ANCESTRAL LAND, INHERITANCE, AND THE REVITALIZATION
OF RURAL JAPAN: THE CASE OF OGATA VILLAGE

A Thesis

by

DONALD C. WOOD

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

August 1999

Major Subject: Anthropology
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August 1999

Major Subject: Anthropology
ABSTRACT

Ancestral Land, Inheritance, and the Revitalization
of Rural Japan: The Case of Ogata Village. (August 1999)

Donald C. Wood, B.A., Texas A&M University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Norbert Dannhaeuser

Three themes are especially significant in rural Japan today. The first two are
the traditional strong sense of ancestral land ties shared by Japanese farmers and the
shortage of heirs problem (atotsugi mondai), which they face. The third is the recent
village revitalization movement (mura-okoshi undo). This thesis addresses the
relation of these factors in Ogata-mura, a thirty year-old rice farming village in
northern Japan. Strong generational land ties stemming from the deep reverence for
ancestors in Japanese Buddhism leads to concerns among older farmers about
securing an heir for their property and household. An heir is necessary so that they
will not only avoid causing a break in the lineage, but also to ensure that they will be
cared for spiritually after their death. It is hypothesized that the lack of ancestral land
ties and subsequent reduced need for an heir in the recently established village of
Ogata-mura will lead to low interest in community revitalization efforts. This
hypothesis is tested by examining three village households.
for my family
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A great many individuals deserve credit for their contributions to this thesis. First of all, I am especially grateful to Professor Norbert Dannhaeuser for his professional guidance since my undergraduate years. This project would never have been completed had it not been for his invaluable advice and extreme patience in reading my rough drafts. I also thank Dr. Jeffrey Cohen for advising me in the absence of Dr. Dannhaeuser early in my graduate work and also for his patience in reading my first attempt at applying theory to my research topic. I am grateful to Professor James Copp as well for his continued support. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr. Sylvia Grider for helping me deal with ethical issues. Dr. John Mock, of Minnesota State University in Akita, encouraged me to get started in my village research and gave me crucial bibliographic leads. I thank him as well. Finally, I cannot overlook the many people of Ogata-mura who shared their lives with me and taught me about their village. I am especially grateful to Toshiko Mimura, Hiroshi Sato, Emiko Noro, Yoko Tozawa, Suzuki Nitahara, and Tokuko Asanuma. Above all, however, I thank my wife, Akiko Takahashi, for her neverending support of this project over the last three years. Without her collaboration in planning and conducting the research, this thesis would never have materialized. It was also with her assistance that the interviews were transcribed, translated and typed. I will never be able to thank her enough for her help.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF MAPS</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOSSARY OF NAMES</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Records</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis Posed</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ISSUES</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Issues</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestral Land Ties and the Heir Problem</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Rural Japan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rural Revitalization Movement in Japan</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Issues</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ethnographic Handling of Rural Japan</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twentieth Century Japanese Agriculture and Government Intervention</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Communities and Their Formation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III THE VILLAGE OF OGATA-MURA</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Village Comes to Life (1955-1975)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Village as a Political Hotbed (1975-1994)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rebirth of the Model Community (1994-Present)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Solar Car and Bicycle Races</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nanohana Festival</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bunkajin Neighborhood Project</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV CASE I - TAKERU ISONO AND HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal History</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Started in Ogata-mura</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting to the New Village</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takeru Isono and Family Today</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance for the Isono Household</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takeru Isono's Rice Marketing</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takeru's Wife</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes About the Village and Revitalization</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogata-mura as Takeru's Furusato</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V CASE II - THE MACHIDA HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household History</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Started in Ogata-mura</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asako Tanaka: The Machida's Daughter</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Machida's New House</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tanaka Household: Asako's New Family</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bond Between the Machida and Tanaka Households</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance for the Machida Household</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Machida's Attitudes About Ogata-mura and Revitalization</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asako's Ideas about the Village and Revitalization</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogata-mura as the Machida Family's <em>Furusato</em></td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI CASE III - THE SATAKE HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household History</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Started in Ogata-mura</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Satake Household Today</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Satake's Attitudes About the Village and Revitalization</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance for the Satake Household</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogata-mura as the Satake's <em>Furusato</em></td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogata Junior High School</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Demographics</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' Opinions of Ogata-mura</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' Opinions of Village Revitalization</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Students' Futures in Ogata-mura</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogata-mura as a <em>Furusato</em> for the Students</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Young Wives' Association</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Demographics</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions on Village Life Among Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members Not Native to Ogata-mura</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions on Village Life and Farming Among</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members Native to Ogata-mura</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members' Opinions of Ogata-mura Today</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogata-mura as the Association Members' <em>Furusato</em></td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Example of a <em>Wakazumakai</em> Member's Life in Ogata-mura: Satoko Ishida</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CHAPTER

### VIII DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS .................................................. 161

- Return to Related Issues ................................................................. 161
- Ancestral Land and the Heir Problem in Rural Japan ...................... 162
- The Rural Revitalization Movement in Japan ............................... 163
- New Communities and Their Formation ......................................... 164
- Return to Hypothesis ................................................................. 166
- Ethnographic Evidence ............................................................... 166
- The Implementation of Revitalization Efforts ............................... 171
- Conclusion ................................................................................... 173

### NOTES ......................................................................................... 176

### REFERENCES CITED .................................................................... 177

### APPENDIX A - INFORMATION ON THE BUNKAJIN
NEIGHBORHOOD TAKEN FROM THE OGATA-MURA HOME PAGE ........ 185

### APPENDIX B - QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS
IN JAPANESE AND ENGLISH ............................................................ 187

### VITA ......................................................................................... 195
# LIST OF MAPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAP</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 The Location of Akita Prefecture Within Japan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Akita Prefecture and Lake Hachirogata</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Lake Hachirogata and Ogata-mura</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Village Neighborhoods</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 The <em>Bunkajin</em> Neighborhood</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 The Ogata-mura Shrine</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Hachirogata Before and After the Reclamation</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Original Ogata-mura House</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Ogata-mura Rice Fields</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 The Remains of the Training Center</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 The Solar Sports Line</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 &quot;Sun Rural Ogata,&quot; The Village Hotel</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 The Entrance to the 1996 Nanohana Festival</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 The Nanohana Field and Village-owned Apartments</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 A Helicopter at the 1996 Nanohana Festival</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Takeru Isono and His Grandson, Kenji</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Takeru Isono at the North Pole</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 A Large First-group Settler's House</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 The Machida and Tanaka Families on Festival Day in Hachirogata-machi</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Kenji and Asako at Their Wedding Reception</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 The Ogata-mura Junior High School Third-grade Class in 1997</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 A Third-grade Student Helping With Farmwork</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Some Advanced English Students at the Community Center</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Solar Events</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Students' Attitudes Toward Farming</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Boys' Attitudes Toward Farming</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Ogata-mura as a <em>Furusato</em> for the Students</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

atotsugi (kokeisha) mondai ......................... the securement of heirs problem
bunkajin ............................................ cultural people
chonan .............................................. the eldest son of a household
furusato ............................................. one's hometown; the place of one's ancestral roots
ie ..................................................... household
machi ................................................ town
machi-okoshi ............................. town revitalization or revival (literally, "raising the town")
machi-zukuri ................................ town-building
mura ................................................ village
mura-okoshi ............................ village revitalization or revival (literally, "raising the village")
mura-zukuri ................................ village building
yakuba .............................................. village or town government office
yami-gome ........................................ black market rice
yome ................................................. young wife
wakazukai ....................................... young wives' association
GLOSSARY OF NAMES

Hiroto Honda .............. Akita city hair dresser and originator of the solar race concept
Satoko Ishida .............. *Wakazumakai* member and wife of an Ogata-mura farmer
Katsuo Isono .................. Takeru Isono's son and heir (Case I)
Kenji Isono .................. Takeru Isono's eldest grandson
Takeru Isono .................. Third-group Ogata-mura settler (Case I)
Hiroaki Machida .............. Son of Nobuhiro and Takako Machida (Case II)
Nobuhiro Machida .............. Fifth-group Ogata-mura settler (Case II)
Takako Machida .............. Wife of Nobuhiro Machida (Case II)
Natsuko .................. Takeru Isono's youngest daughter (Case I)
Shinichiro Sakamoto .............. Published author and Ogata-mura farmer
Hiroko Satake .............. Wife of Isao Satake (Case III)
Isao Satake .................. Fifth-group Ogata-mura settler (Case III)
Takahiro .................. Nephew of Isao and Hiroko Satake (Case III)
Asako Tanaka .............. Daughter of Nobuhiro and Takako Machida (Case II)
Kenji Tanaka .............. Husband of Asako Tanaka (Case II)
Yusuke Tanaka .............. Son of Kenji and Asako Tanaka (Case II)
Mayor Tazaki .................. Mayor of Ogata-mura
Takezo Yamauchi .............. Mayoral candidate (Akita Komachi Corp.)
Yukiko .................. Takeru Isono's oldest daughter (Case I)
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is based on field research I conducted over a two-year period from July of 1995 to August of 1997 in the village of Ogata-mura, Akita Prefecture, located on the continental side of the main Japanese island of Honshu (MAP 1). Ogata-mura is found inside what was once the nation’s second largest inland body of water, lake Hachirogata. For centuries it was the source of much fish for area residents. Flooding was always a problem, however, because the lake was connected to the Sea of Japan by a narrow mouth which allowed salt water to enter the lake and caused the lake’s water level to fluctuate with the tide. The government impoldered the lake in the 1960’s using Dutch reclamation technology and created over 17,000 hectares of new fields on which to grow rice in a large-scale, fully-mechanized manner on individual farms (Chiba 1972; Gordon 1965). The village was founded in 1964, and about 700 households were admitted in five settlement waves from 1967 to 1974. Today, these farmers are among the wealthiest in the nation and have the highest per-capita income in Akita Prefecture.

My relationship with the village of Ogata began in June of 1995 when I was offered a position as the village English teacher through the Ministry of Education--

This thesis follows the style format of the American Anthropologist.
MAP 1

The Location of Akita Prefecture Within Japan.
(From Akita Prefecture www Home Page)
sponsored Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) Program. When I learned that I would be working in a northern rice farming community, I expected to find a quiet, rustic village where not much goes on. Soon after arriving in the village, however, I realized that Ogata-mura was far more energetic and active than I had imagined. I decided to find out the reasons for this, and the answers to my questions are contained in this thesis.

When one travels through the Akita Prefecture airport, one cannot help but notice a large, bright sign on the wall near the gates. The sign displays an image of broad rice fields ready for the harvest, grain elevators on the horizon, and a vast blue sky overhead with the name "Ogata-mura" emanating from the corner. On the way from Akita City northward to the small port city of Noshiro, a large billboard informs motorists that they will soon be very near Ogata-mura and that they may stop and take a dip in the hot bath resort or stay the night in the new hotel, "Sun Rural Ogata," if they like. Other advertising media also inform the public of the village's hotel, or of the village's many festivals and big events, such as the Nanohana (canola flower) Festival in May or the solar bicycle and car races in July. A sign just outside the settlement admonishes drivers not to stare at the many beautiful women in the village, lest they meet with an unfortunate traffic accident.

During my stay, I asked myself why the village tried so hard to sell itself, why the prefecture put so much money into Ogata-mura, and why the village was so concerned with its image. As a first step in answering these questions, I found that all
small cities, towns, and villages in Japan are involved in endeavors to liven up their communities, retain their residents and young people, and to attract as many others as possible. In Ogata-mura, these efforts are especially important to the administration because the village’s brief history was marred by an episode of political turmoil which resulted in the deployment of police officers, legal actions, and some suicides among villagers. Since the village was built as a model farming community, this was especially embarrassing for the village administration and the national government.

In this thesis, I examine community revitalization that the village is engaged in and the relationship between these activities and two other themes in rural Japan today. These are the issues of ancestral land ties and the problems that farmers have with securing heirs for their fields and households. Generally, farmers in contemporary Japan have a hard time securing an heir for their tiny farms. This has been popularly identified as the “securement of heirs problem” (atotsugi mondai). The major motive for farmers to encourage a son or a daughter to take over their farms is to maintain ancestral land ties. It turns out that Ogata-mura farmers differ from most farmers in Japan in that they have no ancestral lands. The question is whether this has consequences on the degree to which Ogata-mura residents participate in village revitalization efforts and on their attitudes toward such efforts.

After developing an hypothesis and discussing important related issues, I trace the history of the village since its conception in the 1950s to 1997, the point at which I completed my fieldwork. My hypothesis is then tested by presenting three
household case studies. Quantitative data in the form of questionnaire results is used in order to expand the scope of this research across generational, gender, and household boundaries. Although this thesis is limited to the village of Ogata-mura, its implications extend to other rural communities in Japan and elsewhere.

Methodology

A variety of data collection methods were utilized in the field research. They include informal and formal personal interviews, questionnaires, review of published written records such as historical accounts and newspaper articles, and participant-observer strategies.

Interviews. The primary means of gathering information was conducting personal interviews. These interviews consist of two types: informal and formal interviews. Informal interviews are those in which I sought general information by speaking to various people without using a tape-recorder. These people were primarily students in my English classes, municipal or prefectural officials, or other acquaintances. I wrote detailed notes on the topics and responses as soon as possible following these conversations. Formal interviews, lasting from forty-five minutes to over two hours, were arranged in advance, sets of questions were prepared, and a tape-recorder was used. Two kinds of informants were interviewed in this manner: first, people who have played notable roles in village developments; and second, household heads and
their family members of the households chosen as case studies. I selected the case study households according to the number of children in the families. Therefore, they vary from high to low in their heir potential. The three families that appear in this thesis I came to know fairly early in my stay through English classes or personal ties. All interviews were conducted in Japanese. Transcription work was carried out by myself and my wife, and the subsequent translations are my own.

In this thesis, most personal names, some places of origin, and other points of information have been altered to protect the identities of the people concerned.

**Questionnaires.** Questionnaires were distributed to the 103 students of Ogata Junior High School and 127 members of the Ogata-mura Young Wives' Association *(Wakazumakai).* Verbal permission was kindly given by the school principal and the *Wakazumakai* president, respectively. In all cases, the identities of the individual respondents are unknown even to myself.

**Written Records.** I consulted published and unpublished village records in order to deepen my perspective on the village society and its position in the region and nation. Newspaper clippings and other historical documents stored in the village educational research center were particularly helpful. Also, current newspaper clippings, magazine articles, and NHK news videos were used. Books published by government agencies and village residents provided valuable insights (Chiba 1972; Sakamoto 1989, 1990, 1991; Tozawa 1993).
**Other Data Collection Methods.** As a village employee and teacher, my presence was requested at many village events, official parties, and other gatherings. This allowed me to observe village life and gain insights into the workings of the community at an official level, which is not easy to penetrate otherwise. At the same time, the fact that I had a title and a position, as well as the demands of a full-time job, prevented me from entering deeply into the more informal aspects of village life. Nonetheless, I believe that my social position was advantageous since my presence in the village was officially endorsed. My teaching activities gave me a wide latitude in which to move among social circles as I worked my way around the village community.

**Hypothesis Posed**

Three themes are especially significant in rural Japan today. The first two are the traditional strong sense of ancestral land ties shared by Japanese farmers and the shortage of heirs problem (*atotsugi mondai*), which they face. The third is the recent village revival movement (*mura-okoshi undo*). My thesis will relate the first two factors to the last one in the village of Ogata-mura.

The general pattern in rural Japan is that strong ancestral land ties lead to concern among older farmers about securing an heir for their agricultural land. However, securing an heir has become difficult especially since World War II as young people have left their home towns and villages for the cities, usually not to
return. To combat this trend, during the past decade rural citizens and the government have tried to make villages and small towns attractive to the younger generations through revitalization programs. The hope is that, by means of these revitalization efforts, that heirs for ancestral land will be available down the generations.

This research will begin with the assumption that when ancestral land ties are severed, farmers will not worry much about securing heirs. Based on this assumption, I ask the following question: is the revitalization movement still meaningful to farmers when ancestral land ties are absent and they do not need to worry about passing their fields down to a successor? To answer this, I will test the following hypothesis: where ancestral land ties are absent, farmers will feel little commitment to revitalization efforts in their community.

Ancestral land ties, the heir problem, and revitalization movements in rural Japan have been well-documented in the anthropological literature. However, this thesis takes a new approach. It does so because no other research that I am aware of has addressed the relationship between ancestral land and the heir problem on the one hand, and rural revitalization on the other. In testing my hypothesis, I will address the dynamics of community-building in the context of residential shifts, and draw attention to the fact that even a new community started from scratch is inextricably tied to a larger social and historical context. Practical implications of this research include the suggestion that kinship, religion, and land ties must be considered in planning new farming communities in Japan, and that revitalization projects should
be carefully evaluated as to their practicality and likely reception by the residents before they are implemented.
CHAPTER II

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ISSUES

A number of important issues in the anthropology of rural Japan relate to the present study. These are classified here as issues of primary and secondary importance. Primary issues are (1) ancestral land ties and the heir problem in rural Japan, and (2) rural revitalization movement. Secondary issues are (1) the ethnographic handling of rural Japan, (2) twentieth century Japanese agriculture and government intervention, and (3) new communities and their formation. Presented in this chapter is a review of these issues as well as the literature in which they are documented.

Primary Issues

This thesis revolves around the two factors of (1) ancestral land ties and the heir problem in rural Japan, and (2) the rural revitalization movement. These need to be discussed in order to clarify their importance in rural Japan and to this study. The relationship between ancestral land ties and the heir problem is a premise for the hypothesis and is not being tested in this study. Consequently, they will be considered together. I will turn towards rural revitalization movements later.

Ancestral Land Ties and the Heir Problem in Rural Japan. Buddhism was introduced to Japan through Korea in the middle of the sixth century (Reischauer and Craig
1989:12). It merged with the native Shinto religion and the two have since become intertwined in Japanese religious life (Embree 1945:198). Japanese Buddhism is marked by a strong reverence for family ancestors. Commonly called "ancestor worship" in the literature, this is a fundamental aspect of traditional Japanese religious life, both rural and urban, and is enacted by performing specific ceremonies over generations (Christopher 1983; Nakane 1970; Ohnuki-Tierney 1993).¹

The Japanese household, or ie, is conceived of as extending through time from the distant past to the unforeseen future (Dore 1978; Embree 1939; Fukutake 1989).

Ito writes:

The ie, the traditional "household" in Japan, is something more than the simple, temporary unit of family members living together that the English word "household" implies. It has the nature of an economic unit, highly independent and persisting over generations; this is true of farming and merchant families alike. It also served as the unit in the composition of local society, charged with the duty of maintaining solidarity (1997:33).

For Japanese farmers, the continuation of the ie has long been based on the inheritance of land or tenancy rights. During the Edo Period (1600-1868) the land of a household was sometimes divided between sons, but it was always done by setting up a branch household which would only receive enough land to survive. The main household's heir would retain headship over the entire lineage.

Along with heirlooms, the main dwelling, ancestral graves, and plaques -- indeed everything symbolizing family continuity -- headship of the family passed to a single heir. It was this heir who perpetuated the family and through whose issue descent was traced, who
performed the ancestral rites that linked the family to the remotest past and projected it indefinitely into the future (Smith 1959:37).

The perpetuation of rural households in Japan has long been based on impartible inheritance -- a pattern of succession often encountered among peasants (Banfield 1958; Netting 1981, 1993; Wolf 1966). Impartible inheritance has been encouraged by the Japanese government to avoid fragmentation of land holdings. This inheritance pattern, together with ancestral land ties, encourages farmers not to sell their fields (Beardsley 1959; Smith 1978). An Ogata-mura farmer I interviewed explained to me that in small farming communities there is heavy social pressure not to part with one's ancestral fields.

You see, even if you decided to sell your fields to someone, you'd have some social trouble. Other relatives and people of your hamlet will say that your house has become poor -- so poor that you had to resort to selling your land. There's that sort of custom, you know. That's why even small-scale farmers who have land that belonged to their ancestors don't want to let it pass into anyone else's hands. You could let go of the agricultural side of your life -- the side that's running in the red all the time -- but people will say many things about you.

State and local agencies have found farmers' resolve to hang onto their ancestral fields to be a major obstacle to consolidation and rationalization plans (Bernstein 1983; Latz 1989; Yang 1962). The tenacity of these ideological bonds have often been addressed as the primary factor in young heirs returning to their farms (Kelly 1986; Knight 1994a; Moon 1989). Moon writes:

The first sons and the first daughters when there is no son still think that they should remain and succeed to the household. It is largely because of this idea that most of them stay at home or return home,
despite the fact that they are no longer interested in farming as an occupation and despite the difficulties (173).

Since the Meiji Restoration of 1868, and especially following World War II, farmers in Japan have faced the "shortage of heirs problem" (*atotsugi mondai*) because of young rural people migrating to urban areas for better living and working conditions. Due to industrialization and increasing access to higher education among farmers, remaining in the home town or village entails high opportunity costs for most young people; their labor is more valuable in the cities (*c.f.* Bennett 1971:15). Young male heirs who do stay behind face a number of difficulties, including finding a bride (Tamanoi 1998:200). These problems are exacerbated by Japan's falling birth rate, which is now below replacement level. In Akita Prefecture, from 1985 to 1995 there was a 25 percent drop in the number of people aged 0-14 years and a 33 percent rise in the number of people aged 65 years and over (Akita Prefecture 1996). Ways of combating the pattern of young rural people leaving for the cities and not returning are often addressed by rural politicians in their election campaigns (Nichibei Production Group 1992b).

The heir shortage itself is a product of demographic and economic trends, but ancestral land ties make these trends especially vexing for farmers. A number of authors have discussed the difficulty of securing an heir for Japanese farmers (Kelly 1986; Moon 1989; Smith 1978; Yang 1962). Moon found the problem to be chronic in the area he studied. He writes:
Many young people in the village have never learnt farming and they are not interested in becoming full-time farmers in the future. Lack of interest seems to be greatest among girls. Therefore, in a hamlet like Yamazaki where women work the land while their husbands are employed elsewhere, the so-called 'successor problem' (kokeisha mondai) is even more serious than elsewhere. Perhaps for this reason, many farm households are having difficulties securing a spouse for those who will inherit and succeed to the house (1989: 49).

The inheritance factor is the central theme of Moore's 1990 book based on fieldwork he conducted in Akita Prefecture's neighboring prefecture to the southeast, Miyagi Prefecture. He asserts that if any attempt at farm reorganization or rationalization is to be successful, it must allow the farmers to ensure the security of their ancestral family lines. He concludes that:

The main problem encountered by rural society is household succession and inheritance. As single heir to the household, rural farmers bear the responsibility for keeping up the ancestral graves, the household Buddhist altar, coordinating the anniversary of Buddhist memorial services, sustaining hierarchical or reciprocal social relations with branch households in their ancestral line, and finally to serve as an important link between rural and urban relatives who at some time in the past migrated to the city as non-heirs (1990:273).

Thus, the heir shortage in rural Japan is a problem of great significance and is closely tied to the issue of ancestral land succession.²

The Rural Revitalization Movement in Japan. The term "revitalization" sometimes refers to programs designed to bring economic benefits to urban areas in order to counteract the hollowing out of city cores caused by developments in the periphery (Dannhaeuser 1996). Anthropologists have more often used "revitalization" to mean
social movements of a religious nature (Brusco 1996; Cancian 1992). Harris defines revitalization movements as processes "of political and religious interaction between a depressed caste, class, minority, or other subordinate social group and a superordinate group" (1987:283). Examples include the Handsome Lake Movement among the Seneca, the Sioux Ghost Dance, and Melanesian cargo cults (Ember and Ember 1993:285-286; Worsley 1970). Wallace's treatment of the revitalization of societies, although it emphasizes religious movements, is useful in understanding the rural revitalization movement in Japan. According to him, revitalization movements are "deliberate, organized attempts by some members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture by rapid acceptance of a pattern of multiple innovations" (1970:188). The rural revitalization movement in Japan, as will be seen below, differs from "revitalization movements" as typically discussed in the anthropological literature in that it is not religious and in that it tends to be carefully planned rather than spontaneous. I will return to Wallace's treatment of revitalization in the final chapter.

Rural municipalities throughout Japan are now engaged in revitalization (mura-okoshi) programs. Knight (1994b) outlines three stages in this development: first, urbanization draws people from rural areas and threatens the futures of many towns and villages; second, the state intervenes to reverse demographic trends; third, it is recognized that rural areas need to be made attractive for visits or living.
The rural revitalization movement in Japan's towns and villages is designed to create incentives for young people to stay within the communities, for nonresidents to settle in them, and for outsiders to be involved in rural communities through various organizations (Wood 1999). The aim is to encourage local social activity and economic development by attracting industries, staging new events, and promoting the export of local products. The propaganda of the movement is one of "rural self-reliance," in which "valiant villages" struggle to combat dangerous demographic trends by relying on their inner strengths, even if the state actually plays a major role in the movement with its financial assistance (Knight 1994a).

In 1989 the Japanese government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Nakasone, offered 100 million yen -- about 800,000 U.S. dollars -- to each small city, town, and village in the country for revitalization projects and community-level identity building (Knight 1994b; Nichibei Media Production Group 1992b). The government has also allocated funds for the Artist in Residence Program, under which rural communities receive money for use in building facilities in which foreign and domestic artists can work (Akita Sakigake 1996b). These temporary resident artists are expected to enrich the community. The Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) Program, on which the government has spent 300 million U.S. dollars each year since it began in 1987, is another aspect of revitalizing rural areas (McConnell 1996). The Program places young college graduates from different countries in cities, towns, and villages
across Japan to teach residents their native languages or to work in municipal offices as international exchange coordinators.

