



Yukaku (red-light district) and city planning in Japanese colonial cities in Taiwan, 1895-1945

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In 1895, Taiwan (Formosa) was ceded to Japan by the Qing dynasty. In the earliest period of the Japanese rule, a crowd of Japanese prostitutes immigrated to Taiwan, which opened an era when sex industry of both Japanese and locals appeared broadly in the cities. Then, aiming to solve sanitary and security issues, Japanese colonial government started to set “kashizashiki designated area (also called yukaku area simply)” in each city in 1896, and allowed prostitutes to do their business only inside the area. It also provided the rough location planning of colonial cities far earlier than other well-studied urban policies or plannings, such as the “city improvement plannings (shiku-kaisei)” started in 1900 and so on. Thus, in this context, these designations can be considered as the earliest “silent” planning of the Japanese colonial cities. After that, some yukakus moved to another location in the cities once or more, in response to city growth and progress of the “city improvement planning”. This study found that there were yukakus in 16 cities of colonial Taiwan in total, and the meanings and grounds of each location changed in response to the progress of urban planning or urban developing.

Keywords: Yukaku, Red-light district, City planning, Japanese colonial city, Taiwan.

1. Introduction

Jinja (神社 shrine) and yukaku (遊廓 red-light district) have been recognized as “symbols” of Japanese colonial cities by some researchers¹, because they were set in the earliest period of Japanese colonial era and characterized Japanese colonial cities with some special functions. Thus, it is very important to focus on these things in order to understand the history of Japanese colonial cities in a variety of aspects, including history of urban planning. Aoi’s research² focused on shrines in the colonial cities of Japan, but there has been no research on relationship between yukaku and city planning yet.

This study aims to find a new meaning of the transition of yukakus’ location in Japanese colonial cities in Taiwan and it has several novelties: it (1) focused on the yukaku’s location in the city, (2) targeted yukakus in all cities of Taiwan and (3) analysed them in terms of urban planning theory.

In this paper, the followings are reported:

- (1) Yukaku’s location in each city and its transition.
- (2) Relationship between yukaku’s location and urban planning and its transition.

It will provide a new perspective and understanding for the planning history of Japanese colonial cities.

2. Methods and materials

In this study, the following materials were investigated; various historical documents such as official documents of the Governor-General of Taiwan (臺灣總督府報), books / newspapers / magazines at the time, city planning maps (市區改正計畫圖) / fire insurance special map (火災保險特殊地圖) and so on.

This paper basically uses original terms and their Japanese pronunciations about the name of cities etc.; such as Taihoku (Taipei 臺北), Takao (Kaohsiung 高雄), ken (prefecture 縣), shu (country 州), shi (city 市) and so on.

3. Policies about urban planning / yukaku in Japanese colonial era

Through the Japanese colonial era, there were some changes in the policies about urban planning. According to Huang(2006)³, these policies were divided into three types. First is in the very early time, such as 1895-1900, called “shiku-kaisei (city improvement 市區改正)” period. In this period, the Governor-General of Taiwan (Taiwan Sotokufu 臺灣總督府) mainly focused only on improvement of water systems and roads, and didn’t consider overall city planning. Then, after 1900, “shiku-keikaku (city planning 市區計畫)” was appointed in some cities, and planners started aiming to make a whole and comprehensive planning on each city. Finally, “Taiwan



Urban Planning Act (Taiwan Toshi-keikaku-rei 臺灣都市計畫令)” was established in 1936, which provided modern and integrated urban planning system in colonial Taiwan.

In terms on yukakus, a crowd of Japanese prostitutes immigrated to Taiwan in the earliest period of the Japanese rule, which opened an era when sex industry of both the Japanese and the locals appeared broadly in the cities. Then, aiming to solve sanitary and security issues, most of local governments started to set “kashizashiki designated area (貸座敷指定地 also called yukaku 遊廓 or yukaku area 遊廓地 simply)” in each city in 1896, and allowed prostitutes to do their business only inside the area. Although these yukaku areas were designated only in part of each city, they based on the various situations of the cities at the time and provided the rough location planning of colonial cities far earlier than other well-studied urban policies or plannings, such as the “city improvement plannings (shiku-kaisei 市區改正)” started in 1900, constructions of governmental buildings, and so on. In the example in Taihoku-ken (臺北縣), the very first local government’s order (kenrei 縣令) in 1896 was about this yukaku. It’s very notable because it’s far earlier than the implementation of any of city plannings. Then, the governmental order about yukaku was established for whole Taiwan in 1906.

