

ELEMENTS OF THE UBRANSCAPE IN TOKYO

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Abstract. Tokyo Metropolis (*Tōkyō-to*) of 13 mln people, crowded, colored, noisy, made of very freely designed buildings, with railway loop line separating the inner center from the outer center – from one side is similar to other large metropolises in Japan, and from another – being a capitol and having the Imperial Palace as its symbolical center, is unique. This article discusses elements of urbanscape, such as transportation infrastructure – roads and railways; junctions and city centers – neighborhoods; urban interiors – streets and squares; border lines and belts – rivers, parks; dominant urban structures, outstanding elements – landmarks, and characteristic sights, that contribute to aesthetic appeal of the landscape of Tokyo. The conclusion is that although both European cities and Tokyo have well-functioning centers, as well as sub-centers of the polycentric metropolises, their forms are differing because they reflect local urban planning, aesthetics, and culture.

Key words: urbanscape, urban planning, Tokyo, elements of urbanscape, urban landscape

INTRODUCTION

Urban landscape is a combination of a city's form and contents that includes natural and built environment. As an outcome of urban and landscape design, it involves arrangement and functioning of cities, with particular focus on architecture, infrastructure and green zones. Design of urban space has become increasingly important for the long-term development and well-being of urban communities, and can provide cities with a unique identity. For the urban landscape to become a long-term livable environment it is also necessary to consider restoration of ecosystems and enhancing the built environment with the innovative green infrastructure. Also recently, the importance of natural heritage, for example rivers and canals that sometimes have been abandoned in modern times, has been underlined, resulting in new approaches of eco-symbolism, which brings back to the city human ties with nature.

Urban landscape in Tokyo has been analyzed firstly in terms of Japanese perception of nature and concepts of landscape experience, secondly in terms of

urban planning culture, and thirdly in the light of universal elements of urban-scape that can be distinguished in the city and their relation to traditional background. Kevin Lynch in his book "The image of the city" [1960] confirmed that there are the universal values of a city, which persist regardless of various trends and the degree of the development. He introduced some elements shaping the image of a city, referring to the perception of its physical form, which can define its urban composition. He outlined five of the most important elements that form the city's image: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks [Lynch 1960]. The objective analysis of individual elements of spatial structure also applies the basis of Kazimierz Wejcherts's theory of urban composition first published in the mid 1970s [Wejchert 1984]. His work developed and enriched Lynch's theory. Among main elements of spatial structure Wejchert listed streets, neighborhoods, border lines, and belts, dominants of a spatial layout, outstanding elements of landscape, nodes and distinguished landmarks. He recognized significance of historical layouts (e.g. streets, market squares), that still are important central fragments of a spatial structure of European cities.

This study analyzes the elements of urban composition, which contribute to the identity of Tokyo.

FACTORS SHAPING URBAN LANDSCAPE IN TOKYO

Japanese perception of nature and landscape experience

Traditional appreciation of nature has a strong influence on the modern landscape. Although it might be altered, somehow traditional aesthetics and dualism in Japanese culture can be found in Tokyo's urbanscape. In Japan many people believe in their unique way of perception. Some authors [Shinohara 1987, Ashihara 1983, Higuchi 1988] see climate, topography, natural phenomena, and vegetation, as playing fundamental roles in determining Japanese view on nature. Perception is however a part of a complex aesthetic experience because it depends not only on natural conditions but it is also profoundly attached to the history and culture. Japanese appreciation of nature has been particularly influenced by natural phenomena, such as rainfall, snowfall, strong wind, sunshine, and seasonal changes in colors [Shinohara 1987, Kubota 1990].

In the past, the majority of Japanese were farmers, who had a close relationship with the natural environment but that relationship was broken in 1950s, when the landscape and land use suddenly changed. Firstly, Japan became industrialized country and the resulting urban sprawl transformed traditional agricultural fields into residential areas. Secondly, increasing dependency on fossil fuels diminished the population's dependency on forest for energy and agricultural production. Traditional perception of nature, which was based on the existential attitude to climate, has been changed through modernization and techno-

logical development that have inflicted many negative changes in natural environment.

