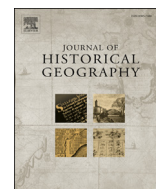




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## Fragmented geographies: Tada Fumio and the Japanese empire in Manchuria, Mengjiang and Korea

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the placement and function of the discipline of geography in the expansion of the Japanese empire, doing so through the prism of the work and field research of Tada Fumio, a leading geographer in Japan both before and after 1945. This examination of this aspect of Tada Fumio's career and its interweaving with the construction and consolidation of Japan's empire will broaden recent studies of imperial Japan's simultaneous encounter with geopolitics and fascism while engaging with Japan's developing ideas about geography as a political and cultural discipline. This paper demonstrates the importance of the entwined histories of Japanese and German geographers in the Japanese empire, as well as documenting Tada Fumio's activities in Manchuria (northeast China) and on the Korean peninsula. Finally, the paper reveals fissures in the historical record of Japanese geographers in continental Asia and, until such time as more subaltern voices can be found, seeks to lay down the foundation for further research on the study of geography in the Japanese empire.

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As the Second World War concluded, the documents of Japan's continental empire largely went up in flames, and the archives of Japanese university departments were dispersed to avoid Allied bombing.<sup>1</sup> In 1945, Tada Fumio (多田文男, 1900–1978), a geographer,

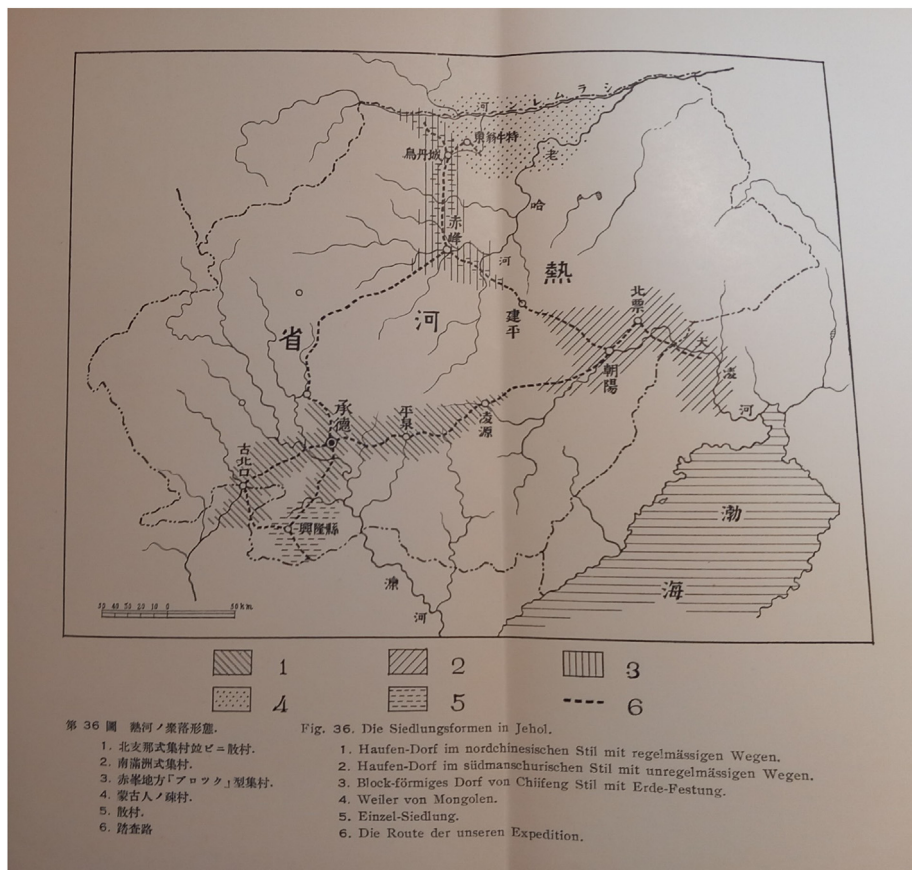
spirited away a large map collection detailing Japan's once-massive empire.<sup>2</sup> Tada Fumio was one of Japan's most successful academic geographers and his work prior to 1945 had engaged in a sustained way with continental Asia, particularly Manchuria (northeast China),

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<sup>1</sup> Kazufumi Hamai and Peter Mauch, 'The Wartime Destruction of the Japanese Diplomatic Record in Historical Perspective', in *Defamiliarizing Japan's Asia-Pacific War*, ed. by William Puck Brecher and Michael Meyers, eds., (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019), pp. 17–33; see also Yunhu Zang [臧运祜], 'A permanent flaw in the study of the history of modern Sino-Japanese relations—On the burning of documents before and after Japan's surrender and others (现代中日关系史研究上永远的缺憾——关于日本投降前后烧毁文书的情况及其他/Xiandai Zhongri guanxi yanjiushang yongyuan de quehan — guanyu Riben touxiang xianhou shaohui wenshu de qingkuang ji qita)', *Contemporary History Research (Jindaishi yanjiu)*, 5 (2005) 149–168.

<sup>2</sup> Shigeru Kobayashi [小林茂], 'The role of Prof. Tada Fumio in the Group for the Study of Geographical Intelligence at the closing period of World War II in reference to collections of Gaihozu of major universities in Japan (終戦直前期の多田文男と兵要地理調査研究会大学所蔵外邦図の来歴に關連して/Shusen chokuzen-ki no Tada Fumio to heiyo chiri chōsa kenkyūkai daigaku shōzō gaihōzu no raireki ni kanren shite)', Presented at 'Annual Meeting of the Association of Japanese Geographers', (Tokyo Metropolitan University, Tokyo, March 27, 2020–March 29, 2020), [https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/ajg/2020s/0/2020s\\_88/\\_article/-char/en](https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/ajg/2020s/0/2020s_88/_article/-char/en), last accessed 13 October, 2023; Shigeru Kobayashi, 'Japanese Mapping of Asia-Pacific Areas, 1873–1945: An Overview', *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, 2 (2012) 1–31, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9rw4h2xt> last accessed 13 October 2023; Tamura Toshikazu, 'Gaihozu in the possession of the Museum of Natural History, the Faculty of Science, the Tohoku University', *Chizu Jyoho*, 20 (2000) 7–10, translated and extracted in <https://web.archive.org/web/20211129235247/http://chiri.es.tohoku.ac.jp/&#x223C;gaihozu/ghz-introduction.php?lang=en-US>, last accessed 13 October, 2023.



**Fig. 1.** Map of Tada Fumio's travel in Jehol, 1933. From Tada Fumio, *Geography of Jehol, Section III of Report of the First Scientific Expedition to Manchoukuo Under the Leadership of Shigeyasu Tokunaga, June-October 1933* (Tokyo: Man'Mō Gakujutsu Chōsa Kenkyūdan, 1934), p. 106. Source: used with permission from the University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Owen Lattimore collections.

inner Mongolia and Korea. In 1945, Tada Fumio managed to preserve not only maps, but to retain the fruits of more than a decade's worth of fieldwork via annotations captured in his research notebooks from the interior of China, as well as his Korean field research.<sup>3</sup> The areas in which he had built his career as a field researcher – Inner Mongolia, northeast China, and Korea – would quickly become zones of partition and contestation in an emerging Cold War. American intelligence agencies would absorb, co-opt, and eagerly exploit much of the geographical research that emerged out of the bonfire of Japan's empire and its peripheries.<sup>4</sup> Tada Fumio would escape postwar purges and investigation, and both his documents and the maps which he gathered would escape the gaze of the US occupation forces. At a time when Japan's colonial research products were

absorbed haphazardly, or simply destroyed, Tada Fumio's materials would await more than fifty years for their rediscovery.<sup>5</sup>

Tada Fumio was able to emerge out of World War II without massive disruption to his academic position. Perhaps this was because, in comparison to other geographers of the era employed in colonial or 'puppet' institutions, Tada Fumio was less visibly tainted by overtly political wartime research.<sup>6</sup> Tada Fumio escaped the postwar purges and was able to continue his influential role through the development of postwar geography at the renamed University of Tokyo. Tada Fumio also continued teaching at the smaller but accomplished geography department at Komazawa University, a relationship which had begun in the 1940s and lasted

<sup>3</sup> Tada Fumio, Notebooks no. 2, 3, 21–24, 26, 28–31, 40–46, in Tada Fumio Papers, in Museum of Zen Culture and History, Komazawa University (駒澤大学禅文化歴史博物館), Tokyo. For an overview, see Komazawa University.

<sup>4</sup> 'It is felt that Central Intelligence Group should exploit [Dr. Walter] Heissig's knowledge of Inner and Outer Mongolia in the same manner as German technical experts are currently being exploited'. OSS, Documents Branch, Office of Operations, 'Report of screening activities at the Hoover Library, Stanford University', 8 June 1947, US Central Intelligence Agency, CREST document no. CIA-RDP81000706R000100190033-5, 29.

<sup>5</sup> Hiromu Sakai, 'Tada Fumio's physical geography research in the Taisho and mid-Showa eras and its significance in the history of geography (大正期～昭和中期における多田文男の自然地理学研究所とその地理学史上の意義/Taishō-ki - Shōwa chūki ni okeru Tada Fumio no shizen chiri-gaku kenkyū to sono chirigakushi-jō no igi)', *New Geography (新地理 Shinchiri)*, 48 (2000) 12–27. [https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/newgeo1952/48/3/48\\_3\\_12/\\_article/-char/ja/](https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/newgeo1952/48/3/48_3_12/_article/-char/ja/), last accessed 13 October, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Yoichi Shibata, *Imperial Japan and Geopolitics: Ideology and Praxis of Geographers in the Era of the Pacific War* (Teikoku Nihon to Chiseigaku: Ajia Taiheiyo sensō-ki ni okeru chirigakusha no shisō to jissen 帝国日本と地政学—アジア・太平洋戦争期における地理学者の思想と実践 2016).





