

Why Has Japan's New Village Survived for 100 Years?¹

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Abstract It is widely known that the 1917 October Revolution established the Soviet Union as the world's first socialist nation: it lasted until its dissolution in 1991. The influence of the revolution extended to China, where an economy of public ownership was established in the 1950s, which has also undergone tremendous changes since 1978 with its opening to the outside world and reforms to the system of public ownership. Today, private enterprise has become the dominant component of China's industrial landscape and constitutes the primary engine of China's industrial development. The once ubiquitous rural people's communes were abolished by the State in 1983. What accounts for the survival of Japan's New Village (Atarashiki Mura), with its communist characteristics, from its founding 100 years ago to the present day? What has been the source of its vitality? The present study assesses Japan's New Village and rural Chinese people's communes against the three key elements necessary for organizations that were proposed in Barnard's seminal work on organization and management, *The Functions of the Executive* (1968). The results indicate that the New Village surpasses people's communes in Barnard's three areas of communication, willingness to serve, and common purpose.

Keywords Atarashiki Mura; New Village; People's Communes; Mushanokoji Saneatsu; Chester Barnard

1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely known that the 1917 October Revolution established the Soviet Union as the world's first socialist nation, which lasted until its dissolution 74 years later, in 1991. The other eastern European socialist republics no longer exist as communist countries. The socialist state that was established in China under the influence of the Soviet Union has gradually introduced reforms to relax the strict limits on the private economy. The rural Chinese people's communes established in 1958 were disbanded by the early 1980s. In 1992, China announced the implementation of the "socialist market economy." China's entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 launched the nation as an integral participant in the global capitalist market system. As of 2016, the number of private companies in China's industrial sector, the number of their employees, and their total profits were 11 times, 2 times, and 2.1 times respectively that of state-owned industrial companies (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2017, pp. 422–429). Private enterprise has become the dominant component of China's industrial landscape and now constitutes the major engine of China's industrial development.

However, the continuous existence from 100 years ago to the present day of the New Village in the capitalist nation of Japan, which operates in accordance with communist principles such as shared ownership, cooperative labor, and needs-based allocation of goods, has been considered nothing short of a miracle (Maeda, 2017, p. 148). How has Japan's New Village been able to last for one hundred years? What is the source of its vitality? This article establishes the research method for the enquiry after a brief consideration of the range of opinions about the New Village. Next, it examines the internal and external factors present at the founding and development of the New Village. Finally,

the questions above are addressed from the perspective of the framework of Barnard's theory of organization, which is also applied to research into the Chinese people's communes.

2. OPINIONS ABOUT THE NEW VILLAGE AND THE SELECTED RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Opinions about the New Village

The New Village was founded in 1918 by literary luminary Mushanokoji Saneatsu (1885–1976), a central figure of the Shirakaba School. Most analyses of the New Village are focused on the earliest period of its founding phase. According to Otsuyama, of the 33 media articles covering the period from 1918 to 1923, 12 articles were positive, while 21 articles were essentially negative. The former provided an encouraging view of the ideals of the New Village and looked forward to its success. The latter, while acknowledging the founder's selfless sense of social responsibility, nevertheless considered the New Village project to be out of step with the times and not undertaken with a realistic view of the challenges involved. Therefore, they forecast its failure (Otsuyama, 1997, pp. 46–49).

A number of socialists of the period (such as Sakai Toshihiko, Yamakawa Hitoshi, and Kawakami Hajime) held that, while Mushanokoji's ideals were aligned with theirs, his methods for achieving those ideals differed substantially from theirs. These differences originated in differing views of society, interpretations of history, and fundamentally different modes of thought. They viewed themselves as materialists, while Mushanokoji was considered an idealist (Aman, 1985, pp. 94–95). Though there was approval of how the New Village highlighted the injustices of capitalism and its program to establish a new ideal society, its avoidance of "realistic class struggle" and promulgation of utopian dreams indicated that the New Village's proponents had not separated themselves from the failed empty fantasies of socialists like Robert Owen and

Charles Fourier (Maeda, 2017, p. 56).

Mushanokoji responded to these criticisms as follows. The negative perspective of those who predicted the failure of the New Village was based on past realities, without an understanding of the need for an inner awakening of humanity. The project today, 37 years after its commencement, is not a success, but the New Village has managed to avoid bankruptcy, and it doggedly persists as a faint trickle. Thirty-seven years is not a short period, but in the light of the nature of the project, neither is it long. The New Village has passed through its inaugural phase (Mushanokoji, 1956, pp. 107–109).

At the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the New Village, critics observed that it was the first experiment with utopian socialism in Japan. Although it has survived and developed, Nishida consider it a failure. This is because the present New Village resembles the initial vision only in form, while the content has entirely changed. The initial stage of the New Village was characterized by a passion to change the world, but in the present New Village, no trace of that spirit can any longer be felt, as it has become quite practical. The present New Village has deviated to the point of heresy from the original founding principles. Because it does not confront the creaking legacy still carried forward in modern society, the construction of an idealistic secluded village lacks the necessary elements to develop into a global phenomenon embracing all humanity. It is merely a living historical monument (Nishida, 1968, p. 7).

