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MAPPING THE CITY AND TRACING OUT THE PAST:
IMAGES OF TŌKYŌ IN “ACCOUNTS OF PROSPERITY”
(*HANJŌKI*), 1900–1930

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I.

Cities consist in general of a grid of overlying functions. Capital cities in particular are both the political and symbolic centers of a nation and in many cases also its centers of production and consumption. Tōkyō is such a capital city and has been the object of a plethora of studies. Its evident economic importance in the present day and the social, economic, and cultural transformations it has undergone since the Meiji Restoration of 1868 have called forth a large number of studies focusing on Tōkyō as a trade and manufacturing center. On account of Tōkyō’s function as Japan’s capital city a number of studies also analyse its role as the political and financial center of that country.

Due to the reception of new Western theories on the city, Japanese discourse on urban studies and especially on Tōkyō have shifted in an important way since the late 1970s. Postwar urban research through the 1960s focused on the city as a functional system which could be engineered, or as a wasteland of human alienation, or as an intensely crowded space in contrast to the depopulating rural communities. In contrast to these approaches, from the latter half of the 1970s studies appeared which treated the city as a text with a complex meaning for both its residents and visitors. They drew on the perspectives of phenomenology, semiotics, and social history.¹ Some years later postmodern streams of thought required that one leave aside universalistic thinking and analyse urban features in its cultural context.² Since the 1980s the canon of the academic disciplines has come under attack and

- 1 See YOSHIMI 1995, p. 4. Yoshimi introduces some recent studies on urban features in Japan. Most of them focus on literary representations of the city or popular culture and consumption. MAEDA 1984 and 1986 as well as SUZUKI 1992 outline the state of the art in literary studies; for urban history see NARITA, OGURA, and YOSHIE 1989.
- 2 The editors of *The City in Cultural Context* claim that very often studies on urban features fail to recognize the relevance of cultural context. This publication attempts to recontextualize theories of urban studies (see AGNEW, MERCER, and SOPHER 1984).

the borders between them have begun to shift. As a result, not only the humanities but also the field of urban studies have experienced a “cultural turn” (King 1996:2–3) and studies focusing on the particular characteristics of the city as a cultural entity have started to appear.³

Besides being new approaches from various scientific backgrounds, most of these studies have in common a failure to account for the role Tōkyō plays in Japan’s historical process of building a nation and in the formation of a national identity in cultural terms.⁴ Only recently have studies been published in Japan which do not merely analyse Tōkyō as the stage for the political history of the Meiji Restoration in 1868, but rather make Tōkyō itself the object of study.⁵

I am especially drawn to the relationship between textual representations of Tōkyō and the historical circumstances which brought them into being. Focusing on the period of time from the Meiji Restoration of 1868 until the mid 1930s I want in particular to find out how these representations relate to the idea of Tōkyō as Japan’s capital city as revealed in architecture, city planning, and national historiography. As a case study I will investigate two texts which both were published at an important point of time in Japan’s process of building a nation, the *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* (*The Most Up-to-Date Account of Prosperity of Tōkyō*), written by the journalist and critic Itō Gingetsu (1871–1944) and published in 1903, and the *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* (*Account of Prosperity of Greater Tōkyō*), published by the newspaper company Tōkyō nichinichi shinbunsha in 1927.⁶

Considering this claim, it is astonishing that the article on Japan, “Japanese Urban Society and its Cultural Context,” is based only on Western sources (see ALLINSON 1984).

- 3 As a recent example for Japan see *Tokyo. The Changing Profile of an Urban Giant* (1991) and the second edition with a new subtitle *Tokyo. The Shogun’s City at the Twenty-First Century* (1998) by Roman CYBRIWSKY. Earlier examples are SEIDEN-STICKER 1983 and 1991 and Jinnai Hidenobu’s “spatial anthropology” of Tōkyō (see JINNAI 1985a and 1995; the latter is the English edition).
- 4 A groundbreaking study in this field is ISODA Kōichi’s *Shisō toshite no Tōkyō*, first published in 1978.
- 5 See especially the works of OGI Shinzō such as *Tōkyō kūkan, 1868–1930* (see OGI, HAGA, and MAEDA 1986). Narita Ryūichi discusses recent studies in this field (see NARITA 1994, p. 178).
- 6 See ITŌ 1992 and TŌKYŌ NICHINICHI SHINBUNSHA 1992.

II.

With the Meiji Restoration the emperor moved from Kyōto to Edo, the former feudal center, which was then renamed Tōkyō and became Japan's new capital. From then on Tōkyō was regarded as a central embodiment of Japan's progress and modernity. The transformation from Edo to Tōkyō stands for Japan's becoming a modern nation. It gave Tōkyō a completely new status inside as well as outside Japan. After the opening of the country in the 1850s, the unequal treaties were the greatest obstacle to Japan's autonomy. In order to achieve their revision, Japan had to become "civilized"; that is, it had to catch up with the Western nations. The government followed the Western ideology of progress and, as a consequence, Japan cut its cultural ties with East Asia, especially with China, which had been the reference point for Japan's position in the world since the 7th century. Japan had to integrate itself into a new context for which Tōkyō became a symbol. From the 1870s onward the city was the focus of an ambitious modernization program led by the government and a testing ground for Western style city planning. Influenced mainly from modernization projects in Paris and Berlin, Western architects working for Japan's government produced new images of historical and cultural continuity which marked a sharp break with Japan's past.⁷ Hence, a new collective identity was formed by means of architecture and city planning. This process was paralleled by the "canonic moment" (Gluck 1997:15), which initiated the construction of "national monuments" (Gillis 1994:14), such as a national history (*kokushi*), a national literature (*kokubungaku*), a national language (*kokugo*), etc.

Tōkyō's transformation from a feudal center to the capital city of a modern nation is not unique. There are similarities in this respect with European cities such as Berlin, the capital city of the German nation which was constituted in the second half of the 19th century. In general, modern cities share the experience of the industrial revolution, the transport revolution, and the growth of population. This common link is the result of the ideology

7 In the Meiji period several plans for modernizing the city arose. Most of them centered on the question of which major functions Tōkyō should fulfil, e. g. trade city, harbor city, or imperial city. All of them together were subsumed under *Shiku kaisei* (Reorganization of the City Boroughs) (see FUJIMORI 1990, pp. 3–205 and 425–453).

of progress which spread globally from the 18th century onward and is generally summarized under the heading “modernization.”

As every city is permanently in a state of change and growth, Tōkyō’s transformation is still continuing. The most important stages to date in this process have been the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, the destruction of Tōkyō in 1945, the Olympic games of 1964, and the boom of the so-called bubble economy in the 1980s. The discourse on Tōkyō, its modernization and its role in the formation of a national Japanese identity have accompanied the history of modern Japan steadily since 1868 and have appeared under different headings. This issue was initiated in the 1960s and 1970s by certain publications pertaining to the *Nihon(jin)ron* (discourse on Japaneseness), which has constituted an intellectual mainstream to the present day. In the 1980s and 1990s the question of Japan’s identity and its link with Tōkyō’s role as Japan’s capital city surfaced in the discourse on Japan’s re-Asianization and the so-called Edo boom. In dozens of publications⁸ and through recently built landmarks such as the Edo Tōkyō Museum (Edo Tōkyō Hakubutsukan, opened to the public in 1993) and the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government Offices (Tōkyō Tochōsha, completed in 1991) attempts were made to construct a line of continuity with the Edo period (1600–1867), Japan’s premodern age.

Due to the particular historical circumstances which created Tōkyō as the center of the nation and the conditions under which the Edo-Tōkyō transformation took place, a large variety of representations and images of Tōkyō have evolved. All of them are the object of a past present future relationship and can be correlated with particular images of history. The question of a specific Tōkyō identity is very complex. Because representations and images of Tōkyō are part of the formation of a local urban as well as of a national identity, they are very diverse and often compete with or even con-

8 Since the 1970s more than 30 books on Tōkyō have been published annually, and since 1984 even more. In the years 1986/87 the interest in *Tōkyōron* (discourse on Tōkyō) expanded into the Edo boom. According to Yoshimi Shun’ya, 271 books were published from 1978 until 1985 which had the word “Tōkyō” in their title. In the year 1978 there were 39 publications, in 1979 31, in 1980 20, in 1981 36, in 1982 25, in 1983 30, in 1984 44, and in 1985 46 publications (see YOSHIMI 1987, p. 12). For a discussion of this discourse on Tōkyō from the point of view of the mid-1980s, see JINNAI 1985b. For a general outline of “Tōkyō as an idea,” see SMITH 1978. For a recent study on the “Edofying” of modern Japan from a historian’s perspective see GLUCK 1998.

tradict each other. Representations of both the “hard city,” the Tōkyō manifested by architecture and city planning, and of the “soft city,” the Tōkyō of illusion and aspiration⁹ as revealed in literature, films, and in the arts, are to be understood as reactions to the conflicts within and the transformations of Tōkyō’s urban and Japan’s national identity. The fact that the new Tōkyō was created by foreign intervention—the opening of the country, the unequal treaties, and the policy of “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*)—and was largely designed by foreign architects and ruled by a new elite from the western part of Japan have greatly complicated the issue for the inhabitants. Behind each representation lay a set of assumptions about Tōkyō’s role and function leading to radically different images of the city as well as of its inhabitants.

