Japan's Urban Land Problems and their Social Background: Sociological Consequences of Modernisation in Central Tokyo

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1. Japan's Economic Growth and Urban Land Problems

1.1 Japan's Rapid Economic Growth and its Background: Preliminaries to a Reconsideration of Japanese Modernisation

Corresponding to Japan's rapid economic growth and leap in GNP during the 1960's were major changes in its industrial structure and distribution of industrial labour. These changes were not merely economic but also political and cultural. They are believed to have had farreaching effects upon the lives and consciousness of Japanese citizens.

Though generation gaps and regional differences remained, from these social changes arose a life style which differed completely from those previously to be found. These changes accelerated the shift of population to metropolitan areas, and strengthened relationships between various regions of Japan. As the urban consumptive culture spread to the rural provinces, cultural standards in these areas rose.

Factors contributing to these social changes included pursuit of economic efficiency (through increased production, reform of technology, streamlining and dramatic increase of mechanisation), and intensified competition between and within organisational bodies (both of companies and government). Private companies began to base promotion decisions and wage increases on ability (rather than on age, as was the traditional practice). In education, entrance exams for better schools became increasingly competitive. These changes deeply affected every industry and many areas of society. The social structure of Japan changed dramatically.

During this social transition, people tried to pursue values esteemed not only in Japan but also in the West. A tendency to emulate a cosmopolitan lifestyle emerged. Westernisation became the motto of the day and symbolised the hopes and aspirations of most Japanese citizens. As there was such an obvious lack of material goods, obtaining material wealth was seen as a way of pursuing these goals.

At that time, Japanese citizens associated the process of modernisation mostly with the process of rapid economic growth, understanding this to be Westernisation. The search for a universal cosmopolitan lifestyle brought about a defiance of traditional values. Opposition to traditional social organisation, structure and sectionalism grew.

As is to be expected, such drastic and comprehensive social change tends to result in the emergence of severe social conflicts.

In order to maintain the government's policy of economic growth, ways of promoting public consent and maintaining social harmony were necessary.

During the period of rapid economic growth, social norms and support systems which existed within all kinds of social groups were the main sources of social security. However, these social norms and support systems of such social units as family, neighbourhood, and occupational group were modified, reproduced, and put to better use during this period of social transition. The Japanese tendency towards groupism is a product of this phenomenon.

On the other hand, political measures for resolving social problems within an economic framework and avoiding intensification of social conflicts (mesures such as the policy of doubling wages) were also employed. The government proposed a new vision of the times, encouraging better standards of living and promoting a more efficient, convenient and materialistic lifestyle. The common goal was to realise this type of ideal life. A share of the country's economic wealth was to be given to the public via various social organisations. There was increased availability of consumer products and of houses with garden space. Through these improvements in living standards, the government managed (barely) to maintain public support. It was the growth of the urban middle class and the prevailing consumer type of lifestyle which provided this support for the government's economic priorities. The consequences of rapid economic growth were so pervasive that life for the Japanese would never be the same.

Government policy regarding land problems was important in promoting public acceptance of the goals of economic growth and an affluent society founded on a culture of masscon-sumption.

Since the war it has often been said that land underpins the Japanese economy. However, urban land too was regarded as giving impetus to economic activity, as large companies could mortgage property for huge amounts, and land could be used as a major source of political donations, etc. Rising land prices were supported not only by those big companies, but also by the urban working class who had already obtained their own houses by taking advantage

of housing loans. Under these circumstances, the fact that investment in land had been advantageous due to the continuous rise of land prices became legendary.

By tracing the progress of land problems in urban areas after World War II, the principal means of producing urban land can be identified. Developers acquired the ownership of agricultural lands, woodlands, or fishery rights adjacent to the urban areas very inexpensively, and developed those areas into residential suburbs or into waterfront industrial areas with improved transportation networks and technical innovations. These developments caused land prices in those areas to rise very rapidly, a trend which advanced through existing urban areas. Through these processes, developers (and allied industries) were able to make great profits. The progressive concentration of various vital urban functions in the metropolitan areas continued to force up land prices.

The increase in land problems in Central Tokyo after 1983, which will be described in the next section, is merely an extension of a series of rising land prices which have occurred in conjunction with the rapid economic growth since World War II. It should be noted that land problems after 1983, and the rising land prices during the 1960's and 1970's, have the same mechanism and characteristics.

Analysis of these land problems is important for a reconsideration of the cultural meaning of government-induced consensus-making processes during the period of rapid economic growth. The analysis of these land problems also enables us to better understand current Japanese society which is in transition.

1.2 Land Problems in Tokyo after 1983

By following chronologically the rising prices of land and the occurrence of land problems in Central Tokyo, it is possible to identify four periods which illustrate media coverage of the issues, and public opinion concerning both the cause of rising land costs and policies relating to these problems.

