

Socio-economic Thought of the *Teikei* Movement and the Early Organic Agriculture in Japan: Overcoming ‘Natural and Human Alienation’

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1. Introduction

This paper has two purposes. First, it introduces a prehistory of the early days of the *teikei* movement in 1970s Japan, which was one of the origins of global Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Second, it re-evaluates the *teikei* movement as an alternative to the capitalist market economy and a recovery from ‘nature and human alienation’, by introducing socio-economic thoughts by Yoneo Okada, Yukio Tsuyuki, Teruo Ichiraku and Setsuko Shirone – the theoretical leaders of the *teikei*. A re-evaluation of their thoughts is not only conducted to learn the philosophy behind Japan’s organic agricultural movement and the *teikei* but also to understand how the movement claimed that our life is based on living nature and living peoples’ labour. It will become a foothold to reconsider our life in the increasing global division of labour and environmental problems.

The *teikei* is a mutual assistance system that directly distributes organic agricultural products – not through the ordinary market system but through associations consisting of producers and consumers – and it includes groups started by farmers and those initiated by consumers. It is characterised by unconventional distribution systems, such as pre-determined varieties and quantities that are adjusted according to the production situation and the seasons; fruit and vegetable sets periodically delivered to consumers with contents decided by the producers; operations by members themselves; non-professional transport and packing; and product prices determined by discussions between producers and consumers. These distribution systems of organic agricultural products are widely known as CSA. However, the *teikei*, which began in the 1970s, predate other types of community agriculture organisations.

In the 1970s, Japan’s early organic farming was supported by the *teikei* movement, in which consumers bought and supported their products. Its early leaders brought a socio-economic alternative to the capitalist market economy, namely the idea that agriculture and consumer’s daily life should recover from ‘natural or human alienation’. Their main criticisms targeted the ‘division of work’ between rural areas and cities as well as the commercialisation of the agricultural products that had promoted it. This division was not only a spatial one, where the production areas of agricultural products were far from the consumption areas, but it also implied a ‘conscious division’ between producers and consumers due to the highly developed food distribution systems.

On the other hand, the *teikei* has been analysed mainly in relation to the organic agricultural movement. Therefore, there are not enough studies evaluating the consumer group of the *teikei* as an environmental consumer movement, and there is not enough research on the *teikei* from the viewpoint of environmental thoughts or socio-economic thought. However, of these, the relationship between consumers and producers in the *teikei* is described

in Harayama (2011, p.267) as follows: ‘what appears before consumers is producers as living humans whom consumers will continue to be involved with in the concrete relationship, beyond producers brought as information’. Today, this producer–consumer relationship is also known as ‘a face-to-face relationship’. The idea that defined this ‘a face-to-face relationship’ in the *teikei* was the thought of ‘overcoming of alienation of nature and humans’ by Okada, Ichiraku, Tsuyuki and Shirone, who were the early ideological leaders of the *teikei*.

Okada conceived his own ‘consumer self-sufficiency/self-defence farm’ inspired by Marx’s theory of alienation. Based on that concept, Okada organised a kind of business model for the *teikei* and the actual consumer networks, which became one of the foundation of the movement. Ichiraku brought ‘co-operativism’ and the emphasis on ‘face-to-face’ relationship based on mutual assistance as an alternative to the capitalist market economy in the *teikei* movement, following the anti-commercial unionism advocated in 1930s in Japan. Shirone founded Tokorozawa Seikatsumura, meaning ‘village for life in Tokorozawa-city’ and later referred to as Tokorozawa Life Village – that is, a consumer purchasing group comprising housewives¹⁾. Shirone aimed to build a community and realise a daily life that avoided chemical pollutants and products made from or with petroleum products. On the other hand, Tsuyuki did not propose a socio-economic model as an alternative but guided the natural farming method in adapting to nature and called for a self-reform of consumers. His farming method was meant to warn that agriculture and life were far from the ‘order of nature’ and to urge to reconsider our society from the viewpoint of the mechanism of nature.

In other words, the leaders of the *teikei* all aimed to connect producers and consumers through food to recover from the ‘natural and human alienation’ caused by the division of labour.

2. Characteristics of the *teikei* movement

In Japan, organic farming has been conducted since the late 1940s, and it was initially called with different names such as ‘natural farming’. In the 1960s and 1970s, as chemical pollution became a social issue, farmers who had doubts about the conventional cultivation using pesticides or chemical fertilisers gathered, creating an organic agricultural movement. The *teikei* supported this early organic agriculture by buying their products. It started spontaneously, with organic farmers in each area connecting with consumers who sought safe food, and it peaked as a movement in the 1980s (Kokumin Seikatsu centre eds. 1981, pp.41–45).