There are examples of town and village revitalization projects across Japan. Eye-catching cases of local initiatives abound in the Japanese newspapers and popular journals. One town experiencing depopulation is granting ownership of local housing sites to settlers provided that they reside on the sites for at least 20 years (Yomiuri Shinbun 1996). A small town in Kumamoto Prefecture has decided simply to offer 500,000 yen in cash to community residents upon the birth of their fourth child (Daily Yomiuri 1996). Prehistoric sites of Japan's Jomon Period (10,000 to 300 B.C.) have been sparking the imaginations of the Japanese people for the last several decades (Kataoka 1997). When these are discovered in towns and villages, they quickly become incorporated into local revitalization projects in the form of Jomon cultural festivals and musicals. More than 1,400 residents participated in such an event in a town near where I conducted my fieldwork (Akita Sakigake Shinbun 1996c). The establishment of rural gardens intended for the use of both local and urban people has also been a part of the town and village revival movement (Aoki 1996:797).

The revitalization movement seeks to secure the future of the nation's small towns and villages. These communities are seen by the majority of Japanese people not only as the hometowns (furusatos) of the village and town residents, but also as the furusatos of the nation. The term furusato is translatable in several ways. It can
refer to “a place of ancient events,” or “an ancient capital” (Kojien 1997). According to Norton:

_Furusato_ is a familiar place to which one can periodically return to in order to find rest, seek refuge, or try and recapture some aspect of one’s past. It can also be a place carried around within oneself representing one’s deepest hopes and longings as well as one’s deepest despair and disillusionment” (1987:7).

Tamanoi points out that _furusato_ can apply either to an individual or to a “collectivity of Japanese” (1998:195). In a practical sense the word is used in reference to a person’s place of origin, usually rural, stretching back a generation or two. This is especially true if the person is living in an urban area or in some other way is far removed from the graves of their ancestors. For a place to become a _furusato_ families must live there for many generations. One could also argue that no place can truly be a _furusato_ for a person unless their oldest traceable ancestral records and graves are in the keeping of a local temple.

Every year in summer or at the end of December, thousands of Japanese leave the big cities and head for their _furusatos_ to pay their respects to their ancestors and reaffirm ties with living relatives who have remained behind. The very concept of _furusato_, loaded with nostalgia and sentimentality, has become a major element in the repackaging of the rural countryside in revitalization efforts, and has been used in countless advertisements and government promotions fostering attitudes of national and regional identity (Nichibei Media Productions Group 1992a; Robertson 1991:14).³ The discussions with family members for the household case studies
presented in chapters four, five, and six of this thesis are couched in terms of the
village as a *furusato*.

Ogata-mura also participates in revitalization movements. The village holds
large solar car and bicycle races every summer and other new tourist-oriented events,
such as the *Nanohana* (canola flower) Festival and a giant pumpkin contest. The
village also attempts to attract outsiders through an elite citizens settlement program,
by offering local agricultural products at a wholesale outlet and by advertizing the
village's new hotel and public bath. A yet unfinished project is the development of
some extra land near the village which will contain vacation homes and small gardens
for rent. Also, in 1998 a land reclamation memorial museum was completed. The
village government thus packages the community as a modern, dynamic model of
food production and leisure. This is signified by the “Rurec” (combining “rural” and
“recreation”) plan, which is the village administration's name for its image-building
efforts used in the 1994 Japanese/English guidebook.

**Secondary Issues**

Ancestral land ties, the heir problem, and rural revitalization are parts of
broader issues. These need to be addressed before turning our attention to Ogata-
mura. They are: the ethnographic handling of rural issues in Japan, post-war Japanese
government intervention in agriculture, and new communities and their formation.
The Ethnographic Handling of Rural Japan. The body of ethnographic work on rural Japan can be divided into three generations. Works in the first generation were published from the 1930s to the 1970s and are generally descriptive local studies. Second generation works appeared in the 1970s and 1980s, and focus on change and development. Third generation studies conducted since the mid-1980s focus on contemporary matters such as heir securement, forming towns out of scattered hamlets and the development of tourism and the revitalization movement. While third generation works are most important to the present study, selected publications from the entire body of ethnographic studies are reviewed here in order to provide a background.

The first generation of works in the canon of ethnographic studies of rural Japan focus on social structure, intra-household relations, descent patterns, forms of production, religion, and cooperation. These studies illustrate general conditions still found in most areas of rural Japan, such as small-scale agriculture, strong intra-hamlet orientations among residents, and an emphasis on closed-community type social relations. Ethnographic work on rural Japan is generally considered to have begun with Embree's Suye-Mura (1939). It was based on fieldwork he and his wife conducted in a small impoverished village in Kyushu. Following a structural functional approach, which reveals the influence of his mentor A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Embree diligently recorded information on social and family structure, cooperative activities, production, and religion. Kelly writes that Suye-mura and the long line of
studies it sparked "believe the charge that community studies are necessarily myopic, ahistorical descriptions of a narrowly local and illusory order" (1991:411). In 1982, Embree's widow, in conjunction with Robert J. Smith, published her version of Suyemura based on the notes and observations she had made 45 years earlier. *The Women of Suyemura* contrasts with Embree's book in its broader, more flexible perspective benefiting from four decades of developments in both anthropological literature and studies of Japanese society. Furthermore, Ella Lury Wiswell, unlike her husband, spoke Japanese fluently at the time of the fieldwork and so her insights and impressions were decidedly different from those of Embree.

Beardsley's exhaustive *Village Japan* (1959) is based on fieldwork undertaken in a small farming town in Okayama Prefecture, Honshu. Even today it stands as one of the best in the canon of ethnographic literature on rural Japan. Maraini's 1962 book, originally published in Italian in 1960, is an early departure from farming community studies. He focuses on the shellfish-collecting activities of women divers of a small community on the outer coast of the Noto Peninsula, Honshu. The divers spent their summers living on and diving near the tiny island of Hegura, about 50 kilometers away from the shore in the Sea of Japan. This book is written in a storybook form, but provides detailed insights into a lifestyle and economic activities that have dramatically changed since the study was undertaken in the 1950s.

The 1970s saw the appearance of the second generation of works on rural Japan. These studies build on the foundation laid down by the preceding generation
and largely take the form of detailed descriptions of regional development. They address conditions which are still common today, such as the pattern of part-time farming coupled with full-time wage labor and increasing out-migration leading to difficulties in finding wives for young farmers. Shimpo's *Three Decades in Shiwa* (1976) covers 30 years of economic and social change in a town to the south of Morioka, the capital city of Iwate Prefecture, Honshu, only about 100 kilometers away from Ogata-mura. The author concentrates on structural developments in farming technology. Smith's *Kurusu* (1978) is set in a farming town on the plains of Kagawa Prefecture, Kyushu, which faces Okayama across the Inland Sea. He focuses on change over a 14 year period from 1951-1975, but concentrates more heavily on social developments than does Shimpo. He also considers the relations that the farmers he studied have had over time with the national government, especially concerning agricultural policy.

Dore's classic *Shinohata* (1978), a study of a farming village in the central highlands area of Honshu, focuses on change over 20 years from 1955 to the mid-1970s. He pays close attention to social relations including household branching and production activities, and allows the people in his study to present their own lives and opinions to the reader with his extensive use of quoted personal narratives. The same year was also marked by the release of Norbeck's two-part study of a fishing community on an island off the coast of Okayama Prefecture. The first part of the book was published in 1954, and then repackaged with a detailed follow-up study
focusing on the effects of two decades of extensive urbanization. He focuses on changes in social structure, including buraku, household, and production relations. Another fishing community study, Kalland's 1981 book set in Kyushu, concentrates on historical developments in economic cooperative relations between individuals and households.

The third and most recent generation of works on rural Japan focus on community and farmland consolidation, government-encouraged agricultural rationalization, rural tourism, and village revitalization. Kelly's 1986 article brings Japanese rural studies into a modern light: that of the farming village amidst rapid government-directed rationalization plans, including systemization and mechanization. The Hachirogata Project and others like it are the epitomes of these plans. Kelly looks at an area, the Shonai Plain in Yamagata Prefecture, Honshu, that is struggling to find a balance between traditional settlement and production practices and idealized conceptions of these. He also shows how the typical Japanese farmer has been incorporated into the “middle class” and how rationalization and nostalgia both play into this transformation. Tamanoi's 1988 article comparing contract farming among Spanish and Japanese agriculturalists, continues with the theme of farmer's relations with the state and other agencies. She analyzes their perceptions of these relationships according to their cultural and historical contexts.

A study which follows from the detailed descriptive analyses of Embree, Beardsley, Dore and Norbeck is Moon’s 1989 book based on fieldwork in alpine
northeastern Gumma Prefecture, Honshu. He addresses the ways in which a village
has adjusted to recent social and economic developments by building a ski resort to
combat out-migration and economic stagnation and revitalize itself. The author
shows that households have had varied success at coping with the changes; those that
converted their homes into bed and breakfast inns (minshuku) have had more success
than those that continued with traditional agricultural practices alone.

Bailey's excellent 1991 book about development and town-building (machizukuri) in a community on the rocky rikuchu coast of Iwate Prefecture, Honshu,
focuses on regional post-war Japanese town-building and revitalization. Discussed
are state-initiated amalgamation projects, the development of infrastructure and
tourism, combating out-migration, and discouraging strong hamlet identification
among residents in order to broaden their community perspective. Bailey, a historian
of the Reischauer legacy, combines his academic specialty with the use of
ethnographic information to present a colorful portrait of the internal mechanics of
town-building in rural Japan.

Moore's 1990 book, Japanese Agriculture, is based on fieldwork conducted in
northern Miyagi Prefecture, Honshu. The author analyses contemporary rice farming
in Japan with an emphasis on the cultural importance of rice over time and the
ongoing involvement of the government in the lives of Japanese farmers. Two
articles by Moore (1991, 1993) deal with conflicts between Japanese farmers and the
government over rice policies. In these the author continues to explore the position,
both practical and symbolic, that rice holds in Japan -- especially among farmers. The first article is based on material collected in three different villages in northern Japan, one of which was Ogata-mura. He reviews forms of resistance over several centuries and then presents detailed descriptions of contemporary resistance strategies in the three villages. Moore then examines the variation in their respective strategies "with respect to three interrelated government policies: the rice price subsidy, the Land Improvement Project, and the crop diversion program" (58). This article illustrates the important role that Ogata farmers played in national agricultural developments, which will be discussed below. Moore's 1993 article focuses specifically on Ogata-mura farmers' struggles against government agricultural policies in a resistance theory framework. The recent government crop reduction and diversion policies and their effects on Ogata-mura are brought forth in his analysis, together with a detailed exploration of the important role played by Ogata farmers in Japanese agriculture.

Ohnuki-Tierney's 1993 book on the cultural importance of rice in Japan and the ways in which rice consumption has been manipulated by the state is of interest in understanding the developments in Ogata-mura over the last several decades. The symbolic and practical significance of rice is addressed from prehistoric mythical times to the present. She tackles the ways in which concepts of rice and rice production have become intertwined with issues of national identity -- especially in relation to the ambiguous "West" -- and also how national internal social divisions are based on food as a metaphor for the individual.
Two articles published by Knight (1994a, 1994b) concerning contemporary regional developments are of interest to my study. The former article examines the high level of official involvement in the village revival movement (mura-okoshi undo). Especially important to the case of Ogata-mura is Knight's detailed description of the movement, which shows that it has developed very rapidly following the government's passing of the Resort Law during the mid-1980s and the subsequent allocation of 30 percent of the country's total land area for recreational use. Furthermore, as the tourism industry developed across the country, certain areas lost out to other areas that are better funded and more accessible. Knight also focuses on "town-making" (machi-zukuri) in a rural area of Wakayama Prefecture (1994b).

Along the lines of Kelly (1986) and Bailey (1991), Knight examines the effects of the 1953 Town and Village District Merger Promotion Act, which reduced 9,895 municipal entities in Japan to 3,471 by 1961. Knight touches on the uses of both rural nostalgia and mura-okoshi projects in combating the permanent out-migration of young people in remote areas and also in strengthening the social cohesion in amalgamated communities. His treatment of local "town-making" over nearly 40 years illustrates the dynamics of the process as well as the context in which mura-okoshi efforts have arisen. Knight describes several stages in the development of local town making. The second and third of these, identification and social reform, in many ways mirror the developments in Ogata-mura that have led to a concerted effort at village-building (mura-zukuri) through mura-okoshi projects.
The last study reviewed here examines the lives of rural Japanese women both historically and geographically with a political economy perspective (Tamanoi 1998). Ethnographic data was collected on southern Nagano Prefecture. In addition to a detailed discussion of the academic treatment of Japanese women by Kunio Yanagita and other native ethnographers, Tamanoi uses many Japanese texts -- making native sources available to a wider audience. The ongoing relationship between rural women and the state, in addition to her discussion of the furusato concept, are of interest in the study of Ogata-mura.

Twentieth Century Japanese Agriculture and Government Intervention. Until the late 1860s, Japanese agriculture was organized in a rigid feudal arrangement, in which most farmers were locked into relations of indentured servitude with landowners. Within this system, main households dominated branch households, and both of these were linked with other households in a complex web of social obligations. Large land holders (oyakata) controlled the labor of various types of servants and tenants, and their respective social differences were reinforced by being passed down through the generations. Peasants that were listed as members of their master’s family and who thus enjoyed the benefits of being quasi-members of a large stable household were known as genin. These may have comprised as much as ten percent of the peasant population in the seventeenth century (Smith 1959:9). Farmers known as nago, which accounted for as much as 60 percent of the peasant population were indentured
servants and worked small plots of land registered in the name of their respective *oyakata* (1959:10). All peasants depended heavily on the benevolence of the land owners and local lords, and had little recourse when things went badly for them (Hane 1982; Smith 1959).

The government was reorganized largely along western lines in the 1868 Meiji Restoration, when the last Shogun abdicated his authority in a political revolution orchestrated by members of a powerful *samurai* clan (Duus 1993). From the time of the Restoration until the end of the war in 1945, the government initiated a number of agricultural policies designed to alter the systems of taxation and reduce the levels of tenancy, thereby hoping to boost overall production. Power to control rice prices, as well as the buying, selling, and storing of rice, was reserved by the government under the 1921 Rice Law (*Beikoku Ho*). With the 1938 Farmland Adjustment Act (*Nochi Chosei Ho*), the government attempted to create one million new owner-operated farms. It did so to better protect tenants from exploitation and to reduce the overall amount of land under tenancy -- still about 46 percent of total farm land at the time (Moore 1990:287). At the end of World War II, approximately one-half of Japan's work force engaged in farming and about 70 percent of them were still tenants (Boyle 1993:334).

Land reform was a major concern of the U.S. occupation government's policies. In 1946, the Second Occupation Land Reform Measure (*Dainiji Nochi Kaikaku*) limited in-residence landlord's tenanted land to one hectare each, and
absentee landlord's holdings were bought up by the government and offered for sale.

In 1947, the Agricultural Cooperative Act (*Nogyo Kyodo Kumiai Ho*) established a new rural cooperative system with banking rights (Moore 1990:288). Foreshadowing the establishment of Ogata-mura and other large-scale farming enterprises, the government enacted the 1950 Act to Promote Agricultural Mechanization (*Nogyo Kikaika Sokushin Ho*), which set aside funds to be used for increasing overall production efficiency through mechanization of agriculture. This measure was followed by two important laws: the 1952 Agricultural Land Act (*Nochiho*), which was amended in 1962 and again in 1970, and the 1961 Agricultural Basic Law (*Nogyo Kihon Ho*). These acts were aimed at increasing the number of private owner-operators in agriculture, further protecting the rights of tenants, and bringing the income levels of farmers up to par with those of urbanites (Moore 1990:290). The 1961 law also helped stimulate the movement towards the high degree of part-time farming prevalent in Japan today. One of the main objectives of this law was "training owners and encouraging their family members to seek employment in other industries" (291). Part-time farming was further encouraged by the introduction of affordable labor-reducing small machinery which allowed young males to work in wage-paying jobs off-farm.⁴

Post-war government efforts at raising the standard of living in rural areas by reducing tenancy and creating a class of small-scale owner-farmers eventually resulted in a high percentage of part-time farmers. This has become a source of much
consternation among policymakers, who now wish to rationalize the national agriculture by putting it in the hands of full-time farmers (Gordon 1965:5; Jussaume 1990:163; Moore 1990:307).

Full-time farming in Japan receives little attention in the literature, perhaps since part-time farming is so dominant. In fact, Japanese full-time farming is concentrated in Hokkaido, the large northern island of the archipelago, which to this day bears the image of a frontier land (Hayami 1988:84). Most full-time farmers engage in the intensive production of single, highly marketable non-grain products such as potatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables on greatly expanded land holdings (Jussaume 1991:158). Therefore, Ogata-mura -- the village on which the present study focuses -- stands out as a unique experiment: an island of uniform full-time rice farmers amidst a sea of small, part-time rice producers.

New Communities and Their Formation. In order to understand Ogata-mura not only as a Japanese village but as a new village, it is necessary to review the creation of other new communities and land reclamation both inside and outside Japan. While numerous scholarly works exist on the design and creation of new communities in urban centers (Galantay 1975; Hayes 1993; Holston 1989), studies of planned agricultural communities are rare. However, there are some examples.

In the United States, the creation of the Division of Subsistence Homesteads within the Department of the Interior under the New Deal Administration in 1933 led
to the establishment of dozens of subsistence homestead communities. It was thought that transforming destitute miners and other workers into self-sufficient farmers and tying them with down with mortgages would prevent communist ideologies from taking root among them (Ghirardo 1989:127). Although these homestead settlements were based on subsistence farming and not built on reclaimed land, two of them in Pennsylvania bear similarities to Ogata-mura. These two communities were designed with a cohesive village layout; the plots of land were long and narrow, making the houses near enough for neighbors to feel close to each other. One of them, Norvelt, was begun in 1934 in Westmoreland County, just east of Pittsburgh (Hoagland and Mulrooney 1991:25). It was a government project designed to get unemployed coal miners and their families back on their feet following the collapse of the local mining industry. Hopefuls were required to apply to the project (254 out of 1,850 were accepted) and farming or gardening experience was among the list of preferred traits for entrance.

The Norvelt settlers' houses were far more attractive and practical than the Ogata-mura settlers' drab block concrete dwellings built 35 years later. They consisted of ten different designs of white washed Cape Cod cottages, complete with outbuildings and grape arbors. Residents seemed pleased with the designs of the houses, located on their own spacious plots of land: the overall arrangement having an open, relaxed quality contrasting with Ogata-mura's tight compactness. Some residents were happy to have an indoor bathroom for the first time (30). The naturally
rolling terrain, curvilinear streets, and variety of house types prevented any sense of monotony in the community (29). Conflicts, however, did erupt between the settlers and the government's community managers over the cooperative aspects of the Norvelt project. Learning from the complications that developed in Norvelt, a similar but privately-funded subsistence settlement project, Penn-Craft, was built in 1937 to the east of Pittsburgh in Fayette County. The small stone houses of Penn-Craft were more uniform than those at Norvelt. Settlers were required to build their own houses from the ground up in a communal effort, whereas the Norvelt settlers had only worked as assistants to professional carpenters. No conflicts of any significance seem to have arisen over the management of this settlement.

In North America, there have been some cases of farm enlargement through land reclamation. From coastal New Jersey north to the Bay of Fundy, between the Acadian mainland and Nova Scotia, a number of large farms have been reclaimed from salt marshes (Sebold 1992:13). Rudimentary reclamation procedures used in England to drain fens through dike construction along river mouths and marsh borders -- using tidal movements to drain the water -- had been described in manuals as early as 1650. New England methods were more complex, but followed the same basic technology (21). However, this farm construction does not appear to have been accompanied by community-building. It was rather a regional effort at expanding existing farms with the occasional founding of new farms.
In north-central Europe, many large-scale population migrations resulting in the founding of new towns toward the east have taken place, especially after the ninth century A.D. (Lopez 1976:28). The establishment of new communities through land reclamation has been widespread in coastal areas of Western Europe as well. This is most noticeable in the Netherlands. Large-scale polder (containment dam) construction was undertaken in the Zuider Zee and surrounding area to the northwest of Amsterdam (Merlin 1971:131). The predominant settlement pattern in the area is one of nucleated villages of approximately 3,000 inhabitants each, situated on separate impoldered areas of 90 square kilometers. This places every village about 10 kilometers from its most distant farmland (131). The pattern is similar to that which was decided upon for the Hachirogata project with the assistance of Dutch engineers.

Not surprisingly, Ogata-mura has a sister-city relationship with the town of Dronten in the polder area of East Flavoland, about 50 kilometers to the northeast of Amsterdam.

As in the Netherlands, land reclamation in Japan has a long history. This is best evidenced by the fact that the word for such “new fields” (shinden) applies to those which were reclaimed after 1600 AD (Beardsley, Hall and Ward 1959:438). An extensive project with a 1,200 year history of land reclamation exists in the Kojima Bay area of Okayama Prefecture (Connors 1963). Beardsley describes the region as follows:
Operated along scientific lines, this project became an exciting center of innovation in methods of cultivation and farm living whose influence carried over into the older adjacent areas. Settlers have come to the reclaimed area from all over Western Japan, creating a social milieu of mixed origins quite unlike the older hamlets in which the same families have lived together in close physical and social relationships for generations" (1959:27).

As early as 744 AD, rudimentary embankments were constructed in Kojima Bay to protect new fields from encroaching sea water. The overall pattern of reclamation in the bay has been one of successive improvement of marginal lands which were built up by the actions of rivers emptying into the bay. Reclaimed areas have been extended outward into the bay over the centuries, resulting in ancient fields separated by the remains of dikes which have largely faded away or been converted to paths for foot and bicycle transportation. Efforts to create communities on the new lands were made as early as the 1660s by the local clan lords. There are records of a shrine being built in one place to attract settlers. Local lords founded farming communities among the new fields but, according to Connors, "after a short but chaotic period the imported workers turned out to be opportunists rather than professional farmers and the government was forced to remove them from the land" (1963:69).

Following this experience, applications were required for settlement and complete background checks were conducted on all hopefuls concerning their birth, parentage, occupation and other factors. In the nineteenth century, local lords continued their reclamation activities in the area and founded more settlements. By
1868 when the feudal period came to a close, 63 percent of the more than 3,944 acres of reclaimed land was worked by tenants.

Toward the turn of the century, the prefectural government of Okayama pushed for a project to reclaim most of the remaining land in Kojima Bay, and the national government responded by recruiting a Dutch polder engineer to examine the possibility. He was optimistic and plans were made, but the government in Tokyo was reluctant to fund the project and nothing happened until the next prefectural governor found a private source of funds in the Fujita Corporation based in Osaka. Several problems then arose similar to the ones encountered in the Hachirogata reclamation 70 years later. Upstream villagers were worried about drainage, fishermen were staunchly opposed, and others were concerned that profits from the new fields would flow to the Fujita headquarters in Osaka rather than remain in local hands. Major reclamation work began once the company made certain payments and promised plots of land in the reclaimed areas to concerned parties. The project was completed by the late 1940s. The company hired people to farm part of the land under contract for wages and rented some fields out to tenant farmers. By the end of the war in 1945, the Fujita Corporation had sold most of the 1,364 acres to the national government because it was worried about losses due to the impending land reform under the occupation Allied Command. The government used much of the land to settle repatriated soldiers and displaced citizens. Each family purchased less than one hectare on which they were expected to subsist. Their houses were spread
out, each located on its own land. Most of the settler-peasants were unable to survive on their small holdings and consequently many sold their plots to local farmers -- former tenants of Fujita -- who were eager to build up their holdings to the maximum of three hectares allowed by the government at the time.

By the 1960s, the reclaimed Kojima Bay landscape could be classified into eight agricultural sections and one industrial zone: (1) houses of wood construction clustered along single narrow roadways with oxen or foot-powered water wheels in use; (2) houses climbing up hillsides to avoid building on small fields; (3) dense settlements with some dissemination; (4) a linear settlement pattern along straight irrigation canals; (5) large, rectangular field arrays with a variety of households located among the paddies and a high percentage of agricultural machines in use; (6) sparse settlement across evenly-spaced linear fields; (7) a largely treeless frontier area of the bay where bare houses were lined up along straight irrigation ditches without farm lot planting or outbuildings; and (8) an odd system of alternating six-foot wide strips of water and rice fields due to subsidence where no houses existed and farming was done by hand from boats (Connors 1963). According to Beardsley, many of the Kojima Bay farmers were well-known across the country for their heavy use of machines because of governmental assistance, the leadership of big corporations like Fujita, and also due to the lack of labor surpluses typically found in traditional villages (1959:173).
Despite the fact that some Kojima Bay farmers possessed fairly large fields and many machines, none of them were able to live well only by farming. Even the largest landholders in 1963 were engaged in extra off-time household production activities. Aside from its less lengthy history, the Hachirogata project differs from the Kojima Bay area in three major respects: (1) Hachirogata farmers never needed to supplement their farm incomes with other work, (2) the layout of the Hachirogata project does not match that of any of the sections of the Kojima Bay area, and (3) the Hachirogata Land Reclamation Area is much larger. It is actually more similar to the large Dutch projects mentioned above. However, like both the Kojima Bay settlement and the Norvelt (Pennsylvania) community, the Hachirogata project has experienced problems between settlers and government planners which have been important factors in the village's development.
CHAPTER III

THE VILLAGE OF OGATA-MURA

The sky here looks gorgeous
In the springtime, the beautiful sun
speedily raises the flowers to be beautiful, too
At night the moon and stars shine brilliantly
I want the sky here to remain beautiful forever

The Sky of Ogata
Meiko Haga 1997
(Ogata Junior High School, first grade)

Ogata-mura is an agricultural village of about 3,300 people near the Sea of Japan in northern Akita Prefecture (MAP 2). The central reclaimed land area within the lake measures 15 kilometers from north to south and ten kilometers from east to west. The settlement itself is located just inside the western edge of the central area, which is bordered by the narrow remainder of lake Hachirogata and the Dutch-engineered polder dam (MAP 3). The village is roughly oval in shape, with a long center section. This is occupied by most of the public facilities, including the village offices, the police office, the community education building, the community center, the medical and dental clinics, a string of retail shops, some open space for public use, the grocery store, and the schools. The public gymnasium and the cemetery park are located on the north end of the settlement, along with the hotel and hot bath resort. The cemetery park, like the village itself, is a model of lineality, efficiency, and
MAP 2

Akita Prefecture and Lake Hachirogata

The Hachirogata reclamation site is the circular area to the north of Akita city, near Oga Peninsula.

