New Urban Sociology in Japan: The Changing Debates*

KAZUTAKA HASHIMOTO

Japanese urban sociology, and regional and community sociology

New Urban Sociology (NUS) began in Europe at the beginning of the 1970s and then spread to the United States. It also influenced urban studies in Japan. This article aims at an investigation of the development and changes in NUS in Japan.

Overview
I shall first briefly outline the historical background of urban and regional sociology before the introduction of NUS. Here, three different trends can be discerned, as Suzuki Hiroshi suggested: urban nationalism, the Chicago School and the Marxist approach (Suzuki, 1991: 25).

The main figure in the urban nationalism school was Suzuki Eitaro, a leading urban sociologist who originally started his academic career in rural studies before the second world war. Suzuki understood cities as nodal points in a national society (Suzuki, 1957). He regarded cities as an accumulation of organs, such as public organizations and enterprises, that interacted between communities and national society. According to Suzuki, the hierarchies from big cities to small towns were organized by the organs of nodal points.

The Chicago School was introduced to Japan before the second world war. Isomura Eiichi was a pioneer in this school, noted for his analysis of the urban underclass. Okui Fukutaro, also a pioneer of urban sociology in Japan, applied the human ecology of the Chicago school to his urban studies on Tokyo. The mainstream of Japanese urban sociology followed the Chicago school, and the urban theory of Louis Wirth was particularly influential on Japanese studies of urbanization from the second half of the 1950s.

By contrast, urban sociologists in the Marxist tradition did not exist until after the second world war. Prior to this, Marxism had largely been influential in the area of political economy and philosophy as it could offer an analysis of the emperor system. The Marxian effect soon spread to the social sciences by the end of the second world war. In Japan, the Marxist approach became very influential, particularly in the field of rural sociology, because in pre-war Japan there were considerable rural societies that, according to Marxist thought, needed modernization. In postwar Japan, Marxism was

* Japanese names in this article are shown in the correct order of surname and first name. I should like to express my gratitude to Professor Fujita Kuniko and Professor Machimura Takashi for their encouragement and assistance in revising the manuscript.
considered a major agent for democratization as well as socialization and by the 1970s Marxian sociology had extended its reach to the various spheres of sociology. It criticized the contradictions caused by high economic growth in Japan on the one hand, and Talcott Parson’s structural-functional approach on the other.

Among its followers, Shimazaki Minoru, who also started his career in rural sociology, began a study of Itoigawa City in 1958 with other Marxian social scientists. Shimazaki and Kitagawa Takayoshi, a Marxian labor sociologist, published a theoretical book on urban sociology in 1962, following which many Marxists took up urban research. Their research method was termed Kozo Bunseki (structural analysis), which had originally started from their analysis of a rural community’s social structure (Shimazaki, 1979: 77–102). By applying historical materialism to a small community, they analysed the relationships among the economic, the social, the political and consciousness. The social structure covered social classes and strata. A community was defined as the constituents of a municipality. Kozo Bunseki soon branched off into a number of sociological research groups in Japan. The five principal schools of thought were led by Fukutake Tadashi and Hasumi Otohiko, Shimazaki Minoru, Fuse Tetsuji, Kamada Tetsuhiro and Kamada Toshiko, and Kitagawa Takayoshi.

In the second half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s, Japan’s large cities were beleaguered by urban problems, such as pollution. The attempt to solve these problems gave rise to the phenomenon of urban social movements (jumin undo). Nitagai Kamon organized a research team to study the social logic of urban social movements. Progressive local governments actively took measures against urban problems. The central government, led by a conservative party, also designed a policy package for community revitalization and tried to implement it, as the government regarded the decline of human relationships in mass societies as a serious issue. Thus, in the 1970s the conditions and possibilities of community revitalization became one of the most important themes for urban sociologists, particularly those of the Chicago school.

The appearance of urban problems, urban social movements and the urban policies of governments contributed in effect to the institutionalization of urban sociology and the construction of regional and community sociology. In April 1976, the Association of Region and Community Studies (ARCS) was established to promote studies on the problems of regions and communities. The initial membership totalled 119. The Japanese Association of Urban Sociology (JAUS) was also established in 1982. The key members of ARCS were Marxists whereas those of JAUS were Chicago school sociologists. These ideological differences have since diminished, and later members have participated in both associations.

