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Tokyo and London:
Comparative Conceptions of the City



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INTRODUCTION

The city is never what we think it is: it is always far more complex and changeable than our ideas about it. Yet even ideas of the city are elusive; they are as often implicit as explicit, and it will not suffice to seek out conceptions of the city in self-consciously articulated urban ideologies alone. It is here that cross-cultural comparison provides a valuable tool, for it forces us to deeper and more fundamental levels of differentiation than do culture-bound theoretical speculations on "the city." Comparison is first of all a means, a system of leverage for understanding our own modes of conceptualizing the urban environment. But beyond this, comparison can become an end as well, a technique of appreciating—or at least tolerating—radically different ways of looking at the city.

If we accept the potential benefits of a cross-cultural comparison of ideas of the city, why Tokyo and London? At the broadest level, they provide a comparison of a Western city with a non-Western city, enabling some perspective on the inevitable Western biases of the great bulk of writing on "the" city. Ideally, one would prefer for comparative purposes a non-Western urban tradition which had modernized while remaining free of European cultural influence—unfortunately, none exists. As second best, one would prefer an urban tradition which had been strong and distinctive *before* the impact of the West. Here Japan, probably the most highly urbanized pre-modern society outside Europe, is an excellent choice.¹ In particular, Japan was never subjected to colonial rule, so the continuity of pre-modern urban traditions is much stronger than in many other parts of the non-Western world.

But within the Western urban tradition, why the English variant? The reason is that England offers a revealing parallel with Japan as an

¹ Gilbert Rozman, *Urban Networks in Ch'ing China and Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 6. Rozman adds the qualification "large-scale" to "society."

island-nation offspring of an older continental culture. A comparison of England and Japan thus implies a comparison of the larger urban traditions of East Asia (defined as the Chinese cultural sphere) with those of Western Europe (or, more simply, "the West"). In fact, the fundamental comparison to be made is precisely that of the Chinese city versus the Western city, and some sketchy but provocative efforts have been made in that direction.² The value of Japan and England as a framework for comparison is that they take us one step farther in understanding the range of variability in urban conceptualization, for each evolved urban traditions which were distinctively different from those of their continental relatives. A comparison of England and Japan thus implicitly involves sub-comparisons of Japan with China, and of England with the Continent.

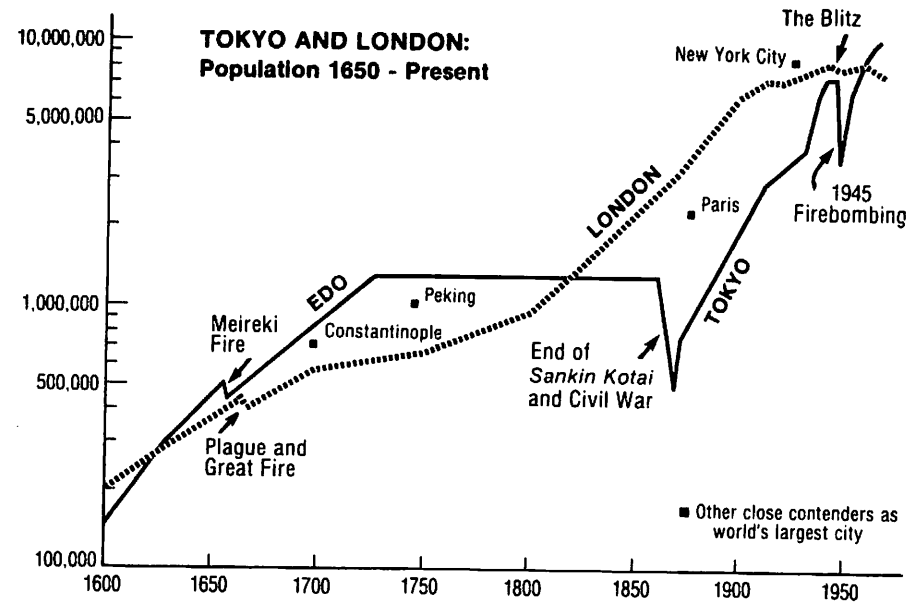
Still further justification for comparing Japan and England is that each has enjoyed a thriving urban culture first as a pre-modern society, then as an industrializing society, and today as a fully industrialized society. I am in general agreement with the arguments of sociological theorists that there is a sharp break in function and structure between the pre-industrial and the industrial city, and again between the industrial and the post-industrial city. But there is far less of a break in the *idea* of the city, which in its many guises remains deeply rooted in pre-modern and early industrial realities. It is for this reason that I have in each section stressed the *modern continuities* of older ideas of the city.

Relevant to the problem of continuity is the most obvious historical similarity of Tokyo and London: both were very large as pre-industrial cities and both have remained continuously very large until the present. They have been so large that for the last three centuries the distinction of the "world's largest city" has gone (or should, from most current evidence, go) to one of these two great capitals; their comparative growth is shown in Figure 1.³ It bears emphasis, however, that *before* the sixteenth century, neither Edo (renamed Tokyo in

² See Etienne Balazs, *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy*, ed. Arthur F. Wright and trans. H. M. Wright (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), pp. 66-78; Frederick W. Mote, "The City in Traditional Chinese Civilization," in James T. C. Liu and Wei-ming Tu, eds., *Traditional China* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 42-49; and Arthur F. Wright, "Symbolism and Function: Reflections on Chang'an and Other Great Cities," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 24, no. 4 (1965), pp. 667-679. The point which bedevils any sustained comparison of the Chinese and the Western city is the essential unity and continuity of the Chinese empire until modern times versus the fragmentation, feudalism, and geographic expansion of Western Europe after the fall of Rome. Japan is much closer to the European pattern.

³ The only other incontestable holder of the title has been New York City, for a brief period in the second quarter of the twentieth century. Peking may have been larger than Edo at some time in the late eighteenth century.

FIGURE 1: Comparative Population Growth of Tokyo and London



This chart is impressionistic at a number of points, particularly for the early growth pattern of Edo. I have accepted Naitō Akira's estimate of a population of 1.3 million for Edo at its peak, although this is slightly higher than most (*Edo to Edo-jō*, p. 136). The rate and degree of Edo's population decline in the 1860's are likewise pure conjecture. Figures for London from 1870 are for "Greater London," which was defined only in 1898, but are here projected back. Figures for Tokyo from 1876 are for the limits of the post-World War II Tokyo-to, but are here projected back in accord with the calculations of Kishimoto Minoru in *Nihon chishi kenkyūjo*, ed., *Nihon chishi* [Geography of Japan], 21 vols. (Ninomiya shoten, 1967), Vol. 7, p. 118. Estimates for other cities are taken from Tertius Chandler and Gerald Fox, *3000 Years of Urban Growth* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

1868) nor London was even in the running as a great world city. Where relevant, I shall mention some of the older urban traditions in Japan and England, both continental and indigenous. But the case of Tokyo and London encourages particular attention to the "early modern" period of the sixteenth through the eighteenth (in the case of Tokyo, through the mid-nineteenth) centuries.⁴ It is in part an

⁴ The concept of an "early modern" period and its uniform application to Japan and Europe presents many yet unsolved problems. I can only suggest in a tentative way that both Japan and England were from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries undergoing changes which were in certain ways preparatory to the "modernization" triggered by the Industrial Revolution. The entire problem has yet to be treated in an analytical comparative framework.

assumption, but also an argument of this essay that these centuries were critical in molding ideas and attitudes about the city in both cultures, in ways that persist to the present.

I have also narrowed the scope of this essay to Tokyo and London as *capital cities*. One justification is that these two capitals have played a dominant role in molding ideas of the city in their respective cultures. This is certainly true of London, which has been without a rival as the great English city. It is far less valid for Japan: Edo-Tokyo is a relatively new city which ever since its meteoric rise to dominance in the seventeenth century has continued to share its cultural and economic power with Kyoto and Osaka. At any rate, it is a major but unavoidable qualification of this essay that I have confined my attention to the capital cities, thereby neglecting the wide variety of urban ideas and images deriving from smaller cities and from cities of different functions, of which there are many. The aim here is therefore a comparison of ideas of the city as evolved in the capital, so that any broader comparative implications are limited to capitals or at least to very large multi-functional cities.

In an effort to uncover deep-lying implicit conceptions of the city, I have relied on two types of evidence in particular. First, I have stressed *language* as the critical structure for basic thinking about the city, accepting the hypothesis that language itself structures the processes and categories of human thought.⁵ In particular, I have focused on the vocabulary by which urban (and, by implication, non-urban) environments are classified, seeking to capsule both the defining and the normative powers of such words as "city" and "country" in English, or "*miyako*" and "*inaka*" in Japanese. Particularly revealing for the normative component are adjectival and nominal inflections of these basic urban referents, such as "civic," "countrified," "*miyabita*," or "*inakamono*."⁶

The second source of evidence is *visual form*, both in the physical city (primarily its plan and architecture) and in visual depictions of

⁵ The use of language as a comparative tool for understanding Japan is seen in the suggestive but often misleading cliché, "In the Japanese language there is no word for _____," common candidates being "rights," "guilt," "privacy," "style," and so forth. The point is not that the Japanese "have no word," but rather that they structure comparable realities into isolates of meaning which do not correspond precisely to those of the English language.

⁶ Throughout this paper, I have relied primarily on the following sources for the historical uses of words: for English, *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 1933), and Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 307; for Japanese, Shinmura Izuru, comp., *Kōjien*, 2nd ed. (Iwanami shoten, 1969); Kindaichi Kyōsuke, comp., *Meikai kogo jiten*, new ed. (Sanseidō, 1962); Nihon daijiten kankōkai, ed., *Nihon kokugo daijiten* (Shōgakkai, 1972-); and Jōdaigo jiten henshū inkai, ed., *Jidai-betsu kokugo daijiten: jōdai* (Sanseidō, 1967).

the city in art and literature. It is the visual faculty on which men have always relied as the primary means of identifying and categorizing a city, at least until the twentieth-century proclivity for analyzing the city as a sociological structure. Even today *most* people (including those who have most of the power to change cities) persist in identifying the city by the way it looks. It is my personal conviction that they are not amiss in doing so, and that every city should ideally be, in the words of J. B. Jackson, "a continuously satisfying aesthetic-sensory experience."⁷

In stressing the importance of a visual esthetic in structuring ideas of the city, I do not mean to deny the primacy of social and economic factors in determining the actual patterns of growth in any city. Indeed, it is my conviction that the idea of the city must be approached within a framework of the changing structure of political and economic power within society at large. For this reason, I have delineated four major categories of socioeconomic power within the traditional city as a scaffolding for the comparison: princely, priestly, aristocratic, and commoner. It is my assumption that each represents a coherent "order" within the city as a whole, with its own distinctive visual "aspect" and isolable conception of the city. This typology coincides nicely with the legal segregation of land in the city of Edo into the shogunal domain (primarily Edo Castle), the *jisha-chi* of the Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines; the *buke-chi*, where the daimyo and their samurai retainers resided; and the *machi-chi*, where the commoners lived and conducted their commercial and artisanal activities. While the categories seem more precisely geared to Edo than to London, there are commonsensical reasons for accepting these as the major sociopolitical orders in *any* pre-modern capital. At any rate, I have found them a useful framework for what must in any event be a very rough and simplistic comparison.

URBAN OPPOSITIONS

Every idea of the city harbors an implicit conception of what is *not* a city.⁸ Consider the ease with which we grasp such oppositions as "city and country" or "rural and urban" in Anglo-American culture; so with "*tokai to nōson*" or "*machi to inaka*" in Japanese. So rich and com-

⁷ Ervin H. Zube, ed., *Landscapes: Selected Writings of J. B. Jackson* (The University of Massachusetts Press, 1970), p. 87. I am indebted at a number of points in this paper to this humane volume of essays on the human landscape.

⁸ Since writing this section, I have been greatly stimulated by Yi-fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perceptions, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), a book which I recommend for those interested in the problem of the conceptualization of urban versus non-urban environments.

plex are these ideas of the non-city that they have had a profound and continuing impact on the way men conceive of cities and aspire to change them. The issue is by no means simple, particularly with respect to the logical relationship between the two members of each pair: they may be, depending on the culture, antithetical, complementary, or coexistent. I would offer a hypothesis that the antithetical relationship is the most prevalent in Western culture, the complementary in China, and the coexistent in Japan. Some evidence for this scheme will emerge from the argument that follows.

The most primitive notion of the non-city in any culture is that of an environment which harbors dangers, a fearful and hostile landscape frequented by natural disasters, terrifying spirits, wild beasts, thieves, and invading armies. In the Western tradition, it is a conception categorized as "wilderness," particularly in its Biblical senses. But in the particular case of England, the conception of the city as a place of safety against a hostile wilderness was far less pervasive than on the Continent. In Japan, where conceptions of a dangerous and hostile environment have been in general far less compelling than in the West, it is difficult even to find a word comparable to "wilderness." In both Japan and England, the non-urban environment had been wholly pacified by the medieval period, and there lingered into the modern era few notions of a hostile anti-urban wilderness. In this respect, both seem similar variants from Continental traditions, where city walls, the prime symbol of the city as safety, often survived into modern times.

Far more persistent in both Japan and England was a conception of the non-city as a settled and working agricultural landscape. Of the many and complex variations within this general category of "rurality," perhaps the earliest and the most unfavorable idea was that of the non-city as a place of ignorance and cruelty. The city, by contrast, was the place of learning, benevolence, and art: in short, a "civilized" environment. Although this conception may be found in both Japan and England, there are subtly revealing differences. In Japan, it was in the early imperial capitals of Nara and Kyoto that such an idea first emerged, centering on the sense of opposition between the *miya*, the palace or court, and the *hina*, the environment distant from the court. The capital itself was known in native Japanese as the *miyako*, or "place of the imperial court," highlighting the crucial importance of the court aristocracy in sustaining this conception of urbanity. In the Nara and Heian periods, this idea took on esthetic overtones of elegance and grace, which are suggested by the word *miyabitaru*, well translated as "courtly." Against this was posed *hinabitaru*, suggesting coarseness of manner. The importance of this conception of city versus

country for this essay, however, is that it remained unique to Kyoto and the imperial aristocracy. Indeed, the term *hinabitaru* was used in medieval times as a derogatory label for the provincial samurai class, and it is not surprising that Edo, as a samurai city, was never graced with the idea of *miyabitaru* urbanity.