2.2 Research method for this study

2.2.1 Theoretical framework of analysis

In the above discussion of the New Village, although opinions differ, they take the success or failure of the New Village as their central concern. We cannot view the present status of the New Village as evidence of either success or failure. There were 20 village members at the time of founding: now only 10 remain and they are of advanced age. There are few likely successors, and

the settlement seems to be in decline, appearing ever more distant from the founding ambition to change the world: how can it be called a success? From another perspective, Owen's New Harmony Commune lasted only four years, the formerly hegemonic Soviet Union lasted 74 years as the first socialist country, and the people's communes of socialist China operated for about 20 years. The fact that the New Village has persisted for 100 years is miraculous. How can this be casually called a failure? It is better to avoid casting the discussion in heroic terms of success or failure and pursue an analysis on a theoretical basis.

The aim of this paper is to answer the question: why has the New Village, a 100-year-old Japanese commune with communist characteristics, survived to the present day? What is the source of its vitality? The analysis below demonstrates that the New Village is a multi-functional organization and viewing it in terms of economics or on any other single dimension leads unavoidably to a biased analysis. We consider that the Barnard framework of contemporary organization theory will be most appropriate for analysis, due to its extensive applicability to organizations of very diverse natures.

2.2.2 The objective of the comparative analysis

After examining the internal and external factors relevant to the establishment of the New Village and the conditions of its development, this article compares the New Village with the Chinese people's communes, and analyzes the reasons for the differences between them. This process is followed for the following reasons.

(1) There is a certain intrinsic connection between the two. The New Village was introduced to China by Beijing University Professor Zhou Zuoren (Watanabe, 1999, pp. 7–8). In April 1919, he authored the first article in Chinese on the New Village in a special issue of *New Youth* magazine. Professor Zhou made a personal visit to the New Village in July 1919 and became an external member of the commune. On his return home, he established a New Village-affiliated group in Beijing and published another article documenting his visit

to the New Village (Zhao, 2014, pp. 14–18). A number of individuals who went on to become leaders of the Communist Party of China, such as Li Dazhao, Qu Qiubai, Mao Zedong, Yun Daiying, Zhou Enlai, and others took a great interest in the New Village before joining the Communist Party. Mao Zedong, in particular, visited Professor Zhou Zuoren to learn more about the New Village, and later published his own plan for a similar establishment in his essay *The Work of Students* and Yun Daiying published *The Dream of the Future* describing his new village plan. Zhou Zuoren was also invited to Tianjin by Zhou Enlai to give a speech introducing the New Village (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 154–162; Zhao, 2014, pp. 46–58). Subsequently, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, both of whom had displayed such interest in the New Village, were the supreme leaders of China during the period of the people’s communes. Some researchers consider that the 1958 establishment of people’s communes was Mao Zedong’s attempt to implement his New Village dream, which was impossible in the 1920s (Zhao, 2014, p. 189).

(2) There are many similarities between the two. First, the form of ownership: the New Villagers shared property such as land and houses; the people’s communes implemented collective ownership of production materials. Second, labor organization: the New Village implemented cooperative labor; the people’s communes implemented collective labor. Third, the distribution principle: the New Village distributes life necessities based on need and distributes equal individual cash payments; the people’s communes distributed necessities according to work effort in principle. In fact, however, work hours were calculated by a simple multiplication of days on the job, which resulted in a kind of egalitarianism, regardless of the actual work performed. Fourth, organizational functions: the New Village, in addition to agriculturally based economic activities, also undertakes activities such as literature, arts, publishing, and education: it is a multi-functional organization; the people’s communes were not devoted solely to agricultural activity, but engaged in various undertakings such as running

schools and health centers and organizing militias, and thus constituted multi-functional organizations.

3. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW VILLAGE

The founder of the New Village, Mushanokoji, was a famous Japanese writer. His oeuvre included novels, plays, poetry, and paintings. He also engaged in related activities such as literary criticism and publishing. Why would a literary luminary propose the establishment of a novel rural commune based on agricultural production? This is investigated from both internal and external aspects.

3.1 Internal factors in the establishment of the New Village

3.1.1 Influence of Tolstoy's thought

From the age of 18 or 19, Mushanokoji read Leo Tolstoy's works and was greatly influenced by them. He stated that without the seed planted by Tolstoy, he would not have been able to carry out the work of establishing the New Village. Tolstoy brought him to the recognition that his own life was built on the oppression and misfortune of others and was fundamentally mistaken (Mushanokoji, 1956, pp. 9–12). Born, like Tolstoy, into an aristocratic elite, he experienced a fundamental disgust at the parasitic life he inherited and resolved to devote his life to eliminating the unprincipled aspects of his own society.