Predisposition in the past to contemplate the landscape in terms of transiency and ephemerality led the Japanese to extract typical natural phenomena – “*ka-chō-fū-getsu*” (flower-bird-wind-moon), as key landscapes. Among these natural entities, a cherry blossom viewing – *hanami* has become a popular visual experience. Concept of formalized landscape experience led to stylized landscape experiences (*hakkei*), which became a traditional scenery appreciation method considering rich, cultural values perceived in a spectacle experience [Kubota 1990]. Formalized landscape experience associated with traveling for aesthetic purpose was reflected in selection of scenic spots (*meisho*). Concept of *meisho*, which means “famous place”, has been related not only to actually visiting places renowned for their natural beauty, history and mythology but included also poetry, guidebooks, sketches, and various ways, in which rich aesthetical values could be appreciated. However by the middle Edo period (1603–1867), landscape perception was somehow liberated from the convention of *meisho* towards observation of a broader environment. Real-world perception became the foundation of new aesthetics associated with new technologies, among which for example railways became the subject of national fascination and pride – and it was with these new technologies that *meisho* of modern Japan became associated [Traganou 2004].

Concept of *meisho* expresses traditional sensitivity of Japanese people towards the beautiful landscape. Historically, some landscapes have been more valued than others, leading to selection of three most scenic places in Japan (*nihon sankei*): Amanohashidate, Matsushima and Miyajima. Aesthetical preferences have been particularly reflected in the art of Japanese gardens: *karesansui* (dry gardens), *tsukiyama* (hill gardens,) which are composed of hills and ponds, and *chaniwa* (tea gardens), located next to *chashitsu* (tea-ceremony room). The Koishikawa Kōraku-en (Fig. 1), Hama-rikyū and Rikugi-en (Fig. 2) are the most magnificent *kaiyu-style* gardens in Tokyo. At the beginning of Meiji period (1868–1912), influence of the West began to extend even to traditional Japanese garden design. Large-scale spaces with extensive lawns appeared at the first Western-style park in Tokyo – Hibiya Park (1903) and at Shinjuku Gyoen (1906). Unlike traditional gardens, Western-style parks provided large urban public spaces.

Aesthetical preferences of traditional architecture and gardens favored asymmetry, arrangement of parts, and contents more than context [Ashihara 1998, Shelton 1999]. Traditional architecture implemented aesthetics, which had often contradictory qualities applied at the same time, such as – silence and loquacity, darkness and light, simplicity and complexity, restraint (e.g. Silver Pavilion – Ginkaku-ji in Kyoto,) and decoration (e.g. Tōshogu shrine in Nikkō), monochrome and polychrome, the grass hut (*gassho-zukuri*) and the aristocrat’s palace (*shinden-zukuri*), which were able to exist in symbiosis [Kurokawa



Fig. 1. Koishikawa Kōrakuen, 1629, Tokyo – a *kaiyu*-style garden

Ryc. 1. Koishikawa Kōrakuen, 1629, Tokio – ogród w stylu *kaiyu*



Fig. 2. Rikugien, 1700, Tokyo – a landscape-style “six poems garden”

Ryc. 2. Rikugien, 1700, Tokio – ogród w stylu krajobrazowym “ogród sześciu wierszy”

1991]. Built forms were planned sensitively taking advantage from their natural surroundings. Traditional planning was additionally incorporating surrounding scenery into garden, through a technique known as “borrowed landscape” (*shak-kei*). Some critics say that modern landscape has been considerably changed and in many cases altered into commercial product rather than sustained as a cultural landscape (*fūkei*) [Kubota 1990]. Today environmental concern is not confined to the natural world but it also includes built environment with all social, intellectual, and cultural interactions. Today Japanese aesthetics still prefers temporary values than permanent, flexible than fixed, decentralized than centralized, shifting and “cloud-like” order than fixed and “clock-like”, content – against physical context, and vague – as opposed to clear boundaries between object and surrounding [Maki 1988]. These aesthetic qualities are reflected in contemporary Japanese architecture and cities.

Urban planning background

Nowadays, an urban form of Tokyo is in great part a succession of the reconstruction after the WWII, which was based on consecutive urban laws. After the war, cities and infrastructure were very much destroyed but the urbanization advanced with remarkable growth of urban population. The reconstruction in Japan was different than in Europe, where planning tradition was stronger and where it was conducted by regions and cities. In Japan reconstruction plans were directed both by tradition and by the government. In 1954, a new Land Readjustment Act (*Toshi Kukaku Seiri Hō*) was passed to replace regulations on Land Readjustment (LR) included in the 1919 City Planning Law. Sorensen [2004] noted that important feature of this law was that it empowered the national government to subsidize projects undertaken by local governments. The practice of

