

LOCAL HISTORY STUDIES IN JAPAN

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It is a great honour and pleasure for me to speak on 'Local History Studies in Japan' this afternoon.

Concern with local history in Japan can be traced back to ancient times. In May 713 AD, The Emperor proclaimed an edict ordering sheriffs of all counties to compile a *Book on Local Topography*. From the Middle Ages, many quotations survive from the ancient *Books on Local Topography*. Unfortunately, however, no books have come down to the present except one entitled "Topography of the County of Izumo" (west part of Japan), compiled in 712 AD. At the end of the seventeenth century, or perhaps the early eighteenth century, *Ancient Books of Topography of All Japan* were forged, and were considered by contemporaries as genuine and quoted very often. Since the seventeenth century onward many series of books on local topography were again compiled by feudal lords. The earliest and most famous one was *Topography of the County of Aizu* (The North East of Japan), compiled in 1661, and of which a new edition of 120 volumes was published in 1809. During the eighteenth century many series were published on different counties. So materials for local history are very rich and abound in Japan.

Although rich in documentary evidence, local history for the ancient and medieval periods depends heavily upon recent archaeological excavations.

I should like to call your special attention to the fact that in Japanese history, the ancient period corresponds to the years when the central government in Kyoto was working, whereas the Middle Ages started when this centralized system collapsed and the government under the Shogun in Kamakura along with the feudal system began. So the ancient period lasted until the end of the twelfth century and the Middle Ages covered the period from the thirteenth to the end of the sixteenth century. The early modern ages begins at the beginning of the seventeenth century and ends at the time of Meiji Restoration in 1868.

A very elaborate and complex central government was set up in 645 on the model

of the administrative system of the T'ang Empire (618-906). Based on this reform, all lands were nationalized. While one ninth was reserved for the state, the rest was distributed to the cultivators of land on the condition of payment of tribute in grain, special local products of the land and labour services. In 710 a Metropolis was built at Nara in emulation of Ch'ang-an, the capital city of the T'ang Empire. It was called Heijo-Kyo and flourished until 794, when Emperor Kammu moved his imperial court to a more permanent capital called Heian-Kyo in Kyoto, where the imperial court remained until 1868. Both Heijo-Kyo and Heian-Kyo have the same grid town plan as Ch'ang-an, just as North European towns built by the Romans had the same town plan as Roman ones. The northern central square section was allotted to the imperial palace and its administrative offices. The main street ran from the gate of the Palace down to the south gate of the City. There were four main streets running from the north to south on either sides of the main street and there were nine main avenues running from the east to the west. Each block marked out by streets and avenues was further subdivided by lanes into sixteen smaller sections.

At the eastern section of Heijo-Kyo, Emperor Shomu built a Buddhist temple, in which was enshrined a huge bronze statute of Buddha, which was called Todaiji. The noble ideal of the Emperor governing the country, based on the principles of Buddhism, was embodied in this statue and temple.

As the modern City of Kyoto overlaps the extent of the ancient metropolis of Kyoto, it is very difficult to excavate extensively and systematically. However, minor excavation can be undertaken when and where modern multi-storied buildings are constructed. During the end of the 80's, an underground railway was constructed from Kyoto Station, which lies at the southern end of the city, straight to the northern end of the city. This construction of an underground made it possible to dig a trench of great length, and we can glean various bits and pieces of information, but it was never possible to make a whole systematic excavation. In contrast with the case of Kyoto, the modern city of Nara occupies only the east section of the ancient metropolis, so that the central and northern end of the ancient city remained as arable fields. Careful and systematic excavation became possible when the site was bought by the Preservation Society and the Government. The excavation started as early as 1924 under the auspices of the Nara National Cultural Properties Research Institute, and extensive excavation has been carried on. By 1980, the total area uncovered was 278,000 square metres of the 980,000 square metres of the nationalized area. The

Palace site was almost completely uncovered, and excavated relics and objects are very abundant indeed. Along with the excavation, the preservation of the site and the reconstitution of the stone foundations of old buildings, as well as the reconstruction of wooden buildings upon them, has been carried on. Both visitors and tourists can observe these quite easily. Recently part of the eastern section of Nara was excavated. The site was presumed to have been a private residence of a noble. Archaeologists dug up many wooden tallies. Paper was still rare and expensive so that everyday transactions of business were recorded on narrow wooden plates. It becomes very clear what kind of tributes were sent to this house. Of course, one can discover how much quantity, from where, and by whom they were sent. It is surprising to learn that ancient noblemen enjoyed fruits and products of every corner of the country. This provides information about the social and economic conditions and activities in ancient Japan. This physical evidence also illuminates and confirms the findings observed in documentary evidence.