1983 to the first half of 1986

Prime Minister Nakasone's strategy of "Privatisation" and the relaxation government control over land usage, resulted in public property being sold at high prices at competitive auctions. This Privatisation Strategy triggered a rise in the value of land in Central Tokyo. As land values increased, criminal cases concerning land were frequently reported by the media. Rising land prices were attributed to an imbalance in supply and demand for office

buildings, and to the progress of Internationalisation and the Information Age. Policies were proposed for reconsideration of city planning, and relaxation of government controls on future construction.

Second half of 1986 to first half of 1987

Rising land prices began to spread from the central business districts of Tokyo to residential areas, and thence quickly to the outer environs, continuing even beyond the prefectures surrounding Tokyo, as far as resort areas such as Karuizawa and Yuzawa. This resulted in a wave of rising prices over vast spans of land. Additionally, crime related to rising land prices became more common. The media took more interest in these issues and reported them more frequently. At this time the central determinant of rising land prices was believed to be loans extended by financial institutions for speculative land deals. Great attention was paid to identification of who (or what) was responsible for the rising prices. There was an intensification of government control over land deals and stronger control particularly over speculative land deals. Further attention was paid to taxation problems relating to these land deals.

Second half of 1987 to first half of 1989

The skyrocketing of land values in Central Tokyo gradually lessened and a stabilisation of prices became apparent. However, the value of land around Tokyo was still rising rapidly. A similar tendency was noted in all major cities of Japan. At this time, radical political countermeasures were proposed to correct the excessive concentration of various urban functions in Tokyo, transferral of function and division of the city, being among the measures discussed.

Second half of 1989 to 1991

A drop in the value of land in some parts of the central districts became noticeable. It became evident that land prices on the whole were stabilising. During this time, the issue of land taxation as one means of rectifing the situation became an urgent political concern. Various ministerial investigative committees made successive proposals, one being that agricultural land within urban areas be taxed on a par with residential areas. The Basic Land Law was enacted by the Diet. The money market was tightened, and there was further deliberation on the Japan-U.S. Structural Impediment Initiative.

During these four periods, with the increasing occurrence of land problems, closely related latent social problems began to appear. General issues of concern included economic imbal-

ance between central areas and outer districts, excessive concentration of central administrative and managerial functions, administration of land usage, and the close relationships between financial capital, urban developement agencies and the controlling ministry. However, land problems influenced people's lives negatively in many ways. Interpersonal relations were adversely affected by the rise of social instability due to land-related illegal activities and subsequent criminal suits. Growth of the nouveau riche, and large-scale vacation of central urban areas by residents accelerated social instability. Table 1 gives details of urban spatial transformation after 1983.

The process of change, particularly in central areas and business areas where change was intense, is well illustrated by the following facts:

(1) In five wards of Central Tokyo, land values were on average ten times higher in 1989 than it was just before 1983 (Figure 1). Incidentally, from 1980 to 1989 the rise in the consumer price index was 18.8%.

(2) During the same period, one consequence of land deals was a conspicuous rise in the amount of land newly owned by private enterprises for example, there was a 13% rise in Chiyoda ward and in Minato ward). See Figure 2.

Additionally, the stage was now set for large-scale tansference of land titles from individuals to private companies. It is clear that not all transactions proceeded smoothly between tenants and buyers. Violence and pressure tactics were employed, and further civil disputes and criminal charges erupted.

(3) During the period from 1983 to 1990, the residential population of the central five wards declined by 120,000 (Figure 3). The real and assumed need for office space precipitated both land transactions and this population shift. In eight central wards of Tokyo, between 1983 and 1990, there were many areas where population declined by more than 20%, according to official government reports (see Figure 4).

(4) Increased redevelopment, construction and disposal of recently vacated buildings, and higher associated costs, were noted. It was deemed more advantageous to break down not only old edifices but also relatively new edifices in order to better use the land space. In this fashion, reconstruction still takes place today in Tokyo.

2. Land Problems and Social Change in Central Tokyo

2.1 Basic Framework of Research into Land Problems in Central Tokyo

Several districts manifesting the typical problems mentioned above were studied to

Table 1 Outline of Urban Spatial Transformation

1) Urban Core & Frame --- the starting point of rising land prices

* Developers began to purchase land in areas with a concentration of old wooden houses ⟶ These areas were transformed to business districts.

* A reduction of the size of residential areas ⟶ A decrease in the residential population accelerated.

2) Inner Suburbs --- rising land prices occured in inner suburbs following the rising land prices of the urban core and frame.

* Developers began to purchase land mainly in areas with a concentration of old wooden houses, adjacent to existing business centers (or big shopping centers), or along arterial roads, or where public transportation was to be made more accessible ⟶ These areas were transformed to business districts, commercial districts, or high-rise residential districts.

* In some traditional style residential areas, typified by old wooden houses, the environment worsened. "Inner-city problems" occurred.

