Japanese Settler Colonialism and Capitalism in Japan: 
Advancing into Korea, Settling Down, and Returning to Japan, 1905-1950

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Editor’s Introduction

I am delighted to send you this latest in our series of occasional papers. The essays collected here were first prepared for presentation on April 4, 2002 at the annual meeting of the Association of Asian Studies in Washington D.C., for a panel titled, "Japanese Settler Colonialism and Capitalism: Advancing into Korea, Settling Down, and Returning to Japan, 1905-1950." Dr. Jae Won Sun was the organizer of the panel, and all the participants, myself included as chair, thank him for his efforts, as well as thanking panelists Jun Uchida and Professor Kimura Kenji for travelling all the way from Japan to take part.

We began the occasional paper series with a goal of bringing to wider attention some of the talks and presentations sponsored by the Reischauer Institute on the Harvard campus, but the intention was never to limit the series to papers based on such talks. We also hope to consider papers by graduate students or faculty members of the Institute. This set of essays represents an extension of this hope, and somewhat of an experiment. In addition to the intrinsic interest of the presentations, and their nice coherence around themes identified and explored in her commentary by Professor Louise Young, the panel is closely connected to the Reischauer Institute, in that Dr. Sun is a visiting scholar here, Ms. Uchida is a graduate student in History at Harvard whose research is supported in part by grants from the Institute, and Professor Young some years back was an Institute postdoctoral fellow. It thus seemed appropriate to gather the papers in this format. All the authors would be pleased to learn of your reactions to their work (contact information is attached at the end).

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June 2002
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Settling into Korea: The Japanese Expansion into Korea from the Russo-Japanese War to the Early Period of Annexation

Kenji KIMURA

Introduction

The Japanese settlers in Korea formed the largest overseas Japanese community within the empire, and certainly one of the largest colonial communities in the twentieth-century world. However, existing scholarship has focused almost entirely on colonial policies and prominent officials, while largely neglecting the lives of ordinary settlers. These papers aim to show the importance of studying Japanese settlers for understanding not only the process of Japanese expansion into Korea, but Japan’s modernity itself. We will attempt to explain the overall trajectory of Japanese settler experience in Korea, from the period of early Japanese migration to the peninsula, to the period of post-war repatriation and resettlement in Japan.

By the time of annexation in 1910, the number of Japanese in Korea totaled over 170,000. My presentation today is concerned with these early Japanese migrants to Korea, most of whom had failed to ride the crest of modernization in Japan and sought to recover their losses or break the impasse of their situations by exploring new possibilities for “success” in this new territory. The conventional scholarship on Japanese colonialism in Japan has largely focused on examining the importance of colonial Korea to the metropolitan state or to large corporations, as a site for pursuing surplus profit, as a source of raw materials, or as a military supply base during the wartime period. In contrast to these “top-down” approaches, my earlier work, Zaichō Nihonjin no shakaishi (Social History of
the Settling Japanese in Korea) (1989), has examined the social background of Japanese migrants and their process of migration and settlement in Korea around the time of annexation. Prof. Peter Duus in his book The Abacus and the Sword (1995) also paid attention to these grass-roots Japanese. In this presentation, I will provide an in-depth analysis of the penetration of these Japanese migrants into Korea, and show the significance of colonial Korea to individual Japanese as a site for self-striving to achieve “success.”

Specifically, I will examine two rare documents on the early Japanese settlers in Korea. One is Zai-Kan jinmeiroku,¹ which is a biographical dictionary listing over 400 prominent Japanese who resided in eleven cities of Korea as of late 1904. The other document is Chōsen zaijū naichijin jitsugyōka jinmei jiten, vol. 1: Keijō,² another biographical dictionary with over 700 entries on prominent Japanese businessmen who operated in Seoul as of 1913. These biographical dictionaries record important personal information including birth year, birthplace, educational background, occupation, social status, and details of migration. By using the two documents, I will show how the Japanese settled in Korea around the time of the annexation and established themselves as independent merchants and businessmen.

In terms of occupation, the Japanese residents in Seoul at the time of annexation may be roughly classified into public officials, employees of companies or banks, merchants of all kinds, owners of drinking and eating houses, building contractors, craftsmen (such as

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¹ Nakata Kōnosuke, Zaikan jinshiki meikan (Mokp’o: Moppo Shinpōsha, 1905).
carpenters), shop employees, day laborers, and farmers. Public officials made up the largest group, followed by merchants, especially grocers, and craftsmen. When viewing their activities in Korea, several patterns of obtaining “success” emerge. These patterns include becoming influential businessmen by accumulating wealth from land investments or other business ventures; becoming landowners to live on rents collected from Korean tenant farmers; becoming public officials to enjoy an additional allowance (60-80% of salary); becoming engineers or foremen for career advancement; and, lastly, becoming independent from one’s employer to set up one’s own business. Of these patterns, the last one represented the most dramatic method of obtaining “success.” I will now examine it in greater detail.

In tracing how former shop employees became independent merchants or businessmen, I have identified the following six cases:

**Six cases of former shop employees becoming independent merchants/businessmen**

**Case 1:** Shop employee in Japan ➔ employee of its branch in Korea (haken) ➔ independent businessman in Korea

**Case 2:** Shop employee in Japan ➔ job hopping in Korea (tenshoku) ➔ independent businessman in Korea

**Case 3:** Direct employee of a Japanese shop based in Korea (shinki saiyō) ➔ independent businessman in Korea

**Case 4:** Shop employee in Japan ➔ independent businessman in Korea

**Case 5:** Government official in Japan or in Korea ➔ independent businessman in Korea

**Case 6:** Middleman, peddler, sailor, or craftsman in Korea ➔ independent businessman in Korea
Let us first look at the Japanese merchants and businessmen listed in the biographical dictionary of 1904 and see how they fit into these six cases. According to the list, there were forty-nine former shop employees who set up their own businesses by 1904 (see Table 1). These 49 merchants were dispersed among the major port cities of Korea: 10 resided in Pusan, 9 in Wonsan, 8 in Seoul, 5 in Kunsan, 3 each in Chinnamp’o, Inch’on, Pyongyang, Mokpo, and Masan, and 2 in other cities. In terms of their age, the oldest was born in 1856 and the youngest in 1881. Among the 38 individuals whose birth years are known from this biographical dictionary, more than half of them (20) were born in the 1860s, and a substantial number (13) were born in the 1870s, indicating that the majority were born during the turbulent times of the Meiji Restoration. Their birthplaces concentrated in western Japan in cities such as Nagasaki and Yamaguchi.

Among the 29 individuals who went to Korea to switch jobs or become newly employed, more than half of them (that is, 15) worked for people who came from the same region in Japan, while some others worked for shops run by their own relatives. To make use of kinship ties or ties to natives from the same region in order to recruit employees was at that time a very popular strategy for building business relationships.

