



<Original>A Comparative Study on Landscape Characteristics of Osaka between Today and the End of the Edo Period Based on Visual and Environmental Evaluation of Famous Places

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# A Comparative Study on Landscape Characteristics of Osaka between Today and the End of the Edo Period Based on Visual and Environmental Evaluation of Famous Places

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## Abstract

Famous places in a city mainly consist of the places which are crowded with a great number of people and have scenic beauty, and it is important to analyze famous places for study on cityscape. This study compared today's landscape characteristics and those of the end of the Edo period in Osaka to clarify characteristics Osaka has nurtured for a long time and to suggest how its landscape should be improved. In this study, scenes of "Naniwa-Hyakkei", the Landscape Print published in 1860, were defined as the old famous places, and pictures of guidebooks published after 1995 were defined as today's famous places. These famous places were evaluated from visual and environmental points of view, and were plotted on the cityscape structure map on which geographic features, business areas and major transportation networks were overlaid. The comparison of today's map and old map showed that, at the end of the Edo period, geographic features, such as Uemachi-daichi hill, and flat areas surrounding rivers and canals, had a closer connection with city activities, offering the cityscape rich characteristics, while today's cityscape was limited to city facilities, especially transportation networks, such as Osaka and Namba Terminal Stations, and main streets, such as Mido-suji, bringing less profound characteristics to the cityscape.

**Key Words:** Famous Places/Naniwa-Hyakkei/Landscape Characteristics/City Activity/Geographic Feature/Cityscape Structure

## 1. Introduction

Famous places in a city are what we call "nadokoro", well-reputed gathering places for people because they are attractive and they create a sense of local color (Watanabe and Naito, 1985). They can be interpreted as places that have a good reputation for attracting a great number of people and having scenic beauty. While cities in Japan have recently been becoming similar with each other, demand for a sense of local color is increasing. Under this circumstance, it is important to study famous places to clarify cityscape characteristics.

In their recent study on famous places, titled "Change of Noted Places in Tokyo during the Meiji Period", Higuchi *et al.* (1982) reported that famous places are situated along canals and rivers, and the points where hills and low areas meet, and that most of them command a good

view and have contact points with transportation networks. Moreover, Narumi *et al.* (1988) has made clear Osaka's landscape characteristics in the latter half of the 19th century in his study on Osaka's cityscape structure in "Naniwa-Hyakkei." The present study compared today's famous places and those of the Edo period in order to understand cityscape characteristics of Osaka. Famous places of today were chosen from current city guidebooks and those of the Edo period, which should have more sense of local color, were chosen from the landscape print

## 2. Materials and Methods

As for the materials to be studied, "Naniwa-Hyakkei," the famous landscape print published in 1860, consisting of 100 landscapes in Osaka, was chosen for famous places of the Edo period. Pictures of 5 guidebooks published by Japanese

leading publishing companies after 1995 were examined for current famous places. Places were designated as famous if more than two guidebooks carried their pictures. By using this criterion, 98 places were qualified as famous.

Landscape print is different from guidebook picture, but both materials have the meaning of environmental information and indicate those places that were well known to everyone at that time. So it is considered meaningful to compare prints with pictures, to analyze landscape characteristics of the past and current periods.

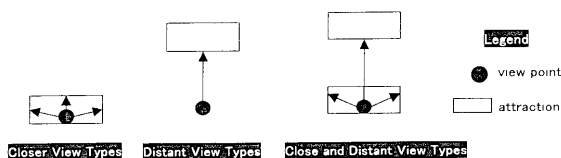
Firstly, prints and pictures chosen were categorized from both visual and environmental points of view. Next, famous places categorized were plotted on the current and old cityscape structure maps. Then, famous places on these maps were examined for distribution patterns, and current landscape characteristics and those of the Edo period were clarified to compare landscape characteristics of Osaka today and Osaka of the Edo period.

**Understandings on landscape characteristics of old and current famous places**

Prints and pictures chosen were categorized based on visual and environmental evaluations. Visual evaluation was made by categorizing spatial relationship between people and main attractions seen by them. Environmental classification was made by categorizing the types of main attractions. With categorized famous places analyzed, both characteristics were made clear.

**Visual evaluations**

As shown in Figure 1, famous places were divided into three types based on spatial relationship between people and main attractions seen by them. They were Closer View Types, where people get closer to a main attraction and view at it, Distant View Types, where people look at a main attraction from a long distance,



**Fig. 1. View types model.**

and Close and Distant View Types, where people view the main attraction from a closer distance with a background of another main attraction.

