The development history of the machizukuri method in Japan after the 1960s

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abstract

The aim of this paper is to review the development history of the machizukuri method in Japan after the 1960s. I explain the development history by three categories, (1) The method of communication, (2) The method of citizens’ organizations and (3) The method of planning processes and systems. About the method of communication, I explain the method such as "district karte (地区カーテ)" to "machizukuri workshop " according to two styles: a) communication with “numbers” and “maps” and b) communication with “words” and “images”. About the method of citizens’ organizations, I explain the design history of the organizations such community council to machizukuri NPO. About the method of planning processes and systems, I explain the methods according to four models of the “styles of governing,”, a) Pluralism style, b) Parliamentary system style, c) Corporatism style and d) Free competition style.

Key words
citizen participation community based development method history Japan

1. Aim

In Japan, the practice of “citizen participation” and “community based development”—together known as “machizukuri”—began in the late 1960s. In the past 40 years, the machizukuri method has shown considerable development as a result of nationwide, synchronized, collaborative practice by many planners and citizens. It can be said that presently, this unique method is now established in Japan.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the brief development history of the machizukuri method by document research and interviews with its pioneers. The history of Machizukuri has been described by a view of history that pay attention to the changes of relation between government and citizen such as "the era of protest movement”, "the era of citizen participation” and "the era of partnership”. In each era, various methods were developed, but because the history is described by such rough historical frame, in new era the methods of the old era tend to be rejected and forgotten. Therefore I describe the history of development of “individual method” that had developed in each era, without having rough historical framework.

Then, what is the fundamental motive of development of Machizukuri methods? The method of
Figure 1: Chronological table of method of Machiavellian in Japan

Machiavellian was born in 1960's when traditional city planning faced citizens protest movement. The fundamental change from the traditional method of city planning to the machiavellian method is the change...
of the subject (person and organization) of planning, decision-making and practice. The subject changed from the government to a citizen. A citizen shares power and rights with the government. Therefore, as a result of the necessity of communication among subjects, the following three categories of methods have been developed as constituting the machizukuri system.

1) The method of communication: communication among the government, citizens, and planners
2) The method of citizens’ organizations: forming and recognizing citizens’ organizations as the subject of machizukuri

According to the abovementioned three categories, this paper describes the brief history and reviews the important methods within each category and each period. Figure 1 shows the chronological table of the development of the method.

2. The method of communication

Multiple subjects share information with each other on machizukuri using various methods such as “district karte (patient's record),” GIS, “book on machizukuri,” “Gulliver's map,” “design workshops,” “machizukuri design games,” “pattern language,” and so on. The methods can be followed according to two styles: a) communication with “numbers” and “maps” to present objective information and b) communication with “words” and “images” to kindle imagination and build rich images. From 1960–1970, the method with “numbers” and “maps” was developed first, and based on the failure of the methods, the method with “words” and “images” was developed second

(1) The method with "numbers" and "maps"

The “district karte” method, which has the theoretical background of “a civil minimum theory,” was completed in late 1970s. This method is the map that indicates various information (problems and resources) of the district. The information is based on national census and the information dispersed in administrative and community organizations. District karte was developed in order to be used as the fundamental document in the discussion and formulation of a district “community plan” with the cooperation of citizens and the local government. The method is clear and simple. It has been introduced by many local governments – Kawasaki city and so on, and the method evolves by a factor a resource of new data is developed or the information processing/expression technology develops.

(2) The method using “words” and “images”

However, the above method was extremely unsophisticated. Consequently, there arose the problem that “a rich image was not created by the enumeration of a number and a map.” In other words, it was a problem
regarding the manner in which an image that is generated through “words” and “images” should be presented.

In order to overcome this problem, a method was developed, which comprised the following three alternatives: a) design of the media, b) design of a communication tool c) design of expressions and language.

a) Design of the media

Rather than enumerating a map and a number, the media itself was improved and made easy to read with “words” and “images.” The items that were developed include “Machizukuri News,” “three generation playground map (三世代遊び場マップ),” “machizukuri picture book,” “machizukuri book” and so on. Recently, the development of IT has led to advancements in the methods of presenting information on the World Wide Web, or a CD-ROM by Hypertext, and animation.

b) Design of a communication tool

A method known as “machizukuri workshop” has been developed. It uses various tools—a model, card, map, worksheet, and so on—to activate and aid communication. “Gulliver’s map,” “Town trail,” “Town walking,” and “Drama workshop” are methods that are used to provide a new viewpoint to a discussion, and to help in creating images of towns as desired by the participant. Tools such as “facilitation graphics,” “KJ method,” “machizukuri design games,” and so on are developed to assist communication and consensus building using “words” and “images” in discussion. “Machizukuri design games” help to ease the process of building a realistic town image using handy models and a visual simulation system.

