The Historical Origins of Community Policing in 19th Century Britain and Imperial Japan

This chapter addresses the frequently cited historical origins of the contemporary community policing paradigm. The British *metropolitan policing* by Sir Robert Peel as well as the Japanese *koban* policing are regarded as the main sources of community policing in theoretical as well as in practical terms for contemporary community-based approaches to policing.[119] Moreover, the Peelian police reform and the consequential British metropolitan policing are regarded as the foundation for modern policing.[120]

The paper explicitly takes the respective country context and its normative objectives of police reform into account. Therefore, discussing the British Metropolitan policing and the Imperial Japanese *koban* policing does not intend to equate these political entities with each other. Due to the significance of the Metropolitan policing approach in modern policing, the Metropolitan policing approach serves as the main reference point for the subsequent variances of community policing approaches. While the Peelian police reform will be presented in the first part of this section, the second part takes a closer look at the Japanese *koban* and its development since the late 19th century in Japan. Finally, the last part of this chapter reflects on the creation and development of *koban* policing in light of the theoretical framework. The chapter illustrates, and this is particularly true for the *koban* approach, that closely linked police-citizen relations and cooperation enabled the police to establish a comprehensive and complex surveillance system to uphold state security.

Metropolitan Policing in 19th Century London

The reform of the British police in the 19th century and its developed metropolitan policing model and basic organisational structure influenced police organisations around the globe. The necessity to reform the British police in the early 19th century by Sir Robert Peel was contingent

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upon substantial societal and economic transformation of the Victorian era. The increasing urbanisation as part of the British industrialisation process brought new challenges to the existing order.[121] The fast-growing urban settlements in Britain were not only accompanied by industrial development, wealth, and prosperity, but also by the development of slums and a rising crime rate. Soon doubts on the professional orientation and effectiveness of the traditional British police to cope with these changes gained weight within the British administration.

The new metropolitan police was more than just a crime-fighting agency; beyond maintaining public order, their assigned tasks revolved around extended dimensions of police work, such as the control and surveillance of the working class and migrated people from the British colonies. Hence, police work did not stop in front of the doorstep but found its way into the people's homes to intervene in cases of alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and as behaviour that was perceived to be deviant from Puritan norms.[122]

The traditional British policing before the Peelian police reforms consisted generally out of untrained and underpaid men from the respective local municipality as well as of a multitude of private-security actors. Their main tasks were the protection and escorting of the local tax collector as well as haunting reported felonies. In addition, recruited residents had to act as "watchmen" by night or as "wards" by day to patrol the streets and detain perceived suspects. The rational bases for these executive actions were generally ad hoc decisions without a solid legal foundation. Frequently, male members of the communities were also called together through a mandatory *hue and cry* to apprehend a criminal suspect. Overall, the character of the traditional, primordial British policing can be described as ineffective and highly reactive since there was actually no rule-based and organized progressive and preventive crime-fighting strategy in place.[123]

The deployment of uniformed policemen who went in regular shifts on patrol in urban boroughs should actively prevent crime. In contrast to the traditional policing, then-Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel aimed at a regulated and centralised policing model for Britain. Mayhall,[124] among others, specified nine principles of Sir Robert Peel, which should guide the Metropolitan police in their daily work. A main focus of these very principles appears to be the premise of non-violence as part of the police service. The use of force, as the principles stated, should be the last resort. This aspiration of non-violence is grounded in the understanding that the police are a service for the people and not against the people. Moreover, the principle of rule-based policing should avoid any abuse of power by the Metropolitan police officers.[125]

Concerning the disciplinary regulations, Peel resorted to a military-disciplinary framework. However, unlike the military, the Peelian Metropolitan police did not carry lethal weapons during patrols.[126] British politicians' response was initially hostile to the idea of adopting military discipline and military-like uniforms by the metropolitan police. Their main concern was that these measures would lead to a militarisation of the British police similar to the negatively perceived continental, and particularly absolutist French, policing model of the militarised Gendarmerie.[127] Most important, however, hitherto there wasn't any known viable organizational model one could refer to except the military organisational structure. Additionally, the centralised military organisational model was unique in its ability to effectively regulate an agency with executive powers and to prevent any deviations from the given rules of engagement.

