

JAPANESE GUILDS

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In the feudal age of any country, merchants and manufacturers formed in many cases trade associations in order to monopolize their business and to make regulations among themselves. Such a trade association was called "guild" or "Zunft" in medieval Europe, while in China it is supposed to correspond to *ko* (community) in the reigns of Tang and Sang dynasties and *Kaikan* (guild hall) [会館] or *Kosho* [公所] in the reigns of Ming and Ching dynasties. In this country, it is thought to be identical with an organization known as *za* [座] or *Kabunakama* [株仲間]. In detailed investigation, we found, however, many differences between them and in order to clarify the peculiarity of each of them, the author first intends to outline the characteristics of *za* and *kabunakama*, which are the correspondents in this country of European guilds.

I. *The early feudal society and the formation of za*

a) Formation of *za*

Za was a definite social group, which was formed through the early feudal age in the 12th, 14th and 15th centuries not only by men of industry and commerce, but also by men of every profession. In general, *za* belonged to manorial lords such as shrines, temples and court nobles (*kuge*) and it was under their protection by paying some customs to the lords.

Although there are many diverse opinions as to the origin of *za*, it is most reasonable to imagine that it originated from a group of people which occupied a certain place reserved for them on such occasions as festivals of shrines, memorial services of temples and the special rites of the royal house hold. Those who were seated at the place on these occasions took part in some events and for this made together some special works and contributions. In return, the members of *za* enjoyed protection and special privilege granted to them. These *za* which later on became active in industry and commerce are thought to have originated either from such service-groups, or branched off from them.

Then, when and how were these service-groups formed? By the disorganization of the ancient society, the shrines and temples and court-nobles

in the metropolitan areas who needed their own self-sustaining organization independent of the state authority began to demand from the leading farmers in their respective estate services and subordination to them. The typical examples are *jinin* [神人] who belonged to shrines and temples and *kugonin* [供御人] who belonged to the royal household and supplied food to it. They were given a special place on the occasions of the royal ceremonies and festivals and memorial services of shrines and temples and granted various privileges in return for their services.

As early as in 1092 in *Hatsuse* Village in *Yamashiro* which belonged to the *Enryakuji* temple, there was organized by villagers a *za*, in which the order to seats of the members was definitely determined. The inhabitants of *Hatsuse* Village who had been known as "the youngmen of *Hatsuse* (*Hatsuse no doji*) since early times were in a special relation of service with the *Enryakuji* Temple. It is, therefore, conjectured that this *za* took its rise in the relation to this temple. One of the evidences that *za* of this kind was functioning as a single community playing an active role outside the village is the fact that a *za* consisting of monks in *Uji-Shirakawa* played a pantomime at the festival of *Yamashiro-Uji-Rikyu* in 1153 (3rd year of *Jimpei*). In fact, a pantomime troupe such as this was formed and called *za* early as at the end of the *Heian* period. In the meantime, in 1183 appeared a *za* of *sake*-dealers of the *Kango-ji* Temple which belonged to *Wakamiya* in *Kasuga* and in 1145 another one of oil dealers was formed at the *Daigo-ji* Temple.

The control which the lord so firmly held over *za* is, therefore, one of the characteristics of these early *za*, whose activities were mainly the rendering of various services. In such cases, one who lead the members of the *za* in its labour services was called "*konokōbe*." The system of *konokōbe* may be the remnant of the ancient institution of "*be*." But, there is no evidence available to confirm the conjecture.