According to Zhang(2008)⁴, contents of the order included the followings:

- (1) introduced license system of prostitutes’ business by local government.
- (2) introduced registration system of the prostitutes.
- (3) prohibited business of prostitutes outside yukaku area.
- (4) prohibited prostitutes to go outside yukaku area.
- (5) gave the Governor-General of Taiwan (臺灣總督府) the power to approve designating and redesignating of yukaku area.
- (6) made periodic medical examination compulsory.

Among them, (5) is quite important in the context of the relationship between urban planning and yukaku. In order to designate or relocate yukaku area, local government had to get an approval by the Governor-General of Taiwan. This rule made the yukaku’s location align with urban planning policies.

4. Location of yukakus in colonial Taiwan

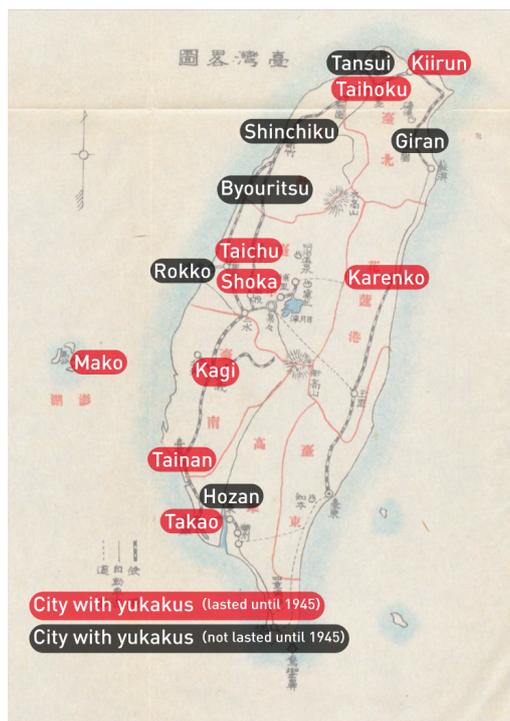


Figure 1: *Yukakus in colonial Taiwan*. Edited by author and based on [台中市, 台中市概況(1936), frontispiece].



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As a result of comprehensive investigation into historical documents such as public documents⁵ and newspapers⁶, it turned out that yukaku existed in 16 cities of colonial Taiwan in total.

At the same time, the change of the location of all cities was revealed in detail. Yukakus in 7 cities moved to another location in each city once or more, in response to city growth and progress of the “city improvement planning (市區改正計畫)”. Case examples of some cities are shown below. For example, in Tainan, yukakus moved to the reclaimed land in 1912 (yukaku for Japanese) and 1917 (yukaku for locals).

