

Communal Principle

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Community management is an important and universal issue for the modern world. I would like to discuss the cooperative communal principle from the social network viewpoints. My paper is to consider the mechanism of community management, and create good governance methods for community. We will begin by considering whether community is emerging or disappearing in modern Japan. There are many distressed communities in rural areas and even big cities too. Then, we examine how we can empower these communities. We also noticed each country has developed a different type of community. We will see the difference of community function in China, the United States of America, and Japan. This comparison illustrates the characteristics of community's principle. Now in Japan, governments and local residents try to re-embed the communal sense to their community again, which was abandoned once during the high-speed growth era. I show the social networks of three different communities, and examine how they are managing. The communal principle is the key concept for management of community. Especially I would like to empathize the importance of the type of "network", "sense of belonging" and "trust" of residents to foster a communal principle for good governance of the community.

1. The transition of Community

First, we will examine the transition of community status and role in society from Japan's experience. The communal principle was embedded in the society until the 1960s, then people are liberated by de-regionalism during the industrialization. Then again, from 1990s people and government are seeking to re-embed the communal sense in the society.

We sometimes believe that community is a naturally generated, warm safety place. We would like to have, but seem to miss¹. Zigmunt Bauman, emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Leeds said the community is paradise lost, but still people hope it to find like Eden. However, we have to pay the cost for the community; Price is freedom, and gets security². We see the social dilemma between the community and individual. It's "Torment of Tantalus". Making community works is tantalizing, irritating, and frustrating challenges.

"Communal" is included a neighborhood relationship with reciprocity, common-pool resources management, and share the sense of belongings to the community. People's relationship within the community creates safe, security and trust. We are never strangers to each other. Collective action in the community provides various benefits such as prevention of crime and natural disaster, protecting environment, everyday life support for nursing and child caring, sharing the value of health and well-being.

From ancient times to 1960s in Japan, we lived in agrarian society; most of the people lived in rural community. To survive they need to work together and help each other continually. The communal principle was embedded in the community³. This was the best strategy to live in this era.

Then, we entered the era of industrialization. Many communities had disappeared as urbanization and industrialization coupled with the rapid economic growth from 1960s to 1990s have progressed, and nuclear families have increased in Japan. "De-regionalism" progressed. People enjoy the freedom from their community's rule. The community was looked as the old

constraint of the feudal system of that time, in urban area, there were no communities, and people didn't know each other. They relied on the relationship of their company, government services and market services.

However, people sometimes experienced serious living difficulties such as industrial pollution problems. Then the citizen who thought it was "our" problem organized social movement. They create their own community for problem solving.

In the era of slow economic growth from 1990s to present, it is also the era of the border less world economy. Not only central government, but also local government has lost the power to govern the territory similar to it was. Government and local resident try to re-embed the communal sense to their community again. It is an intentional man-made community-building movement for solving everyday life problems in the community.

Modern Japan faces huge social difficulties such as the rapid aged society, decreasing of population, atomized, isolated society. National government declared to build "New Public Commons" in 2010. It means a vibrant civil society in which people support one another. In such a society, various stakeholders voluntarily work together to create "New Public Commons". We discuss about ethical and value when we try to design new public policy. To emphasize the communal sense looks same with the return to the communitarian from the libertarian, but it's the most inexpensive approach instead of big welfare-state government.

After great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake in 1995, more than one million volunteers were said to rush to the disaster area, formed makeshift communities to support each other by non-governmental organizations. People cannot survive without mutual support, and this realization from their experiences formed the basis of the "New Public Commons" idea as public policy.

On March 11, 2011, we had a huge earthquake again and tsunami devastated many cities and towns in northern Japan. Fifteen thousand eight hundred sixty-three people died; still two thousand nine hundred forty-nine people are missing. Three hundred ninety thousand houses were destroyed. Over four hundred thousand people were evacuated from their hometown. The nuclear power plants' accident also caused many unsolved serious problems to the citizen and governments. Many cities, towns, and communities were destroyed. They need to re-create new community again with people who want to live together. Old community's relationship becomes an important factor to regenerate the new community. Building community and supporting community are an important public policy issue right now.

2. Difference of communal principle

This is a roughly though. It was found by comparative community studies' viewpoint that the difference of social relationship, which was influenced by culture and history, creates a unique social relationship, and it has the path dependency.