Another noted example of excavation of an ancient city is Dazai-fu in Kyushu, where an imperial delegate resided in order to receive ambassadors, Buddhist monks, scholars and artisans from China and Korea, and also to supervise the dispatching of their Japanese counterparts to the Imperial Capital of the T'ang Dynasty. The excavation started in 1968, and continued for ten years. The Government Offices of the Dazai-fu of three different dates were completely uncovered. It seems that the Dazai-fu was flourishing from the seventh century to the end of the eleventh century.

Let us turn our eyes to the situation in the provinces. The whole country was divided into 67 counties, the size of each county being smaller the nearer to the Metropolis, and vice versa. Each county was governed by a Sheriff sent by the Emperor, and the local administrative centre was more or less built on the same pattern as the capital city, although not on so grand a scale. The local administrative centre was situated almost always in the centre of the county and on a fairly flat plain, and was accompanied by a port near the shore. Beside the administrative buildings, the provincial Buddhist Temple and Nunnery were constructed. Furthermore, each county was sub-divided into hundreds. For instance the County of Musashi (which is the ancient county of Tokyo) had 21 hundreds. Recently the local administrative centre of Toshima hundred was excavated. The site still belongs to the Government, and the Government Printing Office and Police Station of the Metropolitan Borough occupied the site. When the old Police Station was demolished for rebuilding, excavation was

undertaken. A part of the ancient administrative centre was uncovered. It became clear that the square site of 60 metres by 60 metres was for the main offices, and to the west there was a site for granaries of 200 metres by 200 metres, with surrounding moats, 4 metres wide and 2 metres deep. Along the west moat six wooden buildings for granary were unearthed.

This site was used from the middle of the seventh century down to the early tenth century. It is very interesting to notice that these wooden buildings had no firm stone foundation so that every 30 years they were replaced by new buildings.

Another remarkable example of excavation is that of the medieval communal graveyard of the county town of Mituke, which is situated on the Pacific coast. The city was the ancient county town of Tôtômi (Far Sea), and since the seventeenth century onwards it flourished as a port town and also an important station town of the Tokaido Road, which connected Kyoto and Tokyo.

The City Council proposed to construct housing estates on the hill to the north-west of the City. The Board of Education of the City ordered the excavation of the site before starting construction, and archaeologists found the communal graveyard of the town from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries.

I would like to describe the funeral of my uncle to illustrate an old popular funeral ritual and give some idea of another world believed in by these ancient Japanese people. My uncle died in February, 1972. He was a widower and had no children, so he lived with my cousin, who is a farmer in a hamlet about 180 km north of Tokyo. My ancestor seemed to have settled down as a yeoman farmer in that hamlet at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The location was quite remote and isolated from other towns or surrounding villages. It had been secluded until the 1980's when the motorway was constructed. To the west of the hamlets a very deep valley prevented passage, and the east, north and south were surrounded by steep mountains. The only passage to the outer world had been a mountain footpath. My cousin once told me that when he was a boy, the only vehicles in that hamlet were bicycles. So neither undertakers nor Buddhist monks were available to perform the funeral service. Furthermore, to my great interest, they still keep the ancient rituals and traditions of conducting a funeral by themselves.

When any important member of the family becomes seriously ill, as did my uncle, the head of the household, my cousin, sent messengers to relatives and kin not only in the hamlet but also in the neighbouring villages. Having been informed, they had

to visit him, bringing some gift (nowadays just a token, something like a £5 note).

When he died, the head of the household again sent messengers to report the death and also inform them of the date of the funeral, that they might attend. My cousin asked the local carpenter to come to make a coffin, and asked neighbours to dig a grave. My uncle had felled a cedar tree in the wood commonly owned by the village and had kept it in the barn for his coffin. The old woman of the household, in this case my aunt, prepared a shroud. It had to be a costume for his religious journey, made of fresh white cotton. My cousin prepared straw sandals and cut a staff for the journey to the other world. My aunt prepared a purse, in which they put six coppers.

