

# Tokyo's "Urban Regeneration" as the Promoter of Spatial Differentiation

— Growth Coalition, Opposing Movement  
and Demographic Change —

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1. Introduction
2. Spatial Change and the meaning of UR in Tokyo
3. Case Study of Roppongi Hills: Growth Coalition vs Opposing Movement
4. Resulting Demographic Differentiation
5. Provisional Conclusions and Further Research Agenda

## 1. Introduction

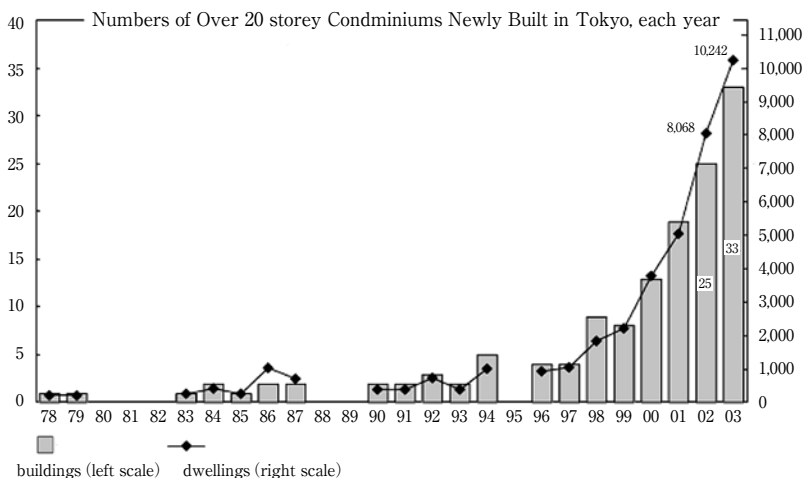
This paper discusses Tokyo's "Urban Regeneration" phenomenon and resulting high-rise condominium boom during the 1997–2007 decade, which would give us a material to discuss the relationship between global and domestic logic, between centre and suburbs, and potentially between haves and have-nots as well.

In the decade, Tokyo witnessed drastic and unprecedented transformation. As Sorensen (2003) put it, the logic of capitalism worked straightforwardly than ever before: "communities in inner city areas have, on the whole, been fighting a losing battle against a resurgent property development industry that seeks to redevelop inner city neighbourhoods into high-rise towers" (Sorensen 2003: 529). It looks as though central Tokyo's scenery is approaching to Manhattan's skyscrapers (see **Figure 1**), ignoring the historical meanings inscribed on places.

Can we discuss Tokyo as converging to the other global cities which

would become more and more subject to global logic of capitalism? Obviously the question contains many aspects and never easy to answer, but I hope this paper could add some viewpoint on the debate. Most of the Tokyo researchers emphasise domestic factors and specific historical path, especially in terms of financial market structures or policymaking process (Fujita 2003, Saito 2003), rather than insist similarities to the other global cities. In this paper I would like to pay attention more to ordinary people's perception and points of view from below so that I can provide another aspect to this debate. I also would like to emphasise the importance of outside area of Tokyo Metropolis when try to understand the dynamics in this construction boom. This report is not ready to discuss the inequality issue, but I share the concern, because the inequality discussion should contribute to the global-domestic debate as well.

Figure 1. high-rise condominium in central Tokyo



Source: TMG (Tokyo Metropolitan Government) (2002).

Accordingly, the questions which shall usher this paper are as follows; how is the process of this unbelievable transformation seen from below? In what area are these changes taking place, in other words, is it confined to central Tokyo or extended beyond there? What kind of potential impact these changes will put upon Tokyo's basic composition?

Before pursuing these agendas, I will explain the background and contexts of recent Tokyo's "Urban Regeneration" (henceforth, UR), then develop a case study of Roppongi Hills Redevelopment project at section 3, because it was a flagship case for policymakers and considered to be at the one extreme end of the spectrum. When I describe the story of Roppongi Hills, part of the description would come from my interview with an anti-development movement leader, while at large this report depends on official or secondary data.

## **2. Spatial Change and the meaning of UR in Tokyo**

In the first place I shall make account of basic geographical definition concerning Tokyo, the largest metropolitan area in the world. In everyday usage "Greater Tokyo" includes the three prefectures<sup>1)</sup> of Chiba, Saitama and Kanagawa added to Tokyo Metropolis itself. And Tokyo Metropolis also covers enormous swathe from the western countryside to the islands far south from the centre. However, when Japanese say "Tokyo", in most cases it means 23 wards<sup>2)</sup>. And in this report I will mention to inner wards among the 23 wards, together with a few cities in Chiba prefecture, both on

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1) Prefecture is similar to counties in the UK, which have their own governmental body and elected parliament.

2) Wards are similar to London boroughs in the UK, and in Japan's local government system, same status as cities with electoral mayor and parliament.

the Tokyo Bay. The swathe is the most drastically changing area, as **Figure 2** testifies. Newly built large-sized condominiums (with over 200 or so dwellings in one building) are concentrated in these wards and cities. I will call this belt as “Tokyo Bay gateway”, inspired by the word “Thames Gateway”. That is not playing with the words, but draws attention to the similarity in the geographically developing pattern—from the east side of the city centre to the corridor to open water, and beyond the boundary of Capital city—which might be useful and imaginative.

And **Figure 3** suggests the strong policy impact on this boom. The areas designated as “emergent UR developing area” overlap with the condominium boom area shown in **Figure 2**. In other words, policymakers and developers both concentrate their resources and efforts into certain area in Greater Tokyo, especially on Tokyo Bay and the inner few wards.

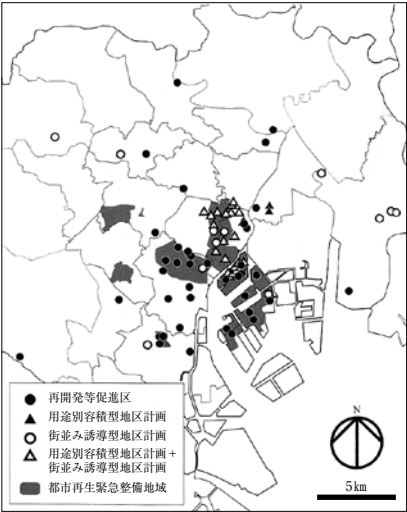
To depict the drastic change from the people’s view, I’ll account for the historical background of Tokyo, side-by-side with the descriptions on Roppongi 6 neighbourhoods, which eventually overwritten by the famous sightseeing and business spot of “Roppongi Hills”, which were later regarded as the symbolic case of UR.