The *teikei* was of three types, depending on whether it was led by the producers or the consumers: the producer-led type, the consumers group-led type and alliances between the producer group and the consumer group. According to a survey conducted by the National Consumer Affairs Centre of Japan (1981), in 1980, the number of consumer groups that focused on food safety and purchased agricultural/livestock products directly or jointly from producers was 303 (Kokumin Seikatsu centre eds. 1981, pp.12–15). In addition, the same survey reports that the average number of households in a group was 419.3, and its size varied from small groups of one to nine households (two groups) to large groups of more than 2,000 households (18 groups).

Many of these *teikei* consumer groups not only bought agricultural products but also tried to learn the situation that producers were in by visiting and helping them and to reconsider their daily lives by sharing information with producers and consumer members. Therefore, direct interactions between producers and consumers, participation in management of the association and information sharing on newsletters were recommended for the enlightenment of consumer members.

3. Prehistory of the organic agriculture movement and the *teikei*

3.1 Consumers' group purchasing movement

Since before World War II, prior to the *teikei* movement, direct food delivery systems in which producers and consumers were connected without relying on middlemen partly existed in Japan. After the war, other type of connections, such as affiliations between agriculture/fishery co-operatives and urban consumer co-operatives, were also trialled in various areas. However, in parallel with those, the group purchasing movement operated by consumers themselves emerged spontaneously – mainly in urban areas nationwide – at the end of the 1960s. Grassroots co-operatives, which later became one of the model of the *teikei* movement, formed its basis²⁾.

Oshima (1972) constitutes a valuable record of the group purchasing movement in Japan around 1970; it recalls how, one year before his writing of the book³⁾, the directors of the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative and of the Nada Kobe Co-operative had visited the United States and had brought back a commentary on group purchasing, entitled 'Buying Club' and issued by the Midland Co-operative. It is not clear whether the Japanese group purchasing movement imitated foreign ones. However, in any case, Japan's group purchasing movement in the late 1960s was the basis of the *teikei* consumer group and also the forerunner of contemporary ethical consumption in Japan.

However, this movement emphasised the idea and consciousness of 'protecting livelihoods' by 'buying better things for a cheaper price'. Initially, it was different from some aspects of philosophy of the later *teikei*, such as the recovery from 'natural and human alienation' or the 'equal and face-to-face relationship between producers and consumers'. Oshima (1972) raises two points with regard to the theory of the movement. First, the consumer movement must start from consumer demand. Second, co-operatives based on consumer movements must not deal in products departing from the characteristic that had been accumulated by previous co-operatives; that is, 'if the quality is the same, the price must be lower; if the price is the same, the quality must be better' (Oshima 1972, p. 115, p.118).

Of course, these consumer movements were conducted to counter the capitalist market economy. Oshima (1972) mentions correct analysis and recognition of products as an essential element of the group purchasing movement because commodities characterise capitalism, and commodity analysis provides an opportunity to deepen the awareness of the social system. He also cites the following as examples of commerciality and regarding humanity (Oshima 1972, p.41, p.50): defective or harmful products, fashion trends created by large advertising costs, high pricing controlled by enterprises, and complicated distribution systems (Oshima 1972, p.113–114). Therefore, consumers' correct perception of commodities through the group purchasing movement promotes not only the idea of 'protecting livelihoods' but also a potential transformation of the capitalist market economy, which disregards consumers' humanity. However, initially, the group purchasing movement had the limit that it would be a movement for consumers themselves.

On the other hand, Oshima (1972) also cites vegetables and fruit, which grew without pesticides for their appearance or did not have a tidy appearance but the same taste (Oshima 1972, p.77), as another type of items targeted by the movement. Here, a common thread with the later *teikei* movement can be noted regarding food safety and the understanding of agriculture, namely that consumers should adjust to production as much as possible. In addition, consumers, who had learned about the products and had strongly connected with distributors and

producers, began to consider the interests of the latter as well as their own. For example, in the case of the Miyagi School Co-operatives, which started in the latter half of the 1960s, they agreed to ‘protect not only the interests of consumers but also the interests of dairy farmers confronting difficult management’ (Oshima 1972, p.35). It was also the foundation for the understanding of producers and the ‘face-to-face relationship’ that became the philosophy of the later *teikei* movement.

In addition, Oshima (1972) raises four points as the issues that must be solved: (1) reforming consumers’ awareness and gathering with their solidarity; (2) the problem that the leaders exclude those members who do not fit the movement’s philosophy; (3) uneven burden of works on some specific persons; (4) the need to deal with the increase in double-income households for maintaining the operation works by themselves (Oshima 1972, pp. 154–162). These issues were almost the same as those of the later *teikei* movement; in particular, the first has continued to be addressed with regards to whether they should maintain the initial ideals of the movement or rationalise its organisation. As for the third and the fourth, Oshima (1972) explains that the group purchasing movement was a consumer movement in which anyone could participate, and whose members engaged in operation. For example, the catchphrase ‘troublesome is a characteristic of the co-operative’ was written on the leaflet for recruiting members of the Kagoshima Citizens’ Co-operative mentioned before (Oshima 1972, p.3), and it shows that the group purchasing movement had the same problems of operation works by themselves since its inception as the later *teikei* movement.