**Fig. 2.** Photograph of Tada Fumio and colleagues flying the Kyokujitsu-ki [旭日旗] “Rising Sun Flag” in Mengjiang, 1939. From *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report* (蒙疆の自然と文化: 京城帝國大學蒙疆學術探檢隊報告書 Moukyou no Shizen to Bunka: Keijyo Teikoku Daigaku Moukyou Gakujyutsu Tankentai Houkokusho) (Tokyo: Kokonshoin [古今書院發行; ], 1939). Jangseogak archive collection, J.912.6K28.M, p. 46.

Source: used with permission from the Jangseogak Archive [장서각], Academy of Korean Studies, Seongnam, South Korea. Photograph taken by Ho June Jung, 16 October, 2023.

until his retirement in 1978, followed quickly thereafter by his death in the same year.<sup>7</sup> His developing work on geoformations – sand dunes in particular – was respected and cited in postwar Japan, as was his 1964 book on plains and environmental change.<sup>8</sup> But the exigencies of the postwar period also meant that certain aspects of his influence in the field during the war years were overlooked, forgotten, or actively repressed.<sup>9</sup> Like the maps which he secreted away, Tada Fumio’s work in Japan’s colonies, especially Manchuria and Korea, would be lost to history, with only occasional

nodes in the Japanese geography field to his continental research. An exhibition at Komazawa University in 2017 marked a change by presenting Tada Fumio’s extensive field notes, which offer a wealth of insights into the itineraries and research processes which underpinned the scholar’s published outputs.<sup>10</sup> Japan’s normalization of its diplomatic relationship with South Korea in 1965 led to a brief revival of Tada Fumio’s personal interest in Korean geographies, and he travelled to South Korea in 1970 as a consultant for

<sup>7</sup> In Tokyo, Tada Fumio was primarily affiliated with Tokyo University (Tokyo Imperial University prior to 1945), but he was invited to teach at Komazawa University as that university built its Department of Geography in the 1940s and returned there after his mandatory, age-based, retirement from Tokyo University in the 1970s.

<sup>8</sup> Tada Fumio, *Transformation of the Natural Environment: Focusing on Plains* (自然環境の変貌: 平野を中心として Shizen kankyō no henbō: heiya o chūshin toshite) (Tokyo University Press 東京大学出版会, Tōkyō, 1964).

<sup>9</sup> For general background on the changing politics in Japanese universities during wartime and occupation, see Ben-Ami Shillony, ‘Universities and students in wartime Japan’, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 45 (1986) 769–787; Hans Martin Krämer, ‘Who reversed the Course? The Red Purge in Higher Education during the US Occupation of Japan’, *Social Science Journal Japan* 8 (2005) 1–18. See also Andrew Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: The Marxian and Modernist Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Komazawa University Museum of Zen Culture and History [駒澤大学禅文化歴史博物館 Komazawadaigaku Zen bunka rekishi hakubutsukan], ‘The First Manchurian and Mongolian Academic Research Group - From the Records of Fumio Tada’s Field Notes’ [企画展「第一次満蒙學術調査研究団～多田文男フィールドノートの記録から～ Kikaku-ten `dai Ichiji Mamō gakujutsu chōsa kenkyū-dan` ~ Tada Fumio frudonōto no kiroku kara], Komazawa University, Tokyo, Special Exhibition, 9 October – 18 November 2017. <https://www.komazawa-u.ac.jp/facilities/museum/overview/exhibition-room/2017/1010-5763.html>, last accessed 13 October, 2023. For an overview of the field notes, see Kazuyuki Koike, ‘Professor Tada’s Field Notes (多田先生のフィールドノート)’, *Journal of Geographical Research of Graduate Students at Komazawa University* (Komazawa daigaku daigakuin chiri-gaku kenkyū 駒澤大学大学院地理学研究) 35 (2007) 1–18.





**Fig. 3.** Photograph of Hohhot (呼和浩特), Mengjiang, 1939. From *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report* (蒙疆の自然と文化: 京城帝國大學蒙疆學術探險隊報告書 Moukyou no Shizen to Bunka: Keijyo Teikoku Daigaku Moukyou Gakujyutsu Tankentai Houkokusho) (Tokyo: Kokonshoin (古今書院發行), 1939). Jangseogak archive collection, J.912.6K28.M, p. 38. Source: used with permission from the Jangseogak Archive [장서각], Academy of Korean Studies, Seongnam, South Korea. Photograph taken by Ho June Jung, 16 October, 2023.

the United Nations Development Program.<sup>11</sup> To our knowledge he never returned to China after the war. Only recently have Japanese researchers begun to reassess Tada Fumio's career and his broader interactions with Japan's empire in the first half of the twentieth century. Yet even in this recuperative work, Tada Fumio's fieldwork in Manchuria (particularly in one famous group expedition in 1933) has overshadowed his role in the building of the geographical academic capacity in Korea. Near the end of his life, Tada Fumio turned back to look at his major expeditions in China and Inner Mongolia. Writing for his fellow Japanese geographers, Tada Fumio

tried to simultaneously convey the value of development of academic geography within the wartime empire without really touching upon the geopolitical function of the work:

As the war escalated and the occupied territories expanded, institutes ... were established for research on China, and geographers joined them. Research institutes such as the South Manchuria Railway [and] Manchukuo Academy of Continental Sciences, etc. were established in the field [現地], and the number of geographers working for them increased.<sup>12</sup>

This lacuna in the disciplinary studies of an influential figure presents a contrast with Japanese-language scholarship both in geography and in other fields, where the wartime activities of

<sup>11</sup> Yoshihiko Akagi, 'Pediment morphology in Korea,' *Geographical Review of Japan* 38 (1965) 682–697; referring to Tada Fumio, 'Topography of Korea, (朝鮮の地形 Chōsen no chikei)', lecture abstract (講演要旨 kōen yōshi) *Geographical Debates* (Chiri-hyō 地理評), 17 (1941) 504–505: Tada Fumio travelled to Andong, where a dam was to be built for the Naktong River in South Korea's South Kyongsang province. Tada's notebook from the trip is fairly sparse in its contents, but the UNDP explains that there was a major survey of soil quality occurring at the time of his visit. See *UNDP in Korea, 1966–2009*, [https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/seoul\\_policy\\_center/two-pagers-eng.pdf](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/seoul_policy_center/two-pagers-eng.pdf), last accessed 13 October, 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Tada Fumio, 'A Historical Sketch of Sand Dune Studies in Japan seen from the Standpoint of Earth Science (日本における砂丘生成に関する研究史 Nihon ni okeru sakyū seisei ni kansuru kenkyū-shi)', *The Quaternary Research* (Daiyonki-Kenkyū) 14 (1975) 177–182.

academic or social pioneers have come under scrutiny.<sup>13</sup> In geography, the scholar Shibata Yoichi has produced a monograph focusing on three wartime geographers entangled in areas of Japan's imperial expansion, including Miyagawa Zenzō, a professor at Manchukuo's Kenkoku University and Masuda Tadao, who worked in the South Manchurian Railway Research Department.<sup>14</sup>

In the field of geography, opportunities abound for possible reassessments of the distortions and developments in Japan during World War II. Foremost, academic discussions have oriented German geographers and their complex heritage to the emerging field of geopolitics as well coming to terms with that material and intellectual past.<sup>15</sup> Historical studies of European geographers under Nazi occupation (or under pressure from Germany) provide important models of how to discuss the rise and fall of individual careers under fascism.<sup>16</sup> In recent years, a blossoming of historical scholarship has emerged on the role of regime intellectuals in transnational fascism prior to and during the Second World War.<sup>17</sup> Japanese academic networks before and during the Second World War, and their connection to the building of empire, have taken on a new interest for scholars today. Our research documents that while Tada Fumio's outputs were rarely explicitly geopolitical, his career and its progression was inherently wrapped in (and in some cases enabled and commissioned by) military expansion or imperialist actors. Although he was hardly as overtly geopolitical as many of his counterparts in the field, his career was enabled and expanded thanks to imperialist expansion.<sup>18</sup>

New work shows how Japanese militarism and imperialism shaped the geopolitics of the pre-war and wartime era, and, particularly, how German influence shaped Japanese imaginations and scholarship about the territories and landscapes it sought to conquer.<sup>19</sup> Keniichi Takeuchi, an Italy-oriented scholar, produced important analysis along these lines a few years before his death, while Christian Spang, a German scholar working in Tokyo, has pioneered work into a massive matrix of interconnectivity between

German geographers and their Japanese counterparts during the Nazi period (1933–1945).<sup>20</sup> Foregrounding Tada Fumio, who was fluent in German, as a case study, our work gives clearer documentation of Japanese geographers in close intellectual proximity to their German counterparts in the period of Nazi rule in Germany and fascism in Japan. We are careful not to overread Tada Fumio's complicity with fascist ideologies like German geopolitics of the era, particularly considering that most of his work, quantitatively speaking, is on geomorphology and not human geography. At the same time his field notes do highlight his institutional connections and affirm that he was embraced by and utilized by the wartime Japanese empire. These interactions range from small interfaces such as like transport and protection by the Japanese military in contested borderlands, to Tada Fumio's enhanced role on the potential development of minerals in occupied areas of continental Asia to serve Japan's wartime needs.

This article aims to advance the broader reassessment of Tada Fumio's career, but it also seeks to go beyond a merely metropolitan biographical approach or one that amplifies new approaches to the intellectual history of transnational fascism. We wish instead to work the other end of the spectrum, namely, looking at Tada Fumio's impact in Japan's significant continental colonial possessions in Manchuria, Korea, and inner Mongolia, and using his notebooks to unearth his daily work as a geographer. Treatments of geography do appear in smaller shapes within more conventional studies, or environmental histories, of Japanese imperial rule and exploitation of Korea.<sup>21</sup> We, however, seek to reconstruct how academic geography itself was used as a tool of imperial and militarist expansion, but to also fuse this process to new work on the processes of education and engagement with colonial intellectuals in Korea. In so doing, we hope to contribute to the scholarship of fascism's interrelationship with wartime geography, looking toward Asian areas of Japanese colonization and imperial incorporation like Korea.<sup>22</sup>

Beyond the researchers themselves, more work is needed to link academic geography to historical analysis as a means of recovering the lived and experienced processes of knowledge production within the Japanese empire. Such processes include the collection of materials and their dissemination amongst contemporary academic communities which sought to explore and understand the social and cultural terrains of Japanese-occupied Manchuria and colonial Korea.<sup>23</sup> These processes also include the training and inclusion of academics and researchers from colonized nations and

<sup>13</sup> Barbara Molony, 'From "Mothers of Humanity" to "Assisting the Emperor": Gendered Belonging in the Wartime Rhetoric of Japanese Feminist Ichikawa Fusae', *Pacific Historical Review*, 80 (2011) 1–27. For contrasting examples of this theme from the field of art history, see Asato Ikeda, *The Politics of Painting: Fascism and Japanese Art During the Second World War* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018); and Jean Selz, *Fujita* (Naefels: Bonfini Press Corporation, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> Yoichi Shibata, *Imperial Japan and Geopolitics*.