c) Design of expressions and language:

In addition to the expression methods of “a number” and “a map,” expression methods using “words” and “images” were developed. “Pattern languages” led to the invention of a method to describe space design with “words”; in Japan, this method was introduced into “Machizukuri Rules (まちづくり規範)” of Kawagoe City (Saitama pref.) and “Standard of beauty (美の基準)” of Manazuru-Cho (Kanagawa pref.). Since “Pattern languages” is difficult to inhabitants to manage it, a more brief method has been developed. For example, the method of “Design language” is used to extract a key word from a conversation in a “machizukuri workshop” and edit it to an element of a design.

A “word and image” and “number and map” supplements each other. After late half of 1990’s, the IT has been developing, and especially the expressions by GIS or CAD have great possibilities to express both “word and image” and “number and map”. And the Internet developed the possibility of the communications in Machizukuri. We have great possibilities for using it.

3. The method of citizen’s organization
The method of citizens’ organization in machizukuri—from “community board (住区協議会)” and “machizukuri council (まちづくり協議会)” to “citizen machizukuri activity,” “community development corporation,” “machizukuri NPO,” “machizukuri center,” “intermediary organization,” and so on—is the method that discusses ways to encourage and establish citizen organizations. The method is becoming increasingly sophisticated and professionalized.

(1)“Community board” and “machizukuri council” model

This method has its origin in the neighborhood protest movements of the 1960s that took place in Tsujidonanbu district in Fujisawa city (Kanagawa pref.) or Maruyama district in Kobe city. Some radical planners evaluated the movements as one that revolutionized traditional city planning. Furthermore, from 1970–1980, in reference to the organization of these protest movements, the process of encouraging and establishing citizens organizations as a partner of the local government was developed. These organizations, known as the “community board” or the “machizukuri council,” were established for drafting a community plan or for the maintenance of high wooden and densely town areas. They were designed as autonomous organizations of the community and negotiated with the local government as representatives of the community. The “Syonai district machizukuri council” in Toyonaka-city (Osaka pref.) and the “Mano district machizukuri council” in Kobe-city were completed as successful models and have become pioneers in this age.

(2) “Citizen machizukuri activity” and the “community development corporation” model

After experimenting with some cases such as “community board” and “machizukuri council,” some cases were abandoned as failures since these organizations were reduced to the state of subordinate organizations to the government. They were regarded as artificial organizations that had lost their independence and vitality.

Considering the failure, in the 1990s, the local government arrived at two alternatives. The first choice was to withdraw from “a design of an organization,” and focus on “a design of the planning process and system” along with strengthening the local government’s authority. The second choice—reviewing the model of an organization—involved smaller, more functional and independent organizations. The “citizen machizukuri activity,” which is a grass roots civic activity performed voluntarily by citizens or some professional planners, came into the limelight as one such organization. The Toyota Foundation (1974) paid attention to such civic activity at an early stage and had built a financial support program for organizations conducting them. The foundation had the mission of “the role of a foundation was to bring up the NPO as a source of funds for the third sector,” and presented a superior support program for grassroots citizens’ groups. This method was introduced in the Setagaya Ward (Tokyo), which was seeking a new organization model instead of the “machizukuri council” model. The “Setagaya
Machizukuri Center report (1993)” showed that the new organization model “machizukuri council,” “professional organization,” and “independent citizen’s activity for each particular problem” construct a network and spread each activity with the cooperation of each entity. Based on the report, the “Setagaya Machizukuri Center” was established as the hub of network of such organizations, the “Setagaya Machizukuri Fund” was established to financially assist such organizations, and another professional organization named “Machizukuri House” was set up as the node of the network.

On the other hand, in regions with high commercial development potential and in neglected regions that lack sufficient social services, a new organization model of “community development corporation” was drawn under the influence of NGOs in the USA. As compared to the government sector, community-based organizations have immense business power to provide social services such as housing⁹. Although such organizations are few in number, an example of success in this regard is the Japanese organization “Kurokabe Corporation (Nagahama city, Shiga pref.),” which has succeeded in reviving abandoned commercial areas as popular sightseeing locations.