A *za* of architects in the *Kōfukuji* Temple, for example had four divisions, i.e. *Daijoin-za*, *Ichijoin-za* and *Kasugasha-za* each under the leadership of its *konokobe*. In *konza* (*za* of deep blue dyers) of *Daijoin*, the members of *za* served in turn the lord, namely, *Daijoin*, with deep blue dying usually under the direction of a *konokōbe*. A *za* of palanquin bearers (*Kagokaki no za*) in Kyoto served the Emperor carrying his palanquin. It has four divisions, each of which was directed by its *konokōbe* accompanied by his assistants called *satanin*. Although these palanquin bearers were all men of industry and commerce in Kyoto, the four divisions did not act as a single united association of fellow traders. They were ordered by *konokōbe* to gather at a waiting place for them. They contributed some money to *konokōbe* and received from him an identification card for their commission. Observing the documents which are kept at the *Nanzenji* Temple in Kyoto, for example, we see that the *sake* dealers of Kyoto joined a *za* of the oil

dealers and the *sake* dealers belonging to the *Hiyoshi-jinja* Shrine which was the tutelary shrine of the *Enryakuji* Temple and presented *sake* and oil to the *Hiyoshi-jinja Shrine* by the order of their *konokōbe*. At the end of the 12th century belonged to *Wakamiya* of *Kasuga* in Nara another *za* of *sake* dealers which presented *sake* and *miso* to it for the use at the divine service.

These organizations were, however, only service-groups subordinate to shrines, temples and court nobles being anything but the independent association of the fellow traders. Since the 13th or 14th century, men of industry and commerce who came to join this kind of *za* for their greater freedom rapidly increased in number. *Jinin* and *kugonin* who constituted *za* also came to join this profit-making activities looking for liberty. Thus, those who were engaged in the same business having closely related to each other for their common interest banded themselves and formed a special *za* within the framework of some existing one. Some of the members left the existing *za*, while some made new one separately. The dealers of *koji*¹ who presented *sake* and *miso* to *Wakamiya* of *Kasuga* in a capacity of *za* members belonging to it organized a *za* of their own and continued their business successfully. It is to be remarked here that this *za* had the appearance of that of *sake* dealers, but was in fact one organized by *koji* merchants. After the civil war in the 14th century, even in the palanquin bearers' *za* which was consisting of men of various professions, fellow traders banded themselves in some separate *za*. Among them, a *za* organized by rice merchants had the members of more than sixty. There appeared further a *za* of textile dealers followed by those of iron dealers and bamboo dealers all branching off from the *za* of palanquin bearers. In such a form, our *za* can be compared with European guilds. In the 14th century, a split took place in many *za* and there appeared a *hon-za* (old *za*) and *shin-za* (new *za*) out of the existing one. In the former, taxes were imposed upon it as a whole, while each member of the latter was taxed individually. On the other hand, the former had the duty of labour services, while the latter paid their duties in money or merchandises they handled. It is understood that the latter was more independent of the lord's authority provided with many features closer to European guilds.

b) Organization of *za*

This kind of *za* rapidly increased in number since the 14th century densely located in such places as Kyoto, and Nara in *Kinki* district, where the economic development had reached a higher stage. In Kyoto, for instance, there were in existence more than fortythree *za*, among which that of palanquin bearers in *Kamigyō* Shrine and that of cotton merchants belonging to the *Gion-yashiro* in *Shimogyō* were most remarkable. In *Yamato*, we find more than fiftysix *za* ranging from very large ones such

¹ a kind of yeast

as that of oil dealers and that of salt dealers down to small ones such as *Omi-za*. They all belonged to *Daijoin* of the *Kōfukuji* Temple. In such large town as *Omi*, *Settsu*, and *Kamakura*, *za* was also seen to be organized. From the evidences which show that *za* was formed in almost all the old castle-towns (*jōkamachi*),² it is concluded that *za* was formed in general in prosperous districts.

Some *za* located in rural districts were formed with their centers in the bargain market. For example, there were various *za* belonging to *Konaikyo* in *Omi*, whose lord was the *Enryakuji* Temple and *Yagi-za* of *Yamato* which was engaged in sesame brokerage. In such cases, the organization of the villages is not to be identified with that of professional *za*. Only those who paid a certain amount of taxes formed a *za*, through which they handled their goods. The members of such a *za* were, at any rate, rich farmers who sold at the market the goods they produced. Such a *za* was also joined by some brokers from other areas. Therefore, *za* in our history was neither identical with the guild of the European medieval age, nor with *ko* (community) in the reign of Tang and Sang dynasties in China. Because both are thought to have been organized in urban districts as organizations consisting of fellow traders engaged in some business. Considering a theory that in Europe the guilds originated from those groups of merchants and manufacturers subordinate to manorial lords, is it not possible to compare the guilds with our *za* which were organized in rural districts?

