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Tokyo-as-World-City: Reassessing the Role of Capital and the State in Urban Restructuring

Paul Waley

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Summary. The world cities literature has been enlivened by debate over the place of Tokyo in a conceptual model that appears to have clear North Atlantic roots. In recent years, it has been suggested that Tokyo is shaped to an unusual degree by interventions by the state. This paper reviews this discussion and argues that the role of capital in Tokyo's restructuring has been underplayed. The paper places Japan's capital within a wider context of urban theorising through the use of three conceptual categories: urban governance, the urban terrain and urban life-spaces. It follows the story of the restructuring of Tokyo's urban terrain and the squeezing of life-spaces, drawing out the ever more substantial role of business corporations in urban development projects, with national government cheer-leading and local government increasingly sidelined.

Tokyo as Difficult Fit

Tokyo is on the move again, moving further down the road of corporate-led development and, as it does so, changing with bewildering rapidity. All around the city, but principally in central areas, new skyscrapers are appearing—like bamboo shoots after the rain, as the Japanese expression has it. The pace and intensity of this latest round of urban restructuring have puzzled observers and left them breathless (Funo, 2003). How can a country whose economy is only now recovering after years of stagnation generate this level of urban construction? And in broader terms, how should we understand urban change in Japan's capital? What are the paradigms, or the categories, that might help us to make sense of this vertiginous speed of change?

Until quite recently, Tokyo was something of a stranger to urban studies debates. Things began to change as a result of the by-now longstanding and fruitful discussion precipitated by John Friedmann's original 1986 proposition on the nature of world cities. Friedmann clearly placed Tokyo in the first tier of an echelon of world cities, which he characterised as being "major sites for the concentration and accumulation of international capital" (Friedmann, 1986, p. 73). He did at the same time express reservations about the nature of Tokyo's fit. Of the core cities, he wrote, the major exception is Tokyo, where "Japanese business practices and government policy have so far been successful in preventing foreign capital from making major investments in the city"

Paul Waley is in the School of Geography, University of Leeds, University Road, Leeds, LS2 9JT, UK. Fax: 0113 34 33308. E-mail: p.t.waley@leeds.ac.uk. *Part of the research for this paper was funded through a grant from the Daiwa Foundation. The author would also like to thank Watanabe Kiyomi, of the Tōkyō Bōsai Kenchiku Machizukuri Sentā (Tokyo Disaster-prevention and Construction Community-planning Centre), Suzuki Takanori of Taitō Ward Office, Suzuki Kenji of Minato Ward Office, and Kawabata Naoshi. All Japanese names are given in the usual Japanese order, with the family name first.*

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(Friedmann, 1986, p. 75). This sense of unease about the degree of Tokyo's fit is reflected in the work of Saskia Sassen. She too acknowledges the "government's strong role" (Sassen, 2001a, p. 279) and she points to further areas of divergence (p. 278).

This hesitation on the part of two leading proponents of world city theorising has been seized upon by a number of writers in the past few years. The critical attack has been led by Richard Childs Hill and June Woo Kim. Tokyo, they argue, as

> centre of the world's second-largest national economy and the world's largest urban agglomeration, departs from the world city paradigm on most salient dimensions (Hill and Kim, 2000, p. 2168).

The brunt of their argument is that both Friedmann and Sassen have seriously underplayed the role of the state in shaping the capital cities of Japan and Korea. Hill and Kim's paper has set a pattern for the expression of critical doubts on the appropriateness of Tokyo's insertion into a schema that is seen as being Western-inspired. Their arguments carry conviction, as do those of White (1998) and Saitō (2003), but I will contend here in this paper that, in emphasising the role of the state in the construction of Tokyo as a world city, the fundamental role of capital has been obscured.

I do not take issue here with the notion that Tokyo is a world city, by whatever definition one might choose. Equally, it would be hard to dispute the contention that it is a different sort of world city from New York or London. To put it crudely (but not inaccurately), Tokyo has many fewer foreigners and many more factories than do either London or New York (Hill and Kim, 2000). Global capital is not a major factor; the dominant presence in Tokyo is that of transnational Japanese corporations (Douglass, 1988). Yet this should neither obscure differences *between* London and New York (which are important but do not concern us here) nor should it suggest a bi-polar conceptual world. Tokyo may in certain respects suggest areas of conceptual similarity to Shanghai or Paris and in others to Berlin or Singapore. Speed and trajectories of change depend on starting-points, which differ one from another (Harloe, 1996; Brenner and Theodore, 2002).

At the centre of this paper lies a simple argument, that capital (Japanese, not global) plays a more important role in urban restructuring in Tokyo (and by extension in other large Japanese cities) than it has been given credit for. In making this claim, I am arguing concurrently that the state has, over the past two decades or so, withdrawn to a more strategic position, leaving centre stage to business corporations. However, to say that capital (in the form of corporate interests) is important in the context of Tokyo means neither that the state is totally absent nor that the city is prey to a process of global convergence, if for no other reason than that the corporations that dominate urban restructuring in Tokyo are predominantly Japanese in ownership and management. This claim for greater centrality for capital in urban restructuring rests on a distinction that has not always been tightly drawn between urban and industrial policy. The former, I would argue, exists within a weak planning framework and has historically failed to deliver (Sorensen, 2002). The latter formed the linchpin of economic growth in the post-war era and made of Japan the prototypical developmental state.

In this paper, I begin by sketching out a simple conceptual framework that sets urban restructuring in Tokyo in the context of the literature on urban change in Europe, in an attempt to draw up a more sophisticated theoretical understanding of Tokyo's proximity to (or distance from) other cities. I propose three conceptual headings under which to refract ideas about urban change in European cities and in Tokyo—urban governance, the urban terrain and urban life-spaces—and find considerable overlap in the positions taken by writers on urban Europe and Japan. Urban governance is here used to signify a conceptual space for debate about how cities are run; this is the conceptual space in which the arguments advanced here are situated. The urban terrain refers to the physical

spaces that are subject to development and restructuring; the term provides a conceptual frame for the substantive sections of this paper, which discuss urban restructuring in Tokyo first on a regional scale, then on an intermediate or 'compound' scale of restructuring and, finally, on a local, neighbourhood scale. Attention is focused on the intermediate scale, that of urban development projects (UDPs) covering between about 10 and 30 hectares; at this scale, we see most clearly the shifting roles of state and capital in urban restructuring, the state stepping back into a supervisory role as corporate developers rewrite the urban terrain. The developers, I argue in this section, are involved in a process of reticulation and articulation, fencing off and tacking on, to exploit floor-area rules to the maximum. While urban spaces are lived at a variety of scales, the preponderant spaces of everyday life are those of the family, neighbourhood and community, and for most people these are proximate if not always coterminous. It is at this neighbourhood level, in the spaces of everyday life, that the prestige projects of clustered skyscrapers give rise to tensions, as city centre functions spill over into contiguous inner-city areas. In the latter part of this paper, I discuss briefly some of the tactics used by local governments to arrest corporate encroachment and identify a few of the policies that have been employed to protect and bolster local communities. I conclude with some thoughts on the type of world city that Tokyo is and on the nature of state and corporate involvement in the restructuring of Japan's capital city.

Urban Governance, the Urban Terrain and Urban Life-spaces

The paragraphs that follow move Tokyo away from the potential trap of theoretical bi-polarity—Tokyo on one side and the metropolitan West on the other—by relating urban restructuring in the Japanese capital to recent commentaries on urban change in Europe. In particular, they draw attention to a sort of counter-intuitional role reversal, which sees a shifting weight in European narratives towards a recognition of the role of the state (both central and local, depending on the context) as orchestrator of the entrepreneurial city, while in Japan, in contrast, the argument is made here that the state has been involved in a retreat from a more tangible involvement in urban restructuring and has adopted a more withdrawn role.

Urban governance, the first of the three headings into which this discussion is grouped, refers to an understanding of the nature of leadership in the urban domain. At the heart of discussion of urban change in the past few decades lies the proposition that we have moved from a managerial to an entrepreneurial urban regime and from urban government to urban governance (Harvey, 1989). While this analysis has become central, it has been taken in various directions with a number of different emphases. For example, Hall and Hubbard have argued that

> It is difficult to assess whether the shift to entrepreneurial modes of governance is supplanting or merely supplementing traditional 'managerial' approaches (Hall and Hubbard, 1996, p. 155).

