The Transformation of Tokyo During the 1950s and Early 1960s
Projects Between City Planning and Urban Utopia

Raffaele Pernice
Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Architecture, Waseda University, Japan

Abstract

The subject of this paper is devoted to a short summary of the "city planning/utopia" combination that influenced most of the urban projects developed in Japan for its capital in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It aims to illustrate the relationship between the geneses of the visionary experiments of a new generation of architects, and the economic and cultural background of postwar Japan, at the dawn of its economic miracle. Focusing on the elements that promoted a strong criticism of current city planning methodologies, the paper attempts to further describe and clarify the origin of a period of insightful research in the field of urban design, that fostered the search for new design principles suitable to express the dynamic changes of Japanese cities led by several factors, that were especially evident in the case of Tokyo.

Keywords: metabolism; Tokyo; urban design; utopia; postwar Japan; modern Japanese architecture

1. Introduction

The national pride and industrial capitalism, which characterized the economic growth of Japan during the 1950s and 1960s, was mainly centered in the cities. The unprecedented phenomena of urbanism and the concentration of activities and functions in the main cities of the archipelago, particularly in the capital city of Tokyo, caused many problems concerning the management of an urban organism that became more and more complex and disordered. From the necessity to achieve a more balanced development of the urban settlements and stop the urban sprawls during the postwar years, attempts originated in Japan to reform the city planning methodology.

Against the interests of political lobbies and private corporations critical young architects and designers developed new theories and techniques, and strove to introduce a completely new vision of, and approach to city planning. They fought to modernize the shape and content of the modern city, giving birth to one of the most prolific periods of modern Japanese architecture.

In this sense the transformation of Tokyo between 1958 and 1961 became the first interesting example in Asia of a total renewal of current urban planning based on the Western matrix, and witnessed the surge of a new methodological and aesthetic approach based on the native culture.

2. Postwar Transformation of Japanese Cities. An Historical Background

At the end of the Pacific War in 1945, the destruction caused by air raid bombing created a housing shortage in Japanese cities of more than 4 million units, and the total disruption of their basic transport and industrial infrastructures. The reconstruction was delayed for a few years due to the lack of materials and the strict control exerted by the US occupation administration, which severely limited any construction activity, so that many shelters were independently built by private people. Simple wooden barracks spread rapidly all over the desolate fields of ashes from the burned cities, most of them on the preexisting sites of the previous buildings, retaining their original pre-war haphazard and mosaic-like characteristics and preventing any attempt by the central government (at least in theory) to lead and control an ordered development of the urban fabric by means of comprehensive planning measures. For several years the occupation of the territory by a foreign army, the collapse of the economic structure, and the shortage of any kind of materials became the main reasons for preventing any attempts to revitalize society. In particular, total destruction of the prewar industrial system paralyzed the economy of the country. In 1950 the outbreak of the Korean War started a process of impressive growth of the economy, led mainly by American capital and technological know-how, as Japan became the principal strategic base of the USA in the Far East and a virtual bulwark against the communist block that was trying to expand in Asia. The financial aid of the Americans promoted the development of Japanese heavy industry and, during the three years of the Korean War, Japan began the impressive work of modernizing its industrial equipment and the assimilation of advanced industrial technologies from abroad. Investment from private
companies, thanks to the support and supervision of the government, were poured into the reconstruction of a modern system of industrial plants and the development of other commercial activities that had to rely on an efficient transportation and services network. The priority given by the Japanese government to economic growth was the reason behind the promotion, since the late 1950s, of many public works for the construction of expressways, railways, dams, ports, and artificial harbors throughout the Japanese archipelago, but especially in the Tokyo, Osaka and Ise Bay areas. During that period the construction industry accounted for 30% of the total gross expenditure of Japan, and became the foundation of Japanese economic growth as one of the main industries of the country.

