

Preface

This book is the third volume in a monograph series published by the Socio-Economic History Society, Japan, and Springer. It contains an introduction, four recent articles on topics related to the history of economic activities under the Japanese colonial empire, and three short book reviews of recent academic works published in Japanese. Because they are English-language versions of material originally published in Japanese, some revisions have been made to render them more accessible to a new readership.

Japan obtained Taiwan as its colony after the war with China in 1894–1895. The conclusion of the war with Russia in 1904–1905 gave Japan control of the Kwantung Leased Territory and administrative rights over the South Manchurian Railway Zone, as well as territorial rights to South Sakhalin. In 1910, Japan annexed Korea as its colony. After World War I, the League of Nations assigned the South Sea Islands to Japan as mandates. In 1932, Japan created “Manchukuo,” establishing effective control over the northeastern part of China.

Since the end of World War II, and even earlier, the historical significance of Japanese colonial activities in East Asia has been a controversial and sometimes contentious issue, not only in Japan but also in East Asian countries and other nations of the world. Attempting to resolve that issue is beyond the scope of this book. One of our purposes here, however, is to share historical facts in the hope of achieving a better understanding of economic circumstances among Japan and other countries of the world, especially in East Asia.

The economic relationships between the Japanese mainland and its colonies became closer during the interwar period with the increase of economic integration within the empire. Chapter 2, by Hori, insists that Japanese capitalism transformed itself into East Asian capitalism during the 1930s, while the colonies became increasingly more integrated into the imperial economic system. Chapter 3, by Takeuchi, investigates in detail the changes of the division of labor for rice and millet production within the empire. Chapter 4, by Horiuchi, examines the historical significance of “small enterprise-style industrialization” in Taiwan, while

Chap. 5, by Hirai, looks into Taiwan's fertilizer market and its transactional realities.

In Japan, high-quality research monographs and articles on the history of economic activities under the Japanese colonial empire are published every year. However, scholarly works originally published in Japanese then translated into English are rare cases. This volume introduces not only some of those but also reviews of recent academic works published in Japanese.

The three reviews are all evaluations of books on the history of economic activities under the Japanese colonial empire. They are a history of the Korean economy under Japanese colonial rule, by Kim Nak Nyeon (Chap. 6); a study of the wartime economy and railroad management in Korea, by Lim Chaisung (Chap. 7); and a research work on the history of finance in Japanese colonial governments, by Hirai Hirokazu (Chap. 8).

Finally, I must thank Dr. Koichi Inaba, who translated Chaps. 1, 2, and 6; Ms. Louisa Rubinfien, who translated Chaps. 3, 4, 7, and 8; and Mr. William Chou and Ms. Ruth Fallon for checking and improving the drafts.

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