of nature and his delight in solitude, of his relationships with his friends and enemies. In the attempt to present Hirota as person, Saburo comes close to making Hirota appear too average and ordinary, too much of a common man. The intent seems to be to make it all the more obvious that such a person, that is, an man of the people and a man greatly attached to his own family, friends, and country could never have done things that would lead to his being condemned to death as a war criminal. This approach, while it may be valid, smacks of being a form of a priori reasoning. In short, Saburo goes into great detail in explaining why he thinks Hirota was wrongly condemned; he passes over quite quickly any explanation for why a majority of the court in fact condemned him.

Without developing the point at any length, Saburo concludes that the main reason for Hirota's death sentence was that the panel of judges simply did not understand what the situation in Japan had been. They did not perceive the importance of the Meiji Constitution's having given independence to the Supreme Command. They could not understand a system under which the military, in the name of the independence of the Supreme Command, could take things into their own hands and drag politics and foreign policy in their wake. Nothing that anyone could do, not even the civilian Prime Minister, could have stopped them. Hirota tried as often as he could and in the only ways open to them. He felt responsible for not having done enough; the judges in their lack of understanding of the true circumstances felt that he could have and should have done much more to stop the military than he did.

In support of his own conclusion that Hirota's sentence was a travesty of justice, Saburo is able to quote no less a person than Joseph B. Keenan, Chief Prosecutor, who on hearing it declared emotionally that the verdict was stupid and that at he very most the punishment should have been life imprisonment. Saburo makes it clear that after all the earlier months of imprisonment, it really did not much matter to Hirota himself which way the verdict and sentence went.

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As far as publications in English are concerned, the study of rural Japan has been the preserve of the anthropologist and probably for this reason we know relatively more about kinship and religion than about agricultural production and economic development in the country side. Anyone who has spent time in village areas recently, however, cannot but have been impressed with the enormous changes in production and life style that have occurred in the last 20 years. Production has been diversified and mechanized and the typical farm household has become a veritable showroom of consumer products. It has been almost impossible, however, to find a book about these aspects of the Japanese village, perhaps because the era of village studies by Americans passed before the era of rural prosperity arrived. Professor Shimpo's book, a study of post-war economic and social change in a Tohoku village, will certainly help to correct this imbalance.

This is a slim book written with clarity and economy of style. Within the brief space of just over 100 pages, the author covers three major changes in the productive system of a rice growing "village" (here used to mean the administrative unit in the pre-1953 system) in Twate Prefecture. Each of the three critical changes, a new dam and irrigation system, mechanization of agriculture and the emergence of the cooperative as the central organizational focus, are taken up in a separate chapter with historical background material included so that the correlated social changes can be evaluated. Using much solid statistical material and offering some memorable anecdotes, Professor Shimpo proceeds with confidence to illustrate for the reader just how powerful the impact of these changes has been on such mainstays of the traditional village organization as household, neighborhood, kin group (dozoku), and social class.

There is much of great interest here. He shows, for example, how the Edo period irrigation system served to strengthen the dozoku and landlord-tenant relationships and how the coming of a new dam in the early fifties removed this important buttress from the old hierarchy. In a similar kind of analysis, he shows how the introduction of farm machinery (encouraged, incidentally, by the land reform, the pressures created by out-migration of the young and the movement to regularize the shape of paddy) brought changes in the division of labor between men and women, reduced cooperative labor (yuz', and gave more authority to the younger men adept in mechanical matters. The agricultural cooperative's role in initiating changes and in enhancing the organization of the village's economic system through serving as banker, extension agent, newspaper, department store, and sales agent are discussed in the third chapter. I found this material intrinsically the most interesting and profound. Throughout Japan today, nothing is more important to understand than the significance and power of the cooperatives.

Professor Shimpo's approach and his conclusions follow a standard format, one he applies skillfully. I found very little to doubt or argue with in his presentation. In fact, the entire picture contains almost nothing that does not resonate neatly with our present wisdom about socio-economic development and modernization. Increased consumerism, the rationalization of relationships, decreasing degrees of inequality, greater independence of individuals and households from one another and the rise of a petite bourgeoisie mentality among farmers and their wives are all trends the author underlines. Unfortunately, in some instances documentation is difficult. In the case of "rationalization" for example, only the rise of family bookkeeping and the observations of villagers about the trends of the times can be cited as evidence. I have no reason to challenge such evidence, but the fact is that many of the changes he points to are neither quantifiable nor easily grounded in available historical materials from the village. Given the problems involved, Professor Shimpo has done a solid job of research and unearthed many crucial relationships within the developmental history of the village.

I was disappointed, however, in the author's reluctance to go beyond the task of drawing the more obvious conclusions from his study. He does not, for example, discuss the central role played by the government in the economic changes he portrays. Comparisons between pre- and post-war rural change, not to mention the use of this case study in international comparisons of rural development would be greatly aided by such a discussion. To go on, the author's case materials point to a crucial role in innovation being played by the wealthy class of farmers and the dozoku leaders (honke). Does this leadership reflect Tohoku rural social patterns? Or, would the same be true of Japan in general? Many innovators from the old ruling class became leaders of new