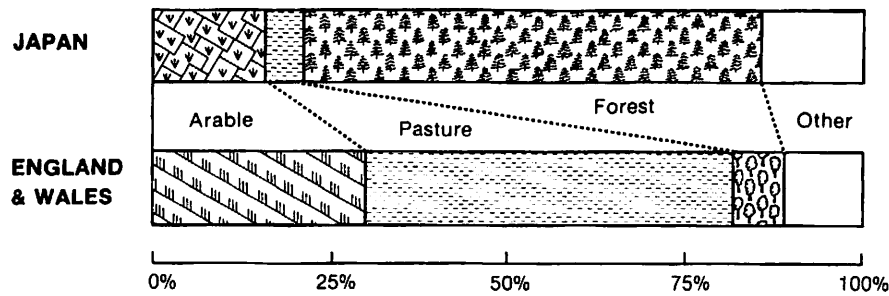
In London as well, one finds a similar idea of the city as a place of polite and refined manners, as "civil" and "urbane." The contrast with Japan is that the esthetic overtones are less clearly developed, and the application of the terms extends beyond the court. These English words seem to involve a social rather than an esthetic distinction, and are opposed by an imagery far more specifically rural (that is, outside the city) than the classical *hinabitaru*, which seems a matter more of taste than location. Thus one finds in England, particularly in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the emergence of such terms as "countrified" and "country bumpkin" to suggest the specifically rural content of that which is not "urbane." In Japan, it is not until the modern period that a word such as *inakamono*, closely corresponding to "country bumpkin," comes into common use with comparable nuances of the rural agrarian order.

But in both Japan and England in the early modern period, these older conceptions of the rural environment as a place lacking in taste were overwhelmed by a set of very different notions, which were to prove far more durable. In England, this new rurality is captured by the single word "country," perhaps the most complex and deeply felt environmental word in the culture.⁹ In its strong esthetic and literary associations, the English "country" is given much of its structure by the *pastoral* mode. To an extent, this is merely descriptive of the topography of England, where from the sixteenth century pasture accounted for a large percentage of the land area. The comparison in Figure 2 of national land use in England and Japan in 1966 shows a striking contrast in this respect. Despite important fluctuations in these proportions over the past three centuries, the fundamental contrast has remained the same: the "natural" landscape (which in both countries is largely manmade) of greatest familiarity is "pasture" for the English and "mountain forest" for the Japanese.

The "pastoral" qualities of English rurality run far deeper than this geographical fact, however, for the word harbors a long and complex tradition of esthetic and religious symbolism. Derived in the first instance from the classical tradition, from Hesiod to the most powerful

⁹ I have drawn heavily on Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, for the changing English ideas of the "country." For the pastoral idea, I have drawn in addition on Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

FIGURE 2: National Land Use in Japan and England, 1966



After Prue Dempster, *Japan Advances: A Geographical Study* (London: Methuen, 1967), p. 72.

formulations in Virgil, pastoralism was given deeper religious impact in Western Europe by Judeo-Christian accretions, notably the image of both God and Christ as shepherds: consider the popularity of Psalm 23 in English culture.¹⁰ These ancient traditions enjoyed a great revival in England in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, the crucial period in the formation of the English concept of "country." It was in the literature, painting, and landscape gardening of this period that the esthetic and emotional content of the pastoral "country" was fully exploited.

The socioeconomic key to this pastoral revival was the emergence of a landed elite with national political power: the aristocracy and gentry. This was part of the trend from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries toward the increasing concentration of landed wealth in the hands of a small class, through the continuing process of enclosure and the evolution of agrarian capitalism. As a sign of its growing wealth and power, the English landed elite patronized the painters, poets, and garden designers who established the pastoral mode within English culture.

The English conception of the "country" as pastoral, although clearly opposed to that of the city, was not necessarily antithetical to it. The pastoral environment was rather one of *mediation*, offering the innocence of the wilderness but none of its dangers, the arts of the city but none of its corruption. In the course of the eighteenth century, however, as English agriculture was increasingly threatened by urban-based mercantile forces, the idea of the "country" veered in a more

¹⁰ Hallett Smith, "Elizabethan Pastoral," in Eleanor Terry, ed., *Pastoral and Romance: Modern Essays in Criticism* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 13.

defensive and consciously anti-urban direction. There were in fact two quite different directions, that of the agrarianists and that of the Romantics.

Of the two responses, the agrarianist form was the more economically rational, stressing the primacy of agriculture in providing the wealth of a nation. It was far more ethical than esthetic, asserting the essential moral worth of an agrarian way of life in contrast to the moral decadence of the city. It is a form of anti-urbanism which appeared simultaneously in other Western nations, notably in the Physiocratic School in mid-eighteenth century France and in the ideas of Thomas Jefferson in the American colonies. The agrarianist conception of the rural environment has survived to the present day as a dominant form of urban opposition in English culture.

The Romantic response was more emotional and esthetic in its structure and was opposed not only to the city but in a sense to society in general. Central to this response was a reinterpretation of the concept of "nature," which came to signify not an underlying order of which man was an integral part, but rather a substitute order untouched by man, of which an individual could partake only in solitary isolation. It was in a sense a revival of the primitive concept of the wilderness, still seen as the antithesis of the city, but now placed in a favorable light as a place of retreat for those who had had too much of civilization. It is an attitude closely involved with the early stages of industrialization in England and elsewhere, and as such represents perhaps the first distinctly modern conception of the non-urban environment.

Japanese conceptions of rurality offer a number of striking contrasts to the English. The most widely used antonym for the city in Japan since the sixteenth century has been *inaka*, a word with two distinct implications. On the one hand, it draws on the older imagery of the rural environment as *hinabita*, or "countrified," an idea that has persisted until the present in such a contemptuous term as *inakappei*, or "hick." A more recent use of *inaka*, however, is to indicate "the place one came from," a usage deriving from the continuing waves of rural immigrants into the great cities, particularly Edo-Tokyo. In this meaning, it falls within a tradition of thought extending as far back as the Nara period and captured best by the powerful term *furusato*.

What is revealing in *furusato* is a tradition of rurality not inherently anti-urban, for the word (etymologically "the former place") in classical usage could refer to the city, as for example a capital which had been abandoned. This represents a tradition of rurality in Japanese thought which is basically temporal rather than spatial: such words as *furusato*, *kokyō*, *kyōri*, *kuni*, and *inaka* provide a vocabulary

of nostalgia for a place once known. For this reason, it would in most cases be more accurate to translate them as "home" than as "country," although in fact a city-dweller's original "home" has often been—and increasingly so from early modern times—a rural environment. At any rate, these words seem to involve a far lesser sense of antithesis to the city than the English "country," and it is only recently that the terms *inaka* and *urusato* have been affected by elements of anti-urban romanticism, not in small part through Western influence.

Although *urusato* and *inaka* thus present a clear emotional landscape, traditionally they have not formed the basis for either a social ethic or a visual esthetic of the non-urban environment. These are to be sought in different ideas. The social ethic can be detected in such words as *mura* or *nōson*, the agricultural "village," and represent the Japanese version of agrarianism. This ethic first emerged in the writings of a number of Tokugawa thinkers who argued along traditional Confucian lines that agriculture is the "base" of a properly functioning society (whence *nōhonshugi*, the conventional Japanese term for agrarianism—"agriculture-as-the-base-ism"). A new strand in Tokugawa agrarianist thought appeared in the teachings of Ninomiya Sontoku, who as a peasant sage represented the interests not of the national polity but rather of the actual farming population.¹¹ But in either form, the contrast with England is obvious: Japan had no socially and culturally prestigious class attached to the land which had the wealth and leisure to elaborate the severe moralism of *nōhonshugi* in esthetically persuasive ways.

The dominant sense of the Japanese rural landscape is thus one of a tight social order engaged in a highly labor-intensive and land-efficient form of agriculture. It is an order which is suggested visually by the character for a rice paddy, *ta* 田, a sense of geometric patterns of fields and paddies. It is, in short, a landscape of economic production rather than one of esthetic consumption, and as such is not radically different from Jefferson's conception of the countryside. Although it is an order which encourages a defensive sense of moral superiority against the city, the Japanese rural environment as an idea is not aggressively anti-urban. As an order of the ruled rather than the ruling and of work rather than leisure, the Japanese *inaka* has lacked the intellectual articulation which is so distinct for the English "country."

The question which remains is the locus and content of the Japanese esthetic landscape and its relationship to the city. A literally pastoral environment simply did not exist in Japan, where animal husbandry

¹¹ For Japanese agrarianism and its modern fate, see Thomas R. H. Havens, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan: Agrarian Nationalism, 1870-1940* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974).

has always been a peripheral agricultural pursuit, discouraged both by Buddhist proscriptions against meat-eating and, more basically, by constant demographic pressure in favor of more productive arable.¹² In terms of both literal familiarity (see Figure 2) and ancient religious feeling, the esthetic landscape in Japan has always been one of *mountain forests*. (It bears emphasis that in Japan, mountains and forests are rarely separated, either ecologically or conceptually.) It is doubtless this conceptual contrast of landscape—facilitated by an ambiguity of language—that led the Japanese to transpose the American song "Home on the Range" into "Home in a Mountain Pass" (*Tōge no wagaya*).

The structure of meaning in the Japanese mountain landscape is complex. Hori Ichirō, for example, has detected such special meanings of mountains as symbols of procreation in their volcanic aspect, symbols of fertility in their watershed function, and the abodes of the dead in their isolation from the everyday world of man.¹³ For the purposes of comparison, however, it may be easiest to envision the Japanese mountain landscape as deriving from two broad traditions, the Shinto belief in the spiritual power of trees and rocks, and the concept—largely Chinese in origin—of mountains and streams as a place of retreat from the cares of the workaday world.¹⁴

Although there are superficial parallels between the Japanese affection for a mountain landscape and the English romantic love of "wilderness," the contrast is profound. The romantic attachment to mountain wilderness emerged in England very late, following a seventeenth-century metamorphosis in Western attitudes toward mountains, which had until then been viewed as ugly and dangerous.¹⁵ In Japan, by contrast, from the very origins of Japanese history, mountains were looked on with favor as a source of spiritual power and esthetic enjoyment and were never considered a form of flight from civilization. One does find in Japan the rather Sinified and Buddhistic tradition of retreat to a rustic "grass hut" (*sōan*), particularly in old age or in times of political turmoil. Kamo no Chōmei's thirteenth-

¹² It is revealing that the most common Japanese term for "pastoral" is *den'en* (literally, "paddies and gardens"), a forced equivalent which brings to the modern Japanese mind specifically Western images.

¹³ Ichirō Hori, *Folk Religion in Japan* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968), Chap. 4.

¹⁴ There are major differences between the Chinese and Japanese uses of the mountain landscape, lying principally in the strongly rural bias of Chinese elite ideals. It is interesting to speculate on the strongly "pastoral" qualities of Chinese literati culture in the idealization of a golden mean between civic commitment and natural retreat.

¹⁵ Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1959).

century *Hōjōki* is the classic statement of this tradition. Yet even there, the mountain environment is less a place for self-torturing asceticism than for the spontaneous enjoyment of a simple life in the woods. It was also an exceptional response: rather than communing with mountains in lonely isolation from society, the Japanese on the whole have enjoyed them in highly social contexts, in the form of organized pilgrimages to mountain shrines or temples, or in the sociable group appreciation of gardens and landscape paintings.

Far from representing the antithesis of the city as in the English (and especially American) romantic tradition, mountain forests in Japan bore little or no implication of hostility to or incompatibility with the urban environment. The entire Japanese urban tradition is filled with techniques of *integrating* mountain landscapes into the fabric of the city, both as a way of drawing upon their protective power and as a source of esthetic enjoyment. Thus, for example, one of the few instances of planning for esthetic (as opposed to social) effect in the city of Edo was the orientation of certain streets to provide a vista of Mount Tsukuba to the east or of Mount Fuji to the west: best-known of these was Suruga-chō, which at the hands of woodblock artists came to constitute one of the most famous scenes of the city.¹⁶

Mountains were also brought into the Japanese city in the form of *gardens*. The distinctively Japanese style of gardening evolved in the medieval period, largely in Buddhist monasteries in urban and suburban locations. Although temples and shrines have continued to provide a strongly gardenized aspect to the Japanese city, the practice also spread naturally to the secular elite, both the court aristocracy and the samurai, and in the course of the Tokugawa period to the urban middle classes. Thus the forested grounds of the temples and daimyō mansions in Edo were complemented by a vogue for miniaturized and symbolic forms of landscape gardening, particularly bonsai and other styles of potted plants.

In England, by contrast, the ideal pastoral landscape, as it was expressed in the distinctive English gardening techniques of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was of rural rather than of urban locale, and of secular rather than of religious origin. Reflecting the functional demands of hunting and sport, the "landscape parks" of the English landed elite were of a spacious and "pastoral" aspect, in contrast to the far more compact and symbolic mountain-derived gardens of the Japanese. This created more of a problem in the passage of gar-

¹⁶ Kirishiki Shinjirō, "Tenshō/Keichō/Kan'ei-ki Edo shigaichi kensetsu ni okeru keikan sekkei," in Tōkyō toritsu daigaku, Toshi kenkyū soshiki iinkai, *Edo-Tōkyō no toshi-shi oyobi toshi keikaku-shi-teki kenkyū, I* (author, 1971), pp. 1-22. Kirishiki demonstrates that Edo streets were laid out for views not only of distant mountains but also of hills and bluffs within the city itself.

dening ideals to the middle classes, which in London could scarcely afford expansive parks: at best, they had to be satisfied with small lawns. Thus English popular gardening has remained more in the older monastic tradition of small herb, flower, and fruit gardens, a conception that is more Edenic than Arcadian. Meanwhile, the deeper yearnings of the English remain fixed outside the city, in the direction of the pastoral countryside.

THE PRINCELY ASPECT

The Early Modern Pattern

The concern here is with the manner in which a political sovereign (prince) imposes upon his capital a visual sense of the power he wields. Three characteristic ways for expressing a princely sense of the city are monumental architecture, geometric ordering of the city plan in accord with a cosmic scheme, and permanence of building techniques. These are certainly the most ancient expressions of the idea of the city, and remain today the mark by which most people instinctively identify a city, particularly that of a political capital. Edo and London in this respect bear a revealing similarity: neither has ever *looked* very much like a great capital. To grasp the implications of this similarity, it is necessary to place both cities within the context of the larger continental traditions against which they were inevitably judged.

