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A study on the Motives and Processes of Rural Center Development in Farming Areas in Hokkaido

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Abstract

This study is arranged for the purpose of gathering planning information for rural regions, and at the same time, gathering historical information on rural center planning and fundamental resources for a formative study of rural areas as well.

The study sets forth relevant processes of structural growth and changes that occurred in rural areas of Hokkaido.

The rural centers came into being within a relatively short period of time (100 years) after immigrants came and settled Hokkaido. The two principal motives of the rural centers were the "land readjustment" and the "spontaneous development", both of which were closely related to the laying down of the railroad.

The rural centers developed as a trading center of goods as well as a supply sources of daily life services, and the railroad as a means of mass transportation were important for the promotion of land development. That is the reason why the Hokkaido Government included it in the land readjustment and development of the rural centers.

1. Preface

This study will clarify the motives and processes of development of rural centers in farming areas of Hokkaido as well as patterns of such developments in the initial stages by areas. It intends to serve the following purposes :

- 1) To clarify the structural growth and changes in the respective areas from the birth of the farming areas in Hokkaido to the present. It will help us to obtain knowledge and views on future area planning.
- 2) To look into the plan and intent of the Hokkaido Government when it carried out land readjustment for agricultural settlements and for rural centers. It will provide us with knowledge and views on the history of the farmland planning.
- 3) To provide the study materials on the formation of farming areas.

The term “rural center”, as used in this study, refers collectively to “a community consisting of densely built dwellings, with the life-and production-related facilities accumulated to perform the central functions”.

A farming community in Hokkaido is composed of rural centers and small village consisting of isolated farmsteads in their periphery.

From this point of view, a rural center which supplies life and production-related services within a farming community may be considered as a factor which determines the basic frame of the farming area structure in Hokkaido. This will mean that it is essential for the clarification of changes in the farming area structure to grasp the rise and fall, and changes in distribution and patterns, of rural centers as well as of the reasons thereof.

To obtain basic knowledge, we must determine how these centers developed, what contributed to the growth, and patterns of distribution of such districts at the initial stage. It is reported that rural centers came into being during the farmland development period between the middle of the Meiji Era and the beginning of the Showa Era and that a larger part of them were intentionally created by the Hokkaido Government in connection with its land readjustment.⁽¹⁾ The land readjustment and the formation of small villages consisting of isolated farmsteads as well as of the rural centers based on such measure may be taken as the beginning of the farming village projects in Japan.

Details of the planned project are not clear.

The information we have been able to gather in connection with for mation of rural areas in Hokkaido is limited.⁽²⁾

Thus, it may be taken also as contributing to knowledge in the planned farming village history and farming village formation history to investigate the details of the growth of rural centers.

This study covers for analysis all municipalities, or cities, towns and villages, of Hokkaido, the sources of information used being the *Shi-cho-son* (History of Municipality) recorded by the respective municipality. Based on descriptions pertaining to rural centers written in the History of Municipality, we have determined the motives by which the respective rural centers were created and the time they were founded.

One of the problems we faced in the analysis was how to determine the time of the respective rural center was created, i. e. at what stage of the growth a rural center should be considered as being formed.

For uniformity, we have arbitrarily considered that a rural center started to exist when the first 30 households were registered according to the descriptions of the literature.⁽³⁾ Taking any rural center where the number of households existed are not known, we consider that the rural center was founded approximately when the basic service facilities shown in Table 1 were made generally available.

The basic service facilities consist of those individual offices, stores, shops, etc. that existed in a rural center when the number of households in that district reached 30 as obtained from the literature.⁽⁴⁾ This method is based on the fact that a continued dwelling

of 30—40 was then called a rural center. We think that the purpose of this study would not particularly require such a stringent definition. The times when the rural centers formed were classified every ten years, commencing in 1886, immediately following 1885 when the Hokkaido Government was founded, and ending in 1945, based on the fact that the Japanese Government colonization policy in the Meiji Era was reviewed and adjusted almost every ten years.⁽⁵⁾

We have, however, provided an exception to the above basic rule for coastal fishing villages and densely built farming villages, where only fishing or farming households are found and nothing else and the number of the households, as a criteria for a rural center, exceeded 30 in many cases.

For these classes of villages, we have determined the timing of urbanization according to the basic service facilities rather than the number of households involved.

2. Motives for Creation of Rural Centres

Having read through the descriptions in the respective “Histories of Municipalities”, we have classified the motives by which the rural centers were developed, in the following manner :

1) Rural Center by Land-Readjustment :

This class of the rural centers represents one that developed by land readjustment for rural center. Most of the rural centers were developed by the Hokkaido Government. The rural centers were formed when the land was surveyed and dwelling lots, roads and streets, and other parcels of land for public facilities are identified and allotted to merchants and other qualified parties.

2) Rural Center for Soldier Colonists : (Old history).

It represents a rural center which developed with a small (extra numbered) commercial district, as a core, provided to serve soldiers stationed in a colony, as well as the removal of a ban on commercial activities for soldiers retired from the active service. (100 years ago, Tondenhei)

3) Rural Centers for Tenant-Farmers :

This is a rural center which occurred when a farmland owners provided it to service his tenant

Table 1 Basic Service Facilities

Governmental Offices	Service Facilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post office • Police station • Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General goods store • Grocery • “Tofu” (bean curd) maker • Dry—goods store • Inn • Pablic bath house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berber’s shop • Farriery • Blacksmith • Forwarding agent • Physician/surgeon

farmers and introduced merchants to sell goods on it.