<sup>15</sup> Ian Klinke, *Cryptic Concrete: A Subterranean Journey into Cold War Germany* (Chichester: Wiley 2018); Rainer Sprengel, *Kritik der Geopolitik: Ein Deutscher Diskurs 1914–1944* (Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 2015); Boris Michel, "'With Almost Clean or at Most Slightly Dirty Hands": On the Self-denazification of German Geography after 1945 and its Rebranding as a Science of Peace', *Political Geography*, 55 (2016) 135–143.

<sup>16</sup> Henrik Gutzon Larsen, 'Geopolitics on Trial: Politics and Science in the Wartime Geopolitics of Gudmund Hatt', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 47 (2015) 29–39; Hugh Clout, 'French geographers during wartime and German occupation, 1939–1945', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 47 (2015) 16–28; Mark Roseman, 'The Lives of Others – Amid the Deaths of Others: Biographical Approaches to Nazi Perpetrators', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 15 (2013) 443–461.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel Hedinger, 'The Spectacle of Global Fascism: The Italian Blackshirt Mission to Japan's Asian Empire', *Modern Asian Studies*, 51 (2017) 1999–2034. See also Reto Hofmann, 'Imperial Links: The Italian-Ethiopian War and Japanese New Order Thinking, 1935–6', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 50 (2015) 215–233; Erin Brightwell, 'Refracted Axis: Kitayama Jun'yu and Writing a German Japan', *Japan Forum* 27 (2015) 431–453; Aaron Moore, 'Review of *Japan and Italy, 1915–1952* by Reto Hofmann', *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 44 (2018) 210–215.

<sup>18</sup> Shibata 2016; see also Yufei Zhou, 'The Concept of "Oriental Despotism" in Modern Japanese Intellectual Discourse', *The International History Review*, 45 (2023) 472–473.

<sup>19</sup> Ricky Law, *Transnational Nazism: Ideology and Culture in German-Japanese Relations, 1919–1936* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2019); Brian Victoria, 'D.T. Suzuki Zen and the Nazis', *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, 11.43 (2013) 1–22; Edward Bruce Reynolds, *Japan in the Fascist Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> Keiichi Takeuchi, 'Japanese Geopolitics in the 1930s and 1940s,' in *Geopolitical Traditions: A Century of Geopolitical Thought*, ed. by Klaus Dodds and David Atkinson, (London: Routledge, 2000), pp.88–108 (p.89); Keiichi Takeuchi, 'The Decline and Survival of Academic Geography: Publications in the Early Stages of Academic Geography (1907–1945)', *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies*, 25 (1993) 63–81; Christian Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan: Die Rezeption seiner Geopolitischen Theorien in der Deutschen und Japanischen Politik* (Karl Haushofer and Japan: The Reception of his Geopolitical Theories in German and Japanese Politics) Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien (Tokyo: Iudicium, 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Aaron Moore, 'The Yalu River Era of Developing Asia: Japanese Expertise, Colonial Power, and the Construction of Sup'ung Dam', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 72 (2013) 115–139; Joseph Seeley, 'Liquid Geography: The Yalu River and the Boundaries of Empire in East Asia, 1894–1945.' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Stanford University, 2019).

<sup>22</sup> Soo-hyun Mun, 'German Discourse on Korea During the Era of Japanese Imperialism', *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies*, 27 (2014) 241–267; Adam Cathcart and Robert Winstanley-Chesters, 'German Studies of Koreans in Manchuria: Gustav Fochler-Hauke and the Influence of Karl Haushofer's National Socialist Geopolitics', *European Journal of Korean Studies*, 18 (2018) 131–141.

<sup>23</sup> Jin-Yeon Kang, 'The dynamics of nation, state and people: Japanese colonialism and nationalist discourses in Korea', *Interventions*, 18 (2016) 379–403. See also Jooyoung Lee, 'Struggling with "Modernity": Korean Elites' Critical Perception of Western Ideas under Japanese Colonial Rule', *Interventions*, 23(2021) 853–871.



territories who used and engaged with these materials and knowledge and supported Japanese colleagues. Some prototypes exist for such a study. The environmental historian David Fedman recently uncovered the story of Hyon Sin-kyu, a Korean forestry specialist. Hyon Sin-kyu was an exceptional individual: he navigated through to a higher degree from Kyushu Imperial University and landed a job with the colonial Bureau of Forestry's Forestry Experiment Stations.<sup>24</sup> Looking at ripple effects from Japanese biologists working in Korea, scholar Manyong Moon indicated that it was "by Japanese design [that] few Koreans became scientific researchers during the colonial period." According to Moon's data, Koreans made up only about 10 % of all biologists in Colonial Korea, although again productive Korean researchers did exist, like the lepidopterist Sok Ju-yong.<sup>25</sup> Miriam Kingsberg Kadia's analysis of anthropological fieldwork practices in the Japanese empire has uncovered the work and legacy of Cho Pok-sung (1905–1971), a Professor at Keijo Imperial University in Seoul with research interests in zoology and entomology. Cho, born in Pyongyang, journeyed as a guest of Keijo Professor of Legal Philosophy Otaka Tomoo, with fellow anthropologists of the empire to Manchukuo and the Manchukuo/Inner Mongolia border region of Mengjiang, and was responsible for naming a number of new species.<sup>26</sup> We have as yet not found Tada Fumio mentioning a specific Korean individual who could be a similar prototype or protegee in the field of geography, although Tada Fumio, as we shall show, was involved with Japan's colonial university in Seoul. Indeed, even the more established field of Chinese geographers in the 1920s and 1930s seemed to be only on the periphery of Tada Fumio's awareness, which was far more oriented toward European research and personal connection to European researchers.

Tracing Tada Fumio's career pathway through the vicissitudes of empire this paper explores the interplay of Japan's colonial expansion, stretching beyond Tokyo and into Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and Seoul. Throughout, we also unpack the German source of many of the ideas and methods which Japanese researchers employed in their geographical studies of, and in, colonial Korea, including the researching of geography as an academic subject (and connected disciplines), at Keijo Imperial University, Japan's model colonial university in Seoul.

### Japanese Geographers and Japan's expanding empire

By the turn of the twentieth century Japan was building an empire, establishing a sphere of influence, and imagining what would ultimately come to be called its Greater East Asia Prosperity Sphere.<sup>27</sup> Taiwan was annexed in 1895, and, after a series of military, legal, and economic maneuvers on the peninsula, Korea was annexed in 1910. Having set down roots in Taiwan and Korea, the field of Japanese geography and geopolitics was in ferment in the 1930s, all in support of the empire and its ongoing expansion.<sup>28</sup> Much European writing and conceptual framing

helped Japanese planners and intellectuals in shaping and driving forward the construction of the developing Japanese Empire, the colonizations that occurred within it, and the ways in which Tokyo sought to use its new place in the geo-politics of the Pacific, and more widely across the globe.<sup>29</sup> In particular, Japanese scholars looked to German academics for inspiration in theorizing the discipline of geopolitics, describing the interplay between politics and geography in the new era.<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, Tada Fumio was heavily influenced by German disciplinary practice in geography, an influence which dated back to the late nineteenth century.

Tada Fumio was born in 1900 and entered Tokyo Imperial University in 1920 as a student of Yamasaki Naomasa (山崎 直方), who was thirty years his senior. Yamasaki was a founder of modern Japanese geography, and his career path demonstrates the deep roots of German academic influence in the field.<sup>31</sup> Studying in Germany and Austria from 1898 to 1901, Yamasaki worked under the direction of Johannes Rein, one of the first German geography professors to have travelled to Japan.<sup>32</sup> Rein had been the beneficiary of Japan's proactive recruitment of a number of what were called hired foreigners (*oyatoi gaikokujin* お雇い外国人) from Germany to help with the redevelopment and reorganization of bureaucracies and institutional structures.<sup>33</sup> As a newly-unified state in the 1870s, Germany would also claim colonies in Asia, such as the Kiautschou Bay Leased Territory around what is now Qingdao, and undertook a limited reorientation of scholarship and military interest in the Pacific after the annexation of what became German New Guinea in 1884, the German Pacific Protectorates declared between 1885 and 1905 and German Samoa declared after 1899.<sup>34</sup> In the 1920s, Yamasaki would serve as Vice President for the International Geographical Union (appointed at the IGU's foundation in Brussels in 1922). His international reputation aided in recruiting a crop of new talent in Japan, for whom his status was cemented via his appointment in 1925 as the President of *Japanese Geographical Research (Nihon Chiri Gakku)*, Japan's first academic geography journal.<sup>35</sup> Yamasaki remained in close touch with German academic circles in the 1920s, and ultimately his introductions to these networks would be invaluable for his students, including those like Tada Fumio with burgeoning interests in geomorphology in the aftermath of the Great Tokyo Earthquake (関東大地震, *Kantō daijishin*) of 1 September 1923.<sup>36</sup> Students who performed well could be assured of entrance into an emerging discursive community, and study of German language would be rewarded. Tada Fumio reveled in such knowledge and concepts at Tokyo Imperial University and

<sup>29</sup> Mark Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), pp.7–9.

<sup>30</sup> Eunjeung Lee and Hannes Mossler, *Facetten deutsch-koreanischer Beziehungen: 130 Jahre Gemeinsame Geschichte* (Facets of German-Korean Relations: 130 Years of Common History) (Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> Takeuchi, 'The Decline and Survival of Academic Geography'.

