

Tokyo: Global City

Against the background of intensifying competition between cities on a global scale, how should we draw the map of Tokyo's future? The interviewees in this issue of *My Vision* indicate that further evolution on both the "hard" and "soft" fronts is essential for Tokyo as it approaches the holding of its second Olympic games. They also express hopes that Tokyo will become an elegant international city that attracts foreign visitors while retaining aspects of Japan's traditional culture, and point out the necessity for downsizing the city's functions in accord with Japan's declining population.

MyVision

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How can We Transform Tokyo into an Attractive Global City?

With the positioning by the Abe Cabinet of the revitalization of local economies as a new policy target, discussion towards the revivification of regions facing declining populations and plummeting birth rates has begun. As the antithesis of the situation in Japan's regions, considerable criticism of the excessive concentration of population and industry in the capital Tokyo has also been heard.

Looking towards the future, what form should Tokyo seek to take? What are the issues that must be resolved to enable Tokyo to continue to be a highly competitive global city?

For this issue of *MyVision*, we sought opinions from academics in the fields of urban policy, sociology, and architecture, an architect, and a foreign journalist resident in the city.

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Formulate policy visions to respond to two major issues

Ryuji Fujimura

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Consideration of a vision for Tokyo's future presents two aspects. The first of these is how to bring out Tokyo's individuality as an Asian global city. Looking towards the 2020 Olympics, this is an issue that affects a zone spanning a radius of eight kilometers running through the central wards of Tokyo, and centering on Harumi, where the Olympic village will be constructed.

In other areas of the city, responses are necessary to issues consequent upon the decline of the population. As Japan as a whole moves in the direction of contraction, it will also be necessary to reduce the scale of Tokyo. These twin aspects will have to be considered as the precondition for the formulation of policy visions and the building of consensus.

Within the eight-kilometer zone centering on Harumi, we should aim, through the planning of Olympic facilities, to create an urban area possessing increased international competitiveness. Tokyo has a number of challenges on the agenda, for example the concept of creating an Asian global center in the bay area. If it is possible to redevelop the "inner harbor" within the Rainbow Bridge as an area for sightseeing and living, we will be able to create a new image of Tokyo centering on the bay. The Olympics will act as the impetus for this.

The other aspect that the future vision for Tokyo presents us is the area outside the eight-kilometer zone. In the context of the everyday issues faced by residents, how to reconstruct communities is the major theme. In an era in which the population is declining, we must consider how to proceed with the future reorganization of schools and public facilities. Residential development commenced in outlying towns in the 1960s and 1970s, and their populations rapidly increased as bed towns. Today, however, the population is aging, and the influx of people is ceasing.

This remains the case whether we are considering the Tokyo

metropolitan area, the Tama area, or provincial cities. It will be necessary to reduce the total volume of infrastructure by stages. Numerous policy issues are involved here, such as the integration of elementary and junior high schools, the aggregation of community centers, and the creation of multi-functional hubs. ■

Mr. Fujimura is an architect theorizing architecture and the city. He proposes a transition in the industrial structure towards the information and service industries, the reorganization of urban space in accord with the ubiquitous information society, and a forward-looking roll-back of the city for a smaller society.

Create visions based on a division into five administrative units

Kozo Kadowaki

Senior Assistant Professor, School of Science and Technology, Meiji University

Tokyo is too large a city to be a single administrative unit for which unanimous decisions are made. It would surely be better to divide the city into an appropriate number of administrative units, for example five, and create visions for the future that are suited to each area.

In Chiyoda, Chuo and Minato Wards, the construction of mega-office buildings centering on Marunouchi and Shinagawa would continue, continuing the development of the area as a business district possessing global competitive ability. Development of the bay area, the second division, as a new city center would proceed. Large facilities would be constructed for the holding of the Olympics in 2020. This would supplement Tokyo's insufficient capacity in the area of holding conventions and exhibitions. The old and new city centers would be linked, and would function to drive the economy.

The remaining three divisions of Tokyo would be a western area, encompassing districts including Setagaya Ward, an eastern area, encompassing districts including Taito Ward and Sumida

Ward, and an area centering on Tama. The physical attributes presented by these divisions differ, as do the attributes of their residents. Historically, the western area was the site of Tokyo's initial suburban development, and its residential areas are marked by a preponderance of detached houses. Residential construction took off in earnest in the 2000s in the eastern area, and the area features a mix of old and new residents. It would be necessary to promote development in the future suited to the respective attributes of each area.

