. The local government here was left to the autonomy of the *Kyōryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council). The other was a mixed residential area consisting of both Japanese and foreigners. As seen in Figure 2, this consists of everything other than the narrow sense of the term "settlement." It was an area neighboring the Settlement, and was land on which foreigners could take up residence as tenants in homes owned by the Japanese. It thus exhibited a mix of foreign and Japanese residents. Later, many Chinese merchants who came to be called *Kawaguchi kashō* (overseas Chinese merchants in Kawaguchi) began to populate this mixed residential area.

Next is an examination of the structure of residents in the early Meiji period. First, based on nationality around the years 1870-71, 13 of the tenants were English, six were American, five were Prussian, three were Dutch, and two were French. On the other hand, in terms of occupations in the year 1872, 27 were involved in commercial firms, 12 were engineers, five were teachers, eight were doctors, two were missionaries, one was a diplomat, and eight were of other occupations (63 in total). In comparison, in 1887, seven were in commercial firms, two were engineers, four were teachers, two were doctors, 67 were missionaries, two were diplomats and two were of other occupations (86 in total). While it was initially expected to be a trading port, and thus those involved in commercial firms originally constituted the majority, after the area near Kawaguchi was deemed unsuitable for trade due to the buildup of sediment from the Yodogawa River, the number of missionaries increased, transforming it to a center for missionary and educational work.

### (2) Self-Government at the Kawaguchi Settlement

A *Kyōryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council) was established at the Kawaguchi Settlement. This began with the enactment of a *Kyōryūchi Tsumikin Seido* (Settlement Fund System) in the *Ōsaka Hyōgo Gaikokujin Kyōryūchi Yakujōsho* (Osaka Hyogo Foreigner's Contract) (August 1868) led by the English who had learned from their failure at Yokohama (because it lacked a financial basis, the settlement's autonomy disintegrated due to the opposition of



- A 安治川 Aji-gawa river
- B 人家 Houses
- C イギリス領事館 British Consul
- D オランダ領事館 Netherlands Consul
- E 畠 Field

Source: *Shinshu Osaka-shi Shi* (History of Osaka: New Edition) Vol. 5

**Figure 2:** The Kawaguchi Settlement around 1870



the various countries' interests). The following two points were established in this contract: i) a *Kyoryūchi Tsumikin* (Settlement Fund) must be established based on a portion of the money paid by the successful bidders at auction for the perpetual lease and a portion of the rent that the bidder (tenant) pays to the Japanese government annually; ii) the management of this fund will be determined through consultation by a *Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council) composed of a three member *Kyoryūnin Gyōji* (Settlement Member Representative Group) representing the tenants, the Osaka Governor, and the ministers of the various countries.

The first election for the *Kyoryūchi Gyōji* (Settlement Member Representative Group) was held on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1868, and the first *Ōsaka Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Osaka Settlement Council) was held on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1869 at the Dutch Consulate.

Until the final council held in July of 1899, a total of 126 councils were held. The matters considered by the Council ranged widely from the maintenance of roads and sewage within the Settlement, to the issues of fire prevention, safety and hygiene, maintenance and control of cemeteries, parks, and other facilities, to the processing of complaints by the residents, and the operation of funds, etc. This Council discussed issues that dealt with the overall government at the Settlement, and was an extremely important organization in the maintenance of autonomy between the foreign consuls and the Settlements' residents.

What follows is an examination of fire prevention and police patrol as examples that demonstrate this autonomy well.

First looking at fire prevention, the fire brigade at the Settlement began with the purchase of fire-fighting equipment from England by the *Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council) in 1874. A residents' meeting for the establishment of a fire brigade was held, and in 1875 the *Kyoryūchi Shōbōtai* (Settlement Fire Brigade) was established, after which fire-fighting activities were undertaken by the Settlement's own fire brigade. Because the city of Osaka was not yet established at the time, and because the *Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council) was formally named the "Osaka Foreign Settlement Municipal Council Meeting," the official name of the fire brigade became the "Osaka Municipal Fire Brigade."

On the other hand, in terms of patrol in the Settlement, Osaka Prefecture's *Fuheitai* (Osaka Government Soldiers) were initially responsible for the patrol, however a *Keisatsu Inkaï* (Board of Police Commissioners) was established by the *Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council) in 1869, and by the following year, 1870, a police administrator called the *chiban* was assigned, the first employee being Japanese. However, after 1874, the office was assumed by an Englishman after which this continued until the Settlement's abolition (1897).

As can be seen above, in the Settlement, based on the consular jurisdiction guaranteed to the foreigners by the Treaty of Commerce signed by Japan and Western nations, the *Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council) controlled the policing rights as well as fire-fighting authority; and while operating under the consent of Osaka Prefecture, an independent police organization and fire brigade were maintained.

### (3) The Settlement and Related Facilities

The Settlement did not exist solely on its own. Through the development of the Settlement in Kawaguchi, many related facilities and functions were developed alongside it.

First, there was the *Gaikokujin Bochi* (foreign cemeteries in Japan). Because the deaths of many foreigners were expected through the development of a Settlement, a foreign cemetery was established in Osaka as well. This cemetery was established in Zuikenyama (Namiyokeyama) located in Ikeyama Nitta. More than 1,810 *tsubo*<sup>1</sup> (5,980 sq. meters) were lent by the Japanese government to the foreigners, with the Settlement residents bearing the costs of cleaning and repair. In 1881, the *Gaikokujin Bochi Kisoku* (Foreign Cemetery Regulations) were enacted by the *Kyoryūchi Kaigi* (Settlement Council), assigning maintenance (cleaning, repair, etc.) as the responsibility of Osaka Prefecture and making foreigners responsible for paying the *boketsu ryō* (grave charges). After the Settlement's abolition in 1899, these foreign graves were relocated to the Abeno Graveyard and then transferred to the city of Osaka's *Hattori Reien* (located in the satellite city of Toyonaka in the suburbs of Northern Osaka City) in 1960 after

1. A *tsubo* is a pre-modern Japanese unit of area equal to approximately 3.31 square meters.

the Second World War. Forty-eight graves still remain there today.

Hotels called *gaikokujin shishukusho* (foreigner lodgings) were also built. In 1868, Kusano Jōkichi, the owner of a Western-style restaurant in Nagasaki, established a foreigner lodging called Jiyutei Hotel in the mixed residential area of Umemotochō, beginning his business as a hotel accompanied by a restaurant. In 1871, in another mixed residential district called Yorikichō, a Frenchman named Raymond opened his Osaka Hotel (this was later transferred to the Kawaguchi Settlement in 1874, then to Kobe in 1876). Of these, the Jiyutei Hotel was renamed the Osaka Hotel (written in *kanji*, or Chinese symbolic characters, while with Raymond's Osaka Hotel, *Osaka* was in *katakana*, a Japanese phonetic alphabet), and became one of the most formal Western-style hotels in Osaka.

A cattle slaughterhouse was also built with the advent of meat eating habits. Government land in Ishida Nitta along the coast of the Aji River was set off for a cattle slaughterhouse, and 360 *tsubo* (1,200 sq. meters) from the Japanese government to the English were divided in three portions of 120 *tsubo* (400 sq. meters) each, which were then leased out.

The Matsushima Yūkaku (the Matsushima Brothel) was also established for foreigners (which will be examined in detail in Chapter 2, Section (4)).

As can be seen in the abovementioned text, the Kawaguchi Settlement – in which foreigners had complete control in a self-government based on an unequal treaty – was not only a very singular district in itself but was also something of a magnetic pole able to exert a great amount of influence in its regional society by generating various facilities around it. These foreign settlements were dissolved with the consular jurisdiction's abolition in 1899 and the issuance of the *Nichiei Tsushō Kōkai Jōyaku* (Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation) which covered issues such as the approval of mixed residential areas within the city of Osaka. After the Treaty, the site of the Kawaguchi Settlement was incorporated into the city of Osaka for the first time, as part of Kawaguchi-chō. However, even after this, the perpetual lease for foreigners continued to exist individually until 1942, during the Second World War.

## 2. Matsushima Yūkaku (the Matsushima Brothel or the Matsushima Red-light District)

In terms of the Matsushima Yūkaku (hereafter referred to as the Matsushima Brothel) established as an outgrowth from the foreign settlement, the following contents will be examined in detail from two perspectives on the district: i) as a factor of the Settlement society and ii) as a factor associated with the history and transformation of brothels after the Edo period (1603-1868), Japan's Early Modern period.