3) Outer Suburbs --- the rising of land prices spread to outer suburbs owing to the tax system

* Use zoning was revised mainly in areas adjacent to existing shopping centers. Those areas began to transform into business or shopping areas.

* High-rise residential buildings started to appear in areas where public transportation was more accessible.

* In some residential areas, residents moved to protect their residential environment or to prevent developers from constructing high-rise buildings there.

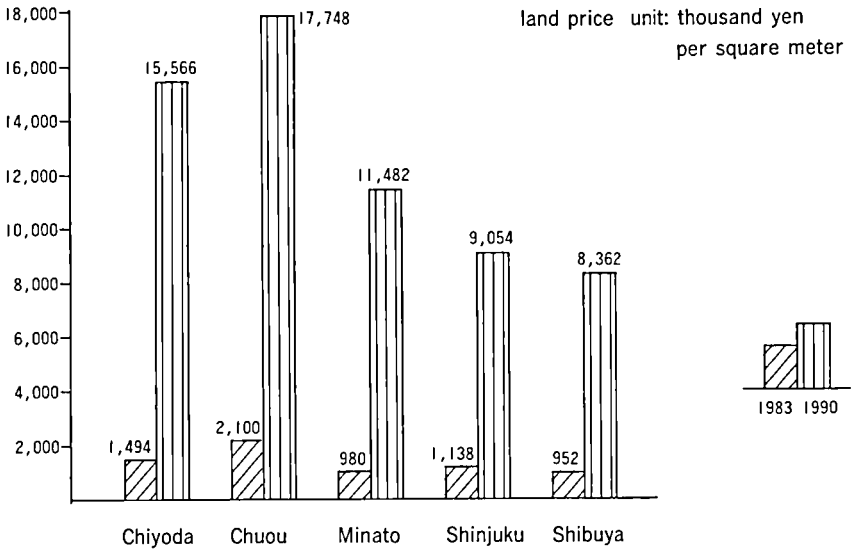
4) Outside of outer suburbs --- The rising land prices spread to all residential areas in Tokyo Metropolitan Area, other major cities of Japan, resort areas...

* Use zoning was revised mainly in areas adjacent to existing shopping centers. Those areas began to transform into business or shopping areas.

* Land prices will rise in outer areas if the commuters' zone expands due to plans to improve the transport, system and feasibility of commuting by Shinkansen (new trunk line) developed consistent with improved life styles based on multi-habitation.

* The rise of land prices in other major cities and resort areas, based on "resort booms"

Figure 1. The rise of land prices during 1982-1989 in five wards of Central Tokyo



Sources: Tokyo Metropolitan Government Land Price Survey

Figure 2. Changes in the ratio of land owned by private enterprises during 1982-1989 in five wards of Central Tokyo

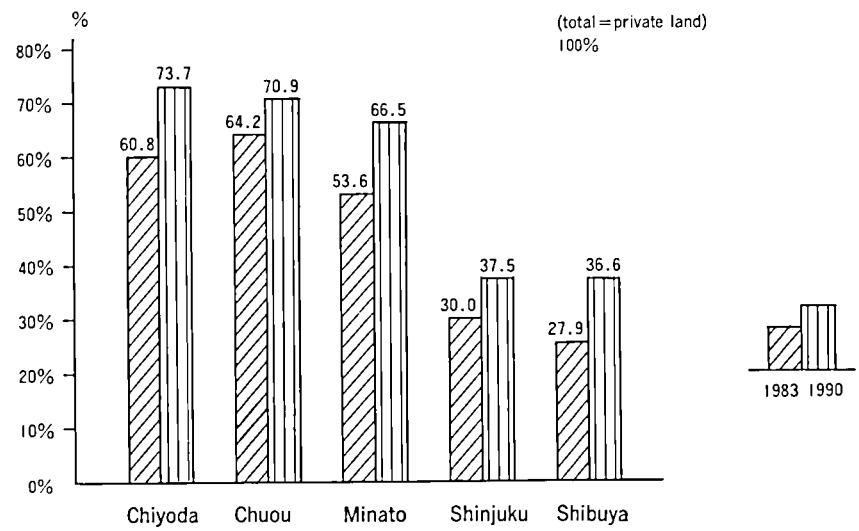
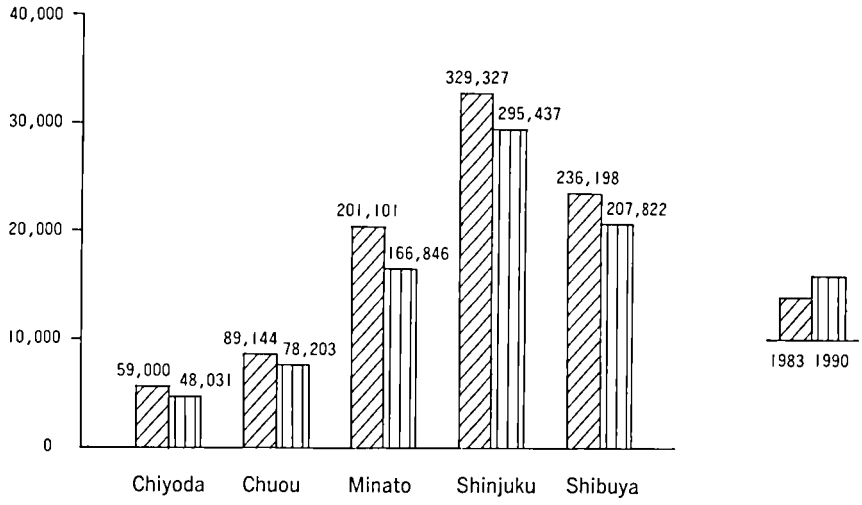