(3) The age after the “Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (the NPO Law)”

The trend of attaching great importance to civic activity became significant as a result of the establishment of the NPO Law in 1998. According to the law, a small organization is certified by the government and is evaluated by means of a simple procedure as a social organization known as an “NPO.” This lowered the legal barrier, thus improving convenience. In this manner, the law has enabled a more sophisticated, free, and made-to-order design of an organization; further, the methods of designing an organization itself and that of designing partnerships (relationships between organizations and relationships between organizations and the government) are increasing in complexity. Presently, numbers of “intermediary NPO” -the professionals of managing citizen’s organization- are being founded to support the design of an NPO.

“Citizen machizukuri activity” and “community development corporation” grew constantly after 1998, and they now include certified NPOs. At present, a method has not yet been established and organizations are designed along an abstract idea or a precedent example. Therefore, the establishment of a method is the problem.

4. The method of planning processes and system

The method of planning process includes environmental assessment, public involvement and so on. The method of planning system includes district plan, city master plan and so on. And both methods have a close relation. This method is categorized by four “styles of governing,” which pertain to the manner in which citizens, communities, and markets can be recognized as the objects of planning.
In the first “Pluralism style,” citizens, communities, and markets are recognized as being sectionalized. This style emphasizes the building of a fair and clear planning and decision-making process for plural sectors. In the second “Parliamentary system style,” citizens, communities, and markets are considered as being represented by an assembly. This style emphasizes the building of a parliamentary system among neighboring districts under the existing parliamentary system of each local government. The third “Corporatism style” emphasizes the finding and recognition of “a strategic partner organization” for the local government form among the community; the partner organization and the government collaborate in the entire process of machizukuri—planning, decision-making, and practice. The fourth “Free competition style” emphasizes the building of a market where, instead of the government, an NPO and a private company competitively adopt machizukuri. All methods follow different styles. I summarize the development of a method in every style as follows.

(1) Pluralism style
This style was predominant from 1960–1970 through the methods such as “advocacy planning,” and from 1980–1990 the method getting sophisticated. The method of “advocacy planning,” in which an expert (mainly a lawyer) advocates the profit and claim of minorities and negotiates with the government as the agent of minorities in the planning process, was introduced from the USA. Parallel with the introduction, the method of “city planning meeting”—wherein neighborhood protest movement organizations gather and function as a point of adjustment for the government—developed in Itayado district, Kobe City.

After the 1970s, this method gradually became substantial. The “City Planning Law” was improved year-by-year—District Plan (1980), Municipal Master Plan (1992)—and the citizen participation processes were institutionalized. In 2002, the “proposal rights of city planning” were institutionalized. Public involvement (PI) was introduced in the field of civil engineering, and was practiced in a decision-making process of a route of a city-planning road.

In the “Pluralism style,” from the 1960s to the present, the methods such as “out reach”, advocate planning and so on have been developed in order to secure the fair planning process: the method of designing a symmetric planning process that allows equal participation of the government and other subjects. Today it seems to be that there exist many institutionalized methods based on the “Pluralism style,” but these are not sufficiently utilized by citizens and local governments.

(2) Parliamentary system style
This style was experimented with from 1960–1970 using methods such as “community board” in Misato-City (Saitama pref.) or Nakano Ward (Tokyo); however, it was later discontinued. In the 21st century, under the major national trend of decentralization of authority, this style was re-discovered, and some experimental programs have been conducted.
In the 1960s, in an advanced local government, the method of “community board” was introduced. It divides the city area into some districts, and the organization was established closely related with the local government, to represent each district to realize administration coherent to that district. This method was influenced by the “District inhabitants council” of Bologna Italia. During 1970–1990, the method was introduced in large cities that required the creation of new communities due to the influx of new inhabitants during the period of rapid population growth. This method has two fundamental elements: 1) how to forge relations between the “Community board” and the local government assembly and 2) how to procure the work undertaken by the “community board.” As a result of the experiments, the “community board” failed to establish relations with the assembly in the local autonomous system. It only managed to establish the role of discussion, not decision, and found that it functioned merely as “a manager of a community center.”

After the onset of the 21st century, under the major national trend of decentralization of authority, the method needs to be re-designed referring to a similar overseas action—such as the “District council” of Bremen, Germany. A method reaches a limit under present local autonomous system and has to re-design with reviewing a whole frame of the system.

(3) Corporatism style

The method based on this style designs the dynamic, not the static, process, in which multiple subjects were related in a complicated manner. This method is closely related to the method of “design of an organization” because the dynamic process contains the process of establishing and encouraging citizens’ organizations.