In the course of Japan’s process of building a nation Tōkyō became more industrialized and materialistic; hence, it served not only as a space for the projection of visions of the future but also for the criticism of modernity. The latter served as a counter-discourse accompanying Japan’s process of modernization from the very beginning. It was a reaction against the government’s attempt to create a cultural unity, that is, a national identity by means of adapting Western concepts in historiography, the sciences, everyday life, and, of course, architecture and city planning. The society and the city itself were (and still are) too diverse and too much in a state of flux to construct an all-encompassing identity.

III.

This situation has created a large and diverse body of texts with complex and conflicting images of Tōkyō. All of them are involved in the struggle of defining the city. Therefore, in Japan as in the West the city and literary texts have inseparable histories. Many links exist between the real city and the city of words and the former has an enormous impact on the latter. One could even assume a symbiosis between literary and urban texts. But since the links between reality and image are very complex, the city in literature is far from being a representation of the real city. Rather, as literature gave

9 The expressions of “soft city” and “hard city” were originally used by RABAN 1988, p. 10.

imaginative reality to the city, urban changes in turn helped transform the literary text.¹⁰

Generally speaking, literary images of Tōkyō from the Meiji period to 1945 belong to two types of narrative: that of progress and enlightenment on the one hand, and of the destruction of the past for the sake of modernity on the other. The physical construction of the new center was intended to contribute to the process of nation-building, but it also created a sense of alienation and division. In the literary imagination especially, Tōkyō engendered a hostility that went hand in hand with distrust of the values of Japan's politics of "civilization and enlightenment" and the consequences of modernity itself. For intellectuals and novelists such as Nagai Kafū (1879–1959) and Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) Tōkyō stood for the disruptions and discontinuities caused by Japan's adherence to the ideology of progress.¹¹

An analysis of how intellectuals represent Tōkyō in their writings throws light on their attitude towards Japan's modernization. But the question arises, which kind of material should be chosen for the investigation. In the West most studies on textual representations of the city focus on the works of authors who constitute the literary canon, such as Honoré de Balzac and Victor Hugo in French literature, Charles Dickens and James Joyce in English literature and John Dos Passos in American literature.¹² In Japan the situation is similar. Here, too, literary criticism focuses on a number of particular texts which constitute a paradigm for the experience of the modern metropolis. In his pioneering works *Toshi kūkan no naka no bungaku* (*Literature in the Context of Urban Space*; 1982) and *Kindai Nihon no bungaku kūkan. Rekishi, kotoba, jōkyō* (*The Literary Space of Modern Japan. History, Language, Conditions*; 1983) Maeda Ai analyses well-known texts such as *Maihime* (*The Dancing Girl*; 1890) by Mori Ōgai or *Mon* (*The Gate*; 1910) and *Higan sugi made* (*Until after the Spring Equinox*; 1912) by Natsume Sōseki. Texts written in a feuilleton style such as *Tōkyō shin*

10 Richard Lehan, in his study *The City in Literature*, focuses on the relationship between literature and history in 19th- and 20th-century Western literature. See especially his introductory remarks in Chapter One, where he outlines different modes of writing on urban features (see LEHAN 1998, pp. 3–9).

11 For an analysis of Kafū's criticism of Japan's path to modernity, see SCHULZ 1997a; for his images of Tōkyō, see especially pp. 169–187 and SCHULZ 1998.

12 See for example PIKE 1981 and SHARPE and LEONARD 1987.

hanjōki (*New Account of Tōkyō's Prosperity*; 1874) by Hattori Busshō only play a minor role (Maeda 1982:119–144). Unno Hiroshi also relies in his work *Modan toshi bungaku* (*Literature of the Modern City*) on the category of the *shōsetsu* (novel) and analyses texts which belong to the canon of “urban literature” (*toshi bungaku*) of the 1920s (Unno 1988). Paul Anderer, on the other hand, doubts whether modern Japanese literature is suitable material for finding out what the city is like. He states that

it is only when the city is scaled down, evoked as a cemetery or a backyard garden, a side street or a bar, a solitary room or a local shop—Tōkyō, in short, as a transplanted village—only in this condition does the city emerge as a landscape in most modern fiction. On any other terms it is too threatening. (Anderer 1987:228)

A quotation from Tanizaki, in one of whose works a character says, “I had only three choices: to die, to go mad, or to stay away from Tōkyō,” accentuates Anderer’s statement (*ibid.*).

However, the number of Japanese texts depicting aspects of Tōkyō is overwhelming. As in the West also in Japan Walter Benjamin’s statement that the “real historical experience”¹³ of the modern metropolis can only be traced in poetry and literature seems to be the underlying concept of scholars when analysing urban features in literary texts. Of course, in Japan literary modernity and urban modernity are tightly linked in a way similar to Western literature of the 19th and 20th century. Furthermore, the experience of modernity is also echoed in the large corpus of semi- and non-fictitious texts on Tōkyō.

IV.

Tōkyō’s functioning as a city has to be considered on two levels: that of its being Japan’s capital city, thus symbolizing the nation, and that of the city as social space. In both cases Tōkyō is related to the idea of the “imagined community,” which refers to the nation on the one hand and the city and citizenship on the other. Not only nations but also cities are “imagined com-

13 See BENJAMIN 1980, p. 643. In German: “echte historische Erfahrung.” Benjamin based his studies on the relationship between the literary text and the experience of the modern metropolis mainly on Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Man of the Crowd* and Baudelaire’s series of poems *Tableaux Parisiens* and *Le Spleen de Paris*.

munities”¹⁴ or “imagined environments.”¹⁵ Both levels are interrelated and form the discourse on Tōkyō.

Representations and images of the city depend on the intentions of the interest groups and the historical junctures at which they came into being. Generally speaking, until 1945 “official” representations and images of Tōkyō were constructed to help shape a national identity and very often these contradict those in literary texts. But the discourse on Tōkyō as revealed in literary texts (*bungaku*) reflects only one side of reality. Literary depictions of urban features are never “realistic.” In Japanese literature Tōkyō never appears as a totality; it is always split into parts. These consist of idealized elements of time and space from selected historical periods which the author created to project his intentions—reminiscent of Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of chronotopos (Bakhtin 1988). This means further that those portions of the city and the segments of its society which are not represented are as important as those which are.

We must also ask if there are any other textual genres than literature (*bungaku*) which reveal images of Tōkyō. What does Tōkyō look like in genres such as reportage or guidebook literature which both accompany the process of Tōkyō’s modernization? Could one not assume that these different genres present different assertions about what is important about Tōkyō, what is worth seeing, worth visiting, and worth remembering? Moreover, can they not be understood as sometimes complementary and sometimes competing versions of what Tōkyō is and of what it means to be a citizen of the capital? Which level is dominant, that of the capital city, i. e., the national sphere, or that of the urban community, i. e., the sphere of life? And finally, are the images changing?

V.

Recently, the term “cultural studies” has become a fashionable catchphrase which is far from being precisely defined. With regard to urban features, however, “cultural studies” can be seen as a means of exploring new types

14 This term was coined by ANDERSON 1983.

15 James Donald uses this expression by way of analogy with Anderson’s idea. See DONALD 1992, p. 422.

of research material. As early as the 1970s Maeda Ai stated that even telephone directories are an important source of information about city life (Maeda 1982:24). The questioning of the authority of the literary canon and the trend to studying “mass culture” have given rise to the recent reprinting and anthologizing of texts as “urban literature” which were very popular when they were first published but until recently were ignored by scholars as objects for research.¹⁶ In the following I intend to explore texts which, although they open out new perspectives on the above mentioned questions, still have not received much attention in either Japanese literary criticism or in Western Japanese studies.