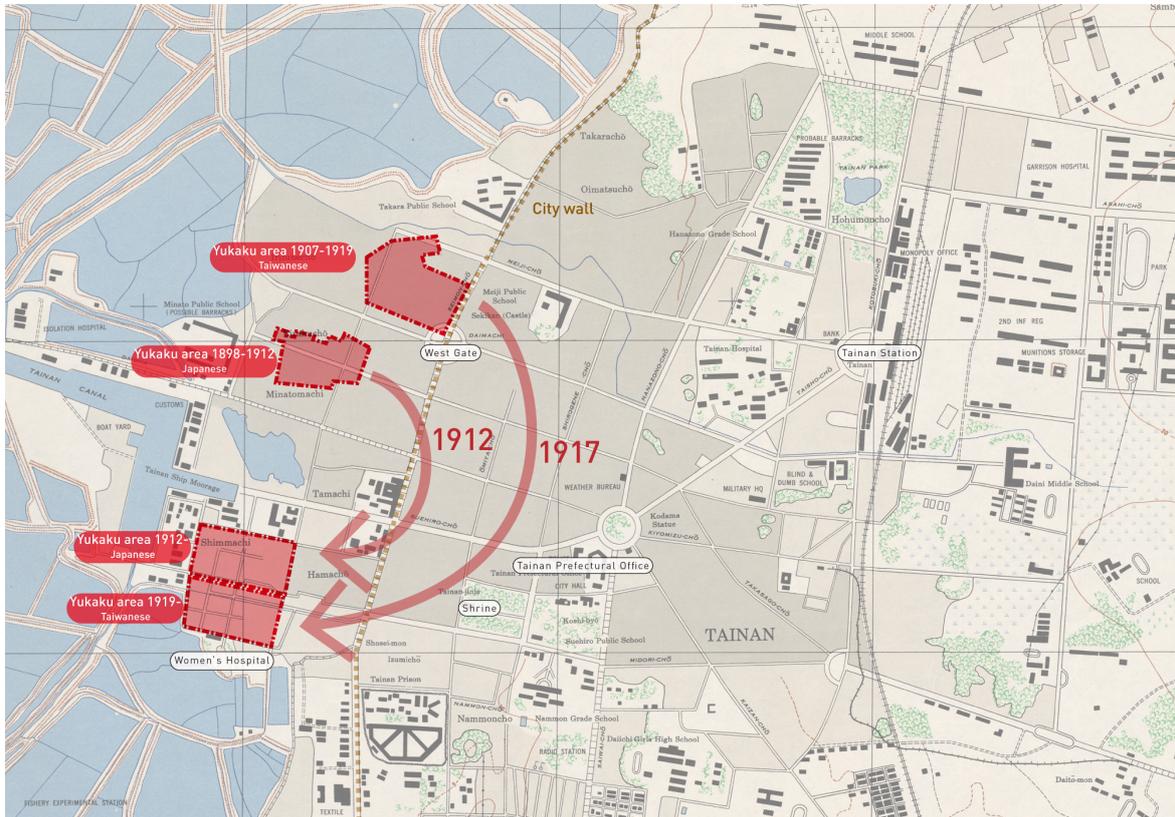


Figure 2: *Changes of the location of yukakus in Tainan.* Edited by author and based on [U.S. Army Map Service, *Formosa City Plans*, (1944-1945)].

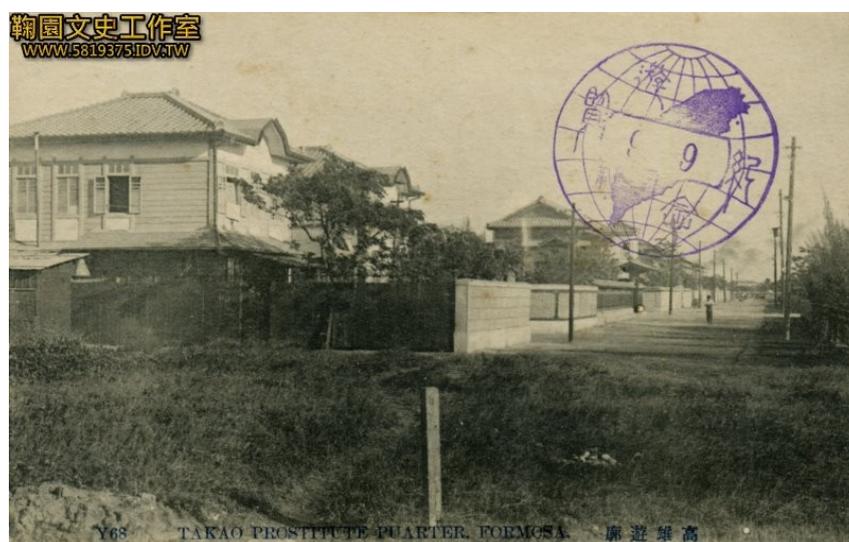


Figure 3: *Picture of Takao Yukaku*, 鞠園文史工作室 <http://www.5819375.idv.tw> (Accessed December 23, 2017)



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Taking all areas before and after the relocation into consideration, kashizashiki designated areas (yukaku areas) amounted to 34 in total. All of yukaku areas are listed below.

City	Kashizashiki designated area	Year of designation	Year of undesignation
Kiirun 基隆	Tenryoko 田寮港	1896	—
	Gyokudencho 2 玉田町二丁目※	N/A (after 1922)	
Tansui 淡水	Shinseki-gai 新厝街	1896	—
Taihoku 台北	Banka 艋舺	1896	—
	Daitotei 大稻埕※	N/A (after 1922)	—
	Banka South 萬華南※	N/A (after 1922)	—