In the kitchen, the wives of neighbours were busy preparing food for family and mourners. Before night fell, the family and closest kin gathered in the bedroom, and cleansed the corpse and put it in the coffin. They put a dagger on the coffin to keep evil spirits away. Then the coffin was moved to the drawing room. In the evening, the elders and old ladies of the hamlet gathered, and ringing bells they sang pilgrimage psalms in unison for the soul of my uncle. This was the only religious ceremony held that night. Throughout the night, someone had keep watch and keep candles and incense burning.

The next day, it not being an inauspicious day for the burial, the ceremony took place. About ten o'clock in the morning, a Buddhist monk came from the temple in the town, and the mourners gathered. The monk offered prayers for the dead and gave my uncle his posthumous name. It is the custom that when a layman takes orders and becomes a monk, he will be given a spiritual name, and thereafter he will be called by that name. In the case of a layman, he will be given a spiritual name after his death. When one prays for the soul of the departed, one must use his posthumous name. I must add that posthumous names differ according to a person's social status. The most simple name consists of four Chinese characters, the more numerous, the higher the social status. After prayers had been said by the monk, the coffin was placed on a bier and carried in procession to the graveyard. The male mourners must precede the coffin, while the female mourners, covering their heads with handkerchiefs, follow. The order of procession must be according to one's closeness to the dead. All were barefooted, save for straw sandals, though even then the ground was covered with snow. At the gate of the graveyard, everybody, including the coffin, had to turn three times in a clockwise direction. This is a ceremony to prevent the spirit of the

deceased from coming back home with the mourners. After the burial of the body in the grave, all the mourners discarded their straw sandals and returned barefooted to the house. This is another ritual for keeping the spirit of the deceased in the grave.

On returning from the grave, the head of the household made prayers at the family altar, wherein is enshrined the souls of the ancestors, to inform them that my uncle had been sent to the other world to join them.

In the drawing room lunch was served to every mourner by the wives of our neighbours and then each departed to their homes. After all the visitors had gone, the family asked all its neighbours to sit in the drawing room and served a meal to them, thanking them for their help and assistance during the funeral service. This concluded the family funeral ritual.

The family must visit the grave every day during the following week, and on the seventh day special prayers must be offered for the deceased. From the seventh day onward, prayer must be offered at the family altar in the house. They must keep mourning for forty nine days. A commemoration service must be kept after one, two, seven, thirteen years, and so on.

While my uncle's body was buried in the grave, his soul had to make a journey of a thousand miles to the other world. The soul of the deceased is said to Journey by himself in the darkness. He will reach the river which divides this world from the other. He has to pay a toll to cross the river by boat. An ugly old woman charges six pence. If one cannot afford the fare, she asks for one's clothes, so that one must cross the river naked in humiliation. On the other side of the river, there is the Court of Hades. In the court ten judges sit; and the chief judge, in a Chinese robe with a Chinese coif on his head, presides. The poor soul must plead guilty or not guilty. People believe that when one is born, two spirit-clerks are given. The one who sits on the right shoulder keeps a record of one's good deeds and kind behaviour, while the one who sits on the left shoulder keep a record of one's evil deeds or misdemeanors, so that if you witness something evil or do something wrong, you should tap your left shoulder to prevent your spirit clerk from recording the incidents. Anyway, there is a mirror which reveals one's life like a television set. Their judgements are fair and very strict. If one is condemned, he or she will be sent to hell to eternal condemnation. If one is saved, he or she will be sent to paradise, where they will sit on lotus flowers in the pond of paradise.

Before the Second World War, one could observe that domestic servants and labour-

ers could have a weeks holiday twice a year, i. e. new year and a week in the middle of August. People believe that even in Hell, jailers could have leave of a week in the middle of August. So damned souls could be released from hell to visit their house in this world. So the first evening of that week, people burn stems of flax at the gate of the house. On that smoke souls could make the journey to this world, and stay a week in the house, enjoying food and wine offered by the family. At the end of that week, people again burn stems of flax, and on that smoke the spirits make their return journey to the other world.

What I have just described is a popular belief of the 'other world'. Nowadays no one believe this, and this kind of funeral service is hardly observed in the city, nor even in the countryside.

However, if you have this picture in mind, you can see the significance of the communal graveyard of the town of Mituke.

