

Development of Agricultural Co-operatives in Japan (IV) Rural Communities and Agricultural Co-operatives at the Initial Phase

Masaaki ISHIDA *

Faculty of Bioresources, Mie University, 1515 Kamihama-cho, Tsu, Mie, 514-8507

Abstract

The multi-purpose agricultural co-operatives in Japan are characterized as united organizations of rural communities. This characterization has been formed over a long history. In this paper, we attempt to explain the cultural background of this phenomenon in terms of the interpersonal relation present in Japanese rural communities. For this purpose, we introduce some sociological concepts; unanimous rule in the decision-making, the notion of democracy in the rural community, the delicate balance of mutual trust and mutual suspicion, and so on. Noteworthy in this context is that co-operative associations at the initial stage were initiated by the upper class of farmers, the “landowners and owner farmers” (Jinushi Tazukuri Keiei) and “landowners living in the rural community” (Zaison Jinushi). However, their improper management of co-operatives led to a decrease in the social influence of landowners living in rural communities and to a reinforcement of restrictions on co-operatives by the government sector. We can regard this change as initiating the second phase of co-operative development.

Key Words: Nokyo, unanimous decision, mutual trust and mutual suspicion, landowners living in rural communities

Unanimous Decision in Rural Communities

Nomination Process of the Board Members

The multi-purpose agricultural co-operatives in Japan are characterized as united organizations of rural communities. Every member of the directorates is nominated as the representative of several rural communities. When electing the candidate, several rural communities organize a recommendation committee that has the right to nominate only one representative in its district. The geographical area is definitively provided by the by-law of the co-operative. The nomination process, however, is not open to all the members in a district. The decision-making fundamentally belongs to the autonomous rural communities; especially an informal decision, which is made among several influential persons in a community, is prevailing.

Next, when electing the representative director and other major officers of the co-operative, the directorates organize a recommendation committee that has the right to nominate candidates. The

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* For correspondence (e-mail: ishida@bio.mie-u.ac.jp)

candidates, however, are substantially determined by an informal discussion among several influential persons of the directorate. Even if the institutional provision of electing officers requires an election during a general meeting of members or a meeting of delegates, the decision is made by discussion among a small number of members of the directorate.

Unanimous Rule versus Majority Rule¹⁾

This tradition has been formed over a long history, as mentioned in the preceding chapter. The decision-making of co-operatives is quite like that of rural communities. Generally speaking, rural communities tend to use not a majority rule but a unanimous rule in their decision-making. The unanimous rule has resulted from a strong intention to take a group action. This means that individual opinion is flexible enough to accept a group opinion in the process of group decision-making. People in rural communities generally have the same cultural background, and common interests and common needs, which can facilitate agreement.

However, in practice, it is often difficult to come to unanimous agreement. There must be persons in opposition in many cases. In such a situation there are two methods of persuading persons in opposition. One is a threat based on the upper and lower relation. Another is a long-term multi-lateral transaction. This transaction refers to the profit inducement to the member in opposition, put forth in a long-term multi-lateral manner. Using these methods, a unanimous agreement can be reached. Persons in opposition who accept persuasion from influential persons of the rural community do not declare their objection in an official meeting.

We call this *Nemawashi* in Japan, which means an informal persuasion. This method is quite general not only for community members, who are bound to strong kinship and common property rights (for example water rights, common forestry, and so on), but also for modern businessmen, who are bound to the hierarchy.

In European nations, people spontaneously organize a co-operative society to achieve a limited purpose. In this society, they tend to refuse any informal discussions or persuasion. Because they clearly maintain their opinions to achieve their own purposes, the decision would have the nature of autonomy in every case. They discuss the problem with one another and obtain an agreement in formal discussion. Hence the agreement has the nature of a short-term bilateral transaction.

We call this the majority rule. This is the best type of rule in the decision-making process of co-operatives, because it satisfies with the notion of equality among members and gives members incentive to persuade other members using logic and argument. This rule, of course, is based on the European notion of individualism.

Each of these two rules, unanimous and majority rules, however, has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of unanimous rule is that all the members reach a common understanding (in other words, the atmosphere has a holistic feel), and therefore they cannot refuse to join in the group action. However, the disadvantage of this rule is that a decision is a mixture of many kinds of judgment, and therefore it tends to fail in terms of logical consistency when the situation is changed. In addition, this rule strikes out alternatives.