Giran 宜蘭	Giran-gai 宜蘭街全体	1901	—
	Minsoibo-sho 民壯圍堡庄×	1901	—
Shinchiku 新竹	Nammon-gai 南門外	1897	1924
	Kyakuga 客雅×	1924	—
	Kousharo 後車路※	N/A	—
Byouritsu 苗栗	Naima 內麻	1897	1902
	Koshitei 坑仔低 etc.	1902	1924
	626-659 Byouritsu 苗栗626-659	1924	—
Taichu 台中	Tokiwa-cho 常磐町	1896	1914
	Hatsune-cho 初音町	1914	—
Rokko 鹿港	Hokuto-gai 北頭街	1896	1898
Shoka 彰化	Seimon 西門	1898	1935
	Nammon Shinchi 南門新地※	1935	—
Toroku 斗六	Toroku-gai 斗六街	1906	—
Kagi 嘉義	Kitamon-gai 北門外×	1901	1903
	Nishimon-gai 西門外	1903	—
Tainan 台南	Nansei-gai 南勢街 etc.	1898	1912
	Motosotomasokogai 元外媽祖港街 etc.*	1907	1919
	Shinmachi 1 新町一丁目	1912	—
	Shinmachi 2 新町二丁目*	1919	—
Takao 打狗 (高雄)	Kigo-gai 旗後街一円	1901	1917
	Sakaemachi 榮町	1917	—
Hozan 鳳山	Kaboko-gai 火防口街 etc.	1901	1906
	Shinjo-kosho 新庄仔庄×	1906	—
Mako 媽宮 (馬公)	Kunaimachi/Minamimachi 宮内町・南町	1897	1898
	Jonai 城内	1898	1906
	Hoshio 埔仔尾	1906	—
Karenko 花蓮港	Fukusumi 福住	1910	—