3.1.2 Influence of socialist thought

From an early age, Mushanokoji unflinchingly read every number of the socialist propaganda organ *Heimin Shinbun*. Although he did not support every aspect of its content, he was substantially in agreement with most of it (Mushanokoji, 1956, p. 33). Scholars have summarized these influences as resulting in two motivations for Mushanokoji: to free himself from guilt deriving from his unscrupulous parasitic class status, that is, to reform his own life; and to liberate the world's people from the bondage of irrational social systems and money, that

is, to transform society (Otsuyama, 1997, pp. 8–9).

3.2 External factors in the establishment of the New Village

Here, “external factors” refers to contemporary events, i.e., the social-political context. After Japan’s victory in the 1894 Sino-Japanese War, Japan rapidly expanded its overseas territories. Distortions and rifts began to appear in Japanese society following the 1904 Russo-Japanese War. From 1905, there were protests against the Treaty of Portsmouth², such as the Hibiya Incendiary Incident, and other social unrest, such as the Ashio copper mine protest against pollution from mine waste. Following Japan’s annexation of South Korea in 1910, there was an attempted assassination of the Meiji Emperor in 1911. Japanese companies flourished for a short period after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, but their fortunes quickly reversed. The Soviet Union, the first socialist country, was created in 1917. Japan sent troops to Siberia in August 1918, at the time when Mushanokoji was establishing the New Village. Widespread outbreaks of civil violence occurred, triggered by soaring rice prices (Maeda, 2017, pp. 48–49). Against the backdrop of these events, there was general dissatisfaction with the social status quo and young people were beginning to pursue their dream of an ideal society. It is therefore evident that the establishment of New Village had elicited a sympathetic response and approval from many people who were directly motivated by the social situation of the times.

3.3 Mushanokoji’s choice

Mushanokoji responded to the impact of the internal and external factors outlined above with the formation of his own particular system of thought. Despite his tremendous admiration for Tolstoy and adoption of his pacifist and anti-war sensibilities, he did not agree with Tolstoy’s emphasis on self-sacrifice and asceticism. He advocated allowing full expression to his own individual potential, and not hindering others from the same self-development, thus styl-

ing himself an advocate of symbiotic existence (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 66–67). Although he affirmed and agreed with the justice of socialism, he maintained a distance from it. He did not advocate socialism, but fraternalism. One reason for this aversion was the association of socialism with violent revolution at that time and Mushanokoji retained an aristocrat's fear of being wiped out by revolutionary upheaval (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 37–39).

Therefore, Mushanokoji took neither Tolstoy's road nor the socialist path to the transformation of society. Instead, he chose a third way, attempting to revolutionize society peacefully by establishing his ideal humanistic symbiosis in the countryside — the New Village. He was asked why it was necessary to go to the country, as he could play his part in cities and work there toward the realization of his potential. He replied that he and his followers sought to break away from the contemporary social vortex, throw off the current unreasonable and distorted social order, and transform their lives under a new rational order. In other words, they did not want to be today's capitalists, nor did they wish to be today's workers, nor to continue their current parasitic life. Rather than live those kinds of lives, they devoted themselves to living a humanistic life (Maeda, 2017, p. 44).

The blueprint he conceived for the New Village had the following elements: when the community had between 100 and 1,000 residents, they would work the land in common and share housing. All would work together to fulfill their obligations. Daily working time would not exceed six hours and the remainder of the time would be free for pursuing individual interests, so many thinkers and artists were expected in the village. Everyone would be equal. There would be nobody giving orders, so nobody would have to obey anybody else. Everyone could dine together, or meals could be taken in one's own home. Money for necessary items could be withdrawn on an account on request, and there was no need for personal medical expenses when sick. As for relationship between men and women, as long as they did not interfere with others, a tolerant attitude was

adopted (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 47–48). Although Mushanokoji advocated sharing property such as land and housing and needs-based allocation on demand, he stressed that his system must not be taken as communism. He held that so-called communism is neither a goal nor an ideology. It is merely a result of fraternalism (Okuwaki, 1998, p. 52).

In 1920, Mushanokoji wrote *The Spirit of Atarashiki Mura* for the New Village, reflecting his conception of an ideal world. *The Spirit of Atarashiki Mura*³ is still in use today and is considered the “constitution” of the New Village.

4. OVERVIEW OF NEW VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

New Village activity has been classified into economic and non-economic activities for 100 years. The three phases of initiation, development, and decline can be identified in the economic sphere.

4.1 The Early Period (1918–1958)

In May and June 1918, Mushanokoji began speaking in the media about setting up the New Village. In July, *Atarashiki Mura*, a monthly publication, announced the two-tier membership system of village members and external non-resident members. In September, Mushanokoji sold his home to purchase land for the creation of the New Village, and travelled through Tokyo, Hamamatsu, Nagano, Matsumoto, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Fukuoka, and other cities to promote his “New Village” concept and to call for like-minded participants to join the project. In November, 25,000 square meters of private land were purchased in remote Miyazaki Prefecture and a further 15,000 square meters of public land was leased to formally establish the New Village.