Nevertheless, the socio-economic thought of the *teikei* movement, such as ‘natural and human alienation’ or ‘a face-to-face relationship between producers and consumers on an equal footing’, was influenced by Yoneo Okada and Teruo Ichiraku, who will be introduced later in this paper.

3.2 Post World War II pollution and food safety: the early days of the Japanese organic agriculture movement

By the 1960s, problems related to pollution had become a significant side-effect of the rapid economic growth in Japan, including foods contaminated by chemical substances and poisons, which represented a serious problem in many regions. The health hazards of producers caused by pesticides had also become a social problem. Against the background of such doubts on conventional agriculture, farmers who practiced natural farming and pesticide/chemical-free agriculture had appeared in various places in Japan⁴).

Giryō Yanase, a physician also practicing organic farming at Gojo, in Nara Prefecture, published the pamphlets *Harm of Pesticide* in 1959⁵) – over three years before the publication of the ground-breaking environmental science volume *Silent Spring* by R. Carson in 1962 (published in Japanese in 1964). Later, *Fukugou Osen* (Combined Pollution) by Sawako Ariyoshi, which has been called a Japanese version of *Silent Spring*, was serialised in *the Asahi Newspaper* from 1974 to 1975 and warned consumers about the problem of food pollution caused by chemicals⁶).

On the agricultural side, in 1947, Masanobu Fukuoka, known worldwide for *One-straw Revolution: Introduction to Natural Farming*, began engaging in natural farming without pesticides and chemical fertilisers on his lands in Ehime Prefecture (Fukuoka 1983). In 1952, Yanase had started practicing as a physician in his hometown of Gojo, and he frequently encountered patients who were suffering from the effects of agricultural pesticide poisoning (Yanase 1975). In 1960, Yukio Tsuyuki engaged in the work of guidance of the Natural Farming Extension

Association at a Shintou's new religion called Sekai Kyūsei Kyou, in Shizuoka Prefecture. He later led the Miyoshi Village Producer Group in Chiba Prefecture, which was affiliated with the *teikei* consumers' group, Anzen'na Tabemono-wo Tsukutte Taberu-kai, meaning the Association for Producing and Eating Safe Food. In 1972, the Takahata-town Organic Agriculture Study Group was formed in Takahata, Okitama-district, Yamagata Prefecture. By the 1970s, farmers in various areas in Japan had switched to organic agriculture in individual or regional units. In response to these situations, in 1971, Teruo Ichiraku invited Fukuoka, Yanase and other natural farmer to his study group to hear their methods (Fukushima Tsuchi to Inochi wo Mamoru-kai 1991); in addition, in October of the same year, Ichiraku, Yanase and 25 members – including organic farmers, scholars and staff of co-operative organisations – became founding members of the Japan Organic Agriculture Association. It was Ichiraku who translated the term 'organic farming' into *yūki nouhou* in Japanese (Kurosawa 1971).

On the consumers side, *Fukugou Osen* (Combined Pollutions) by Ariyoshi had a great impact on consumers. The book contains a description about pesticide-free agriculture by Yanase and the Takahata-town Organic Agriculture Study Group mentioned above, which raised the interest of consumers (especially mothers raising children) in organic farming. It was a great opportunity for them to participate in the movement for safe food. In 1973, the Association for Producing and Eating Safe Food⁷⁾ set up a partnership with the Miyoshi Village Producers Group. This partnership started in the form of a response by farmers to the request of a group of Tokyo housewives seeking safe vegetables and fruits⁸⁾. The Association relied on a milk-buying club to deliver Yotsuba Milk from Hokkaido, which is in the northern region of Japan, directly to urban consumers. Its earliest leader was a practitioner named Yoneo Okada, who was eventually forced to resign due to his unclear accounting and dogmatic guidance; however, his social model of a 'self-sufficiency/self-defence farm' (Okada 1970a, Okada 1970b, Okada 1970c) exerted a strong influence on shaping the philosophy and the 'economic model' of the later *teikei* movements. After Okada left, in 1978, leaders of *teikei* groups from various areas in Japan gathered at a conference hosted by the Japan Organic Agriculture Association to discuss their guidelines for action with Ichiraku, and he summarised their discussion in the '*Teikei* Ten Principles' (Ichiraku 1979).

4. The leaders of the *teikei* movement and their thoughts

The *teikei* movement had two types of leaders: practical leaders actually operating the movement and thought leaders supporting them in the movement's philosophy. Agricultural and medical leaders included Masanobu Fukuoka, Giryō Yanase, Yukio Tsuyuki and Kanji Hoshi⁹⁾.

