

# Women Workers' Supply and Protective Unions in the 1920s: Woman Worker Supply Business as a Union

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The purpose of this monograph is to investigate the actual conditions of women workers' supply and protective unions established in the 1920s in Japan. These unions were established one after another in Gifu, Yamanashi, Niigata and Toyama Prefectures where many women workers were supplied to the industries. Members of these unions consisted of migrant women workers and their parents. The heads of towns and villages had established these unions and became the union presidents. The unions were practically managed by the staff of the town and village offices, and the union offices were set up in the town/city offices. Furthermore, the government of each prefecture established various policies including financial support. The main activities of the unions were to provide women workers to the textile industries such as the silk-reeling and spinning industries. The unions received commissions in return. Before the women workers were dispatched, the union checked all of their contracts to make sure there were no disadvantageous clauses contained in the contract. Such union policies were also requested by the executives of the companies recruiting the workers. The reason for having such policies was to protect women from recruiters who wanted to hire them without adequate provisions. In this aspect, union activities in the 1920s were supported by the local governments as a public function.