Along with the development of towns and cities in this country, merchants and manufacturers and those engaged in the same kind of business began to flock together in order to facilitate their business. Such a tendency became very remarkable in Kyoto in particular and textile dealers, fish and poultry dealers and timber dealers had their own zone in the city and there appeared a densely populated zones of *za* called *Machi-za* in *Shijō*. They are thought to have originated from a market system in ancient *Heian-kyō*.

It is interesting to observe that some resemblances are in existence between this institution and that of *ko* (community) in the reign of Tang and Sung dynasties in China.

A *za* usually consisted of ten members, but some had more than fifty members, while some were constituted of only one or two members. They are rather small scaled, if we compare them with European guilds which were generally consisting of more than a hundred members. But it is presumed that the guilds were also of the similar scale in their early stage of development. *Zatō* (head of *za*), *Otona* (alderman) and *satanin* (assistant) were elected in *za* and assumed the responsibility of running the *za*. In *Yamato*, for example, seven *otona* (aldermen) were leading thirty members in a *za* of brazier-makers belonging to *Daijoin*. In a *za* of oil dealers, eight *otona* (aldermen) had the right not only to collect annual customs and

to control the members, but also to lock out from the business those who were not obedient enough. The use of the same titles as those of village leaders such as “*otona*” (alderman) and “*toshiyori*” is the evidence that *za* was not the body under the control from outside but a selfsupporting organization acting for its own interest. We have also an evidence to the effect that all policies were established in the meeting of members in a *za* of oil dealers in the suburb of *Nara* and that of paper dealers in *Edamura* of *Omi*. In *Ame-za* of *Yamato-karu*, the annual meeting is thought to have at the same time provided neighboring villagers with opportunities of gathering together. In short, *za* whose interest was the bargaining at markets is to be regarded as a group consisting of merchants and manufacturers spontaneously formed for the common interest of the members.

Zatō (head of *za*) and *otona* (alderman) of a *za* were in the same social status as that of landowners (*myōshu*) though not so high in villages, while in towns and cities rich people such as factors collected annual customs being influential in *za*. The fact that a *satanin* (assistant) of a *za* consisting of cotton merchants in *Gion* of *Kyoto* was also a cotton factor is the evidence for an important role he was playing among the members of the *za*, through which he sold cotton at wholesale to his retailers. Consequently, these factors gradually accumulated capital as wholesalers, but in the early feudal age they were still acting as retailers at the same time. The factorship was still in its infancy at the time and could not be organized into a *za* independent of that of retailers. In fact, farmers were pedlers selling their products at bargain markets which were hold on the occasion of festivals of shrines and temples, while handicraftsmen in towns and cities were at the same time retailers of their products and in both cases there was not any motivation to induce the split of a *za* of sellers from that of makers.

c) Functions of *za*

Here we shall be concerned with various functions of *za*. In the early feudal ages, some form of protection from their manorial lord was in demand on the part of merchants and manufacturers, because they were suffering from various obstacles in doing their business including the limitedness of their markets. This was of course one of the reasons why they joined a *za*. It is, therefore, regarded as most essential among various requirements for *za* that the right and interest be sufficiently protected securing the monopoly of the members. As one of the most important rights and privileges, for whose maintenance the protection of the lord is called for, we mention a right to monopolize the workshop specially reserved for them as well as that of selling at the market under the protection of their lord. As for the monopoly of the workshop, the carpenters of the royal household first monopolized all the construction works of shrines and temples, but later

the monopoly came into the possession of those carpenters and architects who flocked together at large shrines and did not allow others to participate in their work. This was also the case of painters and makers of Buddhist images. It was also made a custom that *za* of no players and pantomime players had an exclusive right to play on the occasion of festivals of the temples, to which it belonged. In the festivals of other shrines and temples, two or three *za* were granted the right to play for the occasion. Even those of harpers and courtesans are seen to have had a fixed sphere for their monopoly.