The process of rapid economic growth led to an uncontrolled urban growth of the main cities and the development of 3 industrial macro-regions around Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, which became the centers for most of the investments operated by the Japanese government. The presence of industrial plants and factories in these metropolitan areas promoted even further growth to the detriment of the less developed regions in Japan. According to scholar Norman Glickman, the Japanese tendency towards urbanization during the 1950s and 1960s combined with the phenomena of emigration of rural masses toward the region of Tokaido (a process of "centralization", or growth of the core of the big cities in the region from Tokyo Bay to Osaka Bay). This was particularly evident from the late 1950s, and was followed by a relative emigration from the big industrial centers in the suburbs during the 1970s, due to the progressive surge of cases of further congestion and pollution in the large cities since the early 1960s. By 1960, an increased population in the center of the cities called for better mass transportation systems, but the scarcity of land available to improve services caused congestion and chaos, that in turn promoted a further process of expansion of the suburbs thanks to the development of new transportation lines, with a further spread of urban areas and the increasing problem of long distance commuting. The growth of the Japanese economy was above all the consequence of the sacrifices made by the working class, which combined with the merits of the policy of incentives promoted by the Japanese government to support private companies, and the technological development of Japanese enterprises, helped by the national policy directed towards the creation of an efficient net of urban infrastructures and modern and well equipped factories. Therefore at the end of the 1950s a rapid and dramatic phase in the transformation in the organization of the economy took place, represented by the change from a primary industry to secondary-tertiary sectors, which concurred with the change of the distribution of the population and the working activities of the territory. As a matter of fact, the income of workers in the Tokaido region became the highest in Japan. The attraction of higher salaries together with the need for new workers to be employed in the plants accelerated the enormous mechanism of emigration from the rural areas toward the industrial metropolises that were being reconstructed in the industrial heartland. The logical consequence of this mechanism was the depopulation of some peripheral regions of Japan on behalf of the large industrial districts along the Pacific coast, whose urban development continued a trend already delineated in the 1920s.

The necessity for Japan to strengthen the development of a strong industrial sector oriented toward export was seen as the basis for the national economic survival of the country. Consequently the policy of the Japanese government was aimed at encouraging the concentration of strategic industrial sectors, and the development of integrated industrial complexes along the Pacific Belt coasts in order to foster the efficiency gained from the agglomeration of economies on extensive landfills in tidal bays throughout the Tokaido region, providing large sites at low cost for the expanding factories and thereby achieve higher exports. The new project for more efficient infrastructures, intended as basic elements to sustain the economic growth, led inevitably to serious and fast alteration of the natural landscape, especially of the coasts, as well as the existing cities, which witnessed increased problems of urban sprawl, traffic congestion and pollution. Scarcity of available land and the strong opposition of landowners to expropriation for public utility promoted an alternative solution: the reclamation of waterfronts to create artificial land from the sea. By 1956 the Japanese could hail the official conclusion of the postwar period, and the next year also the achievement of target set by the government in 1955, which aimed to fulfill economic independence and full employment. Japan had become a new industrial power, and her policy towards economic development was further empowered by the "New Long-Run Economic Plan" issued during the years 1958-1962. This plan concerned the development of heavy and chemical industrialization, creating a more sophisticated industrial structure and a general strengthening of the foundation of industry. The "Double Income Plan" issued in 1960 by Prime Minister Ikeda's Cabinet, was also promoted to achieve even faster economic growth based on massive public investment in social overhead capital for new roads, water supply and port installations in the area of Tokaido, and caused the concentration of larger industrial plants and other productive activities especially in the Tokyo metropolitan region.

3. City Planning and Urban Utopias in Modern Japanese Architecture

After the war, unlike European cities, western city planning methods and visionary schemes and ideas didn't play a key role in the process of reconstruction.
Instead the main tools used were those of land readjustment, which in Tokyo was applied in particular to the area along the JR Yamanote Line, and the spread of concentrated projects for the development of basic infrastructures. Any attempt at introducing urban reforms, such as land-use planning and detailed zoning failed. In particular, Andre Sorensen noted that the cause of an ineffective planning system in Japan was the consequence of central government policy. This policy exerted a strong control over local authorities, and considered as top priority their economic development and protection from disasters. As a consequence they didn't strive to correct the shortcomings of this kind of city planning "deregulation". The Japanese zoning system consists of only 4 zones: residential, commercial, industrial and quasi-industrial, and "...within zoned areas land development was as-of-right, with no requirements for basic urban infrastructures before land development, no subdivision control, nor any minimum housing standards". The typical characteristic of modern Japanese cities, most evident in Tokyo, is a chaotic patchwork-like urban environment filled with high-density residential and commercial areas close to industrial plants. Few green areas, and a serious shortage of fundamental services such as sewerage and water supply, was indeed the consequence of the combined actions of fast urban growth and limited planning development. The shortage and high cost of land available for industrial plant plants, the engine of the economic miracle of the time, suggested the development of the "Kombinatos", industrial and residential complexes, along the waterfronts of Tokyo Bay, Osaka Bay and Ise Bay, through the massive process of coastal filling. In Tokyo Bay the amount of land reclamation during the period of high economic growth (1956-1975) was 13,000 hectares, approximately 27% of the national total, and concentrated 44% of all the petrochemical plants and 37% of all the oil plants of Japan, making the capital the real core of the Japanese industrial economy.