In Japan, genres such as “literary topography/geography” (*bungaku chiri*) and “literary geographical description” (*bungaku chishi*) document the geographical and topographical characteristics of a certain place or an area in an essayistic style. Their beginnings can be traced back to the 7th century.¹⁷ As can be seen from recent facsimile editions such as the series *Bungaku chishi “Tōkyō” sōsho* and *Kindai Nihon chishi sōsho*, both published in 1992, such texts, especially modern ones, are being rediscovered.¹⁸ In the introduction the editors explain their reasons for reprinting these texts. They state that the publication as a facsimile edition of these texts which are so hard to obtain corresponds to the growing interest in the history of Edo and Tōkyō in recent years. As the construction of highways and sky-

16 See for example the anthology *Modan toshi bungaku* (see UNNO, KAWAMOTO, and SUZUKI 1989–1991). Each of the 10 volumes consists of literary texts which are grouped under headings such as *Tōkyō annai* (*Introduction to Tōkyō*), *Hanzai toshi* (*The City of Crime*), or *Kikai no metoroporisu* (*The Metropolis of the Machine*).

17 The oldest text of this genre is the *Kofudoki*. Its edition was commissioned by the emperor in 713.

18 This series contains the following texts: *Tōkyō shin hanjōki* (*New Account of Prosperity of Tōkyō*), *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* (*The Most Up-to-Date Account of Prosperity of Tōkyō*), *Tōkyō yūkō ki* (*Account of Touring through Tōkyō*), *Tōkyō inshōki* (*Account of Impressions of Tōkyō*), *Tōkyō nenchū gyōji* (*Annual Events of Tōkyō*), *Tōto shin hanjōki* (*New Account of Prosperity of the Eastern Metropolis*), *Ginza* (*Ginza*), *Tōkyō kinkō meguri* (*Tours around the Outskirts of Tōkyō*), *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* (*Account of Prosperity of Greater Tōkyō*), *Ginza saiken* (*Close Looks at Ginza*) (see *Bungaku chishi “Tōkyō” sōsho* 1992). *Kindai Nihon chishi sōsho* contains facsimile reprints of different kinds of guidebooks, documents, and statistics on Tōkyō and other Japanese cities.

crappers permanently transform the skyline of the city, these texts might be helpful in preserving the memory of Tōkyō's past, since any remains of the Edo and the Meiji period in present Tōkyō are now there only by accident. In order to achieve a detailed understanding of the tremendous changes that have occurred in Tōkyō since the Meiji Restoration, the editors claim, one has to rely on literary geographical descriptions, on the *hanjōki* (accounts of prosperity) and the *inshōki* (accounts of impressions) of writers and journalists.¹⁹

Both types of texts belong to the large body of topographical literature and were very popular from the Meiji Restoration until the 1930s. They document the disappearance of urban spaces and phenomena on the one hand, and the emergence of new ones on the other. In the collective memory of Japan this period is perceived as a time of upheaval in social, cultural, political, and economic terms, thus marking a rough break with the past. With the French historian Pierre Nora one could say that not only in France but also in Japan temporal and topographical memory sites emerge at those times and in those places where there is a perceived or constructed break with the past.²⁰

Hanjōki is a very Japanese genre of urban guidebooks which can be traced back to the early Edo period.²¹ As mentioned above, from the first half of the 19th century to the 1930s *hanjōki* were very popular. *Hanjō* means "prosperity" and is an expression which measures urban success. It relates to the urban sphere of life in material, social, and cultural terms and has nothing to do with the rather abstract idea of the city as revealed in Western thought. Similar to fictional texts, guidebooks do not depict reality but rather are highly self-conscious constructs that reflect contradictory and changing images of the city. They address various groups with differing interests while attempting to define what the city should mean both to visitors

19 The introduction in every volume is the same (pp. 1–2). There is a list of important *hanjōki* and *inshōki* of the Meiji-, Taishō-, and early Shōwa period on p. 2.

20 Quoted in GILLIS 1994, p. 8.

21 As this genre is a rather understudied topic, it is hard to find information on it. For a short outline, see the article on *hanjōki* in *Nihon kindai bungaku daijiten* (see NIHON KINDAI BUNGAKUKAN 1977, vol. 4, pp. 430–431). It seems easier to find information on particular texts such as Hattori Busshō's *Tōkyō shin hanjōki*. See e. g. MAEDA 1981, pp. 119–144 and ENDO 1989a and b.

and to residents, thus forming part of the discourse on Tōkyō. They explain the city on a local rather than a national level and reflect the uneasy and varied changes in self-perception taking place during the crucial era when Japan was becoming “modern” and redefining itself as part of a wider world. *Hanjōki* can therefore be understood as symptoms of and instruments in the struggle to redefine Tōkyō at a time when the city was becoming the focus of both international and domestic interest.

Hanjōki usually serve two purposes. On the one hand, they guide the reader to the prosperous sites of the city, i. e., the market streets, theaters, restaurants, and pleasure quarters. On the other, they contain criticism of society, culture, and politics. The prototype of the modern *hanjōki* is *Tōkyō shin hanjōki* (*New Account of Tōkyō's Prosperity*; 1874) by Hattori Busshō.²² Even though it is modeled after Terakado Seiken's *Edo hanjōki* (1832–1836) it also marks a departure from this tradition. Instead of depicting images of the lingering Edo and commemorating the rapidly vanishing life of its pleasure quarters *Tōkyō shin hanjōki* portrays Tōkyō caught in the rise of Westernization and modernization in the course of the Meiji reforms. It is a mixture of comments on new attributes and lifestyles on the one hand, and satirical and sarcastic remarks on modern civilization on the other. It contains semi-fictitious anecdotes with dialogues in colloquial Japanese that not only bring the reader closer to Meiji city life but also help to attract a larger readership. *Tōkyō shin hanjōki* became a best seller, and because of its overwhelming success, a model for dozens of succeeding *hanjōki*.²³ All of them depict the “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*) of the Meiji period. The craze for *hanjōki* not only spread to other cities but also to the countryside and resulted in the publication of texts such as *Saikyō hanjōki* (*Account of the Prospering of Kyōto*; 1877), *Ōsaka hanjōki* (*Account of the Prospering of Ōsaka*; 1877), and *Inaka hanjōki* (*Account of the*

22 Volume 1 of the series *Bungaku chishi “Tōkyō” sōsho*. Recently a modern Japanese version of Hattori's text has been published. See HATTORI 1996.

23 Furthermore, there are texts which are inspired by the *Edo hanjōki* but do not have the word *hanjō* in their title. A famous example is *Yanagi bashi shinshi* (*New Description of Yanagibashi*; written in 1859, published in 1874) by Narushima Ryūhoku (1837–1884). Narushima focuses on the continuing existence of the pleasure quarters in the course of Tōkyō's modernization.

Prospering of the Countryside; 1885). Furthermore, people travelling abroad wrote *hanjōki* about foreign cities and countries.²⁴

Hanjōki can be regarded as a prototypical genre of the modernizing city. The arbitrary mixture of old and new as well as its incongruous underlying principles alienated not only those who had lived in Edo, but those who had been to the West, and those who had never lived in a big city. There was a need to provide literary representations of the physical as well as the psychological spaces that did not belong to modern Tōkyō. The city was thus de-centered and restored to human scale.

Seen from the perspective of the history of modern Japanese literature the genre of *hanjōki* marks the transition to the novel (*shōsetsu*). Even though the early Meiji *hanjōki* were written in a rather difficult classical Chinese (*kanbun*) style, they became very popular. They were intended for the urban masses, the newcomers as well as the local people, and focused on a particular city and its citizenry, thus closely involved in the context from which they emerged. They are an important source for understanding not only the living conditions of a particular place but also the relationship between text, city, and modernity from a contemporary point of view. Together with the genre of the novel (*shōsetsu*) they investigate historical and spatial interconnections. Both together constitute a kind of “collective autobiography” of Tōkyō and its people in the process of confronting a rapidly changing world for which they were often ill prepared.

VI.

In order to address my set of questions I will, as mentioned above, investigate two *hanjōki*, the *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* (*The Most Up-to-Date Account of Prosperity of Tōkyō*), written by the journalist and critic Itō Gingetsu (1871–1944) and published in 1903, and the *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* (*Account of Prosperity of Greater Tōkyō*), published by the newspaper company Tōkyō nichinichi shinbunsha in 1927.²⁵ Both texts reflect the historical circum-

24 See for example *Bankokukan hanjōki* (*Account of Prosperity of the Ports of All Nations*), edited by Kuroda Gyōkō in 1873. (His name is probably “Gyōkō.” As he is only mentioned in Japanese sources, there is no information about the transcription of his name.)

25 See Itō 1992 and TŌKYŌ NICHINICHI SHINBUNSHA 1992.

stances in which they were created. The year 1903 is situated in the period between Japan's victory over China in 1895 and the outbreak of hostilities with Russia in 1904. The interwar years had been marked by rising nationalism on the one hand, and the emergence of social upheaval and reactions against the government's policy of modernizing Japan on the other. *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* was published four years after the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923. Large parts of Tōkyō were still a devastated area and the reconstruction projects were proceeding only very slowly. Furthermore, this time was also characterized by rising nationalism and oppression which both were counterbalanced by the emergence of a new mass culture.