For Japan, the standards of princely urbanity were set by China, which had provided the model for the first Japanese cities, the capitals of Heijō-kyō (Nara), founded in 710, and its successor from 794, Heian-kyō (now Kyoto). The Chinese model of an imperial capital or *ching* (read *kyō* in Japanese, whence *Kyōto*, "capital city," and *Tōkyō*, "eastern capital") had gradually emerged from hazy ancient origins during the first centuries of the united empire, culminating in one of its grandest manifestations in the T'ang dynasty capital of Ch'angan, planned in the late sixth century, which provided the direct inspiration for the new Japanese capitals.¹⁷

Although the particular application of the model varied from dynasty to dynasty in China, the basic elements were always the same: careful siting of a new capital in accord with cosmological and geomantic principles, establishment of a basic square or rectangular form with massive walls of copious girth, division of the area within the walls into a basic grid plan, and careful placement of public buildings in relation to the overall scheme. It was a highly *centered* design,

¹⁷ For the evolution of the Chinese model, see Arthur F. Wright, "The Cosmology of the Chinese City," in G. William Skinner, ed., *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

reaching out through axial roads and gates to the entire empire, and upward through a hierarchical series of enclosures to the imperial palace, the point of contact with Heaven.¹⁸ The entire city was an expression of the power and cosmology of the imperial order, perhaps the purest example of princely urbanity the world has ever known. Its all-encompassing form and intellectual clarity have made the Chinese capital an inspiration for designers of the city until the present day.¹⁹

Fully as impressive as the coherence of this ancient urban order, as Arthur Wright has stressed, was its persistence, for it served as the model for the design of new Chinese capitals until the Manchu rebuilding of Peking in the seventeenth century. At the same time, he further observes, it was ironically a tradition of urban impermanence, for these cities were built of earth and wood and could last scarcely more than a few decades without rebuilding.²⁰ These two characteristics were of course related, since both the necessity and the ease of frequent rebuilding helped perpetuate a highly durable tradition of urban construction and design.

These twin characteristics of the Chinese city—persistence of ideal plan and impermanence of physical artifact—were transposed in the history of the city in Western Europe into the persistence of physical remains despite the loss of planning ideas. The ancient Roman imperial model for a city, seen best in colonial towns such as Londinium, was in many respects similar to the Chinese, stressing auspicious siting, square walls with axial roads, and the proper location of public buildings. The crucial difference is that the Roman model of city planning was almost totally forgotten after the fall of the Empire, while the Chinese idea survived intact to modern times. At the same time, the Western ideal has been to build cities which would last as long as possible, with the ironic result that although the Roman *idea* of the city has vanished, its physical relics are cherished in many places to this day.

The very idea of planning a city in princely fashion waned in Europe during the Middle Ages, to be revived in a distinctly new pattern in the renaissance and baroque city. Given the difficulties and expense

¹⁸ Nelson Wu, *Chinese and Indian Architecture: The City of Man, the Mountain of God, and the Realm of the Immortals* (New York: Braziller, 1963), pp. 38-45.

¹⁹ For example, Edmund N. Bacon, *Design of Cities*, rev. ed. (New York: Viking, 1974), p. 244: "Possibly the greatest single work of man on the face of the earth is Peking"; Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *Towns and Buildings* (1949; reprint ed., Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969), p. 1: "Peking, the capital of old China! Has there ever been a more majestic and illuminative example of sustained town-planning?"

²⁰ Wright, "Symbolism and Function"; similar points are made in F. W. Mote, "A Millennium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow," *Rice University Studies*, vol. 59, no. 4 (fall 1973), pp. 35-65.

of building entirely new capitals in the increasingly integrated states of Western Europe, most of the baroque urban design techniques involved the imposition of a princely aspect upon existing cities. Walls of course remained an essential feature of the continental capitals, but the strictures of earlier growth patterns rarely permitted the use of ideal geometrical designs. The preoccupation thus shifted from that of regular enclosure to that of *focusing*, in accord with the newly discovered rules of vanishing-point perspective. Primary attention was devoted to monumental structures of great permanence, set off and framed by broad avenues intersecting in ways designed to enhance the monumentality of the buildings.

How did Edo and London relate to these continental models for a capital city? The Japanese had directly borrowed the Chinese model, imposing the continental plan upon the indigenous aristocratic palace, or *miya*, hence *miyako*. The Chinese plan sat poorly with the Japanese from the start, however, for it was economically premature and philosophically alien in its preference for intellectualized regularity. The crucial enclosing walls remained unbuilt in both Nara and Kyoto, and the symmetry of the plan soon crumbled as the city grew eastward into the hills, a more compatible environment for the Japanese urban temperament. Kyoto, the imperial capital for over one thousand years after the late eighth century move from Nara, gradually assumed a relatively unprincely aspect.²¹ The private and unassertive quality of the capital, challenged only briefly in the late sixteenth century when Hideyoshi strove to give it a more appropriately sovereign look,²² was a reflection of the political configuration in the ancient and medieval capital, with power gradually devolving away from the imperial throne and eventually from the city itself.

Hideyoshi's successor as national unifier, Tokugawa Ieyasu, chose to build a new capital in the Kanto plain of east Japan, on the site of a former local castle. The selection of the site of the new city of Edo and its general orientation showed a degree of Chinese attention to auspicious signs, but there the similarity ends. Edo was designed rather on the unique indigenous model of the *jōkamachi*, or "castle towns," which sprang up throughout Japan as power centers of local feudal lords during the sixteenth century.²³ Edo was initially designed, be-

²¹ For the planning and evolution of Kyoto, see John W. Hall, "Kyoto as Historical Background," in John W. Hall and Jeffrey P. Mass, eds., *Medieval Japan: Essays in Institutional History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 3-38.

²² For Hideyoshi's rebuilding of Kyoto, see Mary Elizabeth Berry, "Hideyoshi in Kyoto: The Arts of Peace" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1975), chap. 3.

²³ John W. Hall, "The Castle Town and Japan's Modern Urbanization," in John W. Hall and Marius B. Jansen, eds., *Studies in the Institutional History of Early*

ginning in 1590, *not* as a national capital, but merely as the private castle town of a powerful feudal lord.²⁴ It was not until Ieyasu's emergence as national hegemon after 1600 and the gradual institution of the *sankin kōtai* system, by which provincial lords (daimyō) were required to spend alternate years in residence in Edo, that the city took on a truly national character.²⁵ And even then, it was never the *mi-yako*; that ancient courtly concept remained with Kyoto, where the politically impotent emperor and imperial courtiers continued to reside.

The plan of Edo was simply that of a very large *jōkamachi* adapted to the special needs of the *sankin kōtai*, and as such was based largely on considerations of military defense and social control through class segregation. Militarily, the concern was not for the defense of the city as a whole, much less for that of the nation, but purely for the security of the shogun and his immediate retainers. There was no enclosing wall around the city, which blended imperceptibly with the countryside, but merely around the shogunal castle, which sat in the center. Architecturally, Edo Castle was certainly monumental, at least within the context of East Asian building traditions, and particularly the hundred-meter donjon constructed in 1638. But Edo shared with the Chinese city the character of "planned ephemerality" through construction in short-lived materials, and when the donjon was destroyed in the Meireki fire less than two decades later, it was never rebuilt. In time, the many trees in and around Edo Castle came to lend it a hidden and private aspect.²⁶

Apart from the castle, Edo was laid out in a highly defensive manner, not from concern with external invaders, as in most cities, but rather with an eye to internal threats either from the resident daimyō or from commoner mobs. The principle was one of strict segregation of classes by residential area. The overall form of Edo was therefore not an ideal geometrical form with cosmic referents, but rather an irregular spiral leading clockwise outward from the castle in a pattern of descent down through the social ladder, passing through the residences of the great lords, into the area occupied by the *hatamoto* retainers of

the shogun, finally through the central area of the *machi-chi* at Nihonbashi, and out the Tōkaidō which served as the main approach to the city.²⁷ This spiral, which seems to have been unique to Edo and was probably not an intellectually conceived design, was defined not by roads but by the wide moats and canals which served for defense and as the primary means of the transport of goods in the city.

Defensive planning was carried out within each of the residential areas as well. The commoner *machi-chi* was laid out, as I shall detail shortly, in a regular grid plan with barriers at every major intersection for close and efficient control. In the samurai *buke-chi* as well, barriers and checkpoints were frequent, with most streets intersecting in T's rather than in crosses so as to deny through access to any rebellious forces.²⁸ As a further means of control, virtually all wheeled vehicles were prohibited in the streets of Edo, particularly for personal transport. The contrast with contemporary European planning is striking: although baroque monarchs were also preoccupied with military force, the concern was more aggressive than defensive, resulting in long, broad avenues suited for parades and martial display. And while the Japanese were designing streets to discourage carriages, European designers were widening them to allow for still heavier wheeled traffic, particularly the private carriages of the wealthy.

London, in contrast with Edo, was neither planned nor dominated by a sovereign. In fact, "London" was in origin two cities, Westminster and the City of London, which eventually grew into one but continued to maintain separate identities and a clearly defined relationship.²⁹ National power was entrenched in the Houses of Parliament and the royal palace at Westminster, whereas the commercial City of London lay about a mile down the Thames, encircled by its ancient walls. The English crown made few and never successful attempts to govern or to plan the growth of the entire city, and granted to the corporate City of London a broad assortment of special rights and privileges in return for military and financial assistance, privileges which survive to this day although now of little but ceremonial significance.

Modern Japan (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 169-188. It is remarkable that no general history of city planning, to my knowledge, recognizes the building of the *jōkamachi* in the period 1550-1650 as one of the world's great efforts in the planned construction of new cities.

²⁴ For background in English on the design and structure of Edo, see Takeo Yazaki, *Social Change and the City in Japan* (Japan Publications, 1968), chaps. 5, 6.

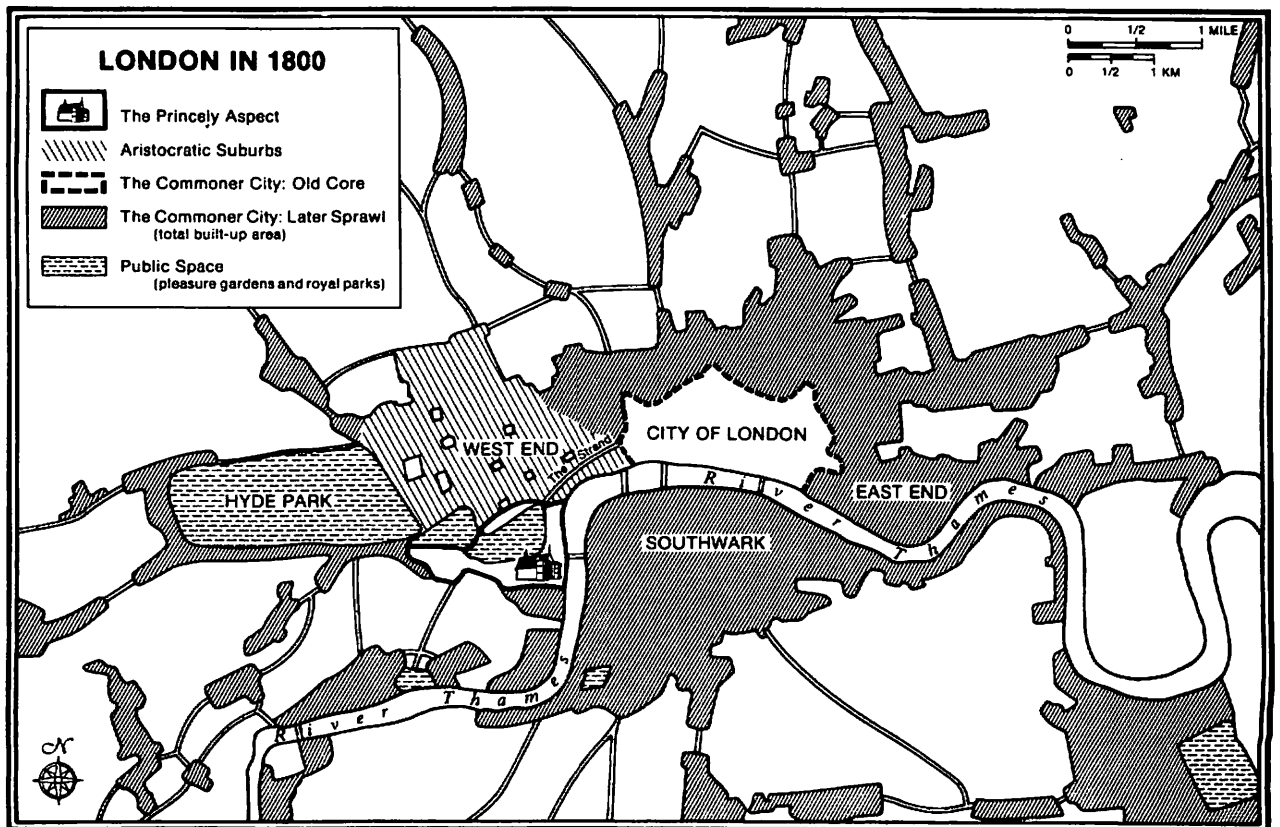
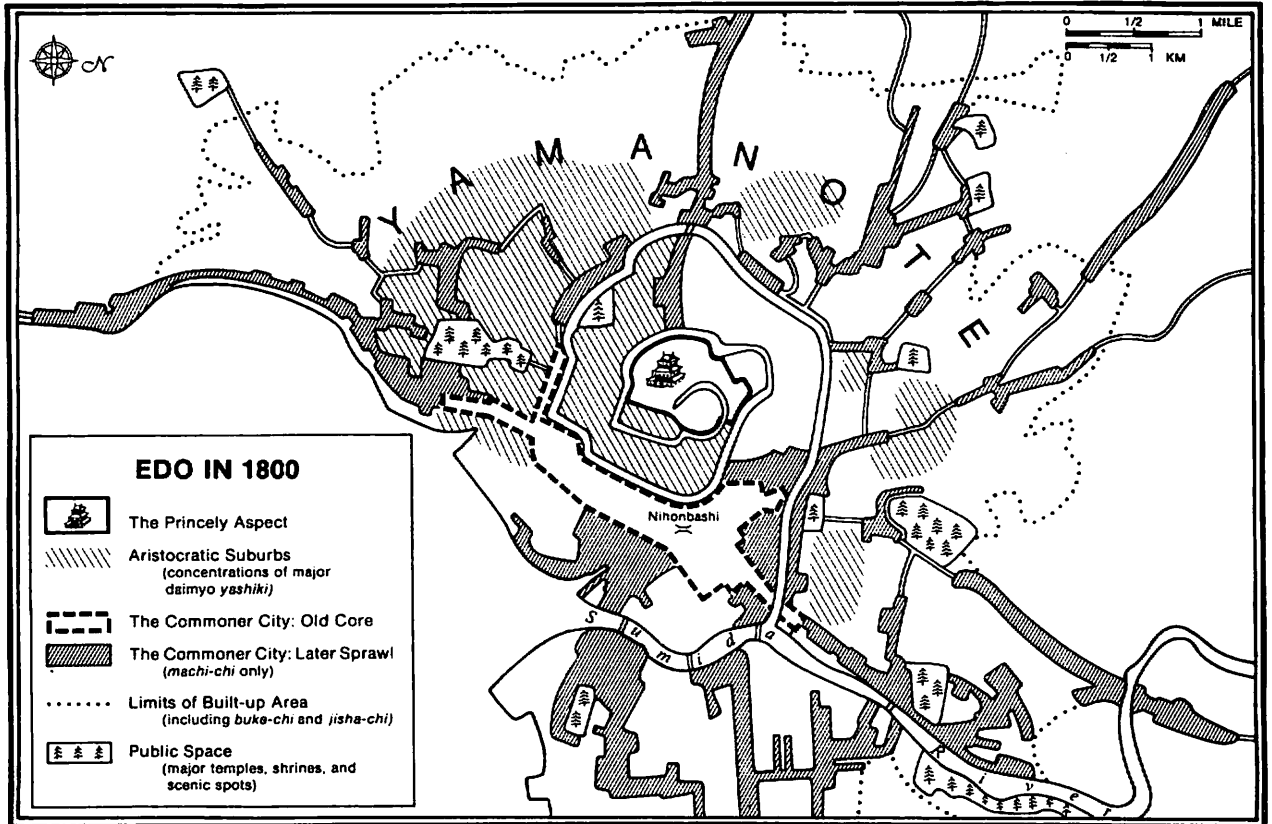
²⁵ For details on the *sankin kōtai*, see Toshio G. Tsukahira, *Feudal Control in Tokugawa Japan: The Sankin Kōtai System* (East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1970).