The origins of modern Japanese planning dates back to the beginning of the 20th century, when further contact with Europeans introduced to Japan the modern urban theories developed in the second half of the 19th century. According to scholar Stephen Ward, after the conclusion of the Japanese-Russian war the imperialistic expansion of the Japanese Empire fostered both processes of the industrialization and urbanization of Japan. The necessity to deal with the growth of their cities induced the Japanese to investigate the town planning methods developed in Western countries, especially the planning tools, the legal instruments on building lines, zoning and land readjustment developed in Great Britain and Germany. During the 1920s and 1930s it appeared clear that urban planning principles imported from Europe and America couldn't be implemented easily in Japan due to the existence of land ownership laws, the excessive lot division and weakness of planning powers, which made the Japanese urban environment hard to change. As noted by Carola Hein, an opportunity for Japanese planners to apply the methodology of modern planning learned from foreign specialists occurred in the overseas Japanese colonies of Taiwan, Korea and above all Manchukuo (Manchuria), where several plans for agricultural villages and planning proposals for the Chinese cities of Dairen, Shinkyo and Datong, "...offered an important laboratory for the development of modern planning in Japan. In the colonies, planners could try out the new planning concepts they had sampled in the West: neighborhoods modeled on Radburn, green belts and zoning became central design ideas, sometimes combined with modernist architecture. Military power in the colonies allowed for the realization of urban plans impossible to realize in Japan". Surely an important achievement of colonial planning was the process of improvement of all urban and building standards, especially for housing, undertaken by Japanese architects and urban planners, such as the widespread use of central heating, suburban subdivisions with large houses, flush toilets, underground utilities, wide streets and boulevards with separated walkways and so on. This was impossible to achieve in Japan at that time, so that their use in
their homeland became a goal for the same planners of postwar reconstruction. However, the need for rapid and expansive reconstruction of the cities during the postwar years quickly led to the development of a chaotic, fragmented and intricate urban environment, which caused many other problems, particularly in the control of urban development. In his work "Contemporary Japanese Architecture" (1968), Noboru Kawazoe assumed that the fragmented and provisional character of Japanese city planning was a consequence of the lack of legal means, such as a Land Expropriation Law, as well as the necessity for the cities to spend much of their budget on land procurement, so that: "...it will take a fairly long time to carry out a plan for a city in its entirety". Kawazoe alleged that the main problems for the Japanese city were caused by the generation of a combination of inefficient laws, excessive land fragmentation into private plots, and the excessive economic power of big companies. To the most sensitive Japanese architects of the time, the city appeared to be an ever-growing gigantic mechanical structure of factories and transport arteries, surrounded by the extended and dense urban fabric of compact residential buildings. New avant-garde movements and research groups took shape on the wave of the deep changes happening in the worldwide architectural context. The meetings of CIAM (Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne) in 1956 and 1958 declared the progressive inclination for issues of diversity and complexity. The new complexity of real world invested architecture and city planning by the wind of reform and a new generation of architects, planners and designers strove to find new methods and principles, which could cope with modern society. Team X in Europe, Louis Kahn and Sigfried Giedion in the US promoted reflection and new conceptual schemes, which led towards new ideas in architecture, promoting further investigations into the nature of urban and architectural, which were less concerned with functionalist' dogmas of unity and clarity. In Japan, where the main theme during the 1950s was the resolution of the intimate contradiction between the new modern culture and the heritage of national tradition aimed at the development of a national architectural language. New groups of architects and designers also elaborated new theories and proposals about contemporary architecture and the city, following the models of their Western counterparts. The occasion was the World Design Conference held in Tokyo in 1960; in the previous years a committee of architects was set up to manage the event, and discussions and seminars were held throughout Japan on the themes of industrial architecture and urban growth as the main issues to be addressed at the conference. Among the many entries and design manifestos presented at WoDeCo 1960, were the proposals contained in a little book issued by a group of 6 young professionals named "Metabolism" (among them Fumihiko Maki, Noriaki "Kisho" Kurokawa and Kiyonori Kikutake), which aroused the greatest interest and represented a turning point for modern Japanese architecture. The drawings and theories expressed in the independent essays of each member of the group were a condensation of many suggestions and considerations on the theme of the modern technological city. The authors like many others in the following years, had chosen Tokyo to present their design ideas and their urban planning experiments, and the technological appeal of their works reflected the great impact that industrial and economic power had over the national capital during the 1950s. Influenced by the theses spread by Paul Rudolph and Louis Kahn, as well as Alison and Peter Smithson, Aldo van Eyck and others of the Team X group, and supported by Kenzo Tange, the Metabolist group envisioned futuristic projects, which saw the city as a mirror of the far reaching transformation that occurred in society during the postwar period, and sought to introduce into the city a new structural order based on an organic and balanced development by means of technological devices.