At the time of building the village, there were 20 resident members, including two children. The early days of construction were very difficult. There was only 150 grams of food per person per day during the first two months. The pocket

money for one month was one *yen* for adults and half a *yen* for children (Nagami, 1968, pp. 6–24; Watanabe, 1999, pp. 3–4).

Table 1 shows the basic situation for the initial six years of the New Village. The number of village members dropped by almost half over the six-year study period. According to calculations by relevant scholars, however, the number of external village members increased from 164 in 1918 to 210 in 1924. By 1924, 24 branches had been formed by external members, including two branches in China, one each in Beijing and Dalian (Otsuyama, 1997, pp. 83–84). In 1928, after six years of hard labor, the New Village finally completed a large canal that solved the water supply problem (Maeda, 2017, p. 76). After another 10 years of hard work, the New Village had planted food crops such as rice and wheat, and cash crops such as tea and fruit trees. Additionally, generators were installed in the village and electricity was made available. Production and living conditions improved, and the development of the New Village gradually was on track (Maeda, 2017, p. 81, p. 208).

Unfortunately, at this time in 1938, authorities of Miyazaki Prefecture announced a plan to build a reservoir that would submerge the New Village's best rice fields (Watanabe, 1999, p. 29), wiping out twenty years of hard labor.

Table 1 Initial conditions at the founding of the New Village

Village year	Yearly breakdown	Resident Members			Income (JPY)		
		Adults ¹	Children	Total	A ²	B ³ + C ⁴	Total
1	1918	18	2	20	2,400	1,627	4,027
2	1919	26	3	29	5,882	5,401	11,283
3	1920	30	4	34	5,333	7,394	12,727
4	1921	17	2	19	4,051	8,210	12,261
5	1922	17	0	17	5,128	6,603	11,731
6	1923	10	1	11	2,950	1,508	4,458

Data source: Otsuyama, 1997, p. 83; Nagami, 1968, p. 18.

Notes: 1. People aged 16 years and above who can participate in the work force. 2. Funds from Mushanokoji and his family. 3. Funds from village members other than Mushanokoji. 4. Funds from external members and supporters.

Despite losing a majority of disappointed village members, Mushanokoji did not give up. In 1939, he used part of the compensation funds he received from the government to buy 13,200 square meters of mixed wood forest in Saitama Prefecture on the outskirts of Tokyo, and decided to reclaim the land and re-establish his New Village. Because the new site is located in the Kanto district, it is called “East Village.” At that time, only four households elected to stay with the project, with two households remaining in place and two households moving to East Village (Watanabe, 1999, pp. 29–30).

During World War II, Japanese people’s thoughts, beliefs, and actions were under strict state control. All production and aspects of ordinary life were subsumed under the war effort. The development of the New Village was therefore greatly restricted. The New Village was viewed as representing a potentially dangerous socialist tendency but there was no actual persecution due to Mushanokoji’s aristocratic background, although the government and police carried out surveillance, tracking, interrogation, workplace harassment, etc., (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 206–210). Crop cultivation and fertilizer distribution were also strictly controlled by the government, and village members were frequently requisitioned for forced labor (Aman, 1985, pp. 196–200).

4.2 Developmental period (1959–1990)

After the end of the Second World War, Japanese economy entered a period of rapid growth in the 1950s. Against this backdrop, the New Village (this term hereafter refers to East Village) made great strides, with the assistance of the Tokyo branch organization. Economic self-sufficiency, including a slight surplus, was achieved by 1958 (Maeda, 2017, p. 106). In 1961, the per capita income of the villagers slightly exceeded that of the average Japanese wage earner (Maeda, 2017, p. 112). In 1966, Mushanokoji stated that the New Village was no longer an empty fantasy but was now developing on a firmly realistic foundation (Maeda, 2017, p. 113). By 1988, the total income of the New Village

was 233.1 million yen, the land area was 944,100 square meters, and 88 buildings had been constructed. National Japanese media outlets such as NHK, TV Asahi, and others, reported on the success of the New Village (Watanabe, 1999, pp. 64–76). In 1989, Asahi Shimbun published an article titled “The Modern Utopia Rooted in the Land,” offering a detailed portrait of the New Village. A summary of the article follows.

