

Summary of Articles

Local Communities and the Funding of Hospital Medical Care in Early 20th Century Rural Japan: The Shift from Local Notables to Agricultural Cooperatives

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This article examines the conditions that determined the supply and maintenance of hospital care from the late 19th to early 20th century, and that in some cases led to its discontinuance. The region under examination is Kanoashi County in Shimane Prefecture, and the focus is on the characteristics and structures of the communities in question.

At first, in the 1890s, hospital care in the Kanoashi County area was supplied by Hatagasako Hospital, which operated under the auspices of Hori Tojuro, a local notable. Hori was a landowner and owner of a mining business in the prefecture. A leading member of the community, he established and sustained the hospital as a device for community integration and labor management. His family's hospital business expanded in the 1910s, but fell into stagnation in the 1920s with the decline of his mining business, and was reduced to the scale of a clinic in the 1930s. It was the changes in Hori's position that brought about these shifts in the hospital's status.

Hori's hospital was replaced in the 1930s by a new hospital established in Nichihara village. The new hospital took the form of a medical care cooperative, organized like an industrial or agricultural cooperative. Oba Masayo and Kanzai Naosaburo, who had developed into community leaders through their work in the cooperative and village offices, headed the effort to establish the new hospital.

In the 1940s, the hospital cooperative established a new hospital in Tsuwano, the county center, as part of an organizational upgrade. Several local notables contributed to this hospital as well, but it had by this time become impossible to finance hospital construction except by combining funds with those of the cooperative. Meanwhile, the original private hospital financed by Hori was absorbed into the cooperative hospital as a clinic.

This study demonstrates that 'the medical practitioner model' premise on which conventional modern Japanese medical history studies are based does not explain the supply of hospital care in this region, and that the subject must be newly examined in terms of a "community model."

Local Capital and Wartime Controls on the Cotton Industry in Manchuguo

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This paper examines movements in local capital in order to elucidate the impact of economic controls on the wartime economy (1937–45) of Manchuguo. The focus is on local capital and cotton industry controls, because the controls had a strong impact on the wartime cotton industry's development; and also because local capital played a leading role in the local economy, and its study is therefore essential to any investigation of the local impact of control policies. Two conclusions emerge from this study.

First, when cotton industry control began in 1939, local textile factories were not included in the Production Control Association, centered on the Cotton Industry Federation. As members of the Textile Manufacturing Trade Association, local factories, though subject to supply regulations, obtained raw materials (cotton yarn) from the Cotton Industry Federation. They also had a certain degree of freedom, because direct transactions with local merchants were permitted in practice. With tightened controls from the summer of 1941, however, local textile operators were formed into a Control Union and became subject to consolidation. Combined with the difficulty of procuring yarn and other factors, local capital's market share in cotton cloth production dropped by over half, and a string of businesses left the Union. Toward the end of the control period, many local textile businesses were either idle or had closed. Control Union member factories were subject to control and forced to operate at a fraction of capacity. Factories outside the Control Union operated with shadow-market materials to generate income.

Second, the controls on supply resulted in streamlined distribution channels. Policies were implemented to eliminate wholesalers (chiefly local merchants), and a number of local traders went out of business. Many factories shifted to capital sources outside the control regime by becoming small- or micro-scale enterprises, in order to stay in business. Local traders also slipped through the cracks of the controls by hanging “closed for business” signs while continuing to operate; their shadow transactions engendered a boom in the shadow market. Thus, the measures for eliminating wholesalers were not wholly effective, and actually caused considerable market turmoil. The Manchuguo government eventually aimed to rectify the situation with new plans to make use of local capital and rely again on the old framework, but the war ended three months later and the plans were never implemented.

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