²⁶ Naitō Akira has gone so far as to call Edo "a castle town without a castle." Naitō Akira, *Edo to Edo-jō* (Kajima shuppankai, 1966), p. 64.

²⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 122, for a diagram. More expressive than "spiral" to describe Edo's form is the shape of the *hiragana* for the syllable *no*. For the general Japanese design principle of "hierarchical access," see Toshi dezain kenkyūtai, *Nihon no toshi kūkan* (Shōkokusha, 1968), p. 32.

²⁸ This remains true of Tokyo today; one ambitious urban geographer has counted all of Tokyo's street intersections (total 155,676), and found that there are twice as many T-intersections as crossroads. Masai Yasuo, *Tōkyō no seikatsu chizu* (Jiji tsūshinsha, 1972), p. 132.

²⁹ For the structure and character of London, I am indebted throughout this paper to Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *London: The Unique City* (1934; reprint ed., Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1967).



In formal terms, the consequence was a very limited aspect of princely urbanity in London. Baroque planning techniques were, of course, not without influence there. Indeed, if John Evelyn and Christopher Wren had been given their way in the wake of the Great Fire of 1666, the City of London would have been converted into a continental capital with a coherent, geometrical street plan and grand perspectives. Yet here, as with the later plans for rebuilding Tokyo after the 1923 earthquake (when one young Japanese architect fresh from study at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris even produced a textbook baroque plan for reconstruction),³⁰ or for rebuilding both Tokyo and London after bombing in World War II, plans came to naught. In each case, the result was remarkably the same, with the power of long-entrenched land-holding patterns proving far stronger than the authority, limited by custom and law, of those seeking to impose princely urbanity from above.

London was thus lacking in any visible overall form, existing simply as two contrasting nodes with the space between and around filled in according to the dictates of economic and social advantage rather than political fiat. In this, it was perhaps not so different from Edo, which, despite the vague spiral form, was actually perceived by most residents in a similar fashion—a cluster of commoner commercial activity surrounding Nihonbashi and an unassertive group of buildings composing Edo Castle. In both cases, the princely center was unimposing by continental standards, relatively unframed and unfocused, surrounded by the greenery of the royal (and public) parks in London and the shogunal (but private) gardens in Edo. London's public buildings were far more permanent than Edo's (especially with a general shift from wood to brick after the Great Fire), and its streets grander if not straighter. Yet both within their larger urban traditions were of muted and unpretentious princely aspect.

This similarity is explained most fundamentally by the natural defenses which an island configuration has provided for both countries. For this reason, Lewis Mumford has argued, England and Japan were among the very few cultures in the world (he mentions Egypt as a third) which failed to evolve a tradition of cities with walls, which in both China and continental Europe came to be a *sine qua non* of princely urbanity.³¹ But of equal importance was the fundamentally limited power of the English crown and the Japanese shogunate, in contrast to the absolute sovereigns of the continental mold, who were far more capable of imposing their will on the plan of the city. The

manner of limiting sovereign power in the two countries differed in critical respects. The English crown was limited by long custom, formalized as law, not only vis-à-vis the City of London but also vis-à-vis the peers, who themselves had little concern for a grand capital, their attention being focused rather outward to the "country." The Japanese shogun, by contrast, was limited not by law but by the pragmatic limits of his military power vis-à-vis the daimyō, many of whom were potential enemies. Although the shogun had far greater power over his capital than the English crown over London, the shogunal face of the city remained a surprisingly shy and defensive one.

The lack of an imposing princely aspect at the center of both capitals was exaggerated by their very large size as pre-modern cities, for both grew outward in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in a sprawling, unplanned pattern which was greatly accelerated under the impact of industrialization. Lacking any limiting walls or centralized planning authority, both cities came to take on the form of what Steen Rasmussen in the case of London has termed a "scattered city," in contrast to the "concentrated city" typical of the continent.³² Although it would be difficult to accept the label "concentrated" for the Chinese city, in which the generous area within the walls enabled relatively low densities, it was certainly a highly "coherent city," against which Edo appeared fully as "scattered" as London.

Modern Continuities

Edo and London in their late pre-industrial phases were prematurely modern, in the sense that both already manifested the low levels of formal coherence which were to become characteristic of all great modern cities, at least outside the historical cores. In the absence of defining walls, in the lack of a unitary planning authority, and in their vast and complex structure, both Edo and London in the eighteenth century were far closer to twentieth-century urban realities than their continental relatives. It is thus no surprise that the Industrial Revolution served only to perpetuate their common lack of coherently planned visual form.

Efforts were made to improve the princely aspect of both cities, particularly Edo with its renaming as Tokyo in 1868.³³ In the autumn of the same year, the emperor moved from Kyoto into Edo Castle, which thereby became the Imperial Palace. Yet Tokyo still did not become the *miyako*, for the ancient and dignified urbanity of that term

³² Rasmussen, *London: The Unique City*, chap. 1.

³³ For a more detailed analysis of the changing conceptualization of modern Tokyo, see my "Tokyo as an Idea: An Exploration of Japanese Urban Thought Until 1945," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1978), pp. 45-80.

³⁰ *Asahi guraifu*, May 14, 1924, p. 13. The architect was Nakamura Junpei.

³¹ Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1961), p. 63.

never seemed to befit an upstart city like Edo-Tokyo. Tokyo in the late nineteenth century was less an "imperial" city, home of the emperor, than an "imperialist" city, seat of the empire, a sense best captured by the pretentious sinicism "Teito" ("imperial capital") by which Tokyo was commonly known from the time of the Meiji Constitution of 1889.³⁴ Visually, Tokyo never lived up to the grand ring of "Teito." The public portions of the central city in the mid-Meiji period were decorated with equestrian statues of military heroes and monumental buildings in a variety of Western revival styles, differing from Victorian London's "obscure and complicated dialogue"³⁵ of styles only in a generally more austere sense of design and a far greater sense of incongruity. These efforts at a Westernized imperial style climaxed with the completion in 1909 of Katayama Tōkuma's Akasaka Detached Palace, a lavish imitation of Versailles which was as out of place culturally and chronologically as it was costly. From this point, efforts at a grand European continental style of princely urbanity waned, and, despite such grim efforts as the Diet Building of 1936, modern architectural functionalism took easy root in fertile Japanese soil.

Since the collapse of the emperor system and the loss of overseas empire in 1945, Tokyo's appearance has become progressively less ordered and monumental, although the Imperial Palace survives as one of the most curious princely monuments in the world. The massive walls of Edo Castle remain intact, together with a few surviving gates and watchtowers, but most of the buildings in this vast area lying at the heart of the city remain invisible beneath a shroud of trees. For the past three and a half centuries, it has remained a totally private domain, creating a "sacred void" (*le rien sacré*) and making Tokyo, in the analysis of Roland Barthes, the only world capital with an "empty center."³⁶ One might call it a "concave" princely aspect.

London in the process of industrialization may have outstripped Tokyo in the building of princely monuments, but certainly never enough to offer competition to Paris or Vienna. The city as a whole grew apace, far beyond the bounds of visual comprehension, and like Tokyo it quickly gained the reputation of a metropolis vast in area and numbers but with little sense of a clear and ordered presence befitting a national capital. It is a reputation the two share today, as in the observation in a popular guide to Japan, that "some compare

³⁴ Tōkyō hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunenshi* (Tokyo-to, 1972-1973), vol. 3, p. 7. "Teito" was also commonly used for Japan's first capital Nara in similar circumstances eleven centuries earlier.

³⁵ The phrase quoted is from John Summerson, "London, the Artifact," in H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff, eds., *The Victorian City* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 311.

³⁶ Roland Barthes, *L'empire des signes* (Geneva: Albert Skira, 1970), pp. 44-46.

Tokyo's vastness to that of London. The two towns are very different and even their vastness cannot be compared: London is a galaxy of countless villages, Tokyo is an overgrown small town."³⁷

This mutual lack of a princely aspect makes Tokyo and London all the more deceptive in terms of their immense integrating influence on a national scale—socially, culturally, and politically. This contradiction between the appearance of power and its reality has been suggested for early modern London in E. A. Wrigley's observation that "the comparative neglect of London as a potent engine working towards change in England in the century 1650-1750 is the more paradoxical in that the dominance of Paris within France has long been a notion in political history." A similar argument has been advanced for Edo by Gilbert Rozman.³⁸ It would be most revealing to pursue this notion for modern Tokyo and London, not only with respect to social and economic change, but on the cultural and political levels as well. It can here only be hypothesized that the diminished visual aspect of power in both cities has led to a consistent underestimation of their real power.

It must be stressed that the centrality of London within England has throughout the past three hundred years been much greater than that of Edo-Tokyo in Japan. In the eighteenth century, London accounted for about 10 percent of the population of England and Wales, whereas Edo's share in Japan was only between 3 and 4 percent. In the course of industrial growth, similarly, London's proportion rose by the 1890's to over 20 percent, whereas Tokyo by the 1950's accounted for only 10 percent of the national population. Furthermore, the gap between London and other English cities has always been pronounced, with the second largest city (Liverpool until World War I, Birmingham thereafter) having a population of only 10 to 15 percent of that of the Metropolis (a term, incidentally, strongly suggestive of London's centrality) over the past century. Osaka's population, in contrast, has been a consistent 30 to 40 percent of that of Edo-Tokyo ever since the seventeenth century.³⁹

London's size has indeed been so great, in the imagery of a head too large for its body, that it appears a striking anomaly among early

³⁷ George Mikes, *The Land of the Rising Yen—Japan* (London: André Deutsch, 1970), p. 187.

³⁸ E. A. Wrigley, "A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750," *Past and Present* 37 (1967), p. 70, and Gilbert Rozman, "Edo's Importance in the Changing Tokugawa Society," *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1 (autumn 1974), pp. 91-112.

³⁹ These estimates are derived from statistics in Wrigley, "A Simple Model of London's Importance"; Irene Taeuber, *The Population of Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958); and *The Statesman's Yearbook*.

modernizing nations. It is only in the unbalanced patterns of metropolitan growth in the late-developing nations that one finds such a disproportionately large city, often assigned the term "primate city."⁴⁰ Tokyo, on the other hand, has consistently shared its economic and cultural (if not political) power within the nation at large with Kyoto and Osaka, and there is much to be said for a Tokyo-Kyoto-Osaka triangle as the proper approach to Tokyo's centrality. It may also be suggested that this relationship has tended to heighten Tokyo's defensive aspect as a political center considerably more than that of London, which for all of its far longer history has had no such challengers in any sphere.

THE PRIESTLY ASPECT

In ancient capitals, the priestly aspect was typically integrated into the overall princely design of the city, reflecting the degree to which appeasement of the gods was considered part and parcel of political rule. In the ideal Chinese and Roman cities, for example, such religious edifices as the Altar to Heaven or the Temple of Jupiter were assigned a proper place in the city and constructed in a style which was harmonious with the more secular buildings. It was only with the rise of universalistic religion—Buddhism in East Asia and Christianity in the West—that religious institutions came to wield political power distinct from and even competitive with that of the secular ruler, evolving a visual aspect which could be clearly distinguished from the princely face of the city.

In both Japan and England, where Buddhism and Christianity were formative cultural influences from an early stage in their urban traditions, the priestly aspect of the city was a distinctive one, reflecting the independent economic and political power of the ecclesiastical establishment. Similarly, however, drastic measures were taken almost simultaneously in the late medieval period to destroy this independent power, through Henry VIII's separation of the Anglican church and dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530's and Oda Nobunaga's subjugation of the military power of the Buddhist church in the 1570's. The implications of these moves for the priestly aspect of early modern Edo and London were profoundly different, however, in ways which can be understood only with some initial consideration of the medieval face of the churches in England and of the Buddhist temples in Japan.

In medieval London, religious institutions offered two quite different aspects to the city, that of the parish churches within the City of

⁴⁰ Eric E. Lampard, "The Urbanizing World," in Dyos and Wolff, eds., *The Victorian City*, p. 39.

London and that of the monasteries and convents on the outskirts. The dissolution of the monasteries obliterated the suburban face and with it the landed wealth of the church. The churches at the center of the city remained, serving important charitable and local urban community functions. The spires of the city's churches continued to dominate the urban skyline, and came to provide London with a distinctive visual imagery. It was common, as in Visscher's drawing of the city in the early seventeenth century, to exaggerate the height of the church towers and spires in representing London in panorama.⁴¹ Among the churches, St. Paul's cathedral in particular served as a center of visual attraction by its massive bulk, even though its five-hundred-foot spire was never rebuilt after destruction by lightning in 1561.

City churches in London were thus primarily a vertical presence, for they typically sat on small and crowded plots of land, rarely set off by the plazas and broad avenues which were the preference of continental city designers. As with all important buildings, churches were constructed primarily of stone, conveying a monumental presence characteristic of Western churchly tradition. However diminished the independent power of the church in the city as a whole, London's parish churches have survived as focuses of community activity and persist as a distinctive mark in the cityscape.