(From Akita Prefecture www Home Page)
MAP 3

Lake Hachirogata and Ogata-mura

Major roads are indicated by dotted lines. Railways are shown by dashed lines.
egalitarianism. The stones are low-profile markers much like those found in contemporary cemeteries in the United States. They are identical, so no one can guess at social class or income differences by looking at them. Furthermore, the park is not managed by a temple as normally would be the case, but by a board of residents. A small Shinto shrine is located on the southwest corner of the village (FIGURE 1). Its design is based on that of the famous shrine at Izu. A priest travels to the shrine from a nearby town when needed.

The village hosts both the Akita Prefecture Agricultural Junior College, and a small high-tech agricultural research center. The residential area of the village is divided into five main neighborhoods with color-coded roofs, which correspond roughly to the five waves of settlers who migrated to the village from all over Japan (MAP 4). A new neighborhood on the north end is comprised of village-owned rental houses.

Of the 711 households in the village, 81.6 percent are listed as farming households (1990). Although the village is relatively young, it now looms large in Akita Prefecture due to its economic power. It contains a mere 0.6 percent of all farming households in Akita Prefecture, yet Ogata-mura accounted for 7.4 percent of the total amount of rice produced in the prefecture in 1990 (Akita Prefecture 1996; Ogata Village 1994). This helps to explain why the yearly per capita income of the village, which today stands at 4,591,000 yen (about 35,000 U.S. dollars), is nearly double the prefectural average of 2,507,000 yen (Akita Sakigake Shinbun 1996a).
FIGURE 1

The Ogata-mura Shrine
r = red roof
b = blue roof
y = yellow roof

Numbers indicate settler-group order.

Houses left blank are village-owned rental houses.

Houses marked with "6" are prefectural settlers who were relocated late due to a dam project.
Ogata-mura families are significantly larger in size than the national average. Their houses are also generally quite substantial.

The Village Comes to Life (1955-1975)

Japan was in a poor state by the end of the Second World War. No industrial center had been left untouched. The small port of Akita was attacked by allied planes as the curtain drew to a close on the Pacific war in 1945. Even as recently as 1995 undetonated bombs were unearthed in the grassy dunes behind the docks among the oil tanks. Japan’s agriculture was also damaged by the war.

After the war, the occupation reforms ensured that farming in Japan would remain a small-scale enterprise by breaking up the power of the local and absentee landlords and creating an egalitarian class of owner-farmers (Reischauer, 1988:108). As life returned to normal across the country, it became evident that outputs of rice, Japan’s staple crop, would have to be increased in order to ensure self-sufficiency. With very little uncultivated land available, large wetland sites across the country were earmarked for possible land reclamation projects.8

The land reclamation project at Hachirogata was the largest project of this kind to date in Japan. It was a prime spot for creating new farmland. The lake was nestled at the root of volcanic Oga peninsula. Narrow strips of land separated it from the sea both to the north and southeast of Oga. A natural mouth allowed sea water to enter the lake and mix with the fresh river water flowing in from the Taiheizan
mountain range to the east. The lake supported a marshy ecosystem that was home to a great variety of marine life. Today, if one digs a hole anywhere in the reclaimed land, white shells are found. According to local legend, the lake was inhabited by a dragon who had a mate in Lake Tazawa, a deep caldera lake nestled in the mountains of eastern Akita Prefecture. Every winter, the Hachirogata dragon would leave his lake to visit his mate. This explained why Lake Hachirogata always froze over in winter but Lake Tazawa did not -- with two dragons in a lake the water would be too warm for ice to form on the surface. Dragon or no dragon, the fact that lake Hachirogata's flat, sandy bottom rested only five meters below the water surface and its proximity to the prefectural capital were elements in the decision to empty the lake.

In 1955 and 1956, Dutch engineers and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations investigated the possibility of transforming the lake into farmland, and work began in 1957. In 1966, the central reclaimed area was completed, and by 1977 all remaining sections were finished (FIGURE 2). This resulted in the creation of 17,203 hectares (42,508.613 acres) of land. In order to appease the displaced fishermen in the surrounding areas, one hectare lots were distributed to them. Several ideas for the layout of the village that would occupy the new land were discussed by government planners. One option was to build a town in the center of the reclaimed land area which would hold the municipal administrative offices, shops, and other necessary institutions (Gordon 1965). Eight villages would
FIGURE 2

Hachirogata Before and After the Reclamation
then be constructed in a circle around the town. It was thought that over 9,000 people would be allowed to settle. This design would have offered the residents the comfort of living in a more traditional, dispersed hamlet-type pattern and also the satisfaction of being close to their own fields. However, the government decided upon a single tightly-clustered settlement similar to the arrangement found in the Netherlands. This was partly due to the lower costs involved in following such a design. The government also decided to decrease the number of settlers and increase the size of the individual land holdings to promote interest in large-scale mechanized agriculture.

The village of Ogata-mura was officially founded on October 1, 1964 -- nine days prior to the opening of the Tokyo Olympics -- and a nation-wide search for settlers was begun. Exams were administered at regional centers where potential settlers gathered hoping to be a part of the big model farming project. Settlers were to have at least an education equivalent to high school completion, and both farmers and non-farmers were encouraged to apply. In at least some cases, people with lower formal education levels were accepted as well. One farmer reported: "to even apply we had to have an education equal to a high school degree or about that level. I never went to high school." In addition to the educational standards and general academic questions on the exams, interviews and essays were required of the applicants. A farmer described his essay question:

What sort of desire will you take with you if you go?" They had us write an essay. Yeah, I was good at writing essays! Hah, hah, hah! Yeah, I gave it my best, the essay, yeah. "Just as a peasant, I'd work
with all my might. I'd even bury my bones there. With resolve to bury my bones in the land of Hachirogata, I'd settle there. I'll go.

Fields of equal size were allotted for the settlers. At first, all farmers had ten hectares each. When the fifth group entered the village they were granted fifteen hectares and all other previous settlers received five more hectares for a total of fifteen per household. That this is a large amount is clear when compared with the national average of about one hectare per household farm (Reischauer, 1988:20). Neighborhoods of identical concrete block houses with v-shaped roofs were quickly erected (FIGURE 3). The selected settlers signed mortgages with 25 year terms for repayment on their houses, residential lots and rice fields (FIGURE 4). New residents came in five waves: 56 households in 1967, 86 in 1968, 175 in 1969, 143 in 1970, and 120 in 1974. The final group of settlers entered the village in 1978, when nine families were relocated by the Akita Prefectural government in the wake of an impending dam project. The household heads were required to spend about one year at the government training center in the new settlement learning how to operate and maintain the machines they would use and how to manage their land in this large-scale man-made farming project (FIGURE 5). Their families, if any, followed the men to the village upon their completion of the training course. A first-group settler said:

I brought my entire family with me. There were also some who came in alone, unmarried. There were also those who married after they entered the village. But the majority were young people, young married couples: families of two.
FIGURE 3

Original Ogata-mura House

A largely unmodified original v-shaped concrete block house belonging to a third-group Ogata-mura settler. An outbuilding in the rear is the only visible addition. The neighbor to the right has constructed a tall garage and the neighbor to the left has replaced the original house with an entirely new structure.
FIGURE 4

Ogata-mura Rice Fields

It is May, and the seedlings have just been planted.
FIGURE 5

The Remains of the Training Center

This is the last remaining portion of the training center where Ogata-mura settlers learned to farm in the large-scale model project.
The government pursued a course of fully mechanized farming on the virgin lands. Since tractors as designed at the time were not able to operate on the soft rice paddies, a helicopter was used to scatter seeds over them for the first two years. This resulted in low crop yields. The first and second groups of settlers argued with the Ministry of Agriculture and were granted permission to revert to the ancient method of transplanting rice seedlings by hand in a communal effort. For several years the large Ogata-mura rice paddies were planted in this manner, with husbands and wives working alongside each other, and with the assistance of hired hands who were brought in from area towns. By the time the last group entered the village in 1975, redesigned tractors were being used to plant the fields and the village agriculture was among the least labor-intensive operations in the country. Also by this time, the residents of Ogata-mura and the class of farmers they belong to -- those who farm full-time -- comprised only ten percent of the total farming population of Japan (Fukutake 1980:20). Approximately 22 percent of Japan’s population was involved in agriculture between 1970 and 1980 (Moore 1990:11).

The Village as a Political Hotbed (1975-1994)

Beginning in the early 1970s, the government of Japan made efforts to cut back the amount of rice being produced in the country. The Ogata-mura farmers were more affected by the government’s actions than most other farmers in Japan. Many of them had either sold or given up their ancestral fields in order to become large-scale
farmers, so they were especially sensitive about their crop amounts being reduced. Furthermore, all of them had taken large financial burdens upon themselves by signing 25 year leases on their new properties, with the result that they were doubly concerned about profits being affected by the crop reductions. Many Ogata-mura farmers opposed the government rice crop reduction, diversion, and marketing policies from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s.

From 1971-1975, the government maintained the Rice Production Control and Diversion Program (Inasaku Tenkan Taisaku), which was designed to reduce national rice production through prefectural rice crop reduction targets (gentan) by offering 30,000 yen per 0.1 hectare for three years to farmers who let land lie fallow, and 40,000 yen per 0.1 hectare for five years for farmers who diverted land to non-rice crops (Moore 1990:298). Many Ogata-mura farmers maintain today that they were not offered these cash incentives. This lack of compensation was a major point of contention with the government at the time.

During the rice-growing season of 1975, when Ogata-mura farmers still owned ten hectares of agricultural land each, the national government ruled that all rice in their fields over 7.5 hectares was to be cut and destroyed. If any event in the village's history can be considered the starting point in the village's political problems, this was it. Ogata-mura farmers, virtually all of whom had planted beyond the government's limit, had little choice but to comply, for at that time the Ministry of Agriculture held great power over the village. More than 1,000 tons of rice were
burned that summer. The incident became known as "the cutting of green rice problem" \textit{(aogari-mondai)} (Moore 1993:288). When I asked farmers about \textit{aogari}, they were reluctant to discuss it in detail and found it difficult to explain. The episode left a permanent mark on the farmers of Ogata-mura, and their tone of voice still changes when the subject comes up. A conversation between myself and the members of a village farming family sheds some light on the matter: (D=daughter, M=mother, R=researcher, F=father)

\begin{quote}
D: \textit{Aogari} was the worst, huh?
M: \textit{Aogari} was the worst problem in our history -- in the village's history -- so far.
R: It seems so.
M: Yeah.
F: \textit{Aogari}.
M: It was almost time to harvest.
F: Yeah, the ears were just coming out of the plants.
M: It was a mower, a mower.
F: We used a mower.
R: What did you do then?
F: I cut it, of course. I cut about four fields. No, I cut three.
D: Cut it?
F: I cut it. I cut about five million. I threw away about five million.
D: About five million yen?
F: About five million yen, yeah.
D: How many hectares?
F: Um, it was about three hectares. About three hectares.
D: Hum, that was tough.
F: It was tough. It was. It was the hardest thing since I came here.
\end{quote}

The same farmer summed up the incident in a subdued voice, dropping very low toward the end:
The rice was piling up so they told us to reduce our crops to a certain level, but we rejected it. We said we didn't want to do it. So then, the bosses from the government office came and said: "If you're going to do this -- if you're not going to cooperate on the crop reduction -- then you people just get out of Ogata village." They threatened us like that. The bosses came and set a time limit, and they set an amount, too. Well, there was no way we were just going to pick up and return to our hometowns. We didn't want to leave so we said: "Well, let's follow what they say," and though it was just awful, we followed and cut it. Yeah, but the country was really the bad one.

Following the aogari incident, the government decided to increase the land holdings of Ogata-mura farmers to 15 hectares each with the proviso that the added hectarage would be devoted to non-rice crops. In January of 1976, the government set the maximum acceptable limit for agricultural land that could be devoted to rice production at 8.6 hectares per household. The remaining 6.4 hectares were to either lie fallow or be used for non-rice crops. The allowed limit was increased to 10 hectares in 1985, 12.5 hectares in 1987, and finally to 15 hectares in 1990. The Rice Production Control and Diversion Program was replaced in 1978 by the Program to Reorganize the Utilization of the Paddy Fields (Suiden Riyo Saihen Taisaku). This continued to promote rice crop reduction and contained specific requirements farmers had to meet in order to receive subsidies for diversion to other crops, including target amounts based on region (1990:302).

In addition to regulating crop amounts, the government controlled all rice marketing in Japan from the passing of the Rice Law (Beikoku Ho) in 1921. Until the early 1990s, when the domestic rice market was freed, farmers across the country marketed their rice through their local agricultural cooperatives at artificially inflated
prices set in Tokyo. Ogata-mura farmers transported their rice to the large grain elevators which had been constructed to the north of the village where it was weighed, polished and stored. Being forced to market all their rice in bulk was not to the liking of many farmers and this became another major point of contention. For some of the more entrepreneurial farmers, being but one small part of a great homogenous rice-producing machine held little charm. They felt stifled and constrained. Many farmers who felt this way ceased to use the government-backed cooperative already in the 1970s, marketing their rice through black market channels instead.

Due to disagreements among the farmers of Ogata-mura concerning government policies, they became divided into two opposed camps (Moore 1993:288). Each faction appears to have comprised roughly one-half of the village population. One of these groups (the “obedient faction”) remained loyal to the government and believed that relying on its benevolence was in the best interest of all farmers. The other group (the “disobedient faction”) felt that their personal rights were being grossly violated. These were the entrepreneurial, independent-minded farmers who stopped using the communal grain elevators and eventually began selling their rice on the black market. As the fighting among the village farmers escalated, an unknown number of suicides took place in the community. Apparently, most of the farmers who went so far as to kill themselves were members of the obedient faction. Seeing the disobedient farmers getting away with their illegal
activities and convinced that they were bringing shame upon the "model" community was unbearable for some of the law-abiding farmers. Details of the village suicides are sketchy, however, and getting residents to discuss the matter is difficult. The Ogata village office (yakuba) fully supported the national government and the obedient farmers in the disputes. Mayor Tazaki acknowledges today that Tokyo was partly at fault due to its draconian policies and lack of diplomacy in dealing with the Ogata-mura settlers. To many of the obedient farmers, agriculture is more of a way of life than a means of making profit. This is well-expressed by Shinichiro Sakamoto, a village farmer who has published a number of books on agricultural developments in Japan and in Ogata-mura (Moore 1993:291; Sakamoto 1989, 1990, 1991). As a symbol of their standpoint on self-sufficient subsistence farming as opposed to profit-oriented production, he and other members of the obedient faction call themselves "peasants cultivators" (hyakusho) in contrast to nomin, the usual word for modern farmers. The general ideology of Mr. Sakamoto and others who share his views relates to assertions made by Goldschmidt (1978), who found that the quality of life was better in North American communities that are dominated by many small owner-operated farms than in those characterized by few large-scale corporate farms.

The conflicts between the disobedient farmers, the village office, obedient farmers, and the national government over production and marketing erupted in the 1980's in the selling of rice on the black market by members of the disobedient group. This is known as the "yami-gome" incident (rice (kome) being marketed in the
darkness (*yami*). These radical farmers made illegal deliveries to buyers -- braving snow storms in the middle of the night -- and were pinpointed by the village office as law-breakers when the government made investigations. The situation came to a head in the winter of 1985, when police were sent to the village to block the roads from October seventh until December 25th to confiscate contraband rice.

The government attempted to prosecute the leaders of the disobedient farmers. Some of the farmers also pressed charges against the government. Although there were some farmers in Japan who gave moral support to the disobedient Ogata-mura settlers in their defiance of the government, many farmers across the nation were shocked and upset by the happenings in the new village. One problem was that the resistance strategies of the disobedient Ogata-mura farmers caused the entire prefecture of Akita to exceed the government's regional rice production quotas, thereby reducing the amount of payments other farmers of the prefecture could receive for meeting the crop diversion and reduction targets. This prompted some farmers in the vicinity of Hachirogata to threaten to blow up the polder dam surrounding Ogata-mura and flood the village and all its fields. During this time, Ogata-mura and it's disobedient farmers were featured regularly in newspaper headlines across the country. The village's image as a “model agricultural community” was all but shattered. Court battles ensued between the disobedient farmers and the government, but the charges against the law-breaking farmers were eventually dropped and they were exonerated. Even in the late 1990s, however, a few
farmers of the village were still pursuing legal actions against the government stemming from that period.

In the early 1990s, the national government reduced its control over the rice industry and the Ogata-mura farmers were free to grow and sell their rice as they pleased. While speaking to some of the main actors in the drama, I discovered many lingering resentments about the past. Obedient farmers cannot easily forget that the disobedient farmers ruined the special safeguards that they had enjoyed for so long: fixed prices and guaranteed sales, and support for traditional patterns of agriculture. The disobedient farmers felt that the price for these safeguards was too high, and that they could do better on their own.

Now that Japanese agriculture has been fundamentally changed, residents on both sides of the ideological battle are anxious about the future of farming. This is especially true for Shinichiro Sakamoto and other obedient farmers who share his views. They feel that agriculture and the traditional way of village life will suffer because of the new liberal policies -- policies which they feel may promote the development of corporate farms. The disobedient farmers tend to be more optimistic about the possibilities for the future of agriculture in Japan, and many are vigorously pursuing new avenues in marketing their products. For example, some grow and ship their rice directly to consumers. One industrious farmer, Mr. Yamauchi Takezo, has formed his own joint-stock corporation known as "Akita Komachi," named for the type of rice most commonly grown in the area. At present about 60 households sell
their rice to this company each year, which then packages it under one label and markets the rice across the country. To paraphrase a disobedient farmer's words concerning Mr. Yamauchi's company: "He gives us hope for the future of farming in Japan. We have to believe in him and his business. We have to have hope." This corporation appears to be thriving; in 1998 Mr. Yamauchi was listed as the fourth highest tax payer in Akita Prefecture (Akita Sakigake Shinbun 1998).

Currently, there are several ways of marketing rice in the village. Some farmers continue to utilize the Country Elevator Corporation, which now runs at approximately one-half capacity, mixing their rice into a homogenous pool. Others sell their rice to one of three or four smaller corporations like that owned by Mr. Yamauchi. A great number of farmers have formed private cooperative marketing associations each consisting of twenty families or so. Every member household has at least some degree of control over the workings of their association, including advertising, shipping, prices, products, and expenditures. These associations generally have offices and employ a small staff to manage the affairs of the business, such as customer relations and finances. In a dramatic departure from traditional marketing patterns, these associations -- they are incorporated -- sell their rice directly by mail to consumers in all parts of the country. A few highly entrepreneurial farmers have begun their own family businesses, shipping bags of rice directly to consumers. Some of these family firms send newsletters and other informative materials to their customers. One farmer who was highly active in opposing the government has
remodeled the storage space above his garage into a lodge and invites his customers to stay and help with the farm work for short periods. When I visited the couple in their lodge one day in late March, they were preparing for guests due to arrive from Tokyo the next day.

Farmers who are selling rice directly to their customers through individual or group associations have taken the way in which agricultural products are marketed in Japan to a new level. They are no longer merely price-takers; they have the ability, within limits, to set their own prices for their products. Also, by personalizing their relationships between themselves and their clientele through newsletters and visits, their customers have the satisfaction of knowing exactly who grows the rice they eat.

The political and economic developments in the village, tied as they are to national agricultural policies, have resulted in greatly altering the social structure of the village in the last 25 years. From a model egalitarian rice-producing machine which was under tight government control, it has been changed to a heterogeneous assortment of farmers with a multitude of different ideologies about the issues of crop production, marketing, and how to manage the village.
The Rebirth of the Model Community (1994-Present)

Red, yellow, white, pink
Blooming every spring
If Ogata and Holland were not friends
Then I would have been a stranger to these tulips

Tulips
Miwa Kuwahara 1997
(Ogata Junior High School, first grade)

Since the early 1990s, increasing attempts have been made to activate the community and to build up Ogata-mura's tarnished image. The mayor and his staff have sought out new projects deigned to bring investments and to maximize the village's visibility. Forming a sister-city relationship with the town of Dronten, the Netherlands, and sending delegations of residents there was an early aspect of this effort. The village administration's goal has been to project Ogata-mura as a progressive, energetic community with a wide range of offerings for the country. This strategy is supported by the national and prefectural governments, since the village has been a source of embarrassment in the past. However, the conflicts between the obedient and disobedient farmers and the village office have not disappeared. Instead, they have been transformed into an argument between those who are supportive of the mayor and his vision and those who are not.

The way of holding events in Ogata village was a major issue in the 1996 mayoral election. Mr. Yamauchi ran as incumbent Mayor Tazaki's only opponent, as
he had four years earlier. This time he lost by an extremely narrow margin. Mr. Yamauchi's platform centers primarily around being critical of expenditures and big events. He espouses a back-to-basics ideology, stressing that the village was founded for farming and therefore farming must remain the main concern. He contends that special attempts at image-building are not important, and that more money should be spent on agricultural improvements and education and less on big events. The mayor, as a politician with ties to the national government and a "big picture" point of view, has other ideas. In the mayor's view, the tarnished image that the village acquired during the dark days of black market rice and lawsuits must be eradicated, and the best way to do this is to do it in as big a way as possible.

Due to the mayor's efforts, Ogata-mura's projects tend to greatly overshadow anything put on by any other town or village in Akita Prefecture. Three village projects that are indicative of the new course Ogata-mura is pursuing will be described. One of these is the solar car and bicycle race. The other two are the Nanohana Festival and the bunkajin neighborhood project. In the case of the solar races and the Nanohana Festival the mayor has been effective in attracting a great deal of attention and investments. The bunkajin project remains less successful.
I love the sun
On a day when the sun is shining brilliantly
Racing around and around, happily
Silently—racing without a sound
Moreover, there’s no smell either
Causing no trouble for anyone
So, they can proudly race on and on
As they must...

Solar Car
Makiko Tani 1997
(Ogata Junior High School, first grade)

The Solar Car and Bicycle Races. The solar car event was conceived by an hair
dresser, Mr. Hiroto Honda. He is a very active member of the Akita Junior Chamber
(Seinen Kaigisho) who owns the most upscale salon in Akita city. Since Mr. Honda
does not live in Ogata-mura, the solar events were not thought of by the village
government or residents. After learning about the solar races in Australia and the
United States through a television program in early 1991, Mr. Honda decided that he
wanted to start such an event in Akita. Since Ogata-mura had ample space for such
an event, Mr. Honda took his new idea to the village and the mayor decided to create
an international solar car race as soon as possible. Reflecting on his reaction to Mr.
Honda's initial proposal for the solar races, Mayor Tazaki said: “I thought it was a
great idea, but a very difficult one, too. But anyway, I decided that it was a necessary
thing for changing the village's image for the better and making a brand new debut for
us.” He and Mr. Honda recruited local politicians, academicians, and other prominent
individuals to work with them on their goal over the next two years. Mr. Honda said:
"what we wanted to do was not to create some little local event, but rather an event based upon a world viewpoint -- an event which would unite people of the world under one set of rules."

The directors of the Australia and USA events collaborated with Mr. Honda to make certain that the rules of the Akita race would be compatible with the rules of the other races. For funding and promotional needs, Mr. Honda and the village officials went to the Akita Prefectural Government. The prefecture agreed to support the race with 30 million yen and the village was held responsible for providing 20 million. Since then similar sums have been spent on the events each year. Private sources, including Pepsi-cola, IBM, Honda Motors Corporation, and other corporate sponsors provide additional support.

In August of 1993 the first race was held on village public roads as the "World Solar Car Rallye in Ogata." Several changes were made the following year. First, a specialized solar race track was built and every year since 1994 the race has been held on this course (FIGURE 6). The 31 kilometer-long track is located about eight kilometers from the settlement. It runs from its starting point near the south pumping station along the primary north-south irrigation canal to a point on the main east-west canal and back (MAP 3). It is said to be the only full-scale solar car race track in the world. The village office solar division was reluctant to reveal the total cost of building the course -- undoubtedly tremendous -- but the prefectural regional planning
FIGURE 6

The Solar Sports Line
office said that the prefecture paid one-quarter of the cost and that the village covered the remainder.

The second major change was the addition of a solar bicycle race. The purpose of this was to attract more participants -- especially from overseas. Mr. Honda reported that teams spend anywhere from 500,000 to three million yen on building a solar car and that shipping a car overseas costs about an additional two million yen. On the other hand, a solar bicycle can be built by starting with a regular bicycle and adding only 70,000 to 100,000 yen worth of equipment. In addition, a solar bicycle can be broken down and carried as hand luggage on an airplane. Mr. Honda said that even the most expensive solar bicycles cost about one million yen -- considerably less than most solar cars. The last major change was the placement of the prefectural governor as nominal host and sponsor of the race. The governor's office deemed this desirable because by the second year it was clear that the event would be a success. The race was then renamed “World Solar Car Rallye in Akita.” The bicycle event has grown in size since it began, while the number of participants in the car race has remained fairly steady. Ninety-one teams entered the 1995 bicycle race and 80 were registered for the car race. Entrants numbered 103 for the bicycle race and 75 for the car event in 1996, 126 and 82 in 1997, and 121 and 83 in 1998, respectively.