land contribution from the participating landowners provided land for roads and parks. But such contribution was unpopular, for example in Tokyo it was difficult to realize planned urban reconstruction projects because of strong opposition to execute such projects. Therefore *shitamachi* – crowded areas of chaotic neighborhoods with small residences, shops and places for entertainment forming the most symbolic urban landscape in Tokyo, reappeared after the war. Comparing to Europe, where historical buildings were built of brick and stone, in Japan old buildings were mostly wooden and very few were reconstructed. Urban development was controlled by subsequent laws – Building Standard Law (*Kihon Hojūn*) introduced in 1950 and New City Planning Law (*Shin Toshi Keikaku Hō*) introduced in 1968, with the aim to control the rampant urban sprawl. Two key measures of a new system – *Senbiki* and Development Control, where designed to draw the line between the town and the countryside, control the conversion of agricultural into urban land uses, to ensure adequate provision of urban parks and roads and to eliminate mixed land use that was the result of rapid economic growth and which caused environmental problems. Another law – Urban Redevelopment Law (*Toshi Saikaihatsu Hō*) introduced in 1969, aimed to improved conditions in built-up areas. New planning system was not strict – did not eliminated mixed use and did not enforced small residential zones to be separated from industrial districts. Although such a mixed use was to some degree the reason for vitality of Japanese cities, which avoided the decline of urban centers like it happened to European ones, it was also a reason of environmental problems and congested central city areas.

Rapid economic growth continued until first oil crisis in 1973. It had an influence on development of urban centers surrounding railway stations and construction of many lines radiating from Tokyo. Urban landscape has been affected by elevated lines with clusters of shops below the tracks and stations, such as those built on Yamanote loop line. Typical features of elevated stations were station-front shopping districts – *shōtengai ekimae* – expanded considerably as unplanned developments near national and private rail lines. In successful districts these shopping walkways were arranged under the roof to create Japanese-style shopping malls. Another distinctive feature for Tokyo station-based shopping centers have been underground shopping malls. Shopping centers located in underground station concourses were introduced for the first time in Japan at the Yaesu Underground Arcade (*Yaesu chika gai*) at Tokyo Station in 1958 and remained a distinctive Japanese feature.

After the crisis, next stage of urbanization took place in 1970–1990 [Karan, Stapleton 1997]. In Japan the suburbanization was almost entirely structured by rail commuting. Typical pattern of development of private commuter lines was that rail operator built a large department store integrated with passenger facilities at the city centre terminal and large amusement park, zoo, or hotel at the rural end of line. Also terminal stations of private lines were built close to main stations of national railways, or as in the case of Tokyo, near stations on the

Yamanote line. The factor behind the development of station terminals was the revision of Building Standard Law in 1970, in which the limit of height to 30 m in urban areas was abolished in commercial and industrial districts, and changes permitting construction and management of shops and offices inside stations. This period brought also shift from industrial society into post-industrial information society. Growing environmental concerns were also extended towards better urban landscape and became a background for the new landscape design – *keikan sekkei*, promoted since early 1980s by civil engineers and architects. Since 1980s, local governments gained significant power to conduct a detailed planning and, as Sorensen [2004] observed, these new powers enabled development of new methods of community-based planning and public participation, generally referred as *machi-zukuri*. Society became already more affluent because of strong economic development and interested more in past heritage and historical preservation. It resulted in introduction of District Plan in 1980, which has become a land-use regulation for aesthetic townscape, and enhanced the legal framework for historical preservation efforts. Another planning tool was a Special District Plan Redevelopment (*Saikaihatsu Chiku Keikaku*), which was a system for major urban redevelopment projects converting low-density use, such as old railway yards into high-density mixed use – offices, residential and commercial complexes. Such plans included improvement of public facilities, landscaping and were led by private developers working with city planners and railway companies. This legislation provided regulation for urban renewal which has become more effective after shifting the planning power to local governments in 1999.