#### Pre-history of UR: up to early 1980s

Central Tokyo was seriously damaged by incendiary bombardment during WWII. The restoration process aftermath of the defeat was in chaos which wouldn’t allow strict and well-planned city reconstruction. Tokyo metropolitan office and the central government tried to introduce some zoning system, although most of them failed (Sorensen 2002: chap. 5). Also, the infrastructure building toward 1964 Olympic Games fallen into symptomatic therapy, such as building motorways over the historical moat of Edo Castle. On the other hand, thanks to these planning failures, the

著作権等の都合により、印刷版に含まれるこの画像は表示できません。

Figure 3. The area designated as "UR emergent developing area" (dark painted areas) by UR bureau in Cabinet Office, within Tokyo Metropolis



Source: Hirayama (2006).

ordinary neighbourhoods in central Tokyo had preserved to attract some anthropological observers such as Theodore Bestor (1989) and Ronald Dore (1958). Roppongi 6 neighbourhood was one of such ordinary communities in inner Tokyo.

### The age of Urban Renaissance and depopulation: 1985–1998

Tokyo's locally and historically determined structure started to change into "space of flows" (Castells) in mid-1980s, heralded by Nakasone Administration. Already a lot of academic literature (Hayakawa and Hirayama 1991; Machimura 1992) has written over what happened in this "Minkatsu" period, so I just excerpt some important points.

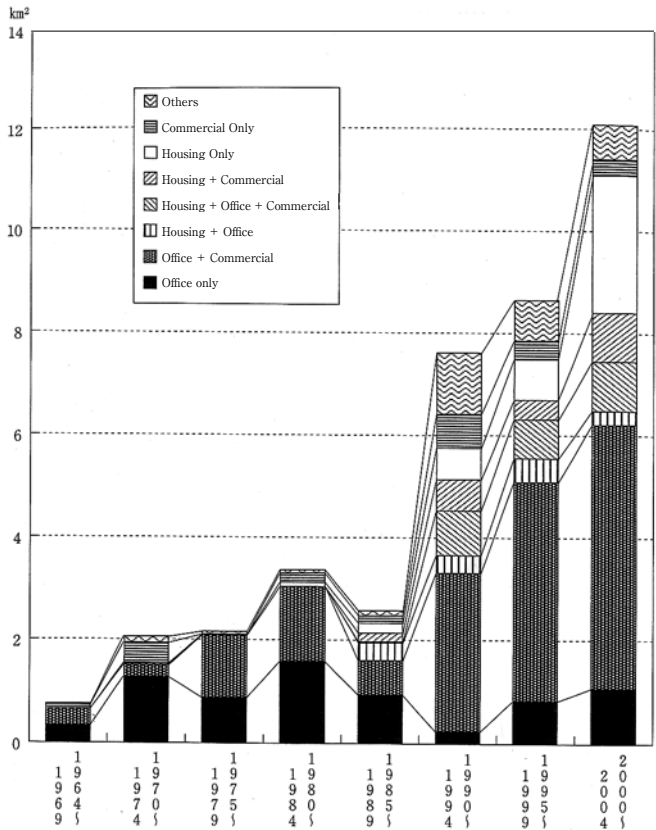
Firstly, in terms of city planning, it was the beginning of relaxation of planning control to create the space in the sky. It is surprising enough what an enormous floor space has created since this period once you give a glimpse to **Figure 4**. Prime Minister Nakasone is said to have commented as: "Within the Yamanote circle line, all the buildings should be over 6 storeys, in order to activate the economy" (Kensetsu Seisaku Kenkyujo 2004: 28).

Secondly in economic terms, it is important that the governing elite found the way to create effective demand just by revising the policy documents. This boom propelled the notorious "bubble economy" until early 1990s, and recent "recovery" of Japan's economy also considered to owe to this return of the housing boom.

Thirdly, in terms of community, it was the destruction of the conventional relationships. Landowners finally decided to sell their land to developers to leave the place they had grown up. A sociologist reports a case in Kanda neighborhood as regular community meeting faced difficulty in 1980s because of the critical decrease of delegates living there (Okuda 1983). In the same time, Tokyo bureaucrats in the ward office worried this depopulation

from another point of view.

Figure 4. Newly created super high-rise space in central Tokyo, 1980s-2004



Source: Maruyama and Ueda (2006).

**Reaction of Minato Ward**

In Japan's local municipality system, financial stability of given municipality mainly depends on the population. Worse than that, in 1980s some inner Tokyo wards were even on the verge of the extinction, because central government might regard them not to satisfy the population criteria to

remain as “ward”. Inner wards (in particular, Chiyoda, Chuo, Minato and Koto ward which consist of what I call Tokyo Bay gateway) shared the perception of crisis and started policymaking for attracting new residents (see Table 1). There is no wonder that ward officers wrote down positive comments towards redevelopment, in Minato white paper on residence: “With redevelopment implementation, it is likely in the district the population retains or recovers” (Minato Ward 1994: 81).

Table 1. Policies toward attracting people to live in inner wards

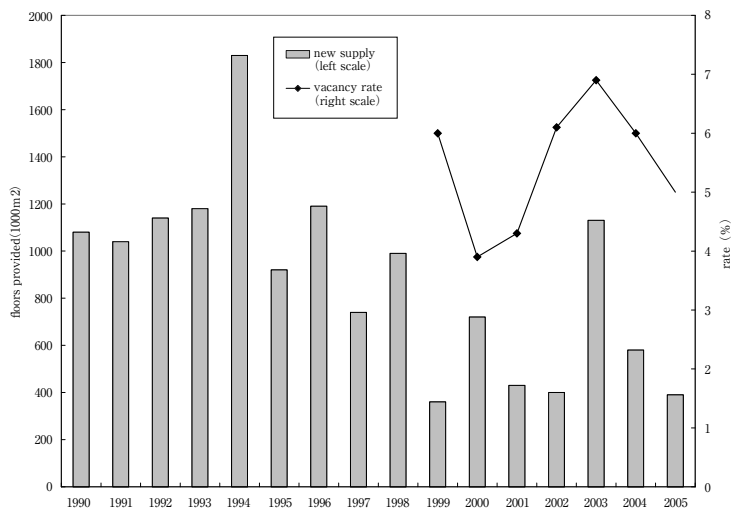
Ward	Period	Name of the policy or the description
Chiyoda	1992–	Obligation of Dwelling Room Attachment to New Building
Minato	1985–	Obligation of Dwelling Attachment to New Building, though it revised to include exceptions in 2003
Koto	1994–2000	The same obligation as above, but abolished in 2000
Chiyoda	2002–	Subsidy for the rent in order to promote newly married couples etc.
Minato	1992–2003	Subsidy for the rent for families, though abolished in 2003

Source: author made from Minato White Paper on residence (1994) ;  
Tokyo white paper on housing (2002)

#### The advent of UR and high-rise boom: 1998–present

Around the year 1998 when the destiny of Roppongi 6 fixed, the city builder’s shift toward high-rise condominiums in Central Tokyo became clearer (TMG 2002: White paper on Land 2000). One of the reasons of this shift may be the saturation of the office supply in central Tokyo, as Figure 5. suggests.