**Environmental evaluations**

Firstly, as shown in Table 1, famous places were largely divided into 2 types according to landscape composition. There were Nature Types, Artificial Types. Nature Types include famous places consisting of nature such as rivers and mountains, and Artificial Types include famous places mainly consisting of buildings, bridges and roads. Next, the two types were combined to create two other types; Semi-Nature and Semi-Artificial Types. Semi-Nature Types and Semi-Artificial Types include famous places consisting of nature and artificial scene, but former Types emphasize nature, and latter Types emphasize artificial scene. Therefore, famous places were finally grouped into 4 types (Takeda, 2000).

Nature Types	forests, farms, rivers, fields, animals and plants, mountains, sea
Artificial Types	buildings, castle, house, temples, shrines, roads, bridges, slopes,

**Table 1. Division of landscape compositions.**

**Landscape characteristics of old and current famous places**

As shown in Table 2, famous places were further subdivided 12 types by combined visual and environmental evaluations in order to understand old and current landscape characteristics.

Figure 2 shows the results of subdivision of famous places into 12 types. This figure demonstrates that famous places of the Edo period classified according to environmental evaluations mostly fell into the Semi-Artificial Types, or Type 3, Type 7 and Type 11, as well as the Semi-Nature Types, or Type 10. Any clear

	Closer View Types	Distant View Types	Close and Distant View
Nature	TYPE1	TYPE5	TYPE9
Semi Nature	TYPE2	TYPE6	TYPE10
Semi Artificial	TYPE3	TYPE7	TYPE11
Artificial	TYPE4	TYPE8	TYPE12

**Table 2. Division of famous places.**

difference was not found in visual evaluations, and famous places were more or less equally divided into three types.

On the other hand, current famous places mostly fell into the Artificial Type in the Close View Type category, or Type 4, and the Artificial Type in the Distant View Type category, or Type 8. Less famous places were found in the other types. These results suggest that current famous places in Osaka are more characterized by buildings and civil constructions, and visual and environmental characteristics are less diversified

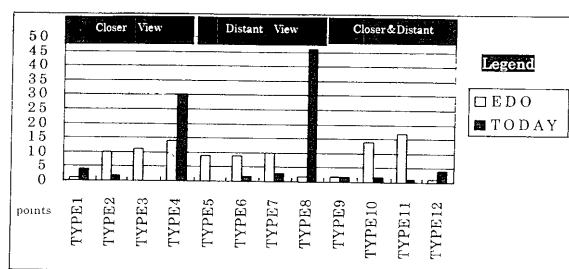


Fig. 2. Comparison of landscape characteristics between old and current famous places.

### 3. Landscape characteristics of Osaka in the Edo period

To clarify landscape characteristics of Osaka in the Edo period, the cityscape structure map was prepared. Firstly, geographic features such as Uemachi-daichi, the low hill commanding a view of Osaka, the river system including rivers and canals, the inland area, and coastlines were drawn to make an original map. Secondly, Osaka Sango, the urbanized area, was overlaid on the map. Then, main streets and canals constructed in the built-up area were also overlaid on the map to show transportation networks as the city axis. Finally, each famous places grouped into the 12 types were plotted on the map. Figure 3 is the landscape characteristics map of Osaka in the Edo period prepared in relation to the above-mentioned method.

Famous places of the Edo period on Figure 3 were examined for distribution patterns according to geographic features. As shown in Figure 4, river-side and canal-side area had 38 famous places, followed by the inland area with