Differing inflections exist on the nature of urban governance, but most writers agree that public–private partnerships (with the weight between the component parts differing) operate at the core of urban restructuring and undertake urban regeneration projects (Hall and Hubbard, 1996; MacLeod *et al.*, 2003; Tickell and Peck, 1996; Ward, 2003). However, a number of qualifications are apparent. Hall and Hubbard (1996, p. 157) write that "the power often attributed to the private sector in urban coalitions is frequently more apparent than real", while both Harvey (1989) and MacLeod and Ward (2003) have argued that the difficulties in forming coalitions of business leaders allow for the emergence of charismatic leaders from the world of business.

Central to the entrepreneurial-turn literature (Ward, 2003) is the sense of a reduced role for the state, both national and local. Over the past three decades, there has been a

> slow erosion of key institutions enshrined in the welfare state and a major crisis in the legitimacy of modernist-inspired urban planning (MacLeod *et al.*, 2003, p. 1655).

Again, this pivotal *aperçu* has been subjected to a wide range of qualifications, but most of them tend towards a revision of this argument along two lines. The first, outlined by Jessop (1998, p. 90), sees a "complex rearticulation of different spatial scales", with no privileging of any one spatial scale. The second envisages the state as reasserting its authority, still pulling the strings. In the British context, this is understood, not surprisingly perhaps, as being "much less about rolling back the frontiers of the state than a restructuring of the local state apparatus in the interests of the central state" (Hall and Hubbard, 1996, p. 157). Indeed, Peck and Tickell (2002, p. 384) interpret this reassertion of the state's authority as reflecting a chronology in the development of neo-liberalism, from roll-back to roll-out.

Along with this repositioning of the state has come the marketing of the city. State restructuring is designed in pursuit of securing a competitive advantage for a country's leading cities (Brenner, 1999; Wu, 2003). The state, whether municipal or national, sees the city as an engine for income creation, competing to attract inward investment, rather than as an arena for wealth distribution (Harvey, 1989). Jessop and Sum (2000) talk in terms of the 'entrepreneurial city'; Ward (2003) writes of entrepreneurial urbanism. For Jessop and Sum (2000, p. 2289), an entrepreneurial city "pursues innovative strategies intended to maintain or enhance its economic competitiveness *vis-à-vis* other cities and economic spaces" and backs them up with the full panoply of entrepreneurial, market-oriented and marketing discourse. In short, the state orchestrates the entrepreneurial city.

The urban terrain is here understood as a space for speculative development, in the Lefebvrian sense—as a material embodiment and reflection of a process of fragmentation and reterritorialisation, expressed in this paper by the notion of horizontal reticulation and vertical articulation (Brenner, 2000; Weber, 2002). In cities throughout the post-industrial world, the collapse of manufacturing industry and its collateral infrastructure has left "many urban landscapes pockmarked with horrific scars, whether in the form of derelict warehouses, dilapidated housing or obsolete waterfronts" (MacLeod *et al.*, 2003, p. 1656). These pockmarks and scars are, however, being filled up with the excrescences of the post-industrial city—that is to say, a variety of prestige projects, gated communities, fortified enclaves and other forms of high walls and barriers to protect the rich and the would-be-rich (Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000; MacLeod and Ward, 2002). In particular, city centres stretching into inner-city areas have become the site both of 'prestigious', business-led projects developed by public–private partnerships in fenced-off terrains and of piecemeal urban regeneration undertaken by property interests and urban regeneration companies (Swyngedouw *et al.*, 2002; Ward, 2003).

Urban life-spaces represent a third conceptual aid to understanding changing urban conditions. Life-spaces are the territories of a daily dialectic between global impulses and local reactions, as people struggle to survive and make sense of them, to absorb and delight in them, to resist and reject them—to create their own *lebensraum*, their own "cultural frames and life strategies", as Öncü and Weyland (1997, p. 11) have so persuasively put it. In the contemporary urban world, life-spaces are stretched and squeezed, and then stretched again. Greater disparities of wealth arise from the focus of urban leaders on wealth creation rather than welfare distribution (Harvey, 1989, p. 12; MacLeod *et al.*, 2003, p. 1656). Social priorities are rejected. Social housing is relegated as an active concern of government. Attempts are made to exclude local residents and their representatives from involvement in UDPs, whatever the likely impact on their lives (Swyngedouw *et al.*, 2002). In general, there is a lack of local democratic participation in the planning process. Local residents are forced to fend

for themselves, isolated agents in the face of co-ordinated pressures.

How have these processes played themselves out in Japan and, more specifically, in the context of Tokyo? Can one talk of a shift from urban management to urban entrepreneurialism? What meaning might Jessop and Sum's formulation of the entrepreneurial city have in the context of Tokyo? In what ways is the urban terrain seen as a source of speculative and rent-seeking activity and to what extent does this impact on the life-spaces of Tokyo's inhabitants?

Central to the discussion about urban restructuring in Tokyo has been the role of the state. As we have seen, Hill and Kim (2000) insist on a more nuanced understanding of Tokyo's insertion alongside New York and London as a first-tier world (or global) city. They argue that

> John Friedmann (1995) has acknowledged that Tokyo does not fit the world city paradigm in some respects, but he does not address the implications for the world city hypothesis. Saskia Sassen (1999, p. 86), on the other hand, explains away Tokyo's differences as a temporary function of "Japan's uniqueness" and continues to assume that convergence among the world's major financial centres is the overall trend. We disagree (Hill and Kim, 2000, p. 2168).

(It is worth noting, *en passant*, that Friedmann (2001) and Sassen (2001b) both responded to these comments.) Hill and Kim go on to argue that

> New York and Tokyo are two different world city types ... the former is market-centred and bourgeois, the latter is state-centred and political-bureaucratic. Tokyo's distinctive world city characteristics stem from Japan's late industrialisation and especially from the relationship between industrial policy and finance institutionalised in Japan's developmental state (Hill and Kim, 2000, p. 2168).

Fujita follows a similar line of argument. "In sum", she writes, "Tokyo's urban development has been led by state policy" (Fujita, 2003, p. 255). The state, she argues, has shaped policy and managed institutional actors in such a way as to protect and nurture specific industries in the urban setting of Tokyo and Osaka, in particular. Government policies, with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) leading the way, are "designed to make Tokyo the regional centre of manufacturing technology" (Fujita, 2003, p. 265). Fujita makes it clear that different levels of government within the state adopt different positions. This is a point taken up by Saitō (2003), in his account of the struggle between national and metropolitan government to control the development of the Tokyo Waterfront Sub-centre.

Japan's developmental state has sought (with some degree of success) to manage the process of internationalisation of the economy, preferring to promote the outward expansion of its corporations (and its people's savings). Part of this process has involved laying the discursive and regulatory groundwork for the restructuring of Tokyo as an entrepreneurial city and, specifically, as an international city that fits the needs of an information society. Government activities have promoted these outcomes over a period of several decades, urged on by an assortment of business interests (Cybriwsky, 1998, p. 230; Saitō and Thornley, 2003). In the 1980s, when the mantras of the day were internationalisation and information society, the then prime minister, Nakasone Yasuhiro, introduced various measures designed to promote Tokyo's attractiveness for international businesses by deregulating the urban property market and stimulating investment in the urban terrain (Waley, 2000). These and other measures were badged as being part of a move to release and harness the energies of the private sector (*minkatsu*). Throughout the subsequent period of furious land price inflation, the nostrum advanced by many economists and other experts was the need for an increase in the supply of office space—current provision being regarded as insufficient in quantity and lacking in quality for a world city of Tokyo's pre-eminence (Oizumi, 1994). After some quieter years with falling property

prices, a new period of exhortatory entrepreneurial urbanism began with the election of the out-spoken Ishihara Shintarō to the metropolitan governorship in 1999. International competitiveness was again proclaimed as being an imperative if Tokyo was to compete successfully and retain a top-ranking world-city status, and again this was interpreted in terms of an attractive environment for business (TMG, 2001a; Newman and Thornley, 2004). While this has a fairly familiar ring to it in a European context, neither national nor metropolitan (nor still less local, ward-level) government has been involved in the same extent of city marketing and promotion as have many European cities. For example, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has only recently come up with a tourism policy, and, as Saitō and Thornley (2003, p. 682) point out, "there is no agency to encourage inward investment into Tokyo".