The period of “bubble economy” ended at around 1991 and since then the Japanese economy has been in recession. The population of Tokyo Metropolis has been about 13,185,502 (2011) – more than 10% of Japan's total population (127,799,000), the largest population of any of the 47 prefectures. On the other side, Tokyo's area, 2,187 km² or 0.6% of the total area of Japan, makes it the third smallest of Japan's 47 prefectures. The population density is 6,000 persons/km², making Tokyo the most densely populated prefecture in Japan. Because of declining urban population in Tokyo, in the period of 1985–1990, recovery of residential areas became urgent challenge. The revisions of City Planning Law in 1992 made way for urban renewal of downtown areas. New amendments of City Planning Law in 1999 and 2000 made planning by local governments more flexible. The connection of the private railways to the Yamanote line and further development of JR lines promoted the development of the core stations and expanded seven Tokyo's sub-centres: Shinjuku, Shibuya, Ikebukuro, Ueno-Asakusa, Osaki, Waterfront Sub-centre Tokyo Teleport Town and Kinshichō-Kameido.

CHARACTERISTIC ELEMENTS AND IMAGE OF TOKYO

Today Tokyo Metropolis consists of 23 wards, among which Chiyoda, Chūō and Minato are the core, and of 26 cities that are bed-towns. Tokyo is Japan's national and political center, which symbolic heart is the Imperial Palace (Fig. 3). Tokyo's urbanscape can be perceived in terms of architecture that was almost entirely rebuilt after the war, and which is characterized by many outstanding buildings designed by architects from around the world. Tokyo landscape has been largely transformed by technological development. There was a shift from appreciation of natural landscape in the past towards consumption of natural resources and intervention into natural landscape in the present. Only in recent years the trend towards preservation of natural resources and towards eco-life style has been gaining popularity.



Fig. 3. Fragment of Imperial Palace
Ryc. 3. Fragment Pałacu Cesarskiego



Fig. 4. Elevated expressway above the Nihonbashi Bridge

Ryc. 4. Droga szybkiego ruchu ponad mostem Nihonbashi

Characteristic elements of Tokyo's urbanscape are: transportation infrastructure – roads and railways; junctions and city centers – neighborhoods; urban interiors – squares and streets; border lines and belts – rivers, parks; dominant urban structures, outstanding elements – landmarks, and characteristic sights, that contribute to aesthetic appeal of the landscape of Tokyo [Kido 2011].

Transportation infrastructure – roads and railways

The basic structure of Tokyo consists of lines, which are formed by the transportation networks – roads and railways, as well as of nodes, which are the junctions on the transportation network. These junctions-stations are surrounded by neighborhoods.

Historical point and a landmark, from which originated five ancient roads, is Nihonbashi Bridge. Many highways and railway lines in modern Japan followed the ancient routes and carry the same names, such as the San'yo and Tokaidō Shinkansen routes that combine to link Kyūshū with Tokyo. Today's main roads are mostly elevated highways – the inner and outer rings, radial, and several main avenues. Extensive network of metropolitan highways was built before Olympic Games in 1964. Some expressways are passing above landmark Nihonbashi Bridge (Fig. 4) and above the river (Fig. 5). There are calls to restore the urbanscape and remove the expressways, and also to make Tokyo's rivers more approachable. Some of Tokyo's avenues are very picturesque – for example the Omotesandō, which is flanked by *keyaki* (zelkova) trees (Fig. 6). However, Tokyo's streets comparing with European avenues, have narrow sidewalks. Benches are less popular, as well open-air coffee shops and restaurants.



Fig. 5. Elevated highway above Nihonbashi River
Ryc. 5. Autostrada ponad rzeką Nihonbashi



Fig. 6. Omotesandō Avenue
Ryc. 6. Aleja Omotesandō



Fig. 7. Shinjuku Station
Ryc. 7. Stacja Shinjuku



Fig. 8. Marunouchi district
Ryc. 8. Dzielnica Marunouchi

Railways and subways are combined into efficient transportation network that is the skeleton of Tokyo's infrastructure. Railway stations are large multi-functional urban centers and focal points of neighborhoods. Modern stations have large building (*eki biru*), very often high-rise, that combine many functions, including transportation, commercial, residential, cultural, and offices. Shinjuku, the busiest station in Japan used by 3.6 mln passengers/day, has several station buildings (Fig. 7).

Junctions and city centers – neighborhoods

Tokyo has dozens of neighborhoods scrunched together by networks of roads and railways. Neighborhoods are smaller areas within each of 23 Tokyo's wards. Holding them together is Yamanote Line, passing through such important stations, as Tokyo, Yūrakuchō, Akihabara, Ueno, Ikebukuro, Shinjuku, Harajuku, Shibuya and Shinagawa. Railway stations located at the centers of the neighborhoods are the nodes of this network. The most important neighborhoods are: Hibiya, Marunouchi, Ginza, Tsukiji, Nihonbashi, Shiodome, Akihabara, Ueno, Asakusa, Ikebukuro, Shinjuku, Harajuku, Aoyama, Shibuya, Ebisu and Hiroo, Roppongi, Akasaka, Shinagawa, Ryōgoku, and Odaiba. Each neighborhood has different characteristics and together they fit well into mosaics of Tokyo.