In an attempt to attract more foreign teams to the races, the solar race executive committee, on which Mr. Honda serves, decides each year which
international teams it will offer travel funds to and how much these funds will be. For instance, if the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a school of less prestige both express interest in entering, MIT would be offered more money than the other school. George Washington University has participated in the car race a number of times -- probably more than any other foreign team. They were the only team from abroad at the 1996 race. Since the Honda Corporation team did not participate that year, the American car won the race for the first time. The team members told me that they had received 12,000 dollars to help with their travel expenses the year before, but only 5,000 in 1996. For some reason, the George Washington team lodged separately at the new Sun Rural Hotel that year instead of in the tent village at the race track. This prompted a newspaper reporter to write an editorial arguing that the arrangement undermined a primary purpose of the races: that of creating opportunities for people from across the country and the globe to mix and mingle (Shimomura 1996). Following the typical internationalization and regional revitalization rhetoric, the author of the article argued that achieving international exchange (kokusai koryu) on an individual level is a necessary aspect of the solar races if they are to be successful.

Important points concerning the Ogata-mura races are that the events are planned and conducted from the top-down by the village office and that their primary function is to clean up the village’s damaged image. In these ways the solar events differ from the average revitalization project in Japan. As Knight (1994a) shows,
such projects generally originate at the community level in most towns and villages — often under the direction of return migrants. For Mayor Tazaki and his aides in Ogata-mura, the solar events are the highlight of the village's revitalization and image-altering projects. They usually speak of the events in terms of what benefits the races bring to the village. Mr. Honda, the originator of the races, is happy with the way they are growing and evolving, but envisions the events as having more far-reaching effects. He said:

This is something which concerns the entire world, so it's definitely not good to think about it only in terms of the people of Akita -- or the people of Ogata, you see? I mean, as far as doing it just for the prosperity of the village, that's too narrow a perspective. There's a much wider field of view here. So, the mayor became determined to build the solar sports line, which is a very special track. There really is no other course like it anywhere in the world. Therefore, I really don't think that the mayor did it merely for village revitalization (mura-okoshi) -- meaning to gather many people and get publicity through the media and such. So, the mayor is hoping that the young people who are using the track will benefit from what they've learned there -- the inspirations they've received -- and the technology, and that they will pass these things down to the next generation, and they to the next. For this reason I think it truly is a wonderful plan.

The mayor, on the other hand, is quick to state that the races serve as good revitalization projects for the village. He said:

Oh yes, it has become great mura-okoshi for the village. Oh, yes. This great event is getting recognized across the country and even around the world. It has brought us from the darkness into the light -- that's the change the solar sports have had on the village's image. It's great mura-okoshi for us.

Now the solar sports are the highlight of the village's revitalization events.

Furthermore, they are also the central theme around which the mayor is redefining the
village as a model of clean food production in a high-tech environment. Ogata-mura's village headquarters (yakuba) is the only municipal office in Japan with a solar division, and this is made clear in a section of the village's home page. Contemporary village pamphlets, guidebooks, and the internet site home page all feature the solar events and track prominently. Furthermore, the new hotel even has solar panels which help to power some of the decorative lighting inside (FIGURE 7).

Takezo Yamauchi, the mayor's political opponent, sees the solar car events as a great source of waste in the village budget. To him, building the track was a pointless misuse of residents' tax money -- especially since it runs along a canal which, according to him, makes it susceptible to destruction through erosion. He feels that no plan is really good for revitalization unless it contributes to strengthening the local economy and securing the livelihoods of village farmers. This was a major point of his 1996 political campaign. The narrow results of the election indicated that nearly one-half of the village's farmers sympathize with Mr. Yamauchi's position.
FIGURE 7

"Sun Rural Ogata," The Village Hotel
The Nanohana Festival. Since 1995 the Nanohana (canola flower) Festival takes place every year in the 3.7 hectare nanohana field at the north end of the village, when the field dazzles with the yellow flowers every spring (FIGURE 8 and FIGURE 9). The festival differs from the solar events in both its smaller scale and in the fact that it was conceived by the village office rather than imported from the outside. The 1996 event centered around the opening of the new hotel, which is adjacent to the field. Professional models posed for photos among the flowers and prizes were offered to participants for the best portraits resulting from these photo sessions. Helicopter rides, concerts, games and food were also parts of the entertainment (FIGURE 10). The 1997 and 1998 events featured rides on a miniature train that ran along tracks through the field. The festival is heavily commercialized and resembles
FIGURE 8
The Entrance to the 1996 Nanohana Festival

FIGURE 9
The Nanohana Field and Village-owned Apartments
FIGURE 10

A Helicopter at the 1996 Nanohana Festival
special occasions that take place in large city parks every spring. This is especially noticeable in the concessions present, which include chocolate-covered bananas, cotton candy, fried potatoes, and baked octopus (tako-yaki). The games, which in most cases are quizzes, tend to attract much attention due to the number of prizes that are offered.

When I attended the 1996 affair, I spotted only two village children out of the one or two hundred that were there. I was unable to find any local farmers. The only adults associated with Ogata-mura whom I saw were the public employees that were required to work the event and several families of junior college faculty members. In contrast to the solar events, the timing of the festival is bad for farmers. They are always too busy planting fields in May to engage in such activities. This is the main reason why many village residents dislike the Nanohana festival, or are at least indifferent to it. Mr. Yamauchi cited the timing of the event as a problem to be addressed in his 1996 campaign. The Nanohana festival is the village revitalization event which is most clearly not designed for community members.

The Bunkajin Neighborhood Project. A village office project which is even more questionable to many in Ogata-mura is the cultural people's neighborhood, or bunkajin project. When the number of settlers in the fifth immigrant group was reduced in 1974, a large square section on the east side of the village was left vacant. Recently, the mayor has decided to construct a spacious neighborhood in this spot in the hope that experts in various fields will come and live in the small community
(MAP 5). The village office produces applications, advertises on the Ogata-mura home page, and makes decisions on which applicants can become village *bunkajin* (see Appendix A). If a person is accepted and builds a house in the neighborhood, they must move their official residence to the village and reside there for at least six months each year. The *bunkajin* receive a 100,000 yen monthly stipend from the village for three years, and then the office will hand over the plot of land free of charge (Ogata village 1999). As with the *Nanoha* Festival, the *bunkajin* neighborhood project is a revitalization effort that was initiated by the village administration. The village is actually a leader where this plan is concerned, for it began the project before a nearby town began theirs, and before the national government started offering funds to municipalities for similar projects.

As of August 1997, two houses stood in the Ogata-mura *bunkajin* neighborhood. One of the houses was occupied by a violin maker and the other by a hang gliding instructor who competes in contests around the world. The concept behind this project is that the village will become a more interesting place if the composition of residents is more varied. The village office planning division director explained:

Basically, Ogata village consists of only farmers and businessmen, you see. So, the idea is that if we have these artists, with these three types, it may be much better here. This goal is all in order to give some stimulus, to make an impact on the village. So, with only these two types, what we can think of or do are always just ordinary things, conventional ideas, but perhaps if these liberal, or free-spirited artists come, they will have some impact on the farmers and the businessmen.
MAP 5

The Bunkajin Neighborhood
The *bunkajan* project, however, is viewed with apprehension, anxiety, or suspicion by all farmers I spoke to. One settler who ranks highly in the village administration said:

I really don't think that the people who have come have gotten used to the place yet, and (neither have) the villagers, either. But the plan is interesting -- the concept of it -- I think. Having experts in various fields come to this village and associate with the villagers is an important thing. Now, the plan is for the kids at the elementary school and middle school to go and see them for demonstrations, and associate and exchange with them.

Another farmer expressed the following concerns:

When I first heard about the *bunkajan* neighborhood, I was very interested in the idea. I would like very much to meet those people. Maybe they have a lot of things that they can teach us, so I think it's a good idea. But, I don't know about using village money for the project. It must be pretty expensive. So, is it a good thing or not? I don't know. Also, who decides who is a *bunkajan* and who isn't? I don't understand that.

The *bunkajan* neighborhood project continues to progress despite the concerns of Ogata-mura's village farmers; when I left the village in August of 1997 the foundation for a third house was being laid. The success of the project will depend on the relationships between the *bunkajan* and the farmers. It is important to remember that all village residents are immigrants and therefore should be more receptive to newcomers than would be the case in long-established villages. However, the farmers' concerns about the monthly stipends and free land are well-grounded. After all, they have had to work hard for 25 years to pay off the loans on their properties. Another valid complaint among the settlers concerns the "*bunkajan*" label and the
implied "non-bunkajin" status of the community residents. The farmers of Ogata-mura have both free time and money to pursue various hobbies, and many farmers are quite skilled at photography, oil painting, traditional Japanese art forms, and other creative activities. They ask why there is a need to use money to attract professionals who do not really want to settle and live in such a small community. Takezo Yamauchi (the mayor's political opponent) is extremely critical of the project. To him, the monthly payments to the bunkajin and granting of land is another waste of village funds, and he believes that the bunkajin do not belong in the village. Many other community members agree.

Conclusion

Ogata-mura has changed dramatically since its founding in 1964. From a simple "model farming community" which the government could hold up as an example of orderliness and efficiency, the village has evolved into a complex society with its own special history. It is ironic that the government of Japan displaced the dragon that lived in Lake Hachirogata in order to build a model village that eventually became a dragon itself.

Despite the village's privileged position in the region and nation -- or partly because of it -- Ogata-mura is now involved in the rural revitalization movement just as other small cities, towns, and villages are. This effort, however, has resulted in perpetuating the divisions within the community that developed in the 1970s and
1980s. This chapter has provided the background necessary for understanding the nature of land ties and the revitalization movement in Ogata-mura. In the following chapters I will explore the ways in which Ogata-mura farmers' relationships with their land affect their attitudes toward the village and its revitalization efforts by focusing on three farming households and two demographic groups: teenagers and young wives.
CHAPTER IV

CASE I - TAKERU ISONO AND HOUSEHOLD

Three detailed household case studies will now be presented in order to test the hypothesis that because ancestral land ties are absent in Ogata-mura, village farmers will be less concerned about revitalization efforts in the village than would otherwise be the case.

I interviewed Takeru Isono using a tape recorder on three different occasions. I was able to approach him about conducting interviews because he was the only student to arrive for conversational English class on my first day of work in the village community center. His oldest daughter, Yukiko, was present for each interview, but his wife was available only the first time. The first two interviews took place in the straw mat-covered guest room (zashiki) of his house. We sat on the floor at a low table for several hours on each occasion, taking up the better part of two Friday afternoons. The third interview was conducted at Yukiko's house, seated in chairs at a dining table near her kitchen. On all occasions, Takeru enjoyed beer or rice wine (sake) while I refrained because I needed to keep track of my questions and drive home later. Takeru was never reluctant to have me interview him. He enjoyed the chance to talk. He is a stocky man of about 65 years with broad shoulders and strong hands that have seen many decades of manual labor. He is well-known in the village community for his good attitude, warm smile, and friendly disposition (FIGURE 11).
FIGURE 11

Takeru Isono and His Grandson, Kenji
Personal History

Takeru Isono came to Ogata-mura with the third group of settlers in 1968 from his home area on the coast of Fukushima Prefecture. Born in the mid-1930s, he was the eldest son (chonan) of his family, and as such was charged with the responsibilities that accompany the position of household heir. His father, a local sumo wrestler, specialized in making charcoal and raised silkworms as a primary means of subsistence. He diverted his three hectares of land to wet rice fields while Takeru was still young. Takeru never attended high school, and began handling the family farming operations at an early age. Instead of taking a regular wage-paying job, he supplemented the family agricultural income by doing seasonal dekasegi work in winters.

Dekasegi -- working away from home on a seasonal, temporary basis -- has been a typical income supplement for many Japanese farmers due to a lack of local jobs since the end of the war (Bailey 1991:146; Dore 1978:106). In Akita Prefecture, about 4,000 people left the area to do dekasegi work alone in 1963 (Gordon 1965:26). Dekasegi work often involves hard labor under dangerous conditions and therefore is not on the top of the list of farmer's alternative employment choices. For the town in which Moon researched, the deaths of two local men away on dekasegi jobs was a major impetus for the directors to go ahead with plans to allow an outside developer to build a ski slope in the area. They hoped that new local jobs would result (Moon 1991:78). In winters, Takeru's dekasegi work took him to Osaka, about 600
kilometers from home, where he worked as a carpenter for about five months out of
the year under especially unsafe conditions.

It was dangerous. You had a whole lot of guys from here and there,
and their backgrounds were really different, so there were a lot of
fights. There were even killings. I decided to kill rather than be killed
if it ever came down to that, so I carried a long knife. I never had to
use it, though. Huh! Sometimes the local mafia guys would come
around and demand money from us for protection, too.

The Isono household depended mainly on rice farming, which produced about
12,000 kilograms of rice, or about 800,000 yen, per year. Takeru's dekasegi work
provided about 300,000 yen per year, while his father's charcoal-making brought in
about the same amount. The family of seven lived on a yearly income of about
1,400,000 yen in the 1960s, or about 4,000 U.S. dollars at the mid-1960s exchange
rate. Compared to others, Takeru's family seems to have been fairly well-off. In
1967, the average farm household in Japan consisted of five persons and had a total
income of only 1,029,700 yen per year: 510,000 of that being agricultural income,
and 519,000 from other sources (Japan Statistical Association 1988:548). The Isono
house was a large wooden farmhouse, designed with an open area for the ox and
horse in the center, the presence of which resulted in midnight grunts and other noises
and a large number of flies.

Takeru's lifestyle and work schedule in Fukushima kept him busy. He neither
had the time or the money to take family trips out of the prefecture. A brief
excursion, he told me, with the kids to the prefectural capital was the best trip that he
could manage. General entertainment was of the old style: local summer festivals and other neighborhood or hamlet gatherings.

In what eventually turned out to be fortuitous for Takeru, heavy rains around his home area in 1967 caused serious flooding in the lowlands, resulting in a number of deaths: eight in Takeru's own neighborhood. Takeru's ancestral fields were among the many which were submerged by the river as it overran its banks. The region was declared a disaster area and the Self-Defense Forces were called in to help with the relief efforts. The Ministry of Construction made plans to widen the river and reinforce the banks to prevent future damage, so the government purchased many farmers' land rights, including Takeru's, leaving him with little means of supporting his family.

It was really tough. "Ah! What should I do?" You see, all of my precious land, the fields I needed to live, was bought up. "Well, how am I supposed to make a living now?" I was lost like that from 1967 until 1968. I was just lost. I didn't know what to do without my farm -- how I could make a living -- so I was really distressed. Then, in the newspaper, there was something about recruiting for the Hachirogata Reclaimed Land Settlement Project, something about applications. It was in the newspaper. There was a big spread in the paper... My turning point... My big chance.

A man from his home area had preceded Takeru in emigrating to the Hachirogata lands by one year, and Takeru, who still keeps the newspaper clippings, decided to become the next settler from his home area. He applied, and took the written examination along with many other hopefuls at the prefectural headquarters. Takeru told me that the exam had not been easy.
Takeru: The difficult part was geometry. Equations. Mathematics. Mathematical equations. Also, social studies: the three big changes in Japanese agriculture. Ah, after losing the war -- the redistribution of farm lands, right?

Yukiko (daughter): What?
Takeru: The land tax revision?
Yukiko: Hmm. Suffrage. Women's suffrage.
Takeru: No! In agriculture. The three big changes in agriculture. There were those three changes, like the Taika Reformation (political reforms carried out in 645AD).

Yukiko: Umm, the tenant farmers...
Wife: The Taika Reformation was a long, long, time ago!
Takeru: Well, yeah. But there were things like that.

Following the written exams, prospective settlers were assembled at regional centers for interviews. Takeru's interview was held at the Tohoku Agricultural Administration headquarters at Sendai in Miyagi Prefecture. He was interviewed by a panel of government officials whom he remembered as having been rather intimidating. He successfully passed the interview exam and went to Ogata-mura in 1968 to study at the agricultural training center, leaving his family behind in Fukushima. Takeru spent about a year at the center, learning how to use large-scale tractors and combines, far greater in size than the mini tillers which he had used before. While he obviously had a good time making friends there, Takeru described the experience as having been "severe" and "tough," probably because he never studied formally after the age of fourteen, and because the type of agriculture he was being trained for differed fundamentally from that to which he was accustomed.
Getting Started in Ogata-mura

After his training period ended, Takeru returned to his home in Fukushima and brought his wife and three children with him to live in the new village house. He and his daughter Yukiko told me they had been very happy to find that their Ogata-mura house had a flush toilet -- an amenity they had done without in Fukushima. Takeru's parents remained behind for a few more years, coming to live in Ogata-mura later. They were both deceased by the time I met Takeru in September of 1995. As for farming, Takeru spent some time working in groups with other farmers to learn, and then raised his own crop in the reclaimed soil of Hachirogata for the first time in 1970. To begin with he had ten hectares of wet rice fields that were increased later by the government to 15 hectares. By 1997 his holdings had grown to 28 hectares due to Takeru's land purchases from various farmers who moved out of the village over the years.

At the time Takeru began farming in Ogata-mura, the settlers had been granted permission by the Ministry of Agriculture to plant their seedlings by hand as they had traditionally done rather than have seeds sprinkled over the fields by helicopter. Takeru and the others continued to plant by hand until the late 1970s, when mechanized planters had become adequate. The men generally operate the tractors, while their wives, children, other kinfolk, or hired hands help by bringing seedling trays to the fields and loading them onto the planter. This pattern of sexual division of labor is common in rural Japan (Dore 1978:112).
Takeru stressed that it had been much harder for the first and second group settlers than it was for him and his entry-group friends.

They were told (by the Ministry of Agriculture): "You people, if you're going to do that, just get out. Get out of this village, Ogata. Just get out!" It was really tough for them. So, they fought and then they started growing seedlings and planting them by hand. Of course, it's a much more reliable way of getting crops. Spreading seeds is for warmer places -- south of here -- like Kyushu or Tokyo. Even places like Chiba, since those places are warm, you see. It's cold here, right? It's cold, so crops don't grow well that way. So they fought that plan and by the time we came along they had reached an agreement that it was okay to plant by hand, so it got to where we could get about ten sacks or so -- nine sacks, eight sacks -- eight to ten sacks per field, and then we could really enjoy...enjoy life! Hah! Hah! Hah! As for hardships, we third-group settlers didn't have so many hardships, you know.

**Adjusting to the New Village**

Although Takeru felt that Ogata farming was fairly easy compared to what he was accustomed to, his wife remembers the early years in the village as having been difficult. According to her, "it was so tough that even a (strong) farmer like him might have quit," to which Takeru replied "yeah, tough. But it was fun." Takeru now tends to look back on those times with a sense of nostalgia, as he does concerning his childhood _furusato_. Adjusting to life in the village was difficult for Takeru at first. Changing suddenly from a lifestyle governed by a schedule of continuous manual labor of one sort or another to one of mostly mechanized farming, with nearly five full months of free time every winter, was not easy. Since the Ogata-mura farmers
were restricted by the government from engaging on off-time temporary work, Takeru, like many other settlers, spent his winters drinking at area bars, coming home late, and being scolded by his wife. After several years of this pattern, another village farmer from Takeru's home area befriended him and offered to teach him how to ski. Today, his name card bears the title "Ski Instructor" among other things. Takeru said: "If it hadn't been for him, I would have drunk myself to the grave by now. I would have at least gone nuts."

It seems that farming and living in the village went well for Takeru until the aogari ("cutting of green rice") episode in the summer of 1975. Looking back, he still feels that the government was at fault, even though Takeru tends to be extremely optimistic about the village in general. It may have been important that Takeru was already well-established in the village at the time, so that the aogari episode did not leave him with permanent ill-will about the village and the government, even though he became quite serious and spoke in a hushed tone about the matter when I asked him. His own past experiences and his household's prospects for a long future in the village have been more powerful influences on him than any hardships he experienced after immigrating.

**Takeru Isono and Family Today**

Takeru's house still contains the original block construction and v-shaped roof, but has more than doubled in size over time through successive additions and
extensions. Now, the house contains a large, ornate traditional guest-room (zashiki), with an alcove (tokonoma) for displaying seasonal scrolls and other objects, and a tatami-mat floor. Aside from Takeru and his wife, their son Katsuo, Katsuo's wife, and three grandsons live in this house. Takeru's two daughters, both older than their brother, have married into other Ogata-mura farming families.

The oldest daughter, Yukiko, did well by marrying a fifth-group settler who had immigrated unmarried, bringing his parents with him. Yukiko now has three sons. The oldest is a college student in Tokyo, the middle son is in a nearby high school, and the youngest is in the ninth grade. Her sister, Natsuko, married the son of a settler, and currently has one daughter in high school and a son in the seventh grade. Natsuko is much more limited in her mobility and autonomy than her elder sister because her husband's father -- not her husband -- is the household head. Her own parents have even had to intercede and defend her on several occasions when conflicts arose in her conjugal family. On one of these occasions, her sister helped Natsuko find a small rental house in which to live temporarily while her husband was hospitalized. During that time he was unable to stand up for her or lend support in her dealings with his mother.

**Inheritance for the Isono Household**

With Katsuo, his wife, and three grandsons in his house, plus two daughters and five other grandchildren in the village, Takeru has built the foundations of what
may turn out to be a permanent household (ie) in the village. If his oldest grandson, Kenji, refuses to take over his grandfather's massive farm, it is likely that one of the other boys would step in and offer to do so. According to Takeru, pressure from the prospect of this happening will influence Kenji to become the successor, although he does not seem interested in farming now. Furthermore, should a third-generation heir fail to step forward, the existence of two related families in the village would provide sources for adoption in order to continue the original Isono ie. Adopting an extra child from blood-relatives in order to provide a household heir is a practice of long standing in Japanese farming villages (Embree 1939:82). At present, the Isono ie extends one generation back because Takeru's parents spent their last years in his house and are enshrined in his butsudan, a Buddhist household altar for paying respects to the ancestors and praying to the gods of the afterlife for their protection. This large, ornate, black and gold altar, doors open, incense, ceremonial objects, and small likenesses of his parents enclosed, stands in a privileged alcove in Takeru's guest room (zashiki). From the upper edge of the sliding door frame that runs midway across the room, Takeru's parents, in black-and-white, look down. Such photos of deceased parents and other ancestors in a house are a sign that one is in the home of an eldest son (Bernstein 1983:7).
Takeru Isono's Rice Marketing

Takeru's rice production and marketing are now largely handled by his son, Katsuo. The Isono household belongs to a family-group association consisting of about twenty households which markets its rice collectively under a single label. Therefore, Takeru does not need to be heavily involved in the business side of agriculture, and the profits are relatively high while the risks remain low. As do the other similar marketing associations in the village, this group sometimes takes international trips together. Takeru, however, prefers taking such trips on his own. He travels abroad about two times every year to ski in places such as France, Switzerland, and New Zealand. More recently he has traveled by ship from South America to Antarctica, where he swam in the icy ocean. When I tried to reach him in August of 1998, he was vacationing in the Arctic Circle (FIGURE 12).

Takeru's Wife

Unfortunately, I was unable to speak much with Takeru's wife. She was always absent except for the first time I visited Takeru at home. However, the fact that she served green tea in the classical Uransenkei style during the original interview reveals one aspect of her lifestyle change after moving to the village: there would have been little chance for her to study such an art form back home. Takeru's wife was to have been present the next two times I interviewed Takeru, but one time she
FIGURE 12

Takeru Isono at the North Pole
notified me at the last moment that she had an out of town trip with her Taisho-goto group. The Taisho-goto is a smaller, less cumbersome version of the traditional Japanese harp, the koto. The third time I tried to interview both Takeru and his wife together, she had injured her back in the rice fields, and was laid up in bed. Joining a Taisho-goto group may have been available back home in Fukushima, but road trips probably would have not been a part of it. She has been active in agricultural labor since before moving to the village, and even engaged in her own dekasegi work for short periods. In the early years of their Ogata-mura life, she participated in the hand-planting of seedlings, but now, being in her sixties, she has largely retired from working in the fields. Even Takeru now leaves most of the machine operations and field labor for Katsuo and his wife. His main farming job is bringing trays of seedlings from the greenhouse to the paddies by the truckload during their busy planting time. "I'm really good at that!" Takeru said.

**Attitudes About the Village and Revitalization**

Takeru thinks very highly of Ogata-mura in general. When I asked him if the aogari episode resulted in any farmers leaving the village, he replied: "No way. No one. A great place like this? It's the best in Japan. It's the best in the world!" While he has a good attitude towards the village, however, he remains distanced from Ogata-mura in terms of his actions. In contrast to his daughter Yukiko who was actively involved in opposing the government with her conjugal family, Takeru does
not feel that the village's political problems have left a lasting mark on the society. In fact, Takeru pointed out an important characteristic of the new Ogata-mura community that may allow such problems to fade quickly: the fact that there are no old family feuds going back into the distant past. These tend to exert very powerful influences in traditional villages.

Among the farmers there's not any extreme...quarrel...going on. That's over and done with. The thing is, in our case, that...how can I say it? We don't have our relations around us and those old family feuds because we come from everywhere, so we can make our own decisions. We can act as we please.

Takeru is very supportive of the village solar car and bicycle events. He is not concerned about the financial aspects of holding the races, nor about the events possibly being designed for the benefit of a limited few. In fact, he feels that the events are outstanding because of the possible benefits for the entire world. He relates this effort at developing alternative clean-energy sources to the recent ozone hole phenomenon.

I'm all for it -- really. We do that here, and then the technology and the solar car spreads out from Japan to the entire world, and then the earth's environment will really become clean, and our own grandchildren -- right? -- they can live in a really clean environment. That's why I completely support it.