Figure 5. Office supply and vacancy rates in 23 wards, each year<sup>3)</sup>

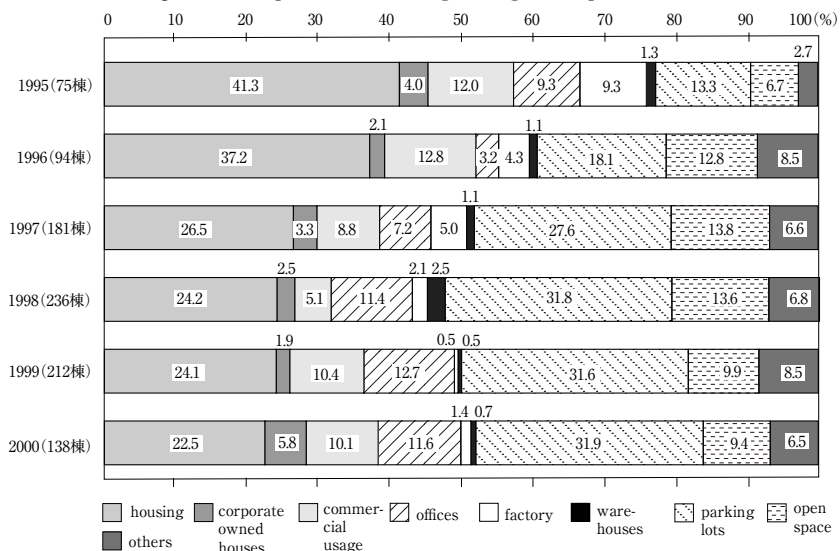
Source: Mori Bldg. (till 2001) and Ikoma Data Service (01-05).

And more important reasons lied both on supply and on demand sides. On the supply side, most of Japanese companies which were struggling with debts caused by the collapse of the bubble economy, started to sell their corporation-owned lands. In most of the cases it was suitable place to build condominiums, both in terms of access to the centre and size of the plots. And developers who also suffered from the collapse started the condominium building right away, without attention to environmental, social or communal impact. Also officials of the inner wards, who worried about the depopulation in the previous decade, welcomed this shift. **Figure 6** illustrates how the previous corporate lands were converted into high-rise hot spots. TMG describes: "In the inner 3 wards, most of the cases are conversion from low

3) Ideally the data should be divided to inner wards and the rest; but the data is coming from a private information company and it is difficult to obtain more detailed figures.

usage plots such as parking lot, or offices. Plots which forced to remain in low usage facing the bubble economy's turmoil, or old offices which have lost the competitiveness, are main objects for the conversion" (TMG 2002: 29).

Figure 6. The previous land usage of high-rise spots in TM



Source: TMG (2002: 29).

Readers may find interesting to see examples of advertising for these condominiums, which are targeted to the upper middle-class residents in Greater Tokyo. Common to these ads were catchword of "Return to Tokyo Centre", and they emphasised the reducing of commuting time, satisfaction of living in skyscrapers, and gated safety of these gorgeous towers. Hirayama points out that these ads contain the following characteristics; 1) emphasize magnificent views from the high tower, which depends on the sacrifice of the lower houses' residents 2) hotel-like services such as concierge, 3) obsession to the security, such as multiple lock and 24hr gatekeeper (Hirayama 2006). Some ads even featured movie stars, which clearly exemplified the trends towards commercialisation of housing, as I shall paraphrase in the next

section. Table 2 also exemplifies how this condominium rush was drastic, even within Minato Ward alone, and in the same time, how luxurious and expensive the assets are.

Table 2. Examples of Condominium buildings within Minato Ward, 2000–07

Name	Number of dwellings	Completion	Developer	Example rent and size
La Tour Shibakoen	130	2000	Sumitomo RE	£7291 for 168 m <sup>2</sup> / Month
Arc Forest Terrace	39	2001	Mori Bldg	£3261 for 124
Atago Green Hills	42	2001	Mori Bldg	£4261 for 122
Roppongi Hills	500	2003	Mori Bldg	£6087 for 162
Homat Viscount	84	2005	Kowa RE	Average £5435/ Month
Pacific Tower Roppongi	83	2006	J-REIT	£4304 for 118

Source: author made on *CRI* each issue by Haseko Ltd.

### ***The imported concept of UR***

I should provide the definition and description of UR no later than here. It is daunting work because the concept has soaked up a lot of meanings, used as a buzzword, and was distorted completely from the original one which was controversial already. Some city planners in Japan have imported the methods of UR from London such as setting of enterprise zone, without consideration to social or political impact (e.g. Shinohara, 2002). Accepting these policy proposals, soon after he took office in 2001, Prime Minister Koizumi established "Urban Regeneration Bureau" within Cabinet Office, which clearly demonstrated that this was one of his main policies to boost the economy. He established Council for Economy and Fiscal Policy as the top level policymaking body, in which Mori Bldg's president Minoru Mori participated from the beginning. The Diet passed "Urban Regeneration Law"

within the year, which enabled UR Bureau to designate “emergent urban regeneration development area”. Once certain project has designated on this, local authorities were obliged to authorise the plan within a half year. And as we saw at **Figures 2 and 3**, these designated areas are located alongside the gateway line from the Tokyo centre to Tokyo Bay, underpinned by the intention of investment concentration. And on top of this line, Roppongi Hills located, as a nearly finished project which didn’t need designation any more. Thus, Japan’s UR concept is equivalent to “redevelopment”, but enhanced by special promoting policy institution.

### **3. Case Study of Roppongi Hills: Growth Coalition vs Opposing Movement**

#### ***The Roppongi 6 neighbourhood***

Roppongi is famous as an entertainment spot nearest to the Central Business District of Tokyo. However, same as other inner ward, was a residential area composed of detached houses, apartments, and small office buildings. Originally the mansion of Mohri samurai clan occupied there in pre-Modern Edo era, but in Modern era the land was divided into small plots owned by various people. Among the communities, the Roppongi 6 neighbourhood is located in a small valley, unfavorable condition for being obtained by riches or by large scale developers, so that preserved as a working class community. **Table 3** illustrates the character of this community, larger number of self-employing people than Minato Ward’s average, but less managerial class people. It would be better to add that workers in the Roppongi entertainment industries obviously needed their rooms to live near working place including Roppongi 6. Until 1985, when a developer Mori Building Ltd. came into this area, this character had been basically retained.