<sup>32</sup> Johannes Rein, *Japan nach Reisen und Studien im Auftrage der Königlich Preussischen Regierung Dargestellt* (Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Engelmann, 1881–1886); Johannes Rein, *Japan: Travels and Researches Undertaken at the Cost of the Prussian Government* (New York: Armstrong, 1884). Rein went to Japan in 1874–1875 to enhance trade and technology links, and took up the study of Japanese geography thereafter.

<sup>33</sup> Hazel Jones, *Live Machines: Hired Foreigners and Meiji Japan* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980).

<sup>34</sup> *The German Colonial Experience: Select Documents on German rule in Africa, China, and the Pacific 1884–1914* ed. by Arthur Knoll and Herman (Lanham: University Press of America, 2010).

<sup>35</sup> On Rein's interactions with Yamasaki in 1925, see Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan*, p.879.

<sup>36</sup> Yamasaki had studied with Wilhelm Penck in Vienna, author of *Morphologie der Erdoberfläche* (Morphology of the Earth's Surface) (Stuttgart: J. Engelhorn, 1894).

<sup>24</sup> David Fedman, *Seeds of Control: Japan's Empire of Forestry in Colonial Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020), pp. 113–116; Yuka Kishida, *Kenkoku University and the Experience of Pan-Asianism: Education in the Japanese Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> Manyong Moon, 'Becoming a Biologist in Colonial Korea: Cultural Nationalism in a Teacher-Cum-Biologist', *East Asian Science, Technology and Society*, 6 (2012) 67–68. See also Atsuhiko Sabatani (柴谷篤弘), 'Sok Ju-yong Revisited', *Yadoriga*, 128 (1987) 12–19 [https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/yadoriga/1987/128/1987\\_KJ00006297886/\\_pdf](https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/yadoriga/1987/128/1987_KJ00006297886/_pdf), last accessed 13 October 2023.

<sup>26</sup> Miriam Kingsburg Kadia, *Into the Field: Human Scientists of Transwar Japan* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2019), p.43.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Duus, 'The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere: Dream and Reality', *Journal of Northeast Asian History* 5 (2008) 143–154.

<sup>28</sup> Takeuchi, 'Japanese Geopolitics in the 1930s and 1940s', p.89.

in Germany, using German as his second main research language.<sup>37</sup> His notebooks are full of annotations in German, and in dedicating his published outputs to English-speaking scholars like Owen Lattimore, he would identify the work as ‘vom Verfasser’ (‘from the author’).<sup>38</sup>

In 1924, Tada Fumio emerged with his degree from Tokyo Imperial University, and quickly gained employment as a researcher at the same institution. For a scholar looking to embark in field studies beyond Tokyo or the traditional geographical core of Japan, the colonies of Taiwan and Korea beckoned, or research along the inner frontiers of areas of difference within the Japanese home islands such as Hokkaido or Okinawa. Hokkaido had been fully incorporated by Meiji Japan in 1869 following the Boshin War, and Okinawa similarly brought fully into the empire 1879 with the full annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom. From Tokyo, Tada Fumio ended up looking both northwest and southeast. To the southeast, Japan’s imperial holdings had expanded following the First World War. The South Seas Mandate (日本委任統治領南洋群島 *Nippon inin tōchi-ryō nan'yō guntō*) stretched over what is now Palau, Micronesia, the Northern Marianas Islands and the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific, with the Marshalls having been inherited from Germany in 1919 as a League of Nations mandate in recognition of Japan’s role as an ally in the First World War.<sup>39</sup> Looking northwest from Tokyo and across the Yellow Sea, Tada Fumio could see that Japan’s Kwantung Army, named for its base ‘east of the pass’ of Shanhaiguan in the region of Manchuria (present-day northeast China), was building its holdings and employing a large number of researchers in such institutions as the South Manchuria Railway Company.

When his mentor Yamasaki recommended him for a Foreign Ministry-sponsored journey to China in 1924, Tada Fumio was able to undertake his inaugural foreign fieldwork.<sup>40</sup> His first journey to the border region between north China and inner Mongolia was fortuitous for him as it both demonstrated Japanese state support of his work, and brought him into contact with an area that would attract his scholarly attention for the next 20 years.<sup>41</sup> In 1925, Tada Fumio again benefitted from a Yamasaki intervention, boarding a military ship (fittingly called the *Manchuria*), and voyaging with nine other scholars to the southern Pacific Islands.<sup>42</sup> In the South Pacific (Nanyo 南洋), he produced new work on island erosion that helped to buttress Japan’s expansionist drive at sea.<sup>43</sup> Tada Fumio’s work on islands would later be reproduced and validated in its inclusion in the major Japanese wartime compilation of scholarship on Nanyo studies.<sup>44</sup> While maritime issues helped to launch his career, the trajectory of his professional development would

see him rooted more comprehensively in Japan’s continental empire.

### Tada and Japanese-German intellectual discourse

As Tada Fumio moved towards seniority and professional respectability, far to the west in Europe the field of German geopolitics was taking shape. This field was led by Karl Haushofer’s developments on the role of Geography and its intersections with political science and organization. Haushofer founded the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (ZfG) journal in 1924, providing ample outlet for German analysis of developments in Asia.<sup>45</sup> This journal was circulated in Japan and rapidly spurred imitations, among them the foremost Japanese geography journal entitled *Review of Geographical Studies* [地理学評論 *Chirigaku hyōron*]. Established in 1926, the pages of *Chirigaku hyōron* regularly saw discussion of German works in the form of lecture notes and reviews, many appearing in the running segment known as ‘Introductions and Critiques.’ Christian Spang observes that ‘the ZfG from the beginning was read by many Japanese geographers’.<sup>46</sup> Materials from the ZfG were translated contemporaneously into Japanese and became part of the colonial project that the scholars themselves sought to analyze.<sup>47</sup> University libraries in Japan’s colonial possessions would stack up full runs of the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* in their collections. Through the ZfG and associated monographs, Japanese scholars could follow the development of German scholars like Haushofer, his protégé Gustav Fochler-Hauke, and the Koreanist Hermann Lautensach, all of whom had travelled widely in East Asia. Using German materials to bolster their understanding of Manchuria and throughout Korea, Japanese scholars were able to integrate the German materials into the body of literature taught in the educational institutions of the Japanese Empire.<sup>48</sup> Tada took interest in the work and read it eagerly, pointing especially to Lautensach as a laudable researcher of Korean geographies.<sup>49</sup>

For a German-reading and receptive academic like Tada Fumio, the step of travelling to Berlin to come into direct contact with leaders in the field was an important career move. In the early 1930s, Tada Fumio toured Europe making important professional contacts in Berlin and Halle in 1930, and presenting research on Korean climate conferences of geographers in Paris and Amsterdam in 1931. Among the scholars in Berlin that Tada Fumio spent time with was Norbert Krebs (1876–1947), who at the time was a student of Albrecht Penck and generating what would become a foundational study in 1937 of ‘Lebensraum’ and ethnic Germans in central Europe.<sup>50</sup> Krebs was further interested in geospatial concepts for German expansionism.<sup>51</sup> Krebs – like Haushofer – was

<sup>37</sup> Shuhei Kimura, ‘Review of Bounsoung Kim, Beyond Local Science: The Evolution of Japanese Seismology during the Meiji and the Taisho Eras’, *East Asian Science, Technology and Society: An International Journal* 4 (2010) 175–177.

<sup>38</sup> Tada Fumio, *Report of the First Scientific Expedition to Manchoukuo Under the Leadership of Shigeyasu Tokunaga, June-October 1933, Vol. 4, Part 1, Geography* (Tokyo: Man’Mō Gakujutsu Chosa Kenkyūdan/Asahi Shimbun, 1937), in Owen Lattimore Collection, University of Leeds Brotherton Library, United Kingdom. For Lattimore’s critique of Japan sealing off of Manchuria to non-Axis researchers, see Adam Cathcart, ‘Owen Lattimore and the Sino-Korean Borderlands, 1931–1945’, *European Journal of Korean Studies*, 17 (2017) 59–74.

<sup>39</sup> Tze Loo, ‘Islands for an anxious empire: Japan’s Pacific Island Mandate’, *American Historical Review*, 124 (2019) 1699–1703.

<sup>40</sup> Kimura, ‘Review of Bounsoung Kim’, p.176.

<sup>41</sup> Robert Winstanley-Chesters and Adam Cathcart, ‘Encountering the Silk Road in Mengjiang with Tada Fumio: Korean/Japanese Colonial Fieldwork, Research, Connections and Collaborations’, *Acta Via Serica* 7 (2022) 91–116.

<sup>42</sup> Sakai, ‘Fumio Tada’s Physical Geography Research in the Taisho and mid-Showa eras’.

<sup>43</sup> Tada Fumio, ‘Marine eroded terraces of islands in the South Pacific (南洋諸島の海蝕段丘 *Nan’yō shotō no kaishoku dankyū*)’, *Geographical Debates* (地理評/Chiri-hyō), 2 (1926) 399–417.

<sup>44</sup> *Geographical System of the South Seas* (南洋地理大系 *Nan’yō chiri taikai*), 8 vol, ed. by limoto Nobuyuki and Sato Hiroshi (飯本信之, 佐藤弘編) (Tokyo: Diamond Press, 1942).

<sup>45</sup> Jörg Michael Dostal, ‘Die “Zeitschrift für Geopolitik” Zwischen 1933 und 1944: Vom Eurasischen Kontinentalblock zum Zweiten Weltkrieg’, *Korean German Social Sciences Journal* 29 (2019) 3–46.

<sup>46</sup> Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan*, p.499.

<sup>47</sup> *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion* ed. by Christian Spang and Rolf-Harald Wippich (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>48</sup> Hermann Lautensach, *Korea, eine Landeskunde auf Grund eigener Reisen und der Literatur* (Korea: A Geography Based on the Author’s Own Travels and Literature) (Leipzig: K.F. Koehler-Verlag, 1945); Hermann Lautensach, *Korea: Land, Volk, Schicksal* (Korea: Its Land, People, and Destiny) (Stuttgart: K. F. Koehler Verlag, 1950).

