AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AN AGE OF EMPIRE: INSTITUTIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND MARKET NETWORKS IN KOREA, 1876–1945

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To Kata,

who does not know what this is

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ABSTRACT

AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AN AGE OF EMPIRE: INSTITUTIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND MARKET NETWORKS IN KOREA, 1876–1945

Holly Stephens

Eugene Y. Park

From the late nineteenth century, successive periods of domestic reform (1860s–1910) and Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945) fundamentally altered the relationship between the Korean state, the population, and the economy. Through a focus on agriculture—the largest industry at the time—this dissertation examines multiple efforts to reorient agricultural production to meet new expectations of the rural economy. In particular, this dissertation focuses on the expansion of the state through a series of semi-governmental organizations—known as associations (Ko. *chohap*; Ja. *kumiai*)—which mediated interaction between farmers, government officials, and local and international markets. In the process, the associations not only introduced new agricultural technologies and reordered trading relationships but also influenced the ways in which farmers produced for the market, be it through the enforcement of quality standards on farmers' crops or the issuing of loans against future production. This dissertation uses a wide range of primary sources written in Korean, Japanese, and Classical Chinese—from official government publications to local organizational records and previously unexamined farmers diaries—to detail the varied ways in which government officials and rural residents alike projected

onto the work of the new associations their own visions of what constituted development within the rural economy.

Chapter One examines the changing significance of the economy to the Korean government in the late nineteenth century. Chapter Two uses the diary of a single farmer to explore in-depth his economic worldview and the factors he considered important in his everyday life. Chapter Three traces colonial agricultural policies toward rice and cotton, and the government's reliance upon semi-governmental organizations to implement its major policies. Chapter Four examines the activities of the new associations in the context of existing agricultural organizations, and Chapter Five questions the ideas of development that underpinned both Korean and colonial efforts to reform the rural economy. Overall, this dissertation places the semi-governmental organizations at the heart of a new rural economic order. Though established under colonial rule, the activities of the associations fit within a broader history of rural economic organization which shaped farmers' interactions with the associations beyond their immediate political objectives.

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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

As this dissertation spans multiple political regimes, the primary sources used provide no single standard for dates, names, weights, measures, and currencies. Discrepancies in recording conventions arise between different Korean governments, as well as between Korean and colonial regimes, as governments of all stripes periodically updated weights, measurements, dates, and currencies. To minimize confusion, information on units of weight and measurement is included in footnotes throughout the dissertation although the following general principles have been followed wherever possible.

For the sake of consistency, where units are generally equivalent Korean terms have been privileged (for example, *chŏngbo* over *chōbu*). In cases where the language of the original term is significant (as with units of currency) this is recorded in the language of the primary source. Korean has been romanized according to the McCune-Reischauer system; Japanese according to the Revised Hepburn system; and Chinese according to Pinyin. Exceptions have been made for well-known place names, such as Seoul or Tokyo. Given the potential for multiple readings, original characters for Japanese personal names have also been included where possible.

Dates

All dates appearing in the main text of the dissertation are given according to the solar Gregorian calendar. Most dates appearing in the footnotes also follow this convention. The only exceptions to this rule occur in bibliographic references to certain primary sources—mainly citations from farmers' diaries and the *Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty*—which are catalogued in the original source according to the East Asian lunar calendar and are therefore referenced as such in the footnotes. Intercalary months are identified with the addition of the letter 'a', as in the following example: Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.6a.8.

Conversions between lunar and solar calendars were made using the online tool provided by the Korea Astronomy and Space Science Institute at https://astro.kasi.re.kr:444/life/pageView/8

Volume

The following values are calculated against the *yŏngjo ch'ŏk*—a base unit for Chosŏn-era construction which is thought to hold one of the most stable values over time.

1 *sŏm* = 15-20 *mal* = approximately 90 to 120 liters
1 *mal* = 10 *toe* = approximately 5.96 liters
1 *toe* = approximately 0.596 liters

As a point of reference, in 1886 Sim Wŏn'gwŏn calculated that he needed one *toe* of grain per day to feed his family of 4 to 5 people.

In 1905, the *sŏm* was adjusted to match its equivalent Japanese measurement, the *koku*. From this point, 1 *sŏm* = 10 *mal* = approximately 180 liters, 1 *mal* = 10 *toe* = approximately 18 liters, and 1 *toe* = approximately 1.8 liters.

Weight

1 *tam* = approximately 50 kilograms
1 *kŭn* = 0.6 kilograms

Area

1 *kyŏl* = the area of land required to produce a given amount of grain, which varied according to the land's fertility. This measure was frequently used in the calculation of taxes. No Yŏnggu calculates the area of 1 *kyŏl* as somewhere between 2,500 *p'yŏng* to 12,500 *p'yŏng* depending on the quality of the land.

1 *chŏngbo* = 10 *tanbo* = approximately one hectare
1 *tanbo* = 300 *p'yŏng* = approximately one-tenth of a hectare
1 *p'yŏng* = 3.3058 square meters

1 *turak* = the area of land on which 1 *mal* of seed could be spread. Again, this varied with the quality of the land, however James Palais gives 1 *turak* an approximate area of 0.163 acres, or 659.64 square meters.

Currency

1 *yang* = 10 *chŏn*
1 *chŏn* = 10 *pun*

The exchange rate between the main Chosŏn-era unit of currency—the *yang*—and new currencies varied widely depending on the time, country of issue, changes in the exchange rate between metals (in coins issued against a gold or silver standard, for example), and relative inflation rates. The following rates are given as a rough guide.

According to the rate set during the 1901 currency ordinance ("Hwap'ye chorye") which set the wŏn on a nominal gold standard, 1 *wŏn* = 100 *chŏn.*

The 1905 currency reforms established an approximate exchange rate of 1 *yen* = 2 *wŏn*, although with many further specifications. For full discussion of the reforms, see Michael Schiltz, *The Money Doctors from Japan* (2012).

INTRODUCTION

I. Overview

One late spring morning in 1919, Yu Yŏnghŭi (1890–1960), a farmer from Andong in southeastern Korea, went to the local township (*myŏn*) office where he collected two sheets of silkworm eggs before returning home.[1] Yu had raised silkworms for several years, since buying a packet of wild silkworm eggs from Pongjŏng, a nearby village, in 1911.[2] Yu continued to raise silkworms in the years that followed, and the village headman (*tongjang*) and township officials gradually became a regular presence in his sericulture activities, holding educational meetings, distributing silkworm eggs, and even visiting Yu to offer direct instruction on the cultivation of mulberries.[3] Such interaction with local officials would remain a routine part of Yu's agriculture throughout the next twenty years that he raised silkworms. As mundane as Yu's experience with sericulture may appear, however, it in fact raises several significant questions regarding the changes to agricultural production in Korea in the early twentieth century. Why did Yu begin to raise silkworms in the first place? How was it that the township office came to promote sericulture over alternative activities? What did it mean for Yu to participate in the newly commercializing rural economy? And, what did it mean to Yu that these changes took place under colonial rule?

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[1] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chingsŏngnok*, 1919.4.8.
[2] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.4.11; 1911.4.18; 1911.4.27.
[3] Ibid, 1911.9.22; 1911.9.23; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chŏngmaerok*, 1917.2a. 23; 1917.4.14; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Tŭksillok*, 1920.4.10.

This dissertation seeks to answer these questions through an examination of the changing role of the state in the rural economy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During this time, successive periods of domestic reform (1860–1910) and colonization (1910–1945) fundamentally altered the relationship between the state and the economy, and the state and the population, as Korean and colonial governments alike sought a new role for the state in the promotion of national wealth. This transformation of the state has received little attention in existing research into the Korean economy, with most studies focusing instead on the politics surrounding the emergence of new forms of capitalism and industry.[4] Nonetheless, as Korea's largest industry, agriculture was a major target of government projects and the colonial government established a wide range of government and semi-governmental organizations to manage the cultivation of new crops and market networks.[5]

The goal of this dissertation is therefore to make visible the hand of the state in the rural economy. This is not just a question of compiling a timeline of economic and agricultural policies. As this dissertation will make clear, to implement any new policies required the government of the day to also build a bureaucratic and administrative infrastructure appropriate to the desired policy goals, to gather sufficient information, and

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[4] While these studies by no means ignore the role of the colonial government, an emphasis on the questions of nationalism, collaboration, and political cleavages between Koreans that accompanied the emergence of capitalism under colonial rule have tended to overshadow dedicated analysis of the changing nature of the state itself. See, for example, Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991); Gi-Wook Shin, *Peasant Protest and Social Change in Colonial Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996); Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005).

[5] Upwards of two-thirds of the population were employed in agriculture throughout the colonial period. Sang Chul Suh, *Growth and Structural Changes in the Korean Economy, 1910–1940* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1978), 52.

to establish organizational networks capable of influencing the behavior of the population. It is in this process that I trace the changes to the Korean state and its interaction with both the economy and individual farmers. When Yu Yŏnghŭi raised cross-bred silkworms or planted upland cotton, he did so as a direct result of colonial policies that aimed to bring new, more productive, breeds and cultivars into Korea. Yu did not see the model industrial farm (Ko. *kwŏnŏp mobŏmjang*; Ja. *kangyō mohanjō*) that bred the new seeds and eggs, however, nor was he privy to the policy discussions that argued for the introduction of certain crops as a way to increase the export of raw materials to Japan. Rather, Yu encountered colonial policy through the silkworm sheets distributed at his local township office and in the advice given by a visiting agricultural technician. To fully understand the transformation of the state in this period, then, this dissertation will pay particular attention to the local organizations and networks which the government relied upon to implement its policies. While the headline policies drafted in the central government will not be ignored, the everyday life of farmers grants another perspective into the significance of agricultural policies and the changes to the form and function of the state at this time.

Although many of the changes explored in this dissertation took place during the colonial period, this is not a history of colonial rule. For one thing, many of the changes discussed were not specific to colonial Korea. In the nineteenth century, governments around the world adopted new roles in promoting agricultural science and economic growth. France, Germany, Japan, and the United States—to give just a few examples—each established new institutions and organizations designed to improve agricultural

production in line with a set of new global norms.[6] Indeed, as can be seen in the financial associations (Ko. *kŭmyung chohap*; Ja. *kin'yū kumiai*), some of the organizations introduced in Korea explicitly drew on examples from other countries (in this case, the German Raiffeisen cooperatives). While sensitive to the specifics of colonial Korea, this dissertation nonetheless views the transformation of the Korean state as part of a broader shift in approaches to the rural economy that drew on international trends and norms as much as it did colonial politics.

Moreover, the changes to the Korean state and its role in the economy neither began nor ended with colonial rule. Before 1910, the Korean government had already undergone an intense period of reform which aimed to restructure government offices in line with new economic priorities. Not only did the colonial government inherit this existing reform program, but it also inherited the same challenges faced by the previous governments—namely, how to incorporate existing local organizations and networks within any new economic and political system. This dissertation therefore begins with an examination of the government reforms instituted under the rule of King Kojong (r. 1864–1907). As well as providing necessary context for colonial policies, including the earlier history of reform projects allows this dissertation to take seriously the experience of farmers for whom colonial agricultural policies fit within a longer pattern of change in the rural economy.

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[6] George Grantham, "The Shifting Locus of Agricultural Innovation in Nineteenth-Century Europe: The Case of Agricultural Experiment Stations," in Gary Saxonhouse and Gavin Wright, eds., *Technique, Spirit, and Form in the Making of the Modern Economies: Essays in Honor of William N. Parker* (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1984), 191-214; Adam D. Sheingate, *The Rise of the Agricultural Welfare State: Institutions and Interest Group Power in the United States, France, and Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Giovanni Federico, *Feeding the World: An Economic History of Agriculture, 1800–2000* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

II. Historiography and Contributions

The significance of this research is threefold, and lies at the intersection of historiographical debates over the economic role of the Korean state, agricultural development, and the position of individual farmers within the rural economy. First, by tracing the implementation of various policies, this dissertation adds to discussions of the transformation of the Korean state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Despite significant attention paid to the state in accounts of South Korean economic growth, attempts to examine the state in earlier periods have proven contentious. One long-prevailing view traces the origins of the South Korean developmental state back into the colonial period. As one proponent of this argument expounds:

> Japan used a "mighty trio" of state organization, central banking, and *zaibatsu* conglomerates to industrialize Korea…a highly articulated, disciplined, penetrating colonial bureaucracy…replaced an old weak state, holding society at bay…this experience goes a long way toward explaining the subsequent (post 1945) pronounced centralization of Taiwan and both Koreas, and has provided a model for state-directed development in all three.[7]

Yet, even while acknowledging the state's influence upon the economy, this argument casts the Chosŏn government (1392–1910) as "an old weak state," apparently incapable of intervening in the economy for itself. In this regard, this and similar narratives unfortunately perpetuate the colonial rhetoric of Korean economic and social "stagnation" which was initially put forward as a justification of annexation.[8]

Against arguments that would credit the legacies of the colonial state with subsequent growth, other scholars have focused instead on the question of whether

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[7] Bruce Cumings, "The Origins and Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy: Industrial Sectors, Product Cycles, and Political Consequences," *International Organization* 38, no. 1 (1984): 10, 11.
[8] On stagnation as a recurring theme in Korean historiography, see also Owen Miller, "The Idea of Stagnation in Korean Historiography: From Fukuda Tokuzō to the New Right," *Korean Histories* 2, no. 1 (2010): 3-12.

Koreans benefitted under colonial rule. Thus, Gi-Wook Shin and Hŏ Suyŏl have put forward the notion of "growth without development" in order to highlight the uneven distribution of the benefits of colonial economic growth.[9] These and similar arguments provide an important counterpoint to overly optimistic claims of colonial development, but do little to further understanding of the state itself. On the contrary, in maintaining a strict distinction between the interests of Koreans and the interests of the colonial government, they perpetuate several oversimplifications regarding the colonial state. For one thing, colonial "successes" are rarely explained, and a persistent trend within research assumes the colonial government's ability to unproblematically implement its policies. In a similar vein, a preference among some scholars for the terms "*ilche*" (Japanese empire) and "*singmin kwŏllyŏk*" (colonial authority) over the titles of individual government offices occludes an understanding of the different branches of the government and assumes an automatic coherence within the Government-General of Korea and the wider Japanese empire. Where the limits of the government are discussed, the primary limit of state power is taken to lie in the nationalist resistance of the Korean population.[10]

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[9] Gi-Wook Shin, *Peasant Protest and Social Change*, 39-53; Hŏ Suyŏl, *Kaebal ŏmnŭn kaebal: Ilche ha Chosŏn kyŏngje kaebal ŭi hyŏnsang kwa ponjil* (Seoul: Ŭnhaeng namu, 2005). For a detailed breakdown of various economic indicators for colonial Korea, see also Mitsuhiko Kimura "Standards of Living in Colonial Korea: Did the Masses Become Worse Off or Better Off Under Japanese Rule?" *Journal of Economic History* 53, no. 3 (1993): 629-52.

[10] See, for example, Chŏng Yŏnt'ae, *Singmin kwŏllyŏk kwa Han'guk nongŏp: Ilche singmin nongjŏng ŭi tongyŏkhak* (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'an munhwawŏn, 2014).
Taken together, these simplifications fuel the further assumption that collaboration stems from a simple motivation and might be easily defined and identified. In this regard, Jun Uchida's analysis of freight industry workers provides an excellent counterexample to simplistic portrayals of collaboration and national interest. Jun Uchida, "'A Scramble for Freight': The Politics of Collaboration along and across the Railway Tracks of Korea under Japanese Rule," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 1 (2009): 117-50.

A handful of studies has attempted to complicate the view of the colonial state. Chi Sugŏl, Hŏ Yŏngnan, and Yun Haedong have each examined the functions of the state as implemented through local government and village-level organizations. Within such research the colonial state no longer appears as an autonomous unit, sharply differentiated from the Korean population, but as a system that actively sought to incorporate local elites, village organizations, and the practices of everyday life as a necessary aspect in the creation of colonial rule. The authors acknowledge the very real limitations of colonial society and the uneven distribution of power between colonial authorities and local residents (few Koreans were employed at the highest levels of the colonial bureaucracy, although many took roles within the county (*kun*) and township offices). Nonetheless, their research points toward several sites where colonial policies intentionally invited a blurring of the lines between the "colonial" and the "national."[11] In this regard, Chi, Yun and Hŏ's research fits within a wider conversation that includes diverse forms of governance and local practices, such as patrimonial networks or customary legal traditions, within analysis of colonialism.[12]

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[11] Chi Sugŏl, "Ilcheha Ch'ungnam Sŏsan-gun ŭi 'kwallyo-yuji chibae ch'eje': 'Sŏsan-gunji' (1927) e taehan punsŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Yŏksa munje yŏn'gu* 3 (1999): 13-75; Yun Haedong, *Singminji ŭi hoesaek chidae: Han'guk ŭi kŭndaesŏng kwa singminjuŭi pip'an* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2003); Yun Haedong, *Chibae wa chach'i* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2006); Chi Sugŏl, "Chibang yuji ŭi 'singminjijŏk' salm," *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 90 (2010): 156-80; Hŏ Yŏngnan, "Ilche sigi chiyŏk sahoe wa singminji kongnonjang: changsi kaldŭng ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 161 (2013): 349-81; Hŏ Yŏngnan, "Ilche sigi ŭp-myŏn hyŏpŭihoe wa chiyŏk chŏngch'i," *Yŏksa munje yŏn'gu* 31 (2014): 129-66.

[12] Chulwoo Lee, "Modernity, Legality, and Power in Korea Under Japanese Rule," in Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 21-51; Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Mounira M. Charrad and Julia Adams, eds., *Patrimonial Capitalism and Empire* (Book Series: Political Power and Social Theory, vol. 28) (United Kingdom: Emerald, 2015).
Jun Uchida's study of settler colonialism in Korea also fits within this nuanced view of the colonial state, highlighting as it does the importance of settlers' informal roles in the creation of empire on the ground. Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011).

Most recently, and in one of the first publications to focus exclusively on the development of the state itself, Kyung Moon Hwang has expanded analysis of the colonial state to situate it within a longer arc of government reform. Stretching back to the 1890s, Hwang draws on Foucault and Weber to highlight the state's attempts to "rationalize" or legitimate itself in a range of spheres, including the economy, public health, education, and religion. In this way, Hwang emphasizes the continuities between the activities of the colonial state and prior Korean government reforms, arguing that both contributed to the creation of the modern state in Korea.[13]

This dissertation builds on the perspectives adopted by Chi, Hŏ, Hwang, and Yun to seek the state not within a narrow political and administrative order, but as an effect to be found in the constant interaction between a set of governing ideals and the wider population.[14] Based on this consideration, throughout this dissertation the "state" is not taken to be synonymous with "the government," which will be used narrowly to refer to a system of administrative and bureaucratic offices. Rather, in emphasizing the state as effect, the lines between the state and government are not always clear-cut. In particular, local government and semi-governmental organizations, though situated at the lowest level of government administrative hierarchy, will be an important topic of research given their frequent position at the front line in implementing government policy, making them an important locus of politics and negotiation in the enactment of the state's influence. In this way, the question of how local government offices implemented the

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[13] Kyung Moon Hwang, *Rationalizing Korea: The Rise of the Modern State, 1894–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).
[14] This is in line with the framework developed within Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics," *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991): 77-96.

economic policies drafted in the central government, and how, in turn, this process legitimated a particular vision of economic development and empowered certain practices over others will thus be an important contribution of this dissertation.

Second, this dissertation reexamines agriculture and the rural economy with an emphasis on the structural changes introduced under colonial rule. Trends within the historiography of colonial Korea have frequently downplayed the significant changes to agricultural production that took place within the early twentieth century. On one side, Marxist critiques of the colonial rural economy highlighted class divisions and a landlord-tenant dominated social order as emblematic of the colonial government's attempt to artificially maintain a traditional, semi-feudal, agrarian order.[15] Meanwhile, studies of "colonial modernity" helped to fuel research into industrialization and the development of an urban, consumer culture at the expense of perceived "traditional" topics such as agriculture, religion, or changes to village life.[16] In both lines of research, changes to agricultural production are neglected as a major topic of research.

Instead, most existing research into the changes into colonial agriculture has been based in quantitative economic analysis. With regard to rice production, numerous studies have documented the gradual adoption of chemical fertilizers, irrigation, and high-yielding seed varieties that resulted in increased productivity.[17] Many scholars

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[15] See, for example, Kim Yong-sop, "The Landlord System and the Agricultural Economy during the Japanese Occupation Period," trans. Howard Kahm, in Pang Kie-chung and Micahel D. Shin, eds., *Landlords, Peasants & Intellectuals in Modern Korea* (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2005), 131-74.
[16] Shin and Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea*.
[17] Masao Kikuchi and Yujiro Hayami, "Agricultural Growth against a Land Resource Constraint: A Comparative History of Japan, Taiwan, Korea, and the Philippines," *Journal of Economic History* 38, no. 4 (1978): 839-64; Ramon H. Myers and Yamada Saburo, "Agricultural Development in the Empire," in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 420-52; Yujiro Hayami and Vernon W. Ruttan, *Agricultural*

outside of the field of economic history continue to dispute the significance of such results, however, arguing that even if some economic growth can be admitted to have occurred the exploitative intentions of the colonial government and uneven distribution of the benefits of growth must take precedence in any analysis.[18] Meanwhile, the small number of studies that do examine the changes to agricultural production have done so within the limited framework of changes to landlord management. Thus, although research by Hong Sŏngch'an and Dong-no Kim has pointed to the adoption of new agricultural techniques among entrepreneurial landlords and the introduction of "modern"

Development: An International Perspective, revised and expanded edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 191-214; Kenneth Henry Kang, "Essays on the Economic Development of Korea," Harvard University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1996.

Hŏ Suyŏl has disputed claims of increased agricultural productivity under colonial rule, arguing that much of the increases in yield occurred during the late-Chosŏn period and first decade of colonial rule (1910-1919) rather than under the colonial government's program to increase rice production in the 1920s and 1930s. Hŏ Suyŏl, *Ilche ch'ogi Chosŏn ŭi nongŏp: singminji kŭndaehwaron ŭi nongŏp kaeballon ŭl pip'an handa* (Kyŏnggi-do, P'aju-si: Han'gilsa, 2011).

This argument is problematic on several grounds. First, while increases in rice productivity did stall during the 1920s this does not suggest that colonial innovations in agricultural techniques were unrelated to productivity increases. Rather, it demonstrates the interdependent nature of new agricultural technologies. Although individually the application of chemical fertilizers, irrigation, and high-yielding seeds had some impact on yield, full productivity increases were only realized when the three improved inputs were combined. Thus, stalling productivity in the 1920s represents the slow adoption of fertilizers and irrigation rather than their irrelevance to productivity. For this reason, most studies also note a decline in rice productivity in the 1940s due to the reduced availability of chemical fertilizers under the wartime economy. Second, Hŏ's arguments against the reliability of colonial statistics are also questionable. Unfortunately, the evidence for Hŏ's alternative theory comes from the same colonial statistics he finds unreliable in the 1920s, despite the fact that the accuracy of colonial statistics only increased throughout the colonial period. For a discussion (and defense) of colonial statistics, see Hyung Gu Lynn, "Industrial Surveys and Statistical Systems in Colonial Korea," in In-sang Hwang and Konosuke Odaka, eds., *Long-term Economic Statistics of Korea* (Tokyo: Hitotsubashi University, Institute of Economic Research, 2000), 267-86; U Taehyŏng, "Ilcheha migok saengsansŏng ŭi ch'ui e kwanhan chaegŏmt'o," *Kyŏngjesahak* 52 (2015): 53-93.

[18] Tae-hern Jung, "Economic Features of Colonial Modernity in Modern Korea," *International Journal of Korean History* 1 (2000): 39-62; Horyong Lee, "The Current State of Studies on the Japanese Colonial Era and Related Issues—with a special focus on the studies produced in the 21st century—" *International Journal of Korean History* 10 (2006): 157-90; Hong Yung Lee, "Introduction: A Critique of Colonial Modernity," in Yong-Chool Ha, Hong Yung Lee and Clark W. Sorenson, eds., *Colonial Rule and Social Change in Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 3-38.

institutions of land ownership, these changes are only considered in relation to the class position of landlords and tenants.[19]

This dissertation will expand discussion of the adoption of new agricultural crops and techniques by considering the question of *how* the colonial government attempted to induce farmers to change their behavior and practices. Colonial agricultural policies were ambitious and wide-ranging, targeting cotton, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, silk, livestock, and many other crops in addition to rice. What is more, the colonial government did not simply aim to increase the volume of output but attempted to reorient agricultural production for the market through the introduction of new species and grading mechanisms to ensure the commercial value of the harvest. This required the creation of new avenues for finance, transportation routes, and distribution networks for fertilizers, seeds, and tools, as well as reliable channels to grade and market the resulting agricultural products. Although it would be impossible to investigate every change to agriculture within one dissertation, I pay particular attention to colonial policies toward rice and cotton in order to demonstrate the depth of changing production practices and networks, from sources of credit and seeds, to the sales routes that linked farmers to different potential markets for their crops. While landlords were still important beneficiaries of these new networks, this dissertation will show extent of institutional changes outside of the landlord-tenant dynamic within the growth of a new state infrastructure to support agricultural production.

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[19] Hong Sung-Chan, "The Emergence of New Types of Landlords in the Occupation Period," trans. Kelly Y. Jeong, in Pang and Shin, eds., *Landlords, Peasants & Intellectuals*, 175-205; Dong-no Kim, "National Identity and Class Interest in the Peasant Movements of the Colonial Period," in Ha, Lee and Sorenson, eds., *Colonial Rule and Social Change*, 140-72.

Local government and semi-governmental organizations will again be important topics of research in this regard. Specifically, I examine a series of associations (Ko. *chohap*; Ja. *kumiai*), established under the aegis of the colonial government, related to rural finance, irrigation management, the promotion of agricultural technology, and industry-specific trade associations. These associations blurred the line between the state and the private economy. The colonial government often relied upon the associations to implement its various agricultural policies, for which the appointment of local government officials to leadership positions within the associations provided an easy connection. Nonetheless, although acting within the general parameters set by the central government, the associations retained an important characteristic as interest groups that worked to further the interests of their members—at times even opposing the Government-General of Korea, as happened in debates over rice price control policies in the early 1930s.[20] What is more, as major conduits of subsidies, finance, seeds, and other resources, the branches of the semi-governmental organizations came to play an important role within the economy and politics of each local area. Even though membership was often concentrated among wealthier landowners, the associations served as an important intermediary with and extension of the state, complicating the existing view of landlord participation in the colonial economy as based solely on an expression of their class interest.

Recognition of the colonial government's active role in promoting changes to agricultural production should not be read as a tacit commendation of colonial agricultural policies. Indeed, a close reading of the changing productivity of different

[20] Kobayakawa Kurō, *Chōsen nōgyō hattatsushi*, seisaku hen (Keijō: Chōsen nōkai, 1944), 554-60.

crops shows just how limited the colonial government's interest in increasing production was. U Taehyŏng's research into the productivity of non-rice, dry-field grains—such as millet, barley, or soybeans—demonstrates that colonial policies produced neglect and stagnation in some crops at the same time that they increased the yield for other favored crops.[21] Even those colonial policies that raised productivity among other crops should not be misunderstood as benevolent developmentalism, directed as they were toward the wider needs of empire. Nonetheless, where policies did induce changes in production or sales routes, these must still be noted for their impact on the rural economy and for the new challenges and opportunities that such policies posed for farmers. As Dong-no Kim states:

> We do not need to negate the possibility that [the modern economic system] was introduced in the colonial period from outside, nor do we necessarily need to consider the colonial period as a dark age. We instead must analyze the effects modernity produced in the colonial social structure and the everyday lives of ordinary people.[22]

The third major contribution of this dissertation lies in its focus on the perspective of individual farmers. Many studies have attempted to shed light on the Korean experience of colonial rule, thanks to which a detailed picture has emerged of landlord-tenant relations. Laws enacted by the colonial state re-classified the institutions of landownership to privilege the rights of landlords. Subsequent policies concerning taxation, irrigation and financial investment were implemented on terms that favored landowners, as the colonial government attempted to work through groups it considered strategically sympathetic to its policies.[23] During the agricultural crisis of the early 1930s,

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[21] U Taehyŏng, "Ilche ha hanjŏn (旱田) changmul ŭi saengsansŏng chŏngch'e," *Taedong munhwa yŏn'gu* 66 (2009): 393-415.
[22] Dong-no Kim, "National Identity and Class Interest," 145.
[23] Ibid; Kim Yong-sop, "The Landlord System and the Agricultural Economy"; Dongno Kim, "Peasants, State, and Landlords: Nationalist Crisis and the Transformation of Agrarian Society in Pre-Colonial

widespread peasant unrest led the colonial government to widen the scope of its conciliatory policies as tenant movements shifted from reformist demands aimed at improving tenant conditions within the existing class system to increasingly ideological protests organized through "red peasant unions."[24]

However, insofar as such research has examined rural society on the basis of landlord-tenant relations, the resulting impression is heavily abstracted and skewed toward the two extremes of colonial society. Even in the most careful ethnographic and anthropological studies the categorization of farmers as either tenants or landlords becomes the defining characteristic when assessing events. Part of this problem lies in the paucity of colonial era sources. Ham Hanhŭi's anthropological study of Songje, a village in Naju county, southwestern Korea, goes further than most accounts of colonial rural society, tracing as she does numerous social groups within the village, including hired laborers and estate managers alongside the familiar figures of tenants and (Korean and Japanese) landlords. Still, in comparison to her nuanced and careful analysis of villagers' actions after 1945, a lack of sources limits discussion of the earlier history of the village to oft-repeated narratives of landlord-tenant protest. Although she includes a comment on village organizations, such as a village cooperative (*tonggye*) established in 1914, with little information on the day-to-day function of the cooperative Ham can only conclude

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Korea," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Chicago, 1994; Hong Sŏngch'an et al., *Ilche ha Man'gyŏng-gang yuyŏk ŭi sahoesa: suri chohap, chijuje, chiyŏk chŏngch'i* (Seoul: Hyean, 2006).

[24] Chi Sugŏl, *Ilcheha nongmin chohap undong yŏn'gu: 1930 nyŏndae hyŏngmyŏngjok nongmin chohap undong* (Seoul: Yŏksa Pip'yŏngsa, 1993); Gi-Wook Shin, *Peasant Protest and Social Change*; Gi-Wook Shin and Do-Hyun Han, "Colonial Corporatism: The Rural Revitalization Campaign, 1932-1940," in Shin and Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, 70-96.

its importance in relation to the development of class distinctions among villagers.[25] Although landlords and tenants, and the emergence of class distinctions between the two, was an important aspect of rural society, ultimately the overwhelming emphasis on such abstract categories limits an understanding of other aspects of agricultural, social, and economic change.

To overcome such problems, this dissertation relies upon three previously unexamined farmers' diaries as major primary sources.[26] The diaries in question are: *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi* (The diary of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn), written between 1870 and 1933; the diaries of Yu Yŏnghŭi, written between 1910 and 1936; and *Kwallanjae ilgi* (The diary of Kwallan), written by Chŏng Kwanhae (pen name Kwallan) between 1912 and 1947.[27] The diaries were chosen for their comprehensiveness—with very few exceptions due to illness or periods of mourning the authors regularly recorded their diaries over a sustained period of time. Each diary is written from a different region: Sim Wŏn'gwŏn lived in the Ulsan region, in the southeast of South Kyŏngsang province; Yu Yŏnghŭi lived near Andong, in North Kyŏngsang Province; and Chŏng Kwanhae lived in Yongin,

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[25] In this case, Ham concludes that the *tonggye* worked to prevent extremes of class tension and "functioned as a barrier to the development of class society." Han Hee Hahm, "Songje's Transformation: Social and Economic History of a Korean Village, 1910-1987," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1989, 249.

[26] Yi Uyŏn cites *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi* in his contribution to *Suryang kyŏngjesa ro tasi pon Chosŏn hugi,* although he only includes data related to the price of firewood. Hŏ Yŏngnan also briefly cites *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi* in her study of markets as evidence of the corruption of local officials in late Chosŏn. To date, there have been no full-length studies of the life of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn himself, nor does a search of research databases return any hits for studies of Chŏng Kwanhae or Yu Yŏnghŭi. Yi Uyŏn, "18-19 segi sallim hwangp'yehwa wa nongŏp saengsansŏng," in Yi Yŏnghun, ed., *Suryang kyŏngjesa ro tasi pon Chosŏn hugi* (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'an munhwawŏn, 2004), 334-365; Hŏ Yŏngnan, *Ilche sigi changsi yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Yŏksa Pip'yŏngsa, 2009).

[27] *Kwallanjae ilgi* (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 2001); *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi,* vols. 1-3 (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 2004). Yu Yŏnghŭi's diary is published online at www.ugyo.net, by the Han'guk kukhak chinhŭngwŏn. After a gap in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Yu Yŏnghŭi's diary continues through the 1950s until 1960, although this portion of the diary is not considered here.

in Kyŏnggi Province near the capital. The choice to include these three diaries is not to make representative claims for each region, but to suggest some of the variations and some of the similarities between each specific case. The diaries are used narrowly, with particular attention being paid to the economic and agricultural activities of each author and the types of local organizations that each author participated in.

The use of diaries in this dissertation follows two patterns among existing diary-based historical research: as a means to understand the author, and as a viewpoint into the author's wider world. As for the former, given the nature of the diary as a personal record of events, much research has examined diaries as an ego-document in relation to the cultivation and expression of the private individual. Although this line of research is heavily associated with European historiography, a recent edited volume compares several Korean, Japanese, and German diaries from the early twentieth century in similar terms, posing the question "what does it mean to write a diary in the modern period?"[28] In these studies, the act of writing the diary is not just an expression of the individual author but an active element in the production of the author's identity. Though diary writing is often understood as an act toward the creation of the individual self, this need not always be the case; in Jochen Hellbeck's study of Soviet-era diaries, many of the authors struggled to position themselves both as individuals and within a wider collective and politicized identity.[29] In either case, the diary itself is studied as an active part of the formation of identity.

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[28] Rudolf Dekker, "Jacques Presser's Heritage: Egodocuments in the Study of History," *Memoria y Civilización* 5 (2002): 13-37; Chŏng Pyŏnguk and Itagaki Ryūta, eds., *Nikki ga kataru kindai: Kankoku, Nihon, Doitsu no kyōdō kenkyū* (Tokyo: Dōshisha Koria [Korea] kenkyū shoten, 2014).
[29] Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary Under Stalin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006).

The diaries studied in this dissertation share in this aspect. To varying degrees, each author followed a set of practices that identified themselves as *yangban*—the hereditary elite group of Korean traditional society. Written in *hanmun*, or Classical Chinese, even the act of diary-writing itself required the authors to have received a certain degree of education, a distinction traditionally correlated with *yangban* status. Beyond literacy, the diarists also marked themselves as social elites through such activities as the observation of Confucian rituals for ancestors, demonstrating their knowledge of Chinese classical texts and poetry, and participation in lineage organizations. Property and wealth also played a role, although this was not always clear cut. Despite owning a slave (another signifier of wealth), one of the authors, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn (1850–1933), was also a tenant of state-owned lands. Chŏng Kwanhae (1873–1949), another diarist who at one point taught a classical education at the local school, found himself plunged into debt after his sons took on significant liabilities.

What significance should be attached to the authors' social status? Clearly, as self-identifying elites, the experience of each author cannot be read as equivalent to the poorest members of society. That being said, the diaries reveal the authors and their economic activities to be much more complex than might be assumed from the simple label of "*yangban*" or "landlord." Although coming from backgrounds of relative privilege, the diary writers were by no means the wealthiest members of society. Indeed, in early modern Korea the category of *yangban* as a status group was becoming less synonymous with the highest economic class as increased competition for high-ranking government positions, the division of estates among heirs, and increasing claims from

formerly excluded groups such as northerners or illegitimate sons (*sŏŏl*) served to expand the social and economic range of those claiming *yangban* status.[30]

Reflecting such diversity among even social elites, at different points in their lives each of the authors participated in the physical labor of farming. Despite laying claim to markers of elite status, the meaning of some of these markers changed throughout the course of their lives as new forms of education replaced the old. Nor did the authors' elite status insulate them from the economic and social changes that occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; when the price of rice fell and taxes were due, none of the authors could entirely avoid financial pressures. While cognizant of the diary writers' elite(ish) status, it is nonetheless necessary to view this as a status in flux that the authors struggled to maintain within a changing environment. Most importantly, as landowners and members of the petty bourgeoisie, the diary writers were precisely the social group targeted by many of the colonial government's agricultural policies. This makes the diaries a particularly important primary source in the task of understanding the reception and implementation of colonial agricultural policies.

This introduces the latter contribution of diary-based research—as a unique viewpoint into a wider world. Studies of this kind have found particular value in histories of East Asia given some of the rigid narratives that have dominated conventional historiographies. As Henrietta Harrison states in the preface to her diary-based study of Liu Dapeng (1857–1952), a scholar from a village in Northern China:

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[30] Kim Kŏnt'ae, *Chosŏn sidae yangbanga ŭi nongŏp kyŏngyŏng* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2004); Kyung Moon Hwang, *Beyond Birth: Social Status in the Emergence of Modern Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2004).
For a detailed study of a late-Chosŏn *yangban* household experiencing economic decline, see also, An Pyŏngjik and Yi Yŏnghun, eds., *Matjil ŭi nongmindŭl: Han'guk kŭnse ch'ollak saenghwalsa* (Seoul: Ilchogak, 2001).

> Part of my aim in this book is to question some of the classifications we apply to Chinese society: gentry, merchant, peasant, elite. What do we mean when we use these terms? Does any individual, let alone a family, fit neatly into one category? If identities are multiple and shifting, then how does this affect the historical narratives we relate?"[31]

Alongside such questions, Harrison uses her study of Liu's diary to question the importance of Confucianism in people's lives and their responses to industrialization. In this regard, Harrison's research has much in common with Simon Partner's use of diaries to flesh out and question familiar narratives of modern Japanese history from the perspective of the individuals who lived through grand events such as the growth of Tokyo as a city or the Second World War.[32]

Two previous studies have demonstrated the potential significance of diaries as a primary source within Korean history. The first, *Matjil ŭi nongmindŭl* (The Farmers of Matjil), uses the diary of three generations of the Pak family to conduct a study of everyday life and the rural economy in Yech'ŏn, in southeastern Korea, between 1834 and 1937. Using the detailed economic data recorded in the diary, historians were able to reconstruct many aspects of the Pak family's everyday life—from long-run price trends to the Pak's payment habits in cash and kind, from the interest rate of money-lending circles (*kye*) to the social networks that linked status groups within the village.[33] As well as shedding new light on the institutions and networks that underpinned the late-Chosŏn

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[31] Henrietta Harrison, *The Man Awakened from Dreams: One Man's Life in a North China Village, 1857-1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 3.
[32] Simon Partner, *Toshié: A Story of Village Life in Twentieth-Century Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Simon Partner, *The Mayor of Aihara: A Japanese Villager and his Community, 1865-1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).
[33] An and Yi, eds., *Matjil ŭi nongmindŭl.*

rural economy, the diary itself provided statistical data of a kind rarely found in Chosŏn primary sources.[34]

Itagaki Ryūta's ethnographic study of colonial Sangju, another town in southeastern Korea, similarly makes use of a personal diary, that of a Mr. S., to examine the experience of colonialism from the perspective of a local resident. Written between 1931–32, and 1935–38, the diaries capture the reflections of the young author (born 1914) between the ages of 17 and 24 as he grew up in a small village some 17 kilometers from the center of Sangju. Where the rest of his research focused on the modern changes to Sangju under colonial rule, such as the growth of its urban center and the development of new industries including alcohol and thread manufacturing, Itagaki used the diary to show not only how Mr. S. perceived and participated in such changes, but also where Mr S.'s intentions and interpretation of events diverged from the colonial state's own narrative about the same.[35]

The diaries used in this dissertation offer a similarly valuable contribution toward understanding responses to and interpretations of the institutional and organizational changes implemented under colonial rule. The overwhelming majority of primary sources related to the colonial rural economy were produced under, if not directly authored by, the colonial authorities. Materials produced by the colonial government carry obvious limitations, requiring scholars to read against the grain to avoid reproducing colonial judgement as fact. Though different in terms of degree, similar considerations must also

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[34] On the difficulties surrounding the collection and use of historical statistics and economic data in early modern Korea, see Yi Yŏnghun, "Chosŏn hugi kyŏngjesa yŏn'gu ŭi saeroun tonghyang kwa kwaje," in Yi Yŏnghun, ed., *Suryang kyŏngjesa*, 368-391.

[35] Itagaki Ryūta, *Chōsen kindai no rekishi minzokushi: Kyonbuku Sanju [Kyŏngbuk Sangju] no shokuminchi keiken* (Tokyo: Akashi shoten, 2008).

extend to materials published by Koreans themselves, as, depending on the era, colonial censorship effectively narrowed the potential range of expression.

Yet, even if the problems of colonial authorship and censorship could be overlooked, a further issue arises in the question of representation. Quite simply, very few publications record the mundane business of agriculture or the everyday life of farmers. Even the few publications from the period that did concern agriculture were rarely created by farmers themselves but were produced by outside observers with a specific purpose in mind, be it the government surveys of household incomes compiled in the 1930s to provide data for a floor in rice price controls, reports from missionaries on the conditions in rural communities collected as a basis for future evangelism, or arguments put forward by intellectuals in favor of a particular religious or political movement.[36] Although such publications may still reveal a mass of information regarding rural conditions, rarely do such sources reveal more than a snapshot of one particular aspect of rural life, be it the level of household indebtedness or a list of village organizations. What remains unseen, however, and what the diaries used in this dissertation can provide, is information on how households approached the problem of debt or how farmers utilized village organizations in the context of their daily lives.

While diaries are, of course, unique to the experience of their authors, two considerations facilitate the use of diaries as sources within this project. First, insofar as

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[36] Nōrinshō beikokukyku, *Chōsen Taiwan beikoku seisanhi chōsa yōkō* (Tokyo: 1934); Edmund deSchweintz Brunner, "Rural Korea: A Preliminary Survey of Economic, Social, and Religion Conditions," produced for The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council (New York: International Missionary Council, 1928); Gi-Wook Shin, "Agrarianism: A Critique of Colonial Modernity in Korea," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41, no. 1 (1999): 784-804; Albert L. Park, *Building a Heaven on Earth: Religion, Activism, and Protest in Japanese Occupied Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015).

this dissertation pays attention to the authors' interaction with a set of state-sponsored organizations established throughout the peninsula, it is reasonable to assume that the situations encountered by each author were not entirely dissimilar to the experience of other farmers who interacted with the same organizations. Although one cannot assume that all other farmers responded similarly to the diary writers studied here, the types of concerns that the authors noted in their dealings with the new organizations were doubtless repeated elsewhere as well.

Second, given the scarcity of records on individual farmers' activities during colonial rule, the uniqueness of each farmers' experience might actually be considered a strength rather than a weakness. Where the majority of colonial-era primary sources dealing with agriculture were recorded from the perspective of the colonial authorities, the divergence of each diary author's experience from familiar narratives should raise important questions for future research. Where historiographical narratives emphasize the export of Korean rice to Japan as part of a general phenomenon of exploitation (*sut'al*), for example, if the farmers studied here interpreted the significance of their rice transactions and their connection to flows of rice differently than might be expected from the exploitation paradigm, then new questions need to be asked to more fully understand the dynamics of change within the rural economy.[37] If Sim Wŏn'gwŏn was ambivalent

[37] Although critiqued as a "New Right" historian promoting an apologist view of colonial economic development, Kim Nangnyŏn raises a hugely important question in this regard. Contrary to the prevailing view of colonial rice exports as a form of theft, Kim reminds that, up until the appropriation of rice under wartime mobilization in the 1940s, "the export of rice was the result of voluntary transactions just like any other business deal." In this case, "exploitation" is no longer sufficient to explain the logic of economic change in colonial Korea and new questions need to be asked regarding the conditions surrounding such transactions instead. Kim Nak Nyeon, "A Reconsideration of 'Colonial Modernization,'" *Korean Social Sciences Review* 1, no. 1 (2011): 226. Article originally published as "'Singminji kŭndaehwa' chaeron," *Kyŏngje sahak* 43 (2007): 155-188.

about the export of rice to Japan, why was this the case? If unconcerned about the destination of traded rice, what other factors mattered to him instead? In emphasizing the perspective of each diary writer, this dissertation will seek a new interpretation of the rural economy and the impact of the state's agricultural policies.

III. Theoretical Considerations

This dissertation pays particular attention to questions of the *state*, and its role in inducing *agricultural development*—two concepts which require further elaboration here. The "state" defies easy definition. Despite a long history of political science theory that places the state in dichotomous relation to society (an equally nebulous term), scholars such as Timothy Mitchell have highlighted the difficulties of defining the state as a key to its analysis.[38] Thus, Mitchell argues that, rather than concentrating on narrow definitions of the state that ignore "the porous edges where official practice mixes with the semiofficial and the semiofficial with the unofficial," such ambiguity should be conceived as an essential characteristic of the state itself. In Mitchell's view, the state simultaneously encompasses both the formal structures and institutions of the political arrangements that we call the state *and* the structural effects that create the impression of the state as distinct entity. In this way, the state cannot be considered as separate to

[38] Alternative theories of the state range from Michael Mann's conception of the state as a territorial and centralized entity, to Skocpol's interpretation of the state as "a set of organizations through which collectivities of officials may be able to formulate and implement distinctive strategies or policies," to James Scott's view of the state as a project of high-modernism intent on rendering society legible at the expense of the humans and human behaviors that would resist such rationalizations. Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results," *European Journal of Sociology* 25, no. 2 (1984): 210, 211; Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 20, 21; James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

"society" but is instead a social process rooted in specific temporal and spatial organizations. If the state appears distinct from society that is rather the result of a set of practices that create the effect of the state's own abstraction.[39] Mitchell's definition opens the state up to a range of new interpretative frameworks. As far as the state can be considered an ongoing project and social process, secondary questions emerge over how and where the state creates its authority in the realm of daily life. This need not be found in overt displays of state power but can also be traced through mundane examples of everyday bureaucracy, in the requirement to register for a parking permit or in the certification of hygiene and quality standards in the food industry, for example.

If state and society are interwoven in such a manner, then so too is the economy. Writing elsewhere, Mitchell himself states that in the twentieth century, the creation of parallel distinctions between state and economy are perhaps an even more significant project to the articulation of the power of the state.[40] Such a perspective is shared by Pierre Bourdieu who, in his study of the formation of the French housing market, finds that "the economic field is, more than any other, inhabited by the state, which contributes at every moment to its existence and persistence, and also the structure of the relations of force that characterize it."[41] Bourdieu's examination of the housing market shows the diverse and subtle influence of state decisions in the every layer of the market, from overt policies to encourage home ownership, to the regulations that shaped the provision of

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[39] Mitchell, "The Limits of the State."
[40] Timothy Mitchell, "Society, Economy, and the State Effect," in George Steinmetz, ed., *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 77.
[41] Pierre Bourdieu, trans. Chris Turner, *The Social Structures of the Economy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 12.

mortgages and the homes themselves, to the insertion of particular phrases into agents' sales pitches that reference the legal norms underpinning potential transactions.

This is the view of the state that underlies this project. Previous research into the colonial period has tended to focus on the repressive aspects of the colonial state, covering such topics as the use of military police during the first decade of colonial rule, publishing limitations and media censorship, discrimination against Koreans in education and employment opportunities, and intrusive attempts at cultural and linguistic assimilation to name just a few well-documented examples. In terms of the economy, restrictions on the registration of corporations, large-scale agricultural campaigns, and patterns of industrialization that integrated northern Korea with the expanding frontier of empire have also been studied in ways that highlight the strength of the colonial state and its repressive nature.[42] Yet it would be a mistake to only seek the legacies and reach of colonial rule in such extreme measures. Such a black and white vision perpetuates a crude view of colonialism, overlooking as it does the vast realm of the "colonial grey zone" famously articulated by Yun Haedong.[43] To reckon with the full impact of colonial agricultural policies requires that attention be paid not just to the final goal of exporting more rice to Japan, but also to the many mechanisms through which the colonial state set

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[42] Ching-Chih Chen "Police and Community Control Systems in the Empire," in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 213-239; Michael E. Robinson, "Mass Media and Popular Culture in 1930s Korea: Cultural Control, Identity, and Colonial Hegemony," in Dae-Sook Suh, ed., *Korean Studies: New Pacific Currents* (Honolulu: Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawaii, 1994), 59-82; Seong-Cheol Oh and Ki-Seok Kim, "Expansion of Elementary Schooling under Colonialism: Top Down or Bottom Up?" in Ha, Lee, and Sorenson, eds., *Colonial Rule and Social Change*, 114-139; Soon-Won Park, *Colonial Industrialization and Labor in Korea: The Onoda Cement Factory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999); Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009); Aaron Stephen Moore, *Constructing East Asia: Technology, Ideology and Empire in Japan's Wartime Era, 1931-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).
[43] Yun Haedong, *Singminji ŭi hoesaek chidae.*

out to achieve its aims. Some may fit the stereotype of cruel colonial excess, while others may appear more innocuous and overlapped more readily with the interests of farmers, however both extremes were integral to the colonial project and will thus be examined here.

The second concept in need of clarification is that of agricultural development. Gi-Wook Shin and Hŏ Suyŏl have already outlined some of the contentious issues surrounding colonial economic development more generally. Shin points to the Program to Increase Rice Production (hereafter PIRP; Ko. *Chosŏn sanmi chŭngsik kyehoek*; Ja. *Chōsen sanmai zōshoku keikaku*), a colonial project, highlighting the oft-cited fact that increasing rice exports outpaced increasing agricultural yields, leading to decreases in per capita rice consumption through the 1920s. Based on this information, Shin concludes that "early colonial Korean agriculture, despite both increased production and commercialization, did not show development. It typified growth without development."[44] Hŏ makes a similar claim, distinguishing between the material phenomenon (*hyŏnsang*) of development and the "essence" (*ponjil*) of development as interpreted by Koreans. In this way, Hŏ acknowledges (some of) the statistical evidence of colonial development while still emphasizing the growing inequalities that limited the ability of most Koreans to appreciate such increases.[45]

While Shin and Hŏ's arguments have helped to move past the old debates of exploitation versus modernization, questions still remain over the notion of development in the colonial context. For one thing, in their effort to qualify the meaning of colonial

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[44] Shin, *Peasant Protest and Social Change*, 46.
[45] Hŏ Suyŏl, *Kaebal ŏmnŭn kaebal*.

"development," both Shin and Hŏ inadvertently share the assumption that "development" might be universally interpreted as a good thing.[46] Thus, they find alternative phrases instead, concluding that there was "growth without development" or material, rather than essential, development. But, at least when considered in relation to the economy, it is not difficult to find examples where economic development, narrowly defined as an increase in productivity or national wealth, manifestly fails to improve the lot of certain members of society. Even the "miraculous" growth of the South Korean economy from the 1960s provides numerous such examples in the sweatshop-like suffering of factory and textile workers, the repression of labor rights, or the steady, slow decline of rural communities.

One way to avoid the value-laden assessments of the term development might be to avoid it altogether and to speak of "economic change" instead. In some places, I do so. But this dissertation will not avoid the term development altogether. The economic change that happened under colonial rule was not neutral or random. The policies implemented by the colonial government were intended to meet a specific set of priorities that placed the Korean economy within the wider Japanese empire. At times, Korea appeared as a source of resources that might be fruitfully used throughout the Japanese empire. At other times, colonists perceived Korea as an example of economic backwardness waiting for the civilizing influence of Japan's own experience. Most often, the two views existed simultaneously. But regardless of the underlying motivation, the colonial government instigated its economic policies with a particular vision in mind to make Korea "develop" according to some kind of plan. In using the term development

[46] This is not perhaps surprising as everyday parlance generally credits "development" with more positive connotations than negative.

throughout this dissertation, I wish to highlight this discursive aspect of colonial economic and agricultural policies.

Colonial claims of a civilizing influence underpinned many an imperial project, from ancient China to European empires (both within the boundaries of Europe and abroad). Despite the veneer of universal scientific principles that surrounds the discipline of economics, the promotion of economic development fits easily within this wider discourse. Nonetheless, and just as claims to civilization could be contested and appropriated by colonized peoples, the notion of economic development is simultaneously greater and less than any imperial project. The logic of economic development transcends the geographic and temporal boundaries of any individual empire. Even after liberation, in Egypt technocrats and international bodies such as the IMF perpetuated a view of development introduced as part of empire, for example, while in Latin America foreign advisors advocated a similarly universalist view of liberalism even within politically independent nations.[47] At the same time, empire was no guarantee for ideological unity. Within Korea, colonial officials disagreed among themselves, with their counterparts in Japan, and with Japanese settlers to Korea (to say nothing of conflicts with the Korean population) over a wide range of policy decisions, of which disputes over an appropriate economic and agricultural strategy formed just one part.[48] Although this dissertation cannot explore the full range of differing interpretations over

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[47] Paul W. Drake, ed., *Money Doctors, Foreign Debts, and Economic Reforms in Latin America from the 1890s to the Present* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1994); Miguel Angel Centeno and Fernando Lopez-Alves, eds., *The Other Mirror: Grand Theory through the Lens of Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[48] Hyung Gu Lynn, "Limits of the Colonial State: Interest Intersections and the State in Colonial Korea, 1919-1942," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 2001; Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*.

the meaning of development, it is understood that the views examined here are part of a much wider series of conversations and understandings.

Within this discursive view, agricultural development itself entails far more than the achievement of numerical increases in production. Even from a strictly economic perspective, scholars have long acknowledged the importance of transfers of scientific and technical knowledge, as well as institutional reform, as fundamental elements within agricultural development. Indeed, one influential theory of agricultural development proposed by Yujiro Hayami and Vernon Ruttan places technical and institutional change as endogenous to the development process and therefore some of the key areas that governments may target in order to induce agricultural development. Hayami and Ruttan draw on data from colonial Korea and Taiwan as evidence in support of their hypothesis, detailing the efforts of the colonial governments in each country to encourage the adoption of high-yielding rice varieties, fertilizers, and irrigation infrastructure.[49]

This dissertation accepts Hayami and Ruttan's basic premise that technology transfers and institutional change are key aspects within the process of agricultural development. However, where Hayami and Ruttan make their argument on the basis of statistics, this dissertation will highlight instead the different interpretations of development that surrounded such changes within colonial Korea. Where the colonial government saw the adoption of fertilizers or the promotion of new forms of lending and sales practices as part and parcel of its agricultural policies, this dissertation will consider the same elements from the perspective of the farmers confronted with such changes. In highlighting the discursive aspects of development in this way, I seek to uncover not only

[49] Hayami and Ruttan, *Agricultural Development*.

what farmers considered important in their own lives, but also how and why their views differed from the colonial government and even where farmers found points of common interest with agricultural policies.

IV. Outline

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Two (Chapters One and Three) focus on reforms to the state and government policies, respectively covering the period between 1876 and 1910, and from 1910 to 1945. The remaining three chapters rely heavily on farmers' diaries and local organizational records to provide a view of how such changes appeared in the context of the daily life and economic activity of individual farmers.

Chapter One examines the changes to the organization and function of the Korean state during a series of governmental reforms begun in the late nineteenth century, paying particular attention to the impact of changing ideas about the state's role in the economy. I use the discourse of "enrich the country and strengthen the military" (*puguk kangbyŏng*) to trace such changes, as well as the government's subsequent attempt to live up to its new responsibilities in the realm of state finance—a necessary prerequisite for investments in the military and the economy. During this period, the Korean government attempted to secure revenues through various means, including reforms to the tax system, the reorganization of government offices and departments, and through the exploitation of additional revenues through loans, maritime customs, and the printing of new currencies. Overall, Chapter One highlights the importance of distinguishing between the multiple offices that constituted both the government as a whole and the wider influence of the state. Even though the central government may have adopted its new policies to fit a particular rationale, the organizational and institutional reforms necessary to support the

state's new role in the economy introduced separate challenges at each level of government. To reform tax collection required the central government to confront the interests and practices of local politics as much as it did the arguments over the ideal type of tax collection system that circulated within the central government and among intellectuals.

Chapter Two switches perspective to present the economic worldview of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, a farmer from the Ulsan region. In order to fully understand the impact of the changes implemented under colonial rule, it is first necessary to consider how farmers themselves conducted their economic activities. Sim's diary reveals a rich and complex understanding of the rural economy based on a system of interconnected cyclical patterns in which the weather, prices, and harvests were in constant flux. After first outlining Sim's understanding of such patterns, this chapter asks how the changes to the rural economy following the opening of Korean ports to international trade affected such patterns, and how Sim sought to mitigate such changes while hedging against the cycles that he saw as governing the rural economy. Overall, Chapter Two stands as a challenge to conventional accounts of the open ports and colonial periods, asking how Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's view of the economic and social changes of the period might differ from existing accounts of the same, and introduces a new point of reference against which the colonial policies discussed later in the dissertation might be judged.

Chapter Three returns to the perspective of the government, this time examining the colonial government's agricultural policies and its use of semi-governmental organizations as a means to implement its policies. I trace the implementation of colonial policies for rice and cotton through a series of associations, including financial

associations, irrigation associations, trade associations, and agricultural associations. Chapter Three explores the depth of colonial policies, showing how the colonial government used the various associations to establish new sales routes and networks for the diffusion of technology and knowledge as a fundamental part of its agricultural policies for the two crops.

In general, the colonial agricultural policies discussed in Chapter Three fall into two periods. During the first, which held sway until the collapse of global agricultural prices in the late 1920s and the onset of the Great Depression, the colonial government maintained a certain faith in the ability of markets to incentivize production among the Korean population. From the 1930s, a combination of declining prices, rural unrest, and the slide toward war led the colonial government to ever greater intervention within the rural economy. Once more, the various associations proved a crucial mechanism through which the government implemented price controls and rice storage programs. In both periods, I argue that the associations were more than an expression of colonial agricultural interests, but actively worked to build, shape and regulate colonial markets in line with colonial policies.

After establishing the general outline of the colonial government's intervention into the rural economy, Chapter Four asks the questions: what did the state look like to each diary writer, and how did this change with the government reforms of the late nineteenth century and the advent of colonial rule? Depending on the activities of each author, the answers to these questions could be quite different. Such differences will become a key part of this chapter as I highlight the uneven nature of the state in each author's everyday life, and to balance the view of the colonial government provided

through official sources. This chapter focuses on the economic networks of each author, including organizations and personal relationships that were both connected and unconnected to the state. In building a "bottom up" view of the state in this way, I highlight not only the "fuzzy edges" of the colonial state but also the context in which farmers encountered the colonial state, the existing agricultural organizations against which the colonial government competed, and the extent of farmers' capacity to direct their own economic activity.

Chapter Five concludes the dissertation with a consideration of the question of development and institutional change. Although the primary focus of many colonial policies concerned numerical increases in production and export of particular crops, a secondary element involved the promotion of institutional and behavioral change among farmers. Regulations restricting the sale of particular breeds of cow were intended to encourage greater cow ownership, for example, while the mandatory grading of crop quality was introduced as a means to incentivize production among farmers. Chapter Five examines the impact of such measures in the lives of the diary writers, often discovering unintended consequences of the government's efforts at inducing behavioral change. Building on the discrepancies between the colonial government's view of development and the personal experiences of the diary writers, this chapter also looks at each author's understanding of the changes to the colonial rural economy and what development meant in the context of their own lives.

This dissertation ends in 1945 with the dissolution of Japanese colonial rule in Korea. Nonetheless, this study also raises questions that extend beyond the boundary of liberation. Post-colonial South Korea has often been described as something of a

successor to the colonial government, restoring a familiar alliance between state and capital if not replicating inherited structures and practices outright. While numerous qualifications have been made to this view, highlighting the impact of 1950s land reform and the difference in the geopolitical situation of the 1950s and 1960s, for example,[50] this dissertation makes it possible to approach questions of continuity from perspective of ordinary Koreans' experience of colonial rule. The state came to play a new role in supporting and directing the rural economy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What farmers thought of these changes, the dependencies they developed on networks of semi-governmental organizations, and their understanding of the undesirable aspects of the colonial system could not help but shape farmers' interpretation of the state and state-led development in the years to come as well. By focusing on individual farmers, this dissertation forces the reader to consider the twin questions of colonial rule and colonial legacies not as the sole result of the external influence of Japan but as something shaped by the hands of Koreans as well.

[50] Chung-in Moon and Sang-young Rhyu, "'Overdeveloped' State and the Political Economy of Development in the 1950s: A Reinterpretation," *Asian Perspective* 23, no. 1 (1999): 179-203.

CHAPTER 1:
TO BUILD A RICH NATION

> The codes and regulations, laws and institutions of this country have been passed down from the Son of Heaven. Alas, in the thirty-three years since I ascended the throne we are facing a situation in which countries around the world are strengthening alliances. We must go down the road of reforming and strengthening our politics...In one go, cut your hair and your ties to the old customs. Seek only the truth in all things, supporting my endeavor to enrich the country and strengthen the military.
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> — decree of King Kojong, 1896[1]

I. Reform and Modernity in the Historiography of Korea

Reform abounds in the history of modern Korea. The nineteenth century was a politically turbulent period, including multiple rebellions, wars, and disruptions to Korea's established political order. During the mid-nineteenth century, Korea transformed the basis of its economic and international relations in just a few short decades. After rebuffing French and American incursions in the 1860s and early 1870s, in 1876, under shadow of gunboats, Korea signed a treaty with Japan to open its ports to new trade and diplomatic relations.[2] Subsequent treaties with the United States, China, Russia, and several European countries followed throughout the 1880s, bringing Korea into fresh contact with global trends. Amid such changes, and building on the domestic discontent expressed in the Hong Kyŏngnae rebellion of 1812 and a string of popular rebellions in the 1860s, numerous groups attempted to persuade Kojong and the central government to

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[1] *Kojong sillok*, 33.1.11 (1896).

[2] Korean resistance against French and American advances followed the long-held practice of strictly regulating external trade and diplomacy. Although Korea already maintained diplomatic relations with Japan at this time, the 1876 treaty represented a break with established norms on several counts—not least among which the circumstances of the treaty's signing (under military threat). For an overview of the 1876 treaty, see Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys: The Opening of Korea, 1875–1885* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 35-50.

adopt their favored reform agenda, including among them representatives from Qing China, Meiji Japan, rebellious peasants, and western-inspired "enlightenment" (*kaehwa*) intellectuals.

That Japan annexed Korea in 1910 has only heightened the significance of reform within the historiography as historians sought to answer the question, why did reform attempts fail to secure Korean independence?[3] Perhaps unsurprisingly, answers to this question have been as varied as the late-nineteenth century proponents of reform themselves, as differing opinions over the political and ideological sympathies of reformers divided assessment of their activities. To some, Korea's best attempt to modernize as a sovereign nation lay with the radical, Western-inspired reform agenda of so-called enlightenment thinkers—a group of elites who drew on their experiences studying conditions abroad (mainly in Japan and the United States) to agitate for democracy and nationalism.[4] Others have pointed to the willingness of a few

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[3] Although this framing is strongest in some of the earliest accounts of the period—including colonial accounts that sought to legitimize colonial rule as a necessary remedy for Korea's failure to adequately reform itself—it has proved remarkably enduring in a range of scholarship. Even staunch defenders of Korea's capacity for independent reform have implicitly adopted such a perspective, as seen in the following remarks from one prominent scholar: "The failure of Korea's modernization was not necessarily its own fault, as is generally believed. On the contrary, Korea was actively trying to enter into the international society, albeit late, but was impeded by the selfish interests of its neighbors, aggressive Japan and egoistic China." Despite placing the blame for Korea's "failure" squarely on outside actors, Yi T'aejin nonetheless perpetuates the notion that Korean reform and modernization efforts should be judged by Korea's ability to maintain independence and not by any measure related to the content of the reforms themselves. Yi Tae-jin, "Was Early Modern Korea Really a 'Hermit Kingdom'?" trans. Edward Park, in *The Dynamics of Confucianism and Modernization in Korean History* (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2007), 350. For an example of earlier iterations of this argument, see Vipan Chandra, *Imperialism, Resistance, and Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century Korea: Enlightenment and the Independence Club* (Berkeley: Center for Korean Studies, University of California, 1988). For a colonial account of Korea's "failure" to reform, see also Tabohashi Kiyoshi, "Kindai Chōsen ni okeru seijiteki kaikaku," in Chōsen sōtokufu Chōsenshi henshūkai, *Kindai Chōsenshi kenkyū* (Keijō: 1944), 1-303.

[4] Clarence N. Weems Jr., "The Korean Reform and Independence Movement, 1881–1898," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, Faculty of Political Science, 1954; James B. Palais, "Political Participation in Traditional Korea, 1876–1910," *Journal of Korean Studies* 1 (1979): 73-121; Chandra, *Imperialism, Resistance, and Reform.*

enlightenment supporters to work with Japanese politicians to push through reforms to the government, opening a debate onto whether leaders such as Kim Okkyun (1851–1894) and Pak Yŏnghyo (1861–1939) should be considered as collaborators or merely pragmatic reformers.[5] In a similar manner, multiple studies have evaluated and reevaluated the contributions, both positive and negative, of Qing China, western advisors to the government, the Tonghak peasant rebellion of 1894, moderate reformers, and the monarch himself to the perceived successes (or failures) of nineteenth-century reform attempts.[6]

In recent years, a further line of enquiry has emerged that places greater emphasis on the content of reform projects themselves. Replacing concerns over the success or failure of reforms, this scholarship has instead investigated the process and impact of reform projects throughout wider Korean society in areas as varied as medicine, new

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[5] For a summary of, and sympathetic defense against, such claims of collaboration, see Young Ick Lew, "The Reform Efforts and Ideas of Pak Yŏng-hyo, 1894–1895," *Korean Studies* 1 (1977): 21-61; Young Ick Lew, "Korean-Japanese Politics behind the Kabo-Ŭlmi Reform Movement, 1894–1896," *Journal of Korean Studies* 3 (1981): 39-81; Yŏng-ho Ch'oe, "The Kapsin Coup of 1884: A Reassessment," *Korean Studies* 6 (1982): 105-24.

[6] On Qing China see, Young Ick Lew, "Yuan Shih-kai's Residency and the Korean Enlightenment Movement (1885–94)," *Journal of Korean Studies* 5 (1984): 63-107; Kirk Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Chosŏn Korea, 1850–1910* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008). On foreign advisors to the government, see Yur-Bok Lee, *West Goes East: Paul Georg von Möllendorff and Great Power Imperialism in Late Yi Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988); Kim Hyŏnsuk, *Kŭndae Han'guk ŭi Sŏyangin komun'gwandŭl* (Seoul: Han'guk yŏn'guwŏn, 2008); Wayne Patterson, *In the Service of His Korean Majesty: William Nelson Lovatt, the Pusan Customs, and Sino-Korean Relations, 1876–1888* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 2012). On the Tonghak rebellion, see Young Ick Lew, "The Conservative Character of the 1894 Tonghak Peasant Uprising" A Reappraisal with Emphasis on Chŏn Pong-jun's Background and Motivation," *Journal of Korean Studies* 7, no. 1 (1990): 149-80; George Kallander, "Eastern Bandits or Revolutionary Soldiers? The Tonghak Uprising in Korean History and Memory," *History Compass* 8, no. 10 (2010): 1126-41. On moderate and early reform efforts, see Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*; Michael Finch, *Min Yŏng-hwan: A Political Biography* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, Center for Korean Studies, 2002). On the monarch's influence on the process of reform, see James B. Palais, *Politics and Policy in Traditional Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1975); Yi T'aejin, *Kojong sidae ŭi chaejomyŏng* (Seoul: T'aehaksa, 2000); Do Myonfe [To Myŏnhoe], "Jishuteki kindai to shokuminchi kindai," in Miyajima Hiroshi et al., eds., *Shokuminchi kindai no shisa: Chōsen to Nihon* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2004), 3-25.

styles of fiction and literature, changes to education, technology, the emergence of modern nationalism, the redefinition of land rights, and the nature of the state itself.[7] In contrast to accounts that return to the "failure" of Korean reforms to secure national independence, these studies search for the origin of modern society within the reform era, forcing scholars to reevaluate pre-colonial Korea as more than just the passive target of Japanese empire.