Figure 3. Dicrease of residential population during 1983-1990 in five wards of Central Tokyo



Sources: Tokyo Metropolitan Government official reports (1 st Jan. every year)

determine how residents were affected by, and tried to cope with, these problems. These districts are limited mainly to the inner city and nearby areas.

This research is divided into three categories: (1) S-research, which is basic research into how land usage changed, and provides a broad outline to facilitate understanding of the land problems; (2) A-research, which focuses on the types of land problems in particular areas; and (3) B-research, which, by studying individuals and families, focuses on the factors that influenced people to sell their land to developers. Districts studied are those in which concentrations of old wooden houses remained and strong outside pressure was put on people to sell their land.

S-research consisted of examination and analysis of problems indicated in official reports, previous surveys, statistical data, local planning data, historical data, and information gathered from field investigations and interviews with administrative officials. Information previously recorded or published was also analysed.

Twenty distinct zones or blocks were selected from the eight wards, which showed clear evidence of having land problems. Some of these blocks covered an area more than several square kilometres .

A-research: From evidence gathered during S-research, we identified: (1) the status of each

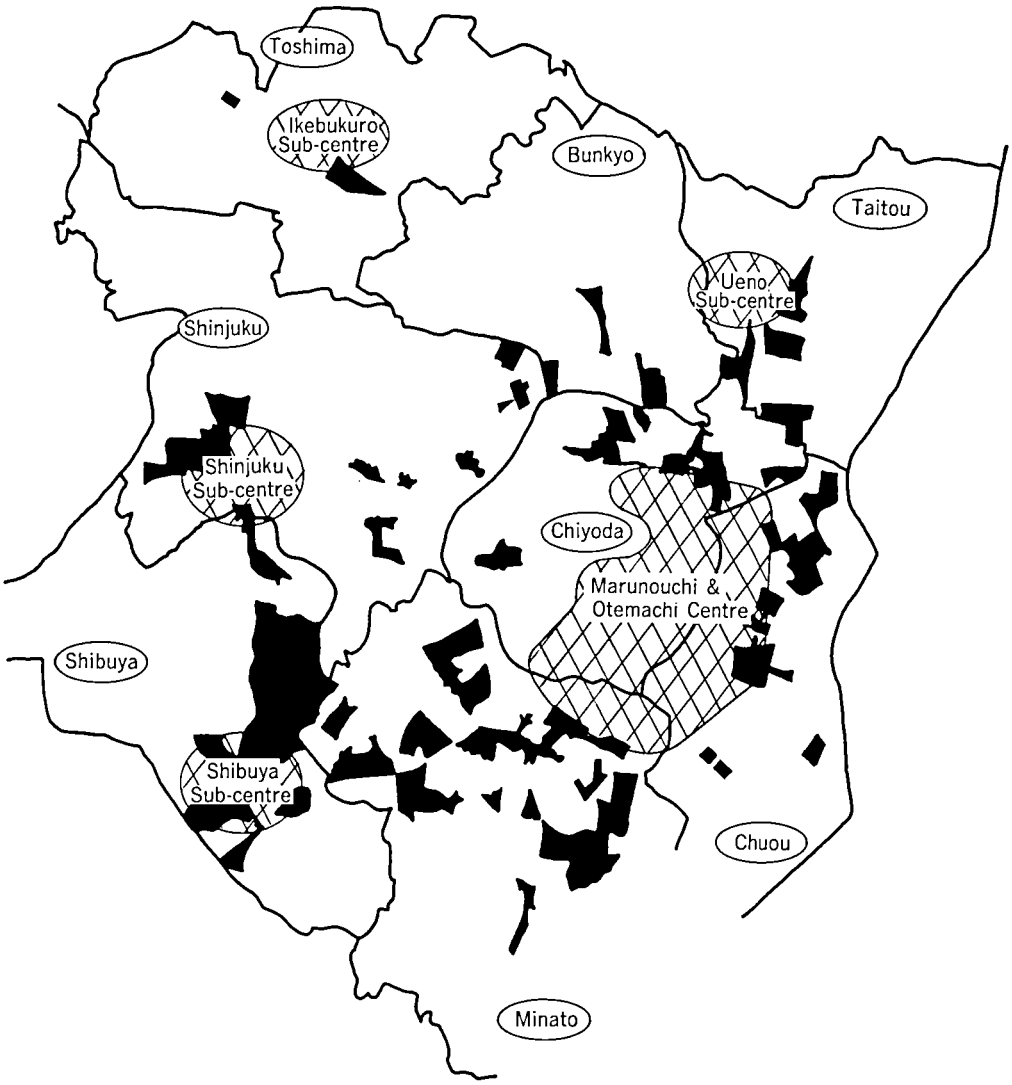


Figure 4. Areas where the population decreased more than 20% during 1983-1990

(in eight central wards of Tokyo)

■ Areas where the population decreased more than 20% during 1983-1990

Excepting areas where the population density was under 10,000 people per square kilometer in 1983

* according to official grovernment reports

area (i.e. distance from the centre of the city, pattern of land usage, and history of the development of the area); (2) the characteristics of its community (i.e. personal relationships amongst residents, frequency of communal activities, etc.); and (3) the evolution of its land problems and the ways in which they were dealt with. Research was then limited to ten areas. Interviews were conducted during May to October 1989 with several key persons from each of these areas.