Takeru does have reservations about the bunkajin neighborhood project. He, like many, wonders how the bunkajin are selected, by whom, and wonders what types of special skills or knowledge they are supposed to have. Another aspect of it that concerns him is how the bunkajin are expected to interact with the farmers and
become members of the community. According to Takeru, the *bunkajin* need to have good communication abilities, in addition to other skills and knowledge, so that they can get along with the farmers.

Even if there's someone with high-tech skills or much knowledge, it's no good if they can't communicate with us on a personal level. "I know this. I went to Tokyo University's Law School." If people just come in here with only a title, without any sense of humanity, if they don't gather people who can communicate well with us farmers, then it'll be a sad, lonely thing. Hmm. It won't become anything. I think that's why it's in trouble now. You can see, because they're just not coming.

Takeru is also concerned about using the label of "*bunkajin*" and setting them apart from the "regular" farmers. The following quote reveals his sensitivity about the social position of farmers, and how the settling of "cultural people" in the village reinforces that position for him:

But then, about the word "*bunkajin*:" If you say that, what does it mean? It's a bad habit of Japanese people, this separation that exists between the farmers and the officials— the bosses. This thing: "I'm an official, you know. You people are just a bunch of peasants." This sort of exclusive viewpoint really exists. Even now, in any city, town, or village, it still exists. Farmers: In the old days, that meant "peasants," right? "You people are mere peasants," right? Since the old days the officials have been like that, and if you say that sort of thing now, it's like saying we're just garbage. Hum... If the *bunkajin* come with that idea, then...maybe (it's our) destiny.

Takeru mentioned the hang gliding expert who is living in the *bunkajin* neighborhood. He, like many, is not clear about what hang gliding is, or what other activities the man is engaged in. He feels that this resident may have some things to offer Ogata-mura farmers in the future, since some villagers are apparently getting
into hang gliding. Takeru also associated hang gliding with the use of remote-controlled airplanes for spreading fertilizers over crops. This is stretching a bit, but it shows that Takeru wants to find something positive to say about the resident *bunkajin.*

Takeru's optimism concerning the village keeps him from being worried about internal political or economic matters. Rather, his attentions are turned more outward toward international free-trade issues involving the WTO and GATT. He spoke of the 1994 Uruguay Round of talks, which resulted in the Japanese government agreeing to accept rice imports (Knight 1994a:635). Takeru explained that in light of such foreign pressures, Ogata-mura farmers need to find ways of lowering their production costs in order to boost their profits and compete against cheaper foreign rice. The best way of doing this, to Takeru, is to increase the scale of agriculture. He said:

Due to GATT and this Uruguay round, the markets are becoming free. So, you've got to lower your own costs in order to counteract this. To do this, you can enlarge your area. You can make your agriculture bigger -- make it big and so lower your costs. But, about lowering your costs -- it's pretty difficult. And making it big is pretty hard, too. If you borrow money from someone and then buy land with it, of course you just end up paying money. I think it's a pretty tough age when we have to lower our costs like this, but if it comes to fighting with the whole world's agriculture to the point where we have to find a strategy for survival...we have to find a way.
Ogata-mura as Takeru's Furusato

For Takeru Isono, Ogata-mura is now his furusato. Yet, in another sense he still feels strongly for his original one. He acknowledges that his old furusato does not exist any more; it only lives on in his memory, and he can travel back without physically going there.

Of course, the mountains and the rivers -- those are the places where I played when I was little. Those mountains and the streams, there's no way I could ever forget them. Sometimes, once or twice a year, I go back to my furusato, you know. Yeah, even now, the green of the mountains, and the way the pine trees turn red when they're eaten by those bugs that eat pines, it makes me feel really nostalgic. The rivers and the roads -- they all used to be just gravel paths, you know? Horse-drawn carts. But these are the day of the "my car" attitude, right? Even in that little rural place, there are cars and the roads are paved. It's really changing. That environment I was raised in all those years ago has really changed, and lifestyles are changing, too. It's really tough, you know -- life there. It's much tougher than here. Really, really tough. Folks just can't get much income. Yeah, they have to pack a lunch and head out in the morning, and so the communication within the family is getting thin. It's getting thin. That's different from when we were young. When we were little... Now, they're doing craft work and such, right? Straw craft work. You know, take straw and, like this -- straw. They're doing that now, right? Sometimes in mountain village schools in Akita an old person comes and makes ropes like this -- does this sort of handicraft, right? Maybe you don't know. It was that sort of age. Hmm...

Conclusion

For Takeru, Ogata-mura's agriculture, lifestyle, and household relations affect the village's becoming a furusato for the settlers and their children. Since he has
three children and eight grandchildren in the village, he is sensitive about "village-
building" (mura-zukuri), especially for the youngest generation of the village. His
vision of mura-zukuri differs from that of the mayor, but he also respects the village
office's efforts.

For them (the youngest generation), this place is completely their
furusato. From their friends to the environment itself, it's entirely their
furusato. We're the settlers, right? We're the first generation. The
second generation is Katsuo Isono. That's the second. Kenji is the
third generation. The third. Now, making it into such that the third
generation thinks: "Yeah, this is a really great furusato!" is what mura-
zukuri is all about. Mura-zukuri is a big thing. The mayor -- he and
the others are working their hardest at Mura-zukuri. Well, as for me,
it's about my own house and my lifestyle. Making my household's
lifestyle enjoyable and leaving that for my family so that my
grandchildren can say: "Hey! Our house is fun!" is what it's all about.
Having a really fun village and making my own household fun --
that's a great furusato. To make my household fun is my -- the
grandfather...Hah! Hah! Hah! -- the grandfather's duty, you see.
Yeah, that's like taking my grandchildren skiing and such. That's how
I feel about it. Yeah, it's a great village, you know?

Takeru's life has changed dramatically since his ancestral fields were lost
thirty years ago. He now follows a schedule of about four months of farm work per
year and eight months of swimming, skiing, traveling, playing with his grandsons,
and relaxing. He can enjoy the security and pleasure of having all of his children and
grandchildren near him. He can also rest assured knowing that the future of his farm
and household which he founded is secure for the foreseeable future. Probably none
of these pleasures would have been possible back home in Fukushima. Expecting a
son to stay home and follow in his footsteps there would have been far less reasonable
than doing so in Ogata-mura.
In discussions about getting accustomed to the new Ogata lifestyle, Takeru spoke about the amount of money that the village farmers have. This shows how his own lifestyle has been affected. He spoke in a low voice when discussing money, but finished the following narrative with a tone of excitement.

People don't talk about it much, but there's a certain degree of money here, too. Yes, money too. There's a certain degree -- enough to enjoy our lives -- right? There's money here, so people can really do group activities and various things, and live as they please. And people go on overseas trips too, if they want. Your usual farmers can't really do that.

Yeah, if I go up to any other farmer (in Japan) and say that sort of thing, they'd say "oh, you're just praising yourself with that talk!"

Yeah, it's better not to talk about this to others. If you want to talk about it, you'd better just go to some other county and talk about it there. If you do, they'll ask "oh, is there a big farm like that in Japan?"

When I went to Sweden, the (skiing) school teacher -- the boss -- he said "you people came from far away -- all the way from Japan -- to ski. What kind of lives do you lead back home?" See, he knew that most farmers -- peasants -- couldn't possibly go to Sweden, but there were ten of us who went there to that ski school in Sweden. Ten people.

Ten! So, that teacher, he was pretty surprised. Sometimes, rarely, there are one or two people who go there, but ten -- that's a big group. A big trip. Big! So then, at night, there was a party, and a lot of conversation...that's written down in here somewhere... They said "you folks, why did you come to such a far away place? What sort of jobs do you do?" I said "I'm a farmer. A farmer." They said "oh, but Japan's farms are small." They said that, so I understood why that teacher had been surprised, so I said "No! No! No! No! No! I'm from Akita, Japan. Our farms are big! BIG! BIG! Hah! Hah! Hah! They said "Okay! Okay!"

Takeru Isono is a good example of an Ogata-mura settler who has adjusted well to the new village. He has done this through forming horizontal ties with other settler families into which his daughters married and, most importantly, by having a son who eagerly took over his farming operation and who has three sons of his own.
Having a large *ie* with good successorship possibilities is a major factor in Ogata-mura's becoming a *furusato* for Takeru. This is clear from the way that he related building a fulfilling household family life in order to make the village a "good" *furusato*.

I have hypothesized that Ogata-mura farmers will not feel enthusiastic about the revitalization efforts of the village because they do not hold ancestral land. This holds true for Takeru Isono in that he dislikes the *bunkajin* project, and although he favors the solar events, he does not take action to support them. They merely serve as a focus for his overall satisfaction with the village because Ogata-mura gave him a second chance at a good life after losing his inherited fields. The assumption for the hypothesis, that the village farmers will not feel pressured to secure an heir, does not completely apply for Takeru anymore because he is building ancestral land. This is happening because his grandsons are the third generation of his *ie* to work the fields he purchased and the fourth generation to call the village "home." It suggests that for some residents land is becoming ancestral in Ogata-mura as the third generation comes of age.
CHAPTER V

CASE II - THE MACHIDA HOUSEHOLD

I interviewed Nobuhiro and Takako Machida, both about 45 to 50 years old, for several hours on a Friday afternoon at their house in Ogata-mura. I was able to approach them about conducting an interview because of a close connection I have with the family into which their daughter married. Mr. and Mrs. Machida hosted me in the spacious, sparsely furnished front room. We sat on the floor at a low table, and Takako kept busy bringing treats and pouring tea -- sometimes pausing to join the conversation. I interviewed their daughter, Asako Tanaka, on another occasion when she visited my wife and me in Akita City. Unfortunately, I was unable to interview her brother, Hiroaki, because he was a high school student away from home.

Household History

Nobuhiro and Takako Machida moved to Ogata-mura in November of 1974 with the fifth settler group, bringing their three year-old daughter, Asako, with them. Both Nobuhiro and Takako grew up in farming families in the same town in Ishikawa Prefecture, Honshu, near the shore of Toyama Bay. Nobuhiro was the eldest son (chonan) of his family, with a younger brother and an elder sister. He had always wanted to farm like his father, except for a short time in college when he considered a career in geography as a profession. In order to be a farmer, he knew that a regular
job would be necessary as well. Consequently, after high school he entered the
Ishikawa Prefectural Agricultural and Technical Junior College. After graduating, he
returned home and took a position at the local agricultural cooperative, traveling
around the area and teaching the techniques he learned in school to regional farmers.
He also helped his father tend to their modest 2.1 hectare rice farm -- his father had a
wage-paying job as well. Shortly after returning home as the *ie* successor, an
arrangement was made by Nobuhiro's parents and a "go-between" (*nakodo*) to hold an
official meeting between a prospective groom and bride. In this way, Nobuhiro was
introduced to Takako, whose house was only a few kilometers away from his own.
They married in 1970, and Takako took up residence in Nobuhiro's family home.
About one year later, Asako was born. For the next several years, they lived a fairly
typical farm household life -- maintaining the fields of the *ie*, paying respects to the
ancestors, working full-time, and generally getting by. Nobuhiro said:

> After all, my wife had her own job, too, back in Ishikawa. I worked,
too, and so did my father. Basically, it was more like working for
wages as far as income went. What money we got for the rice we
produced all went back to the (agricultural) cooperative. For example,
after we paid for the costs of farming, for the machines, for our life
insurance and such -- our installments -- there was hardly anything left
over, you know.

After having spent a total of about five years working for the agricultural
cooperative in his home town, Nobuhiro saw an opportunity to transform himself into
a full-time farmer who can rise above the typical Japanese agriculturalist's situation of
just making ends meet. It was the Hachirogata Land Reclamation Project which gave
him his chance. He had heard of it before. He had even been to Ogata-mura once
with a friend while they were college students. They traveled northwards by train
along the Sea of Japan coast from Ishikawa to Akita to see the newly reclaimed lands
in early 1968, wondering if they would like to apply for the settlement program. The
56 families of the first settler group had moved into their houses only the previous
November when rice had not even yet been commercially grown in the new paddies.

There was little for Nobuhiro and his friend to see.

Back then in Ogata-mura there weren't even any pine groves. There
literally wasn't anything except for the training center and the first
settlers' houses. It was March, our spring vacation, and this place was
just a sandstorm -- whirlwinds, small twisters -- just picking up the
sand and spinning it around, you know. There was no asphalt. We
rode a bus from Akita city to Ogata-mura, and when we entered the
village, the road became really rough. It wasn't even gravel -- just dirt.
When we saw the place, we said "this isn't a place to come and live
in," and we left.

In 1973, about five years after his initial visit to Ogata-mura, the successes
that the settlers had had with their crops by that time were attracting the attention of
both local and distant farmers of Japan. A great many Akita farmers wanted to be
among the last group of settlers and the competition between applicants became very
fierce, Nobuhiro reported:

Because of the competition, there was an area-wide study session held.
It was on television -- something like "bright, promising farming
village." I saw it, and again I thought that I should try. So, I did try,
and I took the Hachirogata Land Reclamation test and got in. After all,
I was in the position of teaching, but rather than teaching, my desire to
actually work was stronger, I guess. You see, my house was a farm
household, right? While farming I worked for the ag. coop. They had
me going around and around teaching, but personally -- between the two -- I like working best.

When the word of Nobuhiro's acceptance came, he set off for the training center in the village. After eight months, in November of 1974, he returned home and brought his wife and daughter to live in a concrete block house just like all the other settlers. When Nobuhiro left Ishikawa, he also absolved himself of the position of ie successor. This included all the associated duties, such as taking care of his parents, maintaining the ancestral graves and fields, and in this case, the pressure of managing a financially profitless farm. Takako was also freed from the duties of tending to the Machida family household Buddhist altar (butsudan) and from living in her mother-in-law's house. She was also freed from the obligation of providing the ie with male heirs. Nobuhiro's brother, Kojiro, was only about thirteen years old when Nobuhiro departed and left the household successorship in his young hands. Today, Kojiro and his wife remain in the family home in Ishikawa and manage the farm while they both have wage-paying jobs.

Getting Started in Ogata-mura

When Nobuhiro and Takako began farming in Ogata-mura, he was among the best prepared of the newcomers -- both in terms of attitude and experience. Since he had been a struggling part-time farmer with household headship responsibilities, and a teacher of cutting-edge farming techniques and methods, getting started was like his own training experience had been. The only new factors were the size of the fields
and the machines. The initial few months in Ogata went well for Nobuhiro, Takako, and Asako. However, during that first summer in the village the aogari ("cutting of green rice") incident took place. Nobuhiro can not easily forget the episode. At the time, his confidence in the government was shaken, but he set to work farming his new land with eagerness. He continued to market his rice through the Country Elevator until about a year after the birth of his son, Hiroaki, in 1979.

Basically, with the Country Elevator, I couldn't work freely -- according to my own schedule -- such as with the harvesting. And, after all, I guess my farming spirit is just strong. Yeah, I really wanted to do it my way. That's my character -- I don't like to leave my work for someone else to do.

After breaking away from the elevator, Nobuhiro became the first chief executive officer of one of several newly-formed joint stock corporations in the village, which began buying rice from farmers who had also stopped using the elevator. The pressure of being the executive, though, proved stressful, and Nobuhiro backed out and went independent.

There were about thirty stockholders. Anyway, of course, in a joint-stock corporation, all the stockholders hold equal shares, right? That means that if everything is going well, it's expected and so it's fine, but if it's going badly, it's the boss who's to blame. That's how it was, of course.

By the time of the yami-gome (black market rice) autumn of 1985, Nobuhiro had gone independent and formed his own personal company, Ogata Rice Limited, which he and Takako still operate out of their own house. Nobuhiro was one of the most heavily involved farmers in yami-gome, and he was among the several
participants who were prosecuted by the government but were later exonerated. An undated article from the Akita Sakigake newspaper which I found in a scrapbook in the village middle school features a photograph of Nobuhiro along with three other men. Takeshi Shirakawa, who was the primary leader of the black-marketeer group sits on Nobuhiro's left. Their relaxed faces contrast with the serious and troubled expressions on the faces of the government officials pictured below them. The headline reads: "Confirmation Causes Big Sensation: No Indictments in Ogata Black Market Rice." A smaller headline reads: "Our Toils Were Pointless: Obedient Faction Disappointed."

Asako Tanaka: The Machida's Daughter

During the height of the yami-gome episode, Nobuhiro and Takako's daughter, Asako, was in the village middle school. Some villagers have said that the events of this period filtered down to the children and broke up relationships between classmates and friends, but Asako does not recall any problems among the students.

Yeah, between us kids, just like now and even then, there was nothing like that -- based on what our parents were doing: "you're bad," or something like that. No, between us kids it was fine. Sometimes there were things in the newspapers, but we were only in the sixth or seventh grade, so we didn't really understand all that. Parents are parents, kids are kids: that's how we thought.

For Asako, now 28, the political quarrels never amounted to much, even though her father was involved in illegal activities and other forms of government opposition. Asako looks back on growing up in the village with nostalgia. For her, it
was a childhood surrounded by nature: one that she and her friends largely spent visiting each other’s houses, riding bicycles, playing in the pine groves, helping on the farm, or just hanging around in front of the stores on the village shopping strip (shotengai), much as village kids do today. Asako said:

We were surrounded by rice fields. There are the residential areas, of course, but if you went just a little bit outside, it was nothing but fields. That meant that if you went out to play, it really was just going to a neighborhood friend’s house, and as far as amusement parks or things like that, if it wasn’t a weekend or a holiday there was no way we could get rides. But all the same, the natural setting was nice. After all, we could play freely.

During the time that Asako was growing up in the village, the big events, the hotel and even the hot spa (onsen) did not exist. She and her friends enjoyed the traditional, typical community festivals which can be found in any ward, town, hamlet, or village across Japan, such as the o-bon summer dance and the autumn shrine festival. According to Asako, participation in these traditional community activities in the village has declined since then. She said that the shrine festival had in years past been marked by far greater attendance and more small stalls offering goods such as candy-coated bananas, grilled chicken, and prizes for hitting targets with various projectiles. Now, only a handful of these shops appear on the evening of the festival, but the childrens’ sumo wrestling is still fun to watch. Asako said that the summer o-bon dance (bon-odori) has become smaller as well.

These days they hold it in front of the shotengai (shopping strip), but they used to do it in front of the village office, you know, where the old parking lot was -- the big road. That’s where it was. Back then,
the **bon-odori** line stretched from end to end, maybe double that of today. Now they just do it in that little parking lot -- in that small circle. Now even the stalls are fewer than before, and so are the number of visitors who come to see the dance. After all, compared to before...it was much bigger, you know.

Of course, the fact that the overall number of children in the village has decreased partially accounts for the smaller scale of these community festivals. Ten or twelve years ago, when Asako graduated from middle school, the school was running at full capacity, with about 300 students divided into nine classes: three for each grade-level of seventh, eighth, and ninth. When I left my teaching position in July of 1997, there were just over 100 students: a decrease of over 30 children since I had arrived two years earlier. Today, one way that the village office tries to encourage attendance at the *o-bon* dance is by offering attractive goods such as a television or bicycles as raffle prizes, and a large array of cheap consolation prizes for nearly all who take part.

Asako and most of her friends were the children of farmers, and during certain times of the year that meant work.

On Saturdays, or if we didn't have after school clubs or sports, and if there were no tests, then I helped. Of course, if exams were close we weren't compelled to help. If you compare my brother and me, I think that I probably helped out more -- from way back -- even if I say so myself! Hah! Hah! Or, maybe I just remember it that way!

Eldest sons feel some pressure to take over their family farms from an early age. Even among Asako's friends, a lot of the boys expressed desires or plans to return to the village after high school or college and work as farmers. Asako and her
girlfriends generally did not want to marry into farming families. This tendency is also found today among girls in the middle school.

The Machida's New House

One of the biggest changes in Asako's life in the village was when her parents decided to raze their concrete-block house in the late 1980s and build an entirely new one. This dwelling is at least twice the size of the original, and much more like the style of farmhouse that Nobuhiro grew up in back in Ishikawa. Said Nobuhiro:

The old triangular houses were too low to the ground. The space beneath the floor was too small. The groundwater was high, so the underside of the floor rotted easily, and the airflow was bad. Another thing, those concrete blocks -- have you ever been inside one? -- they had concrete block rooms. Yeah, and the ceilings were low, too. But, the house I was raised in back in Ishikawa wasn't like that; there had been plenty of space in that house.

The current house is a fairly large, two-storey structure. It is similar to but not as grand as some of the houses found in the first settler group neighborhood (FIGURE 13). The house features all the desired elements of the post-war multiple-generation farmhouse, including a roof covered with thick clay tiles, high ceilings, a guest-room (zashiki) with tatami-mat flooring, a large forward-oriented room for receiving general guests and visitors, and a spacious entryway (genkan) with ample room for doorway greetings and shoe removal before stepping up into the house. The
FIGURE 13

A Large First-group Settler’s House

The front door is on the second floor, to the right of the garage.
structure also has modern plumbing systems, a bath and a shower, and extra gadgets and amenities far beyond any farmhouse of the past. Asako spoke of the old house:

Yeah, that house was...well...the living room was like that of a part-time farmer. Next to that were two tatami mat rooms, six mats each (one standard tatami mat measures about 70 inches by 34 inches). That was the first floor. The second floor had a six mat room and a ten mat room. For a family of four, it was okay to live in, but of course as people around us built bigger and bigger houses, it was like: "Wow! I want to live in a house like that!" And when I was at my friends' houses I thought: "Ahh... How nice. How nice." And then just when I entered high school, they built the new house. That old house really was a complete triangle. But anyway, they destroyed everything and built the new house, so it's great now. With the old house, if I went to a friend's house to play, my own was so small it was like: "Oh, I really don't want to bring my friends over." Yeah! Hah! Hah! Certainly, if it had been a big, nice one, I'd have said "come on over!" I could have invited them comfortably, but the way it was, I had no extra room to play in.

Today, Nobuhiro, Takako, and Hiroaki (age 19) live in their spacious ten-year-old house, from which the couple run their business. Hiroaki is in his first years of college -- studying law at a local university.

The Tanaka Household: Asako's New Family

In March of 1996, Asako married into a family by the name of Tanaka living in Hachirogata-machi -- a small town bordering Lake Hachirogata -- a fifteen minute drive from her natal home. Her husband, Kenji, is the only child of his family. Kenji's father is a carpenter, and Kenji's mother now stays home to take care of the young couple's two-year-old son, Yusuke (FIGURE 14). The wedding was a very
FIGURE 14

The Machida and Tanaka Families on Festival Day in Hachirogata-machi

(From top left: Nobuhiro Machida, Hiroaki, Takako Machida holding Yusuke, Mrs. Tanaka, Kenji Tanaka, and a friend of Kenji’s. From bottom left: Kenji’s father, Asako Tanaka, and a friend of Asako’s)
large affair, held in Akita city, with more than two dozen relatives attending the
ceremony (FIGURE 15). I was fortunate enough to be invited as a candid
photographer of sorts. Asako changed her clothing at least six times during the
reception, which amounted to three different ceremonial kimonos and at least as many
dresses, including a white bridal kimonos, a gold kimonos, a green spring kimonos, a
classic white bridal gown, and a black and white Spanish dress. Her parents spent a
small fortune on the lavish ceremony. Even though the groom's parents are
traditionally held responsible for most of the expenses, Asako's parents, being
successful Ogata-mura farmers, covered much of the cost. On their part, the Tanaka
family added a large section to their house and made many modifications in
preparation for Asako's coming as a daughter-in-law (yome). In rural Japan, receiving
a young yome-san for the eldest son is still a matter of importance.

Today, Kenji works for a regional bank, and commutes one hour each way by
train every day to a branch office in Akita city. Asako worked for a different bank, in
a branch closer to home, until she quit due to her pregnancy. After spending about a
year at home with Yusuke she has since returned to work. When they were in school
together, Asako and her friends were certain that they would never marry into a
farming family since they had had to spend many a weekend and holiday helping on
their family farms. Once they had been out of the village for a few years for high
school or college, most of them changed their minds and began to feel less strongly in
their resolve. According to Asako, her decision to marry a local non-farmer was more
FIGURE 15

Kenji and Asako at Their Wedding Reception
a result of fate than any conscious decision on her part. Asako's marriage into the Tanaka family has helped her parents become more attached to Ogata-mura.

The Bond Between the Machida and Tanaka Households

Economically, the new link between the Machida and Tanaka families, which has been strengthened by the birth of Yusuke -- the first grandchild on either side -- translates into an endless supply of free high-quality rice, fresh vegetables, and other agricultural products for the Tanaka family, and free labor for the Machida household; Asako, Kenji, and his parents help out with the farm work during planting season now, allowing Nobuhiro to avoid hiring temporary workers. Asako's position has been cemented in the new household: she "belongs" to the Tanaka ie, as do any of her children, but she is still close to home and her parents can always count on her and her conjugal family. This provides stability for both households.

The connection between the two families provides more than economic advantages for Nobuhiro and Takako Machida. It helps make them feel more comfortable with their decision two decades ago to settle down in an area where they had no roots. Ogata-mura has become more of a furusato to Nobuhiro and Takako with their daughter's and grandson's membership in a long-established area family. If their son, Hiroaki, stays in the village and marries and has children, his parents will no doubt feel much more attached to the village than they do now.
Inheritance for the Machida Household

Unfortunately for Nobuhiro and Takako, Hiroaki’s future is still vague and uncertain. I was never able to speak directly to him because he was away in high school when I was in the village, but his parents and his sister were very doubtful of his eventual return to the village as successor and heir to the Machida household.

During a conversation, my simply mentioning Hiroaki’s name led to his parents’ speculating on his intentions upon graduating from high school.

