

## Adopting and Adapting of Community Planning/Management “Machizukuri” to Thailand

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### Abstract

One of the biggest challenges of the planning and management system learnt from Japanese experiences during the postwar society was Machizukuri, or Community building. Machizukuri at work is based on the people's initiative and the decentralization of planning powers. The scope of this paper shows the best practices the Japanese and Thai community building. The study of “Machizukuri at work” is not only the hardware activities but also software activities. The main objective of the study is to learn and share Japanese and Thai experiences' of work at “Machizukuri” and Thai community development. The study found as follows; (1) the contexts of Machizukuri at work for community development that show empowering local stakeholders and communities as well as Thai cases for low income community development. The study concludes that the significance of point based on community based approach through people's initiative. These points may be how to make a soft landing from 'the efficient development model by centralized bureaucratic powers to the model of improving the quality of life by people's participation.

**Keywords:** Planning history, Machizukuri, Non-Profit Organization (NPO), decentralization

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## 1. Introduction

Machizukuri is a new paradigm in Japan planning or social model for making a neighborhood” or “making a community for improving existing urban fabric in Japanese environmental communities. It was called “the qualification of the model towards local community”. Machizukuri at work has conveyed a subtle nuance of soft-oriented bottom-up community planning activities and community network. Over the last fifty years local citizens' movements have spread rapidly throughout Japan. The aim of improving the quality of the local environment, and of environmental management processes, such activities are widely referred to as Machizukuri, and represent an important development in local politics and urban management in Japan. Planners must take care to avoid formulating plans that simply follow fashion, seeking instead plans that are sustainable and profitable for local residents. Japanese citizens promote a sense of community which involves not just administrators and town planners, but local citizens, who shoulder a share of the responsibility and obligations for their own community. (Yukio Nishimura, 2005)

In the early 20th century, modern planning gradually moved from citizens' hands to that of the government which had a far bigger authority, capital, and technology. Urban planning was legally institutionalized as an important element of a public service that the government provides. It spread all over the world, beyond Western Europe and North America. In this process, Japan was probably the first country in East Asia that accepted modern urban planning. Therefore, the historical development of modern urban planning of East Asia starts first with the story of Japan. The citizens make cities by themselves, as innovation of urban planning that is being completed now is a planning system of an extremely special style.

It is a social technology that created and protected a good physical environment in the suburbia of large industrial cities. However, a kind of social technology for 'urban planning' has probably existed in many parts of the world since recorded history.

The question has been changed, from how to make local community

participate in planning process, to how to enable the local community to become major actor to play a central role for the community business. Machizukuri, therefore, has become a burning issue for planning and what capacity of planning is required for sustainable city and the most vital foundations.

## 2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is

2.1) To study the development of the Japanese planning system as a Machizukuri;

2.2) To learn the lessons of a comprehensive overview of the Machizukuri phenomenon through examination not only of theory and history, but also of case studies illustrating real changes; and

2.3) To reveal methodology and strategies of Machizukuris from the best case in Japan and to discover how they have been successful by utilizing Machizukuris.

## 3. Literature Reviews

The concept of the Garden City had a big influence on the development of modern western urban planning. The study was proposed as an answer to the problem of growing large cities which were detailed in his famous book published in 1898, *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. His work also started the tradition of the practice that 'a citizen makes the city.' Which is still relevant up to the present-day NPO (Shun-ichi J.Watanabe, ). However, in the case of modern eastern of School of Planning named "Kojo-Kan", it is known that they had grown planners of "no-sectionalism, order-made plans, creative change of local economy", which was founded and financed by Yozan's Yonezawa a rather small "Han" of 150,000 go-ku. (Kubata, 2008). According to phenomenon of the civil citizen, consisting of direct democracy or representative democracy, is a political system that enables citizens to participate directly, rather than through representatives, and have their will reflected, in the decision making of a community they belong to. (Yasuyoshi Hayashi, 2009). Hence, the idea of "new public," born out of citizens' activities symbolized by Machizukuri in

Japan, asserts that citizens are the creator of "public" and it is from this viewpoint that the idea, the basis for the Japanese-type direct democracy, is revealed in whole Japan society. However, the study shows that the meaning of Machizukuri in term of working and practice, Japanese urban planning (toshi keikaku) historically took place as a "top-down process" from administration to citizens. Because of the influence of Western countries, however, and the strengthening of democracy, since the 1960s the Japanese understanding of urban planning has changed to become a "bottom-up process" called machizukuri. (Silke Vogt, 2010).