The introduction of New Urban Sociology into Japan

In the second half of the 1970s, the Japanese economy was stagnant after the oil crisis. Neo-conservatism, which advocated ‘privatization’, was strengthening its political influences. Yet there was still strong public opinion that local governments should contribute to better living conditions. Thus, researchers in urban sociology and regional and community sociology continued to be active, as they took the problems of depressed communities increasingly seriously.

Under these conditions, Castells’ (1976) article, ‘The wild city’, was first translated into Japanese in 1977, marking the introduction of French urban studies to Japan (Kaneta and Yamamoto, 1977). The article was translated by a famous Japanese scholar of public finance, Shima Yasuhiko. Shima (1977) grounded his commentary in points of similarity between the big cities of Japan and the USA, including the historically determined processes giving rise to the contradictions and crises of big cities, the appearance of neo-conservatism, and the growth of urban social movements.
New trends in French urban studies were introduced, particularly the works of Castells, Lojkine and Preteceille, not by urban sociologists but by political scientists, most notably Nishimura Shigeru. Although some Japanese urban and community sociologists were interested in western Marxism, their concerns were mainly confined to studies of urban and rural societies in Japan. Nishimura turned his attention to NUS, because neo-Marxist political scientists were interested in the debate on the capitalist state in western Marxism. Nishimura thus introduced an outline of Monopolville to Japan in 1979 without discussing its significance for urban studies. While he criticized Castells’ structuralist methodology for its rigid theoretical formalism compared with a subjective approach in practice (Nishimura, 1979a: 392–3), he agreed with Lojkine, who clarified the relation and contradiction between the productive powers of human beings and the collective means of consumption (Nishimura, 1979b: 383). He later drew together the theoretical threads of Castells and Lojkine. First, the city is constituted by the social contents of spatial forms. Second, provisions for collective means of consumption are important for the development of productive power and the political integration of ruled classes. Third, the workers’ needs with respect to collective means of consumption should be seen as originating from both the needs of existential labour and the ecological needs of ‘the human appropriation of nature in terms of use value’ (Castells, 1978: 5). Fourth, a state that intervenes in urban problems is not a monolith but an expression of contradictory social relationships (Nishimura, 1980: 146–4). Other political scientists, such as Taguchi Fukuji, Mizuguchi Norihito and Sato Shunichi, were also drawn to NUS, as it focused on relationships among the state, urban social movements and the city, through the intermediary of collective consumption.

Subsequently, Yoshihara Naoki, a young sociologist, introduced many NUS studies to Japan from a sociological point of view and translated them into Japanese. A collection of his papers on the early years of NUS, entitled Toshi shakaigaku no kihon mondai (The basic problems of urban sociology), was published in 1983. He emphasized the importance of Castells’ critical theory of urban ideology for American urban sociology, particularly the Chicago School. NUS studies that he and others translated had a big impact around this time. The following books and journals were translated into Japanese: Urban sociology, edited by C.G. Pickvance (1977), Comparative Urban Research Vol. VI, No. 2–3 (1978), La question urbaine, by M. Castells (1977) and Social conflict and the city, by E. Mingione (1981).

**The debate on New Urban Sociology**

In 1982 three sociologists read papers on NUS at the 55th annual meeting of the Japanese Sociological Society. Yoshihara summarized the essence of NUS, and criticized ‘traditional’ urban sociology in Japan. Fujita Hiroo insisted that urban society must not be considered as a simple sum of communities; rather it must be understood in relation to the integration of neighbourhood associations by state organizations. Machimura Takashi focused on the interdependency between the state and civil society, accelerated by the relation between urban policy and urban social movements. Okuda Michihiro, a Chicago sociologist, commented that ‘these presentations criticized and were not satisfied with contemporary urban sociology’. They insisted that contemporary urban sociology, whose core was Chicago sociology, was too fixed in its scope and analysed conditions in a community or a city from a purely micro perspective (Okuda, 1983: 286–7). Okuda regarded NUS as the macro theory of an urban ideology or an urban political economy and while he expressed some sympathy with these challenges, he still had strong reservations.

