

THE HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 'KUNITACHI MACHIZUKURI MOVEMENT': ITS NATURE AND THE ROLE OF PROFESSOR SHIRO MASUDA

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ABSTRACT

'Machizukuri' or literally 'community-making' is one of the most popular planning-related keywords in the contemporary East Asia. It is a kind of people's community movement that started in the post-war Japan and has spread to Korea and Taiwan with equivalent translations particularly since 1980's. This paper tries to trace the historical origin of Machizukuri by focusing upon the use of the Japanese word of 'Machizukuri.' We identify the origin as the people's community movement in Kunitachi in the early 1950's. In this sense, Kunitachi could be considered as comparable to Letchworth in the international history of the Garden City. Kunitachi now is a suburban city 30 kilometer west of the central Tokyo, where the Hitotsubashi University is located. In 1951, a group of residents together with the university people started a movement to protect their environment against some 'undesirable' commercial establishments and people. The movement got a big power and finally succeeded in attaining its goal of the designation of the Educational District where such establishments are controlled. This was the first case in Japan where the district designation was attained by the movement of people rather than by the local government itself. The movement activists called their movement 'Machizukuri' (community building) which was not an established Japanese word at that time. In parallel to the development of this movement, Professor Shiro Masuda of the Hitotsubashi University published, in 1952, a paper where he used the word 'Machizukuri.' It was one of the earliest cases that the word was used in Japan. In this paper, we will discuss the following points: (1) How and why the movement developed; (2) What was its meaning especially in terms of the concept of Machizukuri and of the relationship between the statutory City Planning and Machizukuri; and (3) What was the role of Professor Shiro Masuda, who more or less coined the new word of 'Machizukuri' in the above process.

1. INTRODUCTION

'Machizukuri' is one of the most popular planning-related keywords in the contemporary East Asia. Roughly speaking, it is a kind of people's community movement that started in the post-war Japan and has spread to Korea and Taiwan particularly since 1980's. It is called 'Maeul-Mandeulgi' in Korea and 'SheQu-YingZao' in Taiwan. All these words more or less mean 'community-making.'

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So the history of Machizukuri is a very important topic in the comparative study of city planning in the post-war East Asia. Instead of tracing its entire history, however, we will focus our attention upon the historical origin of the Japanese Machizukuri. As is discussed later in detail, we identify the origin as the people's community movement that was developed in Kunitachi in the early 1950's. In this sense, Kunitachi could be considered as comparable to Letchworth in the international history of the Garden City.

'Machizukuri,' or community building or planning, is one of the most popular activities in the planning circle of the contemporary Japan. Many planners, citizens and sometimes governments are engaged in such activities, and as a result many articles and books are published about Machizukuri (Hein and Pelletier 2006; Sorensen and Funck 2007; Watanabe 2006; Watanabe 2007).

Machizukuri may be roughly defined as people's activities basically initiated by citizens and/or residents in order to maintain and improve the physical and/or non-physical aspects of their own community. It is not part of the statutory City Planning and has no legal basis for itself. And yet many planners are working in, and writing about Machizukuri, which might be seen as a rather strange situation by the planners outside Japan.

The concept of Machizukuri itself is changing from time to time and is often ambiguous with different meanings to different people. So it is very important to clarify the real nature of Machizukuri, but this paper will be directed to the historical analysis of the origin of the word of 'Machizukuri.' Now our question is: When did the word of 'Machizukuri' first appear in the form of printed materials in Japan?

The first case seems to be the one by Mr. Kan Hideshima in 1947, which was discovered by Dr Naoto Nakajima (Nakajima 2006). Although we need a further careful investigation, Hideshima's word 'Machizukuri' was probably used only as a catchword without accompanying actual activities.

The real first case of 'Machizukuri' which was used in relation with actual people's movement appeared in 1952, which was discovered by Watanabe et al (Watanabe et al 1997). The word appeared in an article on the Toshi Mondai journal. The author is Professor Shiro Masuda, a then young professor of Hitotsubashi University, which is located in Kunitachi Town about 30 kilometers west of the central Tokyo. At that time, Kunitachi was in the middle of people's movement for designation of the Educational District of the statutory City Planning. Some activists called their movement 'Machizukuri.'