#### 4. Methodology

This study employed documentary research for more than 4 months, which focused on the best practices of Machizukuri at work between hardware activity and software activity. This paper, through literature reviews from many documents, observations and investigation during running collaborative workshop between Ritsumeikan University and Thammasat University during 2006-

2009. Thus we should have produced the best case which has both hardware activities and software activities.

#### 5. History and Development of Public Participation

In the modern history of Japan, the citizen sector has its origin in political movements including the anti-war movement which started after the defeat of 1945. Labor movements played a central role in the 1950s, and the following decade of the 60s was characterized by anti-pollution, anti-urban development campaigns. Shiro Masuda<sup>1</sup> was the initiator and created the terminology of Machizukuri in 1952, when a group of citizens wanted to maintain their good living environment in the Tokyo's suburban Town of Kunitachi, where Hitotsubashi University is located. Their activities eventually became a large movement to petition for zoning designation of Education District, where land uses were strictly controlled by prohibiting some undesirable uses. Masuda published an article in which he used a new word, 'Machizukuri' with a meaning near to 'municipal reform' more or less as a slogan.

(Shun-ichi J. Watanabe,) However, many Japanese academic or professionals do not understand the meaning of Machizukuri. Machizukuri at work was divided into 3 periods of working in Japan as follows; (1) period I: 1960s-1970s was the starting point of Machizukuri, (2) period II: 1980s-1990s was the ongoing practice of Machizukuri (3) period III: 2000s moves toward collaboration by Machizukuri networks. The study has concluded development of public participation

(Kobata, 2008) and Machizukuri at work of Shun-ichi J. Watanabe, Yukio Nishimuya as well as the author visit many places for investigation as follows.

### 5.1 During 1960s-1970s:

In the 1960s: Citizens and residents in whole the country started a social movements in order to mitigate and protest against the negative impact of the rapid economic growth of the time. In the modern history of Japan, the citizen sector has its origin in political movements including the anti-war movement which started after the defeat of 1945. Labor movements played a central role in the

1950s, and the following decade of the 60s was characterized by anti-pollution, anti-urban development campaigns. (Shun-ichi J. Watanabe,) As early as the end of this decade, activities of community development emerged in the fields unrelated with the administration. Time moved into the 70s, when citizen activities became popular, to materialize new policies and new systems they proposed. However, the government began to develop various programs to respond to the people's needs that are expressed in Machizukuri activities. At the same time, people also began to learn that their collaboration with government would bring about better dividends. As a result, the relationship between the people and government gradually shifted from 'opposition' to 'collaboration' (Yasuyoshi Hayashi, 2009). The conventional planning system (top-down process) was still quite compelling and the way of conducting day to day business was based on merely following precedents of similar cases, avoiding any possible disputes. Accordingly, the protests of the conventional planning process tended to lead a fierce confrontation between two

camps and leaned toward idealistic and sometime ideological conflicts, which gave the Machizukuri of this decade a distinctive characteristic. This feature of Machizukuri may agree with the universal phenomena of

the rise of fierce environmentalism in the late 1960's which led to the violent protests by younger generations in many cities around the world. (Yukio Nishimura, 2007)