Central to the view, in the European context, of a shift from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism is, as we have seen, an understanding that partnerships between the public and private sector play a leading role. In the Japanese context, this is all the more so. Interlocking power structures are regarded by many as being at the heart of the way Japan operates. Various triangular power structures have been seen to draw together the bureaucracy, politicians and big business. In Gavan McCormack's analysis, development is directed by "an 'Iron Triangle' of politicians and bureaucrats, financial institutions and construction industry" (McCormack, 2002, p. 11; Woodall, 1996). Machimura, adapting the language of growth-coalition theory, refers to "a political coalition made up of growth-oriented governments at both national and local levels, urban developers and a ruling conservative party" (Machimura, 1998, p. 192). For Kitajima (1998, p. 38), Harvey is correct in "seeing partnership as an apparatus for a new path of capital accumulation, despite the relative autonomy of the state". For the case of Japan, she acknowledges "the decisive influence of central government via partnerships over regional and industrial restructuring" but sees too an "orientation of partnerships towards entrepreneurialism".

The urban terrain of Tokyo has presented itself as a highly attractive vehicle for exploitation by corporate interests, at least since the early 1980s—and this despite (or perhaps because of) the extraordinary volatility of the land market (Machimura, 1992). In the 1980s, a number of factors conspired to stoke a historical tendency towards speculative investment in urban land. These included low rates of interest, large corporate profits in external markets and low levels of domestic consumption (Noguchi, 1994; Oizumi, 1994). Speculative surges swept through the property market of Tokyo and then of other large Japanese cities, encouraged by bank lending funnelled through subsidiaries. At the same time, companies both Japanese and foreign were moving offices into Tokyo. Machimura (1992) identifies three private-sector groups involved in urban restructuring. The first are those who make money out of the construction effort, both the construction companies and the manufacturers and suppliers of materials; the second are those who will occupy or otherwise make use of the increased office space and other forms of capacity; and the third are those

> who try to influence the symbolic and semiotic structure of urban space and to diffuse urban ideology: big commercial capital, advertising agencies and various media institutions play an important role as 'space directors' (Machimura, 1992, p. 121).

Indeed, Tokyo's urban terrain has been the subject of a sustained if erratic process of exploitation, as companies have taken advantage of the relaxation of zoning and restrictions on floor area ratios to build upwards. In particular, the rewriting of the urban terrain has been made manifest in clusters of skyscrapers and corresponds unerringly to the process of fragmentation and reterritorialisation already referred to.

This exploitation of the urban terrain and the consequent process of urban restructuring has had severe consequences on the city's

life-spaces (Sorensen, 2003). The impact, as Machimura (1992, p. 126) points out, has been a divisive one, and has not therefore led to the extent of resistance that one might have expected. It has, however, impacted with particular severity on inner-city areas as a result of the expansion of central business functions and this has led to growing social fissures. It is true that we have yet to see in Japan (and perhaps never will) those spatial manifestations of the social insecurity of the moneyed classes found in many other parts of the world—gated communities, fortified enclaves and the like. However, the increasing precariousness of work and the weakness of social welfare structures have led to growing spatial manifestations of social malaise. The blue tarpaulins of the homeless form ironically colourful clusters in numerous parts of urban Japan, telling a very poignant story of a move away from the social compact that had once seen the fruits of economic prosperity fairly equitably distributed across society (Kennett and Iwata, 2003; Aoki, 2003). At a less acute level, Jacobs (2005) has shown how spatial inequality has grown in recent years in the 23-ward area of Tokyo (wards are the equivalents of London boroughs). Exacerbating these processes has been the ever-smaller extent of provision of social housing (Hayakawa and Hirayama, 1991; Hirayama, 2005).

To summarise this section, it would seem that, in the European context, commentators are increasingly aware of the importance of the state, repositioned as co-ordinator of municipal and regional strategies. At the municipal level, the state promotes and markets the city as commodity. It does so in partnership with leading corporate interests and, through partnership, it regenerates the city. Sub-sections of the urban terrain, generally in central and inner areas, are fenced off and built up to attract international business interests. Meanwhile, local residents caught in the interstices of these new UDPs are elbowed aside. When we come to look at Tokyo, we find that the state is generally seen as having put its stamp on the process of urban restructuring, promoting the Japanese capital as a world city through its interventions both symbolic and material in urban development. As in Europe, coalitions, public–private partnerships, are normally represented as the vehicle through which urban development projects are effected. However, in the following sections, I will redraw this picture in somewhat different shades, showing how urban development projects in Japan increasingly testify to a withdrawn role for the state in favour of corporate interests, for whom the urban terrain is a prime source of profit-making activity.

The Regional Scale of Urban Restructuring in Tokyo

In conceptualising urban restructuring in Tokyo, it helps to think in terms of a spatial framework that operates at three scales, at each of which urban restructuring has been envisaged, planned and undertaken within the Tokyo conurbation, and each of which will be examined in the remaining sections of this paper. The first of the three is the regional scale. At this scale, Tokyo's growth has been channelled in two directions: outwards across the Kantō plain of east Japan (and into surrounding foothills) with the designation of a number of satellite business cities in 1985; and along the coast of Tokyo Bay and even across the waters of the bay itself. The second scale is more local, an intermediate scale of compound-sized projects. In central and inner Tokyo, this is the scale at which much urban development has occurred, using the large plots of land left behind by the departing facilities of the industrial city. The third scale is more local still, that of the block or indeed the stand-alone plot. This is one of the main terrains of muted conflict, as developers attempt to assemble plots large enough to construct high-rise buildings and some local governments try to constrain the process.

In the post-war years, integrated industrial facilities planned, built and named after Soviet *konbinat* transformed the coast of many parts of urban Japan, including Tokyo Bay. At the same time, and perhaps not

entirely coincidentally, an influential set of young Japanese architects were publicising a series of apparently outrageous plans for a new extension for Tokyo that would transform the bay into a space age vision of dazzling proportions (Bognar, 1990). The architects, who called themselves Metabolists and were grouped around Tange Kenzō, Isozaki Arata and Kurokawa Kishō, were producing their plans in tandem with Japanese construction companies such as Nikken Sekkei. At the same time, leading businesses were putting their weight behind proposals to build a bridge across the bay as part of a broader strategy of development and growth around and in the bay (Samuels, 1983). Richard Samuels tells the story of the Industrial Planning Conference and its private sector 1959 Neo-Tokyo Plan, which he calls the most important and comprehensive development plan of the era of high growth. With its proposal that two-thirds of Tokyo Bay be filled in, "An aggressive private sector was clearly leading a compliant public sector" (Samuels, 1983, p. 173).

Some of the plans bore fruition (the bay is now crossed by a combined road and tunnel link, for example); others remained on paper. Yet they played a much more important role and one that has passed largely unnoticed. They promoted the bay, aroused interest in its potential and whetted the appetite of big corporations who, when the time came, rose to the challenge in a significant, if not always sustained, way. So it is that alongside numerous 'smaller' projects, three (and four if one includes Tokyo Disneyland) mega-scale developments have been undertaken, Makuhari Messe in Chiba Prefecture, Yokohama Mirai 21 and the Tokyo Waterfront Sub-centre. When considered together, these three mega-projects are probably rivalled in terms of size only by Shanghai's Pudong development.

The planning and construction of the Tokyo Waterfront Sub-centre has already been the subject of English-language accounts (O'Leary and Machimura, 1995; Saitō, 2003) and it is not my intention here to retell this story. Rather, I would like to draw out one or two key points. The first of these is the contextual setting for the sub-centre, that of the development of the bay-side area. The planning of the sub-centre needs to be seen in the context of historical expansion into the sea, a confident state sector able to direct this process and a dynamic private sector keen to take on the task. Saitō (2003, p. 303) has argued that the Waterfront Sub-centre is an example both of the state's pre-eminent role in urban development and also of a lack of unity of purpose between different layers of government. The fact that most of the land due for development was in the hands of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government certainly gave the TMG a central stake in the project. It was principally as a result of the unprecedented strength of the position of the then governor, Suzuki Junichi, that a project of this size could be undertaken. Equally, it would appear to be the case that Suzuki became alarmed by the extent of involvement of the deputy prime minister and political ringmaster, Kanemaru Shin.