B-research: Kanda Tsukasa-cho proved to be an area which manifested typical land problems and for which information was relatively easy to obtain as residents were cooperative. Supplementary research was done in Block No.3 of Nishi-Shinjuku 3-chome in order to make comparisons with Kanda Tsukasa-cho.

This research focused on the factors which had influenced the decisions of each family either to stay or to leave. Interviews and surveys of residents' lives were conducted. An examination was made of official registration records to discover ownership and tenancy details regarding land and buildings. Supplementary research was done on the history of those areas. B-research took place from October 1989 to February 1990. Figure 5 shows the framework of the analysis of this residential research.

2.2 The Characteristics of Various Areas and Basic Attributes of Residents, with Particular Reference to Kanda Tsukasa-cho

This paper focuses on B-research, with respect to residential research and introduces its results. First, we shall identify the characteristics and basic attributes of the residents of Kanda Tsukasa-cho.

Historical aspects of the area

Kanda Tsukasa-cho had been a working class area since the Edo Period. During the Meiji period, it was characterised by terrace housing. Its lower class community was close-knit. Later, a sizable part of the area burned down during the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. Following the land readjustment projects of the Showa Period, the existing urban area was slowly established.

The state of the area prior to the period of rapid economic growth

From the beginning of the Showa Period to the 1960's, the area's key industries were to do with printing (book-binding, printing, etc.) and building (carpentry, plastering and roof tiling, etc.). Generally residents managed their businesses from their homes.

Due to the large number of such business operations, food industry-related services in-

