Japanese Farming, Urban Sprawl, and Changing Land Use in Gardena and Torrance of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area

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Abstract The Los Angeles Metropolitan Area is typified by such geographic features as rapid urbanization, a high population concentration, dynamic industrial development, and ethnic-cultural diversity. It is also the home of many Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans, who have participated in the growth of the metropolis and have contributed to the formation of its regional character. With respect to the areas known as Gardena and Torrance, which are characterized by urban sprawl, the existence of a large Japanese population, and Japanese engagement in farming, land use changes were examined from the beginning of the twentieth century through to approximately 2007. The Japanese began cultivating strawberries in Gardena by initially leasing small tracts of farmland without competing with local Caucasian farmers who specialized in other crops. Strawberries therefore existed as a niche crop for Japanese immigrants up until the end of the 1910s. Due to the fact that Japanese farmers were successful at cultivating vegetables up to the outbreak of the Japan-US war, the kinds of farming practiced therefore underwent diversification. Following the end of the war, vegetable production declined, however, whereas the nursery and gardening industries prospered in response to increasing urban development. At the same time, the Japanese population rose dramatically in Gardena due to the suburbanization of the Japanese population. Following the 1980s, the number of nurseries began to decline; yet, direct investment by the Japanese increased, leading to changes to both the local Japanese economy and the communities of Gardena and Torrance. The process by which these changes occurred was documented and the consequent pattern of land use was analyzed using aerial photographs and field observations. At present, Japanese farming can only be found in small scattered nurseries including those located beneath high voltage power transmission lines and at the site of the Torrance Municipal Airport. The Japanese farming landscape that survives today is clearly a leftover from a successful past, whereas more recent Japanese involvement has provided a new distinctiveness to the Gardena and Torrance areas.

Key words Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, Japanese farming, urban sprawl, urban farming, land use

Introduction

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area has been one of the most rapidly urbanizing parts of the United States. Although the origin of Los Angeles dates back to the Spanish colonial period of the late eighteenth century, it was in the late nineteenth century that new cities were built and urbanized areas expanded (Yagasaki 2008, 2010). Following the turn of the twentieth century, various industries began to develop, oil fields were discovered, and the population increased in the Los Angeles city area and vicinity. By the outbreak of World War II, Los Angeles had become a leading industrial area with diverse industrial activities. A dense network of railroad and streetcar lines had been laid since the late nineteenth century, connecting downtown Los Angeles with the suburban townships; on the other hand, increasing motorization led to a further acceleration in urban sprawl. Although the streetcar network disappeared in the early 1940s, motorization and the freeway network contributed to the continued development of the metropolitan area. According to the 2000 population census, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, with a population of 16 million, contained the second largest number of inhabitants in the United States.

Japanese immigrants took part in this development by playing an important role in providing the rapidly growing population of Los Angeles with fresh produce prior to World War II (Iwata 1990). In the early twentieth century, farming developed in Los Angeles and its vicinity to cater for the growing demand for food. As a result, Japanese immigrants became producers, wholesalers, and retailers of fruit and vegetables. For example, they
rented small parcels of farmland to grow a variety of crops intensively, participated in wholesaling at the Los Angeles' produce markets, and operated fruit/vegetable retail stands (Yagasaki 1982, 1993). Following the end of World War II, however, urbanization began to encroach upon farmland and, as a result, the amount of agricultural land decreased. The Japanese community also saw a change in that there was an increase in the dominance and numbers of second generation Japanese Americans who had different occupational preferences.

Numerous scholars, journalists, and novelists have attempted to depict, describe, and analyze the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, the enormous diversity of which cannot be set out in a few paragraphs. Geographers have been particularly attracted to the urban morphology and structure, urban landscape, industrial development/decline, migration, and residential segregation. As the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area accommodates the largest Japanese population in mainland United States, cultural geographers have paid attention to this particular ethnic group by looking at social, cultural, and economic criteria (Yagasaki 1984). In this respect, cultural geographers can potentially contribute to the understanding of immigrant groups in the context of the local host society by analyzing the adaptive strategy adopted and the economic niches occupied (Yagasaki 2003a, 2003b). At the same time, the Japanese community living in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area has experienced substantial changes over the past one hundred years in terms of distribution, composition, and the social, economic and cultural characteristics. A study of the development and decline of Japanese farming in response to urban development may thus help lead to a deeper understanding, from the perspective of geography, of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area and associated Japanese community.

This paper therefore seeks to examine both the changing land use and Japanese farming in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area by analyzing the cities of Gardena and Torrance. The study area is located to the south of downtown Los Angeles between the Los Angeles International Airport and the Los Angeles Harbor (Figure 1). Farming survived in this area until recently despite its proximity to downtown Los Angeles. The study area is also known for its large numbers of Japanese residents during the pre-World War II period through to the present, who have engaged in farming as well as other

**Figure 1.** Study area and the Japanese population. Based on Allen and Turner (2002: 40) and others.
economic activities. The first section of this paper will thus consider Japanese farming from the beginning of the early twentieth century, after which urban development and land-use changes will be considered by analyzing aerial photographs. In August 2007 we also made land-use observations and conducted interviews. A case study with regard to urban development and Japanese farming in the United States will be presented, the findings of which may hopefully contribute to a better understanding of urban farming from a global comparative perspective (Yagasaki and Nakamura 2008).

Los Angeles Metropolitan Area and the Japanese Community

The Los Angeles Metropolitan Area experienced a phenomenal increase in population during the twentieth century, which is well illustrated by the population statistics of Los Angeles County. Its population was only 170,000 in 1900, and reached 4,150,000 in 1950 and 9,520,000 in 2000. This population growth was due to the continued influx of people from other parts of the United States and overseas. The Los Angeles Metropolitan Area has therefore been a region that has continued to be an extremely attractive destination for various groups.