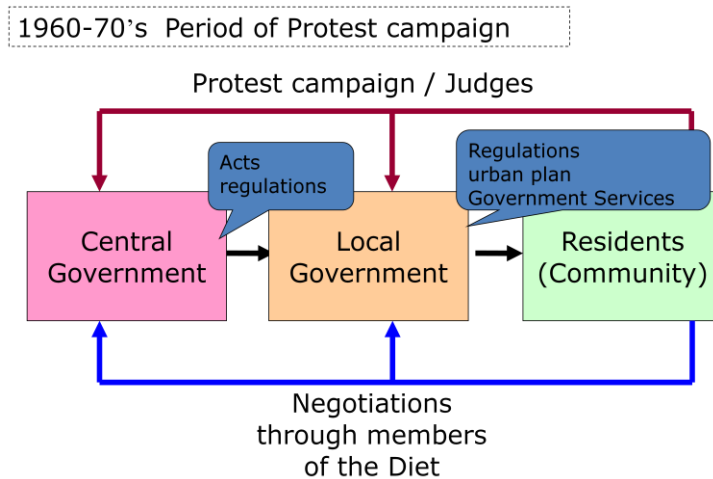


Figure 1: History and Development of Public Participation during 1960s-1970s

Source: Satoshi Otsuki, 2007

## 5.2 During 1980s-1990s:

In 1980, due to the amendment of the 1968 Act, which introduced the district planning system, with aims at detailed and strict land use controls at the neighborhood level with community participation. This planning system can be seen as one of the government's responses to the growing needs of Machizukuri activities. Meanwhile, Machizukuri at work from "small public"

was born. "Small public", born out of citizens' will and action to "open private and become public," then gave birth to a horizontal connection between citizens. Chains of will and action thus generated "expansive public," hence "new public." This idea spread between the 1980s and 90s from care recipients and citizen care workers to concerned experts and to citizens and self governing bodies in many areas. The next year, Kobe City was the

first in the nation to enact the Machizukuri Ordinance, which aimed at coordinating and incorporating Machizukuri activities into the District Planning system at the local level. Many other innovative municipalities including Tokyo's Setagaya Ward followed in this line. In 1992, the Municipal Master Plan system was institutionalized for the first time in Japan. This system legally required citizen participation in the process of preparing the Master Plan. It had a great impact toward a wide and intensive practice of participation by both the people and municipality. In this context, one unique civic action was developed. Some citizen groups made 'Citizen-Made Master Plans', and presented them to the local municipality and citizens. Thus, some citizens demonstrated that they now had expertise for making plans. How can we orientate Machizukuri in its relationship with the statutory urban planning? Well, generally speaking, there are only three sectors, or social mechanisms that produce, distribute and provide goods and services on a social scale. They are government, the market and civil society (or voluntary sector). The urban facilities and services can be also provided by the

government, enterprise and nonprofit organization (NPO). The real essence of Machizukuri seems to correspond to the people's activities to provide urban facilities and services based upon the principle of the civil society. In 1998, the NPO Act was enacted. Since then, it became insufficient to discuss Machizukuri only in relation to urban planning; it became necessary to discuss Machizukuri as one field of the whole spectrum of NPO activities. In this context, two points must be stressed. First, the 'participation' of people and NPOs in the process of making public policies including urban planning has become crucially important. Second, the 'decentralization' of powers, especially planning powers, is also extremely important because it is necessary to guarantee such participation. Moreover, the people's participation is important not only at the process of making policies and plans but also at the stage of their implementation and even their evaluation. In short, the people's participation is now extended to the field of the production and distribution of public services. It is now clear that the government is no longer the only provider of public services. In short, the point with

which Machizukuri challenges the traditional urban planning is how people now participate in all the stages of the preparation, implementation and evaluation of public policies and plans in the name of 'urban planning' as a crucial public service. This will require that the traditional urban planning, which is a difficult technology for construction and engineering, should evolve into a new hard and soft social technology which will enrich the quality of people's urban life as a whole.