Such protection and maintenance of the rights and privileges for the interest of some *za* was particularly remarkable among those *za* of merchants and manufacturers. In the early feudal society which was self-sustaining, goods were produced only in rare cases for selling, while demand for goods was also very limited. Such being the situation, the only way available to small retailers in raising profits was either to make use of the price differences in different places, or to avail themselves of a large variation of prices. Even in such limited markets, too many rival fellow traders would have been lead to bankruptcy. In order to avoid it, they joined a *za* and prevented outsiders from participating in their business. In order to make their monopoly more effective, they needed the authority of the manorial lord, who was most influential in the district. Further, their right of monopoly must be authorized by a well-established tradition of the *za*. In fact, a good lineage was most essential in backing up their standing in case of any dispute. Thus, the members of a *za* liked to show off their old pedigree usually connected with the royal household. Some members of a *za* of sugar dealers and that of drug dealers even dared to make a connection with the *Tang* dynasty in China in their pedigree. Even some seemingly counterfeit documents were presented in case of disputes.

The monopoly of an area for the exclusive sales was started early in the 13th century and in the 14th century there appeared many instances, in which the members of *za* punished such monopoly-breakers as side-sellers. For example, the members of a *za* of oil dealers at *Oyamazaki* seized and destroyed the manufacturing equipments belonging to those, who dared to deal oil without permission. When the situation was beyond their control, they used to appeal to the lord for his intervention. The sphere of monopoly remained, therefore, within the extension of the influence of the lord.

These and other related matters are most clearly recognized in an agreement concluded about the sphere of influence. According to it, some *za* obtained the right to maintain monopoly over several districts. For instance, a *za* of oil dealers at *Oyamazaki* was granted to make monopoly not only all through out the *Kinki* district except *Yamato*, but also in all the western parts of this country. Such a monopoly in sales had its origin in the place for selling at the bargain market, where only those members

of the *za* are authorized to deal goods and outsiders were allowed to do so only by paying some tax for admission.

As a result of the expansion of towns and cities as well as of the increase of retailers, the bargain markets in villages lost its privileged status as bargaining places for monopolized goods and stores of more permanent nature began to play more and more important role in handling these goods.

Abreast of such a tendency, the merchants of those *za* located in villages gradually moved to urban districts, where the native merchants were of course not willing to receive them and employed all means in order to prevent their rivals from encroaching upon their territory. For example, urban merchants imposed taxes upon new comers for their admission to the town or the city and allowed them to sell good only through the channel of their own.

Except in a few cases concerning raw materials, no monopolization was made with respect to stocking goods. This is perhaps because the main concern of *za* was confined to retails. However, some monopolizations were made with respect to raw materials and the members of *za* went out to the producing districts, but did not allow outsiders to obtain there the sought for raw materials. Sometimes, they made a contract with a local *za* securing an exclusive right to obtain the material. It was also one of the characteristics of this period that transportation was also monopolized. For example, the merchant of *Edamura* in *Omi* seemed to have monopolized the transportation of paper which was carried through a pass leading from *Mino* to *Omi*, while those on the south of *Birwa* lake monopolized the transportation from *Omi* to *Ise*.

In case more than two *za* happened to have an intention to monopolize the same kind of goods, there would naturally take place a intense competition between them. Sometimes, the competition was induced by the difference of the way of selling. But in most cases, an agreement was made properly dividing among them the sphere of influence. For example, a *za* consisting of saltdealers in *Yamato* branched off into three *za*, i. e. *za* of retailers, *za* of wholesale dealers and that of pedlars, while *za* of oil dealers splitted into those of retailers and brokers.