Urbanization during the late nineteenth century was largely based on the climatic conditions of southern California. A dry and warm climate without miasma was considered ideal for invalids, and so Los Angeles and its environs tended to attract health seekers from the eastern United States (Yagasaki 1999). Although the reason for the influx of people during the late nineteenth century was not economic, following the turn of the century people began to migrate to southern California for other reasons due to the fact that the newly established industries were providing newcomers with diverse employment opportunities. During the first half of the twentieth century, the oil industry, steel production, automobiles, aircraft, machinery, light industry, the motion picture industry, and farming were developing. In addition, three wars in Asia from the 1940s through to the early 1970s led to an input of federal funds in support of the munitions industry. Thanks to this industrial development, both urbanization and the population increased, with urbanized areas expanding spatially from isolated urban centers in 1900 to the contiguous urban landscape on the flatlands as well as along hillsides. The extent of this uninterrupted urban sprawl in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area for six different periods can be seen in Figure 2.

The cities of Gardena and Torrance are located to the south of downtown Los Angeles, and constitute a part of the region referred to as the South Bay. During the Spanish colonial period, ranchos, or large estates for cattle ranching, were permitted, which had existed during the entire Mexican era up until the mid-nineteenth century. At the beginning of the American period, however, the ranchos were subdivided and sold to ranchers, farmers, and real estate developers (Leonard and Cost 1934).

The area occupied by Gardena, as it is today, was originally regarded as a coveted location, and was often referred to as a “garden spot” with ample supplies of water and green vegetation thanks to the wetlands that were commonly known as “Nigger Slough” (Gumprecht 1999). However, with the arrival of the Los Angeles real estate boom in 1887, developers began subdividing the region into buildings plots. Although the Los Angeles’ real estate agents purchased land and created such subdivisions, the boom soon came to an end but had almost no effect on population levels or land use in the area (Dumke 1944). The railroad reached Gardena in 1889 as part of the process of connecting downtown Los Angeles with the newly planned port of Redondo (Leonard and Cost 1934; Historical Commission of Redondo Beach 2005). Before this time, in 1892, the port of Redondo had accounted for sixty percent of the trade coming by sea to Los Angeles. By 1910, three railroads connected downtown Los Angeles with the port of Redondo, of which two passed through the Gardena area (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 135). The convenience for access by rail contributed to an increase in population and, beside Gardena, such urban centers as Moneta, Strawberry Park, and Western City emerged. These communities were merged to form an officially incorporated city of Gardena in 1930. Thus, as farming developed, the city of Gardena grew and took on a newer shape (Pitt and Pitt 1997: 168).

Torrance, on the other hand, experienced a very different history. Jared S. Torrance, a financier and philanthropist from Pasadena, planned to create an industrial city in the Torrance area in 1911. He thus purchased 3,530 acres of Rancho San Pedro from the Dominguez Estate Company and employed Olmsted & Olmsted, a landscape architecture company based in Boston, to produce a model for an industrial city. Torrance’s intention was to construct a garden city where both industry and workers would eventually be situated. He therefore created an industrial community based on steel, machinery, and other industries while at the same time also providing commercial and residential facilities. The city of Torrance was incorporated as an independent
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city in 1921, when oil was discovered by a subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railroad Company. The oil boom thus contributed to the development of industry in the city with the municipal area expanding by annexing adjoining farm areas, which in turn contributed to a diversification in economic activities (Pitt and Pitt 1997: 505; Dalton 1990: 13–25; Barnard and Save Historic Old Torrance 2005).

Although Gardena and Torrance enjoyed different origins and histories, they were both faced with the same challenges relating to urbanization. As Figure 2 indicates, non-urban areas appear to have existed in Gardena and Torrance right up until after the end of World War II. Farming thereby endured in Gardena even though most of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area had undergone urbanization. Surviving farming activities continued, however, to decline during the 1950s. Although Gardena and Torrance each had only a population of less than 10,000 in 1940, a rapid population increase occurred during the 1950s and 1960s as these areas expanded to become dormitory communities for Los Angeles. Yet, some evidence continues to exist of the once-flourishing farming activities that were common to Gardena and Torrance.

Japanese immigrants, along with many other groups that had arrived in the area in search of a better economic future, were similarly attracted to Los Angeles. The first volume of *Rafu Nenkan*, a Japanese yearbook published in Los Angeles, describes why Los Angeles became so attractive to the Japanese and how this contributed to the migration of the Japanese from northern California; “Although Los Angeles was similar to any Mexican town ten to twenty years ago, now it has become an impressive urban center. Once people had arrived in Los Angeles, they were attracted to the spectacle. They certainly seem to forget about returning home and many thus became permanent residents” (*Rafu Nenkan*, No. 1, January 1907: 43).

The Japanese were late to arrive in Los Angeles compared to San Francisco and other localities in northern California. The first wave of Japanese reached Los Angeles when the Santa Fe Railroad Company and

Figure 2. Expansion of urbanized areas in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area (1900–2000).
the San Pedro Railroad Company hired Japanese laborers for the purpose of constructing the railroads (Zaibei Nihonjin kai 1940: 829). The earthquake and great fire in San Francisco of 1906, however, led to a rise in the numbers of Japanese relocating to Los Angeles and other areas of southern California. Some 2,000 to 3,000 Japanese were said to have moved out of the devastated city of San Francisco immediately following the earthquake. By 1907, the Japanese population of Los Angeles had therefore risen to 6,292 with some 3,382 residing in adjoining rural districts (Mason and McKinstry 1969: 16).

By 1907, the Japanese were engaged in various business activities in Los Angeles (Rafu Nenkan, No. 1, 1907: 45–47). In contrast to San Francisco and other parts of northern California, where people were wary of "the yellow peril" and were thus strongly anti-Japanese, the ever-expanding economy of southern California provided immigrants with varied employment and business opportunities with the advantage that there were no anti-Japanese sentiments or campaigns. In downtown Los Angeles, Japanese-operated boardinghouses and hotels thereby increased to accommodate the rising numbers of Japanese laborers who were engaged in urban employment as well as farm work. Citrus orchards and sugar beet farms required many laborers especially during the harvest season but some Japanese began to farm for themselves by leasing farmland. The Japanese were thus readily able to find economic niches in southern California, one of which consisted of intensive farming (Yagasaki 1982, 1993).

Farming also became increasingly important as the number of Japanese grew. In this respect, Rafu Nenkan (1907) provides a full account of Japanese farming activities at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although throughout southern California the Japanese farmed a total of 4,259 acres, 3,208 acres (75 percent) of this was located in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area. It was also accepted in the Japanese community that small-scale vegetable production was well suited to Japanese families as vegetable cultivation was mainly carried out by family labor without much need for other workers (Rafu Nenkan, No. 1, 1907: 37–38).

