

Tokyo's Third Rebuilding: New Twists on Old Patterns

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Tokyo has many distinctions among the world's cities, including the fact that it is the planet's largest or almost-largest city, depending on definition and data source, one of its most expensive cities in terms of price of land and cost of living, and one of only three so-called "World Cities" in terms of its global economic influence according to the well-known thesis by Saskia Sassen (1991). Furthermore, Tokyo is known as being exceptionally crowded, particularly on rush hour trains and subways, for its tightly packed housing and small spaces, and perhaps for its remarkable efficiency in areas ranging from the transit system to community policing to trash collection. Less famous but also unrivaled is Tokyo's unusual geography, in which city limits (i.e., the territory within Tokyo Metropolitan Government and under the jurisdiction of Tokyo's governor) include not just the crowded central city and many of its suburbs, but also a wild, heavily forested mountainous area to the west of the urban center and chains of tiny Pacific islands with coral reefs and fine beaches stretching for more than 1,000 miles to the south to tropical climes (Cybriwsky 1998).

A third distinction, tied to the main focus of this chapter, is the extraordinary instability of Tokyo's built environment. All through its history, from when it was but a small castle town in the 15th and 16th centuries to modern times, it has continually been destroyed, most typically by fire, and subsequently rebuilt. In just the last century alone there were three destructions and rebuildings. No other city in the world, much less one so large and important, has been so ephemeral in physical form, and no other older city, much less one so historically significant, is so new in built environment and so completely lacking in old neighborhoods and historic buildings. As one tours Tokyo or gazes across the landscape from a high point, say the observation deck of Tokyo Tower, one is struck that here is a city where the overwhelming majority of buildings are recently built, that they are generally similar to each other, and that historic character is absent, at least superficially. In fact, visitors

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to the city from abroad have complained that they cannot see "Japan" or the great traditions of Japan in art and architecture in Tokyo, and that the city is instead a mishmash of ordinary buildings of no particular heritage, peppered with familiar uses such as the popular coffee shop beginning with S and the cholesterol capital with golden arches.

What are the three destructions and rebuildings of Tokyo in the last century? The first two are well known to anyone who knows the least bit about the city's history: the first was in 1923 as a result of the great Kantō earthquake and ensuing fires, while the second was the result of US air raids against the city in 1945 in the closing campaign of World War II. The third is a little less obvious, although its impact on the form of the city was much greater: the tearing down of the city that took place during the economic boom times of the 1970s and 1980s and the reconstruction that followed. This time, instead of disaster, the agent of change was profit for the real-estate industry, as well as urban improvement by the forces of city planning and redevelopment. Instead of the hurried rebuilding after 1923 and 1945, when the goal was to get the city operating again and reconstruction followed old lines, the most recent reconstruction was more calculated. It was designed to maximize land rent and/or to house Tokyo's masses more efficiently, and produced a radically different form for the city – one emphasizing high-rises instead of the low-slung profile of the past. We see this change in the title of historian Edward Seidensticker's book about the city's more recent developments: *Tokyo Rising* (1990).

This chapter takes a critical look at the Tokyo cityscape that was created by this third rebuilding. It is an appropriate topic for anthropologists, following the tradition in the discipline of studying built environments to gain insights about their inhabitants. But instead of excavating the ruins of an ancient city to learn about a people of the past, as anthropologists and archeologists often do, the focus here is on a cityscape of today to see something about contemporary society. The premise is that the built environment can be a faithful mirror of social or cultural values, and should be analyzed for insights into such aspects as economic and political relationships, relationships to natural environment, and national self-image. In our case, we will see that the landscape of Japan's capital reflects, among other things, the excesses of the nation during the economic bubble, the great power over the landscape of the so-called Japanese "construction state," and Japan's peculiar and extraordinary desire to show itself as being "international" and worldly-wise. We will also see that Tokyo's new landscape borrows liberally from cityscapes and landmarks around the world, resulting in a somewhat confusing mix of cultural traditions and architectural styles that, at least in new commercial districts, is coming to be Japan's new vernacular. Finally, we will see that there are historical precedents in Tokyo for rebuilding the city in a way that is both showy and international-looking, such that Tokyo's third rebuilding of the 20th century can be thought of as a case of new twists on old patterns.