With Tokyo's population of productive age declining, it is difficult to consider a model in which workers live in the Tama region and commute to work. A suburban-style residence involving a one-hour commute by train would be particularly difficult for young couples who both work. The role formerly played by new towns is at an end, and an appropriate thinning out of such areas will be necessary.

However, in addition to east-west transportation, this area also encompasses north-south transportation to Kanagawa and Saitama, and is the site of a number of core urban areas. On this basis, it might be possible to reorganize the area as a unique economic zone. It also features numerous universities, and has potential as a center of education and research. ■

distribution, in terms of human movement, the opening of the line will make Nagoya a suburb of Tokyo at a distance of 40 minutes.

The opening of the line will also change Tokyo's urban structure. Shinagawa, the station for arrival and departure of the trains, is located about 10 minutes from Tokyo International Airport (Haneda). Measures such as the expansion of runways will see Haneda increase its presence as a hub for international air routes.

2030 – 2040 will be a testing ten years for Japan, during which the younger population will find itself unable to support the elderly population. It is essential that we increase the power of Tokyo and the nation as a whole before this period. The next 15 years will be very important. The impetus will be provided by the Olympics in six years' time. Taking this opportunity, we will commence the work necessary to change Tokyo and create the future. ■

Professor Ichikawa is an expert in urban issues in Japan and overseas. He is involved in the development of urban policy for Tokyo that emphasizes global competitiveness, and acts as the Principal of the Global Power City Index Working Group of the Mori Memorial Foundation's Institute for Urban Strategies.

Create a comfortable Tokyo

Kaoru Endo

Professor, Faculty of Law, Gakushuin University

In terms of the ranking of major world cities, Tokyo has long been classified as part of the second-tier group. However, recently cities in a lower position have been catching up, and Tokyo's relative position is slipping. Tokyo is highly regarded from the perspectives of business and economy, but it is weak in "soft" areas such as culture, cultural exchange, and the provision of information, and this reduces its overall evaluation. After the war, Tokyo prioritized the economy and technology in an effort to reach the world's most advanced level, but at the same time, the city's ability to project itself culturally declined, and this has resulted in a lack of evolution in the regard in which it is held.

The number of foreign tourists provides us with an easy-to-understand indicator. The number of foreign residents of Tokyo is increasing, which is certainly not a bad trend. The number of foreign tourists visiting Tokyo is also rapidly increasing, but the city was still ranked 36th in a survey conducted by Euromonitor International. What can we do to improve this situation?

There seems to be a mismatch between Tokyo as viewed by Japanese and Tokyo as viewed by foreigners. 60-70% of guidebooks for domestic tourists show Tokyo Disneyland on the cover. As the most representative images of Tokyo, guidebooks for overseas visitors show scenes like sushi restaurants in Tsukiji and Shinbashi bars crowded with "salary men" after work. Akihabara, which mixes advanced technology and "otaku" culture, and Harajuku, the center of "cute" culture, are also perennially popular spots.

Non-Japanese have recently begun increasingly to take part in Tokyo's summer festivals. We see foreign residents helping to carry portable shrines through the streets, and dancing at the front of groups in the awa odori in Koenji. They are enjoying the Tokyo lifestyle. Rather than the extraordinary, they seek the comfortable and homely everyday. But numerous problems stand in the way of realizing this homely everyday in Tokyo, including streets of boarded-up shops, the homeless problem, housing and childcare issues, and disaster-prevention measures. A city in which foreign residents and visitors are able to feel the comfortable and homely aspects is a city in which Japanese residents are also able to live

Dr. Kadowaki has participated in numerous public housing regeneration projects and technological development projects. He considers the changing form of the efficiently-designed contemporary city in an era of population decline from the conceptual realm of architecture.

A Tokyo able to compete globally will drive Japan

Hiroo Ichikawa

Dean, Graduate School of Governance Studies, Meiji University

Tokyo's future is Japan's future. Japan's population began to decline in 2008. Against this background, the only increase in population in the country has occurred in the Tokyo area, which has now reached 35 million residents. For many years, it has been indicated that we should avoid the over-concentration of population in the Tokyo area. But at the same time, there must be somewhere for economic mechanisms to function and power the nation's economy, and for Japan, this means Tokyo, a city that is taking on the world.

At present, the West Japan region extending from Tokyo to Fukuoka is Japan's engine of growth. How to start this engine and engage Japan's power is the biggest question facing us as we consider the nation's future. Tokyo will be the key here, and Tokyo is looking towards the Olympic Games in 2020, and the scheduled commencement of operation of the Linear Chuo Shinkansen in 2027. The announcement by the Abe Cabinet of the creation of special economic zones as part of its national strategy was also timed to coincide with Tokyo's selection as the venue for the Olympic Games.