As rapid population growth in Los Angeles gave rise to a greater demand for fresh produce, Japanese farming experienced a period of increasing development. Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan, another Japanese yearbook published in 1917/18, lists the acreage farmed by the Japanese in Los Angeles County in 1916 as follows: sugar beet (3,780 acres), lettuce (3,263 acres), strawberries (2,500 acres), tomatoes (2,000 acres), peas (1,220 acres), cabbages (1,200 acres), dry beans (1,200 acres), celery (1,100 acres), onions (663 acres), potatoes (500 acres), cauliflowers (400 acres), carrots (350 acres), sweet corn (300 acres), cantaloupe (200 acres), and peppers (150 acres), of which the total amounted to 18,826 acres (Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan, No. 1, 1917–1918: 75–76).

The Japanese were therefore regarded as being especially suited to intensive vegetable production as pointed out and summarized by Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan. The vegetable farms were started with little capital and were tended by the limited labor available from family members and close relatives. Whereas extensive farming entails risk in relation to climate, market conditions, and the availability of labor, small-scale intensive farming is rather stable with continuous engagement providing profits over an extended period. The opening of a new wholesale market in downtown Los Angeles also facilitated the marketing of fresh produce and the growing population of southern California assured an expanding demand for vegetables. Furthermore, the long distance marketing of vegetables by freight cars led to more diversified outlets for vegetables exported from Los Angeles (Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan, No. 1, 1917–1918: 69).

Prior to the outbreak of the Japan-US War in December 1941, the Japanese played a dominant role in farming in Los Angeles County. According to one estimate from the Agricultural Commissioner of Los Angeles County, the Japanese farmed 36,592 acres in 1941 that accounted for 68 percent of the total cultivated land of the county. The ten leading crops that Japanese cultivated consisted of tomatoes for processing (4,500 acres under the Japanese control, accounting for 60 percent of the total acreage of tomatoes for processing), beans (3,795 acres, 93 percent), cauliflowers (3,780 acres, 90 percent), carrots (2,963 acres, 75 percent), celery (2,921 acres, 99 percent), cabbages (2,813 acres, 75 percent), berri (1,792 acres, 81 percent), spinach (1,287 acres, 99), lettuce (1,071 acres, 90 percent), and cucumbers (1,018 acres, 85 percent). The Japanese share of acreage was more than 90 percent in nineteen crops (Nishi 1955: 40–41). Moreover, compared to the farming regions of Los Angeles County as a whole, Japanese farms were most concentrated in Gardena and the immediate surrounding area.

Japanese farming, although successful, was forced to discontinue due to the outbreak of the Japan-US war and the subsequent removal of Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans from the military zone along the Pacific coast. Whereas the Japanese and Japanese American population was about 94,000 in California, 37,000 of these resided in Los Angeles County. Due to
the fact that the Japanese were relocated to hastily built concentration camps situated in remote inland areas, the supply of fresh produce declined and Japanese farmers lost much of their assets previously accumulated through hard work and diligence (Poli 1944).

The Japanese were, however, able to resume economic activities on returning home to the west coast. Although some took up farming again, Japanese farming itself had undergone structural changes following the end of World War II. In this regard, the strong vertical integration of the Japanese had disappeared in the production of vegetables, at wholesale markets, as well as in retailing at fruit/vegetable stands. First generation Japanese people are commonly referred to as *Issei*, who originally travelled to America during the early twentieth century, but had now reached retirement. As a result, the second generation, known as *Nisei*, became the next driving force within the Japanese community. As the Nisei were presented with the opportunity to take up a variety of jobs in the job market, which reflected a reduction in discrimination and prejudice in American society, the role of farming in the Japanese community thus declined.

In addition to the internal factors that were affecting the Japanese community, and which had contributed to the decline of Japanese farming, the system of marketing and distribution of farm produce had also witnessed changes. Thus, although there was a decline in the role of the traditional wholesale market, at the same time, there was also a change in the retail sector with respect to diversification as chain stores and supermarkets increased in numbers and functions. In addition, the decline in farming was hastened as a result of the urban encroachment into rural land. The reduction in farming can be clearly seen in Figure 3, which shows the trend of farming in Los Angeles County from 1945 to 2005. It can also be seen that the cultivated areas devoted to citrus fruits, vegetables, and nursery plants and flowers have decreased. Only intensive farming of added value products, such as nursery products sold as small parcels, were thus able to survive in Los Angeles County due to the fact that the sales and value of nursery products and flowers have continued to remain high.

**Evolution of Japanese Farming**

Having given a general description of the situation of the Japanese community in the context of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, the following sections will now proceed to focus on the particular examples of Gardena and Torrance. The changes occurred in Japanese farming, Japanese community, and general land use from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the present will be scrutinized by proposing four time periods which are identified with special reference to the type of Japanese farm management, crops grown, distribution of Japanese population, and the composition of Japanese community.

**Strawberry cultivation as an economic niche: 1902–1919**

Japanese farming in Gardena and Torrance began with the cultivation of strawberries, which first started in Tropico, located to the north of downtown Los Angeles, around 1900. Although strawberry cultivation in Tropico prospered from 1904 to 1906, decline soon followed due to a lack of water for irrigation, the deterioration of soil, and the limited space available for farming. A new development in strawberry cultivation began, however, in Gardena to the south and the San Gabriel Valley to the east (Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan, No. 1, 1917–1918: 71).
Strawberry cultivation attracted much interest within the Japanese community of Los Angeles at the beginning of the twentieth century. In this regard, although a speculative crop, it was possible to obtain a net profit of 450 dollars through propagating strawberries on only one acre of land (Rafu Nenkan, No. 1, 1907: 40–41). Thus, the Japanese came to dominate the production of strawberries in Los Angeles County. Major producing locations and the extent of the area cultivated by the Japanese around 1907 stood as follows: Gardena (847 acres), Montebello and Newmark (454 acres), Arcadia and Santa Anita (419 acres), Tropic (382.5 acres), Burbank (303 acres), Garden Grove (106 acres), Monrovia (104.5 acres), Covina (65 acres), Dandy (56 acres), and Burnett (9 acres). Taking the 2,746 acres as a whole, Gardena constituted the leading production area, with a share of 31 percent of total Japanese acreage (Rafu Nenkan, No. 1, 1907: 40).