Takako: He'll be in the third grade soon.
Researcher: Ah, the third grade.
Nobuhiro: Where will he go, then?
Takako: Go to college?
Nobuhiro: Go to college, huh? He'll probably say that he wants to go somewhere and study more.
Takako: Hah! Hah!
Nobuhiro: He may quite possibly say that he wants to go study overseas.
(laughs)
Takako: Hah! Hah!
Researcher: Oh, really? He has no desire to farm?
Takako: Not at all.
Nobuhiro: At this point, it seems that he doesn't want to.
Takako: None. None at all. What did he say? It seems he wants to do something in the humanities -- something like archaeology. Anyway, he's looking at universities that are strong in the humanities. Liberal arts, archaeology -- he wants to study something like that.

Nobuhiro: Ogata-mura and its successors, and my successor, too: they're all still in doubt.
Researcher: What do you think you'll do if he doesn't take over?
Takako: Mmm...
Nobuhiro: Well, as the first generation, it sounds strange for me to say but after all, I chose my own path by myself, so I'm thinking of letting my son choose his own path, too.
Takako: We can't force him.
Nobuhiro: I’m thinking of doing it American-style and just selling everything to him for cash if he says he wants to farm. I’m not talking about just passing down ancestrally-inherited lands. I’ll make my son buy my rice fields. Hah! Hah! Hah! If he says he wants to farm, that’s what I’m thinking of.

Following this, Nobuhiro mentioned that he might just tend to the business side of things and let Hiroaki do most of the manual labor in the future if his son is inclined to do so. Nobuhiro and Takako think that, in contrast to most farming communities, about 99 percent of Ogata-mura’s eldest sons still return to take over their family farms. They also think that this figure will soon decrease. As to why this would happen, however, they are not certain. Takako said that many families with only daughters are talking of quitting when they can farm no longer. This would result in land sales to farmers such as Takeru Isono (Case I).

Concerning whether her brother’s future plans involve farming, Asako is just as uncertain as her parents, but certainly wishes him to come home eventually.

To take over or not: at this point, he’s not saying either way, but I think my parents probably want him to do so. If he won’t then it’s over with this generation. I don’t know what will happen until it happens. Mmm... Everyone will feel more at ease if he does take over, though. Maybe he should go out once, to Tokyo or someplace, and then he could come back.

At any rate, if Hiroaki refuses to purchase and take over his father’s farm and business, Asako stands to lose her natal home. Her parents may end up selling everything and moving to wherever Hiroaki settles down when they are no longer able to work. On the other hand, there is always the possibility that Kenji Tanaka
may tire of climbing the corporate ladder and then he and Asako could step in, taking
over the Machida farm. They could do this without moving to the Ogata-mura house
because of their close proximity. Thus, the new bond between the Machida and
Tanaka families gives a measure of security to both household heads, who, of course,
want to keep their children and grandchildren as near to them as possible.

**The Machida's Attitudes About Ogata-mura and Revitalization**

Concerning the village's big events and *mura-okoshi* in general, Asako and
her parents differ greatly in their views. Nobuhiro and Takako are sharply critical of
the mayor, the village office (*yakuba*), and local and national government policies.
This is not due to any fundamental dislike of *mura-okoshi* activities, nor because they
feel a deep-seated prejudice toward outsiders and city people. Their worries are
centered around the issues of the government's reliability, business, and local
economic conditions. When I asked about their personal views on the big events, it
sparked a lengthy, animated, and sometimes emotional discussion.

**Nobuhiro:**  Well, to say it clearly, I think that Ogata-mura's outside
image has improved. But, as for the villagers inside
and their economic benefits: they are not benefitting at
all. The village's image has gotten better, but the
people inside, well, if you talk about the villagers
benefitting from this, it's absolutely the opposite
situation, you know.

**Takako:**  It's a minus, you know.

**Nobuhiro:**  To do the solar events, they use the village's tax revenues,
right? To hold the events -- to build that track -- that's all
villagers'...

**Takako:**  Yeah, the track and...
Nobuhiro: Debts. They sell bonds and it creates a big burden for the villagers. So, as far as doing all that, if you want to know if that's a plus for the individual villagers, there's no plus at all. But, I'd say that is does raise the village's outside image. That's fine, you know, to do that in various ways. So, from the old *yami-gome* and other problems, that dark image has turned around and become a good image for Ogata-mura. But, on the other hand, the villagers' problems have multiplied, to put it bluntly.

Nobuhiro and Takako, like many others, are very concerned about village expenditures. They feel that the money which the village used for the solar track would have been better spent on paving some of the farm access roads, all of which are dirt. They do acknowledge that the events may be interesting for some village youths, but they criticize the choice of the site for the track's location -- closer to the communities of Wakami and Oga than to Ogata-mura. This, they feel, means that participants don't need to enter Ogata-mura proper, and that villagers cannot see the races or meet participants unless they drive out and spend a half a day or so at the track. Nobuhiro and Takako were more interested in the race when it was held on village roads inside the residential areas during the first year of the event.

Nobuhiro and Takako are especially suspicious of the *bunkajin* neighborhood project. Being very sensitive about expenditures, they do not like the idea of the village government giving such a large amount of money to the new residents, or about granting land to them after seven years.

Nobuhiro: Just like the solar events, the mayor is bringing these *bunkajin* in order to push up the village's image. Having them here doesn't bring any economic effect at
all to the village. Do you know what I mean? Anyway, it's exactly the same idea as building the (solar) sports line. It's a promotional move so they can say that there are these bunkajin here in the village, doing such-and-such work, to raise the village's image.

Takako: For the image.
Nobuhiro: For the image.
Takako: Just using tax money.
Nobuhiro: Oh, yeah. To say it plainly, yes.
Takako: Yeah. It's really just a big waste. Hah! Hah! I feel like it's really a waste.

Both Nobuhiro and Takako think, however, that if the bunkajin become active in the village and can form study groups and hold regular lessons or demonstrations, then there may be some positive social effects from the project. They are not fundamentally opposed to the concept. Along with the solar events and the Nanohana festival, it is primarily the way of doing it and the terms by which the bunkajin are being lured and selected that concern Nobuhiro and Takako.

Their immediate worries, instead, are economic. This is due to three factors: their continuing emotional attachment to their home area in Ishikawa, their lack of trust in the village government and the mayor, and the fact that they are not yet certain of the fate that is to befall them, their farm, and their business.

Asako's Ideas About the Village and Revitalization

Although she was born in Ishikawa and spent her first three years there, Asako feels much more positive about the village, the big events, and other mura-okoshi projects than her parents. However, like her parents, she has never become involved
in the events other than attending the Nanohana Festival on one occasion. Asako bears no mistrust of the mayor or the village government. About the big events, she commented:

They're great, huh? Who ever started it -- whoever thought it up -- whoever it was that first talked about doing it at Ogata-mura, I think they're fantastic! I've never been over there to the starting point, but I've seen the cars racing from one of the bridges between the town and the village. Yeah, they do it in the summer, right? It's right at the end of July -- right at the hottest time of the year -- so watching outside all day, well... Last year, or the year before, the bank had a car with that little dog character on it in the race. I didn't go -- I just heard about it. But, bit by bit, Ogata-mura is becoming famous for its solar car events and such. Before, when I told people outside of Akita that I was from Ogata-mura, there were many who didn't know what I was talking about. But now, if I say I'm from Ogata-mura, there's always someone who knows the place. If someone says that, I just feel glad. If someone says: "I don't know, it must not be a famous place," I don't like it much. To me, especially since it was built on a reclaimed lake, it should be famous pretty much all over the country, but outside of Akita, there were many who said "I don't know" when I said I'm from Ogata-mura. But now there's the solar car, which is famous around the country. Also, there's the spa, and the hotel, too. Now, those who say they don't know are getting fewer and fewer, and because of that, I'm happy.

Asako, after all, grew up in the village, and although she still feels attached to her grandparents' homes in Ishikawa and travels there twice a year, she enjoys the fact that her village's image has improved and that people are not only hearing about it, but remembering it. That is enough for her. Asako and Kenji recently took their son, Yusuke, to the village Nanohana festival. They enjoyed playing games and buying food. However, the line for the mini steam train that ran through the field on a track that the village office (yakuba) built was too long, and they decided not to stand in it.
Asako remarked that she could hardly find any villagers there since it was the peak of rice planting time. When I asked Asako her opinion of the *bunkajin* neighborhood project, she had no idea what it was until I explained it. Not being directly involved in village economics and never having personally been at odds with the village officials, Asako and most of her age-mates have no reason to be particularly critical of the administration's plans and projects.

**Ogata-mura as the Machida Family's Furusato**

Some variation exists between the members of the Machida family concerning the level to which the new village has become a *furusato* for them. Nobuhiro still feels sentimental about his home in Ishikawa and continues to journey there once or twice a year. He realizes that he cannot actually live there again and he knows that he lost the link with the homeland since he gave up his position in his natal household long ago.

Well, now I feel like this (Ogata-mura) is pretty much my *furusato*. And my daughter, she married into another house as a *yome*, and there’s a grandson, too. These days, if I go to Ishikawa, I feel like it’s just the place I was born in. Well, I still have brothers, my parents, and other family there, but the foundation of my livelihood is now in Ogata-mura, so...

Thus, for Nobuhiro, his daughter's close presence and the connection through her to a local family -- with the added birth of a grandson -- form an anchor tying him to Ogata-mura. This is the first step in the formation of ancestral land ties for the family. Both his son and grandson now have blood links to the fields which
Nobuhiro bought, and are potential successors. Even Asako’s husband would be considered a good heir for the Machida household because of the link through Asako and their son, Yusuke. Takako is becoming more attached to Ogata-mura for the same reasons as Nobuhiro but she, like many women, feels a stronger connection to her home in Ishikawa.

For me, my parents are still alive and well back there, so as long as that’s the case, I still feel like that’s really my furusato. But, if my parents aren’t there anymore I probably won’t think that way. But for now, they’re both there and...they’re still alive, so...

A number of other women I have spoken to concerning their furusato have expressed similar feelings about home; as long as a parent maintains a household in the hometown, women migrants to Ogata-mura seem more strongly attached psychologically to their natal homes than do men.

Asako seems to feels attached to both the village and her place of birth in Ishikawa. She said:

My furusato is Ogata-mura, but from my parents’ time it was Ishikawa, so I feel like both places are my furusato. Mmm... Of course, I lived in Ogata-mura longer, but we still go back to Ishikawa about twice a year, so it feels more like a “real” furusato to me. I didn’t live there but for three years, but I have many family back there.

Again, there is a pattern among wives and daughters of settlers remaining sentimentally attached to their places of birth. Takeru Isono’s eldest daughter, Yukiko (Case 1), once told me that she still considers her hometown by birth to be her true furusato, even though few relatives, no natal house and no ancestral lands now
remain there. Probably, if Asako were further away from Ogata-mura, she would feel less attached to Ishikawa and more so to Ogata. Finally, Asako feels that her brother, born in Ogata-mura, would think of the village as his one and only furusato.

Conclusion

The Machida family has adapted well to their life in Ogata-mura, despite some rough times, by setting down roots through Asako’s marriage into a local family in a nearby town, and the subsequent birth of their grandson, Yusuke. Their position in Ogata-mura will be fully cemented if their son, Hiroaki, eventually takes over the family farm and business, settles down in his parents’ house, finds a wife, and starts on the next Machida generation. If this does not happen, they all may one day have to give up the foundation which Nobuhiro and Takako have built.

According to my hypothesis, farmers of Ogata-mura should not feel enthusiastic about the village’s revitalization efforts because they are not the inheritors of ancestral land. This holds true in the case of Nobuhiro and Takako Machida. The necessary condition for the hypothesis -- that the farmers of the village will not feel much pressure to secure an heir -- also holds true. The fact that Nobuhiro and Takako are beginning to feel more at home in Ogata-mura because of the link with the Tanaka family and the birth of their grandson, Yusuke, is important. This suggests that the formation of family ties and the existence of more children may also be strong factors in the Ogata-mura settlers’ adjustments to the village and
their opinions of it. With children and family ties, then, interest in village affairs and participation in *mura-okoshi* efforts may increase among residents of Ogata-mura.
CHAPTER VI

CASE III - THE SATAKE HOUSEHOLD

I interviewed Isao and Hiroko Satake, both around 40 years old, during one Friday afternoon over lunch at their home in Ogata-mura. I had spoken to Hiroko on many occasions -- she often attended my English classes in the community center -- but I had never met her husband. He turned out to be more than willing to answer my questions and speak about his life in the village.

Household History

Isao and Hiroko Satake moved into their Ogata-mura house in November of 1974 upon Isao's completing an eight-month training course at the village center along with the other 120 householders of the fifth and final settler group. Isao, the fourth-born of five sons, grew up in a farming household in a small town in northern Akita Prefecture. He remembered being told by his father to go out and find a job other than farming. Hiroko said: "Probably his father had labored really hard as a farmer and so, thinking of that, he told Isao not to become a farmer." Isao said: "Yeah, I think farming was pretty tough in the old days. That was probably his motive for saying that." After finishing high school, Isao left his hometown to study at the Akita Prefectural Junior College in Akita City. After completing two years of study, Isao spent an additional two years participating in an agricultural exchange study program in California. Isao met Hiroko in Tokyo while she was working there.
Her older brother, who had also been in the United States, was Isao’s close friend.

When her brother’s supervisor from the overseas exchange program visited Tokyo, Hiroko acted as a guide. After Isao joined them, he was introduced to Hiroko by her brother. They married and moved to Ogata-mura the year after Isao’s return from overseas.

Hiroko was raised in a coastal town bordering the southern edge of Lake Hachirogata, along the highway and train lines linking Akita city and Ogata Peninsula. Her father was a fisherman and depended heavily on the lake for his livelihood. Hiroko grew up eating the fish from the lake, and then watched as the source of her family’s income as well as the fish she enjoyed was all but erased.

I could see the land reclamation project underway from the windows of my elementary school. I watched in amazement. I never thought I’d actually live here, though. I didn’t understand at the time, but now I think that leaving the lake alone would have been better. So, I think that the reclamation of Isahaya Bay in Nagasaki Prefecture is a shame. You see, when my father was a fisherman, we could eat a lot of fish, but in making Ogata-mura all the fish we used to eat we couldn’t eat anymore. So, I remember the taste of those fish and even though I want to eat them again, I can’t. Also, the government has been telling us not to grow rice, so basically not filling in the lake would have been just fine.

Hiroko’s opinion of the village was not only affected by her close relationship with the lake since childhood, but also by the timing of the government’s orders to reduce the rice crop only several years before Hiroko and Isao entered the village as farmers in 1974. When the reclamation was sufficiently completed, Hiroko’s father received a rice paddy inside the new polder dam. He farmed it for some time until he
retired, passing the land along to Hiroko’s elder sister’s husband, who still owns the field.

From the beginning, Hiroko’s parents liked Isao, but Hiroko remembers that her parents and friends were concerned about farming being too tough on her, and therefore felt that she should not marry him: “They said ‘you can’t be a farmer, so you’d better give up.’” But I liked him, so I said “I’m okay. I’m okay. I can do it.”

Getting Started in Ogata-mura

Isao and Hiroko, having entered with the fifth group of settlers, were immediately affected by the government’s rice crop reduction (gentan) policies. Their first summer in the village was marred by the cutting of green rice (aogari) incident. They became disillusioned with the management of the model farming project and then got involved openly defying the government’s agricultural policies in the 1980s by selling rice on the black market. While Isao and Hiroko concede that the black market rice (yami-gome) episode and other high-profile incidents damaged the village’s public image, they see their defiance as having been a necessary reaction to the situation. Like other opposition farmers, they say that they learned a lot from the experience and that it made them stronger. They felt that they had become champions of sorts for other farmers who wanted to protest the government’s policies but could not do so. Hiroko:

We learned that there were a lot of farmers in Japan who were against the government's gentan policies. But, you see, they’re small-scale
farmers -- mostly part-time farmers. There are hardly any full-time farmers in Japan, but here there are many, so we're the ones who could best fight with the government. That's why some of them said "Keep it up!" They cheered us on.

Isao and Hiroko also remember that some area farmers outside the polder dam threatened to blow it up and flood the village during the height of the political quarrels.

In the late 1980's, Isao and Hiroko stopped selling through the Country Elevator Corporation and joined a collective marketing group to which they still belong. Said Isao:

It was because I couldn't grow my products as I pleased. You see? I came here in order to farm freely -- as I wanted to. But, the government says difficult things, so I didn't want to sell to the government. If you sell to the government, there are a lot of promises (I have to make) and troublesome things. I don't like troublesome things. I have to be a pure farmer! (The last sentence was spoken in English.)

The collective marketing association they belong to sells members' rice in bulk in unpolished form (genmai) to various buyers. Therefore, like Takeru Isono (Case 1), the personal financial risks are limited but so are the potential profits, since all participating households share in the business.

For the Satake household, quitting the country elevator was not a simple matter. When Isao ceased using it, the village office and the national government made it clear to Isao's father and also to his brothers -- employees of the government -- that their jobs might be in jeopardy if Isao did not return to using the elevator.
Hiroko remembers it as having been an especially trying time for her husband: "I really was afraid that he'd have a nervous breakdown. This was no furusato for us then. We even talked about getting out of Ogata-mura and going to America or Canada." During this time period, said Isao and Hiroko, one of their neighbors who sided with the government was among the Ogata-mura farmers who committed suicide over the conflicts.

**The Satake Household Today**

Isao and Hiroko live in a new house which was built in 1988 after the old block house was demolished. Isao did not like the original house because it had poor air ventilation. The concrete block walls and the floor design caused moisture from outside to get trapped indoors, and the straw tatami mats quickly rotted. Due to these conditions, Hiroko was prone to illness. She also said that the small size of the house made hosting friends inconvenient. Although he was involved in black-market activities, Isao was adamant that the building of their new house -- relatively small by Ogata-mura standards -- had nothing to do with the higher proceeds allegedly received by himself and other farmers who engaged in illegal rice marketing (Moore 1993:290). Isao didn't appear to appreciate being reminded of such allegations when I asked him.

Currently, Isao and Hiroko work together to farm their 15 hectares of land. Isao's parents still live in his home town, where his younger brother and his wife have
remained to take care of the old family farm -- ultimogeniture, while not common, is not unheard of in Japan. Hiroko's parents maintain the house in which Hiroko was born, but also have a small detached dwelling on the same lot as her elder brother's house in Ogata-mura. Hiroko's brother also entered the village in 1974 with the fifth settler group. His son, Takahiro, was the only student of his junior high school graduating class to pass the entrance exam for Akita High School, the most prestigious high school in the prefecture. Once a farmer's son or daughter enters Akita High, the likelihood of their returning to take over the family farm diminishes.

The Satake's Attitudes About the Village and Revitalization

Isao and Hiroko are skeptical of the village bunkajin project as well as the solar sports events. Said Isao:

Simply as "events" they're alright, but they don't do anything for the village. There's no economic benefit, either. Also, villagers can't really participate much. The Nanohana Festival, too -- they do that just at the busiest time of the year for Ogata-mura people. Because of this, villagers don't think too much of these things -- the Nanohana Festival and the solar sports. Who are they doing it for? The mayor probably thinks they're doing it for the young people -- for the future of Ogata-mura.

Hiroko felt that the original solar car race, when the cars ran on public village roads, was better because that arrangement was more effective in promoting contact among villagers and between residents and outsiders. Hiroko said:

The first year, the solar car course started behind the village people's center. From there, they went around the village. The villagers and
the race participants could at least rub shoulders and communicate
some then, but now there's that new course way out there. There's no
more of that anymore.

To Isao and Hiroko, the solar races and other village events are used simply to
project a clean name for the village: to sell the village to the outside world. Isao said:

"I think they can sell the name of the village -- the name -- but this is an agricultural
village. It's a farming village. As a farming village, I wish they'd project it more in
that way." Both Isao and Hiroko have fairly traditional, idealistic conceptions of what
farm life should be. While they do enjoy the comforts and benefits of being Ogata-
mura farmers, such as financial security and extra time and money, they both seem to
long for a more "farm-like" farming life. Isao said that such a life can be had if you
live in parts of Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan.

If you go to Hokkaido, there is still a lot of farming village scenery
there. Among the fields there are houses. They're spread out. Here,
there's no scenery like that. You see, your typical tourist comes here
thinking he'll see a farming village that really looks like a farming
village, but this place isn't like that at all. There are no houses -- no
people -- in the fields, right? This is an industrial farming village of
sorts. Even though it was constructed from nothing, they could have
made it more like a traditional farming village.

Hiroko said:

When we got married, he said to me that for our future we could build
a house in the middle of a rice field and not use cars, but ride around
the fields on horses. And, we could have many animals. He said he
wanted to live in the middle of nature. We live a totally different life!
Hah! Hah! Hah! Driving cars every day...

Isao replied: "But to me that's what farming is. Somebody who knew nothing
about farming planned this place with a pen, and this is the result!" Hiroko had also
wanted a more traditional farming life in the village. In the early 1980's she raised
some chickens in the garden behind her house. Said Hiroko:

There were males and females. I raised them from eggs into chicks. I
was so happy when they hatched! There must have been about ten or
twelve chicks that hatched. There were both hens and roosters, too.
So, the roosters cried: "Kokekoko-ku-ku-ku-ku!" Then, a neighbor
told me that they were too noisy, so I gave up on raising chickens. I
thought: "We're farmers and we can't even raise chickens!"

Inheritance for the Satake Household

Isao and Hiroko have no children. Not having an heir would have placed a
heavy burden on them -- especially Hiroko -- had they been charged with continuing
the family line (ie) and inheriting Isao's father's household and farmland. Adoption
would most likely have been considered as a means of securing an heir. This would
have meant adopting a son of one of Isao's brothers, the most common and desirable
adoption choice for Japanese farmers and fishing families without available children
(Embree 1945:155; Norbeck 1978:53). However, since Isao and Hiroko are not
responsible for providing an heir for his household, and therefore are not under any
pressure from his parents, they have considerable freedom regarding the disposal of
their house and fields in the future. Even so, blood relatives -- no matter how distant -
- are considered first as possible successors. Isao and Hiroko have a nephew -- the
second son of his eldest brother -- who recently graduated from college and spent
some time in the village helping his aunt and uncle with their farm work. This
nephew may be interested in becoming their heir and taking over the farm in the future, but Isao is not counting on it. Isao:

Since he was in elementary school he has been coming here every year. I've been taking him skiing with me in the mountains. He really grew to love skiing. He's good. Even since he started college he's been going to Lake Tazawa to work as a ski instructor every year. If he comes here he can ski all winter, so he's thinking that maybe becoming a peasant is okay!

The point that Isao and Hiroko feel most strongly about concerning the future of their farm is that they want to pass it on to a young person who sincerely wants to be a farmer. For Isao, selling everything to a young city boy who has never farmed but wants to would be the perfect arrangement. The couple is certain that finding a young interested buyer will not be too difficult should their nephew decide not to take over.

Hiroko: You see, this land doesn't belong to our ancestors, and he's not the eldest son, either, so we're really free.
Isao: Right. I bought this land. That means that I have the power to decide. On the other hand, you can't just sell land that's been passed down from eldest son to eldest son as you please, right?
Researcher: So, you're really free.
Isao: I'm free.

One other possibility concerning the inheritance of their farm would be to sell their holdings to Hiroko's nephew in the village, Takahiro, should he return and take over his father's fifteen hectare farm. Doing so might make him the largest landholder in the village. Since he will shortly graduate from Akita High School,
however, his returning to Ogata-mura is highly questionable. His parents are probably considering their own options.

Isao and Hiroko's feelings about the agricultural environment of the village and the government, as well as their situation of not having an heir, combine to produce a highly critical view of the village revitalization activities. They do not focus on local economics per se, nor did they ever mention the relationship between the household and the village as a *furusato*. Rather, they take a more community-level view, and a cynical one, opposite to that of Takeru Isono (Case I) and similar to that of the Machida family (Case II). Isao and Hiroko differ from each other in that Isao takes a more hardline traditional stance and Hiroko a more moderate view. This excerpt from a conversation with them conveys their attitudes in their own words:

**Isao:** *Mura-okoshi* is something for mountain villages -- places where people are disappearing, where they're all leaving for the cities. "Everyone's leaving and that's no good" they say, so they make some event so people will come out and get together. Then, when people come, they spend money. That's *mura-okoshi*, and there's no need to do it here. I think people will come here because they want to see a real farming village. Rather than working so hard to do this and that, I think that if they would just make the place more natural -- leave it up to nature -- we'll have a much better farming village.

That would be *real mura-okoshi*.

**Hiroko:** Sometimes I go to Tokyo, right? When I go, I want to come home right away. I don't like Tokyo so much. Maybe it's because there's no natural setting, and it's so busy and hectic. So, I think that city people are longing for a natural environment, aren't they? That's why I think that *mura-okoshi* must be about preserving a
natural environment. City people can then come and relax. It seems to me that that would be best.

Isao: Not to go somewhere because there is something there, but wanting to go even though there’s nothing -- a place with that feeling to it -- that’s a natural farming village. Since the old days, that’s what a real farming village has been.

Hiroko: They say it’s for the young people, but what they’re really doing for mura-okoshi is building the hot spring bath and things like that, right? That’s why I like the Green Tourism project that’s going on, where they bring city people out to work in the country.

Isao: No. To me, farming villages and cities are totally different. That’s how I want it to be.

Hiroko: But Green Tourism, you see...

Isao: There’s no reason at all for us to go hand-in-hand with city people.

Hiroko: Those people escape from the city and come here for a short time and then they go back, right? For example, if they come when we have farm work to do, they can help a little with planting or something. It’s like that, right? They come here with the idea of doing something.

Isao: No. If they want to come here they can come, but there’s no reason to have them come for that...for that mura-okoshi stuff.

Isao and Hiroko have been hosting Canadian college students in their house on occasion for a number of years due to a connection Isao has with a professor there.