On the other hand, the advantage of majority rule is that decisions succeed in maintaining a logical consistency based on the judgment of the majority of a group. And alternatives can be kept under

consideration. However, the disadvantage of this rule is that persons in opposition to the majority may form a cohesive minority group within the ranks. A majority group or its leaders may become the focus of public attention and suffer from the stress of difficult personal relations.

The Origin of the Group Action^{1, 2)}

It may be not wrong to say that a hero who makes history results in an individual. However, an individual acting alone cannot play an important part in a historical incident. Only an individual who is bound to a group and assigned a part by the group can make history. History has been made while many such groups have been in collaboration or in conflict.

The highly structured rural communities under the Tokugawa regime before the Meiji Restoration greatly influenced the way of life of community members. Families could not but group together in order to gain securities and benefits. Solidarity among families in the village was formed on the basis of the notion of equality and doing things for one another. Contrary to these practice and behaviors, the notion of competition existed. The major concern for a family was its own growth and stability, which gave rise to competitive relations with other families, but only in so far as the competition did not destroy the stability of the rural community. Hence, equality and competition reciprocally arose within rural communities.

Democracy in Rural Community¹⁾

The autonomy of rural communities undoubtedly developed simultaneously with such relations. It should be also understood that rural communities possessed definite rules relating to several community-level issues, namely, the accumulation and maintenance of the commons, the principles of action to which members had to conform individually and as a group, management of disputes between and among members, and the solidarity of actions perceived by the world outside the community.

The democracy that developed in rural communities under these rules can be characterized as follows. First, a natural sense of solidarity tended to be acquired on the basis of proximity of members. Second, the goal sharing among members was relatively limited because of paying special attentions to the safety first, the avoidance of confrontation, and egalitarianism. Third, an agreement among members was unanimously reached on the basis of informal discussion among several influential persons rather than by dictatorial decision. Fourth, though it sounds somewhat strange, the spirit of unity was rather weak, and the unification of intentions could be achieved only with outside help or in the face of threat.

Under this type of democracy, which differs from the European democracy, people in rural communities extremely disliked a talented entrepreneur, an ambitious person, or a man of power, all of whom they regarded as persons who could disturb the harmony of human relations in their community. Because the fundamental idea of rural communities is based on the principle of equality, people tend to respect persons who exhibit a tacit leadership while maintaining this principle. The fact that descendants of Nanushi or Shoya, who were considered to be of high birth and to have abilities to arbitrate troubles, have had a political leadership in the rural community so long as they have remained living there illustrates this sense of order.

In short, it can be said that the freedom tends to weigh with the European democracy compared with the equality, and the equality tends to weigh with the Japanese democracy compared with the freedom. In the context of co-operative movements, this difference leads to different modes of management of co-operatives

between Europe and Japan, even if the same co-operative laws are instituted.

As mentioned earlier, agricultural co-operatives in Japan have the basic characteristic of united organization of rural communities; therefore, an egalitarian mode of management based on the democracy in rural communities has been established. The major defect of this mode of management is lack of leadership. As business organizations operating in the market, agricultural co-operatives need strong leadership like those of other commercial enterprises. As long as agricultural co-operatives solely depend on democracy in rural communities, they cannot carry out more professional and more rapid decision-making, which are necessary to defeat competitors.

Demand and Supply for Social Institutions

Demand and Supply Conditions for Co-operative Development

Generally speaking, we can specify two factors that have contributed to the development of agricultural co-operatives. One is of course an effort of the government, which instituted the Agricultural Co-operative Law and provided other financial and technical support to co-operative societies. Another is the effort of small farmers, who offer share capital, participate in decision-making, and utilize co-operative services in order to improve their economic and social conditions. The former provides the supply condition for the co-operative development, and the latter provides the demand condition for it. These conditions together determine the quantity and social value of agricultural co-operative movements, just like the method shown by the demand and supply analysis of micro-economic theory.

Historically speaking, the Co-operative Society Law was approved in 1900. However, as of 1898, there had already been 351 co-operative associations, as mentioned in the preceding chapter. Although these associations were not the same as co-operatives based on the Co-operative Society Law, their natures were essentially the same (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1 Creation of Co-operatives before the Enactment of the Co-operative Society Law

Year of Creation	The Number of Creation of Co-operative Associations by Type							Total
	Credit	Purchasing	Marketing	Processing	Production and Service	Consumer	Indistinct	
Before 1872	1		1					2
1872-77	1	1	4					6
1878-82	7		2			4		13
1883-87	13		22	1				36
1888-92	19	4	29	3				55
1893-97	111	33	124	14	8	1	1	292
1898	24	3	16	3		3		49
Indistinct	13	4	6				4	27
Total	189	45	174	31	8	9	5	451
In Active as of 1898	144	40	141	13	9	4		351

Source: SAITOH (1989) p.9.