4) Industrially Developed Centres :

This formed when workers in fishing villages, mines, plants, factories and other industrial facilities required living quarters on a concentrated basis.

5) Spontaneously Developed Rural Centers :

This may be divided into those which formed traffic points and those created with core facilities in the center and additional facilities spontaneously accumulated outside. Such points included, railroad stations, harbors and ports (e. g. unloading points), landing and unloading points along rivers, and intersections of trunk roads. The core facilities would be represented by municipalities and schools. The term "spontaneously developed rural centres" used here refers to rural centers which developed simply because of their geographical conditions, with no predetermined purposes or plans as described in 1) through 3) in the above.

6) Rural Centres which Developed from small villages :

These are the rural centers which were well populated small village in the Edo Era and may be divided into "those which developed from fishing villages" around a trading post (in the Edo Era) under merchant contract system and "those which developed from farming villages" with farming villages, as the core, which were developed by encouragement to reclaim waste land under the feudal system.

3. Number of Rural Centres by Area and by Motive of Creation (Table 2)

The rural centers in Oshima, Hiyama, Hidaka and Shiribeshi may be characterized by developing from small village. Throughout these four subprefectural areas, we can find one rural center in Hiyama and Hidaka, formed by the land readjustment. About a half of the rural center were formed prior to 1887 with the exception of Hidaka, which developed from fishing-village.

The rural centers which developed in the 30's of the Meiji Era in Oshima were from farm-based small villages and this is unique of Oshima and Hiyama. The formation of the rural centers in Shiribeshi which formed before 1887 by the development of fishing village and the second development in the 30's of the Meiji Era by inland agricultural development.

In those days some rural centers formed by the land readjustment, while many spontaneously developed. The rural centers which developed from small village in Hidaka were fishing villages.

Unlike Oshima, Hiyama and Shiribeshi, they formed rural centers in the 30's of the Meiji Era.

In Ishikari, Iburi, Soya and Kushiro, in most cases the rural centers developed spontaneously. In Iburi and Kushiro, many of the rural centers were formed around railroad

stations.

In Ishikari and Soya, however, they formed around traffic points. Throughout these subprefectures except Ishikari, a few rural centers were formed by land readjustment.

Kushiro, as well as Rumoi and Nemuro, are industrial rural center. This is a result of a new fishing colonization started in the Meiji Era.

Except that these centers were fishing villages, they are different from the fishing village under the feudal system in the Edo Era. Many villages formed as rural centers in the 30's of the Meiji Era, and another before 1887 to the beginning of the Taisho Era in Ishikari. The peaks for Iburi were before 1887 and between the 30's of the Meiji Era and the end of the Taisho Era. For Soya the centers were formed between the end of Meiji and the end of Taisho Era. Rural centers were developed in Kushiro between the Taisho Era and early years of the Showa Era.

Sorachi has more industrial centers and less rural centers formed by the land readjustment. Another point of Sorachi is a large number of rural centers for soldier colonists (Tonden hei) and tenant farmers. Sorachi has many industrial centers because mining areas are mainly found here.

The rural centers in Kamikawa and Tokachi can be divided into spontaneously formed ones and those formed by land readjustment. The former represent 55% and 45% of the all rural centers in Kamikawa and Tokachi, while the latter account for 30% and 40% or more in Kamikawa and Tokachi.

In Abashiri, the 50% were spontaneously developed and 20% by land readjustment and 10% were industrial centers, the second largest to Sorachi. These industrial centers are mostly fishing areas. The rural centers for tenant farmers are seen in subprefectures, but these are very few except in Sorachi.

The rural centers for soldier colonists do not exist in Tokachi where no colonial troops were stationed.

Most of the rural centers in Kamikawa, Tokachi and Abashiri were formed after 1898, while one-fourth of them in Sorachi already existed before that year. The rural centers were formed generally between the 20's of the Meiji Era and the end of the Taisho Era in Sorachi ; between the 30's of the Meiji Era and the end of the Taisho Era in Kamikawa ; and between the 30's of the Meiji Era and early years of the Showa Era in Tokachi.

The rural centers in Abashiri were formed between the 30's of the Meiji Era and latter part of the Taisho Era, mostly in the Taisho Era, which sets apart this area from the rest.