The first Asians to appear in the Gardena area had been the Chinese, who worked as farm workers toward the end of the nineteenth century, and engaged in the cultivation of strawberries and vegetables. Japanese workers, however, began to replace the Chinese after the turn of the century. Notably, Japanese strawberry cultivation was pioneered by a couple who had relocated from Hawaii when they purchased a one-acre strawberry farm in 1902. It was the success of this venture which led to a strawberry boom among the Japanese (Nanka Nikkeijin Shogyokaigisho 1960: 710).

Developed farmland was easily available for lease at a reasonable rent in Gardena which benefited from plentiful supplies of water for irrigation. Thanks to the mild climate, strawberries could be harvested earlier in the spring compared to other growing regions (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 140). The Japanese thereby obtained farmland through paying for the rent with cash. Of the 999 acres that the Japanese cultivated in Gardena around 1907, 929 acres were rented in this way, with only 70 acres being actually owned by the Japanese. The Japanese thus planted 847 acres for the purpose of cultivating strawberries, 92 acres for vegetables, 55 acres for nursery products, and 5 acres for poultry (Rafu Nenkan, No. 1, 1907: 59–62). Hence, strawberry cultivation on cash-rented farms constituted the initial form of Japanese farming in Gardena at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Local Caucasian farmers tended to specialize in growing grain, tomatoes, and alfalfa as well as dairy and poultry farming, without paying much attention to strawberries. Since strawberry cultivation did not require specialized skills or experience, the Japanese were able to initiate strawberry cultivation, and were thereby able to avoid competing with the local Caucasian farmers and became successful at growing strawberries that allowed them to build up a secure economic foundation. Given these advantageous conditions, as well as the fact that there was no record of an organized anti-Japanese movement in Gardena (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 144), strawberry cultivation thus allowed the Japanese to exploit a particular economic niche.

In the beginning, however, marketing was not straightforward or easy. During the early years, strawberries were marketed in the wholesale markets of downtown Los Angeles. In order to facilitate marketing procedures and to increase competitive edge, Japanese growers organized the Moneta Strawberry Growers Association in 1906. This represented the first agricultural cooperative set up by Japanese strawberry growers in Moneta, a part of Gardena where, during the early years, Japanese strawberry growers had gathered. This was also an ethnic organization that sought to facilitate cooperation in production as well as provide mutually beneficial economic aid. This association was also involved in cooperative marketing with regard to setting up contracts with wholesalers. The association only existed, however, for a period of two years. In 1912 another society was created, known as the Japanese Strawberry Growers Association, which was organized by Japanese growers from the Gardena area that set up an office at the City Market of Los Angeles to facilitate marketing procedures (Nanka Nikkeijin Shogyokaigisho 1960: 84; Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 146).

As strawberry cultivation expanded, the Japanese population in Gardena increased, with the population for southern California reaching 13,040 by close of 1906, of which 169 individuals (132 males and 37 females) resided in Gardena (Zaiibe Nihonjinjikai 1940: 831–832). Strawberries were typically cultivated by Japanese couples, which meant that the ratio of men to women was well balanced compared to other areas and occupations where males tended to dominate (Nanka Nikkeijin Shogyokaigisho 1960: 83, 502).

As the Japanese population increased, ethnic businesses began to grow in order to provide the Japanese with different kinds of services. By 1907, a Japanese quarter had formed, where commercial and leisure facilities tended to be concentrated, and provided facilities such as a grocery store, barber’s shop, bathhouse, and poolroom (Rafu Nenkan, No. 1, 1907: 59). The Japanese Cultural Institute was also built in 1906 that served as a community hall, and the Japanese Business Association
and the Moneta Japanese School were established in 1907 (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 148). By 1914, the Japanese business sector had expanded considerably and included four stores providing both grocery and general supplies, two barber’s shops, two tofu makers, and five bathhouses/poolrooms (Kato 1961: 737, 743).

Japanese community organizations also increased with, for example, membership of the Japanese Association rising to about 200. Similarly, membership of the Moneta Procurement Association, which had been set up by strawberry growers for promoting mutual aid and cooperative marketing, rose to over 220 in 1914 (Nanka Nikkeijin Shogyokaigisho 1960: 50; Kato 1960: 41). The Japanese Association was also responsible for the establishment of the Moneta Japanese Institute in 1911 that was created in order to promote Japanese education, and the Gardena Japanese School was additionally formed in 1916 for the advancement of Japanese education. Correspondingly, the Japanese Baptist Church was established for the purpose of promoting Christianity among the Japanese (Leonard and Cost 1934).

Thus, thanks to strawberry cultivation, the Japanese ethnic community had become well established by the mid-1910s. Strawberries were typically grown on small family farms on rented land that were tended by family labor where the Japanese were able to make a living through the cultivation of two to five acres (Toda and Horie 1919: 77).

This dependence on strawberries on the part of the Japanese community began, however, to change around the mid-1910s. One factor that led to this change concerned the spread of Japanese farming areas from the earlier areas centered on Moneta (a part of Gardena) to the adjoining municipalities due to the limited farmland available. The Japanese thus began also to farm in Hawthorne, Inglewood, Compton, Torrance, and Harbor City (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 150). Another change relates to the diversification in farm management where Japanese farmers began to combine strawberries with vegetables such as tomatoes. A problem with strawberry cultivation concerns the need to employ many laborers during the peak harvesting season. By growing both vegetables and strawberries the problem of labor shortages could therefore be avoided. Raspberries were also combined with vegetables so that the harvest season could be extended even further (Toda and Horie 1919: 78; Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan, No. 1, 1917–1918: 72).

The success of the Japanese in cultivating strawberries in 1916 can be found in the fact that 3,000 acres were now devoted to the crop, and Gardena (Moneta) became the leading area for production with 1,700 acres under cultivation (Nanka Nihonjin Nenkan, No. 1, 1917–1918: 72). The prosperity of strawberry cultivation is exemplified by the Gardena Valley Strawberry Day, an official Gardena event held for two days in early May that continued from 1913 to 1917. This was a great occasion that can be compared to the Pasadena Tournament of Roses and the San Bernardino Orange Show. The Los Angeles Times (5 May 1917) reported that 25,000 people visited the event on 4 May, the first day of the festival. The program listed a host of events that included the Gardena High School orchestra, a livestock exhibition, the crowning of the Strawberry Queen, and free strawberry tasting. Japanese entertainment was also included in the program which seemed to be a recognition of the role of the Japanese in the local strawberry economy (Gardena Heritage Committee 2006).

