
第 3 章

History of Resettlement and Rural Development in Aomidaira Community

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青見平集落における歴史；定住政策と地域開発について

<要約>

長野県阿智村の青見平集落は第二次世界大戦後に開拓された自然が豊かな集落である。開拓時における転入の対象は、満州からの帰国者と近隣集落の二男、三男で構成されていた。その後も転出と転入が繰り返され今に至る。

グループ3は、主に青見平集落の定住の歴史について調査した。調査は、開拓時の住人や近年における転出、転入者に対するインタビュー、また阿智村役場における定住化政策などを基に進めた。特に、第二次世界大戦中に満州へ移住した家族や中国残留孤児の方にインタビューできたことで定住の歴史の理解が深まった。その他の調査として、青見平集落の社会問題である高齢化と過疎化の問題についても焦点を当てた。これらの調査を分析し、浮かび上がった課題を検討した。

レポートは4つの段落からなっており、第1章のイントロダクションから始まり、第2章では青見平集落へ人々が定住した歴史、3章は青見平集落で有効な定住政策は何かを述べ、第4章で結語という構成になっている。

1. イントロダクション

青見平集落の高齢化率は50%以上と高い。また、過疎化も深刻な課題となっている。この2つが青見平集落における課題であると捉え、調査し分析した。また、青見平集落は第二次世界大戦後に作られた集落であり、転出や転入が繰り返された地域でもある。従って定住に伴う政策や、集落内での協力体制などにも焦点を当て調査、分析した。

2. 青見平集落へ人々が定住した歴史

第二次世界大戦後から現在までの人の移動、そして青見平集落は第二次大戦後にどのようにしてできたのかという経緯について述べられている。後に、青見平集落への転出、転入を、第二次世界大戦後の転入、1957年の国営開拓の際の転出と転入、そして近年における転出の3段階に分けて議論している。また、インタビューを通して満州からの帰国者である、野中さんのご家族のお話、中国残留孤児の方のお話を聞くことができた。そしてそのお話を通して山本慈昭氏の活動についても述べている。

3. 有効な定住政策

青見平集落での有効な定住政策について述べた。また、第二次世界大戦後に転入された方々と、後の段階で転入された住民の方々の集落内での協力体制に焦点を当てている。そして、他のコミュニティとの協力体制についても調査した。最後に、現在集落でおもな問題となっている高齢化や過疎化を議論し、新しい転入者を増やすためにどういった対策がなされるべきか、政策の過程と、集落の住民の姿勢について述べた。

4. 結論

これらの調査を通して、グループ3はいくつかの結果を得ることができた。青見平集落では、転

出、転入の過程において様々な努力がなされてきたことが分かった。新しい転入者を増やすために、役場の定住政策が充実していること、また青見平集落の美しい景観は新しい転入者を増やすために重要な要素となっていることなどがわかった。しかし、それと同時に課題も見えてきた。

過去における青見平への転出、転入は成功したように見受けられてが、近年におけるそれは、高齢化や過疎化の問題から考慮しても、あまり成功していないようだ。新しい転入者が青見平に来る際には、車や、ある程度まとまった金銭が必要であること、また生計の中心である農業で食べていくのは難しいという問題もあるようだ。そして、コミュニティに溶け込むのに時間がかかる場合があるという印象を受けた。

これらの結果から、グループ3では新しい転入者を増やすために、4つの提案を考えた。1つ目は、新しい転入者のために、集落内で使われていない土地を、転入後すぐに農業ができるよう土地の環境を整えること。2つ目の案として、新しい転入者が集落に早く馴染めるように集落の住民に協力を得ること。3つ目に役場と住民が新しい転入者を増やすために、もっと協力しあうこと、そして最後に役場と住民は過去の活動から、青見平にある政策を絶えず改善するように努力すること、の4点である。

<謝辞>

最後に、調査をするにあたり阿智村役場の方をはじめ、青見平集落の住民の方に大変お世話になりました。また私たちの調査の準備をしてくれた各教授、特に最初から最後までご指導してくださった西川教授にここに執筆者を代表して感謝の意を表したいと思います。

1. INTRODUCTION

This report was written by Working Group 3, composed of 6 graduate students of Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, called “History of Resettlement and Rural Development”. This work is the result of research made in Aomidaira Community, Achi village, Nagano Prefecture, Japan, under the framework of the Domestic Field Work program, which took place between October 28-30, 2009.

1.1.Rationale of the study

The main focus of the research of this group was on identification of social problems in Aomidaira Community, such as ageing society and depopulation while considering possible solutions for these problems. Since the problem of an ageing society covers contemporary Japan in its entirety and the depopulation issue is also common for rural areas in the country, this working group considered the two issues as the main social problems in Aomidaira. Further analyses focused on the main reasons for people to leave Aomidaira and their unwillingness or inability to engage in agriculture and other rural activities. In this regard, the group also tried to investigate the economic activity, sources of income and welfare of people in the community.

Despite social problems of ageing and depopulation, through observation of the environment of the community and beauty of its surroundings along with close cooperation of residents, the study group came to understand positive aspects of life in the community. Festivals, sports competitions (mainly “gateball”) and other activities in Aomidaira Community made life more enjoyable for people living there.

As Aomidaira is mainly a migrant community, which was founded after World War II, the working group investigated stages of resettlement in Aomidaira Community and efficacy of resettlement policy until the present. In this regard, the group also focused on cooperation within the community between people initially settled in the community after World War II and newcomers who migrated at later stages as well as from other communities. Regarding newcomers, the research group tried to deal with government policy as well as the attitude of community members in attracting new settlers to Aomidaira Community in order to solve the depopulation problem in Achi village in general and Aomidaira in particular.

Another part of the group focus was the child orphan issue. After World War II, Japanese citizens had to leave Manchuria in China without their children who joined their parents in Japan at a later date. The study group had a rare chance to interview “child orphans” in Achi village and the group findings in this regard are also included in the present report.

1.2.Structure of the Report

The report consists of 4 Chapters, including the introduction, 2 main chapters and the conclusion. The introduction contains rationale of the report, structure, research objectives, including the main research question, and methodology.