Suzuki's tactic for denying Kanemaru and central government politicians too prominent a role was the creation of a public–private partnership, the Tokyo Waterfront Development (TWD) Inc. Formed in the classic mould of third-sector organisations, TWD had a controlling interest from the public side as well as investment potential as a result of private-sector involvement. Yet O'Leary and Machimura show how, in a telling arrangement, key middle-level decision-making posts were held by people from the private sector, for the most part employees of general construction companies seconded to city banks and then by the banks to the TWD. The private sector was therefore intimately involved in the project, which was planned according to prescriptions sure to draw support from big business. Indeed, a number of those companies that had invested in TWD were members of the consortium that won the first round of bidding (O'Leary and Machimura, 1995).

Ostensibly, the Waterfront Sub-centre represented an arena of dispute between central and metropolitan government, but in fact these two authorities shared a broadly similar

view of the end product. They differed principally over control. Dissent, such as it was, came from left-of-centre and anti-ruling-party forces at the national, metropolitan and local levels, but it took the force of an extraneous event—the bursting of the bubble—for them to be able to have an impact. As discredited governments were defeated first in the national Diet and then, in 1995, at the metropolitan level, so the opposition to the Waterfront Sub-centre suddenly became more than off-stage whispers. In particular, the new governor of Tokyo, Aoshima Yukio, was able to take action and pursue long-mooted opposition demands for a greater proportion of affordable housing and, in general, more than a tokenistic approach to the construction of a multi-functional development rather than a simple business centre. It is ironic therefore that the Waterfront Sub-centre has become today one of the city's leading tourist attractions, with its artificial beach drawing massive crowds in the summer. Projects of this size clearly need support and a steer from government, but it would be unwise to underestimate the role of big business in their construction.

Ishihara Shintarō, the right-wing nationalist who was elected governor in 1999, based his vision and policies for the future of Tokyo around reconcentration of business and other functions in the centre of the conurbation as part of his Circular Megalopolis Strategy (TMG, 2001a; Fujita, 2003; Newman and Thornley, 2004). He campaigned hard against moves to strip Tokyo of its capital-city functions and pressed national government to improve the city's airport and its international transport links (TMG, 2001a; 21 Seiki, 2003). In pursuing these policies, Ishihara was both aiming for an environment more attractive to business (TMG, 2001b, p. 9) and promoting a more business-oriented process of urban restructuring.

The Intermediate, 'Compound' Scale of Restructuring of the Urban Terrain

The urban terrain in Tokyo is constantly being rewritten. Perhaps the most dramatic visual shock in recent decades has been the sprouting of bamboo-shoot clusters of high-rise buildings. Most (but not all) of these clusters of skyscrapers have been built on fenced-off plots of land with a distinctive history that can often be traced back to the period of shogunal rule, plots that I am here referring to as compounds. They have been built on the site of the mansions and villas of feudal lords, former shogunal shipyards, prison compounds, early factories, or railway yards dating back to the late 1800s (Machimura, 1994). Many of them remained fenced-off territories even as their function changed. Hence, they have been detached from the surrounding city and have had special planning regulations attached to them.

Development of these compounds, representing the intermediate scale in urban restructuring, falls fairly easily into three rounds (Table 1)—Saitō and Thornley (2003) offer a similar chronology. The first takes us from the early 1960s through the 1970s and can be seen as part of a government-directed transformation of the urban territory designed to replace large factories and other 'inefficient' users of land with housing. Round two lasts from the early 1980s to the early 1990s. This is a decade marked first by Nakasone's policy to promote the private sector in urban restructuring and then by the economic bubble, the extraordinary five years (1986–91) of speculation and spiralling land and property prices. Urban development during this round was characterised by mixed-function projects, with some involvement from the public sector, often in the form of co-management, and a small quota of public housing. The third round, which marks urban development in the 2000s, while differing in some important respects from the late 1980s, springs out of the excesses of the bubble economy. The projects characteristic of this period are large in size, long in the process of accumulation and led almost entirely by private-sector consortia.

The first round, then, began in the 1960s after the passage of legislation in 1959 designed to convert urban space by encouraging the users of large plots of land (principally factories and universities) to move out of Tokyo's 23-ward

Table 1. Scales and rounds of urban restructuring in Tokyo

		Three scales of restructuring			
		Regional scale			
Round	Political-economic conjuncture	Kantō plain	Tokyo Bay	Compound project scale	Scale of block or building
1960s and into 1970s	1959 Factory, etc., Relocation Law Rapid economic growth Business-led urban and regional development punctuated by government measures to disperse industrial activity	Regional plans for Kantō, for example, First National Capital Region Development Plan (1958)	Metabolist plans for Bay Neo-Tokyo Plan, 1959	Factory sites for housing, for example, Shirahige, RiverPark Shioiri and other housing complexes in east Tokyo (at Tōyōchō, Minami Suna, Komatsugawa)	Reconstruction of houses and buildings on existing plots
1980s and early 1990s	Strong exports and trade imbalance; sharp revaluation of yen Transnationalisation of Japanese production capital Repatriated profits invested in urban territory Prime Minister Nakasone's policy of 'deregulation' and involvement of private sector (*minkatsu*) Governor Suzuki supports private-sector role in urban restructuring	Designation of satellite business cities (1986)[a]	Designation of sub-centres (1986), of which largest is Tokyo Waterfront Sub-centre[b] Other mammoth bay-side projects: Yokohama MM 21; Makuhari Messe; Tokyo Disneyland	Mixed-function projects Public–private partnerships Some public housing, for example, Ōkawabata River City 21, Yebisu Garden Place	Assembling of small plots into site large enough for high-rise building Replacement of older free-standing houses with apartment blocks predominantly for single working men (wanman manshion)

	Economic bubble and speculative land transactions Uni-polarisation of economic activity in Tokyo region				
Mid 1990s hiatus	Government measures introduced to restrain urban restructuring Quality-of-life issues raised, for example, by Governor Aoshima Huge bad-debt problem for banks; falling land prices	Law introduced designed to promote move of national capital out of Tokyo	Governor Aoshima cancels planned international Urban Frontier Exhibition in waterfront	Reduced activity	Continued construction of medium and high-rise buildings along main streets
Late 1990s and 2000s	Governor Ishihara wins power, 1999; focuses on Tokyo's international competitiveness 2002 Urban Regeneration Law Includes measures to promote private-sector involvement in urban restructuring and greater latitude to local governments Waiving of controls on FARs Bad-debt problem remains; land prices flat Repeal of 1959 Factory, etc.; relocation Law	Governor Ishihara's Circular Megalopolis strategy (prioritising transport links, especially airports)	Circular Megalopolis strategy	Large, long-term, private-sector-led projects come to fruition Most of these use large plots of land sold off as part of rationalisation moves, for example, Roppongi Hills, Shiodome, Shinagawa East, Tokyo Mid-Town project	Renewed vigour in reconstruction of urban fabric