Nevertheless, owing to the historiographical trends that placed an emphasis on modernity, much of the new research has presented a relatively narrow vision of reform projects. Most studies begin only after a major series of government reforms in 1894–96 and focus on reforms that replicate an orthodox interpretation of "modernity" as embodied in the promotion of technology, capitalism, and western ideas.[8] Yet, and notwithstanding the doubts that might legitimately be raised over the utility of the

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[7] Kyung Moon Hwang, "Country or State? Reconceptualizing *Kukka* in the Korean Enlightenment Period, 1896–1910," *Korean Studies* 24 (2000): 1-24; Andre Schmid, *Korea Between Empires, 1895–1919* (New York: University of Columbia Press, 2002); Wang Hyŏnjong, *Han'guk kŭndae kukka ŭi hyŏnsŏng kwa Kabo kaehyŏk* (Seoul: Yŏksa Pip'yŏngsa, 2003); Dong-no Kim, John B. Duncan, and Do-hyung Kim, eds., *Reform and Modernity in the Taehan Empire* (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2006); Han'guk Yŏksa Yŏn'guhoe, *Taehan Cheguk ŭi t'oji chedo wa kŭndae* (Seoul: Hyean, 2010); Vladimir Tikhonov, *Social Darwinism and Nationalism in Korea: the Beginnings (1880s–1910s): "Survival" as an Ideology of Korean Modernity* (Leiden, Brill, 2010); Hwang, *Rationalizing Korea*.
Underlying many of these studies is an implicit (sometimes explicit) intent to challenge the dominant notion of colonial modernity in Korean historiography. As initially proposed by Gi-wook Shin and Michael Robinson, the concept of colonial modernity attempted to challenge historical narratives that framed the colonial period as either a time of absolute exploitation and oppression or one of unqualified progress and development. Drawing on the ambiguity of modernity, Shin and Robinson used colonial modernity to explore how both aspects might be true at once, as, for example, in the use of new technologies such as the telegraph to both strengthen the capacity of the colonial state and to expand new arenas of communication. Despite the breakthrough that this represented within the historiography of colonial Korea, the ensuing popularity of the concept gave rise to the unfortunate impression that much of what constitutes modernity in Korea was somehow a byproduct of the colonial state. See, Shin and Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea*; Tani E. Barlow, ed., *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997).

[8] Some notable exceptions to this are John Duncan's contribution to the edited volume *Reform and Modernity in the Taehan Empire*, "The Confucian Context of Reform," 105-25; and, Kyung Moon Hwang, "Country or State?"

concept of modernity itself,[9] it is far from clear that modernity should be synonymous with reform in this period. Insofar as his policies departed from several established norms of Chosŏn governance, James Palais also characterized the rule of the Taewŏn'gun (1864–1873)—the Prince Regent most commonly noted for his conservative Confucian outlook—as a program of reform.[10] While the policies of the Taewŏn'gun and those of the Korean Empire (1897–1910) may equally be considered episodes of reform, [11] the two cases, separated by a period of only thirty years, remain largely divided within the historiography.

Even without reference to recognizably "modern" reforms, there is plenty of evidence for significant changes within Korean politics and society at this time. Kirk Larsen's study of Qing imperialism in Korea details an array of reforms and innovations introduced before the major government reforms of the 1890s—from commerce in the treaty ports to the construction of telegraph communications—as Korea and China redefined their traditional diplomatic relationship. Throughout, Larsen makes clear that zeal for enlightenment and modernity was not necessarily a determining factor in reforms; at times, Qing China's desire to exert stronger political influence over Korea was equally influential in instigating change.[12] At the same time, and as detailed by Kyung Moon Hwang, long-held Confucian concepts continued to inform enlightenment discourse about the nature of the state (*kukka*) even as intellectuals debated new theories

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[9] Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 113-49.
[10] Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 1.
[11] Proclaimed in 1897 by Kojong as an attempt to bolster his rule, the Korean Empire is notable for its pursuit of wide-ranging modernization projects.
[12] Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties and Trade*.

emerging from Japan, China, Germany, and beyond.[13] Elsewhere, Yumi Moon's research into the Ilchinhoe—a populist group famous for their anti-monarch stance and collaboration with imperial Japan—shows in great depth how legacies from Chosŏn Korea stretched into the political disputes of the 1890s and 1900s. As Moon's research demonstrates, grievances over old methods of tax collection, the fate of local elite associations, and disputes over rents on state-owned lands fueled many of the Ilchinoe's anti-government activities just as much, if not more so, than did differing interpretations of modernity.[14] Although it is hard to dispute the growing influence of "modern" reforms in the late-nineteenth century, it is also necessary to acknowledge the continuity of "non-modern" aspects as well.

The need to adequately represent the "non-modern" is of particular concern among economic histories of the late Chosŏn period (1750–1910) given the narrow, Eurocentric basis of much economic discourse. This challenge is not unique to Korean history; historians of China too have grappled with similar problems in overcoming narratives of China's supposed failure to modernize and the difficulties of accounting for economic practices that appear different from standard European models. As Gregory Blue and Timothy Brook argue, the view of Chinese stagnation can be traced back to eighteenth century European intellectual trends that increasingly recast Western civilization as a universal norm and that still influence much economic thought today.[15] In Korea, similar notions were most destructively perpetuated through colonial theories

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[13] Hwang, "Country or State?"
[14] Yumi Moon, *Populist Collaborators: The Ilchinhoe and the Japanese Colonization of Korea, 1896-1910* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).
[15] Timothy Brook and Gregory Blue, eds., *China and Historical Capitalism: Genealogies of Sinological Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

of stagnation, although to the extent that later scholarship accepted the basic premise of social theories developed in the nineteenth century many challenges remain in adequately representing late Chosŏn economic activity.[16] For this reason, accounts which rely too closely upon standard narratives of economic development or markers of social and technological modernity run the risk of overlooking important aspects of Korean economic history or, at the other extreme, exaggerating only those aspects which fit a stylized European experience.[17]

Rather than seeking just the modern aspects of reform projects, then, this chapter will examine instead the gradual transformation of the Korean state and its interaction with the economy in response to the demands of the late nineteenth century. In particular, this chapter will focus on three interrelated aspects to trace the course of government reforms through (1) the adoption of new ideas concerning the government's role in promoting economic growth; (2) government efforts to secure the financial resources necessary to fulfil its new obligations; and (3) the subsequent reorganization of government offices in support of new ideas about the state and political economy. As some of the most fundamental claims that link the state and the population, an examination of the changes to taxation and government support for economic activity

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[16] Ibid; Miller, "The Idea of Stagnation"

[17] See, for example, Young-hoon Rhee, "Economic Stagnation and Crisis in Korea during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Australian Economic History Review* 54, no. 1 (2014): 1-13; Pak Ch'ansŭng, "Han'gukhak yŏn'gu p'aerŏdaim ŭl tullŏssan nonŭi: naejaejŏk paljŏnnon ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Han'gukhak nonjip* 35 (2007): 73-118.

Recent scholarship by Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and R. Bin Wong suggests a promising alternative which calls into question assumptions of both Western and Chinese development narratives. Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and R. Bin Wong, *Before and Beyond Divergence: The Politics of Economic Change in China and Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011); Philip T. Hoffman, Gilles Postel-Vinay and Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, "Information and Economic History: How the Credit Market in Old Regime Paris Forces Us to Rethink the Transition to Capitalism," *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 1 (1999): 69-94.

will reveal not just the financial health of the Korean government but also ways in which it engaged the population, be it through the method of tax collection and assessment or the obligations it assumed. Viewed in this way, the Korean state was not just an agent of modernity directed from the central government, but was a complex series of offices and bureaucratic hierarchies that incorporated a range of interests and institutional practices at each level. To implement reforms required the central government not only to create an agenda but to find ways to alter the existing government structure and to redefine the terms of its interaction with the public.

II. The State and the Economy in Late-Chosŏn Economic Thought

As in China and Japan, a concern for the economy was a well-established facet of Confucian governance in Korea. Far from early assessments of Confucian thought as antagonistic toward economic and commercial activity, the ability of the state to secure the people's livelihood was a significant aspect in determining political legitimacy, based on classical texts that emphasized the primacy of the population's material wellbeing to ensure social stability and the security of the political realm. To cite a famous passage from Mencius:

> As to the people, if they have not a certain livelihood, it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do in the way of self-abandonment, or moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license…Therefore an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people, so as to make sure that, above, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, below, sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children.[18]

Though widely acknowledged, recognition of the importance of economic affairs within the tenets of Confucian governance did not lead to a uniform interpretation of

[18] James Legge, *The Life and Works of Mencius: With Essays and Notes* (London: Trubner and Co., 1875), 49.

what constituted a healthy economy. At different times, and in different contexts, governments stressed the importance of commerce over agriculture and vice versa. What is more, even the extent of the government's role in supporting economic affairs could often be unclear. Unlike the mercantilist policies familiar to Western Europe, East Asian political norms limited the state's direct involvement in the economy. As Jane Kate Leonard and John R. Watt explain, despite viewing the economy as integral to both the state's strategic sphere and the whole of civilization, the government of Qing China nonetheless considered it a semi-autonomous productive sphere best left to the management of the people.[19] Still, the basic principle that governments should foster both material wellbeing and social stability came to underpin a wide array of economic thought in early modern China and Japan, finding expression in policies as varied as the state management of granaries for famine relief, low taxation, agrarian policies, and the regulation of certain commercial industries through licensing and state monopolies.[20]

In Korea, likewise, governments had long taken an interest in the wellbeing of the economy. The Chosŏn state was an agrarian state explicitly founded on Confucian principles and as such government officials took a direct interest in the promotion of agriculture for the welfare of the people. Early in the Chosŏn dynasty the government undertook the construction of reservoirs and irrigation facilities in order to stabilize both

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[19] Jane Kate Leonard and John R. Watt, "Introduction" in Jane Kate Leonard and John R. Watt, eds., *To Achieve Security and Wealth: the Qing Imperial State and the Economy, 1644–1911* (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Program, 1992), 2, 3.

[20] For examples from the Qing and Tokugawa periods, see, respectively, Leonard and Watt, eds., *To Achieve Security and Wealth*; Bettina Gramlich-Oka and Gregory Smits, eds., *Economic Thought in Early Modern Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2010). For more on the general traditions of Chinese economic thought as compared to Western and modern interpretations, see also R. Bin Wong, "The Political Economy of Agrarian Empire and its Modern legacy," in Brook and Blue, eds., *China and Historical Capitalism*, 210-45; Margherita Zanasi, "Fostering the People's Livelihood: Chinese Political Thought between Empire and Nation," *Twentieth-Century China* 30, no. 1 (2004): 6-38.

the socio-economic life of the population and the state itself. The government also bolstered the rural economy through such measures as the publication of agricultural manuals and the promotion of a granary system to stabilize fluctuations in the harvest.[21] Regard for the significance of the economy did not decrease over the years, although intellectual divisions and an increased rivalry over government posts in the sixteenth century led to greater contestation over the form of economic policies. Where some asserted the importance of the material role of the government administration, others placed a primary emphasis on moral and spiritual self-cultivation as the best way to satisfy the state's material obligations to the population.[22]

By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the most active proponents of government support for agriculture lay outside of the mainstream intellectual trends of the Chosŏn court, belonging instead to a loose school of thought often referred to as "practical learning" (*sirhak*).[23] Among interests in many other subjects, scholars such as Yu Hyŏngwŏn (1622–1673), Pak Chega (1750–1805) and Chŏng Yagyong (1762–1836) wrote extensively on proposals to stimulate agricultural production and, by extension, national wealth. The content of such proposals ranged from the institutional, as in Chŏng and Yu's plans to reform land ownership, to Pak's detailed designs for the establishment

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[21] Yi Tae-jin, "The Socioeconomic Background of Neo-Confucianism in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Korea," in *The Dynamics of Confucianism*, 23-48; Sung Woo Kim, "Decline of a Confucian Mecca: Development of Rice Farming and Regional Development in Chosŏn Korea," *Journal of Korean Studies* 15, no. 1 (2010): 1-40.

[22] The most famous proponents on either side of this debate were, respectively, Yi I (pen name Yulgok) and Yi Hwang (pen name T'oegye). For more on their differences in philosophy, see Paolo Santangelo, "A Neo-Confucian Debate in 16th Century Korea: Its Ethical and Social Implications," *T'oung Pao* 76, no. 4/5 (1990): 234-70; Weon-Ki Yoo, "Is Yulgok's Theory of Mind Consistent?" *Acta Koreana* 15, no. 1 (2012): 147-62.

[23] The boundaries and internal coherence of "practical learning" are not clearly defined, nor should it be confused with a form of proto-modernization as some have claimed. On practical learning and its intellectual heritage within Confucianism, see Donald Leslie Baker, "*Sirhak* Medicine: Measles, Smallpox, and Chŏng Tasan," *Korean Studies* 14 (1990): 135-66.

of a government office dedicated to importing, studying, and promoting advanced Chinese agricultural techniques.[24] These views were not entirely ignored and King Chŏngjo (r. 1779-1800) in particular was sympathetic toward "practical learning," but political conflict between various factions prevented the mainstream adoption of such ideas at the highest levels within the government.[25] Although students of the prominent *sirhak* scholars continued to develop their ideas, it was not until the reign of Kojong and the political crises of the late nineteenth century that sustained debates over the state's obligations to support the economy reemerged within the central government.

The four-character phrase *puguk kangbyŏng* (富國强兵), or "enrich the country and strengthen the military," provides a useful lens through which to view changing ideas about the state and its relationship with the economy at this time. This phrase is especially significant in the history of modern East Asia, given its adoption within Meiji Japan as a foremost slogan promoting the development of national industry and military power.[26] The phrase did not originate in Meiji Japan, however, and can in fact be traced back to Sima Qian's description of the philosophy of Shang Yang (d. 338 BCE), a Qin intellectual of the Warring States period (453–221 BCE) who drew an explicit connection

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[24] Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, trans. Edward W. Wagner with Edward Schultz (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1984), 232-36; James B. Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyŏngwŏn and the late Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996); Kim Kisŭng, "Tasan Chŏng Yagyong ŭi puguk kangbyŏnghyŏng kukka kaehyŏk sasang," *Han'guksa hakpo* 19 (2005): 61-93; Yi Hŏnch'ang, *Chosŏn sidae ch'oego ŭi kyŏngje palchŏnan ŭl chesi han Pak Chega* (Seoul: Minsogwŏn, 2011).
[25] Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 221-23, 247, 248, 255-57.
[26] Richard J. Samuels, *Rich Nation, Strong Army: National Security and the Technological Transformation of Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). In fact, usage of the phrase in the twentieth century stretches beyond Meiji politics to encompass state-led industrialization projects in Japan and beyond, often as part of the rhetoric of a developmental state. See also, Byung-Kook Kim and Ezra F. Vogel, eds., *The Park Chung Hee Era: The Transformation of South Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011).

between the wealth of a state and its military abilities.[27] The later association of the phrase with Legalism—a branch of philosophy openly critical to such basic tenets of Confucianism as moral governance and hence denounced by mainstream Confucianism—meant that the phrase was rarely referenced in the *Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty* (*Chosŏn wangjo sillok*), the official history of the debates and activities of the central Chosŏn government. Instead, the phrase appears more closely related to the writings of *sirhak* scholars, such as Chŏng Yagyong and Pak Chega, who used the notion of enriching the country and strengthening the military in their critiques of what they saw as an excessive focus on esoteric morality within the current administration at the expense of the people's material welfare.[28]

When discussion of enriching the country and strengthening the military resurfaced within the central government in the late nineteenth century, Korea faced a tense international situation. The spread of imperialism had led to wars in each of China, Japan, and Korea, to say nothing of the trend toward gunboat diplomacy in which states used military force as a threat in international negotiations.[29] Indeed, usage of the phrase within the *Veritable Records* reflected the new military threat. As a minister reported on the Japanese decision to send gunboats to the Korean coast in 1876: "the Japanese

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[27] Yuri Pines, "Legalism in Chinese Philosophy," in Edward N. Zalta, ed. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 edition), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/chinese-legalism/; John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 2 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 113-38, 235-49.

[28] Kim Kisŭng, "Tasan Chŏng Yagyong ŭi puguk"; Yi Hŏnch'ang, *Chosŏn sidae ch'oego*; Myŏng Sŏngjun and Hong Chunhyŏn, "Tasan Chŏng Yagyong ŭi haengjŏng sasang e pich'uŏ pon haengjŏng kaehyŏgan ŭi koch'al," *Sahoe kwahak yŏn'gu* 17, no. 3 (2010): 83-111.

[29] By the time Korean ports opened to international trade in 1876, military conflicts in East Asia included the first and second opium wars in China (1839–42 and 1857–60), civil wars in both China (1850-64) and Japan (1868-69), defensive wars in Korea against the French (1866) and the United States (1871), and the Japanese invasion of Taiwan (1873).

consider that now is a time when all countries under heaven resort to arms…they repeatedly talk of ways to enrich the country and strengthen the military and that is all."[30] Subsequent references to Japan reiterated the significance of the phrase within the contemporary international climate. On several occasions, Korean officials expressed an interest in emulating Japanese economic and military policies in order to prevent the threat of invasion. Similarly, in 1879 Li Hongzhang, a prominent Qing official, reminded the Chosŏn government of Japan's recent conquest of the Ryūkyū Kingdom (now Okinawa), urging Korea to adopt measures to enrich the country and strengthen the military.[31]

Compared to earlier discussion of *puguk kangbyŏng* within the discourse of "practical learning," the use of the phrase in the nineteenth century had a defensive, martial tone in its stress on the need to counter external threats. This reversed the emphasis of Chŏng Yagyong and Pak Chega, who had referred to the slogan to argue for the government's greater interest in economic matters and the welfare of the general population. Among his many writings, *Kyŏngseyup'yo* (*A treatise on statecraft*) in particular outlined Chŏng's ideas on how best to reform the government in order to achieve the wealth and strength (*pugang*) of the country. Demonstrating the style of thought described by Leonard and Watt, whereby the state should support the productive sphere without directly intervening in economic affairs, Chŏng argued that the government should both maximize its efficiency by removing extraneous government posts and offices while letting pragmatism and ability guide the people's occupation

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[30] *Kojong sillok* 13.2.6 (1876).
[31] *Kojong sillok* 16.7.9 (1879); 17.8.28 (1880); 18.3.23 (1881).

within industry.[32] Meanwhile, the theory to enhance the country's wealth (*pugungnon*) was a core element of Pak Chega's economic writings. Although equally concerned with the increasing the welfare of the people—a wealthy population was a necessary precondition for a wealthy state after all—Pak's proposals envisioned a greater role for the government in creating the conditions for material prosperity through the promotion of trade and the introduction of agricultural technologies.[33] Despite such differences in interpretation, and notwithstanding both authors' additional writings on the military, in reference to the notion of the wealth and strength of the country both men placed a primacy on the economic side in contrast to the use of *puguk kangbyŏng* early in Kojong's rule.

Nineteenth-century discussion of the economy soon grew to match, however, as the need to enrich the country went hand-in-hand with military concerns. More than just a means to finance military spending, a strong and wealthy economy became a method to protect the country in its own right. In the words of one official, "if we cannot emulate their machinery, how can we stop their insults and resist their greed?"[34] As the phrase gained currency within the central government, reformers of all stripes adopted its rhetoric to argue for their preferred reforms. On the side of moderate reform, advocates of "eastern ways and western tools" (*tongdo sŏgi*) argued that the adoption of foreign technologies in areas such as agriculture, medicine, transport, and weapons could help

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[32] Kim Kisŭng, "Tasan Chŏng Yagyong ŭi puguk"; Myŏng Sŏngjun and Hong Chunhyŏn, "Tasan Chŏng Yagyong ŭi haengjŏng sasang"
[33] Yi Hŏnch'ang, *Chosŏn sidae ch'oego*, 164-83.
[34] *Kojong sillok* 19.8.5 (1882).

promote public welfare (*iyong husaeng*) as long as foreign religions remained safely excluded from the country:

> Truly, if we can reform our government and teaching at home and make alliances of amity with neighbors abroad, protecting our country's propriety and righteousness while making [Korea] equal the wealth and strength of other countries, and so scholars and ordinary people together can enjoy an era of peace—would this not be a fine thing?[35]

Many other early suggested methods to increase national wealth and strength also fit within established norms of governance, including such measures as maintaining a balanced budget, decreasing wasteful spending, or concentrating on the proper selection of officials.[36]

As increasing numbers of enlightenment reformers took positions within the government from the mid-1890s, the same slogan was taken in support of more radical reforms such as cutting one's hair (a traditional symbol of filial piety), expanding new forms of education, adopting a land survey, or reforming the standards for weights and measures.[37] The phrase also flourished in the burgeoning popular press. Newspapers representing views from across the political spectrum—from the Confucian-based reformist views of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* (Capital gazette) to the Western-inspired *Tongnip sinmun* (The Independent)—adopted the slogan in articles exhorting the government and readers to establish new schools and commercial organizations, improve

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[35] Ibid.
It is worth noting that the phrase "the promotion of public welfare" (*iyong husaeng*) was frequently used by Pak Chega in his economic writings. Yi Hŏnch'ang, *Chosŏn sidae ch'oego*, 114-32.

[36] *Kojong sillok*, 21.11.16 (1884); 23.7.29 (1886). Not all of these suggestions originated within the Korean government. Following a coup attempt in 1884, Yuan Shikai provided the Korean government with a list of reform proposals as well as numerous warnings on how easily China might crush Korea should it try to dismantle its established diplomatic reliance on China.

[37] *Kojong sillok*, 32.6.10 (1895); 32.9.28 (1895); 32.11.15 (1895); 37.11.2 (1900); 39.10.10 (1902). Traditionally, growing one's hair was an important symbol of filial piety.

industry and the military, and reform popular customs in order that Korea might achieve the status of a rich and powerful country.[38] Even advertisements attempted to capitalize on the interest in enriching the country and strengthening the military; for almost one month, a Japanese trading firm with branches in Pusan, a major port city in the south, and the capital, ran a series of newspaper adverts for agricultural equipment (rice polishing machines and water pumps) under the tagline, "those who want to enrich the country and strengthen the military must read."[39]

The ubiquity of the phrase *puguk kangbyŏng* in the late nineteenth century makes it impossible to classify as belonging to one program of reform over another. Its usage spanned the gamut of Korean reformers, and beyond. In the most extreme example of the slogan's versatility, both Yuan Shikai, the Qing High Commissioner to Korea (1885–1894), and the imperial government of Japan claimed to be enriching Korea and strengthening its military while, respectively, demanding recognition of Chinese suzerainty and establishing Korea as a Japanese protectorate.[40] Clearly, the mere mention of the phrase cannot be taken as proof of ideological sympathy between its users. Nonetheless, the widespread usage of the phrase points toward a growing consensus that not only was a wealthy economy of strategic importance to the government, but that the government bore a responsibility to intervene in the economy to promote economic activity. Depending on the proponent, the actual form of state intervention might involve

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[38] See, for example, "Nonsŏl," August 4, 1896, *Tongnip sinmun*; "Posinsa ch'widimun," *Tongnip sinmun*, October 22, 1898; "Saegun'ga," *Tongnip sinmun*, November 21, 1898; "Pugang chi pon chae ho kyoyuk nongsanggong," March 7, 1900, *Hwangsŏng sinmun*; "Chŏnsa mundap," November 22, 1900, *Hwangsŏng sinmun*.
[39] "Puguk kangbyŏng ŭl wŏn han cha nan p'ildok hasio," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, August 26–September 21, 1903.
[40] *Kojong sillok*, 23.7.29 (1886); 42.11.17 (1905).

the direct promotion of particular technologies, indirect support through the provision of infrastructure or educational facilities, or the elimination of obstacles to the populations' industry. But, in all of these areas, the calls to enrich the country and strengthen the military necessarily envisioned a new role for the state in the economy.[41]

To reimagine the foundation of a wealthy economy was one thing, but to put such changes into practice was separate challenge entirely. Strengthening the military to counter foreign threats was an expensive prospect in and of itself, but attempts to fund new expenditures on education, commerce, and industry in order to enrich the country placed even greater demands on government finances. Thus, one of the key tasks facing the Korean government at the end of the nineteenth century was not just the selection of reform policy, but the manipulation of government finances to secure and direct the resources required by the various reform projects—in itself a task necessitating much reform.[42]

III. New Spending and Revenues in Pursuit of Reform: Early Reforms

Government finance was inextricably linked to the fortunes of the various reform efforts that emerged during the late nineteenth century. From an agrarian economy based on the twin concepts of limited intervention in the productive sphere and low taxation, the Korean government attempted to transform itself into a state capable of directing the necessary reforms to secure its independence as a strong and wealthy country. However, due in part to its willingness to accept the financial burden of reform, for much of the late

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[41] Dong-no Kim, "Views of Modern Reforms as Depicted in the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* during the Taehan Empire," in Kim, Duncan and Kim, eds., *Reform and Modernity*, 55, 56.
[42] This overlooks the entirely separate challenge of ensuring compliance with and enthusiasm for reform projects around the country—another difficult task.

nineteenth century the Korean government faced varying degrees of financial crisis. A major famine in the early nineteenth century and several years of poor harvests had already reduced much of the government's financial reserves.[43] Boosting the military and funding new economic activities would prove an expensive task on top of this. The ability of the state to secure new revenues was thus an essential precondition common to the various reform efforts, and for which the various regimes—from the Taewŏn'gun to the government of the Korean Empire, attempted to resolve in a several ways.

In common with many early modern states, the finances of the Chosŏn government were divided between multiple offices and were not subject to the overview of a single finance ministry.[44] When Kojong ascended the throne in 1864, the centuries-old Chosŏn dynasty had assembled a patchwork of financial claims and practices. Multiple offices within the government collected and disbursed discrete streams of revenue, including several classes of land tax payments measured against the area and grade of cultivated land, income from a regularized system of grain loans, government monopolies over the official ginseng trade with China, a military cloth tax assessed against commoner households, and myriad miscellaneous taxes (*chapse*) levied on particular industries (such as fishing or salt production) as well as additional contributions toward the running of local government offices.[45] Despite its complexities,

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[43] Anders Karlsson, "Famine Relief, Social Order, and State Performance in Late Chosŏn Korea," *Journal of Korean Studies* 12, no. 1 (2007): 113-41.
[44] Andrew Monson and Walter Scheidel, eds., *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Premodern States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[45] Though different offices retained nominal control over each source of revenue, departments also transferred funds between one another complicating the situation further. For a thorough account of the Board of Taxation's competition over revenues with other offices within the central government, see Pak Soŭn, *Chosŏn hugi hojo chaejŏng chŏngch'aeksa* (Seoul: Hyean, 2008). On payments between central and local government offices, see also Son Pyŏnggyu, "Chosŏn hugi kukka chaewŏn ŭi chiyŏkjŏk punbae: 'Puyŏk silch'ong (賦役實總)' ŭi sanghanap (上下納) semul ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 70 (2008):

the Chosŏn fiscal system proved remarkably stable for much of the dynasty. Analysis by Kim Chaeho shows that between 1730 and 1864 the income of two of the most important tax-receiving offices—the Board of Taxation (*Hojo*) and the Taedong Dispensary Office (*Sŏnhyech'ŏng*)—remained largely stable, while the expenditures of the same two offices increased only slightly toward the end of the same period.[46]

The events that prompted the Korean government to consider enriching the country and strengthening the military immediately introduced new financial burdens to the Chosŏn state. Within three years of taking the throne, Kojong and his father, the Taewŏn'gun, committed to three major expenses: the restoration of the Kyŏngbok palace from 1865, the recapitalization of the grain loan system between 1864 and 1866, and military defense from 1866 onwards against incursions from France and the United States.[47] In themselves, the projects were not especially revolutionary. The restoration of the Kyŏngbok palace, destroyed during the Hideyoshi invasions of the 1590s, and the reform of the grain loan system were familiar concerns within the government. Previous rulers had also made plans to restore the Kyŏngbok palace, while a series of peasant rebellions against high fees and corruption within the grain loan system prompted

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57-87. In addition to the original land tax, other taxes were gradually transmuted into land surtaxes over the years (such as the former tribute tax and a portion of the military cloth tax, under the *taedongbŏp* and *kyunyŏkbŏp* respectively) alongside the imposition of new taxes such as the *samsumi* (三手米), a surcharge for military expenditures levied on farmers in the southern three provinces. On the various reforms to taxes throughout the dynasty, see also Palais, *Confucian Statecraft*, 769-854.

[46] Kim Chaeho, "Chosŏn hugi chungang chaejŏng ŭi unyŏng: 'Yukjŏn chorye (六典條例)' ŭi punsŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Kyŏngjesahak* 43 (2007): 3-40.

[47] Unlike the recapitalization of the granaries and military spending, which had direct connections to Chosŏn economic and military policy, the reconstruction of Kyŏngbok palace does not fit neatly into the logic of enriching the country and strengthening the military. Nonetheless, it is included here given the prevailing academic interpretation that the restoration of the palace was part of the Taewŏn'gun's policies to strengthen the authority of the throne, and the fact that the project represented a major financial burden on the state in common with other policies to strengthen the economy and military. Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 38-42.

discussion of its reform during the reign of King Ch'ŏljong (r. 1849-1864).[48] Defending Korean borders against foreign intrusion also followed established precedent, leading the government to reject several requests from countries seeking trade with Korea earlier in the nineteenth century. By 1866, however, the intensity of foreign advances increased to the point of military action when an American ship, the *General Sherman*, attempted to sail up the Taedong river. Later that year, a contingent of French military vessels attacked Korea in retaliation for the execution of French Catholic missionaries. Both incidents elicited a military response, with further disturbances in 1868 and 1871 only adding to expenses.[49]

Although the precise amounts are unclear due to the lack of a single budget, the combined expenditure on the three projects was considerable. Previous studies have estimated the cost of the Kyŏngbok palace reconstruction at 15,000,000 *yang* and the recapitalization of the granaries at 1,800,000 *yang*.[50] The total military budget is unknown, but one recent study calculates a total of at least 593,287 *yang* worth of supplemental payments made to military and naval offices between 1865 and 1874, with further sunms paid in the form of land grants and annual allowances of cloth and grain.[51] Given that the total income of the Board of Taxation was around 4,500,000 *yang* in 1864,

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[48] On the problems within the grain loan system, and the related peasant rebellions in 1862, see Sun Joo Kim, "Taxes, the Local Elite, and the Rural Populace in the Chinju Uprising of 1862," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66, no. 4 (2007): 993-1027. On the background of discussions on both topics, see also Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 38, 39, 132-49.

[49] Yŏn Kapsu, *Taewŏn'gun chipkwŏn'gi puguk kangbyŏng chŏngch'aek yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Sŏul Taehakkyo Ch'ulp'anbu, 2001).

[50] Kikuchi Kenjō, *Kindai Chōsenshi* (Keijō: 1937), 84, 89; Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 153, 154, 301 fn.113.

[51] Military offices received an additional 50 *p'il* of cloth per year, and 50,000 *sŏm* per year through a supplemental "artillery rice" tax (*p'oryangmi*). Yi Chaeŭn and Yi Yŏnghŭi, "Kuhanmal kŭndaejŏk chibang chaejŏng chedo toip kwajŏng e kwanhan yŏn'gu," Han'guk chibangse yŏn'guwŏn chŏngch'aek yŏn'gu pogosŏ no. 40, 2014, 35.

the vast majority of which was consumed by existing spending, each of these projects represented a considerable expense beyond the ordinary financial commitments of the Chosŏn government.[52]

Subsequent policies implemented after Kojong came of age and resumed personal rule continued the trend toward greater government spending. In 1874, Kojong implemented a ban on the use of Qing cash within Korea, at a stroke removing an estimated three to four million *yang* from circulation and precipitating a financial crisis.[53] From 1876, Korea's expanding diplomacy introduced a new realm of expenses as the government looked to strengthen the economy and military through spending on diplomacy, educational missions abroad and the importation of foreign technologies. During the 1880s, the Korean government invested in several study and diplomatic missions abroad, purchased machinery for a new mint and for a workshop to produce military equipment (Machine Hall, *Kigiguk*), established a maritime customs service with offices in each open port, telegraph communications linking Korea to China and Japan, and an experimental farm to investigate western agricultural methods and crops.[54]

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[52] Data on 1864 finances is taken from the *Yukchŏn chorye*, as cited in Kim Chaeho, "Chosŏn hugi chungang chaejŏng." Following Kim's conversion methods, the estimate of 4.5 million *yang* converts payments in kind at the rate of 5 *yang* per 1 *sŏm* of rice. Income to the Board of Taxation here includes amounts paid through the Taedong Dispensary Office and the Equal Service Office (*kyunyŏkch'ŏng*), another major subsidiary of the Board of Taxation.

[53] Though technically forbidden, Qing cash had been circulating as de facto currency since the 1860s. Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 173, 220-25; Wŏn Yuhan, "Tangojŏn go," *Yŏksa hakpo* 35-36 (1967): 316; Kim Sŏnghye, "Kojong ch'injŏng chikhu ch'ŏngjŏn kwallyŏn chŏngch'aek kwa kŭ t'ŭkching," *Yŏksa yŏn'gu* 22 (2012): 169-202.

[54] Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen*, 149-171; Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties and Trade*, passim; Kim Yŏngjin and Hong Ŭnmi, "Nongmu mokch'uk sihŏmjang (農務牧畜試驗場 1884–1906) ŭi kigu pyŏndong kwa unyŏng," *Nongŏpsa yŏn'gu* 5, no. 2 (2006): 71-85; Kim Yŏngjin and Kim Igyo, "Kaehwagi (開化期) Han'guk ŭi kumi (歐美) nongŏp kwahak kisul toip e kwanhan chonghap yŏn'gu," *Nongŏpsa yŏn'gu* 10, no. 2 (2011): 1-25; Leighanne Yuh, "Guns, Farms, and Foreign Languages: The Introduction of Western Learning and the First Government Schools in Late Nineteenth-Century Korea," *Paedagogica Historica* 52, no. 6 (2016): 580-95.

Investment in new technologies came at a price. In the early 1880s the government financed its investment in a new military unit partly by reducing the wages and supplies paid to soldiers in the traditional units, prompting a rebellion in 1882 as disgruntled soldiers in the old units rioted after a dispute over the adulteration of their rations. The soldiers' riot was both a symptom and a cause of the government's financial troubles. During the course of the riot, the soldiers killed a Japanese training officer attached to the new military unit resulting in the levy of a 500,000-*yen* reparation payment to Japan. In 1886, Yuan Shikai admonished the Korean government on the poor handling of its finances:

> Spending according to the amount of revenue is [a revered rule] in the past just as it is today. Recently, the treasury reserves are insufficient for payments, and national debts have accumulated…Undertakings such as the mint, the pharmacy, Machine Hall, and steamships—how are these not good? But if one considers the current trends in Korea then they are not suitable. First, one must improve the domestic government, develop new sources of funds, and put effort into the work of economizing. Only after the national finances are abundant enough that each household has sufficient expenses, then can one carry out those [policies] gradually planning for wealth and strength. If there is no measure of the outgoing wealth and incoming taxes, and the only work is to aggrandize the imitation of foreign things, then in the future there will be no results but waste day by day and the wealth will be exhausted getting even weaker and poorer.[55]

The government adopted several strategies to cover its new expenses, securing funds through five different methods: one-off, informal exactions from the population; the diversion of existing taxes; the creation of new or expanded taxes; foreign loans; and the minting of new currencies. Initially, the government attempted to raise funds through a variety of temporary, informal measures. In the reconstruction of the Kyŏngbok palace, the government mobilized corvée labor and solicited voluntary donations (*wŏnnap*), even

[55] *Kojong sillok* 23.7.29 (1886).

transferring 100,000 *yang* from the Royal Treasury as an exemplar.[56] In total, James Palais estimates that voluntary contributions provided 7,728,693 *yang*—just over half of the estimated total cost of the reconstruction—in addition to further contributions of wood, rice, and white alum.[57] The government also transferred existing wealth to cover the initial payments toward the recapitalization of local granaries and increased military expenses. In 1866, the royal household donated 300,000 *yang* to impoverished regional granaries after writing off their bad grain loans and 80,000 *yang* to supplement the military budget.[58] Later, in a pinch after removing Qing cash from circulation, Kojong again transferred existing sources of wealth to cover shortfalls in the central government's reserves, this time drawing funds from the newly-recapitalized regional granaries.[59]

The government also diverted and expanded existing patterns of taxation. The Board of Taxation claimed an increasing portion of the receipts from the official ginseng trade which it diverted toward military expenses.[60] Between 1866 and 1870, the government removed exemptions on the military cloth tax, requiring formerly-exempt elite *yangban* households to pay the tax alongside commoners.[61] A temporary surtax on the land tax raised an estimated 2,000,000 *yang* in 1868 toward the costs of the palace

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[56] *Kojong sillok*, 2.4.5 (1865); 2.4.8 (1865).
[57] Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 40. Of the 7,728,693 total, 450,913 *yang* were attributed to donations from the palace treasury and royal household, with 7,277,780 *yang* from individuals. The degree to which these voluntary donations were truly voluntary is open to question.
[58] Ibid, 153; *Kojong sillok*, 3.5.12 (1866); 3.8.1 (1866); 3.9.1 (1866).
[59] Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 220-225; Kim Sŏnghye, "Kojong ch'injŏng chikhu," 169-202.
[60] Yi Ch'ŏlsŏng, "Taewŏn'gun chipkwŏn'gi p'osam muyŏk chŏngch'aek kwa haesang milmuyŏk." *Chosŏn sidaesa hakpo* 35 (2005): 211. In 1866, for example, the taxes from 15,000 *kŭn* of ginseng were diverted toward military expenses. At the official rate of 1 *yang* 5 *chŏn* of silver per *kŭn*, this would have provided a revenue of 30,000 *yang* in silver. Ibid, 209; *Kojong sillok*, 3.11.4 (1866).
[61] Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 105-07.

restoration, while the government removed land tax exemptions from private academies (*sŏwŏn*) the same year.[62] The government also implemented new surtaxes, such as the *p'oryangmi*, or artillery rice, which garnered roughly 50,000 *sŏm* of rice per year.[63] A miscellaneous "gate tax" (*tosŏng munse*) on persons entering Seoul further supplemented the funds for palace reconstruction. Though incomplete, records from two out of the total seven gates that levied the tax record an income of roughly 8,000 *yang* per year between 1869 and 1873.[64]

New taxes on maritime trade also added to the central government's income. In 1883, the government established a system for tariff collection and installed customs offices at each of the open ports under the authority of the newly-established Office for the General Control of Diplomatic and Commercial Matters (*t'ongni kyosŏp t'ongsang samu amun*, est. 1882).[65] The maritime customs service represented an important new stream of revenue for the government at a time when most other sources of taxation remained flat, if not decreasing slightly.[66] Moreover, unlike the existing taxes that were already earmarked for particular government departments, maritime customs were particularly suited to novel spending projects. As well as the customs revenues themselves, the government was able to use future revenues as collateral for loans with

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[62] Ibid, 40, 124, 125, 301 fn. 103; Ching Young Choe, *The Rule of the Taewŏn'gun, 1864-1873: Restoration in Yi Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1972), 36-38, 76.

[63] *Kojong sillok*, 8.5.25 (1871). Following Kim Chaeho's conversion rate of 5 *yang* to 1 *sŏm* of rice, this was roughly equivalent to an additional 250,000 *yang* per year. Kim Chaeho, "Chosŏn hugi chungang chaejŏng."

[64] Yŏn Kapsu, *Taewŏn'gun chipkwŏn'gi*, 218-21.

[65] On the diplomacy underlying the establishment of the maritime customs service, the negotiations with Japan over the establishment of trade tariffs and the role of China in supporting the new customs service, see Kim Kyŏngt'ae, "Kaehang chikhu ŭi kwansegwŏn hoebok munje: 'Pusan haegwan suse sagŏn' ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 8 (1972): 693-723; *Kojong sillok*, 16.7.9 (1879); Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties and Trade*, 65-69, 103-42.

[66] Ibid, 146, fn. 60.

foreign merchants, banks, and governments to further enhance revenues for spending on new projects (see Table 1.1).

However, in terms of value raised, new currencies far outstripped all other sources of government revenue. Early in 1867, in the space of just six months, the government minted an estimated 16 million *yang* of a new coin, the *tangbaekchŏn* (one hundred cash), of which 1.5 million *yang* was utilized to recapitalize the granaries with a further 180,400 *yang* transferred toward military expenses throughout the year.[67] Later the same year, the Taewŏn'gun also authorized the use of Qing cash within Korea, boosting the money supply once again.[68] Like the Taewŏn'gun before him, Kojong also minted a new currency—the *tangojŏn* (five cash)—sending at least 620,000 *yang* of the currency to fund government offices between 1883 and 1884 alone. While the *tangbaekchŏn* and Qing cash were swiftly withdrawn from circulation over concern for inflation and a lack of popular support for the coins, the government continued to produce the *tangojŏn* until 1894 when it was replaced with several new denominations. Because the *tangojŏn* was produced at multiple locations, and to varying quality, it is unclear how much was produced overall. But, based on the amount of metal imported for coin production, the volume appears to have increased over time. After importing an average of around 3,000 *tam* per year between 1885 and 1887, the amount of metal imported for currency production increased dramatically to an average of around 30,000 *tam* per year between

[67] Wŏn Yuhan, "Tangojŏn go," 315, 316; Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 154. The currency was withdrawn in 1868.
[68] *Kojong sillok*, 4.6.3 (1867). Precise figures are unknown, but it is estimated that up to four million *yang* of Qing cash circulated in Korea. Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 173.

Table 1.1: Foreign loans to the Korean government, 1882–1894

Year	Amount[69]	Lender[70]	Collateral	Purpose of loan
1882	28,250 *yang*	Qing	Ginseng tax	Study mission to Tianjin
1882	2,999 *yang*	Qing		Construction of official residence in Tianjin
1882	120,500 *yen*	Yokohama Specie Bank		Indemnity payment (Treaty of Chemulp'o), study trip to Japan
1882	210,000 *yang*	Qing	Maritime customs	Establish maritime customs
1882-1883	3,540 *yang*	Qing	Ginseng tax	Purchase machinery, establish Machine Hall
1884	24,000 *yen*	First (Daiichi) Bank		Operation of maritime customs
1885	100,000 *yang*	Qing		Installation of overland telegraph
1886	20,000 pounds (112,280 dollars)	H.C.E. Meyer and Co.	Maritime customs	Indemnity payment, interest payment on Yokohama Specie Bank loan
1886	30,000 dollars	H.C.E. Meyer and Co.		Purchase of mint equipment
1886-1894	508,888 *yen*	First (Daiichi) Bank	Maritime customs	Wages of foreign advisers, repayment of loans (Qing, H.C.E. Meyer and Co.)
1887	44,490 dollars	H.C.E. Meyer and Co.		Purchase of telegraph equipment
1887	125,400 dollars	H.C.E. Meyer and Co.		Purchase of steamship
1887	1,487 dollars	H.C.E. Meyer and Co.		Wages for mint engineer
1887	2,000 *yang*	Qing		Expenses of Koreans in Tianjin
1892	2,800 *yang*	Qing		Repairs to Wŏnsan pier
1892	100,000 *yang*	Tong Shuntai (merchant)	Inch'ŏn maritime customs	Repayment of loans (H.C.E. Meyer and Co., indemnity payment loan)
1892	100,000 *yang*	Tong Shuntai (merchant)	Inch'ŏn and Pusan maritime customs	Repayment of loans (Townsend, National First Bank)
1893	35,000 *yang*	Qing		Indemnity payment re: prevention of grain exports (*panggongnyŏng*)
1893	50,000 *yen*	HSBC		Construction, maritime customs expenses, indemnity payments

Source: Kim Chŏnggi, "Chosŏn chŏngbu ŭi Ch'ŏng ch'akwan"; Kim Chŏnggi, "Chosŏn chŏngbu ŭi Tokil ch'akwan"; Kim Sundŏk, "1876-1905 nyŏn kwanse chŏngch'aek,"; Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 143.

[69] Because of the scattered nature of the sources, this table may not be exhaustive. Due to a lack of reliable exchange rate information, all loans are recorded in original amounts, i.e., in Korean *yang*, Japanese *yen*, pound sterling, and silver dollars. As a rough guide, as of 1892 the prevailing dollar—*yang* exchange rate was around 1.48 silver dollars per *yang*. Kim Sundŏk, "1876-1905 nyŏn kwanse chŏngch'aek kwa kwanse ŭi unyong," *Han'guk saron* 15 (1986): 322.

[70] For simplicity, all loans from government departments within China have been labelled Qing. For more details on the specific offices that lent to Korea, see Kim Chŏnggi, "Chosŏn chŏngbu ŭi Ch'ŏng ch'akwan."

1888 and 1893.[71]

The first decades of Kojong's reign thus marked a distinct shift in the management of government finance. Though not necessarily linked by a tightly defined program of reform, a combination of military threats, financial crises, and a growing concern to promote national wealth and industry lef to a sustained period of increased government spending. By the 1880s, spending on government reform projects and new technologies were a substantial, recurring expense, as seen in Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1 which outline spending on technologies and the reform of government offices during this period respectively. In order to fund all of these projects the government attempted to secure several new sources of funding, including changes to taxes, voluntary donations, foreign loans, and the minting of high-denomination currencies.

As it sought new streams of revenue, however, the Chosŏn government necessarily had to balance its own resource claims against those of the population, with different sources of finance proving easier than others to obtain. When the Taewŏn'gun first attempted to increase revenues in the 1860s, he did so within a government reliant on the politics of brokerage. By the late Chosŏn period, the central government had come to rely heavily upon a host of elite lineages, hereditary local government positions (such as *hyangni*, functionaries), nominal official titles, and local organizations (such as village associations, *tonggye*) to supplement its governance through formal state offices.[72] In place of formal government officials, state capacity often rested upon individuals

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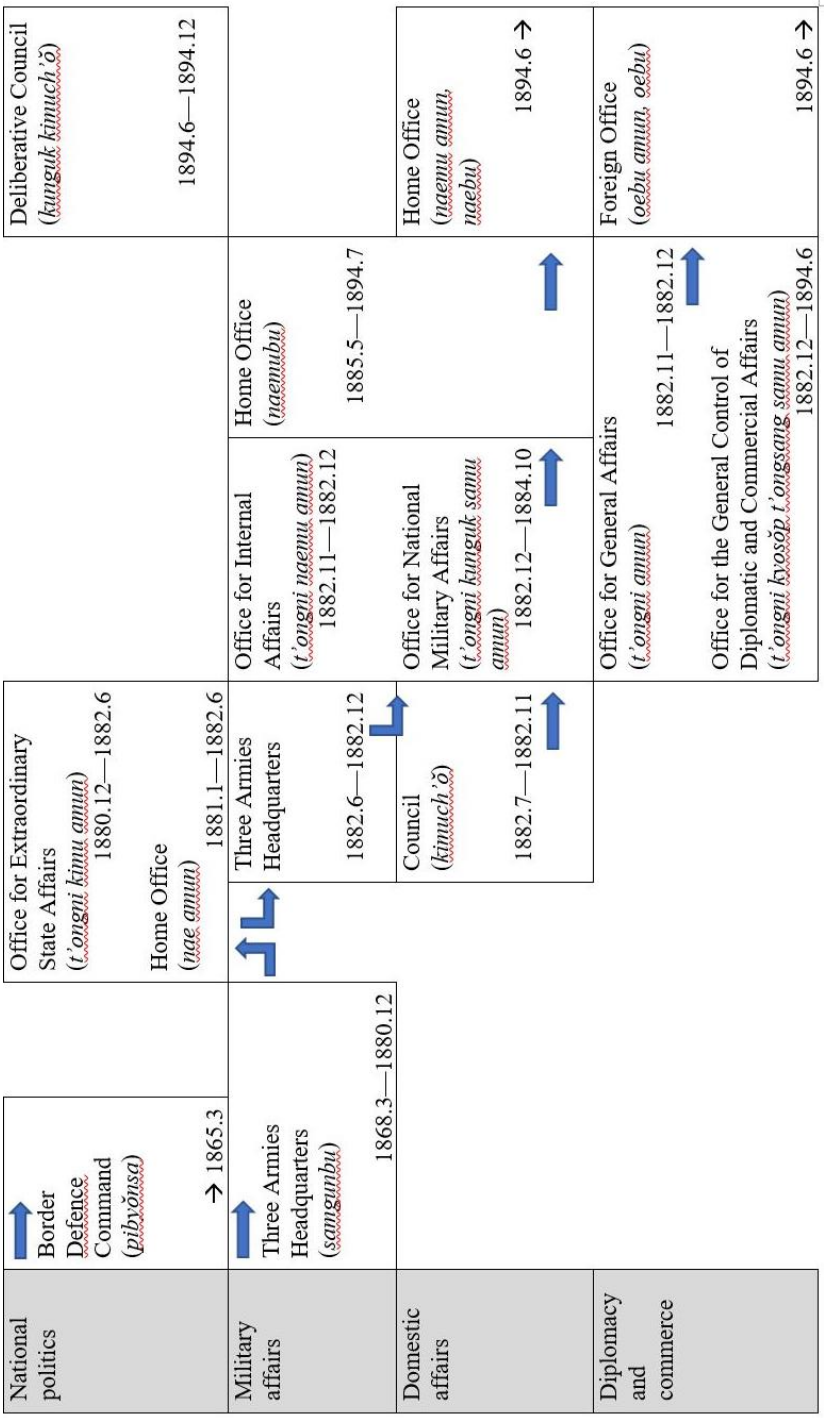
[71] Wŏn Yuhan, "Tangojŏn go"; O Tuhwan, "Tangojŏn yŏn'gu," *Kyŏngje sahak* 6 (1983): 165-227. One *tam* 擔 is equivalent to roughly 50 kilograms.

[72] On the wide variety of informal governance in Chosŏn Korea, see Eugene Y. Park, "Status and 'Defunct' Offices in Early Modern Korea: The Case of Five Guards Generals (*Owijang*), 1864–1910," *Journal of*

Figure 1.1: Pre-Kabo (1894) reorganization of government offices



Source: Table adapted from Han Sŭngyun, "Haengjŏng kaehyŏk kigu ŭi sŏnggong chogŏn," *Han'guk chŏngch'i hakhoebo* 49, no. 1 (2015): 274. Blue arrows show continuity between offices.

Social History 41, no. 3 (2008): 737-57; Martina Deuchler, *Under the Ancestors' Eyes: Kinship, Status, and Locality in Premodern Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2015).

recognized by the state to perform minor tasks, be it gathering voluntary contributions, taxes, or maintaining order in remote offices. Many of the Taewŏn'gun's early efforts to raise funds reflect the delicate negotiation of interests within such a system. For example, the voluntary contributions that formed a major element in the fundraising for the Kyŏngbok palace reconstruction were often rewarded with the granting of a rank or title.[73] Less favorably, the removal of tax exemptions from *yangban* households and private academies prompted considerable opposition from elite households who previously benefitted from the exemptions.[74] In contrast, minting currencies and raising foreign loans posed little direct challenge to the existing fiscal organization of the government or the population, perhaps explaining the government's continued reliance on such methods despite the problems of inflation and indebtedness. But, as spending on reforms continued apace, the government could not avoid restructuring its fiscal organization indefinitely, the opportunity for which would present itself during the wholesale reorganization of government offices beginning in 1894.

IV. New Spending and Revenues in Pursuit of Reform: the Kabo Reforms

The Kabo reform period of 1894–1896 introduced major changes to the organization of the Korean government. During the 1880s the government had created several new offices to handle its new diplomatic and commercial responsibilities (shown in Figure 1.1). But, as these offices operated in addition to and within the general framework of the Six Boards—the basic structure of the central Chosŏn government—the creation of these

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[73] Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 39.
Although the granting of a title does not rule out coercion as a method to solicit the donations, the exchange of contributions for recognition from the state follows a familiar pattern within Chosŏn governance. Similar methods were also used to secure donations for famine relief. See, Anders Karlsson, "Royal Compassion and Disaster Relief in Chosŏn Korea." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 20, no. 1 (2007): 95.
[74] Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 86-131.

offices did little to change the overall structure of the government. The occasion to fundamentally reorganize the government arose in 1894, during the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). A major peasant uprising, known as the Tonghak rebellion, in southwest Korea provided the pretext for both China and Japan to send troops to Korea. Already competing against China for influence within the Korean government and over access to Korean markets, the Japanese military took advantage of the upheaval of the rebellion to take over the palace and force a series of major reforms through the Korean government, placing those sympathetic to enlightenment thought and Japan into positions of power and removing the post of the Qing High Commissioner. Over several bursts of legislation, enlightenment reformers replaced the Six Boards with a cabinet-style structure which consolidated the work of the government within a new set of government ministries. The Kabo reforms ended in 1896 after Kojong fled from the Japan-sponsored court to the Russian embassy, declaring a new regime, the Korean Empire, the following year. However, the basic state organization established during the Kabo reforms would remain in place throughout the Korean empire period.[75]

Despite their ambitious plans to reshape the Korean government, the Kabo reforms did little to alleviate the financial pressures facing the government. On the contrary, securing and increasing tax revenues became an even greater concern following the Tonghak rebellion, which saw large numbers of peasants revolt in protest against a combination of high taxes, corruption among local government officials, and the

[75] For more detail on the progression of the Kabo reforms, see Kyung Moon Hwang, "Governmental Growth in the Taehan Empire Era: Origins of the Modern Korean State," in Kim, Duncan and Kim, eds., *Reform and Modernity*, 157-210; Wang Hyŏnjong, *Han'guk kŭndae kukka*.

increased presence of foreigners in the new treaty port regions.[76] The Kabo reforms, begun in the middle of the rebellion, were thus forced to address popular concerns about the burden of high taxes. At the same time, post-Kabo governments embraced the general goals of reform and modernization as espoused by enlightenment thinkers and placed a heightened emphasis on technology, commerce, and education as an essential foundation for the new Korean state. Projects begun in the 1880s—including updating the military and investing in electric power, the telegram, and agriculture—expanded through the 1890s and 1900s, while additional items such as a nationwide cadastral survey, reforms to weights and measures, and the construction of railways, streetcars, and schools added further to government expenses.[77]

In order to achieve the three simultaneous goals of reducing the tax burden on peasants, reducing corruption among local officials and increasing revenue for further investment, the government attempted to overhaul the entire tax system. The Kabo government replaced multiple layers of land taxes with a single payment per unit of land, with different tax grades depending on the type and quality of the land.[78] Further reforms abolished miscellaneous taxes and required taxes to be paid in cash rather than in kind.[79] Alongside the new tax codes, the government attempted to increase the amount of land

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[76] For more on the intellectual and spiritual background of the Tonghak movement, see George Kallander, *Salvation through Dissent: Tonghak Heterodoxy and Early Modern Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013).

[77] Jae-gon Cho, "The Industrial Promotion Policy and Commercial Structure of the Taehan Empire," in Kim, Duncan and Kim, eds., *Reform and Modernity*, 235-66; Kim Taejun, *Kojong sidae ŭi kukka chaejŏng yŏn'gu* (Seoul: T'aehaksa, 2004); Hwang, *Rationalizing Korea*, 123-31.

[78] Initially the taxes distinguished between mountain and coastal land, with five tax grades. Later changes introduced thirteen separate tax grades, ranging from 30 *yang* per *kyŏl* for the best land to 5 *yang* per *kyŏl* at the lowest end of the scale. Most land fell into the upper categories, with 76 percent of land assessed at 20 *yang* or higher, and 50 percent of all land taxed at the top rate. Wang Hyŏnjong, "Hanmal (1894-1904) chise chedo ŭi kaehyŏk kwa sŏnggyŏk," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 77 (1992): 89-123.

[79] *Kojong sillok*, 31.7.10 (1894); 32.8.25 (1985).

subject to taxation by reclassifying formerly tax-exempt lands (such as post station lands *yŏktunt'o* or military fields *tunjŏn*, for example), adding hidden fields (*ŭn'gyŏl*) to tax registers, and reassessing the quality (and therefore the tax rate) of taxable lands.[80]

In combination, these measures were intended to equalize the tax burden, increasing total revenue while decreasing the individual burden, although this was not always achieved in practice. Tenants of formerly tax-exempt state-owned lands complained of dual taxation as they paid both rents and taxes to the government under the new system. Attempts to include hidden fields did not always succeed, and at times reassessment even provided the opportunity for new parcels of land to go missing from the official register. The practice of re-grading land taxes by the county, and collecting taxes by the township or village also led some farmers' taxes to rise disproportionately over those of their neighbors despite the lower, theoretically uniform, rate.[81] Nonetheless, the recalculation of taxable lands provided a modest increase in the tax base from 57 percent of total land in 1893 to 66.7 percent in 1896.[82]

Beyond adjustments to the land tax itself, a further change to the financial system came in the restructuring of government offices. Within the central government, the Kabo reforms placed control of all government finances, including those of the Royal Household, under the new Ministry of Finance, the T'akji-amun (renamed the T'akjibu in 1895). For the first time, a single ministry oversaw the budgets of all other government

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[80] *Kojong sillok*, 31.9.17 (1894).
[81] On these points, see Sŏ T'aewŏn, "Chosŏn hugi Ch'ungch'ŏng-do P'yŏngsin-dun ŭi sŏlch'i wa kyŏngyŏng," *Kyujanggak* 37 (2010): 69-99; Yi Yŏngho, "Hanmal~Ilche ch'o kŭndaejŏk t'oji soyukwŏn ŭi hwakjang kwa kukyu-minyu ŭi pun'gi: Kyŏnggi-do Ansan Sŏkjang-dun (石場屯) ŭi sarye," *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* (2010): 281-319; Yu Chŏnghyŏn, "1894-1904 nyŏn chibang chaejŏng chedo ŭi kaehyŏk kwa isŏch'ŭng tonghyang," *Chindan hakpo* 73 (1992): 63-119; Wang Hyŏnjong, "Hanmal (1894-1904) chise chedo."
[82] Ibid, 102, 103.

departments and was tasked with the creation of national accounts. To do so, an accounting section (*hoegyegwa*) was established within each government ministry to prepare the ministry's budgets and correspond with the Ministry of Finance. A similar system was also planned for local government offices as part of a series of measures designed to separate local government offices from the direct handling of taxes, although this measure was never fully implemented.[83] Nonetheless, the Ministry of Finance greatly expanded its authority over local government finances through new controls over local government expenses and the elimination of miscellaneous taxes which local governments had previously relied upon to augment their revenue.[84]

Overall, the finanical reforms were partially successful in their attempt to raise tax income to meet government spending. The Ministry of Finance made a concerted effort to increase revenues from the land tax, surveying local offices on their income and expenses and later initiating a nationwide land survey to correct outdated land registers. Over time, revenues did indeed increase, as shown in Figure 1.2. In the wake of the land survey, and after some adjustments to the tax rate, the revenue from the land tax nearly tripled between 1900 and 1904. Despite this success, however, increases from taxation were not sufficient to support concurrent increases in expenditure leaving the government to find other supplemental sources of income.

As in earlier years, the minting of currency served as a significant source of additional revenue. In an attempt to control the inflation of earlier years, an 1894

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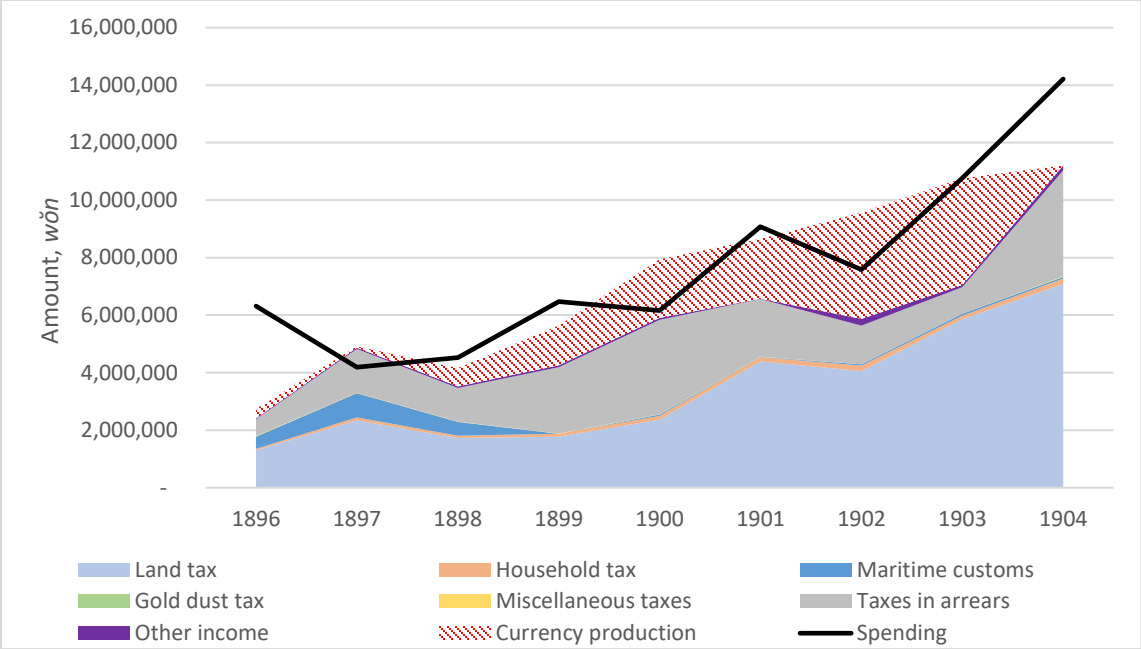
[83] "Ch'ingnyŏng 56: Kwansesa kŭp chingsesŏ kwanje," 1895.4.20; "Ch'ingnyŏng 159: kwansesa kŭp chingsesŏ kwanje pyŏng kak'ŭp pukwaseso changjŏng chŏngji kŏn," 1895.10.22, *Kojong sidaesa 3-chip*, accessed via db.history.go.kr.
[84] "Ch'ingnyŏng 36: Chibang jedo wa kwanje mit ponggŭp kwa kyŏngbi ŭi kaejŏng e kwanhan kŏn," 1896.9.10, *Kojong sidaesa 4-chip*; Yu Chŏnghyŏn, "1894-1904 nyŏn chibang chaejŏng chedo."

Figure 1.2: Government spending and income, 1896–1904



Source: "Kakse silip illamp'yo" and "Seip silji subong'aek" as cited in Yi Sunsang, "Ilche e ŭi han singminji," 299; Yi Sunsang, "Ilche e ŭi han singminji chaejŏng."
Note: The heading "other income" refers to income from government-owned enterprises, including the publication of the *kwanbo* official gazette, the postal service, and the telegraph service. These figures do not include the income of the Royal Household (*Kungnaebu*) or income from loans.

ordinance on the issuance of new currencies introduced five new denominations fixed against a silver *yang*.[85] But, in practice there were few controls on the issuance of coins and the government produced large volumes of one denomination in particular—the *paektonghwa* nickel coin. Between 1894 and 1904, the government produced nearly seventeen million *wŏn* worth of *paektonghwa* coins at a rate that closely corresponded to the gap between tax receipts and government spending during the same period. This helped to solve some of the government's financial difficulties, but was not without consequence. As the mass production of the *paektonghwa* stoked inflation, the value ofthe taxes collected by the government decreased to as little as one-third of the original

[85] "Sinsik hwap'ye palhaeng changjŏng," August, 1894, reprinted in Ōkurashō, *Kahei hōki* (Tokyo: 1910), 117, 118.

amount. In 1900, the government recalculated land taxes accordingly, raising the highest rate to 50 *yang*, although as a result of inflation even this revised figure represented a real decrease in the value of taxes.[86]

The government also continued to rely upon maritime customs as a supplement to other forms of taxation. Although the government continued to receive some revenue directly from maritime customs, over the years the value of future maritime customs as collateral for foreign loans eclipsed customs receipts themselves as a direct source of revenue. Overall, between 1895 and 1905, foreign loans (most secured against maritime customs) provided the government with some eight million *yen* worth of additional funds toward spending on various reform projects, as shown in Table 1.2. Unlike earlier foreign loans, Japanese banks now dominated the supply of loans during the post-Kabo period reflecting the decline of Chinese influence and increase in Japanese influence in Korea following the Sino-Japanese war.

As in previous years, the Korean government attempted to secure new sources of revenue through several different channels. The central government could not act unilaterally, however. Even in the minting of new currencies, the government had to manage a level of opposition from dissenting officials and from the public whose refusal to accept any new currencies had the potential to undermine the central government's efforts, as happened with the Taewŏn'gun's short-lived experiment with the one-hundred cash. In order to collect taxes, in Korea, as anywhere, the government had to confront the twin problems of information and negotiation.[87] Tax collection requires sufficient

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[86] *Kojong sillok*, 40.10.19 (1900); Wang Hyŏnjong, "Hanmal (1894-1904) chise chedo," 117.
[87] For in-depth discussion of the social and institutional questions raised by taxation, see Isaac William Martin, Ajay K. Mehrotra and Monica Prasad, eds., *The New Fiscal Sociology: Taxation in Comparative*

Table 1.2: Foreign loans to the Korean government, 1895–1905

Year	Amount (*yen*)	Lender	Collateral	Purpose of loan
1895	130,000	First (Daiichi) Bank	Inch'ŏn customs receipts	Salaries
1895	3,000,000	Bank of Japan	Taxes, maritime customs	Government reform
1900	300,000	First (Daiichi) Bank	Ginseng monopoly	Palace expansion expenses
1901-1905	1,220,000	First (Daiichi) Bank	Taxes, *paektonghwa*	Payment for military supplies and other expenses
1902-1904	250,000	First (Daiichi) Bank	Income from Office of Weights and Measures (*P'yŏngsikwŏn*)	Improving weights and measures
1905	3,000,000	First (Daiichi) Bank	Maritime customs	Currency reform
1905	150,000	Bank of Japan		Emergency relief re: financial crisis

Source: Kim Sundŏk, "1876-1905 nyŏn kwanse chŏngch'aek"; Yu Wŏndong, "Hanmal Ilbon ŭi ch'agwan kongse."

knowledge of that which is to be taxed, with the pursuit of such knowledge forming a constant endeavor on the state's behalf to update the relevant records as well as monitoring against fraud. Collecting tax revenues also involves aspects of negotiation, whether with powerful rivals who might challenge the state for the right to the same resources or, in a democratic context, with citizens who might vote for or against certain taxes. A degree of bargaining between the taxer and the taxed may take place even under the most coercive of regimes, as in the guise of tax resistance or rebellions against undue predations. Negotiation may occur at the moment of payment, but might also be observed over access to the information that makes taxation possible, as in the misclassification of

and Historical Perspective (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla and Patrick K. O'Brien, eds., *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Monson and Scheidel, eds., *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy*.

land as unproductive (hidden fields) or the underreporting of household size on registers that served as the basis for certain forms of taxation, for example.

Under the Kabo reforms, the reorganization of the tax system promised to move from the personal politics of brokerage that informed the Taewŏn'gun's attempts to raise taxes toward a uniform, more bureaucratic system, although even this process was not without conflict. The establishment of the maritime customs system serves as a precursor in this regard, as the customs system introduced new sites of negotiation over state finances albeit now centered on the bureaucratic organization of the customs offices.

At the signing of the Kanghwa treaty with Japan in 1876 there was no designated mechanism in place to levy maritime customs on behalf of the central government. Rather, records show that local government officials in the vicinity of the port of Pusan first implemented measures to tax Korean merchants engaging in new trade with Japan through the magistracy of Tongnae.[88] However, after diplomatic objections from Japan halted this practice over concerns that taxing merchants contradicted the free trade terms of the 1876 treaty, the opportunity arose to restructure the flows of maritime tax revenues. Writing to the Korean government in 1879, Li Hongzhang advised the creation of a separate customs service based on the system existing in China at the time. According to Li's recommendation, a well-established system of maritime customs could serve the additional benefit of providing funds for the government's new projects: "if [Korea] establishes maritime customs, then it will not lack for that small help toward the

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[88] *Kojong sillok*, 15.8.10 (1878); Kim Kyŏngt'ae, "Kaehang chikhu ŭi kwansegwŏn," 99; Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties and Trade*, 64-66. Previously trade with Japan was strictly regulated within a single compound known as the Japan House (*Waegwan*), also located in the Tongnae district. Dongchul Kim, trans. Seokyung Han and J. B. Lewis, "The Waegwan Open Market Trade and Tongnae Merchants in the late Chosŏn Period," *Acta Koreana* 7, no. 1 (2004): 9-46.

national expenses, and if [Korea] becomes skilled in trade, then it will not be difficult to purchase munitions."[89]

Korea's eventual system of maritime customs emerged in 1883 after negotiations with Japan over the introduction of taxes on international trade, and with China over the design and management of maritime customs.[90] Unlike the earlier system which taxed merchants through the Tongnae magistracy, the new maritime customs were collected as part of a national system that placed collection offices in each open port under the oversight of a central office, the Office for the General Control of Diplomatic and Commercial Affairs. Not only did the new system direct revenues toward the central government as advised by Li, but the bureaucratic structure of the maritime customs offices reinforced and enabled the government's reform efforts in other ways. Within this system, the maritime tax revenues and the loans made against them were directly under the authority of the same office responsible for sending foreign study trips, purchasing machinery, and managing early reform projects such as the new Mint, Machine Hall, and telegraph facilities, among others. As well as the ready access to customs receipts that such a bureaucratic structure provided, the organization of the Office in parallel to its Chinese counterpart facilitated interaction between not only the staff of the customs offices but also among the technical advisers for reform projects in both China and Korea.[91]

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[89] *Kojong sillok*, 16.7.9 (1879).
[90] Kim Kyŏngt'ae, "Kaehang chikhu ŭi kwansegwŏn"; Patterson, *In the Service of His Korean*, 8-18.
[91] Chŏn Miran, "T'ongni kyosŏp t'ongsang samu amun e kwanhan yŏn'gu," *Idea sawŏn* 25 (1989): 213-50; Patterson, *In the Service of His Korean*, passim; Larsen, *Tradition Treaties and Trade*, 134-54.

