



Governing Modernity and Everyday Life in Colonial Korea

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Governing Modernity and Everyday Life in Colonial Korea

A dissertation presented

by

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to

The Committee on History and East Asian Languages

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Governing Modernity and Everyday Life in Colonial Korea

Abstract

The primary aim of this dissertation is to show how the colonial state's top-down social management policy of moral suasion, which received the support of civil society, including the Korean press, the Korean middle class, settlers, and Westerners, was experienced by the Korean populace at large. I peek into everyday realms of colonial society, such as homes, bathhouses, and public streets, as well as the minds of ordinary Koreans, Westerners, and Japanese settlers, whose attitudes, feelings, and thoughts have been captured in history. The dissertation examines three moral suasion campaigns: one that targeted urban slum residents called "mud-hut dwellers," the colonial bathing campaign that constructed public bathhouses across the peninsula and sought to modernize Korean bathing, and finally, colonial animal campaigns that sought to transform how Koreans conceptualized animals, including the animal protection movement. By examining the bottom-up responses to the campaigns, I study how grand colonial policies actually affected the everyday life of the ordinary person.

In historiography, while social policies of the Japanese colonial state in the peninsula have been studied in detail, the bottom-up responses from society have not been adequately examined. This is especially true for the moral suasion campaigns that the colonial state promoted in conjunction with civil society, which aimed to reform the Korean masses. Hence, the actual day-to-day interaction between the promoters of moral suasion and the Korean recipients, and how the policies actually crystallized in the everyday realm of colonial Korea, beg further attention.

The moral suasion campaigns generated a wide range of responses from the Korean populace, which allows us to reconsider the true effects of colonial policies and colonial modernity. They also shed light on the lives of the Korean lower class, as well as tensions and divisions within Korean society, in addition to cross-cultural encounters in daily life that created uncomfortable moments. The unruliness in colonial society and the ineffectiveness of the moral suasion campaigns were not always caused by nationalism or resistance to colonial rule per se. But rather, they were instances in which the Korean populace believed that the ideas of modernity put forth by the campaigns were incompatible with their daily lives. These factors led colonial modernity to be experienced differently by each individual, and state intrusion into daily life being limited in scope.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements / vi

List of Tables / x

Introduction: Social Management in the Colonial Everyday of Korea / 1

Chapter I. Disciplining Homes and Urban Residents: The Mud-hut Dwellers / 28

1. The Colonial Gaze: The “Social Problem of Mud Huts” / 28
2. Governing the Empire’s Slums: The Social Management of Mud-hut Dwellers / 41
3. Colonial Modernity: Capitalists and Illegal Mud Huts in the Modernizing City / 53
4. Slums as Spectacles: Disciplining and Standardizing Modernity in Kyōngsōng /67
5. The Everyday Life of Mud-hut Dwellers and Incorporation into Empire / 87

Chapter II. Washing the Body: The Bathing Campaign / 99

1. Unwashed Bodies: Creating a “Bathable” Chōsen in the Tubless Peninsula / 99
2. Bathing as Business and Entertainment: The Peninsula’s Hot Springs / 113
3. Publicizing Privacy: Social Management of Korean Bodies in Colonial Bathhouses /123
4. Bathing as *Kyōka*: Middle-class Endorsement of Bathing and the Elitism Within / 133
5. Tensions on the Ground: Bathing in the Everyday Realm of Colonial Korea / 153

Chapter III. Conceptualizing Animals and Civilizing Chosŏn: The Animal Campaign / 171

1. Reconsidering Animals in Korean History / 171
2. A Moral Empire: The Animal Protection Movement / 176
3. The Korean Response and the Failed Campaign / 184
4. The Colonial Apparatus of Animal Categorization: Discovering Imperial Animals / 197
5. Sanitizing, Disciplining, and Mobilizing Dogs for Empire / 206

Conclusion: The Making of Modernity in the Colonial Everyday Life and Beyond / 222

Bibliography / 238

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List of Tables

Table A. Number of T'omak and T'omangmin in Kyōngsōng and Its Nearby Regions / 30

Table B. Number of T'omak and Poor-Quality Homes in Kyōngsōng / 31

Table C. Price of T'omak in 1940 across Kyōngsōng Neighborhoods / 66

Table D. Housing in Kyōngsōng and the Housing Shortage Rate / 71

Table E. Kyōngsōng's Korean Households According to Class and Monthly Income in 1921 / 82

Table F. The T'omak Experience with respect to Social Stratum / 94

In memory of my grandmother, Jahee Kwak (1926-2017)

“In a general sense, filth is a term of condemnation, which instantly repudiates a threatening thing, person, or idea by ascribing alterity to it. Ordinarily, that which is filthy is so fundamentally alien that it must be rejected; labeling something filthy is a viscerally powerful means of excluding it. Objects are filthy—polluting, infectious, fearful—the nearer they approach the ultimate repositories of decay and death, feces and corpses. People are denounced as filthy when they are felt to be unassimilably other, whether because perceived attributes of their identities repulse the onlooker or because physical aspects of their bodies (appearance, odor, decrepitude) do. Actions, behaviors, and ideas are filthy when they partake of the immoral, the inappropriate, the obscene, or the unaccountable—assessments that, while often experienced viscerally, are culturally constrained. All of these versions of filth have one thing in common: from the point of view of the one making the judgment, they serve to establish distinctions—“*That is not me.*”