In China, I'm doing a joint social capital survey with Chinese's scholars in Shanghai; It looks, they value and trust kindred and friend relationship instead of neighborhood. Many communities have a big number of resident. It is almost our city size. Many of them are gated communities, fewer relationships with neighbors, few opportunities to take part in community-

building activities. Under the communist party leadership street office government has full responsibility for providing public services and protecting citizen's life. Government provides nursing care, lifelong education programs and medical services, but resources are very limited relative to the population. There are very few voluntary organizations in China because of communist party's association restriction. That's why the communal sphere looks small compare to Japan. However, individuals' self-help, mutual assistance with relatives, and street office government services cover the rest of other spheres. How to build the civil society is one of the crucial issues for Chinese communist party and government.

In the United States, many citizens live in detached house, and share the community value for maintaining their property investment. It is said that to buy a house is to buy a community. Basic social ties are created by friends, membership of church, volunteer works, and hobby and business relationship. There are many kinds of non-governmental and charity organizations in society, but few for neighborhood community. Mutual help and reciprocity are rare as the community activities nowadays. The resident is divided by the difference of race, and incomes. Gated communities are also increasing. A gated community is a residential area with controlled access, used to protect the privacy and safety of residents⁴. Communal activities in the US are NGO and charity matter instead of neighborhood matter. National health insurance was the top issue for presidential election, because people believe this might be a private matter, individual responsibility instead of public in the US.

In Japan Government and residents share the idea that geographical neighborhood community is the key organization in the society. There is over three hundred thousand chonai-kai (neighborhood community association), half of Japanese participates in community activities more than once every year. They try to embed the communal sense to the residents and residential organizations. Residents work together for community development; local government supports citizen's collective activities as community policy. For example, they select a person responsible of community health, crime-prevention, and welfare promotion of the community. Autonomy of the community by residents is emphasized as an important public policy idea.

We focus this re-embedded communal principle (collaboration with residents) as the modern community policy in Japan. We are not living naturally generated warm safety place anymore. Although we know that good community is the safe place to live, can do the best effort to develop such a community for family, but other thinks such a social duty is not their responsibility. Maybe it should be government role, or just wanted to be a free rider without cost paying. However, if nobody takes care of community function; it means no community.

Basic elements of community are these three. First, bounded space. Secondly, resident's relationship such as trust, mutual help, and network. These are the components of social capital to create the relationship of reciprocity. Thirdly, sustainable economy for living is indispensable. Figure 1 shows the structure of social capital in the community. For the good governance of community, bonding power is important; it is a base on the boundary norm of community, and provides the sense of basic trust. Then, for the innovation of community bridging power is essential. It connects new ideas and human resources to another world.

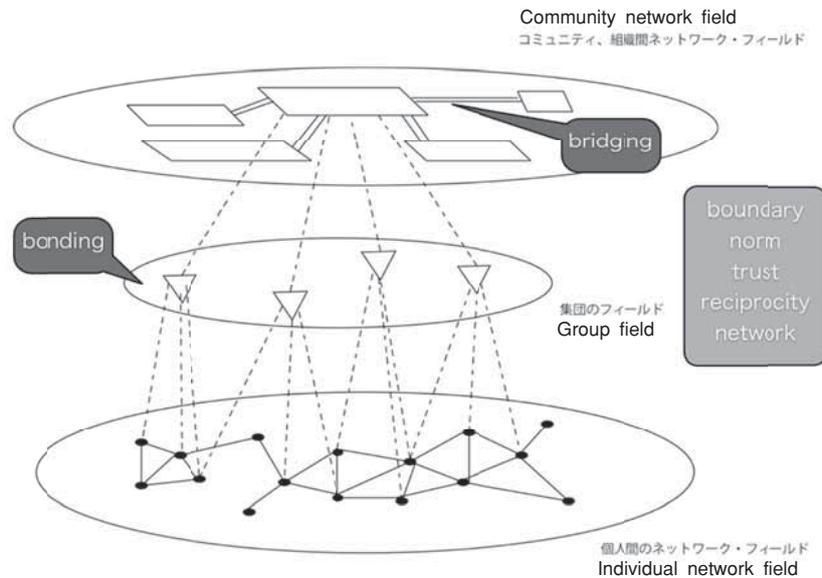


Figure 1. Structure of social capital in the community.