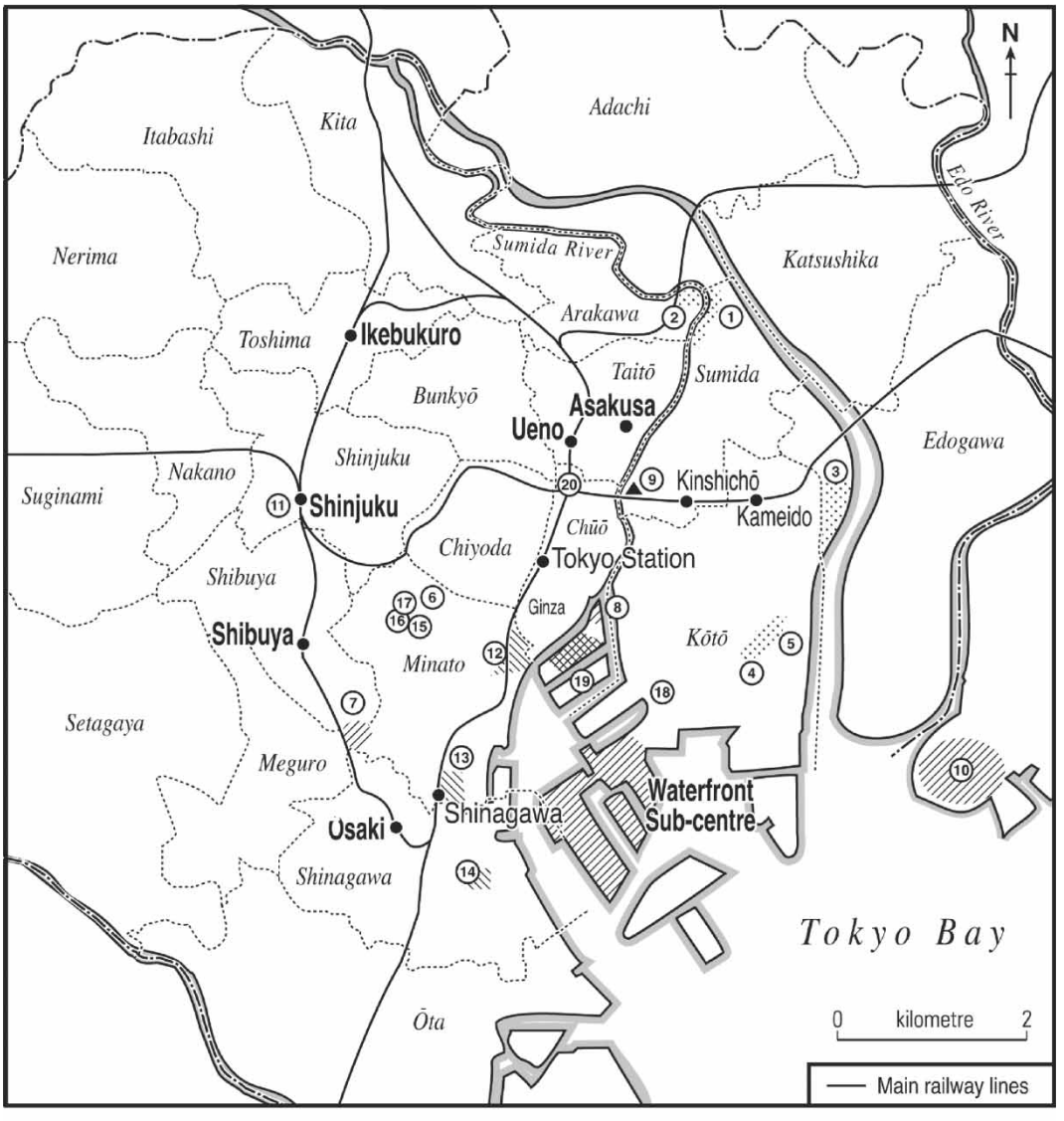
[a]Satellite business cities: Ōmiya/Urawa, Tachikawa/Hachiōji, Kawasaki/Yokohama, Chiba/Makuhari.
[b]Sub-centres: Shinjuku, Shibuya, Ōsaki, Kinshichō/Kameido, Ueno/Asakusa, Ikebukuro, Waterfront.

area. This was accompanied by policy measures drafted by the National Capital Development Commission to shift industrial development away from Tokyo (Samuels, 1983, p. 167). In the 1960s and 1970s, as factories moved to industrial zones—some in the bay-side area but most in surrounding prefectures—the land they vacated was sought by the metropolitan government and, where possible, developed by the TMG and public housing providers as part of a strategy to meet population targets, keep population numbers up in inner-city areas and create a safer and more modern residential infrastructure in parts of the city characterised by wooden housing and narrow streets.

Developed during the early phase of urban restructuring were two large sites in Tokyo's poorer north-east inner city (Figure 1). Both had been occupied by factories; one included a railway yard. Both developments fell within the framework of new legislation—the 1969 Urban Redevelopment Law, *toshi saikaihatsu hō*—designed to promote the construction of large new multistorey housing estates. Both the sites were situated along the city's main river, the Sumida. The east bank, where one of Japan's first modern textile factories, Kanebō Bōseki, had been located, was the first to be developed. A forbidding wall of 16 high-rise tenement blocks, known as East Shirahige, with 2300 dwellings was completed by the mid 1970s (Flüchter, 2003). Like many other such projects, the East Shirahige development was cast in terms of disaster prevention, which remains a central discursive pillar of urban restructuring in Tokyo.

The development of the area on the west bank was far more conflictual. Having acquired the vacant factory sites, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government decided to demolish an area of old housing known as Shioiri adjacent to the site and develop the larger district as part of the same project (Waley, 1993). However, various Shioiri residents were opposed to the plan; they included a small number of landowning families who had lived in the area since the 16th century. It was only after long negotiation and a legal compromise around the offer of new housing for these families that the project could actually begin, in the late 1980s. The new district that has resulted, known as RiverPark Shioiri, remains cut off from the rest of the city by railway lines and, despite a population of around 15 000, it appears to have done little to infuse new dynamism into the rather depressed surrounding areas. Despite being somewhat larger in size and later in realisation, RiverPark Shioiri is otherwise representative of the first phase of urban redevelopment. It was planned and executed by officials of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government with the stated aim of creating a safer and more modern environment for urban living in one of the city's poorer and more fire-prone areas. Similar developments occurred in other parts of the industrial east of the city, with large housing estates, known as *danchi*, appearing between the grid of canals and streets in the low-lying east of the city, especially along the bay (Jacobs, 2005).

A second round began in the 1980s. In the early and mid 1980s, the Nakasone government introduced the *minkatsu* measures referred to earlier, lifting restrictions on urban development by relaxing zoning regulations and other rules and selling off public land to developers (Hayakawa and Hirayama, 1991). While this was happening, funds repatriated by Japan's manufacturers were finding their way back into a surging property market and, by the latter part of the 1980s, Tokyo was awash with excess liquidity and had become the arena for rampant speculation in the built environment (Noguchi, 1994; Waley, 2000; Kerr, 2002). During the 1980s, steps were taken to create a more diffuse metropolitan area and spread development more evenly across the city and the larger conurbation, with the creation of sub-centres and satellite cities (Table 1). The sub-centres were designed to encourage the grouping of new high-order business developments in a number of sub-centre nodes in a controlled dispersal from the Marunouchi district. However, if the aim was to reduce congestion in the centre, the result appears to have been rather different, as intensification of medium and high-rise developments continued between



High-rise predominantly public housing estates, 1960s and into 1970s.

1. Shirahige East 2. RiverBank Shioiri 3. Komatsugawa 4. Tōyōchō 5. Minami Suna

Sub-centres, waterfront developments and other prestige projects, 1980s and early 1990s

6. Ark Hills 7. Yebisu Garden Place 8. Riverside City 21 9. Edo-Tokyo Museum 10. Disneyland 11. City Hall

High-rise projects of the 2000s

12. Shiodome 13. Shinagawa East 14. Shinagawa Seaside Forest 15. Roppongi Hills 16. National Art Gallery
17. Tokyo Mid-Town Project 18. Shinonome Canal Project 19. Triton Square 20. Akihabara

Tsukishima

Figure 1. Large urban development projects in Tokyo. Scale: 1: 175 000.

the various sub-centres and throughout the centre of the city (Ishida, 1992; Sorensen, 2001).

Three projects in Tokyo's central wards stand out—for their size and for the manner in which they captured media attention. Two were public–private partnerships; the first to be completed was also the city's first mammoth private development project. Ark Hills was in fact the work of a maverick property developer, Mori Taikichirō, who cleared existing residents from this prime site and constructed in place of their small dwellings a mixed-use compound—office space, hotel, concert hall and up-market rented accommodation (almost 300 000 square metres of floor space, with a floor area ratio of 726 per cent). Ark Hills was a tremendous success in headline terms, winning much publicity on account in particular of its lavish cultural facilities, but the resistance of local residents was overcome only through the intervention of the ward, which rewrote floor-area ratio limits, and an improved offer to reaccommodate displaced residents (Popham, 1985, p. 83).