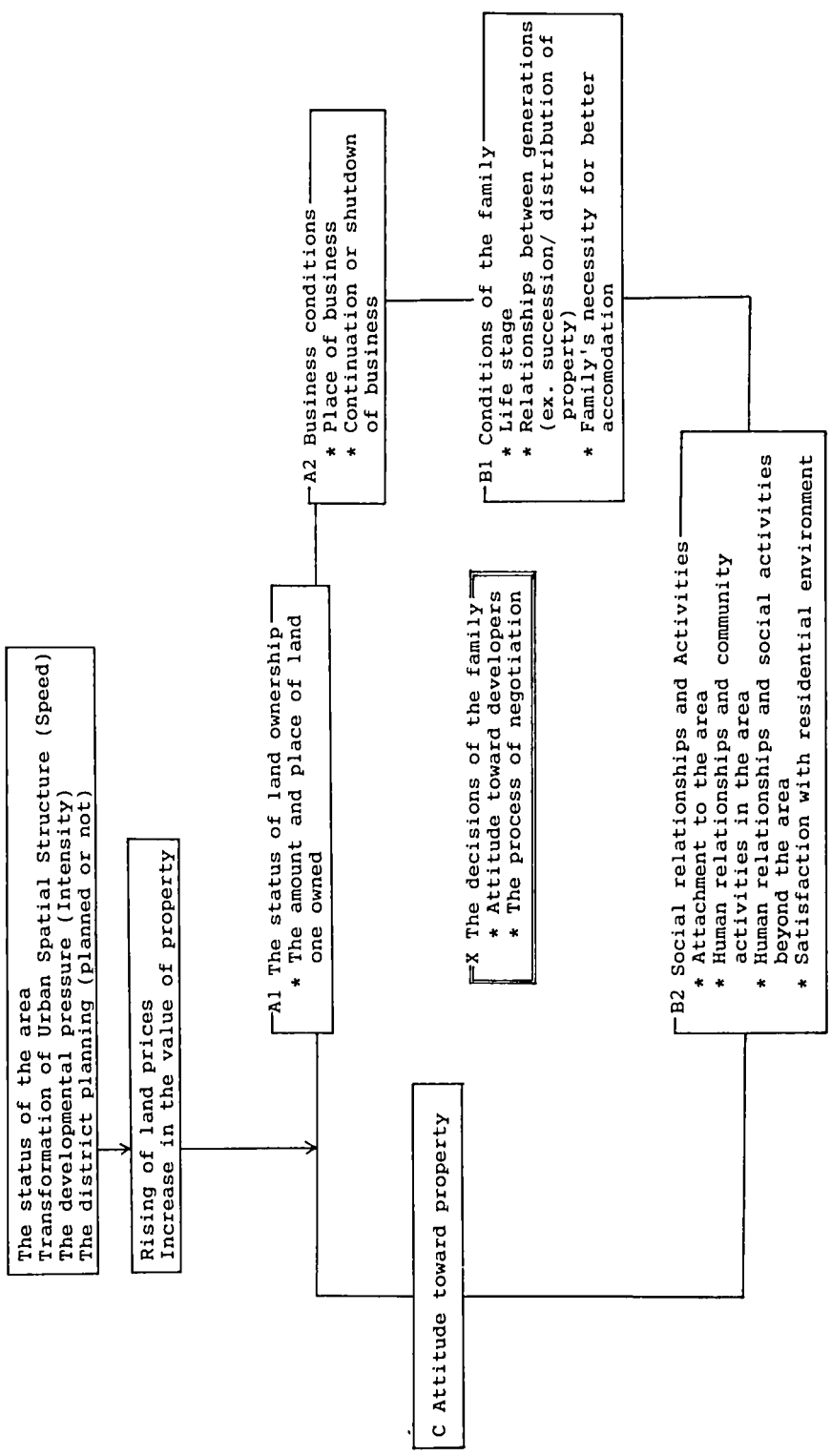


Figure 5. The framework of the research on the residents' lives

creased, and many apprentices came to live and study in the area.

Two different types of network developed, one being a superior-inferior vertical type of system, and the other, an equality-based horizontal type of system. Residents participated together in various events, festivals, welfare functions and informal social gatherings. These networks and support systems were themselves important cultural phenomena. The structure of the community became very close-knit.

Changes in social structure since the period of rapid economic growth

As the economic climate changed, so too did the social climate of the city. People had to adapt to the increased mechanisation and inevitable streamlining of industry. Urban physical transformation occurred as large enterprises and businesses assembled together in Central Tokyo. Consequently, Central Tokyo was ordered to implement fire prevention controls and the construction of wooden structures was banned. Accordingly, there was less demand for such skills as carpentry, plastering, and so forth, in many areas where they had once flourished. (An increased need for such skills was observed in the suburbs.) On the other hand, the book-binding and printing industries remained successful, while food and service industries were variously influenced by the inflow and outflow of other industries.

As these social transitions became apparent, changes within individual industries accelerated: for example, craftsmen such as carpenters and plasterers became managers or employees of construction companies or real estate agencies. The small food service businesses now had a clientele of office workers.

This period of technological reform neccessitated management changes (former foremen now became managers of small- to medium-sized enterprises). Streamlining continued, and a reduction in the number of apprentices was noted. Vertical and horizontal personal networks and social support networks in the area diminished or completely disappeared. A large construction company and a pharmaceutical company shifted to Kanda Tsukasa-cho, in response to its changed urban structure.

The changing pattern of land ownership in the area prior to World War II

The vast majority of residents rented property from absentee landlords. Of 74 land owners of Tsukasa-cho in 1912, 61 were absentee landlords. The difference in social status between absent land owners and tenants was striking.

After World War II, there were two peaks of aquisitions of land or dwellings by tenants. The first peak appeared around 1950, during the period of reconstruction following the war. Property laws were reformed, enabling people to purchase land cheaply provided that they

had lived there for a certain period of time. A well-known expression of the time —"as if it were free"— indicates how inexpensive the land was. The next peak of land acquisition by those who were renting, also appeared before 1970. However, it was then not considered profitable to actually purchase the land, as renting was so inexpensive. Among those who acquired land at this time, were some who did so unwillingly, at their landlord's request, and because they happened to have extra capital.

The majority of these land acquisitions were made by existing residents, although some land was purchased by big companies. It was from 1982 that development and resale of land began, and land sales became frequent.

