

The Industrial Policies in Xing'an Province and Manchukuo's Control over Manchuria and Mongolia Borderland (1931–1945)

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Abstract

This study explores the industrial policies of Manchukuo in Xing'an Province (1931-1945), focusing on their strategic importance in Japan's broader Manchuria-Mongolia policies. Xing'an Province, located in the eastern Inner Mongolia region, held significant geopolitical and economic value due to its abundant natural resources, including timber and livestock. The Japanese Kwantung Army and the Manchukuo government implemented industrial policies that sought to exploit these resources while promoting nominal "autonomy" for the region's Mongolian population. However, these policies often masked underlying colonial control, aligning with Japan's military and economic expansionist objectives.

The establishment of Xing'an Province was driven by Japan's strategic need to secure its northern frontier and counter Soviet influence. Initially, policies emphasized harmony and autonomy, incorporating traditional Mongolian administrative systems. However, as Japan entered a wartime economy in the late 1930s, resource management became more centralized. Industrial policies, including strict regulations on forestry and livestock, were implemented to secure vital war supplies. These efforts significantly diminished Mongolian autonomy and integrated the region's economy into the Japanese wartime system.

Forestry and livestock management were central to Manchukuo's industrial strategy in Xing'an. The Greater Khingan region's vast forests supplied critical timber for construction and war production, while the livestock industry provided essential resources such as wool, leather, and meat. Japan introduced modern management systems but also intensified resource extraction and imposed stringent controls over local industries. These policies disrupted traditional Mongolian livelihoods, leading to the socioeconomic decline of nomadic communities.

Ultimately, Manchukuo's industrial policies in Xing'an Province reveal the duality of Japan's colonial approach: leveraging the rhetoric of development and autonomy while enforcing strict control to serve imperialist goals. These policies contributed to the transformation of Xing'an into a logistical and colonial hub for Japan's war efforts, underscoring the limits of the "harmony of five races" ideology. This study highlights the complexities of border governance and the interplay between resource exploitation and political control in a strategically significant region during a tumultuous period.

Keywords

Manchukuo, Xing'an Province, Inner Mongolia, Japanese Imperialism, Industrial Policies, Manchuria-Mongolia Policy

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Introduction

Manchukuo was a state established in the Manchuria region from 1932 to 1945. Since it was founded by the Japanese Kwantung Army, there are diverse evaluations regarding its nature. Manchukuo is often defined as a puppet state of Japan, and in China, it is referred to as the “puppet state of Manchukuo” (偽滿洲國), emphasizing its illegitimacy. Recently, scholars like Prasenjit Duara have reexamined Manchukuo, highlighting its modern state system, fascist mobilization system, planned economy, and the pluralistic governance system advocating the harmony of five races.¹ Additionally, Korean academia has been conducting research to ascertain various and significant impacts of Manchukuo's state systems on post-1945 Korean history.²

¹ Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003). Additionally, Korean scholar Yoon Hwi-tak has noted the pluralistic ethnic composition of Manchukuo and defined it as a ‘multi-ethnic state.’ For details, see Yoon Hwi-tak 윤휘탁, *Manjuguk: shikminjijeok sangsang-i ingtaehan 'bokhapminjokgukka'* 滿洲國: 植民地的 想像이 잉태한 ‘複合民族國家’ (Hye'an, 2013).

² Related studies include those by Kang Sang-jung and Han Seok-jung. Kang Sang-jung pointed out that the post-war regimes of Kishi Nobusuke and Park Chung-hee had their origins in Manchukuo. Kang Sang-jung 강상중, Hyeon Muam 현무암, *Kishi Nobusuke-wa Park Chung-hee:*

Manchukuo, though subject to various evaluations concerning its characteristic, was a diverse and complex state that encompassed multiple ethnic groups within the Manchurian region. The slogan “Harmony of the Five Races” (五族協和), which highlights the cooperation among the Japanese, Koreans, Mongols, Manchurians, and Han Chinese, epitomizes this diversity. Furthermore, Manchuria, the region where Manchukuo was established, was itself a borderland inhabited by a variety of ethnic groups and cultures. To govern this multifaceted area, Manchukuo adopted a pluralistic administrative structure.

Every nation possesses both central and peripheral regions. Manchukuo was no exception, and one of its peripheral areas was the eastern Inner Mongolia region around the Xing’an Range, which straddles the border between Manchuria and Mongolia. Even before the establishment of Manchukuo, Japan pursued a “Manchuria-Mongolia Policy” (滿蒙政策) to expand into Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia. After the founding of Manchukuo, this eastern Inner Mongolia region was incorporated as Xing’an Province (興安省) within Manchukuo. Given its position bordering Outer Mongolia, the Soviet Union, and China, the Xing’an region was a critical frontier for Manchukuo’s defense and expansion efforts. Leveraging Xing’an Province as a base, Manchukuo and Japan advanced into Inner Mongolia, extending their sphere of influence southward to the Rehe Province, north of Beijing.

Despite the significance of Manchukuo’s control over the Xing’an region, only recently has it received academic attention. Notable studies include those by Suzuki Nirei, Qi Baishun, and Yoshida Junichi. Suzuki Nirei’s research detailed the establishment of Xing’an Province and Japan’s Inner Mongolia policies within the context of the Manchuria-Mongolia Policy.³ Yoshida Junichi’s research holds significant historiographi-

Takaki Masao, Park Jeong-hee-ege Manjuguk iran mueotiotneunga 기사 노부스케와 박정희: 다카키 마사오, 박정희에게 만주국이란 무엇이었는가 (Chaekgwa hamkke, 2012). Similarly, Han Seok-jung highlighted that the economic development model of Korea in the 1960s and 1970s originated in Manchukuo. Han Seok-jung 한석정, *Manju modeon* 만주모던 (Munhak-gwa jiseongsa, 2016).

³ Suzuki Nirei 鈴木仁麗, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru: Manmō seisaku kara Kōanshō tōchi e* 滿洲

cal value, which compiled and introduced historical materials related to Japan's and Manchukuo's Inner Mongolia policies before 1945.⁴ Qi Baisun's research, closely related to the topic of this paper, examines Manchukuo's economic control over Inner Mongolia through its financial, transportation, communication, and industrial policies.⁵ Additionally, there is ongoing research on Manchukuo's educational policies for Mongolians,⁶ land reclamation policies,⁷ and colonial policies.

Building on these previous studies, this paper examines an aspect of Manchukuo's frontier control through its industrial policies in Xing'an Province. In the formation of modern states, control over frontier areas and acquisition of resources are inseparable tasks. The process of securing stable control over frontier regions necessitated the control of various resources such as mines, forests, livestock, and fisheries. Existing studies on Xing'an Province in Manchukuo have been detailed in individual aspects but lack a comprehensive approach. In particular, Qi's research thoroughly examines the policies of economic control of Xing'an Province during the Manchukuo period but pays little attention to the close correlation between these policies of economic control and Manchukuo's border governance. Therefore, this paper seeks to understand how Manchukuo attempted to strengthen its control system over the eastern Inner

国と内モンゴル: 満蒙政策から興安省統治へ (Akashi shoten, 2012).

- ⁴ Yoshida Junichi 吉田順一, *Senzenki no uchi Mogoru tōbu to Nihon* 戦前期の内モンゴル東部と日本 (Kazama shobō, 2021).
- ⁵ Qi Baishun 齊百順, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu* 日本侵佔時期興安省經濟統制政策研究 (Liaoning minzu chubanshe, 2016).
- ⁶ Wei Jingyi 魏靜怡, "Qingmo zhi Riwei shiqi Xing'anmeng diqu tudi he jiaoyu zhuangkuang de bianqian" 清末至日偽時期興安盟地區土地和教育狀況的變遷 (Master's Thesis, Inner Mongolia University, 2014); Cao Yuanyuan 曹園園, "Kangzhan shiqi Riben zai Weimanzhouguo Xing'an sheng de zhimin jiaoyu tanxi" 抗戰時期日本在偽滿洲國興安省的殖民教育探析, *Xibu xuekan* 西部學刊 (2020).
- ⁷ Hirokawa Saho 廣川佐保, *Mōchi hōjō: "Manshūkoku" no tochi seisaku* 蒙地奉上: 「滿州國」の土地政策 (Kyūko shoin, 2005); Ikegami Akihide 池上彰英, Xiao Gang 曉剛, "Kingendai ni okeru uchi Mongoru tōbu chiiki no nōgyō hensen: yūboku ni yoru bokuchikugyō kara teijū hōboku to kōshu nōgyō ni itaru katei" 近現代における内モンゴル東部地域の農業変遷: 遊牧による牧畜業から定住放牧と耕種農業に至る過程, *Meiji daigaku nogakubu kenkyū hōkoku* 明治大学農学部研究報告 64 (2015).

Mongolia region—a frontier area—through the analysis of its industrial policies in Xing'an Province. Particularly, since the eastern Inner Mongolia region where Xing'an Province was established developed forestry using the Great Khingan Mountains' forest resources and livestock farming on the steppe, this paper will explore how Manchukuo's management of forestry and livestock farming was related to its resource management and frontier policies in the eastern Inner Mongolia region.

