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Keikichi KIHARA



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**Preservation of Historical Environment and the Role
of Movement of the Inhabitants in Japan**

**Editorial Office, Asahi Newspaper Co.
Keikichi Kihara**

The country of Japan has been changed largely under high economical growth policy started in 1960s. A rapid industrialization has brought about an elevation of the national income and activation of consumption economy, but also caused a destruction of environment in various parts of the country. The destruction of environment attracted the public eye first of all in the form of public hazard.

As you note from Minamata disease due to organic mercury poisoning, ~~Itai-itai disease due to organic mercury poisoning~~, Itai-itai disease due to cadmium contamination, and Yokkaichi asthma due to factory exhaust gas, the public hazard in Japan has been violent, extraordinary and tragic, which have been so unusual in the world. Therefore, the inhabitants and the administrative organs tackled with the solution of public hazard problem concentrically, facing the fact first of all. We had no composure to pay an attention to the broad side affairs involved substantially in the environmental problems.

However, three situations have been changed gradually in 1970s. Having experience in the public hazard and by joining further to the movement of the inhabitants, people's attention to the surrounding life environment has become sensitive, and people have begun to notice the severity of destruction of nature. As symbolized in a bulldozer scraping hills and lands instantly, the hugeness of development has begun to change the natural environment rapidly. In order to construct a factory site, the natural seashore was reclaimed very easily.

According to the census of the green taken by the Environmental Agency in 1970, although Japan has the coast line of third length in the world, following the Soviet Union and the Australia, the situation is that the length of her natural coast is about half the total coast length. Facing the above situations, people who loved flowers and birds, dealing with the nature as an object of hobby by then, have become concerned with collapse of the nature, reconsidering it as the base of human existence. Consequently, the movement of preservation of nature swelled in the whole country and the form of the movement was changed from a hobby lovers' movement to a movement of resistance against the destruction. Under these circumstances, the governmental bodies of the urban and rural prefectures

in various parts of the country enacted regulations of preservation of nature successively, and the Nation also enacted the Natural Environment Preservation Law in 1972.

At the present movement, the people have recognized the destruction of historical environment as an important subject of the present environmental problem, which came along as a third step following the public hazard and the destruction of nature. The people were concerned with the destruction of each cultural asset previously. However, as a result of hugeness of the size of development, such situation was brought about that the value of each cultural asset was hurt, in the event its surrounding environment was destroyed although each cultural asset itself was preserved. From the destruction of cultural asset to the destruction of historical environment, in other words, the size of destruction was spread and became serious, from a destruction of a spot to that of a plane. Facing with such a situation, the people began to notice that a historical environment is a symbol of mental solidarity for the area people. They began to recognize that how disappearance of historical environment would seriously affect people's life.

Namely, the public hazard is a direct infringement to life, health and property of people, while the destruction of historical environment is a challenge to spiritual life of people. Especially, for the people who have been proud of history of their area, their feeling about lacking of historical environment once it is destroyed, is beyond endurance. Thus, people began to notice an importance of cultural value of environment, in addition to physical value of it. Now for the first time, people recognized the environment as an organic united whole, and an overall environmental sense started to take a root, estimating the public hazard and the destruction of the nature as a visual point in a lateral axis, and also estimating the historical environment as a visual point in a vertical axis.

In November 1976, the Environmental Committee in OECD (The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development) opened an international conference in Tokyo to review the environmental policy of Japanese Government. The conclusion of that conference was that Japanese Government obtained good results in the battle of public hazards, such as countermeasures of the atmospheric and water pollution, however, she obtained rather poor results in the battle of environmental conservation such as preservation of historical landscape. For the officers in charge of environmental problems in advanced industrialized countries, affiliates of OECD, who attended at the above conference, it may have been felt strange by them that the environmental policies of Japanese Government have been to put emphasis on two countermeasures such as public hazard and preservation of nature, while she neglected adjustment of city sight which forms the quality of citizen's life, and preservation of historical environment. They pointed out that Japanese Government would have a

wider interpretation of environment, and should take policies for preservation of amenity. I consider that the analysis by OECD is correct. However, we must remember that an overall viewpoint has been formed in the inhabitants already which recognizes public hazard, the destruction of nature and historical environment as a whole, while countermeasures of administration by the Nation or the Self-Governing Bodies were delayed.

Thus, in our country, the people who faced with the fact that an environment has been destroyed, will rise and urge the Self-Governing Body for solution, and then it will make regulations and start for countermeasures. Finally, the Nation will stand up and make laws. It seems therefore that the sequence pattern from the inhabitants to the Self-Governing Body to the Nation is established in our country, regarding countermeasures for environmental problems. When the time difference between concerns from public hazard to the destruction of nature to the destruction of historical environment, is considered together with the above sequence pattern, it is clearly understood that the countermeasures for preservation of historical environment are mostly delayed among the environmental policies taken by the Japanese Government. As a result of the above, many of important historical environments have been destroyed and disappeared successively in various parts of the country.

The strained relationship between the destruction of historical environment by the authorities and obstructing movement by the inhabitants was noted in various parts of the country in 1960s under high economic growth policy. Then in 1962, even Heijokyo Ruin was appearing in the scene of destruction. Heijokyo, a metropolis of Nara era 1200 years ago is a castle town similar to Chang'an in China and Chingchow in Korean Peninsula.

Daigokuden and Chodoin were constructed at the central part of Heijokyo. These ruins of palaces were buried and preserved under rural districts up to the present. In the summer of 1961, Kintetsu (Kinki Nihon Railway Co. — privately owned) made a plan to construct an inspection yard for their trains. Since Kintetsu knew that the site was a well-known ruin, they made an application for commencement of construction work to the Cultural Asset Preservation Committee (the Cultural Asset Preservation Bureau at the present) of the Nation, through the Board of Education of Nara Prefectural Government.

