



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

COURSE OF  
ARCHITECTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

*Abstract*

**LIVING NISHI-TOKYO. DESIGN PROPOSAL FOR A  
FARMING COMMUNITY.**

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This thesis proposes an architectural redesign of a periurban area of Tokyo, namely Nishi-Tokyo, a city located west of the Japanese capital and about an hour away from the most central areas. This area presents both urban and rural features with agricultural buildings and rural houses (yashikimori) coexisting with towers and residential buildings.

As a graduate student majoring in sustainable architecture, the main questions I have sought to answer were the following: “How is it possible to integrate an agricultural activity in a suburban context of a large metropolitan area? What social role can this experience have? and above all: “which dynamics does this process generate in relation to the theme of contemporary living?”.

Several tools have been used to answer the questions above. First, a study of the sector bibliography on the theme of living has been completed in such a way as to focus the attention on the concept of living in relation to phenomena such as urbanization, functional nomadism, and digitization.

The same approach was followed to understand the factors that characterize urban agriculture with reference to community gardens. This is a specific type of agriculture which uses cultivation as an activity that is mainly social rather than aimed at production.

Moreover, participating in the workshop: Shaping eco-district in Tokyo suburbs organized as a collaboration between the Polytechnic of Turin and the University of Tokyo, allowed me to immerse myself in the local context with an ethnographic approach made of sensations, direct experiences, interviews, confrontations with Japanese teachers and field analysis. On top of this, I added a bibliographic study which has highlighted the complexity, confirmed by my visit in Japan, of a reality so different from any Western context.

For this reason, before focusing on the core of my project, I deemed necessary to carry out a research project on an urban or architectural scale which had already explored the themes outlined above.

Lastly, several scenarios were simulated to bring value propositions in different early stages urban design proposal. In this way selective demolitions were carried out with the intent of containing the gentrification process while ensuring the satisfaction of the chosen propositions.

The thesis has tested the possibility of integrating urban gardens and living spaces for those who sees a hobby in the agricultural activity while respecting the constraints existing in Nishi-Tokyo. The productive open space is central to try to foster social cohesion among the inhabitants of the planned urban portion.

My proposal is expressed through a design report, in which the management of this project emerges from design schemes and architectural drawings in different scales.







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