

Summary of Articles

Landowner–tenant Relations in the Modern Japanese Village : the “Gogura” in a Village in the Kanzaki District of Shiga Prefecture

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Focusing on *gogura*, this paper examines landowner–tenant relations in the modern Japanese village. *Gogura* were warehouses used to store rice and other goods as part of disaster–preparedness, and also served other functions, such as the lending of rice and the collection of rice as rent. This paper analyses Saso village in Goho–mura in the Kanzaki District of Shiga Prefecture from the late Meiji period through the wartime years of the Showa period (early 20th century into the 1940s).

For the most part, Saso village landowners operated commercial concerns. Moreover, some reduced their cultivated land areas or otherwise ceased farming operations altogether in the period between the two world wars. The *Gogura* functioned as follows. Tenant farmers delivered their rice to the *Gogura*. After conducting a quality inspection, landowners in the village took receipt of that rice. In addition, the village provided interest–free loans of rice to tenant farmers, implemented joint purchases of their fertilizer, and offered low–interest loans. The village was also receptive to requests for reduced rent payments in the form of rice and delayed deliveries of this rice. Village landowners held discussions with each other before making the decision to reduce the amount of land dedicated to rice cultivation.

Many landowners in Saso village were engaged in commercial activities ; they did not live in close proximity to their own fields, nor did they enjoy especially close relations with tenant farmers. Therefore, the landowners in Saso responded collectively when it came to landowner–tenant relations. Given that landowner–tenant relations were rather attenuated, with landowners relying on village–wide mechanisms until the early 1940s and lacking the establishment of a “cooperative system” characterized by landowner–tenant equality, the absence of conflict between landowners and tenants stands in marked contrast to the cases highlighted in previous research.

Circulation of and Policy for Copper Coins in the Early Meiji Era

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This paper analyzes the cross–border circulation of copper coins and the policies related to them in the early Meiji period. It addresses different places of circulation as they were linked to different types of copper coins.

Section 1 focuses on the problem that arose around 1872 regarding imported copper coins. In those early Meiji years, as the price of copper coins rose sharply in Japan, previously exported Japanese copper coins that were circulating in China flowed back into Nagasaki along with Chinese copper coins. This led to Inoue Kaoru’s adamant refusal to import Japanese copper coins.

Section 2 focuses on then–Minister of Finance Okuma Shigenobu, with an examination of the law overturning the ban on the export of copper coins and the political issues that arose around 1874 in relation to it. Okuma enacted legislation lifting the ban on the export of coins in an attempt to disseminate Japanese copper coins to China. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, remained concerned about the copper–coin shortage, and interpreted the law narrowly so as to suppress the export of copper coins. The Japan–Qing Treaty of Friendship maintained the legal prohibition on the import and export of copper coins.

Section 3 reveals the process by which Okuma in 1876 dispatched Minister of Finance contractor John Pitman to investigate coinage in Qing China, and then achieved the export of coins to China. Pitman reported that there was significant demand in China for *Kan’eitūhō* Japanese copper coins but little circulation of another Japanese copper coin, the *Tenposen*. In other words, the degree of their circulation in China varied by the type of coins they were. Okuma’s policy of exporting only old Japanese copper coins contributed to the efficient standardization of newly manufactured copper coins, which differed in design from traditional East Asian copper coins.

This research illuminates the actual circulation of Japanese copper coins in China in the early Meiji period, something that had not been clarified in previous studies. It concludes that Japan came close to being drawn into a Chinese currency bloc at the end of the Edo period, and that, thanks to Inoue's and Okuma's policies, it was able to overcome the crisis by separating the Japanese and Chinese currency blocs from each other, allowing it ultimately to break away from the traditional monetary system of East Asia.