Subsequent changes to the Chosŏn fiscal system during the Kabo reform period further reordered the collection and distribution of tax receipts within a hierarchical bureaucratic system. The establishment of the maritime customs system was a first step in this regard, albeit with little impact on the rest of the fiscal system in which several separate government offices continued to collect and manage taxes in parallel to one another. This changed following the Kabo reforms which granted the Ministry of Finance greater control over the finances of other government offices and the setting of national budgets. The Ministry of Finance's new powers extended horizontally, over other ministries within the central government, and vertically, through a hierarchical chain of local government offices through the departments (*pu*) and counties.

The initial Kabo reform proposals transferred the functions of tax collection from local government offices themselves to an independent system of tax offices within a parallel administrative system. Clerks within the local government offices were selected to assist with land registration and to field questions over taxes but were formally prevented from having anything to do with the actual collection of taxes.[92] Ultimately, these reforms were not implemented in the face of bureaucratic difficulties and opposition from existing tax collectors within the local government. A later edict reversed the initial reforms to confirm the role of local magistrates (*kunsu*) within tax assessment and collection.[93] Nonetheless, the Ministry of Finance still gained significant oversight over local governments' financial affairs through the Kabo reforms. The

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[92] "Ch'ingnyŏng 56: Kwansesa kŭp chingsesŏ kwanje"; "Ch'ingnyŏng 74: Kakŭp puseso changjŏng," 1895.5.9, *Kojong sidaesa 3-chip.*
[93] "Ch'ingnyŏng 162: Kakkun semu changjŏng," 1896.10.11, *Kojong sidaesa 3-chip*; Wang Hyŏnjong, "Hanmal (1894-1904) chise chedo," 96.

regulations that restored tax collection to local magistrates also granted the Ministry of Finance the right to appoint collectors within the local administration (following the prior endorsement of the magistrates), to control levels of taxation, and to otherwise manage the activities of tax collectors.[94] The Ministry of Finance also exercised its authority over local government offices to limit spending as part of its efforts to increase the proportion of taxes available to the central government.[95]

Despite the reorganization of the administrative structure, and the Ministry of Finance's new powers to set budgets, reforming the national tax system proved a complex task. For one thing, just as the Taewŏn'gun faced in his attempts to divert funds from the ginseng taxes toward the military, when it came to the management of information regarding taxes the Ministry of Finance was still reliant on the work of local government offices in compiling reliable information over the assessment and collection of taxes. Local government officials thus emerged as both the target and necessary ally of capital-based reform efforts hoping to increase the flow of funds toward the treasury. In this regard, the implementation of a nationwide cadastral survey in 1898 was not just an attempt to modernize Korea's national finances and system of property rights.[96] The attempt to establish nationwide land registers under the control of central government agencies equally symbolized the accumulation and centralization of knowledge over taxes and taxable lands that had hitherto been the domain of local government offices.

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[94] "Ch'ingnyŏng 162: Kakkun semu changjŏng"
[95] Yu Chŏnghyŏn, "1894-1904 nyŏn chibang chaejŏng chedo"
[96] Wang Hyŏnjong, "Hanmal (1894-1904) chise chedo"; Cho Sŏkkon, *Han'guk kŭndae t'oji chedo ŭi hyŏngsŏng* (Seoul: Haenam, 2003); Hwang, *Rationalizing Korea*, 38-41.

The new bureaucratic organization of the government did not obviate the potential for conflict over the flow of information and resources. Rather, disputes emerged within the new fiscal system in line with the institutional and organizational changes implemented by the government. As a gatekeeper to both tax revenues and the loans that could be made against future receipts, the office of Chief Commissioner of the maritime customs service was one such center for conflict within the new system. Since the establishment of the maritime customs system the Korean government had employed foreign advisors to the most senior posts within the service. From the outset, the appointment of foreigners to the post of Chief Commissioner invited a certain amount of political intrigue. The first foreign adviser, Paul Georg von Möllendorf, was fired after attempting to court Russian influence in Korea over the interests of the Chinese Customs Service which had engineered his appointment in the first place. Robert Hart, the Inspector General of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service, also indulged his own (ultimately unsuccessful) designs to annex the Korean Maritime Customs Service into the Chinese system as a way to increase not only his own power but to use China to check Russian influence in Korea on behalf of British interests.[97] Nonetheless, and the potential for such mischief notwithstanding, the relative independence of the maritime customs system under the Office for the General Control of Diplomatic and Commercial Affairs insulated the operation of maritime customs from most domestic conflict within the Korean government.

This changed during the course of the Kabo reforms, which placed all revenue sources, including that of the maritime customs, under the authority of the new Ministry

[97] Patterson, *In the Service of His Korean*, 175-79.

of Finance.[98] Conflict emerged again, as John McLeavy Brown, the Chief Customs Commissioner (*ch'ongsamusa*) at the time (in office 1893–1905), increasingly diverted customs revenues toward the direct payment of the expenses of running the customs houses, the salaries of foreign advisers, the costs of study missions abroad, the Imperial Household, and the repayment of existing loans. Brown also deposited additional amounts in overseas accounts in Hong Kong and Japan, thus preventing the Ministry of Finance from accessing at least a portion of the customs revenues.[99] Under Brown's management, the proportion of customs revenues remitted to the treasury diminished over time, falling from nearly 75 percent of total customs receipts in 1896 to less than 5 percent from 1899 onwards, even as total customs receipts rose.[100] Where customs revenues were to be the collateral for loans, Brown also played an important role in negotiating and approving or denying potential loans.

While some have charged Brown with running the maritime customs as his own private agency, Brown's unorthodox actions reflect competition between the Imperial Household and the Ministry of Finance as much as they do his arrogance and frustration with the Korean bureaucracy.[101] British diplomatic records show that Kojong granted Brown a supervisory authority over the Ministry of Finance and the Treasury to the effect

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[98] "Ch'ingnyŏng 54: T'akjibu kwanje," 1895.4.20, *Kojong sidaesa 3-chip*; "Ch'ingnyŏng 56: Kwansesa kŭp chingsesŏ kwanje."
[99] "Telegraph from Mr. Gubbins to the Marquess of Lansdowne," May 15, 1901. In "Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Corea, 1901" F0881/7799, National Archives, Kew, United Kingdom. Reprinted in Robert Jarman, ed., *Korea: Political and Economic Reports 1882-1970*, vol. 5 (Slough: Archive Editions, 2005), 518.
[100] Kim Sundŏk, "1876-1905 nyŏn kwanse chŏngch'aek"; Kim Hyŏnsuk, *Kŭndae Han'guk ŭi sŏyangin*, 300-05.
[101] Ibid, 300.

that "without Mr. Brown's signature no Treasury Order would be valid."[102] Throughout a series of confrontations with the Ministry of Finance over the use and reporting of tax revenues, Brown continued to claim authority from the Royal Household in support of his actions in keeping aside portions of customs revenue and bypassing the Ministry of Finance to report customs revenues directly to the Emperor.[103] While the British view that "the absence of supervision by competent foreigners [would] not only encourage [the Corean Government] in their present reckless expenditure but also lead to further disorganization of the finance of the country" undoubtedly underpinned Brown's actions, the form of Brown's meddling was a product of contestations over the bureaucratic hierarchy between government departments.[104]

Disputes over the handling of finances within the Kabo system were not limited to the upper levels of government. Despite early claims during the Kabo reform period to abolish miscellaneous taxes, subsequent legislation shows that it was not the taxes themselves that were the target of reform but the manner in which they were levied and collected. In late 1895, when the government published a law to "abolish miscellaneous taxes on items other than the land tax, household cloth tax, the mining tax, tax on land and sea-based trade routes, on the import and export of goods, and national levies (*kukkwa*)," taxes on items such as salt or maritime products were not abolished but instead reclassified as belonging to national levies under the purview of the central

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[102] "Consul General Hillier to Mr. Beauclerk," March 2, 1896, in Jarman, ed., *Korea: Political and Economic Reports*, vol. 4, 501.
[103] "Telegraph from Mr. Gubbins to the Marquess of Lansdowne," May 21, 1901, in Jarman, ed., *Korea: Political and Economic Reports*, vol. 5, 526.
[104] "Telegraph from Mr. Gubbins to the Marquess of Lansdowne," April 26, 1901, in Jarman, ed., *Korea: Political and Economic Reports*, vol. 5, 508.

government.[105] Although the Ministry of Finance claimed authority over the largest sources of tax revenue, such as the land tax, household tax, and maritime customs, different departments within the central government competed with one another over the collection of the various miscellaneous taxes. Competition did not remain within the central government, but extended down to local government offices as well as rival departments attempted to outdo one another in the assessment and collection of the taxes themselves.

This process is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the example of the maritime taxes (*haese*), levied on salt and maritime products. Immediately after the Kabo reforms, the Ministry of Finance was granted authority over maritime taxes, for which it received surveys on the object of taxation from each provincial administration (*kamyŏng*). However, it was not long before concerns that local officials might omit sources of taxation from the reports led the Ministry of Finance to dispatch its own surveyors to assess the maritime tax. Meanwhile, as part of its responsibilities concerning the development of communications and industry, the Ministry for Agriculture Commerce and Industry (*nongsanggongbu*) also undertook its own surveys of post station lands, salt fields, and the fishing industry, dispatching officials and observation committees (*sich'al wiwŏn*) in 1895 and 1896. For the next couple of years the Ministry for Agriculture Commerce and Industry handled both the assessment and collection of the maritime taxes, although in practice the Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry relied upon a combination of village heads (*hyangjang*) and traders to collect the taxes. By

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[105] *Kojong sillok*, 32.8.25 (1985); "Pŏmnyul che-13 ho," 1895.10.13, *Kojong sidaesa 3-chip*; Pak Sŏngjun, "1894–1910 nyŏn haese chedo ŭi pyŏnhwa wa seje chŏngbi ŭi panghyang," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 128 (2005): 222-24.

1898, the Ministry of Finance reclaimed control over maritime taxes after the new system failed to solve the problems of unpaid taxes and excessive levies against taxpayers, returning to the former system where regional government offices collected and enforced payment of the maritime taxes.[106] But, in 1901 control over the maritime taxes changed hands again, this time as part of the Palace Department (*kungnaebu*)'s efforts to secure additional streams of revenue independent from the annual grants made to the Imperial Household by the Ministry of Finance.[107]

In a similar manner, the Palace Department and Office of Crown Property (*naejangwŏn*), a separate office within the Palace Department, gradually gained control of a range of revenue streams through the late 1890s and early 1900s, including income from ginseng, mining rights, various state-owned lands (*tunt'o*), post stations and a butchers' tax (*p'osase*). Just as with the maritime taxes, the incorporation of new taxes into the revenue stream of the Palace Department or Office of Crown Property involved the establishment of new systems of tax assessment and collection working in parallel and in competition with existing tax collection offices. The Office of Crown Property's

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[106] Pak Sŏngjun, "Kabo kaehyŏk–Taehan cheguk ch'ogi (1894-1900) haese sagŏm kwa chingsu ch'egye," *Han'guk munhwa* 40 (2007): 283-313.

[107] Pak Sŏngjun, "Taehan chegukki haese kwanhalgwŏn ŭl tullŏssan kaldŭng kwa naejangwŏn ŭi haese kwanhalgwŏn changak," *Han'guksa hakbo* 26 (2007): 245-84.
How to assess the Imperial Household's efforts to amass financial resources at this time is somewhat disputed. Historians sympathetic to Kojong point to the fact that the Imperial Household used some of its funds to sponsor several reform initiatives, such as investments in schools or the military, while others accuse the Imperial Household of profligacy as spending on entertainments rose to unprecedented levels. Until the conclusion of further research both sides might be true, with Kojong funding certain reform projects at the same time that he lived up to the status of Emperor. Nonetheless, what is undisputed is the fact that the Imperial Household went to considerable effort to bypass the Ministry of Finance at this time in order to augment its income. According to some estimates, by 1905 the total income from such sources reached nearly 5 million *wŏn*, an amount equivalent to roughly two-thirds of the total land tax receipts, although this figure should be considered with some caution created as it was by a, likely biased, Japanese study. Yi Yŏnghun, "Taehan chegukki hwangsil chaejŏng ŭi kich'o wa sŏnggyuk," *Kyŏngjesahak* 51 (2011): 3-29; Kankoku seifu zaimu komonbu, *Kankoku zaisei seiri hōkoku*, vol. 1 (Keijō: 1905), 4, 5.

ability to maintain its new tax revenues was directly linked to its ability to gather sufficient information which it achieved through dispatching central officials to local areas to supervise intermediary tax collectors.[108] In the process, such reforms to the tax system brought with them the potential to engender considerable confusion and resentment among both the population and the local officials who were excluded from the new system of tax collection. By 1904, an anti-monarch populist group, the Ilchinhoe, were able to capitalize on such resentment over tax collection to organize tax resistance protests and rent protests among tenants on some state-owned lands. In some cases, these protests even emulated the tactics of the Imperial Household in claiming the authority to collect rents and manage state-owned lands themselves in place of the Office of Crown Property.[109]

The political leanings of the Kabo reform government, John McLeavy Brown, the Imperial Household, and the Ilchinhoe have tended to attract the most attention in assessments of this period. But, if one takes a step back to examine the means by which each group attempted to advance their own agenda, there is a remarkable similarity in their efforts to gain access to financial resources. Beneath the overt claims of each group, their ability to mobilize finances was only as strong as the bureaucratic order that they were capable of building. After the Kabo reforms established a new organization of government offices, contestations over taxes played out within this new system with conflict centering on the position of local government offices within the system of tax collection.

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[108] Pak Sŏngjun, "Taehan chegukki haese"; Yi Yunsang, "Taehan chegukki naejangwŏn ŭi hwangsil chaewŏn unyŏng," *Han'guk munhwa* 17 (1996): 235; Moon, *Populist Collaborators*, 167-170.
[109] Ibid, 170-240.

V. Conclusion

Previous studies of government finances in the late nineteenth century have often focused on the government's inability to raise tax revenues or its reliance on foreign loans as a precursor to colonization. Indeed, particularly following the Kabo reforms, Korea's foreign loans were not insulated from the politics of the time and many scholars have noted the strings that Japanese lenders wished to attach to the loans.[110] With regard to the Korean government, the use of foreign loans in itself has been taken as proof of the lack of financial assets available to the reform movement and, by extension, evidence of reformers' ignorance of the financial burdens of modernization and their inability to adequately mobilize resources.[111] Such an interpretation is too simplistic, however, and falls into the trap of searching for the root of Korean "failure" in the nineteenth century. Not only does the nineteenth century provide copius examples of the government's ability to mobilize revenues—from pre-reform famine relief efforts to the numerous methods adopted under Kojong's reign—but the mere existence of a fiscal crisis in itself is not a sufficient condition to explain "success" or "failure"; as Wenkai He has

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[110] So much is clear in an oft-cited quote by Inoue Kaoru, the Japanese minister to Seoul:

> How was it that the British had an excuse to intervene in Egypt? Was it not that the British had established its position of interest by providing Egypt with capital?...If our country wishes to firmly establish its position in Korea and to provide a basis for intervention in its internal affairs, then it is most urgent that we strengthen our position in terms of real rights, whether railroads or financial loans, and prepare the way to move from intervention in financial relations to other relations.

Cited in Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 134, 135; Mark Metzler, *Lever of Empire: The International Gold Standard and the Crisis of Liberalism in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 41; Michael Schiltz, *The Money Doctors from Japan: Finance, Imperialism, and the Building of the Yen Bloc, 1895-1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012), 74, 75.

[111] Dong-no Kim, "The Failure of State Reform Movements in Early Modern Korea and Its Relevance to the Mobilization of Resources," in Chang Yun-Shik, et al., eds., *Korea Between Tradition and Modernity: Selected Papers from the Fourth Pacific and Asian Conference on Korean Studies* (Vancouver: Institute of Asian Research, 2000), 172-83; Dong-no Kim, "Views of Modern Reforms," 66, 67.

persuasively argued, both Japan and Great Britain faced fiscal crises of their own during periods of intense political transformation without succumbing to a loss of independence.[112]

Instead of building a causal narrative of decline, the financial challenges of the late-nineteenth century offer an opportunity to examine the institutional and organizational changes that the government confronted in establishing a new basis for its interaction in the economy. The late nineteenth century saw a series of wide-ranging reforms to the Korean state. Serious financial and military challenges to Korea led the government to adopt a program of reform which reshaped its relationship with the economy. A general acceptance of the tenets of enriching the country and strengthening the military saw the government adopt new spending obligations in pursuit of the growth of new industries and military capabilities. In order to meet its new responsibilities, the government also found it necessary to maximize its income which it attempted to do so through a range of measures.

Any change to the fiscal system, whether through the Taewŏn'gun's use of voluntary donations, to the minting of new currencies, to the use of foreign loans and reforms of the tax system itself, introduced the potential for conflict and negotiation with different interest groups. That the post-Kabo reform tax system shared some characteristics that might be described as modern (a central Ministry of Finance and payment of taxes in cash) was no panacea in this regard—rather than the status-based conflict that the Taewŏn'gun courted, the Kabo reforms instead focused conflict toward

[112] Wenkai He, *Paths Toward the Modern Fiscal State: England, Japan, and China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013).

the formation of a new bureaucratic hierarchy and over access to the information that facilitated tax collection itself. In this regard, the local dimensions of reform were just as significant as the various modernizing ideologies espoused by the politicians and bureaucrats. When the project of reform was the state itself, the reordering of central government offices could only form one part of the reform agenda. The institutions surrounding the government's interaction with the population, and the mechanisms that linked central to local government offices, were an inseparable aspect of reform, both for the post-Kabo governments and, looking forward, for the colonial government as well.

CHAPTER 2:
THE ECONOMIC WORLDVIEW OF SIM WŏN'GWŏN

I. Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's Place in History

On May 10, 1876, an envoy passed through Ulsan, in southeastern Korea, on its way to the port of Pusan and ultimately Japan. The envoy marked the conclusion of the Kanghwa treaty that renegotiated diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries. Kim Kisu (1832–n.d.) led the envoy in a typically lavish manner. On observing its passage, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn (1850–1933), a local resident, counted around three hundred people bearing gifts of tiger skins, animal manes, paper, gold, and silver, along with flag bearers, attendants, cavalry, military officials, interpreters, clerks, and palanquins, and recorded the spectacle in his diary. Local residents lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the envoy, the first in nearly sixty years to follow the traditional route of diplomatic missions to Japan.[1]

As it passed through Ulsan, Sim gleaned information about the course of the envoy and its purpose in going to Japan. Sim became one of the first in Korea, especially those outside of the capital, to see an image of the Meiji emperor—"at twenty-five years of age, his face is pale and slightly wan, and his eyes bright and sparkling"—and to hear about the new Japanese government's endeavors:

> I heard in detail about the customs of Wae [Japan]. First I saw an image of the Wae emperor…then I saw the offices of the state. The interior ministry, the exterior

[1] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1876.4.19. Official records of the envoy note between 73 and 80 members besides Kim Kisu. The additional crowd seen by Sim most likely included couriers transporting the envoy's effects (Sim counted 14 loads, each carried by 16 people) and any local people who accompanied the envoy for only part of the journey. For more on the envoy, see Han Ch'ŏrho, "Che-1-ch'a susinsa (1876) Kim Kisu ŭi kyŏnmun hwaltong kwa kŭ ŭiŭi," *Han'guk sasang sahak* 27 (2006): 283-317. On previous envoy missions to Japan, see also Ronald P. Toby, "Carnival of the Aliens: Korean Embassies in Edo-Period Art and Popular Culture," *Monumenta Nipponica* 41, no. 4 (1986): 415-56.

> ministry, and the three censorate offices are like the departments in the Chosŏn government. The county magistrates and senior regional officials are all administered by these state offices. The method by which young children learn to read and write is this: First they write the two characters of 'Japan' [*ilbon* 日本], and next they master Chinese characters, then agriculture and military affairs. Other countries send diplomats to Wae, then they hear of their technical skill. Even though it is a difficult task, it is all the custom of learning, and it is all the skill that enriches the state and strengthens the military.[2]

What to make of Sim's account of the envoy? As for the envoy itself, Sim's description adds little that cannot be found elsewhere. The diplomatic mission was well-documented, and Kim Kisu and others within the court kept detailed records of their travels.[3] Two images of the envoy even survive—one in the form of a wood block print by Utagawa Yoshitora (歌川芳虎) and the other as a drawing for the *Illustrated London News* (Figures 2.1 and 2.2). Subsequent accounts have neatly placed the envoy at a turning point in Korea's history of international relations with Japan, weighing its significance at a time when new standards of diplomacy and civilization began to supplant long-established norms.[4] By this measure Sim's account is almost inconsequential, for the thoughts of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn and the countless other farmers like him, mattered little to Kim Kisu's agenda in Japan or the dynamics that sent the envoy on its journey.

If Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's experience does not fit within the formal diplomatic history, neither does it fit within standard accounts of popular resistance to an increased Japanese

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[2] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1876.4.19.
[3] *Susinsa kirok* (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1958).
[4] Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*; Donghyun Huh, "The Korean Courtiers' Observation Mission's Views on Meiji Japan and Projects of Modern State Building," trans. Vladimir Tikhonov, *Korean Studies* 29 (2005): 30-54; Han Ch'ŏrho, "Che-1-ch'a susinsa (1876); Iwakata Hisahiko, "1876 nyŏn susinsa yŏn'gu: Kojong ŭi kuho hoebongnon (舊好回復論) ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Han-Il kwan'gyesa yŏn'gu* 27 (2007): 235-71; Yi Chŏnghŭi, "Che-1-ch'a susinsa Kim Kisu ka kyŏnghŏm han kŭndae Ilbon ŭi oegyo ŭirye wa yŏnhoe," *Chosŏn sidae sahakpo* 59 (2011): 173-207.

Figure 2.1: Utagawa Yoshitora, "Chōsen shinshi raichō no du," 1876

Image from: Chōsen kankei nishikie kolekushon, Tōkyō keizai daigaku gakujutsu kikan ripojitori, Sakurai bunko, no. 4036.

Figure 2.2: "The Corean Embassy to Japan"

Source: *The Illustrated London News*, August 26, 1876.

presence in Korea in the late nineteenth century.[5] After hearing about Japanese customs and the innovations of the Meiji government, Sim articulated neither animosity nor praise but merely wondered at the differences between the two countries: "Both countries under Heaven, Korea with its extreme droughts and Japan with long rains—how different they are. What is the reason for these country's fates?"[6] The next day, Sim returned to his daily life and paid little attention to Japan. From time to time he noted the appearance of Japanese ships on the horizon, and in 1884, after a coup attempt by pro-enlightenment officials, Sim briefly recorded a rumor of Japanese violence in the capital:

> Today I heard that in Kyŏnggi there are several thousand Japanese people. It is said that they used long swords to kill seven ministers and several hundred soldiers. Now people say that those fleeing the disorder in Kyŏnggi will go all over. Afterwards, a general entered the city, routed the enemy Japanese and killed several hundred. Recently people's hearts are not as of old. There are violent thieves everywhere, and in the evening they enter village houses and take the valuable things, dishes, and clothing. Many of the wealthy are afraid.[7]

As seen in the above passage, even though the report of Japanese crimes reached Sim's ears it can hardly be said to have engendered any particular ill will toward Japan. Indeed, Sim appears more disturbed by rumors of thieves and general social disorder than he was outraged at Japanese villainy in the capital. Even with regard to the rapid growth of grain exports to Japan—one of the issues that directly affected his everyday life as a farmer—

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[5] According to this view, the Korean people "came to regard the Japanese as a vile people or as plunderers," based on memories of the 1592 Korea-Japan war and the Taewŏn'gun's appeals to protect the orthodox and reject the heterodox around 1876. Eventually, after several political scandals including suspected Japanese involvement in the 1882 soldiers' rebellion and the 1884 coup attempt, such anti-Japanese feelings are considered to have fed into the conservative and anti-foreign sentiment expressed in the Tonghak rebellion of 1894. See, Eunsook Park, "The Minjung's Perception of Japan During the Period Immediately Following the Kwanghwa Treaty (1876-1884) and Their Response to Japan," *International Journal of Korean History* 5 (2003): 53-84; Cheolbae Son, "The Ordinary Reaction by Koreans against the Foreign Penetration, 1876 to 1910," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, Department of History, 2006.

[6] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1876.4.19.

[7] Ibid, 1884.11.10.

Sim's thoughts are quite removed from prevailing narratives of an incipient anti-export sentiment among Koreans.[8] As Sim wrote on several occasions:

> Several years ago, in 1876, there was a great famine in Chosŏn and a great harvest in Wae so grain left Wae for Chosŏn. This year, Chosŏn grain will enter Wae. (1879.9.15)
>
> This year and the last, there have been great harvests in this region and grain left for other countries. Why was this? In 1893 and 1894, grain from other countries arrived here. From whence does this virtue come? In 1895 and 1896, even though grain leaves there is a lot of foreign money in this region, and this also is fortunate. (1897.2.10)
>
> Grain leaves for other countries, therefore the price of grain rises. The people in this region have profits from farming. There are no problems and all is peaceful. The people who left last year have all come back. (1897.2.11)[9]

Although Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's experiences need not discount the emergence of tensions related to the grain trade elsewhere, it is clear that negative views of Japan and of the grain trade were not universal. Writing in the late nineteenth century, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn felt no inherent anti-Japanese sentiment nor an aversion to the export of grain in and of itself. This is not to say that Sim was especially pro-Japanese, or even pro-export. Shortly after commenting on the favorable price of grain due to trade, Sim nonetheless expressed some unease: "If every year grain is traded away, then there is a fear that grain will be expensive in one area and the people become oh so fearful. Until now those who trade the grain have not yet realized the damage to themselves, they merely know the desire to earn a profit."[10] Though recognizing some favorable effects,

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[8] See, Ha Wŏnho, "Kaehanghu Pusan ŭi taeoe muyŏk kwa yut'ong kujo ŭi pyŏndong: kongmul muyŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Sarim* 25 (2006): 151-81; Yamada Ryosuke, "Japanese Residents in Korea and the Modernization of Chosŏn: A Preliminary Analysis based on the case of the Conflicts Relating to the Panggongnyŏng (Grain Export Prohibition Order)," *International Journal of Korean History* 10 (2006): 95-120.
[9] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1879.7.29; 1896.12.30; 1897.1.10.
[10] Ibid., 1897.1.29.

Sim tempered his view of the international grain trade with concerns about the potential long-term impact of the trade.

Here, and indeed throughout his diary, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's views on trade and Japan, defy easy characterization. His diary reveals him to be neither pro- nor anti-Japanese; at times he celebrated the international trade of grain, while at others he urged caution. Held against standard historical narratives of the period, the comments within Sim's diary may appear to be the product of indifference or contradiction but these were not arbitrary decisions and Sim followed a consistent logic in his judgement of events. Such a logic cannot be found in national histories of the period, however, deeply rooted as it was in Sim's personal experiences and daily life. This chapter examines Sim's view of the world, as recorded within his diary. After uncovering the basic criteria by which he judged the world and the rural economy, only then does it become possible to understand Sim's actions and responses to the economic and societal changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

II. Sim Wŏn'gwŏn and His Diary

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn was born in 1850, the eldest son of Sim Noik (1816–1873). Sim's patrilineal ancestors had deep roots in the Ulsan region. Sim's family maintained marriage ties to other local lineage groups, such as the Yangsan Yi and Ulsan Yi, and for generations Sim's forebears were buried in the vicinity of Ulsan. Sim and his family identified themselves as members of the Ch'ŏngsong Sim descent group—one of Korea's aristocratic *yangban* lineages which included some prominent early Chosŏn scholar-officials among the lineage ancestors—and maintained genealogical records accordingly. Sim Wŏn'gwŏn and his family traced their descent from Sim Kwanghyŏng (fl. late

fifteenth c.), who was said to have been exiled to the Ulsan region. As an Ulsan branch of the Ch'ŏngsong Sim, however, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's family line was relatively obscure. Sim's direct ancestors first presented a record of their lineage-branch for inclusion in the 1787 edition of the Chŏngsong Sim genealogy, despite the fact that earlier editions listed Kwangyŏng without an heir. Most likely, Sim's family were social newcomers—either local functionaries (*hyangni*) or upwardly mobile commoners—seeking to enhance their status through a claim to an aristocratic lineage.[11]

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's lifestyle reflected his family's marginal claim to elite status. In his youth, Sim attended local schools (his diary notes a number of *haktang*, *sŏsuk*, and *sŏdang*) and studied with the hope of passing one of the state examinations—an important status marker in Chosŏn society. But, shortly after his father passed away in 1873, Sim took on the main responsibility for the household's farming activities and subsequently abandoned his scholarly training. Sim's two younger brothers, Wŏnju (1852–1884) and Wŏnch'u (n.d.), shared in the farming duties with Sim along with other male relatives, including Sim's uncles, brothers-in-law (Sim had three sisters) and a long-time farmhand/slave named Irŏn. Sim remained a farmer for the rest of his life. He married twice (his first wife passed away in 1885) and produced two sons, Chongin

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[11] The 1843 edition of the genealogy noted the discrepancy over Kwanghyŏng's heirs in earlier editions, and recorded the Ulsan branch in special appendix. *Ch'ŏngsong Sim-ssi sebo*, (place unknown: publisher unknown, 1843), 23.1a-b. http://yoksa.aks.ac.kr/jsp/aa/VolumeList.jsp?mode=&page=1&fcs=f&fcsd=&cf=a&cd=&gb=1&aa10up=kh2_je_a_vsu_B10B%5E322_000&aa10no=&gnd1=&gnd2=&rowcount=100 (accessed May 4, 2015). Claiming descent from an heirless ancestor was a relatively common method for families to increase their social status. See, Edward W. Wagner, "'The Three Hundred Year History of the Haeju Kim *Chapkwa-Chungin* Lineage,'' in Song Chun-ho kyosu chŏngnyŏn kinyŏm nonch'ong pyŏlswae (Seoul: Song Chunho Kyosu Chŏngnyŏn Kinyŏm Nonch'ong Kanhaeng Wiwŏnhoe, 1987), 1-22; Eugene Y. Park, "Old Status Trappings in a New World: The 'Middle People' (*Chungin*) and Genealogies in Modern Korea," *Journal of Family History* 38, no. 2 (2013): 166-87.

(1879–1953) and Chongji (1887–n.d.) as well as three daughters (Kyuhyŏk, Kyuho, and Chaebok).

Despite the claim of an aristocratic lineage, Sim's lifestyle was far from extravagant. Altogether, Sim and his family farmed between 52 to 70 *turak* of land each year. Initially Sim managed the family's land as one household, but appears to have divided the land with his brothers as each married and established their own households. From the mid-1880s onwards Sim farmed roughly 20-30 *turak* per year—a relatively small area.[12] The land that Sim farmed varied each year as he bought and sold the rights to cultivate different plots.[13] Some years, Sim had more land than he had seed for, while in other years the reverse was true and Sim eagerly sought out scraps of unused farmland where he could transplant additional rice seedlings.[14] In particularly hard years, Sim could barely produce enough food to feed his family let alone cover his other obligations such as taxes and debt repayments.[15] In such a situation, Sim relied upon state-managed

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[12] At the most Sim farmed 37 *turak*, and at the least 11 *turak*. Converting *turak* into comparable units of area is imprecise, although James B. Palais estimates 1 *turak* to be equivalent to 0.163 acres. According to colonial statistics, in 1919 the mean area farmed per household in South Kyŏngsang province was 1.18 *chō*, or 2.89 acres. At somewhere between 3.26 acres (20 *turak*) and 4.89 acres (30 *turak*), Sim Wŏn'gwŏn was therefore slightly better-off than the average household. All the same, at this time the majority of farming households in South Kyŏngsang province were tenant farmers (64 percent for paddy fields, and 52 percent for dry fields), and so even though Sim farmed slightly more than the average household, at the same time he cannot necessarily be considered wealthy. Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions*; Chōsen sōtokufu shokusankyoku, *Chōsen no nōgyō* (Keijō: 1921), 14.

[13] Based on their low value, in these transactions Sim appears to have been a tenant purchasing temporary rights rather than purchasing the land outright. In 1870, Sim purchased a certificate (*mun'gi*) for a plot of three *tu* of paddy for just 11 *yang* (1870.1.7). Other transactions fell into a similar range of prices: 28 *yang* for 2 *turak* of paddy in the fourth month of 1874, and 9 *yang* for 18 *turak* of dry field in the twelfth month of 1884. As a point of comparison, Ch'a Myŏngsu and Yi Hŏnch'ang record the nominal price of 1 *turak* of paddy in North Kyŏngsang province to have fluctuated between 20 and 30 *yang* between 1867 and 1881. The difference in land prices between South and North Kyŏngsang is unknown, as is the impact of the quality of land in each case—this information is merely a rough guide to give context to the value, and likely nature, of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's transactions. Ch'a Myŏngsu and Yi Hŏnch'ang, "Uri nara ŭi non kagyŏk mit saengsansŏng, 1700-2000," in Yi Yŏnghun, ed., *Suryang kyŏngjesa ro tasi pon Chosŏn hugi* (Seoul: Sŏŭl taehakkyo ch'ulp'an munhwawŏn, 2004), 148-71.

[14] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1877.4.14; 1896.5.29.

[15] Ibid, 1886.12.30.

granaries which provided seasonal grain loans and famine relief. Sim also came to rely upon local markets to sell non-food crops (in particular pine branches, *songji*) as a source of income to supplement his own production. In a typical year, Sim farmed rice, beans, barley, and smaller amounts of cotton and tobacco. In addition to field crops, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn cultivated persimmons, pine trees, and bamboo; raised and traded cows; and wove straw shoes and rush mats which he periodically sold at local markets. Later in his life Sim also amassed a large collection of fish (by Sim's count, he collected up to 2,000 trout (*songŏ*) between 1909 and 1910) in the pond near his home, although this appears to have been more of a leisure activity than a strictly economic enterprise.[16] Sim participated in the work of farming himself, although he frequently hired laborers during the agricultural busy season as well.

A typical day for Sim Wŏn'gwŏn involved much travelling. The land that Sim farmed was scattered across several locations which he visited in loose rotation. Most of the time Sim stayed within Taehyŏn township (see Figure 2.3), located to the south of central Ulsan, frequenting villages such as Yaŭm, Sŏnam, Kosa, Nabu, and Taeil in particular. Sim often travelled further afield as well, especially to visit the periodic markets held at regular intervals in the center of Ulsan, at the nearby provincial military command post (*pyŏngyŏng*), and at several other nearby locations. Figure 2.4 shows the extent of Sim's regular travel, with frequently visited towns and villages circled in red.

[16] As Sim described his fish collection: "At the east river and Yongyŏng valley I got over one hundred trout and put them in the front pond. Since the spring, I have put over 1,300 fish in the pond. The more there are, the better it is for forgetting my pain and troubles. I get them from under the ice." Ibid, 1909.11.5; "At noon I went to Yongyŏn valley. I got over one hundred mudfish and trout, and put them in the pond. Both this year and the last I put over two thousand trout in the pond, and caught over three hundred fish. My intent in putting fish in the pond is to raise the fish; catching fish brings joy to my heart." Ibid, 1910.10.3.

Figure 2.3: Map of Ulsan, *Ulsan county gazette* (1899)

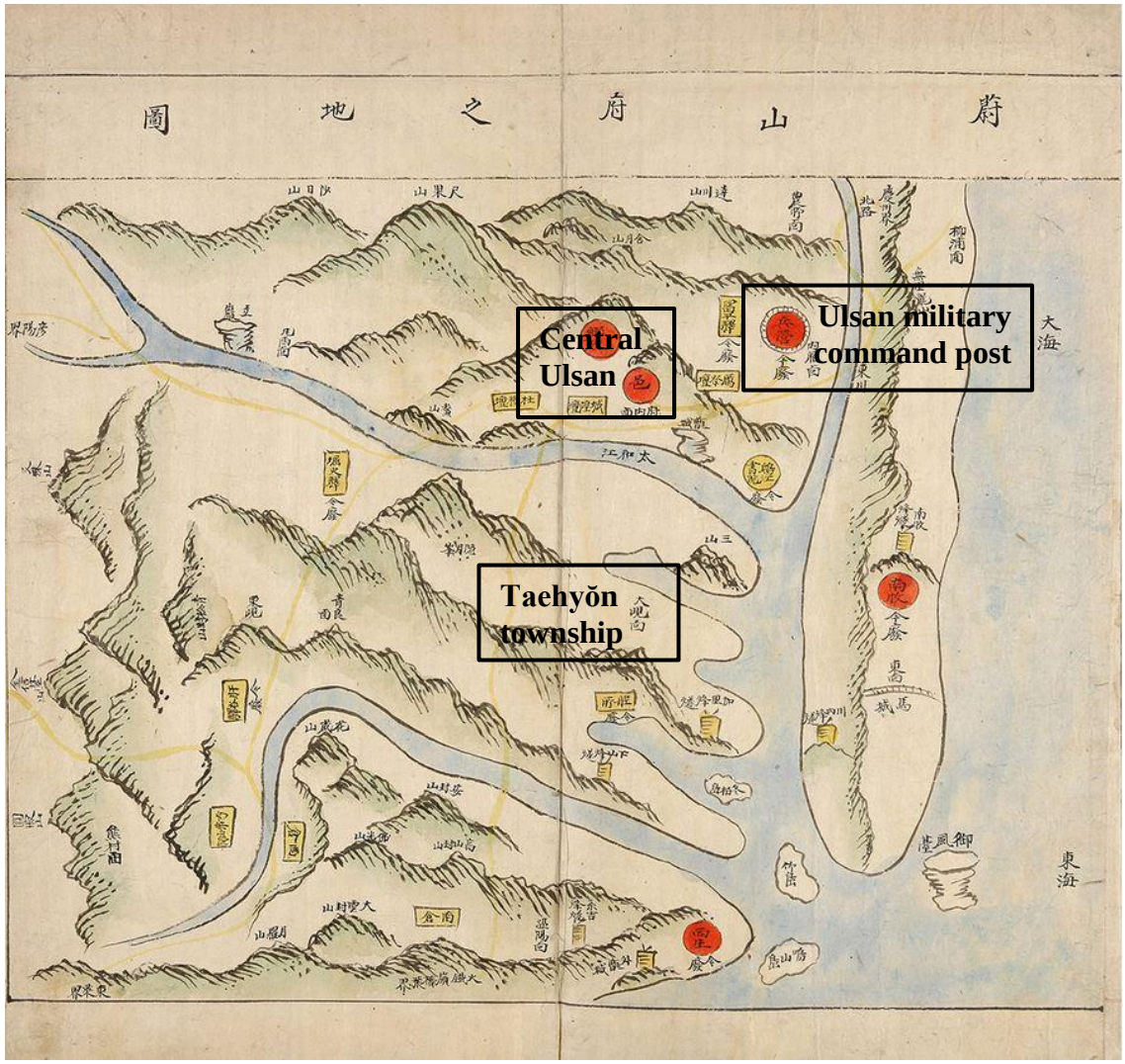

Image courtesy of Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies, Seoul National University.

Sim would often visit several locations within the same day, staying overnight with friends, family, or in commercial lodgings when necessary. Sim visited nearby markets at least every ten days, sometimes more frequently, at which time he checked the price of rice and other items, met with friends and acquaintances, and handled official affairs. Until the tax reforms of 1894, Sim regularly visited the military command post to deliver taxes in both cash and kind, though Sim continued to visit the market held at the

Figure 2.4: Places frequented by Sim Wŏn'gwŏn

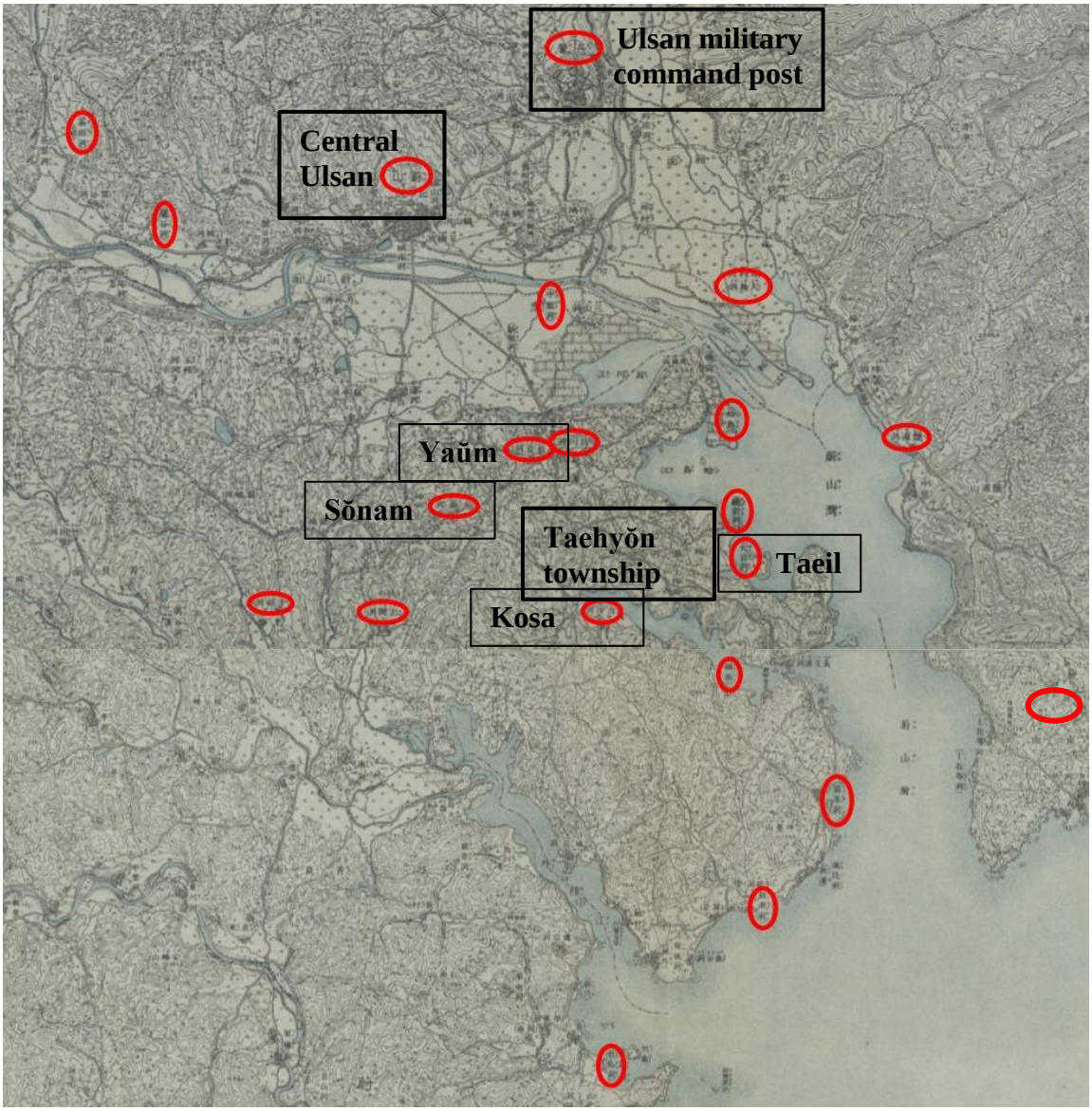

Image from: National Institute of Korean History, Korean History Database. 1:50,000-scale map of Ulsan (1918).

military command post even after the post stopped levying taxes on the surrounding population.

Since commencing his habit in 1870, Sim wrote in his diary every day in the Classical Chinese he learned at the local schools. His entries followed a general pattern, recording first the weather, then the basic details of his daily activity—where he went,

what he did, who he met, etcetera—followed by any further observations. The only times when Sim did not record a daily entry in the diary occurred in 1873, following the death of Sim's father, and in 1885, around the death of his first wife.[17] Sim's diary appears to have served several purposes throughout the course of his life. Although the vast majority of entries focused on the detail of Sim's everyday life, the diary was more than a jotter of facts related to Sim's farming activities and Sim frequently added commentary on his thoughts and feelings. While still studying at local schools, for example, Sim lamented that even after reading late into the night he could not understand the meaning of the sentences in front of him. On another occasion, when officials at the military command post refused to issue a receipt (*ch'ŏngmun*) for a delivery of some firewood, Sim vented his resulting anger into his diary, describing in detail his altercation with the command post officials and his lingering sense of mistreatment.[18]

Although much of the subject matter remained mundane, Sim's diary was thus a very personal account of his life. Even when recording basic facts, Sim choice of which figures to include reveals how he ordered information to narrate the events around him. Often, on the final day of the year, Sim summarized the key details of the previous year's agriculture, calculating the total amount of rain (measured in days) and other notable weather events, as well as trends in the prices of major products such as rice, salt, and fish. As Sim grew older, his reflections turned toward the act of writing the diary itself. To his annual summaries Sim added details on the length of time he had faithfully kept his diary as he worked it into the tally of his life: 14,400 days (1908) …17,280 days

[17] Entries from late 1922 to 1925 are also missing, although these appear to be lost rather than not written at all.
[18] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1871.11.27; 1876.7.8.

(1917) …20,160 days (1925) …22,680 days (1932) …. In 1919, at the age of 70, Sim described his diary thusly:

> For 50 years, I recorded each of the 18,000 days: wind, rain, frost, and snow; sunny days and cloudy days; my comings and goings to the south, north, east and west; I surely recorded all affairs. I know what has happened, but how can I know what is to come? On reaching 70 years of age, what else can I do with my stupid self? When I started learning the Thousand Character Classic I learned two characters a day, but even at the end of the day it was hard to master them. When the people beside me said, "Being a farmer will do for him," my departed parents always replied, "Even though he has no talents, encouraging him to study will do." Seeing and hearing this I was lazy in my studies, and even as an adult I still could not distinguish common characters. The Gods could know how unfilial my heart was. All my life, I have not forgotten my parents desire to encourage me to study, and from 1870 to this day in this year, every day I take up my brush. My crime of being unfilial is incomparable—how can I fully express this?[19]

As the above passage shows, Sim used his diary to give a sense of order to his world. Even though he could not know what the future held, Sim assiduously recorded the weather, prices, and major events, creating a chronicle to which he could refer to understand the world around him. At the same time, Sim combined his descriptions of events with commentary about his feelings—in this case his regret at not fulfilling his parents' wishes to which he retroactively ascribed his motivation to write the diary itself. It is this combination of entries, and Sim's personal interpretation of events, that makes his diary a particularly valuable source in understanding how the changes to the rural economy at the turn of the twentieth century appeared to an individual farmer.

III. Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's Theory of Economic Cycles

Sim's diary reveals a range of intellectual influences. In everyday life he adhered to general Confucian principles through such practices as placing a value on education, respecting his parents, and performing memorial rituals for deceased relatives. At the

[19] Ibid, 1919.12.29.

same time, scattered mention of concepts such as the accumulation of virtue (*chŏksŏn*) and *samsara* (*yunhoe*) reveals the additional influence of Buddhist thought. With regard to the economy, however, Sim referred to one concept in particular to describe and interpret events: namely, *kwich'ŏn* (貴賤), or propitious and unpropitious fortune.

Generally translated as noble (貴) and base or mean (賤), the two characters are most frequently found in Chosŏn texts in relation to discussion of social status. James Palais' translation of Yu Hyŏngwŏn's comments on status distinction in Chosŏn society shows how the two characters appeared in typical usage. In Yu's depiction, nobility and baseness were distinct, opposing attributes against which social status could, and should, be judged. Although Yu argued that one's moral character ought to play a greater role in the assessment of one's nobility or baseness rather than the official court ranks of one's ancestors, he nonetheless presented the relation between the characteristics of noble and base in terms of their difference and as a basis for the strict maintenance of a social hierarchy. As Yu wrote:

> The moral obligation [to recognize status distinction] [*myŏngbun*] is a natural principle of Heaven and Earth. How could one help but be strict about maintaining it? In general, however, the so-called distinctions of social status basically arise from the fact that we have grades between the noble and base, and nobility and baseness [*kwich'ŏn*] basically derives from the difference between worthiness and ignorance, and that is all there is to it.
> At the present time we do not distinguish whether a man is good or bad. Instead, his nobility or baseness is determined exclusively in terms of how exalted the official posts and rank of his forebears were, and yet we still say that we are maintaining strict distinctions of social status.[20]

But, when writing in his diary, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn used the two characters to refer to a much wider range of affairs than social status alone. In the broadest sense, Sim applied

[20] Cited in James Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions*, 138.

the idea of *kwich'ŏn* to any phenomena with two potential opposing outcomes: the temperature, amount of rainfall, occurrence of drought, or quality of the harvest, for example, all lay along a spectrum of warm and cold, high and low, abundant and scarce, propitious and unpropitious. Sim invoked the notion of *kwich'ŏn* to describe not only the favorability of such phenomena but also the pattern of transition from one extreme to the other. Writing one day in 1875, Sim commented:

> There is an old saying about the two characters of propitious and unpropitious. Will next year's events be the same as this year's? If this year for six straight months there were long rains then, eight or nine times out of ten, the next year will surely have a severe drought. Who can know this? Flourish and perish, prosper and decline, abundant wealth and mean poverty—their coming and going belongs to fate. The sun is warm and the moon cool, this is the principle of Heaven. The daytime is bright and the [evening] dark, that is [the sequence of] propitious and unpropitious. This year had six months of continued rain and one month of intense drought. Next year there will be extreme drought, how can we not know in advance? …All things, on reaching a low must then reach a high, and if things reach a high then in later days they will reach a low. All things under Heaven are within this one principle.[21]

As the above passage shows, in referring to "propitious and unpropitious," Sim did not just describe immediate events but placed them within a cycle of expectations where what was previously abundant would return to scarcity, and current low values would eventually rise again.

Sim grounded his understanding of *kwich'ŏn* within wider patterns of Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist thought. Like most Chinese and Koreans at the time, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn understood "religion" in a syncretic manner and blended principles from each school of thought within his view of propitious and unpropitious fortune. The notion of cyclical change so central to Sim's interpretation of propitious and unpropitious fortune drew heavily on a basic tenet of Daoist thought: "Things in the universe are ever

[21] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1875.10.30.

changing according to an endless cycle…Because of this principle, everything that reaches a certain peak, must revert to its opposite."[22] On several occasions, Sim also linked the logic of *kwich'ŏn* to the Buddhist principle of *samsara*, the perpetual cycle of rebirth:

> Last winter and this spring there were great floods and the people met with continued bitter rain. Looking forward after this month, few people expect it to change, but Heaven and earth have *samsara* [*yunhoe*], and among men there is [the cycle of] propitious and unpropitious—fear and respect them.[23]

For Sim, the cycle of rebirth between Heaven and earth was matched by the cycle of propitious and unpropitious fortune among humans. To some extent this placed natural events outside of human control. Treating the vicissitudes of fortune as something of a natural law left little room for individual farmers to influence the patterns of prices or weather that followed the principles of Heaven. Nevertheless, Sim still acknowledged the impact of personal action within such a frame. Sim related the cycle of propitious and unpropitious fortune to morality, believing that the accumulation of virtue would naturally be followed by the accumulation of material assets, and vice versa.[24] In this view, even the fortunes of people from illustrious backgrounds would eventually decline if future descendants lost their appreciation for virtue and concentrated only on the desire for material profits, while people from lowly backgrounds might achieve prosperity it

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[22] Yu-lan Fung, trans. Derk Bodde, *A History of Chinese Philosophy, Volume 1: The Period of the Philosophers (from the Beginnings to Circa 100 B.C.)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), 388, 389. This principle is most strongly expressed in the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes*. See also, D. C. Lau, "The Treatment of Opposites in 'Lao Tzu' 老子," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 21, no. 1/3 (1958): 344-60; Willard J. Peterson, "Making Connections: 'Commentary on the Attached Verbalizations' of the *Book of Change*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42 (1982): 67-116.
[23] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1903.5.27.
[24] Ibid, 1879.3.20.

their descendants behaved virtuously.[25] Here, the accumulation of virtue and diligent work were not just abstract moral principles but part of Sim's basic understanding of the cycles of fortune:

> The two characters of propitious and unpropitious [mean that] after a rainy spell there will surely be a drought. Last autumn and this spring there was a drought which greatly damaged the wheat and barley. After the well-timed rain of the third month, the people say that barley will have a great harvest, and recently there is a popular saying that drought in the winter and spring acts as a fertilizer. The affairs of all men are governed by Heaven. Profit will belong to those who make diligent efforts. Work diligently, and then trust in the principles of Heaven. In times of drought, it will do to think of long rains, and in times of long rains it will do to think of the later drought. Working diligently and fertilizing the soil will do.[26]

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn thus combined the general principle of cyclical patterns of fate with a certain faith in ethical and personal responsibilities. While the weather may have been beyond his control, Sim believed that a combination of hard work and trust in Heaven was nonetheless a route to success.

Sim used the logic of propitious and unpropitious fortune to explain a variety of phenomena but for the most part he applied it to economic affairs—in particular the price of goods: "All things share equally in the cycle of fortune. Things that were expensive two years previously, have returned to low prices, and the things that were cheap two years previously are now expensive."[27] Importantly in an economy dominated by agriculture, Sim applied the cycle of good and bad fortune both temporally, from one year to the next, and relatively, tracing the prices of different goods as alternate patterns of scarcity affected their relative value. In a year with good rainfall and a strong rice harvest, the price of rice might fall in relation to the price of salt, while in a famine year

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[25] Ibid, 1883.1.15.
[26] Ibid, 1913.3.29.
[27] Ibid, 1878.10.29.

the relative price of salt might decrease as grain prices soared. Again, Sim factored these changes into his theory of *kwich'ŏn*: "To talk of [what is] propitious and unpropitious at this time, this year 100 *sŏm* of grain is not equal to 10 *sŏm* of salt, but two years ago how could 100 *sŏm* of salt equal 10 *sŏm* of grain?"[28]

The connection between the relative price of goods could be both direct and indirect. In the prior example, the year in which salt became cheaper than grain was a famine year (1876) and an absolute shortage of rice caused its increase in relative value, regardless of the scarcity or abundance of other goods. In addition to such independent price movements, Sim also noted how the harvest in one crop could directly influence the prices of other agricultural products. In particular, the price of cows and other livestock bore a strong inverse correlation to the price of grain. On several occasions, Sim commented that the price of livestock tended to fall in famine years as households struggled to gather the spare grain and money to feed the animals, while their price tended to rise during good years when a greater number of households had sufficient grain and cash to support livestock.[29]

Sim's appreciation for the cycle of propitious and unpropitious fortune involved more than passive reflection on the world around him; he used it as a guide for his own economic activity. Sim expected changes in future weather conditions and the future price of goods based on the logic of recurring price and weather cycles:

> After the barley grew fat, I reflected on how propitious and unpropitious fortune are in every thought and every object. Now the price of 15 *toe* of barley is worth the price of 1 *toe* of white rice. Last year, in the seventh or eighth month, this was worth 12 *mal* of salt. Recently, [the same] one *yang* is worth 7 or 8 *mal* of salt. Yet, after this there will be a day when the price of salt rises greatly, and the price of white rice is

[28] Ibid, 1878.9.30.
[29] Ibid, 1876.6.25; 1881.5.24; 1883.7.25.

> exceedingly low. If items are cheap then store them, and if they are expensive then do not seek them. (1877.5.23)
>
> Things flourish and die, prosper and decline; abundance and value, and poverty and lowliness, these are the principles of Heaven. In this world, we can look at future events through the two characters of propitious and unpropitious. At this time, after a long drought there will be a long rainy season and great floods. (1883.7.8)
>
> Truly there are the two characters of propitious and unpropitious, and trusting in them will do. Last year was a famine year. This year the grain price is the same as a lean year. Looking at it from this point of view, I therefore expect that next year will be a bountiful year. How could one know in detail the myriad affairs of the world or the principle of what is expensive or cheap? Simply trust in propitious and unpropitious fortune, and then eight or nine times out of ten you will be somewhere between profit and loss. (1885.2.14)[30]

As shown in the excerpts above, Sim incorporated his expectation of future fluctuations in propitious and unpropitious events into his plans for economic activity, preparing himself for future rain or drought, or waiting to buy and sell goods until prices became advantageous. In his reliance on such cyclical patterns Sim differentiated himself from the farmers around him who believed in folk sayings that forecast the harvest through natural events. From time to time, Sim also recounted popular sayings that predicted good harvests based on the timing of the appearance of particular birds or the amount of snowfall in the previous year, but he did not trust them entirely and even used his diary to highlight the occasions when such sayings contradicted one another and actual events.[31] Instead, Sim prided himself on his ability to see the long-term progression of cyclical patterns, aided by his diary-keeping:

> Everyone talks of fear of a dry spell and so forget how in recent days [when] they only knew the suffering of a lengthy rainy season. I, and I alone, am not so—how can that be? I have looked at the diary that I kept for fourteen years now, and in recent years the rain and dew have been uneven. In olden times, there would be wind once every five days and rain once every ten days, but now for four months there is a continued drought then ten days of unbroken rain. The drought exceeds the long rain,

[30] Ibid, 1877.4.11; 1883.6.5; 1884.12.30.
[31] Ibid, 1882.1.9.

> and after the rainy spell there is drought. I looked at previous volumes [of the diary], and therefore if there is drought then I worry about the rain, and if there is rain then I worry about the drought. My worries are different than the worries of other people—why is that the case? People talk of the sweetness and suffering before their eyes, but I know of the propitious and unpropitious fortune of later days. If something is propitious, then I think deeply that in later days it will be unpropitious, and if something is unpropitious, then I can know that in later days it will return to propitiousness. This is the reason why. All things under heaven have [the cycle of] propitious and unpropitious."[32]

Sim applied his expectations of such price and weather patterns to structure his decision making, creating his own version of the maxim "buy low, sell high": "The principle of all things, is that they all have propitious and unpropitious fortune. Storing things when they are unpropitious, and selling them when they are propitious, that is the way to make great profits."[33]

Sim's theory of price and weather cycles was not infallible. Extraordinary weather patterns contradicted Sim's short-term expectations, as in the years between 1876 and 1878 when successive droughts and crop failures led to an extended period of famine. When lean years exhausted Sim's resources he had little choice but to sell his cows and other household valuables along with everyone else, despite the fact that Sim's own theory told him to store, not sell, goods with temporarily depressed values.[34] But, such hiccups notwithstanding, the cyclical view of rise and fall, good and bad fortune remained the basic logic of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's economic worldview throughout his diary.

IV. Economic Cycles in (Human) Action

Sim's understanding of cyclical economic fortune influenced several of his farming practices, including both his individual farming and his interactions with the local

[32] Ibid, 1883.1.15.
[33] Ibid, 1880.3.30.
[34] Ibid, 1876.11.29; 1877.3.29; 1878.12.29.

community. Above all, Sim valued diversity in his agriculture and cultivated a wide range of crops across several different locations. In this, Sim's style of farming corresponded to patterns common across the early modern agrarian world, where the cultivation of scattered plots functioned as a strategy to minimize the risk of crop failure.[35] For Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, the decision to farm in such a manner was a direct consequence of his belief in the cycle of rise and fall. Sim acknowledged and even expected fluctuation in weather and harvest patterns and farmed accordingly, choosing a mix of crops and fields that might differently withstand a drought in the spring or winter.[36]

Sim's belief in the rise and fall of market prices only bolstered this position. As the grain trade flourished in the vicinity of the newly opened ports, Sim cautioned against those who placed too much faith in the international demand for rice as a way of seeking profits:

> This year, the rice price increased greatly, and the reason is that a lot was permitted to be traded away. Recently, the people's hearts only know of profits in the present and they do not yet know the harm of later days. Why? Remember to eliminate the desire for profit, and cultivate the intent to store up virtue. The heart that would desire profits only sees the present profit or loss, and from this there is no fortune. The intent to accumulate virtue must in all things plan for it in the long term, and profit will come of itself as you manifest your virtue. Since long ago, everything has the cycle of propitious and unpropitious. After something is extremely unpropitious, it will become propitious. And if it becomes propitious, then it must return to extreme unpropitiousness. The storage of grain is sufficient to lie between profit and loss; simply knowing to get profits from trading grain away will not do.[37]

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[35] On other examples of similar behavior, see Donald N. McCloskey, "The Persistence of English Common Fields," in William N. Parker and Eric L. Jones, *European Peasants and Their Markets* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 73-119; James Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); Rosemary L. Hopcroft, *Regions, Institutions, and Agrarian Change in European History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Philip C. Brown, *Cultivating Commons: Joint Ownership of Arable Land in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011).
[36] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1877.7.29; 1882.1.9; 1882.5.8.
[37] Ibid, 1897.1.29.

Although Sim himself sold grain in local markets and benefitted from price rises along with many other farmers, two factors prevented him from fully relying on the international grain trade. On one hand, he was reluctant to put the profits of the grain trade above his personal values. Although Sim was not averse to profit, he critiqued grain traders' pursuit of profit above all other considerations.[38] On the other hand, Sim simply did not trust that the price of individual crops would remain high. Although Sim noted the potential to earn huge profits from the export of rice in the short term, he always returned to his cyclical view of the rural economy, expecting that increases in the rice price would not last. Even though he may have found additional profit in converting more of his land to producing rice for the market, Sim continued to cultivate a wide range of crops throughout his life, trusting that diversity would see him through fluctuations in both prices and the weather.

The natural world was not the only source of economic cycles in Sim's life, however, and Sim's interaction with institutional and social structures also placed regular demands on his livelihood. Taxes, for example, posed a recurring burden that Sim had to account for in his farming and finances. By the nineteenth century, ordinary Koreans were subject to three main taxes: the land tax, levied against the area of land cultivated; the military tax, paid in cloth and levied against the number of able-bodied men per household; and a regularized system of grain loans, whereby farmers received loans from state-managed granaries to be repaid with interest.[39] In addition to the main taxes levied

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[38] Ibid, 1892.12.20; 1897.1.29; 1926.12.29.

[39] At the top and bottom of the social order, *yangban* and slaves were not subject to the same taxation as commoners. For a concise overview of the evolution of taxes in early modern Korea, see Kim Sung Woo, "The Tax Burden of the Peasantry," in The Organization of Korean Historians, Seoul, *Everyday Life in*

by the central government, local government offices collected myriad additional taxes from farmers like Sim Wŏn'gwŏn in the form of miscellaneous taxes on the production of particular goods, such as salt or marine products; the requisition of materials used in the running of local government offices, such as charcoal; or additional payments to cover budget shortfalls, a practice that seems to have been particularly prevalent in areas where local government officials mismanaged or embezzled public funds.[40]

In a typical year, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn encountered a combination of each of the above-mentioned forms of taxation. As a resident of Kyŏngsang province, in the south of Korea, Sim paid both the military cloth tax and the land tax as well as several surtaxes (*kyŏlchŏn*, *kunsumi*, *p'oryangmi*) introduced by the central government over the years.[41] Because of the scattered nature of Sim's farming activities, he paid national taxes in several locations—at the main seat of Ulsan (*ponbu*), at the military command post, and occasionally at Hwajin, located to the southeast of Ulsan. Although the exact time of Sim's tax payments fluctuated from year to year, he generally paid the land and military taxes around the beginning or end of the (lunar) calendar year. On several occasions, Sim also made advance tax payments (*sŏnse*) at this time, reinforcing the temporal pattern of tax payments.[42]

Joseon-Era Korea: Economy and Society, trans. Michael D. Shin and Edward Park (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 61-69.

[40] For details on the finances of local government offices, see Chang Tongp'yo, *Chosŏn hugi chibang chaejŏng yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Kukhak charyowŏn, 1999); Son Pyŏnggyu, "Chosŏn hugi chaejŏng kujo wa chibang chaejŏng unyŏng: chaejŏng chungang chipkwŏnhwa waŭi kwan'gye," *Han'guk sidaesa hakpo* 25 (2003): 117-144; Sŏ T'aewŏn, "Kabo kaehyŏk ihu Suwŏn chibangdae-Suwŏn chinwidae yŏn'gu," *Yŏksa wa sirhak* 48 (2012): 175-218.

[41] Several of the surtaxes were earmarked for military expenses, as in the *kunsumi* (military provisions surtax) and the *p'oryangmi* (artillery provisions surtax). On land surtaxes in general, see Son Pyŏnggyu, *Chosŏn wangjo chaejŏng sisŭtemŭ ŭi chaebalgyŏn: 17-19 segi chibang chaejŏngsa yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2008), 86-99. On the circumstances surrounding the introduction of the *p'oryangmi*, see also Palais, *Politics and Policy*, 73, 74.

[42] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1881.12.12; 1881.12.17; 1885.12.25; 1886.1.5.

The third major tax—grain loans—introduced yet another seasonal pattern to Sim's household finances. Sim regularly received loans of both rice and barley, which he repaid respectively in the winter and summer in line with the growing season of each crop. Again, Sim received and repaid grain loans at several different locations, but most frequently Sim received loans from the military command post which managed several granaries around Ulsan.[43] The size of the loans varied, but generally fell somewhere between one to two *sŏm* of rice or barley. Although Sim generally calculated the loans in terms of the volume of grain borrowed or repaid, on at least several occasions Sim repaid the loan in cash, repaying three *yang* for one *sŏm* of barley in the summer of 1883, and one *yang* in the summers of 1893 and 1894.[44] In this way, Sim's tax obligations complemented the seasonality of agricultural production, with land tax and grain loan payments coming due after the relevant harvest.

Not all of Sim's financial obligations followed the cyclical pattern of harvest crops, however, leading Sim to develop several strategies to balance his seasonal income against irregular expenditure. In particular, local and miscellaneous taxes paid to the military command post and other local government entities presented a challenge to Sim's budget. Some local taxes followed a broadly discernable pattern. For example, Sim generally paid firewood (*somok*) levies to the military command post around the second

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[43] A list of the granaries operated by the Ulsan military command post in the early nineteenth century can be found in the *Man'gi yoram* (1808). Minjok munhwa ch'ujinhoe, *Man'gi yoram*, vol. 1, Chaeyong p'yŏn (Seoul: 1972), 620, 621.

[44] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1883.6.5; 1893.5.9; 1894.6.6.
One *sŏm* is equivalent to approximately 90-120 liters. Although Chosŏn taxes were calculated in kind—in grain and in cloth—by the nineteenth century the conversion of tax payments into equivalent cash amounts was widespread. Less scrupulous tax officials would manipulate cash-grain exchange rates for their own benefit. See, Sun Joo Kim, "Taxes, the Local Elite, and the Rural Populace in the Chinju Uprising of 1862," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66, no. 4 (2007): 1002.

and seventh lunar month. On the occasions that Sim recorded the precise amount, the firewood levies appear to have been broadly comparable to the typical cost of grain loan payments—somewhere between one to three *yang*—and paid in both cash and kind.[45] In addition to such relatively regular payments Sim also paid numerous additional payments to the local government which he generally referred to as *kongchŏn*, or "public payments." As shown in Table 2.1, these additional public payments followed no clear pattern either in terms of timing or amount. In some years, Sim made multiple payments of amounts ranging from 1 to 2 *yang*, to as much as 50 or 100 *yang* in extreme cases. In most cases, Sim learned of the need to pay public payments during a township or village meeting which divided the total amount due in the district into smaller obligations for each household. In 1881, for example, Sim heard that a total of nearly 30,000 *yang* was to be divided among district residents, amounting to an obligation per household of 9.7 *yang*. Two days later Sim went to Hwajin where he paid the amount alongside an additional 1.14 *yang* of public payments.[46]

The wide range of tax obligations—both regular and irregular—reinforced Sim's decision to farm a diverse range of crops. By farming barley in the winter, alongside summer grains such as rice, Sim attempted to balance his sources of income throughout the year. Where the system of grain loans expanded to follow both the barley and rice harvests, Sim relied upon additional items, such as pine branches, as an extra source of funds between harvests.[47] As Sim found to his dismay in 1886, when a temporary ban

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[45] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1876.3.2; 1877.2.20; 1891.7.13; 1892.2.4
[46] Ibid, 1881.8.10; 1881.8.12.
[47] Indeed, Sim noted that the cyclical price pattern of pine branches complemented field crops still further in their tendency to increase in price during the plowing time in the spring. Ibid, 1883.2.20.