How do these forty-nine settlers fit into the six patterns described earlier? Eighteen of them represented Case 1, that is, they became independent businessmen after working for Korean branches of Japanese shops. Thirteen became independent after taking up new jobs in Korea, representing Case 2. Eighteen fit in Case 3, that is, they set up their own business
after working for Japanese shops based in Korea. No one in this list fit Case 4.

Let us then look at the time of their migration to Korea. The dictionary provides information on the year of migration for only 38 of the 49 individuals. According to this information, a dominant majority (29 out of 38) went to Korea before the Sino-Japanese War. In particular, those representing Cases 1 and 3 migrated to Korea relatively early. Their individual ages at the time of migration varied greatly, ranging from only nine years old to thirty-four, with 21.2 being the average age of migration.

Next, the ages at which they became independent from their employers and set up their own businesses ranged from 18 to 44 years old. Six of them became independent in their early twenties, ten in their late twenties, twelve in their thirties, and three in their forties. Again, those who were newly employed in Korea in Case 3 represented the youngest group of shop employees to become independent businessmen.

How many years did it take for these Japanese to own their shops or businesses after being employed? The settler who made the quickest transition became independent only a year after his arrival in Korea, whereas the settler who made the slowest transition took twenty-six years. On average, they took 7.9 years. It turns out that this was much shorter than the average time it took for individuals to set up businesses in Japan, which was between ten and twenty years.  

The overarching factor that enabled the Japanese to set up their own businesses in Korea was the successive opening of major ports in Korea, which dramatically expanded entrepreneurial opportunities for a cross-section of Japanese migrants. In these port cities,

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however, commercial risk was very high and the business situation was always in flux, so some closed their shops and returned to their home villages in Japan. There were also cases where shop owners, after accumulating a certain amount of wealth, sold their shops to others or left them in the hands of their employees to return to Japan. Under such circumstances, Japanese shop employees in Korea enjoyed relatively ample opportunities to start their own businesses or own their shops. Of course, their individual capital was small, so they also established partnerships or started their career as something like brokers and gradually established themselves as grocers or traders. On the other hand, there were also some businessmen who went bankrupt and after reverting to the status of shop employees, became independent businessmen again. Indeed, the path to “success” was not at all smooth.

At the same time, there were also a substantial number of Japanese settlers who started as brokers or peddlers upon arrival and grew into big local merchants, representing Case 6. Ten individuals whom I have identified in the list of 1904 came from Nagasaki and Yamaguchi in the early Meiji period and grew into prominent localized merchants in Korea around the time of the Sino-Japanese War. Indeed, these cases of spectacular success became the frequent object of colonial propaganda that aimed at producing a new stream of Japanese migrants to the Korean peninsula.

The case study of the biographical dictionary of 1913 of Seoul

*(Chōsen zaijū naichijin jitsugyōka jinmei jiten)*

Next, let us examine the biographical dictionary of 1913, which lists prominent Japanese businessmen in Seoul. The document indicates that altogether sixty-nine
individuals started out as shop employees and later became independent businessmen. As compared to those listed in the biographical dictionary of 1904, many of them were born later, and many also served in the Sino-Japanese War and in the Russo-Japanese War. As with the case of 1904, the birthplaces of these businessmen in Seoul was also concentrated in western Japan.

Again, the paths to independence for these businessmen in Seoul conformed to the first three cases. Ten of them fit Case 1, moving from shop employees in Japan to branch employees in Korea to independent businessmen. Forty-seven of them took up new employment in Korea and then became independent, representing Case 2. And twelve were examples of Case 3, first working for shops based in Korea and then starting their own businesses.

Only eight of these businessmen settled in Korea before the Sino-Japanese War. Twenty-nine came to Korea between the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese Wars. The largest group consisted of those who settled in Korea after the Russo-Japanese War, numbering thirty-two in total. And the overwhelming majority (27) of the thirty-two men were those representing Case 2. Their ages at the time of migration ranged from 17 to 50 years old. The migrants in their twenties made up the largest category, with the average age being 27.3 years old. Once again, those in Case 3, that is, those Japanese who were newly employed in Korea, represented the youngest group of migrants. The age at which they became independent businessmen varied widely, from 18 to 51 years old. Overall, the average age when these Japanese in Seoul became independent was 31.7 years old, which was higher than the case for those on the list of 1904. And when viewing the three cases,
once again the average age of those who became independent businessmen through Case 3 was the youngest.

On average, it took these former Japanese shop employees 4.8 years to establish themselves as independent businessmen after their arrival in Korea. One of them attained independence quickly, in only one year, while the last one became independent after nineteen years. Most people took two or three years. Excepting Case 2, the document shows that the businessmen from the 1913 list became independent more quickly than did those from the 1904 list, and even more so as compared to the shop employees in Japan.

Moreover, there are thirty-six individuals who fit in Case 4, that is, those who initially worked in Japan, gave up the thought of long-term employment there, and became independent businessmen in Korea. Fifty-eight individuals fall into Case 5, those who had held official posts in the metropolitan government before entering the business world in Korea. They usually availed themselves of their former position or knowledge to become independent businessmen.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, I have shown how former employees of Japanese shops, as well as some former government officials, successfully transformed themselves into independent businessmen in Korea during the second half of the Meiji period, when Japan was undergoing its modernizing process. Most compelling is the evidence that the Japanese shop employees in Korea could become independent and open their own shops more quickly and easily than their counterparts in Japan. Their transformation from shop employees to
independent businessmen was also closely intertwined with the process of Japan’s colonization of Korea through two major wars. The Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese Wars created a huge demand for military supplies and construction and engineering projects, which were met by those Japanese merchants following the flag. In addition, mass magazines circulated many “success stories” about these Japanese in Korea. They inspired particularly those who had been displaced by or left out of the process of Japan’s modernization, and lured them into Korea as new streams of migrants.