The Cultural Asset Preservation Committee at that time checked their application and decided to approve the commencement of work, since the site was privately owned land, and it was not designated yet as a ruin, they considered that the development work should be unavoidable. Against the above decision, the citizens and the scholars made the Heijokyo Ruin Preservation Meeting and started out in an objection movement. A country-wide signature campaign spread out and an application was made to the National Diet.

Finally, the Ikeda Cabinet at that time was affected and a course of preservation for the ruin was decided. The site has become the Buried Cultural Asset Center in the Nara National Cultural Asset Research Institute at the present time, and excavation, investigation and preservation measure are forwarded. Also, it has become the Training Center for excavators and investigators, which is a representative of our country. The preservation movement of the Heijokyo Ruin again indicated the nation that the movement of the inhabitants is indispensable for the preservation of historical environment. In this country, the National Government has disclosed at home and abroad that they might have destroyed even the first class, world-wide ruin like the Heijokyo Ruin, if the inhabitants did not stand up. Under the situation that a persistent movement of the inhabitants is required for preservation of even the highest class historical environment, it is more difficult to preserve cultural assets and surrounding historical environment of Meiji and Taisho eras, which are much more recent than those of the Heijokyo Ruin. Such being the case, in big cities and their circumferences under severe urbanization, it is nearly hopeless to preserve historical environment.

Located in the metropolitan area, and receiving a strong population pressure directly, how the inhabitants in the old city named Kamakura, continued a movement of preservation of historical environment hardly and for a long period, and with the above movement as a turning point, the Old Capital Preservation Law was enacted eventually. In the symposium of this time, a report by Mr. Minoru Hara, dealing with the movement of the inhabitants in Kamakura, is introduced in detail. Under the raging waves of urbanization in Tokyo, the situation is much more difficult to preserve historical environment. Tokyo which lost the majority of historical environment of recent years by Kanto earthquake on November 1, 1923 and the air raid during the second World War, received decisive damages under the waves of urbanization during the high growth policy in 1960s. Historical constructions were destroyed successively under the names of modernization and redevelopment of the city. On the other hand, the regulations for advertisement and design of construction has been scarcely effective, and Tokyo now has become one of the most characterless, undignified, cities.

A red brick building, called old Mitsubishi First Building was built in 1894 (27th year of Meiji) which was designed by a British named Condor, and this building took the first step for Japanese modernization, which was close to a construction of cultural asset, conveying a breath of Meiji era. Despite an appeal by the specialists and citizens, this building was dismembered. A representative masterpiece by Frank L. Wright, namely old Imperial Hotel followed the same fate in the same year. Despite an appeal by the Meeting of Preserving the Imperial Hotel formed by architects working in the first line, saying that the

building is not only belonging to the highest masterpiece among the buildings after Meiji era, but also is an internationally distinguished monumental work among modern buildings, it was dismembered. It has become clear that the Nation was nearby powerless against the movement of preservations for these two representative historical buildings. Not only Tokyo, but also local cities of medium and small sizes followed the similar way, a roller of uniform urbanization went on, and the area characteristics were disappearing successively.

Under these circumstances, we must remember that movements of inhabitants aiming local progresses, through local conservation and preservation of historical environment, have been proceeded in various parts of the country. Among these movements, there was a pioneer and successful one available which is the movement of the inhabitants and the self-governing body at Tsumago-juku in Kiso, Nagano Prefecture. In early 1960s this village was a depopulated district and few people were seen in the village, where young people initiated in preservation and restoring old traditional streets of the main road, and they established a policy of reviving the village as a new sight-seeing and cultural district. More than 10 years later now, the above policy has been successful, and some 600 thousand sight-seeing people have visited the village per annum, looking for a historical environment. The inhabitants in the village made a Meeting of Tsumago Lovers and established a Constitution of the Inhabitants preserving Tsumago-Juku. In the opening paragraph it says that we must remember hard and lonely Tsumago-Juku in the past although the village is highlighted at the present. In their daily motto it says that we should not forget our initial earnest intention. They ask for self-discipline so that they will not be buffeted by the waves of sight-seeing. They established three principles in which it says no sale, no rent and no breakage.

They swear that they will preserve and self-support the village by themselves, and will not sell or rent even a piece of land to the outside capital.

In addition to the above, the inhabitants in various part of the country stood up for the movement of preservation of their towns and villages, and in response to the above self-governing bodies made regulations for preservation of historical environment. These towns and villages are Kakuno-Date-machi, Takayama-city, Kanazawa-city, Kyoto-city, Imai-machi, Kurashiki-city, Matsue-city, Ogi-city, Tsuwano-city, Takahari-city, Hirado-city, Nichi Nichinan-city etc. These movements were fructified and in July 1970, a Revision of Cultural Asset Preservation Law was proclaimed, stipulating historical street preservation. We should mention here that the revision of the law as mentioned above was largely affected by the result of "Kyoto-Nara Traditional Culture Preservation Symposium" opened in September 1970, supervised by UNESCO.

Thus the problem of preservation of historical environment in this country was that such a problem was brought forward in 1960s and it has become considered as a modern environmental problem in addition to the problems of public hazard and preservation of nature in 1970s. Then movement of inhabitants took a leading part, and in response to such movement, self-governing bodies and then the Nation followed. Furthermore, receiving the overseas influence, the movement is being forwarded.