Basic attributes of the residents

Questionaires were sent to the heads of 134 families living in Kanda Tsukasa-cho. Seventy-five people responded (56.0%) to our interviews. Additionally, interviews were conducted with eleven people who had left the Kanda Tsukasa-cho area. The occupations of those who responded are as follows: self-employed, 49 (printing 15, retail and food industry 16, real estate 3, miscellaneous 15); salaried employees, 15; unemployed, 11. The majority owned their own businesses. However, 12 of those also earned some money from renting real estate. The distribution by age was: 15 people under the age of 50; 28 aged 50-59; 14 aged 60-69; and 10 people above the age of 70. (The majorty of respondents were over the age of 50.) Eighteen families owned property of more than 66 square metres, while twenty-seven families owned property of less than 66 square metres. Eighteen families owned living and working facilities but not land. Twelve families rented houses. More than half owned very small holdings of land or rented land and/or buildings.

2.3 An Outline of the Social Transformation of the Area and its Impact on Residents

Kanda Tsukasa-cho is offered as a typical example of an area affected by urban land problems after 1983. Land prices in 1989 were 22 times higher than those in 1980. (The most intense rise took place from 1985 disclosing a rise of 432 % over three years.) This illustrates the intensity of the process. One result was a reduction in the resident population.

The tempo and characteristics of the social transformation changed completely after 1983. Prior to this, residents adapted readily, buying and using land so as to turn the situation to their advantage. At that time the only outside interference was from large-scale private enterprises (construction companies and pharmaceutical campanies) which were entering the district. After 1983, however, people were pressured by developers to sell their

land, and were forced to make important business and personal decisions at very short notice. The number of land deals increased greatly, with a marked rise particularly in tranfers from individuals to private companies.

While in some respects the district improved markedly after 1983, having tidier roads and a generally improved appearance, and showing a trend towards gentrification, it also experienced many social problems.

One consequence of this urban transformation was that many small landowners and tenants had to leave the area. This, however, was not to their financial disadvantage (as they received ample compensation for leaving). The opportunity to sell their land for high prices enabled many to move to better suburbs of Tokyo. Some were even able to buy land elsewhere and lease it for profit.

However, the decline in the number of residents caused a decline in the number of small retailers in the food industries, and a slump for those who stayed. Additionally, as open space and number of parking lots increased (while developers waited until they had purchased as much land as possible before actually building) so too did inconvenience to residents, resulting in further residential decline. Furthermore, as the capital gains of landowners increased, there was a consequent increase in family conflicts regarding inheritance and division of responsibility for elderly family members. There were court cases, disagreements over how land should be used, and disputes among neighbours over borders. community bonds were loosened, community networks and services declined, and social fibres weakened. Some were able to close their businesses, build tall commercial buildings on their land and make large profits by leasing office space, losing all aspiration to labour in the absence of any need to continue labouring.

People were affected differently according to their social status (determined either by occupation or property holdings). The most significant factor was the amount of land owned.

Families who owned more than 66 square metres (hereafter called the upper class) tended to remain, or continue to hold land in the area, and were able to profit by doing so. Families who rented dwellings (hereafter called the lower class) faced the risk of being asked to leave. Families who owned dwellings but rented land or owned less than 66 square metres (hereafter called the middle class), had to consider the pros and cons of remaining in an area most of whose former residents had left. Typically, those whose business circumstances were favourable and who had potential successors to their businesses, tended to stay in order to

maintain either their family land or their business. Generally, the more property one owned the easier it became to attract a successor to one's business. Otherwise, one had to decide whether or not to leave, carefully weighing such considerations as the need for better accommodation, attachment to the area, reluctance to change lifestyle, and so forth.

Before 1983, business conditions and profits were determined by the amount of work done. Ownership of property was dependent on business conditions, and was just one of the determinants of financial prosperity. After 1983, however, people decided whether or not to continue their business solely according to the amount of property they owned. Ownership of property had become the sole determinant of financial prosperity.

This social movement after 1983 irreversibly weakened and disrupted community cohesion, which had been maintained with difficulty during the period of rapid economic growth. At the present time what remains of this community culture is supported only by a group of old people who grew up together. There are few community events that continue to attract the financial support of new business enterprises. There are considerable obstacles to the survival of this local culture.

During the period of rapid economic growth, the personal networks and social support systems which had been developed through business relationships, gradually diminished in the area. However, some elderly residents who had once been apprentices and who still worked in the area, continued to promote community cultural activities which included festivals and social gatherings, such was the strength of their bond with the area and their friends.

In spite of rising pressure from outside during the 1970's, some members of the community engaged in cooperative construction projects. However, over time, some participants in these cooperative schemes, found it necessary to leave for various unspecified reasons. As this trend continued, fewer people were able to deal cooperatively with land problems in this way.

During the social changes occurring since 1983, this type of cooperative response to land problems ceased. Among those who chose to stay, there were differing opinions as to future land use in Kanda Tsukasa-cho, and most of its present residents have different visions for their lives.

Presently, nine leaders of the neighbourhood association live elsewhere, but have offices in Kanda Tsukasa-cho. About 60% of the total membership of 550 consists of private companies. The neighbourhood association is making desperate efforts to preserve its activities

by accepting former residents as associate members and by requesting the financial support of these companies.