Hibiya is a business center, as well as the location of the Imperial Palace, built on the ruins of Edo Castle. Imperial Palace is an out of limits symbolic city center. Bordering the palace are the East Garden and Hibiya Park, both open free to the public. **Marunouchi** is next to Hibiya, bounded by palace to the west and **Tokyo Station** to the east. Marunouchi is one of Tokyo's oldest business districts, with wide avenues and historical office buildings, which have been redeveloped with high-rise towers on the top (Fig. 8). A massive revival began with the replacement of the historic 1923 Marunouchi Building, with a 36-story complex of restaurants, shops, and offices, followed by construction of the Shin-Marunouchi Building, the Oazo Building, and the Peninsula Tokyo Hotel. Recently, the historic west side of Tokyo Station has been redeveloped to its original shape. At Marunouchi side, there is a fashionable, tree-lined Marunouchi Naka Dōri, home to international designer boutiques and restaurants.

Ginza, is a fashion center in Tokyo and the most expensive shopping area in Japan developed on the east of the **Yūrakuchō Station**. It has a multitude of department stores, international brand-name boutiques, exclusive restaurants, hotels, art galleries, clubs, and drinking establishments. Although Tokyo's younger generation favors less staid districts such as Harajuku, Shibuya, and Shinjuku, the Ginza is still a very popular place. The crossing of Chūō Dōri and Harumi Dōri at Ginza 4-chōme, is the most important street crossing in Japan (Fig. 9). It is marked by two landmark buildings, Wako and San-ai; two other corners are occupied by the Nissan Gallery and Mitsukoshi Department Store. Ginza streets are elegant with harmonious facades composed of buildings with height limit of 56 m.



Fig. 9. Ginza – famous intersection at Ginza 4-chōme
Ryc. 9. Ginza – słynne skrzyżowanie Ginza 4-chōme



Fig. 10. Tokyo Skytree at Asakusa
Ryc. 10. Tokyo Skytree w Asakusa

Near Ginza is **Tsukiji**, which was famous in Meiji for location of foreign settlements and since a long time – a wholesale fish market. **Nihonbashi**, which stretches east of Tokyo Station, was a commercial center in Edo Period, which once had many canals and was the “city on the water”. Today the Nihonbashi waterfront is largely non-existent. Now it still serves as Tokyo's financial center, home of the Tokyo Stock Exchange and headquarters for major banks and companies. Two of Tokyo's oldest department stores, Mitsukoshi and Takashimaya, are also here, as well as historical Nihonbashi Bridge (Fig. 4). **Shiodome** is an attractive new urban development with skyscrapers among which the most famous is Caretta Shiodome, south of Ginza. There is also traditional garden Hamarikyū. **Akihabara** is not far from Tokyo Station. Originally areas surrounding **Akihabara Station** were home for many electrical and electronic shops but in recent years, Akihabara has also become a Tokyo Anime Center and destination for manga lovers. It has buildings covered with advertisements of various electronic brands.

Ueno has a major historical **Ueno Station** at the northern edge of the Yamanote line. Ueno has still a *shitamachi* atmosphere, particularly at the Ameya Yokochō street market, located underneath the elevated Yamanote line. Ueno is also known for Ueno Park, a huge green space comprising a zoo, a concert hall, a temple, a shrine, and several acclaimed art museums. **Asakusa** is located in northeastern part of Tokyo and has also *shitamachi* image. Historically it served as the pleasure quarters for Edo. Today Asakusa is famous for its Sensō-ji Temple and traditional craft shops located along the Nakamise Dōri that leads to Sensō-ji. Ueno and Asakusa are traditional Tokyo's *shitamachi* areas. Recently Asakusa has received an important node after completion of Tokyo Skytree – the tallest structure in Japan (Fig. 10).

Ikebukuro is one of largest shopping center around the **Ikebukuro Station**. The Sunshine City Building, one of Japan's tallest skyscrapers, is home to a huge indoor shopping center and aquarium. It serves as an important central station for commuters living in Saitama Prefecture.