**Diversification and vegetable farming: 1920–1941**

The area of Gardena and Torrance retained the basic characteristics that typified the Los Angeles’ suburban farming regions throughout the 1920s up until the early 1940s. Some differences, however, existed between the two cities. Gardena was principally an agricultural community whereas Torrance had developed as an industrial community in the way J. S. Torrance had originally planned, which derived from the oil boom that was initiated by the discovery of oil in 1921. Torrance’s landscape thereby became typically known for its industrial activities where the farmland was surrounded by towering oil derricks (Dalton 1990: 20–21; Gerber 2008).

During the 1920s, Japanese farm management began to diversify from one specializing in strawberries to one involving a variety of vegetables. In this respect, the rapid population growth of Los Angeles had led to an increase in the demand for food with the result that vegetable production seemed to be a promising option. Although strawberry cultivation had begun with minimal initial financial outlay, farmers regularly had to confront the hazards associated with crops. For example, after growing a crop over three to four seasons farmers were then obliged to change to other crops or transfer to different farmland. As a consequence, strawberry cultivation underwent a decline during the 1920s. Furthermore, the 1920 Alien Land Law of California prohibited aliens who were ineligible for citizenship from leasing land. Unless they were able to find some loophole that allowed retention of the farmland, Japanese immigrants were, therefore, obliged to become sharecroppers or were
forced to give up farming altogether. In addition, Japanese farmers were able to reduce the risk involved by growing various kinds of vegetables rather than specializing in just one single crop such as strawberries (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1988: 151).

By the 1930s, the Japanese located in South Bay had firmly established themselves in farming. Although detailed data is not available with regard to the development of Japanese farming, it is thought by the ethnic agricultural cooperatives that the Japanese were able to set up organizations in several different localities. During the 1930s there were nine Japanese agricultural cooperatives in South Bay: Gardena Heigen Industrial Association, Compton Agricultural Association, Central Domingues Hill Agricultural Association, Domingues Hill Agricultural Association, West Hawthorne Industrial Association, Hawthorne Industrial Association, Agricultural Department of the Monta Gardena Japanese Association, Lomita Industrial Association, and Redondo Beach Farmer’s Association (Yagasaki 1993: 72, 1995).

The Japanese quarter thereby continued to develop in Gardena as Japanese farming prospered and, by 1940, there were 320 families living in the area. Moreover, the number of American-born Nisei in 1941 had risen to 509. Community organizations and ethnic businesses had, however, collected together according to ethnicity that led to the formation of a Japanese ethnic enclave. This included a Japanese language school known as Moneta Gakuen which was established in the late 1920s and continued as the Gardena Valley Japanese Community Center (later incorporated into the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute in1967). A Buddhist temple was also established in 1926 and became formerly incorporated in 1931. In addition, both a sewing school and three medical doctors were integrated, as were Japanese businesses that included fifteen nurseries, five flower growers, five farm supply dealers, four truck companies, four bean sprout houses, three clothing stores, three customer stores, three barbershops, two insurance firms, two garages, two chop suey houses, and a fish farm (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1986: 25; Supplement to Gardena Valley News, City of Gardena 50th Anniversary Souvenir Edition, 1 November 1980).

Despite the thriving farming sector, Gardena’s land use was undergoing gradual change due to its accessibility to downtown Los Angeles. In this regard, Gardena, which had become renowned for its annual strawberry festival during the 1910s, subsequently became known as the “poultry capital of California” in the 1930s (Supplement to Gardena Valley News, City of Gardena 50th Anniversary Souvenir Edition, 1 November 1980). As a result of these changes, and especially due to the outbreak of the Japan-US war and the subsequent relocation of the Japanese population to inland concentration camps, the prosperity of Japanese farming suddenly came to an end.

**Nurseries and gardening: 1945–1979**

As is clear from the census statistics, both Gardena and Torrance underwent rapid population growth. For example, Gardena consisted of a population of 5,909 in 1940, which increased to 13,305 in 1950 and 35,943 in 1960. Similarly, the population of Torrance increased from 9,950 in 1940 to 22,241 in 1950 and 100,991 in 1960, which is a trend that was reflected in land use.

Figure 4 presents information relating to land use in Gardena and Torrance, which was deciphered based
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on aerial photographs from 1952 and 1954 in the possession of the Geography Map Library at California State University, Northridge (1952–1954 USDA-LA County-Gardena and Torrance). In many parts of the area farmland existed in large parcels, whereas other sections of farmland can be seen to be surrounded by urban precincts. The regular pattern of housing observed in the photographs clearly suggests a systematic process of planned development on the part of real estate developers. Gardena was especially affected by such urbanization. Indeed, poultry farms can no longer be identified in Gardena despite the fact that it was still referred to as the “poultry capital of California” during the 1930s. Interestingly, two drive-in cinemas also existed in Gardena, which reflects the continuing suburbanization and motorization that was taking place. In Torrance a systematic process of residential development can also be observed in the central and southern quarters but substantial areas of farmland continued to remain, especially in the western and southern sectors. In addition, farmland populated with oil derricks can be said to be typical of the rural landscape in Torrance at this time.

Freeways were constructed in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area during the 1950s, and Gardena became known as a “Freeway City,” as the San Diego Freeway ran along both its western side and the Harbor Freeway to the east. In 1954, the city of Gardena adopted an official seal, the design of which depicted a cityscape with freeways (Supplement to Gardena Valley News, City of Gardena 50th Anniversary Souvenir Edition, 1 November 1980).

It is obvious that such urbanization had a considerable impact on Japanese farming. Following the end of World War II, many Japanese returned to Gardena and surrounding areas from the inland concentration camps but, according to the 1950 census, the Japanese population of Gardena amounted to only 741. Many of these returnees, however, did not resume farming. The South Bay consisted only of eighty to one hundred small Japanese farms, which grew celery, cabbage, cauliflowers, and other bunch produce, with the total acreage coming to 1,500/1,600 acres (Nanka Nikkeijin Shogyokaigisho 1960: 83). Such statistics point to the fact that Japanese farming was obviously in decline as compared to the figures for 1940 cited above.