It seems quite clear that the communal graveyard was a necropolis divided by the river from this world of Mituke town. On the west bank of this brook, there is a temple dedicated to the Ten Judges of Hades. There was no hierarchy of singular graves, so a historian interprets this fact as a reflection of a community of egalitarian citizens with definite self-government in this world. This necropolis started from the middle of the thirteenth century and ended at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the town lost its self-government under the Tokugawa Regime. Since then people buried corpses in the graveyard of temples built on the fringe of the town.

I would like to give another example of an excavation of a medieval town, a most exciting excavation carried on in Ichijo-dani (Valley of Ichijo) near the modern city of Fukui on Japan Sea coast.

Asakura, the feudal magnate of the County of Echizen, moved his caput residence to Ichijo Valley from Kokufu, the local administration centre in ancient times, which, being in the middle of a plain, was difficult to defend. During the troubled century of the Civil War from 1471 until 1573, this secluded and well fortified residence seemed to flourish. But then in 1573, when Asakura was defeated by Nobunaga Oda, a famous general, the whole residence and town were completely burnt down. The chronicle records that the town burned for three days and three nights! The site of the main residence and the town was abandoned and became paddy fields; and nobody imagined that under the fields, a whole town was buried, although some place-names

give indication of the location of warriors' houses. A very careful excavation was started in 1967; and though interrupted by deep snow in winter, it has continued bit by bit. Now it seems to be very clear that streets were constructed according to careful town planning, and along the main street messuages were allotted to members of the warrior class according to their rank and status. Also it was found that there are three different surfaces on the main street. Some sites of Buddhist temples were also uncovered. As the excavation extended to the fringe of the town, very tiny plots were also uncovered with remains of some industrial and commercial activities. Each mansion of a higher ranking warrior had gardens front and back, so the reconstitution of the whole building could be drawn upon the arrangement of stones for pillars, etc. The local authority built a museum in which dug-up articles were displayed very systematically with illustrations of their historical background. From the information previously available from literary sources, historians could not have imagined that such a well planned castle town existed in the end of the Middle Ages. This is no doubt one of the most typical medieval castle towns during the Civil War Period, with which the early modern castle towns of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries must be contrasted.

Now we should turn our attention to the early modern period, from the beginning of the seventeenth century down to the Meiji Restoration of 1868. This period abounds with documentary evidence for local history. Although the Tokugawa family set up the Bakufu (central government) at Yedo, the modern Tokyo, each county was governed either by a feudal magnate or by many retainers. Of course, local peculiarities and irregularities were observed. However, individual towns and villages were given a limited autonomy under the town reeves or village reeves throughout the whole country. The houses of reeve kept their archives during the early modern period in connection with the administration of the town or village until the Second World War. Their descendants continued to be important members of the village as a rich landed gentry class after the Meiji Restoration. Unfortunately, this rich gentry class was entirely deprived of its land by the land reform under the American occupation after the Second World War. So most of their archives has been lost or sold. Especially because of a shortage of paper after the war, old papers were re-used in many ways. For instance, they were used as material for making paper, or making paper screens. However, some of them were bought either by the local museums or by university libraries as collections. The same situation can be observed among the noble class who

were once feudal magnates. Not only their archives but also objects of art were sold in order to pay very heavy property tax under the democratizing process. As those archives became accessible not only to scholars and historians but also to the general public, local history became a very popular subject. This must be the social or economic background to the rise of local history studies in Japan after the Second World War.

There are three kinds of documents of fundamental importance in the local archive of a village reeve. First of all, the copy of the Land Survey of the early seventeenth century. This is equivalent of the Domesday Book of England. The second is the documents concerning the yearly rent to the lord, probably like manorial accounts of England. The third is a series of the register of villagers, equivalent to the parish register in England.

Under the anarchical conditions of the Civil War period, there arose local power based on moated house or castle, and these local lords began to consolidate their power in the course of war and fighting, and became Sengoku Daimyo, or 'lord during the period of Civil War'. Under each, a group of retainers was formed and the peasants looked to their respective lords for security. During the sixteenth century, such Daimyos as had become lords of their respective territories, began to conquer entire provinces. When he defeated a neighbouring Daimyo, he granted the territory back to him on his making homage, or else conferred it to one of his retainers. Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyosi, Tokugawa Iyeyasu were all of this type of conqueror. When he conferred the territory he thus had acquired, he sent his steward or bailiff with clerks to make a survey of the land. This survey reminds us of the Domesday Survey of William the Conqueror in 1086.