We can also observe from the **Table 3** that, the percentage of self-employed people within the labour force at Roppongi 6 district sharply decreased after that, which suggests people sold the plots to leave the neighbourhood.

**Table 3.** Basic Statistical Characteristics in Roppongi 6 neighbourhood

	Roppongi 6 neighbourhood									
	2000		1995		1990		1985		1980	
Population	473	100%	1437	100%	1906	100%	2441	100%	2593	100%
aged 0–24	91	19.2%	353	24.6%	513	26.9%	763	31.3%	831	32.0%
aged 25–59	236	49.9%	771	53.7%	1052	55.2%	1278	52.4%	1418	54.7%
aged over 60	136	28.8%	301	20.9%	330	17.3%	364	14.9%	329	12.7%
Labour force	264	100%	847	100%	1091	100%	1263	100%	1318	100%
Employee	—	—	—	—	760	69.7%	873	69.1%	850	64.5%
Managers	—	—	—	—	168	15.4%	192	15.2%	181	13.7%
self-employed	56	11.8%	101	11.9%	162	14.8%	198	15.7%	287	21.8%

	Minato Ward									
	2000		1995		1990		1985		1980	
Population	159398	100%	144885	100%	158499	100%	194591	100%	201257	100%
aged 0–24	32702	20.5%	35730	24.7%	44482	28.1%	59936	30.8%	65501	32.5%
aged 25–59	88541	55.5%	75542	52.1%	81498	51.4%	101805	52.3%	105879	52.6%
aged over 60	38093	23.9%	32961	22.7%	30325	19.1%	30874	15.9%	28843	14.3%
Labour force	81311	100%	81547	100%	88093	100%	105851	100%	107810	100%
Employee	—	—	—	—	57649	65.4%	69717	65.9%	68960	64.0%
Managers	—	—	—	—	16398	18.6%	16389	15.5%	14840	13.8%
self-employed	14819	18.2%	14732	18.1%	14039	15.9%	19740	18.6%	23987	22.2%
Foreign pop.	18476									

NB: the categories of "employee" and "managers" were merged from 1995 census

Source: the author made by census data each year

### ***Redevelopment of Roppongi 6 and the failure of opposing movement***

Roppongi 6 was not exception to the great change. In 1986, a nation-wide TV station (TV Asahi: a subsidy company of Asahi Shimbun) which located here, felt needs for more spacious office, and consulted Mori Building Ltd. Mori Bldg was a latecomer developer which owned some old buildings scattered around central Tokyo, and was eager to handle large-scale big project of their own, to catch up with giant early bird developers<sup>4)</sup>. But they were not welcomed by ordinary Minato citizen by the preceding redevelopment project, so they needed the legitimacy from the local government in the first place.

After few times' meeting held by Minato ward, Mori building started persuading the residents and owners to cooperate them using rhetoric as follows; "The roads in this district are narrow and bend so that rescue cars cannot pass through quickly. This town is weak for disasters" "It abides by the public welfare to get two main roads connected. It's a responsibility of residents who live in the city centre" (Kubota, 2004). Following the scheme set by Urban Redevelopment Law, the "preparation union" for Roppongi 6 redevelopment was established in 1990, which is eligible to decide the go sign to the plan.

Later in the middle of recession decade, in April 1995, Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) included the project into the city's master plan, accepting national government's intension for economic boost. In 1998 the redevelopment union—legal body to implement the redevelopment on their responsibility, and which should include all the stakeholders— was

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4) A famous architect Kengo Kuma comments: "In the ground of Roppongi Hills, there's a strong obsession of Mori Minoru as a newcomer, apart from the privileges of Mitsui and Mitsubishi who was given the land by the past government" (<http://shinsho.shueisha.co.jp/column/toshi/060822/index.html>)

authorized. Although in the union 398 landowners participated, the other 100 landowners refused to join, opposing to the policy of Mori building (Kubota 2004), and as a result, they had to leave Roppongi 6<sup>5)</sup>.

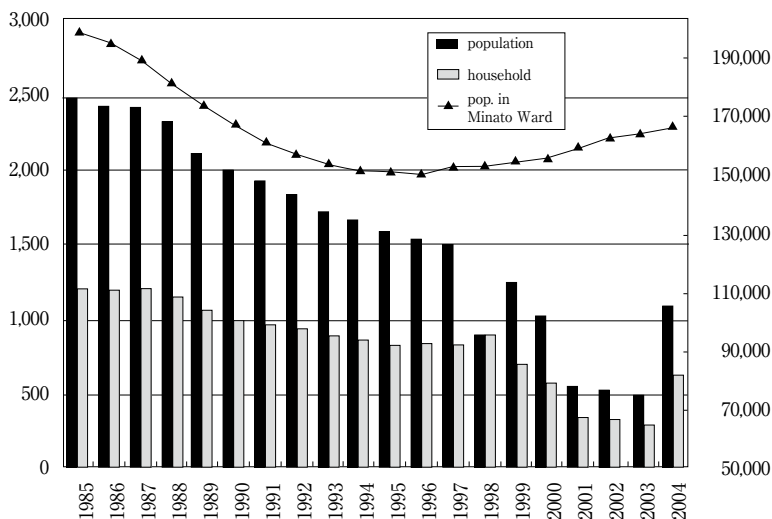
Because the company was a latecomer, Mori Building didn't invest too much during the bubble economy years, which enabled them to be free from the turmoil caused by the following recession. That's one of the reasons why this project suddenly treated as the symbol of Tokyo's UR in the turn of the century.

**Table 4.** Timetable of Roppongi 6 and reactions by the anti-development movement

Date	Event	Reaction by movement	Other
1986	TMG, designated this area to "redevelopment induction area"	"Association for consideration of Roppongi 6 redevelopment" organized	
1988	Minato ward implemented redevelopment basic research	voice in the meeting held by the local government	
1990	Redevelopment "Preparation Union" Established	Try to persuade other owners not to participate in the union	
1995	TMG announced the decision for the urban plan	Draw concession from Mori Bldg that the property right conversion rate shall be 1.9 and be fixed in 1995 price rate	
1998	Redevelopment Union Established	Leave Roppongi 6. End of the movement	
2002	Completion		
2003	Roppongi Hills Open for Public		

5) According to Kubota, in 1995 there were 566 landowners and 95 tenants in Roppongi 6, which was decreased to 398 and 5 when redevelopment union established. The participating owners became less when the towers completed as 371 members, and now the number is said to be less 300, although no correct data available.