So in the following, we will first describe the background and development of the people's movement in Kunitachi. Second, we will analyze the discourses of 'Machizukuri' which were used in the movement. Third, we will compare them with that of Professor Masuda.

2. KUNITACHI AS COLLEGE TOWN

April 1, 1926, a new suburban station was opened between Kokubunji and Tachikawa Stations on the National Railways' Chuo Line about 30 kilometers west of the central Tokyo. The station was newly named 'Kunitachi' and its opening was financially made possible by a real estate company named Hakone Tochi Co. under the ownership of Yasujiro Tsutsumi (1889-1964), who later

became the top of the thriving Seibu Corporation Group. A few years earlier, Tsutsumi began buying some 264 hectare land near to, and south of the station and had a vision of developing the area into a college town.

The area was a flat wooded land with a few inhabitants. It was part of Tokyo Prefecture's Yaho Village, whose main settlements with mostly farmers were located about two kilometers south of the station. As the name of the station implies, 'Kunitachi' meant the new comers and 'Yaho' the old residents. There was a strong discrepancy between the two, which is the social and historical background of the entire story that will follow.

After the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, which destroyed most of the central Tokyo, Kunitachi provided the academic institutions severely damaged in Tokyo with ample campuses. In 1926, Kunitachi College of Music (then, Tokyo Conservatory of Music) moved in and the very prestigious Hitotsubashi University (then, Tokyo College of Commerce) followed the next year.

At that time the whole area was outside Tokyo's City Planning Area, and so there was no statutory planning control. Tsutsumi and his company laid out the street lines freely. One wide street, which was later named 'University Avenue,' was designed from the station as the northern point straight toward south to the Yaho settlements; two similar avenues were laid out from the station diagonally toward southeast and southwest parts of the wooded area.

The sale of the lots began when the streets were not paved nor lit. No provision was made as for gas, water and sewage. The area's only attraction was a quiet environment surrounded by many trees and rich nature. This is one of the reasons why the residents began to ask for basic public services later in the 1950's.

The number of the inhabitants grew slowly in the pre-war days. After the war, the university faculty, staff and students as well as other residents who loved the environment of the college town gradually began to move in. They are socially homogenous with many middle-class intellectuals and white colors; they shared everyday life with insufficient public services and in a rather isolated environment. All this situation provided them with a good base to make a community by themselves.

They established a neighborhood association named 'Kunitachi-Kai,' which functioned as a de-fact quasi-local government. It provided such services as fire fighting, policing and street lightening. It also functioned as a channel to the village and police authorities. This is one of the origins why a strong movement developed later in the early 1950's.

In 1951, the village became Kunitachi Town with some 15,000 inhabitants. The former village mayor Yasutane Sato, from Yaho, was elected the new mayor of Kunitachi Town. Around this time, the local political power slowly began to shift from the old to new residents.

3. PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

The problem started with the Korean War, which broke out June 25, 1950. Many American soldiers came to FEAMCOM Base, which is located in Tachikawa City, just a few kilometers west of Kunitachi and only one railway station away.

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American soldiers began to appear in Kunitachi and brought serious social problems.

Adult entertainment businesses including noisy bars, cheap hotels and brothels began to appear, first in the station area and then almost all over the town. The quiet and decent college town was turned into an unpleasant place for the residents to live in and, above all, a bad place to bring up their children. Mothers stood up to stop such a move.

The first meeting was held in the hall of a local temple in the evening of May 5, 1951. About 30 mothers and activists got together. At the second meeting that took place three days later, the attendants rose up to some 50 residents. They organized themselves into 'Kunitachi Machi Joka Undo Kisei Doshikai (Kunitachi Citizen Group for Cleansing Campaign, hereafter, 'Group'). They unanimously resolved that the campaign goals should be (1) to ask the government to designate Kunitachi as Education District which would limit the use of buildings for adult entertainment businesses and (2) to ask the police to strengthen the control of the activity of such businesses and people. The campaign actions started May 10. Housewives began signature-collection campaign and obtained some 3,000 supporting signatures in a few days; Hitotsubashi students appealed to their friends on campus, which caused a big reaction among the students.

