



## The Origins of Mixed Urban-Rural Land-Use and the Peri-Urbanization of Tokyo, Japan

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On the periphery of Asia's mega-cities, rapid urban expansion into former agricultural areas has produced vast mixed urban-rural land-use (McGee 1991). Standard tools of the planning trade—greenbelts and land-use zoning—have been applied to curtail the urbanization of the agricultural countryside. However, these tools have proved largely futile in the face of rapid population growth and the difficulty of enforcement. Resultantly, sporadic urban development and fragmented agriculture patches dominate the periphery of large Asian cities, and planning tools other than the simple binary of greenbelts are of great importance (Yokohari 2000). The first step in developing planning tools appropriate to these mixed land-use is to recognize that they are not entirely new, nor merely an embarrassing planning failure; rather, mixed urban-rural land-uses are a vernacular landscape characteristic of historical and present-day urban environments of many Asian cities. Taking the present-day mega-city of Tokyo as an example, we see that the mixed urban-rural character of its present shape is constructed atop a history of mixed urban-rural land use in its antecedent of Edo.

The mixed urban-rural land-use of the Shimousa plateau, 20-40 km east of Tokyo, is representative of the way in which rapid postwar expansion shaped the peri-urban fringe of Tokyo. During the Edo period (1603-1867), this area was a large, expansive pasture used to train military horses of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Accompanying the growth of Edo and its resource demands, pasturelands were granted piecemeal to agricultural villagers upon the condition that they reclaim them as productive farmland. While new reclamation patterns greatly varied over time, each new village unit similarly consisted of woodlands, farmlands and villages. In the post-war period, landowners gradually sold much of their original farmstead to developers, while maintaining part of their agricultural land for small-scale agriculture. History and current trends demonstrate that mixed urban-rural land use forms a vernacular landscape characteristic of Japan.

**KEY WORDS:** Mixture of urban and agriculture land use, peri-urban, pastureland, reclamation land, land use transformation.