The second project lies on what used to be a small island at the mouth of the Sumida River and occupies a large plot of land that had once been the site of the shogunal shipyards and more recently had been owned by the shipbuilders IHI. The compound and surrounding land were bought from IHI by Mitsui Bussan (Mitsui's property arm) and Nihon Jūtaku Kōdan, a housing supply corporation (Housing Museum, 2005). The resulting Ōkawabata RiverCity 21 was a flagship project in one of the most conspicuous locations in the city. Much play was made of its waterfront site. The development was marked by a mixture of housing types—about two-thirds of the 3886 dwellings were rented housing, some of them in the private sector, some of them public (but very expensive nonetheless) (*Japan Times*, 1990). A new school was built, new roads and a new bridge to link the island directly to the centre of the city. With its iconic sculpture, Egg of the Wind, designed by the architect Itō Tōyō, the project heralded the rebirth of city-centre living and has prefaced the recent construction of further high-rise housing (nearly all of it private-sector) in the immediate environs.

The third of these projects, Yebisu Garden Place, was completed slightly later, in 1994 (Yebisu Garden Place, 2005). The 11-hectare site is owned by the Sapporo beer company, whose brewery once occupied this plot alongside the city's circular railway line. The mixed-function development consists of offices, expensive shops, a hotel, museum, restaurants (including a pantomime version of Tintin's Chateau Moulinsart) and housing—the Tokyo Metropolitan Government having stipulated that one-third of the developed space should take the form of housing. Like Ark Hills, there was much publicity surrounding the project; it became a prestigious symbol of a style of urban living based around the consumption practices of young, independent salaried people and especially women.

This second round was followed by a somewhat quieter period, during which the city and its inhabitants attempted to recover from the consequences of the economic and property bubble and its bursting. A number of government measures were introduced to place restraints on urban restructuring. This partial tightening of controls combined with falling land prices, hesitance over the wisdom of full-speed construction-led development and widespread concern over quality-of-life issues voiced by the then metropolitan governor Aoshima Yukio resulted in a hiatus in large development projects even as smaller projects continued to be undertaken along main streets and wherever there was sufficient space to build upwards.

As one might expect, the third round of urban projects, from about 2000 on, is closely linked to the earlier one in a number of respects. The ideological agenda is by now similar again to the one that prevailed under the Nakasone government. Controls and restrictions have been further loosened, with a series of measures that have significantly relaxed floor-area ratios (FARs). The centrepiece of recent government policy is the 2002 Urban Regeneration Law (*toshi saisei tokubetsu sochi hō*), under which the

prime minister's office can virtually sidestep the TMG and city governments elsewhere in Japan, earmark areas for redevelopment and give considerable powers to private-sector developers (Igarashi and Ogawa, 2003; Sorensen, 2003; Fujii *et al.*, 2007). The law, which was instigated by the then prime minister, Koizumi Junichirō, is intended to breathe life back into the urban economy while facilitating private-sector involvement in urban development projects.

By now, government has withdrawn almost entirely from these projects (mainstream housing provision is no longer seen as lying within the remit of the state). As if to reinforce this, PFI, introduced through legislation in 1999, is being used in the reconstruction of government buildings. After a 15-year period of decline, land prices started rising again in Tokyo in the latter part of 2005 (*Asahi*, 2006). The projects in this round of urban restructuring are mainly in central areas of the city and this reflects their nature as prestigious, business-led operations in a pattern of development of the urban terrain replicated in other large cities around the world. The size of the projects in terms of floor space and height of buildings has been successively increased, as new rules have allowed for ever-greater relaxation of existing regulations. Ironically, companies have moved out of Ark Hills and even the later Yebisu Garden Place into the 'intelligent' buildings of the latest generation of urban development project.

When the Japanese National Railways were privatised in 1988, a number of centrally located railway yards were earmarked for development as a strategy to recuperate debt. Even the prospect of development on these large compounds sparked a furious speculative surge, so much so that the plans were put on hold. By the late 1990s, with land prices generally falling and the economy becalmed, the plans were reactivated and the former railway yards were converted into high-rise multifunction developments, adding vast amounts of office space; Anderson (2003) writes of 34 per cent of existing higher-quality office space becoming available in central Tokyo between 2002 and 2005. Other large prestige projects such as Roppongi Hills, many of them in various stages of planning for a decade or longer, were brought to fruition now. Once again, Tokyo was being transformed at a rate and with a comprehensiveness that spoke of an extremely well adapted corporate system, as well as sufficient labour and well-honed construction technology, resistant, as the 1995 Kobe earthquake showed, to large tremors. All this activity—and it surprised many with its extent—was supported and facilitated by a further change in political mood and the regulatory environment, as government acted to boost the urban economy. The situation had gone full circle in 20 years.

In this latest round of restructuring, two projects stand out and, indeed, have a resonance that has redefined Tokyo's contemporary culture and economy. They are Roppongi Hills and the biggest of all the redevelopment projects, on the site of Tokyo's first railway station, Shiodome, in Shinbashi next door to Ginza. These high-water marks of urban restructuring were privately undertaken with guidance from local and metropolitan governments and within an overall regulatory framework set by metropolitan and central governments. They thus represent a move away from the earlier phase of urban development project with its mixed involvement from public and private sectors.

Roppongi Hills is the largest of Mori's attempts to rewrite the urban terrain. It was 20 years in the making and involved negotiation with some 500 rights holders—landowners, leasees and tenants (Shimada, 2002). At 11 hectares and 720 000 square metres of floor space, the site is twice the size of Mori's earlier flagship project, Ark Hills, located just a 20-minute walk away. It seems that Mori Minoru (son of Taikichirō, the company founder) had learnt some lessons from Ark Hills and adopted a more emollient approach towards those affected, aided also by new legislation that enabled him to carry forwards the project with the backing of two-thirds of rights-holders. In fact, about 400 joined the specially formed

Roppongi 6 chōme Urban Redevelopment Association (Shimada, 2002, p. 23). There was nevertheless sufficient opposition to delay the project for three years. Roppongi Hills is now a cliché of the contemporary city, a landmark in the popular imagination—avoided at all costs by some, but a magnet for many others. Like the earlier UDPs, it is a mixed-function development, with two up-market residential towers, the head office of a television company and expensive shops, in addition to the main bulk of office space in the central tower. In publicity terms, the project is built around a gallery and exhibition space at the top of this tower, enabling Mori to claim that Roppongi Hills is the cultural heart of the city (*bunka no toshin*) and use the facility to draw direct comparisons between Tokyo and other 'global cities'. The dominant irony of the project escaped few observers—that Mori had to offer generous inducements to entice prestigious tenants such as Goldman Sachs and Lehman Brothers. Yet these same companies were moving from the earlier Ark Hills complex down the road (Anderson, 2003).

While representative of this type of UDP in some respects, Roppongi Hills—like Ark Hills and the other numerous Mori projects—is peculiar in that it is the work of one company. The redevelopment of the 31-hectare Shiodome railway yard next door to Shinbashi station, an even-larger project, was undertaken by several consortia of private businesses (Shimada, 2002; 21 Seiki, 2003, p. 77; Shiodome, 2005). Bidding for the first three parcels of land eventually got underway in 1997. The sale fetched ¥7 million per square metre and was widely seen as a fillip to an urban economy in the doldrums (Shimada, 2002, p. 161), although, as Kamata writes, the fact that the assets were disposed of at the bottom of the market represented a huge bonus for private companies—and a loss for the state (Kamata, 2004). The entire site has been split into five large zones, one of which, located on the other side of the railway line, has been separately developed. The first three zones are office developments, with some commercial and recreational functions; the other two are more mixed in function. Shiodome has been widely presented as a new centre for information and media companies and in fact Nippon Television, the advertising company Dentsū and Matsushita Denkō were lead bidders in the first round of development; they have now moved their headquarters to Shiodome, joined by Kyodo News Agency. The property arm of Mitsui managed one of the bids, with part of the finance coming from a company funded by the Singapore government. The Shiodome project, with 12 buildings over 100 metres high, claims on its website to be the fruit of a partnership between government and the private sector, accounting for 61 000 jobs and having 6000 inhabitants, but only one building contains public housing—680 dwellings—equal to about 12 per cent of the total project floor space (Shiodome, 2005; 21 Seiki, 2003, p. 79).