Hiroko related this to the Green Tourism movement. The students generally would help with farm labor while conducting some social or historical research of their own around the village. Isao and Hiroko recently decided to stop hosting them because the students often did not want to do much farm work and tended to rely totally on Isao and Hiroko for entertainment and transportation.
Recent social developments in Japan concern Isao. According to him, it was necessary in his days to work hard in order to build the national economy. As he sees it, however, certain contemporary conditions may be the nation's downfall. These include the facts that (1) Japan is relatively wealthy today, (2) that people have time and money to spend on leisure and recreation, (3) that weekends in Japan are becoming two-days instead of one to one and a half days, and (4) that the proportion of elderly people is on the rise. He and Hiroko also feel that the village will develop in a direction much like that of farming communities in the United States, including a sharp decrease in the number of farms and farming households coupled with consolidation into farms upwards of 100 hectares (see Albrecht and Murdock 1990:46). To Isao, this development will include a strengthening furusato feeling among the remaining residents. He thinks this will take at least three generations: "Even with the second generation, it's not a 'village.' Maybe from the third generation village-building (mura-zukuri) will really begin."

Ogata-mura as the Satake's Furusato

For both Isao and Hiroko, Ogata-mura is not yet a furusato. They would like to feel more attached to the village, but both are still connected to their home towns. Hiroko does not waver about the location of her furusato; she is clear that as long as her parents are alive and maintain the household on the outskirts of Oga city in which she grew up—only about 15 kilometers away by road—her furusato is there and not in
Ogata-mura. Isao, on the other hand, seems to be in limbo between the home he grew up in and Ogata-mura. His parents are still living, but it is now his brother and wife who will take over the house.

While the Ogata-mura farmers are rather free, not having a blood-heir does pose some problems for them, such as the question of where to have oneself buried and enshrined. Isao does have a plot of land in the village cemetery park, but has yet to buy a stone. He said:

I didn't buy a spot at the beginning. I didn't know if I'd be here until the end or not. Back then, you see, I felt that my furusato was back home. I thought I'd build a tomb back there -- I'd go there after I'm gone -- but then phone calls came again and again from the village office. I refused at first -- said I didn't need it. But finally I went ahead and bought a space. I don't think I'll go back to my home town anymore, but I don't want to be buried in the village cemetery, either. This was all under a lake before, so it has to be a lake once again!

Conclusion

The result of having no children, and therefore no heir, for the Ogata-mura farmers is that they become cut-off from their original furusatos without being able to feel that the village is their furusato. This is certainly the case for Isao and Hiroko Satake. While they do not have to worry much about the fate of their land because it did not belong to their ancestors, they are concerned about where they may be interred and about who might pray for them in the future. If the Ogata-mura settlers do not feel good about the village in general, then it is hard for them to feel good about it as their final resting place.
CHAPTER VII

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Over 250 Questionnaires were distributed to two groups of Ogata-mura residents -- the students of Ogata Junior High School and the Young Wives' Association (Wakazumakai). Ninety-nine out of 103 students and 127 out of 150 Wakazumakai members responded. This was done in order to better understand how other village residents are adjusting to Ogata-mura. Moreover, I thought that the possible long-term effects of the village's revitalization projects would be better understood if I consulted the younger people and newcomers to the village.

By using standardized survey forms (see Appendix B), I was able to collect information from these two groups, to which otherwise I did not have much access. The students are not easy to reach when out of school, and most would not feel comfortable being interviewed on an individual basis by a teacher -- especially a foreign one. In addition, it is not easy for a young man to conduct individual interviews with young wives and mothers of the village. This is partly due to gender, but also because it is hard to meet with them without a mother-in-law present and because they are usually busy with housework.
Ogata Junior High School

In the spring of 1997, I distributed questionnaires to the 103 students of Ogata Junior High School. As a first step, I presented a copy of my two-page survey form in Japanese to the school principal. He was happy about my interest in the community and in the students' opinions, and explained my plan to the general faculty two days later. He asked the home room teachers to cooperate in distributing and collecting the forms, and within several days I had 99 completed responses in my hand. The students of the school are in their seventh, eighth, and ninth years of compulsory grade school -- the ninth year being the last required by law. The students in the school range from twelve to fifteen years of age. Since the questionnaires were distributed early in the school year, very few of the ninth graders had yet reached the fifteen year mark (FIGURE 16).

Household Demographics. Most of the students in the school have at least two siblings. Forty percent of the girls have no brothers and some have only sisters. These are the families that will probably experience the most difficulty continuing their family lines in the village. Seventy-seven percent of the students come from farming households. These students are the third generation of their families in the village, and probably the first comprised of members who were all born into Ogatamura. Sixty-five percent of them indicated that it was their grandfathers who took the entrance exams and brought their families to the village. Only 19 percent reported
FIGURE 16

The Ogata-mura Junior High School Third-grade Class in 1997

(The researcher is in the center)
that it had been their fathers, and 17 percent were not certain who it had been.

Dividing the students according to which settler group their parents belong to, 26 percent are of the third group. The first, second, and fourth groups were represented by 14 percent each, and the fifth group by only 6 percent of the students. Twenty-seven percent of them did not know to which group their family belonged. This pattern is not surprising because the third settler group was the largest, consisting of 175 households. About three-quarters of the boys are from farming households and nearly one-half of them are the eldest sons of their families. Many of them have younger brothers, so their parents have some insurance against successorship problems.

Students' Opinions of Ogata-mura. Most students have good things to say about the village in general. They appreciate the clean environment, the sound of birds, and the lack of heavy automobile traffic. Some responded that they like the fact that there are only two traffic signals in the village. Many cited the abundance of good fresh food, clean air, and the uncluttered skyline. On the other hand, some students wrote that they want to have an amusement center and a train station in the village. Others mentioned a need for holding pop concerts. One home room teacher was embarrassed and concerned about the responses of two girls in his class. They wrote on their forms that they want the mayor out of office because they do not like the way he spends tax money. One was very much against the office's planned Land Reclamation Memorial Museum and wanted to have a game center for the children
instead. The nervous teacher and I concluded that the girls had probably heard their parents speaking about these matters at home. This suggests that the political problems in the village are filtering down to the younger generations.

**Students' Opinions of Village Revitalization.** I asked the respondents to tell me their opinions of the solar car events and the *bunkajin* project (TABLE 1). The solar sports are fairly popular among the young people. This is true slightly more so among boys than girls (56 percent of males like the events compared to 44 percent of females).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I like</th>
<th>I don't like</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male (N=44)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (N=55)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for negative responses, boys and girls were nearly equal at 11 percent for boys and 12 percent for girls. Girls were more uncertain of their opinions on this matter, with 44 percent answering that they did not know whether they like the solar events or not. By contrast, only 33 percent of the boys felt this way. Students who like the solar events responded with reasons such as: "People from around the country come to see it and it gets exciting around here;" "people come to the village from other countries
and race cars and such;" or simply "it's fun." Negative responses were more vague. Answers like "it's noisy" and "it's boring" were common.

As for the *bunkajin* project, male and female answers were nearly identical. It is clear that most students are unaware of the project, as Asako Tanaka had been when I asked her about it. Sixty-three percent of the children responded that they did not know anything about it, and 20 percent knew of it but were unsure how they felt. Ten percent like the project, and 7 percent do not. Boys differed somewhat from girls concerning the percentage of negative responses, which was 15 percent for boys and 2 percent for girls. In designing the survey forms for the students, I inadvertently omitted the *Nanohana* Festival from the questions, so I have no data on their opinions of the event.

It seems that the solar events are having some positive effects on the next generation of the village. They are growing up with the solar competition, and they do not recall a time before the expensive track was built, or when the race was held in a different way. They tend to take the events for granted, although some students do not care for them. About half of the students like the events, but most were not able to explain exactly why. For them the races are interesting spectacles that bring the world to their little village once a year. It also seems that as households become involved in the races, their children begin to think more positively about the events. The best example of this was a response from a student who said that she likes the races simply because someone in her family is participating in them.
The Students' Futures in Ogata-mura. When asked whether or not they would be interested in living in Ogata-mura in the future, the boys and girls were essentially identical in their responses; forty-four percent answered "I don't know." One-quarter responded with a definite "yes," and the remaining 31 percent want to leave. Considering how Asako Tanaka said she and her friends felt at that age, the 25 percent who would like to live in Ogata-mura in the future is unexpected. Most of the students in this 25 percentile group favor the solar events and are well-disposed about the village in general.

The question on the form for which boys' and girls' responses differed substantially was the one asking about their intentions to farm in the future (TABLE 2). Sixty-four percent of the girls do not want to do farm work and 36 percent have not decided. None answered "yes." By contrast, 45 percent of the boys do not want to farm in the future and a nearly identical 38 percent have yet to decide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I want to farm</th>
<th>I don't want to farm</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male (N=44)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (N=55)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eighty-two percent of the total boys in the school are from farming families. Of these, 39 percent do not want to farm in the future, and 44 percent are undecided. Only seventeen percent have already decided that they do want to become farmers (FIGURE 17). Eldest sons (*chonan*) are more likely than their younger brothers to be interested in farming in the future, but even among them one-third do not want to do agricultural work (TABLE 3). Interestingly, none of the boys from farming households who do not want to be farmers felt that their families strongly wish them to take over their farms.

TABLE 3
Boys' Attitudes Toward Farming (Sons of Farmers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I want to farm</th>
<th>I don't want to farm</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eldest sons</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(<em>chonan</em>) (N=16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger sons</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(<em>jinan</em>) (N=18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the girls were asked the question: "How do you feel about marrying a farmer someday?" Eleven percent had not thought about it, and 5 percent were resolved to never marry. The remaining responses were distributed as follows: "Absolutely no way," 20 percent; "I don't really want to," 24 percent; well, maybe...," 29 percent; "I don't mind," 11 percent; and "I want to marry a farmer," none. These figures underscore that there is a shortage of wives in rural Japan and suggest that
FIGURE 17

A Third-grade Student Helping With Farmwork

The eldest son in the household, this boy differs from many of his classmates in that he already wants to take over his family’s farm.
there may be a shortage in Ogata-mura in the future. The village’s young girls today have the same opinions that Asako Tanaka and her friends had 15 years ago. Of course, their ideas are expected to change as they grow up. Many of the girls may leave the village and then learn to appreciate farm life more, especially since they are already favorably disposed toward their village community.

Ogata-mura as a *Furusato* for the Students. The overwhelming majority of the children (82 percent of males and 84 percent of females) feel that Ogata-mura is their *furusato* (TABLE 4). Nine percent of the boys and 2 percent of the girls feel that it is not, and another nine percent of the boys and 14 percent of the girls were undecided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male (N=44)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (N=55)</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the respondents are members of the first generation to be entirely born in Ogata-mura, they know no other *furusato*. Those who do not think of the village as their *furusato* have parents who hail from nearby towns. The children probably accompany their parents when they visit their home towns and therefore feel closer to their parents' ancestral homes. I asked the students who consider Ogata-mura their *furusato* whether they think the village is a "good" *furusato*. Eighty-one percent of
the boys and 76 percent of the girls feel that it is, while 8 percent of the boys and 4 percent of the girls do not. Girls tended to be less certain about their feelings; 22 percent selected the response "I don't know." This compares to only 11 percent of the boys who chose the same response.

**Conclusion.** Even though the teenagers of Ogata-mura have complaints, they basically like their village. Although 31 percent have already decided that they do not want to live there in the future, it is very likely that many of these will change their minds about this eventually. While the majority of the students think of the village as a good *furusato* and are not opposed to living there in the future, they are certain that they do not want to farm; only seventeen percent of the boys and no girls are interested in being farmers. Furthermore, very few of the girls think that they would marry a farmer. The youth are generally well-disposed toward the solar events -- more so than most adults. This, coupled with their feelings about the village as a fairly good place to live and as their undisputed *furusato*, means that when they become the household heads of the community, most disputes about the solar sports will disappear. Perhaps Mayor Tazaki is counting on this. The *bunkajin* project, on the other hand, may not fare well judging from the students' opinions -- ranging from apathy to disfavor.

I have hypothesized that farmers of Ogata-mura will not be interested in the revitalization efforts because of the lack of ancestral land in the village. Ancestral
land ties will form and become stronger, however, if this generation continues to reside in the village. Boys who stay and farm can find wives from outside the village if their female classmates will not stay, and it is the boys who are most favorably disposed towards the solar events. The young men who become household heirs will then pass their feelings about the solar sports, and Ogata-mura as their furusato, down to their own children. Therefore, the formation of ancestral land will take place alongside a strengthening sense of furusato and positive attitudes toward revitalization projects as long as these projects accommodate farmers' interests and schedules.

The Young Wives' Association

In July of 1997 I distributed questionnaires among the members of the Ogata-mura Young Wives' Association (Wakazumakai) (see Appendix B). I did so in order to find out how young women -- most of whom had married into the village -- felt about Ogata-mura, and about how the village was becoming a furusato for them. To get the process started, I decided that I needed to find a Wakazumakai member among the women I already knew who could introduce me to the association officers. I mentioned my idea to Satoko Ishida, a young student's mother who sometimes attended English classes herself, and she took care of everything. Satoko is a native of Tokyo who married the eldest son and heir of an Ogata-mura household. She
spoke to the president of the *Wakazumakai* and I was invited several days later to a meeting of the section leaders. I was told to bring about 150 forms with me.

The Young Wives' Association meeting was held in the *Wakazumakai* room in the village Agricultural Cooperative building. The president, Satoko, and another association officer sat at the head of the rectangular table arrangement. The various neighborhood section leaders were still filtering in when I arrived. Some of them had small children with them -- several of whom were familiar to me -- and I recognized some of the women as the mothers of other children I regularly taught and played with at the kindergarten. After exchanging greetings, they would say something like “thank you for playing with my daughter. I know she's a lot of trouble,” or “my son always talks about you on Tuesdays after playing with you at school.”

Once the meeting began, it was quick and to the point. I explained the contents of the questionnaire and it was decided that the leaders would be responsible for distributing and collecting them, and then placing them in a folder on my desk in the community center. An early deadline was set by the president in order to encourage maximum returns, and the leaders each took the number of forms they needed to cover the areas they represented. The meeting dispersed twenty minutes after it began. By the following Friday, an envelope for each neighborhood section filled with completed forms had been placed on my desk. I received 127 responses out of the 150 forms handed out. In return for the help I received, I promised the
president that I would share the results with the association so that they could be printed in a future newsletter.

**Association Demographics.** The average age of the members is 32 years, with some as young as their mid-twenties and some approaching 40. Technically, the maximum age for the association is 39. Natal households are located inside of Ogata-mura in the case of 33 percent of the members. Fifty-six percent of the members are from other parts of Akita Prefecture, and only 11 percent are from beyond the prefecture's borders. Many cited places such as Hokkaido, Tokyo, and Osaka as their places of origin. Interestingly, only five percent of the members who grew up in the village were born into the village. The remaining 95 percent were born elsewhere and brought to the village when young. Only 57 percent of the respondents hail from farming families. For the others, moving to the village entailed making a big lifestyle change. Most never expected to live with their parents-in-law and have their husbands at home nearly every day during winter.

**Opinions on Village Life Among Association Members Not Native to Ogata-mura.**

Of those who were born and raised outside of Ogata-mura, 26 percent responded that life in the village is easier than back home, and 20 percent felt the opposite. Twenty-nine percent indicated that it was about the same and one-quarter were undecided. These young wives return to their *furusatos* an average of 12 times per year. The range is from 100 to 200 times for those in the immediate vicinity of the village to
only twice per year -- during the New Year time and o-bon in mid-August -- for those from far away. Eighty-nine percent take their children with them when they go. These children are learning something about their mothers' homes and therefore may come to feel some attachment to these places as second furusatos.

Opinions on Village Life and Farming Among Members Native to Ogata-mura. Of those who were raised in Ogata-mura, 42 percent said that they did not intend to marry into an Ogata-mura farming family. Eight percent had wanted to do so when young. Exactly one-half were not sure or had never thought about it. In response to the question "what has changed most about the village since you were a child?," the most common response referred to the increasing visits by outsiders to the village. Some answers centered around the development of greenery in the village, such as the pine groves, cherry trees, and numerous flower beds. Other responses referred to the increases in the population of the village and the larger number of mura-okoshi events.

Members' Opinions of Ogata-mura Today. Informants were asked to respond to the following two questions: "what do you like most about the village?," and "what would you most like to see changed about the village?" Regarding the former question, 51 of those who answered cited the greenery, nature, the clean environment, clean air, the open spaces, the quiet countryside and the overall rural environment. Others commented on being able to see the stars well at night and the neat, straight, evenly-
spaced arrangement of the village. Compared to traditional Japanese villages, Ogata-mura does strike one as a model of orderliness and geometric common-sense. Interestingly, no respondents made positive comments about the village as a social community.

The most fascinating responses were those prompted by the second question listed above. Many respondents cited the need for further infra-structural developments. Eleven people indicated that they would like to see transportation and road improvements, more shopping opportunities, more outdoor play facilities for children, or a local hospital. Several respondents simply wrote “human relations.” Others indicated that they do not like “all the gossip around here,” or the “discrimination.” One respondent asked for many more facilities and events so that more outsiders would come to the village. In contrast, two informants wanted a decrease in such plans and activities. One asked why a small farming village needs to hold big events and attract a lot of outsiders.

Ogata-mura as the Association Members’ Furusato. When asked what place they consider to be their furusato, 66 percent reported that it is the place of their natal household and not Ogata-mura. Judging from interview evidence, it seems that most of the young wives and mothers (89 percent have at least one child) will continue to feel this way as long as their parents live and maintain a home where they grew up. (Ninety-eight percent of the total Wakazumakai members still have at least one parent living.) Twenty-five percent consider Ogata-mura their furusato. All of these grew
up in the village. Another seven percent hail from Ogata-mura, but do not consider it their furusato. Finally, two percent wrote in "both," meaning that they think of the place they were born in and Ogata-mura as their furusato.

An Example of a Wakazumakai Member's Life in Ogata-mura: Satoko Ishida.

Satoko, about 35 years old, grew up in a section of Tokyo in a household in which both parents encouraged her to think in broad terms about her own future. She married the son of a fifth group settler and moved to Ogata-mura around 1990 (FIGURE 18). Fitting into a rural multi-generational production-oriented household in which family members' roles are sharply defined turned out to be an ongoing problem for Satoko. Between her natal and conjugal families, there are some fundamental philosophical differences concerning the relation of the individual to the group. Satoko said "my own parents don't consider that I married a household, but rather that I married my husband only. My parents-in-law don't see it that way. They have an Edo-Period (feudal) way of thinking."

Satoko's position was made clear to her as soon as she entered her husband's house as a new bride, or "yome-san." She was expected by her parents-in-law to begin producing grandchildren -- potential heirs to the household -- immediately. Satoko said: "They didn't bother my husband's younger brother about grandchildren at all after he married, but they asked us all the time: 'Not yet? Not yet?'"

Furthermore, even after her son was born Satoko has continued to be under other
FIGURE 18

Some Advanced English Students at the Community Center

Takeru Isono's oldest daughter, Yukiko, is on the far right. Satoko Ishida sits nearest the door, fourth from left.
pressures. These center around differences between her ideas about his future and those of his grandparents. She said "of course they want Taro to be their successor, but I want my son to become whatever he wants to become." Her place as the eldest son's wife is also reflected in her parents-in-law putting unspoken restrictions on her movement and activities: "As far as they're concerned, my husband can do whatever he likes, but not so for me. They don't tell me (that I shouldn't go somewhere) so much with words, but they say it with their facial expressions."

Despite the bounded, highly structured family life in which she now finds herself, Satoko made sure when she spoke to me that she did not wish to paint a picture of bondage and mistreatment in her conjugal family. She conceded that there are benefits, such as the security of living in a multi-generational household, where one is rarely alone or without a network of support. Also, because she has provided the household with children, her position in the family is secure and solid. In an immediate practical sense, Satoko always has someone near who can watch the children if she needs to go somewhere. She has made networks of friends within the village community and is beginning to feel more at home as a member of a farming household and the wife of its eldest son. However, her furusato still lies in her parents' home where she grew up. Many of her friends are there, too -- living very different lives than Satoko. She said "if I told my friends about this (life), they'd be surprised. But, it's not all bad." these wives have to work hard to keep busy and make friends.
Conclusion. Most members of the Ogata-mura Young Wives’ Association are outsiders. They are not as well-disposed toward life in the village as the students of the junior high school are. While they feel that life in Ogata-mura is comparable to life in their hometowns, they want to see more infrastructural developments in the village. None of them made positive comments about living in the village as a community, and some were unhappy about the amount of gossip and discrimination in the village. Those not among the five percent born in Ogata-mura need much time to get accustomed to living in the village and think of it as their furusato. Even though association members who married into Ogata-mura have been in the village for an average of seven years, none of them think of it as their furusato. Furthermore, Ogata-mura is a furusato for some of those who were raised in the village, but not for all. They are not especially interested in revitalization efforts, but are not adamantly opposed to them either. They tend to remain ambivalent about most matters that do not have tangible benefits for themselves or their children.

Since most of these young mothers do not feel closely attached to the village, they will probably not try to impart a sense of obligation to their sons to take over the family farms. Satoko, for example, does not want her son to make decisions about his future based on what his grandparents think. When she is a grandmother, however, she may feel that preserving the household line is more important since the ancestral ties become more precious as they extend father into the past and as one reaches the upper end of the line. Ancestral ties and a feeling of the village as a furusato, then,
will probably develop over a long time period for the women who have married into
Ogata-mura.
CHAPTER VIII

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has addressed the relationship between ancestral land ties and the heir problem on the one hand, and the revitalization movement in rural Japan on the other. My hypothesis assumes that having strong ancestral links to agricultural land leads to worries about securing heirs among older farmers in Japan. Since rural communities are losing both their young people and their economic base to urban areas, the rural revitalization movement (*mura-okoshi undo*) has arisen in order to make towns and villages more attractive to household successors and also to tourists. I have reasoned that Japanese farmers without ancestral ties to farmland will not be particularly interested in the rural revitalization movement. By focusing on the planned community of Ogata-mura, in which ancestral land ties are at an early stage of development, the present thesis has hoped to test this assumption. In doing so, it has created a bridge between two bodies of literature: general ethnographic works which address ancestral land ties among Japanese farmers, and more recent research on revitalization and community building in Japan.

Return to Related Issues

In the following pages, I will re-examine several of the issues that were reviewed in chapter two in light of the ethnographic findings of chapters four through
rural revitalization movement, and the formation of new communities. Subsequently, I will do the same with respect to the hypothesis I presented in chapter one.

**Ancestral Land and the Heir Problem in Rural Japan.** Ogata-mura settlers are unique among Japanese farmers in that they have no ancestral agricultural land or are still in the process of creating ancestral land. Ancestral links to land among traditional Japanese farmers results in a high concern about inheritance for their fields and households. Aside from the literature, support for this assertion comes from my informants. Ogata-mura settlers point out that care was always taken to secure heirs for the farms which they left behind when they immigrated to the village, and that farmers are subjected to negative social pressure if they intend to sell their ancestral land. The opposite condition -- that farmers without ancestral land ties are not worried about matters of succession -- is also evidenced by statements made by Ogata-mura farmers. They frequently point out that they do not need to worry about the disposition of their fields because they purchased their farms. True, some Ogata-mura farmers are concerned about the future of their farms; however, even in their case, they do not feel compelled to pressure their children or grandchildren to inherit the land. Nobuhiro Machida (Case II) is the best example of this. He and his wife wonder what their son, Hiroaki, will do in the future, because they would like to see their family line and farm continue in the village. They also want the security that would come with his taking over their farm. However, they feel that he needs to find
his own way in the world and decide for himself whether he wants to be a farmer.

Nobuhiro does not want his son to take over his farm merely out of duty or obligation.

A similar situation exists for Isao and Hiroko Satake (Case III). The couple would like to see their farm continued, but they have no children. A nephew may succeed to their agricultural operation, but they do not want him to do so unless he is willing. If he is not, then they would prefer an unrelated young person who hopes to be a farmer to purchase their land. Takeru Isono (Case I) is unconcerned since his son, who has three sons of his own, has already inherited the farm.

The Rural Revitalization Movement in Japan. Ogata-mura's revitalization projects differ from those of other communities in that they are large-scale, top-down initiatives. The idea for the village's largest project -- the solar races -- began with an outsider and the events are funded largely by agencies external to the village. The mayor is the central figure in these projects. This, together with a near absence of the heir problem, makes it difficult for the mayor to generate enthusiasm for these events among Ogata-mura residents.

Bailey (1991) illustrates a similar case of town-building (machi-zukuri) and revitalization over a thirty-year period in a traditional community where households have lived for centuries. The mayor of Bailey's town was the main driving force behind its machi-okoshi efforts. The revitalization plan was effective, although the mayor had to work hard to change residents' attitudes and to cultivate a sense of pride in their community.
Ogata-mura: "Tanohata is not typical, perhaps, but it is illustrative. Its story commands attention both on its own terms and as a means to a larger understanding of Japan in the late twentieth century" (1991:8). Perhaps Mayor Tazaki of Ogata-mura needs another ten years to change the settlers' attitudes and to reach the next generation of village farmers with his revitalization plans, especially once some land has started to be considered by villagers part of their ie.

New Communities and Their Formation. When communities are created artificially, problems tend to arise in certain stages of their development. Connors describes conflicts between land owners and settlers in Kojima Bay, Okayama Prefecture, in the seventeenth century (1963:69). Alluding to the difficulties that arose in Ogata-mura 300 years later, the landlords at Kojima Bay eventually forced the difficult settlers off the land and replaced them with new people whom they screened thoroughly before accepting.