The reaction of the Chicago school to NUS in Japan was cool in general. Although Takahashi Yuetu had already noted the significance of space in relation to urban systems.
and collective consumption, he considered NUS and orthodox Marxism to be versions of the same theory (Takahashi, 1993: 84). Suzuki Hiroshi, an urban sociologist of the synthetic approach, agreed with him (Suzuki, 1985: 20).

The debate spread to the Association of Region and Community Studies thereafter. Machimura Takashi read a paper entitled ‘The face of state theory in the theory of urban society’ at its study meeting in December 1983. This presentation was based on a functionalist approach to the intervention of contemporary capitalist states. He perceived the state’s urban policies as functioning to maintain the social system. At a study meeting in February 1984, Hirota Yasuo summarized the debate introduced in ‘Marx and the city: a symposium’ in Comparative Urban Research, mentioned above, and Osawa Yoshinobu examined the contents of Castells’ (1977) book, La question urbaine. At the ARCS’s 9th Conference in 1984, Yoshihara presented a paper entitled ‘The possibility of New Urban Sociology’ in which he introduced Castells’ definition of the term urban, R.E. Pahl’s urban managerial theory and Lojkine’s theory of the city. When Yasuhara Shigeru and Okuda Michihiro each read a paper entitled ‘Some criteria for the development of contemporary urban theory’, a debate developed around the relationship between NUS and orthodox Marxist sociology in Japan. There was, for example, a discussion on whether Shimazaki’s urban social theory resembled that of NUS. There was also the question of whether the concept of space existed in orthodox Marxist sociology (Hashimoto, 1984: 6–7). Yoshihara argued that the concept of urban space did not exist in Shimazaki’s urban social theory. He claimed that Shimazaki thought of the modern city simply as the central location of labour-capital relations. According to Yoshihara, orthodox Marxists such as Shimazaki often regarded the relation between the city and rural areas as a simple reflection of the relation between the manufacturing industry and the agricultural industry. This meant Shimazaki did not seriously consider a city as a space (Yoshihara, 1993: 213).

Debates continued to flourish. Furuki Toshiaki voiced his support of NUS in 1985, arguing that New Urban Sociology had introduced the concept of social regime, i.e. state or class, that traditional urban sociology had ignored. It also developed the concepts of the reproduction of labour power, the process of consumption and urban space further than orthodox Marxism. Yet, the heated debate had to wait for ARCS’s 10th conference later that year. Kamada Toshiko, an orthodox Marxian sociologist of labour, discussed ‘Class and family in the city’. She argued that while Japanese NUS scholars criticized the human ecology approach to urban sociology, they could not really understand and transcend the urban studies of orthodox Marxism. Vain speculation was empty, she claimed. She boldly insisted NUS must present original empirical studies, in the tradition of Marxist urban sociologists, using the method of Kozo Bunseki (structural analysis) (Katagiri, 1985: 9). Such criticism caused severe conflict between supporters of orthodox Marxian sociology and NUS, while Kamada’s arguments included some accurate observations on the still immature NUS.

A book entitled Toshiron no frontea (The frontier of urban theory), edited by Yoshihara and Iwasaki, appeared in 1986 as the first full-scale introduction of NUS in Japan. Subtitled ‘The challenge of new urban sociology’, the book had five contributors and the contents were as follows: (1) areas of conflict and contact between NUS and Chicago sociology; (2) the meaning of urban crisis; (3) changes in Tokyo’s urban space; (4) the theory of resource allocation in the case of housing; (5) urban sociology of the welfare state; (6) feminism; and (7) urban social movements in which local utopias were discussed positively as they were thought to create alternative ways of life.