Table 2 Number of Rural Centres by Area and by Motive of Creation

Subprefecture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
OSHIMA	a. R·L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	b. S·C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I·D	0	0	0	0	0	0	3 (10.7)
	e. S·D	1	0	1	1	1	0	4 (14.3)
	f. D·H	14	1	4	2	0	0	21 (75.0)
	Total	15 (53.5)	1 (3.6)	7 (25.0)	4 (14.3)	1 (3.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
HIYAMA	a. R·L	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (5.3)
	b. S·C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I·D	0	1	0	0	0	0	1 (5.3)
	e. S·D	0	0	1	3	0	0	4 (21.1)
	f. D·H	11	0	0	0	1	0	12 (57.9)
	Total	11 (57.9)	1 (5.3)	2 (10.5)	3 (15.8)	1 (5.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.3)
IBURI	a. R·L	0	0	0	1	0	0	1 (4.2)
	b. S·C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I·D	0	0	2	0	1	1	4 (16.7)
	e. S·D	0	1	1	1	1	0	3 (11.8)
	f. D·H	4	6	2	0	0	0	12 (50.0)
	Total	4 (16.7)	7 (29.2)	5 (20.7)	2 (8.3)	2 (8.3)	1 (4.2)	3 (12.5)
HIDAKA	a. R·L	0	0	0	1	0	0	1 (4.2)
	b. S·C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I·D	0	0	2	0	1	1	4 (16.7)
	e. S·D	0	1	1	1	1	0	3 (11.8)
	f. D·H	4	6	2	0	0	0	12 (50.0)
	Total	4 (16.7)	7 (29.2)	5 (20.7)	2 (8.3)	2 (8.3)	1 (4.2)	3 (12.5)
SHIRIBESHI	a. R·L	0	0	4	0	0	0	4 (8.7)
	b. S·C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I·D	1	1	0	0	1	0	3 (6.5)
	e. S·D	0	1	11	3	2	1	18 (39.1)
	f. D·H	20	1	0	0	0	0	21 (45.7)
	Total	21 (45.7)	3 (6.5)	15 (32.6)	3 (6.5)	3 (6.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.2)
ISHKARI	a. R·L	1	0	1	0	0	0	2 (8.0)
	b. S·C	0	2	0	0	0	0	2 (8.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I·D	0	0	1	0	0	2	3 (12.0)
	e. S·D	0	3	5	3	2	0	15 (60.0)
	f. D·H	2	0	0	1	0	0	3 (12.0)
	Total	3 (12.0)	5 (20.0)	7 (28.0)	4 (16.0)	2 (8.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (16.0)
SORACHI	a. R·L	1	4	2	1	0	0	8 (9.3)
	b. S·C	0	1	3	2	0	2	8 (9.3)
	c. T·F	0	3	3	1	0	0	7 (8.1)
	d. I·D	0	3	1	9	9	3	27 (31.4)
	e. S·D	1	9	10	5	10	1	36 (41.9)
	f. D·H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	Total	2 (2.3)	20 (23.3)	19 (22.1)	18 (20.9)	19 (22.1)	6 (7.0)	2 (2.3)
KAMIKAWA	a. R·L	0	2	10	2	4	0	19 (33.3)
	b. S·C	0	1	3	0	0	0	4 (7.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	1	1	0	2 (3.5)
	d. I·D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	e. S·D	0	1	8	9	12	2	32 (56.1)
	f. D·H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	Total	0 (0.0)	4 (7.0)	21 (36.4)	12 (21.1)	17 (29.8)	3 (5.3)	0 (0.0)
TORACHI	a. R·L	0	2	9	7	3	4	25 (41.7)
	b. S·C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	1	1	1	0	3 (5.0)
	d. I·D	2	0	1	1	1	0	5 (8.3)
	e. S·D	0	0	7	3	8	8	27 (45.0)
	f. D·H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	Total	2 (3.3)	3 (3.3)	18 (30.0)	12 (20.0)	13 (21.7)	12 (20.0)	1 (1.7)
ABASHIRI	a. R·L	2	0	0	10	5	0	17 (27.7)
	b. S·C	0	0	3	0	0	0	3 (4.0)
	c. T·F	0	0	0	1	3	1	5 (6.7)
	d. I·D	0	2	3	0	5	0	10 (13.3)
	e. S·D	0	4	4	9	19	3	40 (53.3)
	f. D·H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	Total	2 (2.7)	6 (8.0)	10 (13.3)	20 (26.7)	32 (42.7)	4 (5.3)	1 (1.3)

Subprefecture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
RUMOI	a. R · L	0	2	2	0	0	0	4 (21.0)
	b. S · C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T · F	0	0	0	1	0	0	0 (5.3)
	d. I · D	1	1	0	2	0	0	6 (31.6)
	e. S · D	0	0	1	1	2	2	6 (31.6)
	f. D · H	2	0	0	0	0	0	2 (10.5)
	Total	3 (15.8)	3 (15.8)	3 (15.8)	4 (21.1)	2 (10.5)	2 (10.5)	2 (10.5)
SOYA	a. R · L	0	2	1	1	1	0	5 (20.0)
	b. S · C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T · F	0	0	0	1	0	0	1 (4.0)
	d. I · D	0	0	1	1	2	0	4 (16.0)
	e. S · D	0	0	0	5	6	2	14 (56.0)
	f. D · H	1	0	0	0	0	0	1 (4.0)
	Total	1 (4.0)	2 (8.0)	2 (8.0)	8 (32.0)	9 (36.0)	2 (8.0)	1 (4.0)
KUSHIRO	a. R · L	2	0	0	0	3	2	8 (18.9)
	b. S · C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	c. T · F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I · D	2	1	1	0	3	2	10 (27.0)
	e. S · D	0	1	3	3	5	5	19 (51.4)
	f. D · H	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (2.7)
	Total	4 (10.9)	2 (5.4)	5 (13.5)	3 (8.1)	11 (29.7)	9 (24.3)	3 (8.1)
NEMURO	a. R · L	1	0	0	0	2	1	9 (45.0)
	b. S · C	0	1	0	0	0	0	1 (5.0)
	c. T · F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	d. I · D	2	1	1	1	0	0	5 (25.0)
	e. S · D	0	1	0	0	3	1	5 (25.0)
	f. D · H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
	Total	3 (15.0)	3 (15.0)	1 (5.0)	1 (5.0)	5 (25.0)	6 (30.0)	1 (5.0)
OYALHOKKADO	a. R · L	8	13	31	25	18	12	108 (19.5)
	b. S · C	0	5	9	2	0	2	18 (3.2)
	c. T · F	0	3	4	7	5	1	20 (3.6)
	d. I · D	8	10	13	15	23	6	83 (15.0)
	e. S · D	4	23	56	51	77	24	247 (44.6)
	f. D · H	57	8	9	3	1	0	78 (14.1)
	Total	77 (13.9)	62 (11.2)	122 (22.0)	103 (18.6)	124 (22.4)	45 (8.1)	21 (3.8)