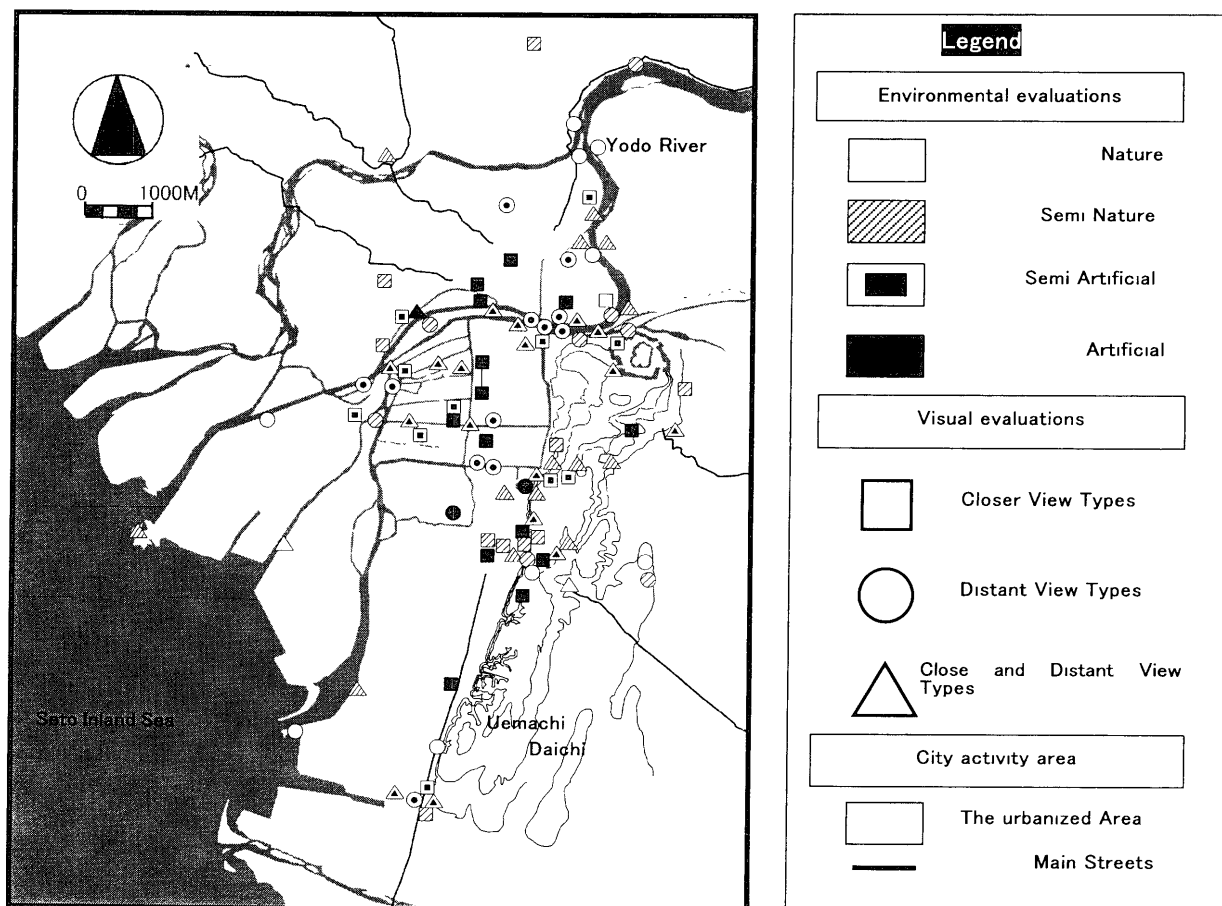


Fig. 3. Landscape characteristics of Osaka in the Edo period.

29 famous places, Uemachi-daichi with 28, and the coastline area with 3. Each group was further analyzed for visual and environmental characteristics.

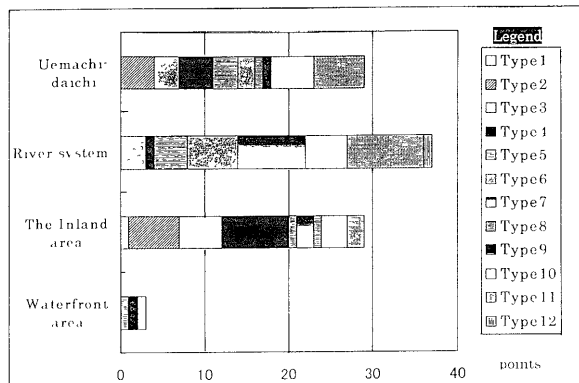
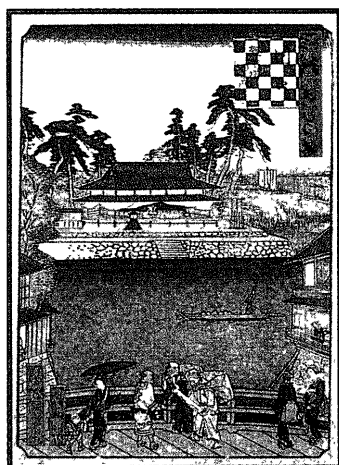


Fig. 4. Division of famous places according to geographic features in the Edo period.