Figure 7. The population of Roppongi 6 neighbourhood



Source: Kubota (2004).

### ***Symbolization of Roppongi Hills***

Koizumi Administration was delighted to find Roppongi Hills in order to demonstrate as the symbol of the recovered economy and the rise of new rich class. In August 2002, at the completion ceremony of Roppongi Hills, three Ministers attended, including the Prime Minister himself. In the ceremony, the politicians have commented as follows: “Private sector holds the key for the future urban regeneration and economic regeneration (Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi)” “This ceremony is a launch of Roppongi Hills as the symbol of Japan’s urban regeneration (Economy and Finance Minister Heizo Takenaka)” “I was scolded by president Mori as the speed of reform is so slow that it took 17 years to build this city. Now that Roppongi Hills have completed, we change institutions so that this kind of regeneration can be done immediately (Public Administration Reform Minister Nobuteru Ishihara)”.



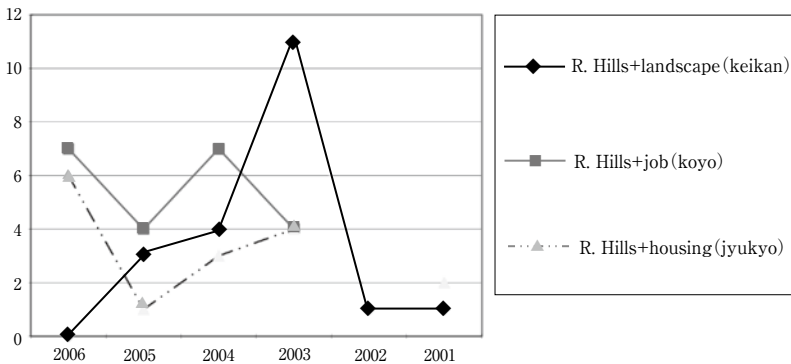
As can be observed, the politicians regarded this town as the symbol of the nation's economic revitalization and the individual's better life, in order to provoke people's positive emotions toward the regime. Prime Minister's comment admits two basic policies of his administration; 1) support for the private developers and hostility to government regulation, 2) distortion of the word "urban regeneration" as equivalent to "economic regeneration". This suggests that Tokyo's regeneration was strongly driven by national economic concern, neither by social or local one. Besides, they often admired the "compact city" concept of Roppongi Hills, which "enables people to live in centre and commute less, enjoy dinner in the hotel, watch films in the theatre, and experience the art museum on top of the tower" (Mori Bldg 2003). It is as if the high-rise towers are the panacea for every housing problem in conventional crowded Tokyo. But readers can cast doubt whether this compactness is open for everybody.

Media basically hailed the rhetoric. There were few questions on the issue of affordable housing and job creation, compared to London Docklands' UR case which was put under journalistic crossfire (see **Figure 8**). When it comes to architects' reactions, most of the experts showed disappointment to this "fat-line" and "decontextualised" design of the towers, but it remained as just a landscape issue. Just a glimpse to the **Table 5** will suggest that Roppongi Hills was treated by media in view of urban lifestyle and Mori Bldg were mentioned just in terms of management and economy, rarely in terms of social responsibility or relationship to the community.

Then it is not surprising that soon after the opening of the Hills, the tower deemed to be the symbol of the new rich class. The representative of this image was Takafumi Horie and Yoshiaki Murakami—both were president of prominent IT companies and later arrested by the suspicions of insider stock trading. They both had their offices in this tower and lived in

luxury condominium rooms here. Horie said in his book, “From the office at Roppongi Hills I can look down on Prime Minister’s house and Tokyo Tower so that I am encouraged to tackle with big projects” (Asahi Shimbun, 2002). Indeed, the architect of the building John Gerde answered to the interview of Asahi Shimbun as he “imagined this building to be a battleship” (ibid). Yes, the towers shall be the battleship fighting in the sea of global economy, far away from the ordinary local people who used to live there.

Figure 8. Media Coverage of Roppongi Hills (in Asahi Shimbun)



Source: Author made by online index search Kikuzo by Asahi Shimbun.

The average rent of the condominium for one month is, from 5000 up to 10000 pounds. What kind of people can afford to pay this amount? We cannot get exact data of residents because of the gatedness of these towers, but Mori building admits 60% of the residents are foreigners (CRI, Mar 2003: 7), presumably executives of global financial capital. Also when looking into the tenant companies in the main office tower around 2005, one can find the major part of the floors are occupied by two US financial superpowers, Lehman Brothers and Goldman Sachs (11 out of 31 floors). The anti-development movement leader Hikaru Kubota commented “Roppongi Hills organize the

**Table 5.** Examples of Magazine Headlines mention to Roppongi Hills, 1998–2002

Year	Title of the article	Magazine Title
1998	None	
1999	None	
2000	Japan's millionaire: Mori Bldg president Mori Minoru	Forbes
2000	21 <sup>st</sup> century redevelopment virtual walk Tokyo	DIME
2001	Which becomes the coolest? Tokyo's redevelopment spots	Weekly Dias
2001	Tokyo's Best! Which is the most gorgeous hotel?	Title
2001	Anxiety for the President Mori Minoru	Thames
2001	Changing City	Switch
2002	2003 Would-be Cool Items Ranking	Nikkei Trendy
2002	Interview with Mori Minoru: the Potential Model Case for Global City	Gekkan Keieijyuku
2002	2003 Tokyo redevelopment map: A Guide for new Buildings and the Shops	Tokyojin
2002	Mori Minoru: Tokyo's Regeneration being ignited by Roppongi Hills!	Zaikai
2002	Tokyo Office Building Today	Zaikai
2002	Interview with Mori Hiroo: The philosophy of Roppongi Hills	Takarajima
2002	Reviving vivacious Tokyo: redevelopment rush	Takarajima

NB: deleted the repeated or series articles. Source: Oya Soichi Bunko Index.

town by completely different formula from what I learned in the Roppongi 6 community where I grew up" (Interview Mar 24 2007).

If you like to continue, more could be said about Roppongi Hills, especially on its political economy, the formation of growth coalition, or the implication for city planning. But I stop here partially because of the lack of further data. Besides, Roppongi Hills was the extreme case and far from typical. But at least we can draw some suggestions about the nature of UR policy in Japan. As prime minister's comment suggests, it is driven by *national* economic concern, not based on real needs to "regenerate". Opposing movements were weak and easily broken up, suppressed, or ignored by the Growth Coalitions including media.