Fig. 11. Harajuku – intersection of Omotesandō and Meiji-dōri

Ryc. 11. Harajuku – skrzyżowanie ulic Omotesandō i Meiji-dōri



Fig. 12. Shibuya – famous intersection of Bunkamura-dōri and Dōgenzak a

Ryc. 12. Shibuya – słynne skrzyżowanie ulic Bunkamura-dōri i Dōgenzak a

Shinjuku at northwestern Tokyo was originally a post-town between Edo and the provinces. In 1970s it became district of skyscrapers and in 1992 a home of Metropolitan Government Office. Shinjuku Station (Fig. 7) is surrounded by department stores and shops. Shinjuku Gyoen Park in the center is a beautiful park in English, French and Japanese style. **Harajuku** close to Shinjuku is a younger generation district around Takeshita Dōri (Fig. 11). Nearby is also located one of major shrines – Meiji Shrine. Omotesandō Dōri, a fashionable tree-lined avenue flanked by outstanding by their architecture designers' boutiques leads to nearby Aoyama (Fig. 6). Aoyama is a location for trendy-setting shops, sophisticated restaurants and more cutting-edge designer-fashion outlets than anywhere else in the city. The upscale Omotesandō Hills shopping center on Omotesandō Dōri stretches from Harajuku to Aoyama.

Shibuya is located at the southwestern edge of the Yamanote Line loop. It serves as important commuter nucleus for western-south Tokyo and Kanagawa. Shibuya is a popular shopping and outing destination for young people. It has very chaotic urbanscape and now it is undergoing redevelopment and revitalization. The second most important street crossing in Tokyo, Shibuya Crossing, nicknamed “the Times Square of Tokyo” is there (Fig. 12). **Ebisu** is one stop on Yamanote Line from Shibuya. It consist of developed in 1995 Yebisu Garden Place, as well as of thriving shopping and nightlife area around the station. **Roppongi** is Tokyo's the best known nightlife district with chaotic urbanscape.

Between Roppongi and Azabu is **Roppongi Hills**, Tokyo's the second largest urban development with many shops and restaurants, a first-class hotel, a garden, apartments, offices, a cinema complex, a playground, and Tokyo's highest art museum, on the 53rd floor of Mori Tower. In 2007 it was upstaged by another urban development – **Tokyo Midtown**, which houses a Ritz-Carlton, a medical center, many fashion boutiques and restaurants, apartments, offices, a garden, and the Suntory Museum of Art. Nearby is the third in this area called “Roppongi Art Triangle” museum – The National Art Center, Tokyo, focusing on changing exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. **Shinagawa**, which was one of post-station on the old Tokaidō Highway, today is a large business center associated with **Shinagawa Station** which also serves a shinkansen bullet train.

One of important districts located outside the Yamanote Line is **Ryōgoku**. It served as sumo center since 17th century. Today it is a home to sumo stadium and many sumo stables. 1993 Ryōgoku became popular tourist destination with the opening of Tokyo-Edo Museum. Another important neighborhood outside Yamanote is Tokyo waterfront district – **Odaiba** (Fig. 13). It is located on the reclaimed land and connected with the center by the Rainbow Bridge (Fig. 20), the Yurikamome Line monorail and the Rinkai Line, as well as vehicular tunnel. Odaiba urban development is combined with many attractions, such as museums, parks, hot-springs, amusement park, shopping and recreation centers.

Urban interiors – streets and squares

In contrast to main avenues and roads, smaller streets and back streets very often do not have sidewalks at all. Many such streets in Tokyo are very narrow, shared by cars and pedestrians. Local residents take care of their beautification placing potted flowers and cleaning them (Fig. 14). Tokyo is a very clean city and its cleanness starts with streets and roads. Local streets are important spaces for community life and stages for various events, such as festivals (*matsuri*). Very often sidewalks are blocked by bicycles and shop displays, signs and advertisements, which occupy their space and make narrow sidewalks more narrow. Local authorities try to control illegal parking of bicycles, however still the sights of bicycles blocking sidewalks are common even on the major streets in Tokyo (Fig. 15). The control of advertisements is not strict enough and Tokyo urbanscape is filled with excessive advertisements (Fig. 16). In addition to regular streets, also underground streets that are part of underground shopping malls in the vicinity of railway stations, are popular (Fig. 17). Such streets, filled with shops and restaurants, provide convenient space both for travelers and inhabitants.