East Asia offers a rather different tradition of priestly urbanity. The first appearance of Buddhism, in both the Chinese city and the early Japanese capital of Nara, was marked by a vertical assertiveness not radically different from the medieval Christian church. In the T'ang capital of Ch'angan, for example, the pagodas of the Buddhist temples, "with their gilded finials reaching towards the sky, added color and variety to an otherwise monotonous skyline."⁴² In the Japanese capital of Nara, Buddhist temples were a commanding presence both visually and politically. The Great Buddha Hall of Tōdaiji remains today the world's largest wooden structure under a single roof, and every major temple in the city featured a tall pagoda. Less than half a century later, however, the capital was moved to Kyoto, partly in an effort to subdue the growing political power of the clergy, thus putting an end to the brief Japanese effort at a monumental style of priestly urbanity.

From the ninth century, Buddhist temples in Japan were increasingly located in forested mountain settings or in the hills on the outskirts of cities. This shift from "plains Buddhism" to "mountain Buddhism" meant, not that temples deserted the city, but rather that they came to serve as an integrating link between the city and the sur-

⁴¹ C. J. Visscher, *London Before the Fire: A Grand Panorama* (c. 1616; reprint ed., London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1973), p. 1 of commentary by J. S. Wellsman.

⁴² Wright, "Symbolism and Function," p. 674.

rounding mountains. Many temples and monasteries maintained a location in or near the center of cities, for they performed the essential functions of the disposal of the dead and the provision of charitable services. But the visual presence of medieval temples was considerably diminished from those of Nara, taking on a certain mountain-forest quality in their hilly locations and generous planting of greenery. Where the spires of London's churches seemed to reach up defiantly to a transcendent Creator, the roofs of Edo's low and hidden temples stretched out to the power of the mountains.

The planning and construction of Edo came only a few years after Nobunaga had broken the independent power of the Buddhist church. Tokugawa Ieyasu, however, was less hostile to Buddhism than Nobunaga, and saw in the ecclesiastical network an effective tool for the control of Christianity. In Edo, the Buddhist establishment was permitted extensive grants of land, amounting to some 15 percent of the total area of the city. Since the total number of temples was over one thousand, the average land occupied by any single temple was less than half a hectare, with only a handful of privileged institutions holding sizable plots. In this way, the political power of the church was effectively fragmented in the interest of close control, but the sense of wealth and power conveyed by such an extensive area of temple land was greater than in the case of London's crowded city churches.

An equally important contrast with London was the presence in Edo of many thriving centers of folk worship. Classified as Shinto shrines (although the object of worship was in some cases a Buddhist deity) and administered as part of the *jisha-chi*, these centers of devotion were considerably more important than the Buddhist temples in structuring the community life of Edo, as today they continue to do in Tokyo. Although perhaps less effective than the parish churches of London in regulating urban community activities, the shrines have nevertheless given Japanese city life an element of cohesion which would not otherwise exist. In Tokyo today, as in Edo before, every established resident will consider himself the *ujiko*—a word aptly translated as “parishioner”—of the neighborhood shrine.

Together with the larger and more public of the Buddhist temples, many of the folk shrines of Edo served a critical urban function as a place of public gathering and recreation.⁴³ From an early time, temples and shrines throughout Japan had provided the site for periodic markets, and in Edo this commercial function was augmented by that

⁴³ For a description of Edo's recreational areas (*yūkanjo*), see Tanaka Seidai, *Nihon no kōen* (Kajima shuppankai, 1974), ch. 1. On p. 15 is a map showing the major areas, of which the great majority are shrines and temples.

of general relaxation, sport, and entertainment. In this sense, the shrines and temples should be compared, not with the churches of London, but with the public parks, particularly the royal parks for which Hyde Park provided the precedent in the early seventeenth century.⁴⁴ The major difference was in appearance. The parks of London tend to be of the preferred pastoral mode, but religious grounds in Japan were of the mountain landscape style. Located typically on a hill or bluff, the shrines and temples of Edo were approached by a long, winding path, punctuated by teahouses and rows of steps, enshrouded in a natural environment of trees, ponds, and waterfalls characteristic of landscape painting. In panoramic depictions of Edo, these religious centers were conventionally represented as groups of evergreen trees, much as London's churches were shown as spires.

The priestly aspect of Edo was dealt a severe blow in the transformation into Tokyo after 1868. The Buddhist church not only lost the protection of the state but came under strong attack in the early Meiji period, resulting in much destruction of temple lands. Despite some conversion of abandoned daimyo lands into “public parks”—the very idea did not exist until borrowed from the West and rendered as *kōen*—the proportion of open land in Tokyo available for public use rapidly diminished. Ironically this occurred at precisely the time when London was leading the West in a policy of greatly expanding public park area, building on earlier royal precedents. The contrast remains acute to this day, with the proportion of public park land to settled area in Tokyo at only 1.5 percent, compared to over 11 percent in London.⁴⁵

Yet if one conceives of the essential function of the temple and shrine in the Japanese city—apart from the practical matter of caring for the dead—not as the provision of a literal piece of “country” within a hostile city, but rather as a *connection* with the powers and religious feeling of the mountains, the continuity from Edo to Tokyo appears stronger. If sadly diminished in total area, the shrines and temples of Tokyo survive in numbers, providing in hidden and surprising corners of the city a suggestion of the distinctly Japanese conception of the wilderness. They have remained, in short, more tightly integrated with the life of the city through their power as an idea, stemming from the religious meaning which they embody and with which most Japanese spontaneously associate. In London, where

⁴⁴ For London's recreation areas and parks, I have relied on Rasmussen, *London: The Unique City*, chaps. 5 and 13.

⁴⁵ Nihon Chōki Shin'yō Ginkō Chōsabu, ed., *Toshi kaihatsu tōkei* (Nihon keizai shimbunsha, 1970), p. 27.

churches have been proudly aloof from the natural environment and where parks have always been wholly secular, the possibilities for such symbolic uses of the non-urban environment are diminished. Although it would be folly to rationalize the dearth of public recreational space in Tokyo in such terms, it is essential to stress that the meaning of greenery in the city in Japan has been on the whole religious and symbolic, and in the West secular and literal. Such is the price the Japanese have paid for their reluctance to set man apart from "nature."

COMMONER URBANITY

The Early Modern Pattern

"Commoner urbanity" refers to the complex range of conceptual and visual orders of the capital which are structured by the non-aristocratic and quintessentially urban classes, from wealthy merchants and skilled artisans to street pedlars and menial laborers. Particularly in Edo and London, where much of the elite class returned regularly to provincial bases and maintained only temporary residence in the city, it was the commoner classes, who identified completely with the city as source of livelihood and place of residence, that were the true bearers of "urbanity."

A comparison of the commoner orders in Edo and London encourages a distinction between two very different conceptions of the city. One is the order of an urban elite which through its wealth is able to assert independent political power against princes, priests, and aristocrats. It is an order which was considerably stronger in London than in Edo, and which is best conveyed by such English terms as "citizen," "civic," and "bourgeois" (the last a term whose French origin suggests the continental roots of this idea). The other is the conception of the commoner city as a plebian mass, deprived of independent political power but conscious of distinctive and autonomous cultural patterns in the face of the social elite: it is, in short, an idea of the city as a *folk* tradition. This latter type was more characteristic of Edo than of London, and is best captured by the complex word *machi*.

The concept of a "civic" order is so much a part of the modern Western idea of the city that many writers have assumed it to be an indispensable element in the urban tradition of *any* culture. However, it is a concept that is either absent or of small consequence in virtually every non-Western culture. Max Weber, who made this conception the basis of a sociological theory of the city, was blunt in his observation that "the concept of the citizen has not existed outside the Occi-

dent, and that of the bourgeoisie outside the modern Occident."⁴⁶ If one were to take the notion of civic community as *the* idea of the city, a comparison of Edo and London would yield little but a rejection of both as "cities," for even London, as a national capital, had a limited corporate identity. But if one accepts this as *one* conception of the city among many that go into anything as complex as a capital, the notion clearly deserves attention.

The merchant City of London was both visually and politically a fairly good example of the incorporated cities of medieval Europe. It was bounded by tightly encircling walls, and the streets followed irregular patterns characteristic of "organic" growth and the absence of geometrical princely planning.⁴⁷ Although by no means wholly autonomous, the City of London was granted by royal charter extensive privileges of self-government and even of participation in the national government, through the traditional if rarely exercised right to select the king. The governance of the City was free from royal interference, and lay in the hands of the powerful urban landowners and eventually of the London guilds. Guildhall in the center of the City served as physical symbol of the civic aspect of London, complemented by the halls of the separate guilds and liveries.

But although the forms and ceremonies of corporate civic identity have survived in the City of London to the present, they ceased from an early date to have any meaning for the city as a whole. With an area of less than 3 square kilometers, the City even with high densities could not support a population of much more than 150,000,⁴⁸ so that the residential area from the late sixteenth century began to spill over the walls, growing in a sprawling, uncontrolled pattern over which the City as a corporate power had no authority (the governance of these areas being under the neighboring counties).⁴⁹ Nor at the other end of the city did the royal authorities make any special efforts to plan urban growth, so that as London expanded the area within the walls became an increasingly insignificant part of the city as a whole, correspond-

⁴⁶ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribner's, 1958), p. 23. See also Max Weber, *The City*, trans. and eds., Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth (New York: Free Press, 1958), pp. 80-89.

⁴⁷ Howard Saalman, *Medieval Cities* (New York: George Braziller, 1968).

⁴⁸ The situation was not quite so simple, since some of the City actually lay outside the walls. Dorothy George gives a peak population for the "City within the Walls" of 139,300 in 1700; *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* (1925; reprint ed., New York: Capricorn Books, 1965), p. 329.

⁴⁹ For the complex and overlapping patterns of administration in London, see George Rudé, *Hanoverian London, 1714-1808* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1971), pp. 118-119, and Francis Sheppard, *London 1808-1870: The Infernal Wen* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1971), pp. 23, 278-280.

ingly reducing the idea of community. The very survival to the present of the medieval ceremonies of civic power in London is an ironic reflection of the ease with which the power itself was rendered meaningless.

The political landscape of Edo provides considerable contrast with London, for there was no basis for either the form or the content of autonomous "civic" power, or for the evolution of a "bourgeoisie." Edo was founded exclusively as a princely capital, and the commoner class (*chōnin*) was from the beginning wholly subservient to the power of the shogun and his deputies. Commoners were strictly segregated from the samurai class by residence, and the area in which they lived was laid out in a regular grid pattern characteristic of many urban systems which are designed for efficient social and economic control. This pattern was known as the *machi*, a word which etymologically seems to indicate a process of land division and which was written with the Chinese character for a path separating rice paddies (町)⁵⁰. In early Japanese usage, the term referred to regularly divided agricultural land, but was also used in its Sino-Japanese reading of *chō* to refer to the separate blocks in the urban grid pattern borrowed from T'ang China and applied to Japan's first capitals. Conceptually, one finds a clear continuity between the formal structure of the agrarian order and the urban order in ancient Japan: both are systems of efficiency and control.⁵¹

The next stage in the evolution of the concept of *machi* was a crucial one, involving a sharp deviation from the continental ideal. The Chinese city scheme was basically one of a hierarchy of *enclosures*, at the grandest level that of the city wall and at the lowest level that of the arrangement of rooms around square courtyards in residential architecture. The city was broken down into regular modules, but these were of necessity fitted into larger squares, so that it was a symmetrical and relatively inflexible plan. In Japan, however, the modular concept came to be applied in a different way, as seen in the meanings which in Heian times came to be associated with *machi*, the native Japanese reading of *chō*. One such meaning is "a room attached to a palace or aristocratic residence, especially when a number of identical units are arranged in a row." A second sense is of "an area dense with

⁵⁰ Much of my thinking on the concept of the *machi* was stimulated by an unpublished paper by Yoshiyuki Nakai, "Edo," written for a seminar at Harvard University in January 1969.

⁵¹ The relationship between urban grid-planning and such agricultural practices as irrigation and land reclamation has been suggested by Ervin Y. Galantay, *New Towns: Antiquity to the Present* (New York: George Braziller, 1975), p. 22.

houses and divided by a road."⁵² While still a subordinated order of control, what is striking here is the evolution from an enclosing block to an extendable row. *Machi* thus refers to an order of modular blocks, unenclosed, asymmetrical, and highly flexible in allowing for change.

This conception of *machi* was reflected in the administrative structure of the Edo commoner district. The entire area was divided by streets into a rough grid pattern of elongated blocks. From these blocks were carved the administrative units known as *chō*, typically the houses on either side of a block-long street, controlled by gates at either end, with an average population of over three hundred persons.⁵³ The total area covered by these separate *chō* was known as the *machi-chi* ("area of the *machi*") or the *chōnin-chi* ("area of the people of the *chō*"), referring to the administrative realm of the shogunal official known as the *machi-bugyō*. This official did not directly govern the *machi-chi*, for each *chō* was self-governed on principles of collective responsibility similar to those of the rural *mura*. With no overall prescribed boundaries, the number of *chō* could be easily extended by administrative edict, and the total number increased in the course of the Tokugawa period from an initial six hundred to over sixteen hundred by the early eighteenth century, when the population of Edo stabilized.

Although self-government within each small *chō* was the ideal of *machi-chi* administration, some matters required attention at a more coordinated level, such as the allocation of new lands, collection of taxes for the *bakufu*, and so forth. For this, a hierarchy of administrators was chosen from among the residents of the *machi-chi*. As in London, these local urban political leaders were drawn largely from the wealthy classes, the landlords, and guild leaders. The contrast with the City of London lies in their wholly submissive political position vis-à-vis the *bakufu*, which prevented the emergence of an idea of corporate identity against the state. Political identity for the *chōnin* of Edo was fragmented and localized, focused on the local neighborhood *chō* rather than on the commoner city as a whole. Edo's political landscape was thus not essentially different from that of the rural countryside, divided into cohesive and autonomous village units connected to the state by the link of a small number of passive bureaucrats.

How different was this from London? It was very different from the

⁵² Kindaichi, *Meikai kogo jiten*, p. 933.

⁵³ For the number of *chō* and the population of the *machi-chi*, see Naitō, *Edo to Edo-jō*, p. 141. The actual configuration of the separate *chō* showed a variety of complex patterns, which can be grasped from a close study of any map of late Edo, such as that of Hamada Giichirō, ed., *Edo kirie-zu* (1849-1863; reprint ed., Tōkyōdō, 1974).