Scholar Akira Asada pointed out that: "Metabolism represents architecture and urbanity as a mechanical in organization. [...] In fact, it might be argued that metabolism is simply a catalyst for modern functionalism, in that it tries to satisfy both a modernist sensibility for logical organization and a more progressive inclination for issues of diversity and complexity." The new urban forms introduced by Metabolists showed an awareness for the importance of the rapid changes in the urban environment and society, which were occurring on an unprecedented scale, and concentrated their attention toward the new challenges of modern and advanced technology and industrialized architecture, even though the theories behind their utopian schemes lacked deep social consideration,
as well as economic and political analyses, as many critics have noted. Indeed their ideas were basically academic experiments, which protested against the disordered growth of the cities, the problems of weak laws and delays in the implementation of plans, which paralyzed any effective attempt to solve the urban problems, and declared the need for a change in urban form, architecture and design principles.

The themes of artificial lands as clusters of marine cities, the huge high-rise buildings towering over preexisting buildings, the development of huge transport networks spreading as infinite and colossal webs into the cities, and the attention paid to the concepts of cycles of changes, became issues directly taken from the reality of Japanese industrial cities of the time. Furthermore, the projects proposed by the Metabolists, Tange, Isozaki and many others, posed for the first time in the Japanese architectural context the issue of comprehensive planning based on aesthetic principles. Following the method introduced by Le Corbusier, their design process conceived different scales of intervention, from the house to the whole city, and gave high importance also to visual factors, in polemical contrast to the traditional city planning methods that in Japan were entrusted to the competence of bureaucrats and engineers. Through their works, finally, they spread a new wave of interest and attention towards Japan, whose expanding urban environment was later to become the object of further analysis and investigations.

4. Projects for the Reorganization of Tokyo through the Years 1945-1961

The planning for the future structure of postwar Tokyo, which, as previously stated, was the core of Japanese economic and political power, began in 1956 with the establishment of the National Capital Region Development Law. Through this law a committee was set up to study a strategy to control development of the whole Kanto Region (all the territory economically and functionally connected with the capital) up to a radius of 100 km from Tokyo Prefecture. The committee prepared the National Capital Region Development Plan, which was approved in 1958. The goal of the plan was to prevent, within the urban territory of the capital, any further concentration of industrial plants and residential settlements by means of a policy of decentralization, with the aim of containing the problem of traffic congestion. Inside the regional territory three main areas were identified, differing in character and function (the areas were: existing urban area, a large greenbelt and a peripheral zone), to achieve a rational decentralization of the Tokyo metropolitan region. According to the plan the decentralization was based on the development of new towns, the delocalization of industrial plants and universities (understood as the major attractions for migrants to Tokyo) and the development of a new set of governmental laws. The general feature of this plan was directly connected with some previous European experiences, such as the concept of a permanent belt of agricultural land around the major cities, elaborated by Raymond Unwin, of Britain, but in particular with the plan for "Greater London" as described by Patrick Abercrombie in 1944. The success of the English experience suggested that the Japanese government should enact a similar urban scheme for the development of Tokyo, hoping to put under control the impressive and fast growth of the capital. However, the lack of concrete legal measures to enforce provisions for the plan and active local opposition of landowners and governments condemned the plan to failure, especially the greenbelt proposal. Apart from the technical and financial problems that caused the plan to be revised, one of the main reasons for the subsequent failure of the First Capital Regional Plan was that it relied on the uncritical acceptance of a planning method that was already
outmoded in the middle of the 1950s. According to the scholar Michael Hebbert: "...It was perhaps the most famous instance of inappropriate transplant of Western planning thought to Japan.", noting that a proposal for a greenbelt was already part of a previous plan of 1939, the "Metropolitan Green Space and Air Defense Open Space", also based on British city planning, which proposed the creation of a greenbelt and a network of green corridors. The plan was never put into action because of the war and the consequent shortage of materials and the financial crisis, but the same concept was once again reconsidered in the preparations for the post-war reconstruction of Tokyo in 1946, known as the "Ishikawa Plan", which also considered the use of a greenbelt which spread deep into the urban area and planned to contain a population of under 3.5 million. The First Plan proposed in 1958 was never implemented, but concerns for the necessity to control the urban sprawl of the Capital fostered new proposals to be considered in the following years. The continuous population growth and development of industry suggested reclamation of the waterfront in the port of Tokyo. This reclaimed area became the most favorable site for larger factories, gas plants, central markets, sewerage facilities and power stations, all of which would be situated outside the older part of the center of the city.