Both texts reflect the “meta-narrative” of modern Japan which formed the decisive context until 1945 for thinking about Tōkyō and is often characterized with catchphrases such as progress, Westernization, nationalism, etc.²⁶ Both *hanjōki* became best sellers. *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* in particular was reprinted several times. Although both texts have similar titles they are very different in terms of structure, content, and style. By having the word “Tōkyō” in their title they pretend to encompass the whole city, but in fact they only depict particular parts, thus revealing alternative conceptualizations of urban space.

From the Meiji Restoration of 1868 until 1945 the historiography of Tōkyō centers around two points of reference: the Restoration and the Great Kantō Earthquake of September 1st, 1923. Both events are polysemic phenomena and can be analysed as chronotopes, the rhetorical figure proposed by Bakhtin that fixes the interaction of historical time and space in a work of literature (Bakhtin 1988). Given Bakhtin's claim that particular genres can be distinguished by their chronotopes, the Meiji Restoration and the Great Kantō Earthquake, as well as the all-encompassing meta-narrative of Japan's modernization without a doubt provide the distinctive chronotope of urban narratives in modern Japan.

26 1945 marks the collapse of the Japanese paradigm of modernity. Since the Meiji Restoration until 1945 Japan's modernization was tightly linked with the building of a nation, but after 1945 catchphrases such as “modern” and “modernity” come to be related to a person's lifestyle. The modern has thus become a matter of the private sphere. See GLUCK 1996, pp. 72–73. Of course, the postwar period is not a monolithic period of time, but can be divided into several stages which are marked by different patterns of self-perception and different understandings of what it does mean to be modern. GLUCK 1993 analyses the postwar period in this respect.

The Meiji Restoration is certainly a primary factor in the constitution of Tōkyō as an object of both philosophical and cultural as well as economic and political speculation. It is linked with the discourse on modernization, modernity, and building a nation. The great social and political reconfiguration that followed the events of 1868 bestowed upon the city a status that it holds until the present. It has been the permanent but ever-changing site of Japan's modernization. The combination of restoration and modernization offered a seductive model for literary interpretation because it constructed social change simultaneously as a function of time and of space, the very elements that form the foundation of any narrative.

The Restoration and the earthquake are completely different events—the first is political, the latter natural—but they both brought about a redefinition of Tōkyō's topography, social segregation, and its systems of representation. Both made the enterprise of national progress the center of attention and initiated important city planning projects. Soon after the Meiji Restoration planners initiated a shift from building a “capital city” (*shuto*) to building an “imperial city” (*teito*)²⁷, and after 1923 the “Plan for the Reconstruction of the Imperial City” (*Teito fukkō*) was set out and Tōkyō became “Greater Tōkyō” (Dai Tōkyō). In both cases Tōkyō was meant to become a symbol for the nation.

Both policies of city planning shared a mechanistic and technocratic view of the city. Since the Meiji Restoration Japan's government had been concerned about Tōkyō's appearance, which was then far from being representative of the capital city of a modern nation. Its infrastructure was insufficient and urgently needed to be improved. The city's inhabitants suffered from the lack of a sewage system, overpopulation and disease, and from the ongoing danger of fire. Tōkyō's modernization was a challenge to be met with modern technology. The city was considered as an object, an abstract socio-economic entity. The question of the citizen's function within the process of social reorganization which accompanied the rebuilding of Tōkyō was not taken into the government's considerations. Contemporary critics conceived of Tōkyō as an example of the politics of a state which was forgetting its people in its single-minded pursuit of national progress.

This was also the case after 1923. From the Meiji Restoration on, it took more than 50 years to move all important political, economic, and cul-

27 For an analysis of this shift, see NARITA 1994.

tural functions from Ōsaka and Kyōto to Tōkyō. This shift not only brought about unprecedented growth to the latter, but also tremendous changes of its inner structure. Due to its central position in the process of modernization Tōkyō's population grew much faster than that of the rest of the country and doubled from 1895 to 1923, reaching almost four million. Such explosive growth put a great strain on the already inadequate infrastructure of the city and disrupted familiar patterns of urban space. The earthquake of September 1923 almost completely destroyed those older parts of the city that had been spared by modernization. The disaster of 1923 marks the beginning of an important phase in the history of Tōkyō. It gave way to ambitious city planning projects led by the government on the one hand, while the city expanded and had to cope with urban problems such as extreme growth in population and industries on the other. For these reasons, new kinds of urban space with specific functions were created. A new popular culture emerged sharing similarities with that of the so-called Golden Twenties in Berlin, New York, and Shanghai. Tōkyō's community became more and more diverse and was confronted with myriad social problems. Furthermore, from the 1910s on the systematization of Japan's nationalism advanced and, in the course of Japan's imperialistic policy, Tōkyō gained weight as imperial city.

The Restoration and the earthquake also gave rise to similar images of Tōkyō. Reminiscent of Emerson's words that there "are always two parties, the party of the Past and the Party of the Future" (Emerson 1946:514) Tōkyō stood for destruction and decline on the one hand and for a new beginning and a prosperous future on the other. Both attitudes relied on different interpretations of the past. After the Meiji Restoration and especially after the earthquake Tōkyō became the testing ground of social and political criticism working towards an alternative modernity. The building of the Japanese nation and Tōkyō's problems with modernization had culminated in the quest for a national identity. Therefore, the Restoration as well as the earthquake mark the beginning of a time when "Edofying"²⁸ grew more intense and the discursive field of Edo-memory underwent a shift in topology. In the Japanese paradigm for criticizing modernity Edo serves as a mirror of Tōkyō. The break in Tōkyō's history is used against the background of the past as an instrument for criticizing the changes brought about by the Meiji

28 This term is coined by Carol Gluck (see GLUCK 1998:269).

reforms in particular and the project of Japan's modernization in general. The counter-discourse on Japan's path to modernity became more diverse as more and more intellectuals were concerned about the future not only of Tōkyō but of the whole nation. After the initial rediscovery of Edo and its particular lifestyle and popular culture, from the 1870s through the 1890s,²⁹ another significant eruption of Edofying occurred during the 1920s and 1930s, when waves of discontent with post-Meiji modernity brought a sea change in the views of Edo (Gluck 1998:269).

Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki

Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki was written by Itō Gingetsu (1871–1944), a writer, journalist, and critic who now seems to have been forgotten by literary criticism.³⁰ He was born in Akita and left middle school at the age of 17. He then moved to Tōkyō where he started his career as a writer of fiction. He became so popular that his work initiated the coining of the term *Gingetsu shiki* (Gingetsu style). He was deeply concerned about politics and society and developed a very critical stance towards Japan's process of modernization. At the beginning of the 20th century, in the West as well as in Japan, modernity was characterized by scientific progress on the one hand and by cultural pessimism on the other. Rising nationalism, fear of war, the alienating effects of industrialization and urban growth on daily life, the deepening gap between rich and poor—all these factors contributed to the perception of modern, meaning urban, life as a condition of alienation, discontinuity, and acceleration. People recognized a deep break with the past and felt that they were living in a time of transition and crisis. The more they felt this, the more intense was the tendency to compensate for the losses caused by Japan's strategy of modernization through romanticizing Japan's past.³¹

29 See KORNICKI 1981 and LANE 1968.

30 According to Tsuchida Mitsufumi, author of the introduction to the reprinted edition of *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki*, volume 2 of *Bungaku chishi "Tōkyō" sōsho*, it is very hard to obtain material on ITŌ Gingetsu. He refers to the short article on ITŌ in *Nihon kindai bungaku daijiten* (see NIHON KINDAI BUNGAKUKAN 1977, vol. 1, pp. 133–134). This is also the basis for my short outline of ITŌ's life and works.

