

Modern Forestry, Capitalism and the Governance of Frontier: Some Reconsideration of the Investigation and Arrangement of *Rinya* in Taiwan during the Japanese Colonial Period

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ABSTRACT

This paper takes the investigation and arrangement of *rinya* (forests and wild land) as its focus, accompanied with the triangulation of historical materials to discuss if the interpretations of such investigation and arrangement of *rinya* in Taiwan's *shihonshugika* (the transition to capitalism) by researchers from *Tadao Yanaihara* downward are appropriate. In addition, this paper also introduces the colonial administration's view toward forests, the unintended consequences generated after the connection of different institutions, and the heterogeneities of forest resources to explain in a holistic scale how the *rinya* was incorporated into colonial control, allocated to different stakeholders, and then reached "*shihonshugika*".

At the beginning of Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan, the colonial administration divided the *rinya* into forest lands and forest products through institutions so as to identify the contents of stakeholders' rights. While confronting the existing customary practices of forestry in Taiwan's society, there were problems of articulating the customary practices and new regulations that frequently occurred. The primary resolution did not come out until the establishment of *engokanke-rinya* (occupation relationships) after the investigation of *rinya*. As a comparison, although the capitalists that resided in the government-owned *rinya* under the consideration of the domestication of the indigenous people and wastelands development deployed *takushokukeiei* (management by colonizing and reclaiming) mainly to the forest lands, the revenue that emanated from the forest products was the important incentive of accelerating the alliance of capitalists and government.

After undertaking the arrangement of government-owned *rinya* in the 1920s, the colonial administration divided the government-owned *rinya* into preserved and non-preserved areas, while at the same time sorting out the forest people and their *engokanke-rinya*. Through property devolving, knowledge inculcation and law en-

forcement, the colonial administration tried to convert these people who resided around the government-owned *rinya* into forest managers who could live on their own and be no harm to forest protection. Benefits to forest products and lumber industries came about due to World War I. However, those capitalists located in the non-preserved *rinya* and who were unable to arrange in time took liberty of the war and the convenience of colonizing and reclaiming the forest lands to undertake operations that resulted in serious deforestation, which did not comply with the conservation ideas prescribed in forest law. Thus, the colonial administration not only concentrated on the authority of the national forests, but also integrated the strengths of capitalists to manage the national forests efficiently.

This government-led model was unexpectedly squeezed between Japan and an international situation turned the profits of *rinya* into a concern over waste. Consequently, a knowledge system package originating from the European continent's scientific forestry was appropriated. The colonial administration tried to reform the existing systems of forest management and solve the practical problems in the 1930s. As to the research history of *rinya* which has focused on the primary and mid-term of Japanese colonial rule, this paper adjusts the errors implicated in evolutionist explanations and the unsuitability of the application of theory into history on some level, while at the same time providing possible spaces for dialogue between the research traditions of Taiwan's *shihonshugika* and the environmental history of South Asia.

Keywords: *rinya*, arrangement of forest and wild land, modern forestry, *shihonshugika*, environmental history