FOUR PLACES IN CENTRAL TOKYO

I will focus here on profiles of four places in Tokyo that collectively represent the new urban landscape. All are redevelopment or new development projects in one of the

23 central wards of the city, and are quite large in scale. The first three are very well known in Tokyo, attracting huge crowds of people on weekdays and weekends alike. The first is Shinjuku, a commercial center at a major rail-subway commuter interchange 5 or 6 kilometers to the west of city's principal business node. It is a large area of many sub-districts and land uses, and contains some of Tokyo's largest and showiest high-rise redevelopment projects, including "City Hall," which we will look at with extra measure. The second is Yebisu Garden Place, a large mixed-use redevelopment project on an old industrial site also on the central city's west side. It is a prototypical "island within a city," being self-contained with a wide range of land uses and standing apart in architecture from the surrounding neighborhood. The third is Daiba, a new mixed-use district (commercial, residential, recreation) developed since the 1980s south of the city center on a new island reclaimed from Tokyo Bay. The fourth place is Shioiri, a newly redeveloped residential district in a working-class zone northeast of the center, on the site of an old-style residential area of the same name. Somewhat isolated from the main flow of Tokyo, it is not widely known but now looks like much of the rest of the city. I shall describe each of these places in turn and then pull together common themes that reflect on critical aspects of Japan today.

Shinjuku

Shinjuku has a long history as a transportation junction and commercial center, but grew especially quickly in the 20th century to become a major rival to the city's original business district in the general area of Tokyo station, Nihonbashi, Marunouchi, and Ginza. One great spurt of growth came after the 1923 earthquake, when many businesses relocated there to safer ground, as well as to be near areas of emerging urban expansion. A second spurt is tied to urban planning efforts in the 1960s, when a decision was made to decentralize Tokyo's commercial functions, taking pressure off the overcrowded and expensive core, and to develop alternative commercial centers (*fukutoshin*) at key transportation nodes ringing the center. Shinjuku became the biggest of 20 or so such districts, in many ways eclipsing the old core itself. Its passenger station is Tokyo's busiest place (and maybe the busiest place in the world!), while the district itself ranks first in Tokyo (and maybe the world) in retail sales, numbers of bars and restaurants, as well as other possible measures, including Tokyo's all-important sex industry. The Shinjuku office towers are Tokyo's tallest buildings, so its skyline often stands for the economic power of Tokyo or Japan, much as the Manhattan skyline is an acknowledged symbol of the economic power of New York City or the United States.

There are so many things to say about Shinjuku that a book could be written about the place. However, there is a special story to tell about its principal cluster of high-rises, an area on the west side of Shinjuku station that is variously referred to as New Shinjuku City Center (Shin Toshin Shinjuku), West Shinjuku, or simply West Exit. The centerpiece is the 107-hectare site of an old water treatment facility that was redeveloped from 1960 into a carefully laid out arrangement of office towers and international hotels interspersed with straight, wide streets, sheltered pedestrian concourses, and various combinations of public plazas, enclosed shopping malls,

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fountains and sculptures, and landscapers' greenery. The first tower to be completed was the Keiō Plaza Hotel in 1971, with various other buildings opening later in the 1970s and 1980s, into the 1990s. The newest high-rises, often taller and more distinctive in form than those of the first generation, are on surrounding blocks, as redevelopment is ongoing and the office tower sub-district is expanded.

What is perhaps most remarkable about this area is the extent to which it is compared in Tokyo to New York's Manhattan. It does not matter that Nishi Shinjuku is no bigger than a few Manhattan blocks; it *is* Tokyo's answer to the skyline of its principal rival metropolis abroad. In Popham's words, written even before many of Shinjuku's most prominent buildings were built, Shinjuku is "the embodiment of [Tokyo's] Manhattan fantasies" (Popham 1985:101-102). The skyline of the district is represented often in Japanese film and television as the setting for big-city detective adventures and other dramas, and the backdrop for commercial advertising for various "urban-sophisticated" consumer products such as cigarettes, whiskey, and luxury automobiles. This is similar to the way in which the more famous profile of New York is often represented in America and other countries, and has resulted in Shinjuku's becoming what is almost certainly the most widely recognized urban scene in Japan. Imitation of New York is sometimes direct. I have a Christmas card illustrating the Shinjuku skyline on a quiet snowy night, Santa and his reindeer in the sky above, and the unmistakable reflection of the Statue of Liberty on the glass skin of one of the high-rises! So, too, I have a key chain that says "Tokyo Megalopolis" and shows a montage of Tokyo's landmarks and the profile of New York's Chrysler building. What is more, there is a waterfall/fountain in Shinjuku's "Central Park" (Chūō Kōen) called Niagara Falls. Several blocks away, at the south exit of Shinjuku station, is a huge new shopping center named, you guessed it, Times Square.