With a workday of six hours per day, members do not need to pay for food, shelter, medical care, education, etc., and people over the age of 65 are freed from the obligation of labor — it’s like a village of dreams. The village day begins with the crowing of 50,000 chickens and lowing of seven dairy cows. At 7:00 am, villagers emerge from their separate houses to gather in the central village cafeteria. The breakfast buffet is stocked with rice, miso soup, raw eggs, cold dishes, plum pickles, boiled mushrooms, and milk, all of which are produced in the village. Here there are no supervisors and no work quotas: there is only hard work undertaken by individuals to fulfill their responsibilities. There is a 30-minute tea break once each morning and afternoon. There is no difficulty in securing the necessities of daily life. Adults are paid 30,000 *yen* in cash every month and 100,000 *yen* in June and December. A scholarship system for high school and college students has also been established. Apart from weekends, there are 20 vacation days per year. Compared with salaried workers toiling like worker bees and suffering from mortgage pressure, the spiritual wealth of these villagers is easily felt (Sasaki, 1989, p. 29).

4.3 Period of decline (1991–present)

As is evident from Fig. 1, the New Village’s total income gradually decreased from 1981 onwards. The Japanese economy has long been trapped in the so-

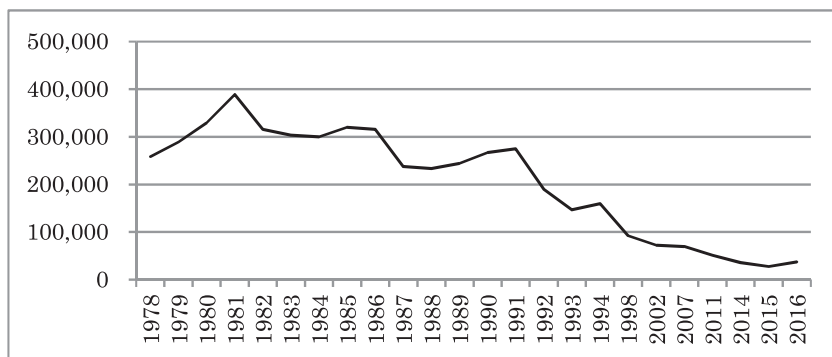


Fig. 1 Change in New Village general income (Unit: thousand JPY)

Data source: Watanabe, 1999, pp. 66–89; Maeda, 2017, pp. 130–134.

Table 2 Changes in New Village membership

Year	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1988	1992	1998	2002	2016
Members	64	63	64	65	64	59	65	54	40	27	25	10

Data source: Watanabe, 1999, pp. 64–81; Maeda, 2017, pp. 129–134.

called “Heisei Recession” since the bursting of the bubble economy as the 1990s began. Against this background, the total income of the New Village showed an accelerating downward trend. Furthermore, village membership also showed a significant decrease after 1984 (Table 2).

The direct causes of the economic decline of the New Village are as follows. (1). A serious aging problem and a severe labor shortage. As in other parts of rural Japan, the younger generation is not inclined to succeed their elders in working the land. (2). A rapid decline in income from a significant fall in the price of eggs (caused by oversupply throughout the Japanese chicken industry: chicken breeding was the primary source of income), a downward trend in rice production and resulting income (caused by government restrictions on rice cultivation promulgated in 1999), and a halt in tea sales in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011. (3) Tax increases, caused by the govern-

ment's re-classification of the New Village in 2013 from a "public interest financial entity" to a for-profit "general public corporation" and the rescinding of preferential tax treatment (Maeda, 2017, pp. 128–144, p. 163).

The New Village adopted a series of reform measures in response to these challenges. To help with aging and labor shortages, a fund for the elderly was established, and in order to strengthen public relations, a monthly magazine *Atarashiki Mura* was distributed to all agricultural and livestock-related schools in Japan. For income generation, the production of white-shelled eggs was converted to the production of brown-shelled eggs. Pesticide- and herbicide-free cultivation was introduced and new sales outlets were created. As for infrastructure, new projects such as a water diversion facility and installation of photovoltaic power generation equipment, etc. were carried out (Maeda, 2017, p. 162). However, these measures have not yielded obvious benefits to date. The outlook for the future of the New Village is bleak.

4.4 Rich literary, artistic, publishing and educational activities

In addition to the above-mentioned economic activities, literature, art, publishing, and educational activities are another very important aspect of the New Village. It is in this area, as opposed to other aspects, that a considerable part of the original promise in establishing the village was actually realized. In the early days, village members consisted of young people in their twenties who were determined to pursue literature and art. Viewing Mushanokoji as their teacher, they would follow up their daily six-hour labor shifts with active engagement in their favorite literary and artistic activities. The New Village established a publishing house and a printing plant. They have published dozens of books, such as the series *Book of the Village*, *One Hundred Poems*, *Miscellany Three Hundred and Sixty-Five*, and many other poetry collections such as *Growing Star Cluster*, *Creation*, *Wasteland*, *Blue Bird*, *Heart*, and *Bird of the Dawn*. Other magazines were also published: *Atarashiki Mura*, *Human Life*, *Atarashiki Mura*

Communications, and other journals and internal newspapers. Village members often held calligraphy and painting exhibitions to provide young people with opportunities to publish and exhibit their works.