<sup>49</sup> Tada Fumio, ‘The field of geography in Germany 40 years ago (40年前のドイツ地理学会/40-nen mae no Doitsu chiri gakkai)’, *Geography* (地理/Chiri) 15 (1970) 7–13.

<sup>50</sup> We note that Lebensraum is a loaded concept; for convenience of reading in the following pages, we no longer put scare quotes around it but will also cease to capitalize it.

<sup>51</sup> Norbert Krebs, *Atlas des Deutschen Lebensraumes in Mitteleuropa* (Atlas of German ‘Lebensraums’ in Middle Europe) (Leipzig: Leipzig Bibliograph, 1937); see also Holger Herwig, ‘Geopolitik: Haushofer, Hitler and Lebensraum’, *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 22 (1999) 218–241.

building upon the work of Karl Ritter, Friedrich Ratzel and Rudolf Kjellen, elaborating on notions of the state as an organic entity which depended on self-sufficiency and centralized power for its health.<sup>52</sup> Such ideas had a huge impact on the ideologies of the Nazi party and the Third Reich, but the new geopolitical concepts were also applicable to other states with colonial ambitions.<sup>53</sup> In Asia, China was seen as a power in decline, Korea as one of the small nations and Japan as a developing global organic power with a requirement for *lebensraum*. When Asia specialists in Germany published on the subject of *lebensraum*, Japanese academic geographers took note.<sup>54</sup> In turn, Krebs could see a new audience for his work, including the young Japanese geographers turning up in his Berlin office who might be useful in seeing it translated.<sup>55</sup>

Tada Fumio also met with Carl Troll, a young geographer freshly back from three years of fieldwork in South America.<sup>56</sup> In the mid-1930s, Troll would go on to produce a study of German colonization in East Africa.<sup>57</sup> Tada Fumio also met with another Penck student, Herbert Lehmann (1901–1971), who had just published a massive geography of Europe.<sup>58</sup> As Tada Fumio's itinerary indicates, a Japanese intellectual in Weimar-era Berlin clearly had a huge array of potential influences. Tada Fumio's notes on his meetings with Troll and Krebs allow direct inferences to be drawn regarding how the interactions proceeded and who was influencing whom.<sup>59</sup>

While Tada Fumio's journey to Germany predated the full Nazi co-option of the German state in 1933, it also indicated that a Japanese–German discursive community was already emerging which had explicit ties to empire-building. These linkages would mushroom as Japan and Germany set up more explicit state-to-state cultural relations in 1933, 1936, and 1940, and academic freedom tightened at Japanese universities.<sup>60</sup> Tada Fumio's relationships would broaden as he gained importance in his field and welcomed German researchers in Japan. Tada Fumio's friendship with the German geographer Martin Schwind (1906–1991) was one such case. Schwind published papers on Japan's need for *lebensraum* in the 1930s and 1940s, a clear indicator of his alignment with the National Socialist (Nazi) project.<sup>61</sup> In the 1930s,

Schwind's efforts to convey trends in Japanese geographical studies to German readers resulted in several small cooperative projects with Tada Fumio. According to Schwind, his Japanese language capacity was not up to the standard of Tada Fumio's German, so he relied on him for this whilst in Japan.<sup>62</sup> Tada Fumio would invite Schwind to a lecture series or *Gesprächskreis* in Tokyo 1939, where he was working between continental fieldwork journeys.<sup>63</sup> Tada Fumio's linkages to Schwind, Lehmann, Krebs and Troll were all certainly useful for him, but his most extensive interface was through the written word. Here his influence was more passive, but still present, in that German studies of the Korean-Manchurian border river region found direction application of Tada Fumio's research to their developing ideas of Japanese *Lebensraum* in greater Asia.

#### *Tada Fumio at the edges of empire, 1933*

It should by now be clear to the reader that Tada Fumio was deeply embedded not just in concerns and trends of Japanese academic geography, but in circles which interacted regularly with their German counterparts in the 1930s. However, how Tada Fumio became involved with research and teaching in Korea in the late-1930s has not yet been outlined. Firstly we assert that Tada Fumio's Korea work was built not upon the intellectual background built up via connections with Germany, but instead upon the strength of his independent research in Northeast China, or Manchuria. The resources and political positioning that had made this possible – indeed, at an accelerated rate – were made possible by rapid geopolitical developments in the area.

In September 1931, Japanese forces deliberately arranged the sabotage of a Japanese-owned railway line in northeast China, or Manchuria, in order to create the pretext for a security focused intervention.<sup>64</sup> Victory soon after the Imperial Japanese Army's invasion of Manchuria and on 1 March 1932 the puppet state of Manchukuo (滿洲國) was founded. Manchukuo's creation sparked outrage both in China and in the League of Nations, but it also triggered a migration and development fever in Tokyo's colonial institutions. There was a concurrent explosion of ethnographic and geographical research of the new state's frontiers, including in its southwest interface with Mongolia and central Asia.<sup>65</sup> However, Manchukuo's own borders were not fully settled, and in late 1932 and early 1933 Japan took military action to expel Chinese troops from the areas north of the Great Wall and consolidated the province then known as Jehol.<sup>66</sup> Expelled from the League of Nations, Japan's forces and influence were now on the edge of Central Asia and in contact with nomadic groups in the interior.<sup>67</sup> Japanese state filmmakers reimagined the area as a phantasmagoric land of exoticism and potential, but state planners had more concrete visions of settlement of Japanese on an industrial scale, requiring

<sup>52</sup> Krebs, *Atlas des deutschen Lebensraumes in Mitteleuropa*.

<sup>53</sup> Günter Wolkersdorfer, 'Karl Haushofer and Geopolitics: The History of a German Mythos', *Geopolitics* 4 (1999) 145–160.

<sup>54</sup> See, for example, the Japanese discussion of Heinrich Schmitthenner's 1934 book *China im Profil in Chirigaku Hyoron* Vol. XVII No. 9 (1941), 755–759, and Vol. XII, No. 1 (January 1936), 70–72. On Schmitthenner and *lebensraum* in the global fascist context, see Patrick Bernhard, 'Borrowing from Mussolini: Nazi Germany's Colonial Aspirations in the Shadow of Italian Expansionism', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 41 (2013) 617–643.

<sup>55</sup> See Krebs, *Die Verbreitung des Menschen auf der Erdoberfläche* (Leipzig, 1921) and its translation, *Jinrui Chirigaku* (人類地理学 Human Geography), translated by Tsujimura Taro (辻村太郎) and Noh Toshio (能登志雄) (Tokyo: Kokin Shoin (古今書院; ), 1938).

<sup>56</sup> Carl Troll, 'An Expedition to the Central Andes,' *Geographical Review* 19 (1929) 234–247; Daniel Gade, 'Carl Troll on Nature and Culture in the Andes (Carl Troll über die Natur und Kultur in den Anden)', *Erdkunde*, 50 (1996) 301–316.

<sup>57</sup> Carl Troll, 'Das Deutsche Kolonialproblem auf Grund einer Ostafrikanischen Forschungsreise 1933/34', (Berlin: Reimer, 1935), (published lecture, given at Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft).

<sup>58</sup> Herbert Lehmann, *Länderkunde Europa, einschliesslich Völker- und Wirtschaftskunde* (Leipzig: List und Von Bressendorf, 1930). See also Tada Fumio's 'Physical Geography Research in the Taisho and mid-Showa eras', p.14.

<sup>59</sup> Tada Fumio, 'The field of geography in Germany 40 years ago'.

<sup>60</sup> Byron Marshall, *Academic Freedom and the Japanese Imperial University, 1868–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

<sup>61</sup> Martin Schwind, 'Japanische Raumnot und Kolonisation (Spatial Constraints and Japanese Colonization)', *Mitteilungen der OAG*, Band 32 C (1940), pp.1–23. Spang criticizes the postwar silence around Schwind at the University of Bochum: "One can hunt futilely for signs of even the most momentary careless remarks [from colleagues or students] revealing criticism of his role in the Third Reich." See Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan*, pp.172–173, footnote 411.

<sup>62</sup> *Zeitschrift für Erdkunde*, 1936 5, p.230, cited in Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan*, p.244.

<sup>63</sup> Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan*, p.870.

<sup>64</sup> Christopher Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy: The West, the League and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931–1933* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1972), pp. 1–7, 32–3, 131–134.

<sup>65</sup> Walter Heissig, *Das Gelbe Vorfeld: Die Mobilisierung der chinesischen Außenländer* (Berlin: Kurt Vowinckel Verlag, 1941).

<sup>66</sup> Herbert Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (London: Duckworth, 2000), pp.257–261.

<sup>67</sup> James Boyd, *Japanese-Mongolian Relations, 1873–1945: Faith, Race and Strategy* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 147–186, 182–221; Kelly Hammond, *China's Muslims and Japan's Empire: Centering Islam in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).



attention to food security amid the autarkic impulses of the early 1930s.<sup>68</sup> Tada's work in 1933 occurred in this milieu.