Emulation of foreign cityscapes or landmarks is most extreme with respect to Nishi Shinjuku's (and Tokyo's) tallest building, Tokyo Metropolitan Government headquarters. Called *tochō* or simply City Hall, it opened in 1991, replacing the overcrowded and exceptionally unimpressive offices of city administration that had stood in Marunouchi in the CBD. Relocation to Shinjuku had been a pet project of Suzuki Shunichi, Tokyo's enormously powerful governor between 1979 and 1995, and is in itself a telling indicator of the growing importance of this district. The design, by Tange Kenzō (b. 1913), the same architect who designed the outmoded City Hall (and who, therefore, had been given a rare chance to redeem himself, and whose career can be said to outlast his buildings), was intended to make the new City Hall not only the number 1 landmark in Nishi Shinjuku but also a major symbol of Tokyo itself, both nationally and internationally, eclipsing Tokyo Tower in this role. According to promotional literature touting its state-of-the-art, high-technology construction, the new City Hall is intended to launch Tokyo "toward the 21st century and beyond" (Tokyo Metropolitan Government 1993:74). When it opened, Governor Suzuki described the complex as "a gift for the metropolis' citizens of the 21st century" (Tabata 1991:18; see also Kenzo Tange Associates 1991-93).

The specific site of City Hall overlooks "Central Park" and faces the city's sprawling western suburbs. It consists of three buildings: two massive office skyscrapers with distinctive shape and texture, and a lower, semi-circular "Assembly Building" that opens on to a grand public plaza. The taller tower, the so-called

Number One Building, rises to 243 meters and is the tallest building in the city; the Number Two Building is 163 meters high and also ranks among Tokyo's giants. The architectural details are fascinating, intending to convey Tokyo as both a traditional city (early Edo, Tokyo's name before 1868) and a city of "international stature as a world leader" (Kenzo Tange Associates 1991-93:31). At street level and below, there are aspects of the project that recall Edo Castle: stone facing that resembles the castle's walls, a kind of moat, and traditional Japanese greenscaping. This contrasts with the public plaza, called Tomin Hiroba, or Citizens' Plaza, which Tange has said was meant to evoke the Vatican's St. Peter's Square. However, instead of depicting saints and former popes, the semi-circular pantheon of statues is of nude or semi-nude young women. It has, therefore, been the subject of occasional protest by women and their supporters, as well as the focus of a very thoughtful scholarly critique of Tokyo's public art (Shimizu 1994). Further architectural contrast is with the façades of the towers above: they are meant to suggest the circuitry of a modern computer and the shapes of specific international landmarks. The Number One Building, for example, has a twin-towers configuration above the 150 meters level that Tange has explained as an echo of Notre Dame cathedral in Paris.

Because of the project's great size and visibility, as well as a price tag reported to be as high as ¥157 billion, critics have said that City Hall is either Tange's monument to himself or a monument to Suzuki, or both, and that it is a symbolic return to Edo Castle, the imposing center of power around which the city was originally founded. Unkind nicknames that have applied to the complex are "Tax Tower," referring to the high cost, and "Tower of Bubble," a label applied by Kurosawa Kishō, a prominent architect who was once a student of Tange's, to refer to the extraordinary buoyant economy that enabled construction (Tabata 1991:18). Indeed, all of the showy office district on Nishi Shinjuku, as well as projects in the vicinity such as the Times Square complex, where the shopping mall rises over 14 stories, reflect Tokyo's protean character and love for new construction.