According to my analysis, there were some differences and similarities between NUS in the West and social sciences in Japan (Hashimoto, 1987). First, in postwar Japan, the concept of collective consumption had been already been developed by political economists. Second, similarities and differences between Japanese urban sociology and the NUS in the West originated from differences in the forms of academic specialization
between sociology and political economy. In Japan, regional and community sociologists tended to focus their studies on sociological aspects of political economy, while NUS in the West seemed to be freer from the division between sociological themes and political economic themes (ibid.: 182–223). As spatial analysis of cities is also divided into several different disciplines in Japan, scholars who examine space need to bring architecture and economic geography into the equation as well.

While points of conflict and contact between NUS and Chicago sociology took place in the West, conflict and debate between orthodox Marxism and NUS occurred in Japan. As mentioned before, the reaction of Kozo Bunseki schools to Japanese NUS was very intense. Kozo Bunseki scholars believed they had produced their own water-tight theories whereas proponents of NUS did not regard them so highly. The Kozo Bunseki schools doubted whether NUS could analyse the realities of Japanese communities. At that time few empirical studies of NUS existed except for ‘The changes in Tokyo’s urban space’ by Machimura (1986b). So the debate between Kozo Bunseki and NUS took place not on the basis of empirical research but theoretical significance.

Urban social movements and globalization: development of Japan’s NUS since the mid-1980s

Since the middle of the 1980s, two issues have engaged the attention of Japan’s new urban sociologists: urban social movements and the globalization of Tokyo. Social movements have continued to be one of the most important issues in urban and regional sociology in postwar Japan, yet, in the present context, changing meanings and possible new forms have become a further focus of investigation. In addition, the impacts of globalization appear to be a particularly appropriate theme for the research styles of NUS.

Resident’s movements have been an important theme for regional and community sociology in Japan. For instance, Machimura examined the applicability of Castells’ theory to urban social movements in 1985. The political left, often supported by residents’ movements (jumin undo), had often held the position of mayors or governors in major cities in the 1970s. Yet in the 1980s, such progressive local governments had almost disappeared, while urban social movements were still flourishing. What Machimura was interested in was whether movements that sought to create alternative ways of life and neighbourhood societies had appeared or not. Comparing Castells’ structuralism-oriented theory of his early writings with the subjective theory of his later works, he criticized Castells’ failure to provide a well-organized logic for why people participated in collective behaviour, the developmental processes of social movements and the reproduction of social movements (Machimura, 1985: 161–8). By contrast, Yazawa Sumiko examined three ‘goals of urban social movement’ which Castells claimed were ‘important also in Japan: that is, the city as a use value; identity, cultural autonomy and communication; and territorially based self-management (Castells, 1983: 321). She argued that these three goals could be regarded as a new movement logic of urban social movements, as distinct from ‘the logic of expectation’ which was often referred to in Japanese local political studies (Yazawa, 1991: 207). In this context, ‘the logic of expectation’ meant the reason one would begin to move against an assailant when one suffered any damage.

In 1989 an annual journal, Chiiki to Jichitai (Communities and Self-Governing Bodies) featured the possibilities of new urban social movements as the theme of its volume 17, which, so far as I am aware, was the only volume to deal exclusively with such movements in Japan (Yazawa and Iwasaki, 1989). In the introductory chapter, Yazawa Shujiro put forward a theoretical definition of urban social movements, which, according to his view, play an active role in changing people’s situations, for example
with respect to urban systems, culture, politics and the power held among classes. He also claimed that urban social movements should maintain a link with radical trade unions that have played such a central role in social movements in postwar Japan. This volume covered topics such as residents’ movements versus public policies, women’s movements in the USA, workers in the development of the service sector in Japan’s economy, urban ecological movements, consumers’ cooperatives, workers cooperatives and *chonaikai* (neighbourhood associations).

**Globalization of Japan**

The Government published the interim report of the fourth Zenso (the Fourth Comprehensive National Development Plan) in 1984. It described Tokyo’s urban area as an economically prosperous area in sharp contrast to other areas in Japan. Economic concentration in Tokyo was identified as an important political issue, often referred to as Tokyo’s imbalanced one pole development problem. The population of the greater Tokyo area (Saitama Prefecture, Chiba Prefecture, Tokyo Prefecture and Kanagawa Prefecture) increased from 18.9% to 25% of the national population from 1960 to 1985. Nearly 30% of the total number of corporate headquarters in Japan and almost 60% of those having capital of over 10 billion yen were concentrated in Tokyo in 1984. In 1980 32% of the functions of public administrations and governmental offices were centralized in the Tokyo urban area and nearly 40% of newspaper business. In 1982 18.8% of Japan’s universities and 31.4% of university students were in Tokyo. These statistics show the extent to which cultural functions are centralized in the capital.