On May 11, the activists held a dormitory student meeting, and three days later, about 300 students gathered from the whole university and held a student meeting, resolving to advance the campaign. The movement got accelerated so much that it created a huge organization named 'Kunitachi Machi Joka Daigaku Gakko Rengokai (Kunitachi Cleansing Alliance of Universities and Schools, hereafter 'Alliance'), It is represented by the president of Hitotsubashi University and had members of many faculty, staff and students of two universities and other schools. As a result, the movement since then was carried out by the cooperation of the two strong organizations of the Group and Alliance, whose leaders were often overlapped.

The movement, however, met a strong opposition by the managers of adult entertainment businesses who got good profits from them and by landowners who thought such businesses will increase their land values. Now it became clear that the issue was 'good environment' or 'good economy.' The debate and decision were brought to the Town Council.

On May 24, two resolutions were on the agenda of the Council, where the public gallery was fully occupied by people. The first resolution for cleansing was unanimously passed; the second one for Education District was hotly debated on but was passed against 4 opposing voices.

Then, these four councilors began to work hard to obtain the support for opposition among merchants and land owners. Now the debate became a big issue for the entire community. Finally they were successful in turning down the former resolution at the July 7 session of the Town Council.

The people of the Group and Alliance stood to fight again. Their strategy now was to publicize the issue at the national level because the leaders had a good access to mass media and the National Diet. After the long heated debate, the original resolution for Education District passed by 14 to 11 again at the August 31 session of the Town Council.

The Education District thus officially proposed was to cover the 280.6 hectare land, which is almost one third of the entire town area. Education District has two classes of different degree of land use controls. The Class 1 covers 158.3 hectare land away from the station where commercial establishments including hotels, restaurants, cinemas and adult entertainments are strictly controlled, and the Class 2 covers 122.3 hectare land near the station area where the control is slightly less. Education District is one of the statutory Special Use District system which is a stricter land use control tool for a specific purpose. It is imposed upon the area, whenever necessary, in addition to the ordinary Zoning system that is rather loose in control. The actual control was to be carried out based upon the Education District Ordinance of Tokyo Prefecture, which had been effective since 1950.

Upon the resolution of the Kunitachi Town Council, the Tokyo Prefecture City Planning Committee discussed and approved it in November 1951. Then, the Governor reported the designation favorably to the Minister of Construction in December. Finally, the Minister gave public notice in January 1952; now the strict land use control was thus enforced. The Kunitachi case was the only one where Education District was designated outside the Tokyo ward area at that time. And of course, this was the first case that people initiated its designation through their own campaign. (Kunitachi Shishi Hensan linkai 1990)

4. OUTCOME OF THE MOVEMENT

The campaign was a great success as it attained the goal of the designation of Education District, and the land use control for a better environment was enforced accordingly. The problem, however, was still there in Kunitachi because the legal control was only upon the action of new construction. The existing non-conforming uses were allowed to stay there. And people were still basically free to rent rooms or houses for some 'undesirable' users. Thus, the designation was only a start of the cleansing campaign.

On February 1, 1952, the citizens of the Group and Alliance practically merged into an overall organization named 'Kunitachi Bunkyo Chiku Kyokai (Kunitachi Education District Association, hereafter, 'Association').' All the important local leaders were elected board members. The people expected the Association to function as the community's cultural center, which was beyond the original narrow function of cleansing the environment. They unanimously adopted the articles of the Association that proudly declared to work hard toward building an ideal college town by protecting and fostering a good environment and by inviting various cultural facilities to Kunitachi. Here, the meaning of the word 'education district' was virtually changed from the statutory City Planning term to the general vision of the 'college town.'

The president of Hitotsubashi University was elected the Association's chairperson on the ex-officio basis, which became a virtual practice since then. It should be noted that Professor Masuda, who was writing his first Machizukuri article just around this time, became the chairperson 12 years later, when he became the University president. However, he did not seem to be active in the entire process of the movement around this time.