Establishment of Xing'an Province in Manchukuo and the Governance of Eastern Inner Mongolia

Map 1. Regional Scope of Xing'an Province during the Manchukuo Period



Xing'an Province (Map 1)⁸ in Manchukuo encompassed the grassland regions of present-day eastern Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Heilongjiang Province, Liaoning Province, and western Jilin Province. Originally, this area was inhabited by Mongolian tribes such as the Khorchin, Gorlos, Dörbed, and Jarud—known as “Mongolia within Manchuria”—during the Qing Dynasty. From the time of Nurhaci, the Qing Dynasty strengthened cooperation with the leaders of these Mongolian nomads by forming marriage alliances and governed them through the Mongolian League-Banner System (盟旗制度). Additionally, the Qing implemented the Blockade Policy (封禁政策) to prohibit Han Chinese migration and cultivation in eastern Inner Mongolia to preserve the nomadic economy. Through cooperation with these eastern Inner Mongolian nomads, the Qing succeeded in stabilizing its rule over Mongolia and Manchuria until the nineteenth century.

However, from the mid-nineteenth century, as population pressure increased in China Proper, and imperialist powers such as Russia began to advance into Manchuria, the Qing Dynasty opened the land of Mongolian banners in eastern Inner Mongolia to Han Chinese for reclamation as a defensive measure. This led to frequent disputes over land ownership and cultural differences between the existing Mongolian nomads and the newly arrived Han Chinese farmers. In 1891, during the Jindandao Incident, Mongolian nomads were massacred en masse by Han Chinese farmers and the secret society known as Jindandao.⁹

Meanwhile, after the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895, Japan began to expand its influence over Korea and Manchuria, viewing eastern Inner Mongolia and Manchuria as critical areas to protect Japan's sovereignty from China and Russia. This perspective laid the foundation for Japan's subsequent continental policy, known as the “Manchuria-Mongolia

⁸ Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 214.

⁹ For the complex background of the Jindandao Incident of 1891, see Burensain Borjigin, “The Complex Structure of Ethnic Conflict in the Frontier: Through the Debates around the ‘Jindandao Incident’ in 1891,” *Inner Asia* 6 (2004).

Policy.”¹⁰ The Manchuria-Mongolia Policy was pursued in earnest after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904. In 1907 and 1912, Japan secured “special interests” in southern Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia through two secret agreements with Russia.¹¹ Additionally, in 1915, following a clash between Chinese troops and Japanese police in Zhengjiatun, Liaoyuan County, Japan stationed 1,500 soldiers there.¹² By pressuring the Beijing government of the Republic of China, which held jurisdiction over eastern Inner Mongolia, Japan secured several rights—including the rights of land leasing, land ownership, mining, and railroad construction—through the “Treaty on Southern Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia.”¹³

Furthermore, Japan pursued the separation of eastern Inner Mongolia from the territory of China. Following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, Inner and Outer Mongolian nobility initiated independence movements. Japan covertly supported the leaders of independence movements by sponsoring Manchu royalty, fomenting anti-Han Chinese uprisings in Inner Mongolia. Although the independence movements in Inner Mongolia during the 1910s ultimately failed due to suppression by the Beijing government, the Kwantung Army continued to gather various information about eastern Inner Mongolia and maintained contact with Inner

¹⁰ The term “Man-Mō” (滿蒙, meaning Manchu-Mongol or Manchuria-Mongolia) was created by Japan during its expansion into Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia. Until the Qing Dynasty, “Manchu” and “Mongol” were ethnonyms. After the Russo-Japanese War, however, Japan began referring to the areas of the Manchu and Mongol peoples as “Man-Mō” during its expansion into the northeastern frontiers of the Qing. The boundaries of “Man-Mō” varied over time, but following the third Russo-Japanese negotiation in 1912, which determined the territorial extent of Inner Mongolia, the area east of 116 degrees 27 minutes east longitude was referred to as “Man-Mō.” For details, see Yang Jiseon 양지선, “Ilje-ui Manmōng jeongchaeg-e daehan Hanjung-ui insik bigyo” 일제의 만몽 정책에 대한 한중의 인식비교, *Dongyanghak* 東洋學 66 (2017): 135.

¹¹ Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 54-58; Yang Jiseon 양지선, “Hanin-ui dongbu Naemonggol iju-reul tonghae bon Ilje-ui Manmong jeongchaeg (1931-1945)” 한인의 동부 내몽골 이주를 통해 본 일제의 滿蒙政策 (1931-1945), *Monggolhak* 몽골학 39 (2014): 152-53.

¹² Yang, “Hanin-ui dongbu Naemonggol iju-reul tonghae bon Ilje-ui Manmong jeongchaeg (1931-1945),” 154.

¹³ Nihon kokuritsu kōkubunshokan 日本國立公文書館, “Nan Manshū oyobi tōbu uchi Mongoru ni kansuru jōyaku” 南滿洲及東部內蒙古二關スル條約 (June 8, 1915).

Mongolian nobility and intellectuals who had studied in Japan.

A key figure in planning and devising Japan's policy for eastern Inner Mongolia was Kikutake Jitsuzō (菊竹實藏, 1889–1946), head of the Zhengjiatun office of the South Manchuria Railway Company (滿鉄 Mantetsu).¹⁴ During the 1920s and 1930s, Kikutake supported the “Inner Mongolian Independence Army” and gathered extensive information about the region, which he provided to the Kwantung Army. Following the Manchurian Incident in 1931, Kikutake proposed a governance model for eastern Inner Mongolia to the Kwantung Army, centering on the establishment of an Inner Mongolian autonomous region based on the Mongolian Banner system (旗制). This proposal was incorporated into the establishment of Xing'an Province after the founding of Manchukuo, and Kikutake was appointed Deputy Director of the Xing'an Bureau under the Ministry of State Affairs in 1932, where he devised and organized the governance system for eastern Inner Mongolia.

On September 18, 1931, the Kwantung Army initiated the Manchurian Incident, occupying entire Manchuria and extending its influence into eastern Inner Mongolia. In December 1931, Captain Kakakura Tadashi (片倉衷), Kikutake Jitsuzō, and others held two meetings in Tailai and Liaoyuan with leaders and intellectuals of eastern Inner Mongolia,¹⁵ where they agreed to establish a Manchu-Mongolian Independent Government with eastern Inner Mongolia as its autonomous region. They also agreed to abolish the traditional Mongolian nobility system, guarantee the appointment of Mongolian officials, and prohibit land reclamation by Han Chinese.¹⁶ Consequently, in 1932, eastern Inner Mongolia was incorporated into Manchukuo, and the “Regulations on the Xing'an Bureau” were promulgated in March, initiating the formal establishment of

¹⁴ For Kikutake Jitsuzō's perceptions regarding eastern Inner Mongolia, see Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 376-404.

¹⁵ For the process and results of the Tailai and the Liaoyuan Conferences led by the Japanese Kwantung Army, see Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 146-51; Hirokawa, *Mōchi hōjō*, 26-28.

¹⁶ Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 166-68.

Xing'an Province and the governance of eastern Inner Mongolia.¹⁷

Xing'an Province, including eastern Inner Mongolia, was a unique region in Manchukuo. Geopolitically, it was an important northwestern frontier bordering Russia and Outer Mongolia. Socio-economically, it was a unique nomadic area within Manchukuo's agricultural and industrial territories. The Manchukuo government established the Xing'an Bureau under the State Council to govern the Mongolians in Xing'an Province, headquartered in the capital, Xinjing. The Xing'an Bureau comprised the Political Affairs Office, responsible for administration, the General Affairs Office for accounting and finance, and the Agricultural Affairs Office for managing industries. Unlike other provinces in Manchukuo, which adopted the county system under the Ministry of Civil Affairs, Xing'an Province operated under the Mongolian Banner system, recognizing the 'autonomy' of the Mongolians.¹⁸

The governance system of eastern Inner Mongolia centered around the Xing'an Bureau inherited many aspects of the Qing and Republican Chinese Mongolian policies. The Qing Dynasty managed the Mongolian nobility through alliances and the Board for the Administration of Outlying Regions (理藩院). After the Qing's fall, the Beijing government of the Republic of China continued this system with the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (蒙藏院), and the Nationalist government in the late 1920s also had the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission under the Executive Branch (行政院) to manage Mongolian and Tibetan issues.¹⁹ Although the Kwantung Army promoted the establishment of Xing'an Province as a break from the subordination under Qing and Republican China, in reality, Manchukuo partially inherited these traditions of Mongolian governance.

The governance structure and jurisdiction of eastern Inner Mongolia under the Xing'an Bureau underwent frequent changes after its estab-

¹⁷ "Xing'anjiu guanzhì" 興安局官制, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (March 9, 1932).

¹⁸ Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 231-33.

