

Abstract of Doctoral Thesis

Title: Basic Study on the Kumamoto Overseas Association

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This thesis presents the relationship between the local community of Kumamoto and emigrants, by examining activities of the Kumamoto Overseas Association (the Kumamoto Kaigai Kyokai) was established in 1918, in context of the history of Kumamoto region. Overseas Associations were established throughout in Japan before World War II, and they encouraged emigration and mediated between local communities and emigrants. They are important in analyzing the relationship between local communities and emigrants.

Since Meiji era, the Kokkento, a local party in Kumamoto, had been active in China and Korea. They played an important role in journalism, trade, emigration, intelligence, and other fields and led overseas activities of Kumamoto. On the other hand, the anti-Kokkento forces in Kumamoto were also active in East Asia, therefore both sometimes cooperated on overseas activities.

In 1911, members of the Kokkento established the Toa Doshikai and decided to reorganize their overseas activities. During the Xinhai Revolution in China, they were active in Wuhan, Nanjing, Beijing, and Manchuria. They contacted Uchida Kosai, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and planned to reduce the power of revolutionaries in Manchuria. Meanwhile, they also contacted and supported the revolutionaries in Wuhan and Nanjing. Their purpose was to have the Japanese government carry out the Toa Doshikai's policies toward China.

When W.W.I. happened, people in Kumamoto wanted to expand overseas trade. Therefore, the Kokkento, the anti-Kokkento forces, and local businessmen established the Toa Tsusho Kyokai. This organization was formed around the Toa Doshikai, provided local businessmen with information on trade, and sent young men to Manchuria. When the California Alien Land Law of 1913 was enacted, emigrants lived in California contacted the local community of Kumamoto for assistance. Therefore, in 1918, the Toa Tsusho Kyokai reorganized as the Kumamoto Overseas Association and mediated between local community and emigrants.

When the Immigration Act of 1924 was enacted, the Kumamoto Overseas Association united other organizations and staged a massive protest in Kumamoto. However, their protest did not last long

due to the restraint of the authorities. On other hand, they searched new destination of emigration, and planned emigration to Manchuria, established a settlement in Brazil. But their settlement had financial problems, and the authorities were concerned about the Kumamoto Overseas Association's management ability.

When the Manchurian Incident occurred in 1931 and Manchukuo was founded in 1932, the Kumamoto Overseas Association united other organizations and planned emigration to Manchuria again. They sent an agricultural expert to Manchuria to investigate, but their plan was abandoned due to opposition from the authorities. The reason the authorities opposed their plan was they had failed to manage their settlement in Brazil.