Roppongi Hills and Shiodome are but two examples of the numerous large urban restructuring projects that characterise central and inner Tokyo in the first few years of the 21st century (Table 2). Within a five-minute walk from Roppongi Hills are two other large projects, Tokyo Midtown, built on the site of the Defence Agency's headquarters, and a new national art gallery, replacing buildings belonging to Tokyo University. A short rail journey from Shinbashi station (next door to Shiodome) takes one either north to Akihabara or south to Shinagawa, both of which districts contain new bamboo-shoot skyscraper clusters. Each of these projects includes some private housing (minimal in the case of Shinagawa) and both reap the rewards from massive (state and private-sector) investment in new railway stations. Between Shinbashi and Akihabara, the Marunouchi district, the city's first and still its foremost business centre, is being transformed, both through the construction of entirely new buildings but also through the retention of older facades and the erection behind them of high-rise office blocks (21 Seiki, 2003; Ōtemachi, 2005). The reconstruction of Marunouchi is particularly noteworthy, for its size, extent and centrality in the city, and

Table 2. Representative urban development projects in central Tokyo, late 1990s and 2000s

Year of completion	Name of UDP	Size		Project developer(s)	Previous land use	Project land use functions
		Ground area (hectares)	Total floor space (square metres)			
2001	Triton Square	10	672 000	Consortium of landowners including Sumitomo, Urban Development Corp. (Toshi Kiban Seibi Kōdan)[a]	Mixed: factories, warehouses, housing	Residential, office, commercial, recreational
2002–07	Shiodome (Buīta Itaria on west of railway tracks)	31	>1 250 000	Various, including principally: Dentsū (advertising), Kyōdō News Agency, Nihon TV; property companies of Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo groups; Mori Trust,[b] Urban Development Corp.	Railway yard (and transport-related buildings on west of tracks)	Office, commercial, hotel, recreational, residential
2003	Roppongi Hills	11.6	720 600	Mori Building	Housing, commercial, offices	Office, commercial, recreational, residential
2004	Shinagawa East	16.2	1 094 500	Various, but principally 10-company consortium led by Mitsubishi Shōji (trading)	Railway yard	Office, commercial, residential
2004	Shinagawa Seaside Forest	9.6	504 000	Kashima Construction Co.	Mainly factory site	Office, commercial, hotel, residential

(*Table continued*)

Table 2. Continued

Year of completion	Name of UDP	Size		Project developer(s)	Previous land use	Project land use functions
		Ground area (hectares)	Total floor space (square metres)			
2004–06	Akihabara	24	>159 513	Various, including Daibiru (property), NTT (telecoms), Kashima (construction)	Wholesale market, railway yard	Office, commercial, hotel, residential
2005	Shinonome Canal Court	16		Mitsubishi group companies; housing corporations	Mitsubishi factory site	Residential, social welfare facilities
2007	Tokyo Midtown Project	10.1	566 000	Consortium led by Mitsui Fudōsan (property)	Defence Agency	Office, commercial, hotel, residential, gardens
2007	National art gallery		48 000	Government	Tokyo University facilities	Cultural/recreational
2007	Marunouchi/ Ōtemachi/ Yūrakuchō/ Yaesu (Tokyo station east exit)	111		Various, but principally Mitsubishi Jisho (property)	No change	Office, commercial

[a]This was transformed in 2004 into the Urban Renaissance Agency (Toshi Saisei Kikō).

[b]Mori Trust is owned Mori Akira, brother of Mori Minoru, who owns Mori Building, the company that developed Ark Hills and Roppongi Hills. The brothers parted company and split the family business on the death of their father.

Sources: Toshi Kōzō, 2003; 21 Seiki, 2003; Shimada, 2002; Seibidō, 2004; Anderson, 2003.

because it succeeds an earlier, far more ambitious plan to rebuild the area announced by the landowner, Mitsubishi, in 1988; this plan had been nipped in the bud by a wary metropolitan government (*Asahi*, 1988; Saitō and Thornley, 2003).

All of these and the many other large projects underway are conducted through the creation of project management committees in accordance with the Urban Redevelopment Law of 1969—indeed, the committee for the Marunouchi district has recognition as an NPO (approximately, the Japanese equivalent of NGO) (Toshi Kōzō, 2003, p. 44). While there is some disagreement about the impact of so much office floor space in central areas (this is sometimes referred to as the '2003 problem'), much of the space has been filled by companies looking to rationalise their offices within one building and this in turn has led to vacancies and problems in 'older' buildings in less 'prestigious' parts of the city (Anderson, 2003). In sum, these new UDPs are undertaken by private consortia working within the parameters laid down by the state. They make claims to be multifunctional, and indeed do generally involve some housing, although this is likely to be private and, inevitably, expensive (Hirayama, 2005). They are reticulated, fenced off from the rest of the urban terrain; they are articulated to the maximum possible degree, in the sense that developers use the successive rounds of rule relaxation (documented by Fujii *et al.*, 2007) to tack floor onto floor and build as high as possible. Along with various other smaller city-centre and inner-city projects, they are prime examples of the restructuring of Tokyo's urban terrain. The state has adjusted the regulatory framework, through the Urban Regeneration Law, and otherwise generally adopted an exhortatory role for this scale of urban restructuring.

The Scale of the Block: Urban Restructuring as Fill-in

The terrain around and between the urban development projects has been for some time now a space of struggle between the forces of development and local governments and communities, with those attempting to douse the flames of rampant development in a slow and sometimes disorderly retreat. On the ground, these tensions play themselves out in the fencing-off of territories, the process of horizontal reticulation and vertical articulation already referred to. On the one hand, developers fence off parcels of land to take advantage of mechanisms that relax floor-area-ratio restrictions and seek to expand the size of their parcels by buying up and amalgamating neighbouring or nearby properties. Against that, local governments use a variety of regulatory devices including right-to-sunlight rules in a generally forlorn attempt to restrict the height of buildings.

In this struggle, the forces are unevenly arrayed. Local governments and local communities are not always united in their aims and, even when they are, they do not find it easy to establish consistent policies. In Tokyo, local ward-level governments have increasingly found themselves sidelined by national interventions such as the Urban Regeneration Law that wrest power from the local level—flying in the face of the officially inspired discourse of greater local autonomy (Hein and Pelletier, 2006). Officials of the TMG look both ways. Some look towards national government and favour a much more unfettered development policy, while others in alliance with ward government staff support measures to counter untrammelled development. Academics and planners are to be found on both sides of the argument.

The struggle has followed a timetable that reflects regulatory change, which itself reflects the state of the property market and the economy more generally. Thus, in the past 20 or so years, legislative steps have occasionally been adopted to retard the advance of the developers; such was the case for a while in the 1990s, when somewhat half-hearted attempts were made to arrest the development process. For most of this period, however, and especially after 1995, measure after measure was introduced to allow for more intense use of land on grounds of efficiency and fears of falling

behind regional 'competitors' such as Shanghai (Fujii *et al.*, 2007). Increasingly, proponents and opponents of aggressive development are using the same planning tools to further their cause. The district plan (*chiku keikaku*) was originally introduced in 1981 as a tool to afford residents and local governments closer control over the type and intensity of redevelopment of local neighbourhoods (Ishida, 2004, p. 265; Sorensen, 2002, p. 268). They have been successfully used in many Japanese cities to create an urban environment more congenial to residents. However, in recent years, a welter of changes have been made to the system and district plans can now be employed as a vehicle for high-density, high-rise development (*kanwagata chiku keikaku*), even as local governments employ them as an instrument to restrict urban change (Toshi Kōzō, 2003).

One part of Tokyo where the pressures of urban restructuring are acutely felt is Tsukishima, hemmed in among new urban development projects between the city centre and the bay. Tsukishima is a district still consisting for the most part of two-storey wooden-frame houses. It was built up from the sea in the 1890s as a location for the small metal and machinery factories that had become central to Japan's economic growth (Waley, 1992). It is situated very close to the city centre (an easy half-hour's walk from Ginza) and, since the 1990s, has been crossed by two metro lines. At one end of Tsukishima stands the bamboo-shoot cluster of high-rise housing known as Ōkawabata RiverCity 21 and at the other is one of the city's brashest new development projects, Triton Square.

In Tsukishima, the Chūō Ward government is using new provisions in the district planning system to allow for the reconstruction of houses on existing plots, hoping thereby to retain residents and guard against encroachment by property developers (Kibe, 2003; Tamura, 2003). Under these provisions, houses can be rebuilt to three storeys while down-grading the alley onto which they face. At the same time, the rebuilt house is set a little further back. This sort of subtle intervention can only be undertaken with the approval of all the residents of the alley. As is normal with such schemes, a minimal amount of help is available from government—in this case about ¥1 million per dwelling (approximately £4500 at 2006 rates), to be used for connection to sewage and water mains and similar purposes. Ward officials and planners admit that progress has been slow, but they believe their measures have raised awareness among residents of the threat posed by the construction of new high-rise apartment blocks (K. Watanabe, personal communication, 12 December 2003). However, contradictions abound in Tsukishima, including a 34-storey apartment building in the middle of the district, one of many lone skyscrapers that dot Tokyo's landscape, the consequence of the relaxation of rules on the height of buildings.