In sharp contrast to the decline in the production of vegetables, the Japanese nursery industry grew rapidly. Fortunately, nurseries do not require a large tract of land for the purpose of growing ornamental plants and the demand for garden plants, plantlets, and potted plants expanded at a rapid rate with increasing urban development. Originally the Japanese nursery and gardening industries flourished in West Los Angeles (often referred to as Sawtelle) during the 1930s, where Japanese operated nurseries and gardeners focused on taking advantage of the easy access to up-market residential districts such as Beverly Hills and Bel Air Estates. Due to the fact that the West Los Angeles Gardeners’ Association had been created by the Japanese prior to World War II, and as the Japanese population and businesses had increased during the 1950s, nursery owners began therefore to relocate to Gardena in search of areas to set up nursery production.

According to Nishi (1958), following the end of World War II, half of the Japanese who owned nurseries in Los Angeles County were located in South Bay, which includes Gardena and Torrance. There were obvious causes, however, for such a concentration of nurseries and garden centers in this region. Gardening had constituted the most important business area for Japanese
immigrants throughout the pre-World War II period. Moreover, Caucasian Americans regarded the Japanese in a stereotyped way as being adept at the aesthetics of gardening, which helped Japanese immigrants to succeed in taking up positions in this type of occupation. With the increase in numbers of residential areas and continuing economic development, the demand for nursery plants and gardening therefore continued to rise. In addition, Gardena and Torrance enjoyed easy access to the up-market residential neighborhoods, such as the Palos Verdes Estates, where the demand for ornamental plants and gardening produce was formidable.

According to Hirabayashi and Tanaka (1986: 27), who had analyzed the Gardena Valley City Directory of 1954, around 820 out of the 20,000 individuals listed had Japanese surnames. Among the 820 Japanese, 203 were engaged in either gardening or the nursery business, with 65 nurseries also being listed in the directory. Thus, gardening was extremely important to pre-war Japanese immigrants, and new immigrants during the post-war period also actively engaged in gardening activities. With the increase in the number of Japanese gardeners, the Gardena Valley Gardeners Association was therefore set up in 1955 (Hirahara 2000: 143).

Figure 5 and Figure 6 show the distribution of Japanese nurseries in 1950 and 1971 respectively as based on Japanese directories. By confirming the alleged address of nurseries listed in the directories according to the map, twenty nurseries were located within the municipal boundaries for 1950 and twenty-one for 1971. More nurseries were found to be concentrated in Gardena compared to Torrance. On examining the owners of the nurseries in more detail, it was also found that only a few were managed by the same owner in both years, suggesting a discontinuity in business operations with newcomers taking over. At any rate, the nursery industry retained its importance for the Japanese community of Gardena right up until the early 1970s.

It should be pointed out, however, that the profile of the Japanese community of Gardena had also changed substantially. This was due to the suburbanization of the Japanese population in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area and also the fact that the Japanese population had witnessed considerable growth in Gardena. By the mid-1950s Gardena had also become a typical dormitory area of Los Angeles. Moreover, those Japanese engaged in urban occupations had moved to the southern suburbs from traditional Japanese residential quarters such as Crenshaw, Boyle Heights, Little Tokyo, and Pico-Wilshire (Nishi and Kim 1964).

The Japanese population of Gardena consequently saw an increase of 490 percent from 1950 to 1960, and
contained the largest number of Japanese residents of any city. The new suburban Japanese community differed, however, from that of the pre-war period. The latter, for example, had been centered on a Japanese area catering mainly for Japanese farmers and laborers that depended on intensive farming specializing, first, in strawberries, and then, in vegetables, which also involved Japanese agricultural cooperatives and marketing organizations (Hirabayashi and Tanaka 1986: 27). The population survey carried out by the Department of Finance of the state of California in 1978 substantiates the dominance of the Japanese in this area at the time where the Japanese accounted for twenty-one percent of the total population of 44,551, with nearly one third of the businesses being either owned or operated by Japanese, and where half of the city’s services were controlled by the Japanese (Supplement to Gardena Valley News, City of Gardena 50th Anniversary Souvenir Edition, 1 November 1980).

Decline of farming: 1980 and later

During the 1980s Gardena and Torrance experienced further changes in both the economy and community. Firstly, urbanization continued and, secondly, the number of Japanese people and companies grew with foreign investment increasingly deriving from Japanese companies. Thirdly, the nursery industry, which had survived from the era of rural land use, had begun to decline.

The 1989 aerial photographs in the possession of the Geography Map Library at California State University, Northridge (1989 I. K. Curtis-LA County-Gardena and Torrance) clearly show that Gardena and Torrance had become entirely urbanized. The land-use pattern did not differ from that of 2007 as can be seen in Figure 7. In Torrance, industrial, commercial-businesses, and residential land use dominated, and no farmland could be identified. Gardena was also dominated by residential, commercial-businesses, and industrial land use, but small scattered plots can additionally be identified, which are in the form of nurseries. Nurseries in a strip of land below high voltage power transmission lines can also be seen in the 1989 aerial photographs, which will be considered in more detail in the next section.

The second change came about due to increasing Japanese investment from Japan, concentrated in South Bay, which also contributed to the changing profile of the local Japanese community. Japanese companies began to invest in the United States during the 1960s in tandem with increasing Japanese exports, which had resulted from the rapidly growing Japanese economy. From the 1970s, differences in trade and a trade imbalance between Japan and the United States led, however, to various disagreements between the two countries. Despite this, and as a consequence of the growing power of the Japanese economy during the 1980s, Japanese companies, including automobile companies, began to build assembly plants to cater for the American market. For Japanese companies, Gardena and Torrance, which were in easy reach of Los Angeles Harbor and the Los Angeles International Airport, came to be regarded as having distinct advantages in terms of their strategic locations. The Japanese community in Gardena and a range of Japanese operated businesses also provided temporary business visitors from Japan with comfortable and familiar living conditions. In addition, Torrance was able to offer industrial and business parks for the convenience of Japanese companies, while the closure of factories during the 1970s and 1980s meant that there was more open space available for incoming new companies. Thus, Honda chose as a location for its business operation the former site of the US Steel Company. In addition to manufacturers, service related companies also started up

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Figure 7. Land use of Gardena and Torrance in 2007. Based on the field observation and aerial photographs (USGS, 29 March 2004).
businesses in South Bay.