¹⁹ Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 232-33.

lishment. Initially, the Xing'an Bureau's jurisdiction was limited to the non-open Mongolian lands in eastern Inner Mongolia, while Mongolian nomads in Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang Provinces were incorporated into the county system under the Ministry of Civil Affairs. This exclusion led to dissatisfaction among the Mongolian nomads, who desired inclusion in the Xing'an Bureau's jurisdiction.²⁰ Additionally, the occupation of Rehe Province by the Kwantung Army and Manchukuo's forces in 1933 necessitated an expanded governance structure for Mongolian territories.

In April 1934, Manchukuo inaugurated Puyi as emperor and restructured its administrative system nationwide. Xing'an Province was divided into Eastern Xing'an, Western Xing'an, Southern Xing'an, and Northern Xing'an sub-provinces. The Xing'an General Bureau (興安總署), which oversaw eastern Inner Mongolia's administration, was reorganized into the Department of Politics of Mongolia (蒙政部) in response to demands for expanded Mongolian autonomy. The Department of Politics of Mongolia's jurisdiction expanded to include parts of Rehe and Fengtian Provinces and gained broader administrative authority over local administration, security, industry, education, and religious affairs.²¹

The establishment of Xing'an Province and its reorganization into the Department of Politics of Mongolia reflected the trend of autonomy movements in eastern Inner Mongolia during the 1920s. To secure their interests in the region, Manchukuo and the Kwantung Army initially propagated 'national harmony' and superficially recognized Mongolian autonomy. They implemented the Banner system in eastern Inner Mongolia, reflecting the traditional nomadic order, and expanded Mongolian autonomous areas through the reorganization into the Department of Politics of Mongolia. Eastern Inner Mongolian officials were also appointed to positions within the Xing'an Bureau, the Department of Politics of Mongolia, and as Banner heads (旗長) within Xing'an Province.

²⁰ Hirokawa, *Mōchi hōjō*, 28-31.

²¹ Hirokawa, *Mōchi hōjō*, 33-34.

However, behind the facade of autonomy policies in eastern Inner Mongolia, there was a darker aspect of strengthened colonial rule and the destruction of traditional Mongolian social order. The Manchukuo government claimed to uphold ‘autonomy,’ but it was limited to the banner level, not the provincial level, and Japanese officials were embedded in various administrative organs within the banner. Additionally, in the late 1930s, Manchukuo and Japan conducted extensive surveys and reorganized the Mongolian lands in Xing’an Province, converting previously opened Mongolian lands (開放蒙地) into state-owned lands. This process, known as “the consolidation and nationalization of Mongolian land” (蒙地奉上), led to the socioeconomic decline of the Mongolian nobility, who had held ownership and various rights over these lands.²²

Furthermore, Japan transitioned into a total war state following the initiation of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the Pacific War in 1941. Consequently, it intensified control over its various colonies. The Xing’an region of Manchukuo was of significant strategic importance to both Manchukuo and Japan as a rear base for the Chinese front and a western front against the Soviet Union, thus being a crucial border region. In 1937, the Manchukuo government abolished the Mongol Government to strengthen its control over the eastern Inner Mongolia region, transferring Mongolian affairs back to the Xing’an Bureau under the State Council.²³ The abolition of the Mongol Government implied a significant reduction in ‘autonomy’ for eastern Inner Mongolia.

In this manner, Manchukuo and Japan actively utilized the “autonomy” (自治) movements within eastern Inner Mongolia during the 1930s to incorporate the nomadic society of eastern Inner Mongolia into their governance domain, establishing a special administrative region called Xing’an Province. They also created the Department of Politics of Mongolia to appear as if they were expanding autonomy in eastern Inner Mongolia. However, Xing’an Province was a strategically important

²² For representative research on the process of *mengdi fengshang* 蒙地奉上 during the Manchukuo period, see Hirokawa, *Mōchi hōjō*.

²³ Hirokawa, *Mōchi hōjō*, 84-85; Suzuki, *Manshūkoku to uchi Mongoru*, 363-67.

stronghold and rear base for Manchukuo and Japan, so the nominal autonomy concealed an underlying duality of increased control and colonial domination. This dual nature of Manchukuo's governance in eastern Inner Mongolia is clearly exemplified by the industrial policies implemented in Xing'an Province during the Manchukuo period.

Manchukuo's Control Policies for Forestry and Livestock Resources in Xing'an Province

One of the key reasons why Manchukuo's control over Xing'an Province was crucial for Japan's expansion of influence was the region's diverse and abundant resources. Since the mid-nineteen century, the Manchurian region had been recognized as a global resource hub. The Fengtian area was noted for its rich coal and iron ore deposits, while the Jilin and Heilongjiang regions were famous for their abundant forest resources and gold and silver deposits. The Xing'an area, corresponding to Manchukuo's northwestern frontier and eastern Inner Mongolia, featured vast steppes connected to the Mongolian Plateau and rich forests along the Greater Khingan Range, which formed a natural boundary between Manchuria and Mongolia. Consequently, from the late Qing Dynasty, this region saw active forestry and animal husbandry, and the upper Heilongjiang areas such as Jilalin and Qiganhe witnessed extensive gold mining development.

For Japan, which had sought to expand its influence into the Manchu-Mongolian region since the late nineteenth century, these resources of eastern Inner Mongolia were of great importance. As mentioned earlier, Japan viewed the Manchu-Mongolian region as its "line of interest" and engaged in numerous diplomatic negotiations with Russia and China to secure "special interests" in eastern Inner Mongolia following the Russo-Japanese War. During the negotiations from 1907 to 1916, Japan diplomatically secured rights in eastern Inner Mongolia through three agreements with Russia. In 1915, through the "Twenty-One Demands" with the Beijing government of the Republic of China, Japan obtained land leasing rights, mining rights, and joint management rights in agriculture

and industry in eastern Inner Mongolia. Subsequently, Japan actively engaged in the development of mines and forests in Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia through agreements such as the “Five Negotiation Agreements on the Three Eastern Provinces” and the “Joint Loan Agreement for Gold Mines and Forests in Jilin-Heilongjiang” with Zhang Zuolin’s Fengtian warlord regime.²⁴

After the establishment of Manchukuo and the incorporation of eastern Inner Mongolia into Xing’an Province, Japanese resource development efforts in this region intensified. The strategic value of eastern Inner Mongolia as a border area with the Soviet Union and as a rear base for Japan’s expansion into China increased significantly. Manchukuo and Japan enacted several laws and regulations to manage and develop the resources of Xing’an Province. From the preparation stages of Manchukuo’s establishment in 1931, the Kwantung Army formulated the “Plan for the Development of Manchuria and Mongolia,” outlining policies for resource development in eastern Inner Mongolia. This plan was reflected in the “Outline of Economic Construction in Manchukuo,” which formed the basis of industrial policies announced after Manchukuo’s establishment.²⁵ Subsequently, the Manchukuo government enacted various laws, including the “Important Industry Control Act,” the “Mining Control Act,” and the “Livestock Market Act,” to strengthen control over the resources in Xing’an Province.²⁶

Additionally, the Manchukuo government and Japanese authorities established several administrative bodies and companies to actively manage and develop the abundant resources of Xing’an Province. According to Qi Baishun, Xing’an Province’s economic control policy was implemented through a three-tiered hierarchical structure: (1) the Xing’an provincial level (peripheral); (2) the Manchukuo governmental level (cen-

²⁴ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng’ānshēng jīngjì tóngzhì zhēngcè yánjiū*, 68-72.

²⁵ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng’ānshēng jīngjì tóngzhì zhēngcè yánjiū*, 119.

²⁶ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng’ānshēng jīngjì tóngzhì zhēngcè yánjiū*, 124-26.

tral); and (3) the Japanese governmental level (core).²⁷ Resource development was also carried out by this three-tiered hierarchical structure.

First, the resource development entity at the Xing'an provincial level was the Agricultural Affairs Office (權業處) under the Xing'an Bureau, responsible for executing various resource development policies of the central Manchukuo government and Japan.²⁸ The resource development entity at the Manchukuo government level was the Ministry of Industry (實業部) under the State Council, which oversaw agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and mining. However, as Manchukuo's economic control policies were strengthened, changes occurred in the resource development management institutions. In 1937, the Ministry of Industry was abolished and replaced by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (產業部). In 1940, with the reinforcement of Japan's total war system and the intensification of Manchukuo's wartime control policies, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce was abolished. Its subsidiaries, the Mining and Industry Bureau (鑛工司) and the Water and Electricity Bureau (水電局), were incorporated into the Ministry of Economic Affairs (經濟部), and the Ministry of Agriculture (興農部) was established to carry out agricultural production increase plans. The Ministry of Agriculture, through its Animal Husbandry Division (畜産司) and Forestry Division (林業司), promoted resource development in animal husbandry and forestry in the Xing'an area.²⁹

A notable subject within the framework of Japan's policies in the Xing'an region of Manchukuo is the role of private corporations or state enterprises. These special Japanese companies led the overall industrial development of Manchukuo. Since Japan's management of the southern Manchurian region following the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, state enterprises such as the South Manchuria Railway Company (Mantetsu) and various Japanese corporations, including Ōkura-gumi (大倉組) and Mit-

²⁷ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng'ānshèng jīngjì tóngzhì zhèngcè yánjiū*, 118.