### (1) The Development of the Social and Spatial Structure of the Matsushima Brothel

In July of 1867, Takenaka Shibata, then a *machi-bugyō* (town magistrate) of Osaka, proposed a brothel for foreigners to the shogun's council of elders as one of the necessary facilities accompanying the development of the Settlement. This was approved by the Edo shogunate. However, the Meiji government was organized in January of 1868, Osaka prefecture was founded in June, and the Kawaguchi Unjo-sho (Customs Office) was also established. After the founding of the Settlement in September, preparations for a new brothel district were begun by the Unjo-sho by November. By January of the following year, the purchase of land and eviction of some of the residents were conducted at a sudden rapid pace. It is said there was some resistance from the local residents at this time. In January of 1869, the development site of Terashima was renamed Matsushima-chō, and an official order was proclaimed by the Osaka government in February that "a brothel has been established and [they were] now calling for businesses." The establishment of this new brothel for foreigners was thus begun by the shogunate and then succeeded by the Meiji government to be developed at a rapid pace.

The new brothel thus established had the following characteristics, which had never been seen in brothels in Osaka before that time:

- 1) As a facility established in association to the Kawaguchi Settlement, it was a *gomen yūjomachi* (an au-

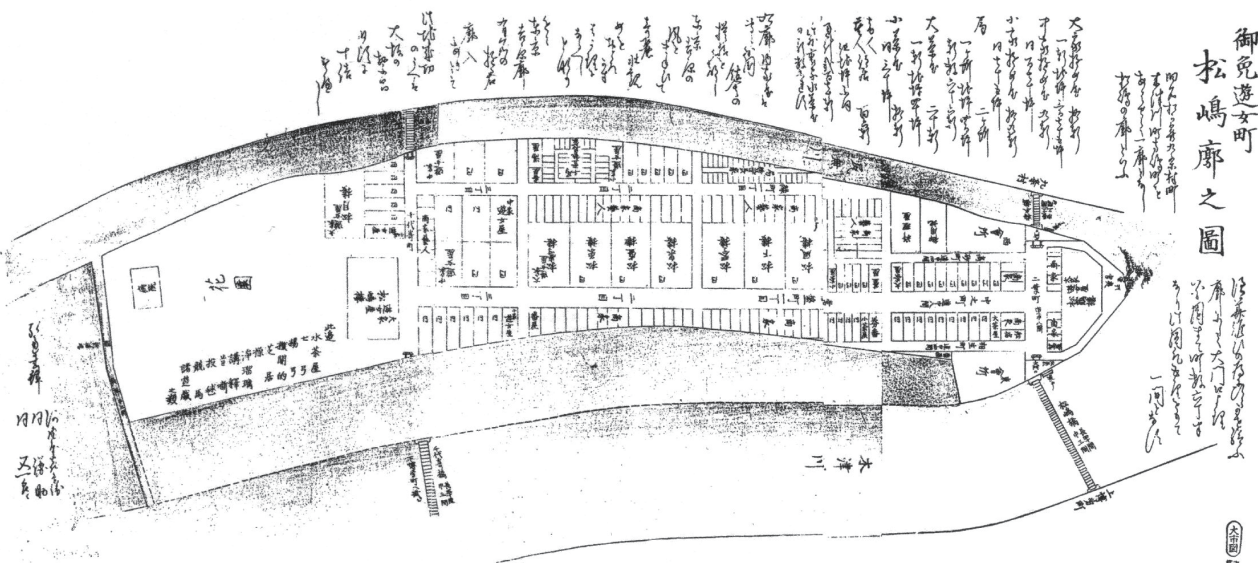
thorized brothel) built on government-held land controlled by the Foreign Affairs Bureau (reorganized Kawaguchi Unjo-sho [Customs], later renamed the Foreign Affairs Bureau);

- 2) It had as its purpose the provision of sexual services to foreign seamen and workers as well as the prevention of “obscene behavior” between foreign men and common Japanese women; and,
- 3) It adopted the business style of “getting brothels from all places, beginning with *keiseimachi* (an authorized brothel for the Japanese), to open up their branches.”

The three points listed above were all characteristics unique to the Matsushima Brothel – a brothel annexed to the Settlement.

Next, let us examine the spatial structure of the Brothel from the illustration entitled *Gomen Yūjomachi Matsushima Kuruwanozu* (Illustration of the Government Authorized Matsushima Brothel) (Figure 3). This is an illustration made before the Brothel was actually constructed, created and published based on the construction plan. Thus not everything reflects the truth, but the plan behind the kind of brothel the Foreign Affairs Bureau had intended to build can be read. The following points can be noted as its characteristics:

- 1) The three pre-existing cities, Kizugawa-chō, Kujōmura, and Terajima-machi, located to the east of the region known as Terashima were not illustrated here because they were designated to be outside the bounds of the Brothel.
- 2) Four new bridges were constructed on this island-shaped land containing the Brothel. From the bridge to the entrance of the Brothel was the front gate; near the northern entrance were two meeting places on the east and west known as *goyōchi*, or land belonging to the Foreign Affairs Bureau.
- 3) The Brothel known as Shōkakurō can also be seen, noted as Otategashi in the historical material; it was built by the government and lent to a prostitution agency.
- 4) In terms of the structure of brothel operations, these were divided by business type and rank into: areas of brothels separated into *taika* (large-sized houses), *chūka* (mid-sized houses), *shōka* (small-sized houses), and *tsubone* (*tsubone* was a *nagaya* [or row house] style brothel where one prostitute was assigned to each room of the *nagaya* to take customers); and areas of *chaya* (teahouses) (businesses that mediate between customers and relatively high-ranking prostitutes) separated into large and small-



Note: This map is currently possessed by Osaka Municipal Library.

**Figure 3:** *Gomen Yujomachi Matsushima Kuruwanozu* 御免遊女町松嶋廓之図  
(Illustration of the Government Authorized Matsushima Brothel) (1868)

sized *chaya*, and other businesses, entertainers, and restaurants known as *mizu-chaya*.

- 5) In the plaza labeled Hanazono on the southern side plans for attractions of temporary entertainment/amusement facilities such as *dokyu* (an amusement shop where one aims an arrow at a target), theaters, and *mizu-chaya* (restaurants that offer cheap food and drinks) can be seen.

As can be noted above, many points that characterize the Matsushima Brothel, beginning with its basic character as a *gomen yūjochō* (brothel authorized by the government), can be read from its spatial plan as well.

## (2) The Matsushima Brothel and the History of Brothels in Osaka

The Matsushima Brothel was not only a facility adjoining the Settlement, but became the cornerstone of the prostitution regulations for the various brothels located in Osaka after the Edo period. There were two types of brothels in Osaka in the Edo period: Shinmachi Yūkaku (Shinmachi Brothel), or the authorized brothel (one location); and the *shimabasho* posing as teahouses or bathhouses but operating as houses of prostitution with tacit approval (more than 40 locations). While authorized brothels were called *yūjoya* and the prostitutes working there were known as *yūjo* (written with the characters for “play” and “woman”), prostitutes working in the tacitly approved teahouses and bathhouses of the *shimabasho* were called *chatate-onna* or *kamiarai-onna* (roughly translated into tea-serving women and hair-washing women, respectively). These prostitutes were daughters sold by their parents to mediators in exchange for their debts, and the girls were tied down to indentured servitude as prostitutes on *nenki-hōkō* (apprenticeship) under those who ran the establishment.

In October of 1872, four years after the Meiji Restoration, the Meiji government issued the *Dajōkan Fukoku* (Proclamations by the Grand Council of State) prohibiting human trafficking (the so-called *geigi* [*geisha*] or *shogi* [prostitute] abolishment act), prohibiting the bondage of persons as *geigi* (*geisha*) or *shogi* (prostitutes), as had been traditionally upheld under the name of apprenticeship or adoption. *Geigi* refers to women called *geisha*, who entertained guests using performances centered on musical pieces, and *shogi* refers to the traditional prostitute. However, this proclamation did not prohibit the business of prostitution itself. Thus, a new business regulation issued by the Osaka government after this proclamation was issued acknowledged the *geigi/shogi* business as long as the women themselves practiced it of their own will, and not under the captivity of the brothels that indentured them to the business of prostitution. In other words, these women were acknowledged as running the independent business of prostitution and entertainment. On the one hand, traditional brothels were able to survive by changing themselves, pro forma, to a rental facility that rented space out to the *geisha* or prostitute. The prostitution abolition regulation is said to have initially wrought immense confusion to brothels across the region, but the aforementioned swift action taken (issuance of the business regulation) by the Osaka government should be noted.