Chapter 2 is titled “Resettlement in Aomidaira Community” elaborating first on background information of the area after World War II until the present time and historical resettlement background of people from Manchuria in China. From there, the stages of resettlement in Aomidaira Community are discussed. The working group identified three stages of resettlement. The first one was foundation of community after World War II; the second - resettlement of people in 1957 which was connected with the government policy on reclamation of land in Kyushu; and the third – all periods after that until present. Furthermore, the “child orphan” issue is discussed in this chapter. The research group had a chance to interview brother and sister of the Nonaka family, so called “child orphans”. Therefore, the group considers necessary to cover this issue in the present report. Finally, the second chapter discusses the efforts of the Japanese schoolteacher called Yamamoto sensei to bring Japanese “child orphans” left behind in China after World War II, back to Japan.

Chapter 3 is titled “Efficacy of Resettlement Policy in Aomidaira Community”. In this chapter the group considered necessary to elaborate on the location of Aomidaira community and beauty of the surroundings. The report discusses cooperation within the community among people who were resettled after World War II, for example founders of the village and people who were resettled at later stages. To some extent, cooperation with other neighboring communities is also discussed. The report analyzes depopulation and ageing problems as the main social issues in the community. Furthermore, attraction of new people to resettle is dealt with, which includes both policy of the government in regard to attracting new settlers as well as attitudes of the community.

The conclusion discusses the research findings and suggests recommendations of the study group.

1.3. Research Objectives

The working group has set 3 research objectives. The first objective of the group was to investigate the stages of resettlement in Aomidaira Community. The study group discusses 3 separate stages of resettlement. The first stage was founding the community after World War II. The following stage of resettlement was in 1957 which was connected with the national policy in Japan on reclamation of land in Kyushu. The third and final stage is the time from 1957 until the present.

The second objective of the report is to investigate the efficacy of the resettlement policy in Aomidaira until the present. In this regard, the group considered it necessary to analyze not only the present government policy on the attraction of new settlers to the Aomidaira, but also the attitude of people within the community. The third and final objective of the report was to work out possible recommendations addressing the problems of depopulation and ageing in Aomidaira included in the conclusion.

The main research question set by the group was: What have been successes and failures of settlement policies in Aomidaira Community until the present time? Throughout the report, especially in chapter 3 and the conclusion, the group tries to answer this question.

1.4. Methodology

For the most part, the report is based on the original research conducted by the working group in Aomidaira community. The group attended the presentations of government officials in Achi village, as well as conducted interviews with the leader and members of Aomidaira, who came at various stages of settlement. Also “child orphans” were interviewed. Prior to the field work, the questionnaire was distributed among members of the community and 5 questionnaires were returned to the group during the field work. The original analyses of the presentations, interviews and completed questionnaires as well as of field surveys by the research group are provided in the report.

As for other sources of information used by the group in the study, one of them is the Domestic Field Work Report for 2008. As the Domestic Field Work was also conducted in Achi village last year, the report of 2008 helped greatly in the analysis of depopulation and ageing issues in Aomidaira. The research group also used secondary sources from the Internet to elaborate on such issues as child orphans, Japanese resettlement policy and the like.

2. RESETTLEMENT IN AOMIDAIRA COMMUNITY

This chapter provides background information about Aomidaira Community as well as the historical resettlement background of people from Manchuria in China. Then stages of resettlement in Aomidaira are discussed in the chapter. The working group elaborates on the government policy at each stage of resettlement. The impacts of the policy will be mainly discussed in chapter 3.

The final part of this chapter is devoted to the “child orphan” issue which is divided in two parts: a case study of the Nonaka family and efforts of the Japanese teacher Yamamoto sensei to establish cooperation between China and Japan and the return of Japanese “child orphans” left behind in China after World War II to Japan.

2.1. Background Information of Aomidaira Community

Aomidaira is located in Achi village, which is in the southern part of Nagano Prefecture in Japan. The present population of Achi village is 7,066 people¹. The main social problems in Achi village are ageing society and depopulation of people leaving the village.

Aomidaira Community was founded after World War II in 1946 as a result of a government policy to move new settlers to mountainous and uninhabited areas which had never been used as farm and agricultural land. The first settlers in Aomidaira were people from the area of Manchuria, China and “second or third sons” of nearby areas who moved to start their lives anew in the community. Initially, there were 23 households whose life was very difficult in trying to transform the mountainous area into farmland. This subject will be discussed further in

¹ Source: official website of Achi Village Office, <http://www.vill.achi.nagano.jp/> accessed on 12 December 2009

parts 2.2. “Historical Resettlement Background of People from Manchuria” and 2.3.1. “Resettlement after World War II” in the present chapter. The next stage of resettlement in Aomidaira happened in 1957 and was connected with the national policy of Japan to reclaim land in Kyushu. At that time, 6 households left the community and replacing them 5 families came to Aomidaira from neighboring communities. This issue will be discussed further in part 2.3.2. “Resettlement in 1957, Reclamation of Land in Kyushu” of the present chapter. After 1957, there have not been any notable resettlement movements in Aomidaira. However, many young people have left the community for big cities. In 2009, one young couple, which the study group had a chance to interview actually moved into Aomidaira community.

The people in Aomidaira seem to be very friendly and cooperative with each other. Their main sources of income are predominantly agricultural activities as well as pension allowances for older residents. The surroundings are very beautiful in the community during all seasons and people are proud that they have the scenery of the so called “Southern Alps”. Residents of Aomidaira also frequently organize festivals and sport competitions such as “gateball” matches. At times residents also get together with neighboring communities making their daily lives more interesting.

In the completed questionnaires, people mentioned that the only problem they were facing was too much snow in winter time. However, the research group also considers that ageing of people and depopulation are the biggest problems in the community. According to statistics as of April 1st 2009 provided by the Municipality Office of Achi village, there are 56 people in Aomidaira Community, and 28 of them (50% of the community) are over 65 years old. The problems of ageing and depopulation will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

There are also people who have second houses in Aomidaira. They come to the community because of the beauty of its natural surroundings and spend time in their holiday residences. However, they are not involved in agriculture and live independently from the residents who permanently live in the community. The municipal government of Achi village is interested in attracting new settlers to the village in order to counter the existing issues of ageing and depopulation. The government policy as well as the attitude of the community in this regard will be further discussed in Chapter 3 of the report.