[Motive for Creation Rural Centers]	[Generation]
a. R · L : Rural Centre by Land readjustment	1 : ~M20 until 1887 (Meiji 20)
b. S · C : Rural Center for Soldier Colonist	2 : ~M30 until 1897 (Meiji 30)
c. T · F : Rural Centre for Tenant-Farmers	3 : ~M40 until 1907 (Meiji 40)
d. I · D : Industrially Developed Centers	4 : ~T 5 until 1916 (Taisho 5)
e. S · D : Spontaneously Developed Centers	5 : ~T15 until 1926 (Taisho 15)
f. D · H : Rural Centres which Developed from Small villages	6 : ~S10 until 1935 (Showa 10)
	7 : ~S20 until 1945 (Showa 20)

4. Forms of Growth of Rural Centers by Area (Fig 1)

1) Oshima and Hiyama Subprefecture :

In Oshima and Hiyama areas, many village already existed, before immigrations after the Meiji Era, under the Ainu control policy of the feudal system of the Edo Era. Among these rural fishing centers were formed before 1887, and the farming center appeared in the 30's of the Meiji Era in inland Oshima areas. The only one rural center were formed by land readjustment in the south of Oshima and Hiyama in the 30's of the Meiji Era in its northern point, and several spontaneously developed rural centers and industrial centers formed around fishing villages appeared between the 30's of the Meiji Era and early years of the Taisho Era.

2) Iburi and Hidaka Subprefecture :

In the coastal areas of this subprefecture, the rural centers developed from villages that were formed from before 1887 up till the 30's of the Meiji Era. In the inland areas of Iburi, rural centers developed by the land readjustment formed along railroad in plains, in the 40's of the Meiji Era, and spontaneously developed rural centers formed between the 30's of the Meiji Era and the end of the Taisho Era at important traffic points along the roads from the eastern and western coasts to inland areas. In Hidaka, the rural centers developed from villages formed before 1887 and in the 20's of the Meiji Era along the coasts, then additional rural centers, mostly of the spontaneously developed type, formed around 1935 in the inland areas.

3) Shiribeshi and Ishikari Subprefecture :

Rural centers along the coasts of Shiribeshi formed before 1887, and mostly from fishing villages. In inland areas, opening of railroads, around 30's of the Meiji Era, gave rise to farming, and rural centers spontaneously developed and those by land readjustment with stations in the center came into being.

Then spontaneously developed rural centers formed plains around Mt. Yoteizan between rural centers formed by the land readjustment that formed in the 30's of the Meiji Era. After the H.P.G was established in Sapporo in the early part of the Meiji Era, two rural centres for soldier colonists, formed in the 20's of the Meiji Era, and spontaneously developed rural centers formed at important points of the traffic network between Sapporo and various local centers between the 20's and 40's of the Meiji Era.

4) Sorachi Subprefecture :

Sorachi Subprefecture is located next to the Ishikawa Plain where Sapporo is situated. It is suitable for farming as well as coal mining and also serves as the junction leading to Kamikawa and Tokachi. It was an important area for agricultural development in its early stage when the establishment of the Hokkaido Government started promoting agricultural development. Soon after 1887, five military colonies were opened in the center of this area for the northern defense and agricultural development, and agriculture was developed fully when the railroad was laid to promote agricultural development. Prior to 1887, two rural centers appeared, as a prison was constructed and a railroad leading to the coal mines was laid down.

In the 20's of Meiji, railroads were laid in the central and southern areas. Along the railroad on the left bank of the Ishikari River, several rural centers developed by the land readjustment. In the northern area, several spontaneously developed rural centres appeared along the road leading to Kamikawa (on the left bank of the Ishikari River), and rural centers on the right bank in the northern part were those for tenant farmers owned by noblemen who controlled the areas there.

In the 30's of the Meiji Era a few spontaneously developed rural centers also formed on the right bank of the Ishikari River. In the urbanized part of this river on the right bank and along the railroad, rural centers appeared between existing rural centers. Most of the rural centers spontaneously appeared.

Between the 40's of the Meiji Era and early years of the Taisho Era, a few spontaneously developed rural centers on the right bank of the northern part of the Ishikari River, together with soldier colonists centers along the railroad formed, with industrial centers (Coal mines) in the southern mountain area.

During the middle and latter part of the Taisho Era, a large number of spontaneously developed rural centers appeared, on the right bank of the Ishikari River in the central and the southern part that filled, in the space between rural centers. Between the mountains in the center and southern part, industrial centers continued to appear one after the other. Before the end of Taisho period, the rural centers almost ceased to appear.

5) Kamikawa Subprefecture :

Agricultural development in Kamikawa started in 1890 when the land readjustment was carried out in the Kamikawa Basin and in the central area, opening up Asahikawa, and six military colonies were established around it. The agricultural development was activated on a full scale in the 30's of the Meiji Era when the railroads were laid out.

In the 20's of the Meiji Era development of the rural centers was rather slow, i.e. two rural centers (the present centers of Asahikawa City) by the land readjustment with an adjacent center for soldier colonists and a spontaneously developed one which appeared in the Furano Basin to the south.