### Riverside and canal-side area

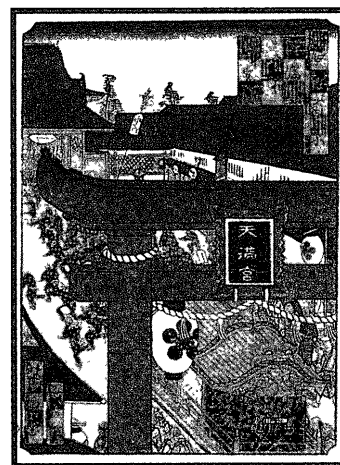
Out of 38 famous places along rivers and canals, 29 were located in the urbanized area, and 9 were outside the urbanized area. As for environmental characteristics, the Close and Distant View Type in the Semi-Artificial Type category, or Type 11 (Print 1), and the Distant View Type in the Semi-Artificial Type category, or Type 7 (Print 2), had a higher number. These types had scenes of buildings viewed from the other side of a riverbank, and bridges over the waterways. This result shows that canals and waterways extending from the Yodo River worked as an important transportation means for people and things, as well as served as a landscape axis for providing better landscape viewed from the other side of a riverbank. It is considered, therefore, that Osaka, called "Mizu



Print1 Type11  
(Kawaguchi-zakoba-tukiji)



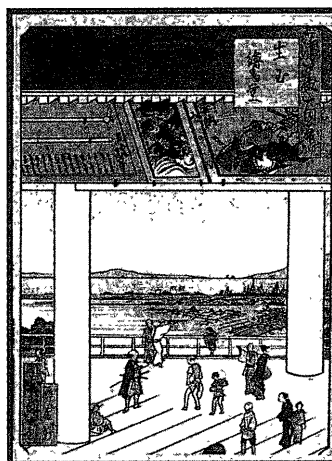
Print2 Type7  
(Eguchi-kimi-dou)



Print3 Type4  
(Tenma-tenjin-dasi-miyairi)



Print4 Type2  
(Ibara-sumiyosi)



Print5 Type11  
(Ikutama-ema-dou)

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no Miyako,” the city with many canals and waterways, developed landscape based on the river system in the Edo period.

#### **Inland area**

Famous places in the inland area were almost equally divided into two areas, with 15 located in the urbanized area, and 14 outside the urbanized area. Famous places in the urbanized area had a higher number of the Artificial Type in the Close View Type category, Type 4 (Print 3). This suggests that the urbanized area was so densely populated that it blocked people’s view, making people pay more attention to the landscape of buildings. Buildings were almost always for business dealings, and played an important role in making Osaka a business center in the country, which brought a sense of local color to Osaka.

On the other hand, about half of famous areas outside the urbanized area were situated along main roads, one part of the city axis. The Semi-Nature Type had the highest number in the Close View Type category, Type 2 (Print 4), and buildings were mostly temples and shrines. This suggests that temples and shrines far from the urbanized area were more integrated into nature and made these places more attractive.

#### **Uemachi-daichi**

Uemachi-daichi had slightly more famous places in the urbanized area than those outside the urbanized area, with 17 located in the western part of the urbanized area, and 11 outside the area. Famous places in the urbanized area had a higher number of the Semi-Artificial Type in the Close and Distance View Type category, Type 11 (Print 5), and most of them commanded views of the Seto Inland Sea and the urbanized area viewed from a temple on the west end of the low hill with the Rokko mountains for a background. The Semi-Nature Type, Type 2, had a higher number in the Close View Type category, which shows a favorable atmosphere was created surrounding temples and shrines. Famous places outside the urbanized area also had a higher number of Type 11. They mostly made the most of a good location by affording views of the Kawachi Plain from the east end

of the hill with a background of the Ikoma mountains. These results suggest that Uemachi-daichi was given importance for the hill commanding a better view and providing a better historic and natural landscape, and played an important role in creating landscape with a sense of local color in the Edo period.

#### **4. Landscape characteristics of current Osaka**

The cityscape structure map was made according to the same method used for preparing the old map. Firstly, geographic features such as Umachi-daichi, the river system including rivers and canals, the inland area, and coastlines were drawn on a map, and then transportation networks and main roads, which serve as the city axis for main transportation means in Osaka, as well as the business areas were overlaid on the map. Famous places categorized based on the visual and environmental evaluations were plotted on this map. Figure 5 is the current cityscape structure map.

Famous places were examined for distribution patterns by using the cityscape structure map. As shown in Figure 6, more than half, or 55, famous places were in the inland area, followed by river and canals with 22 famous places, Uemachi-daichi with 12 famous places, and the waterfront areas with 8 famous places. Each group was analyzed in detail for visual and environmental characteristics.