In the early days of building the village, Mushanokoji had set up Esperanto and German classes and even created theatrical troupes to tour the country. Each year, the New Village celebrates the anniversary of its foundation by performing an original program and invites people from outside the village and external members to come and watch as well as interact socially.

The New Village of that period was designated by young people as “my university” (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 265–268; Otsuyama, 1997, pp. 86–88, p. 112). Many anonymous young village members who lacked the opportunity for higher education later became film directors or comedians: some published novels, fairy tales, plays, translations, poetry, and art or photograph albums. Others went on to found publishing houses, magazines, art galleries, hospitals, and farms, as well as devoting themselves to the peasant movement and participating in county councils (Maeda, 2017, p. 48, pp. 196–205). In the 1980s, in order to enrich the cultural activities of its members and citizens, the New Village established the New Village Art Museum and the Mushanokoji Saneatsu Memorial and refurbished the New Village Living Culture Museum (Watanabe, 1999, p. 69, p. 76).

5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Barnard’s theory of formal organization states that, “An organization comes into being when (1) there are persons able to communicate with each other (2) who are willing to contribute action (3) to accomplish a common purpose. The elements of an organization are therefore (1) communication; (2) willingness to serve; and (3) common purpose. These elements are necessary and sufficient conditions initially, and they are found in all such organizations” (Barnard, 1968, p. 82).

In his discussion of the vitality of organizations, Barnard stated that, first,

the vitality of an organization is closely related to people's enthusiasm for serving the organization, and this enthusiasm needs to be supported by a belief in achieving the organization's goals. This belief will disappear if there is lack of clarity about the organization's purpose and, as soon as this belief disappears, enthusiasm for serving the organization will also disappear. Second, the persistence of enthusiasm for serving the organization depends on the service provider's satisfaction with the process of achieving the organization's purpose. When pay is more important than satisfaction, enthusiasm will disappear; on the contrary, when satisfaction is more important than pay, enthusiasm will persist (Barnard, 1968, pp. 82–83).

In the following section, a comparative analysis of the New Village in Japan and the people's communes in China will be conducted from the perspective of the three elements of the Barnard organizational theory described above.

5.1 Communication

5.1.1 The New Village

In the early phase of village establishment, the New Village formulated a system of working meetings to be held every Thursday evening. The contents of the meetings were reports by the village members on their own work situation and information sharing among community members. Issues were discussed and solutions sought for all concerns. This system is maintained to the present day. As mentioned above, the New Village regularly publishes a variety of publications for village members and external readers to release works and readings, and frequently holds various cultural and art activities as well as commemorative activities. These activities have created a useful platform for communication among members. In addition, since the New Village has only a few dozen members (Tables 1 and 2), the number of relationships among members is small (Table 3), and communication is relatively easy.

Table 3 Group membership and number of relationships

Number in Group	Number of Relationships	Increase in Relationships with Each Addition to Group	Number in Group	Number of Relationships	Increase in Relationships with Each Addition to Group
2	1	...	8	28	7
3	3	2	9	36	8
4	6	3	10	45	9
5	10	4	15	105	...
6	15	5	20	190	...
7	21	6	50	1225	...

Data source: Barnard, 1968, p. 108.

5.1.2 People's Communes

According to the *Working Rules of the Rural People's Communes*⁴, the production team (village) members' conference must convene regularly, and at least once a month. Members can also be assembled provisionally on an ad-hoc basis, depending on production and work distribution. However, according to the author's interview with an educated young person who served in rural areas during that period, the production teams actually did not systematically implement the provisions for regular meetings, other than when exceptionally serious issues arose. Moreover, under the material and cultural conditions of the time, regular publications, such as occurred in the New Village, and frequent scheduling of cultural, artistic, and commemorative activities, as well as providing communication platforms for members, were all completely out of the question⁵. In addition, the population of the communes often reached tens of thousands of people⁶, and the resulting number of potential relationships was very large (Table 3). In the era prior to the advent of modern communications tools, the difficulty of communication among members is self-evident.

5.2 Willingness to serve

5.2.1 New Village

As mentioned above, the New Village has neither supervisors nor labor quotas, and work depends entirely on personal responsibility. Therefore, if the individual does not have any enthusiasm to serve the organization, the result is self-evident. Is it possible for every village member to maintain this kind of enthusiasm over a long period? Of course not. In the 100 years since the New Village's inception, more than 400 members have worked in the community (Maeda, 2017, p. 145), but now, only 10 people remain. Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate that members frequently depart from the village.