Pioneers who founded the community deserve much respect as they have overcome many difficulties in the past. Presently, they seem to be happy to have property rights on water for irrigation, a recently constructed road, Internet access and other conveniences, which allows them to enjoy their lives being surrounded by beautiful nature.

2.2. Historical Resettlement Background of People from Manchuria

The migration of Japanese people to Manchuria started in the beginning of the twentieth century in the wake of the Japanese colonization movement. Japanese were encouraged to settle in Manchuria by the imperial government in order to establish a Japanese empire in Manchuria especially along the peripheries with the border to the Soviet Union. As the circumstances progressed and Japan became embroiled in an engaging war with the United States, young and middle-aged Japanese men from Manchuria, who were basically agrarian settlers, were drafted by the Japanese army to defend East and Southeast Asia. The families they left behind mainly comprised

of their wives and children. As it is known, Japan was defeated in World War II and in 1945 Soviet troops invaded Manchuria which is presently a territory of China and used to be a colony of Japan before the War. At that time Japanese military who defended the area were mostly killed by enemy troops whereas Japanese civilians were sent to Siberia in the former USSR.

The wives and children of the families that were left behind had little resources to sustain themselves. With severe winters and malnutrition, survival was difficult. This resulted in the handing over of their children to local Chinese families. The women needed to work in the fields for their livelihood and the children could not be left behind alone. For those who were attempting to return to their homelands in Japan, it was dangerous to take children along as the region was still plagued with warfare and stray munitions. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to leave children behind with Chinese families.

The resettlement of native Japanese from Manchuria began through the lists of biographies and photos of orphans stranded in China published in Asahi newspaper between 1971 and 1981. In 1981, the Japanese government permitted 47 orphans to visit Japan and by 2003, the number increased to 2133. It was compulsory for the orphans to prove their Japanese identity by locating their parents or relatives in Japan. The Japanese government has returned the citizenship status to deprived orphans by allowing them to stay permanently in Japan with their relatives. However, as many of them have spent the formative years of their lives in China, they became accustomed to Chinese culture and acquired Chinese identity while almost entirely forgetting Japanese customs. While the Japanese government does not allow dual nationality, children and grandchildren of the repatriates do not necessarily wish to become Japanese citizens. Hence, while the orphans who wished to return were considered Japanese, their families constituting of second and third generation Japanese were essentially foreigners

The Japanese government's policy regarding the repatriation of orphans from Manchuria has changed a number of times considering shifts in policy. Until 1989, orphans could not return without the consent of their Japanese relatives. However, the Japanese government introduced a "special sponsor system" that required orphans with verified Japanese nationality to return with the sponsorship of a Japanese national. In 1992, the government of Japan allowed the disabled orphans in China to return with direct family members. Later, the government made this policy applicable to any orphan over 60 years of age. This enabled many Japanese orphans to bring their direct family members (husband, wives or children) to live with them in Japan.

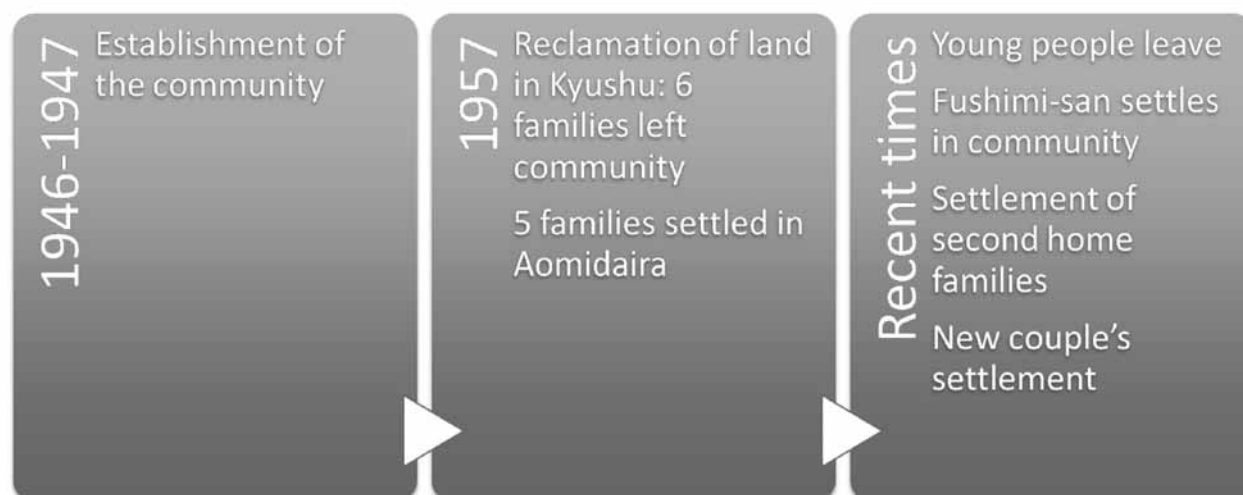
One of the primary incentives to return to Japan is not only the native roots but also the financial hardships that were borne by these repatriates. The working group considers that resettlement of people from Manchuria in Japan is the least the Japanese state could do for those who suffered in the post-war chaos. Though there could be no compensation for being separated from one's homeland and loved ones, repatriation is a significant step to rectifying the wrongs committed during the war years.

2.3. Stages of Resettlement in Aomidaira Community

Aomidaira was established more than half a century ago. Throughout the community history, the study group categorized the resettlement process mainly into 3 stages, which are: Resettlement after WWII, Settlement during reclamation of land in Kyushu, and Recent settlement. The history of this community conveys rich experiences

and lessons learned which could provide insights to address the contemporary problems in the community, especially depopulation.