In actuality, since a year or so before that, there had been a movement in Osaka to preserve five to six large-scale brothels including the Matsushima and Shinmachi Brothels and to organize and merge the other small tacitly approved brothels into the Matsushima Brothel. This plan had been construed by the Foreign Affairs Bureau as a measure to stimulate business for the Matsushima Brothel and was part of the policies implemented by the Osaka government. Thus, the Osaka government remained unruffled by the passing of the *geigi/shogi* abolition act and simply designated Shinmachi, Matsushima, Dōtonbori, Sonezaki, Horie, and Shinbori as the six approved rental facilities for such businesses, thereby limiting brothels to the locations of existent large-scale ones and collecting the *geigi* and *shogi* into these areas.

The abovementioned process shows how the plan to stimulate business for the Matsushima Brothel, the “government approved” brothel, became the basis for changing the brothel regulations of the Osaka government; it demonstrates how modern prostitution regulations were controlled and put into effect through the assistance of the Matsushima Brothel’s enterprise.

## (3) The Surrounding Areas and the “Air of Tension”

Lastly, the relationship between the Matsushima Brothel and its surroundings will be examined.

If the island-shaped land containing the Brothel can be called the Matsushima Region, Matsushima-machi



located to its east was an area that had already developed as a *machiba* (town area) by the beginning of the Modern era. There were three towns, Kizugawa-chō, Kujōmura-chō, and Terashima-chō, located here, and this was an area where shipwrights and boathouses assembled.

Examining the relationship between the *machiba* (towns) to the east and the newly established Brothel to the west, there was, first of all, objection from the landowners and shipwrights on the eastern side in regards to issues such as the purchase of land for the establishment of a brothel, its accompanying orders of eviction, and the creation of the new bridges (the opposition aspect). On the other hand, along with the creation of the bridges and the discontinuation of the ferry that had theretofore been in operation came the monopoly on the approval of transportation and water-drawing businesses associated with the Brothel by the ferry workers in the eastern towns who had lost their jobs and had implored the Osaka government on this issue (the dependence aspect). It can thus be understood that there was an ambivalent relationship of opposition and dependence between the Brothel on the west and the old *machiba* (towns) on the east. In other words, while the people on the east initially displayed an attitude of opposition/resistance to the construction of the Brothel, when the development became unavoidable, they began to shift towards dependence on the Brothel's business – or perhaps simply could not do otherwise.

Now, let us consider what kind of conclusion this led to, through the results of the elections for the leader in power in the Matsushima Region (including both the Brothel on the west and Matsushima-machi on the east) between approximately 1870 and 1885. After 1872, in the Matsushima Region, like the other regions of Osaka, the *gakku* (school district) was developed, based on the unit for operating a school. The east and the west of this island-shaped land together composed one *gakku*, and a leader called *kuchō* (ward headman) or *kochō* (head of the town or village) was chosen for this unit. Looking at these election results, before 1879 the powerful landowners who inherited their lands from their ancestors in the Edo period and lived in western Matsushima-machi took leadership of the entire Matsushima Region (*gakku*), but after 1879, leadership changed to those who were influential in the Brothel. Gradually, the Brothel side came to control all of the Matsushima Region. This actually also coincides with the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877 (a rebellion in which Saigō Takamori and those of Kagoshima Prefecture instigated an uprising against the Meiji government that was suppressed; at this time, the military headquarters of the Meiji government was located in Osaka), through which the number of military visiting the brothels increased, and the Matsushima Brothel's business flourished. In other words, the power relationship between Matsushima-machi and the Matsushima Brothel, initially begun in an ambiguous form between opposition and dependence, changed into one in which (along with the prosperity of the Brothel's business) the Brothel came to hold hegemony over the entire region.

Considering the abovementioned history of the Matsushima Brothel, the following points may be noted.

First of all, it is possible to understand that, due to the development of the surroundings along with the Settlement's founding, the Matsushima Brothel, initially built as a government-approved brothel, developed its history through the intermingling of various factors such as the policies for brothel regulations and the region's revival, the Brothel's management and the changes in it, and the air of ambivalent tension with the surrounding environment.

Secondly, while the Matsushima Brothel was initially developed as an facility adjoining the Settlement, because the Settlement itself entered a slump in trade (the pier neighboring the Kawaguchi Settlement easily accumulated sediment deposit, making it difficult for large ships to approach alongside the pier; thus, foreigners came to use the Kobe port, and in the 1870s Kawaguchi fell into a state of inactivity as a trading port), as this relationship weakened, the Brothel came to be a cornerstone of brothel regulations of Osaka, thereby gaining independence from the Settlement. In other words, it can be said that the Brothel itself grew to become an independent magnetic pole (i.e. the core of the region's hegemony) that was able to influence its regional society. It is also noteworthy that at this time, those influential in the Brothel controlled the region and also formed the unit of the *gakku* established in the region in the early Meiji period. In the city of Osaka after 1890, the community unit established to fix the elementary school district came to be the basic unit of regional society, becoming the political basis for the municipal government as well. In the case of the Matsushima Brothel, those in the same business collectively lived in the region, composed an influential group within the *gakku*, and controlled the region while fulfilling the task of collecting votes at municipal elections – similar examples can be seen in groups of wholesale dealers in other regions with vast markets (a few

representative examples are the fish market in Zakoba and the fruit and vegetable market in Tenma). The tyrants of the Matsushima Brothel especially, along with controlling the brothels industry in the whole of Osaka, gained a great amount of power by, for instance, being part of the municipal party in power which controlled the municipal government of Osaka between 1890 and 1900. The formation of regional leadership in the Matsushima Brothel as explored in this paper also satisfies this premise of modern Osaka's municipal history.

### 3. The Mint Bureau and the Society of Workmen

Next, this paper will examine the Mint Bureau from the perspective of the “social history of the factory.”

The social history of the factory is an important material to consider when thinking, along concrete examples, of the formation of a social structure unique to modern times, in other words, the relationship between the transition to modernism and capitalism and the changes in urban regional society.

Looking at the relationship between the factory and the formation of an urban region, there were, generally speaking, two types. The first was one in which huge factories asserted hegemony and exerted a great influence on the formation of regional society. The other was one in which, while there was an association with the huge factory, formation of regional society was founded on the accumulation of small to mid-sized factories (the latter was introduced on a full scale in the late Meiji period).

In terms of the huge government-operated factories located in Osaka in the early Meiji period, the *Ōsaka Hōhei Kōshō* (the Osaka Artillery Arsenal, named *Zōheishi* [Weapons Manufacturing Office] in April of 1870, and renamed in October of 1879) and the *Zōheikyoku* (Mint Bureau) (named *Zōheiryō* [the Mint] in February of 1871 and renamed in December of 1877) stand out. In terms of private companies, the *Ōsaka Tekkyōjō* (Osaka Iron Works) in the shipbuilding industry (founded in 1881, located in Nishinari-gun Rokkenya-shinden) and the *Ōsaka Bōseki Kaisha* (the Osaka Cotton Spinning Company) in the cotton spinning industry (founded in 1882, located in Nishinari-gun, Sangenya-mura) were most notable. There were also large numbers of relatively large-scale match-making factories in towns and villages such as in Higashinari-gun, a county neighboring the urban district.