The fourth Zenso, established in 1987, addressed the ‘concentration of economic activity and population in the Tokyo area. With a deteriorating employment situation in regional areas, renewed migration to the capital was taking place (though less so to other metropolitan areas such as Nagoya and Osaka), leading to a resurgence in the population decline of certain prefectures. The plan aimed to promote a ‘multi-polar’ national land development policy with renewed investment in infrastructure, especially information technology exchange networks’ (OECD, 1996: 20). However, it turned out that Tokyo continued to develop. As a result, the restructuring of Tokyo was accompanied by high technological industrialization and the globalization of the economy (Hashimoto, 1998: 137–8).

Machimura (1986a) defined Tokyo as a global city by applying Saskia Sassen’s concept to Japan. According to Sassen, global control capabilities are based on control of global production systems and the organization of global labour, i.e. multinational corporations. He predicted that a spatial restructuring of Tokyo would take place, as was the case in New York, but doubted that a polarization of social classes would evolve because Tokyo is more homogeneous in race and ethnicity than New York (*ibid.*: 97–109). Machimura, myself and others all published research results of the urban renewal in Shinagawa ward, Tokyo, in the same year. Major findings in this research indicated that a dramatic ‘office park’-oriented type of urban renewal took place, even in Shinagawa which had been the old core of the manufacturing industries (Hashimoto *et al.*, 1986).

Nitagai Kamon (1987) defined urban planning as the production, distribution and consumption of space as a commodity. He argued that urban residents’ movements, which often resisted urban planning in big cities, were movements for the right of residence (the centrality of urban inhabitants — a concept put forward by H. Lefebvre). Iwaki Sadayuki, of the Fuse Tetsuji school, pointed out that the planned restructuring of urban space would strengthen international linkages in major cities. He also maintained that planned restructuring would cause the loss of national identity on the one hand, while on the other, it would bring a loss of human relationships in a community and finally lead to a transfer of people’s residences as people would no longer be able to inhabit them (Iwaki, 1988: 110). His logic resembles that of Castells who stated that ‘the emergence of
a space of flows . . . dominates the historically constructed space of places, as the logic of
dominant organizations detaches itself from the social constraints of cultural identities
and local societies through the powerful medium of information technologies’ (Castells,

Machimura has published a number of papers on Tokyo’s restructuring, particularly
focusing on the process of globalization, since 1989. He illustrated the restructuring
process on maps and described the driving forces behind it. According to his analysis, the
rapid achievement of urban restructuring in Tokyo was supported by a specific coalition
of urban actors. Members of the coalition include the national government, local
governments and various private actors. The private actors can be divided into three
types. The first comprises manufacturing and construction companies, developers,
financial companies, landowners etc., who expected to earn direct benefits from urban
development initiatives. The second is composed of foreign firms, financial companies,
electronics and computer companies etc., which need a large amount of space and many
floors in the central business district in Tokyo to expand their businesses. The third type
of actor is comprised of big commercial capital, advertising agencies and various media
institutions that diffuse urban ideology (Machimura, 1990: 20; 1992: 120–1).

In 1990 Yoshihara et al. published a book which systematically analysed various
aspects of Tokyo’s restructuring according to the following theoretical framework: first,
Tokyo was positioned at the core of Japan; second, at the core of Asia; and third, it was
considered to have a strategic role in the capitalist global system — that is, Tokyo had
become a control tower because Japanese corporations formed a global network and an
international financial centre was based in Tokyo. My own examination of the
restructuring process focused on the impacts on inhabitant’s lives, and Yoshihara
analysed the effects of restructuring on traditional neighbourhood associations. As a
concluding remark Yoshihara argued that the visual angle had been important and
subsequently (1994) criticized the description of a global city as new human ecology.

