



## 9.2. Nature control and land use in flood areas

**Panel organiser:** Takahashi, Motoyasu, University of Ehime, Japan; Yamauchi, Futoshi, Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan

This panel session aims to examine the characteristics of nature control and land use in the areas where there were frequent floods in the early modern period, when it was difficult for the contemporary techniques to control the nature. Early modern Japan had a widespread land use system, so called wari-chi, in particular in the areas where floods often occurred. This land use system divided the land into allotments according to the degree of rights to the land. The village land was under the common control of the village. The division was generally changed by lot every so many years. This session investigates nature control through the regional social structure and governance structure in frequent flood areas focusing on Nishi-kanbara hundred, Niigata. We also analyse the relationship between the regional natural environment and the wari-chi, as well as the characteristics of land use there. For the international comparison, this session attempts to include papers of other frequent flood occurring areas in European countries.

**Chair:** Yamauchi, Futoshi, Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan

Wednesday, 21 August 2013 // 1400 – 1600 // Session 9 – Room A-119

### 9.2.1. Communal Organisations in the English Fen-edge Area: for a Study of Historical Parallel and Contrast with the Warichi (Land Distribution) System in Echigo, Japan

**Takahashi, Motoyasu, University of Ehime, Japan**

This paper introduces a new perspective, that of communalism, in order to discuss the natural environment and resources in the field of social and economic history. This research group has been engaged in the 'parallel and contrast' study of two rural societies of England and Japan in the period of the formation of the market economy, in other words the 'early modern' period. This study has chosen two village societies namely Willingham, Cambs., U. K. and Kami-shiojiri, Nagano, Japan. It comprehensively analyses the changes in the ordinary daily productive activities and the development of these communities' responses to extra-ordinary natural disasters and the famines that often followed. Work in each research field has shown that social and economic organisations revealed their communality in the course of everyday life and there are very similar features which unite all the different activities carried out in times of natural disaster. The floods and other disasters severely affected the villagers and studying these events also reveals the responses of the landlords and governments to such overwhelming circumstances. Here, applying such findings into another Japanese village, Naka-go-ya, Niigata, the communalism will be proven, in particular the land distribution system named 'Warichi'. The literal meaning of 'warichi' is the practice of changing the land that was to be cultivated by taking turn or by drawing lots. The use of the commons in the two villages is comparable as the purpose was the protection of the natural resources.

### 9.2.2. Nature control and land use in flood areas: a case study of Naka-go-ya, Nishi-kanbara, Niigata, Japan

**Yamauchi, Futoshi, Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan**  
**Murayama, Yoshiyuki, University of Yamagata, Japan**

The Naka-go-ya village on Nishi-kanbara Niigatae in Japan where we will take up the case in this report was a farming village. It was located in the flood prone area and had suffered from disasters for several years. Moreover, this village experienced frequently bad harvests. Furthermore, it had a special land holding system, the so called wari-chi system. This land holding system divided the land into allotments according to the degree of rights to the land. The village land was under the common control of the village. The division was generally changed by lot every so many years. The landholder drew for the land which they owned for several years. It should be assumed that this land holding system was based on the village people's knowledge and experience which tried to absorb the individual damage by dividing it equally. However, this land holding system was inefficient for farming because the land which the landholders owned was scattered throughout the village by small plots. On the other hand, the number of landholders was on the decline and the gap among landowners has widened by buying and selling the rights to the land in the nineteenth century. In this paper we would like to consider not only the land ownership but also the reality of farming, continuity of household and human relationships in the village livelihood.

### 9.2.3. Governance System of Flood Control in Tokugawa Japan: a case study on the coexisting system of human beings and nature in Echigo Plain

**Hasebe, Hiroshi, University of Tohoku, Japan**

This paper explains and certifies the historical character of the co-existing system between human life and natural disaster in the Tokugawa Era. People's thoughts and stances against the natural hazard (flood) were peculiar and different from our own age. They considered the natural disasters as the acceptable or the submit-to in general. Of course they made efforts to prevent and control the flood of the river within their engineering technology. Rivers were not only the hazardous promoters but also the "mother of the grace". People received various benefits from their rivers and they thought rivers were the treasure box of the land. They called the flood as the fulfilled water (Mansui) and called the flood control as the water protection (Bousui). The open levee was the damage acceptable and coexisting technology for them. The modern essential idea of flood control is, on the contrary, the very containment by the modern engineering technology like the concreting. Modern flood control, therefore, is performed through engineering projects by the state. This change disconnected many traditional channels of local people participating in the flood control. This paper describes this peculiar governance system by using local historical sources concerning flood control of the Shinano River.

#### Participants

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##### Yamauchi, Futoshi

M. A. and Ph. D. (Economics, Tohoku University). Professor (since 2006), Faculty of Economics, Kyoto Sangyo University. Books and Articles: The effects of Tenpo lean harvest the land ownership and land use in Kami-Shiojiri village, Ueda. (in Hasebe et al. ed. Tokyo, 2010).