As leaders of the thought, Yoneo Okada, who devised the original idea and the operation model of the *teikei* movement; Teruo Ichiraku, who advocated the '*Teikei* Ten Principles' as the idea and guidelines of the movement; and Osamu Takamatsu (Takamatsu 1980), who inherited the concept and organisation of 'self-sufficiency/self-defence farm' of Yoneo Okada and developed it as his 'anti-division of work' in his organisation.

Furthermore, as the leaders of the consumer groups, Iyo Toya, who was the first representative of the Association for Producing and Eating Safe Food, which gave the model for the '*Teikei* Ten Principles' (Toya 2005), and Setsuko Shirone, who founded Tokorozawa Life Village, realised an anti-pollution and anti-petroleum civilisation community.

Among them, this paper will introduce the socio-economic thoughts of Okada, Tsuyuki, Ichiraku and Shirone as each of their perspectives brought the essential idea of connecting producers and consumers through food to

recover from ‘natural and human alienation’ caused by the division of labour into the *teikei* movement.

4.1 Yoneo Okada and his ‘self-sufficiency/self-defence farm’

Yoneo Okada¹⁰⁾ studied philosophy at Kokugakuin University and became a junior high school teacher in his hometown of Shizuoka. He resigned from his teaching position voluntarily at the age of 40 and acquired the joint management of dairy farming in Saitama Prefecture. From 1955, he moved around the country because he did not have his own land, engaging in modernisation and scaling up dairy farming in various places in Japan. However, he was unsuccessful in every place due to funding and human relationships. After leaving each place, he continued to publish his experiences as novels and articles in opinion journals.

In the process, Okada met Tsuyuki and Ichiraku and was thought to have been influenced by Ichiraku’s criticism of the capital market economy and Tsuyuki’s method of natural farming adapting to nature. Okada conceived the concept of ‘self-sufficiency/self-defence farm by consumers’ inspired by Marx’s theory of alienation in the process of searching the way of exploring dairy farming that follows the natural circulation and of social movements that involve supporting consumers. He published it as articles in opinion journals between 1969 and 1970. Then, Okada, Tsuyuki and Ichiraku attempted the Hometown Co-operative Movement to realise their respective ideas of building a co-operative community which combined farmers and consumers living in the same area, but it failed (Mainichi Shimbun 1971, Seisakujihou 1971). Then, Okada independently started a group purchasing campaign for Yotsuba Milk in Hokkaido in the spring of 1971 and succeeded in organising its consumer purchasing groups (Okada 1971, Yotsuba Nyûgyou 1997, Yotsuba Nyûgyou 2003). This movement for Yotsuba Milk, along with the group purchasing movement by the existing co-op, became the basis of consumer *teikei* groups at each region. In particular, Okada focused on attracting housewives – who were members of his movement – in order to promote consumers’ understanding of agriculture and thereby secure stable sales channels for his ‘real foods’, as explained later. Consumers’ learning contributed to raising awareness of their role in the *teikei* movement.

Okada probably met Ichiraku around 1969 and was influenced by him. The effects are Ichiraku’s criticism of the capitalist market economy and his claim that ‘agriculture had been treated colonially for the modernisation of Japanese industries in the industrial policy after the Meiji era’ (Ichiraku 1959). In addition, it, from his repeated failures in his dairy farming, Okada insisted on the following. Japanese dairy was a subcontractor of the food industry and was also exposed to competition of skimmed milk powder made by foreign, modern large-scale dairy industries. Processed milk using skimmed milk powder from overseas was then widely distributed in Japan. After that, Okada was inspired by Marx (1932) *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and his ‘Alienation of Labour’¹¹⁾, and advocated his self-sufficiency/self-defence farms by producers and consumers, focusing on ‘real’ foods – those made on the basis of natural circulation¹²⁾. In addition, Okada insisted that the farmers had to be the closest existence to humans, in the sense that they were not hired, and what they produced belonged to themselves. However, he said, they were ‘alienated from nature and human’ because they are controlled by the society (Okada 1970a, pp. 48–50). Therefore, it is necessary for farmers to have a direct connection with consumers to produce ‘real’ agricultural products and counter the capitalist system, in which agricultural products are commodities. Okada’s concept of ‘self-sufficiency/self-defence farm by producers and consumers’ advocated that it would be possible by creating a self-sufficient farm between consumers and farmers in a community where urban consumers and rural producers were united (Okada 1970a, p. 55).