²⁸ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng'ānshèng jīngjì tóngzhì zhèngcè yánjiū*, 313.

²⁹ For the evolution of Manchukuo's industrial organizations and resource management agencies, see Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng'ānshèng jīngjì tóngzhì zhèngcè yánjiū*, 131-34.

subishi, have participated in resource development in Manchuria. These Japanese state enterprises and corporations were also actively involved in resource development in the Xing'an region of Manchukuo. Japanese companies such as Mantetsu, Mitsui, and Mitsubishi invested more than half of the capital in Xing'an resource development. Various Manchukuo state enterprises, including the Manchuria Coal Mining Company, Manchuria Petroleum Company, Manchuria Mining Development Company, Manchuria Gold Mining Company, Manchuria Forestry Company, and Manchuria Livestock Company, led the resource development in Xing'an.³⁰ It is essential to note that these companies operated under the control of Japanese government and remained loyal to state interests.

The management and development of resources in Xing'an Province under Manchukuo were conducted through a complex collaboration among three major entities. How, then, were the resource development policies in Xing'an Province specifically implemented? In the following sections, we will examine the realities of resource development in Xing'an Province, focusing on forestry and animal husbandry. These two industries were representative of the economy in eastern Inner Mongolia, and both Manchukuo and Japan paid significant attention to their development while controlling Xing'an Province. Therefore, this paper aims to elucidate the nature of resource development in the Xing'an region during the Manchukuo period by analyzing the forestry and animal husbandry sectors.

1. Manchukuo's Forestry Resource Policy in the Greater Khingan Region

Xing'an Province in Manchukuo, including the eastern Inner Mongolia region, was renowned for its rich forestry resources. In particular, the forests near the Greater Khingan Range, which runs from the west to the

³⁰ For Japanese special companies and state-run companies involved in the economic policies of Xing'an Province, see Qi, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 126-31.

south of Manchuria, along with the forests of the Yalu River, were notable as key forestry areas in Manchukuo. The forested area in Xing'an Province included 8,196,000 *mo* (畝) of dense forest and 24,261,000 *mo* of sparse forest, accounting for approximately 27% of the total forest area in Manchukuo.³¹ Moreover, the timber reserves in these forests also constituted 27% of the total timber reserves in Manchukuo, making the region crucial for the country's timber industry (Table 1).³²

Table 1. Statistics of Wood Reserves in Xing'an Province (Unit: 1,000 cubic meters)

Type of Wood	Xing'an Province	Entire Manchukuo	Proportion of Xing'an Province
Coniferous	573,556	2,050,202	27.9%
Broadleaf	901,831	3,130,242	28.8%
Total	1,475,388	5,180,443	28.4%

During the Manchukuo period, approximately 100 different types of trees were logged in Xing'an Province, indicating a high degree of diversity. Among these, about ten species were suitable for timber. This wood was utilized across various sectors of Manchukuo, ranging from industrial applications such as bridge construction and railroad ties to household products including wagon wheels, chairs, furniture, and firewood (Table 2).³³ Notably, the development of forests in Xing'an Province was significant for key industries like railway construction and the production of gun stocks, which were crucial for war supplies. This underscores the critical role that the forest resources of Xing'an Province played in the economy of Manchukuo.

³¹ Manshū jijō annaisho 滿洲事情業內所, ed., *Mōko jijō* 蒙古事情 (Manshū jijō annaisho, 1940), 125; Tōa mondai kenkyūkai 東亞問題研究會, ed., *Mōko yōran* 蒙古要覽 (Sanshindō, 1938), 34-35.

³² Manshū jijō annaisho, *Mōko jijō*, 135.

³³ Manshū jijō annaisho, *Mōko jijō*, 126-27.

Table 2. Industrial Timber Species and Uses in Xing'an Province

Tree Species	Main Uses of Wood
Larch	Building materials, bridges, shipbuilding, railroad ties, mine timbers, utility poles, masts, implements
Elm	Shipbuilding, railroad ties, implements, agricultural tools, wagon wheels, plywood
Birch	Agricultural tools, other implements, firewood, plywood
Soft Maple	Bowls, plates, axes, wagon wheels, chairs, carts, plywood
Yellow Birch	Gun stocks, ornaments, medicine, dye
Walnut	Gun stocks, handicrafts, chairs, plywood
Poplar	Firewood, cargo boxes, charcoal for gunpowder, pulp
Arborvitae	Railway cars, furniture, plywood
Maple	Furniture, fine woodworking
Linden	Firewood, casting molds

As demonstrated in the table above, the development and management of forestry resources in Xing'an Province were crucial to Manchukuo's industry. Consequently, Manchukuo established administrative bodies and enacted relevant laws to manage and develop these forestry resources. The forestry administration in Xing'an Province was bifurcated between the central government's Ministry of Industry and the Xing'an Bureau (namely, the Department of Politics of Mongolia).³⁴ The Ministry of Industry was responsible for overseeing forestry administration across Manchukuo, while the Xing'an Bureau executed forestry administration within Xing'an Province. The Ministry of Industry comprised three departments: General Affairs, Agriculture and Mining, and Commerce and Industry, with the Forestry Division (林務科) under the Agriculture and Mining Department overseeing the forestry administration.

Subsequently, in 1933, the Agriculture and Mining Department was

³⁴ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 343.

reorganized into the Agriculture and Forestry Department, and the Forestry Division was incorporated into the latter. In 1934, the Forestry Division was separated into an independent agency, the Forestry Bureau (林務司), under which the Forestry Management Division and the Forestry Industry Division were established. The establishment of the Forestry Bureau indicated the growing importance of forestry in Manchukuo's industrial policy and the need for a more systematic and specialized forestry administrative organization. The Forestry Bureau established forestry offices in various forest regions to handle administrative operations, and in 1936, these offices were renamed forestry stations (林務署).³⁵ In 1936, the forestry stations in Xing'an Province were located in eight regions: Hailar, Yilekute, Halun'ar, Samha, Solun, Zalantun, Bogdo, and Xibuteha.³⁶

In 1937, two significant changes occurred in Xing'an Province's forestry administration. The first was the abolition of the Ministry of Industry and the establishment of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The creation of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce aimed to "develop and utilize resources related to national defense and establish an administrative body to protect resources"³⁷ in response to Japan's escalation into the Second Sino-Japanese War and the need to strengthen control over Manchukuo's resources. The forestry-related institutions under the Ministry of Industry were restructured, and a Forestry Department was established under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The Forestry Department included divisions for Forestry Management, Supervision, Administration, Planning, and Operations, with the Supervision Division

³⁵ For the evolution of Manchukuo's forestry administration, see Qi, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 342-47.

³⁶ "Kōanhokushō rinnusho zankō kitei" 興安北省林務署暫行規程, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (March 12, 1936); "Kōantōshō rinnusho zankō kitei" 興安東省林務署暫行規程, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (April 25, 1936); "Kōantōshō rinnusho ichi meissho oyobi kankatsu naka shūsei" 興安東省林務署位置名稱及管轄中修正, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (February 2, 1937).

³⁷ "Guanyu zhongyang zhengzhi jigou gaige wenti" 關於中央政治機構改革問題 (May 5, 1937), in *Riben diguozhuyi qinhua dang'an xuanbian 3: Weiman kuilei zhengquan* 日本帝國主義侵華檔案選編 3: 偽滿傀儡政權, edited by Zhongguo di'er lishi dang'anguan 中國第二歷史檔案館 and Jilinsheng shehui kexueyuan 吉林省社會科學院 (Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 266.

being central to Manchukuo's forestry control policy, overseeing timber distribution and pricing, timber sales, lumbering, and timber export.³⁸

The second major change was the abolition of the Department of Politics of Mongolia. As previously mentioned, the Department of Politics of Mongolia symbolized the 'autonomy' of eastern Inner Mongolia. Its abolition signified a reduction in 'autonomy' and strengthened control by the central Manchukuo government over the region. With the abolition of the Department of Politics of Mongolia, its functions were integrated into the central Ministry of Industry. Through this administrative reorganization, the bifurcated forestry administration between the Ministry of Industry and the Department of Politics of Mongolia at the inception of Manchukuo was unified under the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. This indicated that even in terms of forestry, the eastern Inner Mongolia frontier became more subordinated to Manchukuo.

Manchukuo's forestry policy in the Greater Khingan region can be broadly categorized into four main directions: (1) regulation of forest rights (林場權); (2) establishment of a special account for the national forest industry; (3) a unified plan for forestry resource development; and (4) timber control.