#### **Inland area**

The inland area had more than half of the famous places, with 55 famous places. Out of them, 49 were located in the business areas, and 6 were outside the business areas. Famous places in the business areas were the main roads and the Namba and Umeda areas, with the main terminal stations serving as a base for transportation in Osaka. The Artificial Type in the Distance View Type category, Type 8 (Picture 1) gained the highest number in the business areas, and consisted of landscape including high buildings viewed from the other side of a main road. Following was the Artificial Type in the Distance View Type category, Type 4 (Picture 2), which mostly consisted of a landscape including sub roads and many small buildings, and shopping streets with arcades

These results demonstrate that Osaka has far less diversified visual and environmental characteristics.

**River-side and canal-side area**

Out of 20 famous places along rivers and canals, 15 were in the business area, mostly in Yodoyabashi, Doton-bori, and Kyobashi, areas surrounding the sub-terminal stations. Though this group was able to make the most of waterfront, landscape, fewer famous places fell into the Semi-Nature Type in the Distance View Type category Type 6, and if any, they had cityscape viewed from the other side of a riverbank. Most famous places fell into the Artificial Type in the Distance View Type

category, Type 8, and they had landscapes of buildings viewed from the other side of a main road. These results showed that people do not see rivers and canals as landscape composition, and have less attachment to them.

**Uemachi-daichi**

Out of 12 famous places in this group, 11 were situated around the business areas, and the remaining one was in the business area. Famous places around the business areas had the highest number of the Artificial Type in the Close View Type category, Type 4, and they were mostly temples, shrines, and historical remains on the low hill. The only one famous place situated around the business area was "Shoman-in",