The Hometown Co-operative Movement, mentioned before, was the trial to realise both Okada's concept and Ichiraku's Agricultural and Residential City Concept. However, after the failure, Okada organised groups of consumers who purchased Yotsuba Milk, and established a consumer group called Tamago no Kai, meaning the 'association of eggs', where consumers would actually built their own self-sufficient farms¹³⁾. In addition, Okada also embarked on the establishment of the Association for Producing and Eating Safe Food and mediation of a partnership between the Association of Producing and Eat Safe Food and Miyoshi Village (Anzen'na Tabemono wo Tsukutte Taberukai 2005, pp.10–15). The Tokorozawa Life Village, founded by Setsuko Shirone, was also based on this purchasing groups of Yotsuba Milk, although it was not clear whether Okada had contacted Shirone¹⁴⁾. Furthermore, Okada recommended Tsuyuki to producers in Miyoshi Village. In this mediation, Okada decided the several conditions for affiliation between the Miyoshi Village Producer Group and the Association for Producing and Eating Safe Food, which included 'Consumers receive all the vegetables produced by the Miyoshi Village Producer Group,' and 'Products are delivered by the producers themselves' (Anzen'na Tabemono wo Tsukutte Taberukai 2005, pp. 44–47). These were later incorporated into '*Teikei* Ten Principles' advocated by Ichiraku as guidelines for the *teikei* movement (Fukushima Tsuchi to Inochi wo Mamoru Kai 1991, p. 33).

However, Okada became subsequently to lose trust from the members of each group due to his uncertain accounting, exaggerating achievements, instigative words and self-righteous guidance. In the end, Okada was expelled from all groups (Anzen'na Tabemono wo Tsukutte Taberukai 2005, pp. 98–107. Takamatsu 1980, pp. 24–36); nevertheless, it can be said that Okada's concept, namely the unification of producers and consumers under their complete trust (Okada 1970d, pp. 10–11), and his consumer organisations formed the foundation of the *teikei* movement.

4.2 Yukio Tsuyuki's natural farming method of 'listening to nature'

Tsuyuki was engaged in the work of the Natural Farming Extension Association at a Shinto's new religion of Japan, called Sekai Kyūsei Kyou, after resigning as director of the Numazu Agricultural Development and Extension Centre¹⁵⁾.

Tsuyuki's 'natural farming' was not a method that referred to what kind of pesticide to use and how to cultivate, but it involved developing an ability to feel nature and apply it to agriculture (Tsuyuki 1982, pp. 227–228.). It encouraged to learn how plants and microorganisms live and how they affect each other in nature, and to create a mental attitude that 'adapts to nature' before discussing farming methods; Tsuyuki called this the ability to 'listen to nature'. According to him, natural farming has basic systems that can be explained, such as how the soil 'lives' with microorganisms, the nature of plants and the relationships between soil, plants and animals¹⁶⁾. However, that kind of knowledge cannot be applied to different regions. Instead of it, Tsuyuki explained that natural farming was the way to 'support the autonomy of nature' according to its order, that is, 'natural rationality' (Tsuyuki 1982, pp. 264–267). Tsuyuki raised several basic principles of natural farming; for example, the 'mechanism of unifying and harmonising of nature' means that humans do not disturb its biological harmony and function created by soil, plants and microorganisms such as rhizobia by using fertilisers. Another one is 'the rule of giving according to nature's need', which means that farmers give what nature needs, when it needs it, and as much as it needs (Tsuyuki 1982, pp. 37–40).

At the same time, Tsuyuki urged consumers to reconsider their lives from the mechanism of nature (Tsuyuki

1982, pp. 77–78, p. 91). As a method for this, Tsuyuki recommended them to grow vegetables by themselves, which had two purposes. First, Tsuyuki admonished that consumers chose easy methods because they interpreted the division of labour and the system of exchange economy as their own convenience; for instance, they only depended on farmers to obtain their own foods. He insisted that consumers should have devised as much as possible and done what they could. Second, he believed that consumers' growing vegetables could make modern urban dwellers, who were separated from nature, learn that humans are made alive by its power. In other words, it was meant to 'revive the living blood flow' between humans and nature (Tsuyuki 1982, p. 3). Tsuyuki warned that consumers were enthusiastic only about securing their own healthy foods as the pollution problem expanded, and he insisted that consumers had to become 'human beings' above all, before ensuring their own safety (Tsuyuki 1982, p. 121).

Tsuyuki's teaching on natural farming was conveyed to the producers of Miyoshi Village through his direct guidance on farms and became their shared thought on agriculture. It was not a unified farming method or safety standard, and, unlike Okada and Ichiraku's, it did not aim for social reform as an economic system. However, Tsuyuki's idea of a 'living' response to nature became part of the *teikei*'s philosophy, that is, the relationship between living soil and humans.

4.3 Teruo Ichiraku and the 'Teikei Ten Principles'

Initially, the *teikei* movement directly connected organic farming producers and consumers from the perspective of nature and human alienation. Teruo Ichiraku¹⁷⁾ added 'co-operativism' to the movement's ideas as an alternative to the capitalist market economy. His main achievement is represented by the 'Teikei Ten Principles' (1978) between producers and consumers as the guideline of the movement.