The procedure of survey adopted by Hideyoshi was as follows. The steward or bailiff of the lord was sent to each village to survey the arable land irrespective of ownership. When they made their returns, the original copy was sent to the feudal lord, while another copy was given to the villagers, that is the reeve of the village in question. This kind of survey was repeated from time to time, so as to keep stock of any reclaimed land. If we look at a copy of one of these surveys, or rather terriers, we will find that the description covers all the arable land in a specific village.

Let me give you a typical description of one such item. The survey states where a piece of land is situated in the village. Then it gives the measurement of the land, which is usually oblong in shape, but not like the strip in Western Europe. The bailiff or lesser official measured the width and length of each piece of land using a rod

or rope. Following the measurement of a piece of land, the acreage was given. In addition, an assessment of the productivity or fertility of the land was also given. Then finally it was followed by the name of the holder of land. At the end of these entries of individual lands, the total acreage of the whole village was usually given.

Once this kind of terrier had been compiled, at the next stage, the steward or bailiff converted acreage into the quantity of rice which they estimated it could produce. How they transformed the acreage into the quantity of rice is really a mystery even for the Japanese historian; but one of the possible explanations is that they reaped the rice in one unit of area, then measured the rice threshed, and finally by multiplying the acreage of individual land by an average harvest of rice, and adding the items up they obtained the amount of rice which could be expected to be harvested from the whole arable land of a village. These figures, called Kokudaka, were used as the unit by which the size of the possession of the land of feudal lords was reckoned, and also as a basis upon which feudal rent as well as national tax was assigned, just like the hide-virgate system in England. This survey determined the status of the peasantry and knightly class or established the actual cultivator and legal owner of the land.

The total Kokudaka of the whole country was estimated to be thirty million five hundred fifty thousand Koku (30,550,000), out of which the Tokugawa Shogun held six million seven hundred thousand (6,700,000) koku, that is, more than 23 per cent of all the land. He became the largest feudal landowner in Japan; the second largest was the Lord of Kaga Province, who held only one million koku. The rest of the land was conferred on the Daimyos, the territorial lords, as fief.

Although the survey was done not at the same time, almost all villages have a copy of the survey as the fiscal standard of the village. Every year, at harvest season, the lord sent a bailiff to the individual villages to make an estimate of that year's harvest. If he reported that the harvest was good, the lord decided the rate of rent as 50 per cent of the expected yield. If he estimated a poor harvest, the rate might be reduced to 45 or 40 per cent. In the later period the rate became fixed at a standard one. Then the lord issued an official letter to the reeve of the village giving the total amount of rice to be delivered to the lord. At the meeting of the village, the reeve assigned a quota of rent to individual villagers. When all the assigned rice was delivered to the lord, the lord issues another official letter of receipt to the reeve. As the responsibility of payment was not an individual peasant's but a joint respon-

sibility of the township, it would not be very rare to find a complete series of those letters of quota and receipts during the period of more than 250 years!

The third kind of document kept among a reeve's archive is the parish register. In 1633 the Tokugawa Government declared the ban on Christianity, and closed the country to all western Europeans except the Dutch East India Company. Since the 1740's, peasants had to prove themselves not to be Christians. So each would ask the monk of the Buddhist temple to which he and his family belonged to issue a certificate proving that he and his family was of the congregation of that temple's specific sect of Buddhism. On receiving such certificates, the reeve compiled a register of villagers on the first day of the year. The entry was family by family. It gave the name of the head of the household and his age, the name of his temple and its denomination; then his wife and her age. Usually her name is not given but she is just described as his wife. If they had any children, their names and ages were also given. Entries of any other members of his family were also given, i.e., his father or mother, brothers or sisters and other relatives living with them. Any men servants or maids employed in his household, have their particulars also included. Although these registers were not compiled every new year, it seems that every five or ten years reeves did compile these for their reference.

As you see, these three fundamental documents, together with such miscellaneous documents as registers of Ordinances and Regulations of central and local governments, documents of lawsuits, letters, diaries and memoirs etc, will illuminate village history or family history in economic, social and demographical terms.

For example, I can trace my ancestors back to the very beginning of the seventeenth century. My grandfather asked a monk to compile a necrology of my ancestors at the end of last century. It had a short introduction as to how our ancestor came to settle in that hamlet, and to every member of our ancestors it gave a posthumous name, later with secular name, with the date of death and age at the time of death in chronological sequences. It seems to me that this family necrology was compiled on the basis of information from the necrology of temple and also confirmed by the inscription of tombstones of our family graveyard. It was the custom for Buddhist monks to pray for souls on the day of the anniversary of their death, and they kept a calendar, in which the names of person to be commemorated were recorded. It usually started with the name of lost emperors, their feudal lords, monks and members of the congregation under their care.