William A. Cohen, *Filth: Dirt, Disgust, and Modern Life* (2005)

Introduction: Social Management in the Everyday Realm of Colonial Korea

This is a study of moral suasion campaigns (K. *kyohwa undong*; J. *kyōka undō*) in the colonial era (1910-45), in which civil society, consisting of the Korean middle class, Japanese settlers, policymakers, and Western missionaries worked in conjunction with the colonial state to promote social campaigns and reform the Korean populace. The dissertation addresses three campaigns; one that targeted the urban poor residing in illegal homes called “mud huts” (K. *t’omak*; J. *domaku*), another that attempted to modernize the bathing habits of the Korean masses, and lastly, the animal campaign that sought to transform how animals were conceptualized in the peninsula. The dissertation focuses on how the campaigns were experienced by the populace at large by peeking into the everyday realms of homes, bathhouses, streets, and the minds of ordinary Koreans, Japanese, and Westerners, whose attitudes, feelings, and thoughts have been captured in history.

In colonial Korea, social management occurred at multiple levels. At the top, the Government-General of Korea (K. Ch’ongdokpu; J. Sōtokufu; hereafter “the GGK”) proclaimed modern laws and policies buttressed by formal institutions, such as schools, local administrations, and the police. At a less formal level, Koreans, Japanese, and Westerners directed social programs that addressed issues, such as poverty, education, animals, hygiene, and housing reform—all with state sponsorship of some sort. Mass publications in the Korean language, lectures, and exhibitions gave concrete guidelines on how Koreans should conduct themselves in their everyday life according to modern standards. The campaign proponents aimed at monitoring and curbing undesirable behavior in both public and private realms. In these everyday cross-cultural, cross-class encounters, the average Korean experienced the impact of *kyōka*.

By examining the bottom-up responses to the campaigns, I study how grand colonial policies actually affected the everyday life of the ordinary person. There was a diverse reaction to moral suasion, a point that is highlighted by recognizing historical agency in numerous individuals and groups across social classes and backgrounds, who encountered each other in their daily life. These encounters created tensions, conflicts, and uncomfortable moments in colonial society. Ultimately, I suggest that attempts to persuade the Korean populace to reform their ways of behavior and thought was an arduous task that was time consuming, with changes gradual and uneven in Korean society. The effectiveness of the reformist calls depended on the degree to which ideas promoted by the campaigns were deemed compatible (or incompatible) with one's everyday life. Not all Koreans had the same receptiveness toward reform and modernity, and it was tremendously difficult to "mold" people's behavior and thought.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter I studies slum residents who lived in "mud huts" (*t'omak*) in the colonial capital Kyōngsōng (Keijō; present-day Seoul). These so-called *t'omangmin* (*domakumin*) began to appear in large numbers from the 1920s, reflecting the impact of capitalist development and the resulting urbanization. Mud huts became a huge nuisance for not only the colonial state, but also the rising Korean middle class that perceived the mud huts as threatening their bourgeois life, capitalist endeavors, and the calls for housing reform. For the GGK, the sprawl of *t'omak* across the city was a physical reminder that colonial rule was inefficient. For the Korean bourgeoisie, it was an uncomfortable reminder that Korea remained uncivilized and poor. Mud huts became targeted for moral suasion, as they were perceived as unsightly urban spectacles in need of relocation to outer regions, away from

the city's center. Although the colonial mud huts were a direct product of modernization, they came to symbolize those "outside the modern" abandoned by civilization, and this in turn, worked to discipline and standardize middle-class conceptions of housing in the midst of a severe housing shortage that pervaded the capital. The chapter highlights how t'omangmin conducted their everyday life and negotiated their space in Kyōngsōng.

Chapter II examines the colonial bathing campaign and the establishment of public bathing facilities across the peninsula. Public bathhouses first appeared as direct imports of Japan's soak-bathing culture in settler communities. The early bathhouses were intended for settlers who believed that Korea lacked a bathing culture. But bathhouses quickly appeared in regions outside settler communities, as capitalists began to develop Korea's hot spring regions with the support of the GGK and construct bathhouses in major cities. The colonial state also constructed public bathhouses as part of its hygienic campaign that targeted Korean bodies as subjects in need of proper washing.

The bathing campaign received avid support of local leaders, Western missionaries, mass publications, and the Korean middle class. For the first time in Korean history, the populace was "showered" with information on how to properly wash oneself, with the Japanese state expressing concern over the hygienic management of colonized bodies, and voices in the Korean community equating bathing with modernity and civilization. Private hygienic reform was a shared goal of colonialism and modernity, and the bathing campaign was an intrusive form of *kyōka* that targeted a very private activity; the washing of one's body. Yet, realities were incompatible with the lofty goals of the colonial and the modern. Not enough bathing facilities were provided to the Korean masses; discrimination by Japanese bathhouse owners was widespread; and many Koreans chose alternative ways of

bathing that went against the ideals promoted in the campaign.