The Association developed a variety of activities including requesting the police for stronger control, asking the American FEAMCOM Base officials for

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cooperation, and submitting petitions to the national government. The Association became the symbol of the Kunitachi people's movement for long, but its activity gradually went down. At the time of the local government election of April 1964, there was an internal conflict among some core leaders who had worked together until then. When Professor Masuda, as the Hitotsubashi president, became the chairperson between 1964 and 1969, the Association was more or less just an ordinary resident organization. And since 1967, official meetings ceased to be held.

The people's movement in the early 1950's served as a productive nursery for various groups and organizations of residents, other than the Association itself.

In August 1951, a group of the students and young people who were participating in the movement, established a 'cultural circle' named 'Doyo-Kai (Saturday Club).' They regularly met together on Saturdays for singing, reading, listening to recorded music, publishing newsletters and so on. The members rapidly increased from the original 20 persons to over 130 in a few years. In June 1952, they cooperated with other groups in order to hold the Town Sports Meeting on the University ground. It was participated by over 5,000 people and served as an event to bridge over the gap that had been once developed during the Education District debate. Saturday Club members then developed campaigns for the public library and then for the public community building, both of which did not exist in Kunitachi at that time.

In October 1951, mothers and young ladies, as the eventual extension of the above movement, also organized 'Kunitachi Fujin no Kai (Kunitachi Women's Club).' In 1954, about 30 members, together with some Saturday Club members, started to study the annual budget of the town government. They met regularly on Tuesdays and named the group 'Kayo-Kai (Tuesday Club). It was a very rare case that citizens study, analyze and criticize the government budget at that time (and even now). Their hard work was to be rewarded at the local government election the next year.

In October 1954, a general mood arose among the Kunitachi residents that they want to elect the town mayor from out of themselves. They wanted to innovate the old-fashioned politics of the town government. Thus, a political organization named 'Kunitachi Chosei Konwa Kai (Kunitachi Governance Group)' was established by many leaders of the movement. They chose the councilor Moriyasu Tajima as the candidate for the mayor, who got elected at the local government election of April 1955. At the same time, a young Hitotsubashi student Hiroichi Akamatsu was elected a councilor with the highest votes. This election may be seen as a symbolical epoch that the local political powers have moved from the old Yaho interests to the new Kunitachi group.

In short, what was the real nature of the Kunitachi people's movement for the this period? The movement started as an urgent campaign to directly protect residents' life from the tangible threat. To be precise, this was the interests of residents rather than those of citizens. The former focuses upon the concrete problem-solving goal whereas the latter upon the rather abstract idealistic goal. To be more precise, there was a gradual shift from the former to the latter.

It started as the cleansing campaign which protected especially children and students from 'undesirable' social environment. The movement soon shifted its focus to the designation of Education District. Then the Association tried a

broader goal of making the 'college town.' The whole process of the movement served as the background out of which further specific groups came to exist. In short, the people's movement of the early 1950's was a memorable start of the tradition of the strong people's movements of Kunitachi that somehow follows until today.

5. PEOPLE'S 'MACHIZUKURI'

Now our question is: when and who used the word 'Machizukuri' in connection with the above movement for the first time? And in what way and with which meaning? And was there any connection with the Masuda's article that first used the word?

We tried to identify some cases where the word 'Machizukuri' appeared in the written form. Here we will show three cases. It is interesting that all the cases are found around the time of the local government election of April, 30, 1955, when the Governance Group made a sliding victory. There is a good possibility that the Group may have used the word intentionally during the election campaign although so far we have not reached the original documents yet.

5.1. DOYO-KAI NEWSLETTER

One of the earliest cases was identified as the May 28, 1955 issue of the 'Doyo-Kai,' which is a hand-written mimeograph newsletter of the Saturday Club. It reports their victory at the April election; the mayor and the councilors' majority turned out to be the people that the Club had supported. The headlines read "Town Government Officials Completely Renewed," "New Machizukuri' To Advance" and "Hiroichi Akamatsu Elected with Top 447 Votes: Victory of Youngsters."