Table 2.1: "Public payments" (*kongchŏn*) recorded in the diary of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, 1873–1895

Month / Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1873											X	
1874												
1875		X										
1876										7.7		
1877		X	[30]		1			2				
1878	1							50				
1879											X	
1880												
1881							1.2*	10.84				1.14
1882					X		X					
1883											X	
1884										X		
1885						X						
1886	X							2	X			60-70
1887	X			100			1.4			X		
1888				10							2	2
1889												X
1890	10											
1891												
1892						X*			1.13			
1893						3						
1894		X			X							
1895											48.9	

Source: *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi.*
Note: Payments are recorded in *yang*. "X" indicates payments of unspecified amounts. Entries marked with an asterisk indicate intercalary months. Entries in brackets [] denote amounts which combine "public money" payments along with other taxes due—in the third month of 1877 Sim paid 30 *yang* for the land tax and an additional payment of public money. Sim did not record any payments between 1870 and 1872, although this likely reflects the fact that Sim's father handled this aspect of the household finances rather than an absence of additional payments.

prevented Sim from selling pine branches as usual, he struggled to cover his household expenses without regular supplement to his farming income:

> In the year of 1886 altogether there were 113 days of rain and snow, but in the summer there was a drought and the reason for this was because [the rain] was

> uneven. The year was a good harvest, but some farmers lost their livelihood. I farmed 37 *tu*, but the amount that we need to eat has already gone. We have a shortage of rice, and already there is around 60-70 *yang* in public payments due, and a great many private debts. My heart is troubled; I grieve and suffer amidst this. Moreover, I am without even one unit of pine branches. It is hard to get 1 *pun* from the land. As for next spring's grain and "public money"—how can I gather these? I do not know.[48]

Despite these efforts, cultivating multiple crops could not forestall all of Sim's financial difficulties. As in the example above, extraordinary events might limit the production of certain goods from year to year, be it through temporary bans on the cutting of pine trees (*kŭmsong*) or through damage from adverse weather conditions or insects. Although the government could, in theory, suspend taxes in the midst of a famine, in practice Sim rarely benefitted from such provisions. During the aftermath of the 1876 famine, Sim wrote of the hardships he faced in feeding his family let alone finding any additional funds for tax payments:

> Following the drought from last spring and summer, the grain price has gradually increased. In the spring one *toe* of rice was 2.2 or 2.3 *chŏn*, in the summer one *toe* was 3-4 *chŏn* and in the autumn it was 4.3 or 4.4 *chŏn*. In the winter too, the price gradually increased, sometimes falling by 0.1-0.2 *chŏn*, and sometimes rising by 0.8-0.9 *chŏn*. It was easy for the price to rise, but hard for it to fall…My household has around ten people, and every day we consume around one *toe* of rice and so my heart is troubled. I have less than half of sufficient seed rice, and in the third month I need to pay around 30 *yang* of land tax and additional payments [*kongchŏn*]. Seed rice [*chongjo*], public payments [*kongchŏn*] and immediate provisions [*siryang*] are my three hardships. At present [I need] around 80 *yang*—where will this come from? My heart is worried and that is all. What to do?[49]

Ten years later, Sim found himself in a similar bind. With 100 days until the summer, Sim needed to find around 100 *toe* of rice to feed his family, in addition to seed rice, tax payments (*kyŏlyŏk*) and additional public payments comprising a total 200 *yang* in Sim's

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[48] Ibid, 1886.12.30. It is likely that a temporary pine restriction order (*kŭmsong*) prevented Sim from selling pine branches at this time. Sim's firewood payments to the military command post also ceased between 1885 to 1888. Ibid, 1885.4.1.
[49] Ibid, 1877.3.29.

estimate.[50]

In such situations, Sim had little choice but to borrow money in order to make up for temporary shortages in his income. Like many other late-Chosŏn households, debt was a matter of course for Sim Wŏn'gwŏn and he regularly borrowed and lent among a range of acquaintances, including his peers, merchants, and minor local officials.[51] Sim's borrowing generally consisted of small but frequent loans, most often small sums (between one to twenty *yang* at a time) although he occasionally borrowed larger amounts (between twenty and eighty *yang*, and on rare occasion as much as five hundred *yang*).[52] While the full terms of each loan mentioned in the diary are hard to trace, such loans seem to have rarely persisted for longer than one year and were instead intended to cover short-term fluctuations in Sim's income. In the most extreme example, Sim borrowed five *yang* to buy cotton at the market, repaying the loan only two days later.[53] More often, Sim's loans lasted for a number of months, with interest charged monthly at rates generally ranging between two to five percent.[54] Although the annualized rate of interest could therefore rise to as much as sixty percent, the short term of the loans reduced Sim's borrowing costs, as did regular fluctuations in the price of rice which, as the major crop which retained some functions as a commodity currency alongside cash, served as the main indicator of inflation in the rural economy. Thus, if rice prices

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[50] Ibid, 1886.1.20.
[51] On the features of debt in late-Chosŏn farming households, see Kim Chaeho, "Nongch'on sahoe ŭi sinyong kwa kye: 1853-1934," in An and Yi, eds., *Matjil ŭi nongmindŭl*, 300-31.
[52] Several of Sim's larger loans appear to have been related to land transactions. *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1881.5.29; 1908.3.29.
[53] Ibid, 1910.3.3; 1910.3.5.
[54] The rate of interest differed according to the person extending the loan. Sim regularly received loans from Mr. Kim, the overseer's assistant (*pyŏlgam*) at the lower rate of two *pun* per *yang* per month, while Sim's loans from Mr. Ch'oe, a local clerk (*p'unghŏn*) were generally offered at the higher rate of five *pun* per *yang* per month.

increased over the term of loan, the real rate of interest for borrowers decreased, and vice versa.[55]

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's understanding of price and weather cycles was thus intimately connected to a wider range of his farming decisions and practices. Some, such as the choice of crops to cultivate, were within Sim's control, while others, such as the need to prepare funds for tax payments, were indirectly influenced by seasonal price and harvest patterns. Still, Sim's understanding of cyclical economic patterns was a key factor in shaping his responses to events. Where demands for taxation matched, or did not match, Sim's seasonal income, he compensated through the practice of borrowing and loaning money, the favorability of which in turn reflected the cyclical price trends once again.

V. Changing Fortunes in the Rural Economy

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's economic worldview was rooted in a combination of his everyday experiences and the intellectual heritage of the long Chosŏn dynasty, but the world in which he lived was not static, and the late nineteenth century brought great changes to both the government and the rural economy. As discussed in Chapter One, attempts to strengthen government finance prompted a series of reforms to both taxation and the structure of the government itself. The manner in which these reforms impacted Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's daily life, however, cannot be assumed. As a farmer far-removed from the politics of the central government, Sim interpreted such events not through the lens of international politics but through the concrete effects that central government decisions brought to his local community.

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[55] On calculating the nominal and real rate of interest in rural lending, see Kim Chaeho, "Nongch'on sahoe ŭi sinyong kwa kye," 312-321; Kim Chaeho and Pak Kijun, "Nongch'on ijayul ŭi changgi pyŏndong, 1742-1953: Yŏngam chibang kye ijayul ŭl chungsim ŭro," in Yi Yŏnghun, ed., *Suryang kyŏngjesa*, 110-145.

The most direct impact of the Kabo reforms upon Sim's daily life concerned taxes. After 1894, Sim no longer recorded the payment of grain loans or additional levies of firewood to the military command post. Nonetheless, these changes were relatively minor in relation to the intent of Kabo-era tax reforms. Although new laws decreed that taxes be paid in cash, Sim already paid a significant portion of his taxes in cash. Where tax payments were due at the same time of year, Sim's habits and seasonal calculations therefore varied little. This continued to be so, even for much of the first decade of colonial rule as the Government-General of Korea explicitly maintained the existing system for the calculation and collection of land tax payments.[56] Perhaps for this reason, beyond the disappearance of entries referencing grain loans and payments to the military command post, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary contains little clue of the changes to the tax system. By the 1920s, Sim spoke of the land tax (*chise*) rather than the *kyŏl* tax (the traditional unit of land measurement used in tax assessments), but he continued to pay the tax at seasonal intervals and, beyond noting the payment of the tax, had little to say about any changes.

Rather than taxes or politics, the opening of Korean ports to international trade brought the most significant impact to Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's livelihood. Following the signing of the Kanghwa treaty in 1876, Korea gradually opened a number of ports to international trade. Beginning with the port of Pusan, which opened in 1876, ports in Wŏnsan (1880); Chemulp'o (Inch'ŏn, 1883); Mokp'o and Chinnamp'o (1897); Kunsan, Masan, and Sŏngjin (1899); Yongamp'o (1904); Ch'ŏngjin (1908); and Sinŭiju (1910) opened one after the other, drawing an ever-wider swathe of Korea into contact with new

[56] Article 4, "Chizeirei," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō*, gōgai, March 16, 1914.

markets. Foreign trade brought new products to Korea, chief among them industrially-produced textiles and other manufactured goods. In return, Korea exported mainly primary products such as rice, beans, and gold dust. Although Western-made goods accounted for a majority of Korea's early imports, for the most part international trade flowed through Chinese and Japanese merchants who used their connections to regional financial and commercial networks to gain an advantage in the re-export trade over European and American merchants.[57] Despite the signing of additional treaties which introduced competition from other trading nations, Japanese dominance in Korea's international trade only grew over time, helped along by the removal of travel restrictions on Japanese in Korea in 1883 and victory in the Sino-Japanese war in 1895.[58]

Located on the south-eastern tip of Korea, Pusan, the closest port to Ulsan, was particularly significant in the trade between Korea and Japan, serving not only as a point of international trade but also as a hub for domestic trade along Korea's eastern coast (see Figure 2.5).[59] Thanks to its position in one of Korea's main agricultural regions, outward trade through Pusan chiefly comprised agricultural products, of which rice, soybeans, and cow hides were major export items. Figures 2.6 and 2.7 show the changes to Pusan's international trade between 1876 and 1910. As seen in Figure 2.6, the total value of trade

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[57] Between 1876 and 1882, Western goods accounted for 88 percent of Japanese exports to Korea. This figure would decrease later, as Japan's own industrial manufacturing took off. Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, 255; Takeshi Hamashita, "Overseas Chinese Networks and Korea," in Sin'ya Sugiyama and Linda Grove, eds., *Commercial Networks in Modern Asia* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001), 55-70; Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*.

[58] Prior to 1883, Japanese nationals were restricted to designated treaty settlements within the open ports, in effect making them dependent on Korean brokers. Even after 1883, Japanese merchants often still worked with Korean counterparts when buying rice due to language difficulties and the risk of fraud against Japanese buyers. Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, 274-77.

[59] Yi Hŏnch'ang, "Han'guk kaehangjang ŭi sangp'um yut'ong kwa sijangkwŏn: Han'guk kaehanggi esŏ ŭi sijang kujo ŭi pyŏndong ŭl ch'orae han ilch'ajŏk yoin," *Kyŏngje sahak* 9 (1985): 119-294.

Figure 2.5: Major trade routes between Korean open ports and Japan

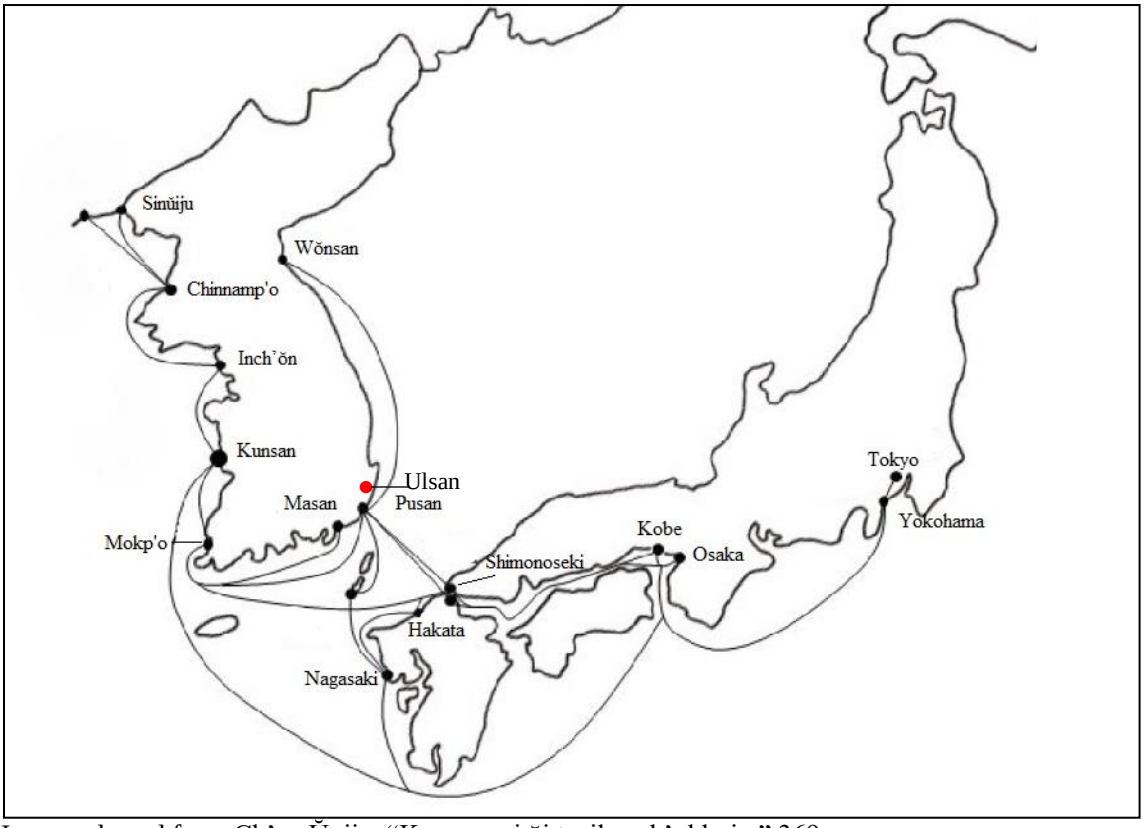
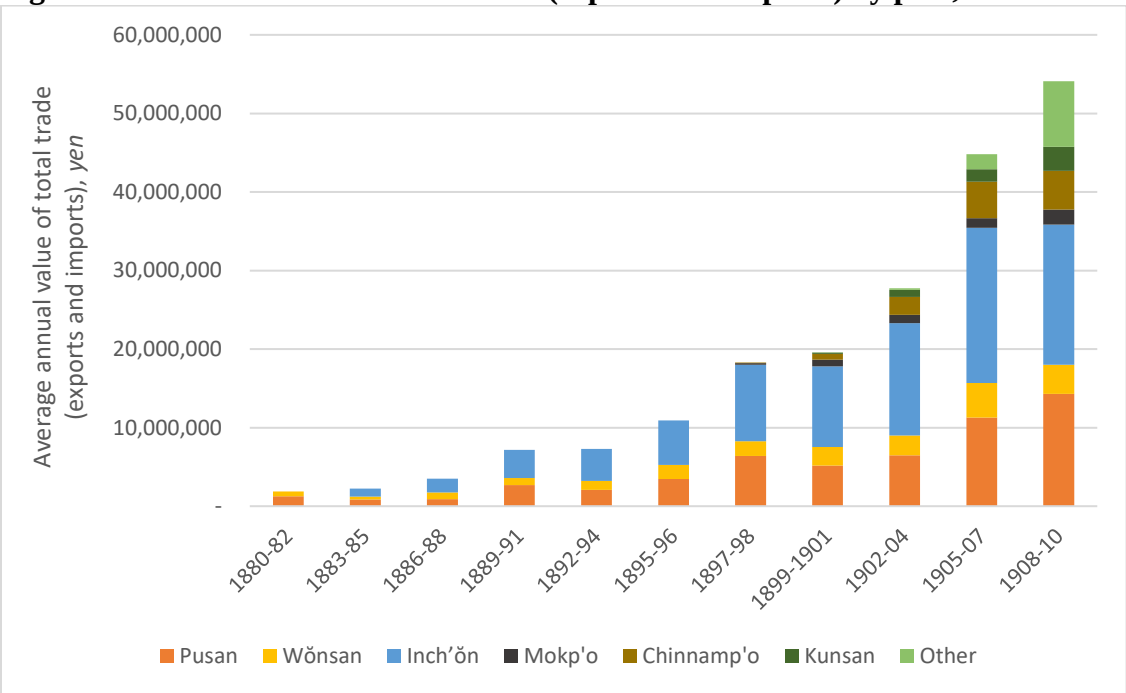


Image adapted from Ch'oe Ŭnjin, "Kunsan mi ŭi taeil such'ul kujo," 369.

rose steadily after 1876. Among the Korean ports, Pusan was second only to Inch'ŏn which served the capital region) in terms of the total value of goods traded (both exports and imports).

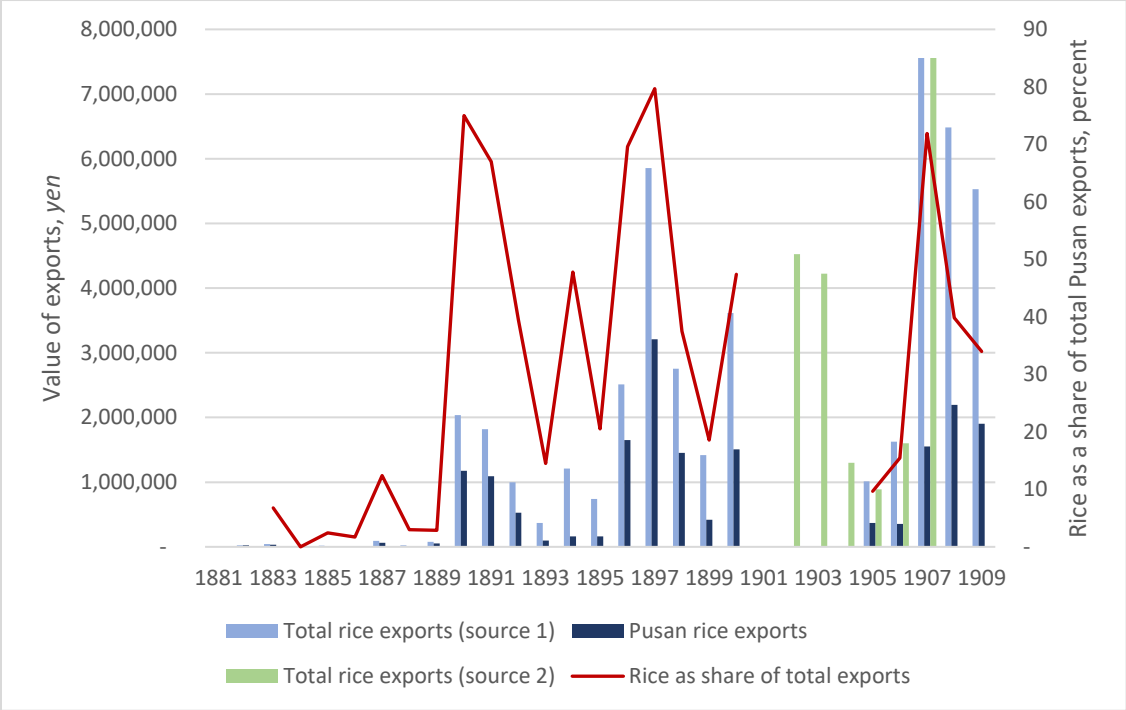
Figure 2.7 shows the changing position of rice exports through the same period. After slowly increasing in the 1880s, total rice exports jumped in the early 1890s and again from 1896, averaging a value of roughly 1,200,000 *yen* in the period 1890-1895 and 3,000,000 *yen* in the period 1896-1900. Although data for the early 1900s is missing, between 1905 and 1909 the value of rice exports increased again to average 4,400,000 *yen* per year. As an agricultural crop, the amount of rice exported was subject to strong variation from year to year depending on the quality of the harvest, and the share of rice

Figure 2.6: Value of international trade (exports and imports) by port, 1876–1910



Source: Yi Hŏnch'ang, "Han'guk kaehangjang ŭi sangp'um yut'ong"

Figure 2.7: Pusan rice exports, 1882–1909



Source: Yi Hŏnch'ang, "Han'guk kaehangjang ŭi sangp'um yut'ong"; *Tōkanfu tōkei nenpō* (Keijō: multiple years).

as a proportion of total exports ranged from as little as 15 percent in 1893 to as much as 79 percent in 1897. The proportion of rice exported through Pusan also varied according to the relative performance of agriculture in the southeast as compared to other regions, albeit to a lesser extent; between 1890 and 1900, when the rice trade took off, Pusan handled roughly 40 percent of all rice exports on average, decreasing to roughly 30 percent of all rice exports in the 1900s as more ports opened to the rice trade.[60]

As a resident of Ulsan, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn did not participate directly in Pusan's international rice trade. Even so, Sim quickly felt the effect of the new trade in Ulsan's local markets. Local brokers served as intermediaries, buying rice in periodic markets and selling it to Japanese traders in the treaty ports, creating one of the main mechanisms that linked local farmers to the international grain trade and expanding the reach of the open port economy.[61] As early as 1879, Ulsan was sufficiently connected within a network of brokered trade that Sim was aware of the grain trade and even retrospectively attributed

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[60] Kunsan in particular grew rapidly as a center for rice exports. After opening in 1899, between 1905 and 1909 average annual rice exports through Kunsan accounted for roughly one-quarter of total rice exports. It should be noted that, due to a lack of reliable information for the period, these figures have not been adjusted for inflation. Nonetheless, the value of exports is recorded in Japanese *yen* which, despite suffering inflation during the early Meiji period, was relatively stable by the 1890s and much more so than Korean currency. Based on the price per unit of rice, with 1895 as a base year, the average price index for Pusan rice exports between 1895 and 1903 was 126. Separate data based on the national price per unit of rice exported gives an average price index of 111 between 1902 and 1907 (base year is 1902). Although therefore subject to some inflationary influence, Figures 2.4 and 2.5 may still be considered reliable illustrations of the general trend in rice exports. Data on rice prices in Pusan taken from *Tsūshō isan*, as cited in Ha Wŏnho, "Kaehanghu kokka pyŏndong yŏn'gu (1895-1904)," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 53 (1994): 1-53. Data on the national price of rice exports is calculated from Tōkanfu, *Tōkanfu tōkei nenpō* (Keijō: multiple years). On Japanese measures to control early Meiji inflation, see also Motokazu Shindō, "The Inflation in the Early Meiji Era: History of Inflation in Japan," *Kyoto Economic History Review* 24, no. 2 (1954): 39-59.

[61] P'yo Yongsu, "Kaehanggi Pusan-hang ŭl chungsim ŭro han kaekchu sangin ŭi sangŏp hwaldong," *Kyŏngju sahak* 15 (1996): 231-263; O Miil, "Kaehang(jang) kwa iju sangin: kaehangjang tosi rok'ŏllit'i ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwa kiwŏn," *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndaesa yŏn'gu* 47 (2008): 40-79; Ch'oe Ŭnjin, "Kunsan mi ŭi taeil such'ul kujo: kaehang (1899 nyŏn)–1910 nyŏndae rŭl chungsim ŭro," *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 81 (2011): 343-83.

imports of Japanese grain as a response to a severe famine in 1876.[62] As trade grew over the years, Sim saw with his own eyes the passage of rice and other agricultural products out of Korea and toward Japan where prices were higher. By 1896 Sim could write of seeing "hundreds of loads of rice" each day, travelling down the eastern road toward the grain trading centers.[63]

Not all of the effects of the new grain trade were equally obvious as the physical transportation of rice. Beyond the immediate environs of Ulsan, the organization of markets across Korea responded to new trading patterns in ways that escaped Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's local perspective. This did not begin with the opening of Korean ports. Research into late Chosŏn rice prices has shown that prices in regional markets began to diverge through the nineteenth century as declining agricultural productivity disrupted state-run grain redistribution mechanisms and, in turn, the number of local markets and their degree of inter-regional integration. By the 1880s and 1890s, when trade in the treaty ports began to take off, prices in the southeast further diverged from prices in the rest of Korea as the increased trade with Japan prompted price convergence along the new trade routes, displacing Seoul as the traditional center of the domestic rice market. Within the new market network, higher prices and demand for rice from Japan fuelled price rises in Korea for both rice and other goods.[64]

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[62] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1879.7.29. Although Sim does not mention the origin of the rice, this perhaps refers to an 1877 diary entry in which Sim noted the arrival of 300 *sŏm* of "traded grain" (*mumi*) at the nearby market-village of Naehwang. Ibid, 1877.4.4. The connection to Japanese imports is not entirely clear-cut however. In 1874, well before the opening of Pusan, Sim heard tell of another 300 *sŏm* delivery of "traded rice" to Naehwang, suggesting that imports of Japanese rice would not have been the only source of additional rice in a famine. In the midst of the famine, Sim also wrote of his efforts to get emergency famine relief from the local granary. Ibid, 1874.8.7; 1877.1.28.

[63] Ibid, 1896.11.29.

[64] According to one set of calculations, not all of the increases in the rice price rice can be attributed to international trade as prices in the southeast started to climb from the 1850s onwards before the opening of

To some extent, Sim was aware of the impact of trade on rice prices. On several occasions he linked the busy grain trade in the open ports with high prices in local markets for both land and grain. Writing in early 1885, Sim commented: "Nowadays the price of grain is gradually increasing. A lot of rice is traded out of each port, therefore grain is as valuable as gold." Just one month earlier, Sim had used the high grain prices to his advantage when he sold 300 *toe* of rice to repay a 100 *yang* debt.[65] Still, even though Sim recognized the connection between trade and rising prices, there were no guarantees that conditions would stay the same from one year to the next. As Korean markets became increasingly integrated with trade networks leading to the treaty ports, grain prices within Korea became subject to trends in the global economy. And, as shown in Figure 2.8, the global influence on local grain prices could be extreme indeed. After fluctuating around a mean price of roughly 0.5 *yang* per *toe* of white rice during the period 1870-1894, and a mean price of roughly 1.2 *yang* during the period 1895-1910, the price of rice rose sharply during the First World War, corresponding to an economic boom in Japan. After a sharp decline, the price rose once again in the early 1920s, only to follow global price trends of a sustained decline from a peak of around 5.5 *yang* per *toe* in the mid-1920s, falling below 2 *yang* once more late in 1930.

The global influence on long-run price trends was one consequence of Ulsan's incorporation into international market networks, but one further outcome had an even

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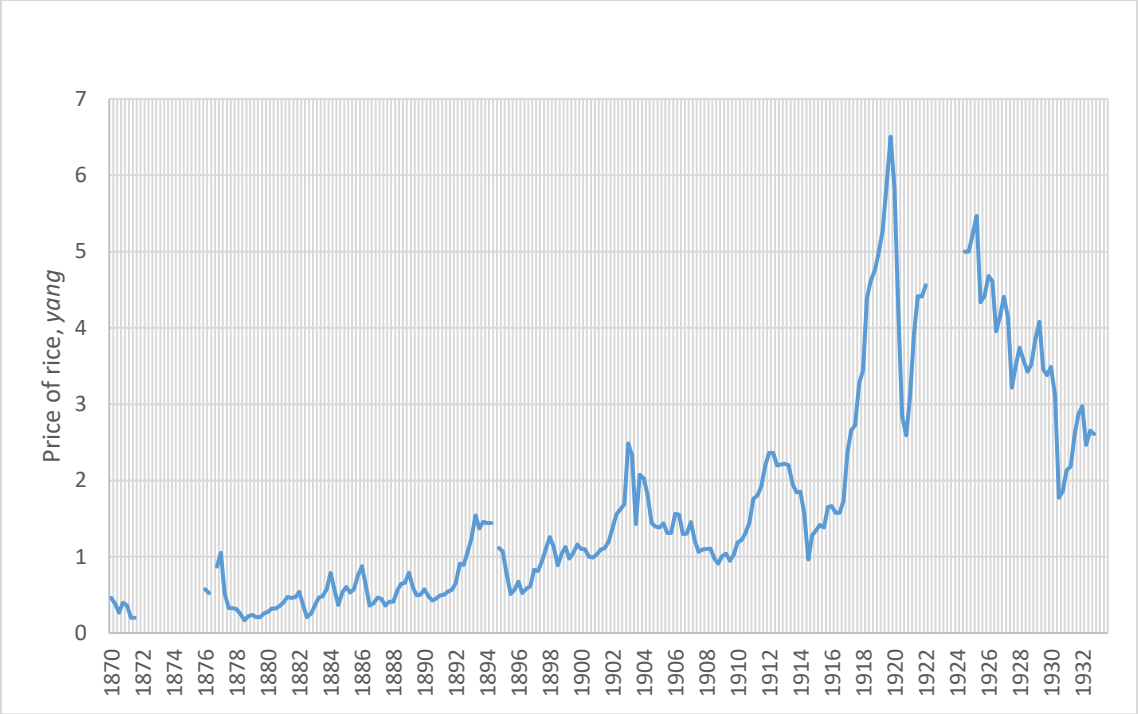
ports. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that international trade contributed to the continuation of this trend from 1876 onwards. Pak Kiju and Yi Uyŏn, "Nongch'on ŭi chaehwa kagyŏk kwa mulka ŭi ch'ui: 1834-1937," in An and Yi, eds., *Matjil ŭi nongmindŭl*, 150-177; Yi Yŏnghun and Pak It'aek, "Nongch'on migok sijang kwa chŏn'gukchŏk sijang t'onghap, 1713-1937," in Yi Yŏnghun, ed., *Suryang kyŏngjesa*, 226-300; Pak It'aek and Yi Yŏnghun, "18-19 segi migok sijang ŭi t'onghap kwa punyŏl: Yŏngam chibang ŭi miga pyŏndong e taehan saengsan ch'unggyŏk ŭi yŏnghyang punsŏk," in Yi Yŏnghun, ed., *Suryang kyŏngjesa*, 302-32.

[65] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1884.11.20; 1884.12.30.

Figure 2.8: Nominal rice price in Ulsan markets, per *toe* of white rice, 1870–1933



Source: *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*

greater influence on Sim's understanding of the rural economy. Although extreme rises and falls in rice prices undoubtedly impacted Sim's livelihood, as a farmer who both bought and sold grain in local markets Sim was in a relatively favorable position to weather long-run increases or decreases in the price of rice. Unlike landless laborers, Sim had relatively stable access to land and could thus benefit from rising prices. Even when prices fell, Sim's cultivation of alternate crops provided a buffer against losses while Sim's efforts to match his purchases and sales to favorable price trends also augmented his ability to withstand turbulence in the price of rice. Sim's practice of taking mostly short-term, rather than long-term, loans also insulated him to some degree from the problem of indebtedness that made many other farmers vulnerable to collapse in rice

prices during the 1920s.[66] Important though they were, long-run price trends measured over a number of years were not the most significant economic indicator in Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's life.

Instead, Sim was most concerned about seasonal price changes. In common with many farmers, the hardest part of Sim's agricultural year came in the springtime when reserves from the previous year's harvest were running low. At this time farmers often borrowed money and grain to cover seasonal shortages, repaying their debts in the autumn. Thus, seasonal price fluctuations were one of the most important criteria affecting any farmer who engaged in seasonal loans, with the degree of variation between spring and autumn prices directly impacting the financial health of both lenders (who benefitted from large variation) and borrowers (who benefited from the reverse).

Over time, increased trade in rice and other agricultural products began to affect seasonal fluctuations in the rice price. In the absence of large volumes of trade, the price of rice was largely determined by local supply and demand, with prices rising in the spring and summer as farmers' stores of grain became exhausted and falling in the autumn after the harvest came in.[67] Increased trade reduced such fluctuations over time,

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[66] On the role of debt in land transfers during the Great Depression, see Edwin H. Gragert, *Landownership Under Colonial Rule: Korea's Japanese Experience, 1900-1935* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

[67] For this reason, the Chosŏn government, following Confucian precedent, had instituted a state-run granary system that in theory could stabilize prices by lending grain. The system declined somewhat by late Chosŏn, as a combination of unscrupulous local officials looking to line their pockets and high rates of default on grain loans leading to the erosion of grain reserves led many granaries to engage in exploitative practices. Complaints ranged from the forced receipt of grain-loans, regardless of farmers' need; high interest rates; and the practice of loaning out chaff but demanding that farmers repay the loan with high quality rice. See, Sun Joo Kim, "Taxes, the Local Elite, and the Rural Populace." On the early Chosŏn granary system and its Chinese counterpart, see also Yi Chŏngsu, "Chosŏn chŏn'gi sangp'yŏngch'ang ŭi chŏn'gae wa kinŭng: mulka pyŏndong kwa kwallyŏn hayŏ," *Yŏksa wa kyŏnggye* 27 (1994): 65-120; Pierre-Etienne Will and R. Bin Wong, *Nourish the People: the State Civilian Granary System in China, 1650-1850* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1991).

although the process was not always a smooth one as markets across Korea integrated unevenly due to differing access to transportation and the new grain trade. Local officials, especially in the northern region which was not a major rice-producing area, complained that exports exacerbated the effect of famine years, instituting temporary grain export bans (*panggongnyŏng*) to try and prevent extreme shortages in popular export products such as rice and beans. Meanwhile, the central government experimented with rice imports as an alternative measure to reduce fluctuations in the supply and price of rice during famine years.[68]

The impact of the grain export bans and rice imports was mixed. As Ha Wŏnho has argued, the fact that most rice imports went through Inch'ŏn limited the effect of price stabilization in regions outside of the capital. Meanwhile, restrictions on grain exports were a relatively crude measure that prevented merchants and farmers from freely trading grain but did not necessarily solve price and scarcity problems in local markets.[69] As one of the centers of the new grain trade, however, Pusan and its environs were well-placed to avoid the logistical problems that characterized the expansion of the rice trade elsewhere. Indeed, Pusan only instituted two grain embargoes, in 1887 and in 1893. Meanwhile, Pusan's close proximity to Japan and the large community of merchants facilitated trade in both directions. In 1888 and 1894, rice was one of the largest import items to Pusan each year, suggesting that the market was somewhat responsive to rice

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[68] Ha Wŏnho, "Kaehanggi panggongnyŏng silsi ŭi wŏnin e kwanhan yŏn'gu (sang-ha)," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 49-51 (1985): 79-97, 145-187; Ha Wŏnho, "Kaehanghu kokka pyŏndong yŏn'gu (1895-1904)."

[69] Indeed, new research by Kim Hŭiyŏn argues that at least one well-known example of the grain embargo can be understood as an attempt by local officials and grain traders to corner the local rice trade for themselves at below-market prices. See, Kim Heeyeon, "Soybean Controversy of 1889: Panggongnyŏng." 27th Association for Korean Studies in Europe Conference, Bochum, Germany, July 10-13, 2015; Ha Wŏnho, "Kaehanghu kokka pyŏndong yŏn'gu (1895-1904)."

shortages in at least the southeast of Korea.[70]

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary supports the interpretation that increased trade helped to smooth price fluctuations within the Ulsan region. Figure 2.9 shows the change in the seasonal fluctuation of rice prices recorded in Sim's diary. Although a lack of reliable data makes it impossible to adjust the prices for inflation, Figure 2.9 displays the coefficient of variation (CV) of rice prices, calculated as the standard deviation of rice price variation for each year adjusted against the annual mean price. Thus, 1877 is calculated as having the highest degree of seasonal price variation (0.52 CV) after being adjusted against the mean price (0.6 *yang* per *toe* of white rice), despite having one of the lowest ranges between the highest (1.3 *yang*) and lowest (0.3 *yang*) absolute prices. In contrast, the absolute range between the highest and lowest rice prices was much greater in 1920 (4.1 *yang*), but once adjusted against the average price that year (4.9 *yang*), the coefficient of variation is shown to be comparatively lower than in 1877, at 0.30. As Figure 2.9 shows, the seasonal fluctuation of rice prices decreased through the 1880s to the 1910s as the international rice trade expanded, before rising again slightly in the 1920s as prices became more volatile.[71]

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn recognized these changes to grain prices, although where such patterns fell outside of his established view of seasonal price cycles he found himself uneasy at the prospect of being unable to predict future changes. Even as Sim celebrated

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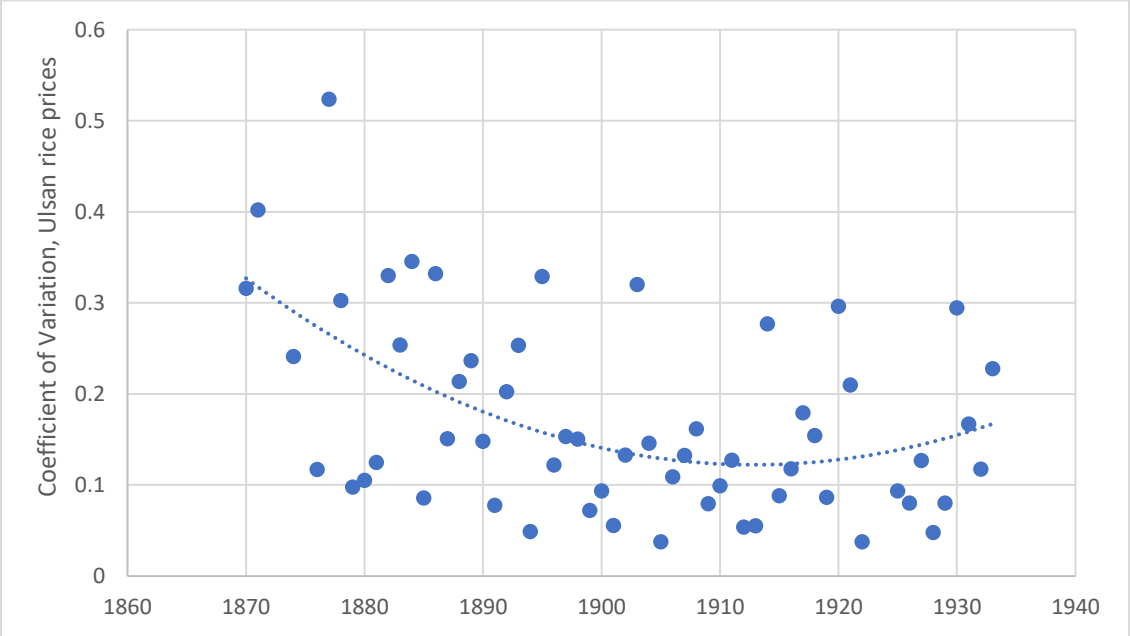
[70] In 1888, 32,565 *yen* worth of rice was imported, the third largest import by value (5.1 percent), while in 1894 111,777 *yen* of rice was imported, the second largest import by value (11.1 percent). Rice also appeared among the top three import items by value in 1884, 1886, and 1889. Data from Ha Wŏnho, "Kaehanghu Pusan ŭi taeoe muyŏk kwa yut'ong," 146.

[71] This result is statistically significant in both quadratic and linear forms. My thanks to U Taehyŏng for his help in confirming this aspect of the data analysis.

Figure 2.9: Seasonal fluctuation in Ulsan rice prices, 1870–1933 (coefficient of variation)



high grain prices at the end of 1884, he expressed a certain apprehension at the disruption to the established relationship that he expected between harvest, weather, and price:

> How can I know the logic of things? I do not yet know how much the grain price next spring will be. Everyone says that [this is] a bountiful year, [but] the grain price is like during a famine. Poor households and craftsmen in particular are at the utmost edge of fear. This autumn, everyone said that one *toe* of rice would be 3 *chŏn*. At the end of autumn and beginning of winter, they said that it would not exceed 4 *chŏn*. Nowadays it almost reached 5 *chŏn*.[72]

As the years passed, and prices diverged still further from Sim's theory of price cycles, he commented again on the problem, diagnosing trade as the underlying factor behind the new trends: "Today I thought to myself that each country communicates peacefully and truly there are no propitious or unpropitious events. Traded grain goes out and comes in, and it is hard to distinguish a famine from a good harvest."[73] Nonetheless, perceiving the

[72] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1884.12.30.
[73] Ibid, 1899.6.10.

connection to trade, Sim remained uneasy about his ability to foretell prices based on patterns of production and trade that lay beyond his experience. As he continued in the same diary entry, "although we say that we know what is within the valley, what about the sea routes of 100 *ri*?"[74] Such sentiments recurred throughout the remainder of Sim's diary as he commented on the disjuncture between actual prices and the "summer price" or the "autumn price" of grain, repeatedly questioning, as if a refrain, "how can one know if grain prices will rise or fall?"[75]

Decreasing seasonal price fluctuations might commonly be assumed to benefit consumers and producers alike. Indeed, minimizing extreme variation in prices has been a mainstay of agricultural policy worldwide, from the Confucian "ever-normal granary" (*sangp'yŏngch'ang*) to the buffer stock schemes introduced in the aftermath of the Great Depression and that continue to underpin the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy.[76] But, while it may be possible to make an objective case for the benefits of stable agricultural prices throughout the year, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary shows that stable prices may not automatically be recognized as beneficial by farmers. Sim *expected* seasonal variation in prices, the weather, and the harvest among different crops, and he prepared to farm accordingly. As Sim wrote in 1879, "every year in the summer months cash becomes extremely valuable. In the spring I consider affairs and the money I will use in the summer, and prepare 30 to 40 *yang*." That year, Sim took advantage of the high prices and cut down 40 loads of pine trees to sell at the prevailing price of 1.4 *yang* per

[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid, 1908.12.30, 1919.1.15, 1925.12.30, 1931.6.20.
[76] Federico, *Feeding the World*, 194-201.

load to prepare for the summer months.[77] A few years later, Sim was not so fortunate. After a poor harvest and some bad investments, in 1881 Sim borrowed 18 *sŏm* of rice in the spring but struggled to repay the principle and interest, eventually having to plead with his debtor for relief from a portion of the debt.[78] In both cases, Sim made arrangements on the assumption that prices would follow a certain seasonal pattern. As new patterns in the rice trade led prices to contradict Sim's expectations, they became increasingly unpredictable and jarring to his established practices.

This is not to say that Sim could not have benefitted from greater seasonal stability in prices. Sim's diary entries suggest that he was unsettled less by changing price and trade patterns *per se* than he was by the fact that Ulsan's absorption into wider trading networks introduced additional factors that, while unknown to Sim, nonetheless influenced the price of grain. This explains Sim's comment on the problems posed by distant sea routes and his repeated questioning of how to know the price of grain. Had Sim regularly read the newspapers of the day, or found a reliable source of information on global grain markets elsewhere, it is possible that he may have incorporated additional knowledge into his existing economic worldview and found a new way to predict prices. As it was, Sim could only lament that the parameters by which he once judged the rural economy were no longer sufficient to assess the world around him.

Ironically, Sim's very awareness of the changes to the rice trade led him to maintain the same farming habits he cultivated over the course of his life. Although Sim recognized the changing patterns of rice prices, his own logic of interrelated cycles of

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[77] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1879.6.10; 1879.6.20; 1879.6.30.
[78] Ibid, 1882.11.29.

propitious and unpropitious fortune directed him to seek variation in the face of uncertainty in the hope that favorable conditions for one product might offset potential problems in another. Sim therefore resisted the temptation to shift more of his land to rice cultivation to take advantage of higher prices. If anything, Sim actually increased the diversity of his farming over the years. In the early 1880s, Sim tried his hand at salt farming but struggled to make a profit. Throughout his diary Sim relied upon pine branches as a source of additional income, but from the 1890s Sim began weaving straw shoes and rush mats to sell in local markets. During the winter of 1896, for example, Sim sold between 40 to 50 pairs of straw shoes to earn around 5 *yang*, enough to make an overcoat (*turumagi*).[79] From the 1890s, Sim also began to regularly cultivate watermelons and tobacco in the summer months, and during the 1900s and 1910s Sim purchased a number of fruit trees (pear, persimmon, and jujube). In these activities, Sim's pursuit of diverse agriculture remained consistent throughout his life. Although from the outside Sim's farming decisions may have appeared the product of unthinking, conservative habit, they were in fact a calculated decision made in relation to the ongoing patterns of change in local markets.

VI. Conclusion: Reconsidering Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's Place in History

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn lived within a period of immense change. But, as Sim's response to the impact of increased international trade demonstrates, Sim judged changes to the rural economy not just by the content of changes (the export or import of rice) but against the standards of his everyday life (his expectations of seasonal price variations). Though it is tempting to look for a dramatic response to follow a dramatic change, such as the opening

[79] Ibid, 1897.3.9.

of Korean ports or annexation, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary offers an alternative example which affords insight into the dynamics that shaped a range of responses to the changes in rural society. Throughout his life, Sim's daily schedule largely remained the same. Sim paid constant attention to the weather, checking for signs of drought, rain, or wind that might damage his crops. Year in and year out, he tilled, planted, transplanted, weeded, and harvested the crops in his fields. En route to his various farming locations, Sim attended markets, meetings, and visited friends and family. Rather than radically embracing the new or rejecting it outright, Sim continued to live and farm as he knew best, absorbing and interpreting changes within the framework of his previous experience.

Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary is a rich primary source that makes it possible to draw a detailed portrait of the everyday life of a farmer in the Ulsan region. It also serves as a challenge to existing accounts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Korean history. Seen from the perspective of an ordinary farmer, certain long-held assumptions about the impact of the opening of Korean ports or the processes of annexation require additional qualification. For Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, the simple expansion of the rice trade between Japan and Korea was less problematic than was the subsequent effect that such trade had on seasonal price trends and their relation to weather and harvest patterns. Similarly, the political events taking place in the capital only acquired significance for Sim within the changes taking place in Ulsan. Even though rice prices rose and fell, and new organizations appeared in Ulsan's town center, for the most part this did not prevent Sim from maintaining his existing habits; Sim farmed the same

fields, met the same set of acquaintances in the same set of organizations, and judged it all by the same worldview that he developed throughout the course of his life.

How representative is the experience of one man? To be sure, it would be unreasonable to assume that everyone shared Sim's theory of price cycles or felt the effects of the new rice trade in the same way. Indeed, it was a point of pride for Sim that his diary enabled him an alternative perspective to that offered by the folk sayings upon which other farmers apparently relied. But one can feasibly assume that the pressures facing Sim were similar to those facing other farmers. Where Sim suffered from the weakening of seasonal price cycles or from a lack of information about the new factors that came to influence the rural economy, then so too did many other farmers beside him. The question of who did, or did not, gain access to the new information on market prices through newspapers and trade associations was surely as meaningful to farmers across Korea and not just Sim Wŏn'gwŏn alone.

But, even beyond the aspects of Sim's life that can be generalized, a further consideration lies in the areas of Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's experience of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that do *not* match perfectly with typical accounts of the same period. The private, personal experience recorded in any diary could never replicate exactly accounts based on official sources and political documents. In its very divergence from official narratives, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary highlights the convoluted process by which government policies translated into the events experienced by farmers. If Sim did not mention the central government politics or the colonial government, it was not because their decisions had no impact on his livelihood. Rather, the decisions of the central government to open ports or introduce new financial organizations were mediated

through a series of offices, organizations, and individual actions, only the culmination of which was visible to Sim.

Paradoxically, the scarcity of reference within Sim's diary to Korea's annexation and the Japanese empire demonstrates the necessity to analyze in detail the colonial government, its policies, and the methods it used to implement them. As Sim's example shows, the context of government policy and the manner of its implementation mattered greatly in how individual farmers interpreted its impact upon their lives. If Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's livelihood and worldview, as represented within his diary, were not substantially affected by encroaching Japanese imperialism, then to understand how this was the case—as well as the question of who was affected, when, where, and in what manner—one must first re-examine the colonial government itself.

CHAPTER 3:
GOVERNMENT BY ASSOCIATION: SEMI-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COLONIAL AGRICULTURAL POLICY

In the eyes of colonial administrators, Korea was an agricultural nation. Numerous colonial reports introduced agriculture as Korea's most important industry, asserting its position as the foundation of the nation (Ja. *kokuhon*) since time immemorial.[1] As much as these claims were statements of fact—agriculture was indeed the major industry in Korea, with upwards of two-thirds of the population engaged in agriculture throughout the colonial period[2]—they were also statements of intent. For many colonial officials, Korea's value to the Japanese empire lay precisely in its status as an agricultural nation, and bureaucrats developed a series of policies to capitalize on Korean agriculture, ranging from the encouragement of settler farmers to programs aiming to increase the export of agricultural goods to Japan.[3] Despite frequent reference to Korea's long agricultural history, colonial agricultural policies envisioned great changes for the rural economy.

This chapter focuses on the question of how the colonial government attempted to put its ambitions into practice, examining both colonial agricultural policies and the

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[1] Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen sōtokufu shisei nenpō* (Keijō: multiple years); Chōsen sōtokufu nōrinkyoku, *Chōsen no nōgyō* (Keijō: 1921), 1.
[2] Sang Chul Suh, *Growth and Structural Changes*, 52.
[3] On various Japanese attempts to profit from Korea as a colony, see Nōshōmushō nōmukyoku, *Chōsen nōgyō gaisetsu* (Tokyo: 1910); Karl Moskowitz, "The Creation of the Oriental Development Company: Japanese Illusions Meet Korean Reality," *Occasional Papers on Korea* 2 (1974): 73-121; Peter Duus, "Economic Dimensions of Meiji Imperialism: The Case of Korea, 1895-1910" in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 128-71; Yi Sangsun, "20C hajime Nihon shokuminchi ni okeru keizai seisaku: Chōsen sanmai zōshoku keikaku wo chūsin ni," *Nihon bunka gakuhō* 6 (1999): 553-78; Chŏng Yŏnt'ae, *Singmin kwŏllyŏk kwa Han'guk nongŏp*.

various organizations established to implement them. In particular, this chapter traces the growth of a series of semi-governmental organizations (generally termed associations, Ko. *chohap*; Ja. *kumiai*) and their functions during colonial campaigns for cotton and rice production. Initially, semi-governmental organizations played a crucial role in the construction of distribution networks for seeds, capital, and technical expertise in support of colonial goals. At the same time, the government used the associations to correct perceived problems in the rural economy, redirecting sales routes and, from the 1930s onwards, attempting to control price and production levels in the face of the global agricultural crisis, the great depression, and the demands of wartime mobilization. Although the colonial government's policy imperatives changed over time, this chapter demonstrates how the semi-governmental organizations provided a consistent, yet malleable, network through which the government attempted to intervene in the rural economy.

Yet, if the associations were a major tool of colonial agricultural policy, an examination of their activities reveals the limits of the colonial government's reach as much as it does its ambition. The colonial government's desire to boost production, control prices, and influence farmers' behavior could only succeed through the practical work of the associations within local areas. As this chapter examines the work of the associations, it also therefore reveals the factors that shaped the colonial influence on agricultural production. The organization of the associations, how they accepted or rejected members, and the activities that they engaged in directly affected the impact of colonial policies. In detailing the organizational infrastructure that underpinned colonial policy, this chapter therefore lays the foundation to understand how Koreans encountered

and interpreted the state within their daily lives, questions which will be explored in Chapters Four and Five respectively.

I. Inducing Innovation: The Organizational Infrastructure of Colonial Agriculture

To achieve its agricultural ambitions, the colonial government established an infrastructure that would have been familiar to many outside observers. From the mid-nineteenth century, governments around the world began to promote the new field of agricultural science through the systematic funding of agricultural research stations. Just fifty years after the founding of the first such station in Germany in 1851, over 776 agricultural experiment stations and similar institutions had been established in 47 countries and colonial territories, many of which received public funding.[4] Compared to earlier government support for agricultural technology, where research was funded on an ad hoc and limited basis, the new agricultural research stations emerged at the forefront of national programs that aimed to facilitate the advance and widespread diffusion of scientific knowledge about agriculture. Concurrent to the growth of agricultural research stations, governments also fashioned various networks to disseminate knowledge of scientifically tested crops and techniques through designated schools, colleges, publications, lectures, exhibitions, and visits from agricultural technicians.[5] In Korea too,

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[4] A. C. True and V. A. Clark, *The Agricultural Experiment Stations in the United States*, bulletin no. 80, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Experiment Stations (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900); A. C. True and D. J. Crosby, *Agricultural Experiment Stations in Foreign Countries*, bulletin no. 112, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Experiment Stations (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902); Federico, *Feeding the World*, 105-107.

[5] Harold C. Knoblauch, E. M. Law, and Werner P. Meyer, *State Agricultural Experiment Stations: A History of Research Policy and Procedure*. USDA Miscellaneous Publication No. 904, (Washington, D.C.: 1962); Charles E. Rosenberg, "Science, Technology, and Economic Growth: The Case of the Agricultural Experiment Station Scientist, 1875-1914," *Agricultural History* 45, no. 1 (1971): 1-20; Grantham, "The Shifting Locus of Agricultural Innovation"; Sheingate, *The Rise of the Agricultural Welfare*; Federico, *Feeding the World*, 105-14.

as early as 1884, reformers within the government supported an experimental farm as part of an effort to introduce Western agricultural technology, although the project struggled to achieve results in the face of organizational and technical difficulties.[6]

As Japanese interest in Korea grew through the 1900s, agricultural technology became one arena in which competing political goals clashed. Japanese traders and bureaucrats alike claimed a leading role for themselves in promoting their interpretation of better agriculture. In 1900, Nose Tatsugorō (能勢辰五郎), the Japanese consul in Pusan, drafted an opinion in which he suggested leasing land from the Korean government to open agricultural experiment stations in Chŏlla, Kyŏngsang, and Ch'ungch'ŏng provinces. According to Nose's proposal, Japanese farmers would move to the experiment stations in order to test the cultivation of various crops, providing a model for Korean farmers and eventually stimulating production and trade with Japan.[7] Several years later, in 1903, a federation of Japanese chambers of commerce in Korea petitioned Hayashi Gonsuke (1860–1939, 林権助), the Japanese minister to Korea, to urge that Korea follow the Japanese example in improving agriculture through the establishment of agricultural experiment stations and scientific agriculture.[8]

Whether influenced by the petition or not, the Japanese government shared an interest in the commercial potential of Korean agriculture. Following a brief rivalry with Russia, which was also looking to expand its empirewithin Northeast Asia, Japan claimed

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[6] Kim Yŏngjin and Hong Ŭnmi, "Nongmu mokch'uk sihŏmjang"; Yuh, "Guns, Farms, and Foreign Languages."
[7] "Nichi-kan bōeki shinkō kakuchō ni kansuru ken," September 1, 1900, in *Chu-Han Ilbon kongsagwan kirok*, vol. 14 (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1995).
[8] Oka Yōichi, *Saishin Kankoku jijō: ichi mei Kankoku keizai shishin* (Tokyo: Aoki sūzandō, 1903); Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 35.

de facto control over Korea following the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05), formalizing its dominance in Korea through the establishment of Korea as a protectorate in 1905. Between 1904 and 1905, the (Japanese) Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (*nōshōmushō*) conducted extensive surveys of Korean agricultural production, adding to a body of literature that described local conditions for prospective traders and migrants.[9] In November 1905, the Ministry took a further step in developing plans for a model agricultural farm (Ko. *nongsa mobŏmjang*; Ja. *nōji mohanjō*) in Korea. As the Ministry stated in a report on the project:

> As a means to develop the wealth of Korea and further trade on both sides, the promotion of agriculture is a most urgent task. Based on improvements in farming and livestock, the usage of wastelands, and facilities for irrigation, etc., we can expect great increases in Korean agricultural production, and the most direct route to achieve this goal will be through the establishment of a model agricultural farm.[10]

According to the report, the model farm would carry out experiments in irrigation, sericulture, livestock, horticulture, and general agricultural methods with the goal of producing information on farm management and crops for both farmers and potential entrepreneurs.[11]

Plans for the model farm were intimately related to the politics of the time. Not only did Japanese proposals claim an ever-increasing role for Japan within Korea, but they stood in direct competition to the Korean government's own agricultural administration. Almost simultaneous to the development of the Japanese proposal, the

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[9] The surveys were published in several volumes under the general title *Kankoku tochi nōsan chōsa hōkoku* (Tokyo: Nōshōmushō, 1907). Examples of additional surveys of Korea include, Nōshōmushō, nōmukyoku, *Kankoku shucchō fukumeisho* (Tokyo: 1901); *Saishin Kankoku jijō*; Chang Yongkyŏng and Hŏ Yŏngran, "Ilche ŭi singminji 'chosa saŏp' kwa Chosŏn ch'ongdokpu chungch'uwŏn chosa saryo," survey for Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 2001; Hŏ Yŏngnan, "Singminji kugwan chosa ŭi mokjŏk kwa silt'ae: 'sijang chosa' rŭl chungsim ŭro," *Sahak yŏn'gu* 86 (2007): 211-46.
[10] "Kankoku nōji mohanjō secchi riyū," *Nihon gaikō bunsho* vol. 38-1 (Tokyo: Gaimushō, 1978), 877.
[11] Ibid.

Korean Ministry of Education announced its own intention to establish an agricultural experiment station (Ko. *nongsa shihŏmjang*; Ja. *nōji shikenjō*) attached to an industrial and agricultural school at Ttuksŏm, to the east of Seoul. Operating within the grounds of the school, the station would research agricultural techniques and educate students on the best methods as part of a plan to "promote the national interest."[12] Any overlap between the two proposals was soon quashed, however, as Japan secured political authority over Korea as a protectorate. In short order the Japanese-appointed protectorate administration withdrew support for the Ttuksŏm experiment station on the grounds of poor soil quality, shifting to favor Japanese proposals for a farm in Suwŏn instead. In 1906 control of the farm at Suwŏn passed to the (Korean) Ministry of Agriculture, Trade and Industry (Ko. *nongsangkongbu*; Ja. *nōshōkōbu*) where it continued as a model industrial farm (Ko. *kwŏnŏp mobŏmjang*; Ja. *kangyō mohanjō*; hereafter, model farm).[13] The model farm,

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[12] "Nonghak sijang," *Taehan maeil sinbo*, November 3, 1905; Ch'ingnyŏng che-60 ho, "Nongsanggong hakkyo pujok nongsa sihŏmjang kwanse," in *Hanmal kŭndae pŏmnyŏng charyojip*, vol. 4, (Seoul: Taehan Min'guk Kukhoe Tosŏgwan, 1970), 452-53; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 48-49.

[13] Kankoku shisei kaizen ni kansuru kyōgikai, no. 3, April 9, 1906; *Kojong sillok*, 1906.5.31; "Ch'ingnyŏng che-17 ho: kwŏnŏp mobŏmjang kwanje," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, March 27, 1907; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 48-49.

The significance of the distinction between "model industrial farm" (Ko. *kwŏn'ŏp mobŏmjang*; Ja. *kangyō mohanjō*) and agricultural experiment station (Ko. *nong'ŏp sihŏmjang*; Ja. *nōji shikenjō*) is open to interpretation. On a basic level, the agricultural experiment stations developed new seeds and farming methods while the model industrial farm focused on testing agricultural conditions in Korea in order to find the most suitable crops and methods from already-known seed varieties and agricultural techniques. Under the colonial system, with many of its staff receiving training in Japanese schools and universities, the model farm frequently (though not always) relied upon Japanese cultivars and farming methods, leading some scholars to conclude that the model industrial farm was an attempt to "Japanize" (*Ilbonhwa*) Korean farming and destroy traditional practices. Although the model farm certainly directed its activities toward colonial priorities and believed in the general superiority of Japanese agriculture, this view ignores the international dimension of agricultural science. The model farm did not hesitate to promote knowledge and cultivars from other regions if they proved advantageous, as in the promotion of American upland cotton seeds, and agricultural technicians published their research in German and English in dialogue with a global community of agricultural scientists. Moreover, this argument relies upon a highly problematic conception of nationally bounded technologies and assumptions of the genetic purity of Korean flora and fauna. U Taehyŏng supplies a more balanced interpretation, arguing that the model industrial farm's activities were guided by a desire to increase productivity at minimum cost. Thus, only when productivity gains from the direct transfer of already-known seed varieties were exhausted did the colonial government begin to fund comprehensive research into new varieties within Korea, upgrading the status of the model

converted to an agricultural experiment station in 1929, remained the centerpiece of the colonial government's agricultural infrastructure throughout the colonial period.

Compared to previous efforts to promote agriculture, the model farm embodied a greater ambition in both scale and function. The farm at Suwŏn was not an isolated facility, but oversaw multiple branch farms and offices throughout the country (see Table 3.1). Under the direction of Honda Kōsuke (1864–1930, 本田幸介), the inaugural director of the Suwŏn model farm, each site employed numerous agricultural technicians who researched local soil and climate conditions and conducted experiments on various crops. From 1908, the government also established seed stations (Ko. *chongmyojang*; Ja. *shubyōjō*) to support the model farm's activities in each province.[14] Between the two, the model farm and the seed stations worked to select and provide a supply of "improved" (Ko. *kaeryang*; Ja. *kairyō*) seeds and livestock varieties in support of government policies to increase production.

In addition to research, a second major task of the model farm was to increase public awareness of the new seeds and techniques it developed. Of the farm's four official objectives, two explicitly concerned outreach to farmers:

1. To carry out model surveys and tests as a resource for the development and improvement of industry;
2. To survey production, and to analyze and assess materials necessary for industry;
3. To distribute seeds, seedlings, silkworm eggs, breeding poultry, and stud livestock;
4. To offer guidance, communication, and lectures on industry.[15]

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industrial farm to an agricultural experiment station in 1929. On these arguments, see Kim Tohyŏng, "Kwŏnŏp mobŏmjang ŭi sikminji nong'ŏp chibae," *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndaesa yŏn'gu* 3 (1995): 139-206; Hong Kŭmsu, "Ilche sidae sinp'umjong pyŏ ŭi toip kwa pogŭp," *Taehan chiri hakhoeji* 1 (2003): 48-69; U Taehyŏng, "Ilcheha Chosŏn esŏ ŭi migok kisul chŏngch'aek ŭi chŏn'gae: isik esŏ yukjong ŭro," *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndaesa yŏn'gu* 38 (2006): 72-107.

[14] Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen sōtokufu shisei nenpō*, 1910 edition (Keijō: 1912), 277, 278; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 57, 58.

[15] "Ch'ingnyŏng che-17 ho: kwŏnŏp mobŏmjang kwanje."

Table 3.1: Location and function of model farm and branch farms, 1906–1944

Location and original title	Year founded	Year closed	Notes
Suwŏn model industrial farm	1906		School of agriculture and forestry, from 1906. Site of silkworm egg manufacturing site from 1913, renamed as sericulture test site in 1917. Women's sericulture training center from 1914. Upgraded to agriculture experiment station in 1929.
Mokp'o branch office	1906		Provisional cotton cultivation site, 1908-1910. Upgraded to branch farm in 1910. Renamed Mokp'o cotton cultivation branch farm in 1917.
Ttuksŏm model horticultural farm	1906	1924	Former planned agricultural experiment station. Upgraded to branch farm in 1910, Renamed Ttuksŏm horticultural branch farm in 1917.
Kunsan experiment site	1907	1909	Upgraded to branch office in 1908.
Pyŏngyang branch office	1908	1914	
Taegu branch office	1908	1914	
Yongsan branch farm	1910	1914	Site of women's sericulture training center (transferred to Suwŏn in 1914)
Wŏnsan branch office	1912	1923	Upgraded to Tŏgwŏn branch farm in 1914. Renamed Tŏgwŏn horticultural branch farm in 1917.
Sep'o sheep farm	1913	1924	Renamed Sep'o branch office in 1914. Upgraded to sheep-rearing branch farm in 1917.
Nangok horse-rearing site	1916	1929	Upgraded to Nangok horse-rearing branch farm in 1917.
(Sariwŏn) Western Korea branch farm	1920		Site of South P'yŏngan provincial sugar beet nursery from 1925.
Yonggang cotton cultivation branch office	1920	1932	
(Iri) Southern Korea branch farm	1930		
Kimje land reclamation branch office	1930		
(Ch'aryonggwan) Sericulture branch office	1930		
(Poch'ŏn-bo) Northern Korea branch farm	1931		
Provincial branch farms	1932		Upgraded from former provincial seed stations.
Yonggang cotton cultivation branch farm	1933		

Source: Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*.

Accordingly, several of the model farm's branches developed secondary facilities, such as a school of agriculture and forestry at Suwŏn, a sericulture training center for girls at Yongsan, and a cotton spinning factory at Mokp'o. The agricultural technicians employed at the farms also played a role in disseminating scientific knowledge about agriculture within their local area. Agricultural technicians held lectures and product fairs (Ko. *p'ump'yŏnghoe*; Ja. *hinpyōkai*) to educate farmers about new varieties of crops and how best to produce them.[16] Technicians also provided instruction on farming methods, either through the direct management of model fields or through "guidance" (Ko. *chido*; Ja. *shidō*) offered to various farmers' organizations and selected villages.[17]

In all of these activities, the technicians worked as agents of the colonial state. In most cases the technicians were employed by the government, either through the model farm, the seed stations, or local government offices (generally at the provincial or county level). Provincial technicians attended annual meetings in the capital where they shared reports on their activities, learned of new policies and targets, and, occasionally, received admonition from their superiors for failing to follow government-compiled agricultural manuals with sufficient care.[18] Similar meetings for technicians were replicated within each region and according to agricultural specialization, maintaining an organized system

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[16] "Kaku-dō no tanki nōji kōshūkai," *Chōsen nōkaihō* (hereafter, *CNH*) 7, no. 9 (1912): 57; "Keijō fugai yon kun rengō nōsanbutsu hinpyōkai," *CNH* 7, no. 12 (1912): 59-60; "Zenra hokudō nōsan hinpyōkai jōkyō," *CNH* 8, no. 2 (1913): 68-69; "Keinan [Kyŏngnam] nōji kōshūkai jōkyō," *CNH* 9, no. 4 (1914): 67; "Keinan beikoku chōseihō denshū jōkyō," *CNH* 11, no. 3 (1916): 70-71; "Chūhoku jinushi kōshūkai jōkyō," *CNH* 13, no. 12 (1918): 55; Keishō hoku-dō [Kyŏngsangbukto], *Mensaku kōshūkairoku* (Taikyū [Taegu]: 1918).

[17] "Daisankai nōgyō gijutsukan kaigi no ketsugi jikō," *CNH* 6, no. 1 (1911): 27-34; "Junten [Sunch'ŏn] Kōyō [Kwangyang] chihō no nōji kairyō," *CNH* 6, no.6 (1911); 62, 63; "Zennan Muan-kun mensaku kumiai jōkyō," *CNH* 9, no. 11 (1914): 61; "Yūryō hinshu saibai seiseki," *CNH* 10, no. 5 (1915): 41-44; "Taishō 4-nen yūryō hinshu fukyū jōkyō," *CNH* 12, no. 2 (1917): 65.

[18] "Nōgyō gijutsukan kaigi," *CNH* 11, no. 1 (1916): 97-99; "Nongŏp kisulgwan hoedong," *CNH* 12, no. 1 (1917): 87.

among the technicians to manage the diffusion of state-sanctioned agricultural knowledge.[19]

Nevertheless, despite the government's ambition to create a comprehensive state system to promote its agricultural policies, the model farms, seed stations, and agricultural technicians were only one element within a larger network of organizations that worked to transform Korean agriculture. For one thing, the colonial government's pursuit of financial independence led it to minimize expenditures from the central treasury, including those associated with agricultural research.[20] Immediately following the formal annexation of Korea the central government transferred control over, and with it the financial responsibility for, the seed stations to their respective provincial governments.[21] As shown in Figure 3.1, throughout the first decade of colonial rule an ever greater proportion of government spending on agriculture was sourced from local expenses (funded by local surcharges on taxation) over funds provided by the central government.

Perhaps even more significant than financial concerns, though, was the colonial government's desire to engage the population. In Japan, newly established agricultural organizations such as the industrial associations (Ja. *sangyō kumiai*) and agricultural

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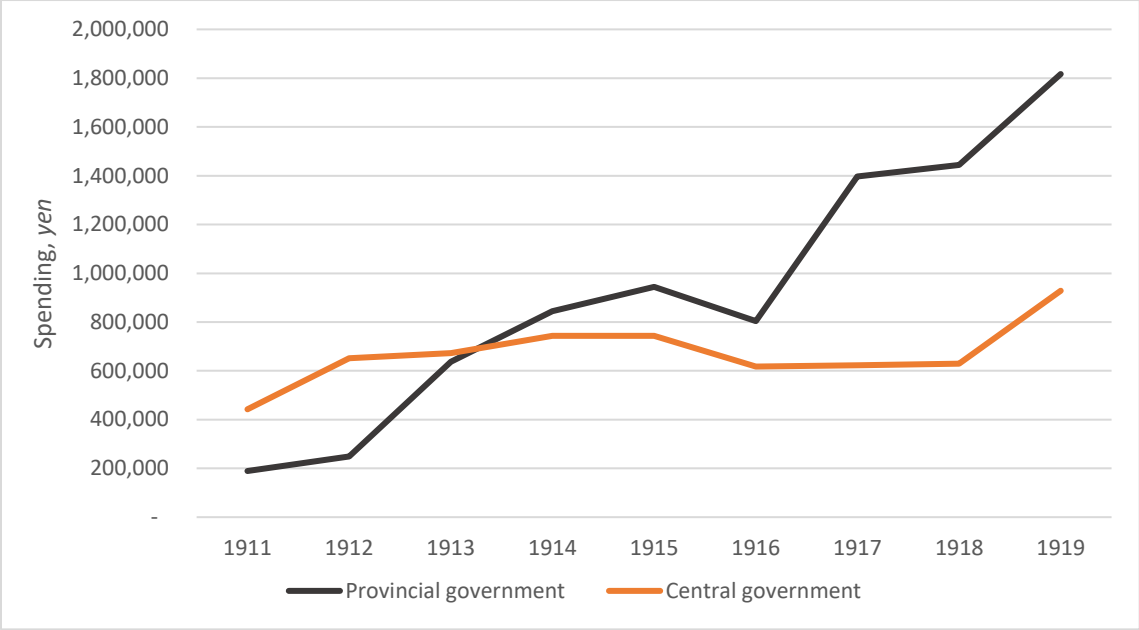
[19] "Mokuho ni okeru nōgyō gijutsukan kyōgikai no kaisai," *CNH* 4, no. 2 (1910): 52; "Heinan [P'yŏngnam] nōringyō gijutsuin kyōtei jikō," *CNH* 13, no. 9 (1918): 61.

