Changes in the Housing Market in Tokyo

Tomoko Kubo, Ph.D.
JSPS Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Meiji University
1. Introduction

- To identify transformation in the housing markets in Tokyo
- Condominium supply ↑↑
- Relationship of this housing form to residential mobility
- New housing preferences of the residents
- **the Japanese housing market**
- **Historical patterns ≠ western models**
- **New trends in condominium growth in Tokyo M.A.**
  - **Condominiums**: Owner occupied housing units in mid or high rise building
Central Tokyo:
Special wards of Tokyo
Near suburb:
15-30km from Tokyo Sta.
Suburbs: outer area within Tokyo M.A

Fig. 5 Number of condominiums sold in Tokyo (1999~2004) and location of Makuhari Bay Town
2.1 Housing Studies in Japanese Urban Geography

- Urban structure: distribution of housing & characteristics of residents
- Classical urban ecology studies of American Cities into Japanese Cities (Kiuchi 1941, 1951; Tanabe 1971; Abe 2003)
- The Concentric Zone Model (Burgess 1925), the Sector Model (Hoyt 1939), & the Multiple Nuclei Model (Harris & Ullman 1945)
Late 20th century western studies of housing & residential patterns (Robson 1975; Johnson 1984; Knox and Pinch 2000) into Japan (Yui 1999)

Western models: residential segregation (income, race, & class)

NOT applicable to Japanese cities: different housing market condition

Difference of housing patterns ≠ Difference of family system
2.2 Housing and family system in Japan

- Tradition of “family institution” in the 1870s to 1945
- Feudal society: patrimony & property (Male household head, large families)
- 1945~: Multi-generational housing custom (2000s, 30% couples move to live together with parents)
2.3 Suburbanization & Home ownership

- Home ownership: 22% in 1941
- ‘50s: Finance of housing by the JHFA, Developing housing estates by JHHC (UR), Public housing for low income families
- Ideology of homeownership
- Suburban boom in ‘60s, dream of detached houses in suburbs
- Migrants from rural to M.A.
- Homeownership: 60% in ‘60s onwards
2.4 Changes in suburbs & Shrinking cities

- ‘90s~: Suburbs < Inner city living
  1. Economic stagnation: Service/information jobs in inner city
  2. Long commuting time & long hour work
  3. High land price & ‘poor’ young Japanese
  4. Aging & low fertility (1.39 in 2011): more women gaining jobs & independence
Dream of ‘suburbia’ is fading...

1. Shrinking population & city (Esaki 2006)
2. Suburban neighborhoods losing its attractions (Hirayama 2005)
   - ‘Aging’ in suburban housing estates
     - Housing & Land Survey (2003): 70% of homeowners bought/built new houses
     - Less mobile after homeownership
     - Less inflows of younger generations
3. Tokyo’s housing market after the late 1990s: Condominiums in Tokyo
3.1 Increasing density trend & Condominium growth

Fig. Number of condominiums sold in Tokyo metropolitan area and their average price per square meter (1993-2012)

Source: Real Estate Economic Institute, ‘Condominium Market Trend Search, 1993-2011’
Increasing single persons, decreasing nuclear families in central Tokyo

Fig. Population of central Tokyo (1980-2010)

3.2 Condominium purchase by single persons

- Late 90s~: Condo purchases by single women
- Major developers’ strategies
- 2000s~ Diversification
- Single men, Tower condos

Fig. 4 Changes in the number of the single-person households by age groups in central Tokyo (2000, 2005)

Data: Statistics Breau of Japan “Population Census 2000, 2005”
Source: Revised on Kubo and Yui (2011a/b)
Fig. Distribution of tower condominiums available in central Tokyo (1993-2010)

Tower Condos in the 2000s

- Moved within CT
- Condos > Detached houses

(Koizumi et al. 2011)
3.4 Changing family & residential preferences in near Suburb

Makuhari Bay Town: 30mins from Tokyo Sta. by train
Image of ‘Luxurious housing units’: late 90s~

Condos ≠ Cheap or temporary residences

Fig. 6 Average price of condominiums in central Tokyo, Chiba pref., and Makuhari Bay Town (1993~2011)

Note: In Makuhari Bay Town, points are put on the year when each condominium building was first sold.
Data: Real Estate Economic Institute, ‘Condominium Trend Search 1993-2011’
Grown up in M.A.

> Moved from local cities or rural areas

Fig. 7 Residential career of household heads who belong to ‘family type’ among condominium residents in Makuhari Bay Town, 2009.

Note: Central area of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area (M. A.) denotes special wards of Tokyo. Data: Author’s interview surveys. Source: Revised on Kubo (2010)
- NOT living together with parents, but living close to them.

### Table 1  Characteristics of relatives who live closely to condominium residents in Makuhari Bay Town, 2009

#### a) Residential areas of the relatives living in Kanto area of the residents surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th></th>
<th>Brothers and sisters</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sons and Total daughters (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Householders</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Householders</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makuhari Bay Town</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiba City</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiba Pref.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanto area</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (%)</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Discussions & Conclusions: Changes of Housing in Tokyo

- Suburbanization in the 60s
- Differences with western cities
- Potential homeowners: born in metropolitan areas, usually suburbs (Nakazawa 2010)
- Changes in household structure, life-style, & housing purchase behaviour
- The case study: Residential segregation (household structures, life stages, residential preferences, and incomes) in the Tokyo M.A.

- Residential preferences and characteristics of condominium residents ⇒ residential segregation in metropolitan areas
Further questions?

- Increasing single-person life-style in Asian big cities: Comparative studies
- Urban structure model of Japan in global context...

Thank you for your attention

Tomoko Kubo, Ph.D.
tmk200430258@yahoo.co.jp