As one of the important facts about *za*, it should be pointed out that the members of *za* were exempted from various duties such as the business tax, market tax and customs tariff and were under the protection of the lord enjoying the freedom of business. Since the second half of the 13th century, lords both in metropolitan and local districts had erected a large number of barriers (*Sekisho*) and collected customs from the merchants passing by. With the extension of the powers of these lords, merchants began to band themselves in order to cope with the expanding power of lords and were given a clearance en bloc for their passing the barriers in return for their contribution of money. Some members of *za* were even granted

passage of the barrier in advance and went hawking throughout various countries. Availing themselves of such a privilege, the oil dealers of *Oyamazaki* raised much profit out of their sales of lamp oil which was manufactured from sesame cheeply purchased beyond the barriers.

Although *za* were active in various fields of commerce and manufacturing at this time provided with such privileges as above-mentioned, it seems that their activities as an independent organization were not so intense on account of the underdevelopment of their organization as trade association. The qualification for a person to join a *za* was his subordination to a lord. In fact, his business was maintained prosperously only under the protection of the lord. Taking into account such a characteristic of *za*, it is seen that they are much different from guilds or *Zunft*s in Europe, although some small-scaled compound guilds and merchants' guilds before the 13th century were supposedly characterized by their subordination to some other powers.

d) Abolition of *za*

At any rate, *za* played an important role in developing commerce and industry throughout the early feudal ages, when there were still many discouraging factors against such developments. But, after the 15th century onwards, there was taking place decline of antique lordship, under which strong protection *za* had been enjoying their prosperity. In other words, *za* were no match for the rising local commerce and industry, which broke their monopoly everywhere. *Daimyo* (war lord), who were rising all throughout the country, tried to isolate manorial lords from merchants and manufacturers keeping them under their own control. In particular, *Daimyo* granted merchants the right of free business on the occasion of erecting their own castle-town, thus breaking the monopoly which *za* had hitherto enjoyed. This policy was called *rakuichi*. Its materialization was seen, for instance, in the abolishment of market taxes and monopolized places in the market, which were practised by many *Daimyo* such as *Imagawa* and *Hōjō*.

It was, further, extensively used by *Nobunaga Oda*, who set about the unification of this country in the latter half of the 16th century devoting himself to the establishment of a feudal monarchy. By so doing, he became at last to challenge the very existence of *za*, which had hitherto been under the control of manorial lords. However *Nobunaga* was not fully successful in carrying out this policy disturbed by the strong opposition on the part of shrines, temples and court nobles.

It was *Hideyoshi Toyotomi*, who succeeded for the first time in fully carrying out this policy initiated by *Nobunaga*. The rearrangement and reshuffling of the manorial system were made by *Hideyoshi* by means of a nation-wide land survey. All *za* were abolished in accordance with his policy of unifying this country. The practise of the abolishment was further promoted after the 13th year of *Tensho* (1585), when the unifications just

started. All the *za*, which the court nobles, shrines and temples had been in possession of, were dissolved and there were no restriction whatsoever, which disturbed unrestricted flow of goods all throughout this country.

II. *Kabunakama and its function*

a) Formation of *kabunakama*

Hideyoshi's policy of free trading was subsequently passed over to the *Edo* Shogunate, in whose reign a private law was promulgated to the effect of forbidding the act of rising the prices of commodities by monopoly. In the towns and cities under the direct control of the Shogunage, *za* was not allowed to exist any more. From the appearance of the situation, it is not generally concluded, however, that even the substantial part of the organization known as *za* was lost with its dissolution thus effectuated. It is, therefore, considered that the character as trade association of *za* remained in most cases untouched in spite of the disappearance of its former connection with manorial lords. Although they were not allowed to call themselves *za*, merchants and manufacturers were now banding themselves into groups strongly provided with a character of trade associations. These groups are known as *ko*, *nakama* and other titles. In *Omi-hachiman* which was well-known for the production of mosquito nets, seventeen net-makers of the town formed a *nakama*, holding a banquet once every year in November at a member's house. Around 1654, a regulation was effectuated preventing any fellow trader from the other area from encroaching their sphere of influence. In the regulation, there was also provided for some punishments of the member who paid higher to their textile workers than the amount stipulated in the regulation. With the Shogunate's adoption of the seclusion policy, there came an end to the free industrial development, which had been in progress without any checking. As a result, domestic markets became narrower and narrower. However, many people did not like to compete with each other unrestrictedly and some of them were banding themselves in secret into *nakama*.

