

Deciphering Historicity in the Landscape of an Ordinary Town with the Aid of Old Poems (Dummy)

within 3 lines

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Abstract: This paper discusses the effects of urban transformation on our landscape, which is used here as an intersubjective concept. Twenty scenic places in a seemingly typical village with ordinary surroundings had been the subject of poetic verses written by a prominent local family Haryo Kumasaka and his descendents in the Edo Period. These versified place names are still known in the area. However, the actual location of many of these original scenic places have since been forgotten by the local people. This paper describes the causes for this oblivion in an attempt to find what changes took place and what was lost in the process of urban transformation. Some of the reasons include changes in physical environment which make it difficult to notice historicity and the beauty of the original hidden landform, changes in residents' daily activities influenced by contemporary culture and lifestyle, and changes in values and perspectives of people. It was suggested that a broader urban planning approach is needed from now in order to improve the human-environmental relationship in our ordinary surroundings.

within 10 lines

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1. Introduction

The modern age has been a period of urbanization, with growing cities and construction of infrastructure for motorization. In this period, town planning has played a technological and social role in the formation of cities for modern urban life. Nowadays, it is not an overstatement to say that nearly all people in Japan are living in urban places. To put it more precisely, 65.2% of the total population are living in DIDs (Densely Inhabited Districts) according to the census taken in the year 2000, and others are living around or among cities with access to urban services and employment.

We are stepping into a new period after the urbanization process. The DID ratio has hit ceiling and now the national population has begun to decrease in Japan. Demand for the construction of new urban infrastructures is falling, especially in local cities. Economical and social decline has become a familiar issue in urban planning, indicating that the current planning system has lost its effectiveness and requires remodeling for the coming age.

Standing at the tail end of the urban growth period in Japan, we have a chance to reconsider the future direction of town planning in terms of the aim, method, procedure, and implementation. It is hoped that the insights gained from the discussion in this paper will serve as stepping stones in the ongoing search for what that new future vision will look like by making us reflect on what we have lost in the modern period of urbanization.

2. The features of the Japanese master plan

1) Outline of the Japanese master plan in the city planning system

The district, which had been called Takako Village by the beginning of modern age, has experienced several mergers, and is located in current-day Date City in Fukushima Prefecture. Haryo Kumasaka (1709-64) and his family moved to this village around 1730. Haryo and his son Taishu (1739-1803) and grandson Hankoku (1767-1830), were famous in this region as an ideal farming family which managed their assets well and contributed greatly to the public welfare, and as cultured men who founded and organized a literature association.

Haryo's love for this region, society, and its places were demonstrated through his past charities for people in difficulty in this town and by his poems in which he originally named twenty places of hills, ponds, and valleys. Taishu edited and published them as "Eibohen" in 1788. In the anthology, he and Hankoku had written responses to Haryo's poems, which were accompanied with drawings by Buncho Tani, who would later become a very famous Japanese painter.

Their Chinese-style poems show their preference for classic Chinese culture as well as the depth of their study. The form of the anthology of "Eibohen," which selected twenty scenic places and contained original

2) Specific features of the Japanese municipal master plan

The MLIT notification 9 indicates a fundamental expectation that the master plan would clarify a desirable future vision of the city as a planning target, would as comprehensively and concretely as possible explore implementations, and would

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