First, regarding the regulation of forest rights (林場權), Manchukuo promulgated the "Forest Rights Regulation Law" in 1934, legally delineating the boundaries between national and private forests and establishing policies for applying for, reviewing, and approving forest ownership. In Xing'an Province, forest owners applied for forest rights through various subdivisions of the Xing'an General Bureau, which then reviewed and approved these applications. Through this process, 2.09 million hectares of forest land in Xing'an Province were registered.³⁹ Second, starting in 1936, Manchukuo implemented the special account for the national forest industry in the Xing'an forestry regions. This initiative aimed to

³⁸ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 344-45.

³⁹ "Rinchōken seiri hō" 林場權整理法, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (June 9, 1934).

allocate 300,000 yen annually for logging military and industrial timber and to issue financial subsidies to each Mongolian banner in Eastern and Northern Xing'an to cover logging expenses.⁴⁰

Third, the unified plan for forestry resource development aimed to maximize the benefits of timber development under the guidance of the Japanese Kwantung Army. This plan had two main components: during the first five-year industrial development period, the logging volume of natural forests was set at ten million cubic meters, and during the second five-year development period, the annual logging volume was set at 1.3 million cubic meters.⁴¹ This plan was disseminated to the forestry departments in various regions of Xing'an Province.

Finally, Manchukuo implemented policies to control various aspects of timber-related activities. In 1938, the "Timber Control Ordinance" was enacted, which regulated the logging methods in national forests, timber distribution and price control by special companies like the Manchurian Forestry Corporation, government control over military and governmental timber, and the implementation of an export permit system for timber.⁴² Additionally, the Ministry of Industry's Forestry Department established divisions for timber utilization and processing to control timber production, while the Manchurian Forestry Corporation controlled timber export and distribution, thereby strengthening control over timber management in Xing'an Province. The "Commodity and Price Control Law" and the "Temporary Measures for Prices Law" further enabled the Manchukuo government to control timber prices in Xing'an Province.

⁴⁰ "Kōan tōhoku ryōshō nai shinrin shori yōkō" 興安東北兩省內森林處理要綱, in *Manshūkoku Mōsei jūnenshi* 滿洲國蒙政十年史, edited by Kōankyoku chōsaka 興安局調查課 (Manshū shūbunkan, 1942), 42-43.

⁴¹ "Yoshikai Tadashi hikkyō" 吉海忠之筆供 (July 1, 1954), in *Riben diguozhuyi qinhua dang'an xuanbian 14: dongbei jingji shouduo* 日本帝國主義侵華檔案選編 14: 東北經濟收奪, edited by Zhongguo di'er lishi dang'anguan 中國第二歷史檔案館 (Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 205-10.

⁴² *Manshūkokushi hensan kankōkai* 滿洲國史編纂刊行會, ed., *Manshūkokushi: kakuron ge* 滿洲國史: 各論 下, translated by Dongbei runhan shisnian Jilin bianxiezu 東北淪陷十四年吉林編寫組 (1990), 181.

2. Management of Animal Husbandry in Xing'an Province of Manchukuo

Along with forestry, animal husbandry was one of the most important industries in Xing'an Province of Manchukuo. The eastern Inner Mongolia region, including Xing'an Province, was predominantly a nomadic area with an economy largely based on pastoralism. Major livestock in this region included cattle, horses, sheep, goats, and camels, and the livestock products comprised wool, beef, dairy products, horsehair, and leather.⁴³ According to a survey conducted in 1934, the number of cattle, horses, and sheep per 1,000 people in Xing'an Province was as follows (Table 3).⁴⁴

Table 3. Numbers of Cattle, Horses, and Sheep per 1,000 People in Xing'an Province, Manchukuo in 1934

	Cattle (heads)	Horses (heads)	Sheep (heads)
Northern Xing'an Province	1,903.3	2,008.8	11,852.7
Eastern Xing'an Province	95.4	90	13.3
Southern Xing'an Province	119	26.3	180.6
Western Xing'an Province	378.7	94.3	479.4
Average in Xing'an Province	313.3	178.6	993.5
Average in Other Provinces of Manchukuo	46.6	68.1	35.5

The management of animal husbandry in eastern Inner Mongolia was also crucial in Japan's Manchuria-Mongolia Policy. Products such as wool, horsehair, and leather from livestock of eastern Inner Mongolia were significant trade goods and strategic materials during wartime. Japan often referred to the animal husbandry of Xing'an Province as the

⁴³ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 87.

⁴⁴ Tōa mondai kenkyūkai, *Mōko yōran*, 32.

“flower of Manchuria and Mongolia,” highlighting its importance.⁴⁵ Consequently, both Manchukuo and Japan devoted significant efforts to managing animal husbandry in Xing'an Province, particularly focusing on livestock breeding and production increases.

Initially, the administration of animal husbandry in Xing'an Province was divided among the Military Government, the Ministry of Industry, and the Xing'an General Bureau. The involvement of the Military Government in livestock management was due to the strategic importance of livestock products, such as horses, cattle, and leather, to the Kwantung Army of Manchukuo and Japan. Following the administrative reforms of Manchukuo in 1937, which saw the abolition of the Ministry of Industry and the Department of Politics of Mongolia, and the establishment of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the administration of animal husbandry was also integrated into the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Subsequently, with the establishment of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1940, the Livestock Bureau and the Livestock Affairs Bureau under this ministry took over the administration of animal husbandry.⁴⁶

Manchukuo's livestock policy in Xing'an Province focused on two main directions: control of livestock and livestock products, and increase of livestock production. The control of livestock and livestock products was implemented through policies such as livestock and livestock product quantity surveys and statistics, control over the distribution of livestock and livestock products, and policies on the shipment and allocation of livestock products.

The quantity surveys and statistics of livestock and livestock products were conducted periodically in various ways. In 1937, a survey on horse-related affairs in Xing'an Province was carried out,⁴⁷ followed by extensive livestock resource surveys in Northern Xing'an in 1939 and in

⁴⁵ Fujioka Kei 藤岡啓, *Manmō keizai taikan* 滿蒙經濟大觀, in *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan sanbian* 近代中國史料叢刊三編 88 (Wenhai chubanshe, 1999), 151.

⁴⁶ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 376.

⁴⁷ “Baji chōsa hō” 馬事調査法, “Baji chōsa hō shikō kisoku” 馬事調査法試行規則, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (February 4, 1937).

Southern and Western Xing'an by the South Manchuria Railway Company in 1940. The 1940 livestock survey in Southern Xing'an examined various aspects, including livestock quantity, feeding management, breeding, rearing, and hygiene.⁴⁸

The control over the distribution of livestock and livestock products involved stringent regulations on meat and livestock, wool and leather, and general livestock. Meat and livestock, as well as furs and leather, were crucial military resources and were strictly controlled in terms of production and distribution. The control of meat and livestock was enforced through laws such as the "Slaughterhouse Law" and the "Livestock and Livestock Products Control Law," which mandated that meat in Xing'an Province be produced at government-designated slaughterhouses and distributed through the government-designated Manchurian Livestock Corporation. The production and distribution of wool, furs, and leather were also controlled under the "Livestock and Livestock Products Control Law" and were structured to be purchased by the Manchurian Livestock Corporation and the Central Cooperative Association. Additionally, the Manchukuo government enacted laws such as the "Livestock Trade Market Law" and the "Livestock Adjustment Law" to control the movement, allocation, and use of livestock, including horses, cattle, sheep, and camels, in Xing'an Province.⁴⁹

The shipment and allocation policy for livestock products in Xing'an Province was implemented as a part of the control policies following Japan's initiation of the Pacific War in 1941, strengthening the "integration of Japan and Manchukuo." The Manchukuo government, through the Ministry of Industry (later the Ministry of Agriculture), controlled the distribution volume of livestock products in Xing'an Province and allocated quantities to each Banner head, requisitioning livestock and livestock products for central or regional distribution to secure wartime supplies.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng'ānshēng jīngjì tóngzhì zhēngcè yánjiū*, 386-87.

⁴⁹ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng'ānshēng jīngjì tóngzhì zhēngcè yánjiū*, 387-89.

⁵⁰ Qi, *Riben qinzhān shìqì Xīng'ānshēng jīngjì tóngzhì zhēngcè yánjiū*, 390-91.

Another important task in the livestock policy of Manchukuo's Xing'an Province was the improvement and increase of livestock breeds. From the early days of its establishment, Manchukuo considered the improvement and breeding of horses, sheep, and other livestock in Xing'an Province as a crucial part of its agricultural policy. The "Outline of Economic Construction in Manchukuo" promulgated in 1933 outlined plans for the improvement and increase of livestock breeds in Xing'an Province, setting targets to increase the number of new horse breeds—such as Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horses—to at least two million, introduce four million heads of Merino sheep, and increase cattle numbers to 2.7 million with new breeds.⁵¹ These plans to increase livestock production were materialized in the first five-year livestock development plan in 1936 and the second five-year livestock development plan in 1941.