Summary of Settlement in Aomidaira Community



2.3.1. Resettlement after WWII

After World War II, the Japanese government invited people of Japanese ancestry who lived in Manchuria to return to Japan. The cost of relocation was covered by those relocating families or their relatives in Japan. At the initial stage of community foundation there were 15 families who moved from Manchuria; 7 or 8 people were second and third sons from areas neighboring Aomidaira. The community was established in 1947 in an area that was previously uninhabitable land owned privately or by the state. There was a land dispute during the foundation of the community as it affected the interests of other land owners. This is the reason that the community has been geographically divided into 2 separate blocks.

It was not easy to start a community in a remote mountainous area covered by thick forest. There was no electricity, clean water nor proper road access. In addition to that, the land is on a steep incline which does not provide good conditions for farming. Therefore, people had to work hard to transform sloping areas into flat agricultural land. Water for irrigation was another issue. Members of Aomidaira community did not have the right to use water from streams for irrigation. They had to ask for permission to use this water from neighbors who did have the right to use it. It should be noted that in Japan due to the scarcity of water, the customary water rights were applied and managed independently on a community level; at present, there are various policies on water rights related to increasing demand on water². The water sources available for irrigation were used and managed by other communities before the foundation of Aomidaira. Thus, residents from Aomidaira needed to request for

² Further reading regarding water rights in Japan: Masahiko Murase (Year N/A). A Review of Water Rights in Japan. National Institute for Land and Infrastructure Management. Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport. Website: www.nilim.go.jp/lab/bcg/siryou/tnn/tnn0156pdf/ks0156018.pdf Retrieve: Nov 21st, 2009.

rights to use water for irrigation purposes. Seeking rights to use water for this purpose took approximately 10 years of negotiation.

At the initial stage the community people planted upland rice, soybeans, vegetables, wheat, tobacco, buckwheat, while raising cows for meat and milk. It was noticed by the group members, who tasted some of the vegetables grown by the community that the flavor of produce was more appetizing when compared with the same agricultural products sold in the market.

2.3.2. Resettlement in 1957, Reclamation of Land in Kyushu

Herewith, the group would like to mention both the departure of residents from the community and arrival of new settlers during this stage. During 1957, 6 families moved from Aomidaira Community to Kyushu because there was more available land for agriculture as a result of land reclamation there.

Although 6 families left the community, 5 other families from areas in neighboring Achi village arrived to settle in Aomidaira. The purpose of moving was due to greater availability of agricultural land for farmers meeting the minimum standard of government policy which needed to be 15 acres or more. The start of their lives in the community was mostly as difficult as that of the previous settlers.

2.3.3. Settlement until Present

After the stage of resettlement during land reclamation in Kyushu, there were 4 significant settlement groupings. They included migration of young people to urban areas or elsewhere, leading to depopulation and ageing problems in the community; the settlement of Fushimi-san in 1990s; the settlement of a young couple in 2009. Separately the group considers necessary to mention second home residents. Although there have been some movements into Aomidaira Community from elsewhere, the population is sharply decreasing. There is a great imbalance between departures from the community and arrivals. Furthermore, most of the people residing in the village are elderly; only a small proportion of the residents are relatively young. These are strong indicators that depopulation and ageing are the main problems of this community.

There are a number of reasons for migration, especially youth moving out of the community during this stage. The difficulties of engaging in agriculture and increased interest in working in industrial and service sectors are the main reasons. It is not possible to farm the entire year in Aomidaira Community as people cannot work the land during winter. For this reason, people's livelihood commonly appears quite hard. Before the modernization of industrial and service sectors when there were not many job opportunities available in the city, a number of people went into the forest to find food for consumption and sale in the market while others went to the city to find jobs. The difficulties and low income from farming and the greater benefits and working conditions in the city due to the rapid growth in industrial and service sector in the last several decades, caused people to give up farming and migrate to urban areas.

Younger people born in Aomidaira Community often decided to leave because they desired to work in other sectors besides agriculture. It is not possible to farm together in a large family and according to Japanese tradition only one child stays with the parents to succeed the property while other siblings leave the family upon maturity. Due to the difficulty for the youth to start new lives in rural areas and the disparity of job opportunities as well as

benefits between rural and urban areas, they are encouraged to leave the community. “When our children graduated from school in an urban area, they never come back”, said Nonaka-san during his interview. Lacking the younger generation makes the community more vulnerable. According to data provided by Achi Municipal Office regarding the population category sizes, 7.27% are children, 14.55% are adult from 20-39 years old and 78.18% are over 40 years old³.

As for the movement into the community, it is necessary to mention second house-owners in Aomidaira. Within the last 10 years, 10 houses have been built by people coming to Aomidaira from elsewhere who wish to have alternate residences. The owners of these houses do not permanently stay in the community but periodically visit their residences. The beautiful scenery and fresh air were the main reasons attracting them to settle as second home owners in Aomidaira.

Resettlements of Fushimi-san and his family as well as migrants in 1957 are another case of successful settlement in the community. During the interview, Fushimi-san mentioned that he enjoyed life there because it was convenient for him. The positive aspects of his life in Aomidaira included the beautiful scenery, receiving social security, Internet access and in particular the hot spring which is located in Achi village and quite close to the community. However, during the interview, Fushimi-san also mentioned difficulties during his initial settlement. Due to lifestyle differences and community norms he emphasized the requirements of assimilation in the community. Presently, he claimed to have a good relationship with other residents in Aomidaira. The working group realized that Fushimi-san did not receive subsidies from the government for resettlement, since that policy had not been yet enacted when he moved to the community.

In 2009, a married couple moved in to start their life in Aomidaira. The main reasons they moved were due to the beautiful scenery and cooperation from local people. They were very enthusiastic to engage themselves in agriculture and the present government policy on settlement made their move easier. However, as these young people have recently arrived in Aomidaira, their relationship with residents of the community is not strong. As in the case of Fushimi-san, their way of thinking and lifestyle is generally different from the values and traditions of the community. However, the group assumes that, in fact, it is normal for people from different places to have differing ways of life. The study group considers that it would be good for people to share their differences and exchange their life experiences which might provide an opportunity to create and develop a positive relationship and respect for each other's values and traditions.