It is almost impossible to penetrate into the period before the seventeenth century except in the case of a few families of ancient origins. However, I have a most pleasant memory of my grandfather sitting by an open hearth and telling me that our ancestor was a famous general of the early eleventh century. He told me that he could not prove this, but would give a ground for believing so. He told me a famous old story. Of course it has many different versions, and is performed by No players. It goes like this. Once upon a time, a devil appeared in the evening at the outskirts of the capital and did harm to passers-by. On hearing this news, emperor was annoyed and ordered a general to destroy that devil. In disguise of a lady of the imperial court, the general went to the spot where the devil was supposed to appear. When the devil appeared in a lonely place by a bridge, he cut off its right arm. The devil ran away. He put the devil's arm in a chest and kept it under a heavy guard. Late one evening, someone was knocking at the door asking to see the general. A voice said that she was a milkmaid to the general, and hearing of his brave act, she felt very proud of him. So she came a long way to see the arm which he had severed from the devil, and implored that door to be opened for her. Out of compassion, the general ordered the door to be opened and showed the old woman into the room where the chest was placed. When the general opened the chest, the devil, in disguise as the old woman, took his lost arm by his left hand, and destroyed the gable and flew away high in sky!

My grandfather told me that when my ancestor built his house, he did not construct gables in order to cut the devil's escape. And furthermore in Japan people keep a ritual of throwing beans against devils to keep them away on the evening of the 4th of February, but my family never kept that ritual, because my grandfather believed that devils dare not visit our house again!

It is a charming and innocent story, but oral tradition proves nothing. You may come across a pedigree going back to the Middle Ages among a family's archive, but I am quite sure that such must have been forged by genealogists many years previously.

I would like to give another example of the archaeological excavation of a lost village from 1783. In spring 1783 Mount Asama, a volcano about 150km north west of Tokyo, started to erupt. Smoke and falling ash had annoyed people in the villages at the foot of the volcano. In the summer suddenly a big eruption caused the stream of lava with ash and mud to destroy a village about 30km away from the crater.

Although about half of the population was lost, the survivors built the village again on same place. In 1981 Professor Matsuda, the historian, proposed to excavate the village on the occasion of the bicentennial anniversary of the eruption. It was difficult to locate the old village under the thick layer of soil. At the time of the eruption there was a small temple at the top of a hill to the west of the village. Villagers who took refuge in that temple managed to survive. The temple was reconstructed on the same spot and stone steps led down into the earth. According to the oral tradition, some say the original stone steps had more than a hundred steps, and some say just fifty. Naturally the archaeologists started to dig at the foot of the stone steps, and uncovered 30 stone steps: and they found two bodies at the foot of the steps. Later it became clear that these were an old woman on the back of a young woman. It is presumed that a young wife of a peasant took her mother-in-law on her back to take refuge in that temple, but very unfortunately they were swallowed up by a hot stream of sand and mud. It became clear that the village was so far away from the crater that the stream of lava had cooled off on the way. The stream must not have been lava itself, but a stream of hot water with sand and mud. Observation from recent eruptions suggests that the stream comes down with great speed, and even motor vehicles are overtaken. And it retained a quite high temperature, but not high enough to destroy wooden houses and barns. The findings of this excavation are remarkable in proving that the standard of living of this village was higher than usually expected. They found furniture, china, ink pot for their letters, glasses for readings, kitchen utensils such as pans and pots, and other tiny things of every day life, which are never recorded in official documents.

Now I would like to illustrate another new approach to urban history. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, feudal lords ordered painters to draw in very minute detail a bird's-eye view of the cities of Kyoto and Edo. Those are very huge paintings, consisting usually of six pieces of paper screen, the size of which must be something like 2 metres by 12 metres. Today, I have brought photographs of some sections of Edo (Tokyo). As you will notice, it illustrates various sections of the city, such as the castle, the residences of feudal lords, temples and shrines, and also the busy mainstreet. These are not only very exactly painted but also different scenes of the year. For instance, at the gate of the castle, you will see the ambassador from Korea on his settee carried by soldiers and his tributes of presents displayed. In front of a shrine, knights are waiting the arrival of the Shogun. On the main street it is

a festival day, and there are various activities of commerce. It seems that feudal lords took these screens back to their residences in the countryside and showed them to members of their family and their retainers who had never been in Kyoto or Edo. It is very fascinating to compare different scenes of different screens to estimate the dates of paintings, for we knew the date of construction of certain buildings as well as the date of loss by fire, or the name of owners of the residence.