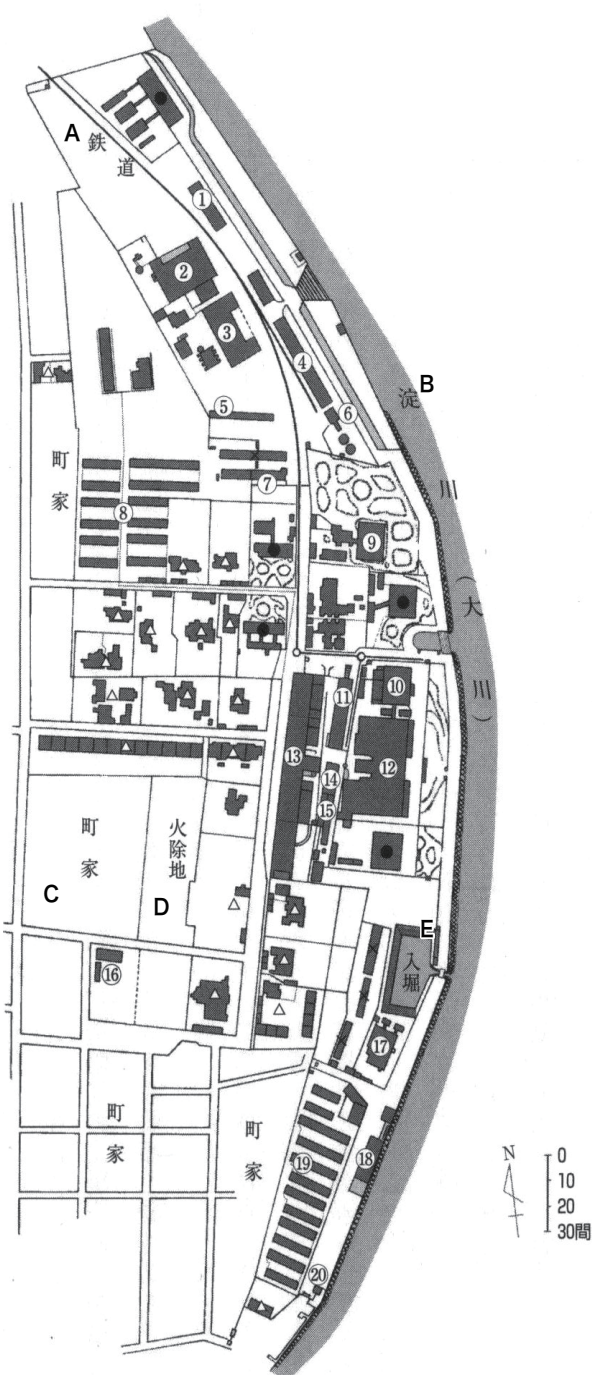
The following section will examine a Mint Bureau for which there remain relatively good primary sources.

#### (1) The Space of the Mint Bureau and its Internal Structure

The following spatial characteristics of the factory can be pointed out, as seen from sources such as the *Zōheiryō Ezu* (Illustration of the Mint) (Figure 4). First of all, the closed character of the factory space should be noted. Because currency was the manufactured product, entry into and exit from the facility was strictly controlled, with workmen even having to show their licenses upon entrance. Secondly, the combination of various workplaces corresponding to the manufacturing process warrants pointing out. In the Mint Bureau, the factory was composed of an assembly of workplaces varying greatly in composition and in the work carried out. Third of all, the comprehensive character of the factory space bears noting. The Mint Bureau included not only the key division of the *Kin-gin-dō Kahei Chūzō* (Gold, Silver, and Copper Currency Minting) for the work of minting itself, but also included industrial facilities for the industrial goods necessary in relation to the factory (sulfuric acid production, coke production, gas production; the complete cycle of the production process), and even included living spaces like the *Nanboku Shokunin Nagaya* (North and South Craftsmen's Row Houses) for the *Oyatoi* (rank of employed) foreign and Japanese officials (production/life = live work all in one).

Next, this paper will examine what kinds of people worked at the Mint Bureau (using the population statistics from around 1871-1877). First, there were the Japanese government officials, approximately 60 bureaucrats from the Ministry of Finance headed by the *Zōheino-gami* (the Japanese head of the Mint Bureau). Next, there were the *Oyatoi* foreigners, more or less 10 foreigners working under Director Thomas William Kinder. In January of 1875, however, most of their contracts failed to be renewed, resulting in their de facto dismissal. Then there were the Japanese workmen. They were the craftsmen (meaning laborers) that dealt with the work of minting in each of the departments (numbering about 150 initially, then growing to about 200 to 300). Finally, there were also attendant





- A 鉄道 Railway  
B 淀川 Yodo-gawa river  
C 町家 Houses  
D 火除地 Fire protection district  
E 入堀 Barge

- ① Kousaku-ba (Workshop)
  - ② Ryusan-shitu (Sulfuric acid production area)
  - ③ Bunseki-sho (Analysis area: a facility where old currency used as material was analyzed)
  - ④ Sekitan-goya (Coal shed)
  - ⑤ Koku-gama (Coke production area)
  - ⑥ Gasu Tou-shitsu (Gas production area for the gas lamp)
  - ⑦ Eizenka Tsume-sho (A station for maintenance/ repair of the building and facilities)
  - ⑧ Kita Shokunin Nagaya (Northern Workmen's Rowhouse)
  - ⑨ Senpu-kan (Western-style building for the reception of VIPs)
  - ⑩ Jigane-kyoku (Facility managing the gold, silver and copper material for currency)
  - ⑪ Seisaku-ba (Production area)
  - ⑫ Kin Gin Kahei Chuzou-ba (Minting area for gold and silver currency)
  - ⑬ Dou Kahei Chuzou-ba (Minting area for copper currency)
  - ⑭ Kaji-shoku ba (Possibly a production area for necessary ironware)
  - ⑮ Chu-tetsu Kikai-ba Saiku-ba (Possibly an area for casting/ manufacturing necessary ironware or machinery and equipment, and for designing currency)
  - ⑯ Yojyou-sho (Hospital for factory staff)
  - ⑰ Shuchou Suitou-ryou (Possibly an office for accounting set here by the Ministry of Finance in Tokyo)
  - ⑱ Shubi Taihei-sha (Barracks for garrison soldiers of the army)
  - ⑲ Minami Shokunin Nagaya (Southern Workmen's Rowhouse)
  - ⑳ Soumon (Main gate)
- △ Kansha (Residence for Japanese officials)  
● Youjin-kan (Residence for foreign officials)  
\* Residence for Oyatoi foreigners  
× Dozou (warehouse) and monoire-goya (storage), etc.

Source: Meiji 6-nen 9-gatsu Aratame Zouheiryō Ezu 明治六年九月改 造幣寮絵図  
(Illustration of the Mint, Surveyed in September of the 6th year of the Meiji Era).

**Figure 4:** The Mint Bureau in 1873

workers necessary for the operation and maintenance of the facility, such as custodians, transportation crew, and janitors (numbering approximately 50) and guards for the Mint Bureau consisting of dispatched army soldiers from the Osaka Garrison stationed at the Osaka Castle (initially numbering about 60, but they were dismissed in 1919).

Of the above, the *Oyatoi* foreigners had a special status based on the *Tōyō Ginkō Yakujōsho* (Agreement between the Japanese Government and the Oriental Bank Corporation) (October 1869), wherein the bank received a mandate from the Japanese government to employ the foreigners, and while the Japanese government paid their salary, the government could not directly interfere in personnel management during the contract term. The Oriental Bank Corporation was an English bank with its main branch located in London; in order to import modern mint-

ing technology, the Japanese government paid \$60,000 over a period of three years as well as 1/1000 of the minted currency as commission to the bank in return for its technology and recommendation of staff members. While the *Zōhei Jimushori Kitei* (Administration of Minting Affairs Regulations) (May 1871) regulated the division of roles between the Japanese and the foreigners, the foreigners were endowed with authoritative roles such as direction or supervision of key divisions in the minting work; furthermore, relations between the authorities on the Japanese side and on the foreigners' side were complex and complicated. In other words, on top of the higher status of the foreigners, the whole of the work had a dual character, with the "two leader" system of the *Zōhei-gami* (Japanese head) and *Zōhei-shuchō* (the head of Minting assigned to the foreigners).

The Meiji government thus executed the *Ryōmu Kaikaku* (Reform of Bureau Affairs) in 1874-1875. On the "proposition" set forth by the government official Endō Kinsuke from the Chōshū area in August of 1874, the Agreement between the Japanese Government and the Oriental Bank Corporation was abolished. By dismissing/reducing the number of foreign officers led by Kinder, Japanese government officials gained control of the work in the various departments. Given this proposal, the government issued a de facto dismissal of Kinder and eight foreigners on the occasion of the contract's expiration in January of 1875. The dual system of administration was brought to an end, and through this, supervision and work management by Japanese government officials was realized. Against the backdrop of this change was also the fact that in every department, Japanese workmen were assimilating the technology with extraordinary rapidity.

