Tokyo is an ugly city. There are hardly any beautiful or even good buildings; there are few parks; there are no mountains or even hills inside or outside the city; there is no green belt; there are few monuments worth looking at; the air pollution is terrifying; the perpetual noise deafening; the traffic murderous.
But not all is ugliness in Tokyo. There are a few good buildings and impressive temples and shrines; there are a few parks worth visiting. And the overcrowding, the lack of space, has one advantage, pleasing at least to the eye. Everything has to be small in Tokyo: houses, rooms, shops – even, one feels, people, to fit into the small houses. Long side-streets consist of tiny houses only, and this often creates a toy-like, unreal quality, with small women tip-toeing along in their kimonos and equally small men sitting, motionless, inside their tiny shops.

George Mikes, *The Land of the Rising Yen*

(Reading 2, Simon Greenall & Diana Pye, Penerbit Kanisius)