Case of Credit Associations³⁾

Many credit associations in the form of voluntary organizations were created in the 1890s, showing a biased geographic distribution. Among 144 credit associations active as of 1898, there were 40 in Shizuoka, 10 in Tochigi, 10 in Kumamoto, 7 in Yamagata prefecture. These prefectures are scattered across Japan. The reason for this distribution was rather clear; farmers in these prefectures had aggressively responded to the persuasion of Yajiro Shinagawa and Tosuke Hirata, who were the earliest introducers of the German co-operative system to Japan. Credit associations in Shizuoka had shifted primarily from Hotoku-sha, an association of spontaneous co-operative movements based on rural communities in the Tokugawa period. It is of worthy of mention that Yajiro Shinagawa owned his farm in Tochigi prefecture, and the hometown of Tosuke Hirata was Yamagata prefecture.

The fundamental character of these credit associations was that they originated from a unanimous decision of rural communities under feudal rule during the Tokugawa period. In these associations, compulsory savings were more often introduced to prepare for a bad harvest, allotting farmers a fixed amount of money every year by the community rule.

Case of Marketing Associations³⁾

The fundamental character of marketing associations is almost the same as that of credit associations. These associations, which were created on the basis of rural communities, were organized in order to market regional special products (such as tea and silk) directly to exporters in the large cities (for example, Yokohama). As shown in Table 4-1, there were 141 marketing associations across the country as of 1898.

With regard to rice, which has been considered the most major crop in Japan, its market transactions between farmers and commercial enterprises or local merchants had already been developed, and therefore there was only one marketing association in the country. It was in the 1920s that rice became the leading commodity in marketing services of agricultural co-operatives. Thus, the contribution of rice to the creation of marketing associations was extremely small at the turn of the nineteenth century. The contribution of other commercial crops for export was large. In fact, among 141 marketing associations active as of 1898, 44 were for silk and 40 were for tea, showing a biased geographic distribution. Silk associations were concentrated in Gunma, and tea associations in Shizuoka.

These details indicate that co-operative movements cannot develop without members' spontaneity, either as an individual or as a group; people who aggregate based on mutual interests are regarded as demanders of social institutions. In those cases, the democracy based on the autonomy of rural communities played an important role in the development of co-operative movements. It is insufficient for a co-operative development to rely solely on efforts of the government sector or even on a great leader such as Yajiro Shinsagawa, Tosuke Hirata, or Sontoku Ninomiya, the founder of Hotoku-sha, or the Germans Friedrich W. Raiffeisen or H. Schulze-Delitzsch. A good example of the spontaneous development of a co-operative movement follows.

Co-operative Movements based on the Autonomy of the Rural Community

Quantitative Outlook³⁾

Co-operative associations in the first stage were organized based on rural communities. For example,

Table 4-2 Changes in the Number of Co-operatives in Chiisagata County, Nagano Prefecture

Year	The Number of			
	Co-operative Associations	Co-operative Members	Co-operative Associations per Municipality	Co-operative Members per Association
1911	70	5,784	2.1	83
1912	63	5,158	1.9	82
1913	62	5,241	1.8	85
1914	67	6,133	2.0	92
1915	70	6,479	2.1	93
1916	66	7,064	1.9	107
1917	63	7,408	1.9	118
1918	66	7,758	1.9	118
1919	66	7,440	1.9	113
1920	46	17,901	1.4	389
1921	41	17,090	1.2	417
1922	39	17,309	1.1	444
1923	38	18,494	1.1	487
1924	38	19,237	1.1	506
1925	37	19,595	1.1	530

Source: SAITOH (1989) p.28.

consider the case of Chiisagata County in Nagano prefecture. By 1911, there were 70 co-operative associations in this county. This county had 34 municipalities including towns and villages, meaning it had 2.1 co-operative associations per municipality. The number of members per co-operative association was also small (on average, 83 persons). It is clear that these associations were created on the basis of rural communities.

However, as shown in Table 4-2, after 1911 the number of co-operative associations was decreasing, and the number of members per co-operative association was increasing. By 1925, the number of co-operative associations had become almost equivalent to the number of municipalities. This fact indicates that co-operative associations based on rural communities had come to be based, rather, on municipalities.