## (2) The "Workman Culture" of the Mint Bureau

Next is an examination the performance of the workmen in the Mint Bureau.

First, the following points may be noted in terms of labor organization, the workmen's origins, and the characteristics associated with life in the workmen *nagaya* (row houses):

- 1) Modern/civilized labor management: Treatment was exceedingly civilized; not only was the pay high, but there was a weekly holiday system and a seven-hour work day (except at busy times), medical examinations were conducted by a specially employed doctor, and a *Shokkō-Tsumikin-no-hō* (a regulation concerning funds in the event of an accident, something close to a mutual aid premium) as well as paid sick days, etc.
- 2) Different organizations based on workplace (each workplace was highly independent): Foreigners were initially appointed to head each of the departments, command the workforce, administer technical instruction, and control the rights to the workmen's courses of action, and so in technical terms as well, each of the workplaces maintained a high level of independence.
- 3) The existence of a managerial position called the Supervisor: Although labor management in each of the workplaces was overseen by the *Oyatoi* foreigners, other aspects such as workmen attendance or laziness and life in the workmen *nagaya* (row houses) were overseen by the Supervisor.
- 4) Supply of workmen: Members of the artillery arsenal flowed into and out of the machinery department, and it can be seen that the craftsmen workers who wandered across the nation following the end of the Edo shogunate were at least involved in each of the departments.
- 5) The structure of the each of the departments were as follows: i) the *Oyatoi* foreigner, head of the workforce, ii) under him, the Japanese master craftsman who supervised all the workmen below, iii) apprentice officials (youths) who received direct technical supervision from the foreigners, iv) low-ranking employees, and v) unskilled workers such as the temporarily hired handymen.
- 6) Life in the *shokunin nagaya* (workmen's row house): i) There was a curfew when going outside. The workman himself had to be home by curfew, and there were some restrictions that stated that, for instance, even on days off the workmen would have to return for fire-fighting duties should there be a fire. ii) A *Tsukiban* (monthly shift), or representative of the *nagaya* residents, was appointed per *nagaya* composed of eight to 14 units. iii) Even the family register was managed by the Mint Bureau up to a certain period.



In order to examine this in more detail, the specific profiles of two skilled workers at the Mint Bureau should be noted.

- Ōno Yasaburō (in the copper working department)

Born in 1820 to a family of clockmakers working for the shogunate in Edo, Ōno worked in the production of rulers, protractors, and clocks until being sent abroad by the shogunate as a student to the Netherlands in 1862. There he learned the technology for precision instruments, returning to Japan in 1867 to work as a naval machinery engineer, then in the Engineering Department of the Grand Council of State before working for the Mint Bureau in 1871. At the Mint Bureau, he worked as an engineer in the production of machinery, creating such machinery as the Standard Weights and Measures Machine and the Grandfather Clock (in storage at the Mint Museum). In 1880, using imperial donations received from the Imperial Household Department, he established a clock factory in Kokubunji-mura Hinokuchi (north of the Mint Bureau). This, however, was closed a few years later. Ōno passed away in 1886. The *Zōheikyoku Zaihan Gogatsu Aratame Kanninroku* (The May Records of the Mint Bureau Officials in Osaka) notes “12 person family, nine boys of which six are apprentices, three girls, responsible for machinery, Ōno Yasaburō,” showing that even at the Mint Bureau, he worked in machinery production along with his disciples. At the time, in 1880, he lived in Kita-ku Usuyachō 21-Banchi (a town facing the front gate of the Mint Bureau) and not in the workmen’s row houses. It can thus be believed that he had higher autonomy than the common workman living in the workmen’s row houses.

- Kanō Natsuo (in the sculpting department)

Born in Kyoto in 1828 and adopted into a family of sword dealers, Kanō studied sculpting and painting of the Maruyama School (Maruyama is a painting sect known for its realistic touch, and derived from Maruyama Ōkyo who was active in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century). In the Ansei era (1854-1860), he moved to Edo where he demonstrated exquisite skill in sword accouterments. After being ordered to do the construction of the *Mitachi Mikanamono Chōkoku* (sculpture) by the Imperial Household Department in 1869, he went on to work at the Mint Bureau the same year. In 1877, he returned to Tokyo, after which he became a professor at Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō (now Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku [Tokyo University of the Arts]). He passed away in 1898. At the Mint Bureau, he worked on the design of currency, test casting, and engraving; of the five apprentices he had during his time at the Mint Bureau, four came from Tokyo to Osaka and had high salaries. At the time in 1876, he lived in Kita-ku Kawauchi-chō 1-Chōme (in a town to the northeast of Osaka’s Tenmangū), and like Ōno, he did not live in the workmen’s row houses.

From the abovementioned specific examples, it can be seen that in workplaces like machinery production/repair or sculpting, those master craftsmen who assimilated a high level of skill after the end of the shogunate took on apprentices and employed them in addition to working in production themselves. This kind of situation, however, only lasted until the early 1880s, after which the engineers who had finished their apprenticeships took over as the second generation.

### (3) The Mint Bureau and Urban Society – Relationship with the Outside

The Mint Bureau had various ties to the outer world of the economy and society.

First, in the relationships built through production/management, the connection to Osaka’s chemical industry in terms of sulfuric acid production is important to note. The *Kawaguchi Ryūsan Seizōjo* (Kawaguchi Sulfuric Acid Factory) established in 1879 by Osaka’s leading businessmen such as Fujita Densaburō and Nakano Goichi hired many workers from the sulfuric acid production department at the Mint Bureau, transferring the technology to a private firm. Also, a mirabilite production company was established in 1886 leasing the sulfuric acid production and soda production departments from the Mint Bureau. The founding members included Ōi Bokushin, a sulfuric acid dealer for the Mint Bureau. In 1892, he became involved in the establishment of the *Ōsaka Ryūsō Kaisha* (Osaka Mirabilite Company), thereafter promoting the production of chemical fertilizers in Osaka.

The ties with local production in Tenma can also be noted. The containers used at the Mint Bureau for sulfuric

acid were initially ceramics from Shigaraki, after which French containers came to be imported. However, because they were not only expensive but many broke in transport, after 1881, sulfuric acid-specific jars made by Itō Keishin from Kawasaki-mura are known to have been used. Itō was a pioneer of modern glass production in Osaka (founding his business in Tenma in 1875, he established the *Nihon Garasu* [Japan Glass] Company in 1883; although it was disbanded by 1890, he sent out numerous trained craftsmen from his firm) and was both an engineer as well as a businessman who instigated the assembly of glass industries that spawned across the Tenma Region. From such facts, it can be understood that the Mint Bureau was connected to the glass manufacturing industry in the modern Tenma Region.

Next, the role of the Mint Bureau can be pointed out as symbolizing *Bunmei Kaika* (Japan's westernization movement in the Meiji period introducing "civilization and enlightenment").

The Mint Bureau was a "factory to see" as well as a "factory to be seen." The *Kōjō Kanran Gaisoku* (Public Inspection of Factories Law) was enacted in 1873, setting every Tuesday of the week as an open-factory date wherein factory tours were given to the public. The famous "*Sakura-dōri nuke* (passing through Sakura [cherry blossom] Street)," based on the cherry blossoms of the old Dōdō-han Kurayashiki (the *han* [domain] storehouse) on the Bureau site, was also made open to the public in 1883 and is still one of the annual events held in Osaka in the spring. Besides this, in the factory, a "civilized" physical demeanor (in posture and movement) was demanded of the Japanese workmen. For instance, this included a strict observance of modern manners (a banning *dogeza* [prostrating oneself on the ground]), prohibition of taking tea/smoking/gossiping, and an appraisal of newspapers/Western books. Furthermore, a school called Nishinagakusha was established in the Mint Bureau in 1872. This school taught subjects such as English, mathematics, and chemistry to the Mint Bureau's officials and their children; this was later extended towards children in the surrounding areas.

However, there were also largely negative aspects of the Mint Bureau's influence on urban society. The Mint Bureau was also a source of pollution. Two pollution problems occurred in the 1880s. One was the problem of exhausted sulfurous gas. Such incidents as that of the poisoning of guards at the Osaka Garrison and the corrosion of their guns due to the sulfur-oxide (SO<sub>x</sub>) emitted from the roof of the sulfuric acid production factory were reported in the newspapers. It can also be considered as one of the earliest examples of atmospheric pollution caused by sulfurous gas. Another problem was the issue of contaminated waste. The effects of human waste and toxic substances emptied into the Yodogawa River from the factory became a problem and were reported in the newspapers. This is also another extremely early case of water contamination problems. Both are early examples of industrial pollution that became issues after 1880, but strategies against this remained insufficient.