As a matter of fact, the reclaimed lands along the foreshore of Tokyo became a central issue in the government's economic policy, and fostered the need for the implementation of city planning in the new areas. In April 1958 the president of the Japan Housing Corporation, Kuro Kano proposed land filling on the east side of Tokyo Bay to create residential and industrial areas. His pragmatic plan caused much criticism as well as interest, and promoted a strong reaction from both architects and planners.

Alternative projects were proposed in 1958 and 1959 by Metabolists Masato Otaka, Kiyonori Kikutake and Noriaki "Kisho" Kurokawa, who took the opportunity represented by the World Design Conference in Tokyo the following year, to refine and present their urban ideas. Thanks to their influence, the theme of floating cities as a plausible alternative solution to problems related to the housing and land shortage, and the idea of urban development on artificial land became very popular, and logically connected with the process of land reclamation already carried out by the Japanese government; indeed advanced engineering and design mixed through the creative process and poetic approach of these young designers and architects, who later determined the spread and development of the megastructural trend of the 1960s, not only in Japan.

In 1959, the news that the capital city of Tokyo had been chosen to host the 1964 Olympic Games had an even more important effect on the architectural research activities for the reorganization of Tokyo. National pride and a willingness to present to the world the astonishing result of the economic and cultural growth of Japan, fostered new bold visions and public works to make Tokyo more beautiful and functional. Once again, practical solutions and utopian visions alternated, showing the internal contradictions between the interests of the financial and capitalist powers, and the aspirations for a better quality of urban life. New infrastructures were built in the center of Tokyo, and new expressways were laid over the ancient canals and rivers of the city. Bold projects were proposed by architects, such as Isozaki's "City in the Sky". At a time when the height limit was 31 meters, structural shafts 10 times higher, filled with bracing capsules, which overshadowed the existing city on the ground, were
proposed. Floating structures and high towers, which stood over the urban fabric many meters below were proposed by the other metabolists, as well as Kenzo Tange, who continued with his experiments for the reorganization of Tokyo and unveiled the famous plan for a city of 10 million people, a plan that rejected the conventional satellite-town systems, and announced the theme of a new large dimensional urban settlement, the megalopolis, as a new key urban entity of the second half of the 20th century. For a period of just a few years Japanese architectural debate was focused on similar projects which tried to revolutionize the previous layout of Tokyo; several schemes were proposed by other independent architects as well as powerful private corporations (as in the case of the "Neo-Mastaba" project released by a group of young professionals in 1961, and the "Neo-Tokyo Plan" presented in July of 1959 by the Industrial Planning Conference, a private lobby group established by the Electric Power Central Research Institute). All of them seemed to share, beyond the technical solution, an obsession with the improvement of urban infrastructures and great interest in the aesthetics of industrial architecture, as well as pride and enthusiasm for the economic growth of Japan, an enthusiasm which faded more and more with the slow-down of urban growth, the decadence of the myth of technology, increasing cases of pollution and the awareness of environmental destruction; all phenomena clearly in evidence by the end of the decade.

5. Conclusions

While the growth of Japanese cities during the 1950s and 1960s was sustained by economic expansion, congestion and urban sprawl resulted in disorderly development caused by the shortcomings of planning methods and bureaucracy, which were a heritage of the pre-war period, limiting any attempts to carry out comprehensive projects on an urban scale.