Following the construction of the railroad in the 30's of the Meiji Era in the Nayoro Basin in the northern area and in the Furano Basin in the southern area, many rural centers developed by the land readjustment appeared along the railroad. Along the northern railroad, two rural centers were formed, out of the military colonies formed in 1899, between the rural centers by the land readjustment. Rural centers which appeared away from the railroad were all of the spontaneous developments.

Between the 40's of Meiji and early years of the Taisho Era, the railroad extended to the northern end. Along that railroad a few urbanized districts were established. And, away from the railroad, several spontaneously developed rural centers appeared. In the middle and latter part of the Taisho Era, along the two railroads extending to Abashiri, several spontaneously developed rural centers appeared. In addition, a few rural centers appeared dividing the hinterland of rural centers in the kamikawa basin in the center and the

Furano basin to the south. They are mostly of the spontaneous development. By this time, rural centers generally ceased to appear.

6) Tokachi Subprefecture :

Agricultural development in Tokachi started with the "Banseisha" consisting of group emigrants. It was not until 1893 when the land readjustment was carried out in Obihiro, the development center in the middle of Tokachi Plain, or the 30's of the Meiji Era when the railroad began to be laid, that the true agricultural development began. Two rural centers already existed before 1887 as the unloading place for inland or the junction of the sea routes to Kushiro and Abashiri.

In the 20's of the Meiji Era, two rural centers developed by the land readjustment were born. One was Obihiro and the other was the junction of routes from the unloading point to Obihiro.

In the 30's of the Meiji Era a railroad traversing the center of the Tokachi Plain was laid down, with many rural centers appearing along it. The rural centers along the railroad were mostly those developed by the land readjustment for Obihiro and eastward and of the spontaneous development type for Obihiro and westward. The rural centers westward from Obihiro already existed, before the railroad was laid, along the development road which extended from Kamikawa.

Between the 40's of the Meiji Era and early years of the Taisho Era, rural centers developed by the land readjustment were formed filling the open space between the rural centers, along the railroad traversing the central area.

It means that the rural centers developed by the land readjustment along the route of the railroad, formed at that date. In the north western area, as railroad leading to Abashiri extended, a number of rural centers developed by the land readjustment or otherwise spontaneously appeared.

In the middle and latter part of the Taisho Era, the railroad was laid down in the northern area, thus causing the spontaneously developed rural centers to form along it. In this regards, it may be interesting to note that the rural centers exist in columns in the north western area. This happened because private railroads were laid down there accordingly. Even in areas away from the railroad, several rural centers appeared.

7) Abashiri Subprefecture :

Agricultural development in Abashiri was the last to be established among the 4 subprefectures. As a matter of fact, a development center was not provided. In 1897, five military colonies were opened in the center of the inland. The land development, however,

was not truly established until after the 40's of the Meiji Era when the railroad started to be laid down. During that period, the land development advanced just a little from the coast.

Prior to 1887, two rural centers developed by the land readjustment appeared along the coast, we do not have the details as of this writing.

In the 20's of the Meiji Era, several spontaneously and industrially developed rural centers (fishing-based) formed along the coast.

In the 30's of the Meiji Era, rural centers were formed inland, of which two were soldier colonists centers.

From the end of the Meiji Era to early years of the Taisho Era, railroads were laid down in the inland center.

Many rural centers, developed by the land readjustment, appeared along the railroad.

In and after the middle of the Taisho Era, rural centers made their appearance on a concentrated basis. Along the then existing railroads, rural centers developed either spontaneously or by the land readjustment appeared to fill in the space between the existing rural centers. The land development advanced from east and west where a number of rural centers for tenant farmers and many spontaneously developed ones appeared.

Early in the Showa Era, several spontaneously developed rural centers formed in the east as the railroad was laid down. After that date no further rural centers were formed.

8) Rumoi and Soya Subprefecture :

In Rumoi, only two rural centers developed along its coast prior to 1887. Also, in coastal territories, north of the Shakotan Peninsula and east of the Erimo Cape, very few rural centers developed from villages. This was because the settlement of Japanese people in areas north of Shakotan was restricted until the end of the Edo Era and, presumably, it was too dangerous for ships of that date with navigation technics then available to pass over the dangerous points around the Erimo Cape and Soya Cape.

In Rumoi, industrially developed centers based on fishing appeared since before 1887 and in the 20's of the Meiji Era ; rural centres developed by the land readjustment (harbor based) in the 20's of the Meiji Era ; and spontaneously developed rural centers between the 40's of the Meiji Era and early years of Showa, as the railroads were laid down.

In the eastern coastal areas of Soya, rural centers developed by the land readjustment and those industrially developed appeared in the 20's and 30's of the Meiji Era. As the through railroad was extended to north through the central inland area and northern area,