Another recent unique experiment is the reconstruction of the old School of Ashikaga, about 90 km north of Tokyo. It is described by Francis Xavier, a Jesuit missionary, as the oldest '*Schola*' in east Japan. Tradition told us that the School was founded in 832 by Ono-no-Tofu, a famous literaryman, native of this town. There is a Foundation Charter of 1249, and the Regulation of 1349. However, the first warden of the School was invited to come from Kamakura between 1432 and 1439. Uesugi Norizane, then the Lord of Ashikaga, donated a collection of Chinese Classics to the Library, and ordered that the books never be taken out of the Library. He must have been equivalent to Duke Humphrey and Thomas Bodley of the University of Oxford. Those books are still preserved in the Library. Some of the commentaries published in China during the thirteenth century are the only remaining copies in the World. During the fifteenth century when the School was at its zenith, more than 3000 students were studying there. During the early modern period, the School had been under special patronage of the Tokugawa Shogun, and in 1668 almost all the buildings were rebuilt. The School was surrounded by a moat and mound, and there was the Temple, enshrining the statues of Confucius and the Founder, the Lecture Hall, the Warden's Lodging, and the Students' Dormitories. In 1754 when all the buildings except the Temple were burned down by lightning, the School asked for a subsidy from the government to rebuild, submitting the estimate of costs, describing minutely all the timbers and building materials necessary for re-building. The kind and size of all the timber were recorded. Those reconstructed buildings were again destroyed by fire in 1831. The site was used as a local primary school after the Meiji Restoration. Recently the primary school moved to a new building in a more spacious site. The Mayor of the City of Ashikaga, who is still a nominal warden of the School, proposed to the City Council the reconstruction of this historic School, and granted the necessary budget. One of my colleagues, Dr Hatano, an architectural historian and architect himself, participated in the scheme. He designed the Lecture Hall, the Warden's Lodging in one building and other buildings based on the Plan of 1668, consulting the

estimate of 1754. Those buildings were completed in spring in 1991. I must say that this is an unique experiment of historical reconstruction.

As I describe recent trends of local history studies in Japan, I must conclude my paper, telling how local historians are organized and publish their research. In England there are so many local history societies, at least one in each county. But in Japan there are not so many local history societies on a local basis. I do not know the reason why this is so in Japan. But in 1950 a national society for local historians started as 'The General Council for Research in Local History', and in the following year began to publish a quarterly journal called Local History. I believe that present membership is more than a thousand. The Annual General Meetings take place alternately in Tokyo and provincial cities. The first day of the General Meeting is for papers and business, followed by an excursion to historic sites nearby. Sometimes, special subjects are selected as the main theme for the general meeting. For instance, either current topics such as urban developments, industrialization, transport systems, or local topics of area where the general meeting takes place.

As to publication, I must point out the fact that each county, city, or even village is eager to publish their own history.

The modern framework of local government in Japan was constituted by 'the Municipal Corporation, Urban and Rural Districts Act of 1888' and 'the Urban and Rural Prefectures Act of 1890' under the strong direction of the Central Government, along with the Promulgation of the Meiji Imperial Constitution of 1889. So before the Second World War, in celebrating the golden jubilee of local government, many counties and cities compiled their history. And after the War other trends were observed in a "keeping up with the Jones" fashion in the compilation of histories on the occasion of the centenary. Some of them are excellent presentations with volumes of historical documents and non-documentary evidence. It reminds me of the Victoria County History of England, but not so uniform.

I would like to conclude my speech thanking University of Copenhagen for giving me this opportunity and also the Danish Research Council for making this possible, and last but not least Dr. Thomas Riis, University of Odense for organizing everything for me.

Thank you again for your kind attention.

(9th Oct. 1991)

附記

本報告は1991年10月9日、コペンハーゲン大学の東アジア研究所のセミナーで、翌日10月10日にオデンセ大学の歴史学部のセミナーでも行なわれたものである