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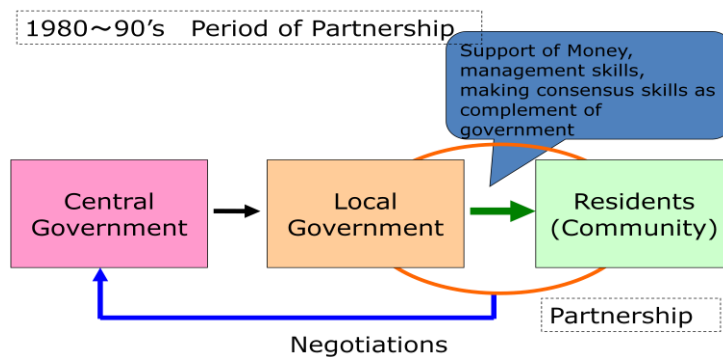


Figure 2: History and Development of Public Participation during 1980s-1990s

Source: Satoshi Otsuki, 2007



5.3 During 2000's:

In fact, the City Planning Act of Japan had already delegated its regulating and planning authorities to the prefecture and local government by its 1992 amendment and local and business communities were granted the authority to initiate, create or change the statutory city planning regulations and projects. Moreover, in 2000, city planning procedure was assigned to the local government under its autonomy, which marked an end of the hierarchical top-down planning system in Japan for the first time in its planning history.

In 2003, the Local Autonomy Act was further amended to introduce the designated manager system, which enabled non-profit organizations to participate in the management of publicly owned facilities. This may add more responsible status for local NPO's for management of public assets previously exclusively conducted by the public sector. These arrangements gave a momentum to the Machizukuri movements towards more responsible and sometimes more collaborative attitude for the public-private partnership schemes. (YukioNishimura, 2005)

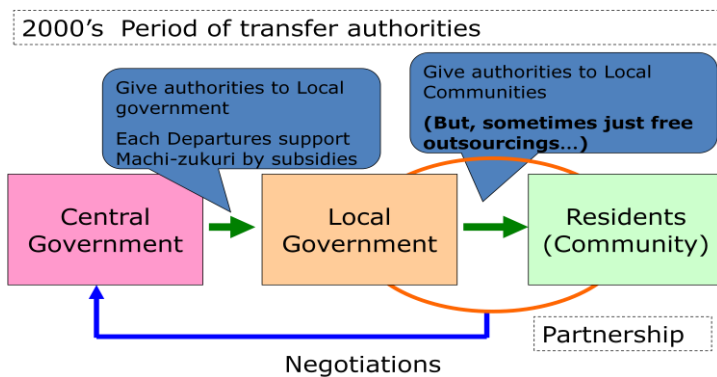


Figure 3: History and Development of Public Participation during 2000's

Source: Satoshi Otsuki, 2007

## 6. Community development concept good to live, good to visit

### 6.1 Hardware activity: Cooperative Housing; U-Court in Rakusai New Town saikyo-ku, Kyoto-city

The study shows the good practice of community building and community design by the People's initiative. U-Court housing project is a condominium project located in Rakusai Newtown of Kyoto-city. U-Court is a successful 22-year-old collective housing development in Kyoto. The project, completed in 1985, consists of 48 units in three buildings, each three to five stories tall. The buildings are arranged around a south-facing U-shaped courtyard containing tall trees and a patio. U-Court doesn't have a common kitchen or

dining room, but in many ways it resembles cohousing. It boasts a shared meeting hall, stairwell entries that face into the courtyard, shared ivy-covered balconies running like outdoor hallways along the courtyard sides of the buildings, and hidden parking in one corner of the property. U-Court highlights the importance of trees and the natural environment in creating community. U-Court residents debated whether to plant trees in their central courtyard, which would have been expensive for them, but they finally did plant trees. The presence of these trees later made all the difference in cooling the building, adding a beautiful, shady outdoor place for neighbors to gather in spontaneous as well as planned meetings, picnics, and celebrations.



Figure 4: Cooperative Housing; U-Court in Rakusai New Town Kyoto-city, Japan

Source: Author

U-Court has many outstanding characteristics, including: 1) residents formed cooperative and constructed condominium building. 2) Buildings and each house were designed with residents' participation. 3) Wishes of residents were reflected in unique design of houses. 4) Residents also decide rules of living and building management and 5) Good community was grown through participation in planning.