Chapter III examines the animal campaigns of the colonial era that sought to mold Koreans' attitude toward animals and effectively place the peninsula's animals under state control. The chapter begins with a brief description of the dog-meat controversy upon the 1988 Seoul Olympics, and then goes on to locate the origins of Korea's modern conceptualizations of animals in the colonial era. I start with the dog-meat controversy to provide a larger context because it was the first instance in which Korea's treatment of animals came into the spotlight domestically and internationally. In fact, Koreans' treatment of animals in the modern era has had a longer history, in which modern notions of animals entered the peninsula in the colonial era. In the 1920s, a group of Westerners, Koreans and Japanese from the upper strata of colonial society, launched the first animal protection movement in Korean history. The group campaigned for animal welfare and called for the reform of Koreans' treatment of animals.

While the group was in existence until 1944, the campaign was not well-received by the Korean masses, nor did it receive the degree of support from the Korean bourgeoisie that other *kyōka* campaigns were able to gain. This was because it was largely an elitist campaign with lofty goals that viewed the Korean lower class in disdain as uncivilized masses in need of mental transformation in their treatment of animals. The campaign also could not succeed because of competing state-led projects that prioritized other modern, capitalist, and imperialist animal projects that were deemed more imperative by the GJK, such as categorizing the peninsula's animals into their respective modern functions, eradicating roaming dogs from the streets under the hygienic campaign, and mobilizing dogs for empire.

Finally, the conclusion discusses my findings in the larger scheme of historiography and post-liberation developments in Korea. The topics were chosen mainly because they are largely unknown in English scholarship, with works on bathing and animals particularly scarce even in Korean literature. Mud-hut dwellers have been studied by urban historians; most prominently, Kang Man'gil and Son Chŏngmok.¹ But the meta-narrative has always been one of victimhood and oppression in colonial history, with voices and agencies of t'omangmin virtually non-existent. Colonial hygienic campaigns have been addressed in the works of Todd Henry.² But the bathing campaign, which was in essence, a private hygienic campaign, gives us additional insight into how hygienic campaigns affected the lives of ordinary people, and how modern notions of bathing were received by the populace.

The animal campaign deserves some elaboration because it is distinguishable from the other topics. It stood on especially tenuous grounds because it was a direct import of a Western bourgeois ideal that, unlike other moral suasions, did not contain a social welfare component promising tangible improvements in the life of the person that was the target of inculcation. Thus, criticism for the movement was especially high, even within the middle class who generally provided support for modern ideas originating from the West. While the GGK permitted their activities, it remained relatively out of the picture, and pursued other animal campaigns deemed more urgent than animal protection, which is discussed in detail

¹ Kang Man'gil, "Ilche sidae ūi tosi pinmin saenghwal-t'omangmin ūl chungsim ũro," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 53 (1986): 111-54; Kang Man'gil, *Ilche sidae pinmin saenghwalsa yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Ch'angjaksŏ, 1987). Son Chŏngmok, *Ilche kangjŏmgi tosi sahoesang yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1996). See also, Kim Kyŏngil, "Ilche ha tosi pinminch'ung ūi hyŏngsŏng: Kyŏngsŏngbu ūi irŭnba t'omangmin ūl chungsim ũro," *Munhak kwa chisŏngsa* (Dec. 1986): 203-58.

² Todd A. Henry, *Assimilating Seoul: Japanese Rule and the Politics of Public Space in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014). See also, Todd A. Henry, "Sanitizing Empire: Japanese Articulations of Korean Otherness and the Construction of Early Colonial Seoul, 1905-1919," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 64, no. 3 (2005): 639-75.

after the animal protection campaign. In other words, there were two clashing animal campaigns in the colonial era; one promoted by a group of urban elites and the other by the colonial state, in which the former was sacrificed for the latter. These colonial developments determined the fate of the peninsula's animals in the post-liberation era.

Reconsidering *Kyōka*

The use of the word *kyōka* (K. *kyohwa* 教化) and its translation as “moral suasion” in this study requires some elaboration, as it is a convoluted term both in history and in historiography. I adopt Sheldon Garon’s definition of *kyōka* as “moral suasion” or alternatively, “moral reform” or “moral education.”³ In historiography, *kyōka* has been associated with total mobilization, assimilation policy, the emperor ideology, and *naisen ittai* (Japan and Korea as one body).⁴ The imperialist baggage that comes with the term is mainly due to the increase of state-managed “moral suasion groups” (J. *kyōka dantai*) following the establishment of the Social Bureau in both the metropole and the peninsula. The Japanese state mobilized various civic groups including religious, charity, youth, rural and women organizations to “promote the national spirit,”⁵ which was extended to the colony as an “ideological education of emperor-centered nationalism, the spirit of hard work, frugality,

³ Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 7.