31 GLUCK 1998 gives an overview of how the Edo period has been conceived of since the Meiji Restoration.

From the late 1880s the discourse on Tōkyō began to diversify. Due to the Freedom and People's Rights Movement (*Jiyū minken undō*)³² and the promulgation of the constitution in 1889, the political and social focus shifted from the technical aspects of modernization to the role of the individual in the construction of society and the nation state. Intellectuals such as Kōda Rohan (1867–1947) analyzed Tōkyō's role as Japan's national capital and the creation of an urban community.³³ Not only was the government's policy of modernizing Japan successful, but it also caused contradictions and serious social problems. While the Ginza was being rebuilt as a central symbol of the modern urban space of the nascent nation state, the urban poor in the slums surfaced on the pages of newspapers in the 1890s. As in the West, journalists in Japan also investigated the dark sides of the city.³⁴ These reports laid the basis for socialistic ideas which entered the discussion on urban reform after the turn of the century.³⁵ Social thinkers and reformers focused on the improvement of the living conditions and lifestyle of the urban dweller.³⁶

- 32 There is no precise definition of this movement, as it included a diversity of loosely organized groups claiming the promotion of citizenship rights. In Japanese historical scholarship, popular movements in the period between 1874 and the 1880s are usually lumped together as *Jiyū minken undō*.
- 33 See especially Rohan's thoughts on urban reform and the new urban community as revealed in *Ikkoku no shuto* (*One nation's capital*), written and published at the turn of the 20th century. For an analysis of this treatise, see SCHULZ 1997b and forthcoming.
- 34 It is interesting to note that these reports show convincing similarities with that of their Western contemporaries, such as *How the Other Half Lives* (1890) by Jacob Riis, a police reporter from New York, and Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and London Poor* (1864). Matsubara Nijūsankaidō (1866–1935) investigates the living conditions among the poor in *Saiankoku no Tōkyō* (*Darkest Tōkyō*; 1893). He was influenced by Henry Morton Stanley's depiction of Africa. Narita Ryūichi points out that the urban poor had become a *topos* for everything "uncivilized," i. e., unhygienic and dirty. These people were positioned outside the realm of "Meiji" because they were not reached by the light of civilization and had themselves created a value system which maintained its own order. See NARITA 1994, p. 201.
- 35 See for ex. Katayama Sen's *Shisei to shakaishugi* (*City Government and Socialism*; 1899) and *Tōkyōshi to shakaishugi* (*The City of Tōkyō and Socialism*; 1902). For an outline of these treatises, see SEKINO 1993.
- 36 An important example of this discussion is Sakai Toshihiko's (1871–1933) collection of essays *Katei no shinfumi* (*A New Way of Home and Family Life*; 1902). Sakai probably was influenced by the contemporary life reform movement in Europe.

Itō was also critical of the consequences of the government's adherence to the ideology of progress and, driven by a romantic attitude towards the past, he participated in the re-discovery of Edo. He used different genres to write about Tōkyō. In his essay *Shiteki Tōkyō* (Poetic Tōkyō), which was published in November 1901 with an introduction by Kōtoku Shūsui, he combined a longing for the past with criticism of the new and outlined some ideas on urban reform. In 1902 Itō published the utopian novel *Biteki shakai* (Beautiful Society),³⁷ thus contributing to the discourse on the community of the future, which then was an international issue.³⁸

Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki consists of two volumes. Volume I was published in February 1903, the second volume two months later. Both volumes were combined in one volume and published a second time in 1905.³⁹ Itō's approach to the city becomes clear from the titles of the two volumes: volume I is entitled *The Tōkyō of Entertainment* (*Yūraku no Tōkyō*), volume II *The Tōkyō of Life* (*Seikatsu no Tōkyō*). The focus is on Tōkyō's inhabitants and their particular lifestyle. The content and style of the two volumes are very different. In the foreword to the second volume Itō discusses the volumes' content. The first volume deals with the "sweet Tōkyō" (*amaki Tōkyō*) and the second with the "bitter Tōkyō" (*nigai Tōkyō*); furthermore,

37 See NIHON KINDEI BUNGAKUKAN 1977, vol. 1, pp. 133–134.

38 Towards the end of the 19th century, the discussion of urban reform and the questioning of modern civilization itself had become tightly linked. The question of how the living conditions of modern (urban) society could be improved and how its future was supposed to be was discussed in various fields of cultural activity, such as city planning and architecture (The City Beautiful Movement, Ebenezer Howard's idea of the garden city as revealed in *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, published in 1898, etc.) as well as in social and political thought. In 1887 Ferdinand Tönnies published *Gesellschaft und Gemeinschaft* (Community and Society); the Chinese reformer Kang You-wei evolved utopian ideas about society in *Datongshu* (Book of the Great Community), posthumously published in 1935; and Liang Qichao published his serial essay *Xinminshuo* (Treatise on the New People) between 1902 and 1904 in *Xinminbao* (New Citizen Journal). Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward, 2000–1887*, published in 1888, was very influential in developing visions of the future; it was translated into more than 20 languages. The Japanese translation, published in 1903, also came to the attention of a younger generation of Chinese students who resided in Japan.

39 This edition of 440 pages was reprinted as a facsimile in the series *Bungaku chishi "Tōkyō" sōsho* (vol. 2). The following quotations refer to this facsimile edition. See Itō 1992.

the dialogues in the first volume are mainly fictitious, while those in the second volume are based on real events (Itō 1992:1–2).

Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki is reminiscent of Hattori Busshō's *Tōkyō saishin hanjōki* of 1874. Like its famous predecessor, it combines discussions of serious problems of Tōkyō, such as environment pollution and migration, with anecdotes of everyday life and dialogues between common people written in a colloquial style. Itō follows the convention of the *hanjōki* and approaches the urban space from the perspective of the inhabitant rather than from that of the administration, i. e., from below and not from above. He conceives the city as a social space and focuses on the sphere of life. Tōkyō is mainly represented by people; their dominating characteristics are activity and movement.

Itō plays different roles to convey his information. He acts as a writer of fiction, as a journalist who reports what people are talking about, as an anthropologist who investigates the geographic origins of Tōkyō's inhabitants, and as a *flaneur* who pretends to walk through all the 15 wards of the city. In the last chapter of *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* Itō describes a walking tour through all 15 wards. He aims to find out the characteristics of each ward and in the introduction to this chapter he explains his method of discovering the city:

I neither rely on reason nor do I cling to arguments. I will pass through the 15 wards of Tōkyō and very abstractly, just in the way I feel them, I will tell about the things that I can see, that I can hear, that I smell and taste. (ibid.:372)

The city is scaled down to the individual; the experience of the urban scape relies on nothing but being sensitive to all kinds of impressions.

Itō is interested in the geographical and social origins of Tōkyō's inhabitants and in the results brought about by the melting of old and new identities. Furthermore, he wants to find out why some places are prospering (*hanka*) and others are not. To do so, he contrasts the new prosperity with the old. In short, *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* lays out three main topics:

- 1) the lifestyle of the natives of Tōkyō,
- 2) the formation of a Tōkyō identity,
- 3) the criticism of the environmental pollution created in the course of Tōkyō's industrialization.

1) The lifestyle of the natives of Tōkyō

The development of a characteristic lifestyle and the formation of a Tōkyō identity are deeply intertwined. Only those who know how to live a pleasant and fulfilled life in Tōkyō are able to become members of its community. *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* outlines the aesthetics of this lifestyle. The focus is on the male population; women are not even mentioned. According to Itō Tōkyō lifestyle can be mainly characterized by the myriad possibilities of entertainment. Anyone can participate as long as one knows how. First Edo, than Tōkyō had been a *topos* for the city as a center of entertainment and consumption since the end of the 17th century. Itō states that nobody in the world loves dynamics and movement as much as the people of Tōkyō; they are obsessed with the theater, *Sumō*, and *hanami* (cherry-blossom viewing) (ibid.:78). The main characteristic of the native of Tōkyō is his lust for consumption and amusement. He is a very dynamic person and his main activity is entertainment. For him prosperity does not mean becoming rich in material terms but finding as much entertainment as possible. The real people of Tōkyō live in order to eat and not vice versa; entertainment is not a luxury but their profession (ibid.:7).

Itō describes the natives of Tōkyō mainly in terms of mental characteristics. Their addiction to amusement is rooted in a basically pessimistic state of mind. Entertainment is the approved means of forgetting the anxiety and nervousness caused by natural disasters, fire, and crime (ibid.:6). He explains that the extraordinary energy of the people of Tōkyō stems from a particular spirit and will power, the so-called *hari* (ibid.:2–3). There are even some natives of Tōkyō in whom traits of insanity or madness can all of a sudden burst out. Enjoying the cherry blossoms helps them bring order into their lives. The short-lived nature of the cherry blossoms fits the atmosphere of this city which “enjoys changes” (*hendō o konomu*) and appeases the taste of the urban dweller who lives a stressful life (ibid.:105–106).

Itō’s emphasis on the Tōkyō dweller’s movement and activity as well as his focus on mental aspects are reminiscent of Georg Simmel’s analysis of the mental condition of the city dweller in his essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life*.⁴⁰ In contrast to the rural world the density and diversity of the

40 Simmel presented his ideas on urban living conditions at the Congress of City Planning in Dresden in 1903. See SIMMEL 1957.

city constantly put the individual in contact with experiences unknown outside the city. The assumption in Simmel's analysis is that the city dweller is mobile and resourceful. Gliding over the urban landscape, picking and choosing associations to create a particular individualized social world, the city dweller belongs to many different groups and thus has to produce multiple individual identities. This matches Itō's statement that the people of Tōkyō enjoy playing different roles. The city is thus the space where people become actors (Itō 1992:3), and Itō claims that the main reason why people go to *hanami*, theaters, and temples is their wish to put themselves on a stage (ibid.:164). Therefore, in the season of *hanami* the whole city resembles very much a group of actors (ibid.:108).