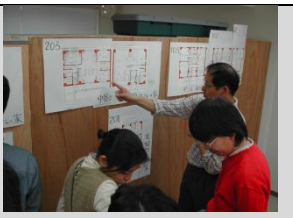


In addition-Court has pursued "creating another kind of cooperative

housing" from an open and free way of living. A childhood spent in the common yard (courtyard) with a pond and rich greenery and dirt heightens a thirst for soft and muddy spaces beyond orderly and rigid ones that today's society imposes. Adult residents of U-Court come in a pretty wide range of human characters thereby creating a world of collaboration where, unlike communities characterized by "all alike", every different self respects ideas and acts of others and gets connected together, thus enabling one plus one to add

up to more than two. With “an unusual uncle, a caring aunt and other characters around”, flexible communications among them, in which conflicts do not immediately lead to break up, win high regard of the younger generation. An environment where people can live with dogs, cats and other small animals which adult residents constructed encourages juniors to cultivate the idea of creating symbiotic relations, rather than cultural conflicts.

Cooperative Housing: U-Court in Rakusai New Town employed in process about 3 years. (See Table: 1).The first process generated from people who were interested which took about 1 year and half because of diversity of the individuals. The concept of this project is “Community Building”.Members of the community have different demands, but they have the same purpose, that is “Community Space”. (Yasuhiro Endoh, 2007)

**Table1:** Chronological of Process of Cooperative Housing; U-Court Development

1982	1983	1984	1985
Initiative Project	Construction Project	Completion Project	Completion Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Call of participant by architects-organizing of residents</li> <li>● Study about housing, living etc. /Preparation of a draft plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Formation of residents' committee/ Project start</li> <li>● Examination of building design based on conversation with residents</li> <li>● Objection for Project management /confirmation of rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Designing of site and building</li> <li>● Designing in each housing units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● completion</li> </ul>
			

Source: Author

Yasuhiro Endoh (2007) mentions Cooperative housing, U: Court made human relations of mutual conveyance through collaboration in various events, whether within one generation or between different ones. It also helped the individual and others heighten interaction with each other, and a growing number of young people take pride in this process. This fact suggests that such mutual conveyance leads to inheritance and development of culture in the next generation.

## 6.2 Software activity: Example of Community Development by Residents in Japan, Cooperative Housing by NPO

Cooperative housing, the most different and important point compared with other apartments is that it is planned and completed not by the government or real estate agents, but by citizens. The NPO informs people about the project of cooperative housing before planning and constructing. They seek citizens who want to take part in it.

Participations elect the chair person and have many meetings at the office of the NPO. They discuss the

facilities of their apartment, the design of the room, the methods of maintenance after they started living there. Through these meetings, they become friends and appear as a community. There may be a feeling of security and relief. The staff of the NPO don't force their ideas on participants, because leading characters are participants. They only support meetings.

### The Merits of Adopting This Way of Cooperative Housing:

1) Participants can communicate more with each other than people who live in typical apartments in Japan.

2) Participants can get their ideal apartment for a reasonable price because the cost is very clear.

3) Participants can plan not only whole design, but also designs of their own rooms because specialty designers of the NPO talk it over one by one.

4) Participants can start living with ease because they have already discussed about how to use and manage the common spaces before construction.

However U-Court is the best example of cooperative housing in Japan which it has participated in resident Cooperative housing organization monthly meetings to build good relationships between members. Furthermore, the group enhances traditional activities such as planned meetings, picnics, and celebrations, especially “The 2007 International Ecovillage Conference was held in Tokyo, Japan” with a packed crowd of Japanese environmental activists, progressive university professors, enthusiastic students, and the “green press” in Japan.