In the first five-year livestock development plan, the Manchukuo government planned to invest 430 million yen from 1937 to 1941 to increase the number of sheep by 4.5 million, cattle by three million, and horses by 2.5 million.⁵² In 1941, the second five-year livestock development plan was established, with specific items and figures detailed in the table below. (Table 4)⁵³

Table 4. The Second Five-Year Livestock Development Plan in Manchukuo

Item	Unit	Quantity in 1941	Production Increase Target	Predicted Quantity in 1946
Cattle	Heads	2,423,000	521,000	2,944,000
Sheep	Heads	3,771,000	1,086,000	4,857,000

⁵¹ "Manshūkoku keizai kensetsu kōyō" 滿洲國經濟建設綱要, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿洲國政府公報 (March 1, 1933).

⁵² "Manshū sanyō kaihatsu gonon keikaku kōyō" 滿洲產業開發五年計劃綱要 (January 25, 1937), in *Riben diguozhuyi qinhua dang'an xuanbian 14: dongbei jingji shouduo* 日本帝國主義侵華檔案選編 14: 東北經濟收奪, edited by Zhongguo di'er lishi dang'anguan 中國第二歷史檔案館 (Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 225-27.

⁵³ Dongbei wuzhi tiaojie weiyuan yanjiuzu 東北物質調節委員研究組, ed., *Dongbei jingji xiaocongshu (chanye)* 東北經濟小叢書 (產業) (Dongbei wuzi diaocha weiyuanhui, 1948), 34-36.

Wool	Tons	3,958	2,241	6,199
Cattle Hides	Pieces	360,000	64,000	424,000
Sheep Pelts	Pieces	1,595,000	395,000	1,990,000
Meat	Tons	160,987	38,173	199,160
Bone Meal	Tons	11,000	41,000	52,000
Pastureland	Hectares		13,000,000	13,000,000

To achieve these livestock production increase plans, the Manchukuo authorities implemented various policies in Xing'an Province. First, policies for the improvement and breeding of horses, cattle, and sheep were implemented. For horse breeding, six national horse breeding farms were established in regions such as Hailar, Jixin, An'anji, Zounan, Tongliao, and Linxi to cultivate superior breeds.⁵⁴ For cattle, breeding farms were established in Western Xing'an, Southern Xing'an, and Eastern Xing'an, with additional breeding stations in the pasturelands of Mongolian banners to work on cattle improvement.⁵⁵ For sheep, national sheep improvement stations were set up in Zhalantun in Solon Banner, Wangyemiao in the right-wing Khorchin Banner, and Linxi in Linxi County to improve sheep breeds.⁵⁶ Additionally, Manchukuo enforced laws such as the "Regulation for National Livestock and Sheep Breeding," the "Regulation for National Horse Breeding," and the "Horse Management Law" to strengthen state control over livestock breeds in Xing'an Province.⁵⁷

Furthermore, Manchukuo paid considerable attention to livestock disease prevention in Xing'an Province. While breed improvement was

⁵⁴ Tōa mondai kenkyūkai, *Mōko yōran*, 32; "Kokuritsu shubajō no meishō, ichi oyobi kankatsu kūiki" 國立種馬場之名稱, 位置及管轄區域, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (September 12, 1939).

⁵⁵ Tōa mondai kenkyūkai, *Mōko yōran*, 135-36.

⁵⁶ "Kokuritsu men'yō kairyōjō no meishō, ichi oyobi kankatsu kūiki" 國立綿羊改良場之名稱, 位置及管轄區域, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿州國政府公報 (December 27, 1938); Dongbei wuzhi tiaojie weiyuan yanjiuzu, *Dongbei jingji xiaocongshu (chanye)*, 43.

⁵⁷ Qi Baishun, *Riben qinzhan shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 384-85.

essential for stable livestock management, disease prevention, particularly against contagious diseases, was also critical. The region had previously suffered from the Manchurian Plague in the early 1900s. Consequently, Manchukuo enacted laws such as the “Regulations for Livestock Epidemic Prevention,” the “Livestock Epidemic Prevention Law,” and the “Veterinarian Law,”⁵⁸ and dispatched epidemic prevention experts from Japan and various parts of Manchukuo to Xing'an Province to cultivate specialized personnel in disease prevention. Stations for epidemic prevention were also established in Chifeng, Linxi, Tongliao, and Qiqihar to strengthen epidemic prevention policies.⁵⁹

In summary, the resource policies in eastern Inner Mongolia during the Manchukuo period, focusing on forestry and livestock, were aimed at actively developing the region's resources as part of Manchukuo's and Japan's broader control strategy. Under the pretext of ‘advancement’ or ‘modernization,’ Manchukuo and Japan implemented resource development projects in Xing'an Province, introducing modern management and development systems to some extent. However, this process increasingly subsumed the economy and industry of eastern Inner Mongolia under the control of Manchukuo and its ‘mother country,’ Japan. This economic dependency of Xing'an Province was further intensified as Japan's transition into a total war state in the 1940s and ensuing Manchukuo's policies led to the strengthening of control over the northern frontier regions.

Strengthening Manchukuo's Control over the Northern Frontier and the Colonization of Xing'an Province's Economy

Through the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Pacific War (1941-1945), Japan transitioned into a wartime economy. Manchukuo also became a crucial logistical base for Japan's continental expansion

⁵⁸ Qi Baishun, *Riben qinzhān shiqi Xing'an sheng jingji tongzhi zhengce yanjiu*, 385.

⁵⁹ “Kachiku bōekisho no meisshō, ichi oyobi kankatsu kūiki” 家畜防疫所之名稱、位置及管轄區域, *Manshūkoku seifu kōhō* 滿洲國政府公報 (April 27, 1943).

policy. However, the situation in Manchukuo's northern frontier was quite unstable in the late 1930s. Particularly, with Japan forming the Axis alliance with Germany and Italy and increasing tensions with the Soviet Union, conflicts arose along the Soviet-Manchukuo border, ranging from the Heilongjiang-Ussuri River to the Tumen River. Notable incidents include the Battle of Lake Khasan (or Changkufeng Incident) in 1938 and the Battle of Khalkhin Gol (or Nomonhan Incident) on the Outer Mongolian border in 1939.⁶⁰

Starting in 1938, the Japanese Kwantung Army launched military provocations around Lake Khasan (or Changkufeng) along the Tumen River to stabilize the unstable northern and eastern borders of Manchukuo and also to assert dominance over the Soviet Union. Following this, in 1939, the Kwantung Army deployed massive forces to attack Soviet troops at Khalkhin Gol (or Nomonhan) on the Outer Mongolian border. However, these military operations in the Manchurian border areas resulted in significant setbacks due to the overwhelming superiority of the Soviet military. The defeats at Changkufeng and Nomonhan enhanced the sense of crisis among Manchukuo and Japanese authorities against the Soviet Union, leading to strengthened controls over the northern frontier of Manchukuo.

The Northern Frontier Development Plan was a policy devised in response to these crises in the northern frontier of Manchuria, aiming to strengthen control over the regions bordering the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia. The term "northern frontier" of Manchukuo at that time referred to the areas from Andong Province and Mudanjiang Province to Heilongjiang Province, Hejiang Province, and Northern Xing'an Province.⁶¹ This region was strategically critical as it bordered the Soviet Union but was sparsely populated and far less urbanized than the central

⁶⁰ For the background of the border disputes between the Soviet Union and Japan, including the Battles of Changkufeng and Nomonhan, see Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin, Japan, and the Struggle for Supremacy over China 1894-1945* (Routledge, 2023), 377-89.

⁶¹ Zhang Ning 張寧, "Weimanzhouguo 'Beibian zhenxing jihua' yanjiu" 偽滿洲國「北邊振興計劃」研究 (Master's Thesis, Changchun Normal University, 2021), 9-10.

areas of Manchukuo, such as Xinjing and Fengtian. Moreover, its transportation, communication, and industrial facilities were underdeveloped. Consequently, from the early days of Manchukuo's establishment in 1933, Manchukuo and the Japanese Kwantung Army formulated plans to fortify the northern frontier region as a 'border stronghold' and strengthen frontier control. The Northern Frontier Development Plan was a concrete realization of these ambitions to enhance control over the northern frontier of Manchukuo and Japan.

Manchukuo began to officially draft and implement the Northern Frontier Development Plan on June 1, 1939, immediately after the Battle of Lake Khasan between Japan and the Soviet Union. At that time, Manchukuo, preparing for total war and serving as a rear base for Japan's continental policy, pursued the Northern Frontier Development Plan alongside the "One Million Households Immigration Plan" and the "Five-Year Industrial Development Plan" starting in 1936. These three policies were known as the "Three Major National Policies" of Manchukuo, and they were closely interconnected. The Northern Frontier Development Plan, aimed at "national defense maintenance, livelihood security, and industrial development," was a three-year policy with a total budget of one billion yen. Of this amount, 200 million yen was funded by the Manchukuo government, 600 million yen by the South Manchuria Railway Company, and the remaining 200 million yen by Manchukuo's special corporations.⁶²

The Northern Frontier Development Plan of Manchukuo was implemented with a focus on two main aspects: strengthening national defense and developing industry. From a defense perspective, the plan included the reorganization of transportation and communication systems to facilitate military transport and rapid command structures, the fortification of border regions, and the enhancement of electricity and water supply facilities. As a result, military railways were constructed between

⁶² Zhang Tao 张陶, "Weimanzhouguo 'Beibian zhenxing jihua' qianxi" 伪满洲国「北边振兴计划」浅析, *Xibu xuekan* 西部學刊 (2020): 140.