Table 1: List of kashizashiki designated areas (yukaku areas) in colonial Taiwan. ※ represents “de facto” yukaku area of local Taiwanese. * represents yukaku area of local Taiwanese. × represents yukaku area that was only designated and didn’t have real businesses inside. Romanized pronunciation of the names of each area can be not accurate.

5. Discussion



From the point of view about relationship with city structure, the location of each kashizashiki-designated area (yukaku area) can be classified into following 4 types:

- (A) whole designation type: whole area of the existing urban area was designated as yukaku area.
- (B) centre designation type: central area of the existing urban area was designated as yukaku area.
- (C) margin designation type: marginal area of the existing urban area was designated as yukaku area.
- (D) suburb designation type: an area outside the existing urban area was designated as yukaku area.

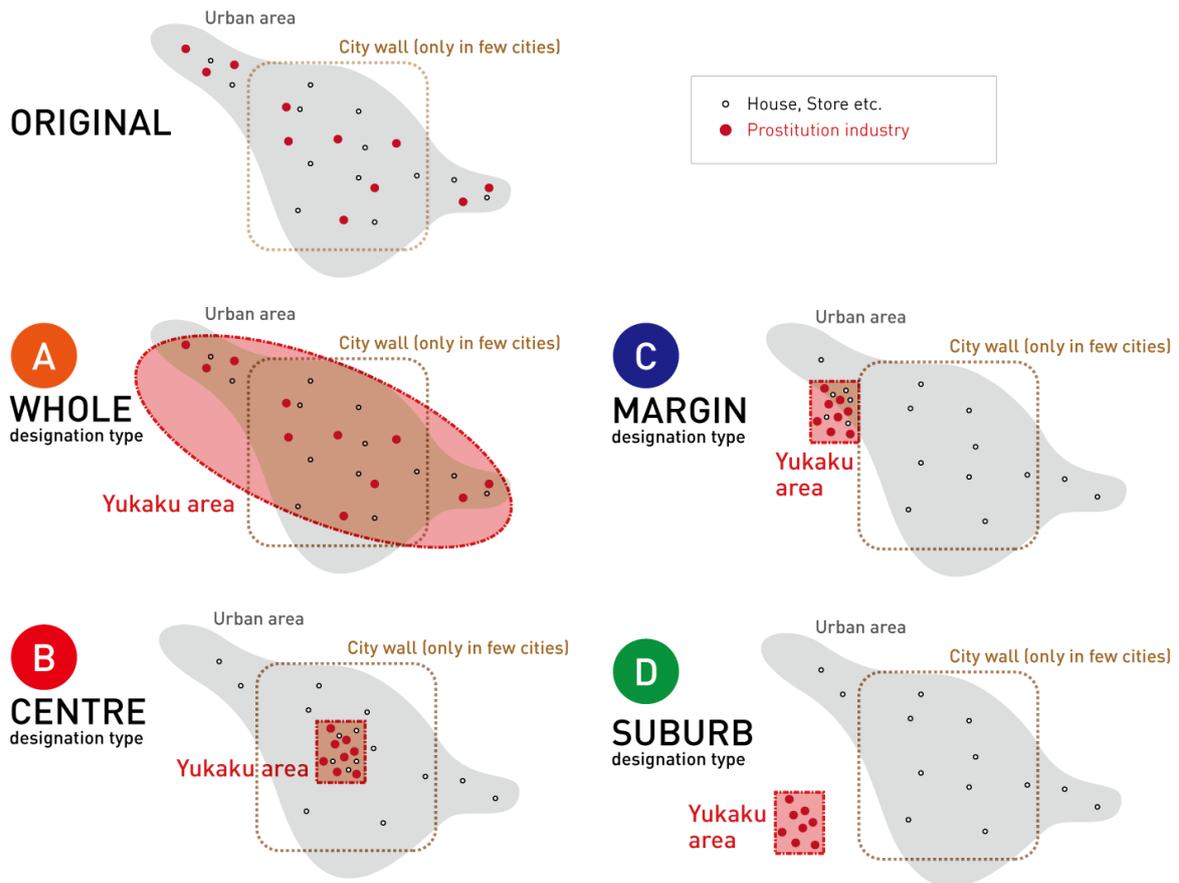


Figure 4: The location patterns of each kashizashiki designated area (yukaku area).

Based on this classification, we classified all of the yukaku areas. The results of classification are shown in Table 2.

City	Kashizashiki designated area	Location type
Kiirun 基隆	Tenryoko 田寮港	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
	Gyokudencho 2 玉田町二丁目※	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
Tansui 淡水	Shinseki-gai 新厝街	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
Taihoku 台北	Banka 艋舺	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
	Daitotei 大稻埕※	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Banka South 萬華南※	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
Giran 宜蘭	Giran-gai 宜蘭街全体	(A) WHOLE DESIGNATION TYPE



	Minsoibo-sho 民壯圍堡庄×	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Shinchiku 新竹	Nammon-gai 南門外	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
	Kyakuga 客雅×	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
	Kousharo 後車路※	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
Byouritsu 苗栗	Naima 內麻	Not clear
	Koshitei 坑仔低 etc.	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
	626-659 Byouritsu 苗栗626-659	Not clear
Taichu 台中	Tokiwa-cho 常磐町	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Hatsune-cho 初音町	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Rokko 鹿港	Hokuto-gai 北頭街	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
Shoka 彰化	Seimon 西門	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Nammon Shinchi 南門新地※	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Toroku 斗六	Toroku-gai 斗六街	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
Kagi 嘉義	Kitamon-gai 北門外×	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
	Nishimon-gai 西門外	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Tainan 台南	Nansei-gai 南勢街 etc.	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
	Motosotomasokogai 元外媽祖港街 etc. *	(C) MARGIN DESIGNATION TYPE
	Shinmachi 1 新町一丁目	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
	Shinmachi 2 新町二丁目 *	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Takao 打狗 (高雄)	Kigo-gai 旗後街一円	(A) WHOLE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Sakaemachi 榮町	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Hozan 鳳山	Kaboko-gai 火防口街 etc.	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Shinjo-kosho 新庄仔庄×	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Mako 媽宮 (馬公)	Kunaimachi/Minamimachi 宮內町・南町	(B) CENTRE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Jonai 城內	(A) WHOLE DESIGNATION TYPE
	Hoshio 埔仔尾	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE
Karenko 花蓮港	Fukusumi 福住	(D) SUBURB DESIGNATION TYPE

Table 2: *The location patterns of each kashizashiki designated area.* ※ represents “de facto” yukaku area of local Taiwanese. * represents yukaku area of local Taiwanese. × represents yukaku area that was only designated and didn’t have real businesses inside.

The transition of the location of yukaku area is shown in Figure 5 and 6. According to this figure, we can find that more than 7 yukaku areas had changed from (A) whole designation type, (B) centre designation type or (C) margin designation type into (D) suburb designation type. In the cases of Kiirun (Keelung 基隆), Kagi (Chiayi 嘉義), Karenko (Hualian 花蓮港), yukakus were located in the suburbs ((D) suburb designation type) since first yukaku area in each city was designated. Yukaku areas in only four cities did not move to the suburbs.

This means that most of yukaku areas gradually moved to the suburbs during the colonial era of Taiwan.

In (D) type, yukaku areas were located near the border of the grid-patterned street network of city improvement plannings (shiku-kaisei-keikaku 市區改正計畫).