City of London, to be sure. But what of those Londoners, an increasing majority from the mid-seventeenth century on, who lived outside the City? Most were similarly under village-like regimes, for the most part self-governed and contributing little to an overall spirit of civic community. Although it would be a great mistake to underestimate the acute degree of subservience under which the Edo *chōnin* were placed relative to the shogunal regime, it remains true that *most* Londoners were little different from the residents of Edo in lacking any feeling of corporate civic spirit.⁵⁴

The weakness of *political* identity among the commoner masses in Edo and London should not obscure a real and indeed growing sense of *cultural* identity, a quality which became articulate with the emergence of popular publishing and which tends to be neglected by those who focus on the institutional structure of the city. I would like to suggest the term *machi* as an expressive word for the idea of the city as a folk culture. It is of the utmost importance here to differentiate this use of *machi* from its earliest uses. The ancient uses have in common the meaning of a cell-like order arranged for effective control, a meaning best captured by bureaucratic tone of the Sino-Japanese reading *chō*. The native reading *machi*, however, has no such sense of enclosure or spatial definition: it refers more to the *quality* of an environment than to its physical boundaries, more to the commoner content than the administrative form. In particular, the word began from an early point to develop the sense of the bustling activity of a *market*, in the physical setting of a *street* lined with shops and filled with people. It is a sense of *machi* which has become progressively stronger since the seventeenth century, paralleling the steady growth of popular culture. It is a *machi* best captured when written not with the character *chō*, which suggests regulated order, but with the character *gai* 街, which in the original Chinese means both "street" and "market."⁵⁵

Whatever the terminology, this sense of urbanity as close, noisy, and

⁵⁴ One reflection of the diminished sense of unity in both Tokyo and London is the lack of coordination among administrative jurisdictions for which both cities are frequently cited. For London, see Note 49. For Edo, see Nakai, "Edo," in which the problems of administrative definition are discussed. For modern Tokyo, Charles Beard, *The Administration and Politics of Tokyo* (New York: MacMillan, 1923), chap. 2 is of interest.

⁵⁵ Two other words in modern Japanese usage capture this sense of *machi*. One is *chimata*, literally a "fork in the road," hence a place of marketing and street interaction. The other is *kaiwai*, a Sino-Japanese term of Japanese coinage which has the sense of "neighborhood" but without its residential and communal overtones; it is interpreted as an "activity space" in an interesting analysis in Toshi dezan kenkyūtai, *Nihon no toshi kūkan*, p. 44.

cluttered street life is one which crops up with surprising frequency among observers of both cities in the early modern period, as in the observation of a Dutchman visiting Edo in the early nineteenth century that "although there are here no carriages to increase the noise and tumult, I can compare the hurly-burly of Jeddo to nothing but that of London."⁵⁶ The single contrast which he observed is an important one, stemming from the *bakufu* prohibition of wheeled vehicles in Edo. The idea of the street as the site of bustling activity is thus complemented in Japanese culture by the neglect of the street as a means of through passage, reflected in the Japanese reluctance to commemorate or even name their streets.⁵⁷ This tradition has left Tokyo with many narrow, winding back streets poorly adapted to modern traffic, and a legacy of pedestrian movement that is one of the most appealing qualities of the city today.

The idea of the city as hurly-burly street life is in certain respects the antithesis of the idea of the city as a civic corporation. Whereas the civic concept is highly political, the *machi* notion rejects politics or at worst suggests resignation to the rule of a narrow elite. Where the civic concept is narrowly middle class, *machi* is an idea accepted by all classes. I have used the term "folk" to describe the *machi* idea, perhaps rashly in view of the common conception that "folk" is the opposite of "urban." More appropriate is the Japanese *shominteki*, an adjectival form of *shomin*, in the original Chinese "the multitudes." Like *machi*, it is a term which originated in the perceptions of the ruling elite, but came in time to refer to the cultural identity of the ruled. Translatable only as "popular" but with none of that word's potential political nuances, *shominteki* captures much of the sense of an urban folk culture which is at the heart of the idea of the city as *machi*.

The sense of spatial homogeneity implied by bustling, commercial street life does not preclude social distinctions, which were in fact elaborately observed in pre-modern Edo and London commoner districts. The point seems rather to be, following an interesting theory advanced by Lyn Lofland, that these distinctions were made not by spatial segregation but rather by differentiation of *dress*.⁵⁸ This perspective explains the relatively minor importance of architecture in structuring the environment of commoner urbanity, which is rather a

⁵⁶ J. F. Fisscher, *Bijdrage tot de Kennis van het Japansche Rijk*, 1833, as quoted in Andrew Steinmetz, *Japan and Her People* (London: Routledge, Warner & Routledge, 1859), p. 211.

⁵⁷ For insight into Tokyo's street and address system, see Barthes, *L'empire des signes*, pp. 47-51.

⁵⁸ Lyn H. Lofland, *A World of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), chap. 2.

landscape of the *crowd*. The many colorful prints of street life in both Edo and London in the eighteenth and nineteenth century are prime visual representations of this idea of the city.

Modern Continuities

A middle-class-based civic spirit, which on the eve of industrialization was fading in London and nonexistent in Edo, has survived as little more than a lingering ideal in both cities today. In this respect, they have proved no different from any other great metropolis (small cities are a somewhat different matter) in the world. The lack of a strong civic past may have even enabled both cities to adapt less traumatically to the inevitable process of atomization and loss of community spirit in large modern urban centers.

The civic idea is by no means dead: it simply no longer exists at the city-wide level as an effective political concept. It survives rather in two very different contexts. One is the "city planning" (*toshi keikaku*) profession, which has emerged as a moderately powerful force in both London and Tokyo, particularly since World War II. Despite the tendency of city planners to plead technocratic impartiality, it is inevitable that such a profession harbor ideal conceptions of the city, and one of these seems to be the civic idea of the "public good." The problem is that the middle-class morality which gave rise to the idea is now replaced by technocratic expertise, and the real political issues are obscured. To complicate the matter, the urban planning profession has also absorbed at least two other major ideas: the city as a grand princely monument and the city as a place that deserves to be remade into "country." The former is a continental idea (seen clearly in modern form in Le Corbusier's "radiant city" of 1933), and the latter a distinctive English contribution (formulated first and best in Ebenezer Howard's "garden city" of 1898).⁵⁹

Despite the almost wholly Western bias of the ideology of the planning profession, it has not been without influence in Japan. Hence Tokyo, like London, has over the past few decades come forth with elaborate "master plans" for remaking the city, adopting from the West the notions of green belts, new towns, restrictive zoning, and so forth. It is impossible here to make a detailed comparison of Tokyo and London in terms of the ideology and impact of city planning. It might simply be suggested that city planning in Tokyo has been sub-

⁵⁹ Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City: Elements of a Doctrine of Urbanism To Be Used as the Basis of Our Machine-Age Civilization* (1933; reprint ed., New York: Orion Press, 1964), and Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898, 1902; reprint ed., Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1965).

stantially less effective than in London, both because its ideas are not wholly compatible with Japanese urban traditions, and because it has a substantially shorter history and less effective institutional framework than in London. At the same time, it should be stressed that English "town planning" (the use of "town" suggests the English ideal of decification if not countrification) has not created any powerful new idea of London as a city, much less a new reality.

The civic ideal also survives at a much more modest level, that of the neighborhood (*kinjo*), where indeed it was always strong in both Tokyo and London—this is one explanation for the common metaphor of Tokyo and London as conglomerations of "villages." It is dubious whether "civic" is a proper term here, for the "neighborhood" has none of the corporate sense of the city as a self-governing entity: it is rather a narrow, parochial idea of the city as a knowable community, indeed much more like a village than a city. As a result, the political conception of a distinctive *public* realm tends to be lost at the neighborhood level. This tension is particularly evident in Tokyo in recent years, in the emergence of the so-called "citizens' movement" (*shimin undō*) in response primarily to the threat of environmental disruption. Despite the use of the term *shimin*, coined as a translation for the English "citizen," the movement tends in practice to break down into the separate defense of particular local interests. A revealing expression for this tendency is *jūmin egoizumu*, literally "residents' egoism" but more meaningfully, "neighborhood parochialism." Although suggestive of a greater sense of community than in the *chō* of Edo, the idea falls short of that implied by "citizen" in the West.

The dissipation and atomization of the idea of the "citizen" has been paralleled by a complex evolution in the commoner idea of the city as dense and hurly-burly street life. From well before the beginning of modern industrialization, both Edo and Tokyo had each been in a sense two cities, a political-administrative princely city to the west, surrounded by the mansions of the aristocracy, and a commercial-commoner city to the east. This bifurcation was greatly accelerated by industrialization and the resultant rapid growth and heightened spatial differentiation. Two dynamics in particular characterize this process of polarization: (1) the wealthy commercial classes of the old commoner city increasingly aped their aristocratic betters and moved to the upper-class suburbs to the west, while (2) the core of the traditional city was usurped by the commercial institutions of modern capitalism, driving up property values and forcing the poorer classes in the *opposite* direction, to the east. The suburbs to the west—the West End of London and the Yamanote of Tokyo—will be compared in the next

section; here the concern is rather with the commoner districts on the other side: the East End of London and the Shitamachi ("under-machi," that is, the *machi* below the castle) of Tokyo.

From the crowded and impoverished lower-class districts of Tokyo and London, there emerged in the process of industrialization a wide range of conceptions of the city, most of which had in common a middle-class point of view. The commoner order has typically been seen in this way, from the outside in, resulting in two rather different responses: that of a lyrical idealization of commoner street life, and that of horrified shock at the deplorable realities of living conditions among the lowest urban classes. The positive conception finds its most appealing articulation in two important urban personifications, the Edokko ("child of Edo") of Tokyo and the Cockney of London, who call for a brief comparison. Of particular interest is the way in which these figures were similarly transformed in the process of industrialization.

Both Edokko and Cockney are of clearly pre-industrial origin.⁶⁰ The term "Cockney" (in the specific sense of a Londoner) was in use by the seventeenth century, whereas "Edokko" appeared in the late eighteenth century. In origin, both terms appear to have referred in many cases to the upper ranks of the commoner class, living at the heart of the traditional merchant city. The original Edokko seem to have been wealthy rice brokers (*judasashi*) who catered to the *hatamoto* class of samurai, whereas "merchants and first-rate tradesmen" are said to have qualified as Cockney. As for locale, a Cockney was one born "within the sound of Bow Bells," that is, near the church of St. Mary le Bow in the center of the City of London, whereas a proper Edokko, by a similar tradition, had to be a parishioner of one of the two ancient shrines which lay to either side of the original *machi-chi*, Kanda Daimyōjin or Sannō Daigongen.

In the course of time, however, the locale of these two figures shifted to the east, in Tokyo away from the Shiba-Nihonbashi-Kanda belt north toward Asakusa and across the river to Honjo-Fukagawa, and in London beyond the walls of the City to the area known as the East End.⁶¹ In more recent times, as both Edokko and Cockney have become more and more idealized as folk figures, a considerable tolerance of locale has developed. Thus Julian Franklyn admits that the Cockney can actually be born anywhere in London if he has the proper

⁶⁰ For the Edokko, I have relied mostly on Nishiyama Matsunosuke, *Edo chōnin no kenkyū*, 3 vols. (Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1972-74), vol. 2, pp. 3-93, and for the Cockney, Julian Franklyn, *The Cockney—A Survey of London Life and Language* (London: André Deutsch, 1953).

⁶¹ Isomura Eiichi, "Tōkyō no Isuto Endo," in Kiuchi Shinzō *et al.*, eds., *Nihon no bunka chiri*, 18 vols. (Kōdansha, 1968-71), vol. 6, pp. 325-327.

qualifications of dialect and spirit, and the recent *Otoko wa tsurai yo* (roughly, "It's Tough To Be a Man," suggestive of the self-conscious masculinity in the Edokko image) film series extends the base of Shitamachi consciousness as far east as Katsushika, some eight miles from Nihonbashi.

At the same time, the class status of both Edokko and Cockney became progressively more plebian in the course of industrialization. As the wealthier commoner classes increasingly aped the aristocracy and moved off to West End houses or country seats, the quintessential mark of the Cockney became his *refusal* to ape his social betters. So too the Edokko came to be conceived as one who stood up defiantly to a samurai, with none of the sycophantic airs of rich merchants and even a positive aversion to the accumulation of wealth. The Cockney similarly is seen as undaunted by airs, self-reliant and self-supporting, tending to side with the underdog rather than ape his betters. In profession, Edokko and Cockney alike came to be typically "street people": pedlars, pitchmen, costers, ricksha-men, cabbies, beggars, on the whole traditional menial urban professions of high mobility and inevitably poor.⁶²

The idealization of Edokko and Cockney for their pride and of their locale for its hurly-burly humanity was counterposed in the era of early industrialization in Tokyo and London by a much more unfavorable set of ideas, all identifiably middle-class in origin. One was the idea of the city as a hotbed of sedition and revolutionary radicalism. It is the idea of the commoner crowd now transformed into a "mob."⁶³ The example of the French Revolution and later the Paris Commune made this a far more pervasive idea in London than in Tokyo, where nevertheless a tradition of pre-modern urban rioting and government fears of subversive Western ideology combined into a similar rhetoric in the late Meiji period. In the end, despite a few small insurrections, neither Tokyo nor London was ever in danger of being lost to the mob. But the specter was there, and created a major new strand in the conceptualization of the city.

Parallel to this was the idea of the city as a place of disease and poverty, an image best captured by the English word "slums." This concept in both cities presents a complex problem in the relationship

⁶² There is a revealing overlap between the idea of the Cockney and the idea of poverty, for Cockney professions as described by Franklyn are much the same as those emphasized as poor by Henry Mayhew in *London Labour and the London Poor* (1861-62). For an analysis of the rather special nature of Mayhew's "people," see Gertrude Himmerlfarb, "The Culture of Poverty," in Dyos and Wolff, eds., *The Victorian City*.

⁶³ The work of George Rudé has emphasized this conception, as in his *Hanoverian London*, especially chap. 11.

between an objective reality of sub-standard living conditions and the subjective discovery of these conditions by horrified and sensitive bourgeois reformers.⁶⁴ It can only be hypothesized here that whatever the comparative realities of living conditions among the lower classes in both cities, the English response was far stronger and more sustained, as reflected both in literary sources (Dickens in particular) and in the great investigations into lower-class living conditions by Henry Mayhew and Charles Booth. Tokyo's industrial slums did provoke a similar response, beginning in the 1880's in a series of journalistic exposés, of which the best-known is Yokoyama Gennosuke's *Japan's Lower Classes* (Nihon no kasō shakai, 1899).⁶⁵ Yet the Japanese reformers never produced studies as monumental as those of Mayhew and Booth, nor were they stricken with the same ambivalent mix of shock and morbid fascination as the Victorians. One indication of the milder Japanese conception of the city as a place of poverty and disease is the lack of any modern Japanese word as expressive as "slums." For a brief time in the Meiji period, the older Edo word *hinminkutsu* (literally, "caves of the poor people") was used, but was soon replaced by *suramu*, suggesting the degree to which these zones of urban poverty were conceived of as a Western-derived phenomenon.