The uniforms for the Peelian policemen were in so far a novelty as traditional policemen conducted their work in plainclothes. To uniform the new police force, however, as Monkkonen[128] argues, was not a sign of exclusiveness or militarisation but a measure to make police officers highly visible and easily approachable by the population. Moreover, Peel's recourse on the military structure as a role model for the new metropolitan police was actually not inspired by the idea to militarise the British police, as several authors argue.[129] It also has to be noted that the Metropolitan police was issued blue uniforms while the British military wore the traditional scarlet red coat. This indicated a clear distinction between the military and the police.[130]

Irrespective of the resistance to his policing model, Peel, in his function as Home Secretary, brought the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 into action. Soon, newly recruited metropolitan policemen patrolled the boroughs of London on a regular basis. While the number of newly recruited metropolitan policemen continuously rose, the Home Secretary opted for a temporary coexistence of traditional policemen, private security actors, and metropolitan police officers until 1840.[131] From the 1830s onwards, the new metropolitan policing model expanded across the country. But despite the Rural Constabulary Act of 1839, which codified the Peelian police reform on the countryside, a nationwide implementation of the police reforms did not take place until the 1850s. Emsley[132] explains this fragmentary implementation of police reforms with the unwillingness of local mayors to cede control over local police forces. More important for the limited police reform, however, was the unwillingness of local policemen to adapt to the new conceptual orientation of the metropolitan policing towards a preventive and proactive style of policing. In many cases, traditional forms of reactive policing prevailed in Britain until the 1890s.

Koban Policing in Imperial Japan

The Western community policing approach has been frequently attributed to the Japanese *koban* policing. To date, the Japanese *koban* acts as prototype for successful community policing.[133] In essence, *koban* policing stands for intensive communication and collaboration between the Japanese police and citizens and is widely regarded as role model and inspiration for police-citizen partnership.

Due to the relatively low crime rates in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s, the Japanese policing approach has been internationally heralded as a role model for its assumed mutually trusting relationship between the police and the population.[134] Bayley's influential book *Forces of Order: Police Behaviour in Japan and the United States*[135] is regarded as the initial spark for the international interest in the Japanese approach to policing. His well-cited book depicts the hitherto relatively unnoticed *koban* policing. According to Bayley, the responsiveness and friendliness of the Japanese *koban* officers constitutes the basis for an amicable relationship between the citizens and the police. Moreover, Bayley stressed the fact that *koban* officers do foot patrols on a regular basis, which enables them to get to know the respective neighbourhood and its residents. It is this constant but unobtrusive police presence on the streets that generates a feeling of safety and protection on behalf of the local residents, as Bayley concluded.[136] Similar to Bayley's book, Vogel[137] reported about the exceptionally low crime rates in Japan in comparison with other industrialized countries and identified *koban* policing as a main reason for this success in crime control. However, a long-time observer of Japanese society stressed even at that time the potential of misuse of power and widespread one-sided intelligence gathering of the Japanese police through its complex networks to neighbourhood associations and the neighbourhood police boxes known as *koban*.[138]

The origins of the *koban* policing approach date back to the Japanese Empire in the late 19th century. The demise of the Togukawa dynasty and the accession to power of Tenno Mutsuhito triggered an extensive modernisation of the Japanese Empire, known as *Meiji* reforms. Alongside the centralisation and professionalization of the bureaucratic apparatus, the Japanese state-building approach also encompassed a thorough reform and build-up of a police force following the example of European police institutions. The Japanese executive's commitment to implement a Western policing approach in Imperial Japan was high; particularly influenced by the European continental policing model, the Japanese Interior Ministry sent officials to Europe but also invited French and German police advisors and practitioners to introduce and implement European continental policing strategies to the Japanese context.[139] Relating to this, it is important to note that the Japanese police build-up was modelled on the British metropolitan policing insofar as the

Japanese police adapted the basic idea of a modernized police with a uniformed police corps acting in line with an elaborated set of regulations. However, since the Japanese leadership aimed at a rigorous state-building agenda and a powerful police force to maintain state security during the far-reaching and comprehensive political and societal reform in Japan, it opted for the centralized and militarily shaped continental policing model, as Aldous[140] stresses.