The word 'Machizukuri' appears twice. Interestingly enough, the both words are modified by the word 'new,' thus spelling 'new Machizukuri.' This implies that the town government until then was doing 'old Machizukuri,' but the Club people will continue their own "Machizukuri" in order to renovate the old municipal politics. So what is really meant here is that 'Machizukuri' is municipal reform by the citizens, especially youngsters. The article closes with such sentence as: "We would like to continue to fight for the new Machizukuri with Mr. Akamatsu." (Doyo-Kai 1955)

5.2. KUNITACHI OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

The July 1, 1955 issue of Kunitachi Official Newsletter introduced the new mayor and council chairperson elected at the April election. Moriyasu Tajima, who was the former councilor and now defeated the former mayor Sato, greeted at the top of the newsletter. He used the word twice. "I was elected with many supporters this time. I believe this reflects a big expectation of the people for city planning which we call 'Machizukuri' We have to improve streets, water supply, sewage, schools and other public facilities in order to make Kunitachi a real college town As part of Machizukuri, we would like to plan the street network to smoothly connect the Kunitachi and Yaho areas"

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What the new mayor means here is simply city planning in the traditional way. He did not emphasize the reform aspect, probably because he wanted to address the whole townsman about the shortage of urban services and facilities which was the common problem in the new and old areas.

Council Chairperson Kozo Nakadate uses the words 'new Machizukuri' tree times in his greetings. "Since the designation of Education District in 1952, Kunitachi has started the first step of 'new Machizukuri' The strong fetal movement for 'new Machizukuri' leads us to a deep excitement We have to work hard to clearly put our awareness of 'new Machizukuri' in our historical footprint." Nakadate's view is different from the mayor in that he emphasizes the reform aspect just like the one made by the Saturday Club (Kunitachi Town 1955).

5.3. REFLECTION BY MAYOR TAJIMA

Tajima served as the mayor for 3 terms from 1955 to 1967, when Kunitachi was promoted to the city. After his retirement in 1971, he published a book about his memory of the movement and Machizukuri. In the early part of the book, he devoted about 2 pages on the word of 'Machizukuri,' using the word 7 times with quotation marks (Tajima 1971).

The important part is: "By 1954, two years had passed since the Kunitachi Education District Association was established and it became famous all over Japan. This was the time that the Association was substantially functioning and getting good results. Then, the word 'Machizukuri' became an important password among the members. What is 'Machizukuri'? Many of those who moved into Kunitachi shared the dream of making it a real college town with warm community spirit and comfortable living environment 'Machizukuri' has two sides; one is community's goals and hopes at the mental level, and the other is their expression in terms of physical facilities" (Tajima 1971: 3).

Tajima witnesses that the word 'Machizukuri' became to be used sometime between 1952 and 1954 among the Association members, meaning their movement as a whole. While other activists tend to mean the social and/or political aspects only, Tajima also considers Machizukuri as somehow related to city planning.

6. PROFESSOR MASUDA AND HIS 'MACHIZUKURI'

6.1. PROFESSOR SHIRO MASUDA (1908-1997)

Finally, we will try to understand what Professor Masuda meant by the word 'Machizukuri' and then we will compare it with the above cases that were developed out of the actual process of the people's movement in Kunitachi.

Shiro Masuda graduated from the then Tokyo College of Commerce, which later became Hitotsubashi University, and joined its faculty in 1938. His research field was European economic history with special interests in the medieval European city. In the name of 'social history,' Masuda tried to develop a theory for understanding the society at a certain time as a whole. He was teaching and writing at Hitotsubashi for long, becoming the president and later receiving Order of Cultural Merit from the government.

Since 1946, he lived in the University residence located in the Kunitachi campus, and was promoted to professor in 1950. When he wrote his 1952 article with a new word of 'Machizukuri' for the first time, the Kunitachi movement was at its peak. As he must have written his draft article either in his office or at his home, it may be said that the word 'Machizukuri' was born somewhere on the Kunitachi campus of Hitotsubashi University.