At first this method of “planning process” was developed separately as a method of making city scale “master plan” and a district level “district plan,” and later, both methods were integrated and method of “planning system” was developed.

As an experiment of the city scale “master plan”, an attempt to formulate the master plan was pushed forward in Machida City (Tokyo). A fixed traditional master plan was rejected, and some model projects with the cooperation of citizens were developed. Further, the unique thought that the synthesis of each model project with citizens comprised the master plan was presented. However, this method was later rejected and was followed by only a few actions.

Experiment of the district level “district plan” began in the first half of the 1970s with the establishment of the “Machizukuri council (まちづくり協議会)” as a partner of the government. Through the experiences, the three characteristics of the method were clarified1: A) “Gradual process” = the spiral gradual planning process proceeds from the formulation of the plan to the project; B) “Regress process” = A plan is not always formulated after investigating it; C) “Restriction by plan” and “Plan as an indicator” = both,
the indicator function and the restriction function of a plan are important. In other words, a dynamic and flexible planning process was presented instead of the traditional static fixed planning process. Through 1980–1990, this method was developed into a method of planning by accumulating the life design of individual inhabitants and the methods of planning cooperative houses with inhabitants.

During the 90s, the “workshop method” was developed, and planning process became more sophisticated. Although the fundamental frame of the method remained unaltered, a highly integrated method was developed to assist the planning of each rich image by matching each situation with its respective partner. The planning system had to change in response to such a dynamic process. A planning system that integrated a master plan with a plan at a district level was developed. In Adachi Ward (Tokyo), Setagaya Ward (Tokyo), Toyonaka City (Osaka pref.) and so on, a model of such a planning system was established. This system included the method in which citizens' organizations worked as partners of the local government. Every local government institutionalizes these experiments in “the Machizukuri regulations” or “the citizens’ activity support regulations.”

(4) Free competition style

In this style, the role of the local government and the plan is reduced. The role of a plan is to show “rough policy target” and role of the local government is to spend resources effectively to NPOs and the market sector. The realization of a policy is entrusted to free competition or the partnership of the NPOs and the market sector.

This method required drastic change to the concept of the “planning”, and it has not been attempted often because machizukuri is based on “planning”. However, we can see some experimental projects after the late 1990s. Such a method has been developed in commercial areas or regions that promote sightseeing since these require fast decision-making (such as Kurokabe in Nagahama City), or in regions where the social system has been supported and greatly developed by an NGO (such as Kobe City after the earthquake). The “eco-money (a local currency)” and “competitive furtherance program by funds” seem to be one of the experiments of the method. Though some examples appear, a range of “a method” is uncertain. The experiment has recently begun, and the possibilities and problems of this style are still unclear.

5. Conclusions

Because of paper limit, I describe only name of methods and just show the frame of development history. The practice of machizukuri is complicated and we have to solve and support it by sophisticated method. This paper showed a chart of the methods.
6. Acknowledgement

This thesis referred to interviews with many planners. Here I thank the planners who got cooperation.

7. References

This thesis referred to many thesis and books. I show below representative documents.

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8) Moriaki Hirohara(ed.) Yoshimitu Shiozaki et al.: “Thought and management of Kobe city (開発主義神戸の思想と経営)”,
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    理念の体系化)”, Annual report of housing research foundation, no.27,2001 (in Japanese)
13) Shin Aiba: “The development history of the planning method of " community based planning " and its possibility in the field of
    the disaster prevention and reconstruction. (参加型まちづくりの方法の発展史と防災復興まちづくりへの展開可能性)”，

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1 A policy standards or benchmarks to secure citizen’s “living right” that was proposed in 1960’s by Keiich MATSUSHITA(A political scientist) et al.
2 The method was developed by KAWANA et.al. Refer to book 1) for concrete method.
3 For example, OKUDA(1983) raises this problem in book 2) p143.
4 A method to analyze and integrate data creatively invented by Jiro KAWAKITA (An anthropologist)
5 An original work was published in 1977, and the Japanese version was published in 1984 (book 3). A theory of
    Alexander affects many Japanese planners.
6 An example of a neighborhood protest movement of those days is written on book 4) and 5).
7 The method of “machizukuri council” developed mainly in Tokyo is written on book 6)
8 For example, in Kobe-city, the method of “machizukuri council” was reviewed with planning “Maintenance general
    plan of inner city area (1989)”, and method was changed to more project oriented method. The practice in Kobe is
    written in book 7) and 8).
9 Refer to book 9
10 Refer to book 10
11 Refer to book 11)