

Cityscape and Ethics

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The event to showcase the early summer in Kyoto is the Gion Festival with a history of roughly 1100 years. The main event of this festival for tourists may be the Yamahoko Procession that 32 of “yama” and “hoko” (double-decked floats) floats with names derives from classics march through main streets. The period for which local people are looking is “Yoi-yama”—three nights before procession. While that period, dozens of Japanese lanterns on “yama” and “hoko” enshrined by each town will be lit and Gion festival music will be played boisterously on “yama” and “hoko”. In each block association keeping “yama” and “hoko”, a base called “Kaisho” is set up and the ornaments and treasures decorated the successive “yama” and “hoko” are displayed there. It is a town-by-town system, however, it produces a wonderful harmony, maybe thanks to traditions. It is also a big opportunity to see the cityscape of Kyo-Machiyas (“Machiya” refers to the traditional wooden “town” house) having narrow frontage and long depth.

Speaking of Nara, temples and shrines such as Todai-Ji, Kasuga-Taisha, Yakushi-Ji and Toshodai-Ji in Nishinokyo come to our minds. But one more thing that cannot be passed over is Nara-machi where Machiyas with Nara lattices stand in rows. The vicarious monkeys—charms against evil—hanged under eaves of each house and harmonized shrines, temples and merchant houses are making an attractive cityscape. Some reason may be for tourism, however, we can see the spirit of the residents to preserve good old cityscapes in either Kyoto or Nara.

- For main events of Gion Festival, visit:

<http://www.gionmatsuri.jp/>

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/yasaka/gionmaturi.html>

<http://web-jpn.org/kidsweb/calendar/july/gion.html>

- For sightseeing in Nara-machi, Nara-shi, visit:

<http://urano.org/kankou/naramati/index.html>

- About the vicarious monkey, visit:

<http://www.naramachi.org/what/migawari.html>

The Oedo Nihonbashi was established in 1604 as the starting point of five roads (Tokaido, Nakasendo, Nikko-kaido, Ohsyu-kaido, Kohshu-kaido). Above the Nihonbashi (Nihon bridge), which is a representative construction of Meiji era completed in 1991, the express highway built at the time of Tokyo Olympics is crossing and spoiling the cityscape.

With the views of local residents and support from Prime Minister Koizumi, to start examination about the move of express highway has been decided. The old-time cityscape of Nihonbashi with a view of blue sky may come back soon.

In Japan, the earthquake resistance falsification of condominiums and illegal conversion of hotels are at issue. It seems that economy and efficiency were prioritized and the spirit of the law was forgotten when constructing

these condominiums and hotels. I suspect that this was caused by the lack of ethics such as considerations to the people living near the buildings and compassion for the weak. One possible cause is a thin tradition to keep the cityscape regionally as general Japanese wooden houses will be reconstructed after 20 years or so on an average. I am stunned by the fact that people in European cities have been continuing their daily activities in the buildings built in medieval times. I think this is because the tradition cultivates the ethic that they have a duty to use good old buildings for day-to-day living and continue to conserve cityscapes.

- About the Round Table for the Consideration of Roads and Cityscape of Nihonbashi, visit:

<http://www.ktr.mlit.go.jp/toukoku/michikeikan/about.html>

- About the trial regarding the height of a condominium in Kunitachi-City and cityscape, visit:

<http://www.linkclub.or.jp/~erisa-25/kosakuin/warehouse/kunitati/ihohanketu01.htm>

<http://www.oskjichi.or.jp/j/readingroom/200304kakuhashi.html>

- About condominium's earthquake resistance falsification scandal, visit:

<http://retour.seesaa.net/article/10081560.html>

From the standpoint of consumer protection, the Product Liability Law of Japan that imposes the burden of proof to prove a causal relationship between the accident and product defect on the company was enacted in 1994. As for electrical appliances and materials, the Electrical Appliance and Material Control Law was revised into the Electrical Appliance and Material Safety Law in 1999 and enforced in April 2001, and then the indication of PSE mark became mandatory. The products subject to control and having been granted for 5-year grace period as a transitional measure will become unable to be sold without PSE mark on and after April 1, 2006, even if they are used products (see Note). The range of articles for which the product safety is required has widened from hard wares such as automobiles, electric appliances, foods, cosmetics, and drugs to the soft wares such as game software, information software, and control software.

Note: As of February 2006.

- About Product Liability Law of Japan, visit:

<http://www.consumer.go.jp/kankeihourei/seizoubutsu/index.html>

<http://www.consumer.go.jp/e/index.html>

- For letter of Consumer Product Safety Act of the U.S., visit:

<http://www.herc.org/library/cpsa.pdf>

- The website of Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry about Product Safety:

<http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/consumer/contents5.html>

- About Electrical Appliance and Material Safety Law, visit:

<http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/consumer/seian/denan/>

- For handling of electrical appliances and materials following the end of grace period, visit:

http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/consumer/seian/denan/keikasochi/keikasochi_q&a.htm

In medieval Europe, medical doctor, person of religion, and lawyer are called “professions” as the occupations having ethics swore before heaven and agreed to a contract. In our time, engineers and researchers are also required to be professional acquired high sense of ethics. Among the requirements for approving product safety, the electromagnetic environmental test plays a central role. If you read the items required for EMC engineer shown in IEEE’s jobs available section, you can see that high sense of ethics and loyalty are required.

For ethics educational curriculum of university for engineers, visit:

<http://www.akita-pu.ac.jp/system/elect/original/jabee/ethics.html>

- About ACM code of ethics, visit:

<http://www.acm.org/constitution/code.html>

- The website of Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions in Illinois University:

<http://ethics.iit.edu/codes/>

- For job requirements for EMC engineer candidates, visit:

http://www.emclab.umn.edu/ieee_emc/jobs.html



Yamahoko Procession



Nara Lattice and Vicarious Monkeys



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1968 Graduated from Department of Engineering Science, Osaka University

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