In such a situation, the formation of *nakama* was granted by the Shogunate to public bathes, calender makers, pawnshops and second-hand clothes dealers for the reason of security. In 1721, the Shogunate took a further step in this direction and banded all merchants and manufacturers into *nakama* depriving them of the right of free trading. Such a tendency was further promoted by the financial difficulties, with which the Shogunate was confronted at the beginning of the 18th century. In order to collect a large amount of tributes from *nakama*, the Shogunate could not remain reluctant in granting the status of *nakama* to those who wanted it and the granting of the status was made more freely. In the era, which

is often referred to as that of *Tanuma*, the tendency attained its climax. In fact, a large number of *kabunakama* were formed one after another in the towns and cities under the direct control of the Shogunate. The enthusiasm for *kabunakama* even spreaded to towns and ports under the control of feudal lords.

b) Organization of *kabunakama*

A *kabunakama* was officially organized only on the approval of the Shogunate or feudal lords. Of course, some merchants and manufacturers might have banded themselves into an organization provided with the characteristics of a *kabunakama* without any official authorization, for which it was requested that a list of the members be submitted to the authority. Only after such a formality, the organization in question was granted status of a *kabunakama* and given a monopoly of its business. The members of a *kabunakama* was usually limited in number and those who wanted to start a business were all requested to buy the right of the membership of a *kabunakama* concerned with the business. The right was called a *kabu* (stock) and no one was allowed to be engaged in the business without holding the stock.

In a *kabunakama*, there were set up two executive boards respectively called *nengyoji* and *gatsugyoki*, which represented the organization in negotiating with outsiders. The appointment of the officers were made by means of election or lot, while all the members held the seats in turn in case the *kabunakama* consisted of a small number of members. Some seats were also given to those of a distinguished family by appointment in the name of the authority. For convenience, *kabu* are classified into two categories, i. e., one which was authorized for the convenience of security and the other which was approved in response to an application on the part of the members of *nakama*. Among the former, there were *nakama* of pawnshops, second-hand clothes dealers and public bath-houses, while those of transportation agents, handicraftsmen and workmen were included to the latter. In particular, *nakama* of workmen are supposed to correspond to the craft or the guild in England or to the *Zunft* in Germany. This kind of *nakama* was most numerous, for instance, including those of carpenters, plasters, masons, blacksmiths, etc. As for those concerned with trading there were three kinds i. e. *kabunakama* of factors, brokers and retailers. Hawkers and vendors also had their own sphere of influence banding themselves into *nakama*. This is one of the characteristics of *nakama* not seen in *za*, which was usually constituted of factors as well as retailers.

Of these *kabunakama*, most influential were those of factors, brokers and exchange-brokers. They were further subdivided according to the kind of goods they handled. Thus, *nakama* of factors and retailers were each subdivided into those of cotton dealers, paper dealers and others. Among them, most powerful were those of dyers, weavers and *sake* mer-

chants. On the other hand, factors and retailers banded themselves into *nakama* according to the destination of their goods.

Then monopoly of various products was started by many *daimyō* at the end of the *Yedo* period. Some of these products were carried to *Osaka* to be sold there. Factors of that city were, therefore, induced to band themselves into a *nakama* according to the *daimyō*, with whom they had business connections. Such connections were, of course, responsible for some intervention from the part of *Daimyō*, although profits were sometimes guaranteed by such a bondage. This was the reason why a line-up of *nakama* of factors was made in the big cities according to the fief of *Daimyō*, with whom the factors were in relations of dealing. In local towns, the guilds of fellow-countrymen were also organized with a view to securing profits. For instance, the merchants were united to *nakama* according to the kind of goods they were handling in *Aizuwakamatsu*, where many merchants had penetrated from *Omi*, *Sakai*, *Osaka* and *Yedo*. In this connection, it is of some interest to note that in *Peking* the membership of the guild was granted only to the fellow countrymen and this custom have also been in practise in Central and, in particular, in South China.