There are many reasons for leaving the village: interpersonal issues, discomfort with communal living, differences in opinion with Mushanokoji and his wife, disagreement with the New Village's development policy, disappointment with the status of the New Village, changing political views, and emotional and relationship problems. Individuals or families considered harmful to the New Village have also been expelled. As the current director of the New Village has said, "although the New Village is based on idealism, problems with human groups are present in the New Village" (Kojima, 2018, p. 8). New entrants to the village undergo a certain degree of scrutiny, but departure from the village is free at any time (Kojima, 2015, p. 76). If village members lose their enthusiasm to serve the New Village, they can choose to leave: there is no need to remain in the village. Because there is no requirement for individuals to make any sacrifices for the New Village, this applied to the founder himself. Mushanokoji left the village to care for his elderly mother at the request of his elder brother. After he left the village, he continued to support New Village operations fully as an external member (Okuwaki, 1998, pp. 216–248, p. 299). In other words, as people who have lost their enthusiasm for service to the New Village have departed one after another, there is reason to believe that the vast majority of members who remain are people who are enthusiastic about serving the New Village.

The enthusiasm of non-resident New Village members to serve the organization is also a very important factor. In the early days of construction, the New Village formulated its two-tier membership. Internal resident members live and work in the village proper, while non-residents have the same enthusiasm for the New Village as the former, but are unable to work in the village for various reasons, and therefore provide village residents with indirect assistance of both a material and spiritual nature (Nagami, 1968, p. 4). The history of the New Village development offers ample evidence that this unique membership system has played an extremely important role. The infrastructure projects, such as the canal and the power station construction, in the New Village were all funded from donations by external members (Nagami, 1968, p. 19). Whenever the New Village has faced financial difficulties, affluent external village members have generously donated money to help the New Village survive the crises. Many village members still support New Village enterprises as external non-resident members after leaving. After the New Village moved to Saitama Prefecture on the outskirts of Tokyo, members of the Tokyo branch often devote their weekends to traveling to the village to provide unpaid work (Maeda, 2017, pp. 86–88).

5.2.2 People's Communes

People's communes were established in 1958. Whether or not joining was voluntary or forced, the labor enthusiasm of the members was greatly dampened when the oppressive practices of the cadres were exposed, and it became clear that treatment was the same regardless of how much or little work was performed. However, people did not have the freedom to withdraw from the community. We illustrate this situation with the two following examples.

(1) Xiaogang Village, in Fengyang County, Anhui Province, set up a temporary mutual aid team in 1955 and joined a people's commune in 1958. In 1978, the members of Xiaogang Village ran the risk of imprisonment when they circumvented the upper governance levels of the people's commune to secretly implement household responsibility and household contracting arrange-

ments. Members of the community near Xiaogang Village also sensed the atmosphere and secretly imitated these practices⁷. This situation continued until the beginning of 1980. After the government changed the policy and renamed the Xiaogang Village's practice a household contract responsibility system, members were free to leave the people's commune, which was subsequently dismantled (Wu, 2008, pp. 67–68).

(2) Before and after the 1970s, about 18 million urban intellectual young people in China were mobilized by the government to rural areas. Apart from a small number of agricultural workers who joined state-managed farms, most of them became members of communes. Regardless of how many people originally went voluntarily to the countryside and how many people were forced, when they became frustrated and disappointed and lost their enthusiasm for serving the people's commune, they could not choose to leave and return to the cities because their city residence permits were no longer valid. This situation continued until around 1980. After the government changed its policy for educated young people, these members almost totally abandoned the people's communes and returned to the city (Ye, 2008, pp. 60–63).

From the two examples above, it is evident that many members of the people's communes, despite losing their enthusiasm for serving the organization, were nevertheless forced to remain. Well-known economist Lin Yifu has also put forward the hypothesis that self-supervision can only be effective when people join an organization voluntarily and when departure is freely permitted. He has stated that the peasants' right to withdraw their labor was removed after the communalization movement, and this resulted in a sudden drop in the enthusiasm of members for their work. This was the main cause of the collapse of agricultural production in 1959 and subsequent low productivity (Lin, 2000, pp. IX–X).

5.3 Common purpose

5.3.1 The New Village

According to surveys, there are three types of motives for members entering the New Village as residents: 33% were driven by admiration for Mushanokoji's literary works; 20% resonated with the New Village's spirit; and 47% were motivated by both considerations (Sasaki, 1989, p. 29). In fact, Mushanokoji's literary output is a depiction of an ideal society. The New Village spirit is the attempt to realize an ideal society. Therefore, all the motives of the participants are consistent.

Specifically, many young people abandoned their private property and gave up their stable jobs in pursuit of their dream of an ideal life in the New Village (Aman, 1985, p. 36). In the early days of the establishment of the New Village, there were indeed people who wanted to come for an easy parasitic existence, many came out of transient curiosity, and some even fled to the New Village to escape legal punishment for crimes. The New Village developed a review system in response to the problem of mixed and inappropriate motives for joining the village (Aman, 1985, pp. 112–114). Later, the village also set a one-year review for those who had not been members of the village for three years. Their status was decided according to performance at the conclusion of the probation period (Maeda, 2017, p. 219), and those with impure motives were strictly prohibited from remaining in the village.