Yebisu Garden Place

If the tall buildings of Shinjuku are meant to either rival or recall New York, then Yebisu Garden Place (also written as Ebisu Garden Place) is an echo of France or Paris. Located not far from Shinjuku in an upscale residential district at the boundaries of Meguro, Minato, and Shibuya Wards, it is a megastructure redevelopment project on the site of an old Sapporo brewery complex. With the land too valuable for just making beer, it was converted in the early 1990s to a sprawling mixed-use development that features, among other things, an office tower, a major international hotel, a department store and shopping center, lots of restaurants, a museum about photography, a beer garden, and, hooray, a museum about beer. All this is around a large central courtyard with an overarching roof that combines the feel of being outdoors with the benefits of climate control. The feeling of France comes mostly from the project centerpiece, a more or less faithful reproduction of a historic chateau. There are also French restaurants and cafés with "outdoor" seating, as well as sculptures, signposts, and other landscaping with a European flavor. Particularly on Sundays, Japan's main day of rest and shopping, Yebisu Garden Place is

crowded with people enjoying the atmosphere. Musicians, magicians, and other street performers add to the pleasure. Some visitors choose to pose for pictures in front of the chateau, which will give the illusion that they have been abroad.

The success of Yebisu Garden Place as an alternative to Japan (or simply to the crowded conditions of Tokyo) depends also on its physical separation from the city. Although it is in the midst of a densely built-up (and generally well-regarded) neighborhood, it stands totally apart by design, so much so that high walls and steep slopes mark some of its edges. Other edges are formed by the backsides of the project's buildings, with main entryways opening toward the interior central courtyard rather than the outside. The insular feel also comes from the physical means of access. As anywhere else in Tokyo, most visitors would arrive by train or subway, but because the project is not immediately adjacent to such a station they are conveyed the last 400 meters by a specially constructed enclosed moving walkway. Once they get on the "Yebisu Sky Walk" at Ebisu station, people are moved in narrow files for about five minutes through an enclosed, climate-controlled tube that eventually deposits them at an inviting entryway with photogenic qualities. U-turns or turnoffs are discouraged by the design, while anticipation of what lies ahead is heightened by measured breaks in the walkway and little right-angle jogs that conceal the ultimate destination until the last stretch. All along the short journey, arriving customers pass colorful posters and backlit advertisements for shops, restaurants and other facilities that lie ahead. They are vetted by security personnel, who sometimes greet new arrivals at the walkway's start or watch through surveillance cameras as they glide toward the entry.

There are obvious parallels between design features of Yebisu Garden Place and those of Disneyland-type theme parks. In both cases there is a sharp break with the outside world and architectural devices such as anticipation-building approaches that heighten the feeling that one is in a different or special place. Both are also designed to make customers feel relaxed and comfortable, to encourage people to linger and spend money. Finally, both are extraordinarily safe and sanitary environments. At Yebisu Garden Place, security comes from a bevy of uniformed and non-uniformed guards and ubiquitous surveillance cameras, while the cleanliness is thanks to an army of men and women workers in lime-green jump suits who silently scrape, scrub, sweep, mop, and polish amidst the crowds of customers. The granite-faced walls are so shiny that they could be mirrors.

Daiba

Daiba (aka Odaiba) is a beachfront development on a new island in Tokyo Bay not far from the center of the city. Access is even more dramatic than that to Yebisu, as most visitors arrive via the Yurikamome line, a new monorail from central Tokyo across the high Rainbow Bridge, Tokyo's answer to the Golden Gate Bridge. There are sweeping views of the Tokyo skyline that one leaves behind and the futuristic urban scene ahead called Tokyo Teleport Town or the Waterfront Subcenter, of which Daiba is a part. Other visitors come by automobile on an expressway that crosses the same bridge, or from a different direction via tunnel under the bay. What they find at Daiba is still another escape from both the routines and the look of Tokyo. The focus is a

new sandy beach that was laid down in an L-shape at the foot of the bridge and the gleaming new resortscape behind it. There are large shopping malls and entertainment complexes, dozens of bars and restaurants, hotels, office buildings and clusters of high-rise apartment and condominium buildings. On the upper floors of Island Mall is Little Hong Kong, a replica back street with Cantonese restaurants and Hong Kong souvenirs. A little further on are still more shopping malls, including one named Venus Fort where the streets and statuary resemble a Las Vegas version of Italy. Also, there are other high-tech entertainment centers, new conventional and exhibition halls, an amusement park, public swimming pool and tennis courts, and Telecom Center, an "intelligent" office building shaped like Le Grand Arc in La Défense in Paris. Perhaps the most striking sight is a large replica Statue of Liberty on a high pedestal near the Daiba beach. However, unlike her counterpart near New York, this lady has her back to the bay and the city, and holds her torch in the direction of the shoppers in Daiba's malls.