[20] The colonial government ran continuous deficits throughout its rule of Korea, but financial pressures were particularly acute during the first decade of colonial rule as the government attempted to reduce its dependence on transfers from Japan. After the introduction of "cultural rule" (Ko. *munhwa chŏngch'i*: Ja. *bunka seiji*), spending increased and the goal of financial independence was relaxed somewhat, although it was never abandoned entirely. See, Mitsuhiko Kimura, "Public Finance in Korea under Japanese Rule: Deficit in the Colonial Account and Colonial Taxation," *Explorations in Economic History* 26 (1989): 285-310; "Chōsen zaisei no dokuritsu keikaku," *Chōsen sōtokufu geppō* 4, no. 8 (1914): 1-3; Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen tōchi sannenkan seiseki* (Keijō: 1914).

[21] A portion of the expenses continued to come from the central treasury, but the remaining costs were newly funded through local taxes. Chŏsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen sōtokufu shisei nenpō* (Keijō: 1910), 63-69, 277, 278.

Figure 3.1: Sources of government spending on agriculture, 1910–1919



Source: Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 24-27.

associations (Ja. *nōkai*) formed a crucial link between farmers, government projects, and the formal state infrastructure of agricultural experiment stations and local administrative offices. Although designed as interest groups to represent local residents (especially landowners) engaged in agriculture and other industries, the Japanese government played a significant role in the establishment of the associations, often placing local government officials in leadership positions. Unlike alternative forms of village organization that might be formed on the initiative of farmers themselves, this type of semi-governmental organization offered an effective mechanism for the state to incorporate local populations into national campaigns, as well as an avenue for farmers to access resources—in the form of information, credit, or market networks—beyond the boundaries of their individual villages.[22]

[22] On the role of village-level, semi-governmental organizations in Japan, see Kenneth B. Pyle, "The Technology of Japanese Nationalism: The Local Improvement Movement, 1900-1918," *Journal of Asian*

From the 1900s, Japanese settlers and bureaucrats replicated familiar agricultural organizations as they assumed prominent roles within Korea. Partially emerging from settler community efforts at self-management, following Korea's establishment as a protectorate, Japanese officials within the Korean government also began to promote the creation of semi-governmental organizations at the national level as part of their wider administrative program.[23] Generally termed "associations" (Ko. *chohap*; Ja. *kumiai*), the new organizations were established according to industry with different associations for the management of general agriculture, finance, irrigation, sericulture, cotton production, forestry, fishing, livestock, and the trade and manufacturing of several "important" products (as designated by the government), among many others. Three organizations in particular played a central role in the subsequent implementation of agricultural policies: the irrigation associations (Ko. *suri chohap*; Ja. *suiri kumiai*), established in 1906 to facilitate investment in large-scale irrigation projects; the financial associations (Ko. *kŭmyung chohap*; Ja. *kin'yū kumiai*), which served as small-scale rural banks, modelled on the German Raifeissen cooperatives; and the Korean agricultural association (Ko. *Chosŏn nonghoe*; Ja. *Chōsen nōkai*; hereafter agricultural association), the major interest group for farmers which, in 1926, would eventually take over the activities of several other agriculture-related associations, including among them the cotton associations (Ko. *myŏnjak chohap*; Ja. *mensaku kumiai*).[24]

Studies 33, no. 1 (1973): 51-65; Penelope Francks, *Technology and Agricultural Development in Pre-War Japan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Kerry Smith, *A Time of Crisis: Japan, the Great Depression, and Rural Revitalization* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001); Sheingate, *The Rise of the Agricultural Welfare*; Matsuda Shinobu, *Keitō nōkai to kindai Nihon, 1900-1943* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 2012).

[23] On self-management in early settler communities, see Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*, 68-76.

[24] For details on other semi-governmental organizations established under the colonial government (namely, hygiene associations and forestry associations), see also Todd A. Henry, *Assimilating Seoul:*

The degree and form of government involvement varied with each type of association. At the lowest end of the spectrum, irrigation and trade associations could be formed at the government's approval of the request of a simple majority of landowners or tradesmen within a particular district. Although the central government published some regulations outlining the scope of each associations' activities—mainly regarding the handling of finances, personnel and reporting requirements, and the associations' legal ability to enforce common production standards and fees among its members[25]—the irrigation and trade associations were designed to rely upon the motivations of the local population. For this reason, variation among irrigation projects was a key characteristic of the early irrigation associations. Although the colonial government had hoped that the irrigation associations would be a vehicle for farmers to collectively borrow and invest in new, large-scale irrigation facilities, several of the early irrigation associations were formed around existing weirs and reservoirs.[26] The size of irrigation projects also varied widely, with areas ranging from 312 *chŏngbo* at the Magup'yŏng Irrigation Association

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Japanese Rule and the Politics of Public Space in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 130-167; David A. Fedman, "The Saw and the Seed: Japanese Forestry in Colonial Korea, 1895-1945," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, Stanford University, 2015.
Landlord associations (Ko. *chijuhoe*; Ja. *jinushikai*) have also received particular attention in previous research, thanks in part to the popularity of class-based analysis of colonial rural society. Nonetheless, by 1920 only 124 landlord associations existed throughout Korea, with only one in South Chŏlla province—a major agricultural region. Given the irregularity of landlord associations they will not be discussed here. Due to their similarity in activities, however, the landlord associations may be broadly understood as a sub-unit of the agricultural associations. In 1926, the landlord associations were merged into the county agricultural associations along with other industry-specific groups. On the landlord associations, see Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi* (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha, 1942), 60-67.

[25] "Suri chohap ŭi chorye," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, March 27, 1906; "Suri chohap ŭi pojo," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, June 15, 1909; "Suri saŏp kyehoek," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, June 28, 1909; "Dōgyō kumiai ni kansuru ken," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 378, November 30, 1911; "Chōsen jūyō bussan dōgyō kumiai rei," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 883, July 13, 1915; "Jūyō bussan oyobi missetsu no kankei wo yū suru gyō no shurui no nintei ni kansuru ken," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 1146, May 31, 1916.

[26] The Okku West Irrigation Association, for example, which was established in 1908 by a local landlord, Kim Sanghŭi, based its irrigation plans on two existing weirs. Chŏnbuk nongji kaeryang chohap, *Chŏnbuk nongjo-70 nyŏnsa* (1978).

in South Ch'ungch'ŏng province to 6,861 *chŏngbo* at the Taechŏng Irrigation Association in North P'yŏngan province.[27] Indeed, the formation of irrigation associations rested so heavily on farmers' own desire to organize that few were organized during the early years of colonial rule. By 1917, ten years after their introduction, only 12 irrigation associations were operating throughout the country—a situation that the colonial government would attempt to remedy through additional subsidies and pressure to form irrigation associations from local government officials in the 1920s.

Other associations maintained closer ties with the government in their activities. Introduced in 1907 as part of a wide-ranging reorganization of the financial system, the Ministry of Finance carefully planned the location of each new finanical association and provided each with an initial capital of 10,000 *yen*, which the associations lent out to middle- and lower-class farmers whose financial needs fell outside of the scope of the mainstream banks. Alongside their work providing low-interest loans and basic banking services, the government intended the financial associations to play a central role in the rural economy. In this capacity, the associations also organized warehouse services for their members, facilitated the bulk purchase and sale of products, and promoted new agricultural techniques by hosting lectures from agricultural technicians and raising awareness about new seed varieties and crops developed at the model farms.[28] The

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[27] Data on irrigation associations is taken from Hŏ Suyŏl, ed., *Kukka kirogwŏn ilche munsŏ haeje: Suri chohap p'yŏn* (Taejŏn: Haengjŏng Anjŏnbu Kukka Kirogwŏn, 2009). For more on the variation among different irrigation associations, see also Yi Yŏnghun, Chang Siwŏn, Miyajima Hiroshi and Matsumoto Takenori, *Kŭndae Chosŏn suri chohap yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1992); U Taehyŏng, "Ilcheha Man'gyŏng-gang yuyŏk suri chohap yŏn'gu," in Hong Sŏngch'an et al., *Ilcheha Man'gyŏng-gang yuyŏk ŭi sahoesa: suri chohap, chijuje, chiyŏk chŏngch'i* (Seoul: Hyean, 2006), 27-64.

[28] "Kwŏnŏp mobŏm sihŏm," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, March 26, 1908; "Nongsa kisu paech'i," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, March 27, 1909; "Kisulkwan pich'i," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, June 12, 1909; "Chihō kin'yū kumiai he hiryō haifu," *Kankoku chūō nōkaihō* [hereafter, *KCNH*] 3, no. 5 (1909): 37-38; "Kakuchi suitō sōsinriki no

government appointed a director to each association to oversee its work, although maintaining an active membership was an important feature of the financial associations with many local elites and minor administrative officials, such as township heads, also taking on prominent leadership roles.[29] Ten years after the establishment of the first finanical association at Kwangju in 1907, the number of associations had risen to 260 with a total membership of 120,216.[30]

Like the finanical associations, the agricultural associations also relied upon a mixture of prominent farmers and government officials to enhance its position as the dominant agricultural interest group in Korea. Originally founded as a society for emigrant farmers in 1906, the agricultural association swiftly moved to recruit Korean members as support from the Protectorate administration helped it to eclipse its rivals.[31] While the central government did not actively assign leaders to the branches of the agricultural association, as in Japan local magistrates and township heads frequently took prominent roles within the association alongside local entrepreneurs and farmers. The central government subsidized the publication of a monthly journal, distributed to association members, that contained a wealth of articles in both Korean and Japanese on

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seiseki," *KCNH* 4, no. 4 (1909): 12-13; Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chihō kin'yū kumiai riji kaidō tōsinsho* (Keijō: 1915).

[29] Initially, the role of director was reserved for Japanese administrators, although from the 1920s a growing number of Koreans joined their ranks. As a teacher in a technical college wrote in a journal of local administration in 1929, the financial associations were one of the few employment options for Korean graduates who faced discirimination in many other spheres. Pak Chunho, "Gakkō sotsugyōsei no hakeguchi wo kangaeyo: toku ni kin'yū kumiai hōmen he no kibō," *Chōsen chihō gyōsei*, April 1929, 51-56.

[30] Chōsen sōtokufu zaimukyoku, *Kin'yū kumiai gaikyō* (Keijō: 1921).

[31] Originally known as the Korean Central Agricultural Association (Ja. *Kankoku chūō nōkai*), the association was renamed the Korean Agricultural Association (Ko. *Chosŏn nonghoe*; Ja. *Chōsen nōkai*) in 1910. At the time of its founding, the agricultural association competed among several other farmers' organizations founded by other émigré farmers and the Korean government alike. Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 3-9; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 36-40, 114-16; Kim Yongdal, *Ilche ŭi nongŏp chŏngch'aek kwa Chosŏn nonghoe* (Seoul: Hyean, 2003), 40-54.

such topics as new agricultural methods and crops; current events; regional, national and international statistics and reports; and information about government campaigns, laws, and new regulations concerning agriculture.[32] The association opened branches in the major agricultural regions, reaching a total of thirteen branch associations in 1910, each of which hosted periodic lectures from agricultural technicians and provided members a connection to government projects and the latest developments from the model farms.[33] Unlike its Japanese counterpart, membership in the Korean agricultural assocation was voluntary until 1926, helping the group to maintain the character of an interest group despite its ties to the government. For ambitious, literate farmers who could afford the 1.8 *yen* per year membership fee, the agricultural association offered privileged access to information about opportunities to test new seed varieties, government initiatives, and even recruitment drives for other state-sponsored organizations such as the financial associations.[34]

Associations proliferated under colonial rule. Despite the slow expansion of the irrigation associations, by 1920 there were 400 financial associations spread across the country with a total of 228,247 members. By the following year a branch of the

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[32] Prior to 1910, the association published its journal under the title *Bulletin of the Central Korean Agricultural Association* (Ko. *Han'guk chungang nonghoebo*; Ja. *Kankoku chūō nōkaihō*). The title was changed to *Chōsen nōkaihō* following annexation.

[33] The number of associations would remain relatively constant (minor changes saw branches merging and opening through the 1910s until there was one branch per province) until the major expansion of the agricultural association to include county-level associations in 1926.

[34] "Kangyō mohanjō no shushi haifu," *KCNH* 2, no. 1 (1908): 47; "Chihō kin'yū kumiai no zōsetsu," *CNH* 4, no. 6 (1910): 22, 23; Kim Yongdal, *Ilche ŭi nongŏp*, 142-44.
1.8 *yen* was the basic membership fee, and wealthier farmers had the option of paying 5 *yen* per year for "special membership," which brought additional voting privileges within the agricultural association. In 1926, after the expansion of the agricultural association to include county-level associations, membership fees were assessed as a nominal fee (within 30 *sen*) and a charge proportional to members' land tax liability (within 7 percent). "Hoewŏn mojip," *KCNH* 1, no. 6 (1907): Korean appendix, 8; "Chōsen nōkai rei shikō kisoku," *CNH* 21, no. 2 (1926): appendix, 3-8.

agricultural association had also been established in each province, with hundreds of additional cotton, sericulture, and livestock associations dedicated to the promotion of industry-specific activities operating in counties throughout Korea.[35] Taken together, the financial, irrigation, agricultural, and other associations formed a network of semi-governmental organizations that provided a focus for the government to target favored industries, and to sponsor particular activities among the rural population.

In all cases, the colonial government regulated and limited the activities of the semi-governmental organizations. Freedom of association was not guaranteed, and only organizations that complemented colonial priorities received the approval of the colonial government. Nonetheless, the semi-governmental organizations were more than the simple extension of the central government into the countryside. The incorporation of private interests was an essential feature of each of the associations mentioned here. Groups whose interests aligned with colonial policies—be it landlords looking to invest in irrigation or farmers seeking wealth in the sericulture business—benefitted from not only the sanction of the colonial state but also the material support provided through the various associations. Even if farmers did not sympathize with the wider objectives of the colonial government, membership in an association could still offer farmers important resources or an avenue for influence in local politics. For its part, in exchange for authorizing a limited degree of autonomy within the associations, the central government gained a method of interaction with the population which minimized the burden on its bureaucratic and finanical resources. To understand how this dynamic functioned in the

[35] For precise numbers for each of the major industry-specific associations and their membership, see Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*.

implementation of colonial policies, government campaigns for two of the most important colonial crops—cotton and rice—will now be examined.

II. Enacting Colonial Policies 1: Cotton (1910s-1920s)

Cotton was an important target of agricultural policy throughout the colonial period. In Japan, the dramatic growth of the textile industry fueled imports of raw cotton, especially after the removal of import tariffs in 1896.[36] But, despite the promise of textile manufacturing as a source of wealth and as an industry in which Japanese producers might compete against western firms, Japanese politicians feared a new dependence on the British empire in the market for raw cotton as much of Japan's imported cotton came from a small number of countries, with over half of raw cotton imported from British India.[37] It was with these concerns in mind that politicians and bureaucrats began to investigate Korea as an alternative source of cotton for Japanese industry. Over the decades, this desire for cotton would lead to the rise of an organizational and institutional infrastructure that fundamentally changed the way that farmers produced and marketed cotton in Korea.

From the outset, Japanese commercial interest in Korean cotton was buttressed with political support. In 1902, Wakamatsu Usaburō (1869–1953, 若松兎三郎) first began

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[36] W. Miles Fletcher, "The Japan Spinners Association: Creating Industrial Policy in Meiji Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 22, no. 1 (1999): 49-75.

[37] In 1910, 63 percent of Japanese imports of raw cotton came from British India, with 23 percent from China, and 9 percent from the United States. Restrictions on the import of cotton from British India as a result of changes to Indian currency standards in 1916 only increased Japanese interest in Korea as an alternative source of raw cotton. "Nihon no bōsekigyō to Kankoku mensaku kakuchō no kyūmu," *CNH* 4, no. 4 (1910): 52-53; Mokuho shōgyō kaigisho uchi rikuchimen saibai jū shūnen kinenkai, *Rikuchimen saibai enkakushi* (Mokuho: 1917), 1-29; Dai-Nihon bōseki rengōkai, *Nihon mengyō tōkei* (Tokyo: 1921); Chŏng An'gi, "Cheguk ŭi nongjŏng, Chosŏn myŏnhwa chŭngsan chŏngch'aek ŭi yŏn'gu: Che-2 ch'a (1919-1928 nyŏn) Chosŏn myŏnjak changnyŏ chŏngch'aek ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Hanil kyŏngsang nonjip* 47 (2010): 141-74. On the global competition for sources of raw cotton at this time, see also Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 340-78.

to experiment with the cultivation of various strains of cotton in his position as the Japanese consul in Mokp'o, a port city in southwestern Korea. Although cotton had been grown in Korea for centuries, the short staple fiber of existing varieties was considered unsuitable for industrialized spinning processes, leading Wakamatsu and others to investigate the viability of alternative strains of cotton.[38] Over the next few years Wakamatsu played a vital role in the promotion of Korea as a source of raw cotton, forming the Society for Cotton Cultivation (Ja. *mensaku saibai kyōkai*) in 1905 which linked Japanese politicians, bureaucrats, and representatives of the spinning industry. After Japan gained control of Korea as a protectorate, Wakamatsu, the Society, and the chamber of commerce of Japanese residents in Mokp'o found additional support for their project, eventually partnering with the Protectorate government to operate a branch of the model farm in Mokp'o dedicated to the cultivation of cotton.[39] After annexation in 1910 the colonial government continued to promote cotton cultivation with the goal of increasing exports to Japan, to which end a series of national cotton promotion plans (1912–1918, 1919–1928, and 1933–1942) introduced detailed targets for the expansion of cotton cultivation (see Figure 3.2).[40]

The colonial government's cotton promotion policies involved three major elements: increasing the general cultivation of cotton; encouraging the cultivation of American upland cotton (*gossypium hirsutum*) over local varieties (*gossypium arboretum*); and increasing the export of cotton. As seen in Figure 3.2, the colonial

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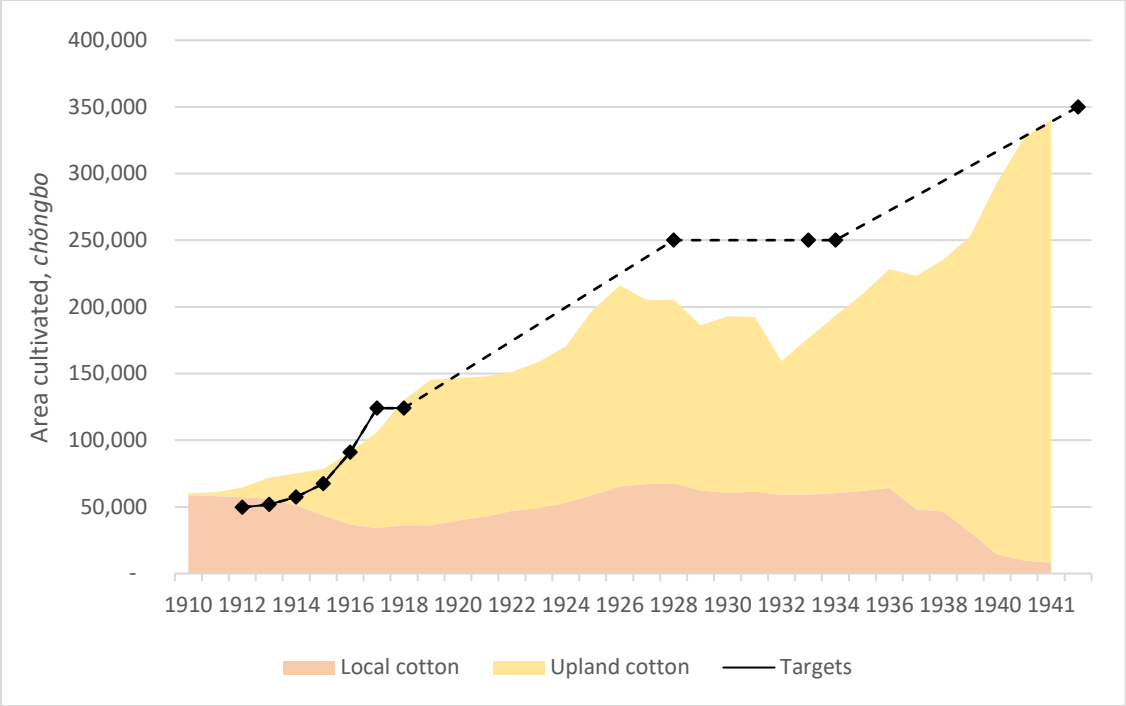
[38] On the industrial preference for upland cotton, see "Naeji sijang e taehan Chosŏn yukjimyŏn ŭi changso kŭp tanso," *CNH* 10, no. 3 (1915): 37-42; Nichi-man menka kyōkai, Chōsen shibu, *Chōsen no menka jijō* (1937), 18-23; Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 101-105.
[39] *Rikuchimen saibai enkakushi*, 39-51.
[40] "Rikuchimen saibai shōrei ni kansuru ken: Chōsen sōtokufu kunrei dai-8 go," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 459, March 11, 1912; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 217-32, 373-80, 597-602.

Figure 3.2: Cotton cultivation and government targets, 1910–1942



Source: Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*.
Note: Non-dashed line (1912-1918) indicates annual cultivation targets within the first cotton expansion plan. Dashed line (1919 onwards) indicates the final target for each cotton expansion plan.

government was largely successful in achieving its first two goals. With the exception of a decline between 1926 and 1932, which some have attributed to the global collapse of cotton prices, cotton cultivation steadily increased in line with targets.[41] What is more, the cultivation of upland cotton rapidly increased. By 1918, at the conclusion of the first plan, upland cotton accounted for 93 percent of all cotton planted in the six southern provinces (the area identified by the government as most suited to cotton production).[42] Increasing exports proved a greater challenge for the colonial government. Despite Wakamatsu's ambitions, the sheer scale of Japanese demand for cotton meant that Korea

[41] Chŏng An'gi, "Cheguk ŭi nongjŏng."
[42] The six southern provinces refer to North Ch'ungch'ŏng, South Ch'ungch'ŏng, North Chŏlla, South Chŏlla, North Kyŏngsang, and South Kyŏngsang. *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*.

never provided anything more than a negligible share of imports. Nevertheless, the colonial government enacted significant policies in its attempt to influence the behavior of farmers in all three areas.

Cotton promotion policies began in earnest in 1912, when Governor-General Terauchi Masatake (1852–1919, 寺内正毅) issued a directive on cotton cultivation to the provincial governors. In the directive Terauchi laid out an idealized vision of the colonial economy, describing the mutual benefits that increased cotton cultivation and exports were bound to bring to both Korea and Japan in the form of increased profits for individual farmers, the general expansion of the Korean economy, and the development of the spinning industry in Japan. To achieve its goals, the directive listed five specific tasks: (1) to encourage upland cotton cultivation among farmers; (2) to preserve upland cotton seeds; (3) to offer guidance on upland cotton cultivation; (4) to expand upland cotton cultivation in the six southern provinces; and (5) to improve the cultivation of local varieties of cotton in areas not suitable for the new seeds.[43]

Shortly after the announcement of Terauchi's directive, South Chŏlla province responded with a plan to establish cotton cultivation associations (hereafter, cotton associations), publishing sample regulations for the associations the following year.[44] The cotton associations were typical of the many semi-governmental organizations established under colonial rule in their intentional blending of public and private interests. According to the model regulations, cotton associations were to correspond with local administrative districts, generally at the township or county level, with the

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[43] "Rikuchimen saibai shōrei ni kansuru ken"
[44] Ibid; Chŏnnam myŏnjak chohap," *Maeil sinbo*, July 14, 1912; "Zenra nandō mensaku kumiai mohan kiyaku," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 305, August 6, 1913.

township head or county magistrate often playing a prominent role in establishing the association and serving as its head. All farmers of upland cotton within the district of a cotton association automatically became members, with supplementary leadership positions elected from among the association members (Articles 1, 4, 18).

The other southern provinces quickly followed suit to establish similar cotton associations in their own regions. By 1922, ten years after the publication of the directive on cotton cultivation, cotton associations existed throughout Korea's cotton growing regions with a total recorded membership of 642,265.[45] By the colonial government's own pronouncement, the cotton associations were the government's chief mechanism for influencing cotton production within Korea. As one report on cotton promotion activities in South Chŏlla province stated, "it is no exaggeration to say that cotton promotion in this province is carried out entirely through the cotton associations."[46]

The primary goal of the cotton associations was to increase the cultivation of upland cotton, for which the associations provided their members with a range of incentives and assistance. At the outset, the cotton associations distributed an initial stock of upland cotton seed (supplied by the model farm and seed stations) after which the associations encouraged members to collect and maintain their own supply (Articles 9,

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[45] The associations were only absent in Kangwŏn, North Hamgyŏng, and South Hamgyŏng provinces, which were not cotton-growing regions. In the northern and western provinces, where the climate was unsuitable for upland cotton cultivation, the cotton associations focused on promoting local varieties of cotton instead. "Ch'ungnam yukmyŏn chaebae changnyŏ," *Maeil sinbo*, March 15, 1913; "Keinan rikuchimen saibai kumiai kiyaku," *CNH* 8, no. 10 (1913): 75; "Rikuchimen jitsumen no kyōdō hanbai," *CNH* 8, no. 12 (1913): 63; "Kyŏngsangpuk-do, Talsŏng," *Maeil Sinbo*, May 20, 1914; "Kyŏngsangpuk-do, myŏnjak chohap sŏllip," *Maeil sinbo*, July 3, 1915; "Chŏllapuk-do, myŏnjak chohap chojik pyŏn'gyŏng," *Maeil sinbo*, October 14, 1915; "Heinan mensaku kumiai kiyaku junsoku shō," *CNH* 13, no. 8 (1918):65-66; Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 35.

[46] Zenra nandō, *Men no zennan* (Kōshū [Kwangju]: 1926), 8.

14).[47] As well as seeds, the associations provided members with credit via the local financial association or branch of the Agricultural and Industrial Bank (another state-managed financial organization; hereafter AIB) to facilitate the joint purchase of fertilizers and tools for members (Article 9).[48] In addition to such material inputs, agricultural technicians visited the cotton associations regularly to spread awareness of the benefits of upland cotton, educate members on appropriate techniques for the new crop, hold lectures at annual association meetings, and host product fairs where farmers could compete for prizes for the best cotton crop.[49] In each of these activities, the work of the cotton associations closely followed the goals set by Terauchi in his 1912 directive.

The work of the cotton associations went far beyond increasing cultivation, however, and the associations also played a significant role in shaping cultivation practices to meet the demands of the international cotton market. The promotion of upland cotton cultivation over local varieties already embodied such concerns. Beyond the initial distribution of upland cotton seeds, the cotton associations monitored the cotton produced by members and implemented measures to continually maintain the quality of the crop. After noticing a tendency for upland seeds to become diluted over time due to accidental mixing with existing cotton seeds, the cotton associations worked

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[47] Ibid; "Zennan no rikuchimen sakuzuke tanbetsu oyobi sakujinsū," *CNH* 8, no. 2 (1913): 66; "Chŏlla puk-do yukchimyŏn chongja ŭi paebu," *Maeil sinbo*, April 23, 1916; "Ansŏng myŏnjak chohap chojik," *Maeil sinbo*, April 2, 1924.

[48] "Zenra nandō mensaku kumiai mohan kiyaku"; "Myŏnjak chohap ŭi ch'angnip," *Maeil sinbo*, February 11, 1913; "Ch'ungnam yukchimyŏn chaebae changnyŏ," *Maeil sinbo*, March 15, 1913; "P'yŏngyang: Yonggang ŭi myŏnjak chohap," *Maeil sinbo*, July 4, 1918; "Ansŏng myŏnjak chohap."

[49] "Hŭngyang myŏnhwa chaebae chohap," *Maeil sinbo*, July 17, 1912; "Ch'ungnam yukjimyŏn chaebae changnyŏ," *Maeil sinbo*, March 15, 1913; "Kaku dō nōgyō gijutsukan ni taisuru sōtoku shiji," *CNH* 8, no. 9 (1913): 64-67; "Zennan Muan-kun mensaku kumiai jōkyō," 61; "Chŏnju: nongŏp kisulwŏn hoe," *Maeil sinbo*, May 4, 1917; *Mensaku kōshūkairoku*; "Myŏn immo p'ump'yŏnghoe," *Maeil sinbo*, November 17, 1922.

with the model farm to establish seed renewal programs. In North Kyŏngsang, the provincial government acquired imported American upland cotton seeds from the model farm at Mokp'o and contracted local cotton associations to run three cotton seed fields to ensure a supply for the province's seed renewal program. South Chŏlla province similarly used its regional budget to purchase seeds from the model farm and offered subsidies to the nine largest cotton associations to operate county and township cotton seed fields on behalf of the local government. As part of a rolling program, the cotton associations invited farmers to exchange their seeds for fresh ones to remove diluted seeds from cultivation and maintain the quality of upland cotton.[50]

Concerns over the quality of the crop also led the cotton associations to take an interest in cultivation methods, rewarding farmers who adopted prescribed methods and punishing those who did not. Farmers who wished to cultivate upland cotton in South Chŏlla province had to commit to grow upland cotton exclusively.[51] Farmers who produced high quality cotton had the opportunity to win flags, certificates, and prizes at product fairs hosted by the cotton associations. At Nonsan county, in South Ch'ungch'ŏng province, a women's cotton group received a certificate for the high quality of their cotton, while a Taejŏn cotton fair awarded cash prizes ranging from five to eighteen *yen* per person to the seven farmers who had sold the most cotton the previous year.[52] Meanwhile, farmers who violated the rules of the association risked fines or

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[50] *Taishō 7-nendo mensaku shōrei hōshin narabi ni shisetsu jikō* (Taikyū: 1918); "Chōsen menka seisan shōrei," *CNH* 18, no. 4 (1923): 58, 59; *Men no zennan,* 35-52.
[51] Similar restrictions applied at other cotton associations that adopted regulations based on the South Chŏlla model. "Zenra nandō mensaku kumiai mohan kiyaku."
[52] "Daita [Taejŏn]-kun wata-ina ritsumō hinhyōkai jōkyō," *CNH* 16, no. 6 (1921): 36; "Men immo p'ump'yŏnghoe," *Maeil sinbo* November 17, 1922; "Nongsanmul p'ump'yŏng sangjang" [1922]. 1-L00591-000, Tongnip kinyŏmgwan, Chŏnan, South Korea.

worse. In 1925, the Yŏnggwang cotton association in South Kyŏngsang province banned members from cultivating cotton in "mixed" fields (Ko. *kanhonjak*; Ja. *kankonsaku*), where cotton was planted alongside another crop (often barley), over fears it would damage the quality of the cotton. One day in August, Mr. Sim, an employee of the Yŏnggwang cotton association, led two township clerks and around twenty students of the local school to inspect nearby fields when, upon spotting a field of mixed cotton, the group leapt into the offending field and violently destroyed the crop for breaking the association rules.[53]

Sales constituted the final major element of the cotton associations' activities as colonial policies positioned the cotton associations as an entryway to new imperial markets. Association members were required to sell any remainder of the cotton crop that they did not use themselves through the cotton associations (Article 13).[54] The associations used a variety of methods to carry out the joint sale of cotton. Early on, most associations followed a system of designated joint sales (Ko. *chijŏng kongdong p'anmae*; Ja. *shitei kōdō hanbai*), under which system members delivered their cotton to an association technician who assessed its quality before selling it on to designated factories or traders at a price set against global cotton prices in the United States, Ōsaka, and

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[53] *Mensaku kōshūkairoku*, 85-88; "Kahok han kwŏnŏp haengjŏng," *Tonga ilbo*, August 27, 1925. This incident appears to have been the exception, rather than the norm. In a special issue of the *Bulletin of the Agricultural Association* in 1935, former agricultural technicians recalled their first attempts to persuade farmers to grow upland cotton prior to annexation. The methods discussed included bribing farmers to grow the new cultivar, as well as more violent means such as destroying recalcitrant farmers' crops or calling upon the local magistrate who beat farmers until they switched to the new cotton. Such candid accounts notwithstanding, by 1935 the technicians prided themselves on how quickly they had been able to move past such "unimaginable" methods to be able to persuade farmers by the superiority of the new type of cotton alone. The rarity of accounts of violent crop destroyal similar to the case in Yŏnggwang suggests that the technicians' recollections, though rosetinted, were likely accurate. "Zadankai kiroku," *CNH* 9, no. 11 (1935): 36, 45.

[54] "Zenra nandō mensaku kumiai mohan kiyaku"

Mokp'o. From 1917, the cotton associations in South Chŏlla province introduced an alternative system based on the competitive bidding of purchasers (Ko. *kyŏngjaeng ipch'al*; Ja. *kyōsō nyūsatsu*). As before, association members delivered their excess cotton to the local association where technicians assessed its quality and set a time and place for transactions. Purchasers then placed bids for the cotton, with the sale awarded to the highest bidder. Each province adjusted its associations' sales regulations in response to local conditions, with major cotton regions tending to adopt competitive bidding while areas with fewer traders maintained the designated sales system. But, in each region the cotton associations served as the point of contact between individual farmers and purchasers.[55]

The cotton association's sales activities served two main functions. First, the associations helped to redirect existing market networks. The cotton associations actively competed with existing cotton traders by offering members credit from the financial associations. In this way the associations hoped to undercut what they called "green field lending" (Ja. *aotagashi*), whereby local traders would offer loans to cotton farmers in the spring, when farmers were typically low on funds, in return for the farmers' future cotton harvest. By connecting farmers to the financial associations as an alternative source of credit, the cotton associations explicitly hoped to "remedy the evils of green field lending" and drive a greater share of the cotton harvest toward their own sales mechanisms.[56]

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[55] *Men no zennan*; Keishō nandō [Kyŏngsang namdo] mensakukei, *Keinan no men* (Fusan: 1931); Chōsen shokusan ginkō chōsaka, *Chōsen no menka* (Keijō: 1934), 37-49. For a detailed discussion of the factors influencing changes to sales regulations in South Chŏlla province, see Chŏng An'gi. "1920-1930 nyŏndae Ilche ŭi myŏnŏp chŏngch'aek kwa Mokp'o chomyŏnŏp: k'arŭt'el (Cartel) hwaldong ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Kyŏngje sahak* 49 (2010): 73-113.
[56] *Men no zennan*, 7.

Second, the position of the cotton associations as an intermediary for cotton transactions also allowed the government to monitor and control the quality of cotton that reached the market. Early in the government's efforts to establish Korea as a source of raw cotton, industrial buyers in Japan noted several disadvantages of Korean cotton including excessive moisture content, discoloration, and unreliable grading standards.[57] By requiring all members to sell their surplus cotton through the cotton associations, the government used the cotton associations to regulate the quality of cotton entering the market. This regulatory role applied to traders of cotton as much as it did farmers. In South Chŏlla province only pre-approved purchasers were permitted to participate in the association-managed competitive bidding system as the province attempted to weed out unscrupulous traders. Purchasers who were found guilty of adulterating upland cotton with the cheaper local variety, adding moisture to cotton to artificially increase its weight, or falsely classifying cotton grades were excluded from the association-managed marketplace as the colonial government attempted to improve the reputation of, and demand for, Korean cotton in Japan.[58]

In all of the above, the cotton associations emerged as the primary organization that implemented colonial cotton policies. Yet, although the parameters of the cotton associations were set by government policy, it was only by incorporating local interests and activities that the associations could succeed in their goal to increase cotton production. Despite the associations' restrictive regulations that forced upland cotton farmers to join and sell their excess crop through the associations, farmers could still

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[57] "Naeji sijang e taehan Chosŏn yukchimyŏn ŭi changso kŭp tanso"
[58] *Men no zennan*, 72-76; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 224-27, 379; Chŏng An'gi. "1920-1930 nyŏndae Ilche ŭi myŏnŏp."

choose how much cotton to grow and sell, if any at all. Indeed, despite the colonial government's aspirations to establish Korea as a major source of raw cotton, until the conclusion of the second cotton promotion plan in 1928 the proportion of the cotton harvest sold through the cotton associations rarely exceeded 20 percent.[59] The cotton associations' ability to engage with farmers directly affected their ability to influence farmers' behavior in this regard—a factor which would become increasingly important as colonial targets grew ever more ambitious.

After the conclusion of the first cotton promotion plan in 1918, the central government immediately announced a second that built on the institutional framework of the first. Once again, cotton associations served as the major organization that put cotton promotion into practice, although the expanded targets of the second plan led provincial governments to adopt additional initiatives to focus promotional activities toward particular communities.[60] Each year, provinces selected "guided villages" (Ko. *chido ridong*; Ja. *shidō ridō*) and townships (Ko. *chido myŏn*; Ja. *shidō men*) to receive the concentrated attention of cotton association staff and agricultural technicians. Parallel to such efforts, many regions also encouraged the formation of separate women's cotton groups and other village-level organizations to coordinate cotton cultivation between the

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[59] *Chōsen no menka jijō.* This rate varied by province. South Chŏlla province stands out as having the highest rate of group sales to harvest thanks in part to higher cotton prices within the province under the competitive bidding system. Chŏng An'gi, "1920-1930 nyŏndae Ilche ŭi myŏnŏp."

[60] In 1926 the cotton associations were merged with other semi-governmental organizations dedicated to agricultural production to form a new system of comprehensive, county-level agricultural associations (Ko. *kun-nonghoe*; Ja. *gun-nōkai*). Although focused on wider range of crops, the county agricultural associations continued the activities of the cotton associations largely unchanged, distributing seeds, grading cotton, managing the sale of cotton, providing mechanisms for credit for members, and hosting agricultural technicians, et. cetera. For more on the 1926 changes to the agricultural association, see "Chōsen nōkai rei," *CNH* 21, no. 2 (1926): appendix 1-3; Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 77-144; Kim Yongdal, *Ilche ŭi nongŏp*, 162-66.

village and the associations (which by the 1920s had largely been consolidated at the county level).[61]

A 1931 publication—*Villages of cotton*—reveals how a dense network of subsidiary village-level organizations emerged to supplement the work of the cotton associations in three South Chŏlla villages: Oktang village in Naju county, Kŭmho island in Haenam county, and Kwangjŏng village in Muan county. Chosen for their exemplary status, all three of the villages had been selected as guided villages during the 1920s, while from 1922 both Oktang and Kŭmho villages also contracted with the local cotton associations to operate seed selection fields (Ko. *ch'aejongjŏn*; Ja. *saishuden*), for which they received additional support in the form of grants of seeds and fertilizers.[62]

Multiple village organizations embedded upland cotton cultivation within the social structures of each village. In Oktang, for example, Yi Tonghyŏn, who *Villages of Cotton* credited with bringing upland cotton to the village after hearing a lecture on the topic in 1909, headed the village's Revitalization Society (Ko. *chinhŭnghoe*; Ja. *shinkōkai*)—another project supported by the colonial government—which officially encouraged the joint cultivation of cotton within the village, the maintenance of improved seed varieties, and the joint sale of the cotton crop. Alongside the Revitalization Society, cotton cultivation within the village was supported by a diligent farmers' mutual aid association (Ko. *kwŏnnong kongje chohap*; Ja. *kinnō kyōsai kumiai*), which provided financial support for non-financial association members; a cotton cultivation group (Ko. *myŏnjakkye*; Ja. *mensakukei*), which arranged the joint purchase and distribution of

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[61] *Men no zennan*, 52-72; *Keinan no men*, 25-28, 56-65; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 373-81.
[62] Zenra nandō nōkai, *Men no mura* (Kōshū[Kwangju]: 1931), 4, 5, 63.

fertilizers within the village under the supervision of the county agricultural association; and a communal savings fund for cotton cultivation founded by Yi Tonghyŏn, Yi Kyŏnghwa, the district headman (Ko. *kujang*; Ja. *kuchō*), and No Chisu, a teacher at the nearby Komagwŏn Normal School.[63]

Similarly in Kwangjŏng and Kŭmho, the work of the cotton associations became replicated through multiple organizations and practices within the villages. In some cases, village organizations maintained a formal connection to the semi-governmental associations, as with the Oktang cotton cultivation group and the agricultural association, or organizations such as Kwangjŏng's diligent savings association (Ko. *kŭn'gŏm chŏch'ul choap*; Ja. *kinken chochiku kumiai*) whose members committed five percent of the value of their cotton harvest as savings within the financial association.[64] In other cases, indiviudals within the village took on much of the work of cotton promotion, such as Yi Tonghyŏn in Oktang village and Cho Chonghyŏp in Kwangjŏng village, a former clerk, township head (1918–1923), and head of the Kwangjŏng Revitalization Society, the diligent savings association, a cotton cultivation improvement implementation association (Ko. *myŏnjak kaeryang sirhaeng chohap*; Ja. *mensaku kairyō jikkō kumiai*), and a general agricultural improvement association (Ko. *nongsa kaeryang sojohap*; Ja. *nōji kairyō shōkumiai*).[65] Of course, Cho Chonghyŏp's position as a local government employee no doubt placed him under a certain amount of pressure to conform to the campaign *du jour*, however his concurrent status as a farmer must also be seen as equally

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[63] Ibid, 3, 4, 34-57. On the presence and activities of Revitalization Societies within villages, see Chi Sugŏl, "Ilcheha Ch'ungnam Sŏsan-gun ŭi 'kwallyo-yuji chibae ch'eje': 'Sŏsan-gunji' (1927) e taehan punsŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Yŏksa munje yŏn'gu* 3 (1999): 13-75.
[64] *Men no mura*, 57, 143, 144.
[65] Ibid, 120-123.

important in his decision to focus on the cultivation of upland cotton. In the year surveyed, Cho earned 280 yen from the cultivation and sale of upland cotton—a considerable amount.[66]

As a promotional publication of the South Chŏlla provincial agricultural association, the examples listed in *Villages of Cotton* must be viewed as ideal cases rather than the norm. Nonetheless, that the villages were chosen as exemplary models confirms the prominent role of village and semi-governmental organizations as a means to implement the government's cotton promotion policies. Throughout the 1920s, a comprehensive network of organizations emerged to facilitate the production of upland cotton. At the county level, cotton (and, after 1926, agricultural) associations oversaw the production and sale of cotton within each county. In turn, the cotton associations relied upon smaller organizations within townships and villages to select sites for intensive production and contracted the management of seed selection fields. Whether through formal connections between the associations and the village organizations, or through the personal and informal mediation of prominent farmers, a mixture of local administration and village organizations combined to support the spread of upland cotton cultivation under the umbrella of the cotton associations.

To the extent that the price of upland cotton rendered its cultivation profitable, this array of semi-governmental organizations arguably constituted an effective method of encouraging the production of upland cotton. Between 1912 and 1926, the acreage of cotton planted more than tripled, rising from 64,566 to 215,910 *chŏngbo*, broadly

[66] Ibid, 114. Yi Tonghyŏn and Yi Kyŏnghwa, two prominent supporters of cotton cultivation in Oktang village also earned 247 and 225 yen from the sale of cotton respectively. Ibid, 33.

following colonial cotton plans. However, the collapse of global cotton prices in the mid-1920s proved a serious limitation. From its peak in 1926, the acreage cultivated fell by as much as a quarter to reach just 159,269 *chŏngbo* in 1931 as farmers turn to alternative crops instead, dashing the government's ambition to reach an acreage of 250,000 *chŏngbo* by 1928.[67] Indeed, considering the timing of its publication in 1931, *Villages of Cotton* itself appears to be less proof of a healthy cotton industry and more an appeal to farmers to reconsider the benefits of upland cotton. As the foreword stated, the authors of the book intended it to "serve as a reference for others engaged in the guidance of rural villages."[68] But, as long as the global price of cotton remained depressed, the colonial government would have to use the semi-governmental organziations in new ways in order to try to increase cotton cultivation once again in the 1930s.

III. Enacting Colonial Policies 2: Rice (1910s-1920s)

In 1912, one day after announcing the directive on cotton cultivation, Governor-General Terauchi issued a similar directive on the promotion of rice. Terauchi listed four targets for particular improvement: the spread of high-yielding seeds; improving the drying and processing of rice; expanding the supply of irrigation; and encouraging the use of fertilizers. Just as with cotton, the directive revealed twin priorities in colonial rice policy—to increase production through the adoption of technologies such as improved seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation, and to improve the quality of rice entering the market through changes to processing methods.

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[67] *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*; Kimura Mitsuhiko, "Shokuminchika Chōsen mensaku ni tsuite," *Ajia keizai* 30, no. 1 (1983): 54-79; Chŏng An'gi, "Cheguk ŭi nongjŏng."
[68] *Men no mura*, jo.

Despite the similarities with colonial cotton policies, there were some important differences in the implementation of rice policies. With cotton, the colonial government attempted to create an entirely new market based on the introduction of a distinct strain of cotton, the production and sale of which was largely managed through the single organization of the cotton associations. For rice, a thriving export market already existed. Though new varieties of rice had the potential to increase yields, they did not produce a substantially different crop. Rather than creating a market from scratch, the colonial government therefore focused instead on redirecting existing markets and rice production. What is more, while the cotton associations occupied a central position in both the cultivation and sale of upland cotton, colonial policies for rice relied upon a diffuse array of organizations. The government's plans to increase rice production involved multiple different initiatives, ranging from the provision of finance for fertilizers to the construction of large-scale irrigation facilities. As such, the implementation of colonial rice policies relied upon the concerted action of several semi-governmental organizations.

The first priority of the colonial government was to distribute high-yielding seeds to farmers. The model farm advertised high-yielding seeds in the *Bulletin of the Korean Agricultural Association*, and organized local tests of seeds through the financial associations, branches of the AIB, Japanese-owned farms and farmers' groups, and even the Taegu branch of the finance office. To further spread the new seeds, local government offices at the county and township level organized seed exchanges where farmers could

swap their existing seeds for the high-yielding varieties supplied by the model farms.[69] By 1916, each province had established its own network to supply high-yielding seeds to farmers building on the basic framework of the model farm and provincial seed farms.

As shown in Table 3.2, each province adapted its distribution chain to suit the local context. In regions with a strong presence of farmers' organizations, such as North Chŏlla province, groups such as the industrious farming association (Ko. *kwŏnnonghoe*; Ja. *kannōkai*), financial associations, agricultural associations, and the association for tenants of state-owned lands (Ko. *kugyuji sojagin chohap*; Ja. *kokuyūchi kosakunin kumiai*) all participated in the distribution of seeds to their respective members. Elsewhere, local government offices, trusted landlords, and recipients of agricultural lectures also joined the supply chains to spread improved seeds to ordinary farmers. As with upland cotton, agricultural technicians played an important role in organizing lectures and product fairs to inform farmers about the new seeds and to persuade them to adopt the new varieties. In the case of North Hamgyŏng province, the recipients of agricultural lectures themselves became part of the distribution chain and were called upon to distribute seeds to other farmers. By 1919 high-yielding seeds constituted 46.8 percent of the total planted acreage of rice, with a higher concentration of high-yielding seeds within the southern provinces. Four years later, in 1923, the proportion of high-yielding seeds had increased even further, to 67.3 percent of the total planted acreage of

[69] "Kangyō mohanjō no shushi haifu"; "Suitō sōshinriki to zairaishu to no hikaku," *KCNH* 3, no. 11 (1909): 23-24; "Kakuchi suitō sōshinriki no seiseki," *KCNH* 4, no. 4 (1910): 12-14; "Chŏnnam ŭi sudo chongnyu kaeryang ŭi sanghwang," *CNH* 6, no. 7 (1911): 18-20: "Suitō sōshinriki no saibai seiseki," *CNH* 7, no. 3 (1912): 15-20; "Kairyō ina shushi kōkan seiseki," *CNH* 8, no. 10 (1913): 75.

Table 3.2: Distribution chains for improved seeds, 1916

Province	Original seed field	Secondary seed fields		Final users
Kyŏnggi	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields		→ General farmers → Exemplary farmers
North Ch'ungch'ŏng	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields	→ Township seed selection fields → Village seed selection fields → Individual seed selection fields	→ General farmers
South Ch'ungch'ŏng	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields → Township seed selection fields		→ General farmers
North Chŏlla	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields	→ Township seed selection fields → Village seed selection fields → Village school (Ko. *hyanggyo*) fields → Industrious farming association seed selection fields → Large landlords' and exemplary farmers' seed selection fields	→ General farmers
		→ Special county original seed fields	→ Financial association seed selection fields → Association for tenants of state-owned lands seed selection fields → Industrious farming association seed selection fields → Agricultural association Chŏnju branch seed selection fields	→ Members
South Chŏlla	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields	→ Township seed selection fields → Financial association seed selection fields → State-owned land tenants' association seed selection fields → Agricultural association seed selection fields → Landlord association seed selection fields → Large landlord seed selection fields	→ General farmers

North Kyŏngsang	Provincial seed farm	→ Contracted provincial seed selection fields	→ Shared seed selection fields	→ General farmers
South Kyŏngsang	Provincial seed farm	→ Contracted seed selection fields		→ General farmers
Hwanghae	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields → Contracted country seed selection fields → State-owned land tenants' association seed selection field		→ General farmers
		→ Landlord seed selection fields		→ Tenants
South P'yŏngan	Provincial seed farm	→ Seed selection fields		→ Model farmers → Model village residents → Agricultural lecture students → General farmers
North P'yŏngan	Provincial seed farm; Chŏngju-county seed farm; Sŏnch'ŏn-county seed farm	→ County seed farm seed selection fields	→ Model village supervised fields	→ General farmers
Kangwŏn	Provincial seed farm	→ County seed selection fields	→ Township seed selection fields → Village seed selection fields	→ General farmers
South Hamgyŏng	Yet to select improved seed varieties			
North Hamgyŏng	Sŏngjin-county industrious farming association	→ Supervised seed selection fields	→ Exemplary farmers → Agricultural lecture students	→ General farmers

Source: Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 186-89.

rice.[70]

Early efforts to promote the usage of fertilizers and irrigation relied upon a similarly wide range of organizations and institutions. The model farm and provincial

[70] Chōsen sōtokufu kangyō mohanjō, *Chōsen ni okeru ine no yūryō hinshu bunpu fukyū no jōkyō* (Keijō: 1924); Iinuma Jirō, *Chōsen sōtokufu no beikoku kensa seido* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1993), 87; U Taehyŏng, "1920 nyŏndae migok saengsansŏng ŭi chŏngch'e," *Kyŏngjesahak* 25 (1998): 60.

seed farms carried out research into fertilizer use on behalf of the government, while financial associations offered loans for fertilizers and in some cases organized fertilizer improvement groups (Ko. *piryo kaeryanggye*; Ja. *hiryō kairyōkei*) among their more enthusiastic members.[71] The financial associations also granted loans for farmers to carry out small land improvement and irrigation works on their fields, but could not supply the large amounts of capital required for major construction projects. The irrigation associations thus proved the chief mechanism for landholders to jointly borrow and invest in large construction projects, although few farmers actually formed irrigation associations during the first decade of colonial rule. Supplementing the financial and irrigation associations, local government offices also focused attention on landlords who it was hoped would spread improved farming practices, seeds, and fertilizers among their tenants. Some provinces also organized landlord associations (Ko. *chijuhoe*; Ja. *jinushikai*) in several counties, providing yet another venue for agricultural experts to give lectures, hold product fairs, and distribute seeds, fertilizers, and tools. By 1920, 124 landlord associations existed with a total of 93,503 members.[72]

Despite these various initiatives, the first decade of colonial rice policies had a limited impact on producers. Beyond the distribution of high-yielding seeds, colonial

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[71] "Piryo kaeryanggye chojik," *Maeil sinbo*, May 11, 1913; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 214. Based on the dubious assessment of Koreans as lacking advanced agricultural knowledge and generally possessing a low civilizational development (Ja. *mindo*), at this point the colonial government mainly promoted the production and use of organic fertilizers, including compost, plant-based fertilizers such as Chinese milk vetch, and animal and human waste products. Indeed, the official fertilizer textbook produced for agricultural schools that paid "particular attention to content appropriate for Korean agriculture" only dedicated 3 (out of a total 24) chapters to chemical fertilizers, focusing instead on organic fertilizers such as compost, rice bran, fallen leaves, and animal corpses. Chōsen sōtokufu hensan, *Hiryō kyōkasho* (Tokyo: 1914); "Piryo kaeryang ŭi p'il'yo," *Maeil sinbo*, July 13-16, 1912.

[72] "Jinushikai soshiki," *CNH* 8, no. 6 (1913): 67; "Jinushikai jōkyō," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō*, October 7, 1914, 117-120; "P'yŏngbuk Sŏnch'ŏn-gun chiju chohap," *CNH* 10, no. 8 (1915): 68, 69; "Chūnan jinushi kōwakai jōkyō," *CNH* 13, no. 12 (1918): 55; Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 60-67.

policies were constrained by the limited reach of the organizations that would implement them. The small number of irrigation and agricultural associations restricted the influence of each organization. Though possessing a greater membership, non-members vastly outweighed the membership of the financial associations. Even among members, however, directors of the financial associations commented on the difficulties they faced in encouraging members to participate in their non-financial activities, such as warehousing and the adoption of new crops.[73]

The Government-General shared the concerns over the slow pace of change in rice production. In the face of reports of the weakening productivity of high-yielding seeds, the central government mobilized provincial governors to institute seed refreshment programs to renew high-yielding seeds that may have been cross-contaminated with other strains. Of particular concern to those with an eye to the export market was the creeping infiltration of red rice—a type of wild rice that spread easily among other rice crops.[74] From 1917 onwards, the provinces instituted regular programs to refresh seeds on a rolling basis. Compared to the initial distribution of seeds, by this time most provincial governments had established a supply chain that, though still relying on private farmers and farmers' organizations, dealt with a narrower range of intermediaries (see Table 3.3). In most regions, the provincial government distributed seeds from its own seed farm to contracted farmers and organizations who in turn

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[73] In particular, directors complained of a lack of trust, inconvenient transport, and competition from merchants with existing trading relationships with farmers. *Chihō kin'yū kumiai riji kaidō*.

[74] "Chungyo changmul pokŭp kŭp kihoek," *CNH* 12, no. 4 (1917): 36-40; "Chosŏnsan hyŏnmi chung ŭi pulsunmul e tae haya," *CNH* 12, no. 5 (1917): 5-17; "Akagome jōkyō ni kansuru hiken," *CNH* 13, no. 1 (1918): 11-19; "Yūryōtō no ryōsei iji ni tsuite," *CNH* 13, no. 4 (1918): 1-7. On red rice in general, see also S. A. Knapp, "The Present Status of Rice Culture in the United States," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Division of Botany, Bulletin no. 22 (1899), 42-45.

Table 3.3: Distribution chains for seed refreshment programs, 1919

Province	Original seed field	First seed selection field	Second seed selection field
Kyŏnggi	Provincial seed farm	Provincial seed farm fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
North Ch'ungch'ŏng	Provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
South Ch'ungch'ŏng	Provincial seed farm	Provincial seed farm fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
North Chŏlla	Provincial seed farm	County agricultural association	Contracted elite farmers' fields
South Chŏlla	Provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
North Kyŏngsang	Provincial seed farm	County agricultural association	Contracted elite farmers' fields
South Kyŏngsang	Provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
Hwanghae	Provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
South P'yŏngan	Provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
North P'yŏngan	Provincial seed farm	Provincial seed farm fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
Kangwŏn	Provincial seed farm	Provincial seed farm fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
South Hamgyŏng	Provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields
North Hamgyŏng	Contracted elite farmers' fields under supervision of the provincial seed farm	Contracted elite farmers' fields	Contracted elite farmers' fields

Source: Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 186-89.

cultivated a larger crop of seeds for secondary and tertiary distribution.[75]

More serious in the government's eyes, however, was the slow adoption of irrigation and fertilizer use, two elements which were crucial to achieving the full potential of the high-yielding seeds. Although the financial, landlord, and agricultural associations held promotional activities among their members, by the end of the 1910s

[75] Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 184-89.

fertilizer use in Korea lagged far behind Taiwan (12 kg/ha) and Japan (63 kg/ha) at just 1.3 kilograms per hectare, much of which consisted of plant-based fertilizers.[76] Meanwhile, by 1916, nearly a decade after the introduction of irrigation associations, more individuals had begun private irrigation projects than had formed irrigation associations.[77] In 1917, the colonial government issued the Law on Irrigation Associations in an attempt to clarify procedures for the formation and management of irrigation associations to encourage the formation of more associations. The following year, the government also introduced a 15 percent subsidy on construction costs for qualifying irrigation associations to further encourage their formation.[78]

These problems only took on new urgency following the 1918 rice riots in Japan, during which nationwide protests broke out against the rising price of rice—a particular concern for Japan's growing population of wage laborers.[79] As part of an empire-wide response to the riots, in 1920 the colonial government initiated the Program to Increase Rice Production (PIRP) which aimed to increase rice production by 8,995,000 *sŏm* in thirty years, little over half of which was planned for export to Japan. To achieve these goals, the PIRP planned to improve 800,000 *chŏngbo* of land, either by bringing new land into rice cultivation or investing in irrigation facilities on existing fields. These land

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[76] "Yūryōtō no ryōsei iji ni tsuite"; Kikuchi and Hayami, "Agricultural Growth against a Land"; Hayami and Ruttan, *Agricultural Development*, 202.

[77] Though also encouraged by the government, private irrigation projects were typically of a smaller scale than the projects managed under irrigation associations and therefore less desirable. On average, private irrigation projects covered an area of 237 *chŏngbo*, costing an average 39,224 *yen* per project. In contrast, the average area of irrigation associations was 1,714 *chŏngbo*, with an average cost of 239,609 yen per project. "Kojin keiei gaikan jigyō no jōkyō," *CNH* 11, no. 4 (1916): 63-65; "Kakto suri chohap," *Maeil sinbo*, September 8, 1916.

[78] *Chōsen sōtokufu shisei nenpō*, 1918-1920 ed. (1922), 170; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 212-14.

[79] See, Michael Lewis, *Rioters and Citizens: Mass Protest in Imperial Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

improvement projects would only provide a portion of the planned increases in production, however, and a full 60 percent of the PIRP's planned increases in rice production were based on the subsequent increased use of fertilizer and improved cultivation methods (see Table 3.4).

The PIRP budget reveals how the colonial government attempted to put the Program into practice (see Table 3.5). Of an initial budget of around 125 million yen, the majority of PIRP funds were assigned to land improvement projects (62.7 percent of the total, roughly split between low-interest loans and subsidies) and low-interest loans for fertilizers (21.7 percent). Progress was slow, however. By 1925, nearly 14 million yen of

Table 3.4: Planned increases in rice production under PIRP, *sŏm*

Source of increase / Land by type	Result of completed land improvement	Upland rice cultivation	Application of fertilizer	Other improved cultivation methods	Total increase
Paddies with improved irrigation	1,125,000	-	900,000	337,500*	2,362,500
Reclassified paddies	1,462,500	-	450,000	168,750	2,081,250
New paddies from cleared and drained land	900,000	-	360,000	135,000	1,395,000
Currently irrigated paddies	-	-	1,340,000	502,500	1,842,500
Paddies without irrigation	-	-	-	1,231,250	1,231,250
Upland rice in current dry fields	-	-	-	20,625	20,625
Future expansion of dry field upland rice	-	52,500	-	9,375	61,875
Total increase	3,487,500 (38.8%)	52,500 (0.5%)	3,050,000 (33.9%)	2,405,000 (26.7%)	8,995,000 (100%)

Source: *Chōsen sanmai zōshoku ni kansuru iken* (Tokyo: Takushokukyoku, 1921).
Note: * 337,500 is recorded in error as 337,000 in the original document.

Table 3.5: Initial budget for the PIRP

Source of funding	Target of spending	Amount, *yen* (%)
Treasury funds	Construction subsidies for land improvement projects	38,550,000 (27.9)
	Costs to establish a supervisory and promotion agency for subsidies	3,000,000 (2.2)
	Survey costs for land improvement projects	2,000,000 (1.4)
	Subsidies for small-scale land improvement projects	3,000,000 (2.2)
	Funds to promote improvements in tilling and sowing	7,460,000 (5.4)
	Costs to establish a special promotion agency	9,000,000 (6.5)
Government-backed low-interest loans	Capital for construction in land improvement projects	45,000,000 (32.6)
	Capital for purchase of fertilizers	30,000,000 (21.7)
Total		138,010,000 (100)

Source: Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 422.

Table 3.6: Revised budget for the PIRP, 1925

Source of funding	Target of spending	Amount, *yen* (%)
Government subsidy	Land improvement	65,070,000 (20)
Industry funds	Land improvement	22,067,000 (6.8)
Government-backed low-interest loans	Land improvement	198,197,000 (61)
Government-backed low-interest loans	Improvements in agriculture	40,000,000 (12.3)
Total		325,000,000 (100)

Source: Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 436.

government spending had resulted in only 90,000 *chŏngbo* of completed land improvement projects and an increase of around 450,000 *sŏm* of rice.[80] To remedy the situation, the colonial government drastically increased the PIRP budget (see Table 3.6) and introduced several new measures designed to increase the efficiency of the irrigation projects. Under the revised PIRP, proposed land improvement projects covering an area greater than 200 *chŏngbo* were required to contract with the Korean Land Improvement Corporation (a new government-backed agency) which would oversee the work of land

[80] Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 434; *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*. The figure for the increase in rice should be treated with some caution as harvests fluctuate significantly from year to year. But, even keeping this in mind, the figure is still considerably below the PIRP targets.

surveying and construction. A Land Improvement Law (1927) also introduced regulations governing the fundamental principles of land improvement projects for the first time.[81]

In both stages of the PIRP the colonial government did not undertake projects directly but distributed funds through intermediary organizations instead. The Industrial Bank of Chōsen (which succeeded the AIB in 1918; hereafter IBC), Oriental Development Company (hereafter ODC), and financial associations each handled roughly one-third of the government-backed low-interest loans. Where the financial associations were able to lend directly to farmers for fertilizer purchases or small scale land improvement projects, as large institutional lenders the IBC and ODC in turn lent a significant portion of the PIRP funds to irrigation associations, which became one of the major conduits that put the PIRP into practice.[82] Between 1926 and 1931—the second phase of the PIRP—80 percent of the total funds for land improvement projects (both subsidies and loans) went to irrigation associations.[83]

Accordingly, the 1920s saw a jump in the number of irrigation associations formed. Between 1920 and 1925, 54 new irrigation associations were established—a significant increase compared to earlier years. Between 1926 and 1931, irrigation associations increased at an even greater rate, rising by 125 to reach a new total of 191 associations throughout Korea.[84] Such a rapid increase in the number of irrigation

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[81] "Chōsen tochi kairyō rei no happu," *CNH* 2, no. 2 (1928): 83-92; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 438-41.
[82] "Nongsa kaeryang chagŭm taech'ul pangbŏp," *Maeil sinbo*, May 12, 1926; "Nongsa kaeryang chagŭm kŏch'i o-nyŏn sanghwan isip-nyŏn," *Maeil sinbo*, September 26, 1926; "Sanmi chŭngsik o nyŏndo nongsa kaeryang chŏjaaek," *Tonga ilbo*, February 1, 1931. For more on the ODC and IBC, see Moskowitz, "The Creation of the Oriental Development Company"; Karl Moskowitz, "Current assets: the employees of Japanese banks in colonial Korea," Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1979.
[83] Chōsen sōtokufu nōrinkyoku, *Chōsen tochi kairyō jigyō yōran* (Keijō: 1935), 6, 7.
[84] Chōsen sōtokufu, *Tochi kairyō jigyō no gaikyō* (Keijō: 1932).

associations was not without problems. As the number of associations rose, so too did protests against their formation. Although landowners within the proposed district of an irrigation association were eligible to vote on its formation, tenants and agricultural laborers were not. Farmers also expressed dissatisfaction over the disproportionate influence of larger landholders within the associations and the tendency for local government officials, who were often also landholders, to initiate the formation of irrigation associations.[85] At the same time, and as warned by Nishikawa Hikojirō (西川彦次郎), the government's use of subsidies and cheap loans to increase the number of large-scale irrigation projects beyond the natural level of investment created inherent risks. Debt was an unavoidable feature of the irrigation associations and if projects failed to deliver the expected increase in yield, or if the price of rice fell, farmers would struggle to repay the loans (collected as association fees and water charges levied against all farmers within the irrigation district).[86]

Irrigation was just one aspect of the PIRP, however. As a representative of the Department of Industry explained, "to achieve direct increases in rice production, the improvement of agriculture is an essential task that must also be carried out in those lands that have completed [irrigation projects]."[87] Thus, besides irrigation itself, the PIRP also

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[85] This line of research has received much attention among Korean-language publications. See, for example, Chŏng Sŭngjin, "20 segi chŏnban taegyumo suri chohap saŏp ŭi chŏn'gae: Yŏnggwang suri chohap ŭi sarye punsŏk," *Taedong munhwa yŏn'gu* 36 (2000): 141-188; Son Kyŏnghŭi, *Han'guk kŭndae suri chohap yŏn'gu: Kyŏngsang puk-do Kyŏngju-gun Sŏ-myŏn suri chohap ŭl chungsim ŭro* (Seoul: Tosŏ ch'ulp'an sŏnin, 2015).

[86] "Saikin suiri jigyō no keikō hihan," *CNH* 17, no. 4 (1922): 18-24; "Saikin suiri jigyō no keikō hihan," *CNH* 17, no. 5 (1922): 10-16. The risk that irrigation projects might not lead to the expected increases in productivity became even greater as the expansion of irrigation associations spead to include more marginal land and more expensive construction projects. In some cases, the projected increases in yield for completed irrigation projects could be huge—as high as 300 percent. See also Chŏng Sŭngjin, "20 segi chŏnban taegyumo suri," 169, 170.

[87] "Sanmai zōshoku keikaku ni tomonafu nōji kairyō teiri shikin ni tsuite," *CNH* 22, no. 1 (1927): 41.

saw the expansion of state initiatives into other areas. As well as outlining regulations over land improvement projects, the 1927 Land Improvement Law also expanded the irrigation associations' remit to include such activities as managing seed selection fields, demonstrating model farming methods to members, encouraging the use of fertilizer and improved seeds, and hosting agricultural technicians.[88] In this, the newly-reorganized agricultural associations played a major role alongside the irrigation associations. In 1926, the government established county-level agricultural associations across the country, one per county, to replace and expand the activities previously managed by industry-specific associations, such as the cotton or sericulture associations. Although many of the activities pursued by the agricultural associations were not new—hosting lectures, providing subsidies, and monitoring the production of particular crops—the establishment of county-level associations across Korea brought the work of the associations to a much wider population of farmers in a systematic manner.[89]

For rice, the agricultural associations followed established patterns to promote "improved" farming methods, hosting technicians, lectures, and educational events. More significantly, the agricultural associations also came to play an important role in the distribution of material resources. Many seed selection fields that provided the high-quality seeds for the government's seed refreshment programs continued to be contracted out to trusted farmers with the county agricultural associations increasingly playing a role in selecting the farmers who would undertake this work.[90] The agricultural associations

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[88] "T'oji kaeryang ryŏng kaejŏng suri chohap ryŏng sihaeng e ch'wihaya (chung)," *Maeil sinbo,* May 28, 1928.
[89] Heian nandō nōkai, *Heian nan-dō shusai kunnōkai jiseki hinpyōkai hōkokusho* (1929).
[90] Ibid; "Koch'ang-gun ŭi sudo sŏnsu changnyŏ," *Maeil sinbo,* October 27, 1926.

also occupied a prominent role in the distribution of the seeds and fertilizers that formed another line of the PIRP. As well as their own activities to promote fertilizer use and organize joint purchases among members, the agricultural associations mediated with the IBC, ODC, and the financial associations that distributed PIRP-related low-interest loans. In order to access loans for fertilizers, farmers without a direct relationship with the ODC, IBC or financial associations had to first get confirmation from their county office or county agricultural association which would then transmit the application for a loan to the financial organization in question.[91]

By the second half of the 1920s, the semi-governmental organizations promoting rice production thus came to resemble those supporting cotton production. Although promotional activities proceeded through a wider range of organizations that dealt with finance, irrigation, and material aspects of rice cultivation separately, the semi-governmental organizations nonetheless formed and regulated a comprehensive network that brought farmers into contact with government initiatives. Support from the colonial government fueled the growth of this network. The law on agricultural associations established one per county, while under the PIRP the number of irrigation associations increased to a total of 191. Meanwhile, the steady growth of the financial associations continued to reach a total of 661 associations with a membership of 684,407 by 1931.[92] For those farmers who had the means and the inclination to participate, the irrigation and financial associations offered government-subsidized loans while the activities of the

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[91] "Sanmai zōshoku keikaku ni tomonafu," 48, 49; "Sanŏp chŏri chagŭm: Taejŏn-gun sŏ changnyŏ," *Maeil sinbo*, February 19, 1929; Doi Hirotsugi, "1920 nendai ni okeru Chōsen sōtokufu no kannō gyōsei kikō: sanmai zōshoku keikaku to Chōsen nōkai rei," *Chōsen gakuhō* 181 (2001): 156, 157. In theory this system was intended to increase small and medium farmers' access to loans when, due to a lack of resources, they were unable to deal directly with the financial associations. How far this succeeded in practice is doubtful.
[92] *Tochi kairyō jigyō*; Yi Kyŏngnan, *Ilcheha kŭmyung chohap yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Hyean, 2002), 354.

agricultural associations introduced alternative sources of seeds, fertilizers, and, in some cases, potentially lucrative government contracts. But, in common with the cotton associations, insofar as the core purpose of the associations was to bring farmers in Korea into contact with wider imperial markets, the health of such markets would decide both the strength and the weakness of the association-based model.