In the past half-century, these various conceptions of the commoner city which dominated the period of initial industrialization have undergone still further changes. One underlying dynamic of this change has been the evolution of a small and self-conscious middle class intent on aping its betters into a much bigger middle-class mass dedicated largely to the pursuit of leisure and consumerism which seems characteristic of all advanced industrial societies. I would suggest that Japanese society has been more thorough in this process, if only because the tradition of a middle class with a distinct ethic and identity was from the start far weaker than in England. The abolition of the privileges of the samurai class in the early Meiji period had the further effect of converting the entire traditional elite into a new middle class, with the result that the tendency to the aping of social betters has been less persistent in modern Japan than in modern England.⁶⁶

Moralistic bourgeois concern with poverty and disease as metaphors for the commoner city in the nineteenth century has for the most part

⁶⁴ For an interesting discussion of the relativity of residential "overcrowding," see Ronald Dore, *City Life in Japan: A Study of a Tokyo Ward* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958), pp. 45-51.

⁶⁵ Available in reprint edition (Iwanami shoten, 1949).

⁶⁶ For the problem of the Japanese "middle class" in comparative perspective, see Ronald Dore's entry "Modernization: The Bourgeoisie in Modernizing Societies" in David L. Sills, ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 17 vols. (New York: MacMillan and The Free Press, 1968), vol. 10, pp. 403-406.

disappeared in the twentieth, less because of the decline of bourgeois attitudes than because of the drastic drop in objective levels of poverty and disease in the contemporary city. On the other hand, the conception of the commoner city as personified in the Edokko and Cockney survives as an appealing ideal in both Tokyo and London. Whether many actual specimens of either breed exist or not, they both live as folk figures who appeal to contemporary commoners for their anti-aristocratic and anti-bourgeois inclinations alike. Coupled with these social implications is the appeal of old-time street life, neighborhood-centered and hurly-burly. Suggestive of the continuing strength of this idea is the great popularity of, for example, London's famous street markets or of the many festivals and markets at the temple of Sensōji in Tokyo's Asakusa, to which vast numbers flock for a taste of *shomin-teki* urbanity.

The idea of the commoner city today is to be found not only in the nostalgia-fueled survival of Edokko, Cockney, and street markets; the twentieth century has given rise to its own distinctive idea of the city, an idea rooted in the urban function of mass popular consumption and entertainment. Both as idea and as fact, it is a type of city which is far more conspicuous in Tokyo than in London, appearing most visibly at the transfer nodes of the rail system connecting central Tokyo with the western suburbs, at Shibuya, Shinjuku, and Ikebukuro. It is an environment, not where one strives to emulate the style and pastimes of one's social betters, but where one can escape into fantasy worlds. It is an environment of signs and lights, a landscape of advertising and consumption, and for a large number of Tokyo dwellers the true contemporary *machi*.⁶⁷ This idea of the mass-commoner-consumer city seems less in evidence in London, where such comparable centers of popular entertainment as Picadilly are greeted by most Londoners with disapproval. The contrast seems most clearly rooted in the continuing attachment in London to older conceptions of the city held by the aristocracy and bourgeoisie. To find a counterpart to Tokyo's modern *machi*, one must turn rather to the similarly egalitarian mass society in the United States, where a fundamental contrast in the system of personal transportation has shifted a large part of the world of escape and consumption from the city center to the highway margins on its outskirts.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ For an analysis of this environment, see Peter Gluck and Henry Smith, "Shinjuku," *Kenchiku to toshi*, August 1973, pp. 132-156 (in Japanese with English summary).

⁶⁸ For interpretations of the American highway strip, see J. B. Jackson's "Other-Directed Houses" (written in 1956), in Zube, ed., *Landscapes*, pp. 55-72, and Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Isenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972).

ARISTOCRATIC SUBURBANITY

The Early Modern Pattern

The modern idea of "suburbs" in both Japan and England draws on two different pre-modern traditions. One of these involves primarily a *spatial* distinction, indicating the area lying between the central city and open countryside. The other is a largely *social* distinction, referring to the residential quarters of the aristocratic elite. It was in the course of the transport revolution and rapid population growth which characterized early industrialization in Tokyo and London that these two earlier traditions combined and were transformed into the twentieth century suburban idea.

The spatial conception of the London "suburbs" is seen in the etymology of the word itself, "below the city," that is, lying outside the city walls. The term thus referred from medieval times to a variety of small settlements outside the City of London and of Westminster (a city in its own right), typically at transport junctions where they offered marketing and lodging services. This spatial sense was paralleled by a vague conceptualization of the suburbs as an ambivalent in-between zone, neither really of the city nor of the country. As the walls of the city came to lose their defining power both visually and conceptually from the seventeenth century, this idea of the suburbs became weaker and more diffuse.

In Edo, the idea of such suburbs was still vaguer than in London, although much the same morphology obtained. There was no word for suburbs in Japanese: *kōgai*, the standard modern translation for "suburbs," referred in Tokugawa times simply to the *unsettled* land in the outskirts of the city, while *machi-hazure* ("the outer edge of the city") likewise suggested a distinction not between city core and suburban settlement, but between commercial *machi* and agrarian *inaka*. In the Japanese tradition of unwalled cities, there was no conception of a settled zone between city and country which might provide the basis for a "middle landscape" ideal.

More distinctly conceived were the residential quarters of the aristocratic class, which in both Edo and London contributed a quiet and green-enshrouded aspect to the city, catching the eye of many observers for the contrast with the dense, bustling commoner districts in the center. Yet here as well, one discovers a clear ambiguity, less in terms of spatial location than of the *quality* of these districts, which although clearly located *in* the city were in spirit somehow *not of* the city. In neither culture, for example, was there a generic term for these parts of the city, only such specific labels as West End and Yamanote.

One must turn rather to a continental city such as Paris to find a word, *faubourg*, which conveys a more distinct conception of the residential quarters of the aristocracy.

In London, the belt extending over one mile (a long distance in the pre-modern city) between the City of London and Westminster, known as The Strand, provided the obvious site for the initial appearance of an aristocratic faubourg, in the form of elegant residences lining the way.⁶⁹ These mansions gave way in time to the more characteristic forms of the West End in the residential squares northwest of The Strand (and later south of Hyde Park) which took shape first in the seventeenth century and continued to grow into the nineteenth. These West End townhouses were in their prototypical form the seasonal residences of the landed elite, and on the whole far smaller and less elaborate than the country houses which were the true elite "seats." They were also relatively modest in comparison with the *palazzos* and *hôtels* of the more city-oriented continental aristocracies. In aspect, the West End suggested the "country" more than the city: most of the houses were nearby the pastoral expanses of the great royal parks, and their monotonous and unassertive facades were often shaded by strategically planted trees.

The *buke-chi* of Edo was comparably green and privatized, but for very different reasons, relating largely to the profound contrast between the elite classes in Japanese and English society in the early modern period. Most obvious was the contrast of size and structure: the samurai class in numbers was far larger than the English landed elite, but at the same time it included a far wider range of status, so that only a small part of the entire class could be considered "aristocratic" in power and prestige as well as in birth. This meant that within the *buke-chi* of Edo resided large numbers of men with samurai status who were in function little more than servants. The West End of London similarly housed large numbers of servants, in all probability more numerous than those they served. But whereas English society involved a straightforward dualism of servants and masters, samurai society had in its pyramidal structure more numerous intermediate levels and was generally more complex.

The residential quarters of the subordinate classes were therefore more conspicuous within the *yashiki*, or daimyo mansions, of Edo than in London's West End. Lower samurai and servants were for the most part housed in linear barracks called *nagaya* ("long houses"), built into the walls which enclosed the *yashiki* complex. In their regular, elongated aspect, the *nagaya* were a version of *machi*, in the

⁶⁹ These houses stand out clearly on the map "A View of London about the Year 1560" (reprint ed., Ithaca, N.Y.: Historic Urban Plans, 1967).

older sense of a modular order designed for efficiency and control. It is revealing that the barracklike dwellings for the poor constructed in the back alleys of the *machi-chi* were similarly called *nagaya* (or, more precisely, *ura-nagaya*, "back *nagaya*").⁷⁰ In London, the distinction was rather a vertical dualism of "upstairs and downstairs," the servants' quarters generally occupying the basement floor of a multi-story townhouse and contributing less of a distinctive aspect to the whole than Edo's *nagaya*.⁷¹

A second major contrast between the Edo samurai and the London aristocracy lies in the terms on which they came to the city. Whereas the English elite came to London voluntarily for the "season" and the pleasures of conspicuous consumption, the daimyo gathered in Edo under the compulsory regulations of the *sankin kōtai*. Like the London elite, the daimyo had their home bases in the provinces, but these bases were the urban *jōkamachi* rather than isolated country estates. Hence for the samurai class, the alternation was not between city and country, but between capital city and provincial city. And although the attendance of the daimyo may have been compulsory, it was doubtless often a welcome escape from the narrow and tedious life in many of the provincial castle towns. So whereas London was typically contrasted with the joys of the pastoral countryside, Edo was set against the loneliness of provincial towns.

The *sankin kōtai* system had some important implications for the visual aspect of the Edo *buke-chi*. First, the population of the *buke-chi*, roughly half of Edo's total population, was far greater than that of the aristocratic quarters of London (including servants). The *buke-chi* was also much greater in area than the West End,⁷² and although the actual *yashiki* buildings were densely populated, the large surrounding gardens gave Edo the overall appearance of a great landscape park, particularly in the quarters of the most powerful lords. In the eyes of an English observer in 1860 as he viewed the city from Atago Hill, "the whole surrounding aspect is that of a succession of

⁷⁰ For the architecture of the daimyo *yashiki* and the *machi-chi* residences, see Ōkuma Yoshikuni, "Kinsei buke jidai no kenchiku" in Kokushi kenkyūkai, ed., *Iwanami hōza Nihon rekishi*, 18 vols. (Iwanami shoten, 1933-35), 16, 56-69.

⁷¹ The one type of building in London's West End that paralleled the *nagaya* was the mews, or stables, in which grooms were quartered on the second story. These were, however, considerably less conspicuous than the Edo *nagaya*, which had windows fronting on the main streets.

⁷² In Edo, the *buke-chi* accounted for over two-thirds of the built-up area of the city (see Naitō, *Edo to Edo-jō*, p. 133), whereas the West End in the mid-eighteenth century could not have been more than a third of the settled area of London, as estimated from the 1747 "Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark" (reprint ed., Ithaca, N.Y.: Historic Urban Plans, 1970).

Hyde Parks or Kensington Gardens—a city of green slopes and overhanging groves."⁷³

Perhaps the most important quality of both the West End of London and the Edo *buke-chi*, particularly in view of modern continuities, was the sense of *privatization* conveyed by both when compared with the commoner order. Neither as a political concept of the common good which typified the civic order nor as a social fact of heterogeneous intermixing in the streets of the folk order was there any sense of "public" in these districts. Architecturally, both the London townhouses and the Edo *yashiki* presented a monotonous and forbidding face to the street, the major contrast being the narrow, multi-story, stone-built aspect of one versus the low, long, and wooden form of the other. The description of Laurence Oliphant, an English traveller to Edo in the summer of 1858 is revealing of the general similarity: "This time we soon turned out of the main street, and leaving the dense crowd behind us, dived into the Princes' or aristocratic quarter. We were amazed at the different aspect which the streets here presented from those we had just left; . . . Belgravia in September does not look more deserted than these fashionable thoroughfares, so dull, clean, and respectable."⁷⁴

The collapse of the *sankin kōtai* in the 1860's drastically altered the social structure and visual character of the Edo *buke-chi*, with much of the land either passing into the hands of the new Meiji government as sites for government buildings and military installations, or becoming fragmented among small landholders on the open market. Nevertheless, the cultural concept of a privatized residential area for the respectable classes was perpetuated in the idea of the "Yamanote" (in effect, "towards the mountains"), the term for the hilly areas of Tokyo rising away from the flats and valleys where the commoners resided. This was accomplished as Japan's new ruling class, mainly officials of the Meiji government and officially connected entrepreneurs, took up residence in the spacious hills of the former *buke-chi*. Although these new residents were typically of samurai origin, the dissolution of the samurai class in the 1870's mitigated the exclusivity of the Yamanote, particularly in comparison with the West End of London. The area referred to as the Yamanote in fact includes many lower-class pockets and is far more socially and culturally heterogeneous than the West End. But as a cultural *idea*, the word "Yamanote"

⁷³ George Smith (Bishop of Victoria, Hong Kong), *Ten Weeks in Japan* (London: Longman Green, 1861), p. 303.

⁷⁴ Laurence Oliphant, *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan in the Years 1857, '58, '59*, 2 vols. (London: William Blackwood, 1859), vol. 2, p. 123.

itself developed the same connotations of a "dull, clean, and respectable" residential district for the social elite as had its premodern version.⁷⁵

Modern Continuities

Modern suburbs are the result of the rail (and later road) transport revolution, which began in London in the 1830's and in Tokyo in the 1880's, enabling increasing numbers of people to hold jobs in the commercial center of the city while residing on the more spacious fringes. This dramatic expansion of the effective residential area of the city most benefited middle-class workers in the tertiary sector, the "white-collar" workers of London and the "sarariman" of Tokyo,⁷⁶ whose growing affluence and numbers enabled them to leapfrog the crowded lower-class slums and the exclusive aristocratic suburbs into the open land which lay along the new rail lines. This process began on a substantial scale in London from the mid-nineteenth century and in Tokyo from the early twentieth.⁷⁷

Although in the long run the residential orders of these white-collar classes in Tokyo and London have proved to be profoundly different, both are nevertheless dominated by the deep yearning for the central features of the pre-modern aristocratic suburbs in both cities: privacy and greenery. More specifically, the urban middle classes in both Tokyo and London have come to idealize the detached single-family residence with ample space for a garden. Although such an ideal is scarcely unique to Japan and England, it seems to be pursued with particular tenacity in those two cultures. What differs between the two is the motivation for pursuing that ideal and the highly contrasting ways in which it has been approximated in the actual suburbs of Tokyo and London.