The case of Hekikai County in Aichi prefecture more explicitly reveals that co-operative associations were created based on rural communities. As shown in Table 4-3, at the end of 1924, there were 58 credit associations in this county. Of these, 56 were created on the basis of rural communities, and only the remaining two were created on the basis of municipalities. That year (1924) was 24 years after the enactment of the Co-operative Society Law, and the geographical spread of co-operatives into the area of the municipality was happening. Therefore, the fact that many co-operative associations based on rural communities remained as late as 1924 proves that they essentially had the nature of rural community organizations.

Table 4-3 Credit Associations in Hekikai County, Aichi Prefecture at the End of 1924

Name of Municipality	The Number of Credit Associations Based on		
	Municipalities	Rural Communities	Total
Anjoo Town		12	12
Yahagi Town		7	7
Meiji Village		8	8
Takaoka Village		7	7
Isami Village		5	5
Kariya Town		4	4
Sakurai Village		4	4
Kamigo Village		3	3
Fujimatsu Village		2	2
Chiryu Town		2	2
Mutsumi Village		1	1
Takahama Town		1	1
Asahi Village	1		1
Shinkawa Town	1		1
Total	2	56	58

Source: SAITOH (1989) p.30.

Experience in Mirokuji³⁾

It may be meaningful to quote the document concerning the relationship between a rural community and a co-operative association. The document refers to co-operative movements in a rural community called Mirokuji, in Nagafuji village, Ina County, Nagano prefecture. The document, greatly relying on the book of professor Saitoh, tells a suggestive story, which proves that co-operative associations were created on the basis of rural communities. The following excerpt explains.

“Mirokuji has about 70 farmhouses. Farmers have a strong sense of solidarity. For example, in 1885, they constructed a collective warehouse in response to a bad harvest. After its completion, they began to compulsorily save 0.1 bushel of wheat per farmhouse and 0.15 bushel of paddy per ¥100 of land price at every harvest. Harvesting new crops, they sell the old crops. The income is considered basic property of the community. At present, twelve tons of paddy and wheat is always stored in the warehouse. This amount of paddy and wheat is capable of providing farmhouses with seeds for twelve years. They are purchasing fertilizer and daily necessities from the co-operative, and saving money to the co-operative. It is quite reasonable to limit the number of layers (one cock and three hens) per farmhouse, because layers greedily eat farm products without the knowledge of their owners. In addition, young men are voluntarily prohibited from gambling. If this rule is broken, a first offender should pay ¥1, a second offender should pay ¥2, and the banker should pay ¥5. In the case of those who commit this offense more than three times, the villagers hand the criminal over to the police and request disposal. The total of the penalties has already amounted to ¥100. This money is also considered the basic property of the community. In order to maintain the

forest resource, they also prohibit deforestation of the community-owned woods except in a certain year. Only withered twigs and dry leaves can be used for fuel, and the value of trees has consequently reached ¥20 thousand now. Accumulated capital of this community has reached ¥3 million. This community is admired by its neighbors.”

Here, it should be noted that co-operative movements were included in rural life. In other words, the co-operative association mentioned above could be established as a result of the autonomy of the rural community. Such autonomy results from mutual help, mutual trust, and mutual acquaintance among community members. These good relationships make it possible for the people to compulsorily invest and save for the co-operative association.

Needless to say, the stratification of farmers into upper and lower classes was inevitable in the history of rural communities. In such a condition, the upper class of farmers tended to be lenders, the lower class of farmers to be borrowers. In order to accumulate the owned capital of their co-operative association, the upper class of farmers, who engineered the initiatives in the community, had to make the lower class of farmers compulsorily invest and save. The basis on which such good relations were established and led to success in co-operatives was the mutual trust that was present in rural communities.

Mutual Trust and Mutual Inspection⁴⁾

However, it is insufficient for the community members to manage credit associations relying solely on the mutual trust present in rural communities. They also need a method of mutual inspection, because credit associations should be able to safely collect on a loan. This means that the upper class of farmers (lenders) should continuously observe the daily life of the lower class of farmers (borrowers) and check on their financial condition. Therefore, it can be said that mutual trust provides the necessary condition for the development of a credit association and mutual inspection provides the sufficient condition for it. It is also appropriate to say that rural communities where credit associations were successfully created were equipped with both conditions.

According to the opinion by professor Dore, modern co-operatives rely on a delicate balance between mutual trust and mutual suspicion; between disinterested sentiments of loyalty and self-interested calculation. The institution that checks on the honesty of borrowers must itself be subjected to broad general checks. The only workable kind of check, the only tolerable form of institutionalized suspicion, is one that serves as a periodic reminder of the sanctions against dishonesty.