5.3.2 People's communes

In 1955, the Chairman of the Communist Party of China and President of the State, Mao Zedong, wrote in the preface to *Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside*.

In the transitional period from capitalism to socialism, the general line of the Communist Party of China is to complete the basic industrialization of the country and at the same time undertake to complete the socialist reform of agriculture, handicrafts, and capitalist industry and commerce. ... by 1959

or 1960, we can basically complete the transformation of cooperatives from semi-socialism to socialism. ... all local Party organizations have led the movement in a comprehensive manner (Mao, 1977, pp. 218–224).

The so-called “transformation of cooperatives from semi-socialism to socialism” refers the transformation of cooperatives into people’s communes. We can deduce two facts from the summary above. First, the establishment of people’s communes in the rural areas of China was a goal determined by the Communist Party of China, rather than a goal set by the peasants themselves. Second, peasants joined the people’s communes under the “comprehensive leadership of all local Party organizations” of the Communist Party of China. Therefore, it is doubtful whether the members who joined the people’s communes had mutually consistent goals.

6. OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS

There are other important factors related to the proposition of this article that merit consideration, as a supplement to the study above.

6.1 The personality and resources of the founder

Although Mushanokoji was only 33 years old when he founded the New Village, he was already famous. He had a circle of devotees around him. In an era when the university enrollment rate was extremely low, young people who did not have the opportunity to enter university regarded him as a teacher and followed him to work in the New Village while studying, and to use New Village as their university for realizing their dreams. The founder, as a well-known writer, had published numerous literary and artistic works, making it possible to provide substantial financial support for New Village from his royalty payments (Nagami, 1968, p. 27). Especially in the early days of village construction, the funds provided by Mushanokoji and his family accounted for about half of the New Village’s income (Table 1). Further, although New Village was considered

to constitute a socialist danger during World War II and was subject to government and police interference, the founder's aristocratic background offered some protection from severe persecution (Okuwaki, 1998, p. 209).

6.2 Small scale

The New Village has remained at the scale of a few dozen people for a hundred years (Tables 1 and 2). The advantages of New Village's small scale include efficient communication, as discussed above; the relatively few funds required and the potential for financial assistance from external sources when difficulties arise.

7. CONCLUSION

In summary, the creation of the New Village was neither arbitrary nor accidental. It emerged from the founder's internal motivations and from external causes created by the era. The New Village has experienced three phases over the course of 100 years, corresponding to creation, development, and decline. No matter what the future may hold, its efforts to pursue an ideal society for the past 100 years are extremely valuable. The experience and lessons to be learned from it are worthy of our careful attention and absorption.

This study seeks to answer the questions of why the New Village has persisted for 100 years and what has been the source of its vitality. First, the research method of this study was decided after examining the range of views and opinions regarding the New Village. Second, the internal and external factors affecting the establishment and development of the New Village were surveyed. Finally, from the perspective of the three elements of organizational structure postulated in Barnard's theoretical framework, Japan's New Village was compared with the people's communes of China. The comparative results show that in terms of communication, willingness to serve, and common purpose, Japan's New Village is superior to the Chinese people's communes. According to Barnard's

theory, these three elements are the necessary and sufficient conditions for the establishment and continuance of an organization. Therefore, we assert that the results of the comparison have demonstrated the central proposition of this article from the standpoint of organization theory.

There are other important factors such as the personality and resources of the founder, the small scale of the New Village, and the plethora of art events and publications (as noted above: “they devoted themselves to living a humanistic life”) that contributed to the New Village’s longevity.

Notes

- 1 This article was written for the 1st Asian Congress held from 13th to 15th July, 2018 in Poznan, Poland.
- 2 The Treaty of Portsmouth formally ended the 1904–05 Russo-Japanese War. The Treaty confirmed Japan’s emergence as the pre-eminent power in East Asia, and forced Russia to abandon its expansionist policies there, but it was not well received by the Japanese people. News of the terms of the Treaty appeared to show Japanese weakness in front of the European powers, and this frustration caused the Hibiya Incendiary Incident and the collapse of Katsura Tarō’s cabinet on January 7, 1906. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org> (May 20, 2018).
- 3 See The Spirit of Atarashiki Mura. Retrieved from http://atarashiki-mura.or.jp/oshirase/cat1/post_15.html (May 14, 2018).
- 4 Retrieved from <https://baike.baidu.com> (February 20, 2018).
- 5 Interview with Li Ping, educated youth team member in Jilin Province, Dehui County 1975–1978, served as educated youth women’s team leader. Interviewed February 1, 2018.
- 6 Such as the famous Cuoyashan Satellite Commune, with 9,369 households and 43,263 people in 1958. Retrieved from <https://baike.baidu.com> (February 20, 2018).
- 7 Data source: Xiaogang Village Dabaogan Memorial Hall information and author’s interviews with local farmers on March 3, 2018.

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