And an important implication in our context to the next section is that, through Roppongi Hills' case, people's perception toward UR were heavily decided. Not only by the policy orientation but also by the media discourse. In other words, people started to regard high-rise tower dwelling less inhuman or abnormal, instead more fashionable, reasonable, and comfortable one. According to white paper on capital region 2005 by MLIT, "over 80% of super high-rise dwellers answer to a survey that they are generally 'satisfied'" (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation 2005: 25). New housing market created especially in the hot spots within designated UR areas. But in the same time, the white paper quotes another answer to the survey that "under 50% of respondents said they are willing to live there for the rest of their lives" (ibid). I remember a report by Urayasu city council, geographically adjoins to the inner wards, which says residents worry less about conflict they will face when the concrete building depreciated and dilapidated after 30–40 years (Urayasu City Council 2005: 101).

In the next section I shall develop these implications in broader geographical viewpoint.

## **4. Resulting Demographic Differentiation**

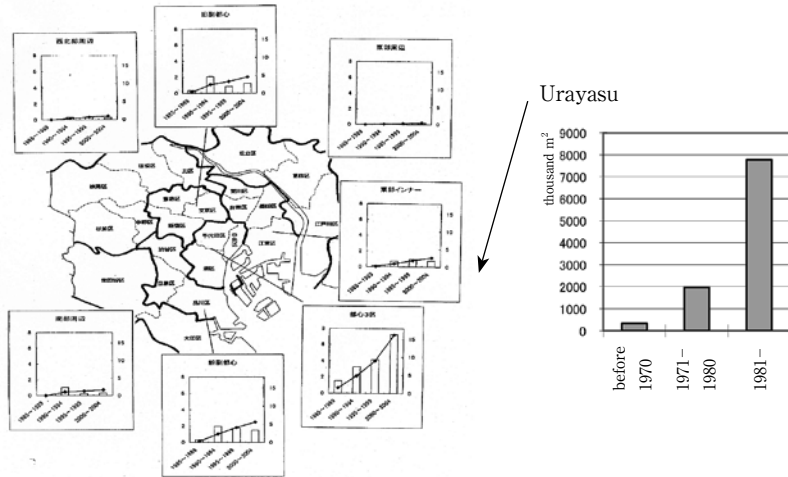
### The uneven investments

One important point of UR policy is that, it showed an intention to concentrate the government budget and the other resources into central Tokyo, and to abandon the responsibility for withering hinterland in peripheral Japan. Even within Tokyo, as I have suggested, investments tend to be concentrated into inner areas. **Figure 9** illustrates this unevenness.

Adding the data of the Urayasu city in Chiba prefecture, we can see the similar tendency to inner wards. Again it is important not to limit discussions

within TM area<sup>6)</sup>. Even the UR designated areas are beyond the TM borders; they scattered over the swathe of Tokyo Bay gateway.

Figure 9. Building supply in 23 wards, divided into groups of wards and years



Source: Maruyama and Ueda (2006)

Urayasu city council<sup>7)</sup>

### From suburbanisation to re-centralisation

Greater Tokyo is known for its huge suburbanisation process. However, it is easy to infer that the trend should be reversed after the condominium boom we discussed. White Paper on Land Usage by the central government called this re-centralisation as "Return to Centre". **Figure 10** suggests the tipping point was the year 1997. The impressive population rebound in inner wards can be also confirmed by **Figure 11**.

6) Researchers on Tokyo tend to limit the discussion within TM border, because the data provided by TMG is so detailed and useful for any analysis, while in Chiba prefecture statistical officers are not so efficient.

7) The graph of Urayasu was made by the author, based on <http://www.city.urayasu.chiba.jp/a007/b007/tosikei/toshimasu/kankyobook/index.htm>

Then who is the main actor in this re-migration to centre process? TMG (Tokyo Metropolitan Government's White Paper on TM housing analyses that, "In 8 inner wards, high percentage of the condominium buyers is in the group aged 30–49" (25). Furthermore, by investigating into the **Figure 12** made by TMG (2002) we can find that the population increase rate of single and couple households are significantly high only in inner wards. Presumably households with child are unlikely to live in these inner areas, due to high living cost or poor environment for nurturing children. They may find alternative in, for example, Urayasu city just next to the 23 wards. This city marked the highest population increase rate in Japan during the year 2000–05, according to 2005 census report. With this background knowledge a comment from Urayasu city council's officer is very convincing: "Young couples who can't afford to buy in Tokyo 23 wards, generally decide to buy condominiums in this city, and soon they have their child, that's our problem. For the skyrocketing population the city council have to build kindergartens, schools, and hospitals, so on. But nobody knows whether they stay here or move toward Tokyo 23 wards eventually" (Mr. Saito, Chief of General Department, Urayasu city council, interviewed June 2005).

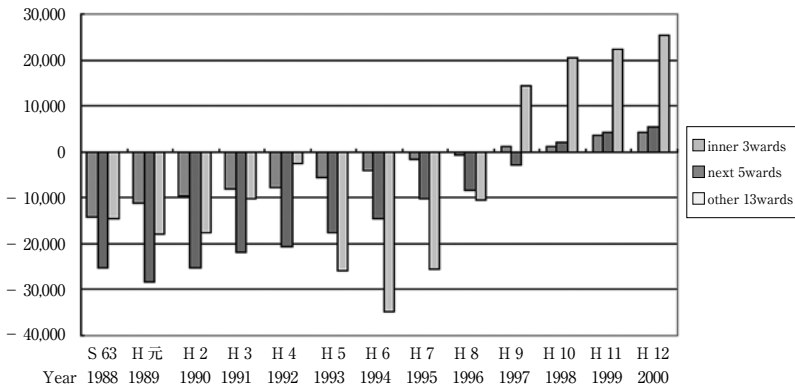
So the next task is to confirm what Mr. Saito's comment implies. What happening to the conventional suburban area, for example in Chiba prefecture? One possible and scandalous answer is that, people living in Chiba is now making exodus forward nearer places to Tokyo centre, or willing to do so. **Figure 13** might read as confirming the view, the inflow towards suburb area stopped and reversed since the year 2000. But on the other hand, our survey data<sup>8)</sup> shows that, in spite of these "return to Tokyo

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8) The survey had conducted on 7 neighbourhoods in Chiba prefecture from Dec 2006 to Jan 07, by mail questionnaire to 1020 random sample. Return rate was 39.7%. In this report I excluded 2 spots so that 305 samples of the

centre" trends, people once decided to live in Chiba are not so inclined to move to centre (see Figure 14). A logically consistent explanation may be like that: the previous migrants who settled in Chiba before 1997 are likely to stay there; while new young migrants after 1998 are likely to enter into the Bay gateway condominium towers, as near to the centre as they can afford to buy. This would lead to sort of housing differentiation. In the last part, I will have a look to housing ads in these areas in order to catch some reality of this differentiation, and hopefully draw some hypotheses for the future research.

