High Economic Growth and the Change in Agriculture of Japan: One Trial Assumption from the Japanese Cultural Traditionology

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This article concerning high economic growth and the change in agriculture focuses on general numeric aspects for the whole of Japan, specific industrial changes in local governments, infrastructure improvement projects in agriculture promoted as policy, and corresponding concrete village cases moving from a consideration of the whole to an analysis of the parts. The points at issue are as follows: Firstly, in the case of the former Chiyoda-cho in Hiroshima Prefecture as one example of a rural village community in an intermediate, mountainous areas, in the 1980s when Japan had already achieved high economic growth according to the number of industrial workers and the income produced by industry, the town had a rural village landscape, but in fact it functioned as an urban community with operations mainly in the manufacturing industry, retail business, and service industry. Secondly, according to the numerical values for income produced by industry there, the total amount was 1,065 million yen in the 37th year of the Showa Era (1962), and it increased by about 18 times to 18,139 million yen in the 57th year of the Showa Era (1982). For secondary industry, it miraculously increased by nearly 100 times, from 84 million yen to 7,986 million yen. It showed that the high economic growth did not necessarily end with the First Oil Crisis in the 48th year of the Showa Era (1973). Thirdly, the change in agriculture lay in mechanization and chemical improvement, and there was a change from individual farming to group farming. The shift to group farming by the Agricultural Producers' Cooperative Corporation was promoted as policy. The shift, however, was realized on about one-third of the farming land in the Kitahiroshima-cho area, while the commissioned farming system in which farming is commissioned to entrusted farming companies was adopted for the remaining two-thirds. Fourthly, the existence of a leader is indispensable to incorporation, and two orientation forces or vectors functioned to realize the incorporation. Type A keeps farmland and villages with no expectation of agricultural income. In this case, maintenance of the household budget depends on the employment income obtained by working for neighborhood companies. Type B secures income through farming, protecting livelihood, and training young successors. In this case, in order to secure income, brands were developed by improving the quality of rice as a product and sales efforts such as sales through the direct selling method were conducted. The introduction of vegetables and garden crops and efforts towards diversification of operations such as entrustment of works other than
farming were promoted. Type A and Type B are positioned at opposite poles, and most corporations are positioned on the intermediate line. Fifthly, for the background to the realization of Type A, it is assumed that companies for which people work are located in a neighborhood that is convenient in terms of transportation and that larger farming land can be secured in a flatland area. For the background to the realization of Type B, in contrast, it is assumed that transportation is inconvenient, that there is no company for which people work in the neighborhood, and that the farmland is small. There are different farming attitudes through which these types are realized. The attitude needed for Type B is that "the situation cannot be left untouched while farms, villages, and farming land disappear," which raises a sense of mission that the farming rooted in the region must be maintained and developed. On the other hand, the attitude needed for Type A is that the farmland must not decay and that the village must be maintained, which is supported by the awareness that the land has been handed down from ancestors. Sixthly, what must not be forgotten in the agricultural ethnography is the grief of an old farmerette born in the Taisho Era, who cannot help putting her nose into what the workers are doing in the paddy field in front of her house, which was completely commissioned to a farming company because incorporation of the field had not been realized. She learned, from the previous generation, about the characteristics of her paddy field and how to feed it with manure, and she knows everything about it and does the work accordingly. This knowledge and skills of hers have become useless and she has been treated as a nuisance or busybody. However, there is a possibility that such knowledge and skills will be handed down, changing places, to young people who join Type B corporations and are given guidance by Mr. Kazuo Ogawa of the "Uzutsuki."

Key words: Infrastructure improvement project, production income by industry, Agricultural Producers' Cooperative Corporation, commissioned farming, Agricultural Spirit