However, while such prospects of quick and easy success abounded during the period of the opening of new ports or the wartime boom, they diminished greatly after the annexation of 1910. The path to embarking on one’s own business also increasingly narrowed and eventually became limited to college graduates. Nevertheless, the amount of wealth and social status acquired by the Japanese settlers during this period was considerable. Their “success stories” not only produced successive generations of Japanese migrants, they also became deeply ingrained memories for the Japanese settlers who continued to recollect “how great the colony was” long after their repatriation to Japan in the post-war era.
Table 1. How many years did it take to become independent businessmen?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>1904</th>
<th>1913</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Age of migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Settler Colonialism: Japanese Merchants under Cultural Rule in the 1920s

Jun UCHIDA

Introduction

Professor Kimura’s paper has explained how the majority of Japanese migrants settled in Korea as an alternative site for social advancement, and how some enterprising settlers accumulated considerable wealth and prestige. I will focus on a set of those Japanese merchants who grew into influential “localized” entrepreneurs, and show how they parlayed their influence beyond the daily management of settler affairs and actively joined in Governor-General Saitō Makoto’s so-called cultural rule in the 1920s. Saitō replaced the former governor-general Terauchi, whose military rule had been a primary cause for the outbreak of the March First Movement of 1919. In order to dampen the Korean nationalist sentiment, Saitō declared a policy of cooperative capitalist development, which essentially aimed at bringing the Korean elite into the colonial ruling structure and promoting a limited degree of industrialization in Korea that would complement Japan’s industrializing effort at home. And of significance to this study Saitō hoped to delegate this task partly to the prominent Japanese settlers.

Here I examine the role of these settlers by offering an overview of their activities through the chambers of commerce, one of the key institutions of settler colonialism in Korea. By “settler colonialism,” I refer to the visions and activities of civilian Japanese colonists, who mediated the colonial management of Korea through a nexus of formal
aswell as informal conduits of power. Paying particular attention to how colonialism was shaped in engagement as well as in contestation with the actions of the “colonized,” I will elucidate the internally contested process of empire-building from within. I also hope to explore the empire-wide context of Japan’s modernity by analyzing settler colonialism, Korean nationalism, and colonial and metropolitan governance as mutually interactive processes.

[1]

In October 1920, prominent Japanese businessmen and merchants from all over the Korean peninsula gathered secretly at the Seoul Chamber of Commerce headquarters. For three days, they groped for strategies to cope with the anti-Japanese sentiment still smoldering among Koreans since the previous year’s independence movement, and vowed to assist each other in protecting their ongoing ventures. Some hotheaded merchants rejected the colonial government’s policy of assimilation with the Koreans, pleading for swift military suppression of all nationalistic Korean activities. By the last day of the meeting, however, most settlers had come to agree that the promotion of Korean industry offered the most viable alternative to forced assimilation, and that the completion of railroads was most imperative for expanding the Japanese settlement in Korea.

The settlers’ opinions were echoed in the Industrial Commission of 1921, convened by the new governor-general Saitō Makoto to enlist “public opinion” in formulating official

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4 Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho, Zensen naichijin jitsugyō yūshi konwakai sokkiroku (Seoul, December 1920).
industrial policy. While acknowledging the official priority on developing Korean agriculture to meet the food shortage in Japan, the settler participants still demanded more dynamic industrial policies for Korea. They complained about the meager colonial budget for Korean industries, and criticized the metropolitan perception of Korea as a mere source of raw materials.

What was more notable, the Industrial Commission also considered an array of petitions and opinion letters from Koreans. Acting as the spokesmen of the Korean business community, the Korean participants insisted on a Korean-centered industrial policy from the standpoint of national profit. For instance, Han Sangnyong, a prominent Korean entrepreneur, pointed out that the Koreans did not welcome the Japanese effort to start joint Japanese-Korean enterprises due to the unequal distribution of profit, and entreated the Japanese to “allocate honor and status to Korea sufficiently for the higher purpose of kyōzon kyōei [coexistence and co-prosperity].” Although many Japanese participants turned a deaf ear to their demands, the commission’s final proposal still recognized and emphasized the importance of Korean cooperation in developing industries.

5 The Industrial Commission brought together forty-eight prominent officials and civilians from Japan and Korea to discuss the overall contour of official industrial policy outlined in the sōtokufu’s draft proposal. It was also a first step toward incorporating a Korean bourgeois in the top echelon of policy-making.

6 They included the Yuminhoe and the Choson Sanop Taehoe (Korean Industrial Congress) organized by Pak Yonghyo. Although they tend to be categorized as “pro-Japanese,” their petitions reflect their strong nationalistic emphasis on the Korean priority. Chōsen Sōtokufu, Sangyō Chōsa Inkai giji sokkiroku (Keijō, September 1921), 140, 162, 246-48; Pak’s speech quoted in Tonga ilbo, July 29, 1921.

7 Sangyō Chōsa Inkai giji sokkiroku, 155.

8 Ibid., 594. In particular, Kada Naoji, who was an early advocate of industrialization for Korea, emphasized the importance of encouraging small-scale industries.
The industrial commission signaled a turning point for the settlers, who endeavored to transform their anxiety toward Korean nationalism into their mission as pioneers of Korea’s industrial progress. In order to promote Korean industries, the settlers, joined by the Korean business elite, embarked on an extensive lobbying movement through the Korea League of Chambers of Commerce (which represented all eleven regional chambers of commerce in the peninsula). In 1922, the Korea League declared the “Four Great Points for Industrial Development.” It envisioned the rapid completion of Korean railroads, the removal of tariffs, the improvement of port facilities for the development of the marine products industry, and the campaign to increase rice production in Korea, by applying a 200 million yen surplus in government expenditure generated by the recent disarmament conference in Washington, D.C.⁹

The Korea League pressed for these points in a barrage of petitions and recommendations to the sōtokufu, while its representatives (including Han Sangnyong and several other influential Koreans) traversed the Tsushima Straits to ask key politicians, including the prime minister, ¹⁰ as well as former colonial bureaucrats in Tokyo to pledge their support for Korea’s development. If these Japanese did not promise support, the lobbyists warned, it “would certainly destabilize the people’s minds and give rise to dissidents.”¹¹ In particular, they focused on demanding the completion of Korean

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⁹ Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho, comp., Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho nijūgonenshi, Dai-ichibu: enkaku-hen (Keijō: Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho, 1941), 179-83.

¹⁰ The Prime Minister then was Katō Takaaki, who was head of the three-party coalition government from October 1924 to January 1926.

It was largely owing to the charismatic leadership of Watanabe Sadaichirō, who became head of the Seoul Chamber (and the Korea League) in August 1924, and his close partnership with the new vice governor-general Shimooka Chūji, that the railway lobbyists managed to cement a strong platform of official-civilian cooperation. Unlike metropolitan officials, Shimooka believed in the need to develop manufacturing industries together with agriculture in Korea. Through Shimooka, the settlers coordinated their lobbying strategy with the sōtokufu in effectively pressing for a railroad bill in Tokyo. ¹³

Intriguingly, the lobbyists simultaneously coordinated their activity with a campaign to demand the Korean rights to political participation led by Won Toksang¹⁴ and Ōmura Momozō, who were both representatives of the Kōshi club and of the Seoul citizens’ rally.¹⁵ Watanabe, Ōmura Momozō, and several other influential settlers invited the Korean elite to form the Kōshi club, evidently to counter the doubly harmful effect of the Great Kantō Earthquake, which not only rekindled anti-Japanese sentiment due to the massacre of

¹² Another reason for their focus on railroads was that the other objectives were more quickly and easily achieved. The tariffs were quickly abolished on all but alcohol and textiles by 1923. The campaign to increase rice production had been an official agenda since 1920, and following its initial failure, it was re-implemented in 1926.