³ Achi Municipal Office data: 2009.10.01

The stages of resettlement in Aomidaira can be summarized as follows:

Reason of migration

Departure from the community	Arrival in the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for larger area of agricultural land • Low income: not possible to cultivate the whole year round • Difficult work (agriculture) • Other sectors besides agriculture provide more income • Not enough land for all children to farm together • General norm is that children besides the first sons need to leave family upon maturity • Disparity of income: agriculture compared to industrial and service sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of land for agriculture • Beauty of scenery and nature • Acquiring subsidies from local government upon resettlement • Social security • Access to communication (Internet, cell phones, etc.) • Attraction of hot spring (onsen)

2.4 The “Child Orphan” Issue

The expression “child orphans” is used for the Japanese term *zanryu koji*, which refers to children who have remained behind and were handed over to Chinese families by their Japanese parents in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Manchuria upon the end of World War II. Due to the disintegration of Japanese families by the harsh circumstances Japanese parents thought it best to leave behind their children for their survival and well-being. It was general practice at that time that fathers died during fighting or were sent to far-off regions by Soviet forces and mothers were either left to fend for themselves or dragged to the detention camps. Since the children were raised by Chinese parents and acquired Chinese language and culture in the formative years of their lives, many of them lost their sense of Japanese identity and forgot Japanese language and culture.

2.4.1. Case study of the Nonaka family

The study group had the opportunity to interview a “child orphan”, 73 year old Nonaka-san. He returned to Japan when he was nine years old after living for 3 months in Manchuria. Nonaka-san lives in Achi village and is a part of the community, where he makes his livelihood carrying out agricultural activities.

Nonaka-san’s family, which comprised of nine people including parents and six siblings, was sent to Manchuria during World War II. The journey to Manchuria was extremely difficult as there was no food and travelling during the day was dangerous due to widespread fighting and live ammunition. Food could not be cooked as the smoke would indicate the presence of civilians which was risky. In such inhospitable conditions, there were times when they simply survived by eating one raw potato and a cup of “azuki” beans per day. They were forced to walk during nights by following the stars since they were afraid to be seen during the day time. The

family members considered themselves lucky whenever they could find corn on the way as it would provide energy to continue their journey. When the family reached China, the winter was very severe and they hardly survived. In China, Nonaka-san's older sister was forced by a local Chinese man to marry and his father could not prevent this due to the possibility of hostile consequences. Later, his mother was sent to a detention camp while his father was sent to Siberia. Although he was promised a respectable job, in fact, he was obliged to work as a laborer. His mother decided to leave the children with local Chinese families and Nonaka-san recalls it as an extremely wise decision, which saved their lives. During the interview, Nonaka-san stressed the cooperation and understanding of Chinese families regarding the hardships of Japanese. In March, 1946, the Japanese government requested China to facilitate repatriation of the Japanese citizens living in China who were willing to return. While his older sister asked him to return to Japan with her, Nonaka-san readily agreed as he was willing to return and tell his family's story to others. One of the sisters of Nonaka-san passed away in China due to the severe winter and the other refused to return since their mother had passed away in a detention camp and she considered it impossible to live without her mother in Japan.

When the ship to return people from Manchuria arrived, Nonaka-san had few belongings to take with him and he had kept a lock of his mother's hair as memorabilia. However, these belongings were taken away by American soldiers during his journey home. The period when they started their journey till the time when they arrived in Hakata, Fukuoka lasted approximately six months. When they arrived in Japan Nonaka-san and his elder sister were provided with a blanket and ten yen while they continued their journey to Nagano Prefecture to their village. Though Nonaka-san's memories were blurred regarding his journey, he mentioned his mother's blessings made it possible for them to reach their homeland again. Upon arrival in Ida which is a town near the village, they were welcomed by people from the administration wearing white sashes. They were offered sweet potatoes to eat and asked about their destination which caused him distress as he only remembered his name and "Gokamura", the name of the village. Their relatives were informed and though they lived separately the family members received constant support from their relatives.

One year later, Nonaka-san's father returned from Siberia and was delighted to find two of his children had survived as he thought that they had all passed away. The family was reunited and started their new life in Aomidaira though they did not have financial resources or land. They applied for assistance from the government to build their home with fresh wood. However, the material was not satisfactory for the rainy season or snow. Later, his father remarried and had two more daughters. Nonaka-san, who until that point had to do all the housework, was slightly relieved since his stepmother shared some responsibilities about the house; however, his life was still difficult. He considered it necessary to go to school and receive an education despite his father's opposition who gave more importance to farming and domestic work. Nonaka-san continued schooling in adverse conditions despite not having money to buy a pen and paper. He practiced writing on ash with a piece of burnt wood and carried his cooked potato lunch in a rag as he did not have a lunchbox like other students. Despite all of the hardships, Nonaka-san displayed perseverance and later opened his own school where he taught Mathematics, Japanese, Science, Agriculture and Sociology. He had his share of landmark achievements when his group won a scholarship to a school in Tokyo related to an agricultural project they conducted.

After some time, Nonaka-san found a list of orphans in the newspaper where he identified one woman as his sister. He gathered some evidence and sent money to his sister since he had to pay the transportation fee as a guarantor. However, the money was used by the sister's family in China and she did not return, which disappointed Nonaka-san's father greatly as he did not expect such a response from his own daughter. However, Nonaka-san was determined and he worked hard earning money from two different jobs at the same time and gathered enough money to be sent for his sister again. This time, his sister did come back along with her family.

The study group had an opportunity to meet with Nonaka-san's sister who came back to Japan. She was married to a Chinese man with four children but was facing abject poverty as her husband could not work due to physical disability and later passed away in Japan. She was the only bread-winner in her family and made ends meet with great difficulty. After she arrived in Japan, she had further difficulty in learning the Japanese language and nuances of the culture as she had spent the majority of her life in China and struggled to adjust to her new surroundings. However, with the emotional and financial support of her brother who built a home for her family, she overcame major difficulties. She recalled the years she spent in China fondly and misses her Chinese relatives, especially her siblings, who treated her as a mother due to her constant care for them. Though she has little hope of meeting them again, her brother's support is a crucial element in rebuilding her life in Japan. The case of Nonaka's family illustrates one of examples of the hardships "child orphans" faced in China and Japan. These narratives must be taken into account by policy makers and researchers.