⁴ See e.g., Sayaka Chatani, “The Ruralist Paradigm: Social Work Bureaucrats in Colonial Korea and Japan’s Assimilationism in the Interwar Period,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, no. 4 (2016): 1004-31; Kim Chōngmin, “Chosōn ch’ongdokpu naemuguk sahoekwa ūi kyohwa yōnghwa chōngch’aek ch’ulhyōn paegyōng e kwanhan koch’al,” *Han’guk munhak yōn’gu* 37 (Dec. 2009): 287-334; O Miil, “Ch’ongdongwōn ch’eje ha saenghwal kaesōn k’aemp’ein kwa Chosōnin ūi ilsang: singmin tosi Inch’ōn ūi sahoejōk konggansōng kwa kwallyōn hayō,” *Han’guk Tongnip undongsa yōn’gu* 39 (Aug. 2011): 235-77; Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

⁵ Garon, 11. See also, Gi-Wook Shin and Do-Hyun Han, “Colonial Corporatism: The Rural Revitalization Campaign, 1932-1940,” in Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 70-96; Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*, 327-54.

and modern living customs, or, in other words, teaching to create diligent and loyal imperial subjects.”⁶ The Social Bureau of the GGK established the Korean Social Work Research Group (Chōsen Shakai Jigyō Kenkyūkai) in 1921, which disseminated information on *kyōka* projects.⁷ From the same year, the GGK began holding “social moral suasion lectures” across the peninsula in major cities which attracted thousands of visitors daily.⁸

Hence, *kyōka* has had a negative connotation in historiography, signifying colonial oppression with an aim to transform the Koreans into that of imperial subjects (J. *kōminka*)⁹ through ideological indoctrination; or in more colloquial terms, a form of “brainwashing.”¹⁰ Even scholars who have acknowledged civic participation in *kyōka* and its role in social welfare, point to the inadequacies in the social work of the GGK and argue for its imperial and colonial motives, stressing its critical role in total mobilization.¹¹ While it is true that

⁶ Chatani, 1011.

⁷ Ibid., 1010. On the Social Bureau of the GGK, see Sō Hoch’ōl, “Chosōn ch’ongdokpu naemu pusō wa singminji ūi naemu haengjōng: chibangkwa wa sahoekwa rŭl chungsim ūro,” *Sahoe wa yōksa* 102 (June 2014): 45-83.

⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 4, 1921 and Aug. 24, 1922. In 1921, the GGK’s budge for *shakai jigyo* was reported to be 1,217,000 yen. On the type of works and expenditure, see *Tonga ilbo*, May 9, 1921.

⁹ On *kōminka*, see Wan-yao Chou, “The *Kōminka* Movement in Taiwan and Korea: Comparisons and Interpretations,” in Peter Duus, et al., eds., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996): 40-70.

¹⁰ The main confusion surrounding the term *kyōka* in historiography comes from the fact that not many scholars define the term. For the handful of scholars that do define *kyōka*, they rely on official state documents with convoluted imperialist, formalistic language that discuss *kyōka* as a means to serve the spirit of the *kokutai*. See e.g., Sō Hoch’ōl, 67-68.

¹¹ The surge of works on social welfare can be attributed to the popularity of the colonial modernity paradigm that has made it possible to conceive of the Japanese state engaging in modern social welfare activities in the peninsula. See e.g., Cho Kyōnghŭi, “‘Onjōng’ kwa ‘kyohwa’ ūi singmin chuŭi- 1910 nyōndae Chosōn ch’ongdokpu ūi sahoe kuje saōp kwa kŭ imgye,” *Yōksa munje yōn’gu* 25 (Apr. 2011): 235-71 and “1920 nyōndae singminji Chosōn sahoe saōp ūi sōngkyōk kwa kŭ han’gye- pangbin ūi chajōl esō nodong saōp ūro,” *Yōksa wa tamnon* 80 (Oct. 2016): 81-122; Kim Yōngsu, “1910-20 nyōndae singminji Chosōn ūi siryo saōp ūi pyōnch’ōn- siryo taesang kwa un’yōng chuch’e ūi pyōnhwa rŭl chungsim ūro,” *Yōksa wa kyōnggye* 95 (2015): 143-68; So Hyōnsuk, “Kyōnggye e sōn koadŭl- koa munje rŭl t’onghae pon ilche sigi sahoe saōp,” *Sahoe wa yōksa* 73 (Mar. 2007): 107-41; Ye Chisuk, “Ilche sigi Chosōn esō purangja ūi ch’ulhyōn kwa haengjōng tangguk ūi taech’aek,” *Sahoe wa yōksa* 107 (Sep. 2015): 73-96.

kyōka played a role in Japanese imperialism and its assimilationist agenda in the colonies, the notion of *kyōka* existed from the start of colonial rule, where the GGK's interest in moral suasion was evident as early as 1912. For instance, elementary schools (*pot'ong hakkyo*) were perceived to be suitable grounds to inculcate desirable beliefs and behaviors in the Korean youth through *kyōka*.¹²

Furthermore, conceptualizing *kyōka* solely under Japanese imperialism only shows us the top-down view, which does not tell us much about how it was understood by the colonial society at large. In fact, Korean contemporaries understood *kyōka* to encompass much more than what is typically suggested by its historical connection to total mobilization. From the 1920s, civil society adopted the notion in their discussions, in which, *kyōka* referred to various lifestyle improvements (*seikatsu kaizen*) that addressed the reform of homes, domestic hygiene, clothing, frugality, time management, and child rearing even before the 1930s and often outside the context of "lifestyle assimilation," the idea that Koreans should lead a life similar to that of the Japanese.¹³ *Kyōka* was used to describe not only a wide range of moral education and reforms, such as social work (*shakai jigyo*) that included aiding (*kyūsai*) those in need, like the poor, homeless, orphans, the sick, the blind, and the unemployed, as a form of welfare, but also public facilities and institutions for the community, such as museums, photo exhibitions, botanical gardens, zoos, libraries, public

¹² Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 516 (May 18, 1912). See also, "Kyōka jigyo" in Keibunsha Henshūbu, ed., *Kokumin hōkan shosei shishin* (Tokyo: Keibunsha, 1913), 201-05.