Itō depicts urban spaces which are a *sakariba* (a "crowded place"), a term coined by Japanese historians to capture their theories of urban change.⁴¹ A *sakariba* is a social rather than a physical space, less a particular place such as a shopping mall or an amusement arcade than an event (*deki-goto*) such as a festival, the city itself or even chaos and disorder (Yoshimi 1987:22–24). In Itō's view people generally enjoy gathering, as do the natives of Tōkyō in particular (Itō 1992:107). He states that visiting a temple or a shrine has less to do with religious faith than with the pleasure of meeting people and of being seen by others (ibid.:161).

2) The formation of a Tōkyō identity

The formation of a Tōkyō identity is related to the practice of a particular lifestyle. Itō is interested in the question of how people can become "new natives of Tōkyō" (*shin Tōkyōkko*) (ibid.:180). In order to reach the standard of the ideal native of Tōkyō one has to cultivate one's mind, i. e., one has to develop the "philosophical thinking" (*tetsugakuteki shisō*) and the "poetic taste" (*shiteki shumi*) of the native of Tōkyō. Amidst the hustle and bustle of the city there are schools where one can learn all these attitudes, namely the *yose* theaters. The shows—the "lessons" in Itō's words—are mainly held in the evening. There are more than ten comic storytellers (*rakugoka*)—the "teachers" in Itō's words—who change places every second week. One does not have to attend any entrance exams or go through any formalities, and it even does not matter what clothes one wears. Furthermore, the meetings are

41 See YOSHIMI 1987 for a further outline of the concept of the *sakariba* (see especially pp. 22–28).

very unconventional: one enters, sits down and listens to the “lesson” while drinking tea. If one suddenly gets the feeling of being very light, than it is the effect of the “Tōkyō spirit” (*Tōkyō kifū*). If one suddenly feels curious about the world, than it is because one is getting drunk on the “Tōkyō taste” (*Tōkyō shumi*) (ibid.:181–183). The storytellers teach the people how to enjoy Tōkyō. Itō states that the whole city has the flair of a theater; the whole city is a stage.

In contrast to the first volume in which Itō outlines the characteristics of the native of Tōkyō mainly in aesthetic terms such as *hari* and *shumi* (taste), in the second volume, *The Tōkyō of Life* (*Seikatsu no Tōkyō*), he approaches the question of a Tōkyō identity from a rather sociological or anthropological point of view. He explains that Tōkyō’s citizens have two origins: country villages and fishing villages. He points out that even in these days there are still many fields inside the city and more than 600 farmers making their living in agriculture. But the people of Tōkyō disregard the fishermen and farmers and do not even know that they are nourished by them (ibid.:221–222). He complains that they have forgotten Tōkyō’s origins.

Itō emphasizes the fact that on account of the migration into the city and the evolution of new social structures after the abolishment of the feudal system in the course of the Restoration, Tōkyō’s inhabitants consist of a combination of people who have lived there before: the *Edokko* (natives of Edo), and people who have come from all over the country to the metropolis, the *Tōkyōkko* (natives of Tōkyō). As the city is a social space where people have countless opportunities to meet others and where new identities therefore constantly emerge, those people from the countryside are becoming inhabitants of Tōkyō, while the natives themselves are being provincialized. The people of the countryside and of the city mingle with each other and a new group of citizens comes into being. Because the *Tōkyōkko* are very much influenced by the West, their taste is a mixture of provincial and Western elements. They are a product of the effects of Japan’s modernization on Tōkyō. Itō characterizes them as stubborn (*ki ga kikanai*), unrefined (*yaba*), and boring (*ohanashi ni naranaku*). Even if they do not have any personal link with Tōkyō’s history and culture, they behave as if they owned the city (ibid.:224). In contrast, the *Edokko* withdraw from modern society and lead their own life.

Itō discusses the question of the Tōkyō lifestyle mainly in aesthetic terms such as *shumi* (taste) and *bi* (beauty). The aesthetics of lifestyle of the

Edokko are the “beauty of obstinacy” (*ganmei no bi*) and the “beauty of superficiality” (*senhaku no bi*) (ibid.:221–225). But as it is very hard to find pure *Edokko* or *Tōkyōkko* (ibid.:225) *Tōkyō* belongs neither to the former nor the latter. It consists both of the melting of farmers with fishermen, and the melting of people from the countryside with urbanites. Characteristics from different sources will mingle to form “the taste of the new *Tōkyō*” (*shin Tōkyōteki shumi*) (ibid.:382), which Itō believes to be the “taste of children of mixed race” (*konketsujiteki shumi*) (ibid.:225). In general, Itō regards the diversity of *Tōkyō*’s population in a positive light and approaches the problem of the formation of an urban identity from an open-minded perspective.

3) The criticism of the environmental pollution

Alongside the themes of the making of a *Tōkyō* identity and the features of the lifestyle of the *Tōkyō* native, Itō’s ideas on urban reform and his criticism of Japan’s process of modernization constitute the third main topic in *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki*. Though Itō has a very positive view of the living conditions in *Tōkyō*—the whole city is a space of entertainment and its inhabitants grow old much more slowly than the people of the countryside⁴²—he also is concerned about the dark sides of the city, conceived mainly in terms of pollution. Particular parts of the city carry the stink of epidemic diseases such as the plague and cholera, and female factory workers from the countryside in particular suffer from them (ibid.:169–170). He claims that *Tōkyō* is nothing but a rubbish heap because its inhabitants do not know where to discard the waste (ibid.:131). Some people even suggest tipping it into the sea, but others argue that one would no longer be able to gather sea weed. Another example he lists is the pollution of the fields in Yoshiwara. Formerly, one could hear the sound of frogs there; now one can only hear the weeping of the children of the poor. Dangerous exhaust fumes cause diseases and the fields have become covered with waste. A lot of new houses have been built. Here the “newest *Tōkyō*” (*saishin Tōkyō*) emerges, a *Tōkyō* which can easily be moved and burnt down. Furthermore, the peoples’ clothes are becoming dirty, and the humid air contains many harmful substances which make them ill. The people who live there suffer from diseases and nervousness and wish to move somewhere else (ibid.:228).

42 Itō 1992, p. 356. Itō states that a 60-year old native of *Tōkyō* is comparable with a 40-year old person from the countryside.

Itō illustrates the negative effects of Japan's modernization by focusing on the changes which have occurred in Mukōjima since the Meiji reforms. Mukōjima is an area located on the eastern bank of the river Sumidagawa. In 1804 the Hyakkaen opened there, a public park which was famous for its cherry blossoms. For Itō this area was one of the most beautiful in Tōkyō (ibid.:125). In the Edo period Mukōjima had already been a *sakariba* where people gathered and enjoyed life. Furthermore, it had also become a so-called "famous place" (*meisho*) in the arts and literature of the Edo and early Meiji periods. But then due to industrialization this area changed tremendously. Prosperous factories turned Mukōjima into a dusty and smoky industrial site. The more the legacy of the past waned the more people conceived of this area as an epitome of Japan's premodern culture. In the collective memory Mukōjima became a central temporal and topographical site for the commemoration of Japan's past. Itō, too, remembers the idyllic character of the place and its images in the arts and literature. He states that in former times this area was not yet spoilt by modern institutions such as advertising posters, music bands, and sports meets. He claims that the people's taste is becoming more and more superficial and that the citizens' culture is degenerating. Now even the cherry-trees are used as firewood for factories (ibid.:132).

Itō conceives of Mukōjima as a kind of microcosm that helps him point out the damages done to Tōkyō by the government's strategy of modernizing Japan. The lifestyle that had provided the foundation for the urban identity of Tōkyō has been lost and those places where one could lead this life are being industrialized and polluted. In his opinion the preservation of Mukōjima would create a place where people could make up for the stresses and exertions of modern life. In unsteady and changing times such as the Meiji period Mukōjima is very important. Located apart from the "battle-fields of life" (*seikatsu sensō no kuiki*) (ibid.:127) it serves as a kind of storehouse of the city's tradition and as a unique school for the education of the citizens' taste. Therefore it is essential to modern Tōkyō. Because of its beautiful landscape and its value as a historical site it is unique and cannot be replaced by modern parks such as that in Hibiya.⁴³ Mukōjima, the tem-

43 The park of Hibiya was the first public park in Japan to be constructed according to Western, especially German, principles of park design. It was opened to the public in 1903 and became a model for further projects of public parks. The park of Hibiya was

bles there, and the park Hyakkaen should be preserved. According to Itō this could be achieved by transforming the area into a “Mukōjima for amusement” (*yūraku no Mukōjima*). All industrial sites should be removed from Mukōjima, which should then be converted into a large park. Ugly factories, houses, and advertisement posters should be forbidden in the vicinity of Mukōjima. In order to get the money for this project Itō suggests charging visitors to this area an entrance fee. Since the cherry-blossoms of Mukōjima are so outstanding, tourists not only from Tōkyō but also from other parts of Japan would be drawn to go there. Another possibility would be to transfer all of “Tōkyō’s elegance” (*Tōkyō no fūryū*) to Mukōjima and to present it to the public there. The money which would be necessary for the construction of the park could be paid back via the entrance fee (ibid.:126–131). In this sense, then, the park would not only contribute to the preservation of the city and its past but would also provide a new public space for Tōkyō’s citizens.

Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki is a guidebook for the outsider to help/her him become an insider. It provides the reader with local knowledge about life in Tōkyō. As the focus lies on the inhabitants of Tōkyō and their lifestyles there are no descriptions of the external features of Tōkyō, its architecture or streets, nor are there any references to the symbolic meaning of Tōkyō as Japan’s capital city.

Itō writes about Tōkyō by means of dialogues between local people who take part in a typical situation of everyday city life, such as visiting a temple, going to a tea-house or meeting a friend by chance on the street. For the reader Tōkyō begins to lose its alienating character if one knows how to become familiar with it. Digressions on topical debates about urban reform, such as pollution, migration, and diseases, are informative and necessary for the understanding of life in Tōkyō but they do not play a major role in the text.

The prospering of Edo or Tōkyō is presented by means of rather conventional images. The city is conceived of as a center of popular culture and entertainment. Itō only refers to those *sakariba* which existed long before the Meiji Restoration, such as theaters, Sumō, and the river banks of the Sumidagawa, i. e., Mukōjima. New “famous places of Tōkyō” (*Tōkyō*

used as a parade ground and for official events such as the funeral ceremony of Itō Hirobumi in October 1909.

meisho) such as the park of Asakusa or Ginza and , are not even mentioned; the park of Hibiya appears only in the context of Itō's criticism of Mukōjima. One gets the impression that the modernized areas in the center of Tōkyō—in Itō's words the “battlefields of life”—with their crowded streetcars, road works, and construction sites do not even exist. Those parts of Tōkyō that are linked with Edo's popular culture have “the taste of gay quarters” (*karyū shumi*), whereas the modernized parts of Tōkyō have “the taste of the countryside” (*inaka shumi*) and a “taste of Edo” (*Edo shumi*) which has been washed with soap (ibid.:422).

In general, Itō depicts Tōkyō as a place which, apart from the problems caused by industrialization, is safe and pleasant. This image of the city is very different from that revealed in literary texts of the same period or some years later. In short stories such as Kunikida Doppō's *Kyūshi* (*Death in Anguish*; 1907) and Ikuta Kizan's *Tokai* (*The City*; 1908) Tōkyō is a space of alienation, division, and fear; in short, it is nothing but a “battlefield of life.”

Dai Tōkyō hanjōki

In 1927, four years after the earthquake, the newspaper company Tōkyō nichinichi shinbunsha commissioned 17 more or less well-known writers and 14 illustrators to take a walk together through a particular ward or area of Tōkyō and to report on its current state. Most of the novelists, such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Izumi Kyōka, and Kitahara Hakushū, had contributed important works to the canon of modern Japanese literature. The participants of this project either had been born in Tōkyō or had moved from the countryside to the city in their youth. All of them knew at least one area of Tōkyō very well. *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* (*Account of Prosperity of Greater Tōkyō*) consists of 17 autobiographical essays of 40 to 70 pages each; with one exception⁴⁴ all the texts contain 5 to 16 illustrations. The texts were published twice. In the first edition they were printed as a series of 191 installments from March 15 through October 30, 1927, in the evening edition of the newspaper *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun*. In the following year these texts were combined into two volumes—the first contains the articles on Shitamachi, and the second the articles on Yama no te. Together, these volumes were entitled *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* and published a second time in 1928. Because each

44 Takahama Kiyoshi's (1874–1959) *Maru no uchi* is the only text without illustrations. See TAKAHAMA 1992.

text reports on a particular area of Tōkyō the two volumes encompass a large part of the metropolis and document both its state and the results of the ongoing reconstruction works. Due to the circumstances that brought *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* into being, its images of Tōkyō are completely different from those in Itō Gingetsu's *hanjōki* of 1903.

The atmosphere of the city as revealed in *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* is overshadowed by the disaster of September 1923. The massive earthquake of September 1st in the Kantō region had a catastrophic effect on Tōkyō. Raging fires ravaged the imperial capital for three days, turning nearly half of the city into wasteland. More than 3500 hectares of land were affected, over 310,000 houses were destroyed; and nearly 60 % of Tōkyō's population, over 1,300,000 people, were left homeless, while more than 70,000 had died. Compared to other catastrophes such as the great fire of London in 1666 or the earthquake of San Francisco in 1906, the Great Kantō Earthquake was far more disastrous. Japan's imperial city and greatest metropolis, Tōkyō, was nearly completely burnt to ashes. The destruction of Tōkyō itself and the mass hysteria and mass murder of Korean people that followed the disaster were a great shock for the nation. Apart from many detractors, the period between the Meiji Restoration and 1923 was conceived of in the official historiography as a story of a continuously prospering nation with Tōkyō in its center. The earthquake had not only hit the nation's political but also its economic center, since two-thirds of Japan's industrial production was concentrated in cities along the Tōkaidō Belt (Hanes 1993:62), and it thus brought the general issue of Japan's project of modernization into high relief. Since the Meiji Restoration the city had loomed large in the lives and imaginations of the Japanese people. It had become the space where people could imagine both a new future and a new past for the nation as well as for themselves.

Immediately after the catastrophe the government concentrated all its efforts on rebuilding Tōkyō, but it first placed emphasis on material reconstruction, at the cost of human relief. Under the guidance of Home Minister Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929) and Charles Austin Beard (1874–1948), former director of the New York Bureau of Municipal Research and very experienced in city planning, Tōkyō was to be transformed into a much more modern and representative imperial city than it had ever been before.⁴⁵ The plan for the reconstruction of the imperial city focused on the building of broad

45 See BEARD 1923 for an outline of his proposals of the reconstruction of Tōkyō.

avenues, transport systems, and public institutions. Architects were commissioned to design national institutions in the new “imperial style” (*teikoku yōshiki*) and to decorate the city with symbols of power inspired by Western architecture. The authorities adhered to a rational, materialistic vision of progress. As in the Meiji period, this rebuilding phase reflected a technocratic view of the city and “civilization” was reduced to improvements in technical and material terms. Believing “that the restoration of the Imperial Capital is necessary for the restoration of the Empire” they aimed at “the reinvention of Tōkyō as a modern metropolis.”⁴⁶ As in the Meiji period, the fate of the capital city and that of the nation were tightly linked. The reconstruction of Tōkyō was to symbolize Japan’s progress.

Similar to the Meiji Restoration the earthquake became a central event in the historiography of both Tōkyō and Japan and brought different narratives into being. The historian Narita Ryūichi analyses the process of how the event of the earthquake became a narrative. He maintains that the term “memory” (*kioku*) is usually applied to the experience of war, especially the Second World War, but that it also can be very useful to understand historical experiences which have nothing to do with war. He suggests applying it to the experience of natural disasters (Narita 1996). According to Narita, two narratives of the earthquake came into being: the “sad story” or “tragic tale” (*aiwa*) and the “beautified” or “idealized story” (*biwa*) (ibid.:75).

Dai Tōkyō hanjōki was published four and five years after the earthquake. How is the earthquake represented here? Which images of the “prospering” Greater Tōkyō (Dai Tōkyō) are revealed? Instead of selecting particular texts and analyzing them I will outline some general features of the texts and contrast these with Itō Gingetsu’s *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki*.

Because each author limits himself to a particular area of Tōkyō which he relates with his memories of childhood and youth, *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* is far from being a guidebook to Tōkyō’s *sakariba* and entertainment as the genre suggests. *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* contrasts the prospering of the city between the 1880s and the event of the earthquake with the destroyed city left behind by the earthquake. Here “prospering” has two meanings. It points to the cultural and entertainment life of the city as the author remembers it on the one hand, and to the projects for the reconstruction of the city on the other. Most of the texts of *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* refer to two events: the earth-

46 Quoted in CYBRIWSKY 1991, p. 82.

quake and the Meiji Restoration with its politics of national progress. The latter forms the underlying context for the period from 1868 until 1945. The remembered period is mostly the childhood and youth of the author, covering in most cases the 1880s to the 1910s. The years immediately before the earthquake do not appear as an object of memory.