c) Function of *kabunakama*

In exchange for its contribution to the Shogunate or to *daimyo*, the *kabunakama* was given by the authority the right to forcibly make fellow traders join the *kabunakama*. Availing itself of this right, the *kabunakama* was able to enforce its policy. In China, such a right was not granted to the guild, but the inconvenience which might result from the non-affiliation with it forced all fellow traders to join it. In this country, the acquisition of such a right was a result of a requirement on the part of the members of the *nakama*. However, as in European countries, the Shogunate and *daimyō* were responsible for the maintenance of this right. In general, the monopoly of a *nakama* was confined to a town or a city under the control of a *machibugyō* (town-magistrate's office) or a *Hanchō* (*daimyo*'s office) or to some specified area. It was also the case with *za*, whose monopoly was confined to a certain area by arrangements. But, in this case, the monopoly took a very complicated form with its sphere of influence both in towns and villages. In case of *kabunakama*, the demarcation was made in accord with the administrative jurisdiction for the better convenience of the administration. For instance, the jurisdiction of the *machibugyō* in *Osaka* was extending beyond *Osaka* proper down to *Nishinomiya*, *Hyōgotsu* and *Nada* and the factors and merchants in these places were always placed under the control of the *kabunakama* in *Osaka* and were not allowed to form an independent *kabunakama*.

The *kabunakama* was stronger than *za* with respect to its control of the members and strongly prevented them from competing with each other.

Such a control was most explicitly exercised in connection with the purchasing of commodities by the members. Co-operation was also maintained by the members in transportation and all the losses were equally borne by them in case of a shipwreck. On the other hand, the punishment for any disobedience to the control was *nakama-hazushi* (expulsion from *nakama*), the boycotting and sometimes even *kabutorihanachi* (confiscation of *kabu*).

As the high prices of commodities could not be maintained as a result of intensified competitions, the members of a *kabunakama* cooperated in inspecting their products or good for their improvements, while the weights and measures were also unified by the agreement of the members. In *Sakai*, for instance, the cotton dealers were very scrupulous in examining measures in preparation for the competition with their fellow traders in *Osaka* and everywhere.

Although the monopoly of their business was the main concern of *kabunakama* and *nakama*, they also maintained friendly terms with religions institutions and participated in various functions held under their auspices. The members of *kabunakama* and *nakama*, further, contributed money to shrines and temples, to which they were related. In this connection, a reference must be made to the *kō* of *kabunakama*, which was usually named after the patron saint of the business of the *kabunakama*. For example, Prince *Shōtoku* was worshipped by carpenters and roofers, who organized *Taishi kō* (fraternity of the Prince), while blacksmiths formed another one called *Inari kō* (fraternity of the god of cereals). Banquets were frequently held by *kabunakama* attended by the members, while ships and warehouses were usually of their common properties.

b) Towns and *kabunakama*

Thus, *kabunakama*, above all, those of urban districts, held the predominant position in economic activities of the cities and towns. However, owing to a strong control exercised by the feudal lords over them, *kabunakama* was not in general so strongly represented in the politics and administration of these towns and cities, as it was in Europe, where the members of the guilds were elected to the municipal office in a capacity of the officer of the guild. However, only in *Hyōgo*, the representatives of a *nakama* were elected to the municipal office and entrusted with the administration of the town. It is to be remarked, however that they were not so elected in a capacity of the representatives of the *nakama* they belonged to. This fact is, therefore, the evidence for the complete lack of relations between the *nakama* and the administration.