More similar to events in Ogata-mura in the late twentieth century was the dispute over residents' communal labor in the Norvelt (Pennsylvania) subsistence homestead community during the 1930's. The settlers had been limited to 1,200 credit hours each toward the cost of building their homes, but some demanded an extension of hours upon reaching this amount. The government produced a plan whereby the settlers would receive one-half pay and one-half credit hours for the rest of their labor -- the communal credit hours being applied towards paying off the
federal loan on the project. The dissenting settlers of Norvelt then demanded full pay at the standard rate of 50 cents per hour for their work, eschewing the idea of one-half credit hours and communal labor. Newspapers ran headlines, such as “One for All Theory Fails to Work out in County Experiment.” To resolve the situation, the government eventually gave in to the dissenters’ demands (Hoagland and Mulrooney 1991:36).

As explained in chapter three, the Ogata-mura settlers had entered the village thinking that they would be permitted to grow as much rice as they could. Intense conflicts ensued when they were told otherwise. As the United States Government had done a half-century before in Norvelt, the Japanese Government eventually accepted the wishes of the dissatisfied settlers.

The above evidence suggests that disagreements between planners and settlers in new communities arise due to a variety of causes. In all three cases, screening immigrants minimized the cause arising from the character of the settlers. In the case of Kojima Bay, ejecting the first settlers and then selecting others based on specified criteria prevented conflicts from reappearing. The Norvelt and Ogata-mura settlers were screened from the beginning, and conflicts in these places were due more to power relations between immigrants and officials than due to the quality of the community residents. It seems, therefore, while the screening of immigrants helps to avoid some problems with settlers in new communities, it is not a failsafe. Beyond being careful in selecting settlers, governments or other agencies who plan and build
new communities need to exercise caution in their subsequent relations with those they have selected.

Return to Hypothesis

At the beginning of this thesis the following hypothesis was posed: where pressure for heirs is low because ancestral land ties are absent, farmers will tend not to be community-oriented and strongly supportive of the rural revitalization movement. This is so because there is little need to make the community attractive for heirs. The household case studies and quantified data provide support for this hypothesis.

Ethnographic Evidence. Takeru Isono (Case I) is working to build a new household (ie) and lineage in Ogata-mura. He has already done so to a considerable extent because there are three grandsons in his house and because his parents are enshrined in the village. He also worked hard to amass the extra 13 hectares of farmland he now owns. In Takeru's case, ancestral land ties are forming -- probably more so than for most other settlers in Ogata -- but he is fairly relaxed about matters of succession because he has eight grandchildren in Ogata-mura. Weak ancestral ties coupled with great heir potential accounts for Takeru's strong focus on his household in the development of Ogata-mura into his furusato. This attitude reflects Takeru's overall outlook on the village.
While he loves the village and speaks grandly of it, Takeru stays out of the big mura-okoshi projects and is sceptical of the bunkaijin neighborhood. He prefers to entertain himself by swimming and traveling rather than participate in revitalization activities. Takeru's current state of comfort -- when he had once lost every piece of land he owned -- contributes to his relatively bright opinion of the village. Takeru has also engaged in more heavy labor and experienced more dramatic technological changes in his life than the household heads of Cases II and III, and can therefore make a clear comparison between farming in Ogata-mura today and in villages 40 years ago. For example, when his daughter Yukiko says that farming in Ogata-mura is hard work because of the large fields, Takeru responds with a laugh and says that it is very easy compared to his life before settling in Ogata.

Although Takeru now sees Ogata-mura as his furusato, he still feels nostalgic about his original home. This sentimental attachment to the places of origin among the first-generation village settlers will probably not disappear during their lives -- no matter how much time passes. It will be the second and third generations who will finally let go of sentimental ties with the pre-Ogata furusatos.

Nobuhiro Machida (Case II) thinks less than Takeru Isono about the qualitative aspects of the village as a furusato and the revitalization programs, and more about the purely economic benefits of the events. Because he has the possibility of continuing his household and starting ancestral land in Ogata-mura, and since he now has ties with an area family through his daughter and grandson, he and his wife
are attached to the village. They are not as close to Ogata-mura as Takeru Isono, but they think that eventually it will become their own furusato. This feeling will increase if their son stays in the village. Therefore, it is important for them that the village be attractive for a potential heir of theirs. However, they do not agree with the village administration's choice of revitalization (mura-okoshi) events.

Finally, Isao and Hiroko Satake (Case III) are less well-disposed toward the village and least concerned about its revitalization. They are content to remain in the village as long as they can run their farm, but do not feel at all attached to Ogata-mura. The couple does not have very good feelings about the village community, either. This is partly due to the fact that they have not raised a child in the village and have no direct descendant to inherit their property.

Isao Satake has no furusato because he can no longer think of his home town as one and he also refuses to consider the village as a furusato. Hiroko, compared to her husband, is still sentimentally attached to her parents' home, and has a more positive attitude about Ogata-mura. Isao said that true village-building (mura-zukuri) might begin with the third generation. To him, this is the point at which the village will start to become a furusato for the residents. This does not hold true for all settlers, because Takeru Isono (Case I) and Nobuhiro Machida (Case II) are already beginning to think of Ogata-mura as a furusato. Since Isao Satake does not have children and will therefore not be represented in the third generation, he feels more out of touch with Ogata-mura.
Hiroko Satake is similar to Takako Machida (Case II) in her continued attachment to her natal home. Takako's daughter, Asako, feels this way about both Ogata-mura and her parents' home in Ishikawa Prefecture. Such sentiment also exists among Satoko Ishida and other members of the Young Wives' Association. This illustrates an interesting aspect of community formation and the development of the village as a furusato: that there are differences between women and men in their adjustments to the new village. Women are more attached to their natal homes than men regardless of whether they have an older married sibling remaining behind. Men are unable to think of their natal households in this way once another married couple is in a position to take over. The phrase "you can never go home again" is more true for men than for women.

Another gender-based difference is the tendency for men to focus more on the quantifiable aspects of community-building, revitalization than women. For example, Yamauchi Takezo (the mayor's political opponent), Nobuhiro Machida (Case II), and Isao Satake (Case III) feel that the village's revitalization projects are pointless unless they have some measurable economic benefits for the agricultural business of the village. Takako Machida and her daughter, Asako (Case II), as well as Hiroko Satake (Case III), are able to see other benefits of holding some of the events -- benefits such as providing inspiration and diversions for young people -- which can not be easily measured in numerical terms.
The quantitative data presented in chapter seven indicates that the younger generations in Ogata-mura and the women who have married into the village from the outside are adjusting to the community at different rates. The students do not compare the village with other places but feel attached to Ogata-mura simply because it is their home. Some have sentimental feelings toward their parents' natal homes, but these are strong among only few students. Furthermore, the village's solar events and Nanohana Festival are fairly appealing to the children, even if not so for most of their parents. This youngest generation is having the easiest time getting accustomed to the new village than any other group. They will be the ones who determine how Ogata-mura as a community fares in the next century and how soon it becomes a true furusato.

The members of the Young Wives' Association (Wakazumakai), on the other hand, are having a harder time in their adjustments to Ogata-mura. Most of them still feel very strongly attached to their natal homes or places of birth. This is true even for those who have parents in Ogata-mura. They are also passing these sentimental attachments down to their children by taking them along when returning to their furusatos. The children of these young mothers of Ogata-mura will, however, probably grow up feeling closer to the village than the current teenagers do because they will be the fourth Ogata-mura generation and their households will have stronger ancestral links to the land by the time they grow up.
The *Wakazumakai* members are basically neutral towards the village's revitalization efforts. Some want to see a decrease in scale for the events, while others like the events as they are and appreciate the influx of outsiders that the projects bring to the village. Since many of the young wives and mothers are from urban areas and most are outsiders themselves, they do not have a problem with urbanites coming to their village. Judging from some of their comments about wanting more infra-structural developments in Ogata-mura, many would probably prefer to travel to the big cities more often. Most of them do appreciate the village's open, uncluttered skyline and clean air, nonetheless.

**The Implementation of Revitalization Efforts.** A close look at the revitalization efforts of Ogata-mura and their effects indicates that such projects must be carefully planned before they are implemented. As discussed in chapter two, Wallace (1970) outlines several functions which must be fulfilled if a revitalization movement is to be successful. Among them are the formulation of a new code ("goal culture,"), successful communication of the new code to make converts, and adaptation of the code to real conditions (192-194).

Mayor Tazaki and his administration have conceived of a new code. Their goal is a clean energetic community where farmers and non-farmers work together to improve their lives. The Ogata village administrators' problem is that they have not fulfilled the other two of Wallace's functions mentioned above. First, they did not
because ancestral land ties are not present; second, they did not consider that events imposed from the outside and directed toward an external audience would be unappealing for farmers. Furthermore, the administrators have not adapted the code to real conditions in the village; they are forging ahead with their plans even though a large section of the Ogata-mura residents are opposed. These residents are becoming more alienated and the entire situation is getting more politicized. The village administration needs to be sensitive to local desires of residents in its revitalization efforts if it wants to unite the community behind them.

Although the village's mura-okoshi projects have problems, they do have some potential social benefits for the community. The solar events and the Nanohana Festival appeal to some residents of Ogata-mura. They can watch the car and bicycle races and participate if they like, and young children can attend the Nanohana Festival if their parents allow them to go. However, while these revitalization projects attract both positive and negative attention from residents, opinions about the bunkajin neighborhood project range from apathetic to strongly critical. The village administration did not consider the possible local reactions to manipulating the social composition of the village before embarking on the project. Furthermore, using the label “cultural people” automatically implies that the other village residents are “uncultured.” Considering that most of them are farmers -- a social class that is still somewhat stigmatized -- it is not surprising that many feel intimidated by the introduction of trained professionals into the village. This would increase the social
stratification within the community. The solar events and the *Nanohana* Festival can be predicted to continue in the future since they fulfill their purposes of attracting crowds and positive media attention, even if they are of little significance with respect to the heir problem and ancestral lands. However, the *bunkajin* neighborhood project remains in question because it does not have any tangible benefits for village farmers.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this research, several assertions can be made concerning ancestral ties to the land, inheritance, and revitalization in Ogata-mura. These are that (1) without ancestral land and in the absence of the heir problem, support for revitalization efforts is difficult to generate in Ogata-mura; (2) children are necessary in order for a sense of community to form among first-generation residents of Ogata-mura and for them to feel that the village is their *furusato*; (3) with children and family connections, settlers who were at first very unhappy with Ogata-mura and the national government can become attached to the village as a *furusato* and become more supportive of revitalization efforts; (4) revitalization projects which are initiated for political reasons and implemented from the top-down will not be effective in motivating the residents to participate or feel more community-oriented; (5) such projects will not help to attract or retain heirs in the future. This thesis has contributed to the study of Japanese rural society by establishing a connection between two bodies of work; that is, between research
concerned with ancestral land and the heir problem, and research that focuses on revitalization efforts. I am yet unaware of other studies that have done the same. Since my findings are of a mostly qualitative nature based on few household cases, further quantitative tests of the hypothesis are warranted. Moreover, no control group was included in the present research, such as a selection of farmers who do have ancestral land and live in a traditional community with similar revitalization projects. I did not have sufficient time to undertake such research outside of Ogata-mura. There is also the possibility that large-scale revitalization projects like those of Ogata-mura would not appeal to most farmers in Japan, whether or not they are the holders of ancestral fields and have heir securement problems. These are issues that deserve greater attention in the future.

Concerning the future of Ogata-mura, many residents agree that depopulation and farm consolidation will happen in the village as some families who cannot secure heirs sell their fields to other farmers and move away. As this thesis has shown, ancestral connections to the farmland of Ogata-mura are slowly forming. The grandsons of Takeru Isono (Case I) are already the fourth generation household members in the village, since his parents spent their last years in his house, and the third to work the fields which Takeru purchased. The Machida family (Case II) is now on the threshold of establishing ancestral fields. Many other Ogata-mura households are currently in the same position as the Isono and Machida families.
As the farms in Ogata-mura increase in size while they decrease in number, and as the land is passed down from father to son several times, both the financial value of each farm and the strength of the ancestral ties to the fields will increase. Drawing from my hypothesis, I would predict that the heir problem will be of greater concern to future generations of villagers. Consequently, attempts at retaining heirs through revitalization efforts will grow and the participation of local residents in such efforts will be more intense than it is today. To verify this, additional research ten or twenty years from now would be warranted.
NOTES

1. Such "ancestor worship" is not unique to Japan -- it is also a strong element of Buddhism as practiced in China, Taiwan, and Korea (Eastman 1988:47; Brandt 1971:120; Wolf 1968:26).

2. Pressure has also been placed on farmers by the government in an attempt at discouraging further fissioning of the farms into smaller units. The gift-tax law allows a tax break for farmers if they hand their land down to a single heir, whether a son or a daughter, with no stipulations as to the birth order of the heir (Moore 1993:281).


4. The displacement of labor due to farm mechanization has been noted in other twentieth century capitalist societies as well, including Western Europe and the United States, although at a much greater scale (Berardi 1981:11).

5. Robertson (1991) offers a shinden typology in her study of a Tokyo community.

6. The exchange rate at the time was approximately 130 yen to one U.S. dollar.

7. The average number of persons per household in 1990 for Ogata-mura was 4.62 compared to 2.99 for the entire nation (Ogata Village 1994; Japanese Government Statistics Bureau 1999).

8. In 1997 a large reclamation project in Nagasaki Prefecture which had been initiated after the war was still progressing to the consternation of many residents and environmental activists (Yomiuri Shinbun 1997). Another large project was begun in the early 1960's in Shimane Prefecture, also to boost rice production. It was canceled in 1988 by the national government, but local movements to resume the 36.8 billion yen project have sparked an intense political struggle in the area (Kawashima and Yamazaki 1997).

9. See Moore (1993) for a more detailed treatment of these developments.
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APPENDIX A

INFORMATION ON THE BUNKAJIN NEIGHBORHOOD
TAKEN FROM THE OGATA-MURA HOME PAGE

The immigration of cultural people
Spreading the culture of this area...

What does 'the immigration of cultural people' mean?

As a part of a project of recruiting 'cultural people', who will bring with them useful information from outside the village and who will blow new life into agricultural Ogatamura, we had three of those 'cultural people' moving into our village in April 1996.

Main points of the cultural information dispatch of the Ogatamura recruitment project

Number of members

Qualifications for applications
We do not inquire after nationality, sexe, occupation or age, but if you come and live in this village, we expect you to contribute to the promotion of the dispatch of cultural information. In this sense we will pay attention to the following points. We look for people:
1) whose merits in cultural art are remarkable
2) whose merits in cultural science are remarkable
3) whose merits in preserving and collecting material on traditional cultures are remarkable.
4) whose merits in the international exchange of sports and culture are remarkable
5) who are approved of by the mayor.

How to apply?
The application form for the Ogatamura recruitment project has to be submitted to the city hall of Ogatamura before ... To the application form one should add together with a recent photograph taken from the front from the waist up (4.5cm by 3.5cm), vital information which proves one's suitability
(career activities etc). Please enclose a complete set of the necessary
documents.

Please send your application to the following address
010-04 Ogatamura city hall, planning division
Akita-gun, Ogatamura Azachuo 1-1
Akita-ken, Japan
Tel 0185-45-2111  Fax 0185-45-2162

Persons who are acknowledged as 'cultural people', are entitled to receive
the following:

1) Provision of a building lot (700 sq. meters) to be used free of charge
during one's stay as a 'cultural person'
2) Conveyance of the building lot to persons who stay for more than 7 years.
3) Payment:
   Until the age of 60, from the month in which all the conditions are
fulfilled, one will receive 100,000 yen a month, which will be payed
every six months, after the construction of the house and after moving
into it.

Other privileges
1) Use of public facilities within the village is free of charge
2) Communication facilities such as fax and computers are provided for.

Important matters concerning the housing, after being appointed.
1) Housing is free of charge, but you are required to build the house within 2
   years after being appointed and on your own expenses. The building
   lot, given in free loan, will become your property after 7 years as stated
   in a contract. In case the contract is broken, you have to return the
   building lot to the village. You have to be registered as an inhabitant of
   Ogatamura for a period of at least 6 months and you have to reside
   here for a period of at least 4 months. However, in exceptional cases,
   approved of by the mayor, these regulations do not apply.

Please contact the address written below for requests on material and
inquiries:

010-04 Ogatamura city hall, planning division
Minamiakita-gun
Ogatamura, Azachuo 1-1
Tel: 0185-45-2111  Fax: 0185-45-2162
E-mail: gv-plan@ogata.or.jp
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS IN JAPANESE AND ENGLISH

1) (〇をつけてください)
   男性 女性

2) 何年生ですか。
   一年生 二年生 三年生

3) あなたの家族は何県の出身ですか。
   父：__________ 母：__________

4) 下の例のように、あなたの兄弟姉妹（あなた自身も含む）を記号であらわし、
   年齢順に〇の中をうめてください。例えばB、妹はG、あなたの自身はMです。
   もし、あなたの兄弟姉妹が大講中にいるならば、その人の名を〇で囲んで下さい。

   例： [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
   （二人のお兄さんと二人の姉がいる男子（又は女子）。妹の一人はこの中学校
   の生徒である。）

5) これからもずっと大網村に住みたいと思いますか。（〇を付けて下さい）
   はい いいえ わかりません

6) あなたの家は、農家ですか。
   はい いいえ

7) a) あなたの将来、農業をするつもりですか。
   はい いいえ わかりません

   b) 「はい」と答えた人：あなたは家族の田んぼや農場を受け継ぐつもりですか。
      はい いいえ わかりません

   c) 「いいえ」と答えた人：あなたの両親や家族は、あなたに田んぼや農場を
      ついてもらいたいと思っていますか。
      はい いいえ わかりません

8) ご家族の中で、入院するための試験を受けた人は誰ですか。
   父 おじいさん 他__________

9) ご家族は何回目入籍者ですか。
   1 2 3 4 5

10) 大網村はあなたにとって、ふるさとですか。
    はい いいえ わかりません

Front Page of Questionnaire Distributed to

Students of Coastline High School (Japan)
11) 大海村はいいふるさだとだと思いますか。
    はい    いいえ    わかりません

12) 大海村で、一番好きなことは何ですか。

13) 大海村で、一番きらいなことは何ですか。

14) できれば、大海村で一番変わってほしいことは何ですか。

15) あなたは大海村のソーラー・スポーツ・イベント（自動車と自転車）が好きですか。（〇を付けて下さい）
    はい    いいえ    わかりません

16) 「はい」と「いいえ」の場合：それはどうしてですか。

17) あなたは大海村の文化人入植事業を、どう思いますか。（〇を付けて下さい）
    好き    好きすぎかわかりません
    いいえ    文化人入植事業とは何かわかりません

18) 文化人入植事業は役に立つと思いますか。
    はい    いいえ    わかりません

19) それはどうしてですか。

20) 女性への質問：あなたは農業をやっている男性と結婚することに対して、どう思いますか。（〇を付けて下さい）

   絶対嫌だ
   ちょっと嫌だ
    いいですか・・・
    かまってません
   そういう男性と結婚したい
又は：結婚について、考えたことはありません。
   私は一生結婚するつもりはありません。

Back Page of Questionnaire Distributed to

Students of Ogata Junior High School (Japanese)
1) Please circle: male female

2) What year student are you? first year second year third year

3) Where are your parents from? Father: _______ Mother: _______

4) In the boxes below, following the example, please write in yourself and your siblings in the order of birth. Use the following symbols: boy=B, girl=G, yourself=M. If a sibling also attends this school, please circle that sibling’s symbol.

Example: (A boy or girl with two big brothers and two big sisters. One of the sisters attends this school.)

Would you like to live in Ogata Village from now on?
yes no I don’t know

Is your family a farming family?
yes no

Do you want to farm in the future?
yes no

b) if “yes,” then do you plan to take over your family’s fields?
yes no I don’t know

c) if “no,” then do you think your family wants you to take over the fields?
yes no I don’t know

Who in your family actually took the village settler exam?
my father my grandfather I don’t know

What settler group does your family belong to?
the first the second the third the fourth the fifth

10) Is Ogata-mura your furusato?
yes no I don’t know
Do you think Ogata-mura is a good furusato?
   yes     no     I don't know

What do you like best about Ogata-mura?

What do you dislike most about Ogata-mura?

If you could, what would you most like to change about Ogata-mura?

Do you like the Ogata-mura solar sports events?
   yes     no     I don't know

16) If you answered “yes” or “no,” then why?

What do you think about the Ogata-mura bunkajin neighborhood project?
   I like it     I don't know whether I like it or not
   I don't like it     I don't know what it is

Do you think the bunkajin neighborhood project will have an effect?
   yes     no     I don't know

19) Why or why not?

Girls only:
What do you think about marrying a farmer one day?

   No way
   I don't really want to
   Well, maybe it's okay
   I don't mind
   I want to marry a farmer

or:
   I have never thought about marrying
   I will never marry
「ふるさと」に関するアンケート・若葉会
97年7月
Donald C. Wood

1) 何歳ですか。___歳

2) あなたの実家はどこですか。（〇を付けて下さい）
大野村 秋田県（村以外） 県外：___ 都道府県

A) 「大野村」と答えた方：あなたの実家は何回目入植ですか。
  1 2 3 4 5 他

B) 「大野村」と答えた方：あなたは大野村で生まれましたか。
  はい いいえ

*「いいえ」と答えた方：大野村に来た時、何歳でしたか。___歳

C) 実家が村外か県外にある方：何年前に大野村に来ましたか。___年前

3) あなたの実家は農家ですか。
  はい いいえ

  A) 「はい」と答えた方：あなたの実家に後継者はいますか。
  はい 多分 いいえ 分かりません

4) あなたが嫁いだ家は農家ですか。
  はい いいえ

  A) 「はい」と答えた方：あなたが嫁いだ家は何回目入植ですか。
  1 2 3 4 5 他

5) あなたの自身の両親は生きていますか。
  父：はい、いいえ 母：はい、いいえ

6) あなたにとって、ふるさとはどこですか。
  大野村 実家のある所 他：___

  A) 「他」と答えた方：それはどうしてですか。
7) あなたは、子供さんがいますか。
   いません  います  (男：___人  女：___人)

8) 大潟村について、一番好きなことは何ですか。

9) 大潟村について、一番変わってほしいことは何ですか。

※大潟村は自分のふるさとではないと思う方（前ページの8番の関連）:
  1) 大潟村の生活と自分のふるさとの生活と比べて、どっちが楽ですか。
     大潟村の生活  ふるさとの生活  同じぐらい  分かりません
  2) あなたは一年間、自分のふるさとに何回帰りますか。
     ___回ぐらい
  3) いつ帰りますか。
  4) 子供たちも一緒に帰りますか。
     はい  いいえ  いません

※大潟村で育った方:
  1) あなたが子供の頃から、大潟村で一番変わったことは何ですか。

  2) あなたは、村外の生活を経験したことがありますか。
     はい  いいえ

  3) あなたは、ずっと前から大潟村の農家にお嫁に行きたかったですか。
     はい  いいえ  分かりません  あまり考えなかった

    たいてんたすかりました。どうもありがとうございました。

Back Page of Questionnaire

Distributed to Wakazumakai Members (Japanese)
Questionnaire about furusato for Wakazumakai
July, 1997
Donald C. Wood

1) What is your age? _____ years

2) Where is your natal household?
Ogata-mura Elsewhere in Akita Prefecture Outside of Akita

   A) If "Ogata-mura," then to what settler group does your natal household
      belong?
      1  2  3  4  5  other

   B) If "Ogata-mura," then were you born in the village?
      yes no

      * If "no," then how old were you when you came to the village?

Is your natal household a farming household?
yes no

   A) If "yes," then is there a successor in your natal household?
      yes no I don't know

Is the household into which you married a farming family?
yes no

   A) If "yes," then to what settler group does your new family belong?
      1  2  3  4  5  other

5) Are your own parents still living?
   father: yes no mother: yes no

6) Where is your furusato?
   Ogata-mura The place of my natal home other: _______

   A) If you answered "other," then why?
7) Do you have children?
   no  yes  (sons: ________, daughters: __________)

8) What do you like most about Ogata-mura?

9) What would you most like to see change about Ogata-mura?

- For those who feel that Ogata-mura is not their furusato (question 6 on page 1):

  1) Comparing life in Ogata-mura and life in your furusato, which is easier?
     Ogata-mura  my own furusato  about the same  I don’t know

  2) How many times do you return to your furusato in a year?
     about ______ times

  3) When do you return?

  4) Do you take your children with you?
     yes  no  I don’t have any

- For those who were raised in Ogata-mura:

  1) What has changed most about the village since you were a child?

  2) Have you ever experienced life outside of Ogata-mura?
     yes  no

  3) Did you always want to marry into a farming household?
     yes  no  I don’t know  I never really thought about it

Thank you very much for taking time to fill out this form
VITA

Donald C. Wood became interested in anthropology while studying art history at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. After working on an art degree for two years, he discontinued that course of study and entered Texas A&M University in 1992. Early interests included folklore and gender studies, and East Asian history. After taking the undergraduate theory seminar (ANTH 410) and studying Japanese ghost tales for a folklore project, Donald decided to focus on sociocultural anthropology and East Asian societies. He first visited Japan in December of 1992. He went again in August of 1993. Donald married Akiko Takahashi and graduated with a B.A. in anthropology in 1994. In 1995 he and his wife moved to Akita Prefecture, Japan. While in Akita, their daughter Seiko was born. After two years of teaching and conducting fieldwork in Ogata-mura, Donald returned to Texas A&M University to complete an M.A. in anthropology. In late 1998, he was invited to present this research as a poster at a meeting of the Society for Economic Anthropology at Texas A&M University in April of 1999. In early 1999, Donald was offered a summer research fellowship in Japan by The National Science Foundation and the Japanese Government Ministry of Education (Monbusho). He plans to attend the University of California, Santa Barbara beginning in September of 1999. Donald can be reached at (c/o Takahashi), 45-3 Kami-no-machi, Izumi, Akita City, 010 Japan, or at dcw1970@yahoo.com. He can also be found on the Ogata-mura web site at http://www.ogata.or.jp/ac/donny/donny.htm.