

Between Imperial and Colonial Universities: The Institutional Characteristics and Coloniality of Keijō Imperial University*

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Keijō Imperial University was a Japanese Imperial University established in colonial Korea in 1926. Although the university's organizational culture mirrored those of the Imperial Universities in the mainland Japan, its birth during colonial rule mired it in tension and conflict over its orientation as a modern university and classification as an elite university with colonial origins. Institutionally, Keijō Imperial University functioned by intertwining modern, imperialist, and colonial characteristics. However, studies on the university have primarily focused on only one of these aspects. This study focuses on the two unique institutions that distinguish Keijō Imperial University from the other Imperial Universities in mainland Japan: the Pre-University Department and its finance system. The Pre-University Department was an affiliate institution of Keijō Imperial University that helped prevent colonial students from leaving the colony and managed them through division and control. The university finance system of Keijō Imperial University was subordinate to the Japanese Government-General of Korea. These are two examples that demonstrate the complex dynamics of Keijō Imperial University at the institutional level. As a colonial state institution, Keijō Imperial University ultimately found it impossible to break free from its intrinsic, colonially embedded limitations.

Keywords: Keijō Imperial University, Keijō Imperial University Pre-University Department, university finance, Imperial Universities of prewar Japan

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