As can be seen above, while the character of the Mint Bureau was itself non-regional – as its function was the production of currency – it exerted no small amount of influence on the urban economy as a whole, beginning with the chemical industry of Osaka. It can be understood that it was a body that exerted various influences on the regional society of Tenma.

#### 4. Nagamachi: the World of the Urban Residents in Meiji period Osaka

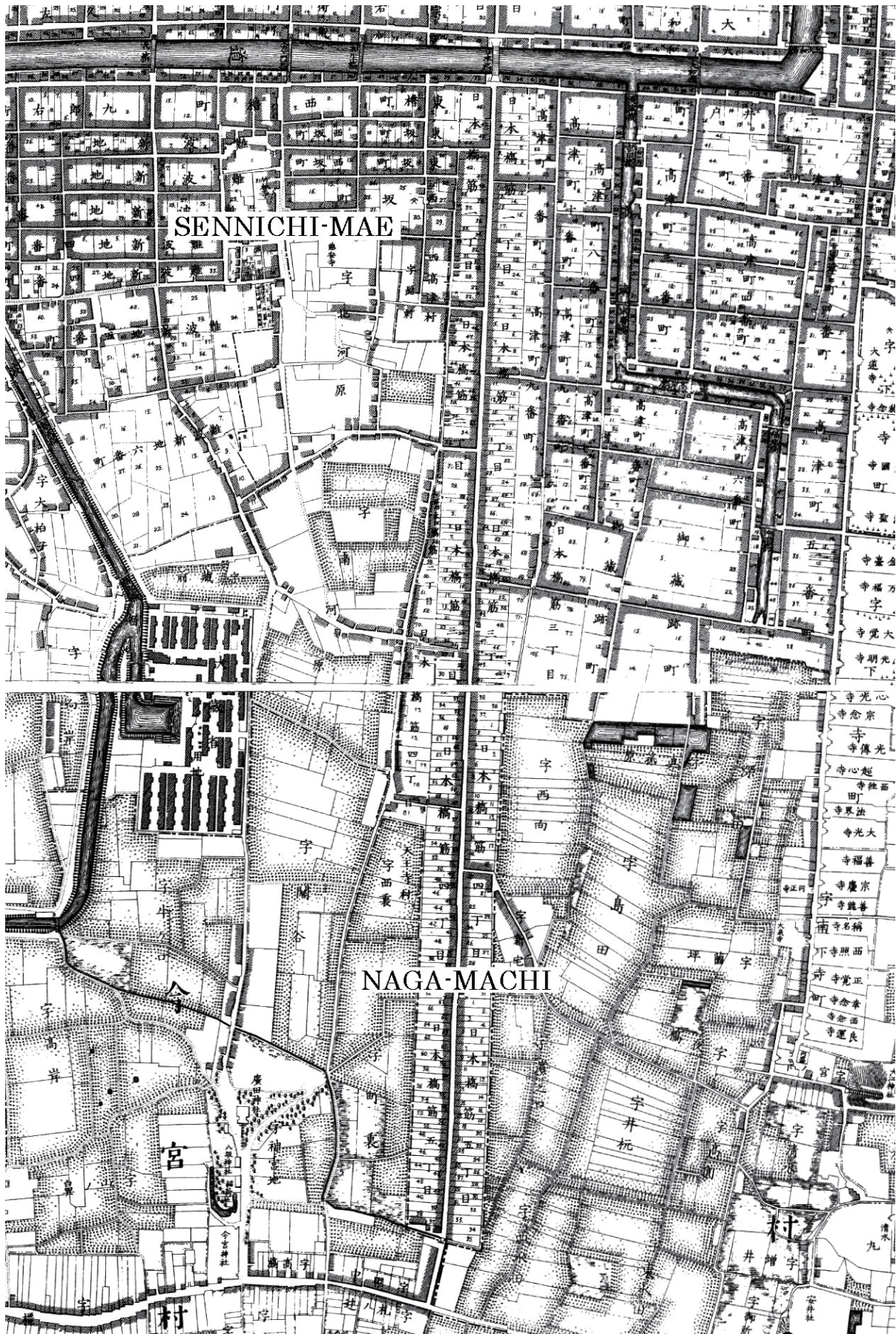
Lastly, this chapter will examine the *hinmin* (poor) group collected in the "*toshi kasō shakai* (urban lower-class society)." An analysis of the living environment of lower-class people in the city is one of the important themes of urban social history research. However, here it is important to not only view the "lower-class society" as a closed and isolated "society" but to grasp it in the expanse of social relationships that envelop it.

##### (1) The "Lower-Class Society" of Nagamachi

First, this paper will consider the origin of the "lower-class society" in Nagamachi (Nago-chō).

Early Modern Nagamachi was a *ryōgawa-chō* (a town that existed on both sides of a street) facing Nipponbashi-suji street stretching along the Kishū Kaidō Road and lying to the south of Nipponbashi Bridge suspended





Source: Osaka Jissoku-zu (Surveyed Map of Osaka), 1886.

**Figure 5:** Nagamachi 長町 and Sennichimae 千日前 area around 1886



over the Dōtonbori Canal. Initially it was the nine *chō*<sup>2</sup> of Nagamachi from 1-9 *chōme* (the first to the ninth *chō*); but in 1793, Nagamachi 1-5 *chōme* was renamed Nihonbashi 1-5 *chōme* (Nagamachi 6-9 *chōme* remained as was). In Nagamachi in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there were approved *kabu* (exclusive business rights) to own *handakoya* (lodging for general travelers to stay at) and *kichinyado* (cheap lodging for the lower-class). *Kichinyado* were cheap lodgings where one could stay for approximately the equivalent of the cost of firewood; it was also the de facto residence of the urban lower-class. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, *kichinyado* were collected in the four blocks between Nagamachi 6-9 *chōme*, and provided accommodation for *mushuku karanin betsu no mono* (those whose residences were not fixed and whose person was unknown) and day workers working in the three trades of brewing/rice milling/oil squeezing. They maintained special privileges to *kuchi-ire* (mediating between these workers and workplaces). In 1872, after the Meiji Restoration, due to the change in town names and town divisions, the original total of nine blocks were reorganized into the five blocks between Nihonbashi 1-5 *chōme* (Figure 5).

In other words, Nagamachi was an area where *kichinyado* with their monopoly on the special privilege to *kuchi-ire* business for day laborers assembled, and was thus also a place where as many as 10,000 of the lower-class resided. Even after 1880, Nagamachi continued to expand with an influx of population, becoming a slum that provided unskilled laborers to modern large-scale factories.

Below, this paper will consider the lifestyle and social relationships in Nagamachi through the *Ōsaka Nagochō Hinmin-kutsu Shisatsu-ki* (*Investigative Report on the Poor of Osaka's Nagochō*, abbreviated *Investigative Report* hereafter) written by Suzuki Umeshirō, a newspaper reporter, in 1888.

First, the following characteristics can be pointed out about the structure of the Nagamachi residents around 1887:

- 1) Many of the occupations of adult men included “*zatsugyō* (jack-of-all-trades),” “*hiyatoi* (day laborer),” “*hikifu* (people who pulled rickshaws or wagons),” “*kasa* (umbrella craftsmen and merchants),” “*kōgyō* (manufacturers),” “*futsū-shō* (small-scale retailers),” “*kuzu-hiroi* (ragpickers),” “*kojiki* (beggars),” and “*shichi/kobutsu* (pawn brokers/antique dealers).”
- 2) Many of the occupations of adult women included “*kuzu-hiroi* (ragpickers),” “*mugyō* (without occupation),” “*zatsugyō* (jack-of-all-trades),” “match makers (craftsmen making matches in the factories),” “*hiyatoi* (day laborers),” “*kasa* (umbrella craftsmen and merchants),” “*futsū-shō* (small-scale retailers),” “*kōgyō* (manufacturers),” and “*kojiki* (beggars).”
- 3) Apart from a third being “*mugyō* (without occupation),” children’s occupations included “*kuzu-hiroi* (ragpickers),” “match makers,” “*kojiki* (beggars),” “*hiyatoi* (day laborers),” “*kasa* (umbrella craftsmen and merchants),” “*futsū-shō* (small-scale retailers),” “*gakusei* (students),” and “*zatsugyō* (jack-of-all-trades).”
- 4) There were many people engaged in the occupations of day laborer and jack-of-all-trades. Furthermore, there was no small amount of people in the lowest level occupations of “*kuzu-hiroi* (ragpickers)” and “*kojiki* (beggars).”
- 5) There were many women and children workers, with many members of the family working.
- 6) On top of traditional occupations such as “*kasa* (umbrella craftsmen and merchants),” there also developed occupations like “match makers,” developed along with modern industrialization.
- 7) There were also a standard number of *omotedana* shops (shops fronting the street) with workers such as the “*futsū-shō* (small scale retailer)” and “*shichi/kobutsu* (pawn broker/ antique dealer).”