Machimura, who published a book of collected papers in 1994, supposed that a
positive effect of global city formation would be the birth of global citizens, suggesting
the creation of a civil society (Offentlichkeit) beyond the border of a state or a city.

From New Urban Sociology to the sociology of space: new trends
since the 1990s

Since the 1980s, as Tokyo climbed to the position of core Asian city, foreign workers
have been migrating to Japan. Traditional urban sociologists began researching ethnic
minorities, and, among them, Okuda Michihiro, an urban sociologist of the Chicago
school, and his students energetically carried out fieldwork in Tokyo’s inner-city areas
such as Ikebukuro and Shinjuku. Their studies revealed that newcomer migrants,
particularly from China, often lived together in one room of wooden rental apartments
which used to be settled by Japanese. Conflicts sometimes occurred between foreign
migrants and their Japanese neighbours in the second half of the 1980s, owing to
differences in customs and cultural practices. However, foreigners had settled in by the
first half of the 1990s and had some solidarity with Japanese. They have formed networks
with members of their own ethnic group (Tajima, 1995; Hashimoto, 1998: 139–40).

By contrast, Okubo Takeshi, who started his academic career under the tutelage of
Shimazaki Minoru, a leading Marxist sociologist, regarded the sudden increase in foreign
workers in Japan as a development of labour migration beyond national borders.
Agricultural labourers in developing nations who could not find work in their own rural
villages left their homes, departing for developed nations in search of jobs (Okubo, 1991:
19). He argued that such international labour migrations were a reflection of the
globalization brought about by the increasingly world-wide activities of multinational corporations.

Japan’s ‘bubble economy’ finally collapsed in the early 1990s. Since that time, NUS has been transformed by a new approach which places greater emphasis on an analysis of the sociology of space. Three reasons can be pointed out here. First, the urban renewal in big cities under Japan’s bubble economy brought about drastic changes in their space and built environments. Second, the emergence of a space of flows, which Castells identified in relation to the emergence of an information society, was thought to be an important factor in understanding current trends in cities in Japan. Finally, spatial theory, particularly that of David Harvey, drew the attention of urban scholars following the demise of grand theories, which often depended upon time theory as historical law, in postmodern analysis (Yoshihara, 1994: 5, 216–17).

As stated earlier, NUS intended to develop an analysis of the roles of the state in an urban context, as well as the urban system and urban social movements. For instance, Machimura (1986b) analysed urban social movements and urban space empirically in Tokyo. In contrast, sociology of space focused on the relation between the production and reproduction of urban space and the accumulation of capital, paying attention to the concept of built environments. In 1992, Kainuma Jun argued in his paper that not just a paradigm innovation of urban sociology but also an introduction of space theory are required for a reconsideration of capitalist theories (Kainuma, 1992). Also, Yoshimi Shunya considered that urban sociology must discuss space as an outcome of social relationships, because the contemporary reproduction of the capitalist system itself is shaping capitalistic production and reproduction of space (Yoshimi, 1992: 136–7). New Urban Sociologist Yoshihara (1994: 8) argued that the sociology of space should entail a reconsideration of capitalist theories as they lacked any theory of space.

The emergence of a sociology of space in Japan was accelerated by David Harvey’s visit to Japan in 1994. During his stay he gave a lecture on ‘Spatial Configuration and Social Theory’ at the Association of Region and Community Studies 20th anniversary event. Harvey emphasized that place takes on importance against the evolution of time-space compression, and that the difference between places makes place more important for attracting capital, although spatial borders take on less significance (Yoshihara, 1996a: 121). It was as a matter of course that such views were of particular interest to Japanese sociologists, because the reorganization of spatial organizations and the annihilation of spatial barriers under globalization have also acquired importance in the changing Japanese economy and society.

In 1996, Yoshihara edited a book comprising a collection of papers on spatial sociology. Contributors to this publication covered relationships between capital and space, state and power in urban space, planning versus social movements in urban spaces, social regulations in housing and space, and gender and urban space (Yoshihara, 1996b).