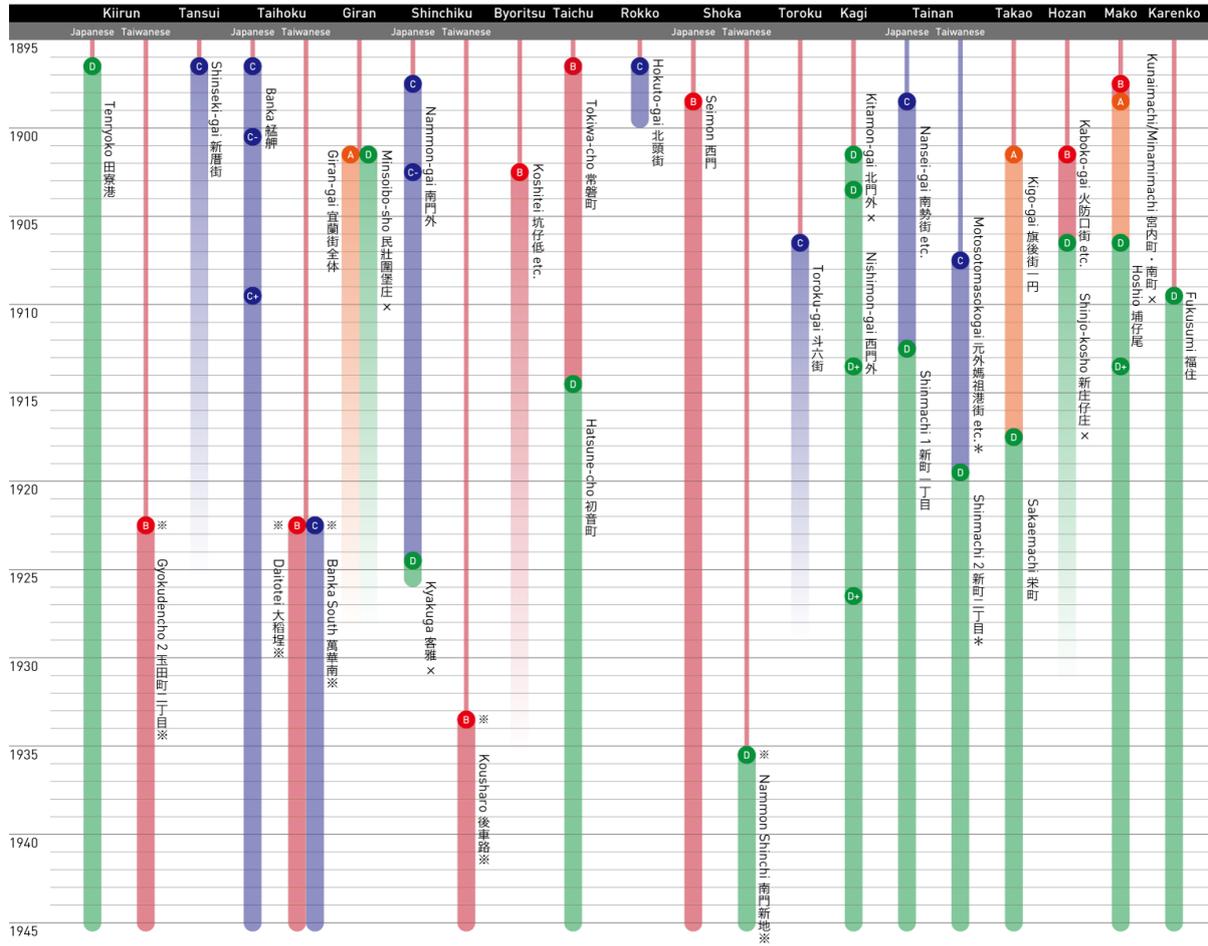


Figure 5: The transition of location patterns of each kashizashiki designated area (yukaku area).

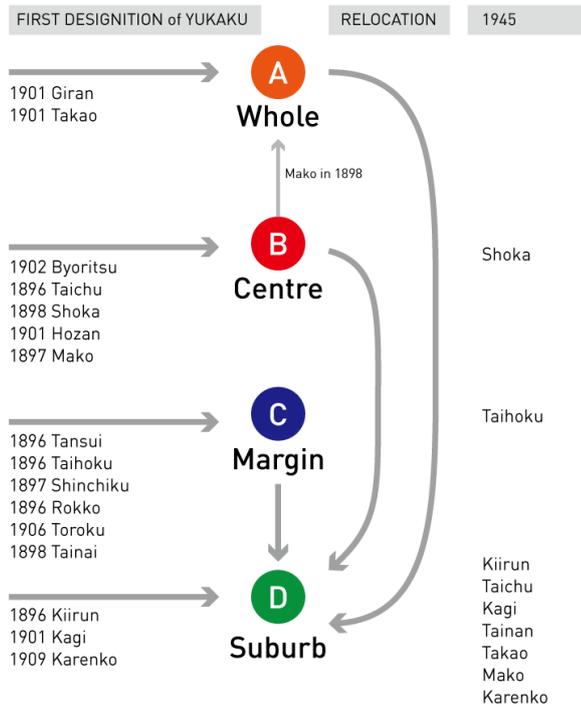


Figure 6: The transition diagram of location patterns of each kashizashiki designated area (yukaku area).