Figure 10. Numbers of migrants in and out of central Tokyo, by year



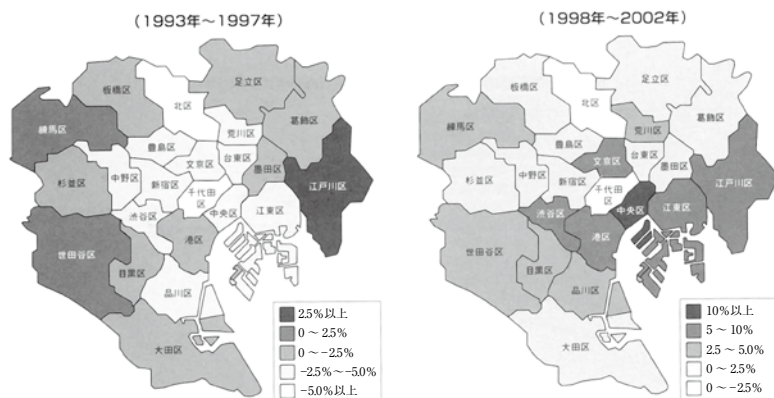
Source: MLIT<sup>9)</sup>, "the survey on the Returning to Centre phenomenon"  
[http://tochi.mlit.go.jp/w-new/tc\\_chousa/b2/b2\\_index.html](http://tochi.mlit.go.jp/w-new/tc_chousa/b2/b2_index.html)<sup>10)</sup>

rest 5 are used in the analysis.

9) Ministry for Land, Infrastructure and Transportation

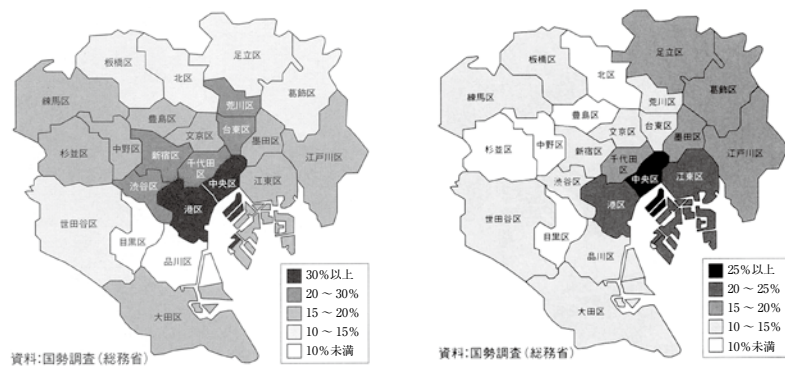
10) If you count the migration in prefecture basis stats, the drastic change will seem less outstanding, because the effect of migrants from the west within TM to central Tokyo countervails. If possible, compare Figure 9 with Figure 2-6 on the TMG (2002).

Figure 11. Population growth rates in 23 wards, 1993–1997 and 1998–2002



Source: TMG (2002).

Figure 12. Population growth rates in 23 wards single and couple households



資料:国勢調査(総務省)

single households 95-00

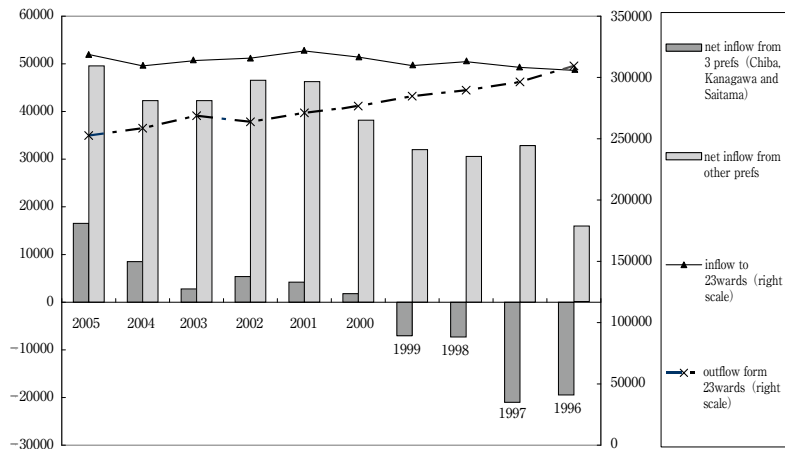
資料:国勢調査(総務省)

couple households 95-00

Source: same to Fig 10.

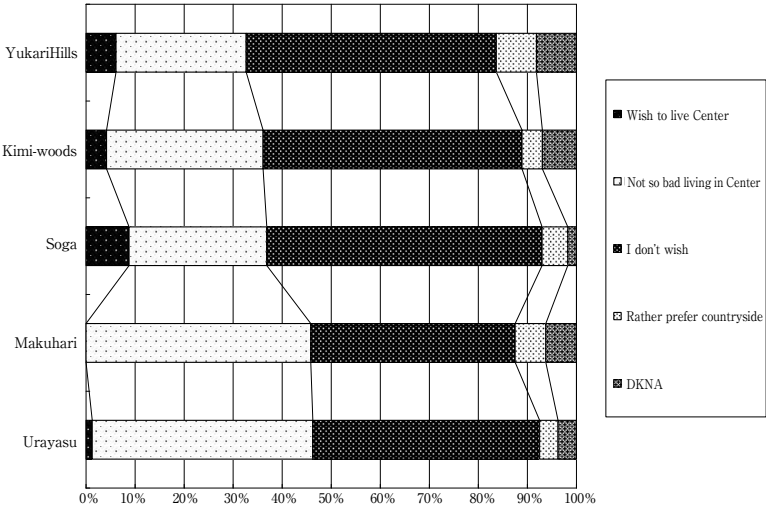


Figure 13. Population inflow and outflow at 23wards to/from 3 prefectures (Chiba, Saitama and Kanagawa) and the rest of Japan



Source: the author made from TMG's migration report each year on <http://www.toukei.metro.tokyo.jp/jidou/ji-index.htm>

Figure 14. Answer to the survey question, "Would you like to move to Centre Tokyo?"