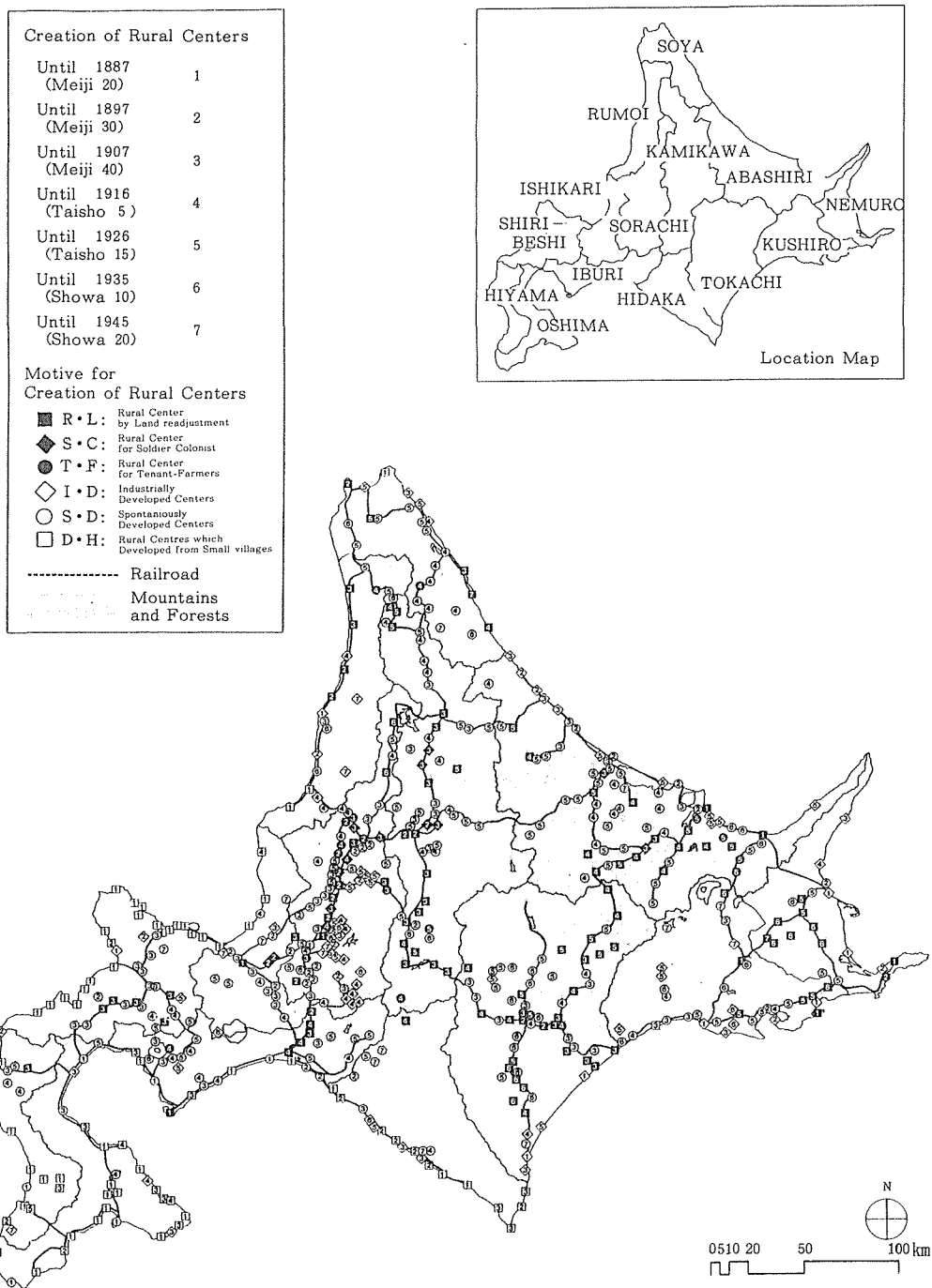


Fig. 1 Distribution of Rural Centers by Area and by Motive of Creation

those spontaneously developed and developed by the land adjustment formed up to the end of the Taisho Era.

9) Kushiro and Nemuro Subprefectures :

Rural centers in Kushiro and Nemuro appeared by the land readjustment (following establishment of base harbors, fishing immigrations and prison inmates) prior to 1887.

Developments from then vary largely : In Kushiro in the 30's of the Meiji Era, rural centers spontaneously developed and those developed by the land adjustment appeared along the railroad extending to Tokachi from Kushiro. In the Taisho Era, they continued along the same railroad further extending to Nemuro. In inland areas, as the through railroad was opened in the Showa Era, more of the spontaneously developed rural centers appeared.

In the 10's of the Showa Era, they formed one after another filling up the space between rural centers along the railroad. During the Meiji Era the rural centers in Nemuro formed only along the coast. In the Taisho Era, agricultural development in the inland started, and rural centers mainly developed by the land adjustment made their appearance before 1935 all at once.

5. Motives for and Processes of Development of Rural Centers from Overall Hokkaido Viewpoint :

There are similarities among territories of certain motives or processes of development of rural centers by subprefectures :

1) Tokachi, Kamikawa, Nemuro :

These territories may be characterized by a relatively large number of rural centers formed by land readjustment or spontaneous development as rural centers.

In Nemuro, however, there are many fishing-based, industrially developed centers, as well. The dates of appearance in Kamikawa and Tokachi generally fall in between the 30's of the Meiji Era and in the Taisho Era, While those in Nemuro are somewhat delayed forming in the Taisho Era and early years of the Showa Era.

2) Abashiri, Kushiro, Soya :

Prior to 1887 and in the 20's of the Meiji Era, rural centers first appeared in the coastal areas, followed by spontaneously developed rural centers which appeared as agricultural development progressed.

Rural centers by land readjustment are somewhat more in number. In Abashiri, while the percentage is low, there are actually 17 of them, the number is the third largest following Tokachi and Kamikawa. The majority of the rural centers in Abashiri and Soya appeared between the 40's of the Meiji Era and the Taisho Era, while those in Kushiro appeared in the

Taisho Era and early years of the Showa Era.