IV. The Crisis of a Colonial Model (1930s)

Throughout the first two decades of colonial rule, the Government-General's policies toward rice and cotton pursued twin objectives. On one side, the colonial government attempted to increase cultivation of the two crops, issuing specific targets and building a network of state-sponsored associations that might influence farmers' production in the manner desired by the government. At the same time, a fundamental aspect of the government's agricultural policies centered on the creation of market networks within the wider imperial economy. In large part, this was driven by the colonial government's desire to establish Korea as a source of raw materials for Japanese industry, for which exports of rice and upland cotton were strategic goals. Successful policy in Korea centered around the creation of flows of rice and cotton to Japan, channeled through the various associations.

The events of the late 1920s severely tested the government's initial model of a colonial economy. From the mid-1920s, agricultural commodity prices around the world began to decline significantly.[93] Colonial Korea was not insulated from these trends. The

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[93] Economists have variously attributed this collapse to rising agricultural wages, indebtedness, overproduction, and the decline from peak prices during World War One. See, Jakob B. Madsen, "Agricultural Crises and the International Transmission of the Great Depression," *Journal of Economic History* 61, no. 2 (2001): 327-365; Giovanni Federico, "Not Guilty? Agriculture in the 1920s and the Great Depression," *Journal of Economic History* 65, no. 4 (2005): 949-976.

practice of setting the price of upland cotton sold through the cotton associations to the Ŏsaka price constituted a direct mechanism that related global price shocks to producers in the Korean countryside. Between 1924 and 1930, global cotton prices decreased by 66 percent, causing the average price of raw cotton sold through the cotton associations to fall from 27 to 7.96 yen per *kŭn*.[94] Global rice prices similarly fell, following major investment in the production and export of rice across East and Southeast Asia.[95] In Korea rice prices fell from a peak of 19.26 yen per *sŏm* in 1925 to just 6.61 yen per *sŏm* in 1931, resulting in significant rural unrest and mirroring similar discontent in Japan and Taiwan.[96]

The collapse in prices prompted two major shifts within the colonial economy. On an immediate level, governments in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan each tried to minimize the impact of the falling prices among farming households. At the same time, and in part as a result of the efforts to mitigate the rural crisis, governments in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan found it necessary to reorder the flows of primary products across the Japanese Empire. What had once been a marker of successful colonial rice policy in Korea—high exports—became undesirable as the supply of Korean rice to Japan swiftly became both a political and an economic problem.

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[94] Prices began to recover in 1932, although to a lower level than before the collapse. In 1935, the average price of raw cotton sold through the associations was still only 16.95 *yen* per *kŭn. Chōsen no menka jijō*, 88. See also, Chŏng An'gi, "Cheguk ŭi nongjŏng."

[95] Francesca Bray, *The Rice Economies: Technology and Development in Asian Societies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 129; Ian Brown, *A Colonial Economy in Crisis: Burma's Rice Cultivation and the World Depression of the 1930s* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 9-26.

[96] Kim Chaehun, "1925-1931 nyŏn miga harak kwa puch'e purhwang," *Han'guk kyŏngje yŏn'gu* 15 (2005): 227-260; Gi-Wook Shin, *Peasant Protest and Social Change.* Similar problems also occurred in Japan. Smith, *A Time of Crisis.*

The severity of the fall in rice prices and the ensuing rural discontent led the Japanese government to adopt a series of measures designed to stabilize prices. After the rice riots in 1918, the Japanese government had instituted a Rice Law (Ja. *beikokuhō*) in 1921 that enabled the government to buy or sell rice at ceiling and floor prices in order to stabilize the supply and price of rice. In response to falling prices, the government increased the funds available to the program throughout the 1920s. When this failed to achieve the desired result the government added measures to limit the importation of foreign rice to Japan, eventually passing a new Rice Control Law (Ja. *beikoku tōsei hō*) in 1933 which removed previous limits on the government's rice purchases.[97]

As part of the Japanese empire, Korean and Taiwanese rice was exempt from most of the restrictions placed on rice imported to Japan. Nonetheless, under pressure from its own farmers, the Japanese government took additional steps to control the flow of Korean and Taiwanese rice. Amending the Rice Law in 1931, the Japanese government set itself as the sole authorized importer of Korean and Taiwanese rice. In this capacity, and under the later Rice Control Law, the Japanese government thus attempted to regulate the volume and timing of imperial rice imports, limiting imports during the Japanese rice harvest and managing the flow of rice to ameliorate seasonal price fluctuations.[98]

As the government in Japan continued to seek a solution to the economic problems of its farmers, pressure increased on the colonial government in Korea to follow

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[97] On policies in Japan, see Bruce Johnston, *Japanese Food Management in World War II* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1953), 45-69; Yujiro Hayami, *Japanese Agriculture Under Siege: The Political Economy of Agricultural Policies* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 37, 38; Sheingate, *The Rise of the Agricultural Welfare*, 83-86; Smith, *A Time of Crisis*.
[98] Ibid, 549-561; Johnston, *Japanese Food Management*, 45-69; Hayami, *Japanese Agriculture Under Siege*, 37, 38.

suit. Any rice policy would test the limits of colonial rhetoric as it sought a delicate balance act between the interests of Japan, which wanted to limit Korean rice exports, and Korean producers, who resisted any attempt to close formerly profitable markets for Korean rice. Indeed, in 1932, producers and traders of rice in Korea reacted angrily to the suggestion that Japan might aid its own farmers at the expense of those in Korea, vowing to prevent the implementation of discriminatory policies that would "push rice production and the economy to the point of death."[99]

Rural discontent within Korea, as well as the tentative extension of Japanese rice control policies toward the peninsula, prompted the Government-General to introduce its own measures to deal with falling rice prices. When exports to Japan came under temporary limitation in 1928, the colonial government in turn limited the import of foreign rice into Korea, requiring permits from importers and further restricting imports in 1930.[100] As in Japan, the colonial government also began to purchase rice itself in an attempt to prop up prices and appease large traders and producers. Government purchases of rice were not entirely successful, however. After the first round of purchases in 1932, representatives from rice trading associations and the agricultural association criticized the Government-General for its restrictive implementation (initially the government only purchased rice from one location in the capital) and for the low price offered.[101]

At the other end of the spectrum, the colonial government employed a range of strategies in an attempt to stem the flow of rice onto the market. In 1934, the colonial government ended the PIRP ahead of schedule after rice prices failed to recover and amid

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[99] "Chōsen kome tōsei mondai hihan," *CNH* 6, no. 9 (1932): 15-20; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 555.
[100] Ibid, 463-477.
[101] Ibid, 558.

several years of record harvests. To deal with surpluses, the government also encouraged the cultivation of alternative crops, such as cotton, and the use of rice in other industries such as alcohol production.[102] But chief among the colonial government's efforts to manage the amount of rice entering the market at any one time was the construction of warehouses and rice storage facilities. In 1930, the colonial government introduced a fifteen-year plan for the construction of grain warehouses. The plan offered substantial subsidies for the construction of warehouses in rural areas and the major trading ports—up to 70 percent of construction costs for rural warehouses (Ko. *nongŏp ch'anggo*; Ja. *nōgyō sōko*). Under the plan, the government aimed to build 50 rural warehouses in the space of five years with 150 more to follow in the next ten years. Farmers who stored grain in the warehouses received a coupon for their rice, which could be exchanged for low-interest loans against the stored grain. The government also applied subsidies and fines to farmers who either kept or broke storage contracts to encourage compliance.[103]

The colonial government did not manage rural warehouses directly and instead it entrusted the management of the rural warehouses to the agricultural associations.[104] To boost its storage capacity to meet the ambitious targets of the rice storage program, the

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[102] Ibid, 450, 451.

[103] The planned rural warehouses were in addition to commercial trading warehouses to be built at the major ports. Ibid, 465; "Nongŏp ch'anggo sŏlch'i Chŏnbuk Kunsansŏ," *Tonga ilbo*, March 2, 1929; "Nongŏp ch'anggo ŭi kŏnsŏl kyehoek chinhaeng," *Tonga ilbo*, May 6, 1929; "Simnyŏn kyehoek ŭi nonggo ch'onyŏndo e sipgaeso," *Tonga ilbo*, January 17, 1930; "Chosŏn nongŏp ch'anggoryŏng (sang & ha)," *Maeil sinbo*, July 17, 18, 1931; "Chōsen kome ishutsu no keizaiteki tōsei yōkō," reprinted in Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 557, 558; "Kŭmnyŏnsan Chosŏnmi chŏjang sŏlch'i," *Tonga ilbo*, November 1, 1935.

[104] "Chosŏn nongŏp ch'anggoryŏng," (article 4). To a lesser extent, industrial associations (Ko. *sanŏp chohap*; Ja. *sangyō kumiai*) also managed the warehouses. In function, the industrial associations combined the work of the financial associations and agricultural associations, i.e., selling and marketing agricultural products, and for this reason the industrial associations struggled to establish a significant presence within Korea. Accordingly, I do not discuss them here, even though they shared much in common with the other semi-governmental organizations discussed here. On the industrial associations and their overlap with the financial associations, see Yi Kyŏngnan, *Ilcheha kŭmyung chohap yŏn'gu*, 248-259.

government also mobilized warehouses belonging to other semi-governmental organizations, including the financial associations and irrigation associations. Among the grain warehouses and those belonging to financial associations, irrigation associations, and other groups, in 1930 the colonial government planned to store a total of 2,012,000 *sŏm* of rice—an amount equivalent to 10 percent of the total harvest that year.[105] Warehouses and rice storage were thus a major part of the colonial government's response to the collapse in rice prices.

Despite the government's efforts, rice storage had little immediate impact on the price of rice. As prices remained low, and the amount of rice in storage grew ever higher, the colonial government expanded the scope of the original storage plans. In 1933, the colonial government introduced supplementary storage targets on export grain and unhulled rice to plan for an additional 4,000,000 *sŏm* of stored rice. To meet the expanded targets, local governments and the various associations began to manage the open-air storage (Ko. *yajŏk*; Ja. *nodumi*) of unhulled grain in addition to that stored in warehouses. Depending on the region and the availability of warehouses, the amount of rice stored in the open air could be significant. In the spring of 1934, 217,508 *sŏm* out of a total 285,233 *sŏm* of stored grain in South Kyŏngsang province was kept as open-air storage, with only 67,725 *sŏm* stored within rural warehouses while the province worked to complete the construction of 94 county warehouses.[106] As shown in Figure 3.3, even after the construction of warehouses began to have results, the sheer volume of stored

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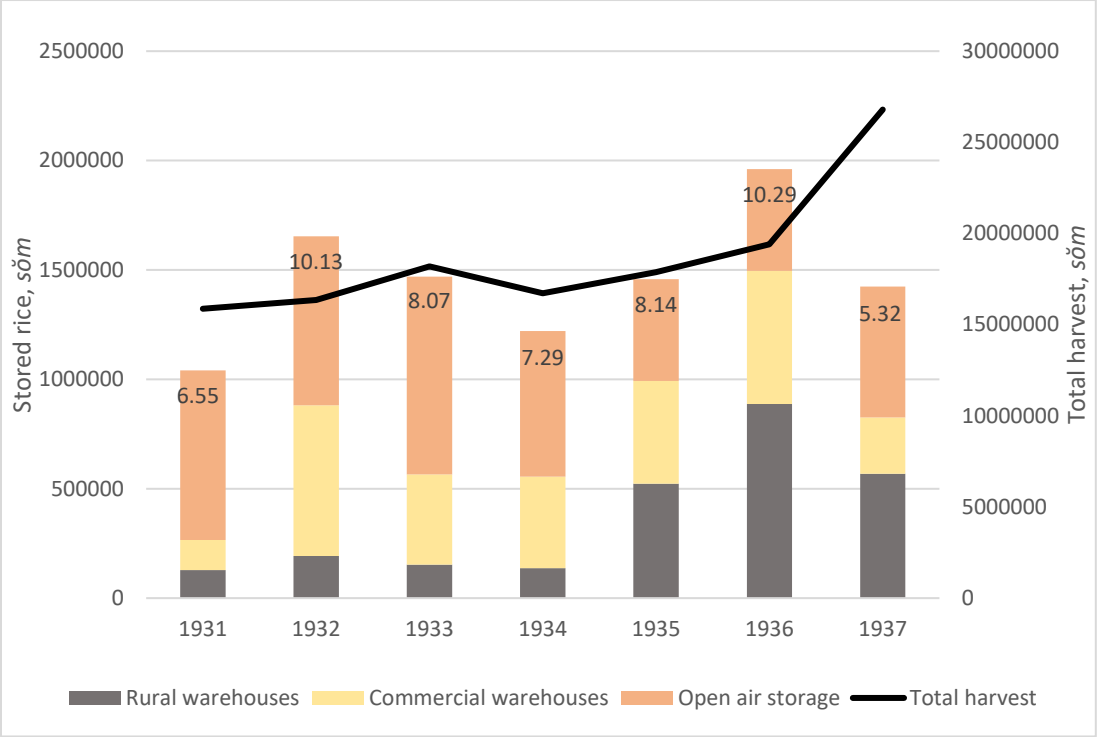
[105] This figure is even more impressive if one considers that 1930 was a record rice harvest. Judged against the harvest of the two previous years, 2,012,000 *sŏm* represented an even greater fifteen percent of the total rice produced in Korea. *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*; Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 465-68.
[106] "Kyŏngnamdo sipku-gun nongch'ang kusipsadong," *Tonga ilbo*, March 5, 1934.

Figure 3.3: Annual long-term stored rice, 1931–37



Source: Data from Chŏn Kangsu, "Singminjigi Chosŏn ŭi migok chŏjang," 318
Note: Numbers above columns indicate the percentage of total rice harvest stored each year. Commercial warehouses were located at the major rice ports and were mainly used by traders, while most farmers dealt with the rural warehouses or open air storage.

rice meant that open-air storage continued to form a considerable portion of the total stored grain for much of the 1930s.[107]

The warehouses and other storage facilities did more than simply store rice. Regulations on the rural warehouses published in 1931 granted them three separate functions the storage of rice; the inspection and processing of rice; and the joint sale of rice. The warehouses stored all farmers' grain together, thus any rice entering the warehouse was inspected and sorted by its variety, quality, and year of production. The inspections also sought to prevent any spoiled rice from contaminating other grain held in

[107] Chŏn Kangsu, "Singminjigi Chosŏn ŭi migok chŏjang changnyŏ chŏngch'aek kwa pyŏ kŏmsa-kongdong p'anmae chedo: 1930 nyŏndae rŭl chungsim ŭro," *Kyŏngjesahak* 17 (1993): 307-357.

the warehouse. The colonial government also encouraged the joint sale of stored grain. Repeating the arguments made in favor of earlier consigned sales programs, official encouragements of joint sales promised a better price for grain sold in bulk than farmers might achieve individually.[108] All in all, the grain storage system as envisioned by the colonial government set the rural warehouses and other storage facilities operated by the semi-governmental organizations into yet one more network that linked farmers to markets, albeit one with built-in delays.

Just as the other initiatives promoted through the semi-governmental organizations, the colonial government's attempt to control the flow and price of rice was shaped by the organizations which implemented the policies. Where agricultural associations managed the rural warehouses, the associations were able to include regulations specifically favoring the storage of members' rice over that of non-members.[109] Meanwhile, a combination of warehouse storage fees and the immediacy of some farmers' financial needs made it harder for the most impoverished farmers to take advantage of the rural warehouses, leaving such farmers with little choice but to sell their rice to brokers who were able to use the storage system themselves. Despite boasting of an "age of warehouses" after completing its targets for warehouse construction ahead of schedule, local officials in North Kyŏngsang province noted a disparity in the background of farmers using the rural warehouses. The vast majority of farmers using the

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[108] Ibid; "Chosŏn nongŏp ch'anggoryŏng"; "Beikoku kyōdō hanbai no jisseki kanshō," *CNH* 7, no. 1 (1933): 143, 144.

[109] In P'aju county, Kyŏnggi province, the agricultural association warehouse at Munsan listed deposits in order of preference as follows: 1) deposits from association members engaged in agriculture; 2) deposits from association members with rights to land; 3) deposits from non-members engaged in agriculture, and 4) deposits from non-members with rights to land. Hashū[P'aju]-kun nōkai, "Nōgyō sōko gyōmu kitei" in "Bunsan [Munsan] nōgyō sōko shinsetsu ninkasho" [1934]. MS CJA0004930, National Archives of Korea, Taejŏn.

rural warehouses were large landlords and merchants, while medium- and small-scale farmers continued to sell their crop to traders regardless of the low prices.[110] Farmers who had to store their crop in the open air faced risks of their own; the stored grain was vulnerable to damage by weather or by fire, apparently prompting a sudden increase in applications for insurance against the stored grain.[111]

The agricultural crisis of the 1920s and 1930s fundamentally changed the colonial government's relation to the international rice market. From its earliest efforts to reinforce the influence of price signals to encourage greater production among farmers, a period of sustained low prices and the need to coordinate policies with those implemented in Japan led the colonial government to try and control the market for rice in the 1930s. Nonetheless, although this represented a reversal of some aspects of earlier policies, the use of semi-governmental organizations as a means to implement agricultural policy remained the same. From their earlier work in facilitating the sale of rice to Japan, the various associations now functioned as a gateway to the colonial government's rice storage programs. In this capacity, the association-managed warehouses gained a stronger presence in the storage, inspection, and sale of rice in greater quantities than in previous years. Although some agricultural associations had handled the sale of members' rice during the 1920s, the warehouse system formalized their position within a nationwide parallel market network and by 1937 ten percent of all rice sold in Korea was handled by the agricultural associations.[112]

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[110] "Shukka kumiai de kome hanbai tōsei," *CNH* 5, no. 10 (1931):123; "Nōsō jidai shutsugensu," *CNH* 5, no. 11 (1931): 119, 120; "Nōgyō sōko riyōsha no futettei," *CNH* 6, no. 2 (1932): 104.
[111] "Yajŏk kongmul esŏ parhwa chŏngjo samch'ŏn sŏm hoesin wŏnin ŭn sirhwa sonhae nŭn ilmanyukch'ŏn wŏn p'alil Chinnamp'o taehwa," *Maeil sinbo*, March 11, 1931; "Yajŏkcho pohŏm kŭpchŭng," *Tonga ilbo*, November 12, 1933; "Yajŏk tomi e ŭimun ŭi parhwa," *Tonga ilbo*, November 8, 1934.
[112] "Nōka keizai yori mitaru nōsanbutsu hanbai no jūyōsei ni tsuite," *CNH* 13, no. 1 (1939): 24.

V. Pushing at the Margins: Overcoming the Market through Joint Cultivation

The colonial government's response to sustained low prices for rice and cotton demonstrates the importance of imperial politics in crafting policies for Korea. Pressure from rice farmers in Japan and major producers and traders in Korea led the colonial government to introduce long-term rice storage programs that, though ultimately ineffectual in raising prices, insulated certain groups from the worst of the fall in prices. Not all crops held the same political and economic value as rice, however. Unlike the surpluses of rice that existed across the empire, the Japanese textile industry continued to import vast quantities of raw cotton, while the expansion of empire into Manchuria and nascent industrialization in Korea, including textile manufactures, meant that increased cotton cultivation remained an important strategic goal for the Government-General of Korea.[113]

Cotton cultivation fit within two further imperatives of 1930s colonial policy. First, cotton was an alternative to rice. As part of its efforts to reduce rice harvests and relieve the downward pressure on rice prices, the colonial government made efforts to persuade farmers to divert their land toward cotton cultivation, among other crops. Second, and cotton fit within the logic of the Rural Revitalization Movement (hereafter RRM; Ko. *nongch'on chinhŭng undong*; Ja. *nōson shinkō undō*)—a nationwide program to pacify rural unrest through a combination of patriotic campaigns, debt restructuring, and economic intitiatives. Agricultural technicians and local government officials thus

[113] In the words of one cotton booster, the Japanese textile industry offered "unlimited" demand for Korean cotton. Chōsen nōkai, *Chōsen ni okeru mensaku saibai no genzai oyobi shōrai* (n.d.), 1. On the colonial textile industry, see also Eckert, *Offspring of Empire*.

promoted cotton as one of several cash crops that struggling farmers might cultivate as a way to boost their household income [114]

With these ideas in mind, Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige (1868–1956, 宇垣一成) unveiled a third cotton promotion plan in 1933 that called for an increase in the acreage of cotton cultivation in Korea to 350,000 *chŏngbo* within twenty years. Announced at an advisory meeting of the provincial governors under the slogan of "from an individuated (Ko. *kaebyŏlchŏk*; Ja. *kobetsuteki*) to a controlled economy (Ko. *t'ongje kyŏngje*; Ja. *tōsei keizai*)," Ugaki introduced the cotton production expansion plan as part of a series of major campaigns, including among them the RRM, industrialization in the northern regions, and the diversification of agriculture.[115] Like earlier cotton promotion schemes, Ugaki's plan was based on the achievement of cultivation targets, with national targets subdivided into targets for each province to achieve through the work of agricultural technicians and local state-sponsored associations. But, where the price of cotton remained depressed, colonial officials could no longer rely upon the profitability of cotton as a sufficient mechanism in itself to encourage its increased production.

To achieve the desired increases in yield and acreage provincial governors therefore combined familiar methods with several new strategies. County agricultural associations—the successors to the cotton associations—continued to offer material support in the form of improved seeds (this time a substrain of upland cotton developed

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[114] For more on the RRM, see Gi-Wook Shin and Do-Hyun Han, "Colonial Corporatism: The Rural Revitalization Campaign, 1932-1940," in Shin and Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University East Asia Center, 1999), 70-96. On similar programs in Japan, see Smith, *A Time of Crisis*; Simon Partner, "Taming the Wilderness: The Lifestyle Improvement Movement in Rural Japan, 1925-1965," *Monumenta Nipponica* 56, no. 4 (2001): 487-520.

[115] "Sanŏp chŏngch'aek ŭi hyŏksin chŏnhwan kido," *Maeil sinbo*, March 7, 1933. Initially the plan called for an increase of 250,000 *chŏngbo* of cultivation, but was revised upwards after the first year. Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 597-600.

at the agricultural experiment station in Mokp'o, variety no. 380), credit for fertilizers, and guidance from agricultural technicians, as well as several new subsidies for cotton.[116] At the same time, colonial officials looked to offset the impact of lower cotton prices through the promotion of "intensive cultivation" (Ko. *chipjung chaebae*; Ja. *shūchū saibai*), and through a new emphasis on bringing marginal labor and marginal land into cotton cultivation. Such an effort required more than the expansion or continuation of old campaigns, as officials targeted new populations of potential cotton farmers.

Women in particular found new attention from colonial administrators as a source of labor for cotton production. As one representative from North Kyŏngsang province who called for women to "be sent to the front lines of labor" frankly stated: "behind advances in cotton cultivation in North Kyŏngsang, the shadows are deeply stained with the blood and sweat of the labor of rural women."[117] With cotton prices low, appeals to women made economic sense as female casual labor was significantly cheaper than its male counterpart. As one study in Chindo, South Chŏlla province, reported, female agricultural laborers earned around 20 *sen* per day compared to equivalent male wages of 35 *sen*, leading local officials to promote cotton as particularly suited to hitherto "unproductive" female labor. Across Korea, the zeal to make better use of women's

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[116] "Menka daizōsan keikaku shuritsu," *CNH* 7, no. 6 (1933): 107, 108; Mitsuyō[Miryang]-kun, *Mensaku shōrei shisetsu oyobi seiseki* (Mitsuyō-kun: 1935). On the development of the substrain of upland cotton, see also "Rikuchimen shushi jikyūsaku," *CNH* 5, no. 2 (1931): 110. According to the article, alongside their high yield, the new seeds were a desirable alternative to imported American seeds as they increased Korea's self-sufficiency in upland cotton seeds.

[117] "Mensaku no yakushin to fujin rōsaku," *CNH* 7, no. 8 (1933): 115. This was not the colonial government's first appeal to women within cotton promotion policies. In 1923, agricultural technicians within the cotton associations organized a series of cotton cultivation observation trips to major cotton growing regions in South Chŏlla province for women from around the country. See, for example, "Koch'ang puin myŏnjak sich'aldan," *Tonga ilbo*, September 10, 1923. The 1930s stands out, however, in the intensity of colonial appeals to female labor and the government's effort to use women in all aspects of cotton cultivation (and not just as a complement to male labor).

"surplus labor" (Ja. *kajō rōryoku*) neatly blended the policy imperative to increase cotton cultivation with cultural and gendered views of Korean women as economically unproductive, and the RRM's general goal of rationalizing the household to increase rural incomes.[118]

Bringing new sources of land and labor into cotton cultivation presented a new logistical challenge for officials, however. Whereas prior campaigns implemented through the cotton and agricultural associations appealed to wealthier farmers who already owned (or could reliably lay claim to) sufficient farmland and capital to grow cotton alongside food crops, women and the poorer households who were the target of the RRM, for the most part, did not. Provincial governors across the major cotton-growing regions thus encouraged the formation of new village-level organizations dedicated to the joint cultivation of cotton. Where individuals lacked the surplus land and capital to farm cotton, these village-level groups would allow farmers to jointly lease land for upland cotton and, where necessary, jointly borrow from the financial associations to cover the upfront costs of fertilizers and tenancy contracts.[119]

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[118] "Senfujin no gaigyō shōrei," *CNH* 4, no. 9 (1930): 118; "Fujin mensaku shūkan no jisshi," *CNH* 5, no. 8 (1931): 96, 97; "Menka zōsan keikaku ni yori nōson fukyō dakai: 'fujin kyōdō kōsaku menpo' no shisetsu ni tsuite," *CNH* 8, no. 7 (1934): 66-75. It should go without saying that to view Korean women as economically unproductive necessarily ignores the value of domestic labor, not to mention the significant number of women, often from poorer households, who already worked outside of the home in a wide range of roles. See, Theodore Jun Yoo, *The Politics of Gender in Colonial Korea: Education, Labor and Health, 1910-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Janice C. H. Kim, *To Live, To Work: Factory Women in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

[119] "Myŏnjak yŏl ŭl chojang k'oja puin chŏnsŭptan sŏlch'i ilmyŏn i-sam tong sik t'ŭkchŏng chido k'iro Kyŏngbukto ŭi sin changnyŏ pangch'im," *Maeil sinbo*, February 6, 1931; "Kyōdō kōsaku kumiai no setsuritsu shōrei," *CNH* 6, no. 5 (1931): 117; "Kyŏngnamdo kwannae ŭi puin myŏnjakp'o sanghwang," *Maeil sinbo*, July 23, 1932; "Mensaku shōrei nijū kanen keikaku juritsu," *CNH* 7, no. 3 (1933): 108; "Fujin mensaku kyōdōho no secchi shōrei," *CNH* 7, no. 4 (1933): 114; "Menka zōsan keikaku ni yori nōson"; "Uryang puin myŏnjakkye p'yoch'ang chunbi chinhaeng Ch'ungnamdonae yukpaekosibo kye e silchŏk chosa kaesi," *Maeil sinbo*, February 30, 1935; *Mensaku shōrei shisetsu oyobi seiseki*.

Joint cultivation organizations targeted the cultivation of new plots of land. Though not necessarily representative of the country as a whole, a 1935 report from the village-level "cotton improvement groups" in Miryang county, South Kyŏngsang province, suggests the likely nature of such attempts at joint farming. Promoted by the local government in support of the general cotton promotion plans, by 1935 almost each village in Miryang county was home to two separate cotton cultivation groups, divided by gender. Each group borrowed money to pay for land and farming equipment which it repaid through the joint sale of cotton, with any profits being shared among the members. The groups managed multiple scattered plots—often obtained through a group loan, which was repaid through the sale of cotton produced by members—including such locations as "behind the school" and "along the side of Ch'unbok road" in one village, or "within the forest" and "in front of Anp'o [a neighboring] village" in another.[120]

Similar to those detailed in *Villages of Cotton*, the village-level cotton organizations formed as part of the third cotton promotion plan fit within the larger network of semi-governmental organizations. In Miryang, the county magistrate (and concurrent head of the county agricultural association) oversaw the establishment of each organization and assigned agricultural technicians to each group to offer dedicated guidance and oversight. Technicians held product fairs, encouraged the appropriate use of fertilizer to increase productivity, and managed the joint sale of cotton produced by the group.[121] Unlike earlier years, however, village-level organizations were increasingly part

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[120] "Mensaku kairyō hinpyōkai," *CNH* 7, no. 7 (1933): 98; *Mensaku shōrei shisetsu oyobi seiseki*, 3-5. The villages referred to here are Kyodong village, Miryang township (*ŭp*), and Anbŏp village, Tanjang township (*myŏn*).
[121] Ibid.

of a wider, systematic effort to expand the reach of the state's existing agricultural infrastructure. The organizations found in Miryang were not the spontaneous creation of residents, or even an enterprising county magistrate looking to distinguish himself, but were part of the planned establishment of 1,200 joint cultivation groups across South Kyŏngsang province in support of the third cotton plan.[122] No comprehensive data exists on the nationwide prevalence of village-level joint cotton cultivation groups, but scattered sources suggest that they were widespread. In South Chŏlla, the provincial government planned to create a total of 2,660 joint cultivation fields, each at least 4 *p'yŏng* (Ja. *tsubo*) (roughly 13 square meters) in size, while plans to expand cotton cultivation through a series of smaller organizations operating below the agricultural associations were also announced in South Ch'ungch'ŏng, North Kyŏngsang, Kangwŏn and North and South P'yŏngan provinces.[123]

The scope of village organizations also changed as the RRM provided a rationale that positioned rural households as the target of colonial campaigns. To the emphasis of earlier cotton campaigns on improving farming methods and crop quality, the RRM added the imperative to investigate and reform households' sources of income and spending, saving habits, side-jobs, and work ethic. In many places, cotton promotion thus became intertwined with the RRM's focus on reforming the household as an economic

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[122] "Mensaku shōrei nijū kanen keikaku juritsu."

[123] Menka zōsan keikaku ni yori nōson"; "Rikuchimen shōrei," *CNH* 4, no. 3 (1930): 86; "Mensaku no fukyū wo shōrei," *CNH* 4, no. 3 (1930): 87; "Mensaku-kei hinpyōkai no seiseki," *CNH* 6, no. 3 (1932): 115; "Mensaku no tekisho shūchūshugi shōrei," *CNH* 6, no. 5 (1932): 118; "Fujin mensaku kyōdōho no secchi shōrei"; "Menka zōsan keikaku wo kakuchō," *CNH* 8, no. 4 (1934): 97, 98; "Mensaku no shōrei," *CNH* 8, no. 4 (1934): 100; "Menka saibai wo shōrei," *CNH* 8, no. 5 (1934): 103, 104. Most of the new organizations were designed to operate at the village level, although in Kangwŏn and North and South P'yŏng'an provinces the new cotton promotion organizations were organized at the township and county level given each province's relative lack of experience and shorter history in cotton production.

unit. "Guidance" to cotton cultivation groups grew to cover not only advice on fertilizers and seeds but also the appropriate use of the money earned by the sale of cotton. In South Ch'ungch'ŏng province, officials set a minimum savings rate of 50 *sen* per *p'yŏng* farmed within its 412 "special cotton villages" and 1 *yen* per *p'yŏng* cultivated for its 452 "women's cotton groups," claiming that the savings would enable the groups to purchase their own land in the future.[124] Officials in Chindo, South Chŏlla province, similarly enforced savings among the "women's joint cotton cultivation groups," ostensibly to prevent the squandering of joint sales revenues—either by the women themselves or at the hands of their husbands.[125]

The expansion of village-level organizations dedicated to joint farming was not limited to cotton and joint cultivation came to occupy a central position within the RRM. In Kyŏnggi province, local officials adopted three slogans for its RRM activities—reducing consumption, increasing income, and diligence and thrift—introducing new organizations at the county and township level to oversee their implementation. As part of this effort, the provincial agricultural association established "joint cultivation associations" within each village to actively encourage villagers to participate in joint farming. According to the proposal, the new organizations were intended to serve as a new side-employment for farmers, thereby increasing their income and providing a communal pool of capital that might be loaned out to impoverished farmers at favorable rates, thus reducing the burden of debt within the village.[126] In North Kyŏngsang province, officials similarly planned "rural revitalization organizations" to coordinate

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[124] "Fujin mensakukei no chochiku," *CNH* 7, no. 11 (1933): 110.
[125] "Menka zōsan keikaku ni yori nōson," 73.
[126] "Kyōdō kōsaku kumiai no setsuritsu shōrei," 117.

RRM-related activities between villages, other local government officials, and representatives of the various associations in areas such as joint cultivation and the encouragement of female labor.[127]

Alongside village-level organizations for joint cultivation, colonial officials also introduced village-level community credit organizations as part of the RRM. The financial associations had long been criticized, even among colonial bureaucrats, for failing to include more small- and medium-sized farmers among their members.[128] Critics of the financial associations also accused them of acting too much like banks and neglecting the responsibility of educating farmers on the most profitable ways to sell their crops. In the view of scholars such as Kurumada Atsushi (車田篤), a prominent legal scholar and colonial bureaucrat, the financial associations had directly contributed to the rural crisis threatening the Korean countryside by failing to offer stronger advice on the use of loans and techniques to improve agriculture, leaving little option for farmers but to build up debt after debt.[129]

In 1935, the colonial government responded to both of these concerns with the introduction of yet another village-level joint organization—the industrial group (Ko. *siksan'gye*; Ja. *shokusankei*). Announced as the "front line agency of the RRM," the industrial group worked as a subsidiary of the financial associations to extend credit to farmers who did not have sufficient income or assets to meet the membership requirements of the financial association. Instead of joining as an individual association

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[127] "Nōson shinkōkai no secchi," *CNH* 6, no. 11 (1932): 106.
[128] Chōsen kin'yū kumiai rengōkai, ed., *Kin'yū kumiai ronsakushū* (Keijō: 1930).
[129] Kurumada Atsushi, "Nōson shinkō no kikan toshite kin'yū kumiai soshiki no kaizen wo yōsu," *CNH* 7, no. 5 (1933): 17-21. For a similar critique, see also, Dōmoto Sadaichi, "Hinan no ten," *Kin'yū kumiai*, November, 1930, reprinted in *Kin'yū kumiai ronsakushū*, 314-338.

member, groups of five-or-more farmers within the same village were newly able to form an industrial group which could then apply for financial association loans on a collective basis. The industrial groups offered more than financial services, however. Financial association staff bore a responsibility to oversee each industrial group, providing a mechanism for the agricultural guidance that critics like Kurumada had found lacking in the original financial associations.[130] As the most recent focus of agricultural policy, agricultural technicians and local government officials promoted the formation of industrial groups alongside and in support of joint cultivation projects. Within two years, there were 1,345 industrial groups around the country, bringing 10,408 farmers under the realm of the financial associations to finance joint farming activities on behalf of the RRM.[131]

The promotion of communal village organizations also linked the RRM to rice storage and price control campaigns. As the colonial government continued its drive to control and correct for what it perceived to be failures in both the market for agricultural products and farmers' behavior, it introduced new organizations to coordinate, and at times coerce, farmers' participation in the agricultural association-managed rural warehouses. After noting that brokers and large landlords dominated the use of rural warehouses' rice storage programs, North Kyŏngsang province established roughly 100 "rice forwarding associations" that aimed to "rationalize" farmers' sales practices and eliminate brokers by organizing the joint packing and transporting of rice within local

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[130] "Shokusankei no naiyō," *CNH* 9, no. 1 (1935): 112, 113; "Kŭmil palp'o toen siksan'gye ryŏng chŏnmun," *Maeil sinbo*, August 30, 1935. Technically, industrial groups could also be formed under the supervision of industrial associations as well, although the industrial associations were far fewer in number. For the most part the industrial groups under the industrial associations functioned similarly to the industrial groups organized under the finanical associations.
[131] Yi Kyŏngnan, *Ilcheha kŭmyung chohap yŏn'gu*, 354.

areas. Instead of selling their rice to local traders, farmers within North Kyŏngsang could deliver their rice to forwarding associations that transported the grain to the rural warehouses collectively on behalf of the farmers.[132] Other provinces followed suit, establishing forwarding associations and joint farming organizations as an effort to expand participation in rice storage programs via the network of sales and subsidies established through the county agricultural associations.[133]

The 1930s thus saw the expansion of joint farming organizations to cover all aspects of agricultural production, from finance to cultivation and from sales to savings and reinvestment. As the colonial government expanded the target of its agricultural programs to include poorer farmers, it increasingly turned to work through the village as an economic unit. Village cotton organizations collectively purchased and rented land that farmers could not afford individually. Industrial groups jointly took out loans for the purchase of fertilizers and tools on behalf of village residents, while rural revitalization groups and forwarding associations further promoted joint farming and joint sales activities within the village. Although Korea had a long history of local, village-level, economic organizations, the new groups were part of a distinct effort that systematically linked village organizations to the nationwide economic network established through the various associations.

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[132] "Shukka kumiai de kome hanbai tōsei"; "Shukka kumiai wo mōke, nōsō riyō no kakudaika," *Taikyū nippō*, April 23, 1931.

[133] "Kyŏngnam tononghoe esŏ ch'urha chohap ŭl sŏllip," *Maeil sinbo*, June 7, 1932; "Manmong yuch'ul changnyŏ ro ch'urha chohap ŭl chojik," *Maeil sinbo*, July 28, 1932; "Nongsanmul ch'urha chohap hwakchang," *Maeil sinbo*, Augist 16, 1932; "Kakji kongdong ch'urha chohap," *Maeil sinbo*, March 17, 1933; "Hamnam susanmul Manju yuch'ul ch'okchin," *Maeil sinbo*, April 14, 1933; "Chosŏn nonghoe ŭi nongsanmul p'anmae alsŏn," *Maeil sinbo*, May 11, 1933; "Hwanghaedo chiksanmul ch'urha chohap hyŏnhwang," *Maeil sinbo*, February 24, 1934.

The initial impetus behind the turn toward village-level joint farming organizations was grounded in the agricultural crisis of the late 1920s and early 1930s. But, as the Japanese empire slid toward war with China and in the Pacific in the late 1930s, the colonial government found new purpose for village organizations within the system of wartime mobilization. Writing in the *Bulletin of the Korean Agricultural Association*, Nomura Jin, (野村稔), a teacher at several agricultural colleges, made a case for strengthening the role of the agricultural associations under wartime mobilization:

> The struggle for survival that became intense in a modern state and society is, I think, already developing its own semblance of structure in peacetime. Thus, where this strengthens future advantages, wartime and peacetime are not opposing systems, and the distinctions between the two are gradually diminishing… Therefore, at this time, is it not an urgent task to strengthen and expand the Korean agricultural association, use its power in the surveys and research for a broader agricultural policy, and to cooperate with the agricultural administrative organizations, experimental organizations, educational organizations, and agricultural organizations to urge action and development in the world of agriculture?[134]

As Nomura, and others, argued, wartime mobilization did not require the creation of a new economic system as much as a strengthening of central authority over the myriad agricultural organizations already in existence.[135] At the same time, the government made greater efforts to expand association membership at both poles of the rural economy, both among wealthy landlords who could avoid the associations to deal directly with banks and trading corporations and the poorest of tenants not yet reached by the RRM's agricultural campaigns.[136] Wartime mobilization thus entailed both the expansion of

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[134] Nomura Jin, "Senji taiseika no shinnen wo mukaete nōgyō sanbō honbu toshite no Chōsen nōkai no kyōka kakujū wo teishōsu," *CNH* 12, no. 1 (1938): 28.
[135] See also, Kobayakawa Kurō, "Chōsen ni okeru nōgyō dantai no tōsei kōryō," *CNH* 12, no. 4 (1938): 21-29.
[136] "Sangyō dantai tōsei mondai zadankai kiroku," *CNH* 12, no. 10 (1939): 53-60.

village organizations and their continued incorporation into a tightly controlled national system.

The basic principles behind wartime mobilization were not so different from earlier agricultural campaigns, albeit on a much stricter, much more coercive level. As increased demand from the military turned empire-wide surpluses into shortages, the colonial government implemented a new wave of production campaigns, issuing production targets and using the network of associations and their subsidiary organizations to allocate resources such as fertilizers. But, where just three percent of rural households are estimated to have actively participated in the main activities of the RRM, wartime mobilization aimed to target every village and every household.[137] To that end, in addition to existing village organizations the colonial government established patriotic groups (Ko. *aegukpan*; Ja. *aikokuhan*) and village leagues (Ko. *burak yŏnmaeng*; Ja. *buraku renmei*) to coordinate labor for and implement the production campaigns and distribution targets that constituted wartime mobilization. By 1942, almost ninety percent of rural villages had established at least one mobilization organization within the village.[138]

Where village leagues and patriotic groups organized joint cultivation toward production targets within the villages, industrial groups linked villages to a network that

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[137] It is estimated that 92.4 percent of rural households participated in wartime mobilization campaigns by 1942. Lee Songsoon, "The Rural Control Policy and Peasant Ruling Strategy of the Government-General of Chosŏn in the 1930s-1940s," *International Journal of Korean History* 15, no. 2 (2010): 16. The figure of three percent participation in the RRM does not include participation in simultaneous agricultural campaigns, such as that for cotton production, that were not explicitly named as part of the RRM but that nonetheless shared many of the RRM's aims and tactics, such as joint cultivation and the promotion of savings.

[138] Ibid; Yi Kyŏngnan, "Ch'ongdongwŏn ch'ejeha nongch'on t'ongje wa nongmin saenghwal: maŭl sahoe kwan'gye ŭl chungsim ŭro," *Tongbang hakchi* 124 (2004): 785-838.

managed the distribution of both financial and material resources. Similar to the village leagues and patriotic groups, by 1942 around ninety percent of households were a member of either a financial association or an industrial group.[139] More so than in any other agricultural campaign, wartime mobilization sought to control the flow of resources and direct agricultural products through government-managed networks. To that end, the colonial government consolidated existing forwarding associations under the direct control of the agricultural associations and took steps to limit the sale of agricultural products outside of government-controlled sales networks. The colonial government issued regulations banning the private sale of crops, directing farmers to participate in industrial-group-managed joint sale programs instead. Within joint sales programs, the government also instituted set prices for crops as a measure to control inflation. At the peak of wartime mobilization, the associations and village organizations that were initially established as a complement to commercial market networks thus came to eclipse them. Within the vastly expanded alternative economic sphere of the association-managed economy, joint sales and joint cultivation formed the new norm of the rural production organized through the village-level industrial and patriotic groups.[140]

VI. Conclusion

By 1945, agriculture was still the largest industry in Korea by employment, but much had changed since 1910. Not all of these changes were readily apparent. Fields of rice still dominated the landscape, and the uneven distribution of colonial economic development

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[139] Yi Kyŏngnan, *Ilcheha kŭmyung chohap yŏn'gu*, 355.

[140] "Mugi zōsan kakuho nami ni hanbai tōsei jisshi yōkō," *CNH* 14, no. 7 (1940): 100, 101; "Beikoku tōsei kikō no setsubi hōshin," *CNH* 14, no. 7 (1940): 107; Yi Kyŏngnan, "Ch'ongdongwŏn ch'ejeha nongch'on t'ongje,"; Yun Haedong, "Singminji malgi ch'ollak esŏ ŭi 'ch'ongdongwŏn ch'eje' kuch'uk (1937-1945 nyŏn)," *Minjok munhwa nonch'ong* 33 (2006): 253-314.

kept landlords and tenants in place as a social fixture for all too many farmers. But, beneath the surface, agricultural production was vastly different. The rice that many farmers grew now came from high-yielding seeds, developed at agricultural experiment stations in Korea and Japan and distributed through a network of agricultural associations. The cotton that farmers sold no longer headed for local traders, but found its way through the association-managed system of grading and pricing as a raw material for industry. Although landlords maintained a social and economic status above tenants, neither could farm without relying in some measure on the range of semi-governmental organizations established under the colonial state. Wartime mobilization pushed the state's presence in the economy to the extreme, but the pattern of state involvement in the wartime economy built on trends established years earlier in the colonial government's zeal to foster new agricultural markets in Korea and its social and economic responses to the agricultural crisis of the late-1920s.

Previous research into the colonial rural economy has made much of the confluence of interests among the landlord class, capital, and the Japanese empire. According to such arguments:

> Japan created a legal and institutional apparatuses to protect land ownership and accumulation by the landlord and capitalist class, and it placed no restrictions on land ownership or accumulation by Koreans, allowing the existing situation to continue. It adopted these policies because the Japanese needed a social class that would collaborate with them politically and socially in order to rule the Korean people and to turn Korea into a major food supplier.[141]

> The colonial government not only protected the interests of large landlords in the land survey and in the estimation of land tax, but also provided many subsidies to those landlords who faithfully followed government agricultural policies. The Government-General fortified the economic position of the landlords who eagerly introduced new

[141] Yong-sop Kim, "The Landlord System and the Agricultural Economy," 134.

> rice hybrids, organized water irrigation associations, and tried to enhance agricultural productivity.[142]

Such descriptions are not entirely inaccurate. The colonial government indeed adopted policies that supported the development of commercial agriculture, often designing its policies with the interests of landowners in mind. Still, this long-held view overlooks a key feature of the colonial rural economy—namely, the ever-present hand of the colonial state in creating, shaping, and regulating the market for agricultural products so as to redirect flows of resources and to prompt farmers to adopt new methods of production. When colonial policies achieved their targets, this was neither the result of spontaneous cooperation from farmers, nor was it the product of a natural alliance between capital and empire. Government policies, as implemented by the various associations, created new incentives to which farmers responded both positively and negatively.

The associations created under colonial rule were neither the handmaidens of landlords nor the colonial government, but were a site of interaction between the two sets of competing interests. At times, the colonial government actively promoted commercial agriculture. At other times, it channeled subsidies and targets through the associations to fight the currents of the global economy. In both cases, the form and function of the associations themselves defined in no small part the effect of colonial policy on the ground. Where farmers did not respond in the way envisioned by the colonial government, it introduced new regulations and organizations in an ongoing struggle to beget the desired response. Regardless of the particulars of each individual campaign, in

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[142] Dong-no Kim, "National Identity and Class Interest," 161, 162.

using the associations to build and regulate new market networks the colonial government reset the foundations of the rural economy. State intervention in the rural economy became a norm, not just in the heavy-handed extraction of wartime mobilization but in the mundane practices that turned crops into products, in the processing, grading, and distribution of particular types of rice and cotton. Most importantly, after the excesses of wartime mobilization—even after liberation and land reform swept away the immediate pressures of colonial rule and rural inequality—state intervention in the rural economy through semi-governmental organizations would endure. How the introduction of such associations fit within farmers' established patterns of production will be examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4:
THE CHANGING PLACE OF THE STATE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

> To the extent that institutions appear to "work," it is because they have been made to work by being implicated in ongoing practices or projects, by the selective erosion and elaboration of time. Yet, even against this modest claim for the surface efficacy of political institutions, many aspects of American political institutions constitute a challenge. Our arrangements of governance appear infused not with the spirit of the Enlightenment but with the humor of Rube Goldberg; after releasing a marble that tips a lever that lifts a plug, a stream of water moves a pingpong ball from A to B. Unlike the clean geometry of checks and balances in constitutional design, the facts on the ground are an immensely complex tangle of indirect incentives, cross-cutting regulations, overlapping jurisdictions, delegated responsibilities, and diffuse accountability…the twentieth-century state was constructed in a field already thickly populated by voluntary associations, political parties, and other organizational actors—a land already "full of governance."
>
> —Elizabeth S. Clemens, "Lineages of the Rube Goldberg State," 2006[143]

> Do you know the meaning of what olden people called a *kye*?...A *kye* is when several people agree in spirit, as if making an accord with one another. When famines and fortunes alternate, if there were no *kye* then we could not establish the duty of mutual aid; when wealth and poverty are uneven, if there were no *kye* we could not attain the joy of banqueting.
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> —Preface to a *kye* ledger, seventeenth century[144]

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Korean and colonial governments alike reshaped government offices to suit their needs. As explored in Chapters One and Three, this was not always a simple task. Even within the central government, the implementation of policies frequently relied upon a host of tangentially related phenomena; the relatively simple goal of raising tax income prompted a cascade

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[143] Elisabeth S. Clemens, "Lineages of the Rube Goldberg State: Building and Blurring Public Programs, 1900–1940," in Ian Shapiro, Stephen Skowronek, and Daniel Galvin, eds., *Rethinking Political Institutions: The Art of the State* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 187, 189.

[144] "Kŭmgang sibirin kyech'ŏp," unpublished manuscript, compiled by Kim Tonghŭi, 1999.

of reforms in land registration and currency issuance; the ability to establish Korea as a source of cotton and rice for the wider demands of empire rested upon the work of a string of associations and initiatives, each vulnerable in turn to global price fluctuations and the logistical challenges of partner organizations. Yet, despite these complications, the view from central government maintains a semblance of internal consistency. Even amid attempts at avoidance or redirection, tax receipts lay within the purview of the Ministry of Finance. When the colonial government wanted to increase the cultivation of a certain crop, it turned to its hierarchy of organizations to promote the item in question from the model industrial farm through to an array of associations.

The moment that one moves away from the perspective of central government, however, claims of comprehensive and effective government policies become even fainter to the point of illusion. The financial associations may have been the colonial government's main channel for lending to farmers, but, as shown in Chapter Two, when it came to borrowing money Sim Wŏn'gwŏn already had a host of options for rural credit, from family and friends, to well-connected local elites. To paraphrase the epigraph from Elizabeth Clemens, colonial economic policy was implemented in a field already thickly populated by markets, lenders, and other economic actors—a land already full of agricultural production. When the colonial government introduced new seeds or rural finance, it did so against a backdrop of existing practice and in parallel to numerous personal networks, charitable groups and commercial businesses that also engaged in the distribution of seeds and credit. This chapter examines the semi-governmental organizations introduced by the colonial government within the milieu of alternative organizations and established practices followed by Korean farmers. It looks at three

farmers in turn—Sim Wŏn'gwŏn (1850–1933), Yu Yŏnghŭi (1890–1960), and Chŏng Kwanhae (1873–1948)—to detail the practices, organizations, and institutions that supported their agricultural activities over the years. Based on the perspective and everyday life of farmers themselves, this chapter thus re-assesses the changing place of the state among rural organizations.

I. Sim Wŏn'gwŏn and Sources of Agricultural Finance

Long before the colonial government established semi-governmental organizations within Korea, farmers relied upon a host of organizations, commonly known as *kye*, to coordinate activities between and within villages. First recorded in the Koryŏ period (918–1392) as a form of voluntary association, *kye* brought their members together in pursuit of a range of common goals, be it the payment of taxes, support for education, or to gather funds to maintain a family member's gravesite.[145] Although early records on *kye* are scarce, by the seventeenth century several distinct types of *kye* organizations had emerged across Korea, including well-known forms such as the village *kye* (*tonggye*), organized to maintain the social order and fulfil common projects within a single village, and lineage *kye* (*chokkye*, *mun'gye*), which coordinated familial obligations such as ancestral rites among the extended families of elite *yangban* households.[146] By the nineteenth century different *kye* organizations existed for a wide range of specialized activities, including education, mutual aid and insurance, the management of forest resources, village administration, as a vehicle to seek profits for *kye* members, or even for the appreciation of poetry or music. Depending on their purpose, *kye* might be formed

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[145] On *kye* during the Koryŏ dynasty, see Kim P'iltong, *Han'guk sahoe chojiksa yŏn'gu: kye chojik ŭi kujojŏk t'ŭksŏng kwa yŏksajŏk pyŏndong* (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1992), 70-90, 236-40.
[146] Ibid, 130, 131, 338–41.

within a single village, between members of the same lineage or descent group, or simply among a group with a common goal. Although the size varied among different organizations, surveys produced by the colonial government estimate that the average *kye* had around forty members, with the largest stretching into the hundreds.[147]

Although the precise activities of individual *kye* organizations differed according to their purpose, most shared several common features. Members of *kye* organizations paid contributions toward the work of the *kye*, either as an initial payment or at agreed intervals, with payments made in cash, cloth, grain, or some combination thereof. Depending on the activities and financial health of the individual *kye*, members might also be asked to make supplementary contributions as necessary.[148] To avoid recurring contributions, most *kye* engaged in profit-seeking activities to earn extra income through loaning rice for interest or renting fields owned by the *kye*. For example, one pine *kye* (*songgye*) in South Ch'ungch'ŏng province required all members to pay one *mal* of rice upon joining the organization, while supplementing its finances by charging non-members a fee for using the *kye*'s forest resources.[149] In another case, an educational *kye* (*hakkye*) in Suwŏn collected fees from members as they joined the group but made the vast majority of its income (upwards of eighty percent) through rental income from paddy fields owned by the *kye*.[150] *Kye* organizations appointed their own management

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[147] Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen no kei* (Keijō: 1926), 1, 28. Kim P'iltong's study of 150 *kye* (mainly from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries) found similar results, with an average of 46.5 members. Kim P'iltong, *Han'guk sahoe chojiksa*, 136.
[148] Ibid, 178.
[149] After 1921, new members had to provide 1.5 *yen* and a jar of alcohol in addition to the *mal* of rice. Ch'ungnam taehakkyo maŭl yŏn'gudan, *Kyeryong-si Hyanghan-ri* (Seoul: Minsogwŏn, 2010), 108-117.
[150] The *kye* founder, Paek Siyong (1724–1788) originally set aside 67 *turak* of his family's land to fund the *kye*. Over the years the *kye* gained and lost land, reaching a low of around 10 *turak* at the turn of the early twentieth century which remained constant until the *kye*'s dissolution in 1936. Kim Kŏnt'ae, "Chosŏn hugi

from among members and held regular meetings (typically once or twice a year) at which members discussed *kye* finances, regulations, and membership queries, among other topics.

The membership of *kye* organizations differed from group to group, although some general patterns may be identified. On the whole, *kye* organizations tended to cater to the interest of wealthier and elite families. In the above example of the Suwŏn educational *kye*, the *kye* was explicitly formed to promote the education of the founder and his future descendants, all members of an elite *yangban* lineage.[151] In this case, as with lineage *kye*, membership was defined by one's status within a particular elite descent group.[152] Other types of *kye* organization were open to a wider range of members, although high membership fees still presented a barrier to entry for poorer farmers. Even in village *kye* that purported to include all residents of a village, wealthy or socially elite families could often dominate the management of the *kye* and its activities.[153]

Kye organizations thus combined several social and economic aspects of late-Chosŏn Korea. *Kye* organizations both reflected the existing social order and created social and economic advantages for their members through their activities. Where *kye*

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kye ŭi chaejŏng unyŏng yangsang kwa kŭ songkyŏk: Chŏlla-do Changhŭng-gun Yongsan-myŏn Sanggŭm-ni sŏgye rŭl chungsim ŭro," *Han'guksa hakpo* 38 (2010): 289-92.

[151] Ibid, 289.

[152] As studied by Kim Kŏnt'ae, the increasing practice of communal land ownership through forms such as the *chewijŏn* (ceremonial fields) and *kyejŏn* (*kye* fields) accompanied the declining fortunes of *yangban* households from the eighteenth century, as lineages attempted to preserve jointly what they could no longer support as individual households. See, Kim Kŏnt'ae, *Chosŏn sidae yangban'ga ŭi nongŏp kyŏngyŏng* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2004), especially chapter 4.

[153] Kim Kyŏngok, "18–19 segi Chindo Songsan-ri ŭi tonggye-hakkye unyŏng," *Chibangsa wa chibang munhwa* 16 (2013): 95-124. It should be noted that studies of other *kye* find the domination of traditional social elites to have been diminishing by the end of the nineteenth century due to the wider proliferation of *kye* and ongoing internal stratification among *yangban* households. On this, see Yi Yonggi, "19 segi huban yangch'on tonggye ŭi kinŭng kwa sŏngkyŏk pyŏnhwa: Chŏnnam Changhŭng-gun Ŏsŏ-ri tonggye rŭl chungsim ŭro," *Sahak yŏn'gu* 91 (2008): 261-311.

made loans for interest or rented fields, members who borrowed from their own *kye* could expect more favorable terms than non-members typically received.[154] In cases where *kye* were organized for the sole purpose of making a profit (*singnigye*), members received a share of the *kye*'s assets at the conclusion of the *kye*'s activities. Meanwhile, other types of *kye* provided access to resources—both material (in the form of funding for education) and social (fostering a connection with other local elites)—that helped members to establish and maintain their status within the local region. Despite their elitist tendencies, *kye* organizations flourished throughout the latter half of the Chosŏn dynasty as new forms of *kye* emerged over the years and the practice of forming and participating in *kye* spread to include more non-elites, especially during the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[155]

For Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, *kye* organizations were an integral part of everyday life. In 1870, Sim's father returned home late one evening with 30 *yang*. When asked about the money, he explained to Sim that it came from a *p'agye*—a *kye* organized among likeminded men—and was the proceeds of group's activities in selling wood and loaning rice.[156] Following his father's example, Sim was a member of multiple *kye* organizations throughout his life; his diary references at last fifty different *kye* (see Appendix).[157] Sim's *kye* organizations spanned a range of activities, from those dedicated to specific activities

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[154] Kim Chaeho, "Nongch'on sahoe ŭi sinyong kwa kye."
[155] Kim P'iltong, *Han'guk sahoe chojiksa*, 336-45.
[156] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1870.3.2.
[157] This figure is a rough estimate based on the *kye* that Sim Wŏn'gwŏn named throughout his diary. Diary references to unspecified *kye* are not included in this figure. Within this figure, some similarly-named *kye* may refer to the same organization. For example, on some occasions Sim may have referenced the *Songho hakkye* as merely *Songho kye*. Conversely, it is equally possible that the *Songho kye* that Sim listed in 1871 was a different organization than the *Songho kye* he visited in 1902 and 1903. In the absence of any secondary confirmation, it can only be assumed that instances of double-counting roughly cancel out instances where different *kye* share the same title within Sim's diary.

such as education or a "three-person-*kye* for raising fish" (*yangŏ samin'gye*), to those organized around Sim's own lineage or local villages (such as the Sŏnam-gye and the Tŏksan-gye). Whatever the type of *kye*, Sim attended regular meetings with other *kye* members and contributed money as an obligation to fund the group's activities, be it raising fish, providing mutual insurance against the cost of funerals, or contributing toward the costs of education.

Sim's participation in *kye* can be seen as an extension of his attempts to diversify his agricultural production. In some instances, *kye* organizations offered Sim the opportunity to increase the range of his own farming by jointly acquiring assets with other *kye* members which were used to generate revenue. The Tŏksan-gye, for example, held 28 *turak* of paddy which it rented out to farmers. Whether Sim received a portion of the rental income, or whether *kye* funds were diverted instead toward taxes or other local expenses that Sim would have otherwise had to pay himself, Sim benefitted from the income derived from the Tŏksan-gye's fields. In another case, Sim received 33 bundles of rushes as his share in a three-person-*kye* in 1880.[158] Again, membership of a *kye* organization helped Sim to maintain the breadth of his farming activities, in this case by providing Sim with the materials that he used to weave mats. By extending his agricultural activities through *kye* organizations, Sim thus bolstered his efforts to balance the cycles of propitious and unpropitious fortune through the cultivation (both direct and indirect) of additional crops and fields.

In addition to expanding the diversity of his agriculture, *kye* organizations fulfilled several important financial functions for Sim Wŏn'gwŏn. Sim was a member of

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[158] Ibid, 1880.11.2.

a funeral *kye* (*sanggye*) that provided a form of insurance against the high costs associated with funeral ceremonies. With each member contributing toward other members' funeral expenses, the funeral *kye* protected Sim from sudden large costs that he may otherwise have struggled to cover from his seasonal income alone. *Kye* organizations also enabled Sim to jointly store and accumulate wealth in the long term. By 1930, one lineage *kye* in which Sim was a member, the Sŏnam *mun'gye*, had accumulated some 2,300 *yang*, while Sim also received a share of the combined assets (worth 3,700 *yang*) of another similar lineage organization (*munhoe*) in 1901.[159] Sim also borrowed money from various *kye* organizations when necessary, alongside his other loans from friends and acquaintances. Of course, lending money was one of the main mechanisms for *kye* to increase their own assets. But, when faced with temporary financial shortfalls, *kye* were an important additional option to which Sim turned for credit.

By participating in several *kye* organizations at any one time, Sim was able to build a social and economic network that extended beyond individual *kye* that catered to one town or one lineage. In the same year, Sim both rented fields from a *kye* to farm himself and belonged to *kye* that rented fields to others, a pattern that was surely repeated in loans as well. Especially when members engaged in repeated transactions with one another over the years, *kye* organizations formed a dense network that supported members' economic activity. In 1878, for example, when the Tŏksan-gye allocated its 28 *turak* of paddy, it rented the land to four of Sim's acquaintances: Yi Myŏngjin, Pak

[159] Ibid, 1901.11.28; 1930.3.4. The *munhoe* was apparently dissolved in 1901, as there is no further record of it in the diary.

Ch'undan, Kim Sunjin, and Sŏnwŏl.[160] Sim, Yi, and Pak were in other *kye* together. Several years later, Yi Myŏngjin, Sim, and his lineage grandson (*chokson*) attended a *kye* meeting together in Taeil, while in 1883 Sim divided the property from yet another *kye* with Pak Ch'undan.[161] Prior to the allocation of the Tŏksan-gye paddy, Sim rented a different *kye*'s paddy from a Mr. Kim, paying the rent to his lineage grandson who had his own economic relationship with Mr. Kim.[162]

In all of these activities, *kye* organizations were more than a simple conduit for lending money or renting fields; *kye* provided the very foundation for transactions to take place between members. Not only did *kye* allow members to share the risk of a bad loan or land investment among one another, but over time the pattern of regular meetings and repeated interaction within *kye* organizations helped members to establish patterns of trust and reciprocity that promoted transactions. In his diary, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn noted the significance of fulfilling regular obligations at *kye* meetings in his assessments of the trustworthiness of fellow members. As he wrote in 1876, "today it is the day of the *kye* meeting. Nine people came, and truly these gentlemen are trustworthy."[163] Conversely, when a fellow member failed to attend a meeting of the funeral *kye*, Sim noted that both he and the meeting's host subsequently doubted the reliability of the missing member.[164] For his own part Sim made sure to uphold his obligations to *kye* organizations, even sending his contributions when he could not personally attend the *kye* meeting.[165] Within

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[160] Ibid, 1878.2.8.
[161] Ibid, 1881.2.28; 1883.11.3.
[162] Ibid, 1877.9.15. For similar findings on the overlapping membership of *kye* organizations, see also Yi Yŏnghun, "18・19 segi Taejŏ-ri ŭi sinbun kusŏng kwa chach'i chilsŏ," in An and Yi, eds., *Matjil ŭi nongmindŭl*, 245-299.
[163] *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*, 1876.5.5.
[164] Ibid., 1873.5.2.
[165] Ibid., 1870.12.12.

Sim's community, *kye* thus facilitated economic activities in several ways at once, providing a means by which members shared information and risk, and established the trust that enabled members to undertake transactions with one another. In some instances, the increased trust among *kye* members translated into additional economic benefits through more favorable rates of interest offered to members than non-members.[166]

As Japan began to strengthen its political and economic interests in Korea in the 1900s, bureaucrats were quick to recognize the prevalence of *kye*. Before long, a series of reports detailed the distinct features of *kye* organizations and their historical development to satisfy the curiosity of colonial officials and other interested parties.[167] Though the reports were thorough, the colonial interest in *kye* was strictly utilitarian, however, and the reports frequently returned to the theme of how the new government might use the popularity of *kye* to further colonial policies. Thus, after outlining six types of *kye* organization (taxes, mutual aid, credit, production, purchasing, and lottery), Kawai Hirotami (1872–1918, 河合弘民), a school teacher with an interest in Korean history and society residing in Seoul, concluded that *kye* might complement the work of the new financial associations by granting loans to approved *kye* to undertake various commercial and industrial activities.[168]

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[166] Kim Chaeho, "Nongch'on sahoe ŭi sinyong kwa kye," 318, 319.
[167] See, for example, Kawai Hirotami, "Kankoku no kei [kye] ni tsuite," *KCNH* 2, no. 12 (1908): 3-7; *Keishō nan-dō Keishō hoku-dō kannai kei, shinzoku kankai, zaisan sōzoku gaikyō hōkoku* (1910). Accessed via "Chungch'uwŏn chosa charyo," National Institute of Korean History, db.history.go.kr; "Kei ni kansuru kanshū chōsa," *Kōshū*[Kongju] *chihō ni okeru tokubetsu chōsa hōkokusho* (1912). Accessed via "Chungch'uwŏn chosa charyo," National Institute of Korean History, db.history.go.kr. For a brief overview of Japanese studies of *kye*, see also Kim P'iltong, *Han'guk sahoe chojiksa*, 5-9.
[168] Kawai Hirotami, "Kankoku no kei [kye] ni tsuite," 7. A similar attitude persisted through later studies of *kye* as well. See, *Chōsen no kei*, 26.

While some imagined ways for *kye* to co-exist within colonial Korea's new economic infrastructure, others sought to replace *kye* entirely. Indeed, even Kawai's proposal stripped *kye*'s independent financial functions, relegating them to a form of licensed business or contractor. The financial associations thus emerged as one of the main challengers to *kye*'s role in rural finance, as Megata Tanetarō (1853–1926, 目賀田種太郎), financial advisor to the Protectorate administration, and other bureaucrats planned a new financial system for colonial Korea where financial associations would bridge the gap between large banks and the rural population. In particular, the architects of the financial associations charged *kye* with "fostering a spirit of dependency" and "weakening individual activity," contributing to a general Korean economic weakness. By replacing *kye* with financial associations, the administrators hoped to usher in a new era of agricultural productivity thanks to the associations' lower interest rates and the provision of agricultural guidance.[169]

In Ulsan, colonial ambitions were put into practice with the opening of a financial association in 1908. Founded under the leadership of Endō Yoshichirō (1881–n.d. 遠藤與七郎) a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University and the director of multiple financial associations throughout his career, the Ulsan financial association was one of the earliest to open in Korea. The association's first task centered on recruiting members. Without a pre-existing membership or prior knowledge of the local area, the Ulsan association relied upon a founding committee composed of township heads and other low-level government employees to advertise the association in the local area and vet new

[169] Akita Yutaka, *Chōsen kin'yū kumiaishi* (Keijō: Chōsen kin'yū kumiai kyōkai, 1929), 60, 71-76.

members. By the time of the association's inauguration, the committee had recruited 317 "diligent and thrifty" members, 273 of which attended the opening ceremony.[170]

The township heads would continue to play an important role within the financial associations. The financial association directors were overwhelmingly young graduates of Japanese technical schools, with little to no prior knowledge of Korea or the Korean language.[171] Granted roles as councilors (Ko. *p'yŏngwiwŏn*; Ja. *hyōgiin*) within the associations, the township heads therefore performed multiple essential tasks on behalf of the financial associations, checking the background of prospective members and assessing loan applicants' creditworthiness.[172] However, even as the township heads helped the financial associations to function in this way, they illustrated the limits of the initial ambitions of the associations. Despite a stated preference to recruit "middle- and lower-class farmers" (Ja. *chūsan ika no mono*) as members, this goal stood in potential contrast to the associations' concurrent desire to enlist reliable, diligent, and trustworthy members. Though not impossible to satisfy both criteria, whether or not such conditions were kept depended heavily on the actions of the township heads who gathered and liaised with the members of the Ulsan financial association.

