

論 文 の 英 文 要 旨

論 文 題 目

The Formation Process of Agricultural Policy in Modern Japan
The Establishment of the Food Control System

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This research traces the process of the formation of the food control system in Japan by analyzing the debates of the rice policy council from 1910 to the mid-1950. The contents of the debates were very diverse and were held over an extended time period. Depending on way the council members recognized the family-run farmer's businesses, the debates varied largely. A main issue which emerged in the discourse was the gap between the old system of the mainly family-run rice business and the introduction of a modern capitalist economic system to Japan. The intense debates of the rice council finally found entrance in the food management system.

This study is composed of four chapters. The first chapter covers the period from 1910 to 1921 before the Rice Law was inaugurated. Chapter two analyzes the period from 1921 to 1933 in which the Rice Law was introduced. This is followed by a chapter on the period from the 1930s onward in which the Rice Control Law was established. Finally, the study turns to the analysis of the post war economic reconstruction period between 1945 and 1955. The data material used for this study are mainly the proceedings of the rice councils in each period. Above that, data from the official publications of the agricultural organizations provided important insights into the positions of the different agricultural stakeholders.

The analysis of the development of the Rice Law during this period of time allows for a deeper understanding of the modernization process of the Japanese commerce and industry as a whole. In other words, these debates can be interpreted as the reaction of agricultural stakeholders to the industrialization of Japan. The debates over the rice price regulation, had an important impact on the Japanese agriculture in general. Rice was not only an important product for agriculture but it was essential for the stability of the society in general as rice was and still is a staple food. Therefore, for the agricultural side, it was also a bargain in order to maintain agriculture as an industry and livelihood. In this paper, I discuss the debates concerning the rice price regulation which ended up in a rice control system in the 1940s. It was also a process of seeking the measures to agricultural issues that had occurred in the modernization process of Japan with a focus on commerce and industry.

The rice problem manifested in 1910s after the Russo - Japanese War, and became

more serious in 1920s. The agricultural side introduced economic measures such as agricultural warehouse or low-interest funds and tried to resolve the fund shortage problem of the family-run rice businesses. Also they claimed a policy intervention to regulate the rice import from foreign countries and the colonies, and they supported the foundation and networking of farmers to bring back the rice price decision from the capitalist free market to the producers. At the same time, capitalism developed, and the population was increasing, therefore the demand for the supply of staple food was high. Until the 1920s, the government realized that increasing food production was the most important issue. And with the Showa Agricultural Depression in the 1930s, the government enhanced support for agricultural actors and following the aggravation of the food crisis during the war, the claims from the agricultural side were gradually incorporated into the policy.

To summarize, these two processes influenced the food control system that was in place during wartime. After the war when food shortages occurred, GHQ(General Head Quarters) and the Government of Japan founded a food control system promoting iron fist delivery and a low rice price policy to maintain social stability and to promote economic recovery. In the same time, farmers and agricultural organizations also adhered to the food control system, to speak for the producers who had been forced to lower the price of rice and who had been subject to harvest seizures. These actors claimed that the rice price should be determined by the production costs. The severe social situation in the first years after the war, both producers and consumers, demanded public financial support. Under these circumstances the mentioned food control system was established.

Overall it can be said that the formation process of the food control policy was strongly influenced by the agricultural issues Japan experienced since the 1910s. During the war time and in order to rural social stability, the government increasingly incorporated the claims of the agricultural side into state policy. After the defeat, however, state control became stronger and led to a food control system, based on an agricultural protection policy with a focus on the regulation of the rice price.

This study presents the formation process of the food control system established after the war and I interpret the food control system as a counter-measure to the agricultural issues at the time. Although today's international situation differs largely from the above mentioned, some of the outlined mechanisms and processes can also be found in recent discussions on agricultural policy such as the GATT negotiations in the 1980s or the current negotiations on the TPP with the U.S..

Agricultural modernization processes touch upon the very core of what holds a

society together: food. Therefore, it is important to not only observe agricultural issues in Japan but also modernization processes in other areas in Asia, especially state measures, and the formation of agricultural policies.