Achievements of New Urban Sociology in Japan

The last decade of the twentieth century ended with the collapse of urban renewal and the bubble economy. The achievements of New Urban Sociology were confirmed by the publication of two books written by Yoshihara (1994) and by Machimura (1994), underlining the transformation of NUS into the sociology of space. Nishiyama Yaeko argued that in her historical analysis of New Urban Sociology and its affiliated journal, the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, NUS consisted of two theoretical stances: neo-Marxism and neo-Weberianism. According to her summary, the principal urban experiences in developed countries during the last two decades have been gentrification of their urban structure and the emergence of a post-welfare state in their urban system. In the 1980s, more fragmented polarization occurred and the problem of
the ‘underclass’ emerged. The ‘underclass’, as a new category of social poor who are
excluded from labour markets, became a more serious issue in the second half of the
1980s and the 1990s. She claimed that one of the tasks of NUS was to place the
‘underclass’ as key agents of social change in its analysis (Nishiyama, 1994).

Conclusion

One notable feature of Japanese sociology is that it has been deeply influenced by
imported knowledge from the West. Japanese sociologists mainly studied German
sociology before the second world war and American sociology from the end of the war
until the 1960s. The urban sociology of the Chicago school has been a particularly
influential source of such imported knowledge. The introduction of new western
sociological schools was considered to be an important means of contributing to the
development of Japanese sociology. The introduction of NUS and spatial theory was no
exception. It seemed to spark an era of intellectual boom, and serious consideration was
not given — at least at the early stage of its introduction — to the question of whether
these theories and concepts really apply to Japanese urban society. So Kamada Toshiko
criticized NUS, as is mentioned above. Yet it was, I believe, necessary for NUS and
spatial theory to be introduced to Japan. NUS focused on the concept of social regime that
had been a weak point in traditional urban sociology on the one hand, and emphasized the
reproduction of labour power, the process of consumption, and urban space that were
weak points in orthodox Marxism on the other, as was pointed out by Furuki (1985).
Spatial theory was also required to investigate urban transformation in the 1990s. In
globalizing Tokyo, urban renewal has to be analysed from the point of view of changes in
space and built environments. Globalization in the form of multinational corporations is
also accompanied by the emergence of a space of flows.

New Urban Sociology was transformed to the sociology of space in Japan, but how
can the latter systematize itself and apply its theories to the analysis of societies? The
sociology of space must answer these questions in a Japanese context.

Kazutaka Hashimoto (kahashi@kanto-gakuin.ac.jp), Department of Applied Sociology,
Kanto Gakuin University, 3-22-1 Kamariya-minami, Kanazawa-ku, Yokohama 2368502,
Japan.

References

Furuki, T. (1985) Gendai daitosiron no ronten [The points of dispute in contemporary urban
criterion for the development of contemporary urban theory’]. Chiiki Shakai Gakkai Kaiho 26,
5–7.
82, 127–45.

© Joint Editors and Blackwell Publishers Ltd 2002
analysis of urban renewal planning]. In Tokyo Jichi Mondai Kenkyusho (ed.), Mizu to midori no ningen toshi shinagawa o mezashite, Shinagawakyo Shokuin Rodokumiai, Tokyo.


—— (1986b) Toshi shakai to toshi kankan no kankaisei [The change in Tokyo’s urban space]. In N. Yoshihara and N. Iwasaki (eds.), Teshiiron no furontea, Yuhikaku, Tokyo.


—— (1979b) J. Lojkine, Marukusu shugi, kokka to toshi mondai [Jean Lojkine’s ‘Le marxisme, l’état et la question urbaine’]. Nagoya Daigaku Hosei Ronsho 81, 370–86.


Shimazaki, M. (1979) Shakai kagaku toshiten no shakai chosa [Social research as social science]. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo.


Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, Tokyo.


—— (1994) Toshi kukan no shakai riron [The social theory of urban space]. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, Tokyo.


—— (ed.) (1996b) Toshi kukan no kosoryoku, 21 seki no toshi shakaigaku [The imagination of urban space, urban sociology in the 21st century]. Keiso Shobo, Tokyo.