2.4.2. Efforts of Yamamoto sensei to Bring People from China

Yamamoto sensei was the chief of the *Chugoku Zanryu Koji Taisaku-shitsu*, an office within the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare that deals with orphans who remained behind in China. Nonaka-san addressed him as *sensei* or "teacher" in the Japanese language, as he followed Yamamoto sensei's initiative to assist "child orphans" and out of a great respect to him. With persistent efforts and initiatives from Yamamoto sensei, numerous orphans returned to Japan from China. Nonaka-san recalls Yamamoto sensei's continuous endeavors to convince the Japanese government to take a number of actions to assist the "child orphans". He travelled twice a month to Tokyo during days when the transportation was unreliable and the mountainous terrain was treacherous. Nonaka-san owes the reunion with his sister to Yamamoto sensei. As a dedication to Yamamoto sensei, Nonaka-san has maintained a memorial hall with the various records and photographs of orphans as well as records of various projects undertaken by the instrumental figure. Nonaka-san along with Yamamoto sensei went to China and brought gifts for the Chinese government officials demonstrating the gratefulness of Japanese families who felt indebted to the Chinese for taking care of their children. A statue was also sent to a museum in Beijing that depicted a Japanese child holding the hand of a Chinese mother as a symbol of love and cooperation. Nonaka-san intends to shift the memorial for Yamamoto sensei to a larger hall as the present location is too small in his opinion.

3. EFFICACY OF THE RESETTLEMENT POLICY IN AOMIDAIRA COMMUNITY

This chapter discusses the natural beauty of Aomidaira and its relation with the resettlement issue. It also focuses on the life of people in Aomidaira by describing the relationship within the community between people who first resettled in Aomidaira and community members who settled later. The chapter then discusses the relationship between residents who permanently live in the community and second home owners. The relationship with other communities is also discussed.

Depopulation and ageing problems as the main social issues in Aomidaira are discussed in the chapter. The study group analyzed the policy of the Municipal Government of Achi village to attract new settlers in order to address the issues of ageing and depopulation. Lastly, the attitude of the people in Aomidaira regarding the government policy on attraction of new settlers is analyzed by the research group.

3.1. Natural Surroundings and Location of Aomidaira Community

Aomidaira is located in the outskirts of Achi village in a picturesque mountainous region. Unlike the bustling and crowded city, Aomidaira has a quiet environment and fresh air. The beautiful scenery of the forest and trees in the mountains combined with the sounds of surrounding nature renders a relaxing atmosphere. The popular view of snow peaks from the mountains, called by residents as the “Southern Alps” is visible from Aomidaira. This breathtaking natural beauty is the pride of the community. It also is one of the factors that makes potential residents decide to live in Aomidaira and others own a second house in that area.

At times living conditions in Aomidaira are difficult to manage. Surrounded by thick forests, people need to beware of wild animals such as snakes, boars and poisonous insects. The wild boars also destroy cultivated fields. Heavy snow in the winters makes it difficult to carry on with farming; however, in the early years of Aomidaira, the situation was much worse than at present. There was no electricity, clean water or proper roads and the forest was still thick and the land was unlevel. The first generation settlers had to work much harder to transform the unlevel areas into flat farming land.

Today’s conditions are much improved in many ways. Today not only is there electricity, clean water, and a recently constructed asphalt road, but also a bus for public transportation even though Aomidaira is located in a remote mountainous area. Telephones and internet are also accessible means for communication in the community. There is flat farming land ready to be cultivated without the hassle of converting it from uneven land as it was during the early days of the community. All of these conveniences are incentives for potential residents.

3.2. Cooperation within Aomidaira and with Other Communities

There is a cooperative atmosphere within the community especially among the first generation settlers as they had faced the same hard conditions and common experiences together when they founded Aomidaira. When migrants of the second stage of resettlement arrived, the first settlers welcomed and helped them. However, due to

the differing lifestyle of recent settlers it took some time to adapt and build a relationship. Recently, a young couple settled in Aomidaira and residents of the community welcome and attempt to help them in settling in.

The study group observed harmonious relations between residents in Aomidaira. They frequently organize festivals and everyone brings food to be shared. In the summer, residents play “gate-ball” together every week at a gate-ball field as well as invite people from other communities to participate. Community members also maintain a public house and a shrine together. During the research, the study group was welcomed into the public house and served some local delicacies and drinks illustrating the hospitality and kindness of community residents.

There are also people who have second houses in Aomidaira. They are not permanently living in the community, but periodically visit Aomidaira to enjoy nature during holidays. As they do not spend much time to build relationships with the people of the community their interaction with the community members is limited.

Cooperation with other communities can be traced back to the early years of Aomidaira. As a newly founded community, Aomidaira did not have water sharing rights in the region. In this regard, the community depended on neighboring communities and formed closer relationships with them to share their water access with Aomidaira residents. After spending some years creating stronger ties with neighboring communities, Aomidaira received its access to its own water supply.

After evaluating the life of people in Aomidaira, the research group came to the conclusion that settlement in the community had been successful. Even though life was difficult in the early years of settlement, people survived and settled in Aomidaira without any problems with other residents in neighboring communities. Settlement of the second stage can be also considered a success since the second stage settlers became adapted and were welcomed by the first settlers of Aomidaira Community.