¹³ *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 6, 1922. For lifestyle improvement campaign, see Cho Hüijin, "Singminji sigi saenghwal kaesōn nonūi wa ūisaenghwal kangsūphoe ūi yōkhal- ch'ōngdokpu chōngch'aek sihaeng kwa kisul mit chisik pogūp kanūngsōng ūl chungsim ūro," *Minsokhak yōn'gu* 34 (June 2014): 29-60.

lectures, and Sunday schools.¹⁴ In the early 1920s, *Tonga ilbo* (East Asia Daily) understood *kyōka* to include elementary (*pot'ong*) education, education for commoners (*sōmin*) and the unemployed, library services, exhibitions, short lectures, health services, schools, and public lectures, as well as public markets, public bathhouses, barbershops, public housing for laborers, employment facilities, child clinics, protection of people discharged from prison, accommodation of lepers, aiding victims of natural disasters, books, public gymnasiums, and popular entertainment (*minjung orak*).¹⁵

The comprehensive list above suggests that *kyōka* had a positive meaning for those who used it, not only the Japanese who argued for the moral suasion of the colony, but also the Korean proponents who saw it as having a transformative, constructive force in Korean society.¹⁶ Many of the moral suasion campaigns enacted in the colonial era were compatible with internal Korean calls for reform that had existed from the late nineteenth century because both involved endorsing modernization. Contemporaries did not necessarily perceive *kyōka* to be solely a product of colonialism or limit its context to its coercive nature. In other words, *kyōka* was directly linked to modernity. Although it is true that the early notions of *kyōka* worked to assist in the institutionalization of *kyōka* campaigns from the 1930s, more important is that the Korean populace was exposed to *kyōka* throughout the colonial period as a whole. This had a direct impact on their daily life, even if the colonial

¹⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, May 1 and 9, 1921. For a nice overview of the types of social work conducted by the GGG between 1910 and 1931, see Yi Pangwŏn and Yi Panghyŏn, "Ilche chŏn'gi (1910-1931) Chosŏn ch'ongdokpu ūi sahoe saŏp kwa kŭ t'ŭksŏng," *Hyangt'o Seoul* 88 (2014): 212-53.

¹⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, June 15, 1920 and Sept. 4, 1921.

¹⁶ For early Japanese calls for the *kyōka* of the Korean masses, see the writings by Watase Tsuneyoshi, the first Japanese missionary sent by the Congregational Church and his collection of other Japanese' views on the *kyōka* of Koreans. Watase Tsuneyoshi, *Chōsen kyōka no kyūmu* (Tokyo: Keiseisha, 1913); Watase Tsuneyoshi, ed., *Hantō dōhō no tameni* (Tokyo: Self-Published, 1917).

state's agenda was primarily assimilationist and the state later used *kyōka* to mobilize the populace for war (1937-45).

Role of Civic Groups

As in the metropole, moral suasion campaigns were led by civil organizations which worked in conjunction with the colonial state to educate the Korean populace. The bathing campaign attracted missionary organizations and institutions, such as Severance Hospital, Catholic Orphanage, the Red Cross, the YMCA, T'aehwa Women's Clinic, and missionary schools that provided bathing facilities to their students. These groups educated the populace in their respective settings on the proper way of bathing. Japanese Buddhist groups took an active role in the moral suasion of mud-hut dwellers in the colonial capital; the two main facilities being Wakō Kyōen (K. Hwagwang Kyowŏn) founded by Jōdoshū and Kōjō Kaikan (K. Hyangsang Hoegwan) established by the Shinshū Ōtani sect. Korean organizations, such as the Housing Relief Association (Chut'aek Kujehoe) and the Mutual Aid Society for the Poor (Pinmin Sangjohoe), provided housing aid to the city's lower class, along with some of the missionary groups mentioned above. In the animal campaign, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tongmul Haktae Pangjihoe) founded by wives of Western consuls preached animal welfare in the colonial capital, which attracted the city's Korean and Japanese bourgeoisie in modern professions.