Before being involved in it, Ichiraku aimed to realise a 'fair society through co-operatives'; this approach included improving the status of agriculture as an ideal among co-operative organisations. In 1967, Ichiraku held a meeting with the heads and researchers of Japanese co-operative organisations for the discussion on the 1966 edition of the 'International Co-operative Principles'. During this meeting, Ichiraku insisted the need for a community based on people's autonomy and mutual aid, which had different principles from those of economic rationality and state power. After the meeting, he published several articles on its ideals between 1967 and 1968 (e.g. Ichiraku 1967a, 1967b). Furthermore, Ichiraku actually proposed two concepts on co-operative community and tried to put them into practice, namely the 'Agricultural and Residential City Plan' in 1969 (Ichiraku 1969) and the 'Hometown Co-operative Movement' in 1971 (Mainichi Shimbun 1971); however, both of them failed. In 1971, Ichiraku launched the (Japan) Organic Agriculture Association to deal with the chemical pollution and the harmful effects of pesticides on foods that had spread throughout Japan. It could be thought that, in the process, he supported the organic agricultural movement and met the *teikei*, finding his ideal of community based on people's autonomy and mutual aid through 'co-operativism' within them.

The 'Teikei Ten Principles' advocated by Ichiraku consist of the following (summarised by the author): (1) relationship between producers and consumers based on humanity, (2) planned production by producers, (3) Acceptance of all products by consumers (consumers eating habits depend on these as much as possible,) (4) pricing based on mutual consideration, (5) effort to increase opportunities to make contact and achieve mutual understanding, (6) self-distribution by producer or consumer groups, (7) democratic operation and mutual

consideration of members' circumstances, (8) focus on learning activities, (9) maintaining proper scale (the size of the area and the number of members) by increasing the number of groups and cooperating with each other, and (10) progress toward the ideal (Ichiraku 1979).

Among them, Article 1 was particularly important for Ichiraku as it represented the *teikei*'s philosophy and stated the following:

The essence of *teikei* between producers and consumers is not the relationship between buying and selling things but the relations of friendship based on humanity. It is a relationship of mutual relations, where they are on an equal footing, understand and help each other (Ichiraku 1979).

According to Ichiraku, its characteristics are: (1) the evaluation of agricultural products in use-value on the basis of their taste and safety rather than in exchange-value at anonymous markets; (2) the price of agricultural products, which can be determined freely and directly in 'face-to-face' relationships between the parties without going through commercial markets composed of an unspecified number of people; (3) the essence of *teikei* being 'gifts and thanks', i. e. producers' providing products and consumers' monetary compensation/rewards; (4) the relationship between producers and consumers in *teikei* is not a trading partner but 'an extension of the family, a partner who share more pains and joys than relatives and friends' (Ichiraku 1979).

These Ichiraku's socio-economic ideas were influenced by the 'industrial co-operativism' of the Industrial Association, which was founded in Japan in 1900 and consisted of agricultural co-operatives, credit unions, credit co-operatives, and consumer co-operatives. Industrial co-operativism was an anti-commercial ideology promoted by the Industrial Association through the campaign 'Industrial Association expansion movement', which aimed to improve the situation in rural areas and the status of farmers in 1930s. Ichiraku worked at the Credit Union Central Bank since 1930 and joined the movement. The background of this industrial co-operativism campaign was the Great Depression of 1929 and the subsequent Showa Agricultural Depression in Japan in 1930–1931. The movement insisted on the elimination of intermediate profits of fertiliser dealers affiliated with pre-modern usury finances in rural areas, in response to growing concerns about capitalism. It is thought that Ichiraku's lifelong insistence on the 'criticism of the capitalist market economy', 'not including distributors as third parties in the *teikei*', the 'decommodification of agricultural products' and the 'denial of corporations' were largely influenced by this corporatist ideology before WWII¹⁸⁾.

As for the '*Teikei* Ten Principles', Ichiraku claimed that he had merely summarised it after discussions among the *teikei* leaders. However, his belief of an anti-capitalist market economy and his co-operativism on mutual aid were brought into these principles under his strong leadership. Although it had an ideological side, it was essentially aimed at understanding agriculture and improving the status of small-scale farmers. Ichiraku's co-operativism and his 'Ten Principles' also became a crucial part of philosophy of the *teikei*, along with, a 'face-to-face relationship' based on empathy and humanity.

4.4 Setsuko Shirone's anti-pollution movement and her 'Life Village'

Finally, this paper introduces Setsuko Shirone¹⁹⁾, who tried to implement a lifestyle reform in the form of a consumer community group connecting directly with producers. Since around 1970, Shirone had encouraged

neighbourhood housewives to use soap instead of synthetic detergents in their daily life. After a few years, Shirone launched the Gyūnyū Tomonokai (meaning ‘Milk Club’) in 1973 with the aim of group purchasing Yotsuba Milk in order to seek safe foods (Shirone and Nakayama 1982, p.145). Shirone had gradually expanded the items for group purchasing to vegetables, rice and fruit and, in 1978, changed the name of the group to Tokorozawa Seikatsumura, meaning ‘village for life in Tokorozawa-city/Tokorozawa Life Village’ (Gyūnyū Tomonokai 1978, Tokorozawa Seikatsumura 1978).