The waters of Tokyo Bay are not recommended for swimming, so except for some courageous windsurfers in wetsuits only a few wade in from the beach. However, during good weather the beach itself and walkways along it are crowded with Tokyoites enjoying the sun and the relative fresh air and quiet. The shopping malls and entertainment centers like Mega Web and the Joypolis video arcade are also crowded, especially on weekends and holidays when great throngs descend on the scene. Street musicians and other outdoor entertainment add to the festive atmosphere, as do the many boats for drinking parties, the Mississippi River steamboat that takes visitors on short cruises, and what is reputedly the world's largest Ferris wheel. The district is especially popular for dating. At sunset and after dark the Daiba waterfront is lined with couples evenly spaced along the sitting area, many of them in close embrace.

Thus, Daiba is a waterfront festival zone *par excellence*, offering countless diversions in a theme-park-like setting. We might call it "Santa Monica Land" or "Waikiki Land," or something after one of the resort towns in Australia's Queensland. The place also suggests famous big-city redevelopment projects like Baltimore's Inner Harbor and Canary Wharf in London. Whereas in many other cities such areas have been made from once derelict warehouse and industrial zones, in Tokyo the approach has been to build something totally new on new land, and to import a beach to boot. The fact that Daiba is only minutes away by rail from the center of the city and easily accessible by car (a rare feature in Tokyo) adds to the success. The residential buildings on the island are also popular, particularly if they are close to the rail stations and shopping for daily needs. The commute to downtown Tokyo is quick and easy, while at the same time there is a sharp break in landscape between the city of work and where one lives.

Development plans for Tokyo's waterfront have been even more ambitious than what is seen at Daiba. The waterfront area actually consists of several large new islands in various stages of completion, as well as sizeable extensions to the shoreline of Tokyo Bay, where there has been considerable construction for some time. One specific plan, linked to the same Tokyo decentralization concept that gave rise to Shinjuku, has called for a residential population of 63,000 and the workforce population is 109,000 – large enough to be considered a major extension of the city into the bay. There were also plans for a major world's fair on one of the new islands,

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although that particular idea and several other construction projects have fallen victim to the weak economy and taxpayer rebellions about subsidies for real-estate development. Consequently, still another type of landscape at the waterfront, in addition to the successful Daiba development, is new vacant land and undeveloped spaces in an otherwise very crowded city.

Shioiri

If Shinjuku suggests Manhattan, Yebisu Paris, and Daiba an American or Australian beach resort, then Shioiri is no place at all. The sad thing is that it had been a fine neighborhood with distinctive qualities before redevelopment, and that a decade of demolition and reconstruction in the 1990s produced nothing more than just another cluster of ordinary high-rise apartments, albeit for many more people than were housed in the old neighborhood. What makes the place different from countless other high-rise residences is that buildings in the center of the new Shioiri are colored pink, presumably to make the area cheery. There are also some concessions to local history: reuse of the area's toponymy; mosaics with historic scenes on the walls of the supermarket; no destruction of the old temple and its surrounding trees. Otherwise, everything in old Shioiri was chainsawed, bulldozed, and hauled away, possibly for Tokyo Bay landfill, and the topography was regraded. Residents and shopkeepers were given cash for their properties and priority for new apartments and commercial sites. Several thousand new people from elsewhere in Arakawa Ward and all over Tokyo came to settle, attracted by the newness and competitive rents in a housing project with public subsidies. Many of them are families with young children, a type of household being recruited by Arakawa and other wards on the blue-collar side of Tokyo to balance age structure and reinvigorate local economies.