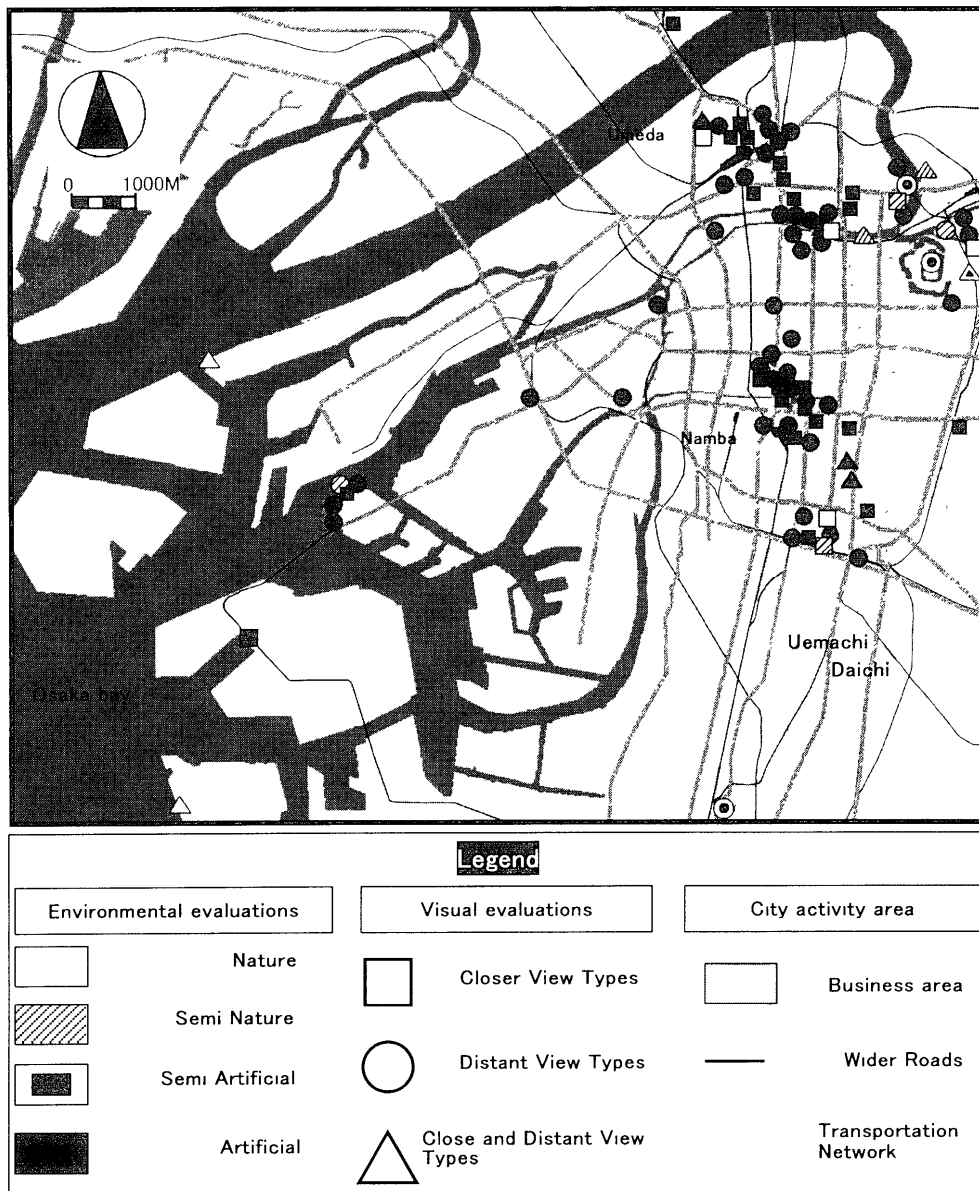


Fig. 5. Landscape characteristics of current Osaka.

falling into the Artificial Type in the Close and Distance View Type, Type 12 (Picture 3). It is interesting that this place was attractive not only today, but also in the Edo period, though the background has changed from nature to many buildings. These results show that Uemachi-daichi is characteristic of a town for temples,

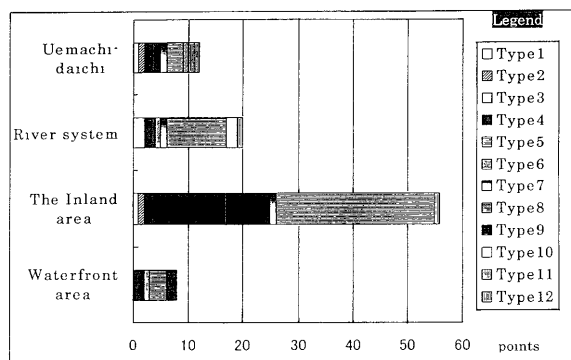
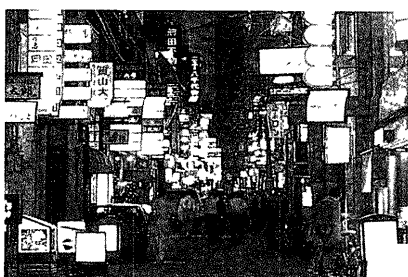


Fig. 6. Division of famous places according to geographic features in current Osaka.



Picture1 Type8  
(Shin-kabukiza)



Picture2 Type4  
(Sonezaki-shinchi)



Picture3 Type12  
(Shoman-in)

shrines, and historical remains rather than business areas, and the local color of this town gives it importance. However, the number of places commanding a good view with the help of geographic advantages have decreased, suggesting that less attention is paid to geographic characteristics today.

### Waterfront area

The waterfront areas had 8 famous places. They were located in Nanko and Tempozan areas. Five famous places were among the Artificial Types in the Distance View Type category and the Close View Type category, or Type 8 and Type 4, and they had landscapes including modern buildings rather than waterfront. The remaining 3 fell into the Nature Type and Semi-Nature Type, Type 6 and Type 9, and had a scene of the sea. This suggests that people's attachment to the sea has been decreasing.

### 5. Comparison of landscape characteristics between Osaka today and Osaka of the Edo period

In conclusion, the landscape of Osaka in the Edo period was characterized by a sense of local color created by integrating city activities into geographical features. The advantageous geography includes Uemachi-daichi, or the low hill commanding a view of Osaka, the river system such as rivers and canals, and areas surrounding rivers and canals. On the other hand, today's landscape largely depends on city activities, and, therefore, famous places are mostly situated in the inland area, especially the "Kita," or Umeda area with one of the two main terminal stations, the "Minami," or Namba area with the other terminal station. Other famous places include main roads connecting both these areas, and sub-terminal stations including Tennoji and Kyobashi. These results suggest that current famous places in Osaka are more characterized by buildings and civil constructions, and visual and environmental characteristics are less diversified.

Today, canals running through Osaka have decreased, while Uemachi-daichi and the Okawa River have remained intact. However, less attention has been paid to these geographic



features, and famous places has changed landscape from nature to modern buildings viewed from the other side of a main road, and have been losing the sense of local color which Osaka had nurtured by making full use of geographic features and historical remains. Landscape print is different from guidebook picture, but both materials have the meaning of environmental information and indicate those places that were well known to everyone at that time. So it is considered meaningful to compare prints with pictures, to analyze landscape characteristics of the past and current periods.

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