Different than in Europe, plazas, such as for example market squares, are not popular in Japanese cities. Main public spaces are streets. However there are plazas in front of stations – *ekimae hiroba*. They are often connected with the



Fig. 13. Odaiba
Ryc. 13. Odaiba



Fig. 14. Street in Bunkyo-ku
(courtesy of Mr. K. Okamura)
Ryc. 14. Ulica w Bunkyo-ku
(dzięki uprzejmości Pana K. Okamury)



Fig. 15. Street in front of Tokyo Station –
Yaesu Dōri
Ryc. 15. Ulica z przodu stacji Tokio –
Yaesu Dōri



Fig. 16. Streetscape in Shinjuku
Ryc. 16. Krajobraz uliczny w Shinjuku



Fig. 17. Underground shopping mall
Ryc. 17. Podziemne centrum handlowe



Fig. 18. Sugamo *shōtengai*
Ryc. 18. Sugamo *shōtengai*

deck built on artificial ground and corridor (*jiyū tsūro*) linking two sides of the railway tracks. Station plazas are often extended towards the local commercial centers by station-front shopping streets – *shōtengai*, which in urban areas based on rail transportation became a part of traditional Tokyo urbanscape (Fig. 18).

Border lines and belts – rivers, parks

Tokyo once had a vast open area with waterfront space and greenery that was cultivated in the Edo Period. However, with the advancement of urbanization, water and greenery have been lost. After the period of high economic growth and the economic bubble, greenery in urban Tokyo has become scarce. In recent years various measures have been undertaken to create and preserve greenery. Tokyo never had a green belt but it had a “green island” at the Imperial Palace grounds, and now another one, for public use – *Umi-no-Mori* is planned. Efforts are also made to increase roadside trees and to create large scale plots of greenery along the roads. In next few years, about 400 ha of green space will be created on the rooftops, wall surfaces, railroad areas, parking lots and all other possible urban spaces (“10 Year project for Green Tokyo”, 2007).

Tokyo has several large parks, such as Yoyogi Park, Shinjuku Gyoen, Meiji-Jingū, Ueno Park, Hibiya Park, and also traditional gardens. Ueno Park is one of Japan's first parks. It was established by Meiji government in 1873 along with Shiba, Asakusa, Fukagawa, and Asukayama Parks. Hibiya Park was designed and constructed as the first westernized urban-style park in Japan, and opened to the public in 1903. Nowadays there are various kinds of parks in Tokyo: nature observation parks, sports parks, family parks, parks for children, amusement theme parks, etc. Except large parks, there are also small packet parks, as well as small green squares – *oyabashira* – located on both sides of bridges (Fig. 19).

Some rivers in Tokyo are border lines. They are flowing into Tokyo Bay and dividing Tokyo Metropolitan area from Kanagawa and Chiba prefectures. The lack of firsthand contact with sea was recompensed by rivers and one hundred years ago Tokyo was “the city of rivers”. Since the Edo Period, Sumida River's banks and bridges became the favorite places of the city, evoking the most poetic memories to the city's residents. A variety of pleasure boats, such as *ya-katabune* lub *amisei* were floating along the river, while the riversides offered many sites for restaurants and teahouses. Today, many of rivers and canals have disappeared. They are not easy accessible and many of them face backward sides of the buildings. The most representative is Sumida River, which runs through downtown Tokyo for 27 kilometers, under 26 bridges, most of them historical with high aesthetic values. Its tributaries include Kanda and Nihonbashi Rivers. Once major transportation routes used for commerce, nowadays rivers provides tourist attraction through various boats routes. Other large rives include Arakawa, Shin-Nakagawa, Edogawa on the east and Tamagawa on the south-west.

A large border is composed of Tokyo Bay. In spite of industrial areas, there are also residential areas located in waterfront, as well waterfront parks (e.g. Kasai Rinkai Park) and landmark bridges. Waterfront is an area of a city (such as a harbor or dockyard) located alongside a body of water (river, canal or seaside). Waterfront has become an attractive place, where people can live, work and rest. One of the most successful waterfront projects is Tokyo Waterfront Sub-District (*Rinkai Fukutoshin*), which brought into life Tokyo Teleport Town (*Tokyo Terepōto Taun*), now widely known as Odaiba (Fig. 13).