Tumen and Dongning, Dongning and Haxi, Longjing and Hualong, and Suihua and Jiagedaqi. Additionally, 1,448 km of existing railways within Manchukuo were converted to double tracks. In the northern frontier, 7,000 km of new roads were built, 5,800 km of existing roads were repaired, and 74 military airports were established in the border areas. Furthermore, the Japanese Kwantung Army invested 100 million yen to construct thirty power plants in the northern frontier and established water supply companies to expand water supply facilities.⁶³

In addition to strengthening military infrastructure in the northern frontier, Manchukuo undertook administrative reorganization in the 1940s under the pretext of enhancing national defense. This reorganization led to the creation of two new provinces: Bei'an Province and Dong'an Province. Originally, Manchukuo had advocated for 'national harmony,' appointing Mongolians as Banner heads in Mongolian regions and Chinese as provincial governors in other regions of Manchuria. However, as the Northern Frontier Development Plan progressed, even local governors were replaced with Japanese appointees, further strengthening the control by the Japanese Kwantung Army. In 1943, the administrative reorganization included parts of Xing'an Province, merging the four subdivisions of Eastern, Western, Southern, and Northern Xing'an into Xing'an General Province. The Mongolian banner system in Xing'an Province was significantly debilitated, with Japanese officials effectively taking over local administration.⁶⁴

In terms of industrial development, the plan promoted 'development' only ostensibly. In practice, it reinforced 'control.' In Xing'an Province, following the implementation of the Northern Frontier Development Plan, the previous dual structure of industrial administration under the Ministry of Industry and the Department of Politics of Mongolia was integrated into such departments directly under the State Council as

⁶³ Zhang, "Weimanzhouguo 'Beibian zhenxing jihua' qianxi," 140.

⁶⁴ Zhang Ning 張寧, He Jian 赫堅, "Weiman shiqi 'Beibian zhenxing jihua' yu 'beibian' chengzhen de xingshuai" 偽滿時期「北邊振興計劃」與「北邊」城鎮的興衰, *Jilinsheng jiaoyu xueyuan xuebao* 吉林省教育學院學報 (2021): 164.

the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Economy, and Ministry of Agriculture. This reorganization significantly diminished the influence of Mongolian autonomous institutions and strengthened the control of the central Manchukuo government. Furthermore, Manchukuo had already promulgated various laws for industrial control from the 1930s, such as the "Outline of Economic Construction in Manchukuo," the "Rice Control Law," the "Livestock Trade Market Law," the "Trade Control Law," and the "Forest Rights Regulation Law." In the 1940s, additional laws such as the "Industrial Control Law" (1942), the "Mining Control Law" (1943), and the "Livestock and Livestock Products Control Law" (1944) were enacted to further tighten control over the industries and resources in Xing'an Province.

To strengthen control over the northern frontier region, Manchukuo also pursued the "One million Households Immigration Plan" along with the Northern Frontier Development Plan. This plan can be seen as a Japanese-style "immigration for border consolidation" policy. Japan's immigration policy in Manchuria gradually developed after the Russo-Japanese War, primarily around areas affiliated with the South Manchuria Railway Company. From 1932 to 1936, following the Manchurian Incident, Japan promoted armed immigration to Manchuria, resulting in the migration of 7,296 people from Japan to Manchuria.⁶⁵ Additionally, Korean immigration to Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia was actively promoted from the 1920s, led by the East Asia Development Company, with 1,300 Koreans migrating to eastern Inner Mongolia in 1921.⁶⁶ However, due to the harsh environment and climate of Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia, the scale of Japanese and Korean immigration and settlement remained small until the 1930s. To address this, the Japanese government announced the "One Million Households Immigration Plan" in April 1936, aiming to promote large-scale immigration of Japanese and Koreans to Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia.

⁶⁵ Jiang Niandong 姜念东, *Weimanzhouguo shi* 伪满洲国史 (Jilin renmin chubanshe, 1980), 341.

⁶⁶ Yang, "Hanin-ui dongbu Naemonggol iju-reul tonghae bon Ilje-ui Manmong jeongchaeg (1931-1945)," 158.

The “One million Households Immigration Plan” for Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia was a project involving not only the Manchukuo government but also various Japanese government agencies and corporations such as the Ministry of the Army, the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, the South Manchuria Railway Company, and the Manchurian Colonization Company. The plan aimed to relocate people to northern Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia over the period of twenty years starting in 1937. The target areas for this immigration plan largely coincided with those of the Northern Frontier Development Plan, including regions along the Soviet border such as Mudanjiang Province, Dong’an Province, Andong Province, Sanjiang Province, Southern Xing’an Province, and Northern Xing’an Province. The Manchurian Colonization Company (hereafter referred to as Manshu Taku) led this plan, organizing the “Manchuria-Mongolia Development Corps”⁶⁷ to implement large-scale Japanese and Korean immigration to Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia.

The Manshu Taku established branch offices in various parts of northern Manchuria to manage the immigration policy, and subordinate units of the Manchuria-Mongolia Development Corps were dispatched to the northern frontier areas of Manchukuo to carry out development work. In Xing’an Province, the immigration policy focused on the Hulunbuir area, with a Manshu Taku branch office overseeing the Hulunbuir immigration policy established in Zhalantun, and subordinate offices set up in Hailar, Nagidun, and Chinggis Khan.⁶⁸ The number of Manchuria-Mongolia Development Corps units and their personnel dispatched to Eastern and Northern Xing’an Province are as follows (Table 5).⁶⁹

⁶⁷ For comprehensive research on the Manchuria-Mongolia development groups, see Futamatsu Hiroki 二松啓紀, *Imin-tachi no “Manshū”*: *Manmō kaitakudan no kyo to jitsu* 移民たちの「満州」: 滿蒙開拓團の虚と實 (Heibonsha, 2015); Kato Kiyofumi 加藤聖文, *Manmō kaitakudan: kokusaku no ryoshū* 滿蒙開拓團: 國策の虜囚 (Iwanami shoten, 2023).

⁶⁸ Xu Tao 徐濤, “Riwei zai Hulunbei’er diqu de zhimin tongzhi” 日偽在呼倫貝爾地區的殖民統治 (Master’s Thesis, Inner Mongolia University, 2015), 24.

⁶⁹ Xu, “Riwei zai Hulunbei’er diqu de zhimin tongzhi,” 24.

Table 5. Status of Manchu-Mongolian Pioneer Groups in Eastern and Northern Xing'an Province around 1945

	Eastern Xing'an Province	Northern Xing'an Province	Subtotal
General Pioneer Group	27	2	29
Volunteer Pioneer Group	3	2	5
Volunteer Training Center	1	0	1
Women's Dormitory	1	0	1
National Service Farm	3	0	3
Registered Personnel	6,967	734	7,701

The primary activities of the Manchuria-Mongolia Development Corps involved recruiting immigrants from Japan and Korea to cultivate land and increase food production in the northern frontier areas of Manchukuo. Koreans, in particular, had experiences with rice farming in eastern Inner Mongolia since the 1920s, and they participated in rice field reclamation as part of the "One Million Households Immigration Plan" within Xing'an Province.⁷⁰ By the late 1930s, however, the focus of the Manchuria-Mongolia Development Corps shifted from land reclamation to military and labor conscription with the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941. Volunteer military units and training camps were organized in Xing'an Province, and many young Japanese and Korean immigrants were conscripted and dispatched to the front lines.

The series of policies to strengthen control over the northern frontier by Manchukuo and Japan transformed the border society in Xing'an Province. The immigration policies of the Manchuria-Mongolia Development Corps led to urbanization in some parts of Xing'an Province. A notable example is Hailar in the Hulunbuir region. Hailar's history began as a fortress built in 1732 during the Qing Dynasty's Yongzheng period.⁷¹ It became an

⁷⁰ For the migration and irrigation farming of Koreans in the Xing'an region, see Yang, "Hanin-ui dongbu Naemonggol iju-reul tonghae bon Ilje-ui Manmong jeongchaeg (1931-1945)," 157-64.

⁷¹ Hulunbei'ermeng shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 呼倫貝爾盟史志編纂委員會, ed., *Hulunbei'ermeng*

area under the jurisdiction of the Chinese Eastern Railway in 1902 and was later administered by the Heilongjiang Commissioner under the Republic of China in the 1920s, establishing the county of Hulun.⁷² After Manchukuo's establishment in 1931 and the Japanese Kwantung Army's takeover of the Chinese Eastern Railway, Hailar came under Manchukuo and Japanese control. Manchukuo abolished the Hulun County established by the Republic of China and established Hailar City, developing a new urban area.⁷³ Through this process, Hailar grew into a new hub for Manchukuo's control over Xing'an Province and the northern frontier.