We might wonder why the campaigns attracted so many civil groups. Social work by civic groups began in earnest from the 1920s because, as previously mentioned, the Social Bureau of the GGK encouraged groups to participate in the *kyōka* of the Korean masses. Civic participation in state-led moral suasion campaigns was a phenomenon that was

occurring across the Japanese empire, including the metropole and Taiwan.¹⁷ Japan's modern state often depended on civil society to deal with social problems; its colonies were not exceptions. But in Korea, civic involvement was also the result of the "Cultural Rule" (1919-31), a new colonial policy implemented by Governor-General Saitō Makoto in the wake of the March First Independence Movement (1919), which was a series of mass demonstrations across the peninsula opposing Japanese rule. The movement provoked the GGK to abandon the repressive policies of the 1910s, and allow for a more liberal sphere permitting political, social, and cultural activities in Korea.¹⁸

In this setting, Japanese, Korean, and Western missionary groups were permitted to engage in social work. The liberal atmosphere even allowed leftist Korean organizations, such as the Mutual Aid Society for the Poor, to operate, along with organizations with loftier goals, such as the Animal Protection Society. Civil participation in *kyōka* was also encouraged to further the assimilation policy of *naisen yūwa* (harmony between Japan and Korea). So sometimes, the GGK asked groups to assist in *kyōka*, which was the case for Wakō Kyōen and Kōjō Kaikan, established in 1921 by Japanese Buddhists in the colonial capital.¹⁹ In such cases, their facilities were expressly referred to as *kyōka* institutions, and the GGK provided lands and buildings to house them, while depending largely on charity donations

¹⁷ In addition to Sheldon Garon's *Molding Japanese Minds*, see David R. Ambaras, *Bad Youth: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Joseph C. Wicentowski, "Policing Health in Modern Taiwan, 1895-1949," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2007).

¹⁸ Michael E. Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 4. On the March First Movement, see Frank Prentiss, Jr. Baldwin, "The March First Movement: Korean Challenge and Japanese Response," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1969).

¹⁹ Je Jum-suk, "The Modernity of Japanese Buddhism and Colonial Korea: The Jōdoshū Wakō Kyōen as a Case Study," *Eastern Buddhist* 43, no. 1-2 (2012): 182-3. See also Che Chōmsuk (Je Jum-suk), "Singminji Chosŏn ilbon pulgyo ūi sahoe saōp tonghyang: Shinshu ot'anip'a ūi sahoe saōp ūl sarye ro": 241-57.

for their maintenance.²⁰

But civil support for the campaigns did not suddenly emerge in the 1920s, as shown in the mud-hut and bathing chapters. They often had origins from the late nineteenth century. For instance, Shinshū Ōtani sect had entered the peninsula in the late nineteenth century, initially to provide religious support and social aid to the early settler communities in cities like Pusan, Inch'ŏn, Wŏnsan, and Kunsan.²¹ Likewise, Western missionaries had established modern facilities from the Taehan Empire (1897-1910), which included hospitals, schools, churches, orphanages, the Red Cross, and the YMCA. In addition, Korean reformist calls for modernization had been in existence from the late Chosŏn period, which meshed very well with the moral suasion campaigns of the colonial era. Thus, while the liberal sphere of Cultural Rule worked to institutionalize *kyōka* and draw civil participation, it can be said that societal forces were already in place, ready to be called upon by the colonial state. In this respect, studies of *kyōka* require a wholistic approach, sometimes tracing their origins from the late Chosŏn era.

Role of the Korean Press

In addition to civic groups, the Korean vernacular press played a key role in the moral suasion campaigns. The importance of the Korean press in the modern era has been well-documented in the works of Michael Robinson and Andre Schmid.²² In particular, these scholars have emphasized the critical role of the press in Korea's modern nationalism. From

²⁰ Je Jum-suk, "The Modernity of Japanese Buddhism and Colonial Korea: The Jōdoshū Wakō Kyōen as a Case Study," 188. See also, *Maeil sinbo*, June 25, 1921.

²¹ Che Chŏmsuk (Je Jum-suk), "Singminji Chosŏn ilbon pulgyo ūi sahoe saŏp tonghyang: Shinshu Ot'anip'a ūi sahoe saŏp ūl saryero," *Ch'asedae immun sahoe yŏn'gu* 6 (2010): 238-39.

²² Andre Schmid, *Korea Between Empires, 1895-1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). Michael Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925*.

the late nineteenth century, the vernacular press was the primary producer of knowledge, which grew into a formidable force in the colonial era. Michael Robinson has argued that upon Cultural Rule, the intellectual activities of the Patriotic Enlightenment Movement in the decades preceding annexation blossomed into what he refers to as a “renaissance of nationalist activity.”²³ Newspapers and magazines were places where vibrant intellectual discussions about the nation, society, culture, and modern life took place. Robinson describes this as “cultural nationalism,” in which moderate Korean nationalists (“cultural nationalists”) believed in working within the colonial system, rather than aiming for immediate independence. They initiated the “cultural movement” (*munhwa undong*) with the belief that a “gradual program of education and economic development was necessary to lay the basis for future national independence.”²⁴

With respect to *kyōka*, from the 1920s, the vernacular press disseminated educational information to the populace on a variety of topics, many of which corresponded with the ideas promoted by the moral suasion campaigns. Sometimes, *kyōka* was directly equated with Korean nationalism, as shown in a *Tonga ilbo*'s article that called for the reform of *han'gŭl* (Korean vernacular script) under the rubric of *kyōka*, in which newspapers were expected to play a significant role.²⁵ In another article, *Tonga ilbo* lamented the shortage of social moral suasion enterprises in the colonial capital, and demanded more facilities and programs for the education of elementary school children.²⁶ Hence, even while the GGK treated *kyōka* in elementary schools as part of an assimilation

²³ Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea*, 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 8, 1922.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1921.

project, Korean elites saw *kyōka* as a means to improve the educational environment of school children.²⁷ It also indicates that *kyōka* had a role in Korea's cultural nationalism as a means to educate the populace and a forum in which Koreans could make demands to the colonial state.