To enable the Japanese police to be present in every part of the country and to defend the state's monopoly on the use of force, the Japanese Interior Ministry opted for the area-wide installation of police boxes. The installation of these boxes was inspired by the German concept of extensive social control through the police.[141] While *koban* police boxes were mainly established in urban areas, *chuzaisho* police houses were installed in rural parts of the country as the functional equivalent to *koban* boxes. Both the *koban* as well as the *chuzaisho* initially aimed at a thorough control and surveillance of the population and at a closer interaction between the stationed police offers with the nearby residents.[142]

Officers stationed in the *koban* boxes were tasked with assistance in emergency situations but acted also as first contact for residents in case of complaints and reports of criminal acts. Moreover, *koban* police officers registered every resident and regularly conducted mandatory house visits. During these house visits, residents had to provide detailed personal information such as their family status and occupation. While the police officers in the metropolitan areas were only assigned to work during shifts in the *koban* boxes, police officers on the countryside actually lived with their families in the *chuzaisho*. Similar to the *koban* officers, rural *chuzaisho* police officers had comprehensive knowledge on the personal living situations of every resident within their service area and conducted housing visits on a regular basis.[143]

An important feature of the internal security policy in the Japanese Empire was the political and social dimension of policing: The immediate proximity of the police to the Japanese population through *koban* and *chuzaisho* enabled the police not only to represent and defend the state's monopoly on the use of force but also to control the loyalty and subordination of the population to the Imperial political doctrine. In this vein Ramcharan[144] emphasizes the deeply entrenched social hierarchical order and the paternalistic habitus of state officials, such as the police, towards the citizens. The above-mentioned conducted house visits on a regular basis by *koban* officers illustrate how far the surveillance actually went. In addition to the gathered information on the size of each household and the respective dwellers' occupations, the police categorized each resident into a risk group and conducted profiling. While noblemen, landowners, as well as residents with decent professions were visited by *koban* officers only twice a year, residents who were perceived as a potential threat to state security as well as relatively poor people were visited every month by the police. Unemployed residents, former inmates, and politically active residents were visited three times a month.[145] This comprehensive surveillance and intelligence gathering by the Japanese police increased particularly during the Second World War since political activism and deviation from societal standards were perceived as a threat to the government.[146]

Of great importance for the police-citizen cooperation as part of *koban* policing are the Japanese neighbourhood associations (*tonari-gumi*). These neighbourhood associations are deeply entrenched into the Japanese cultural history and date back to the 17th century. According to Aldous[147] and Onda,[148] the *tonari-gumi* acted as "auxiliary police" during the Second World War in mainland Japan. They were actively focussed on maintaining social order and identifying critics of the government within their neighbourhood and to report them to the state authorities. Although not a direct offspring of the *tonari-gumi*, post-war established *Crime Prevention Associations*, organized by local businessmen in cooperation with the local police stations followed a similar strategy as the *tonari-gumi* and display the still-close relationship between the police and the population in Japan.[149] These Crime Prevention Associations try to sensitize the respective

residents for potential criminal activities and to prevent crime through showing presence, attentiveness, and even through instructing perceived wrongdoers in public.[150]