It is well known that the holding of an Olympic Games is an enormous boon to the implementation of policy, providing an opportunity for things to be done that would normally not be possible. The opening of the Linear Chuo Shinkansen line between Tokyo and Nagoya will follow the Olympics in 2027. Tokyo's economy centers on tertiary industry, while Nagoya's economy centers on the manufacturing industry, as exemplified by the presence of Toyota Motors. The Linear Shinkansen will integrate these two economic zones. Even without considering physical

comfortably. What we need are efforts to establish this type of virtuous cycle. ■

Professor Endo analyzes the effect of "intermediality," the interconnectedness of diverse forms of media, on the state of contemporary society in areas including politics, the city, and culture, and on change in society.

Preserve Tokyo's history and culture and remain a modest megalopolis

Regis Arnaud

Chief Editor, France Japon Eco

The problem in Tokyo now is that the old city is being destroyed by big, new buildings. There are guidelines for the protection of beautiful buildings, but no real legal framework that supersedes ownership rights. Seeing the Tokyo Station building, an old stone building, gives one the feeling that time is important, that culture is important. If buildings from the Taisho era or the Meiji era are not preserved and maintained, Tokyo will become like Shanghai or Hong Kong. In these cities, it is difficult to breathe, and the living environment has declined in quality. These are no place to raise families. Once people living there become rich, they chose to live in the US or Europe, precisely to find back the quality of life that has been shattered. Why would Japan follow the same path?

There is a scheme for the creation of a Japanese "Champs-Elysees" between Shinbashi and Toranomom. But the success of the Champs-Elysees is not about buildings, it is about events, and culture. It is always lively, because every night you have shows, movies, opera, cabarets, night clubs. If you don't have flows like

this, a city may full of shops, but it is boring and economically fragile.

In France, in Paris, nobody wants to put up big buildings. In Tokyo today, the most valuable land is in places like Denenchofu, Meguro, and Seijogakuenmae. These areas are like villages; there are only houses and a lot of green spaces, parks, and schools. Areas like the neighborhood around Hitotsubashi University – for me, they are the best future. The land price in these areas will never decrease.

Another problem in Tokyo is the conservative attitude of the police. With a few exceptions, the police will usually forbid any street events, and restrict extremely movie shootings. Even if Steven Spielberg wanted to shoot a movie in Tokyo, it would be impossible. If you were to allow films to be shot in Tokyo, a lot of productions would come here to film, and it would be good for Tokyo's image. Tokyo also needs to stage events that will attract overseas visitors.

In the 20th century, all of Asia looked to Japan. But now, Japan and Tokyo look to cities like Shanghai and Hong Kong at a time when they are financially broken. That is what is behind the folly of the Tokyo Skytree or the Olympic Stadium. This is the mentality of a developing country. My hope is that Tokyo can remain a modest megalopolis. ■

Mr. Arnaud has written extensively concerning Tokyo's appeal and the city's problems. He has high regard for Japan's cultural traditions, sense of community, and sound democracy, but is outspoken in his criticism of urban policy that disregards cultural values.

This is a translation of a paper originally published in Japanese. NIRA bears full responsibility for the translation presented here.

About this Issue

Tokyo: Global City

It has been indicated that the 21st century will be an era of urbanization on a global scale. Attractive cities are developing one after the other across Asia. How should we draw the image of Tokyo as a global city against this background?

We can find an example of an attempt to formulate a grand design for the future in the world's most advanced global city. This was the initiative instituted by Michael Bloomberg, former mayor of New York City. In 2011, Bloomberg announced that the city would move away from an economic structure dependent on the financial industry, and instead become a center of technology rivaling Silicon Valley. Many readers will no doubt see this as a natural direction to move in based on the experience of the Lehman crisis. But the process that led up to the proposal of this initiative is very interesting. In order to hone a new vision for New York City, Mayor Bloomberg conducted a study of notable entrepreneurs stretching back to the 19th century. This led him to

decide that engineers were essential to the city's prosperity. He therefore called for ideas from universities throughout the world for the creation of a university of applied science, and conducted interviews with large numbers of entrepreneurs, university presidents and other individuals within the city. We can readily imagine that major universities would be eager to respond to a call from New York City.

In Japan, Tokyo's importance to national strategy will only increase in the 21st century. Unfortunately, discussion at present tends to focus on the excessive concentration of population and industry in the city. It goes without saying, however, that what we need is a greater focus on increasing Tokyo's appeal from the global perspective. This issue of *MyVision* offers free discussion of visions of Tokyo that engage with the 21st century.

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