The old Shioiri was a place that I had once considered to be one of my secrets about Tokyo. Even though it is generally near the center of Tokyo, the site is an out-of-the-way place, being a long walk from the nearest train station, on the far side of a long stretch of railyards and industries, and tucked within a sharp bend of the Sumida river. Paul Waley and Sugiura Noriyuki, two geographers who are experts on Tokyo, took me there in 1985 when I was beginning my professional interest in the city, and told me that I should get to know Shioiri to learn about Tokyo's past and present (see Waley 1984). I've been returning ever since, sometimes bringing friends who were visiting me to show them an alternative side of Tokyo. The appeal was to see one of the last vestiges in Tokyo of an old-style urban landscape and way of life. It was a tightly packed "urban village," of small wooden houses with tile roofs along narrow, crooked streets, small family-owned shops, and potted greenery double- and triple-stacked beside every building. The temple and its small grounds was a spatial focus. Neighbors also got together at the *senjo*, the local bathhouse. There was a lot of outdoor activity as well. It seemed like everyone knew everyone else and that the community was exceptionally close-knit. I stood out when I visited, and was remembered by locals as the foreigner who had visited before whenever I returned.

Unfortunately, Tokyo's high-risers, including Tange Kenzō personally, also found Shioiri. For them, it was land used inefficiently in a crowded and expensive city, and

housing that was substandard because it was drafty, not air-conditioned, and lacking in conveniences such as private baths and showers. The neighborhood was also said to be hazardous in terms of earthquake fires. And so this old section of Tokyo was modernized to make it better and safer, and to make room for more people. The neighborhood's original residents did not have much say in the changes, as demolition was imposed on them. Most of the locals are still around, living in better dwellings, but behind closed doors with air conditioning, cable TV, and private facilities instead of with their neighbors. For them neighborhood is gone, and the new place, now called River Park Shioiri, is like a move to a distant city.

The same change is happening in countless other places in Tokyo: communities of single homes are giving way to high-rise residences and multi-unit apartment-condominium structures called *manshon*. Just a bit upriver from Shioiri, also in Arakawa Ward, close to the sewage works, is another planned new high-rise residential area, one exceptionally densely developed. It houses many thousands on land where hundreds once lived and replaces traditional neighborhood life in old houses on narrow lanes with the faceless relations of a giant new complex of like buildings. In this particular project the architects' gesture toward making the place distinctive is having lots of freestanding Ionic columns all about and a narrow moat, just 1 meter across, at its edges. For some reason all these places, like River Park Shioiri, have names in English, written in Roman letters. Whoever it was who named this second place may have been part of a quiet resistance: its name is "Acrocity."

DISCUSSION: COMMON THEMES

So, here we have three famous places in Tokyo that attract the crowds, as well as a fourth new place, an ordinary residential district little different in appearance from countless other new residential developments. What things in common do we see in these four examples of Tokyo's third rebuilding and what do they tell us about contemporary Japan?

First and most obvious is that all four developments, as well as many other construction projects in the city of which these four are examples, are new, large in scale, and emphasize high-rises. This contrasts sharply with the low-slung, smaller-footprint profile of traditional Tokyo, and represents a significant change in the look of the city. Furthermore, there is an extra measure of pizzazz, such as an exaggerated international look for the three famous projects and the pink tone to the center of Shioiri, as well as a certain reliance on big-name architects to give each new project instant cachet. Cachet also derives from fancy-sounding foreign names given to the projects or individual structures, and/or from imitations of famous foreign places or landmarks. Other new construction projects in this vein are Tokyo Opera City, an oversized high-rise building and commercial complex with Tokyo's outstanding new National Theater near Shinjuku, and Tama Center, the main commercial district of a large, planned western suburb, where the main street is called Parutenondōri (Parthenon Street) and the visual focus is a stylized representation of the Parthenon on an artificial hill at the end of the street. Another important commonality is that all four developments stand apart by design from their respective surroundings and are "islands in the city" (or "cities within the city") with little or no

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articulation with the wider districts they occupy. In the case of Daiba, the "island" analogy is literal.

