

English scholarship, in particular, on the migration history of Koreans to the metropole emphasizes the mobility and mobilization of Koreans in the labour class. While the labour class indeed dominated the Korean community in Japan, my research examines three additional groups of Koreans, Christians, students, and women, who also comprised the Korean community. This presentation discusses the group of Korean migrants in the lower strata who were farmers but turned into labourers during the colonial period. In addition to the scrutiny of push and pull factors which finalized the decision of Korean labourers to emigrate, my research takes top-bottom and bottom-up approaches to study the migration process of Koreans to the metropole. On the one hand, it examines the strategic way in which the empire regulated immigration of the labour class. On the other hand, it studies the motive behind the decision formation of Korean labourers to have left their home for a variety of destinations in and outside the Japanese imperial territories. On this spectrum of approaches from top to bottom, my research, through a regional investigation, zooms into the population of Korean labourers who traveled to Japan through the route of Pusan to Shimonoseki.