The urbanization of Hailar during the Manchukuo period was significantly influenced by the influx of immigrants from Japan and Korea. From 1933 to 1940, the population of Northern Xing'an Province increased by 45,439, reflecting a 73% growth rate in ten years. Hailar, the central area of Northern Xing'an Province, also saw a substantial population increase.⁷⁴ Before the establishment of Manchukuo, Hailar's total population in 1930 was 7,011, with nine Japanese, four Koreans, 3,132 Chinese, and 3,866 foreigners. By 1934, after Manchukuo was established, the population increased by approximately 2,900 to 9,780, with the Japanese and Korean immigrant populations growing to 1,036 and 150, respectively.⁷⁵ This population growth during the Manchukuo period indicates that Hailar developed as a colonial hub for Manchukuo and Japan in eastern Inner Mongolia.

Originally, Xing'an Province was predominantly inhabited by Mongolian nomads. However, from the late 1930s, as Manchukuo's policies to strengthen control over the northern frontier were implemented and various

zhi (*shang ce*) 呼倫貝爾盟志 (上冊) (Neimenggu wenhua chubanshe, 1999), 25.

⁷² Hulunbei'ermeng shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Hulunbei'ermeng zhi*, 26.

⁷³ Hulunbei'ermeng shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Hulunbei'ermeng zhi*, 27.

⁷⁴ Li Qiang 李強, *Weiman shiqi dongbei diqu renkou yanjiu* 偽滿時期東北地區人口研究 (Guangming ribao chubanshe, 2012), 90-91.

⁷⁵ Wang Shengjin 王勝今, *Weiman shiqi Zhongguo dongbei diqu yimin yanjiu: jianlun Riben diguo zhuyi shishi de yimin qinlüe* 偽滿時期中國東北地區移民研究: 兼論日本帝國主義實施的移民侵略 (Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2005), 121.

“development corps” comprising Japanese and Korean immigrants became active, agricultural land reclamation was carried out. In the Hulunbuir region, 2.09 million mu (畝) of land were cultivated in 1942.⁷⁶ However, the grain produced from this reclaimed land in Xing'an Province was strictly controlled by the authorities of Manchukuo and Japan and was primarily used as war supplies for Japan. The Manchukuo government promulgated the “Grain Control Law” in 1940 to control and manage the distribution of thirteen types of crops produced in Xing'an Province, and from 1939, it implemented a policy of forcibly purchasing agricultural products at low prices. The situation regarding agricultural product shipments from Xing'an Province in the 1940s is as follows (Table 6).⁷⁷

Table 6. Shipment Status of Agricultural Products in Xing'an Province (1940-1943, Unit: Tons)

Year	Southern Xing'an Province	Eastern Xing'an Province	Western Xing'an Province	Northern Xing'an Province
1940	289,994	23,305	18,086	
1941	185,175	25,486	22,356	4,062
1942	299,080	40,350	35,130	3,500
1943	323,409	44,746	48,046	8,535

As shown in Table 6, the shipment volume of agricultural products from Xing'an Province gradually increased toward the end of the Pacific War. In Southern and Eastern Xing'an, the shipment volumes were higher due to the larger reclaimed areas compared to other regions of Xing'an Province. Northern Xing'an, with more nomadic lands and forests, had relatively lower volumes. However, by around 1943, a significant amount of agricultural products was requisitioned even from Northern

⁷⁶ Hulunbei'ermeng shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 呼倫貝爾盟史志編纂委員會, ed., *Hulunbei'ermeng zhi (zhong ce)* 呼倫貝爾盟志 (中冊) (Neimenggu wenhua chubanshe, 1999), 872.

⁷⁷ “Shōbetsu shukkaryō tōkeihyō (1940-1943)” 省別出荷量統計表 (1940-1943), in *Riben diguozhuyi qinhua dang'an xuanbian 14: dongbei jingji shouduo* 日本帝國主義侵華檔案選編 14: 東北經濟收奪, edited by Zhongguo di'er lishi dang'anguan 中國第二歷史檔案館 (Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 590-91.

Xing'an, indicating the intensified material requisition by Manchukuo and Japan.

The series of policies implemented by Manchukuo and Japan in the 1940s to strengthen control over the northern frontier in response to the Soviet threat led to the subjugation of the Xing'an region to the wartime regime of the Manchukuo government and Japan. While it is undeniable that these policies brought about some social changes in Xing'an Province, such as an influx of population into previously sparsely populated areas and the growth of cities like Hailar, the control exerted by Manchukuo and Japan over Xing'an's society and economy from the late 1930s resulted in the region's transformation from a unique area of Mongolian autonomy to a logistical base and 'colony' for Manchukuo and Japan. This situation persisted until August 1945, when Japan was defeated in the Pacific War and Manchukuo came to an end.

Conclusion

Ishihara Kanji of the Japanese Kwantung Army, known as one of the architects of Manchukuo, mentioned the economic value of the Hulunbuir and Greater Khingan regions in a document titled "Opinions on the Manchuria-Mongolia Problem (滿蒙問題私見)" written in May 1931 before the establishment of Xing'an Province:

Our country (i.e., Japan) must counter the northern threat from Russia as well as the southern threats from the United States and Britain. Therefore, the Hulunbuir and Greater Khingan areas hold particularly important strategic value. It is extremely difficult for Russia to advance eastwards while maintaining control over northern Manchuria, and it is also difficult to counter this with the power of Manchuria and Mongolia alone.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Ishihara Kanji 石原莞爾, "Manmō mondai shaken" 滿蒙問題私見, *Nika nichu* 二課日誌 (1931), 99-101.

As Ishihara's statement indicates, for Japan, the Xing'an area was a critical frontier region to counter the eastward advance of Russia. This perception heavily influenced the establishment and governance of Xing'an Province following the creation of Manchukuo, as reflected in the resource development and industrial policies discussed throughout this paper.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Xing'an region had attracted attention from various empires due to its abundant forest, livestock, mineral, and aquatic resources. Japan, which actively pursued the Manchuria-Mongolia Policy after the Russo-Japanese War, also focused on the economic and defense value of this region. Even before the establishment of Manchukuo, Japan claimed special rights to the region's mines and forests. Following the establishment of Manchukuo in 1931, both Manchukuo and Japan actively developed Xing'an's resources through the central government, local government in Xing'an, and special companies. They managed the region's significant forest and livestock resources through various laws and regulations.

In Xing'an, the resource control policies of Manchukuo and Japan were further intensified by the series of control policies for the northern frontier in the 1940s. As Japan entered a wartime regime and border disputes with the Soviet Union increased in the late 1930s, Manchukuo and Japan implemented policies such as the Northern Frontier Development Plan, Industrial Development Plans, and the One million Households Immigration Plan in Xing'an Province. These policies aimed to strengthen the defense of Manchukuo's northern frontier and control various industries to establish a stable rear base. Consequently, these policies further subordinated Xing'an region economy to the central Manchukuo government and Japan, effectively transforming Xing'an into a colonial base for Japan.

Manchukuo's industrial policies in Xing'an Province highlight the duality of Japan's policies towards eastern Inner Mongolia. While promoting slogans of 'harmony' and allowing 'autonomy' for Mongolians, Japan gradually reduced the scope of Mongolian autonomy and strengthened economic control over resources. Unlike the Mongolian Autonomous Government in western Inner Mongolia, Xing'an Province was in-

incorporated into Manchukuo's territory, making it politically and economically dependent on the central government of Manchukuo and Japan due to its strategic value as a border area with the Soviet Union. The governance of Xing'an Province under Manchukuo reveals the reality and limitations of Japan's Mongolian autonomy policy.

Furthermore, the governance and industrial policies in Xing'an during the Manchukuo period can be seen as part of the broader trend of "strengthening state power" over eastern Inner Mongolia that began in the late Qing period. From the mid-nineteenth century, the Qing Empire shifted from a policy of separation and indirect rule over Mongolia to promoting Han Chinese immigration and converting Mongolian pastures into farmland. The Republic of China maintained this policy, leading to increased Han Chinese immigration and land reclamation in Inner Mongolia, which fueled dissatisfaction among Mongolian nomads and sparked the Inner Mongolian independence movement in the 1920s. Manchukuo initially advocated separation from the Qing's and Republic of China's policies by promoting 'Mongolian autonomy' and prohibiting Han Chinese from cultivating pasturelands, thus gaining support from eastern Inner Mongolians. However, as Manchukuo transitioned towards a total war state in the 1940s, its policies shifted from 'autonomy' to 'control,' leading to the collective immigration and land reclamation by Japanese and Koreans in Xing'an Province. Such return to the policies of state control shows a degree of continuity in the governance of eastern Inner Mongolia from the late Qing down to the Manchukuo period. In this sense, Manchukuo's policies in Xing'an Province reflect both the aspirations and limitations of Japan's broader colonial ambitions in eastern Inner Mongolia.

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