3.3. Depopulation and Ageing Problems in the Community

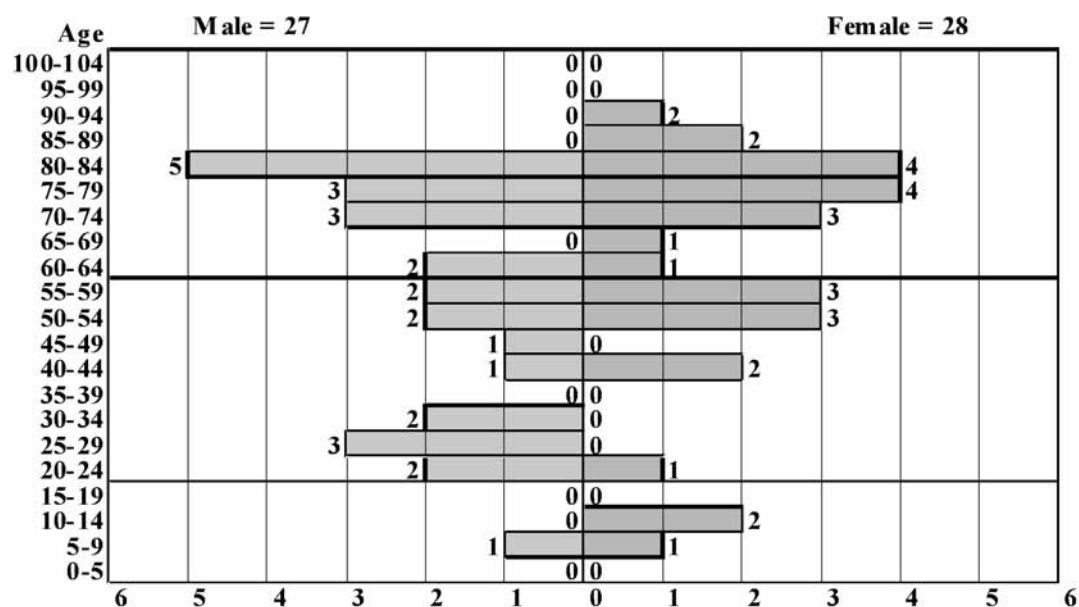
Depopulation is one of the biggest problems in Aomidaira Community. As can be seen from Figure 1, the total population of the community is only 55 people. The major cause of the depopulation is because residents, especially young people, leave the community as described in Chapter 2. People leave Aomidaira predominantly due to economic factors. The predominant employment source in Aomidaira is farming and it is not possible to farm for the whole year due to the harsh winter; whereas urban areas attract potential residents with more employment opportunities as well as better income. As a result, the youth who do not aspire to be farmers move to the cities. To overcome the depopulation problem the Municipal Government of Achi village has devised ways to invite people to settle. As a result of this program one young married couple has moved to Aomidaira.

Another cause of depopulation is a low fertility rate and late marriages in the community. The Municipal Government of Achi village organizes events to bring prospective couples together for interaction as a measure to alleviate the problem.

Besides this, Aomidaira is facing the problem of an ageing population. Figure 1 demonstrates the population in Aomidaira community. From bottom to top the pyramid's shape implies that there are more aged people than young people living in the area. It follows that the figure illustrates the problem of ageing in Aomidaira. Older residents (over 60 years old) have reached about 50 percent of the total population. The Municipal Government of

Achi village considers a community with more than 40 percent of the population over 60 years old as an area that needs serious attention and the community does fall into this category.

Figure 1: Population pyramid of Aomidaira Community



Source: Achi village office

Depopulation will become an economic and social problem in the future if there is not enough manpower to carry on with the economic activities. However, in Aomidaira, there is no actual social problem at present as people can still handle their own jobs pretty well. During interviews, community members claim to be healthy and that they do not need any assistance for daily activities. Residents still have income from pensions and participate in farming so they believe they do not need economic support. If community members need to buy food or groceries from Achi village, the goods can be delivered to them through the cooperative. However, it is obvious that the situation will change in coming years and the community desperately needs young people who can care for older residents.

3.4 Attracting Residents to Settle in the Community

As Achi village is facing problems of ageing and depopulation, the Municipal Government has come up with incentives to attract new settlers there. Among the 53 communities that make up Achi village, most of the population is ageing and usually heads of communities are 60-65 years old. As a measure, the authorities are offering public housing on rent at reasonable prices for those who do not live in the area. The arrangement involves cleaning and repairing houses and at the moment 222 houses are ready to be occupied. Until now, 10 people have already entered contracts to rent a home.

There are also some facilities for people who want to take up farming in Achi village. According to one government officer in the village, subsidies are available for those who are interested in agriculture from the local government. If they plan to continue for three years, they can receive 100,000 yen per month as a loan from the Municipality Office. Within the following three years, they can obtain a loan of 360,000 yen. In addition, there is no age limitation to receive loans for new settlers under the subsidy program.

The information regarding such programs is advertised on the internet and in newspapers to attract people from outside of the village. As new settlers are arriving with their families and children, the Municipality Office hopes that the problem of ageing will be resolved in future. Recently, one family and an individual have arrived from outside the village, who can receive subsidies to start a farm. They are fresh university graduates from Nagoya and Chiba and are aiming to proceed with their farming techniques in a modern fashion.

3.4.1 Policy of the Government

According to the Achi village government's data, the population is in rapid decline. To resolve the problem of depopulation, the government policy mainly rests on providing subsidies and other benefits. Besides, the government encourages the tourism industry in the village to focus on the local hot spring and related activities. The expansion of tourism promises to generate employment and attract new settlers. In addition, the tourism industry utilizes local products such as fruits and vegetables and creates demand in the market. Hence, its expansion is a viable option for benefitting the livelihoods of locals and tackling the depopulation issue.

Despite the above methods, the research group noticed some shortcomings in the government policy on attracting of new settlers. During the interviews conducted with villagers, it was discovered that there is a hindrance for people willing to buy land in the village. In this regard, there is a regulation by the government that restricts outsiders to purchase land inside village. This fact is discouraging for new settlers and can be viewed as an obstacle for settling in this area. The group advises that the government should reconsider this policy and relax the stringent rules regarding land ownership that exist at present. Furthermore, the municipal government recommends new residents to have a car, a certain amount of money and an additional source of income before they settle in the community which may also prevent settlement in the village.

3.4.2. Attitude of the Community Regarding New Settlers

Though the government policy strongly favors migration of potential residents to the village, there could be subdued friction due to the different lifestyles of those who have lived in the village for a longer period of time and people who have just arrived. The community members, who have resided in the village for a long time, expect active participation and cheerful interaction with the new settlers as they have always maintained within the community. Furthermore, the customs and norms in a village are different from the ones followed in cities and towns. This could often instill slight skepticism in both old residents and new settlers about whether their migration to the village would be sustainable. Therefore, cooperation is required from both sides as not only the old residents of the community need new settlers to counter the depopulation issue; new residents also need to establish a successful livelihood in their new homes.