In London, the yearning for privacy and greenery is at heart a yearning for the "country," for the pastoral ideals of the landed elite. This is evident in the allurements of early suburban developers, who

⁷⁵ For further analysis of the Yamanote-Shitamachi cultural split, see Robert J. Smith, "Pre-Industrial Urbanism in Japan: A Consideration of Multiple Traditions in a Feudal Society," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 9, no. 2, part 2 (Oct. 1960), pp. 241-254.

⁷⁶ Both the Americanism "white-collar" and the Japanese-coined "salaryman" originated in the years following World War I, the era in which mass suburbanization began in both Japan and England.

⁷⁷ For London suburbanization, see H. J. Dyos, *Victorian Suburb: A Study of the Growth of Camberwell* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1961), and Alan A. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London: Suburban Development, Life and Transport, 1900-1939* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1973). For Tokyo, I know of no comparable secondary studies on the suburbs—perhaps a reflection of the lack of the idea of "suburbs"—although much source material is available in the local ward histories (*kushi*).

"knew exactly what their potential customers required. Assiduously, often clumsily, they strove to evoke at least a suggestion of that rural-romantic make-believe which was the very spirit of suburbia."⁷⁸ Thus there emerged the concept of "suburbia" (the word apparently dates from the 1890's)⁷⁹ as a distinct environment, filled not with houses but with "villas" and "cottages," which stand along not streets but "drives," "ways," and "gardens." This conception was even provided with an ideological rationale in Howard's ideal "garden city," which would bring together the best of the city and the country in a new version of the pastoral. Although Howard had in mind the creation of totally new cities, it took little time for the evolution of his concept into the "garden suburb" movement around the turn of the century.⁸⁰

In fact, the London suburbs were as patently urban as their ideology was anti-urban, with the exception of the wealthiest areas, where land was sufficient to allow genuine isolation. The vast majority of London's suburbs were drastically scaled-down versions of the West End, with houses constructed in monotonous rows and token greenery provided front and back. The appearance of the middle-class suburbs owes much to the way in which they were built, largely by speculative developers who took advantage of the large parcels of land offered in the environs of London by estate ownership. Speculation was profitable on both land and buildings, although the two tended to fall into different hands, and the result was the regular and unimaginative planning of many suburban areas. For maximization of profit, houses were built as closely as possible, often in contiguous rows or at best in the "semi-detached" mode popular after World War I. Such methods were enabled by the English tradition of building in brick, which assured substantial privacy even with common walls.

But no matter how cramped the London suburban "cottages," their one indispensable feature was space for a garden in back, occasionally in front.⁸¹ It was the garden, after all, that was responsible for the idea of the "garden suburb," although it is difficult to see how these tiny suburban plots could provide much of the pastoral environment which lay historically and culturally behind their omnipresence in suburbia. In the end, London suburbanites have been forced willy-nilly to ac-

⁷⁸ Jackson, *Semi-Detached London*, p. 136.

⁷⁹ The word "Suburbia" appears to have been sometimes used as a proper noun to refer specifically to the suburbs of London (*The Oxford English Dictionary*).

⁸⁰ It is revealing that the Japanese translate "garden city" as *den'en toshi* or "pastoral city," suggesting the Japanese difficulty in finding any native word for "garden" which conveyed the necessary sense of anti-urbanity. Tokyo saw a brief vogue for the "garden suburb" idea in the post-World War I period, the most notable legacy being the upper-class suburb of Den'en Chōfu, planned in 1918.

⁸¹ Jackson, *Semi-Detached London*, p. 149, refers to the suburban garden as a "hallowed plot" and "an essential part of the life style" of the London suburbs.

cept the symbolic uses of nature which the Japanese have exploited spontaneously throughout their urban history.

The monotonously homogeneous aspect of London suburban developments is by no means the fault of profit-hungry developers alone, for it is clear that most English city-dwellers tend to prefer residential areas where social status is clearly announced by the facade of the house, reflecting the deep and persistent attachment of the English to visible distinctions of class and status.⁸² Although the neat ordering of suburban facades seems to deny individual identity, it nevertheless enables unmistakable identity in terms of one's place in the social hierarchy.

The ideology and structure of suburban Tokyo differs from London in a variety of ways. Most fundamental is the lack of any conception in Japan of a *rus in urbe*, of an urban environment which looks like the country. Such a conception in fact makes little or no sense in Japanese culture, where there has been no tendency to dichotomize the rural and urban environments. What the Japanese *do* desire, whether in the country or the city, is a residence which is sufficiently protected from neighbors and a garden which will remind them of mountains and forests. Hence Tokyo suburban homes, much like the *yashiki* of Edo, tend to be enclosed by fences and hedges, with heavy planting of trees and shrubs in the spaces between the enclosure and the house itself. Indeed, as is often pointed out, house and garden are considered as an indissoluble whole in Japanese residential building, in contrast to the Western tendency to segregate the two. Whereas English and American suburbanites strive for "better homes and gardens," the Japanese aim at better home-gardens.

But why have Tokyo suburbs not evolved, as in London, in homogeneous developments? The answer lies in strongly contrasting patterns of urban landholding and residential construction in the two cities. In a country like Japan, which unlike most other countries (including England) has been densely populated since early modern times, land has always been precious, and the security which it offers high. One ironic corollary is that the actual occupancy of land is often accorded higher respect, both by custom and by law, than legal ownership. As a result it is very difficult to evict tenants, which makes urban landlordism a far less profitable pursuit than in most other countries, in turn restricting the rental market and intensifying the competition for individual landownership. A final contrast is the ab-

sence in Japan until very recently of restrictive use zoning to encourage homogeneous development of land.

Against this intense pressure for urban landholding must be considered the continuing Japanese preference for residential construction in short-lived materials. The result is a far higher premium on land than on houses, so that land speculation is far more profitable in Japan than is building speculation. Unlike London, where most suburban homes are built in a uniform style by developers, Tokyo suburban residences tend to be owner-built and hence less monotonous in appearance than in London. Furthermore, the impossibility of constructing sound-proof common walls between separate residences using conventional Japanese building techniques has obviated the use of row houses for all but the lowest urban classes.

A further obstacle to uniform patterns of suburban development in Tokyo has been a far greater fragmentation of landholding than in London. In the absence of an elite of large landowners, the land available for suburban building in Tokyo, as elsewhere in Japan, was owned by relatively small peasant landlords and owner-cultivators, and even one man's holdings were typically scattered into several different parcels. Hence the development of the Tokyo suburbs was on a piecemeal, ad hoc basis with little regular division of large pieces of land. Even where such large subdivisions have been possible, the tendency has been to sell the land, which is the source of the most profit, and let the buyers erect their own houses.

For all of these reasons, the suburbs of Tokyo have little of the regularity and homogeneity that characterizes London. And just as homogeneity of residential area seems to suit English social preferences, so heterogeneity, although not necessarily sought after, seems no great cause for concern among the Japanese. There are clear notions among Japanese of what constitutes a desirable versus an undesirable neighborhood, but such preferences seem less oriented toward the class status of potential neighbors than among English suburbanites. To a degree, this is a continuation of the tendency of the Edo *buke-chi* to much greater heterogeneity of status than that in the West End of London. London suburban houses clearly announce their owners' status by the outward-facing facades, whereas Japanese suburban houses can be judged only by a furtive look through a neutral and primarily defensive fence. If anything, it is the care and quality of the trees rising above the fence that will mark the wealth of the owner rather than the house, which appears as no more than a low roof.

A final contrast between Tokyo and London suburbs lies not in the external appearance of the two, but rather in the style of life which

⁸² For ideas on the complex problem of "class" in Japan versus England, see Ronald Dore, *British Factory—Japanese Factory: The Origins of National Diversity in Industrial Relations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), index references to "class."

each has come to represent. In London, there is a clear conception of a suburban way of life, although the normative content varies widely: indeed, no idea of the city has produced such intense feelings pro and con as that of suburbia. Suburbia in England is conceived of as a place for social interaction focused upon the home, whether in competition with one's neighbor for the neatest garden or in the invitation of friends and relatives for dinner in a manner harking back to aristocratic modes of entertainment.

For the Japanese *sarariman*, by contrast, the suburban home is a place of minimal social interaction, limited strictly to the immediate family. For the Japanese suburban male, as for the samurai who was in many ways his predecessor, the focus of attention is rather on the place of work. It might even be suggested that the company is a kind of *mura*, a closely regulated social setting much like the traditional agricultural village. In any case, the suburban residence itself thereby becomes the near-exclusive domain of women and children, who likewise tend to socialize not in their homes but rather in the streets and markets—in short, in the *machi*. In the end, then, the “suburbs” of Tokyo, to the extent that they have any independent identity at all, are simply more *machi*, little different from anywhere else in the city. The fundamental contrast between London's suburbia and Tokyo's amorphous *kōgai* is thus that the one is rooted in rural ideals and the other in urban realities. Whereas London's suburbs represent a way of life, Tokyo's are simply a place to live.

CONCLUSIONS

The various points of comparative interest which have emerged from this tentative analysis may be resolved into a single broad similarity and a single fundamental contrast. The similarity is this: neither Tokyo nor London, either as pre-industrial or as modern cities, has encouraged strong ideas of the city as an isolated entity. Both cities have proved relatively weak in the conception of the city as a clearly defined monumental presence which is found in ancient continental traditions both East Asian and Western. Both have also defied conceptualization as coherent political units in the manner derived from the medieval traditions of Western Europe. In short, Tokyo and London have refused—others would say failed—to conform to either princely or civic standards of urbanity. That Tokyo has been more conspicuous in this refusal (or failure) than London should not obscure their similarity in the broader context of East Asia versus Western Europe.

The significance of this similarity is that Tokyo and London, in

their relatively particular, vague, and privatized forms, are far closer to contemporary urban realities than the ancient and medieval notions which continue to structure much thinking about the city today. Over the past several decades, high-speed urban transport and electronic communications have increasingly short-circuited our ability to identify and evaluate the city, both visually and conceptually. In the tendency of the English and particularly of the Japanese to tolerate a vagueness of urban definition, it is possible to detect an easy accommodation to this growing “invisibility” of the twentieth-century city.⁸³ This perspective is of considerable relevance to many of the debates over the city today, which revolve around such issues as the planned city versus the unplanned city, the inspiring city versus the functional city, the orderly city versus the spontaneous city.

But this passive tolerance of unprincely sprawl and uncivic privatization by no means exhausts the relevance of Tokyo and London, for the traditions of both cities also lend themselves to *alternative* modes for apprehending the city in general. It is here that the fundamental *contrast* of the two is to be sought, in the dominant English conception of the “country” versus the dominant Japanese conception of the *machi*. In the English case, the city is apprehended not directly, but rather is *reflected* through the clear conceptualization and idealization of the rural environment. In the Japanese case, the city is apprehended not through its power of definition (either visually or politically) but through its qualities as a locus of human interaction. In neither case is there any clear sense of the city as an isolate.

To clarify this contrast between the Japanese and English conceptions of the city, it is useful to differentiate two sets of relationships: that of man and his physical environment, and that of man and his fellow men. No conception of the city can be understood by reference to only one of these frameworks, for both interact in complex and wholly symbiotic ways. Thus, for example, the English conception of the “country” can be understood only with reference to the social history of the landed elite, and the Japanese notion of *machi* makes no historical sense without reference to the agricultural environment. But in the relative terms dictated by a comparative analysis, it seems clear that “country” is primarily an environmental concept whereas *machi* is primarily a social one.

The English notion of the “country” is environmental in the sense that it involves a conceptual distinction between the works of man

⁸³ For a photographic essay on the idea of urban “invisibility,” see the series “Toshi,” 52 installments, *Asahi jōnanu*, (March 16, 1973—March 15, 1974, particularly installments 1–38.) This idea is largely the conception of architectural critic Taki Kōji; see his “Aimaisa no kūkan” [The space of ambiguity], *Asahi jōnanu*, April 4, 1975, pp. 27–32.

and the works of God, or in the modern secular version, between man and his "natural" environment. The "country" in its dominant pastoral sense is conceived as an idealized middle ground between these two poles of art and nature, of civilization and wilderness. In the more extreme Romantic evolution of this idea, the logic of the resolving mean is sacrificed to a simple dualism of idealized wilderness versus corrupt society; it is this latter idea which has dominated American thinking on the city. In England, the rural compromise is rather the dominant form and has found a modern evolution into the suburban idea. In all of these conceptions, the element of social interaction is secondary to that of man and his physical environment.

The Japanese conception of the *machi* is social in the sense that it involves human relationships, whether that of the ruler and the ruled, as in its ancient meanings, or that of interaction for the sake of exchange and entertainment, as in its early modern transformation into a folk idea. As an environmental concept, the *machi* tends to be neutral, for the Japanese have never conceived of a dichotomy between the works of man and the works of something which transcends man (or, in the secular version, which man transcends). Thus the *machi* is neither anti-rural nor anti-wilderness, and in fact accommodates both, as in the village-like social structure of the Japanese city or in the symbolic use of wilderness in urban gardens.

It must be emphasized again that the environmental and the societal dimensions which structure any coherent idea of the city are symbiotic, and the emphasis on one to the detriment of the other cannot fail to have an unhappy reflection in urban realities. Thus, for example, the English emphasis on man's physical environment has perhaps been related to the conspicuous failures of London as a just and efficient social institution, whereas the Japanese preoccupation with the social efficiency of the city has in the end led to the current failure of Tokyo as a biologically wholesome habitat.⁸⁴ At a broader level, this need to *integrate* environmental and societal factors in seeking to comprehend the city has relevance to the evolution of American thinking about the city over the past several decades, among both academic and practicing urbanists. The sociological obsession for seeing the city as a disembodied network of human relations which has characterized much formal American thought about the city since World War II has seen an abrupt shift since the 1960's to the vogue for seeing the city and indeed all human affairs within the context of the "ecological" vogue for biological integrity. Each of these positions tends to neglect the other.

⁸⁴ The phrases "just and efficient social institution" and "biologically wholesome habitat" are from J. B. Jackson, in Zube, ed., *Landscapes*, p. 87.

I emphasize that the need is not for a new idea of the city, and even less for a new ideology of the city. Nor is the need for an abandonment of all historical conceptions of the city: most of the ideas mentioned in this essay continue to have their own integrity in the proper part of the city and at the proper time. The need is rather for a tolerance of a diversity of different ways to conceive and appreciate the city, not only among different cultures but within any single culture. The city is nothing if not diversity, and the ultimate comparative use of Tokyo and London is the historical hospitality of these two great capitals to a healthy variety of competing ideas of the city.