Dai Tōkyō hanjōki seems to mark an important stage in the writing on Tōkyō. It became the model for a subgenre of topographical literature, the *bungaku sanpo* or “literary walks,” which forms a genre of writing on Tōkyō still present today.⁴⁷ As in *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki*, in these texts as well the author acts as a *flaneur* who strolls through the city and remembers how the place looked in his childhood and youth. Itō’s *hanjōki* as well as *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* depict the sphere of life mainly from the perspective of the observer and focus for the most part on the past. Large parts of each text in *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* compare the present state of a particular area with its past appearance and include nostalgic reminiscences of life 20 or 30 years earlier. Both *hanjōki* illustrate the tremendous changes that had taken place in Tōkyō since the Meiji Restoration and which intensified after the earthquake.

Most authors are driven by emotions of longing for the past and the feeling of loss. It seems that the disastrous destruction of the city allowed no emotions but hopelessness, loneliness, and sorrow. The authors visit only areas which they have known very well since their childhood or youth. In most cases the remembered period is the school years. Tōkyō is scaled down to local size, overseable by the individual. As the whole area changed tremendously, each writer can find meaning only in his personal past; to walk through the city is a means of rediscovering and remembering it. In *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* urban space is, to a large extent, described “as it once had been.” The past is formed by the memory of the writer who searches for traces of his personal history in the places of his past which have survived the catastrophe, and for the home (*furusato*) which helped form his identity.⁴⁸ The author’s point of view is that of the insider. He signifies places by mentioning the name of a restaurant or a shop, and by characterizing them against natural features such as hills, trees, or grooves. In contrast to the

47 This trend was initiated by NODA Utarō’s *Shin Tōkyō bungaku sanpo* (1951). See the article on *bungaku sanpo* in NIHON KINDAI BUNGAKUKAN (1977), vol. 4, p. 161.

48 This is obvious in Tayama Katai’s text. See TAYAMA 1992, p. 179. For different interpretations of *furusato* cf. ROBERTSON 1998, p. 110n1, and NARITA 1998.

reader of *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki*, here the reader is expected to know the place in detail already. The author does not help to bring these localities into the broader geographical context of Tōkyō.

Because the earthquake was far more disastrous in the eastern part of the city than in the western part, the hilly area Yama no te survived in a much better state than Shitamachi. It is not surprising then, that the mood of the volume on Shitamachi is very different from that of the volume on Yama no te. Large parts of Shitamachi were still under reconstruction in 1928, and wards such as Nihonbashi were still laid to waste. There the authors were confronted with completely devastated areas and with the misery and poverty of the survivors, who very often had to live in shabby barracks. Writers such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927) and Yoshii Isamu (1886–1960) are full of consternation and express a feeling of hopelessness. The depiction of shabby barracks⁴⁹ points to two serious problems with which Tōkyō had to struggle after the earthquake: the problem of migration and overpopulation of certain areas, and the problem that four years after the earthquake large parts of the city were still under reconstruction.

Compared to Itō's *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki* of 1903, in *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* the themes of the formation of a Tōkyō identity and the particular lifestyle of the natives of Tōkyō have nearly disappeared. Not one of the 17 texts discusses these topics as intensively as Itō does. The realm of national history covers the nation and Tōkyō, while that of the individual encompasses only the tiny area one can discover on foot. Both realms seem to be in conflict with each other. In this respect Izumi Kyōka's description of landscapes in Tōkyō, in which there seems to be not even a trace of the enterprise of national progress, can be understood as a kind of "counter-history." Kyōka documents in detail a walk from bridge to bridge, strolling through a landscape which looks like the countryside. He depicts areas which are still laid to waste and while walking he describes the plants growing there. He states that these also are "famous places of Greater Tōkyō" (*Dai Tōkyō no meisho*) (Izumi 1992:114). They signify representations of Tōkyō which are outside the realm of national history and the earthquake. In this respect, Kyōka withdrew from modern Tōkyō.

Similar to *Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki*, in the latter the symbolic sphere of Tōkyō's role as the capital city of the modern nation is broached through

49 See e. g. AKUTAGAWA 1992, p. 151.

critical remarks on modern civilization in general. This is especially the case in the texts of Kitahara Hakushū and Kishida Ryūsei (Kitahara 1992 and Kishida 1992). Hakushū's depictions of Tōkyō are like snapshots taken with a camera. Like the futurists who attempted to paint the speed of modern life, Hakushū seems to record this speed with words. He splits Tōkyō into word fragments and describes it with suggestively onomatopoeic expressions. One even gets the impression that he does not write about the city but about a machine. For Hakushū "Dai Tōkyō"—he uses the word ironically (Kitahara 1992:174)—is a system of physical debris and human dereliction. He even uses the expression the "human machine" (*ningen kikai*) (ibid.:164). The city and modern civilization itself are like an animal, a "machine monster of civilization" (*bunmei no kikaijū*) (ibid.:160). In this sense, Tōkyō stands for the whole of Japan. At the sight of a small and shabby barrack Hakushū states that "this is not a landscape of Japan. This modern theater of a strange land is the setting for the expressionists" (ibid.:174).

The only text in *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* which discusses the meta-narrative of Japan's modernization somewhat theoretically is Kishida Ryūsei's *Shinko saiku Ginza dōri* (New and Old Fine Poems of the Ginza) (Kishida 1992). Here the earthquake is overshadowed by Japan's process of modernization since the Meiji period. The imperial city stands for the urban wastelands created by the adherence to the ideology of progress. In contrast to the other texts, which point out that community was still to be found in the past, in Kishida's text the idea of the city as *tokai*, community, no longer exists. The spaces of social life, the *sakariba*, have disappeared completely.

The writers of *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* approach the transformation of Tōkyō in different ways. One method, as mentioned above, is to rely on the personal memory of a particular place and to contrast it with its present appearance. Another method is to compare descriptions in a guidebook of earlier days with the present state of the same places. For example, Kubota Mantarō (1889–1963) quotes from *Asakusa hanjōki* (*Account of the Prospering of Asakusa*; 1910) to point out the changes (Kubota 1992: 280–281). Yoshii Isamu relies on *Shinsen Tōkyō meisho zukai* (*New Selection of Pictures of Tōkyō's Famous Places*)⁵⁰ to recall how the city looked in his youth. He feels lonely when he looks at a photograph of the theater which no longer

50 According to Yoshii published in the magazine *Fūzoku gahō* in 1899 or 1900. See YOSHII 1992, p. 182.

exists (Yoshii 1992:190 and 218). This theater was finished in 1893 and, like many other “famous places” of the Meiji period, it was destroyed in the earthquake (Yoshii 1992:192).

Conclusion

Saishin Tōkyō hanjōki and *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* reveal very different images of Tōkyō. The first still insists on the idea of the city as a kind of “imagined community” while the second reports on the urban wastelands created by the earthquake. Its authors mainly express feelings of loss, hopelessness, and despair. As can be seen from the analysis of these texts, the genre of the *hanjōki* encompasses a large variety of different depictions of urban features. The question remains, to what extent the genre itself shapes the experience of the writers and therefore their way of describing the city.

Seen from their title both texts pretend to encompass the whole city but in fact concentrate on the depiction of particular places. The selection of these places is linked with a particular interpretation of the past. In both *hanjōki* the “modern Tōkyō,” the Tōkyō as it was rebuilt by the means of the ideology of “civilization and enlightenment,” plays only a minor role. Itō Gingetsu mainly selects places which have “prospered” since the Edo period. The past here is the collective past of the Edo period. In contrast, the authors of *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* refer mostly to places which form the basis of their childhood and youthful memories of Tōkyō and which had once prospered. Here the realm of national collective memory is not used or even mentioned in the search for meaning, which is only to be found in the memory of one’s own past. With Pierre Nora one could assume that “when memory is no longer everywhere, it will not be anywhere unless one takes the responsibility to recapture it through individual means.”⁵¹

The autobiographical texts of *Dai Tōkyō hanjōki* can also be understood as a kind of “counter-history” or “counter-memory” against the rising nationalism of the late 1920s. The nation no longer seems to be the site or frame of memory for these authors and therefore national history does not appear as a proper measure of what people really know about their pasts.

However, as the history of modern Japan is motivated by two sets of forces, the push for internationalization and adaptation of universalistic cri-

51 Quoted in GILLIS 1994, p. 17.

teria on the one hand, and a interest in forming a national identity based on ethnic characteristics on the other, the activity of commemorating, such as the writing of topographical literature as well as the reprinting of such texts, is by any definition socially and politically motivated. Both activities are part of Japan's reworking of its past, a procedure which goes on since the Meiji Restoration.

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