¹³ For the details of their lobbying movement, see for instance, Ōmura Tomonomō, “Chinjōkō,” in Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho, Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppō Chōsen keizai zasshi 103 & 104 (July & August 1924); “Chōsen Tetsudōmō sokushin undō no keika” (A report on the lobbying movement in Tokyo by Watanabe Sadaichirō) in ibid., 128 (August 1926), 58-64.

¹⁴ Won Toksang was a prominent entrepreneur in Seoul, and head of the Chongno Financial Union, which was set up in the wake of the March First Movement in April 1919. See Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppō Chōsen keizai zasshi 179 (November 1930), and Fujisawa Kiyōjirō, ed., Chōsen Kinyū Kumiai to jinbutsu (Keijō: Tairiku Minyūsha, 1937), 718.

Korean residents during the chaos, but also threatened to cut back the promised official subsidies for Korea’s development. By cloaking Won and Ōmura with the title of “a representative of the Seoul citizens’ rally,” the Japanese made their petition to the Diet appear as if it were coming from the Korean people. In truth, however, its content merely envisioned controlled elections in four cities of major Japanese settlements (Seoul, Pusan, Taegu and P’yongyang) without specifying the electorate, and the inclusion of a few Korean aristocrats in the Peerage. The fact that the petition was not taken seriously by the Diet renders the whole campaign as a charade, but the settlers maneuvered many such pro-Japanese bodies to divert Korean attention away from nationalism to the mutual goal of economic development and the battle against socialism.

In addition to the Great Kantō Earthquake, the lobbying effort suffered a few unexpected setbacks on the way, such as the rejection of the Korean proposal for railroads as a “regional problem” by the National League of Chambers of Commerce at the metropole in 1925, and the sudden death of Shimooka in the same year. The lobbyists also faced criticism from the local community. One major Japanese newspaper in Seoul chided Watanabe and fellow lobbyists for engaging themselves with state policy concerns at the expense of local commercial affairs, and using the Seoul Chamber as a semi-official

16 Chōsen Sōtokufu Keimukyoku Hoanka, ed. Chian jōkyō (December 1927), Part 5: seiji katsudō, 6-7.

17 However, there were also some Japanese settlers who seriously entertained the idea of Korean self-rule. For instance, see Fukushima Michimasa, “Chōsen tōchi ni tsuite” Keijō Nippō (1925), and his opinions on Korean self-rule in Chōsen oyobi Manshū (Keijō: Chōsen oyobi Manshūsha) 218 (January 1926) and 230 (January 1927).

18 Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho nijūgonenshi, Dai-ichibu: enkaku-hen, 199.
organ of the sōtokufu. Moreover, Watanabe’s devotion to railroads gave rise to a split between the “commerce” faction and the “civil engineering” faction within the Seoul chamber. These instances reveal the multi-faceted challenge of settlers in negotiating with Korean nationalism, mediating between the metropole and the colony, and balancing between local interests of the settlers and broader objectives of the colonial state.

Nevertheless, the settlers’ resilience eventually prompted the Imperial Railroad Association in Tokyo to conduct a serious investigation of the Korean railroads, which resulted in a petition to the Diet bearing most of the lobbyists’ demands in March 1926. In the meantime, settler entrepreneurs convened a peninsula-wide railroad forum featuring the entire spectrum of influential men in Korea in April 1926. Their representatives then went to Tokyo and mobilized sympathetic Diet members as well as the Central Korea Association, composed of former colonial officials and entrepreneurs with strong ties to Korea, to establish the Association for the Rapid Construction of Korean Railroads in July 1926. This joint civilian-official railway lobby strategically placed its headquarters in Tokyo and named Shibusawa Eiichi as its honorary chair in order to push its demands.

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20 Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho nijūgonenshi, Dai-sanbu: shiryō-hen, 76.

21 The petition managed to obtain a consensus of the House of the Lords at the fifty-first imperial assembly under the Nakatsuka (Kenseikai) Cabinet. See the stenographic record of the lecture organized by the lobbyists at the occasion of an inspective tour in Korea by the members of the Imperial Railroad Association in Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppō Chōsen keizai zasshi 126 (June 1926), 1-8; Senkōkai, Chōsen kōtsūshi (Tokyo, 1986), 76.
through the Diet more quickly. Watanabe and other settlers, now joined by the sōtokufu officials and metropolitan backers, staged their last petitioning drive with the period of budgetary reformulation in late 1926, and stayed in Tokyo for the entire duration of the Diet session from January to March of 1927 so to see the proposed railroad bill through both Houses.

As soon as the railroad budget passed in March, the Korea League of Chambers of Commerce advanced the “Six Great Points.” These proposals ranged from afforestation and flood control works to the development of manufacturing, mining, and marine products industries. The settlers now called for a more ambitious state industrial policy.

What explains the settlers’ persistent lobbying and proposals for a dynamic industrial policy, when the metropolitan officials remained largely apathetic or even averse to the idea of industrialization in Korea? Behind their lobbying efforts loomed the mushroom-like growth of Korean nationalist activities. The most impressive was

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23 “Watanabe Kaitō hōkoku,” Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppō Chōsen keizai zasshi 131 (November 1926), 1-5; Chōsen kötsūshi, 77.


25 However, the “Six Points” made unrealistic financial demands in times of retrenchment at home. Chōsen Shōgyō Kaigisho Rengōkai, Dai-jukkai Chōsen Shōgyō Kaigisho Rengōkai giji sokkiroku (Keijō, May 1927) Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho nijūgennshi, Dai-ichibu: enkaku-hen, 208-212.

26 Kawakita Akio has pointed out the dilemmas of the colonial bureaucrats such as Nishimura Yasukichi (Industrial Bureau chief) and Shimooka Chūji, who believed in the need to promote Korea’s industrialization under some form of protective policy, but who were also aware that Korea as a colony could not operate outside the framework of Japan’s naichi enchō policy that deemed Korea a market for Japan’s manufactures. See Kawakita Akio, “1920-nendai Chōsen no kōgyōka rongi ni tsuite,” in Kindai Higashi Ajia no shosō (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1995), 172.
thenation-wide Korean Production Movement (founded by Cho Man-sik and Yi Kwang-su and joined by such prominent businessmen as Kim Song-su in the early 1920s), which called on the people to patronize Korean products and stores in order to promote the idea of self-sufficient national economic development. These nationalistic activities also stimulated the growth of small-scale Korean capital in the areas of commerce, manufacturing, and finance, which led to a six-fold increase in the number of Korean-run companies from 1919 to 1929 (and even higher if joint Korean-Japanese companies were included), all in spite of the sōtokufu’s tendency to prioritize agriculture over industry.