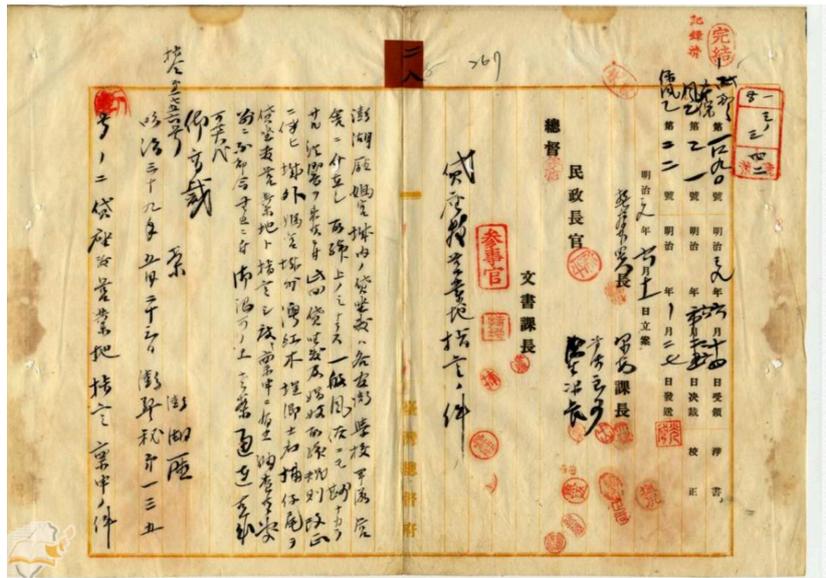


Figure 7: The official paper about relocation of Mako Yukaku area 「澎湖廳告示第四十二號貸座敷營業地域改正ノ件」(1906年7月11日),《臺灣總督府檔案》, 國史館臺灣文獻館, 典藏號:00001187088X003.

The reasons for designating of the kashizashiki-designated areas (yukaku areas) were partly found in the official documents such as the Governor-General of Taiwan (臺灣總督府報). The reasons can be largely divided into two; “in order to control prostitution businesses” and “in order to improve the reason for urban planning.”

As a reason for prostitution control, the most emphasized reason is “temporary” in case of (A) whole designation type, (B) centre designation type or (C) margin designation type. For example, the reasons such as “to control prostitutions temporary” were found on the official paper. In contrast, in case of (D) suburb designation type, it seems that the colonial government tried to positively isolate yukaku areas from city centre. For example, the sentence such as “to refrain from society” were written on the official paper.

As a reason for urban planning, negative reasons were conspicuous in case of (A) whole designation type, (B) centre designation type or (C) margin designation type. For example, “dangerousness of attack of bandits”, “lack of land where yukaku can be put” etc.

However, in case of (D) suburb designation type, more positive reasons were written on the official paper: such as “good potential of transportation”, “good landscape”, “scenic beauty”, “compatible with city planning” and so on. These reasons included viewpoint of urban design or landscape design and we can find yukaku’s location of (D) suburb designation type had intendment in the context of urban planning.

Especially, in the case of Tainan (Tainan 台南) and Takao (Kaohsiung 高雄), the local government and the land leveling forming company attracted a kashizasaki designated area (yukaku area) to their new land. From this point of view, it can be said that the designation of the yukaku area could be considered as a measure to expand the urban area or the “driving force” of urban development.

In these case, the grid pattern of roads inside yukaku followed the grid pattern of whole city, but rivers and green spaces were made and used as boundary of yukaku. (Figure 8) Compared to Japan, inner space of yukaku was not so characteristic.