Shirone explained that she named the community ‘Life Village’ because the culture could not be cultivated without soil, and our life could not be nurtured without the nature circulation, with her desire to return to the life with soil. She argued that daily life was being eroded by civilised society. Shirone’s movement also included reconsideration and reflection on our consumption and daily life because she thought consumers should not have only consumed but also created something. Shirone insisted that the problems of food could not be solved without considering ‘our way of life’, namely our daily life (Shirone and Nakayama 1982, pp.146–147). Shirone said, ‘The basis of our life is food, and food can be obtained only from whole circulations ... We have to grasp our life with our own hands as human beings’ (Shirone 1979, pp.188). These words show her strong assertion that consumers should regain their independence from a civilised society that is alienated from nature through their own practices.

Shirone also stated that the activity of her Tokorozawa Life Village was anti-pollution (Shirone and Nakayama 1982, p.8). She promoted a *teikei* movement that aimed not to bring things which destroyed the ecological cycle into her daily life. She called them ‘dirt’ and included things made from petroleum, such as pesticides, fertilisers and materials used for institutional cultivation (Shirone and Nakayama 1982, p.154). Several principles were asserted by Shirone to avoid buying most of the food in the market and to resist the conventional distribution system, namely not having a third party between production and consumption, and eating as much homemade food as possible instead of processed food, with the exception of having a connection with traditional handmade factories (Shirone and Nakayama 1982, p.147). Therefore, in Tokorozawa Life Village, Shirone expanded the items of group purchases to seasonings, including salt, miso and soy sauce, soybean products, fish, meat and natural detergents, in addition to agricultural products. For this purpose, Shirone visited producers not only in the Tokorozawa area but all over country to seek such products²⁰). The large number of items and the spread of producers nationwide remain almost unchanged at the current Tokorozawa Life Village. Consumer members, on the other hand, needed to engage in volunteer works for their ordering, receiving, distributing and accounting, and efforts of sharing information among members through newsletters were also made.

Shirone was also influenced by the ‘criticism to division’ by Takamatsu (Takamatsu 1980, pp.21–23), the leader of another *teikei* group, Tamago no Kai (meaning the egg association, which had also been initially organised by Okada, as mentioned before). Shirone’s philosophy of the Tokorozawa Life Village strongly criticised the oil civilisation and the division of labour and insisted on the ‘de-marketing’ of agricultural products and daily life. It can be said that her thought also inherited that of ‘natural and human alienation’.

5. Current *teikei* movement and consumer ethics

The *teikei* movement in Japan, which started in the 1970s, has developed gradually and continued to the present day. However, the movement is currently facing a crisis due to several reasons, such as the subsequent marketisation of organic agricultural products, the change of socio-economic conditions (e. g. the social

advancement of female consumers who engaged in operation works at the movement), and the ageing and decrease of its members. It may be argued that the thoughts advocated by early leaders, introduced in this paper, narrowed the diversity of the movement – for example, by completely rejecting the marketizing of organic agricultural products. However, the ‘division between producers and consumers’, which the *teikei* movement criticised and tried to overcome, has continued to expand due to the further globalisation of the agricultural market. The ideal of the *teikei* movement was to connect producers and consumers through food to overcome ‘natural and human alienation’. It still has the potential to become a foothold for environmental ethics in reconsidering the relationship between individuals, society and nature; further to this point, the ‘face-to-face’ relationship in the *teikei* provides an opportunity to know that we are made alive by the natural circulation and the people in it. Food, the most familiar and essential element in our daily lives, is produced by ‘living soil and living people’, and consumers, who are aware of this, can support and preserve them. Then, it might be said that the objective of the *teikei* movement’s early leaders was to restore the cyclical relationship between nature and people by uniting them on the idea of ‘living food’.

In this sense, the *teikei* is not only an agricultural movement, but has the aspect of environmental consumption movement through food, which is most familiar and essential to us, and that makes us recognise that our life is based on living nature and the living people’s labour. In further studies, the plan is to examine how this early *teikei* ideal has been practiced as ‘face-to-face relationships’ in the movement, including its limits. This is because the environmental thought and practices of the *teikei* could be considered to be one of the environmental ethical foundations for today’s environmental consumption behaviour and ethical consumption.

