Occupational Obligation in Household Register and Status

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1. Perspectives of Occupational Obligation and Status

During Joseon period, occupational obligation as registered in household register. More precisely, it signified legislative status in the form of occupational obligation of the household registers. Here 'in the form of occupational obligation' indicates source of taxation that original household registers does not include. Legislative status is defined as status determined in official records that differs from socio-economic classes or status. These two perspectives should examine occupational obligation in the household registers. National taxation = occupational obligation as national acquisition system made it principle to levy taxes on individual person, 1) Writing occupational obligation on the household register reflect the principle. In Goryeo period, land distribution was based on the occupational obligation

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1) Son Byeong-gyu, “Hojeogdaejang jigyeokgijae yangsang gwa uimi (Aspects and Significations of Registration of Occupational Obligations in Household Register)”, Yeoksa wa Hyeonsil no. 40

2) People began to perform national obligations at 16 as adult and were exempted at sixty as ‘noyeo.’ Local bureaus reported population registered in household registers to the ministry of finance every year. Requisition of military obligation was based on household registers. See History of Goryeo. Book Ji no.33, food and money 2, Section of household registers. In this paper, the term ‘national obligation’ is exchangeable with ‘occupational obligation.’ Sometimes occupational obligation is perceived as occupation and obligation respectively. Because officials can be regarded as one of occupational obligations. Early inquiry on this relation is Kim Seok-hyeong, “Joseon chogi Gungnyeokpyeonseongui
unit household. In other words, as ‘household’ unit arranged population on the household register, 1)taxes were imposed on delegate 1).

- This principle of taxation was also true in the definition of making household registers in the late Joseon dynasty. In 1655, the way to define household appeared in the *Ogajagtongsamog*. One of the instances is as follows.

- Household should be registered serially. Lower class (slaves) should be recorded one space below the master or his relatives. After names of obligations recorded on each household, numbers of male, temporal responsibility, occupation, (whether artisan or no occupation) age and transference must be registered. 1)

- It was rule in Goryeo period that representative occupation of the household should be recorded. Rather it was a rule of comprehensive records that prior to making household registers 1). This rule did not appear in late Joseon. There were additional records of members of household. Often occupational

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3) “The King Chungseon ascended the throne and commanded. Firstly, precedent kings had established rules on the square land. Every square land should be distributed equally to every occupation for sources of everyday living of people and national budget. Ownerless land should be provided to everyone who performed occupational obligations and established household for national obligations.” We can infer that people were obliged to perform national obligations and imposed each occupational obligation in return for the rights of cultivation and receipt.


5) Sukjongsillok, 1st year 26th September.

6) It is regarded as tonggisamok in the legal documents.