Indeed, the settlers’ activities developed in response to and even in competition with these Korean nationalistic and capitalistic activities. In this dialectic, ironically, the Korean aim to nurture economic self-sufficiency could also conveniently overlap with the settlers’ efforts to promote Korean industry as a social policy. Hence, the establishment of

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27 The leaders of the movement organized mass rallies, set up branch offices in provinces, and even published a monthly magazine to promote the idea of self-sufficient national economic development for Korea. Due to the official suppression and mounting criticism from the Left, however, the production movement fell into slack within just one year after reaching its peak in 1923. Nevertheless, the idea of national self-sufficiency outlived the movement to inspire other nationalist activities as well as the continued growth of Korean capital participation in the economy. See, for instance, Cho Yongman, Song Minho, Pak Pyongch’ae, eds. *Ilche ha ui munhwa undongsa* (Seoul: Hyonumsa, 1982), 128-31.

28 Especially rice-milling, sake-brewing and other small-scale manufacturing industries.

29 *Keijō Shōgyō Kaigishō geppō Chōsen keizai zasshi* 169 (January 1931), 44-45; *Chōsen Sōtokufu, Chōsen Sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*, 1929 (Keijō, 1931), 180-81.

30 Except for selected industries such as mining and manufacturing industries that did not compete with industries in Japan.

31 Statistical evidence also shows that in small and medium-sized industries and businesses, Japanese and Korean capital competed with each other to a certain extent. See Kaneko Fumio, “Shokuminchi tōshi to kōgyōka,” in *Kindai Nihon to shokuminchi* vol. 3 [Shokuminchika to sangyōka] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993), 27-50.
the Association for Korean Production (Chosen Bussan Kyōkai) in November 1924 or Shimooka’s instruction to the regional governors in July 1925 to prioritize the use of local products, both of which accommodated the growing public opinion in support of Korean production. These Japanese moves may well be interpreted as attempts to exploit this convergence as a matter of convenience for social control.

At the same time, however, it is striking that the settlers refused to see Korea as an overseas colony supplying only raw materials, and often criticized the metropolitan vision of a colonial division of labor that relegated Korea to function as Japan’s agricultural appendage. Thus, the Seoul Chamber of Commerce began seriously discussing Korea’s industrialization well before the 1930s, and frequently conducted its own research on promising local industries. Their anxiety about Korean nationalism aside, the settlers’ attention to industries is more logically explained by the fact that their own economic activities were by no means immune to the effects of the official tendency to limit industrialization in Korea. In other words, settlers and the Koreans shared some

32 Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppo Chōsen keizai zasshi 107 (November 1924), 50-52.

33 Shimooka’s instructions reflected a growing call for sangyō daiichi shugi (“industry first” policy) among officials as well as civilians in Korea. See “Chōsen seisainhin no shiyō shōrei ni kansuru seimu sōkan no kunji tetteihō ni kansuru ken,” Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppo Chōsen keizai zasshi 115 (July 1925), 49-50. A year later officials and key business leaders convened a commemorative assembly for the use of Korean-made products at the Chōsen Hotel. See ibid. 128 (August 1926), 4. For the creation of the Society to Promote Korean Production (Sensan Shinkōkai), see ibid. 151 (July 1928), 1.

34 For instance, see Tagawa Tsunejirō (councilor of the Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho, head of the Chōsen Kōgyō Kyōkai), “Chōsen no kōgyō seisaku ni tsuite,” Keijō Shōgyō Kaigisho geppo Chōsen keizai zasshi 135 (March 1927), 1-3.

interests in the promotion of Korean industry, for they both were living in the same “colonial periphery” of Japan’s capitalistic modernization.

This congruity of interests could give rise to new spheres of alliance between settlers and Korean merchants. Thus, the Seoul Chamber created the Seoul Commerce and Industry Associations’ League (Keijō Shōkō Kumiai Rengōkai) in 1920 as a forum for “greater cooperation and interaction between Japanese and Korean merchants,” and used it as the Chamber’s arms and legs in petitioning for their shared concerns, such as easier access to low-interest loans. From the mid-1920s, the chambers of commerce and various trade associations were dispatching trade missions, composed of Korean and Japanese merchants and businessmen, to Manchuria, China, Taiwan, and different parts of Japan in search of prospective markets for Korean exports.

However, what appeared to be solidarity was often contrived solidarity. The Japanese dominance in joint ventures, including the chambers of commerce and trade associations, was taken for granted. The pro-Japanese outlook of such organizations as the Kōshi club also masked the inner anxieties or half-hearted attitudes of Japanese toward the ideal of naisen yīwa (harmony between Japan and Korea) on the one hand, and the nationalist and entrepreneurial motives of the Korean businessmen to cooperate with the Japanese on the other. No wonder that most of the pro-Japanese bodies could not withstand the Korean public censure, and became ossified or disappeared quickly after the mid-1920s.37 The unity of interest forged by the program of “cooperative capitalist

36 Keijō Shōkō Kaigisho niijūgō-nenshi hattatsushi, Dai-ichibu: enkaku-hen, 158.

37 Kikuchi Kenjō, Chōsen shokoku (Keijō: Tairiku Tsushinsha, 1925), 270.
development” could never overcome this deep psychological disparity between the Japanese and the Koreans, which conditioned the scope of settlers’ activities for the rest of the decade.

Conclusion

My paper has shown how the settlers in Korea operated within a complex matrix of shared anxieties about Korean nationalism, competing visions of progress, and overlapping or conflicting agendas between the metropole and the colony, as well as within the colonial community. Recent English-language scholarship on Japanese colonialism (represented by Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds., Colonial Modernity in Korea [Cambridge and London, 1999]) has called for a more dynamic and interactive analysis of modernity, colonialism, and nationalism. I believe that “settler colonialism” provides a useful analytical category for exploring their interrelationships. Settler colonialism juxtaposed a contingent process of negotiation with Korean nationalism and an internally contested effort among Japanese to mediate modernity. This dynamic resulted in shifting alliances and contests among settlers, Koreans, and colonial and metropolitan officials, which cut across as well as crystallized the dichotomy between colonizer and colonized. The contingencies of such multi-layered interaction merit further investigation.
The Reverse Impact of Colonialism: Repatriation and Resettlement Entrepreneurs after the Second World War

Jae-Won SUN

Introduction

In this paper, I will explore how after the Second World War the legacy of Japanese settler colonialism affected Japan-Asia relations in postwar Japan through the economic revival process of Japanese repatriates.