3. Network in the community

I developed the method to measure social capital status of community, and visualize people's social network within the community. I found an interesting relationship between local activities' participation and frequency of resident contact by over one hundred community surveys in Japan⁵. We can strengthen the mechanism to develop social capital within the community if we do properly local management policy.

Figure 2 (left) shows you the network of community leaders in a rural area. We can analyze the strength and weakness of community network. It looks beautifully connected hierarchically. The right diagram shows the affiliations network. Farmer's association is the key organization to connect all community associations in this network. We can create an individual network and affiliation network from same data. Figure 3 is another rural community. This network has a serious problem. There is only one line between two network groups. v9 one and v11 people are gatekeepers for two groups; they have an important role to connect two groups for community. Figure 4 shows an urban community's network. There is the core group in the center, then outer layer of groups such as agriculture, women's, and government groups are arranged in the form of laminae. This kind of network structure shows us the strengthness and the weakness of community.

After I surveyed many communities, I think "sense of belonging" is the most important component to manage the community. "Image of us" emerges at the boundary of "us" and "them". "Practice engagement" and "discourse" in the boundary of community are the important factors to re-create (renovate) the community. We can say community management is the design of belonging sense in the community. To intervene in community building as public policy, first we need to re-design the residents' relationship in the community. Experience of participation and decision-making by residents will create the sense of belonging and social capital in the community. We should create the dense network ties in the community to empower the distressed community, and build the sense of belonging for "our" community.

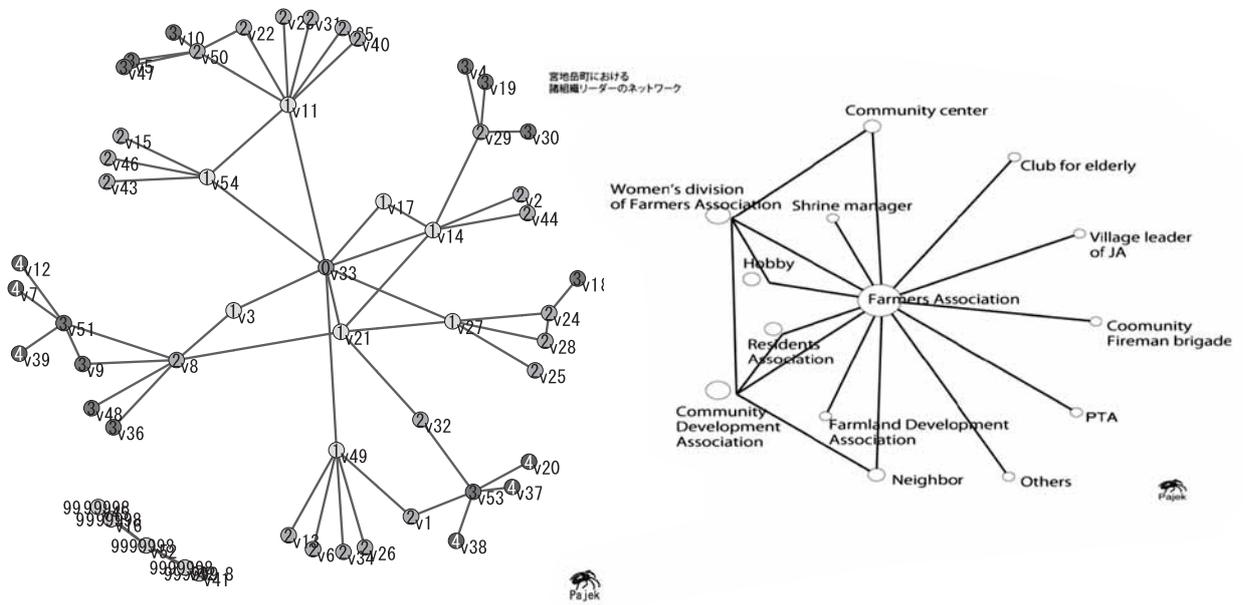


Figure 2. The network of community leaders in rural area.
 Note: Miyajidake-machi, Amakusa city.