3) Oshima, Hiyama, Hidaka :

As stated before, the rural centers in these territories developed from small villages in earlier than those of other territories. In Oshima and Hiyama the majority of the rural centers formed before the 20's of the Meiji Era, while in Hidaka about a half of them appeared in the 20's and the 30's of the Meiji Era.

Motives for and processes of development of the rural centers in Hokkaido as a whole may generally be summarized into the following three categories :

- (1) Particular rural center formed under the feudal system of the Edo Era ; or
- (2) It had good farmland to warrant control of the agricultural development policy of the Hokkaido Government ; or
- (3) The date that the railroad was laid down in the rural center agrees with the peak of the land development.

Good examples of (1) would be Oshima and Hiyama. In areas where certain communities were formed under the feudal system of the Edo Era, the rural centers appeared at relatively earlier dates from fishing villages or populated farming village, as the ban on commercial activities was removed and economy developed. (2) and (3) may be best understood from distribution of the rural centers by land readjustment, area of cultivated land, length of the railroad and the rural centers that appeared. Many rural centers developed by the land readjustment are seen in Tokachi, Kamikawa and Abashiri (Table—2), and or typical farmland areas in Hokkaido. Sorachi also is one of the typical farmland areas which has few rural centers developed by land readjustment. This is probably because (1) substantial areas of farmland were already cultivated before the Hokkaido Government land readjustment plan was put in effect on a scale basis, and (2) many rural centers appeared as military colonies or large-scaled tenant farms.

Fig. 2 shows cumulative percentages of areas of farmland, length of railroad laid down, and number of rural centers that formed preparatory for the six subprefectures. It will be seen from the Chart that in Tokachi the railroad was first laid down to bring in emigrants and at about the same time the rural centers appeared to promote the land development. The above may be seen in Kamikawa. In the case of Sorachi, the laying down of the railroad and appearance of the rural center took place after the land was cultivated. Except that many mine-based industrially developed centers appeared in this area, the cumulative curve of the rural centers that appeared is closer to that of the farmland. In Abashiri, with the exception of the fishing-based industrially developed centers on the coast and the spontaneously developed rural centers with harbors or ports, three cumulative curves are very similar. It is the same as Tokachi and Kamikawa where the centers appeared after the railroad was laid down, and the land development plans took hold. To summarize the

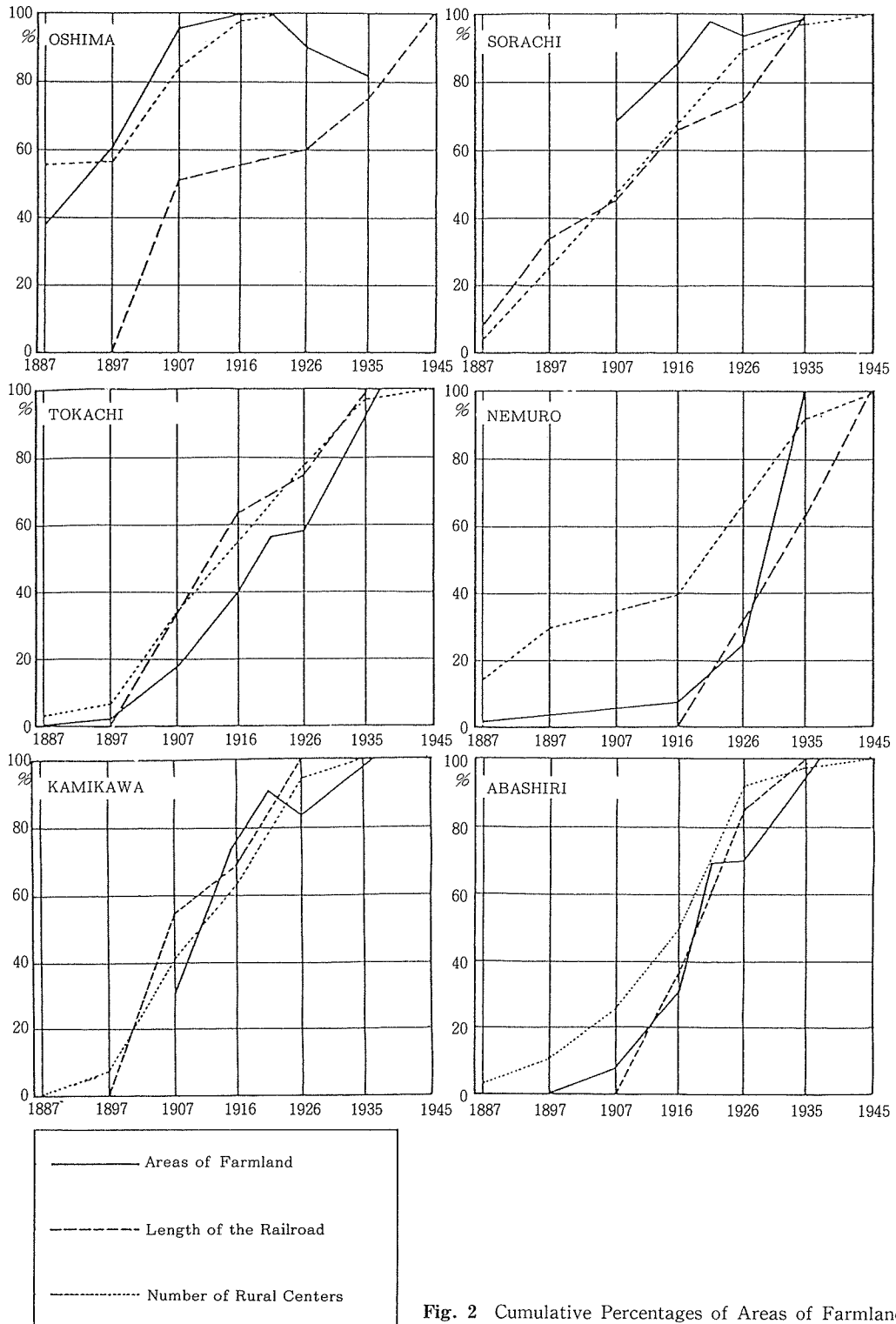


Fig. 2 Cumulative Percentages of Areas of Farmland, Length of the Railroad laid down, and Number of Rural Centers that formed