There are certain reasons for doubting the likelihood that a highly authoritarian structure of rural communities that militates against any kind of development can help to create new co-operatives. At the same time, it is difficult for traditional communities, united by family-like bonds and egalitarian membership, to take on the formal institutions of modern co-operatives. Modern co-operatives require rational auditing and control over managers, without destroying the bonds of solidarity and mutual trust that are supposed to be their advantage. This kind of attention to the delicate balance between mutual trust and mutual suspicion is prerequisite to creating a stronger and more efficient organization than a co-operative, which rests solely on the authoritarian or egalitarian structure of the rural community.

The illustration of Mirokuji and other early efforts of modern co-operatives in Japan indicate that the transition from a traditional community to a modern co-operative is a difficult one, but it will be successfully realized if mutual trust and mutual suspicion sprout from their co-operation. In the tight structure of

Japanese agriculture, there was historically nowhere else to go; farming, which depended on irrigation, required community co-operation. If co-operation was impeded or ceased, the water ceased to flow, the rice ceased to grow, and people starved. Therefore, modern co-operative movements based on rural communities are considered to be workable if the material advantage derived from co-operation is sufficiently favorable.

Internal Bodies in Co-operative Associations

Attribute of the Upper Class of Farmers³⁾

Co-operative associations in the initial phase had double standards; those of the community and those of landowners. Here, the word landowner refers to members of the community who were not only farming by themselves but also lending their farmland to tenant farmers. We call these members of the community the “landowners and owner farmers” (Jinushi Tezukuri Keiei) or “landowners living in the rural community” (Zaison Jinushi). They were trusted from the tenant farmers. As a result of this kind of trust or leadership, the landowners could introduce and manage co-operative associations strongly reflecting their own economic and social interests.

What, then, were their major interests or motivations for creating co-operative associations? First, they had economic incentive. Strictly speaking, this incentive can be divided into two elements. One was to secure the land rent by ameliorating the poverty of tenant farmers. In this case, co-operative associations were considered as common facilities where the poverty of tenant farmers could be ameliorated. Another was to improve their own economic conditions, because they were also farmers. Like all small farmers, they had to improve their farmland, purchase fertilizers and daily necessities, and market farm produce by utilizing some co-operative activities. In this case, co-operative associations were considered as common facilities where economic conditions of all classes of farmers could be improved.

Second, they had social incentive. They were originally participating as the executives of rural communities. Some of them already had been elected as members of the assembly of local government. Facing the miserable situations of the lower classes of farmers (small owner farmers and tenant farmers), they tried to create co-operative associations in order to prevent financial crises in their community and the local government by ameliorating the poverty of small farmers and maintaining the hierarchy of their societies. Their major concern was the impoverished condition of the rural community where they were living.

Altruistic Behavior of the Upper Class of Farmers³⁾

In order for us to understand the leadership of the upper class of farmers, it is useful to refer to the book of professor Saitoh, which shows the reminiscence of a landowner living in a rural community of Miyagi prefecture. According to “The Statistical Survey for Landowners in 1928” issued by Miyagi Prefectural Office, his holding was small in size, arable land of only 6.8 hectares. He was a landowner and owner farmer, the definition of which has been stated above. In his community, there were only ten persons, including solely-owner farmers, who held farmland. On the other hand, at town sites of the same municipality, there were five persons who belonged to the class of absentee landowners (Fuzai Jinushi), which held more than 50.0 hectares of arable land. Such absentee landowners also managed credit business at town sites because they were rich.

“Our community experienced a large bad harvest in 1905. A lot of farmers had already lost their farmland, which belonged to the absentee landowners living at town sites. Tenant farmers in our community completely lost their way of life due to this bad harvest because they could not borrow additional money from the absentee landowners. Just at that time, I got information about a government subsidy in the reclamation of mulberry fields. In order to solve the predicament of our community, I immediately decided to introduce this subsidy. My plan was to create mulberry fields, reclaiming the community-owned woods. But we did not have any money to invest, so we had to borrow money from the Agricultural and Industrial Bank, which was one of the organizations of guidance policy finance, established in each prefecture in 1896. When borrowing money, the offer of paddy and upland fields as the mortgage was demanded. The forest was not accepted. Therefore, I asked other landowners living in our community to offer paddy and upland fields as the mortgage. At that time there were ten landowners in our community. Fortunately, all of them agreed to my proposal. Thus, the reclamation of mulberry fields could be carried out during the period from 1906 to 1907. I wish to express my gratitude for their co-operation now. No one wishes to borrow money for others. If this plan failed, all of us would have had to run away one night. In order to avoid such a situation, I made up my mind to create a credit association in our community. But it was difficult to persuade community members to create it, because the pioneering work of the earliest credit association in Miyagi prefecture had ended in failure. In spite of this difficulty, since we had no alternatives, we came to work on the creation of a credit association. It was 1905. When creating it, we had a hard time accumulating the share capital, because tenant farmers had no money to invest. For the sake of accumulating the share capital, we enforced collective farming.”