The Japan Business Association of Southern California (JBA) and JETRO Los Angeles carried out a questionnaire survey in 2007, the findings of which were published as the Survey of Japanese Companies in Southern California in July 2008. This survey found that the total number of Japanese companies in southern California came to 1,185 at the time, of which 781 were located in Los Angeles County with Torrance possessing 254 companies, followed by Los Angeles (198 companies) and Gardena (58 companies). Interestingly, Torrance and Gardena constitute the locations where the highest concentration of Japanese companies are to be found, consisting of 312 companies, making up 26 percent of the total number in southern California. Out of 1,185 Japanese companies involved, 416 returned questionnaires and 341 companies reported the year that they were founded; 82 companies were first set up during the 1970s and 121 during the 1980s. This influx of Japanese companies has therefore had a considerable influence on land use in the area.

In addition, Japanese investment expanded and led to changes to the Japanese community in South Bay. In Gardena and Torrance, various services increased to meet the needs of Japanese companies as well as Japanese residents. Company oriented services such as transportation, computers, and construction grew, while various ethnic businesses thrived to meet the needs of both Japanese Americans and Japanese company employees as well as their families for services, such as school tutors, automobile repairs, beauty salons, restaurants, video rentals, books, and food markets (Machimura 1997).

The surviving Japanese farming sector consisted of the nursery industry that continued to produce potted seedlings, foliage plants, and potted flowers. Although nurseries producing garden plants at ground level either closed permanently or previously moved to other areas due to space restrictions, growers of potted plants and potted flowers managed to survive by efficiently exploiting the limited space available.

Although urbanization led to a reduction in the amount of farmland, the nursery industry flourished as the demand for potted plants and flowers increased. Japanese nurseries, including both wholesale and retail nurseries, were able to supply home centers with quality products at low prices, which left the small nurseries with little chance of surviving in the face of intense price competition and reduced demand.

Table 1 gives the total number of nurseries in Gardena and Torrance over three time periods namely, 1957/59, 1980, and 2006, which were compiled from city directories as well as telephone directories. In 1957/59 there were 86 nurseries, including both wholesale and retail nurseries, which declined to 66 in 1980. The number of nurseries declined to 30 in 2006, and the number of wholesalers decreased even more dramatically. These figures testify to the dwindling nursery industry from 1980 onwards.

Table 1. Number of Nurseries in Gardena and Torrance

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<th>1957/59</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
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Compiled based on Fred F. Polley Gardena Valley Blue Book Classified Directory (1957), Luskey Torrance Cross City Directory and Classified Yellow Book (1959), Bell System Yellow Pages, Los Angeles, California, South Bay (October 1980), Verizon Yellow Pages, South Bay (December 2006).

generation Japanese Americans.

Technological innovation within the nursery industry additionally served to contribute to the decline of Japanese nurseries. When the innovative system of utilizing plugs was introduced into potted flower production during the period 1982 to 1985, production became much easier in terms of transplanting plugs to pots. Prior to this technological innovation, experience and skill as well as the appropriate facilities were required in order to sterilize soils for the purpose of realizing continuous production. As plugs became more readily available, former Latino employees at Japanese nurseries set up their own nurseries. This led to a reduction in prices at Latino nurseries, which posed a great threat to the surviving Japanese nurseries.

Another factor contributing to this decline came in the form of the large home centers which served to further exacerbate the price war. Only the large-scale growers were able to supply home centers with quality products at low prices, which left the small nurseries with little chance of surviving in the face of intense price competition and reduced demand.

In order to assess the present situation with regard to land use in Gardena and Torrance, we carried out a field survey in August, 2007. As a result, a limited type of agricultural land use was identified. Figure 7 shows the generalized pattern of land use as consisting of residential, industrial, commercial-business, and agricultural, based
Northern Gardena can be seen to be mainly industrial, as this is where Nissin Foods produce their famous instant cup noodles. Other sections of Gardena are largely made up of residential districts subdivided into precincts. Commercial-business use can be found along the major roads laid out on the section lines at one-mile intervals and along the Redondo Beach Boulevard. In Torrance the vast area of land south of the San Diego Freeway consists of industrial sites. The oil refinery and oil tanks of the Exxon-Mobile Oil Company occupy large tracts of this area. In the industrial park on Western Avenue, Japanese companies can be found including Toyota Motor Company’s United States’ headquarters. Commercial-businesses take up extensive tracts along major roads, and the largest concentration can be found at the Del Amo Fashion Center and surrounding blocks. Around the Torrance Municipal Airport (Zamperini Field), are an accumulation of commercial-businesses and industrial complexes. Residential areas also occupy much of this area, where a scattering of parks, schools, and public facilities can be observed.

Strips of agricultural land use can be seen in southern Gardena and northern Torrance. The Southern California Edison Company, the fourth largest power company in the United States and the supplier of electricity to Los Angeles and other counties in southern California, is the proprietor of this land, where power transmission takes place (Pitt and Pitt 1997: 477). As the exploitation of the land below the high voltage power transmission lines is limited, nursery owners have been able to lease this land for the purpose of propagating both potted plants and seedlings (Figure 8). Considering the decline of the nursery industry from the 1980s onwards, this appears to be the only type of land remaining on which nursery owners are able to continue their businesses. The Japanese owned company appeared in Figure 9, for example, leases four acres from the Southern California Edison Company for the purpose of producing potted foliage plants.

Figure 10 illustrates the distribution of Japanese nurseries based on our field survey in 2007. Only seven Japanese nurseries were identified. The O Nursery on Western Avenue adjoining the San Diego Freeway typifies...
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the history of Japanese nurseries (Figure 11). The present owner is a third-generation Japanese American, who was born into a nursery family situated in Hawthorne. The present area of two acres was purchased in 1952, allowing the nursery business to resume, as the Hawthorne farmland was devastated during World War II. When this business was originally set up in Gardena, the area was dominated by farmland. In addition to this two-acre nursery, fourteen acres were also leased from the Southern California Edison Company, which is situated outside the Gardena-Torrance area (Interview with the owner of the O Nursery, 14 August 2007).