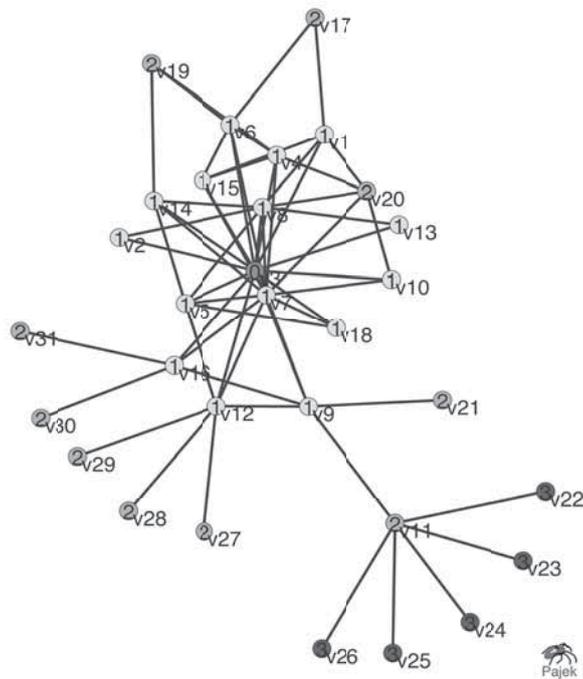


Figure 3. The network of community leaders in rural area.
 Note: Okoba-fumoto-machi, Hitoyoshi city.

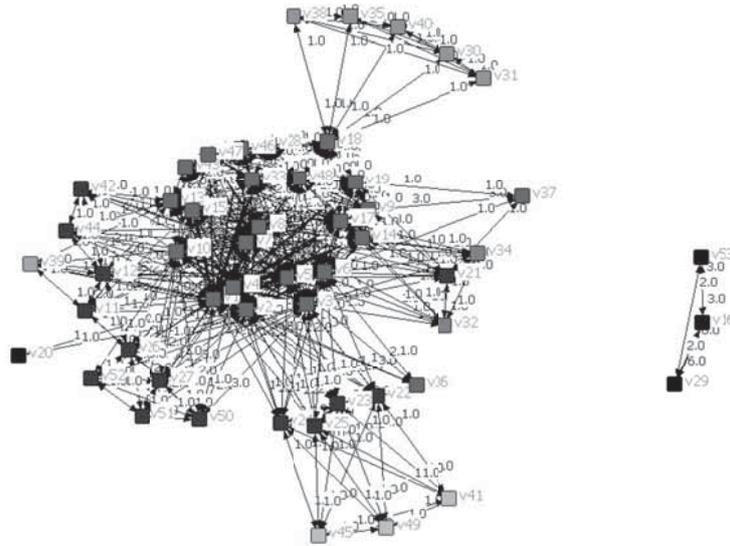


Figure 4. The network of community leaders in urban area.
 Note: Zendomo-machi, Kumamoto city.

4. Conclusions

As I have said, the communal principle has been changing. Now, in modern society we will intentionally use “sense of belonging”, “trust”, and “network” to develop communal relationship in the community. We may put the whole question briefly in this way. From individual to community level, public policy in Japan is trying to get the collective action of citizens by using communal sense. So far, Communal sense is talking as a sound ethic.

(This paper is written based on the presentation of the 6th UNESCO-Kumamoto University Bioethics Roundtable on December 9, 2014.)

References

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共同性の原理

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コミュニティ・マネジメントは現代世界において普遍的で重要な課題となっている。本稿では、「共同性の原理」について公共政策の観点から論じる。コミュニティのメカニズムについて考察し、コミュニティをうまくガバナンスする方法について検討することになる。まず、コミュニティはいまも新たに出現しているのか、あるいは消失しつづけているかという疑問について日本の例で考える。次にコミュニティのエンパワメントについて考察する。日本の農村、あるいは大都市においてさえ、たくさんの衰退したコミュニティが存在している。各国の事情を比較すると、そこではそれぞれ異なったタイプのコミュニティが発展していることがわかる。ここでは中国、アメリカ、そして日本のコミュニティ機能について概観しその共同性の違いについて確認する。いま日本ではコミュニティに再度「共同性を埋め込む」政策が官民両サイドから推進されている。さらに、3つの社会ネットワーク分析から、共同性のマネジメントや共同性を支える原理について考察する。結論として、コミュニティへの帰属意識、信頼、ネットワークが、コミュニティの善きガバナンスを実現することにとって重要な要素であることを明らかにする。