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The Function and Structure of the Ward Associations

Takeshi Yamagishi

In this paper I would like to analyze the function and structure of the ward associations, the *chō-nai-kai* in Japan.

This is one of the groups in a city life of Japan. These associations played an important role in our daily urban life, especially in the war. Today this group has many aspects, for example it is characterized by a subsidiary group of an administrative organization. On the other hand it has some aspect of the pressure groups.

The group is a locality group and in general has a large number of households. These households associate in certain activities.

Generally speaking the household is the unit in most Japanese community organizations. So it is in the case of the ward associations and the *tonari-gumi* which is a sub-group of the ward associations.

In summary, these groups have formal and informal functions. To be sure there are many gaps in the city and borough administration. These functions are intimately connected with several services to fill gaps. Without these groups it is almost impossible to perform the municipal administration. The point to be noted is that the above conditions are reflected in the inclusive character of the function and structure of the ward associations.