This story vividly tells us that landowners living in the rural community played an important role as executives of the rural community, and a credit association was created in large part due to their efforts. Their efforts often extended to include mortgaging their own farmland in order to improve the economic and social conditions of other members. This kind of an altruistic behavior of landowners living in rural communities was prevalent across the country.

Attribute of Internal Bodies of Co-operative Associations

In those days, since a lot of co-operative associations were taking the form of an infinite responsibility, there was no one willing to take on the risk of management failure except landowners living in the rural community. When co-operative associations borrowed money from other banks, landowners living in the rural community could not but offer their own farmland as the mortgage, or they had to borrow money and assume a personal debt. Their aggressive participation in co-operative movements was indispensable for co-operative development. It was in the course of nature to entrust the business management of co-operatives to them. In particular, during the initial phase of credit associations, the success or failure of co-operatives clearly depended on whether reliable directors could be secured to run their associations.

According to the Co-operative Association Law, it was considered desirable to choose the directors by election. However, in practice, it was common to adopt a method of nomination. Landowners living in the rural community were first chosen as the directors of co-operatives and subsequently chosen as representatives of the directorates by this method. Even if co-operative associations adopted a method of election, the result would be unchanged. Thus, a small number of landowners or influential persons began to dominate their co-operative associations. In other words, co-operative associations began to be co-operatives for the

landowners living in the rural community. And this bias or interest sometimes led to ambiguous management and even management failure of co-operative associations. It was an inevitable result. This tendency continued until the 1910s, when the national government began making promotion policies for co-operative development. This policy-making was the beginning of government participation in co-operative movements.

Causes of Liquidations and their Consequences³⁾

With regard to improper management by landowners living in the rural community, the following example, quoted from the work of professor Saitoh, could be considered typical.

“A small number of persons were in charge of every kind of clerical work, and therefore the other members did not know the actual condition of management at all. For this reason, when the representative of the co-operative died, members became aware of its management failure. It was reasonable to think that the success or failure of co-operatives was determined by the personal character of the representative of the co-operative.”

During the period from 1900 to 1913, the number of voluntary winding-up of co-operative associations amounted to 1,402. Of these liquidations, the lack of reliable directors accounted for 16%. The major causes could be listed as follows; the failure to hold general meetings of members due to directors' neglect of duty, serious disturbances of political party or other political powers into the co-operative management, unfair dealings or dishonest acts of directors, and so on. The most vicious incident was one in which the representative of a co-operative association personally started an investment in the stock market by mobilizing the funds in hand. All these phenomena represent arbitrary management of the directors or the representative, or takeover of co-operative associations by the upper class of farmers in the rural community.

It cannot be denied that the government sector, worrying about frequent occurrences of disgraceful affairs, was compelled to set about reinforcing restrictions on co-operative associations, and to start promotion policies for co-operative development as a part of agricultural policies emphasizing the character of social policy. However, at the same time, this change showed a decrease in the social influence of landowners living in rural communities. Thus, we can regard this change as initiating the second phase of co-operative development.

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日本の農協発展（Ⅳ）初期段階における農村社会と農協

石 田 正 昭

三重大学生物資源学部

日本の総合農協は農村集落の連合組織として特徴づけられる。この特徴はその永い歴史の中で作られてきた。本論文では、この現象の社会的背景を日本の農村社会に存在する人間関係の観点から説明する。この目的のために、われわれは、意思決定における全員一致型ルール、農村民主主義の観念、相互信頼と相互疑惑の微妙な均衡など、いくつかの社会学的な概念を導入する。これに関連して注目すべき点は、初期局面の農協は上層農民（地主手作り経営や在村地主）によって設立を動機づけられたということである。しかしながら、彼らの不適切な農協経営は、在村地主層の社会的影響力の低下と政府部門の農協に対する規制の強化をもたらした。われわれはこの変化を農協発展の第二局面の始まりとして見なすことができる。