From the abovementioned points, it can be read that most of these tenants were, in the form of day labor or side job (at home), unskilled laborers whose whole families worked and that the ratio of these occupations began to change from a focus on modern day-laborers to workers associated with modern industrial factories, beginning with the match maker. On top of this, it is also evident that in Nagamachi there existed not only the lower-class in the

2. In this context, a *chō* refers to a unit based on regions spreading to both sides of the street, and should not be conflated with the Japanese word for “town” which is also pronounced *chō* but written differently in Japanese.



*uradana* (rear tenements) but those that worked the *omotedana* shops (shops fronting the street) as well.

## (2) The Poor in Nagamachi and the Home Owner/Property Owner

The section of the *Investigative Report* describing the relationship between the homeowner and Nagamachi's poor (*hinmin*), indicates that the homeowners, "make a living by means of renting the worn out *nagaya* (tenement homes/row houses) to any of the poor numbering more than 140, taking the poor's articles in pawn, lending to them with high interest, and selling goods to them." First, as a premise, the structure of the *hinmin nagaya* (tenement homes for the poor) will be examined. Nagamachi's *machiyashiki* (residential areas for the townspeople), with the Nipponbashi-suji (Sakai-suji) street running through it north to south, stretched for a depth of 20 *ken*<sup>3</sup> (36 meters), on both east and west, and took on the basic form of *omotedana* shops (shops fronting the street) along the main street and *ura-nagaya* (backstreet tenement homes) in the back "usually in pairs facing one another." One *nagaya* was about 12-13 *ken* (22-23 meters), its depth was about nine *shaku*<sup>4</sup> (2.7 meters), or two *ken* (3.6 meters). One *nagaya* house had about 10-20 units of rooms. There were three types of structures for an *ura-nagaya* (backstreet tenement home): (1) A frontage of one *ken* (1.8 meters) by a depth of nine *shaku* (2.7 meters) for an area of three tsubo/six *jō*<sup>5</sup> (10 sq. meters), (2) a frontage of one *ken* (1.8 meters) by a depth of two *ken* (3.6 meters) for an area of two tsubo/four *jō* (6.5 sq. meters), (3) a frontage of one *ken* (1.8 meters) by a depth of nine *shaku* (2.7 meters) for an area of 1.5 tsubo/three *jō* (5 sq. meters).

As seen through the situation of rent and its collection, 30 percent of the *hinmin* living in *ura-nagaya* paid monthly rent, "[as part of the population that] resided permanently in fixed rented homes and that had gained the trust of the homeowner through a long-term relationship." The remaining 70 percent paid rent on a day-to-day basis and were considered "untrustworthy *hinmin*...without a stable job." In the latter case, collection of the rent was made in the evenings, when the homeowners would await the tenants' return from work and collect the rent, standing at the entrance of the alleyway to the *ura-nagaya* located beside the *omotedana*. If the tenants were unable to pay, they were ordered to leave on the spot. This is believed to have been the nature of the management of *kichinyado* after the Early Modern period.

The cost of rent was set at: for monthly rent-payers, a "maximum" monthly payment of 60 *sen* (an old monetary unit, a hundredth of a yen) to 30 *sen*; and for day-to-day rent-payers, a "maximum highest" of two *sen* five *rin* (one *rin* equals one thousandth of a yen) to eight *rin*. While this was considered "*hanahada furen*" (much too expensive) for a poor man's rent, the residents were provided with an iron pot, cooking stove, pail, hand-washing pail, a mosquito net in the summer and a blanket in the winter, and while it was called just a flat, it was in fact a furnished flat.

From the above, it can be seen that even after 1887, there remained in fact a tenement leasing business (in form of *hiyatoi nagaya* [day laborer row houses]) not much different from the *kichinyado* developed in the Early Modern period.

Taking this into consideration, next this paper will look at the relationship between the food and clothing of the poor and their relationship with tenement owners. The *Investigative Report* states the following about the "rental" of clothing: "there were many in this town who rented out clothing, and those of the poor who required them would request this rental most of the time. Those who operated the rental shops were mainly the tenement owners...but rental costs were extraordinarily expensive." This shows that tenement owners were in fact conducting such business.

Also, regarding sales of items such as food in Nagamachi, the *Investigative Report* illustrates that many small shops were involved in the sale of items related to clothing and food for the poor. The "products" sold included "firewood" made from used *geta* (wooden sandals) and old posts, a bonito head and *ara* (bony remainders after the fresh fish has been filleted), bird's intestines, and the "*kayu*" (rice porridge) disposed by the Osaka Garrison (army barracks located around Osaka Castle). It is even stated that, "those who conducted these sales were mainly the owners of small tenements...who bought these [items] for very cheap. And, because they sold it for very expensive [prices], from the proportion of profit, it can be said that there were not many others elsewhere whose share of profit

3. A *ken* is a pre-modern Japanese unit of length equal to approximately 1.8 meters.

4. A *shaku* is a pre-modern Japanese unit of length equal to approximately 30.3 centimeters.

5. A *jō* is a pre-modern Japanese unit of area equal to half a *tsubo*; it represents the area of one tatami mat.

matched that of these owners – even the small businesses of Nagochō.”

The relationships between the moneylenders and the pawnbrokers are also important. In the case of the moneylender, while the loan was one which required no collateral, and thus was based completely on trust, “its interest was extremely high,” at a rate of “*hibu 4-sen*” (4% interest daily) per one yen. The payment term was set at within 20 days, with payments made for the loan and interest on a daily basis. Furthermore, “this promise was regarded extremely strict, with not a bit of mercy,” and should there be even a bit of delay, the copper cookers and garments of those who received the loan were seized.

From the abovementioned points, the following can be noted to sum up the relationship between “the poor” of Nagamachi and the tenement owners. First of all, the relationship between the poor and the tenement owners existed in various aspects. While the power of the tenement owner was of great enormity, the poor were “*fukugami* (a well appreciated existence bringing about profit)” to the businesses of the tenement owners. Secondly, through financial interests, a relationship of opposition constantly existed between these two classes.

### (3) Landowners of Nagamachi and the *Omotedana* Owners

Next, the character of the presence of Nagamachi’s *omotedana* owners, who are also thought to have been the landowners as well, will be examined. Although the details will be omitted, the following points can be noted as the characteristics of Nagamachi landowners from the end of the shogunate to the end of the Meiji period.

- 1) There was constantly a population of landowners equaling about two thirds of the number of *machiya-shiki* (the town’s residential areas/blocks).
- 2) There were always about 10 powerful landowners who owned multiple (about three to six) blocks along the Nipponbashi-suji street. Within these, a few were powerful landowners who had continued to stay as such throughout the end of the shogunate to the end of the Meiji period, and furthermore, these landowners were central figures in the town’s government.
- 3) Overall, there were a great many changes in ownership, with a particularly intense amount of change from around 1872 to 1880.

On the other hand, looking at the *omotedana* owners of Nagamachi, there were various small shopkeepers noted as “500 shop residents/owners” in a newspaper article from 1887. The slightly later “*Shōkōgyōsha Shisanroku* (Registry of Merchants’ Assets),” confirms that most were pawnbrokers, and that there also existed blanket rentals and umbrella merchants.