As we know, change and continuity in the period of the Second World War have continually been a main theme in scholarship on modern Japanese history. However, the continuity of colonialism, that is, the reverse impact of colonialism, has not aroused historians’ interest (even though concerns about its continuity have become somewhat stronger recently in Japan and in the U.S.), because most scholars have been interested in postwar Japan-U.S. relations. In Embracing Defeat, John Dower has examined the repatriates’ recovering process as an embracing of the defeat by the U.S., but he has not explored the recovering process between them and the Asia to which they expatriated and where they lived for a long time. Did most Japanese people really concentrate on the victory over the U.S. during the prewar and even in the Pacific War period? Logically, they mainly supported the war because of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. This


study on the revival process of repatriates from the colonies will provide insight into the reverse impact of colonialism in Japan-Asia relations.

In this paper, I will focus on the Japanese repatriate entrepreneurs. Concerning the evaluation of Japanese entrepreneurs, I share Lewis Gann’s opinion that the Japanese bourgeoisie lacked the self-confidence of its British or French equivalent and that this was a characteristic of Japanese colonialism.40 But I cannot accept his opinion that the Japanese middle class did not possess any kind of missionary spirit, because I think that they were strongly affected by the propaganda of the assimilation policy of the Japanese government and adhered to the ideal that they should realize the mission to civilize Korean people.41 This ideal let them think that they contributed to developing the economy in colonial Korea. But simultaneously, they ignored the problem of preserving Korean identity.

I. Repatriation and the Organizations for Repatriates

Six million Japanese, equivalent to one-tenth of the total domestic population, returned to their homeland from the colonies after the Second World War. About half of them were civilians and a quarter of these civilian repatriates were from Korea (Figure 1). Characteristically, these Japanese had lived in the colony for a long time, but they rushed back to Japan as soon as the war ended.

A variety of organizations operated to support the resettlement of these repatriates.

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41 Takahashi Tōru, Chōsenjin (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1920); Chōsen Sōtokufu, Chōsen no fūshū (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1925).
There were not only nationwide organizations like the *Hikiagesha dantai zenkoku rengōkai* and the *Zaigai dōhō kikan sokushin zenkoku kyōgikai*, but also some groups organized by narrower interests, for instance, place of origin (*Keijōkai*), organization of origin (*Takuyōengokai*), and locality (*Iwatechōyūkai*). One such narrow interest organization for Japanese repatriates was the *Kaigai jigyō sengo taisaku chūō kyōgikai*, or the Central Council for Postwar Countermeasure of Overseas Enterprises (hereafter referred to as CCPCOE).

The CCPCOE consisted of two sectional groups, organized by region and by industry, and two executive committees, that is, the Small Compensation Committee for overseas assets and the *Kōsei jigyō suishin chūō kai*, or the Central Committee for Driving of Revival Enterprise (hereafter referred to as CCDRE) within the postwar Japanese economy (Chart 1). The members of the CCPCOE were representatives of branches in Japan which had had main offices overseas, and they established this organization in order to demand compensation for their lost assets, especially the main offices, and to manage the branch assets in Japan by themselves. The members of the sectional meeting by region, for example, Korea, were employees as well as employers who worked in Japanese companies in colonial Korea. The purposes of this meeting consisted not only in demanding compensation and the management of assets but also in rescuing employers and employees who remained in Korea. The total number of overseas enterprises enrolled with the CCPCOE was 1,085; the largest number was in Manchuria and the second largest was in Korea (Table 1).
II. Demands for Compensation

The CCPCOE prepared to petition the important persons concerned with compensation through the Small Compensation Committee. Because they thought that they operated in the colonies as pioneers of progress, they first sought to prove that the operations of the overseas enterprises in the prewar era were peaceful and they prepared data for negotiation with the Japanese government. The members of the committee discussed the compensation process in Italy and public opinion concerning war compensation. After these advance operations, they introduced the petition to several main ministers, that is, the Prime Minister, Yoshida Shigeru, the Minister of Finance, Ishibashi Tanzan, and the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Hoshijima Jirō, and to the leaders of organizations related to the compensation. They insisted in the petition, as follows, that it would be “an unfairness” if the government did not compensate overseas enterprises, which had lost all of their assets, in the same way that it compensated domestic enterprises, which had lost only a part of their assets. The domestic enterprises could survive because the overseas assets were sacrificed as reparations. But the repatriates were impoverished unequally. They thus demanded the establishment of a joint committee for compensation by the government and

42 CCPCOE, Waga kaigai jigyō honrai no heiwa teki seikaku narabini katsudōjökyō chōsa ni tsuite no irasho oyobi shōshi (April 1946).

43 Chōsen jigyōshakai, Kaihō, from no. 14 to no. 18.
the people.44

They sought to make their argument through the citation of a specialist’s opinion. Suzuki Takeo, who was a public finance economist,45 argued that the responsibility for war should not affect private property rights, because countries, not civilians, implemented the war; therefore, the government must compensate repatriates whose assets were treated as reparation.46 They also elicited the opinion of international law scholar Yokota Kisaburō,47 who maintained that the government should pay repatriates, even though after the First World War the victorious countries came to have the right to confiscate the assets of defeated countries like Germany, because in principle the governments of defeated countries, not private citizens, should have paid the reparation to victorious countries.48

The CCPCOE also organized a round-table conference with twelve members of the House of Councillors and fifteen representatives from the lower house of the Diet who were intimately involved with the repatriation enterprises.49 Furthermore, they invited persons from the press and asked them for cooperation in realizing their demand for compensation,


45 He was Professor of Keijō Imperial University before the Second World War and taught public finance at the Faculty of Economics of University of Tokyo after the Second World War. Suzuki Takeo sensei kanreki kinen ronbunshū henshū inkai hen, Keizai seichō to zaisei kinyō (Tokyo: Shiseidō, 1962).

46 Zaigai zaisan hoshō yōsei ni kansuru shiryō.

47 He taught international law at the Faculty of Law of University of Tokyo at that time, and in 1957, he served on the committee for international law at the UN. After that, in 1960, he became the Minister of the Supreme Court. Yokota Kisaburō, Watashi no issei (Tokyo: Tokyo shinbun shuppankyoku, 1976).