A unique example of fruit/vegetable farming was observed at the Torrance Municipal Airport. The present airport was built in haste during World War II by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and was known as the Lomita Flight Strip. When military use came to an end in September, 1945, the War Relocation Authority temporarily exploited the base by constructing barracks to house Japanese returnees from the above mentioned concentration camps. In 1947, the city of Torrance eventually obtained the right to use 490 acres of the former military airport (Lobb 2006)

Mr. I, seventy-nine years old at the time of our interview in 2007, continues to grow fruit and vegetables on the farmland within the airport (Figure 12). His father began farming by leasing land in the area referred to as Portuguese Bend in the southern Palos Verdes Estates in 1906. After World War II, the family resumed farming in Portuguese Bend. Mr. I’s cousin also began to grow vegetables by leasing farmland within the bounds of the municipal airport in 1949, which Mr. I inherited in 1960. Much of the produce was sold directly to customers at a sales stand located on the Pacific Coast Highway. Although there were several Japanese farms around the airport growing vegetables and flowers, they had to give up farming in the face of urbanization (Interview with Mr. T. I., 9 August 2007).

Vegetables and berries were at one time additionally grown around the runway located in the center of the land leased and, up to 2005, seventy acres were planted with tomatoes, berries, sweet corn and a variety of other vegetables. The direct sales store, however, moved to its present site on Crenshaw Boulevard in the mid-1980s (Figure 13). During the season from February through to October, the store continued to successfully attract regular customers (Interview with Mr. T. I., 9 August 2007; Daily Breeze, 29 October 2005, 22 August 1990).

Mr I decided to retire in the fall of 2005 and removed

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Figure 11. Surviving Japanese nursery on Western Avenue. Taken by N. Yagasaki in August, 2007.

Figure 12. Farming within the confines of Torrance Municipal Airport. Taken by N. Yagasaki in August, 2007.

Figure 13. Direct sales market in the Torrance Municipal Airport. Taken by N. Yagasaki and K. Fukase in August, 2007.
the irrigation pipes from the southern section of the runways. He nevertheless returned to farming and planted forty acres in 2007. In the past, Mr. I enjoyed the benefit of a long-term lease contract with the city of Torrance; this, however, was reduced to an annual contract, which subsequently had to be renewed on a monthly basis (Interview with Mr. T. I., 9 August 2007).

The situation of Mr. I is unique as urbanization did not affect the existing farming activities so long as the city of Torrance was willing to lease the land within the airport site. However, the City of Torrance General Plan Land Use Map shows that the section associated with Crenshaw Boulevard is designated as commercial with the exception of the area where the direct sales store is located. Considering Mr. I's age and the fact that the lease agreement has now to be renewed on a monthly basis, it appears that the coexistence of airport and farming may not survive for very much longer.

Conclusion

At present, the profile of Gardena and Torrance with respect to the Japanese community and economy differs in many ways compared to the past. The activities of the Japanese in these cities have thus given rise to two different trends, namely, one that sees the roots of Japanese Americans and their economic activities as stemming from the pre-World War II period, and, the second, which gives precedence to the effects deriving from the recent arrival of both Japanese nationals and Japanese companies owing to direct Japanese investment. These two trends have thereby led to a unique cultural landscape where the old and the new now coexist and interact.

Automobile companies such as Toyota and Honda symbolize the Japanese presence with landmark buildings that can be seen from a distance, with Panasonic, Kubota, and Nisshin Foods providing further typical examples. These companies have contributed to the local economy by creating employment, and Japanese employees and their families have also contributed to the local economy by consuming various goods and services. There are also Japanese ethnic shopping centers such as Marukai and Mitsuwa, in addition to the traditional smaller commercial facilities, including Pacific Garden, Nijiya Plaza, and Tozai Plaza. Japanese schools have additionally sprung up, such as the Gardena Japanese Cultural Institute Japanese Language School, the Saniku East-West Language School, Asahi Gakuen, Kumon, and Ena, as well as religious facilities that include the Gardena Japanese American S.D.A. Church, Jodo Shinshu Shinrankai, Nishi Honganji, Konko Church of Gardena, and Seicho-no-ie. There are also now many Japanese hotels where Japanese is spoken and Japanese breakfast is served at hotels such as the Hotel Pacific Garden. Japanese financial institutions include two branches of the Union Bank of California (formerly Yokohama Specie Bank and Bank of Tokyo) and the Nikkei Credit Union. Cultural associations are also evident, which include, among others, the Gardena Japanese Cultural Institute and the Okinawa Association of America. Many other Japanese associations and practices, some more visible than others, are also to be found in Gardena and Torrance.

This paper has analyzed the process of change that has occurred in Gardena and Torrance from the beginning of the twentieth century through to the present by focusing on Japanese farming, urban development, and land use. The Japanese began strawberry cultivation in Gardena by leasing small farmland areas and by so doing avoided competing with local Caucasian farmers who specialized in other crops. Strawberry cultivation therefore provided a niche market available to Japanese immigrants up until the end of the 1910s. As they became more successful vegetable growers, Japanese farming became more diverse and Japanese farming communities thus expanded away from the early center at Gardena towards populating the entire South Bay. Prosperous farming ended, however, with the outbreak of the Japan-US war in 1941. Following the end of the war, vegetable production declined and the nursery and gardening industries expanded in response to urban encroachment. At the same time, the Japanese population burgeoned as they increasingly moved from urban residential districts to the suburbs of South Bay. Nurseries, the last bastion of Japanese farming, however, began to decline from the 1980s onwards due to the increasing influence of urbanization. At the same time, Japanese direct investment began to grow, which gave rise to a change in the Japanese economy as well as the community living in Gardena and Torrance. The underlying processes leading to such changes have been documented here and the pattern of land use highlighted based on aerial photographs and field observations.

At present, Japanese farming can only be found in small scattered nurseries including those existing under high voltage power transmission lines and at the site of the Torrance Municipal Airport. The surviving Japanese farming landscape is obviously the remnants of a rich past, but the more recently introduced Japanese influences have, nevertheless, also served to provide a new set of circumstances that have helped define the current
demographic and geographic profile of both Gardena and Torrance.

Acknowledgments

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