Source: author's own survey.

Expanded but differentiated condominium boom: What happens in Chiba?

To investigate into the reality of the possible housing differentiation, I collected some brochures for sales promotion of the condominiums. **Table 6** is the summary of these advertisements in 3 different points on the Bay gateway. There seems to be some segregation by supposed target groups. In Minato ward, the high price condominium, same as Roppongi Hills, are being sold for “power people” (!), with heavy media exposure appealing to rich people’s conspicuousness. In Urayasu, the way to appeal to image rather than describing housing specs is similar, but the target is set on family with kids, confirming Mr. Saito’s comments. And probably by this reason of targeting on upper-middle families, these condominiums put high priority on privacy and security. Whereas at Makuhari in Chiba city, the ads are describing how convenient and enjoyable everyday life is for ordinary people.

The significant effect of condominium boom in Tokyo is not limited to inner wards of Tokyo Metropolis. Rather, it is scattered process over Greater Tokyo, creating some hot spots mainly on the Tokyo Bay, and along the gateway to the centre. Observers can understand the process clearer than only paying attentions within Tokyo Metropolitan boundaries. This boom is not even or equal within Greater Tokyo, instead there are graduations, differentiations in at least three levels: (1) very centre such as Minato (2) middle of the gateway such as Urayasu (3) far end of the gateway such as Chiba city. We can hypothetically describe this differentiation as **Table 7**.

**Table 6.** Examples of advertisements describing features of their condominiums, Minato, Urayasu and Chiba Makuhari

**Example1. Minato Ward, "Tokyo Twin Parks" 2002**

Catchphrase	"Power Condominium for Power People"; "Panorama view of Hamarikyu and Tokyo Bay"
Access	Few mins walk to Ginza. Close to any working place in central Tokyo.
Service	"24hrs gatekeeper"; "Front Concierge"
Rooms	From 40m <sup>2</sup> up to 160m <sup>2</sup>
Price to buy a dwelling	From 40 million up to 600 million yen (200–3000 thousand pounds)
Ads	Broadcasted on TV news; creation of privileged image

**Example2. Urayasu City, "Proud Shin Urayasu" 2008**

Catchphrase	"The stage for you and your family who live proudly. The place to go back to the way you are"
Access	"Only 16 mins from Tokyo station"; "Shuttle bus available to the Shin-Urayasu station"
Service	"Front Concierge"; "Café Lounge"; "Guest Sweet Room"; "A Lift for every 4 rooms, for the sake of privacy"; "24hrs gatekeeper"
Rooms	"Average size 113 m <sup>2</sup> "; "High ceiling, wide span to enjoy the openness"
Prices to buy a dwelling	To be confirmed up to Jan 2008; but estimated around ¥50–80 million (250–400 thousand pounds)
Ads	Featuring movie star Ken Watanabe; closed access to the website—only for the subscribed company's employees

**Example3. Chiba Makuhari, "Stellar Garden Makuhari" 2006**

Catchphrase	"Marine Resort Town"; "Lovely life space where your dream expands ever more"
Access	"29 mins to Tokyo station, 37 mins to Shinjuku station"; "Shuttle bus available to Kaihin Makuhari station"
Service	"IC card lock"; "11 CCTV cameras"; "Security Company monitors 24hrs"; "Kids land"; "Garbage Collection Point 24hrs available"
Rooms	"75m <sup>2</sup> to 96m <sup>2</sup> "; "IH cooking heater"; "thermo bath"; "Slop sink for gardening"
Prices	¥28 million to 43 million (100–210 thousand pounds)
Location Description	"Academic Town"; "Stage for Business and Sport"; "Shopping Centre which you can buy everything"
Ads	Similar to conventional ads for detached houses; full of information for the functions of the dwelling and the environment

Source: author gathered from brochures, web pages, so on.

**Table 7.** Differentiation of residents?

	Access	Buyers	Ads	Timing of purchasing
Centre	Walk to centre	Global elites/ single or no kids couple	Appeal to conspicuousness	2001–
Middle Gateway	Up to 30mins on train	Upper-middle family	Image of “Urban Resort”	1980s– / 2001–
Edge Gateway	Up to 1hr on train	Ordinary family	Emphasise life convenience	1990s– / 2001–
Conventional Suburbs	Over 1hr on train	Aged family	—	1970–1980s

Supposing the differentiation account to be true, is this kind of new differentiation, or is it similar process to high-growth era’s housing “game of life”? Under what mechanism do these differentiations crystallize? These are the questions with which I should tackle in the future.

## **5. Provisional Conclusions and Further Research Agenda**

The previous discussion suggests that among the bay-gateway area condominiums, class differentiation of residents can be observed. There is a spectrum from the end of Chiba side to the other end of central Tokyo condominiums, which was symbolised by the Roppongi Hills.

In post-war Japan until 1980s, domestic migration process from rural area had been stable. Young people from rural villages firstly stayed in poor houses in “zone in transition” (as E. Burgess put it) in Tokyo as tenants, then married to acquire better social housing in the fringe area, and eventually become able to purchase detached houses with garden in suburban area of Kanagawa, Saitama or Chiba. This “game of life” process—beginning from dodgy and dirty inner city zones to the goal of suburban lovely house—was called “housing chain” to determine the structure of housing market

and policy in Greater Tokyo. As I have discussed, now the pendulum seems to sway back. The 1980s "urban renaissance" triggered the spatial transformation of Tokyo, and in spite of the recession, still Tokyo continues to transform. The Bay-gateway condominium boom is one of the outcomes, and seems to enhance space differentiation process.

Getting back to the first question, can we draw any suggestions to the global-domestic debate? Tokyo is still subordinated to domestic logics, but as we can see at Roppongi Hills, similar process to other global cities can be observed. It is worthwhile to discuss the similarity and difference between Tokyo and other cities, to observe to what degree, by what mechanism global logic comes into each domestic context.

At last, is there anything I can say on the inequality issue? Tokyo's gentrification—if I can call it— may mean the divide between centre and periphery, between the prosperous Bay gateway area and the rest. Even within Bay Gateway area, there seems to be a spectrum, Minato ward on the one end and the fringe of Chiba on the other. At least when discussing Tokyo, inequality outside of Tokyo Metropolitan borders may have crucial importance. Simple application of Mollenkopf and Castells (1991) framework, which limit the discussion within the city, would not make sense. Some urban sociologists suggest that there are presage of inequality within Greater Tokyo (Sonobe 2003), creating contour-like differentiation (Asakawa and Kurasawa 2005). Discussions in this paper could support that view.

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