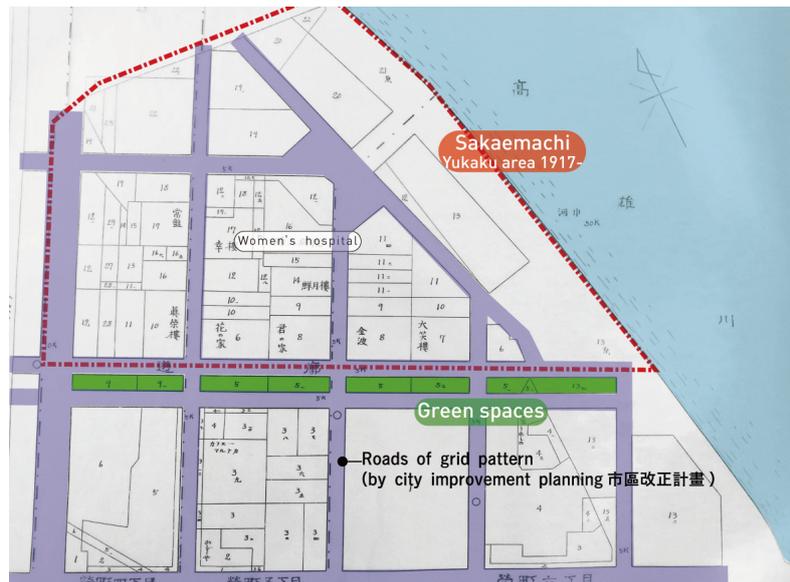


Figure 8: *Sakaemachi Yukaku area in Takao*. Edited by author and based on 都市製図社, 臺灣火災保險特殊地図, 1930.

Moreover, both Japanese and Taiwanese residents joined the discussion about relocation of yukaku on the newspapers or magazines, such as “Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō”.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the following was clarified.

- (1) Yukaku was a symbol of the Japanese colonial city.
- (2) Yukaku in Taiwan gradually began to be located in the suburbs so that it can be aligned with urban planning. The repeated transition of the location of yukakus was influenced by the shape of cities or various city plans, and also influenced them at the same time. The designation of some yukakus was considered as an effective “measure” to expand and develop the urban area. Later, in 1936, the designation of yukaku areas was included in the urban planning system by law⁷.
- (3) In most cases in Taiwan, the grid pattern of roads inside yukaku followed the grid pattern of whole city, because planning of the whole city was prior to the designation of yukaku’s location. Inner space of yukaku was not so characteristic as Japan’s yukaku. Only rivers and green spaces were used as boundary of yukaku.

Moreover, this study would be possible to obtain meaningful suggestions on countermeasures against urban problems that are occurring inside cities now, such as private prosecution problems in Asian countries.

However, this study scoped only colonial Taiwan and has its limitation on this point. Further studies on the other countries or areas (such as Korea, Manchuria and so on) are needed in order to illustrate the planning history of Japanese colonial cities before 1945.

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Notes on contributor(s)

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Endnotes

- ¹ 金富子, “植民地朝鮮における遊廓の移植と展開” シリーズ遊廓社会 2 (吉川弘文館, 2014).
- ² 青井哲人, 植民地神社と帝国日本 (吉川弘文館, 2005).
- ³ 黃武德, 日治時期台灣都市發展地圖集 1895-1945 (南天書局 2006).
- ⁴ 張曉旻, 植民地台灣における公娼制の確立過程 (1896 年~ 1906 年)-- 「貸座敷・娼妓取締規則」を中心に (2008), pp.22.
- ⁵ Based on the research of 臺灣總督府報 (Taiwan Sotokufu-ho / official documents of the Governor-General of Taiwan), which can be accessed via the database “臺灣總督府檔案” (<http://ds3.th.gov.tw/ds3/app000/>, 國史館臺灣文獻館).
- ⁶ Based on the research of 臺灣日日新報 (Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō / Taiwan Daily News), which can be accessed via the digital database.
- ⁷ 風紀地區 (Fuki-chiku / Public Moral District) is established by 臺灣都市計畫令 (Taiwan Toshi keikaku-rei / Taiwan Urban Planning Act) and 同施行例 (Seko-rei / Enforcement Order) in 1936. The enforcement order included the following sentence: ‘It is illegal to build those [buildings for prostitution industry] unless it is built inside Fuki-chiku’ (風紀地區内ニ非ザレバ之ヲ建築スルコトヲ得ズ) (Article 39).

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Image sources

- Figure 1: 台中市, 台中市概況 (1936), frontispiece.
- Figure 2: U.S. Army Map Service, *Formosa City Plans*, (1944-1945).
- Figure 3: 鞠園文史工作室, <http://www.5819375.idv.tw> (Accessed December 23, 2017)
- Figure 7: 「澎湖廳告示第四十二號貸座敷營業地域改正ノ件」 (1906 年 7 月 11 日), 《臺灣總督府檔案》, 國史館臺灣文獻館, 典藏號: 00001187088X003
- Figure 8: 都市製図社, 臺灣火災保險特殊地図, 1930