Delegating tasks to township heads was just one strategy that the Ulsan association adopted to mitigate the risks of lending to unfamiliar clients. At a 1915 meeting of the finanical association directors, Endō reported that the thorough knowledge

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[170] "T'akchiburyŏng che-16 ho," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, June 17, 1907; "Kumiai setsuritsu ni kanshi menchō shūchū no ken," "Sōritsu sōkai hōkoku no ken," in T'akchibu ijaeguk kamdokkwa (Chosŏn) p'yŏn, *Ulsan kwan'gye sŏryu* [1908], MS, 21983, Kyujanggak Archives, Seoul National University, Seoul.
[171] Yamada Kanto, *Shokuminchiki Chōsen ni okeru Chōsengo shōrei seisaku: Chōsengo wo mananda Nihonjin* (Tokyo: Fuji shuppan, 2004), 165-73.
[172] The importance of township heads and other low-level government employees within the associations has been noted nationwide. See, Namikata Shōichi, "Chōsen ni okeru kin'yū kumiai," Kokusai rengō daigaku, Ningen to shakai no kaihatsu puroguramu kenkyū hōkoku, HSDRJE-60J/UNUP-372, 1981, 12.

(Ja. *jukuchi*) of each association member was the most important factor when allocating loans. The association investigated loan applications in great detail—in the case of cow loans, the association even went so far as to inspect the cow before deciding whether to grant the loan. For members who lived far from central Ulsan and whose credit worthiness was hard to ascertain, association staff made dedicated trips once or twice a year to survey members' financial status.[173]

Over the years, as membership increased, the Ulsan association moved away from a reliance on personal knowledge. From an initial membership of around 300 in 1908, the association recorded an attendance of 600 members at the annual general meeting in 1924 and 900 members in 1927, increasing the burden of attaining "thorough knowledge" of each member substantially.[174] Already in 1915, the association had begun to experiment with methods of assessing members' credit worthiness suitable for a larger organization. In particular, the association assigned each member a credit score (Ja. *shinyō no tensū*) based on the value of their assets (recorded in land and livestock registers) and their behavior and general standing within the association (assessed by staff and fellow members).[175] The credit score system relieved the Ulsan association of some of the more onerous investigations required by the previous case-by-case assessment of loan applications and reliance on personal knowledge, while also setting new criteria that favored the formal ownership claims based on documentary evidence.

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[173] *Chihō kin'yū kumiai riji kaidō* (1915), 128, 276.
[174] The total membership is unknown, but is likely to have been higher than these figures. "Ulsan kŭmyung chŏnggi ch'onghoe," *Maeil sinbo*, April 14, 1914; "Ulsan kŭmjo ch'onghoe," *Tonga ilbo*, April 27, 1929.
[175] *Chihō kin'yū kumiai riji kaidō* (1915), 276.

The financial associations thus operated within certain constraints that shaped their form and function. Decisions over whether to delegate tasks to township heads or to adopt a credit-score based system shaped the membership of the association as well as the preference for certain loan applications over others. On top of such practical issues, colonial policy could also introduce challenges. Despite the desire that financial associations would compete against, and even replace, *kye* organizations, central decisions on the number and location of financial associations created a natural limit on total membership. Even as membership grew to over 900 in 1927, and additional associations opened in the neighboring districts of Yangsan (1910) and Ŏnyang (1917), association membership represented only a small fraction of the total population of Ulsan county (recorded as 130,000 in 1922).[176] Indeed, in the late 1920s some Ulsan residents even petitioned, unsuccessfully, to open a second financial association at the former military command post.[177] Unlike *kye* organizations, which members could form relatively freely, the formal organization of the financial associations proved a barrier to their growing influence.

Given the above, for farmers like Sim Wŏn'gwŏn the financial association was likely not as attractive as the colonial government may have hoped. On paper, Sim possessed many of the qualities that the financial associations in theory desired. He was a lower-to-middle class farmer, directly engaged in agriculture with a diligent and enterprising work ethic. As Sim's diary proves on multiple occasions, Sim was quite willing to borrow funds to invest in new enterprises and side-employments. What is

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[176] Keishō nandō, *Dōsei ippan* (1922), 6.
[177] "Kŭmjo sŏlch'i undong, Ulsan pyŏngyŏng esŏ," *Tonga ilbo*, January 23, 1929.

more, Sim was educated and frequently visited the markets in central Ulsan where he could be reasonably expected to encounter information about the financial association and its activities. Yet, not only was Sim not a member of the financial association but he did not even mention it within his diary, relying instead upon *kye* organizations to serve his financial needs throughout his life.

Several factors may have influenced Sim's lack of involvement with the financial associations. On the side of the financial associations, a limited membership capacity and recruitment channels that ran through the township heads may well have prevented Sim from joining the association in its early stages. But, Sim's own choices and lifestyle may have equally contributed toward his non-membership. For one thing, Sim was nearly sixty years old when the first financial association opened in Ulsan. By this time, Sim had already covered many of his major life expenses, including building a house (1898) and establishing relatively secure claims to farmland over many years. Although Sim continued to farm well into the colonial period, he no longer undertook any significant investment for which membership in the financial associations may have been useful.

Most importantly, based on his diary entries, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn did not perceive a lack of affordable credit within his everyday life. When Sim looked to borrow and lend money, *kye* organizations were sufficient for his needs. What is more, after decades of reciprocal lending through friends and family, *kye* organizations did not require the burdensome proofs of income and assets demanded by the Ulsan financial association.[178]

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[178] As its membership grew, the Ulsan association was one of the first in Korea to pioneer credit scoring (Ja. *shinyō no tensū*) among its members. From 1915, the Ulsan association performed annual surveys of its members to record the value of their landholdings and other assets, and their behavior and diligence as assessed by financial association staff and other members. *Chihō kin'yū kumiai riji kaidō* (1915), 276.

Tellingly, Sim did not complain of being denied membership to the financial associations within his diary, nor even mention them as a desirable option. Despite the efforts of the colonial state to establish influence over the financial habits of the population, the state's main vehicle for doing so—the financial associations—failed to elicit Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's attention.

At least within the realm of agricultural finance, the colonial state was notably absent in Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's daily life. This was not for a lack of effort. The colonial government invested millions of *yen* into the financial associations, with the goal of competing against *kye* lending. Of course, the fact that Sim Wŏn'gwŏn did not personally participate in the financial associations does not negate significant impact of the financial associations elsewhere in the rural economy. It does, however, draw attention to the constraints faced by the colonial state, and the existence of alternative sources of finance that many others could, and did, continue to use throughout the colonial period. Even recognizing the structural advantages that favored the financial associations, they could not bypass competition with the *kye* organizations that they sought to replace. And, as long as farmers like Sim retained the authority to make financial decisions, there was no guarantee that their preferences would align with those of colonial officials.

II. Silk, the State, and Yu Yŏnghŭi

The bounds of personal relationships and entrenched daily habits may have kept Sim Wŏn'gwŏn from participating in the financial associations, however, in a different setting the very same factors could equally draw farmers deeper into the sphere of the colonial semi-governmental organizations. Some seventy miles north of Ulsan, another farmer, Yu Yŏnghŭi, wrote his own diary detailing his life in Andong, North Kyŏngsang

province. Like Sim, Yu claimed an elite *yangban* status while engaging in varying degrees of agricultural production throughout his life. But, wheras Sim's personal acquaintances provided an alternative financial and economic network to that promoted by the colonial state, Yu's close relationships with minor government officials and local notables worked to introduce him to a number of the colonial state's new agricultural programs.

Yu Yŏnghŭi was a member of the Chŏnju Yu descent group. Born in Andong to Yu Hyosik (1856–1924), Yu was the eldest son among two brothers, Hŭiyun (1898–1953), who was adopted into the family, and Hŭich'ŏl (1906–1987) and two sisters.[179] Unlike Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, whose family's claim to the Ch'ŏngsong Sim descent group was contested, Yu Yŏnghŭi actively maintained his ties to the Chŏnju Yu descent group through such activities as compiling and publishing the literary compilations (*munjip*) of other notable Yu's, including those of Yu Hak (1607–1688) and Yu Hongwŏn (1716–1781).[180] Yu started his diary in 1909 and continued it for most of his life.[181]

In keeping with Yu's more established claims to elite status, he was less directly involved in the daily work of agricultural production than was Sim Wŏn'gwŏn. Yu rarely mentioned visits to individual fields or markets within his diary, nor did he comment regularly on the minutiae of agricultural prices or seasonal farming activities. Instead, Yu placed greater emphasis on his wide-ranging social interactions as he attended numerous commemorative rites (*chesa*) for his ancestors throughout the year and met frequently

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[179] Chŏnju Yu-ssi taedongbo, accessed via http://ryu-nakbong.kr/xe/jeonjuryulibrary (January 14, 2017).
[180] "Yagye yugo: Haeje," and "Kangp'o munjip: Haeje," published by Han'guk kukhak chinhŭngwŏn, http://ugyo.net (accessed December 2016).
[181] Entries for the years 1929–33, 1936–49, and 1950–53 are missing, although it is unclear whether these were not written at all or simply lost.

with acquaintances, including among them several low-ranking officials such as overseers (*chusa*), district heads (*kujang*), village heads (*tongjang*), and even township heads. On several occasions, fellow villagers—and even the village head—turned to Yu to request his help in drafting letters and reports, indicating that Yu was well-known as a scholar within his local area.[182] Thanks to the time he spared away from the fields, and his social connections, Yu was thus well-informed about current events and he frequently commented in his diary on issues such as the establishment of new schools, the expansion of the telegraph line, and the local activities of Japanese migrants and, early on, patriotic resistance groups (*ŭibyŏng*, literally "righteous armies").

Like Sim, Yu Yŏnghŭi was an active member of numerous *kye* organizations, with educational *kye* (*hakkye*), various village *kye* (*ch'on'gye*), reading *kye* (*tokkye*), and *kye* for the promotion of Confucian morals (*yugye*) referenced throughout his diary. Where Sim frequently commented on the economic function of *kye* organizations, however, for Yu participation in *kye* appears to have been equally important for its social benefits. As someone invested in maintaining his status as a *yangban* household and an active member of lineage descent group, by the late Chosŏn period Yu would have been expected to participate in a range of activities to demonstrate his social status, including among them the performance of ancestral rituals to commemorate a common ancestor, maintenance of lineage grave sites, publication of, and inclusion within, lineage geneaologies, and maintaining the status of the lineage through marriage and social

[182] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Sumunnok*, 1910.9.12; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.6.18; 1911.9.22; 1911.9.23; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusimnok*, 1913.3.13.

interaction with other lineages of similar or higher social status.[183] Thus, for Yu, participation in the right *kye* contributed toward the maintenance of his social status—from *kye* directly concerned with Yu's own descent group (*mun'gye*) to those that gave Yu the opportunity to interact with other prominent local families.

Nonetheless, agriculture was still an important topic within Yu Yŏnghŭi's diary. Even as a social elite, Yu did not ignore the demands of the agricultural seasons as he commented daily on the weather, hired additional labor during the agricultural busy seasons, considered the state of his landholdings, sent *nongju*—the alcohol traditionally consumed by farmers—to the workers in his fields, and listened for news on weather patterns, price changes or insect infestations that might affect his agricultural interests. Even though Yu was removed from the day-to-day cultivation work within his fields, over time he increasingly participated in secondary agricultural enterprises such as the cultivation of silkworms, for which he personally obtained silkworm eggs and mulberry leaves to feed the growing worms. Indeed, Yu adopted the penname "nongp'o," or "cultivated field," for himself, indicating that even as he engaged in literary pursuits Yu did not distance himself from his rural lifestyle.

Yu rarely discussed the politics of colonization directly within his diary, preferring instead to comment on his immediate circumstances. This does not mean that Yu was indifferent to colonial rule. On the contrary, on hearing the news of annexation, he lamented in his diary:

> I heard that our country has been annexed to Japan, and the Korean Yunghŭi-era year numbers are no more. Everyone says to use the equivalent Meiji year numbers. It

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[183] On the construction and maintenance of lineage and descent groups, see Eugene Y. Park, *Between Dreams and Reality: The Military Examination in Late Chosŏn Korea, 1600–1894* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), 203, fn. 99; Deuchler, *Under the Ancestors' Eyes*, 266-303.

> hurts! It has already been three or four years since our country's taxes and household registration introduced the Japanese system, and the appointment as a so-called protectorate nation has likewise been some years. It has indeed been a long time that our nation in the East has no leader and no government. Yet, the country name and the year name were still one thread of our laws and ways. Now, I cannot think. It hurts! The people of our eastern nation will not pardon traitorous officials, will they?[184]

Yu's diary, however, largely continued as it had before. Every day, Yu recorded the weather, his comings and goings, and the conversations he had with his acquaintances. From time to time Yu mentioned secondhand accounts of anti-Japanese resistance, as when eighteen *ŭibyŏng* members entered a nearby school and killed two teachers and one pupil, or of Japanese traders and migrants purchasing rice and land without regard to the harvest or price increases.[185] But, these accounts were few and far between, with most entries focusing on Yu's own daily activities.

Where Yu did notice the impact of the new colonial government, it generally took the form of increased surveys and inspections. Surveyors appeared in the village and left. In 1911, the village and township heads held meetings where they announced new regulations concerning hygiene and road maintenance, for which inspectors would be sent regularly. In the same year, several village heads passed on the order (*hullyŏng*) that each village should report its best female weavers, leaving Yu with mixed emotions ranging from fear and suspicion to bewilderment and laughter.[186] Yu was under no illusion of the origin of these new initiatives. When the military police offered financial

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[184] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Sumunnok*, 1910.8.1.
[185] Ibid, 1910.7.9.7; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.7.19; 1911.12.13.
[186] Ibid, 1911.6a.8; 1911.6a.18. Although the purpose of not every survey is clear, at least some of these would have been annual hygiene inspections, in addition to regular crop surveys for items designated as important by the colonial government, such as cotton or tobacco. Other surveys conducted during the early colonial period include national land, tax, and forest surveys, as well as less-widespread surveys on Korean customs.

awards to elders, Yu surmised that the "island barbarians" (*toi*) were attempting to utilize people's goodness, while he judged the new regulations on hygiene to be "exceedingly severe."[187]

In most cases, however, the gradual expansion of the colonial state into Yu Yŏnghŭi's everyday life was more subtle. Perhaps the best example of this can be seen in Yu's experiences with sericulture. As with many other industries, early twentieth century Korea witnessed a surge of interest in innovations related to silk production, including new strains of silkworms, breeding programs, and scientific worm-rearing procedures. Among the trending sericulture projects, the promotion of tussar silkworms (Ko. *chakjam*; Ja. *sakusan*), "wild" silkworms fed on oak rather than mulberry leaves, emerged as a popular venture among commercial and government interests alike, both Korean and Japanese. In the final years of the 1900s, a flurry of newspaper articles detailed the recent success of the tussar silk industry in Manchuria, various business efforts to replicate tussar silk profits within Korea, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industry's own projects to import and develop new silkworms, as well as numerous advertisements for lectures and books on tussar silk production, the sale of silkworm eggs, and opportunities to join tussar silk cultivation tests overseen by various entities including the Suwŏn model farm.[188]

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[187] Ibid, 1911.5.1; 1911.6a.18.

[188] "Chakcham sayuk," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, September 21, 1906; "Chakchamsa palgi," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, December 13, 1908; "Chakcham hoesa hwakchang," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, May 12, 1909; "Chakcham yŏngŏp e taehaya poksin kwŏngo," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, July 2, 1909; "Chakchamjong pun'gŭp," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, August 6, 1909; "Hagin mojip kwanggo," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, September 4, 1909; "Chakcham palchŏn," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, February 8, 1910; "Ch'oesin Chakcham hak," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, March 9, 1910; "Chakcham chiwŏnja," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, April 26, 1910; "Chakchamŏp palchŏn," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, June 16, 1910; "Chakcham chongja sin'gaeryang," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, July 1, 1910.

Following annexation, the colonial government continued to support tussar silk production as part of its general sericulture promotion policies. Like cotton and rice, the government designated silk as a favored industry. Early in 1912, Governor-General Terauchi published an edict on the promotion of sericulture affirming the importance of improving the quality and volume of silk production through the import and standardization of silkworm eggs, the promotion of sericulture as a secondary employment (especially among women and girls who were "best suited" to the meticulous and delicate work), the establishment of regional facilities to educate producers and supply silkworm eggs, and by mediating cocoon sales to ensure that prices reflected quality.[189] Just as with cotton, the government also promoted dedicated county-level sericulture associations (Ko. *yangjam chohap*; Ja. *yōsan kumiai*) within each province which provided the organizational support for sericulture promotion activities.[190] Sericulture was also a major target of colonial grants and subsidies. In particular, the Imperial Donation Fund classified sericulture as a suitable industry for *yangban* and offered grants to raise their productivity through the establishment of sericulture training stations, lectures, and the distribution of equipment.[191]

In Andong, Yu Yŏnghŭi encountered the budding silk industry not through an official government representative, but through his normal stream of acquaintances and information. In the spring of 1911, after hearing a rumor of tussar silkworms in nearby

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[189] "Sangyō no kaisen shōrei ni kansuru ken: Chōsen sōtokufu kunrei dai-10 go," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 460 (1912).
[190] On the sericulture associations, see Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 37-48. As with the cotton associations, the sericulture associations eventually merged with the county agricultural associations in the mid-1920s.
[191] Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen sōtokufu shisei nenpō* (Keijō: 1911), 38-42. Out of 314 individual projects funded in 1911, 151 were directly related to sericulture. Over half of all recorded recipients of Imperial Donation Fund projects received training in an aspect of sericulture.

Pongjŏng, Yu personally went to investigate. Later the same month, Han Sugyo, a resident of neighboring Yech'ŏn county, brought envelopes of the Pongjŏng silkworm eggs to Yu's house, at which time he purchased several packets to test for himself and for members of his extended family.[192] Thereafter, Yu regularly raised silkworms each spring, and often in the autumn as well. Although his first experience was with tussar silkworms, raised on oak leaves, Yu quickly switched to cultivating the more common mulberry-fed silkworms. Yu was not alone in this regard; by the spring of 1915, mulberry-based sericulture was sufficiently widespread that, after a poor mulberry harvest, Yu and others in the area struggled to find enough mulberries to support the silkworms. That year, the price of mulberry leaves rose rapidly in local markets, even prompting fighting among those competing to buy the leaves.[193] Shortly afterwards Yu made a concerted effort to secure his own supply of mulberries, and from 1917 Yu often noted his efforts in buying, planting, and grafting mulberry seedlings as a complement to his annual silkworm rearing.

Although Yu's initial foray into sericulture grew out of his existing social network, over time the colonial government played an increasing role in supporting and directing a range of sericulture activities. Indeed, even though Yu did not openly acknowledge a connection within his diary, it is conceivable that even his first experience with the tussar silkworms might have been a product of the government's promotional efforts. Any such ambiguities would soon disappear, however, as a state infrastructure

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[192] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.4.11; 1911.4.18; 1911.4.27.
[193] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chŏngmaerok*, 1915.4.22; 1915.4.25; 1915.4.28. High mulberry prices would have been a particular concern for those rearing silkworms, as a failure to provide sufficient food at the worms' crucial growth stages could severely damage or limit the final quality of silkworm cocoons, potentially destroying any return on farmers' initial investment in silkworm eggs.

developed piece by piece around the sericulture industry. Late in 1911, the village head contacted Yu to gather requests for silkworm eggs, passing any names on to an industrial research group.[194] Lectures on sericulture and the handling of "improved" silkworm eggs were also held through the region, with one 1915 meeting reaching some 2,000 people by Yu's estimate.[195] By 1917, Yu was buying his silkworm eggs from the local township office—a pattern which would continue for the rest of the colonial period. When he began planting his own mulberries, the village head and representatives from the township office even visited Yu to inspect the growth of the mulberry shoots.[196]

Yu Yŏnghŭi's interpretation of the expansion of the colonial state into sericulture is not clear-cut. On the one hand, Yu was not comfortable with the colonial government's efforts to compile data on households and villages, and he described an early request for a detailed report on the availability and price of a range of agricultural products within the village as "strange and suspicious."[197] Yet, Yu's wariness of colonial projects did not always extend to the individuals who held government posts. Particularly in the case of Yi Ŭngguk, who Yu knew as an acquaintance both during and after his appointment as the village head of Naedong. When Yi visited to inspect Yu's mulberry seedlings, or to share information on new appointments within the local government, he was more than just a representative of the colonial government but a social acquaintance as well.[198]

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[194] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.9.22; 1911.9.23.
[195] Ibid; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chŏngmaerok*, 1915.4.23. The promotion of sericulture may well have contributed to the increased competition for mulberry leaves, although Yu also noted bad weather as a cause of damage to the mulberry harvest in 1915. Ibid, 1915.4.22.
[196] Ibid, 1917.3.23; 1917.5.14; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chingsŏngnok*, 1918.1.23.
[197] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Kusillok*, 1911.4.23.
[198] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chŏngmaerok*, 1917.5.14; Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chingsŏngnok*, 1919.3.25.

A similar ambiguity can be found in Yu's approach to sericulture as an industry promoted by the colonial government. Yu's interest in sericulture, though encouraged through colonial policy, was not coerced. Yu decided to begin rearing silkworms on the recommendation of his friends and acquaintances. Even after the township office emerged as the source of silkworm eggs and other materials, Yu still rushed to buy additional eggs when the opportunity arose.[199] For Yu, sericulture was a source of income, not just an example of colonial policy. While Yu certainly opposed Japanese colonial rule and the loss of Korean sovereignty, where the township and village offices offered support for his agriculture—through lectures, direct instruction and advice, and access to the latest breed of silkworms—Yu apparently felt few qualms in using such services.

In Yu's other farming activities as well, local government offices became a focal point for a wide range of agricultural promotion. Yu regularly met representatives of the township and village office who carried out inspections and lectures on behalf of colonial agricultural campaigns. Oversight from government officials was not always welcome. In the spring of 1918, Yu complained of the township's petty supervision after an official arrived to inspect Yu's cotton before he had completed sowing his fields, subsequently returning the next day to watch him complete the task.[200] Such frustrations notwithstanding, however, local township offices gradually became an important part of Yu's economic life, as they provided access to seeds and equipment for cotton, tobacco, and pine cultivation that Yu would not otherwise have been able to procure. In addition to

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[199] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Tŭksillok*, 1920.4.10.
[200] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chingsŏngnok*, 1918.3.17; 1918.3.18.

programs in support of specialized crops, the local government became a regular presence in Yu's life as he participated in agricultural fairs and crop inspections,[201] as he paid his taxes at the township office and waited to listen for the latest news to trickle down to Andong,[202] and as a point of organization for social campaigns ranging from government-sponsored abstinence drives to nationalist-inspired "buy Korean" drives (as in the Korean products promotion movement; Ko. *Chosŏn mulsan changnyŏ undong*).[203]

Of course, the closer that local government offices became entwined in Yu's day-to-day economic affairs, the easier it was for the central government to enact agricultural controls and mobilization campaigns during the 1930s and the war effort. From bristling at the rigid timetable and methods of cotton inspections in the 1910s, by 1935 the same infrastructure of county and township advisors were visiting Yu directly to compel the conversion of more of his land to the cultivation of upland cotton for the war.[204] Local government officials intervened in other areas as well, from holding obligatory national defense meetings where officials demanded financial contributions from residents, to recruiting potential migrants to settle in Manchuria with a combination of carrots (free

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[201] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chŏngmaerok*, 1916.10.7; *Tŭksillok*, 1920.1.15.

[202] In 1925, for example, Yu requested 6,000 pine saplings from the township office after learning of county plans to distribute saplings the previous month. Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Chonsillok*, 1924.12.25; 1925.1.18. Following the 1923 Tokyo earthquake, Yu also attended the township office to hear a speech for donations about the disaster. Ibid, 1923.8.4.

[203] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Tŭksillok*, 1922.11.28; *Chonsillok*, 1923.2.5; 1923.2.14. It is unclear whether Yu associated either movement as a colonial initiative. Although the colonial government initiated several abstinence campaigns (usually twinned with diligence and thrift drives), so too did several prominent Korean groups, including several Christian campaigns, at times overlapping with movements to promote self-sufficiency and Korean products. On anti-drinking campaigns, see Michael Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920–1925*, 2nd ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 95; Albert L. Park, *Building a Heaven on Earth*, 165, 202. On the Korean Products Promotion Movement, see K. M. Wells, "The Rationale of Korean Economic Nationalism under Japanese Colonial Rule, 1922–1932: The Case of Cho Man-sik's Products Promotion Society," *Modern Asian Studies* 19, no. 4 (1985): 823-59; Yun Haedong, "Mulsan changnyŏ undong: 'Kŭndaehwa' rŭl wihan pulgap'i han kyŏngno in'ga?" *Naeil ŭl yŏnŭn yŏksa* 5 (2001): 142-55.

[204] Yu Yŏnghŭi, *Ilsŏngnok*, 1935.3.27.

transport and 200 *yen*) and sticks (volunteers who changed their minds were punished with labor).[205] Yet, even if he wanted to avoid the harshness of the later years of the colonial government, Yu remained bound to its programs of economic and agricultural support. As well as the source of materials and destination for sales, local government offices also provided much-needed subsidies for crops following the prolonged collapse of agricultural prices in the early 1930s, as well as payments in support of disaster relief after floods damaged crops in 1934.[206]

In Ulsan, Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's habits and personal connections largely insulated him from the colonial government's direct attempts to influence rural production. In Andong, the same channels brought Yu Yŏnghŭi into much closer contact with colonial schemes: Yu began to cultivate silkworms based on the recommendation of acquaintances; where his social network included village and township heads, Yu heard of government projects of which he might avail himself. To be clear, Yu was in no way sympathetic to the colonial government. Even as he complied with colonial surveys and regulations, Yu remained skeptical and grumbled at the imposition. Yet, where colonial campaigns wound their way through the lowest levels of local government, staffed with Koreans with their own friendships and interests, Yu's decisions on whether or not to grow cotton or raise silkworms were no longer framed in terms of colonial policy but fit within the existing local social dynamics.

Nonetheless, even if Yu did not dwell on the implications of growing cotton or raising silkworms, his actions still had consequences. Even if Yu did not see the

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[205] Ibid, 1934.3.3; 1934.8.22; 1934.9.24.
[206] Ibid, 1933.7.9; 1933.8.1; 1934.2.5; 1934.6.20; 1934.7.7.

connection to government programs when he purchased his first silkworm eggs from an acquaintance in a nearby town, the colonial government was gradually creating a state infrastructure that Yu would ultimately depend upon to continue to engage in sericulture. For better or for worse, Yu relied upon the local village and township offices for a supply of eggs each year, for advice on the cultivation of mulberry trees, and even as a buyer for his cocoons. On one hand, this was the product of the massive expansion of the colonial state into the rural economy, a process which reached its peak under wartime mobilization. The same process of expansion, however, also complicated and diluted the interaction between farmers and the colonial government. Yu was not loyal to the Japanese empire as much as he was beholden to a market network structured through government agencies. As long as Yu continued to produce silk, or any of the other crops sponsored by colonial projects, he had few alternatives but to turn to the village and township office. While Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's personal connections provided several alternatives to colonial schemes, Yu Yŏnghŭi's greater familiarity with low-level government employees and local notables did not.

III. Chŏng Kwanhae, Organizations, and Agricultural Innovation

As Yu Yŏnghŭi was incorporating the township office into his new regime of sericulture, on the other side of Korea another farmer, Chŏng Kwanhae, faced similar decisions in whether and how best to adopt the agricultural technologies that emerged under colonial rule. Like Yu, Chŏng benefitted from a relatively elite social status matched with declining economic prospects, prompting Chŏng to actively engage with the latest developments in agriculture and industry. Thanks in part to his social standing, Chŏng also found favorable access to a variety of agricultural initiatives through his network of

acquaintances, personal reputation, and level of education. But, as Chŏng's diary reveals, even if access to material resources could be achieved on relatively favorable terms, adopting new technologies was not just a question of approving of agricultural innovations but also involved consideration of the terms which accompanied extra credit, or improved seeds.

Born in 1873, Chŏng Kwanhae was a member of the Kyŏngju Chŏng descent group. Like Yu, Chŏng's elite family background was reflected in his social network, which included several local landlords (including the O family—the largest landlord in the local area), and holders of low-level positions such as district heads. Chŏng received a classical education and served as a tutor in the local school, although as the colonial period progressed he increasingly depended on agriculture for his income as student demand shifted to favor a modern education. Chŏng had two sons who shared in the family's farming activities. Like Sim and Yu, Chŏng kept a diary, in which he recorded numerous details about his everyday life, including the weather, his day-to-day activities, and his reflections on current events. Although portions are missing, Chŏng's diary offers a near-daily insight into his life during the years 1912, 1918, 1920, 1923–41, and 1944–48.

Chŏng Kwanhae lived in Yongin, a rural county in Kyŏnggi province, some 25 miles to the south of the Korean capital. Thanks to its proximity to both Seoul and Suwŏn, the neighboring county, Yongin was well-positioned to receive the attention of agricultural reformers. As a resident of Yongin, Chŏng did not struggle to hear the latest news from the capital and often mentioned current events in his diary entries. Chŏng's acquaintances appeared equally well-connected. Chŏng's sons travelled widely

throughout the local region, on several occasions spending time in Seoul as well. Meanwhile, O Sŏngsŏn (1872–n.d.), a local landlord and agricultural entrepreneur, devoted considerable energy to the promotion of agricultural technologies he reportedly encountered on a trip to Japan. In this endeavor, O was aided by technicians from the Suwŏn model farm who regularly visited a *kye* organization he founded to encourage new farming methods within Yongin (Chŏng was a member).[207]

It was therefore not hard for Chŏng to encounter groups espousing agricultural innovations. Like Yu, Chŏng was familiar with the township office as a location for meetings and as a source of mulberries, for example.[208] At the same time, Chŏng was also a member of multiple voluntary groups. By 1921, if not earlier, Chŏng was a member of the O Sŏngsŏn's Yongsu farming *kye*, while throughout his diary he also mentioned membership in other local forestry associations, financial associations, and the agricultural association. Beyond such organized advocates of agricultural technologies, Chŏng's social network was, by all appearances, well-informed and supportive of the latest farming methods, likely due in part to his peers' own participation in the agricultural association and similar organizations.[209] One day, in 1925, after Chŏng lamented his difficulties in obtaining mulberry seeds to a Mr. Kim, his acquaintance explained in detail to Chŏng how he could order many different types of seeds directly from Japan through what appears to have been an agricultural catalogue, which Kim

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[207] "Ryūsui [Yongsu] nōkei (shita)," *CNH* 8, no. 8 (1913): 46-51; "Ryūsui kōdō kōgyū kei kiyaku," *CNH* 8, no. 12 (1913): 63, 64; "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (2)," *CNH* 5, no 2 (1910): 47-51.
[208] Chŏng Kwanhae, *Kwallanje ilgi*, 1920.1.17; 1920.2.20.
[209] One acquaintance, a Pak Kyomin, was apparently a member of the local agricultural association since 1914. It is unclear when Chŏng joined the agricultural association himself. Ibid, 1925.1.9.

offered to lend to Chŏng. In no more than ten days after placing his order at the post office, Kim promised, Chŏng could have his chosen seeds delivered to his door.[210]

As much as he appreciated new agricultural technologies in their own right, Chŏng's interest in mulberries and fertilizers was not independent of the other changes to the rural economy taking place around him. For one thing, Chŏng's work as a tutor diminished over time new schools gradually opened and students turned toward a different curriculum than the classical education taught by Chŏng Kwanhae.[211] At the same time, the mainstays of Korean agriculture—that is, the cultivation of rice and other grains—became an increasingly precarious source of income due to the same price volatility noted by Sim Wŏn'gwŏn. In 1918, Chŏng recorded how rice prices in local markets had halved in recent memory.[212] Five years later grain prices were still unstable, to the extent that everyone around Chŏng seemed indebted.[213] Although prices rose the following year, providing the opportunity for Chŏng and others to gladly discharge their debts, Chŏng no longer placed faith in mainstream agriculture as a stable livelihood, writing: "These days life is gradually becoming difficult. Simply working in agriculture is not sufficient. Beyond the main industry, one must also have a secondary employment. I aspire to [have] a mulberry sapling field."[214] In additional to sericulture, Chŏng also experimented with raising tobacco, chickens, cows, cotton, and pine trees, as an attempt to supplement to his general farming income.

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[210] Ibid, 1925.2.12.
[211] Ibid, 1928.12.24; 1929.2.3; 1929.2.30; 1929.4.11.
[212] Ibid, 1918.8.25.
[213] Ibid, 1923.12.17.
[214] Ibid, 1924.11.5; 1925.2.12.

In cultivating his crops, both new and old, Chŏng Kwanhae drew on the support of a range of organizations. As with Yu Yŏnghŭi, Chŏng's decision to pursue sericulture, cotton, and other crops favored by colonial policy provided an inroad for closer interaction with direct and indirect government offices. Once again, the township office quickly became a regular fixture in Chŏng's farming routine as a source of information on potential crops, seeds and other materials, supplemented with a steady stream of field inspections by township office employees and agricultural specialists. Chŏng also joined several semi-governmental agricultural organizations, including the local finance, forestry, agricultural, and, later, tobacco associations. At the same time, Chŏng was also a member of multiple *kye* organizations, including those covering funeral expenses, lineage matters, finance, and agriculture, as well as the Yongsu farming *kye* dedicated to agricultural improvements. In 1929 and 1932, Chŏng's village also acquired a mutual aid society (Ko. *kongjohoe*; Ja. *kyōjokai*) and a revitalization society (Ko. *chinhŭnghoe*; Ja. *shinkōkai*) respectively, both of which were promoted by the colonial government as part of its response to the rural crisis in the late 1920s and 1930s. Though not dedicated to any single activity, colonial policies set each organization within the agricultural life of the village through such activities as encouraging savings, hosting village meetings and lectures, and even as a site to use and share such farming machinery as a straw bag machine.[215] While the specific activities of each organization differed from one to the next, taken together they nonetheless provided crucial sources of the finance, information, and materials that enabled Chŏng's economic activities.

[215] Ibid, 1929.4.1; 1932.12.14; 1935.2.17.

As Chŏng adapted his farming over the years, trying to make a profit amid a volatile rural economy, his production gradually became beholden to the expanded colonial state. In some cases, the impact was minimal. The obligation to pay annual association fees, though a financial burden, did not impede Chŏng's major farming decisions. Similarly, the subsidies that Chŏng occasionally received from the same associations augmented, rather than drastically altered, Chŏng's agricultural production. In other cases, Chŏng felt the stronger influence of the underlying presence of the colonial state. The financial associations, for example, lay claim to far greater economic resources than financial *kye* could organize within the village. While Chŏng generally avoided borrowing from the financial associations, preferring to turn to smaller, more familiar, *kye* organizations first, on more than one occasion Chŏng found himself borrowing from the financial association when he needed a larger than usual sum of money.[216] In a similar vein, Chŏng praised new forms of life insurance as an improvement upon funeral *kye*, thanks to the larger sums available through the colonial financial system:

> I just opened life insurance and the fee was 1 *yen*…in the future if we make a claim, then we will receive 449 *yen.* This actually is a form of the funeral *kye* of earlier days but an especially profitable one. Of course, this is not for my own purposes. I only want to provide a foundation for my offspring's industry.[217]

In a less positive light, the more that Chŏng relied upon organizations linked to the colonial state, the greater the impact of price and sales controls on Chŏng's household income. Where Chŏng relied upon government networks to produce and sell new crops

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[216] Ibid, 1936.11.1; 1939.4.4; 1940.1.16.
[217] Ibid, 1934.12.5. The colonial government particularly promoted life insurance among farmers from 1932 onwards. Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 632, 633.

such as silk, cotton, and tobacco, he was increasingly vulnerable to the increase in product restrictions and regulations that characterized the rural economy of the late-1930s and 1940s.

At first glance, the distinction between government- and non-government-related organizations would appear an appropriate point to begin an analysis of Chŏng's participation in agricultural organizations. Indeed, a connection to the colonial government often introduced varying degrees of obligation on Chŏng's behavior. Even while Chŏng's decision to engage in sericulture was voluntary, albeit in the face of certain economic pressures, his subsequent participation in the sericulture association and interaction with the township office was not. Especially toward the 1930s and 40s, as economic controls intensified, government-related organizations were essential in the work of limiting the sale of crops in local markets and instituting price controls and production targets. Like many other farmers, Chŏng experienced colonial economic policy through the local agricultural association, the township office, and the tobacco association, which directed all aspects of his farming, from what to produce and how, to when and where to sell, or store, his harvested crops.[218]

Yet, the question of whether an organization had a formal connection to the colonial government or not was not the only criteria by which Chŏng Kwanhae assessed the various agricultural organizations. Although membership in some associations was, for all intents and purposes, obligatory, membership in other associations was not. Chŏng automatically became a member of the sericulture association (and later agricultural association) by virtue of his farming activities, while Chŏng's sudden participation in the

[218] Chŏng Kwanhae, *Kwallanjae ilgi*, 1934.6.2; 1934.6.3; 1937.9.3; 1940.1.16; 1940.7.22; 1940.8.18.

tobacco association from 1940s also suggests an element of coercion under wartime mobilization. However, membership within forestry associations remained voluntary (Ko. *imŭi*; Ja. *nin'i*) for much of the colonial period (Chŏng was a member of the local forestry association as early as 1923).[219] Meanwhile, the Yongsu farming *kye*, while an example of a private local organization established by a Korean, arguably held stronger ties to the Suwŏn agricultural experiment station than did some of the government-sponsored organizations, thanks to the *kye*'s efforts to work with Suwŏn agricultural technicians and explicit focus in promoting many of the same agricultural technologies favored by the colonial government.

Rather than focusing on the conditions of their genesis, Chŏng Kwanhae instead assessed each organization according to its activities. Thus, Chŏng held decidedly mixed views of many agricultural organizations—even for those linked to colonial rural campaigns, such as the mutual aid society and the revitalization society. On the establishment of the mutual aid society, for example, Chŏng compared it favorably to existing types of marriage or funeral *kye*: "If there is a wedding each [mutual aid society] member will pay ten *chŏn* to help toward the meal expenses, and this is no different than a marriage *kye.* This is our sincere intention and may even be considered an enterprise (*saŏp*). I can see that this will be a good thing."[220] Similarly, notwithstanding its role in hosting numerous lectures and meetings organized by colonial officials during the 1930s and wartime mobilization, the revitalization society hall was, to Chŏng, first and foremost a hall, equally capable of hosting evening classes for women and children, and home to

[219] On the policy regarding forestry associations, see Fedman, "The Saw and the Seed," chapter 5, 263-327.
[220] Chŏng Kwanhae, *Kwallanje ilgi*, 1929.5.9.

the telegraph which conveyed urgent news to the village.[221] Even when recognizing the less-savory activities of colonial organizations, Chŏng could not always avoid them entirely. Despite decrying what he saw as the colonial government's plan to entice farmers with low-interest loans only to foreclose on their properties and gain their land titles, he nonetheless continued to rely upon the same set of associations that facilitated such practices for access to fertilizers and seeds for his own farming.[222]

Intergenerational differences further complicated Chŏng's participation with agricultural organizations. Chŏng Kwanhae, while not averse to new technologies or modes of agriculture, was extremely wary of debt. As he recounted in painstaking detail, Chŏng endured periodic episodes of indebtedness throughout the 1920s as his expenses rose above his income. When he finally escaped his debt burdens in the early 1930s, Chŏng turned to Daoist imagery to describe his elation—"what kind of place the Peach Blossom Land must be? Escaping debt—it's like being an Immortal"—while endeavoring to avoid further debts.[223] While Chŏng actively attempted to avoid debt and, by extension, participation in potentially risky financial organizations, Chŏng's two sons did not share his qualms. In one instance, Chŏng warned his sons against participating in an "industrious farming *kye*" (Ko. *kwŏnnonggye*) on the grounds of financial prudence. Chŏng's warnings were in vain, however, and despite his sons' protestations to the contrary, within the year the farming *kye* was in disarray after the manager, Yi Ŭnjik, mismanaged the funds.[224] Later, to Chŏng's dismay, he learned that his sons had taken on

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[221] Ibid, 1936.3.19; 1936.7.18; 1937.9.3; 1941.5.28.
[222] Ibid, 1930.6.25; 1936.5.26; 1939.1.8.
[223] Ibid, 1934.1.9.
[224] Ibid, 1934.2.8; 1934.2.9; 1934.10.28; 1934.10.29.

huge debts, prompting him great stress as he feared the extent to which the Yongsu farming *kye* might go to recover its principle.[225]

Chŏng Kwanhae's view of the colonial state and its gradual expansion into multiple organizations and agricultural innovation was complex. Although, in the examples given above, Chŏng's appreciation for life insurance might appear at odds with his distrust of the wider colonial financial system and his warnings against taking on farming *kye* debts, in fact there was a logic to Chŏng's piecemeal acceptance of innovations in finance. In fact, Chŏng's warnings to his sons grew out of his own experiences with poorly-run *kye*. On one occasion, early in 1924, an acquaintance of Chŏng's, Cho Pyŏngok, used his name to get ten *mal* of rice from a *kye* which he used to repay his own drinking debts, leaving Chŏng to angrily threaten Cho with infinite dishonor.[226] Based on this experience, Chŏng's appreciation of his life insurance arguably stemmed from its apparent security as much as its generous terms, even as Chŏng bitterly opposed what he saw as the colonial government's systemic manipulation of debt and the financial system.

In many cases, the financial pressures that Chŏng faced led him to adopt a pragmatic view of the changes to the rural economy. Though often connected to colonial policies, Chŏng judged agricultural innovations and the new rural organizations on the merits of their activities rather than the existence of any governmental connection. In many ways, this was a logical extension of the colonial government's own efforts to increase its influence in everyday life. While Chŏng held disdain for colonialism in general, as the

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[225] Ibid, 1940.5.4; 1940.5.20; 1940.11.3; 1941.2.12; 1941.2.15.
[226] Ibid, 1924.1.20.

government expanded into the realm of the rural economy under the guise of agricultural policy, the colonial state's actions were no longer judgable in the abstract, but on the terms of everyday life. In this way, Chŏng developed his own opinions about agricultural and financial innovation, independent from the government's interest in agricultural policy.

IV. The Everyday Life of the Colonial State

As evidenced in the daily life of each farmer examined thus far, the colonial period saw the significant expansion of the colonial state into a wide range of economic and agricultural affairs. In particular, the state's presence in rural Korea was felt through township offices, a branch of local government, as well as the activities of the various associations which acted as semi-governmental organizations in implementing colonial policy.

That colonial Korea can be characterized as a period of state expansion highlights the importance of looking at the colonial state not as a preformed bureaucracy but as an ongoing exercise in the projection of the central government's power. The ambition of senior officials' agricultural policies required existing local government offices to be used in new ways alongside the creation of new agencies—the semi-governmental organizations—to supplement and support the capacity of the colonial state. On this level, it becomes possible to examine not just the impact of an expanding colonial state on farmers and agricultural production, but also the government's attempts to increase its own presence within local communities. As previous studies have demonstrated, the state does not simply exist but has to reproduce itself, spatially and culturally, through various

practices and procedures, in order to create and naturalize its own authority.[227] By examining how similar processes unfolded in colonial Korea, it is possible to see not only how the colonial state approached farmers like Sim, Yu, and Chŏng, but also the potential limits and constraints that the government itself faced.

While the ongoing nature of the colonial state building project means that examples could be drawn from almost any period of colonial rule, the 1926 reorganization of the agricultural associations offers one of the clearest views of the processes involved. Initially, the agricultural association maintained a simple organizational structure, with one central association supplemented with thirteen branch associations.[228] Under this structure, industry-specific associations, such as the sericulture or cotton associations, bore the brunt of implementing the government's promotional activities, including hiring technicians, organizing lectures and product fairs, distributing seeds and fertilizers, and managing the sale and inspection of crops. By the 1920s, however, criticisms arose over the burden posed by the multiplicity of organizations. Farmers who cultivated a range of crops often found themselves paying multiple membership fees to the separate cotton, sericulture, livestock, and agricultural associations, while each association struggled to operate efficiently within its area. In 1926, the colonial government announced the Korean Agricultural Association Law

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[227] See, for example, Scott, *Seeing Like A State*; James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, "Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist* 29, no. 4 (2002): 981-1002.

[228] Generally, the branch associations operated under the principle of one per province. While some of the first branches prioritized major population centers (especially those with a strong Japanese presence), leading to an uneven distribution of branches nationwide, the agricultural association gradually opened new branches in Kangwŏn and North and South Hamgyŏng provinces and merged others, where multiple branches existed within the same province, until the standard of one per province was achieved in 1921. For a detailed description of this process, see Kim Yongdal, *Ilche ŭi nongŏp*, 132-41.

which merged most of the existing industry-specific associations into a new "systematic" (Ko. *kyet'ong*; Ja. *keitō*) agricultural association structure, similar to that adopted in Japan. Under the new law the government replaced the multiple industry-specific associations with county-level agricultural associations, organized within a nationwide hierarchical model of provincial associations and one central association. While membership of the agricultural association had previously been voluntary, under the new structure agricultural association membership became compulsory for all landowners and people engaged in agriculture (that is, some tenants) who farmed over three *tanbo* (approximately three-tenths of a hectare), as was also the case in Japan.[229]

At a stroke, the agricultural association became the primary semi-governmental organization related to agricultural policy. Not only did the new structure grant the agricultural association a comprehensive, nationwide presence, gaining hundreds of new county-level organizations across Korea, but the scope of the agricultural association's activities also increased. While the former agricultural associations provided mostly indirect support to its members through the organization of lectures and the publication of the *Bulletin*, the newly-reorganized associations inherited the crop-specific associations' previous responsibilities for direct promotional activities within their district. Thanks in part to the change in membership, however, the county-level agricultural associations did not limit themselves to the work of the former associations (i.e., a focus on sericulture and cotton), but expanded promotional activities to cover a much wider range of crops, including rice, barley, millet, sugar beet, and alfalfa, to name just a few.

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[229] "Chōsen nōkai rei"; Doi Hirotsugi, "1920 nendai ni okeru Chōsen"; Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 77-138; Kim Yongdal, *Ilche ŭi nongŏp*, 153-75.

The rapid expansion of the county-level agricultural associations in 1926 thus posed several logistical challenges. First, was the question of personnel. While some agricultural technicians and association staff could be hired from the former crop-specific associations, the greater geographic scope of the county-level agricultural associations, along with their responsibility for a wider range of crops, required the recruitment of hundreds of new association staff throughout the country. Second, was the question of meaningful interaction with the new association members. Though a significant expansion beyond the former provincial branches, county-level branch associations were still relatively remote from much of the population.[230] In order to be effective, the county-level associations would have to establish their own procedures to maintain contact with the farmers within their district. Third, was the question of the management of the county-level associations themselves. In order to fit within the new, systematic hierarchy of the wider agricultural association, the colonial government would have to find some way of monitoring and disciplining each individual county-level association.

Regarding the hiring of new association workers, a report from the South Ch'ungch'ŏng provincial agricultural association hints at the scale of the challenge involved. Overall, the county-level agricultural associations maintained 269 employees, between 10 to 25 per association, of which just 21 were Japanese.[231] Drawing on the example of Yŏn'gi and Asan counties, the majority of the technicians employed by the associations had little to no prior experience within local government. In Yŏn'gi county,

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[230] Indeed, in Japan the equivalent county-level organizations were supplemented with a further layer or smaller, town-level agricultural associations. The similar structure was eschewed in Korea due to efficiency concerns, although the logistical challenge of organizing one organization per township doubtless played a role as well.

[231] 14 county-level associations were entirely staffed by Koreans. "Hondō kaku-kun nōkai shokuin meibo," *Chūsei nandō nōkaihō* 1, no. 1 (1926): 108-16.

only 3 of a total 18 technicians were previously employed as agricultural technicians within either the provincial or county government, while one more technician was employed in a local school. In Asan county, none of the 17 association technicians are listed as having prior employment within the government, although 4 of the technicians would go on to work as township heads or agricultural technicians employed in the county government in the 1930s and 1940s.[232]

The South Ch'ungch'ŏng agricultural associations therefore invested heavily in the education and training of their new agricultural technicians, based on the understanding that "each and every action of the association technicians, especially those stationed within the townships, directly influences the prosperity or decline of the work of the county agricultural associations."[233] Mirroring the educational lectures held in villages, in 1926 the South Ch'ungch'ŏng agricultural association designed a three-year program to educate county-level agricultural technicians. Held in August 1926, the first educational session spanned a period of 10 days and invited 69 technicians from across the province. During the training event, technicians received lectures on the laws relating to agriculture, fertilizer use, land improvements, grain inspections, agricultural statistics, and general administration, among other topics, in classes from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.[234]

As well as training the new association employees, the county-level associations had to establish their relationship toward the farmers within their districts, both in terms of creating an authority and maintaining a regular influence that would last beyond an annual inspection or single lecture. Some of the methods adopted by the county

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[232] Ibid. Employment history checked against "Chigwŏnnok charyo," Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe.
[233] "Kun-nōkai gijutsuin kōshūkai kaisai no ken," *Chūsei nandō nōkaihō* 1, no. 2 (1926): 64.
[234] Ibid, 64-72.

associations followed a by-then familiar pattern. Writing for the *Bulletin of the Agricultural Association* in 1929, Yi Minnyŏng, head of the Sŏsan county association in South Ch'ungch'ŏng province, offered his own experiences in trying to increase and improve rice production among isolated villages. In particular, he encouraged readers to institute thorough surveys of villages before holding talks, offering subsidies for equipment, and assigning individual advisors to the village to ensure that residents follow recommended methods.[235] To the stick of surveillance, associations also added financial incentives offered through competitive agricultural fairs for the farmers who adopted desired crops and methods. At one such fair in South Ch'ungch'ŏng, the provincial agricultural association advertised a total of 6,280 *yen* in cash prizes for farmers with the greatest increase in rice harvest, the best village oversight of fertilizer use, the best compost, cotton, and sericulture (judged against mulberry cultivation, silkworm eggs, and cocoons).[236]

Beyond such tactics, however, the county agricultural associations also built their own connections with local villages, establishing and entrenching the expansion of the state through additional institutional arrangements. In establishing seed exchange programs, for example, where the county associations had limited direct impact they often contracted township offices, and even sometimes trusted individual farmers, to operate seed fields to provide a stable supply of high-yielding seeds.[237] Many agricultural associations established subsidiary organizations to coordinate projects within individual villages or districts. For example, the Chunghwa county agricultural association, in South

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[235] Yi Minnyŏng, "Sanmai kairyō shidō shōrei no jissai shudan," *CNH* 3, no. 2 (1929): 31-35.
[236] "Honnen no hinpyōkai," *Chūsei* [Ch'ungch'ŏng] *nan-dō nōkaihō* 7, no. 2 (1932): 98.
[237] "Heian [P'yŏngan] nan-dō nōkai shusai kun-nōkai jiseki hinpyōkai hōkokushō" (1929).

P'yŏngan province, established two rice improvement associations (Ko. *sanmi kaeryang chohap*; Ja. *sanmai kairyō kumiai*) within two villages, assigning an advisor to each to provide intensive "guidance" (Ko. *sido*: Jap. *jidō*) to residents in matters such as selecting seeds, transplanting seedlings, and applying fertilizer. All residents within the villages who either owned paddy land or farmed rice were asked to sign their names to a list of the associations' regulations, pledging to increase fertilizer use, harvest their crops at a particular time, and remove grit from their rice after harvesting, among other activities. In addition to the rules over individual farming practices, the associations also required members to support various communal facilities such as shared seed selection fields, the joint purchase and sale of agricultural equipment and crops, and village lectures and competitive fairs. Farmers who fulfilled the regulations faithfully were awarded subsidies while those who did not were liable for fines.[238] In all of these activities, the social structures of villages were actively incorporated into the government's implementation of agricultural policies.

Despite these efforts, however, just as the associations found it necessary to monitor farmers' actions, so too did the provincial agricultural associations need to oversee and control the activities of the county-level associations. As Sonoda Hiroshi (園田寛), provincial governor of South P'yŏngan, explained in the introduction to a 1929 report, the county agricultural associations were a unique agency for the promotion of industry but the propriety of each associations' methods was deeply related to the success

[238] "Chūwa-kun nan-men nan-ri sanmai kairyō kumiai kiyaku" in "Heian nandō nōkai shusai," Chūwa-kun, 91-95. Similar associations can be found across Korea. See, for example, "Sanmi kongdong p'anmae: alsŏnbŏp hyŏpjŏng silsi," *Maeil sinbo*, November 23, 1925; "Miryang kunnonghoe wa kongmul chohap ŭi hyŏpjŏng," *Maeil sinbo*, October 19, 1927.

or failure of their work.[239] With this in mind, Sonoda organized a competitive fair to judge the quality of the county agricultural associations within South P'yŏngan. Early in 1929, over a 60-day period, a team from the provincial government visited each association in turn to assess the results of their first three years' activities, scoring the associations for their level of internal organization and their promotion of agriculture (judged by the distribution of high-yielding seeds, improving farming methods, equipment, village guidance, etc.), sericulture, and livestock. The associations with the highest scores received cash prizes (100 *yen* for the first-ranked, 50 *yen* each for two second-ranked, and 30 *yen* each for three third-ranked associations), and detailed notes on the results of each association were produced in order that the county associations might "learn from the past [*onkochishin*]" to enable further progress in the promotion of agriculture.[240] In both of these examples, the agricultural associations became drawn into the same pattern of regulation and surveillance, punishment and reward that characterized the colonial government's push to get farmers to alter their own behavior. In this, programs such as the PIRP, or cotton campaigns, were not only programs to increase rice or cotton production, but also an impetus for the expansion of the colonial state through semi-governmental organizations that, by design, blurred the line between the government and farmers.

V. Conclusion

The drafting of colonial agricultural policies and even the creation of a network of semi-governmental organizations were just one aspect of the colonial rural economy. Korea's

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[239] "Heian nandō nōkai shusai," 3.
[240] Ibid, *sinsa*, 26.

long history of rural organizations meant that the colonial government had to compete with existing institutions and organizations in order to establish its ability to influence farmers. As Sim Wŏn'gwŏn's diary and the early history of the Ulsan financial association show, such a process was not always straightforward. For all of the associations' ambitions to replace *kye* lending, the very networks that the associations relied upon to reach out to the local population—that is, using the township heads as intermediaries—enabled Sim to continue his existing habits relatively unaffected by changes to the colonial financial system. A similar dynamic brought both Yu Yŏnghŭi and Chŏng Kwanhae within closer reach of colonial projects, however, as their social circles included local notables and low-level government employees.

How each farmer navigated the tangled web of colonial agricultural policies demonstrates yet further the complexities of the colonial state's expansion into the rural economy. While both Yu and Chŏng participated to a greater or lesser degree within colonial programs, their motivations for doing so were far removed from the colonial bureaucrats who planned the initial policies. This was no coincidence, however. The very extension of the colonial state into the rural economy, through the expansion of the agricultural association, the recruitment and training of new employees, and the contracts and agreements that tied villages to colonial policy, both facilitated the implementation of agricultural policy at the same time as it relied upon farmers to bring their own interpretations of rural development and agricultural innovation. This chapter has examined the messy processes which saw different organizations and institutions bring farmers into contact with the colonial state. How their understanding of rural

development differed from the colonial government, and changed over time, will the subject of the next.

CHAPTER 5:
DEVELOPMENT IN AN AGE OF EMPIRE: IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS IN CONFLICT

Between 1910 and 1940, agricultural productivity in Korea increased. The widespread adoption of high-yielding seed varieties, investment in irrigation, and increasing fertilizer use contributed toward rising rice yields per hectare, with increases becoming especially apparent from the 1930s.[1] Cotton productivity also increased. Not only had the acreage devoted to cotton production increased nearly five-fold by 1940, but the use of fertilizers and new seed varieties more than doubled yield per hectare over the same period.[2] Output of tobacco, sericulture, and livestock—also targets of colonial campaigns—increased as well, providing further evidence for what some have described as an "agricultural revolution."[3]

Beyond the most statistically-focused economic analysis of colonial agriculture, the question of how to account for such changes in production has raised important debates over the historical significance of agricultural development. Debates over who benefitted from increased the rice production, and how, have highlighted struggles over inequality within colonial society, while analysis of the uneven distribution of productivity gains among different crops draws attention to the partiality of the mechanisms that promoted growth—not all credit was granted equally.[4] Frequently

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[1] Hayami and Ruttan, *Agricultural Development*, 198-210; Kang, "Essays on the Economic Development," 90-126; U Taehyŏng, "Ilcheha migok saengsansŏng ŭi ch'ui."
[2] As calculated from *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō*, three year moving averages.
[3] Kang, "Essays on the Economic Development," 125, 126.
[4] Kimura "Standards of Living in Colonial Korea"; Shin, *Peasant Protest and Social Change*; Hŏ Suyŏl, *Kaebal ŏmnŭn kaebal*; U Taehyŏng, "Ilcheha 'kaeryang nongbŏp' ŭi isik kwa nongch'on ŭi yanggŭkhwa," *Sahoe wa yŏksa* 68 (2005): 234-53; U Taehyŏng, "Ilche ha hanjŏn (旱田) changmul."

debates have centered over the interpretation of the term "development," with several scholars concluding that colonial-era economic development was inherently limited, given the unevenness of the distribution of its benefits and the lack of a sincere intent to benefit Koreans. Thus, some have adopted the phrase "growth without development" or "development without development" to qualify discussion of the changes to agricultural production that took place under colonial rule.

This chapter builds on prior discussions over colonial "development" by asking, what how did the colonial itself define development, and how did it envision agricultural development within its own plans and policies for the rural economy? Although historians have attempted to move away from purely numerical interpretations of "development," so too did the colonial government build a broader conception of "development" that encompassed both quantitative gains in productivity and a series of institutional and cultural reforms reforms that government officials considered a necessary precursor to increases in economic output. This chapter will therefore examine the view of development promoted by the colonial government, the implications of such ideas for the rural economy, and the ways in which colonial interpretations of development conflicted with alternative views held by some Koreans. In particular, this chapter will focus on the significance of the market within colonial policy, as both a target of development and in terms of the practical implications created by policies. In this way, a deeper understanding of the historical claims made in the name of "development" can help to further untangle the context in which colonial policies took on meaning in the rural economy, and the institutional factors which shaped colonial economic activity.

I. The Idea of Development in the Japanese Empire

Despite its mainly positive connotations, the term "development" has a loaded history in the context of economics. Generally encompassing a wider scope than numerically determined measures of economic growth, development as a goal implies improvements in living standards and the welfare of a population concurrent to increases in (national) wealth. Indeed, Gi-Wook Shin and Hŏ Suyŏl's critiques over the usage of "development" to refer to Korea's colonial economic change stem precisely from the broader expectation of social welfare implicit in the term. Yet, controversies over development are not limited to after-the-fact evaluations of colonial economic performance. As far as it can be seen as a goal in its own right, economic planners have readily harnessed the notion of development as a justification for a wide range of political, social, and economic policies, both domestically and internationally. In all cases, plans for development necessarily introduce subjective judgements of what constitutes a desirable economic outcome. But, international development programs in particular have been vulnerable to criticism over who the beneficiaries of development actually are, whose definition of development becomes accepted as standard, and even for replicating "colonial" hierarchies of authority between (mainly Western) economic advisors and the (non-Western, poorer) recipients of development planning.[5]

The idea of development carries a long association with colonialism. Building on existing notions of racial and cultural superiority, during the nineteenth century Western imperial powers increasingly adopted the discourse of a civilizing mission as justification

[5] See, for example, Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, third edition (London: Zed Books, 2008); William Easterly, *The Tyranny of Experts: Economists, Dictators, and the Forgotten Rights of the Poor* (New York: Basic Books, 2013).

for the continuation of empire. In the wake of anti-slavery movements, proponents of empire constructed new claims of their ability to transform local populations through the diffusion of European religion, science, or modes of political and economic organization.[6] According to such claims, economic growth and industrialization were the product of particular Western practices and attributes—the Protestant work ethic, free trade, or a legally-enshrined appreciation for property rights, for example. As assertions of cultural superiority became tied to a narrative of economic progress, colonizers increasingly held the promise of "development" as justification for the continuation of colonial rule, maintaining the fiction that under their tutelage the colonized population might also experience development.

In Meiji Japan, such theories of civilizational progress found a receptive audience among reformers eager to prove Japan's international standing in the modern world. Influential thinkers such as Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901, 福澤諭吉) not only introduced Western ideas to new audiences, but promoted the idea that Japan should "leave Asia" and follow the example of European nations. Following Fukuzawa's lead, and in pursuit of parity with Western imperial powers, Japanese thinkers combined programs of domestic reforms with efforts to reimagine China and Korea as "backward" sites of Confucian-bound cultural and economic stagnation, thus establishing Japan's supposedly unique position in East Asia.[7]

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[6] See, for example, Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 287-90, 324-26.

[7] On the reimagination of China, see Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

While Fukuzawa tied the re-conception of Japan's position within Asia to domestic concerns, other thinkers adapted similar theories in support of Japanese imperial conquests. In Korea, Japanese claims of economic superiority became a crucial element in establishing political control over the peninsula. Scholars such as Fukuda Tokuzō (1874–1930, 福田徳三) referenced German theories of economic stages to argue that, due to a lack of a feudal stage, Korea had failed to develop beyond the self-sufficient household economy. Only under active Japanese guidance, Fukuda argued, would Korea finally achieve a sufficient foundation for economic growth, unleashing the value of land through property rights and awakening a sense of individualism among the population which could lead to the mobilization of capital and economic and social development.[8]

During the transformation of Korea into a protectorate, and later colony, of Japan, numerous officials seized upon the opportunities presented in Fukuda's theory of Korean stagnation. In the name of "reform and progress," Japan appointed numerous advisors to the Korean government to oversee wide-ranging reforms "in pursuance of a national policy leading to reform and progress…in order to promote the country's welfare."[9] In this capacity, Megata Tanetarō (1853–1926, 目賀田種太郎), financial advisor to the protectorate administration and one of the most prolific proponents of reform in Korea, thoroughly restructured the Korean currency and financial system, by removing debased nickel coins from circulation and placing Korea on the yen standard; establishing a new central bank, the Bank of Chōsen (formerly the private Dai-ichi Bank), and a hierarchy of

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[8] Fukuda Tokuzō, "Kankoku no keizai soshiki to keizai tan'i" (1904), reprinted in Fukuda Tokuzō, *Keizaigaku kenkyū* (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1915), 70-148; Miller, "The Idea of Stagnation"
[9] H. I. J. M.'s Residency General, *The Second Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Korea 1908–9* (Seoul: 1909), 3.

other government-supported banks for both commercial traders and farming households; reorganizing the tax system to direct all revenues toward the Ministry of Finance and increase government income through a combination of new taxes and increased enforcement; and laying the groundwork for a national cadastral survey which would rationalize the collection of taxes and promote economic development through improved protection of property rights.[10] In Megata's reforms, the need to bring development to Korea became a major premise for colonial intervention. As one official history recounted: "One of the chief causes which led Korea to ruin was her financial disorganization, so, after the Russo-Japanese War, when Japan came to interfere more actively with the internal affairs of the country, it was from the fiscal side that she first undertook to reform them."[11]

Of course, Japanese claims of reform where Korea had failed to govern itself in large part served as an external justification of imperial activity. Indeed, that many of the reports heralding Japanese activities in Korea were published in English demonstrates the perceived significance of an international audience for Japan's developmental rhetoric. Yet, acknowledging the superficial nature of some colonial claims to development does not automatically discount the content of such claims. The very fact that the colonial government attempted to justify its rule in Korea according to the criteria of development itself reveals the symbolic importance of development within colonial discourse. What is more, notwithstanding the publications that were produced for an international audience,

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[10] On Megata's reforms, see Schiltz, *The Money Doctors from Japan*, 59-120; David A. Fedman, "Triangulating Chōsen: Maps, Mapmaking, and the Land Survey in Colonial Korea," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 1, no. 1 (2012): 205-34.
[11] Bank of Chosen, *Economic History of Chosen* (Seoul: 1920), 37.

most publications on the topic of development in Korea were produced by and for colonial officials who discussed theories of development among themselves in relation to colonial policy. This is especially so when considering Korea's status after annexation as part of the Japanese *naichi*, or domestic territory. Claims of development were not just a passive excuse, constructed after the fact, but were part of an ongoing effort to persuade the population in both Korea and Japan that not only did the colonial government deserve to rule Korea, but that Koreans should accept its rule and follow its decrees. While by no means undertaken with the interests of Korea and the Korean population in mind, the idea of development was an important trope within the maintenance of Korea as a colony.

The example of the nationwide cadastral survey demonstrates the multiple uses of development claims to the colonial government. Planned by Megata in 1907 and undertaken between 1910 and 1918, the reorganization of Korean land records fulfilled several simultaneous objectives. The survey was a tool of empire, providing the colonial government with valuable knowledge of land ownership, the extent of state-owned lands, and the potential taxes which would underwrite subsequent colonial policy, facilitating both day-to-day governance and the pursuit of narrower goals such as encouraging Japanese migration. At the same time, by using the most up-to-date mapping and surveying technologies Japan also established itself at the forefront of international expertise in mapping, further legitimating Japan as a competent colonial power in the eyes of foreign observers.[12] In addition to such instrumental purposes, the cadastral survey also aligned with Fukuda's theory of economic growth, which considered a lack

[12] Fedman, "Triangulating Chōsen."

of property rights to be one of the chief causes of Korea's supposed stagnation.[13] Through the cadastral survey, the colonial government established a mechanism to implement its own view of property rights, bolstering not only the activities of the colonial regime but also a range of private economic activity that would fulfil the government's definition of "development," further validating colonial rule.

Colonial officials envisioned themselves as bringing a particular type of development to Korea, namely, the promotion of capitalist markets and values. Throughout colonial rule, officials within all levels of the government frequently referenced such goals as they incorporated Fukuda's theory as a basic premise of economic policies. Even policies designed to explicitly benefit Japanese producers and consumers stressed the importance of inculcating capitalist values and improving the function of markets as a means to achieve such ends. Such a perspective is clear in the writing of Kagami Yasunosuke (1868–1931, 鏡保之助), an agricultural technician at the model industrial farm in Suwŏn. Writing in 1914, Kagami argued that the key to achieving desired increases in agricultural production lay in the proper development of exchange-oriented economic institutions (Ja. *kōkan wo shugi to seru keizai soshiki*):

> If we want to increase the welfare of the farmers and open the eternal fount of national wealth, then along with the goal of decreasing costs and increasing harvests through improved agriculture and cultivation we must always make goods profitable. To put it in other words, we must get farmers to think constantly about the point, "How can I increase the price of this product?"[14]

In Kagami's view, technical improvements in agriculture would only achieve their maximum effect if farmers could be made to appreciate the value of production for the

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[13] Fukuda Tokuzō, "Kankoku no keizai soshiki to keizai tan'i"
[14] Kagami Yasunosuke, "Ikaga ni shite nōsanbutsu no kachi wo takamu beki ka," *CNH* 9, no. 3 (1914): 1-7.

market. Profits were therefore an essential feedback mechanism to encourage farmers to adopt better farming methods and to produce and sell an ever-greater proportion of their crops.

The colonial government therefore pursued two interrelated goals in its plans for agricultural development. On one side, the government sought numerical increases in production and exports. Not only would such increases provide raw materials for an expanding empire, but higher exports supported the financial health of Korea as a colony and served as a testament to the supposed benefits of Japanese rule. To this end, the colonial government introduced new, high-yielding crop varieties to Korea and promoted investments in irrigation and other agricultural technologies, the results of which were prominently cited in reports of Korea's "extraordinary strides" in agriculture.[15]

At the same time, and as a means to achieve the first goal as well as an objective in its own right, the colonial government attempted to change farmers' interaction with the rural economy, encouraging them to adopt profit-maximizing behaviors and to rationalize their production for the market. The profitability (Ja. *yūrisei*) of various products became a recurring theme within colonial agricultural policy, as both an aspiration to be instilled among Korean farmers and as a mechanism to achieve broader policy goals. Colonial officials regularly touted the profitability of the new crops and farming methods they sought to popularize among farmers, from new strains of cotton to barley, sugar beet, and even woven straw bags.[16] In these efforts, profitability was neither

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[15] See, for example, "Tokushūgō hakkan ni sai shite," *CNH* 9, no. 11 (1935): 1.
[16] "Mitsuyō [Miryang] no ōmugi kōsaku nōkei," *CNH* 6, no. 2 (1911): 41-43; "Heiwa hakurankai jushōsha jigyō gaiyō (3)," *CNH* 18, no. 1 (1923): 45-48; "Heian nan-dō nōkai shusai kun-nōkai jiseki," 96, 97; *Men no mura*, 3, 4.

empty rhetoric nor an expression of colonial benevolence, but an incentive that officials sought to harness to increase the production of favored crops, stemming in part from officials' own belief in narratives of market-led economic development.

Colonial agricultural policies therefore often included explicit measures designed to shape rural markets and incentivize farmers, even at the expense of some of the typical beneficiaries of colonial rule. In 1913, for example, as part of the colonial government's larger campaign to increase the commercial production of cotton, the governor of South Chŏlla, Korea's most important cotton-growing region, announced regulations concerning the sale of upland cotton within the province and limiting the cotton trade to only official channels (that is, through the cotton associations). As one official recalled the decision, "because traders manipulated the prices and farmers had barely any profits, Governor Kudō [decided that], as a global crop, it was unreasonable to let cotton be controlled by traders and we must take the Ōsaka market as a base."[17] In this case, Kudō restricted the activities of private traders—both Japanese and Korean alike—in order to create a market that, he hoped, would make cotton a more attractive crop to farmers, ultimately achieving the wider goal of increasing its production, sale, and export through the newly regulated channels.