The study group also observed that Aomidaira is quite autonomous from the Municipality Office in Achi village. Despite the government policy to attract new settlers, residents of Aomidaira have their own opinion in this regard. The working group observed that some members of the community are not well aware of the details in the government policy and express their concern in regard of attraction of new settlers, since residents of Aomidaira share and cherish their own traditions, norms and values. Therefore, by attracting new settlers there is a concern among founders of the community that these values might be destroyed. In this regard, the research group considers that the government should work in the heart of the community and explain its policy and inevitability of new settlements. This is especially crucial for Aomidaira, where 50 per cent of population is aged.

Conclusively, the government in Achi village is tackling the issues of depopulation and ageing effectively on an overall basis. Coupled with the natural beauty of the location and serene environment, more resettlement of new residents is expected. Despite minor issues, the resettlement has been successful and the new families have blended smoothly with other residents in the village. However, the cooperation and understanding between old residents of Aomidaira Community and new settlers should be reinforced through patience in building relationships and allowing new settlers to acclimatize themselves with their new surroundings and society.

4. CONCLUSION

Through the above critical analysis, the study group comes up with several findings and recommendations. It should be noticed that these conclusions are based on the results of a questionnaire, other sources of information and interviews.

4.1. Research findings

Although there are various achievements and some challenges regarding the process of resettlement in Aomidaira community, the group considers that the resettlement program has been implemented smoothly.

The first resettlement after World War II, the integration of “child orphans” thereafter, and the settlement of five families in this community during 1957, which was the period of reclamation of the land in Kyushu, are all significant achievements during the first 2 stages of settlement. Even though there were many difficulties, the government and settlers established a healthy balance and harmonious interaction in helping each other and themselves. The government provided the location for establishment of a community and thereafter the settlers worked together to establish a community in a mountainous and forested area. Community members expressed their willingness to help one another, form a good relationship both within Aomidaira and with neighboring communities and create a harmonious environment to live together happily. In addition, the working group observed a balance between the families that left the community and settled in during reclamation of land in Kyushu, when 6 families moved out and 5 families moved in.

Regarding the resettlement, the first two stages of resettlement seem to be successful however the recent resettlement pattern is not that successful, which has led to the problem of depopulation. There is an imbalance

between the people leaving Aomidaira and new settlement in the community. Most young people who were born in this community leave for the urban areas while only 2 permanent families have settled in and 10 second home owners have constructed their houses in the community.

The reasons for young people leaving are numerous. Firstly, agriculture is a difficult career option and has lower income benefits when compared with other sectors. Secondly, members of large families cannot be involved in farming together due to the limited space of land, and as a tradition, only one child stays with the parents while others need to leave the family once they are adults. Therefore, the research group assumes that the people who moved out of the community did so mainly due to reasons regarding livelihood as they faced constraints while living in the community and discovered greater opportunities elsewhere.

The attraction for those who currently live in the community include the following:

beauty of nature;

good infrastructure that makes lives more convenient;

government subsidy program that caters to the needs of initial settlement;

available land for doing agriculture and the warmth of a well-knit community.

Despite these incentives, there are also some difficulties for new settlers such as the advice in government recommendations for settlers as they need to have a car, particular amount of money; and the difference in lifestyles of community people and new settlers. Although these criteria help the government to select settlers who would adapt well to the conditions in the village and community, that is not always the case. Different settlers use various ways to cope with the difficulties of life. These selection criteria may prevent capable and willing people, who use different ways rather than the ones described above for settling in the community. The above recommendations should be advice for prospective settlers rather than selection conditions, which is actually the case. Furthermore, it is normal for **different** people from **different** places to have **different** lifestyles. Thus, it is difficult for new residents to settle within the community because of this difference. The community needs to have a close relationship and interactive lifestyle, while new comers should take their time to learn and get accustomed to that norm.

There are initiatives from a community level, especially the community groups and organizations, which can be a good way of addressing community issues. Besides actively conducting many events and campaigns, the community groups seem to be reluctant to reflect on the performance of activities. It is advisable for community groups and organizations to reflect on their previous operations and find ways to organize those events in a more effective manner.

4.2. Recommendations

Throughout the research activities, the study group observed that the community's resettlement and coping with depopulation and aging issues have been respectively resolved in the best possible manner. All researchers within this group have learned much from these experiences. The working group would like to propose some recommendations based on our experiences during the field work.

- a) It is necessary to encourage young people to live in the community by giving them sufficient incentives. Though it is difficult to influence their personal choices, many juveniles are forced to leave as there is not sufficient land for farming. In addition, Aomidaira Community preserves the traditional custom that allows only first sons to stay with the family while others are bound to move out. The government must utilize the unused two thirds of land in the village and make it available for farming. Such a policy could influence the decisions of those who are considering moving out and have them review their choices.
- b) Established residents of the community should create a welcoming environment for new settlers by giving them time to get acclimatized to their new environment.
- c) The government should work in the heart of the community by making close contacts with the residents of close-knit communities. Making close coordination with communities would be an additional step towards tackling the problems of ageing and depopulation.
- d) Community groups must constantly try to improve their functioning and policies by reflecting on the work done in the past.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are extremely grateful to all the people who spared their valuable time and energy in helping us during the field work in Achi village. We are very indebted to Andou-san, Hara-san, Sonohara-san, Kawai-san, and Fushimi-san who provided us with priceless interviews that gave an insight into the history of Aomidaira Community.

Nonaka-san's kindness and patience needs a special mention as he not only shared his life's history through personal narrative but also went out of his way to show us around the community including the memorial and shrine which left us with a lasting impression. His efforts are greatly appreciated as this report would have been impossible without his contribution.

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Kozuka-san who agreed to be interviewed even without a fixed appointment; Masuda-san who gave a helpful lecture regarding resettlement policy and Satou-san who was there every second taking us around the village the three days that we were there.

Lastly, we would like to thank all of the professors who guided us in every way and made this research work possible by organizing the trip. We express our gratitude to Professor Nishikawa, who has been very supportive in providing advice, directions and comments for writing the report since the very first meeting.

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