- 1) Tokorozawa Seikatsumura (Tokorozawa Life Village) (<https://www.seikatsumura.com/>).
- 2) For example, in March 1969, the Nagoya Working Citizens’ Co-op was established after a preparation period of about 10 months, triggered by ‘a housewife’s small desire to give children a lot of delicious and cheap milk’. The number of initial members was 2,500 (Oshima 1972, pp.4–5). In March 1970, the Consumer’s Association for Protecting Living was established in Kagoshima to group purchase several products such as milk, co-op products, potatoes, propane gas and white kerosene. After that, by November of the same year, 169 groups and more than 1,100 households were organized into what became the Kagoshima Citizens’ Co-op the following year (Oshima 1972, pp. 208–210).
- 3) Oshima (1972) also describes the group purchasing movement overseas in the 1960s. According to it, ten years before the writing of this book, Oshima himself saw several baskets of the same shape in a warehouse during his visit to the Italian Cooperative Federation (abbreviated as Lega) and heard that the baskets were used to deliver to groups that purchased foods regularly. He wrote that this had probably been a ‘group purchasing movement’ in Italy.
- 4) See also Barton (2018) for the history of Japanese organic agricultural movement and the *teikei*, as materials published in English.
- 5) See Jikokai website (www.jiko-kai.org/en/), Ariyoshi (1975).
- 6) Ariyoshi (1975) contains several references to Yanase and other organic farming pioneers who formed the Organic Agriculture Study Group of Takahata Town in 1972.
- 7) Anzen’na Tabemono wo Tsukutte Taberukai (the Group of growing and eating safe food)(<http://taberukai.jp/>).

- 8) It is written that many other organic agricultural farmers in Japan connected endogenously with consumers as partners, and it was a rare case that the Miyoshi Producers' Group had started organic agriculture at the request of consumers. Anzen'na Tabemono wo Tsukutte Taberukai (2005), pp. 23–24.
- 9) Kanji Hoshi (1935–) A farmer poet and one of the leaders of the Takahata Town Organic Agriculture Study Group. He has written many poems, essays and books on beautiful nature in Takahata and the organic agriculture movement.
- 10) Yoneo Okada (1914–?)
- 11) Okada (1970d) referred Chapter 4 of the First Draft, 'Alienation of Labour' in Marx (1932).
- 12) According to Okada (1970a; 1970c; 1970e), good cows, good pastures and good soil are needed to obtain good milk. For this purpose, the compost and urine of cows must be returned to the pasture lands; however, the main aim of Japan's small dairy farming was to put manure produced by dairy cows into rice cultivation or fruit and vegetable fields, which are the main businesses for farmers. As a result, the circulation had been cut off, and the quality of milk reduced. This was the reason that they had used fertilizers and pesticides, having destroyed the natural circulation; however, it was no longer agriculture. Okada (1970a), pp. 50–53.
- 13) The philosophy and organization of this association was taken over by Takamatsu, and while modifying Okada's philosophy, it continued thereafter (Takamatsu 1980).
- 14) The milk they initially purchased at the Milk Club, the first name of Tokorozawa Life village, was Yotsuba Milk (Gyûnyû Tomonokai 1977; Tokorozawa Seikatsumura 1978a, 1978b).
- 15) Yukio Tsuyuki (1911–1977). After graduating from Shizuoka Prefectural Tagata Agricultural School in 1928, he moved to Manchuria and worked in the Manchurian Agricultural Administration Division. After being detained in Siberia at the end of the war, he worked for the Kan-nami Agricultural Cooperative Association in Shizuoka Prefecture. He died of kidney cancer in 1977 (age 65). Tsuyuki (1982), pp. 413–414.
- 16) For example, Tsuyuki explained 'living soil' as follows. Mountain trees do not grow by using the fallen leaves as fertilizer, like compost, but they use the mould that grows between the soil and the fallen leaves. Microorganisms similar to 'koji' – rice mould that makes sake and miso – form a network in the soil and act as catalysts to produce nutrients. This living soil smells good and can be eaten; it is granular soil. When dissolved in a glass of water, only the soil will settle after a while, and the water will become clear. Applying the methods of nature, we will transform cultivated land into such living soil. Similarly, when growing rice, one must 'listen to the rice' to know how to grow it. Tsuyuki (1982), pp. 6–11, pp. 231–236.
- 17) Teruo Ichiraku (1906–1994) After working for the pre-war Industrial Association Central Bank and the post-war Nourinchûkin Bank, meaning Agriculture and Forestry Central Bank, he was a director of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives and a director of the Cooperative Management Research Institute. During his tenure as Chairman of the Institute of Management of Cooperatives, he established the (Japan) Organic Agriculture Association, which is an independent organisation.
- 18) At the same time, Ichiraku's criticism of the capitalist market economy may also have been influenced by his family background. Although Ichiraku was born in a small farmer family, he was adopted by a merchant relative as the son and heir. He wrote that his adopted family was very stingy in business and he felt aversion to business (Nousanson Gyoson Bunka Kyokai eds., 1996a=1996b=2009, pp.354-357).
- 19) Setsuko Shirone (1938–2019): Consumer activist. She also engaged in the Organic Agriculture Association as a

major member.

20) Shirone's frequent visits to producers were recorded in the newsletters of the Tokorozawa Life Village.

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