48 CCPCOE, Yokota Kisaburō hakase ni kiku hoshō mondai zadankai kiroku (Tokyo: December 1948).

49 Kaihō, no. 17, 22 July 1946; Kaigai jigyō senso taisaku chūō kyōgikai kankei, 1946.
through explanation of the petition’s points and of the real situation of overseas assets.\textsuperscript{50}

How did the government cope with these demands? The Minister of Finance, Ishibashi, and the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Hoshijima, responded to the questions at the general meeting for budget of the House and at the committee for commerce and industry of the House respectively. Their opinions were not so different.\textsuperscript{51} Basically, they both said they would be willing to compensate repatriates since they thought the repatriates were victims due to the confiscation of all their assets. Actually, however, they could not pay fully because the Japanese government was in financial difficulties. In addition, the GHQ firmly prohibited recompense of overseas assets.

\textbf{III. Loan Facilitation and the Plan of Re-expatriation}

After submitting their petition, the CCPCOE acted in various ways to obtain their demands for compensation. One of those operations was loan facilitation for the revival of repatriate entrepreneurs. Eventually, this operation resulted in the establishment of two organizations: the CCDRE, which was one of executive committees at the CCPCOE as mentioned above, and the Kōsei jigyō taisaku kyōgikai, the Council for Measures to Revive Enterprises (hereafter referred to as CMRE), which consisted of chiefs or vice-chiefs in charge from the Government. Through the CCDRE, the CCPCOE facilitated the repatriate

\textsuperscript{50} They invited the chief and vice-chief of the economics division from Mainichi, the chief of the politics and economics division from Asahi, the chief and vice-chief of the politics and economic division from Yomiuri, the chief of the economics division and the chief of the politics division from Tokyo, and the chief of the economics division and the vice-chief of the editorial division from Nihonkeizai (Kaihō, no. 20, 12 August 1946).

\textsuperscript{51} Kaihō, no. 20, 12 August 1946; Kaihō, no. 21, 19 August 1946.
entrepreneurs’ requests for loans to the CMRE and the CMRE then introduced them to banks.52

Gradually, as the policy of the Allied Powers shifted from economic restriction to promoting recovery, the Japanese economy began to focus on reconstruction and the CCPCOE’s main concerns changed.53 In the Rijikai Yōroku (Main Records of the Board of Directors), we can confirm the change.

With America’s aid plan for Japan put into concrete shape, the policy [of the Allied Powers] toward Japan was remarkably changed toward deregulation, i.e., aid for reconstruction of Japanese industry, reduction of reparation, deregulation of commerce and overseas travel, and partial abandonment of the plan for reduction of economic power concentration, in particular concerning overseas expansion....

[Our Council’s] two directors, Tamura and Watanabe, informally discussed with the Foreign Affairs authorities and on the whole agreed with each other concerning [overseas expansion] some time ago. Namely, from now on, the coming expatriation should assume the form of technology advance -- not the form of emigration. Japanese entrepreneurs managed excellent technology in the prewar era [in the colonies] and this advance should contribute to the international community as well as to the local. In order to realize the above purposes, we would be better to advance into some areas in which we already have experience, and then recover our war-devastated enterprises. After all, even though our people have already advanced far into Latin America for technology cooperation, it would be better to start from the near Far East.54

Actually, the Japanese government concluded personal reparation conventions with the South East Asian countries and then the Japanese companies re-expatriated to South

52 Government officials were from the Planning Board for Reconstruction of War Damage, the Headquarters for Economy Stabilization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Board of Support for Repatriates. Kaihō, no. 48, 6 October 1947; CCPCOE, Rijikai Yōroku, no. 23-6, 20 April 1948.


54 Yōroku, no. 23-5, 8 April 1948.
East Asia, prior to returning to Far East Asia.\textsuperscript{55} But at any rate, according to the above documents, the CCPCOE coped successfully with the change of the Allied Powers’ policy toward Japan and led the re-expatriation of Japanese companies, because the repatriate entrepreneurs of the CCPCOE already had more experience of management overseas than of domestic companies.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Japanese repatriate entrepreneurs from the colonies demanded compensation for overseas assets based on the logic of “unfairness” vis-à-vis domestic entrepreneurs. The Japanese government did not accept this entirely; but repatriate entrepreneurs were able to recover through the reconstruction of their companies in Japan itself and re-expatriation based on their unique overseas experiences.

The colonialism of Japanese settlers, who both “benefited and suffered” from their colonies,\textsuperscript{56} did not end with the end of the Second World War. The settlers proceeded to reopen economic relations with Asia, ironically, after the Japanese government paid reparations to South East Asia. This contributed to economic growth in Japan after the 1950s.


\textsuperscript{56} Louise Young, \textit{Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism} (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 411.
Figure 1 Repatriates by areas

Source: Hikiage engō chō hen, Hikiage engō no kiroku (1950)

Chart 1 Central Council for Postwar Countermeasure of Overseas Enterprises (CCPCOE)

Small Compensation Committee — Central Committee for Driving of Revival Enterprise

Karafuto  Taiwan  Manchuria  C.S.China  Europe/US/Australia/India  Finance  Tobacco
Korea  Micronesia  N.China  The South  Intl Trade  Construction  Textile

Small Compensation Committee

Coal  Iron  Chemical  Trade  Fishery/Agriculture  Electric/Transportation  Textile
Mining  Machine  Light metal/Ceramic  Paper/Forestry  Brewery/Food  Construction

Sources: The documents related to the CCPCOE and the Chōsen jigyōshakai

Table 1 Number of Overseas Enterprises Enrolled at the CCPCOE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Karafuto</th>
<th>Korea</th>
<th>Taiwan</th>
<th>Micronesia</th>
<th>Manchuria</th>
<th>N.China</th>
<th>C.S.China</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: The documents related to the CCPCOE
Comment: Settler Colonialism and the Social Production of Space

Louise YOUNG

One of the central concerns of all three papers is the way colonial and post-colonial histories are produced out of the relationship between colony and metropole. For at least the past decade, such a strategy has informed the historiography of imperialism, which has been preoccupied with the ways that colonial structures are co-constituted and mutually determining. With their focus on settler colonialism, these papers begin to suggest ways that we can push our understanding of this relationship further by framing the problem of co-constitution in terms of the social production of space. This takes the “empire strikes back” model one step further, going beyond a dialectics of transformation where both colony and metropole are treated, in a sense, as pre-existing categories, and where transformations are seen to occur within and upon a fixed, pre-given and self-contained territorial arena. By shedding this presumed isomorphism between state, economy, and society, or in other words, the assumption that both Korea and Japan existed as fixed territorial containers for their respective societies, polities, and economies, we can open up the way we think about the relationship between the spatiality of the colony and the metropole. This means thinking about social, economic, political geographies as being in flux and transformation. It also means thinking about these geographies being actively produced and continually transformed through ongoing social relationships and social struggles.