Tsukishima is unusual in its proximity to the city centre, but in other respects it is fairly typical of older pre-war or immediately post-war districts. In these districts (chiefly but not exclusively eastern and north-eastern areas), ward governments—with different emphases depending on local conditions—have pursued policies over several decades designed first to maintain and if possible increase the number of residents and secondly to provide support for local small and medium enterprises (and in particular, manufacturers). In pursuing these aims, they received support, and indeed operated in consort with the TMG and central government, at least in the 1970s and 1980s, but since then the TMG has directed its energies elsewhere—for example, in the promotion of technology innovation industries (Fujita, 2003).

After many years of decline, population levels are rising in Tokyo's central and inner-city wards, and particularly in the case of Chūō Ward. In Chūō, as in most of the inner-city wards, local governments introduced in the 1980s and early 1990s a plethora of policies designed to attract younger residents and tempt existing residents to stay (*Nihon Keizai*, 1991). How effective these were is a moot point. The growth in population, which began

in the late 1990s, is no doubt attributable to a range of other factors—not least the construction of high-rise housing, as in the RiverPark Shioiri and Ōkawabata RiverCity 21 projects. Important too is the existence of a growing cohort of 'empty nesters', who have found themselves able to move into central or inner-city apartments as a result of lower property prices. Japan's rapidly ageing population makes population levels a source of acute concern for local governments. However, a growing number of new residents moving into high-rise housing is not likely to lead to well-balanced local communities. Disparities in lifestyle between those living in high-rise blocks and the inhabitants of older two-storey houses are great and they pose formidable problems for local governments attempting to reconcile interests and formulate policies.

A number of ward governments have introduced measures to promote small and medium enterprises, and in particular local manufacturers (despite occasional opposition from newer residents). The measures introduced by Ōta Ward, in the south of the city, have received some considerable attention in the literature, both English and Japanese language (Seki, 1990; Whittaker, 1997; Fujita, 2003). Less has been said about the policies pursued by local authorities in north-east Tokyo (Sumida, 2003). One of the most active of these is the Sumida Ward Government; it published an influential book in 1987, which was both a realistic appraisal of the problems of industry in an inner-city Tokyo ward and a vision for local industrialists and the local population more generally (Sumida, 1987). Since the 1980s, Sumida Ward has provided institutional help for industrialists (Sumida, 1988). It established a Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises, where industrialists could meet, hold fairs and receive training; and in April 2000 it opened a fashion centre as a location for exhibitions, promotion and information exchange for the ward's many textile manufacturers (mainly in knitwear).

As these examples suggest, local government initiatives aimed at creating thriving communities are variable in their imaginative compass and limited in their impact. They are working against the grain of deeper and more powerful forces of change. The current pressures on the urban terrain are such that the ability of local governments and communities to constrain development is severely circumscribed and continued corporate-led urban restructuring can be expected to continue for some time to come.

Concluding Remarks: Capturing the Speed and Intensity of Urban Restructuring

Because of the speed and intensity of urban change, Tokyo seems to allude sensitive interpretation. How does one capture the sheer explosive quality of urban change in what is, after all, still the world's largest conurbation? Even allowing for the extremely efficient nature of high-rise construction in Tokyo today, where does the workforce come from to operate so many sites and erect so many buildings? What are the flows of capital that enable companies to undertake such massive developments? There is purpose behind the apparent naïveté of these questions. The intensity of change does, I believe, inhibit research. It is this context that makes it difficult to generalise about Tokyo and to draw conclusions about Tokyo's 'distance' from cities around the world with which it might be compared. In recent writing, there has been a tendency to move Tokyo away from New York and London and to draw it closer to Seoul, Taipei and East Asian cities (Hill and Kim, 2000; Wang, 2003).

So what are the main characteristics of Tokyo-as-world-city? First, the state, whether national or metropolitan, plays an increasingly withdrawn role, acting now principally as cheerleader with exhortatory statements about the need for international competitiveness. Cheerleader it may be, but it does not pursue its strategies in the "active, entrepreneurial fashion" seen by Jessop and Sum (2000, p. 2289) as a defining feature of the entrepreneurial city. The state is facilitator-in-chief, drafting new acts such as the Urban Regeneration Law, but emasculating an already-weak planning regime by introducing a plethora of

exceptions and exclusions to controls, especially controls on FARs. The local state at ward level, for its part, might intervene more if it could, but is increasingly sidelined. Secondly, the UDPs that have changed the face of central Tokyo in the past decade or so are no longer the product of public–private partnerships, even if their management sometimes lay claim to the discourse of joint development between the two sectors. Most of them are projects that are undertaken by the private sector and it is the private sector that benefits from them. The companies involved are for the most part large Japanese corporations. Thirdly, urban entrepreneurs have been able to capitalise even quite recently on the availability of large plots of land in central and inner Tokyo that had once contained the infrastructure of the industrial city (railway yards, in particular). Finally, in between the spaces of reticulation and articulation of the urban development projects, the everyday life-spaces of the inhabitants of Tokyo's central and inner areas (and ultimately, the life-spaces of all Tokyo's inhabitants) are squeezed. Residents lack the structures to influence urban development projects and exist in a political context where the needs of business are prioritised in order to maximise international competitiveness (Swyngedouw *et al.*, 2002).

Perhaps it is most useful, then, to see urban development in Tokyo in the following terms: in a weak planning system, the state steers; it organises the provision of infrastructure and sets the regulatory parameters (through zoning, for example). Central government steer tends to be delivered through revisions to legislation and edicts that work their way downwards to a sometimes-reluctant local stratum. Capital has provided the driving-force for the state's steer. Construction capital in particular has shaped the development of Japan's cities (McCormack, 1996). One need only think of the rapidity of the reconstruction of central Kobe after the 1995 earthquake to appreciate the amount, availability and accessibility of capital (and labour) that can be channelled into the construction process. Such is the dynamism of 'urban capital' in Japan and the speed with which it can operate.

There are three corollaries to the foregoing discussion on the role of the state and of capital in urban restructuring. The first concerns the nature and impact of the developmental state. Whatever may be happening today—and certainly Japan's élite have adopted some of the rhetoric (if little of the substance) of Anglo-American neoliberalism—the developmental state shaped Japan's industrial policy for much of the post-war period. While this was not without its influence on urban areas, the state never availed itself of strong instruments to manage regional and urban policy. Successive laws and comprehensive national development plans have done little to halt urban sprawl and uni-polar concentration in the Tokyo conurbation. Developmental state it may be or have been, but the government in Tokyo has been less than interventionist in urban policy. The second point is this—where government has intervened, this intervention has often been driven by local ward offices. For the divisions that exist within government (and they are not inconsiderable) are between officials who hold to a social-welfare-first vision and urban entrepreneurialists, who subscribe to the rhetoric of a more market-oriented position. The former are to be found more commonly in local government offices and (still) in the Tokyo Metropolitan Government; while the latter are more likely to be officials of central or metropolitan government. This is where divergences lie.

Thirdly, acknowledging the role of capital should not lead to simplistic conclusions about global convergence, as Ma and Wu (2004) forcefully argue in their analysis of urban restructuring in China. Japanese capital has many distinctive characteristics. Equally, the relationship between capital and the state should not be thought static. Characterisations of Tokyo-as-world-city need to reflect relationships between capital and the state that change over time. Even in the past two or three decades, the role of capital in urban restructuring has changed as has that of the state. In the 1970s, urban redevelopment was directed and

undertaken by the state to suit its interpretation of wider societal aims. In the 1980s, most urban development projects were the result of a partnership between the state and the private sector, but from the 1990s and onwards, it was increasingly the case that business consortia led by the property arms of general trading companies were prime movers and managers in the business of urban restructuring. This trend is likely to continue for a while, but with the saturation of prime sites, who is to say that it will not swing back towards the state in years to come?

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