The post-war occupation of Japan by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) led to comprehensive reforms of the public service and state institutions. Apart from the Imperial Military, the Japanese police system was considered by the American occupying forces as the epitome of the authoritarian und hierarchical Japanese Imperial mindset. Therefore, the SCAP initiated police reforms aimed at the decentralization of the police and a limitation of police powers. One point of criticism on the police's sweeping powers was the detailed personal information each Japanese citizen had to reveal to the *koban* officers. However, despite the reform attempts and the targeted "democratization" of the Japanese police by the American occupying forces, the Japanese police force was able to maintain established practices and ideas of how to police the Japanese society. Still, social control, one-sided intelligence gathering, and tight surveillance, as Aldous[151] argues, were among the primary duties of *koban* officers in post-war Japan. Moreover, changing geopolitical developments during the 1950s caused an end to the formal occupation of Japan by SCAP and enabled the Japanese police to regain their centralized structure just as in the pre-war period.[152]

Still, critical observers perceive the contemporary Japanese *koban* policing first and foremost as a surveillance tool to effectively control the population.[153] While answering the *koban* household surveys is not mandatory anymore, Katzenstein and Tsujinaka[154] argue that refusing to comply with *koban* officers might even appear suspicious to the police officers and arouse the police's curiosity. Even if residents declined to answer the regular surveys, *koban* officers stationed nearby would be able to record movement profiles and additional information with the help of cooperating neighbours and community associations. Even non-resident visitors would be monitored and recorded by *koban* officers in case they were perceived as a potential threat to the community.[155] Moreover, neighbourhood gossip about unpopular residents who are not socially integrated into the neighbourhood community might also be forwarded to *koban* officers and appear on the records, fostering immense pressure on individualists.[156] Furthermore, the gathered data on each resident is not exclusively kept in the local *koban* boxes but accessible to other state agencies in case a profile attracts attention and fits to perceived risk groups.[157]

The Japanese *koban* policing emerged during a phase of enormous social and political transformation. Traditional reactive police forces were not able to cope with the pace of societal development and concomitant challenges regarding the operational area, nor did they have the necessary professional tools and knowledge. Moreover, the introduction of a modern police force in Imperial Japan has been regarded on behalf of the political leadership as one of several epitomes of modern statehood. Hence, local ownership and commitment in supporting the reform of the police was crucial. As part of a modernization and state-building project, an effectively operating police organization was tasked with the provision of state security in rural and urban areas.

Ames's quotation perfectly defines the theoretical underpinnings of this paper on adaptation, reinterpretation, and resistance when he describes the Japanese *koban* policing as "blended amalgam of the authoritarian, powerful, and highly centralized prewar police system and the 'democratic' and decentralized post-war system."[158] Hence, the Japanese *koban* is not a solely Japanese creation but an outcome of exactly the above-mentioned adaptation processes between external and local approaches to policing. The case study on the formation of *koban* policing in Japan therefore answers the initial research questions regarding the historical origins of community policing as well as the necessary conditions to establish a community-oriented approach to policing.

To become explicit: The implementation of foreign approaches to policing and the creation of *koban* policing as a very local approach to policing was driven by a strong local ownership and a clear political agenda. During an era in Japanese history with major socio-political transformations,

the Japanese political leadership actively sought for external or foreign modes of policing in order to maintain state security. The general modern concept of policing introduced by Peel through the metropolitan policing approach, as well as the highly centralized and bureaucratized continental approach to policing, fit the Japanese demand for effective regulated policing. Due to the existence of a strong local ownership and commitment on behalf of the Japanese political leadership, the external model was soon adapted and combined with the traditional Japanese hierarchical and paternalistic norms and values as well as with the traditional local cooperation patterns between the police and neighbourhood associations, the *tonari-gumi*, to expand the police's surveillance capacities. Particularly this reinterpretation or alteration of an external concept on behalf of the local leadership to a very own concept, as De La Rosa[159] and Draude[160] describe it, eventually facilitate the implementation process in the local context. Moreover, the thorough implementation of a professional bureaucratic police system with rigidly minded rules and regulations enabled an unimpeded continuation of police development and practice in Japan.