

A Study of the Engokanke Land Ownership of Cheng-tang Lin in Wufeng during the Japanese Colonial Period

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ABSTRACT

Based on official documents of the Taiwan Government-general and private bookkeeping data of Cheng-tang Lin—one of the largest landlords during Japanese colonial period in Taiwan—this paper studies the composition of Cheng-tang Lin's land holdings. Initial research has found: 1), Lin's land holdings should include the 224.4245 jia (甲) shown on the copy of land ledger published by the government after the survey during the period of 1896-1903, plus the 68.4327 jia (甲) of the engokanke (connection ground), which was released by the government in the mid-1920s; 2), based upon the land cultivation expenditures that Cheng-tang Lin submitted to the Taiwan Government-general, the rate of the return from such investment appeared to be seriously underestimated; and 3), the degree of flexibility with which the Taiwan Government-general executed its release policy regarding the connection ground clearly depended upon: 1), whether or not Lin was making continued progress in land cultivation; 2), the time required to develop and cultivate raw lands; and 3), the price of released lands.

Keywords: Engokanke (connection), Land Composition, Cheng-tang Lin, The Lin family of Wufeng, the release policy