There is nothing particularly "Japanese" about urban development with these characteristics. Cities in other countries have similar building trends, so much so that some writers have lamented the lack of regional or cultural distinctiveness in new urban landscape and complain that, more and more, cities around the world, especially their commercial cores, look alike (Cybriwsky and Ford 2001; Ford 1994: 268–275). In his introduction to a landmark collection of social critiques about urban design trends, particularly in New York and other American cities, Michael Sorkin identified at least three physical characteristics that seem to hold as well for Tokyo: (1) "dissipation of all stable relations to local physical and cultural geography [and] the loosening of ties to any specific place"; (2) an "obsession with 'security,' with rising levels of manipulation and surveillance over [the] citizenry"; and (3) new emphasis on architecture of "simulation" in cities, giving cities, or parts thereof, some of the key characteristics of theme parks (Sorkin 1992:xiii–xv).

If anything can be said to be distinctively Japanese about the look of Tokyo's new developments, it is, ironically, the extent of copying of foreign (Western) landmarks and architectural styles, and application of Western-language names to buildings and other construction, as opposed to Japanese toponymy. These are patterns that date back to Meiji Japan (1868–1912), when the country emerged from a long period of enforced isolation under the Tokugawa shoguns and completed crash courses in modernization and internationalization. Tokyo assumed the special role as Japan's principal pupil, becoming the locus of a vastly disproportionate amount of the newness. As national capital it concentrated Japan's foreigners and foreign influences, in part to protect the rest of Japan from unwanted changes, and constructed for itself new series of landmarks to show to the world and to the Japanese alike that the nation was a fast learner, capable of achieving whatever others had achieved. Along with its newly created companion city of Yokohama, Tokyo became a showcase of new fashions and activities, as well as of grand buildings and entire districts with new architecture and foreign themes (Barr 1968; Sabin 2002; Seidensticker 1983; Tokyo Metropolitan Government 1993).

Two of the principal early landmarks in this vein were the Tsukiji *Hoterukan* and the *Rokumeikan*. The first was a large hotel completed in 1868 just across from a newly designated settlement for foreigners in the Tsukiji district at Tokyo Bay. It was a striking brick building which combined curious Western accretions on a traditional Japanese timber-frame base, reflecting Japan's awkward first encounters with the outside world. The word *hoterukan* itself was a strange new blend: the first syllables correspond to the Japanese pronunciation of "hotel," while *kan* is based on the Japanese for "inn." Unfortunately, the building had an unusually short life, as a great fire that swept through central Tokyo in 1872 and destroyed it. The *Rokumeikan* was completed in 1883. Located in Hibiya near the new government district, it was the work of English architect Josiah Conder, who was brought to Japan for the task at the request of the Ministry of Technology. Like its predecessor, it too was an elaborate hotel and gathering place with unusual, hybrid design. It was covered with stucco and combined Moorish, Mediterranean, and northern European styles. Its purpose was to be a place where cosmopolitan Japanese of the new era could mix with foreigners. During its heyday in the mid- and late 1880s, the *Rokumeikan*

hosted countless elegant balls, formal dinners, musical performances, charity bazaars, and other Western-style "high society" events.

The famous district of Ginza is a prime example of an entire section of the city that was redeveloped in a foreign style. Originally the site of the shogun's silver mint and later one of the city's premier geisha districts, it bore the brunt of the 1872 fire and needed to be rebuilt. As an experiment to make the city safer, the reconstruction was done in brick, a first for Japan, after a plan by English architect Thomas Waters, and the district came to be called the Ginza Brick Quarter (*Ginza renga gai*). By the time work was completed, there were more than 1,000 brick buildings, many of which were two-story structures with colonnades and balconies. So, too, there were sidewalks, gaslights along the streets, and rows of planted willows. There were also quite a few problems with the construction, not the least of which was that buildings were poorly suited to the local climate and became excessively damp, so it took quite a while before the area became popular as a restaurant and shopping paradise.

A second European-looking district in Meiji Tokyo was the so-called Mitsubishi Londontown. Developed around the turn of the century on what was once a military parade ground and army barracks next to the Imperial Palace, it became Tokyo's premier office district after the opening of Tokyo station in 1914. The principal designer was once again Josiah Conder, and, as the name suggests, the district was an imitation of the English capital. Its main features were four-story, red-brick buildings that were vaguely reminiscent of Victorian Kensington, and a grid pattern of wide streets. It also took a while to catch on, but it eventually capitalized on its centrality and became pre-eminent.