Did German frameworks help to shape the interpretation of Japanese scholars in their extensive analysis of Manchuria, or was this a case where Japanese fieldwork was simply put to use by German geographers? Tada Fumio's area of focus in Jehol is an interesting case. His work there was not overtly in the geopolitical school, with most of his most famous outputs from his 1933 fieldwork there focusing on geomorphology, with briefer forays into human geography. The prism of Karl Haushofer's analysis and the broader outlook of Haushofer's journals and students saw the Jehol area as unique since it was outside the traditional edge of Japan's continental areas of conquest or interest, namely the lands fought over and briefly held in Liaodong in 1895–96, or the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, and as a huge continental space went beyond Japan's more traditional emphasis on naval projection. But Haushofer also saw Jehol as a Pufferstaatenzone or buffer state zone for Japan, to keep Soviet influence at bay in Outer Mongolia or further west in Xinjiang. He also saw Jehol or Inner Mongolia (Mengjiang or Mokyō as the Japanese would name it), as an menschenleere or underpopulated zone toward which Japan could lean with its "racial instinct for establishing settlements."<sup>69</sup> In 1933, the boundaries between Manchukuo and the Republic of China remained ambiguous, a situation which Japanese military commanders deemed as "necessitating intervention."<sup>70</sup> To protect Manchukuo from perceived vulnerability, Jehol was considered a crucial area into which the Japanese state sought to surge military resources and weaken Chinese influence.<sup>71</sup> Tada Fumio's work in Jehol arrived on the heels of this intervention.<sup>72</sup>

The delegation created considerable consternation among Chinese scholars, but Japanese recollections of the trip and coverage at the time suggested this scholarship and concern did not exist.<sup>73</sup> Tada Fumio's travel in the province was extensive; a map of his sees him travelling through some cities, like Chengde and Chaoyang, multiple times.<sup>74</sup> (see Fig. 1)

The trip ranged into inner Mongolia region, where he noted the poor hygiene of the nomadic Mongols ('they never wash their clothing; they don't bathe') and their novel techniques of heating their yurts via the burning of yak dung.<sup>75</sup> His notebooks indicate he did attempt to expand his reading into more geopolitical

interpretations of the Mongols in China's inner Asian frontiers, including the works of Owen Lattimore.<sup>76</sup> He was interested in the drainage area of the Laoha River (老哈河 Laohahe), with special interests in the settlements that had grown around it.<sup>77</sup> Citing van Richthofen's nineteenth-century studies of the Mongolian plateau and its link to the Liaodong Gulf, Tada Fumio's goal was to bring together analysis of the three distinctive areas of Jehol, uniting the Gobi Desert, the Jehol mountain lands, and the plains of south Manchuria.<sup>78</sup> This was nothing if not an area of junctures and collisions, and for Tada Fumio Jehol was indeed 'a Sino-Mongolian borderland'.

Tada was not alone in undertaking fieldwork in these borderlands and in the wider spaces of Japan's empire. Marian Kingsberg Kadia's recent work explores the conceptualization of 'the field' and the practice of field work in the processes of colonization and the construction of the Japanese empire from the perspective of anthropology.<sup>79</sup> Japanese anthropologists deeply influenced by the work of the legendary Polish academic Bronisław Malinowski spread out across the territories newly conquered by Tokyo and, imbued with a social Darwinist spirit, went in search of and engagement with the distant 'savage' of the colonial peripheries. Anthropologists such as Otaka Tomoo, Izumi Seiichi, Izumi Akira, Akiba Takashi, Akamatsu Chijo and many others crisscrossed the edges of imperial territory, Malinowski translations in their minds, enabled by institutions of the empire, and by new and rapidly developing technologies which bridged temporal and geographic frames, allowing new ways of seeing once-distant territories and peoples.<sup>80</sup>

The rise of imperial Japan and the conquering of its territories and colonies in the first three decades of the twentieth century similarly saw a contraction and flattening of space across the globe thanks to the development of airplane technologies and the increasing possibilities of flight.<sup>81</sup> Radar not having yet been invented, those planning air routes in the 1920s and 1930s had to engage in a complex process of knowledge development about the topography, weather and geography of any territories to be overflowed, so those with Japanese imperial interests at heart or encouraged or funded by Tokyo had to invest in trigonometric surveying along the way, photographic reconnaissance and infrastructural development to support the logistical needs and processes of long distance flight without the technologies later available.<sup>82</sup> Reconnaissance for civil flight in this context (and in other contexts), shares many prerogatives and skills in common with reconnaissance for military or intelligence needs, and of course can also share utility and value.<sup>83</sup>

The territories of Mengjiang/Mokyō, as well as Manchukuo and other areas of Northeastern China were surveilled through these aerial reconnaissance exercises for airlines, to the extent

<sup>68</sup> Jie Li, 'Phantasmagoric Manchukuo: Documentaries Produced by the South Manchurian Railway Company, 1932–1940', *positions: east asia cultures critique*, 22 (2014), pp.332, 335.

<sup>69</sup> Karl Haushofer, *Japan baut sein Reich* (Berlin: Zeitgeschichte-Verlag, 1941), pp.161–166, 192–194, 250.

<sup>70</sup> Shin'ichi Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Domination*, translated by Joshua Fogel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

<sup>71</sup> Toshiko Shimada, 'Designs on North China, 1933–1937', translated by James Crowley, in *The China Quagmire: Japan's Expansion on the Asian Continent 1933–1941*, ed. James Morley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp.18–52. The direct quote on intervention is from Muto Nobuyoshi's general order for the Jehol operation on 27 January 1933, in Shimada, p.19.

<sup>72</sup> Morris Low, 'The Japanese Colonial Eye: Science, Exploration, and Empire', in *Photography's Other Histories* ed. by Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp.100–118.

<sup>73</sup> Lin Chih-hung (林志宏), 'The Adventure of Empire: The "First Scientific Expedition to Manchukuo" in Jehol, 1933 帝國的探險——1933年「滿蒙學術調查研究團」在熱河', *暨南史學 (Jinan Shixue)* 17. 11 (2014) 11–41.

<sup>74</sup> Tada Fumio, *Geography of Jehol, Section III of Report of the First Scientific Expedition to Manchoukuo Under the Leadership of Shigeyasu Tokunaga, June–October 1933* (Tokyo: Man'Mo Gakujutsu Chōsa Kenkyūdan, 1934), pp.66–67, 106.

<sup>75</sup> Tada Fumio, *Geography of Jehol*, pp. 114 116, 131. For another more geopolitically-oriented analysis of hygiene of Mongols in Manchuria, see Heissig, *Das Gelbe Vorfeld*, pp. 90–91.

<sup>76</sup> Owen Lattimore Collection, University of Leeds Brotherton Library, United Kingdom, Notebook 28.

<sup>77</sup> Tada Fumio, *Geography of Jehol*, p.102. See also Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Die Mandschurei: Eine Geographisch-Geopolitische Landeskunde* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinkel Verlag, 1941), pp.78–82.

<sup>78</sup> Tada Fumio, *Geography of Jehol*, p.121. Tada Fumio was later influenced by George Barbour's 'Physiography of Jehol, North China', *Bulletin of the Geography Society of America*, 46 (1935) 1483–1492.

<sup>79</sup> Kadia, *Into the Field*.

<sup>80</sup> Kadia, *Into the Field*, pp. 15–39.

<sup>81</sup> Sakura Christmas, 'The Cartographic Steppe: Mapping Environment and Ethnicity in Japan's Imperial Borderlands,' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 2016), particularly Chapter 5, Subsection "Empire Up in the Air", pp. 236–244.

<sup>82</sup> Christmas, 'The Cartographic Steppe', pp. 249–251.

<sup>83</sup> Christmas, 'The Cartographic Steppe'.

that aerial photography and surveying became familiar not only to airline staff, intelligence and military strategists, but also to academics like the anthropologists mentioned previously.<sup>84</sup> These anthropologists, influenced by Malinowski and others, began to use their newly gained aerial vision to deploy a particularly wide angled gaze down at the populations below them. Imanishi Kinji (a Zoology Professor at Kyoto Imperial University, and later author of *Steppe Travels* [草原行], an account of a 5000 km trek across Inner Mongolia in 1938), for instance, developing what Christmas describes as a ‘cartographic way of thinking’,<sup>85</sup> was deeply committed to the use of aerial photography as a research and methodological tool. He saw Mongolia and Inner Mongolia as three distinct ecological zones (seeing this vast area conceptually from the perspective of 2,000,000:1 which Christmas points out was actually technologically impossible at this point in history), ecologies which could explain the anthropological facts on the ground, such as social formation, cleavage to particular forms of agriculture and societal commitments to materiality.<sup>86</sup> In this commitment to a much more expansive scale of analysis, driven by different forms of gazing (both imperial and technological), a reader might see commonalities between these Japanese Imperial anthropologists and the development of academic geographies elsewhere which worked at a larger scale, and also had a commitment to field work and the field. Carl Sauer, whose ‘Morphology of Landscape’ was concerned with wide spans of geologic time and the landscapes generated by both geology and climate and how human societal and social development in Mexico and the western United States was influenced and produced by these over deep time,<sup>87</sup> could also be said to have been energized and enabled by new forms of gazing and technology.<sup>88</sup> Readers will also see commonalities with Tada Fumio’s van Richthofen inspired connection of the deeply continental territories of Mongolia with the coastal spaces of the Liaodong Gulf. Tada Fumio’s research group from Tokyo Imperial University also had access to an airplane, and utilized in the same manner and purpose as the anthropologists that Christmas and Kadia describe, to better understand the landscapes they were interested in at a different scale, and increasing the scope of their particular gaze. Tada Fumio also brought his expertise and knowledge of wider territories and scales, such as those from the Korea peninsula when engaging in fieldwork in northern China, noting a similarity of a pattern of mountain slope topography with one encountered in Korea.<sup>89</sup>

Tada Fumio’s approach to fieldwork was approved of and eagerly read by German colleagues, in particular Gustav Fochler-Hauke, Karl Haushofer’s mentee and colleague.<sup>90</sup> Fochler-Hauke’s work on the geopolitics and geographies of Asia and Asian colonialism reached audiences in *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* and other publications in which he praised Tada Fumio’s careful fieldwork.<sup>91</sup> Tada Fumio’s work on northern China was discussed again by Fochler-Hauke in his massive 1941 omnibus on

northeast China, *Die Mandschurei*. If Tada Fumio eschewed geopolitics in his published outputs, Fochler-Hauke appeared to revel in expanding his audience, outdoing all of his geographer colleagues in enthusiasm for the Nazi Party, becoming *Oberjäger* (a military rank equivalent to Corporal), and joining a Wehrmacht anti-Partisan unit operating in Russia’s Kaluga Oblast, photographing the burning of Belorussian towns and praising the SS.<sup>92</sup> Fochler-Hauke is an extreme example, but it was certainly possible for Japanese scientists to join the military, and some did. Nakai Takenoshin (中井 猛之進) Tada’s colleague in the field expedition to Jehol in 1933, would take up a military rank to administer new colonial possessions, working with Dutch counterparts against any attempts of Indonesians to control their own research.<sup>93</sup> But Tada Fumio would eschew direct enlistment, opting instead to use the security and the bureaucracy of the Japanese military on the frontier to continue his research on Manchuria – and its natural resources – up until the mid 1940s, a topic to which we will return later.