Fig. 19. *Oyabashira* near Nihonbashi Bridge

Fig. 19. *Oyabashira* obok mostu Nihonbashi



Fig. 20. Rainbow Bridge

Fig. 20. Most Tęczy

Dominant urban structures, outstanding elements – landmarks and characteristic sights

Tokyo also features new large urban developments, two outstanding bridges – **Rainbow Bridge** (798 m; 1993; Fig. 20) and **Tokyo Gate Bridge** (2,618 m; 2011), as well as two towers – **Tokyo Tower** (332,5 m; 1958) and **Tokyo Skytree** (634 m; 2012; Fig. 21). Tokyo skyline contains many high-rise buildings (Fig. 22). Sometimes, on the days with good visibility, Mt. Fuji can be seen on the background of Tokyo's skyscrapers.

Tokyo's landmarks include skyscrapers in Shinjuku, such as **Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building** designed by Kenzo Tange (1991), the tallest building in Tokyo (243 m) until 2006, when Tokyo Midtown Tower (248 m) was completed. Now, recently completed Tokyo Skytree is the tallest structure. Design of the main building of TMG with two towers has many symbolic touches and it resembles monumental gothic cathedral. **Tokyo Station** (Fig. 23) is another landmark, which recently has been revitalized according to its original form of 1914 designed by architect Kingo Tatsuno. Third floor, and octagonal domes have been rebuilt into the original round shapes and their interiors decorated in their original form with reliefs. Among outstanding elements in Tokyo's landscape is also Sumida River with its historical bridges. Most of them were

planned in 1920s and 1930s with a great care about their aesthetic impact on urban scenery (Fig. 24). Another characteristic sight in Tokyo is the Imperial Palace (*Kōkyō*) (Fig. 3). The Palace and surrounding gardens in central Tokyo cover the area of 3.41 km², surrounded by moats. This is a landscape element, which has symbolic meaning for the city and for the country.



Fig. 21. Tokyo Skytree
Fig. 21. Tokio Skytree



Fig. 22. Tokyo's skyline
Fig. 22. Panorama Tokio



Fig. 23. Tokyo Station
Fig. 23. Dworzec Tokio



Fig. 24. Sumida River scenery
Fig. 24. Krajobraz rzeczny Sumida

CONCLUSION

Tokyo is a modern city with very contemporary and traditional landscape elements. Its aesthetics contains both the “Western-style” and “Japanese-style” elements. Therefore, despite being a modern city, Tokyo is different from Euro-

pean cities. Although from the first sight, Tokyo may be considered as chaotic and fragmentary, its all various parts together form a very well functioning urban organism. Tokyo has many different urban landscapes. Main positive landscape features are: variety of sights, many building with outstanding architecture, *cleanliness*, good information and efficient transportation. Among negatives are: utility poles, low-quality buildings, billboards, advertisement panels on buildings and lack of sidewalks on narrow roads. These negatives are being gradually eliminated because the attention in Japan put on urbanscape has been growing. Although there are urban problems in Tokyo, its urbanscape has surely its own identity. Tokyo has its original form of polycentric metropolis developed under the influence of both modern technology, and rich heritage of tradition and culture, with various sceneries coexisting in symbiosis.

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ELEMENTY KRAJOBRAZU MIEJSKIEGO W TOKIO

Streszczenie. Trzynastomilionowa metropolia Tokio, kolorowa i zatłoczona, zbudowana z bardzo dowolnie projektowanych budynków, z pętlą linii kolejowej oddzielającej centrum wewnętrzne od zewnętrznego, jest podobna do innych metropolii w Japonii, ale jako stolica z Pałacem Cesarskim jest miastem unikalnym. W artykule przedstawiono zarówno elementy krajobrazu miejskiego, takie jak infrastruktura komunikacyjna – drogi i kolej, skrzyżowania i centrum, przestrzenie sąsiedzkie, jak i wnętrza urbanistyczne – ulice i place, linie graniczne i pasma – rzeki i parki oraz dominanty urbanistyczne, charakterystyczne elementy i miejsca, które składają się na wygląd estetyczny krajobrazu Tokio. Można stwierdzić, że zarówno miasta europejskie, jak i Tokio mają dobrze funkcjonujące centra i policentryczną strefę podmiejską metropolii, lecz ich formy są różne, ponieważ są wynikiem lokalnego planowania urbanistycznego, estetyki i kultury.

Słowa kluczowe: planowanie urbanistyczne, Tokio, elementy krajobrazu miejskiego, krajobraz miejski