There were other examples of Western building and landmarks in Tokyo in the decades that followed, not the least of which was Tokyo Tower, Tokyo's answer to the Eiffel Tower, completed in 1959. Thus, a pattern of Tokyo as "international city" with the look and landmarks of other places had been set. I argue that at Daiba, Yebisu, and "Tokyo's Manhattan" the pattern continues today, and that the "third rebuilding of Tokyo" is, therefore, not quite as great a break in local history and geography as it might initially seem.

Still another collection of thoughts about the four new developments is that, both individually and collectively, they reflect the enormous activity of the construction industry in Japan. The country has been described internally as *doken kokka*, a "construction state," in which vastly disproportionate power resides with top bureaucrats in the Ministry of Construction, their political allies in the National Diet, and the country's biggest construction companies, and where much of the economy is in construction and related industries. The result is a landscape, not just in the big cities but also in the remote corners of the country, of many new (and often large-scale) public works such as highways, bridges, tunnels, flood-control projects, landslide-control projects, museums, concert halls, and convention facilities, and of private works built with government largesse, whether they are needed or not (Kerr 2001:13-50). The culture of the times and apparent guiding principle of the Ministry of Construction is to build and keep building, with the corollary being that construction gets ever grander and more elaborate. As the biggest city and national capital, Tokyo represents the apex of this pattern. The nation's largest developers and construction companies are headquartered there, and it is there that they have erected some of their greatest monuments.

The case of Shioiri is a particularly poignant story with respect to the angle of the construction state in Tokyo. While building and rebuilding is endemic in the city, Shioiri seemed immune because of its remoteness. Yet, the city's builders were able to find the neighborhood and see that it had lots of land and many old houses, where "progress" could be brought. Shioiri residents protested the changes, citing immense satisfaction with their quieter, community-based life in the city, but to no avail, as the neighborhood was formally tagged as a concentration of substandard housing and a risk for flooding. In this way what had existed for decades was bulldozed, the land covered with new topsoil so that remaining traces would be buried, and the site made to look like so many other ordinary places in Tokyo.

Thus, one overarching conclusion about the new cityscape at Shioiri and the other study sites is that Tokyo is undergoing a conscious break from past patterns of land use and a deliberate change in the look of the city. Indeed, this is the claim of much of the publicity about these and similar redevelopment projects in Tokyo which emphasizes Tokyo's modernization and improved comfort for both living and business. This is seen especially clearly in the straightforward advertising campaigns of the Mori Corporation, one of the world's biggest land developers, headquartered in central Tokyo. The company has built well over a hundred high-rise office and residential towers, mostly at an advancing edge of the Central Business District in Minato Ward on the accumulated sites of older single homes, and, probably more than any other real-estate firm or land development company, represents the changes under way in the city. In its advertising it promotes itself with the slogan "We Design Tokyo." Moreover, the Mori Corporation has advertised its giant redevelopment projects such as Ark Hills, Roppongi Hills, and Moto-Azabu Hills as being "Where Tokyo Is Headed." Likewise, promoters of the new construction projects on islands reclaimed from Tokyo Bay have argued that their various exhibition facilities, office buildings, international hotels, and other new buildings are necessary to propel Tokyo through the 21st century, keeping the city competitive with Shanghai, Singapore, Hong Kong, and other business-aggressive urban centers in Pacific Asia that are also undergoing major redevelopment.

However, we can also say the exact opposite about these physical characteristics, and argue that they are best understood as contemporary manifestations of land use and lifestyle patterns that are long embedded in the city's history. That is, we can say that, while the projects themselves are new they actually represent aspects of Tokyo that have been around for some time, and that design details such as extra pizzazz, similarities to foreign landmarks and use of foreign names also have historical antecedents. In this regard, instead of signaling new directions for urban development in Tokyo and new modes of urban living, the high-rises of Shinjuku, the seemingly non-Japanese landscapes of Yebisu and Daiba, and even the new apartment blocks of Shioiri, among other recent developments, are all just new twists on old patterns.

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