### Tada Fumio and Korean geographies

In 1935, Tada Fumio began travelling to Korea, where he would conduct fieldwork and teach.<sup>94</sup> Tada Fumio had demonstrated no prior scholarly interest in the Korean peninsula. However, as the Japanese empire expanded, consolidation of Korea and more rapid exploitation of its human and natural capital became necessary. Tada Fumio would play a role in Japanese geographical studies of Korea, but these were less significant than his role in underpinning the teaching and research in a colonial research institution in Seoul, then known as Keijo Imperial University. Tada Fumio’s arrival in Korea of course did not mean that he was bringing enlightenment to a *tabula rasa* or an area that was without its own tradition of scholarship in the field of geography. Indeed, the Korean peninsula has a long history of academic or scholarly endeavor.<sup>95</sup>

On the Korean peninsula, Japanese colonization involved and included a project of nation and culture building which sought to reconfigure and redefine the subjectivity of Koreans, transforming them into Imperial subjects, and reducing and restricting the utility and availability of Korean language and culture.<sup>96</sup> While this was of course contested repeatedly by Koreans (both those on the peninsula and among the diaspora), writers, academics and many other citizens of the new Chosen in fact sought to use their new Imperial identity and the Japanese language to explore opportunities generated by colonial modernity.<sup>97</sup> One such opportunity was the chance to attend a university and gain a higher level of education. The Japanese empire had a network of imperial

<sup>84</sup> Christmas, ‘The Cartographic Steppe’, pp.236–244.  
<sup>85</sup> Christmas, ‘The Cartographic Steppe’, pp. 254–270.  
<sup>86</sup> Christmas, ‘The Cartographic Steppe’, pp. 263–264.  
<sup>87</sup> Carl Sauer, ‘The Morphology of Landscape’ (1925), in *The Cultural Geography Reader*, pp. 108–116 (London, Routledge, 2008).  
<sup>88</sup> Carl Sauer, ‘The survey method in geography and its objective’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 14 (1924) 17–33.  
<sup>89</sup> Tada Fumio, *Geography of Jehol*, pp. 127, 75.  
<sup>90</sup> Gerhard Rainer and Simon Dudek, ‘Beyond Haushoferism: Geography, Geopolitics and National Socialist Rule at Munich’s Ludwig Maximilian University’, *Geopolitics* 28 (2022) 1967–1989.  
<sup>91</sup> Gustav Fochler-Hauke, ‘Chinesische Kolonisation und Kolonialpolitik,’ in *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde*, Berlin 1933, 108–122; Gustav Fochler-Hauke, ‘Deutschland und China’, *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, 11 (1934) 275–280.

<sup>92</sup> On the geographer’s participation in the invasion of the Soviet Union, see Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Schi-Jäger am Feind! Von Kampf und Kameradschaft eines Schi-Batallions in der Winterschlacht im Osten 1941/42* (Berlin/Heidelberg: Kurt Vorwinkel Verlag, 1943). For other citations of Tada Fumio by the same, see Gustav Fochler-Hauke, ‘Chinesische Kolonisation und Kolonialpolitik’, in *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde*, Berlin 1933, 108–122; Gustav Fochler-Hauke, ‘Deutschland und China’, *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, 11 (1934) 275–280.

<sup>93</sup> Richard Howard, ‘The Role of Botanists during World War II in the Pacific Theatre’, *Botanical Review* 60 (1994) 197–257; pp. 235–236.

<sup>94</sup> On Yamasaki and the younger Tsujimura Taro (1890–1983), see Sakai, ‘Tada Fumio’s Physical Geography Research in the Taisho and mid-Showa Eras’.

<sup>95</sup> James Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyongwon and the late Choson Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

<sup>96</sup> Jaeun Kim, *Contested Embrace: Transborder Membership Politics in Twentieth-Century Korea* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021), pp. 40–49.

<sup>97</sup> Janet Poole, *When the Future Disappears: The Modernist Imagination in Late Colonial Korea* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2014).



universities, mainly on the core islands of the homeland, but also in its territories such as Formosa (Taiwan) and Chosen (Korea). While opportunities for Koreans were rare, and the number of Korean students very definitely restricted as well as Koreans being discriminated against in favor of ethnic Japanese, some Koreans did attend university on the peninsula and in Japan proper.<sup>98</sup> After 1924, Keijo Imperial University provided opportunities for a number of Koreans, and on occasion recruited Korean faculty and researchers. It was particularly famous as an institution for medical anthropology and research in psychology and psychiatric-surgical and pharmacological interventions.<sup>99</sup> Some academics at Keijo became frequent travelers to the Chinese cultural capital of Beijing, where they studied the modernization of Chinese literature and the revolutionary milieu from a safe ideological distance.<sup>100</sup> As part of its reach into the broader Asian continent, Keijo employed a series of visiting lecturers to extend its teaching offer and capacity, and lecturers in geography were a core part of that series, generally employed within the history faculty.<sup>101</sup>

Tada Fumio served as a part-time visiting lecturer at Keijo Imperial University from 1935–1941.<sup>102</sup> This academic post served as a base for his many continental trips and enabled him to combine his studies of the southwestern pocket of Manchukuo, the Liaodong peninsula, and the Korean peninsula – all areas which the Japanese government was striving to extend and deepen its control. Although it is not clear by what precise means he gained the appointment at Keijo, his reputation was clearly sufficient for the university and Korea fit smoothly with his scholarly interests. Taking up the opportunity, Tada Fumio's own work began to engage with Korea as well as Manchuria. His writings on Korean geography appeared in public throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, including work on geology and volcanoes. In 1935, he produced a co-authored article with Inoue Shuji, blending ethnographic and topographic research on a rural county in northeastern Korea.<sup>103</sup> Both men had a common interest in Kilju county (famous in our present for nuclear and missile testing<sup>104</sup>), an area which was then quite remote and almost entirely unknown to scholarly communities in the 1930s. In April 1938, Tada Fumio returned to the northwestern part of Korea to produce a dense report about the Amnok/Yalu River basin, which was then the political boundary between colonial Korea and the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. His work focused on slope and current, with a geological background that elided well with interests of colleagues like Shigeji Hanai (花井重次) and their interests in the

mountainous areas of eastern Manchuria.<sup>105</sup> In April 1941, Tada Fumio was able to put his fieldwork to use again with a new lecture on the geographical and topological aspects of 'The shape of the Korean peninsula.' His work here was geologically oriented, without much focus on ethnography. His opening descriptor of Japanese topography posed Korea as being notably different; this was not pseudoscience trying to backdate prehistorical Pan-Asianism or unity of Korea and Japan, although his lecture was presented to a conference on 5 April 1941 and Japan's empire was on the cusp of another massive expansion.<sup>106</sup> Just as Fochler-Hauke praised Tada Fumio's research in Manchuria, so too did Western analysts like Shannon McCune, who drew upon two of Tada Fumio's pieces in an early postwar article.<sup>107</sup> This resulted in a neat interweaving of Japanese colonial knowledge into the geographies of the early US occupation era and its regimes of knowledge in Korea. Apart from a handful of references and brief return to Korea in 1969–1970, Tada Fumio's work on colonial Korea would be largely forgotten.<sup>108</sup>

What was Tada Fumio's relationship with Keijo University? The content of his lectures at Keijo is still unclear, but the arrangement of his colleagues and subjects covered is quite revealing.<sup>109</sup> Tada Fumio's main counterpart or superior at Keijo appears to be Sato Takeo (佐藤武雄 사토 다케오), a member of the Faculty of Medicine (醫學) at Tokyo Imperial University who is mentioned in several studies of medical history of Korea. Sato was focused on questions of race and blood type.<sup>110</sup> Other faculty members at Keijo have been analyzed, particularly by Mun, as being not simply Europe-oriented apologists for Japan's empire, but actively attempting to undercut any use by their Korean students for more challenging nationalistic ends.<sup>111</sup> For Tada Fumio, Korea was a useful jumping-off point, connected physically to Manchuria and capable of exploration for fieldwork with groups of colleagues and researchers.

### Mengjiang/Mokyo, Koreans and Tada Fumio

In April 1933 Japan's proxy armies invaded the Inner Mongolian provinces of Chahar and Suiyuan. In 1936 using Prince Demchugdongrab, a member of one of the Mongolian clans as its head, Imperial Japan organized these newly conquered lands into firstly the Mongol United Autonomous Government and then in September 1939 Mengjiang (蒙疆聯合自治政府 the Mengjiang United Autonomous Government). As was the case with Manchukuo, Mengjiang was not colonized simply for political reasons, to fragment the Republic of China still further and to counter any threat from the Mongolian People's Republic (which was allied to the Soviet

<sup>98</sup> Leighanne Yuh, 'Contradictions in Korean Colonial Education', *International Journal of Korean History* 15 (2010) 121–149.

<sup>99</sup> Jung Joon. Young, 'Racism of "Blood" and Colonial Medicine - Blood Group Anthropology Studies at Keijo Imperial University Department of Forensic Medicine', *Korean Journal of Medical History* 21 (2012) 513–549.

<sup>100</sup> Y.L. Wang, 'Experience and imagination - Respective Beijing Experiences of Three Intellectuals in Keijo Imperial University in Colonial Korea (体验与想象 - 殖民地朝鮮京城帝大知識分子的 '三人三色'北京体验 *Tiyan yu xiangxiang - zhimindi Chaoxian Jingcheng dida zhishifenzi de 'sanren sanse' Beijing tiyan*)', *Eastern Frontier Studies [Dongjiang Xuekan 东疆学刊]*, Yanbian University, PRC, 38.4 (2021): 12–18.

<sup>101</sup> Soo-hyun Mun, 'A Portrait of a Japanese History Professor at Keijo Imperial University, Korea', *Interventions*, 21 (2019) 423–443.

<sup>102</sup> Sakai, 'Tada Fumio's physical geography research in the Taisho and mid-Showa eras', p.18.

<sup>103</sup> Tada Fumio and S. Inoue, 'Topography and Humanities in the Upper River of Kilju, North Hamgyong Province, Korea (咸鏡北道吉州南大川上流地域の地形と人文, 朝鮮 I-kyō Hokudō Yoshi-shū Minamiō-gawa jōryū chiiki no chikei to jinbun, Chosen)', published in *Geological Tour Guide ('地質見學案内書/Chishitsu kengaku an'nai-sho)*, 1935.