Against the old models of city planning, avant-garde movements and a whole new generation of architects chose Tokyo, the economic and cultural center of Japan, as a model for their planning experiments to show new theories aimed at reforming urban and architectural forms. The visionary projects for Tokyo, mainly proposed by a younger generation of architects such as the Metabolist group, spread general interest among the government and international observers, as they were concerned with innovative issues such as the themes of "marine cities" and artificial land, modern industrial architecture and the benefits of advanced technological construction, themes directly drawn from the reality of the Industrial archipelago of Japan. These proposals were mainly an attempt to criticize the inefficiency of contemporary city planning methods, as well as the aspiration to introduce new urban principles and a new aesthetic language suitable to express the bigger scale of modern industrial cities. The utopian spirit, within most projects, indeed acted as a stimulus, which stressed the necessity of rapid and radical solutions to the problems facing Japanese cities. Solutions adequate to the changes resulting from the postwar dynamic urbanism driven by economic growth, as well as an awareness of the failure of the previous architectural and planning theories based on Modernist principles. Even though many of these projects appeared to be something more than academic research, aimed to resolve by means of a comprehensive plan the fundamental problems of housing and land shortage, however they also appeared to be a catalyst for further studies and analysis, and showed a new proud attitude of Japanese architects towards the development of new urban planning theories which were inspired by their native culture and sensibility, and linked directly with the Japanese exclusive urban environment.

Reference

4) In the Tokyo Metropolis the development of railways, buses and subway services grew since the 1950s, when the old tram services, which were the backbone of Tokyo's transit system since 1910, were abandoned due to expensive prices and timetable problems caused by traffic congestion; see: Haruya Hirooka, "The Development of Tokyo's Rail Network", in: Japan Railway & Transportation Review, March 2000, p.7; Hideo Nakamura, "Transportation in Tokyo", in: Japan Railway & Transportation Review, March 1995, p.4.
5) In 1970 72% of the total population lived in the city, while just 20 years earlier it was about 37%, witnessing the sharp shift in a very short space of time, of Japan from a rural society to an urban society; efr. Karon F.P., Kristin Stapleton, The Japanese City, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1997, p.22.
11) Yorifusa Ishida, Hein Carola, Diefendorf Jeffrey M., Rebuilding Urban Japan after 1945, Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2003, pp. 6-7; Regarding the plan prepared for Datong, according to Ward: "... much was very directly borrowed [by other sources], particularly the standard neighborhood plan, which was virtually identical to one applied in Detroit in the early 1930s". Quoted in: Ward
14) British scholar M. F. Richards also pointed out that a major difficulty in the Japanese city planning approach was the absence of professionals specifically trained in the field of city-planning; in fact the first faculty in urban planning was activated in a Japanese university just after 1962; before then planning regulations had been administered exclusively by officials who often were without any academic preparation in the architectural field.
15) Akira Asada adds that: "...The metabolists then, conceive of architecture as essentially functionalist and yet more complex than what a conventional, modernist scheme might propose"; see: Akira Asada, "Beyond the Byomorphic" in: Reiser+Unemoto Studio, Tokyo Bay Experiment, Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, New York, 1994, p.21.
16) Tafuri Manfredo, Architettura Moderna in Giappone, Cappelli, Bologna, 1964, pp.131-133; In detail the existing urban area, where it was possible to make an intensive construction, extended for a radius of 15 km from Tokyo Station, was intended for residential use only. In the green belt, extending more than 10 km beyond the urban area and acting as a physical boundary between Tokyo and its satellite cities, was forbidden any further build of residential suburbs, whereas the preexisting ones were equipped as "new towns". In the peripheral zone surrounding the green belt, as far as a radius of 100 km from the central urban area, it was planned to settle new satellite cities filled with services and other economic activities.
18) "The specific cause of the failure of the Tokyo belt was the formation of a political league between sixteen municipalities and several hundred farmers to frustrate the plan. In Koganei city, farmers prematurely subdivided and sold plots to prevent designation. The small landowners had a powerful ally in the form of Japan Housing Corporation, owner and intending developer of large tracts of land in the heart of the proposed [green] belt". Quoted in: Shapira Philip, Masser Ian, Edgington David, op. cit., p.73.
20) In 1968 it approved the new version of the National Capital Region Development Plan, without the greenbelt. Furthermore, the abolition in 1966 of height limits in the 23 wards, which started the era of skyscrapers in Japan, was another feature of the plan.

Bibliography