

Comparative Studies of the Segmental Socio-Spatial Structures in Traditional Cities, 1500-1900

Yoshida Nobuyuki

(University of Tokyo, Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, Faculty of Letters, Professor)

【Outline of survey】

The aim of this research project is to provide a comparative understanding of the special historical characteristics of traditional cities by examining the massive scale of urbanization experienced by cities, such as Edo (Tokyo), London, Paris, and New York, between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. In particular, we focus on and intend to show precisely the specific qualities inherent in the segmental character of the social and spatial characteristics that formed the base of these traditional cities.

As for implementation of this research, we have established the following five common themes of research: 1) segmental structure and social formation, 2) creation of contemporary urban patterns, 3) urban periphery, 4) world of the urban populace and modernity, and 5) comparative patterns of traditional cities. In addition, we will collect historical documents principally related to Edo (Tokyo), but also for other cities like Paris, London, New York, and Tianjin, and make the results of our efforts commonly available to the academic world.

In approaching the comparative patterns aspect of this project, we will raise the level of discussion by annually inviting a foreign scholar of urban history to present on their research and participate in a roundtable discussion. Moreover, project members will report on the results of their basic research at regular research meetings and at an annually held fall symposium as well as often publishing journals like the *Nenpou toshi-shi kenkyuu* [The Urban History Annual].

【Expected results】

This research project will result in, first, a synthesis of our past research conclusions and topics related to the urban history of traditional cities between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and present directions for new research. In particular, based on the results of our long-term collaborative research on the early modern urban and architectural history of Japan, this project will explore the viability and limits of applying the urban historical methodology of 'socio-spatial structure' and 'segmental structure' analysis to research on traditional cities in other regions and on modern and contemporary urban societies.

Secondly, we will offer a comprehensive understanding of the basic historical documents related to the segmental structure of traditional cities and further ensure the conditions for sharing this information.

Thirdly, having accomplished the above two steps, we will develop research related to the social structure of traditional cities and an especially broad network involving researchers both here and abroad.

【References by the principal researcher】

• Yoshida Nobuyuki. *Kyodai shitamachi Edo no bunsetsu kouzou* [Edo as Great Castle Town: A Segmental Analysis]. Yamakawa shuppansha, 1991.

• Yoshida Nobuyuki. *Mibunteki shuu'en to shakai=bunka kouzou* [Status Margins and Socio-Cultural Structure]. Buraku mondai kenkyujo, 2003.

【Term of project】 FY2006 - 2010

【Budget allocation】 181,000,000 yen

【Homepage address】

n o n e