<sup>104</sup> Nuclear Threat Initiative, 'Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Facility', *NTI*, 12 February 2003, <https://web.archive.org/web/20131029193551/http://www.nti.org/facilities/881/>, last accessed 13 October, 2023; *Daily NK*, 'Camp 16 prisoners forced to bear brunt of NK's nuclear pursuits', *The Daily NK*, 28 January 2015, <https://www.dailynk.com/english/camp-16-prisoners-forced-to-bear-b/>, last accessed 13 October, 2023.

<sup>105</sup> Tada Fumio, 'Slip-off slopes of the Yalu River (an initial research report on transitions of the river's slope) (鴨綠江 嵌入曲流帯の滑走斜面に就いて(斜面の傾斜遷緩線に關する研究第一報/Kamo-sen kō kan'nyū-kyoku-ryū-tai no kassōshamen ni tsuite (shamen no keisha Sen yuru-sen ni Seki suru kenkyū daiippo))', In *Review of Geographical Studies [Chirigaku hyoron]*, 14.4 (April 1938) 88–90.

<sup>106</sup> Tada Fumio, 'The Topography of the Korean Peninsula (朝鮮半島の地形/Chōsenhantō no chikei)', In *Geographical Studies (地理学評/Chiri-gaku)*, 17.6 (1941) 504–505.

<sup>107</sup> Shannon McCune, 'Physical Basis for Korean Boundaries', *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, 5 (1946) 272–288.

<sup>108</sup> Yoshikawa Torao, 'Remembering Professor Tada Fumio [多田文男先生の逝去を悼む/Tada Fumio sensei no seikyo o tomul]', *Geographical Review of Japan*, 51 (1978): 429–432. [https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/grj/1925/51/6/51\\_6\\_429/\\_article](https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/grj/1925/51/6/51_6_429/_article), last accessed 13 October, 2023.

<sup>109</sup> Documents provided to us at SNU's Special Collections were said to consist of a list of Tada's lectures at Keijo, but in fact we received a document which more resembled a personnel listing for a department at Keijo. The document has Tada listed as the only geographer, with no lecture or topic titles.

<sup>110</sup> Jung, 'Racism of "Blood" and Colonial Medicine'.

<sup>111</sup> Mun, 'A Portrait of a Japanese History Professor at Keijo Imperial University, Korea', pp.425–426.

Union), its territory contained substantial mineral resources such as iron ore and coal.<sup>112</sup>

Just as had been the case when the Korean peninsula was colonized in 1910, it would be necessary for a set of proper surveys to be undertaken in Mengjiang, so that its landscape and resources could become knowable by Imperial institutions. We were able to locate material in the Jangseogak archives in Seoul, specifically in the collection of Keijo Imperial University.

It appears that in 1939 soon after the declaration of its new name and format of government, Tada Fumio travelled to Mengjiang and engaged in a fieldwork exercise surveying, analyzing, and considering the new landscapes that Japan would now control. This work was done alongside scholars and researchers from Keijo Imperial University, including Koreans. Jangseogak's collection includes a report from Tada Fumio's research group from Keijo (who were known in English as the Man-Mong Research Group), with a distinct social and cultural geographic approach, which does not simply record the spaces of mineral extraction and industry or the infrastructures needed for logistics and the transport of those materials.<sup>113</sup> Instead the surveyors and researchers also consider the social landscapes of Mengjiang, both those of its indigenous Mongolian residents, but also the places and journeys of settlers encouraged into the territory by Imperial authorities in a similar fashion as was the case on the Korean Peninsula.

Tada Fumio and the researchers in their report firstly demonstrate their placement within the colonial project, using a photograph of the team surrounded by Imperial Japanese Army soldiers and the security guards or police tasked with the protection of the researchers, flying the 旭日旗, Kyokujitsu-ki "Rising Sun Flag."<sup>114</sup> (see Fig. 2)

A very substantial element of the report focuses on the agricultural and nomadic landscapes of Mengjiang, quite concerned with the social and human geography of this new territory, and its relationship with the historical past and the connections made by past political entities in the region. Interestingly there is also a series of photographs and writing on the transportation of materials and caravans of both Mongolian families on the move, and Han Chinese as well as Japanese settlers who are on the move elsewhere nearby the market and its Mongolian nomads and sellers.<sup>115</sup> As with Tada Fumio's work on Mongolian nomads in his 1933 expedition to Jehol, the emphasis appeared to be on the low level of development among the nomads, and specific resources about their housing and social arrangements. The researchers then moved on to Mengjiang's second largest urban space, Hohhot (known as 呼和浩特 in Chinese), still famous for the Dazhao Temple 大召 and the White Pagoda 白塔 (built during the reign of Emperor Daozong of Liao 遼道宗, 1055–1110). The researchers did not include a photo of that famous pagoda, though one large Pagoda is visible in the report, but they do spend some time analyzing what they conceive to be the backward and decidedly unmodern nature of Hohhot as it appeared at the time.<sup>116</sup> (see Fig. 3)

<sup>112</sup> Victor Seow's very recent *Carbon Technocracy: Energy Regimes in Modern East Asia* (University of Chicago Press, 2021), details the importance of coal and other fossil fuels to Japan's Imperial project in northeast China.

<sup>113</sup> *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report* (蒙疆の自然と文化: 京城帝國大學蒙疆學術探檢隊報告書 Moukyou no Shizen to Bunka: Keijyo Teikoku Daigaku Moukyou Gakujuutsu Tankentai Houkokusho) (Tokyo: Kokonshoin (古今書院發行), 1939). Jangseogak [장서각] archive collection, J.912.6K28.M.

<sup>114</sup> *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report*, p.46.

<sup>115</sup> *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report*, p.7.

<sup>116</sup> *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report*, p.38.

If Imperial Japan had survived longer than 1945, or if Japan had been a victor in the Pacific War, then Hohhot would have been an important border or near border town close to the Soviet influenced People's Republic of Mongolia. It would have been important for Japanese infrastructural and security planners to develop the area, at least to make it easier to support the logistics and supply of the Imperial Japanese Army. This practical aspect of the research was obvious at the time to Soviet observers, who complained at length about Japan's efforts to colonize and industrially develop its new imperial periphery as a means of preparing for war with the Soviet Union. Finally, the report engages with the natural landscapes of Mengjiang at its boundaries and peripheries, in a way which geographers would understand in the twenty first century. The mountains and high places of Mengjiang such as the Helan Mountains (贺兰山), are presented as both a natural barrier with a protective element, and a potential problem for future development and access to the central Tibetan plateau.<sup>117</sup> For any Koreans involved in this research expedition and fieldwork among the researchers and academics from Keijo Imperial University, they might have recognized something of the Kungang mountains in the shape and form of the Helan Mountains, though dry and arid instead of the green and forest covered Korean wilderness landscapes.

## Conclusion

This paper has extended the analysis of geography as an academic discipline in Imperial Japan, colonial Korea and Mengjiang and their institutions. More broadly, it joins wider efforts which consider the connection and transfer of German ideas of geopolitics and organic geography, such as the work of Gustav Fochler-Hauke, Herman Lautensach and others, to East Asia, especially those with an interest in the Korean Peninsula. We have demonstrated the impact of Tada Fumio on geography as a teaching and research discipline in the Japanese empire and colonial Korea. It is clear that geographical research on Korea during the colonial era, as may be found in the Jangseogak archives, or Tada Fumio's fieldwork notebooks at Komazawa University, would repay further study. The report of the Mengjiang expedition undertaken by Tada Fumio and his colleagues from 1939/1940 demonstrates that Keijo Imperial University was both a research community as well as a teaching or vocationally focused pedagogical community, in which geography in its various guises and forms was very important, and that similar or common to geography departments elsewhere, work in the field was vital to that community. Scholars like Tada Fumio and those from Keijo, be they Korean or Japanese (and most were Japanese), were, given the evidence, regarded as capable analysts and assessors of the new landscapes created by the imperial project, their own university being just such a geography, a space in which futures envisaged by the empire would be constructed and imagined. Tada Fumio was a citizen of the imperial metropole, yet his academic career and much of his field work, pre-war, was rooted in its peripheries like Keijo, Chosen and Mengjiang. In the post-war Tada Fumio, as was the case with many Japanese geographers, would mainly turn his analysis away from Korea or former colonial spaces, and would not seek to rebuild academic ties to researchers in Germany who had espoused geopolitical theories or were associated with Karl Haushofer. Japanese geography would instead become influenced by the Berkeley School, and following the work of Carl Sauer, would seek to explore morphologies of

<sup>117</sup> *The Nature and Culture of Mengjiang: Keijo Imperial University Scientific Expedition Group Report*, p.37.



landscape, but from the perspective of the western Pacific.<sup>118</sup> Nonetheless Tada's reputation was built through his work prior to 1945 and its intersections with the German geographies of Haushofer, Fochler-Hauke, Lautensach and others, the pedagogic terrains of the imperial universities and with his work making knowable and tangible peripheral and once intangible places like the Korean peninsula, Manchuria/Manchukuo and Mengjiang. In these spaces we have explored how through the work of Tada Fumio and his colleagues, academic geography itself was used both for the purposes of Japanese imperialism and militarism, and the engagement with and development of a wider academic milieu in the colonial/colonized territory of Korea.

In this way it is hoped that the lived and experienced narratives of Japanese imperialism, as lived and experienced by colonial Koreans in a colonial institution of higher education, and their work with scholars like Tada Fumio can contribute to a more holistic understanding of epistemic and academic communities of the time.<sup>119</sup> The authors further suggest that Tada Fumio's work on Mengjiang, and his earlier writing on Jehol are particularly important to the understanding not only of his earlier career, but also to an understanding of the processes and practices of fieldwork and knowledge gathering in the Japanese Empire, and there is ample room and much work left to do for future scholars interested in those practices and the territories in which they were undertaken.

#### Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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<sup>118</sup> Sauer, 'The Morphology of Landscape'.

<sup>119</sup> Kang, 'The Dynamics of Nation, State and People'.