From the above, it can be noted that those of the ruling class in Nagamachi had been powerful landowners since the Early Modern period, and in terms of business, pawnbrokers were the most prominent. The poor and the landowners/tenement owners in Nagamachi can be said to have formed various relationships based on that of tenement owner vs. leaser in the *nagaya* (this can also perhaps be rephrased as that of the *kichinyado* owner and lodger). These can be characterized as: the pawnbroker/moneylender vs. the leaser, the clothing renter vs. the borrower, the various businesses involved in the sales food and clothing items vs. their customers, etc. These relationships can even be said to have been the “*umami* (charm)” of a collected region of poor people for land and home owners as well as *omotedana* shop owners; there may even be a commonality between this and the so-called “poverty industry” that is seen as a problem in Japan at present.

### (4) The Problem of Relocating the Poor

Lastly, what follows is an examination the *hinmin iten mondai* (the problem of relocating the poor) that occurred from about 1886-1892. This was an attempt to forcefully relocate the poor of Nagamachi, who have been investigated above, to areas outside the city.

This issue, instigated by the large outbreak of cholera in 1886, began with the proposal to disassemble/eliminate the *ura-nagaya* concentrated in Osaka’s Nagamachi, and to move the poor to the county of Nishinari-gun. There were two *Rengō Chōson Kai* (Town/Village Alliance Meetings), in which conferences of representatives chosen by

the towns and villages located in areas with an interest in this issue, namely, the four wards (*ku*) of Osaka and two counties (*gun*) of Nishinari and Higashinari. This assembly was brought together solely to deliberate on this relocation proposal, and is a different assembly from the *Fukai* (Prefectural Assembly), which was a conference for the whole of Osaka Prefecture, held in September and October of that year. The Osaka government's relocation proposal was discussed, but was rejected based on opposition from the group representatives. However, by prohibiting the operation of *kichinyado* in the urban areas of Osaka with the *Yadoya-Torishimari Kisoku* (Lodgings Regulations) in December, Osaka decided to aim towards scattering the poor by expelling the *kichinyado* to locations outside the city. On the other hand, in March of the following year, 1887, the landowners/tenement owners of Nagamachi, who had theretofore opposed the relocation of the poor, applied to voluntarily clear the *hinmin nagaya* (row houses for the poor) in return for approval to set up an entertainment business. The Osaka government approved this in July, while simultaneously giving verbal notifications for the prohibition of the entertainment business in the Sennichimae Region, a region neighboring the west side of Nagamachi with a dense concentration of entertainment show booths.

However, due to the obstinate opposition movement by businesses in Sennichimae, and later because of a petition movement for the postponement of this action, the removal of the *nagaya* was put off again and again until finally by 1892, approval for entertainment facilities as the measure to prohibit such businesses in Sennichimae were retracted.

As can be seen, the aforementioned social structure and the interests of the landowners in Nagamachi are well reflected in this relocation issue.

The reason why the Osaka government's relocation proposal was rejected by the representatives of the Town/Village Alliance Meetings was the excessively heavy burden this would incur on the landowners/tenement owners as well as the opposition of the *omotedana* shop owners. On the contrary, at the same time, behind the application of the Nagamachi landowners to "clear the filthy housing," was the landowners' interest in the expected increase in land prices in return for approval of entertainment businesses. While at first glance it appears as though they took contradictory stances, the interest of the landowners can be consistently seen behind their actions.

In other words, even while the relocation issue had at one point failed to go through, at the bottom of the new proposal that appeared shortly thereafter to clear the *nagaya* were the demands of the landowners/tenement owners seeking new profit that would replace the "*umami* (charms)" attached to the poor, which would have been lost with removal of *nagaya*. During this time, the "*hinmin* (poor)" of Nagamachi, under a leader called a *gorotsuki* (hoodlum), consistently opposed their relocation as well as the clearing of the *nagaya*.

To sum up, the factors that led to the failure of this poor relocation proposal was, first of all the opposition movement by the villages set to be their destinations, as well as by those related to the entertainment businesses in Senninmae and residents of other regions. At the same time, a second reason was that there existed deep down a relationship of conflict between the landowners/tenement owners and the poor in Nagamachi. In other words, this clashing relationship between the landowner/tenement owner and the poor in Nagamachi can be interpreted as the basic ruling factor in the development of this "*hinmin* (poor) relocation" issue.

## Conclusion

The above analysis of three urban regions in Osaka in the early Meiji period yields the following conclusions.

First, the megalopolis of Osaka was an agglomeration of (both spatial and societal) urban regional societies: the city called Osaka, from the perspective of those people who lived and worked in this area, was not a homogeneous "*nopperabō* (a ghost without a face)" nor an "anonymous" world, but was instead composed of regional societies, each one unique.

Second, about the method with which can be used to comprehend the structure of such an urban regional society: In order to grasp such urban society in concrete terms, it is important to understand the various relationships shaping production/distribution in the region (such as the character of the businesses and land ownership). At the same time, a method can be envisioned of focusing on the delineating factors that determine the regions' characters – in other words, the "magnetic pole-like" existences – and to clarify the relationship between it and other factors. In terms of such



“magnetic poles” – in other words, those nucleic centers in the region that influence and subordinate the interrelated societies around them – it is important to note, in modern society, new factors such as the settlements, factories, government (and municipal) offices, large-scale companies, military facilities and stations on top of the market operating since the Early Modern period, large temples and shrines, brothels, and entertainment areas. Also, in terms of concrete analysis, it is important to focus on the spatial characteristics of the region and understand this in connection to the various social relationships developed therein (the spaces of the factory and brothel, location-based relationships between the “magnetic poles” and other facts, etc.) and to bear in mind the various relationships and factors that help keep the urban region from closing up (control of the brothels, distribution relationships, networks surrounding businesses, etc.)

Third, about the characteristics of urban social structure in modern times: As has been stated above, new “magnetic poles” appeared in the Modern period, and the analysis of such subjects must be furthered. Also, while this was not explored in detail here, the elementary school and its *gakku* (the district assigned to the school) generally held important places as the cells of modern Osaka’s urban society, with new communities having formed under this unit. As seen in the case study with the Matsushima Region, the *gakku* functioned also as a unit of political and social control for the groups of businesses and the powerful that held hegemony within the region.

Finally, it is important to view the modern city in relationship to the traditional Japanese city established by pre-modern society. Specifically, it is important to investigate the organization of regions based on the cellular unit of the town with its various relationships unique to a hierarchical society, the connections between people based on the unit of the *kabunakama* (trade guilds), and the breaking down of the notion of identity as understood in terms of social status. For instance, the *Geishogi Kaihō-rei* (Geisha and Prostitute Liberation Law) and its relationship to the Matsushima Brothel noted above is one such issue. While this liberation law appeared as part of the modernization policies to change the system of enslaving the prostitutes that supported the brothels, due to the unified strength of the prostitution house members (or the guild, *Kashi-zashikigyō Kumiai*), power over the prostitutes was not easily dissolved, allowing the remnants of a hierarchical relationship to remain strong. This is one example demonstrating the fact that the relationships based on social standing in the traditional city remained strong in spite of the change accompanying the modernization process.

The same remnants of hierarchical relationships can also be observed in the organization of residents in a town and in the various associations (or guilds of those in the same industry). It is impossible to gain a correct understanding of modern urban society without analyzing such points, only investigating the new aspects borne of modernization. The author would like to conclude this paper by stressing the importance of research on the history of modern urban society taking the influences of the traditional city into consideration.

## References

- Nishiguchi, Atsushi and Hotta, Akio ed. *Ōsaka Kawaguchi Kyoryūchi no Kenkyū (Research on Osaka’s Kawaguchi Settlement)* (Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1995).
- Hirokawa, Tadahide ed. *Kindai Ōsaka no Gyōsei/Shakai/Keizai (Politics/Society/Economics of Modern Osaka)*. (Aoki Shoten, 1998).
- Hirokawa, Tadahide ed. *Kindai Ōsaka no Chiiki to Shakai Hendō (Changes in Society and Region of Modern Osaka)*. (Burakumondai Kenkyūjo, 2000)
- Saga, Ashita. *Kindai Ōsaka no Toshi Shakai Kōzō (The Structure of Modern Osaka’s Urban Society)*. (Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha Ltd., 2007).

## **Editor's Note**

This paper was translated by Ms. Riyo Namigata (RAJP translator) under the supervision of Hisatsugu Kusabu and Steven Evans (Editorial Board). For the convenience of English readers, the translated article was fully reviewed and necessary information about proper names, historical events, and Japanese titles was added.