However, nowadays most Japanese in urban areas live in tiny apartments in concrete high rises, with little connection to neighbors or nature. Land is so expensive that few apartments include gardens or landscaping. So the Japanese projects presented at the conference, while not “ecovillages”, were nevertheless inspiring to the people because they made the connection with neighbors and nature once again. (The 3rd Ecovillage Conference Tokyo, 2009)

## 7. Machizukuri at work

Through process, participated community members started to identify assets of individuals and organization already existing in the community. With “give & take” consciousness, members started to learn from each other and work together, building stronger relationships. People were motivated to learn from themselves because not only the community activities members, but also every member associated in this project had responsibility for the success of the project. The significant group was nurtured through the process, giving future prospective for the community. Most of all, the commitment of elders to revitalize their own town were critical factors, which brought their wisdom, experience, and networking into the project. It is my belief that retired people, rather than being burden of society, should be respected for their great assets, knowledge, and skills for community work. Many retired people are now volunteering because they want to contribute back to society. I believe that the aging of society is not burden for the future of Japan, but a chance to grow for a country with more care and respect. The

perspective of younger generation in Japan will widen from many of inspiring accomplishments such as seen in the revitalization of old business districts. (Douglass, Mike and Chong Ho, Kong and Ooi, Giok-Ling, 2002). However, work of Yokohama city introduces these rules as “machizukuri-rule” and district rule, but they

did not first begin as the system for Machizukuri at work, it started as methods of city planning by the city government, and it changed its meanings and systems under the city policy aiming at raising citizen’s involvement.(See Table: 3)

**Table 2:** Comparison on District rule between Machizukuri rules

Rule	Management	Base of law	Effect of Law	Restriction
District Plan	Verification by the city government	City Planning Law	Yes – to the whole covered area of plan	land use, lot area, building coverage ratio, capacity ratio, height, setback of wall, moat, design of building, street, park, green
Community Agreement	Respects by the residents	No	No	Anything

\* Restrictions which are unique of this rule –Yokohama city

**8. Conclusion**

It is clear that the government is no longer the only provider of public services. In short, the point with which Machizukuri challenges to the traditional urban planning, people participate in all the stages of the preparation, implementation and evaluation of public policies and plans

in the name of 'urban planning' as a crucial public service. This will require that the traditional urban planning, which is a hard technology for construction and engineering, should evolve into a new hard and soft social technology which would enrich the quality of people's urban life as a whole.

The study makes understanding of Machizukuri at work in terms of the development of the planning history of Japan, the Thailand case for low income group and the traditional urban planning vs. Machizukuri that challenges it. Lessons learnt from experiences of the Japanese may serve as a kind of model of a wider applicability to the modernization process of other areas in South East Asia. The contemporary planning system has been a social technology for elite bureaucrats to efficiently build regional and urban infrastructures. It can be considered as a 'decentralization model' for efficient development for a society where various resources are still scarce and so have to be centralized. How can we find a path of soft landing from the centralization model to the decentralization model?

Machizukuri at work in Japan found that most of projects were focused upon each household income group. The projects do various purposes, role of local stakeholder consists of agencies such as local government, and universities are just support committees. But money, management skill, planning skill are based on them. The most important/difficult point

for the success of "Machizukuri" is making a consensus for community concepts among various participants. For a community based approach in Thailand, most projects are also city-wide for low income groups. Those projects support Community Organization Development Institute (CODI). The projects aim to improve community development and life environment of lower class people. Besides, others project are health, income generation, and capability building. NGO, NPO agencies and local government constructs community networks and make solutions actively.

#### 9. Recommendation:

1) The further study should be examined the growth and nature of such civil society participation in local urban and environmental government for supporting.

2) Many important questions about the changing roles of government and relationship between a central and a local government, and between civic citizens and the state, in managing shared spaces.

3) Community development **concept** good to live, good to visit



**Notes**

1) Professor Shiro Masuda of Hitotsubashi University, who created term of Machizukuri

2) Definition of Machizukuri is the continuous activity which is based on the community resources, cooperated by various actors, improving the situation gradually, raising the power and attraction of community, and realizing the

improvement quality of life. (Architectural Institution of Japan)

Japanese word of Machizukuri

3) Hardware activities mean construction works and urban planning work.

4) Software activities mean the regeneration of historic centers and the creation of networks of people involved in conservation. (Yukio Nishimura, 2005)

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