The spirit of independence and isolationism of *kabunakama* was responsible for the lack of liaison among different *kabunakama*. Such a lack of liaison was extreme in the guilds in China. As they did not have any national power to rely upon, the activities of different guilds were far from

being in order and even the weights and measures were not the same in each guild. However, the *kabunakama* was relatively powerless in comparison with the authority of the state, which was so firmly established at this time, whereas the Chinese guilds were rather independent of the governmental authority. Further, owing to the lack of interconnection among guilds as well as to their independence from the governmental authority, there was no possibility in China for its guilds to develop into a nationwide one. In this country too, most *kabunakama* were confined in their activities to a relatively small area. Further, only a small number of towns and cities had the privilege of having its *kabunakama* which could profitably deal in some important commodities. Consequently, those *kabunakama* in local small towns were allowed only to handle the necessities of life yielding to the aggression of those from the big towns and cities. For example, ten drapery factors in *Yedo* tied up with the cotton crape factors in *Tōkamachi* in Echigo and made a monopoly, while close co-operation was maintained between twentyfour factors in *Osaka* and ten factors in *Yedo*, who combined their efforts in order to monopolize the transportation of goods between these two cities. These facts and others are one of the evidences for the commercial development of this country, which had been actively under way at that time in a nation-wide scale. However no guild in this country was so internationally active as some in Europe. The Japanese towns and cities are also characterized, it is supposed, by the fact that the *nakama* of handicraftsmen was not so strong as that of merchants. It is a familiar fact to anybody who read about the history of European towns that the *Zunft*, i. e. the association of handicraftsmen, began to gain power in the town in the 14th century and even dared to demand sometimes the autonomy of the town or the control of markets. In contrast to such a situation in Europe, the *Zunft* of handicraftsmen had almost no power in Chinese towns, as pointed out by Max Weber. However, some researches made in this connection clarified that they were not so powerless as has been conjectured. In fact, they sometimes even challenged the guild of merchants. But in this country, the commercial capital was so strong that handicraftsmen ranked very low and their *nakama* were not in a position to compete with those of merchants. In fact, they were humble enough to remain lowest among the class of *Chōnin*.

This is because they had no oversea market and could not have chance to export their products to distant countries, just as the European weavers did.

e) Transformation and dissolution of *kabunakama*

In the latter half of the 18th century, a change began to take place to our *kabunakama*, which had played a role somewhat similar to that played by the guild in Europe. In the first place, there developed in rural com-

munities an agricultural economy provided with commercial elements. As a result, land-owners became more interested in producing things with a view to selling them to privileged *nakama* in the town. In order to obtain the right to sell the goods they produced, they contributed some money to feudal lords and joined a *kabunakama*. The right of this kind was called *zaishokabu* (kabu of villagers). On the other hand, the increase of workmen made it more and more difficult for them to become an *oyakata* (master). A similar situation was taking place among *kabunakama* of merchants and existing *kabunakama* began to branch off into smaller ones, which were respectively joined by those engaged in the same kind of business or working in the same area. Later on, this kind of *nakama* developed into an organization, which was essentially the same as the trade association. Similar kinds of organization were also developing from the *ko*, which had been in existence within a *kabunakama*. For instance, a *kabunakama* of sugar brokers split into three *ko*, each of which was in possession of its own list of the members. They were, further, taken care of by the officers such as *nemban*, *nengyoji* and *kaiyaku*, who were all different in each *ko*. The gradual dissolution of *kabunaka* was, thus, started.

In the meantime, a movement against the privileged status of *nakama* became active and even the abolishment of the system was tried in some places.

The policy again *kabunaka* on the part of the authority came to a culmination, when the Shogunate disbanded in the 13th year of *Tempō* (1842) all the *kabunakama* under its direct control. The excuse was the prevention of the rise of the prices of commodities. In reality, the step was taken in order to put the rising class of rural merchants under the direct control of the Shogunate. The same step was taken by some *daimyō* and the monopoly was made stronger everywhere. Although the policy of the Shogunate was somewhat moderated by the strong opposition on the part of factors in three big cities, the influence of *kabunakama* was not recovered any more. But, it was only after the Meiji Restoration that the system of *kabunakama* was abolished at last. Herewith the guilds of the feudal age disappeared.

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