3. The Benefits and Disadvantages of Rapid Economic Growth: The Impact of Land Problems on the Wider Social System

The characteristics of social change and the actual impact land problems had on residents' lives in each area differed, depending on factors such as the status of the area, the characteristics of its community, and the history of its land problems and their treatment. These factors influenced the intensity and rapidity of developmental pressure, the strength and durability of cooperative responses of residents to the activities of developers, and the relationship between residents, developers and local government bodies.

Actually, in one inner area of Tokyo, residents' cooperative efforts to improve the residential environment, and to create an area less vulnerable to disaster, are about to succeed. Hence we should be wary of generalisations regarding the causes and effects of land problems. However, in considering the areas dealt with in this research, one notes several common tendencies. Examination of these tendencies impels us to reconsider the nature of Japan's rapid economic growth, whose positive aspects have been apparent to the world up to the present.

Areas where residents have experienced dramatic social change since 1983, have certain common features, which include: (1) having a concentration of old, wooden two-storied houses, and being relatively close to the central business district; and (2) having the potential for very profitable redevelopment in virtue of adjacency to existing business centres (or big shopping centres), or to arterial roads, or of plans for greater accessiblity to public transportation. In most areas which exhibit such features, one can observe almost the same characteristics as were observed in Kanda Tsukasa-cho, except for differences in historical conditions and occupational composition. In these areas, where urban lower-class communities existed, residents had started to improve their local environment and raise their standard of living by adapting to the times. This transition, on the other hand, excluded those who would not (or could not) accept the changing circumstances. Therefore, if these processes accelerated, conflicts could worsen and social problems explode.

As indicated earlier, during the period of rapid economic growth, social norms and mutual-support systems of the various social groups functioned very well as social stabilisers. Moreover, the government's economic policies and the emergence of urban consumer culture were social mechanisms promoting public consent to transitional changes. Thus conservative

Japanese Government has succeeded in maintaining support through policies of pursuing "economic growth" and achieving "an affluent society founded on a culture of mass-consumption". We see, though, through the profile of the community changes in Kanda Tsukasa-cho during the period of rapid economic growth, that different outcomes were possible, according to individual circumstances. Some residents may adjust to the trends of the age, others may not.

Community changes after 1983, also included pressure for improved amenities in the area. This, too, may be seen as a product of economic growth and mass-consumptive culture. Hence, we see that many of the mechanisms of social change after 1983 in Kanda Tsukasa-cho are identical to those employed during the period of rapid economic growth.

On the one hand, small business enterpreneurs took the opportunity of rising land prices to develop their businesses and obtain wealth. On the other hand, older residents who had hoped to live there undisturbed with good neighbours, regarded these changes very negatively and felt that their plans had been completely upset. Thus, for most of the residents, these social changes were thought of in different ways; as an opportunity to enjoy themselves in an affluent society with increased financial power; or as a change which threatened to completely disrupt their previous way of life, depriving them of existing stable, meaningful human relationships, and of animated local culture.

The social changes occurring since 1983 resulted in friction within the community and an overall breakdown of the mechanisms for maintaining social stability. These changes produces conflicts within families, a decrease in community cohesion, and a loss of social norms.

During the period of rapid economic growth, it was believed that hard work would lead to prosperity. However, the urban working masses, unable to buy their own houses in suburban areas as a result of rising land prices, gradually lost faith in this view. These social changes therefore tended to deprive the working masses of the will to labour. One reason why people accepted intensified competition during the period of economic growth, was that they believed that successful competitive effort would lead one to a better life and to an assured rise in status. This, however, no longer held true. The widening social gap between those who owned real estate and those who did not, meant that people were no longer judged on merit alone. This situation in turn has encouraged greater sensitivity toward issues of social justice.

Mass consumptive culture, and desire for material wealth and (in particular) convenient, efficient urban facilities and services, were important in facilitating economic growth. However, answers are still required to such questions as: 'What constitutes a comfortable

way of such life?'; 'How should such life be achieved?'; and 'What types of economic activities and of social systems will permit such an ideal lifestyle to be realised?'

We have seen that existing social processes have led both to the benefits of economic growth and to problems with respect to transport, housing, and residential environment; these advantages and disadvantages being but two sides of a single coin. Japanese society is groping for solutions to these social problems, and for a way of reconciling such solutions with economic growth. How should Japanese cope with weakening and loss of social norms and with the breakdown of trust between members of society? How should Japanese reorganise their ways of life and their values (which are presently wholly based on mass consumptive culture, and focused on material wealth)?

This quest is closely connected with the re-evaluation of family life, and with problems to do with gender, occupational life (Japanese-style management), the labour-leisure relationship in everyday life, control of levels of production and consumption, cultural transition between generations, and so forth. Urban land problems are but one aspect of these wide-ranging social transitions.

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