He did not try to study Machizukuri whose actual case was being developed in front of him; he actually used the word for only several times in the printed form. In the following, we will pick up two cases for analysis.

6.2. THE 1952 ARTICLE

Masuda's first Machizukuri article was entitled "Toshi Jichi no Hitotsu no Mondaiten (A Crucial Point for Urban Self-Governance)," which appeared in the April 1952 issue of Toshi Mondai (Urban Problem) journal that was then quarterly published by the Tokyo Institute for Municipal Research. At the end of the article, there is a note of completion dated March 13, which proves the article was written at the time of the Kunitachi movement.

The article is made of three chapters. The word 'Machizukuri' appears only once at the end of the second chapter. In the first chapter, Masuda points out a problem that Japanese citizens have little positive will to liven up the local government. In the second chapter, he describes the medieval European city as a desirable model and raised a question: "How can we build a rational basis for such a community?" Then, he suggests an approach to the answer in the form of 'new Machizukuri,' which is explained in the third chapter. In order to build a new vivid local government, Masuda discusses (1) its population size, (2) good city planning, (3) relationship with the national economy, and (4) sound middle class.

In short, what Masuda meant by 'Machizukuri' was the conditions for what he thinks is a good community. It seems that he used the word, not as a key concept of his argument, but as a catchword to cover his entire theoretical argument. In this sense, it looks like 'theoretical' but is not reflecting the actual people's movement that was being developed in the same town (Masuda 1952).

6.3. THE 1966 ADDRESS

The other case is Masuda's address as the chairperson of the Education District Association. He was in that ex-officio position from April 1964 to July 1969. It was a time that Kunitachi went through a rapid urbanization and eventually became the city. There in 1965, the huge Fujimidai Housing Estate was developed by the Japan Housing Public Corporation. For those new inhabitants, the Association held "Welcome Meeting for New Townspeople" on May 22, 1966.

In his address for the meeting, Masuda used the word only once. "As you know, Kunitachi is a college town with Education District in its center Machizukuri in Kunitachi is not only a spontaneous happening but also what residents have intentionally worked hard for So, let us work together to foster this community...." This address seems to be rather different from his 1952 article

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in that he directly faces the Kunitachi's reality and uses the word almost the same way as other people. We may be able to see a rather big gap between his 'theoretical' and practical approaches to the concept of Machizukuri.

6.4. SOME CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the above analysis, now we may discuss two points as concluding remarks. First is Masuda's relationship with the Kunitachi movement. We could not identify that he directly mentioned the movement in all of his writings nor that he participated actively in the movement in the 1950's. If he had not become the University president, he should not have become the Association chairperson who was involved in the movement at its final stage of existence. Our conclusion is that Masuda was not active but passive in relationship with the Kunitachi movement.

Second is the relationship between his 'Machizukuri' and the Kunitachi people's 'Machizukuri.' There are two logically possible cases: (1) Masuda influencing the people and reversely (2) the people influencing Masuda. We will discuss these points below in order.

(1) The fact is that there is no written material of 'Machizukuri' before Masuda's 1952 article. It may suggest Masuda first used the word, which then began to spread among the Kunitachi people. This possibility, however, seems to be negative, partly because there is no evidence of such a spread, and partly because he did not have a positive connection with, and influence over the movement itself.

(2) When he wrote his 1952 article, there is no evidence that Masuda picked up the word that had been used by the people. When he referred to 'Machizukuri' in his 1966 address, he used the word almost the same way as the people used it. This may mean that Masuda had no clear theoretical concept of his own about 'Machizukuri' in 1966. His academic discourse about the medieval European cities is one thing and his practical discourse in his address in Kunitachi was another; they are not theoretically related to each other.

After all, the word 'Machizukuri' was used differently by Masuda and the people who both lived, worked and wrote in a very much limited time-space of Kunitachi in the early 1950's. This was the situation of Machizukuri in its origin. Since then, more than half a century has passed; the word of 'Machizukuri' is now spoken by professionals and amateurs alike widely beyond the national boundaries in East Asia.

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