That colonial officials attempted to use price incentives to increase production of favored crops complicates understandings of colonial agricultural policy as a binary of either exploitation or growth. Indeed, while recounting the success of Kudō's cotton policies several years later, colonial officials congratulated themselves for moving away from more coercive methods of cotton promotion. Officials described their earliest

[17] "Zadankai kiroku," *CNH* 9, no. 11 (1935): 37.

attempts to persuade Koreans to farm upland cotton through bribery, beatings, and the destruction of non-upland cotton as "unimaginable" in contrast to the system of incentives and supports established through the cotton associations.[18] But, even as it attempted to avoid the harshest measures of previous years, the colonial government's market-based regulations were both more and less intrusive than its efforts to expand the cultivation of upland cotton. While colonial officials avoided coercion and violence as standard practice, they nonetheless maintained the ultimate goal of changing farmers' behavior. After all, if farmers could be induced to produce and sell more cotton or rice of their own accord, then the colonial government would have no need to compel cultivation.

Of course, there were limits to colonial rhetoric. Despite constructing a narrative of the self-evident, self-sustaining benefits of market-led economic growth, in reality the colonial government had to take concrete steps to support its view of development. In the above example of Kudō's cotton policies, the profitability of upland cotton to farmers was only achieved through the creation of a physical infrastructure capable of overseeing cultivation within each district (the cotton associations), the enactment and enforcement of provincial regulations controlling traders' activities, and the establishment of an alternative sales network through the cotton associations which took over the work of calculating prices and arranging finances. In this way, the colonial government's view of development can only truly be assessed against the measures it used to implement it.

II. Institutionalizing Development in Korea

[18] Ibid, 45. Despite such claims to have moved on from such practices, individual accounts of violent crop destruction still arose from time to time. "Kahok han kwŏnŏp haengjŏng," *Tonga ilbo*, August 27, 1925.

As examined in Chapter Three, semi-governmental organizations—the network of cotton, agricultural, financial, and irrigation associations—provided the basic framework for colonial interventions in the rural economy. These associations supplied the materials and hosted agricultural technicians across the country that the government relied upon to implement all aspects of its agricultural policies, from distributing new seed varieties, to channeling investment for irrigation projects, and even mobilizing resources for wartime campaigns. The utility of the semi-governmental organizations was not limited to material tasks, however, and through the drafting of laws and regulations, the colonial government also attempted to use the semi-governmental organizations to reinforce its view of agricultural development through the creation of new economic institutions, such as regulations and new standard practices within the associations.

Government intervention through the semi-governmental organizations took many forms. At one end of the spectrum, individual associations directly created local organizational and institutional models to encourage desirable behavior and activities. In Miryang county, South Kyŏngsang province, for example, the local financial association organized a barley cultivation group (Ko. *taemaek kyŏngjak nonggye*; Ja. *ōmugi kōsaku nōkei*) in order to promote the cultivation of a new strain of barley—golden melon barley—among association members. This fit within the colonial government's wider project to promote the cultivation of improved crop varieties within Korea, with golden melon barley having been selected for promotion by the Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry for its robust quality, large harvests, and high sale price.

The barley cultivation group did more than simply provide seeds to association members, however. After a trial cultivation, the financial association sent a sample of the

crop to a beer factory in Meguro, Tokyo. The factory liked the barley, and made a contract with the group to continue as a supplier. In response, the financial association drew up a series of internal regulations for the barley cultivation group in order to enhance their cultivation of barley as a commercial product. In particular, the barley cultivation group committed to plan for the uniformity of the crop among all forty-five group members. To that end, each member was required to send two *toe* of their crop to the financial association each June for a quality inspection, while members would also receive regular inspections from the group leader and representatives of the financial associations during the growing season.[19] In this way, the financial association not only attempted to increase production among its members, but directly promoted the idea of commercial production and established a series of procedures to maintain the quality and uniformity of members' harvests as required by the brewery.

At the other end of the spectrum, the colonial government also attempted to influence farmers through national regulations. To take the example of rice—Korea's most important export crop and one of the major targets of colonial policy—the government implemented a number of measures designed to create an institutional context supportive of its wider goals to increase exports and production, which can be traced through even the colonial government's earliest rice policies. Terauchi's 1912 directive on rice production, for example, contained measures aiming to both increase the volume of production (through the promotion of new seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation) as well as to increase the quality of rice entering the market (through improvements to the

[19] "Mitsuyō no ōmugi kōsaku nōkei."

drying and processing of harvested rice).[20] The latter was of particular concern as the colonial government had identified improperly dried rice (which tended to spoil quicker) or the presence of impurities, such as dirt, stones, and discolored, broken, or low quality grains, as major factors that drove down prices.

Rice policies thus closely followed the colonial government's market-centered view of development in which prices could serve as a means to both educate and incentivize farmers. Even as colonial officials developed plans to increase the export of rice to Japan, they emphasized the concurrent need to improve the quality of Korean rice and raise its price as a natural complement to policies concerned with the expansion of sales routes. In this vein, officials such as Nakamura Gen (1868–n.d., 中村彦), an employee within the Department of Agriculture, and Kagami Yasunosuke, among others, wrote extensively on the development of the rice market between Japan and Korea, detailing plans to enhance the reputation of Korean rice in Japan, opening new markets for exporters, raising demand and prices, and ultimately encouraging farmers to grow and sell more of their crop.[21]

Shortly after the publication of the initial directive, Governor-General Terauchi introduced subsequent legislation to promote the desired improvements in the drying and processing of rice. In particular, in 1915 the colonial government announced new regulations concerning the inspection of grain at the major rice export ports. As Terauchi described the measures:

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[20] "Beisaku kairyō no shōrei ni kansuru ken: Chōsen sōtokufu kunrei dai-10 go," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 460 (1912).

[21] "Ōsaka ni okeru Chōsen kakuchi sanmai no sōba," *CNH* 6, no. 2 (1911): 48, 49; Nakamura Gen, "Nōsei ni tsuki kunsu ni nozomu," *CNH* 6, no. 11 (1911): 1-6; Kagami Yasunosuke, "Ikaga ni shite nōsanbutsu no kachi,"; Nakamura Gen, "Chosŏnmi ŭi naeji p'allo hwakchang e tae haya," *CNH* 10, no. 1 (1915): 9-20.

> Rice occupies the leading position among Korea's agricultural products, and as a result of the efforts we have made to date to improve and increase its [production] there is sufficient to also supply Japan. Seeing large amounts exported each year, we have the opportunity to make [rice] a major item of trade in the future. However, it is deeply regrettable that transactions are interrupted and it is impossible to maintain appropriate prices due to its crude processing, many impurities, and insufficient drying. Hereafter, we will expand the sales routes of Korean rice and plan to increase its export all the more. To this end, we plan for the careful selection of export rice, the removal of impurities such as stones, unhulled rice, broken grains, and millet. The reason for the enactment of these regulations on grain is the removal of these obstacles to transactions as a matter of urgency.[22]

According to the regulations, all unpolished (Ko. *hyŏnmi*; Ja. *genmai*) "brown" rice destined for export would be newly subject to inspection and graded according to standard criteria for its dryness and presence of impurities. Any rice that failed to meet a minimum standard would be stamped accordingly and potentially prohibited from export, while the inspection stations would also recognize higher quality rice.[23] As explained by Nakamura Gen, although the careful selection of rice for the market should be a matter of course for farmers, the introduction of formal inspections at the major ports was a necessary immediate measure in order to bring about rapid improvements in the quality of Korean exports in order to expand sales routes within Japan.[24]

In mandating a system of grain inspections for exports, the colonial government not only introduced incentives for farmers to improve the post-harvest processing of rice but also encouraged the emergence of a distinct market for export rice. By the time of annexation, the burgeoning rice trade with Japan had already made a significant impact

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[22] "Suich'ul migok kŏmsa e kwan han hullyŏng," *CNH* 10, no. 4 (1915): 60.
[23] "Beikoku kensa kisoku," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 760, February 17, 1915; "Migok kŏmsa kyuch'ik e kwan han puryŏng," *CNH* 10, no. 3 (1915): 55.
[24] Nakamura Gen, "Chosŏnmi ŭi naeji p'allo hwakchang," 20. Nakamura's interpretation of farmers' "natural" incentives to strive for the highest quality grain was no closer to reality in Japan than it was Korea. Ann Waswo has detailed problems over the quality of rice sold within Japan during the early Meiji period and the development of various institutions to reduce spoilage and improve standards. Ann Waswo, *Japanese Landlords: The Decline of a Rural Elite* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 42-56.

upon the circulation and price of rice within Korea as the open ports emerged as important new grain trading centers.[25] The introduction of the grain inspection regulations only added to this trend by enhancing the development of export rice as a distinct product. In addition to Japanese consumers' preference for unpolished rice, the grain inspection regulations further differentiated export rice through the requirement of higher quality standards as verified by the grain inspection stations and authenticated through official seals. Even the external appearance of export rice became distinct through the new inspection system, as the grain inspections required rice to be packaged in straw bags of a set size and weight, and bound in a uniform manner.[26]

The requirement that export rice pass through the grain inspection stations compounded the growth of new market networks catering to the export grain trade. In this, the grain inspection stations complemented the development of new transport routes—in particular the railways—designed to link the major agricultural regions with urban areas and the ports.[27] In North Kyŏngsang, for example, the provincial government authorized grain inspection at nine railway stations exclusively located along the Seoul (Keijō)-Pusan railway line, reinforcing the connection between the export grain trade and the railways.[28] Similarly, in South Kyŏngsang, the grain inspection stations were located almost entirely along the southern coast, rather than spread evenly throughout the

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[25] Pak It'aek and Yi Yŏnghun, "18–19 segi migok sijang ŭi t'onghap"; Ch'oe Ŭnjin, "Kunsan mi ŭi taeil such'ul kujo."
[26] Specifically, straw bags should hold between four to five *to* (Ko. *mal*) of rice (roughly 72 to 90 liters), and weigh more than 700 *monme* (roughly 2.625 kilograms). "Migok kŏmsa kyuch'ik e kwan han puryŏng," Article 5.
[27] Hŏ Yŏngnan, *Ilche sigi changsi yŏn'gu*, 143-156; Takenori Matsumoto and Seung-Jin Chung, "On the Hosokawa Farm and the History of Daejangchon, a Japanese-Style Village in Colonial Korea: Dilemmas in Rural Development," *Korea Journal* 49, no. 3 (2009): 121-50.
[28] "Keihoku kokubutsu kairyō kumiai," *CNH* 9, no. 10 (1914): 64.

province.[29] Elsewhere too, growing markets in the port regions and along the railway lines increasingly challenged the primacy of the existing five-day markets with regard to the grain trade. In Kyŏnggi province, P'yŏngt'aek grew to rival the traditional market centers of Ansŏng and Asan, especially as an intermediary center linking Ansŏng to both the export and import trade, due to P'yŏngt'aek's strategic location which combined access to both water transport and the new railway lines.[30] Once again, the establishment of a grain inspection station tied important market functions to P'yŏngt'aek's location as a rice trading center. Although Ansŏng and Asan remained important markets in their own right, the lucrative business surrounding the export grain trade shifted to favor P'yŏngt'aek and its convenient access to transport links and the newly-mandated grain inspection stations.[31]

If the physical location of grain inspection stations gave a geographic order to the export trade, then so too did the technical requirements of rice processing mark the production of export rice as a discrete industry. This contradicted much of the government's rhetoric surrounding grain inspections, which placed emphasis on the actions of farmers to improve the quality of their rice in response to market prices. As the prevailing logic assumed, "if we want to increase the price of Korean rice and expand its sales routes, we must pay attention to its processing and improve its handling after the harvest…it is clear that the price of agricultural products will rise *once farmers are able*

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[29] "Kyŏngnam migok kŏmsaso sojaeji," *CNH* 12, no. 5 (1917): 71.
[30] Hŏ Yŏngnan, "1910 nyŏndae Kyŏnggi nambu chiyŏk sangp'um yut'ong kujo ŭi chaep'yŏn," *Yŏksa munje yŏn'gu* 2 (1997): 149-93.
[31] Ibid; Chōsen sōtokufu Keiki [Kyŏnggi]-dō, *Keiki-dō jijō yōran* (1922), 28.

to put this into practice well [emphasis added].”[32] As early as 1916, however, it was clear to some within the industry that grain inspection regulations were not having their desired effect upon farmers’ behavior. As Tennichi Tsunejirō (1863–n.d., 天日常次郎), a member of the Keijō chamber of commerce, noted, although rice inspections had generally made a positive impact on the quality of exported rice, as long as Korean farmers sold their rice to domestic traders “as is” (Ja. *sono mama*), the regulations did little more than encourage the emergence of a new rice processing industry in which traders bought unhulled rice at comparatively cheap prices before processing it themselves to earn higher profits.[33]

Comprehensive figures showing the extent of the secondary processing industry are scarce, but data from the accounts of one rice mill in the capital (est. 1910) show that by 1919 purchasing and processing rice formed the bulk of the mill’s income. In one year, the rice mill earned 19,431 *yen* from the purchase, processing and sale of rice (as unpolished rice), compared to just 3,387 *yen* earned in fees from processing rice on behalf of landlords and other rice-owners. As analyzed by Hong Sŏngch’an, the Tongil Rice Mill invested heavily in the rice processing industry, purchasing engine-powered mill equipment and converting the firm’s commercial capital to industrial capital throughout the 1910s.[34] Though only one mill, the example of the Tongil Rice Mill nonetheless demonstrates how rice processing became a viable industry in its own right. What is more, as the Tongil example also shows, a large proportion of rice processing

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[32] Kagami Yasunosuke, “Ikaga ni shite nōsanbutsu no kachi,” 6. See also similar arguments in Nakamura Gen, “Chosŏnmi ŭi naeji p’allo hwakchang,” 20; Terauchi Masatake, “Yuich’ul migok kŏmsa e kwanhan hullryŏng,” *CNH* 10, no. 4 (1915): 60.
[33] Tennichi Tsunejirō, “Chōsen kome no konponteki kairyō to chihō nōmin,” *CNH* 11, no. 4 (1916): 50-51.
[34] Hong Sŏngch’an, “Hanmal ilche ch’o Sŏul Tongmak kaekchu ŭi chŏngmiŏp chinch’ul kwa kyŏngyŏng—Tongil chŏngmiso ŭi ‘ilgi’ (1919) punsŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro,” *Kyŏngje sahak* 55 (2013): 213-247. In addition to its income from processing and sale unpolished rice, to a lesser extent the mill made further profits from seasonal arbitrage and the processing and sale of polished rice.

transactions took place away from the hands of the landlords and farmers who initially produced the rice and sold it unprocessed. While Tennichi, a rice trader and president of a (different) rice mill himself, undoubtedly profited from this trend, he nonetheless lamented that as long as rice processing remained a separate industry there would be little improvement among farmers' production methods.[35]

If colonial officials shared Tennichi's concerns, they struggled to find an effective solution to the problem. On the whole, officials ascribed the tendency to sell unprocessed rice to Korean custom and a lack of knowledge among farmers, to combat which the government planned regional lectures on the benefits of rice processing and demonstrations of recommended techniques and machines.[36] Supplementing these measures, semi-governmental organizations once again provided an organizational and institutional channel to buttress attempts to expand the practice of rice processing among farmers. In Sach'ŏn county, South Kyŏngsang province, the local agricultural association carried out an awareness campaign on the additional benefits of selling processed rice as part of an effort to redirect a greater share of the profits from the rice trade toward farmers. Meanwhile, the Andong county agricultural association in North Kyŏngsang province began its own program to jointly process and sell members' rice for profit from 1923 onwards. Like the Miryang financial association barley cultivation group, the Andong agricultural association carried out its own quality inspections of participating members' rice. As the association proudly reported, these measures helped it to achieve a higher price than members could have achieved in the nearby Taegu market, satisfying

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[35] Tennichi Tsunejirō, "Chōsen kome no konponteki kairyō to chihō nōmin," 51.
[36] Ibid; "Keinan beikoku chōseihō denshū jōkyō," 70; "Keinan Shisen[Sach'ŏn]-kun ni okeru genmai chōsei no shōrei," *CNH* 18, no. 12 (1923): 30, 31.

both participating members and the colonial government's vision of price incentives as a spur to agricultural improvement.[37]

As evidenced in the colonial government's struggle to expand the practice of rice processing, the rural population did not automatically share the colonial government's interpretation of market incentives and commercial production. Rather, particular processes acquired significance within the colonial logic of development and were put into practice through a specific infrastructure of regulations and semi-governmental organizations. The colonial government's was not the only view of development within rural Korea. Where the colonial government created new institutions to emphasize the profitability of certain crops, this was just one potential avenue for farmers and one which might present significant obstacles to farmers, whether through geographic constraints or a lack of necessary capital. How colonial plans for development compared to alternative views and institutions provides essential context to understand its impact within the rural economy.

III. Multiple Views of Development

For all the confidence with which it projected its vision of development onto the Korean rural economy, the colonial government's interpretation of desirable market institutions did not command universal acceptance. Among the general population there existed a full range of opinions concerning the rural economy, some of which corresponded to the colonial perspective and some which did not. Perspectives on colonial policies ranged from farmers like Sim Wŏn'gwŏn—who were elderly enough or sufficiently insulated

[37] Ibid; "Antō [Andong] kin'yū kumiai ni okeru genmai kyōdō chōsei," *CNH* 1, no. 6 (1927): 65. Andong did not have railway access until 1931, leaving it far removed from the grain inspection stations authorized by the provincial government in 1914.

from colonial initiatives to receive much influence on long-held views—to farmers such as Yu Yŏnghŭi or Chŏng Kwanhae, whose daily lives brought them into contact with colonial agricultural programs, albeit for different reasons than those imagined by the colonial government. Critics of colonial agricultural policies at the time were equally diverse, ranging from Marxist intellectuals, to nationalist campaigns to develop sources of capital that could compete with Japan, to agrarian critics of capitalism who advocated self-sufficiency and traditional values over the governments' promotion of an increasingly specialized and scientific commercial agriculture.[38] Even those who shared with the colonial government a desire to improve Korean agricultural production through the adoption of new technologies and methods might disagree with certain aspects of colonial policy or the institutional mechanisms used to implement them.

Of course, within colonial society, not all views of development garnered equal respect. Whether due to arrogance, ignorance, or a combination of the two, colonial officials often overlooked existing Korean practices and ideas and condemned them as backward customs. Where the colonial government endorsed one set of institutions over another—by extending credit through financial associations in direct competition with merchants who customarily made loans against farmers' future harvests, for example—it often created new obstacles for existing practices, if not outright preventing them. How colonial development policies appeared in relation to the alternatives, then, is an inseparable task when assessing colonial views of development.

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[38] Wells, "The Rationale of Korean Economic Nationalism"; Pang Kie-chung, "Paek Nam'un and Marxist Scholarship during the Colonial Period," trans. Michael D. Shin, in Pang and Shin, eds., *Landlords, Peasants & Intellectuals*, 245-308; Pang Kie-chung, "Yi Hun-gu's Agricultural Reform Theory and Nationalist Economic Thought," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 19, no. 1 (2006): 61-89; Gi-Wook Shin, "Agrarianism."

Colonial officials were not the only ones to take an interest in Korean rural development. The Yongsu farming *kye* (Ko. *nonggye*; Ja. *nōkei*) was among the many agricultural organizations established in the early years of colonial rule. Founded by O Sŏngsŏn (1871–1950), a local landlord, the Yongsu *kye* included members from both Yongin and Suwŏn counties in Kyŏnggi province. O launched the Yongsu *kye* in February 1909 and successfully gathered 226 attendees for its opening ceremony the following year. By 1913, the *kye* claimed a membership of 557 local farmers drawn across four townships, comprising both landlords and landless tenants alike (see Table 5.1). Intended to foster and improve the agriculture of its members, the Yongsu *kye* supported a number of activities, including livestock rearing (particularly cows and chickens), moneylending, savings, sericulture, promoting high-yielding seeds, fertilizers, and general knowledge of new agricultural techniques, as well as promising mutual aid and grain loans to its members in times of need.[39]

The Yongsu farming *kye* drew early praise from colonial officials. Although the Yongsu *kye* was not formally a part of colonial projects, as were the various semi-governmental organizations or government-run projects such as the model industrial farm, it garnered the attention and support of colonial officials due to the similarity of many of its objectives. Agricultural technicians from the nearby Suwŏn model farm visited the Yongsu *kye* and consulted with O to educate members through lectures and offer advice on how to improve agriculture. Government technicians complimented the *kye*, calling its establishment, "the most gratifying affair in achieving the goal of

[39] "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (1)," *CNH* 5, no. 1 (1910): 32-35; "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (2)," *CNH* 5, no. 2 (1910): 47-51; "Ryūsui nōkei (ue)," *CNH* 8, no. 7 (1913): 42-46; "Ryūsui nōkei (shita)," *CNH* 8, no. 8 (1913): 46-51.

Table 5.1: Yongsu farming *kye* membership and landholdings, 1913

Township	No. of members	Total land held by members, *turak*	Average land, *turak* per household	Proportion landless (%)
Kigok township, Yongin	399	3,000	8	60
Kuhŭng township, Yongin	53	300	6	47
Taech'on township, Suwŏn	45	360*	8	33
Changju township, Suwŏn	60	540*	9	66

Source: "Ryūsui[Yongsu] nōkei (ue)," *CNH* 8, no. 7 (1913): 44.
Note: Total landholdings marked by asterisk have been calculated from the average data. Averages are calculated to include landless households, as they are assumed to be tenant farmers.

developing regional industry."[40] The Yongsu *kye* maintained a favorable reputation among officials throughout its operation, earning a bronze medal for its work at both the 1915 Chōsen Industrial Exposition and the 1922 Tokyo Peace Exposition.[41]

In their praise for the Yongsu farming *kye*, colonial officials highlighted the areas in which the *kye*'s activities overlapped with the goals of colonial policy. In a 1925 tribute to the *kye*, a representative of the Kyŏnggi provincial office listed its many accomplishments since its founding, offering descriptions that closely resembled several agricultural policy directives. In order, the *kye* was lauded for improving and popularizing the selection of improved seeds, establishing an improved nursery for rice seedlings, removing weeds and millet from rice paddies, promoting fertilizer use, encouraging the cultivation of sugar beet, increasing and improving livestock rearing, improving sericulture, supplying agricultural credit, encouraging savings, storing and

[40] "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (2)," 51.
[41] "Heiwa hakurankai jushōsha jigyō gaiyō," 27-29. On the Tokyo Peace Exposition and its political context within Japan, see Frederick R. Dickinson, *World War I and the Triumph of a New Japan, 1919–1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 144-166.

lending grain, and offering agricultural guidance.[42] Each of these activities mirrored current agricultural policy within the colonial government's broader agenda of promoting rural development. Removing weeds and millet from paddy fields was a basic element within the government's rice improvement campaigns, as was the adoption of high-yielding rice varieties, the application of fertilizers, and the use of seedling nurseries to improve the quantity and quality of the harvest. The cultivation of sugar beet and silkworms was also encouraged by the colonial government for their commercial potential; as well as supplying Japan with important raw materials, agricultural technicians stressed the potential profitability of the two as cash crops that households could use to supplement their income and further develop industrious habits.

In many ways, the activities of the Yongsu farming *kye* did align with the priorities of colonial agricultural policy. O, the founder, reportedly left a government position in 1907 to return to his village and focus on improving agriculture. As a committee member for the Oriental Development Company (ODC)—a semi-governmental Japanese corporation dedicated to the development of agriculture in Korea, largely, though not exclusively, through the facilitation of Japanese emigration[43]—O visited Japan for one month in 1908 in order to inspect the most recent developments in Japanese agriculture. Upon his return to Korea, O established a society to study agriculture and the Yongsu farming *kye*, the latter of which became O's main vehicle for promoting improvements in agricultural production for the benefit of local farmers.[44] The account of O's revelation about the potential of Japanese agricultural methods to develop

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[42] "Ryūsui nōkei ni tsuite," *CNH* 20, no. 4 (1925): 36-40.
[43] Moskowitz, "The Creation of the Oriental Development Company."
[44] "O-ssi kwŏnnong," *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, May 11, 1909; "Ryūsui nōkei ni tsuite," 36.

rural villages in Korea, published repeatedly as it was in the *Bulletin of the Agricultural Association*, may be somewhat exaggerated to suit colonial narratives. Nonetheless, to the extent that, through his actions in partnering with technicians from the Suwŏn model farm and facilitating the spread of high-yielding seeds and fertilizers, he appears to have believed in the benefits of the new agricultural methods promoted within the *kye*, O and the Yongsu farming *kye* shared a perspective that aligned with several aspects of colonial agricultural policy.

Nonetheless, despite positive portrayals within the *Bulletin*, not all of the Yongsu farming *kye*'s activities corresponded perfectly with the colonial view of development. As explored above, property rights were both an important goal and mechanism within colonial agricultural policy; as well as defining and protecting property rights by law, the colonial government relied upon the profit motive as a major incentive for several of its policies, hoping that properly guaranteed returns would motivate farmers to invest in their land and improve their cultivation methods. For all its promotion of agricultural technologies, the Yongsu farming *kye* did not simply replicate the colonial view that placed profits and property rights as key foundations for agricultural development. Although the Yongsu *kye* upheld the explicit goal of improving agriculture, it also looked to support farmers—both landlords and tenants alike—through practices such as mutual aid and the extension of grain loans to impoverished households. What is more, where the *kye* offered loans to its poorer members, it did so in consultation with village representatives and not just with regard to the individual assets of the potential lender, as was the practice among the financial associations.[45]

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[45] 'Ryūsui nōkei kiyaku,' "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (1)," 33-35.

Conflicting views over the importance of property rights came into even sharper focus regarding the Yongsu *kye*'s efforts to promote livestock. On a basic level, the views of most farmers and colonial officials aligned in seeing cows as a positive asset for rural households. Agricultural technicians therefore praised the Yongsu *kye*'s early plans to increase the number of livestock among its members, and technicians from the Suwŏn model farm even offered to lend the *kye* some of the model farm's "improved" breeds, so that the *kye* might enhance its cows' physical characteristics rather than leaving them "entirely to nature." However, where the Yongsu farming *kye* planned a program based on joint cow ownership, agricultural technicians objected that such a system provided greater benefits to non-owners, thus weakening the incentives to own (and improve) cows.[46]

At the heart of the disagreement was a practice known as *yet'ak* (Ja. *yotaku*), or deposit feeding. Owning a cow was an expensive and uncertain prospect. On top of the purchase price of the cow itself, the owner had to ensure the cows' food supply. What is more, the owner would lose their entire investment if the cow became sick, died, escaped, or was stolen. Customarily, farmers in the Yongsu region therefore used the practice of "deposit feeding" to mitigate some of these risks. In exchange for contributing toward the costs of raising a cow—typically somewhere between seven *mal* to one *sŏm* of rice per year—other farmers could share some of the risk of cow ownership in exchange for a right to one of the cow's future calves. Despite the popularity of the system within the local area—over 70 percent of the Yongsu farming *kye* cows raised in this manner—the agricultural technicians feared that the practice undermined returns to cow ownership and

[46] "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (2)," 48.

could decrease the number of calves that owners might wish to breed, hampering colonial schemes to increase the number of improved livestock in Korea.[47]

In the end, the agricultural technicians reached an agreement with O to modify cow ownership practices within the Yongsu *kye*. The system of deposit feeding would continue, although with some modifications. Under the new system, feeders would offer lower annual contributions to the upkeep of cows (now limited to between five to seven *mal*), while the Yongsu *kye* would also reduce the total number of calves per cow that could be claimed in return. Although the technicians acknowledged that this measure was little more than a drop in the ocean, they nonetheless credited the slight strengthening of cow ownership rights with an uptick in the total number of livestock between 1910 and 1913 (increasing from 70 animals at a ratio of 1 bull to 2 heifers, to around 300 animals at a ratio of 2 bulls to 3 heifers).[48]

Based on only a few reports authored by agricultural technicians, it is hard to assess the impact of the modifications to the Yongsu *kye*'s cow ownership system. Although the technicians asserted the strengthening of cow ownership rights as the prime factor behind the *kye*'s increased cow population, it is equally plausible that the numbers simply reflected the initial enthusiasm of *kye* members to participate in one of the Yongsu *kye*'s first major projects. But even in the absence of conclusive evidence to validate one claim over the other, it is clear that the employees of the model farm and the organizers of the Yongsu farming *kye* held quite different assumptions about what it would take to improve livestock ownership.

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[47] Ibid; "Chikugyū kairyō zōshoku no shōrei ni kansuru ken: Chōsen sōtokufu kunrei dai-9 go," *Chōsen sōtokufu kanpō* no. 459, March 11, 1912.
[48] "Ryūsui nōkei (shita)," 51; "Ryūsui kyōdō kōgyūkei kiyaku," *CNH* 8, no. 12 (1913): 63-64.

Ultimately, however, neither view prevailed. The Yongsu farming *kye*'s formal program to increase livestock was dissolved in 1916 at the mutual agreement of the *kye* members.[49] Meanwhile, for its part, the colonial government also found it necessary to temper its simple faith in ownership rights as sufficient to encourage increases in cow ownership and investment in improved cattle breeds. Although cows were generally a popular investment among Korean farmers, they were also a flexible asset which farmers easily bought and sold when harvests and incomes rose and fell. Yet, despite such behavior aligning with the colonial government's professed concern for rational economic decision making, farmers' proclivities to freely buy and sell cows in fact contradicted the colonial government's wish to establish secure, long-run programs where improved cow breeds could be systematically cross-bred with native livestock in a controlled manner. Thus, from 1916, the colonial government introduced its own series of subsidies and regulations on cattle ownership in order to prevent farmers from treating cows as "solely a financial asset."[50]

The provision of agricultural credit also became an arena in which the Yongsu farming *kye*'s view of development differed from that of the colonial government. Credit was an essential element in colonial development plans. Almost every major agricultural policy—from upland cotton promotion to investments in irrigation and high-yielding seeds—received financial support in the form of loans offered through a combination of the financial associations, irrigation associations, and other government-backed financial institutions such as the ODC, AIB, and IBC. For colonial officials, however, the credit

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[49] An attempt to revive the program between 1916 and 1920 also fell apart. "Ryūsui nōkei ni tsuite," 38.
[50] Kobayakawa, *Chōsen nōgyō*, 397-401.

offered through such organizations was more than a practical necessity of ambitious agricultural policies. Colonial officials intended the financial associations, in practice the gateway to the wider financial system for many small and medium farmers, to be as educational as they were financial. Thus, the associations engaged in activities to support the broader project of agricultural development. Where associations offered credit for seeds and fertilizers, they also hosted lectures and promoted favored varieties aimed at increasing productivity.[51] Where associations acted to facilitate members' transactions, they did so as part of efforts to bypass merchants and boost members' appreciation for profits.[52] Despite frequent reference to the civilizing mission of the associations, however, they were not conceived of as charity. Rather, officials saw their benefit to farmers in the associations' status as a people's banks (Ja. *shomin ginkō*), operating on business principles and remedying a "broken" system of agricultural credit.[53]

Credit and finance also featured prominently in the activities of the Yongsu farming *kye*. To the *kye*'s early objective of "loaning grain to poor farmers," over the years the *kye* established dedicated savings programs (see Figure 5.1) and mechanisms for wealthier members to purchase shares in the *kye* in return for dividends, voting privileges, and other favorable treatment.[54] On the whole, colonial officials praised the Yongsu *kye*'s financial activities, in particular its commitment to low-interest lending and

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[51] Kagami Yasunosuke, "Nōmin no kyūhaku to kin'yū kikan no kaizen," *Chihō kin'yū kumiai*, January 1918. Reprinted in *Kin'yū kumiai ronsakushū*, 128.
[52] Kawasaki Isamu, "Chōsen no sangyō to kin'yū kumiai no shōrai," *Kin'yū to keizai*, October, 1921. Reprinted in *Kin'yū kumiai ronsakushū*, 172, 173.
[53] Hoshi Keizō, "Kumiai to sono undō," *Chihō kin'yū kumiai*, April/May/June 1917. Reprinted in *Kin'yū kumiai ronsakushū*, 27-69.
[54] 'Ryūsui nōkei kiyaku,' "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (1)," 33-35; "Ryūsui nōkei (ue)"; "Ryūsui nōkei (shita)"

Figure 5.1: A Yongsu farming *kye* savings certificate, 1924

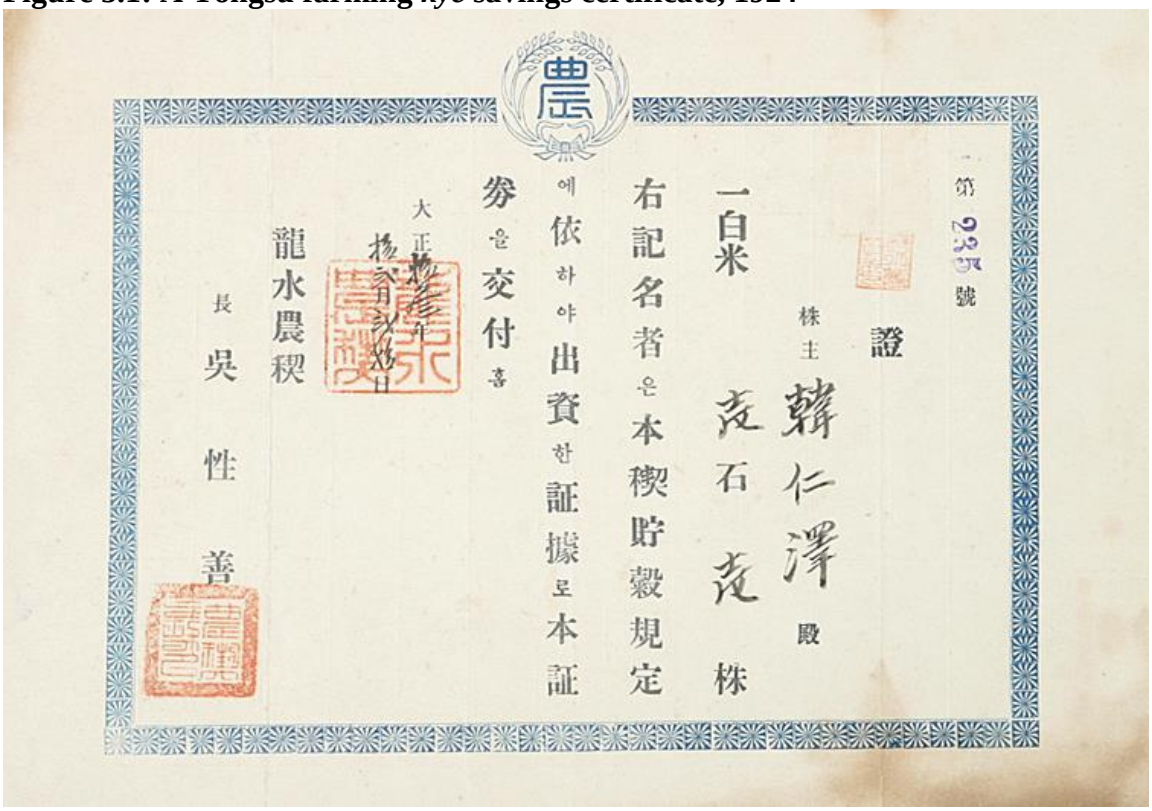

Image from: http://www.emuseum.go.kr/relic.do?action=view_d&mcwebmno=39605 (accessed April 22, 2016)

poverty relief.[55] The *kye*'s approach to agricultural credit, however, differed from that of the financial associations in several ways. Where the financial associations placed a heavy emphasis on loans for what it considered to be productive uses such land improvement or investment in a large purchase, such as a cow, the Yongsu farming *kye* held fewer ambitions for its loans. Intended as short-term loans, to be repaid within the year, the main regulations of the *kye* stipulated three types of loans, each related to the agricultural seasons: cutting grass and making fertilizer, planting, and ploughing.[56] Also, where the financial associations lent to individual members based on their personal

[55] "Ryūsui nōkei ni tsuite," 40.
[56] 'Ryūsui nōkei kiyaku,' "Ryūsui nōkei wo shōkaisu (1)," 35.

financial status, the Yongsu *kye* relied to a greater extent on villages to communally guarantee and decide the allocation of grain loans for poverty relief. In both of these ways, the Yongsu *kye*'s conception of debt differed from that of the financial associations. For the Yongsu *kye*, debt was not a tool to be used to progress toward wealth, but was simply a feature of everyday life to be mitigated. In this way, the Yongsu *kye*'s grain loans were not designed to provide a long-term solution for the recipients, as the loans for agriculture were a means of covering regular expenses rather than intended to boost farmers' incomes through dedicated investments.

The Yongsu *kye*'s approach to savings also differed from the financial associations. From the beginning, the financial associations were established with the goal to build capital within each association. Although the central bank granted each association an initial fund of 10,000 *yen*, this was considered a temporary measure. The financial associations therefore kept detailed records of the returns on their loans and the speed with which they were repaid, planning for the gradual increase in the associations' capital. Savings were therefore one more means for the associations to expand their operating capital, and the associations both promoted savings among their members and established mechanisms to transfer capital from one association to another to seek additional returns. In contrast, the Yongsu *kye* gained most of its capital from its wealthy members who bought into the *kye* in the form of shares and membership fees. Without the financial backing of the colonial government, which continued to support the financial associations by offering them additional funds for policy-related loans, such as with the PIRP, the Yongsu *kye* was almost always short of capital and any new venture required additional requests for investment from among the *kye* members. The Yongsu

kye first experimented with a savings program in order to alleviate some of these financial pressures, from 1912. While this worked to some extent, the *kye* also structured its savings program as a means for poorer members to gradually accumulate shares in the *kye* through gradual accumulation of assets (see Figure 5.2). Because the *kye* paid dividends to its shareholders, savings were therefore an unsustainable source of cash in the long run and did not help the *kye* to achieve financial stability in the way that the financial associations did.

Ultimately, both were actively engaged in the business of debt and savings, but with important differences. Where financial associations viewed debt as a means for their members to increase their wealth, the Yongsu *kye* followed a more conservative model in emphasizing savings and gradual (non-speculative) investment. Ironically, for all of the talk of avoiding a spirit of dependency, both the financial associations and Yongsu *kye* were committed to offering debt and loans to their members as an essential part of their business. Indeed, more than even the financial associations, the one with the greatest interest in avoiding debt seems to have been Chŏng Kwanhae, a member of both the financial association and the Yongsu farming *kye*. Chŏng repeatedly lamented his debts within his diary and expressed relief when he finally cleared his debts and a desire to avoid future financial stress.[57]

As explored above, agricultural "development" during the colonial period generated a range of interpretations. Even among those who had ostensibly similar purposes and goals—to increase the number of cows, for example, or to extend more credit to farming households—the choice of methods and institutions in pursuit of the

[57] *Kwallanjae ilgi*, 9.1.1934

Figure 5.2: A Yongsu farming *kye* savings certificate showing the accumulation of shares in the *kye*, 1929–1935

Image from: http://www.emuseum.go.kr/relic.do?action=view_d&mcwebmno=110775 (accessed April 22, 2016)

goal could lead to quite different outcomes. These differences were not coincidental but were the product of differing interpretations of development itself, of the underlying priorities of improving agricultural production, and the institutions which proponents prioritized within the rural economy. Different conceptions of development did not simply coexist, however, and nor did they remain in the intellectual realm. Different views of the market and development came up against not just one another but also against practical constraints and the limits of advocates to control the world around them.

IV. Conflict and Failure in Rural Development

Among the colonial government's development goals, making new markets for rice was one of its highest priorities. This was also one of its most ambitious tasks. To foster new markets between Japan and Korea involved many aspects, including encouraging commercial production—changing the type of rice grown, and its post-harvest processing—as well as building a transport and inspection infrastructure capable of supporting new sales. What is more, in line with the colonial government's view of development, it sought to use regulations to enhance producers' incentives to engage with the rice market, by ensuring higher prices for higher quality grain, raising the quality and uniformity of the crop to expand demand, and, at least in theory, attempting to secure rice as a source of profits for farmers.

All the same, many of the colonial government's assumptions about rice regulations and their expected impact within the rural economy rested upon a limited understanding of the rural economy. By assuming that Korean farmers simply lacked a proper appreciation for profits, colonial officials not only overlooked the potential source of problems in the rural economy but colonial policies that aimed to raise an awareness for profits were also more likely to produce different effects than anticipated. Thus, regulations that mandated rice inspections did not encourage widespread, small-scale rice processing, but instead fueled the emergence of a distinct rice cleaning industry.

In Kyŏnggi province, Chŏng Kwanhae and his family were keenly aware of the profitability and commercial potential of rice. Not only did Chŏng sell his rice in local markets, but his family would travel to seek out the best prices for their own crop and to take advantage of favorable trading possibilities. In 1912, Chŏng's elder brother went all the way to Chinch'ŏn county, in North Ch'ungch'ŏng province, some 40 miles away, to

buy rice after he heard that prices were significantly cheaper there.[58] When Terauchi introduced policies to promote the market in rice, the result was therefore not so much to introduce a new motivation to a blank slate of farmer opinion as to alter the options available to them.

For Chŏng Kwanhae, the new regulations were less than welcome as he saw them as undermining the existing market for rice. As he complained in 1918, "since the new law was issued, the grain price fell," noting a near 50 percent decline from what he considered to be the customary prices in the local Paekam market. This caused great consternation not just to Chŏng but to his sons and neighbors as well. Even though the crop was still too green to harvest prices were already falling, leaving farmers to anxiously decide whether to harvest their crop early or risk increasing the scale of their losses should prices fall even further. Chŏng did not describe the new law in full; he cared little whether or not it was working as intended by Terauchi. Rather, it was simply an unwelcome source of disruption in the local market, and one that came with stiff penalties at that.[59]

Despite the colonial government's faith in the potential for market incentives to inspire development throughout rural Korea, actually producing the desired effects was a harder task. Not only did the colonial government fail to understand the existing market awareness among Korean farmers, but it also struggled to bring its own plans into reality. The key foundation of many colonial development plans—achieving higher prices for higher quality rice—may have been possible in small, incremental measures, as in the

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[58] Ibid, 9.10.1912.
[59] Ibid. Chŏng notes the penalties for breaking the law as a fine of 500,000 *yen* and up to five years of labor service.

premiums found for export rice, or for processed rice. For many farmers, however, rising prices appeared as little but a temporary reprieve among dramatic periods of decline, during which time the threat of debt and famine loomed large. Most years, Chŏng Kwanhae complained of debts and falling rice prices. Even though in the years 1924 and 1925 prices rose to a sufficient degree that Chŏng was able to repay all of his outstanding debts, these years were the exception in a longer period of decline. From the mid-1920s, Chŏng's pessimism about rice prices only seemed justified as global prices fell over a sustained period. In this context, Chŏng, rather than spend additional energy seeking marginal increases in rice through processing his crop tended to look at alternative ventures instead, investing in non-agricultural businesses as well as taking an interest in sericulture. As Chŏng and his friends remarked, among those they knew who sought profit in rice, all were poor, whereas among others who sought money in its own right, some had become rich.[60]

The colonial government recognized the obstacles to its idealized model of development, and amended its plans over the years. Where officials perceived Korean farmers to be unresponsive to market incentives, it attempted to raise awareness in ever more direct measures, as through grain inspection regulations and the various initiatives to promote rice processing. At the same time, colonial officials also recognized flaws in the international rice market itself. Government representatives and traders studied the underlying causes of low Korean rice prices in Japan, only to find persistent and unexplainable discrepancies. The director of the Korean Rice Society (Ko. *Sŏnmi hyŏphoe*; Ja. *Senmai kyōkai*), for example, was dismayed to find that rice from North

[60] Ibid, 13.2.1931.

Chŏlla province traded at a discount compared to rice from South Chŏlla and North Kyŏngsang provinces, even in the absence of any discernable differences in quality.[61] Likewise, Okazaki Tetsurō, (1885–n.d., 岡崎哲郎), head of the Department of Commerce and Industry within the Government General of Korea, studied the price of Korean rice in Ōsaka, which consumed 80 percent of Korean exports, only to find that Korean rice was persistently underpriced, and sold for substantially higher margins when mixed with Japanese rice or repackaged in department stores.[62]

Faced with the limitations of its prior assumptions, the colonial government responded with an even greater vision for itself and its role in supporting agricultural development. In addition to changing agricultural production and behavior among Koreans, it began to target the functioning of the market itself. In 1926, when the colonial government reorganized and expanded the agricultural association, it also altered the emphasis of their activities. The initial agricultural association had claimed a role in (1) surveying agricultural conditions as a basis for future policy; (2) educating and guiding farmers on agriculture, forestry, and livestock; and (3) promoting the interests of individual farmers, whether Japanese settlers or local Koreans.[63] In contrast, the 1926 amendment to the agricultural association regulations altered its functions to include a greater role for the government in its new priorities of: (1) working in tandem with the authorities to encourage and guide agriculture; (2) to supply the facilities to increase the welfare of those engaged in agriculture; (3) to conduct surveys and research into

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[61] "Tonggyŏng migok ch'wiinso ŭi Chŏnbuk-mi kyŏkha e tae haya," *CNH* 2, no. 3 (1928): 19-25.
[62] Okazaki Tetsurō, "Ōsaka ni okeru Chōsen kome no atarashii hanbai hōhō ni tsuite," *CNH* 1, no. 3 (1927): 10-15.
[63] Mun Chŏngch'ang, *Chōsen nōson dantaishi*, 11-13.

agriculture; (4) to mediate dissent relating to agriculture; and (5) to make proposals to government administration and the answer questions from the administration related to agriculture.[64]

Although the stronger governmental role applied mostly to farmers, as problems emerged in the international rice market, colonial officials increasingly saw a role for the government to promote development by improving the market itself. Thus, in 1928, Tomita Gisaku (1858–1930, 富田儀作), a consultant with experience across a range of colonial agricultural projects, argued that the agricultural association should play a central role in the rural economy. As he saw it, despite some progress, Korea still lacked sufficient commercial and financial institutions to efficiently match Korean farmers with the profits to be found in Japanese markets. Thus, for the future development of Korean agriculture and industry, the agricultural association should play a central role in mediating commercial transactions.[65] The colonial government had initially hoped to use the agricultural associations to bring market incentives to farmers to spur development. However, when this policy failed to produce the desired effects, the colonial government maintained its rhetoric of commerce and development and merely shifted its focus to apply government programs toward the market itself.

Tomita's vision for the agricultural associations was not an idle thought experiment. Just one year earlier, a delegation from the South Ch'ungch'ŏng provincial agricultural association travelled to Fukuoka, Japan, to participate in the East Asia Industrial Exposition (Ja. *Tōa kangyō hakurankai*). While at the expo, the delegation

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[64] "Chōsen nōkairei to ha donna mono ka," *CNH* 21, no. 2, appendix (1926): 12-13.
[65] Tomita Gisaku, "Nongsanmul ŭi p'anmae wa nonghoe," *CNH* 2, no. 1 (1928): 5-7.

hosted a "Ch'ungnam rice day" event, which introduced information about the rice grown in the province in conjunction with special rice tastings offered through the Korea Hall's canteen. Throughout the trip, representatives of the agricultural association promoted their local rice to Fukuoka reporters, consumers, traders, and manufacturers, with the goal of earning favorable sales contracts.[66] Here, the agricultural association directly marketed its rice in Japan in an effort to improve perceptions of the quality of the crop and establish a new sales route. South Ch'ungch'ŏng agricultural association was not alone in these endeavors. In a similar manner, in 1928 the governor of South Hamgyŏng province travelled to Tokyo to publicize South Hamgyŏng rice. In particular, the trip aimed to overcome negative impressions of South Hamgyŏng rice that saw it trading at a discount to similar rice from North P'yŏngan province by announcing South Hamgyŏng's new grading standards to some two hundred local government officials and notable industrial leaders.[67]

As the rural crisis unfolded and rice prices remained low in the 1930s, colonial officials' goal of improving the market was quickly replaced with the intent to control it. Abandoning their theories, economists and agricultural technicians studied the rural economy to find a solution to the seemingly intractable problem of falling prices. Deeming August as the most profitable time to sell rice, one study duly planned a series of financial measures that might make it possible to support a model of August sales. Whereas previous development strategies had simply used regulations to try and create the right incentives, colonial officials increasingly began to imagine a more active role

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[66] "Tōa hakurankai ni okeru hon-dō sanmai no senden," *Chūsei nandō* [Ch'ungch'ŏng namdo] *nōkaihō* 2, no. 3 (1927): 6, 7.
[67] "Hamnam 'Kumi [Kameo]'mi ŭi taesŏnjŏn," *CNH* 2, no. 2 (1928): 85.

for the state in the rural economy to supplement economic institutions. As the author summarized the problem, "in the current situation where village finance is inadequate, and where there is no development of financial institutions to match the agricultural warehouses that securitize rice, it is absolutely impossible for ordinary farmers to [sell rice profitably in August]." Faced with this situation, the study recommended introducing more organizations to facilitate the storage of rice, joint sales, and financial mechanisms that could manage both farmers' behavior and market prices.[68] With the advent of laws restricting rice imports to Japan and the colonial government's grain warehousing program, the list of items to be controlled only increased, from the timing of transactions, to sales routes and brokers.[69]

For farmers such as Chŏng Kwanhae, the new model of colonial agricultural was almost unrecognizable from a mere decade previously. Where Chŏng complained in 1918 of the new laws which enforced free transactions, by 1930 he was hearing rumors of the government buying grain, salt, and alcohol in mass quantities and rice storage programs at Inch'ŏn and even within Chŏng's local township:

> The grain sellers within the township, gathered at a warehouse, and using first their money, and for one *sŏm* of rice 10 *yen*, stopping there, a discount of 2 *yen*, and in later days if the price rises then sell the grain and return the advance payment, then add 7 *ri* of interest." This is the [noble plan] of the ever-normal granary from China, and especially clever.[70]

As in the above passage, Chŏng compared the government's grain storage schemes to the traditional price stabilization granaries that operated in China and in Chosŏn Korea.

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[68] "Kome no uri toki: ika naru toki wo erabuka," *CNH* 5, no. 3 (1931): 31-40.
[69] "Chōsen kome no hanbai kaitaku," *CNH* 5, no. 7 (1931): 16-19; "Shukka kumiai de kome hanbai tōsei," 123; "Keishō hoku-dō ni okeru nōson keiei no jōkyō narabi nōson ni taisuru shōrai no shisetsu hōshin," *CNH* 6, no. 2 (1932): 11-16; "Hachi nendo san kome ha itsu uruka," *CNH* 7, no. 3 (1934): 2-10; "Beikoku no jichiteki kanrian ni tsuite," *CNH* 8, no. 2 (1935): 40-42.
[70] *Kwallanjae ilgi*, 10.9.1930.

Based on Chŏng's reaction to the rumors of government storage programs, he did not consider additional involvement in the rice market a bad thing. After suffering debts and losses for years Chŏng was not automatically opposed to a scheme that might raise prices, especially as Chŏng was already finding it impossible to sell his rice in local markets due to its extreme low price.[71] As well as the warehouses, the township office also ordered the creation of a rice stockpile (Ko. *yajŏk*; Ja. *nodumi*), which would gather 150 *kŭn* of rice to be sold at the county magistrate's command.[72]

Despite Chŏng's assessment, however, the warehouse and rice stockpile programs were not identical to the typical ever-normal granary. Established as part of an effort to control the rice market, rather than as a supplement to stabilize market prices, the colonial government's rice storage programs came with greater restrictions over farmers' rice trading activities. Once farmers entered into the scheme, they were prevented from accessing their rice freely, as Chŏng found in 1934 when he tried to sell some of his rice that was being held in a local stockpile. Although by that time the rice had been stored for the agreed amount of time, when Chŏng approached the local agricultural association to request the release of his crop, the association representative reported that he would not be allowed his rice for the purpose of a private sale.[73]

By 1935, the colonial government's initial theory of market-centered development was almost completely eclipsed. Instead of the market, discussions of development centered almost entirely on the performance of the semi-governmental organizations and their capacity to control trends within the rural economy. Epitomizing this trend, Yamane

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[71] Ibid, 24.12.1930.
[72] Ibid, 6.10.1933.
[73] Ibid, 2.6.1934; 3.6.1934.

Kei (1885–n.d., 山根諶), a long-time financial association employee, published an article linking the fate of Korean villages with the fate of the financial associations. As he summarized, "the rehabilitation of rural villages lies in the elevation of the work of the financial associations, and the development of the financial associations' work will be the thing that speaks of the promotion of the rural economy."[74] Others expressed similar sentiments about the agricultural associations, equating them ever-closer to the project of development itself—in contrast to their previous imagined role as enhancing market incentives.[75]

V. Conclusion

The notion of development, especially when taken in the context of an economic plan, resists easy classification. In any context, questions may be raised about the subjective definition of development, as well as different criteria against which the achievement of development may be judged. Assessing development becomes even more complicated in the context of colonial Korea, where numerical increases in output stand in stark contrast to accounts of rural poverty.

The difficulty in defining development provides an entry to examine a more nuanced picture of colonial agricultural policy, based on the realization that the colonial government never held a single view of development. From the beginning of colonial rule, officials within the government tied their desired numerical increases in output to the promotion of what were considered to be desirable institutional and cultural factors, such as a particular scheme of property rights, for example, or an appreciation of

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[74] "Nōson to kin'yū kumiai," *CNH* 9, no. 8 (1935): 28-32.
[75] "Chōsen ni okeru keitō nōai no genjō to sono shimei," *CNH* 11, no. 7 (1937): 18-21.

profitability and market values. Understanding this, it becomes possible to trace the colonial government's wider developmental project within Korea, its efforts to alter the mundane institutions that underpinned the rural economy, and the ways in which these efforts conflicted with existing practices and values. To the colonial government, development was not just about increasing output, nor was it even a matter of increasing standards of living, but it was equally a question of institutional and behavioral change.

Acknowledging the colonial government's own view of development provides a new perspective onto colonial policy and the changes in the rural economy. Where colonial officials attached significance to property rights and the profitability of crops as an incentive for their increased cultivation, this fed through into the design of colonial policies and, eventually, the ways in which the population might receive such policies. Where Korean ideas of development overlapped with those of colonial officials, farmers could find space to pursue their own interests within the colonial agenda. However, even with broad goals in common, a different appreciation for, for example, the application of property rights to cow ownership, could prompt quite different interpretations of a desirable livestock promotion program. For farmers such as Chŏng Kwanhae, the limits of colonial agricultural policy were most apparent where policies conflicted with his own views of the rural economy. For this reason, understanding the different perspectives held by both the colonial government and individual farmers, like Chŏng, can further understandings of when and why conflict arose in the rural economy. At the same time, by analyzing colonial officials' own underlying biases and assumptions in planning for agricultural "development," it also becomes possible to build a clearer picture of where, the agenda of the colonial state and actual economic practice diverged.

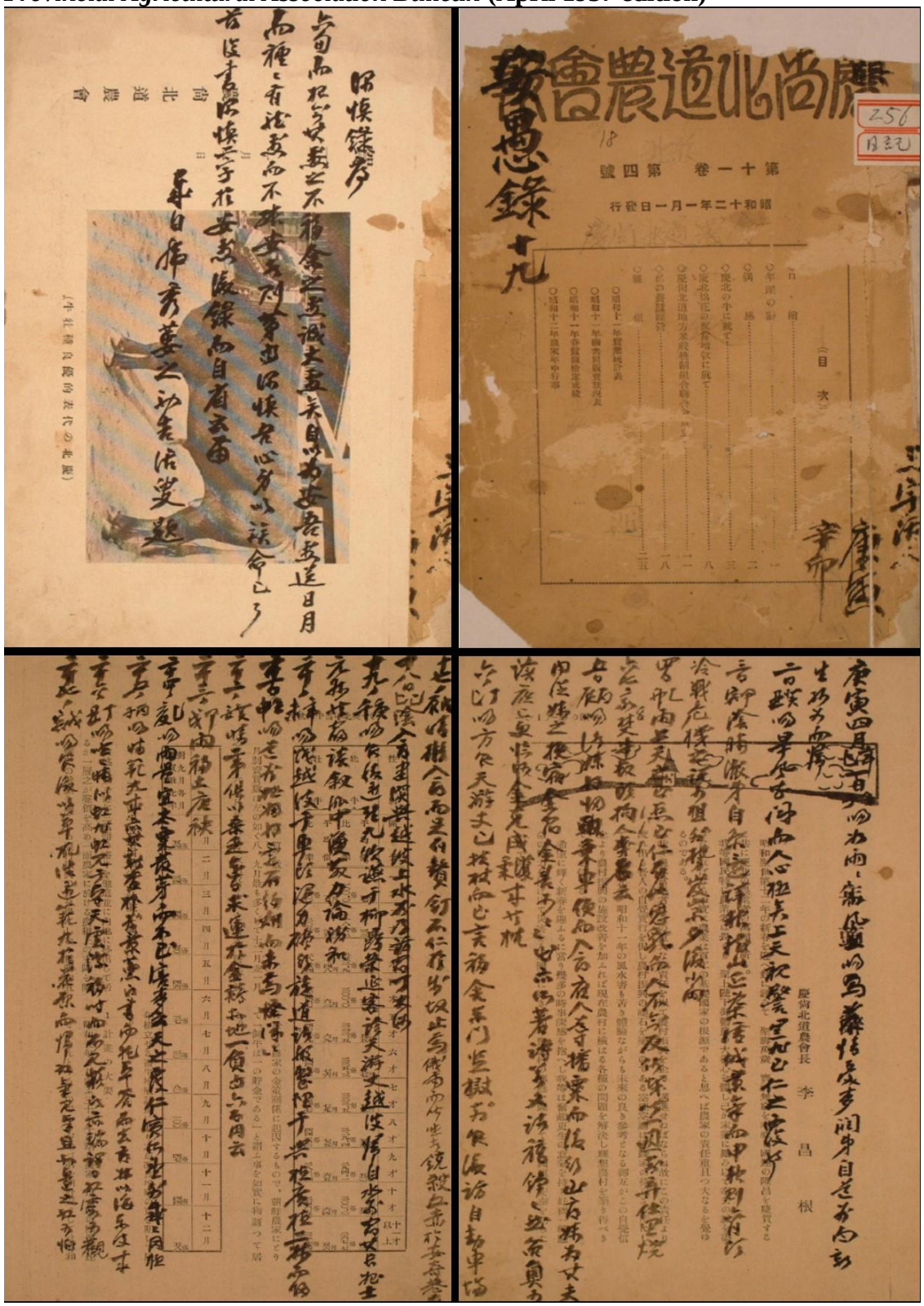
CONCLUSION

After a break from 1936, Yu Yŏnghŭi resumed his diary in 1949. Presumably suffering from a shortage of materials in the aftermath of liberation, Yu turned to whatever paper he had to hand to continue his diary, writing over both a 1936 guide to the laws and regulations concerning the Autonomous Rice Control Law (Ja. *Beikoku jichi kanrihō*) and the 1937 April edition of the *North Kyŏngsang Provincial Agricultural Association Bulletin* (see Figure 6.1).

Yu's 1949 diary serves as an apt metaphor for the complex legacies of colonial agricultural policy. After thirty-five years of rule, the colonial government could not help but to leave a footprint in Korea—in the materials and physical infrastructure left behind, but also in the knowledge, practices, norms, and organizations that farmers had learned to structure their agriculture around. Those who maintained an improved cow, or a guide to fertilizer, did not abandon entirely the innovations to agricultural production that accompanied colonial rule.

Yet, at the same time, any legacies needed to be maintained actively. Without the ongoing support of the central government, there was no guarantee that the agricultural associations would continue their former role in printing journals, offering subsidies for favored crops, and employing agricultural technicians to inspect fields and hold lectures. Without the conscious decision to maintain aspects of the colonial agricultural system, its legacy would be little more than a memory. Above all, Yu's makeshift diary reminds us that, as the principal agents involved in agriculture, whether or not the new government would maintain the state infrastructure surrounding the rural economy, farmers would

Figure 6.1: Pages from Yu Yŏnghŭi's 1949 diary, written over the *North Kyŏngsang Provincial Agricultural Association Bulletin* (April 1937 edition)



Source: www.ugyo.net (Accessed May 25, 2017)

continue to form their own opinions on the state of Korean agriculture. Although Yu was not able to shape the system within which he lived and worked, he nonetheless evaluated the world around him through his diary.

One of the greatest shifts in history of the modern Korean economy has been the expansion of the state into the economy. Beginning under the rule of King Kojong, the Korean government adopted many new roles and responsibilities, not least among them the assumption that the state should intervene in the economy to promote national wealth. To this end, the government undertook a series of drastic reforms to both the administrative organization of government and the financial system. The reforms may not have secured political independence for Korea, nor did they necessarily improve the financial standing of the Korean government, but they did change the basis on which the state interacted with the population, and within the government itself.

The transformation of the state continued apace under colonial rule, as the Government-General established a range of new semi-governmental organizations in support of its ambitious agricultural policies. These organizations represented an expedient growth in the role of the state in response to increasing the complexity of both agricultural technologies and economic planning. Korea was not the only country to experiment with semi-governmental organizations at this time, but similar iterations emerged around the world as governments and ordinary citizens alike searched for ways to manage their livelihoods within an increasingly complex global economy. In Korea, the colonial government dominated agricultural policy and restricted many avenues for the semi-governmental organizations. But, their functions were still intimately connected

to questions of production and exchange within the rural economy, factors which were not lost on the farmers who used the associations.

Indeed, as this dissertation has demonstrated throughout, one cannot judge the colonial economy by the superficial claims of the colonial government alone. Even apparently straightforward colonial goals, such as increasing the number of livestock or the export of rice, rested upon a set of values and assumptions that inflected the shape of colonial policy. For farmers engaged in the day to day work of agricultural production, colonial policies and the work of the semi-governmental organizations were not just questions of national allegiance, nor of class sympathies, but raised a host of tangential concerns, be it preexisting attitudes toward debt or a desire for security, whether found through new insurance products or in the tried and tested cultivation of a diverse range of crops. Where the semi-governmental organizations performed important functions within the rural economy, farmers judged them by their ability to perform such tasks relative to the available alternatives, as much as they did by any overarching sense of colonial politics. This is not to say that the associations found wide-ranging and enthusiastic support throughout the countryside. The short-sightedness of officials within the colonial government could often hamper a potentially useful organization with unrealistic expectations, while a bias toward wealthier farmers kept many of the functions of the associations out of the practical reach of most farmers. Yet, the overlap between the productive work of the associations and their governmental role meant that the significance of the new state infrastructure would be felt long beyond the limits of colonial rule.

Indeed, one of the defining features of the (South) Korean economy throughout the twentieth century has been the active role of the state, fueled in the postwar period by the politics of national division and the Cold War. Many studies of the 1950s and 1960s have argued against the view that would see a strong postwar state as an unthinking replication of colonial-era patterns. If only indirectly, this dissertation would add to such studies, through its assertion that the organizations that epitomized state intervention in the colonial economy—the associations—were bound to international trends in agricultural technology and the global trade in agricultural products as much as they were characteristic of colonial politics (although with the potential to have their outcomes influenced by colonial politics). Any replication of the state's role in the rural economy following liberation must therefore be equally judged according to the productive function that the semi-governmental organizations would fulfill—just as Sim Wŏn'gwŏn, Yu Yŏnghŭi, and Chŏng Kwanhae did in their diaries.

Although agriculture's contribution to the overall economy decreased following South Korea's rapid industrialization and urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s, its significance remains as the major industry in which the central government first attempted widespread intervention into the economy. Even in the 1970s, as heavy industries and factory production became more widespread, it is notable that one of Park Chung Hee's most iconic economic and social campaigns, the Saemaeul (New Village) Movement, began in rural areas before extending to factories and cities. Understanding the earliest expansion of the state into the rural economy thus takes on additional significance, particularly as campaigns in the postwar period borrowed the symbols and tactics from colonial-era rural programs—in the nomination of model villages, the

awarding of prizes, and even the encouragement of womens' groups to carry out small-scale savings one handful of rice at a time. Where such similarities do arise, credit cannot be assumed to belong to the long-gone colonial government; rather connections must be examined and questioned. If Park Chung Hee and others sought to maintain a role for the state within the economy, then such ideas might fruitfully be examined against the similar set of negotiations and considerations that characterized earlier farmers' thoughts about the same.

APPENDIX

Kye referenced in *Sim Wŏn'gwŏn ilgi*

Type of *kye*	Date mentioned
Village *kye* (*tonggye*)	Tonggye (1881.3) (1909.11)
Kye named by location	Sŏnam kye (1870.7) (1871.10) (1871.12) (1891.1) (1891.4) (1893.7) [Sŏnam kye (1872.2)] Songho kye (1871.11) (1902.9) (1903.3) Myŏngdong kye (1872.5) (1874.1) (1874.3) (1874.5) (1874.10) (1877.4) (1893.2) [Myŏngdong kye (1873.10)] Myŏngdong ch'o kye (1874.5) Songgok kye (1873.12) [Songgok kye (1873.11)] Hwajang kye (1873.10) Yŏch'ŏn kye (1875.3) Hajŏng kye (1875.7) Sangjŏng kye (1876.1) (1876.3) (1876.6) Yŏmbup'o kye (1877.5) Tŏksan kye (1878.2) Mansu kye (1878.12) Taeil kye (1882.3) Ya'am kye (1883.8) (1886.9) (1897.10) (1917.1) (1921.3) (1930.3) Ya'am Usan t'aek kye (1925.3) Ya'am chungni t'aek kye (1925.3) Yongyŏn kye (1891.11) Kosa kye (1892.3) (1893.3) Taera kye (1897.3) (1917.5) Tamil kye (1912.8) (1922.6)
Educational *kye* (*hakkye*)	Myŏngdong hakkye (1870.6) (1872.6) [Myŏngdong hakkye (1873.3)] Sŏdang kye (1870.8), (1870.9) Ŏnyang sŏdang kye (1870.11) Songho hakkye (1871.8) (1874.3) (1875.6) (1876.1) (1876.2) (1887.11) Ya'am hakkye (1874.1) Mansu hakkye (1877.11) (1877.12) Hakkye (unnamed): (1870.2) (1870.12) (1872.3) (1872.7) (1875.2) (1875.4) (1887.12)

Lineage *kye* (*mun'gye*)	Sŏdang mun'gye (1872.4) Sŏnam mun'gye (1891.5) (1892.7) (1917.7) (1927.9) (1929.3) (1930.9) Sŏnam pomunt'aek mun'gye (1930.3) Songho mun'gye (1891.9) Taera mun'gye (1897.8) (1916.10) Myŏngdong mun'gye (1917.6) (1926.9) Ya'am mun'gye (1926.3) (1926.9) (1928.9) (1931.9) Ya'am Tŏksant'aek mun'gye (1922.3) Usan mun'gye (1931.3) Kokyŏnt'aek mun'gye (1931.3) Mun'gye (unnamed): (1891.7) (1892.4) (1897.9) (1929.9)
Other	P'agye (1870.3) (1873.6*) (1926.9) (1927.9) Sa'andang kye (1873.4) Hyogye (1881.4) Sam'in'gye (1888.11) Yangch'on t'aek kye (1888.5) (1902.4) Mukchŏng Hong saengwŏn t'aek kye (1894.2) Naegae kyoja kye (1891.10) Manin'gye (1900.2) Kama kye (1902.2) Hyomunsa kye (1907.1) Min'gye (1911.9) Samch'ŏn kye (1915.7) Kŭmran'gye (1921.10) Ya'am chungni t'aek p'agye (1928.10) Sŏnam dong t'aek p'agye (1930.3) Yangŏ samin'gye (1930.11) Kye (unnamed): (1870.5) (1870.10) (1875.5) (1876.5) (1879.5) (1881.2) (1883.11) (1892.2) (1919.3) (1931.2)

Note: 1) Entries in parentheses () indicate the year and (lunar) month that Sim attended a *kye* meeting or participated in other *kye* activities. * denotes an intercalary month within the lunar calendar.
2) Entries in brackets [] indicate that the location of the *kye* has been inferred from the context of the diary and was not explicitly mentioned by Sim Wŏn'gwŏn himself, as in the following example of a Myŏngdong *kye*: 食後往于鳴洞, 契會後, 往于孝洞李生員家, 留宿矣. (1873.10.10)
3) Not included here are: (a) passing references to *kye* in which it is clear that Sim was not a member (such as Sim's first description of a ten-thousand member gambling *kye* (*manin'gye*)) (1900.1); or (b) incidental references to *kye* when meeting fellow *kye* members at non-*kye* occasions or visiting *kye* fields for reasons not related to the work of the *kye*.

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