processes of developments of the rural centres in principal farming areas, the rural centers developed by land readjustment and spontaneously developed rural centers with railroad stations in the centers emerged along the railroad, as it was laid down, and the spontaneously developed rural centers appeared dividing the hinterland as immigration progressed. Nemuro is an exception when rural centers formed before the agricultural development and laying down of railroads. The exception remains the same, when preexisting coastwise rural centres are excluded. This reflects the administrative policy under the colonization plan then in effect (the second colonization plan), where Hokkaido Government first laid down the colonization railroad (for horse-drawn carriages) to encourage settlement. On the other hand, the rural centers in Oshima appeared well ahead of the building of the railroad.

This reflects the process and motives for the forming of these rural centers. Agreement of the cumulative curves of the number of the rural centres with that area of farmland under cultivation is probably a coincidence. Oshima is a fishing-based subprefecture.

6. Conclusion

The rural centers on Hokkaido appeared in a relatively short time after immigrants came and settled. The two principal forming power of the rural centers were "land readjustment" and "spontaneous development", both were closely related to the laying down of the railroad (and stations). Generally speaking how the rural centers formed were by land readjustment and spontaneously emergence with railroad stations at the centers, as rails were laid down. As settlement grew and expanded, the spontaneously developed districts emerged dividing the hinterland of the rural centers.

This hinterland was limited to areas accessible by traffic (walking or horse-drawn carriages) and were usually within half-to one-day's walk range. Such developments were brought about by the advance of economy in and around the middle of the Meiji Era.

All rural centers were trading centers of goods and daily life services, and the railroad as a means of mass transportation were essential for promotion of land development. That is the reason why the Hokkaido Government included it in the land readjustment and development of the rural centers

Rural centers developed by the land readjustment and those influenced by land readjustment in course of formation total 30% of the entire rural centers. Rural centers developed by the land readjustment are mainly located along railroads in major areas covered by the agricultural development policy and, as seen typically in Tokachi, Kamikawa and Abashiri, may be said to have a leading role in the formation of farmland communities. The land readjustment was mostly carried out by the Hokkaido Government. Out of 158 rural centers that came into being by experienced the land readjustment, 22 were not by the Hokkaido Government, but were privately readjusted by companies, associations, landlords, etc.

Out of these 22 rural centres, there are some with large scales (for example, "Moseushi") that have an aggregate of 450 parcels, comparable to publicly developed rural centers. Needless to say, those also played a role in the formation of farmland communities.

Notes

- (1) Development of rural centers included, among others, land readjustment of dwelling sections, projected roads, and spaces for public use. These are collectively called land readjustment for rural areas.
- (2) A relatively detailed literature covering the space formation in forming villages is one titled "Shinsen Hokkaido—si (New History of Hokkaido), Vol. 4, Tsusetsu 3", Hokkaido Government, 1937. It outlines examples in several areas concerning the emergence of rural centers.
- (3) "In Hokkaido, I often come across "···Center", "···Rural Centre", and the like in practically every village. Continued dwellings of only 30—40 households that settled down there on a permanent basis are not sufficient enough in number to make up a town. Nevertheless, there are shops, a municipality office, an agricultural cooperative association and so forth. Immigrants living in the wilds must come to this place to buy daily necessities.
"Hokkaido Hogenshu" (Dialect in Hokkaido), by Shigeru Watanabe, Published by Hinoki Shobo, 1955.
- (4) "Shi-Cho-Son Shi" (History of Municipality) has been prepared by each municipality under fourteen subprefectures.
The simplest History contains information on when governmental offices as well as commercial and service facilities were first set up. Detailed ones of the History include, in addition, the number of households in each rural center.
- (5) Opening of the Hokkaido Government in 1886 put the agricultural development on a full scale basis. In 1896, the "Shokuminchi-Sentei Kukakushisetsu-Kitei" (Regulation of colonial selection and land use) was laid down. Huge sizes of land were sold to capitalists under the "Kokuji-Mikaichi Shobun" (Law for disposal of stateowned undeveloped area) enacted in 1896, expediting farming development through management by the capitalists of tenant farming. In 1908, the above law was amended in part by the change of the government policy toward protection of owner farmers.
- (6) A feudal system characteristic of Ainu district granting each vassal the fish catch from the tenure assigned to him as the stipend. "Unjoya" is the trading post for such produce.
- (7) For securing a labor force, many fishing immigrants were also sought. Rural centers that thus emerged are classified into the industrially developed centers.
- (8) The cumulative percentages of farming land areas were compiled from data on the development of farming land areas contained in "Hokkaido Nogyo Hattatsu Shi" (History of agricultural development in Hokkaido) First Volume (Published by Hokkaido Nogyo Keizai Kenkujo, in 1963).