Why is this helpful in terms of looking at settlers? Or, how are settlers helpful in
rethinking imperial space? Settlers by definition make up mobile social formations that traverse state territorial boundaries. As these papers show, settlers were involved in a dynamic process of creating new spatial formations that connected Japan and Korea in new and complicated ways. Historiographically, we are most familiar with spatial processes that involve the state, ways that sovereignty is territorialized through military policy, law, diplomacy. Here, we are dealing with a form of spatialization that operates under different logics and mechanisms. We are looking at the ways settler activities promoted the circulation of capital, labor, and commodities between Japan and Korea, and the ways that these activities extended the operations of capitalism in Korea, integrating Korea into the global market through the mediation of the Japanese market.

At the same time, settler activities were caught up in state projects of colonial developmentalism on one hand and national developmentalism on the other. Both the colonial and metropolitan states pursued policies to promote capitalist development and these policies helped produce Japan and Korea as territorialized markets and self-enclosed economic spaces. In this sense the interests of settlers in promoting the industrialization of Korea could bring them into conflict with protectionist interests in Japan: the project of colonial developmentalism competing with the project of national developmentalism. But although colonial and national developmentalism were often in conflict or competition, their agendas overlapped in important ways and those interconnections produced the economic geography of the Japanese empire. The point here is that we can understand actions of settlers to develop business opportunities in Korea as part of a broader dynamic process that produced the social spaces we call the Japanese colonial and neo-colonial
One dimension of this is the formation of Japanese, Korean, and empire-wide labor markets. Kimura’s paper shows how wage differentials between Japan and Korea drew labor across the sea as early as the turn of the century. His findings point to the need to reflect further on the structure of the labor market and its importance for the spatial processes of Japanese capitalism. Within Japan, as we know, the labor market was segmented in terms of gender, ethnicity, day and wage labor, rural and urban workers. As Kimura shows, we also need to take account of the movement of different labor pools from Japan to Korea and back again. Such movements had a profound impact on where, when, and how the commodification of labor occurred, and hence were linked in elemental ways to the geography of capitalism. Furthermore, labor mobility in the early twentieth century -- both out migration from country to city as well as the propensity of skilled labor to move from factory to factory -- was a key factor in the social conflict between labor and capital and helped define the limits and opportunities of the working class to constitute itself as a political agent. Kimura adds to this picture another mechanism of labor mobility, the opportunities for workers in colonial enterprises to move into the lower middle class through the establishment of independent businesses. In other words, a geographic movement opened up the possibility of a social movement unavailable within metropolitan Japan. While Kimura is looking at a relatively small number of people, the ideological impact of this somewhat remote social possibility was tremendous. To me one of Kimura’s most interesting insights is the ways these social possibilities in Korea produced critical modifications to the narratives of “striving and success,” making the trope of Korea into a
stock element in those stories, a way station in the path from rags to riches.

Another way that settlers socially produce space is through the movements of the bourgeoisie between colonial Korea and metropolitan Japan. Such peregrinations shape the formation of the bourgeoisie, producing a class that understands itself simultaneously as a national and an imperial bourgeoisie. Uchida’s paper highlights this process in interesting ways, showing how the advocacy of both Japanese and Korean entrepreneurs of a policy of colonial developmentalism served to create economic institutions and networks that strengthened their subjectivities as nationalist bourgeoisies, while at the same time and on a different geographic scale, integrated and subsumed them into an imperial bourgeoisie.

One mechanism for producing the social formation of the bourgeoisie at local, national, and imperial levels and mediating the connections between these social formations at different geographic scales was the collection of business organizations that Uchida focuses on, specifically the chambers of commerce. We see that chambers of commerce became a key circuit for the creation of divisions between Korean and Japanese entrepreneurs, but also, a channel whereby social conflict between these constituencies could be mediated. Thus Korean entrepreneurs used the chambers of commerce to lobby metropolitan capitalists and politicians, and Japanese entrepreneurs employed them to influence native capitalists. In other words, the chambers of commerce constituted a network that connected Korean and Japanese, metropolitan and colonial, and various regional capitalists into a larger social totality.

Uchida’s paper also helps us understand this process in the historical moment of the 1920s, pointing out the contingencies behind the reformation of the bourgeoisie and its
reorientation on the colonial question at this time. She shows how the actions of Korean and
Japanese entrepreneurs in Korea helped engineer the shift both in governmentality -- the
turn to so-called cultural rule -- as well as the move to industrialize the empire and mobilize
native capital through the endorsement of the developmentalist claims of the Korea League
and the Korea Production Movement. We have to understand this shift in terms of the
emergence of a powerful Korean nationalist bourgeoisie and its ability to appropriate the
ideas of colonial developmentalism that had originally been the project of the colonial state,
and harness these ideas to their own project of territorial nationalism. Japanese capitalists,
in turn, tried to re-appropriate the developmentalist agenda, uncouple it from the questions
of political sovereignty, and turn it back to the service of the colonial state. Both were
fighting over the ends of economic development of Korea, but both helped produce Korea as
an economic space.

Sun’s paper offers another set of insights into the spatiality of empire. I think his
stress on the continuities of empire across the watershed of defeat and decolonization is a
welcome intervention into debates about Japanese imperialism and also the ongoing
preoccupation with memory politics. It has become a cliché that the memories of prewar
and wartime aggression in Asia were wholly occluded by concern with Japan’s own
victimization during the war. But I have always felt this account of instantaneous forgetting
was far too pat. In fact, in the aftermath of war and defeat there was a great deal of
discussion of Asia and Japan’s relationship with Asia; if we were to actually take a look at
the various sites of these debates, I think we would find that the imperial past had not been
forgotten at all. This is precisely what Sun’s paper shows in his treatment of the
re-expatriation of the imperial bourgeoisie. As he illustrates, the activities of these former settlers helped to reconstitute the economic geography of empire even when the colonial state had been eliminated and Japanese sovereignty shrunk back into the territory of the metropolitan nation.

A key factor in the ability of the imperial bourgeoisie to reconstitute itself in this way was the power of their appeals for a return to the “lost territories” of the empire. The language of loss they deployed involved both a claim for recovery of lost material assets as well as a lost field of action for their particular forms of knowledge and experience. Moreover, they were quite easily able to freight the state with sole responsibility for war reparations, a move that served to disarticulate the political project of colonialism from the economic space of empire. By demanding the reconstitution of the economic empire in the language of “recovery of war devastated enterprises,” they naturalized the creation of a neo-colonial economic space as part of the project of postwar recovery and rebuilding of “the Japanese economy.” This is a critical insight because we tend to understand Japan’s relationship with postwar Asia as the creation of U.S. cold war policy, but it is also important to stress, as Sun does, the continuities in Japan’s colonial and neo-colonial empires. In both material and ideological terms this was a re-building, a re-covery, a re-constitution of an economic space created in the context of the pre-1945 empire.
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