But Korean reformist calls were not always driven by nationalism per se. As in the metropole, the growth of moral suasion campaigns in the 1920s coincided with the emergence of an urban middle class.²⁸ Koreans with modern occupations like teachers, policemen, entrepreneurs, journalists, architects, and housewives often joined the campaigns to address what were perceived as serious social problems pervading the Korean masses. Not all of these campaign participants were nationalists. For instance, a person calling for the modernization of Korean homes and slum districts was not necessarily always a nationalist. Alternatively, as the chapters below suggest, it is difficult to label all who worked with the colonial state to promote *kyōka* simply as pro-Japanese "collaborators."

In this respect, this study avoids labeling Korean endorsers of reform and modernity as nationalists or alternatively, as collaborators.²⁹ My research reveals that the Koreans who took part in the moral suasion campaigns had various agendas of their own, which cannot all be neatly categorized into retroactively assigned political labels by historiography. It is true that some used their modern occupations to provide direct assistance to the GGK or to promote Korean nationalism. In historiography, the sanitary police have been a prime

²⁷ In 1912, the GGK explained that *kyōka* in elementary schools was important to nurture loyal subjects proficient in Japanese who were earnest, diligent and did not evade hard labor. See Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, May 18, 1912.

²⁸ Garon, 20.

²⁹ In addition to Michael Robinson's *Cultural Nationalism*, see e.g., Todd A. Henry, *Assimilating Seoul*.

example of the former and the Korean press being the latter.³⁰ But there were also many more neutral professions that do not fit the pro-Japanese or cultural-nationalist prototype that provided assistance in the *kyōka* project. Also, the interaction between *kyōka* proponents and the Korean masses suggest that Korean society was highly fragmented with tensions and complications that cannot always be understood in the framework of cultural nationalism.

Even within the Korean press that is typically viewed as cultural nationalist, it would be an overstatement to view all of the participating journalists, commentators, and interviewees as a single group furthering “cultural nationalism.” Mass publications served as non-political forums for ordinary Koreans to share their everyday life events, mundane concerns about livelihood, and insecurities about modernity in a society that was being organized under a capitalist class structure, complicated by premodern continuities in behavior and thought. Likewise, it is questionable that Korean policemen who assisted the animal protection movement, for instance, thought of themselves as furthering colonial rule. Such a view assumes that Koreans only had a handful of goals that were political when making decisions in their colonial everyday realm, which was not always the case.

The Korean Middle Class

If *kyōka* was a form of modern governance for the Japanese state, for the Korean middle class, moral suasion was not only a means to disperse modernity among the Korean

³⁰ For more information on the colonial sanitary policemen, see Chōng Kūnsik, “Singminji wisaeng kyōngch'al ūi hyōngsōng kwa pyōnhwa, kūrigo yusan,” *Sahoe wa yōksa* 90 (June 2011): 221-70. See also, Park Yunjae, “Sanitizing Korea: Anti-Cholera Activities of the Police in Early Colonial Korea,” *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 23, no. 2 (Dec. 2010): 151-71. For a general discussion of the police force and its expansion in the colonial era, see Ching-chih Chen, “Police and Community Control Systems in the Empire,” in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 213-39; Yi Sangūi, “Ilche ha Chosōn kyōngch'al ūi t'ūkching kwa kū imiji,” *Yōksa kyoyuk* 115 (Sept. 2010): 165-98.

masses, but also a forum to produce, consume, and debate ideas and anxieties about modern life. In other words, *kyōka* was a sphere in which the GGK's aim to discipline what they perceived was an unruly, premodern Korean populace, coincided with Korean aims to modernize popular behavior along the lines of civilization, and a means to formulate a middle-class identity.³¹ The Korean middle class is discussed further in the mud-hut chapter, but an early examination here may be helpful.

The emergence of a Korean bourgeoisie in the colonial era was brought upon by industrialization, capitalist modernity, and urbanization. As Carter Eckert noted, the Korean bourgeoisie was not a monolithic class.³² The bourgeoisie included not only the industrial (capitalist) bourgeoisie with large capital, such as Kim Sōngsu (1891-1955) who comprised the upper stratum of colonial society,³³ but also Koreans engaged in modern professions, such as teachers, university professors, salarymen, public officials, legal professionals, doctors, nurses, veterinarians, architects, artists, novelists, journalists, and as *Tonga ilbo* noted in 1932, petty merchants, petty landlords, and moneylenders.³⁴ Depending on one's earnings or wealth, especially wealth in the family, the professions listed above comprised the middle or upper class in colonial Korea.

While the backgrounds of the industrial bourgeoisie with large capital have been revealed in Eckert's empirical study,³⁵ the rest who comprised the Korean bourgeoisie

³¹ See e.g., *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 6, 1922.

³² Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 241.

³³ *Ibid.*, 7-26.

³⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 5, 1932.

³⁵ Eckert, *Offspring of Empire*.

deserve some elaboration. In doing so, I rely mainly on Korean newspapers and magazines, which, from the 1920s, began to talk about a “Korean middle class.” I do so because it is in these discussions where socio-cultural constructions of the bourgeoisie took place that had major implications for *kyōka*. In other words, this is where we can get a sense of how people in the colonial era understood what it meant to be a middle class.

The middle class was generally defined in two ways; one in terms of wealth and another in terms of a socio-cultural status determined by the role one played in society. Both were often associated with profession, but not always, as a wealthy individual from a landed aristocratic family could be jobless, but still comprise the middle or upper class. In the first definition, a person’s class status was gauged by his or her average income and/or accumulated wealth, usually along with the nature of his or her profession. For instance, public officials were considered “representatives of the middle class.”³⁶ A 54 year-old man who worked as a junior clerk in the City of Kyōngsōng in 1923, with a monthly wage of 36 yen (wōn)³⁷ and provisional income of 16.87 yen, was described as a “middle class who was not free from anxiety” because he paid monthly debt payments of 1.5 yen.³⁸ In 1936, P’yōngyang was described as a “typical middle-class city” because while it “did not have large capitalists, there were over 300 people whose accumulated wealth exceeded 100,000 yen.”³⁹ Another article that described salarymen, petty merchants, petty landlords, and moneylenders as comprising the middle class, stated that commoners (K. *sōmin*; J. *shomin*)

³⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Jan. 29, 1929.

³⁷ In the colonial era, 1 yen was the same as 1 wōn (Korean currency), which is sometimes used in Korean scholarship. There was also “chōn,” which was 0.01 yen. Thus, 1 yen was 100 chōn.

³⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 14, 1923.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 8, 1936.

consisted of petty farmers, tenant farmers, laborers, and petty merchants, suggesting that petty merchants (*sosangin*) could go in either category depending on their wealth or income.⁴⁰ I discuss this further in the mud-hut chapter, but roughly speaking, the monthly earning of a middle-class individual in the colonial era was between 60 and 270 yen.

What often goes unmentioned in the mass publications is their educational background. Education was a central factor in the emergence of the Korean middle class, as it enabled members of Korean society to transition from their premodern Confucian statuses to engage in modern professions. Many of them were beneficiaries of the modern education system that had appeared from the Taehan Empire established by the late Chosŏn state and Western missionaries, or subsequently in the colonial-era schools.⁴¹ Thus, they were highly receptive to ideas of the modern. For those that came from more affluent families, they received their education abroad in Japan, Europe, and the United States, and returned to form the upper class in colonial society.⁴²

Eckert has observed that the Korean industrial bourgeoisie was a mix of the old and new; that upon the opening of the ports in 1876, they accumulated capital with their merchant status or their background from aristocratic (*yangban*) landed families, to emerge as the industrial bourgeoisie in the colonial era.⁴³ Likewise, others who formed the middle and upper classes in the colonial period came from backgrounds that were often a mix of the old and new. From late Chosŏn, many of their families had either accumulated wealth

⁴⁰ Ibid., Oct. 5, 1932.

⁴¹ Kim Ŭnhŭi, "Taegajok sok ūi aidŭl: ilche sidae chungsangnyuch'ŭng ūi adonggi," *Kajok kwa munhwa* 19, no. 3 (2007): 10.

⁴² Ch'a Namhŭi and Yi Chin, "Kyŏngsŏng Cheguk Taehak kwa singminji sigi 'chung'in ch'ŭng' ūi sangsŭng idong," *Tamnon* 201 13, no. 4 (2010): 22.

⁴³ Eckert, *Offspring of Empire*, 7-26.

with their merchant, *chung'in* (middle men), or *yangban* status.⁴⁴

This was especially true for those who attended the colonial universities or studied abroad. In the 1930s, tuition for higher education was 50 to 60 yen per month.⁴⁵ At the time, the cost of living for a small farmer's four-family household was 20 yen; a policeman's monthly earnings was 35 yen; and a school teacher's monthly wage was about 60 yen, suggesting that only affluent families would be able to provide higher education to their children.⁴⁶ A study of Korean students who attended Kyōngsōng Imperial University in 1938 has revealed that they came from *chung'in*, merchant, or *yangban* families; fathers were employed in civil service, agriculture, commerce, education, legal, medical, and religious fields; with one third of the students' fathers unemployed, suggesting that they came from *yangban* families with enough wealth that the father need not work.⁴⁷ These were obviously students who came from the affluent sector of Korean society.⁴⁸

The alternative definition identified the middle class as having a socio-cultural status and an important modern role in society. In 1922, Sōn Ujōn (1889- ?), a part-time employee of *Tonga ilbo* who was an ardent advocate of reforming the Korean lifestyle,

⁴⁴ *Chung'in* was a status group below the aristocratic *yangban* but above the commoners; technicians who worked as interpreters, technicians, or medical doctors for the state. For more information on the Confucian status system, see James B. Palais, *Politics and Policy in Traditional Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1975), 6.

⁴⁵ Ch'a Namhŭi, et al., 21.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 15, 17, 21.

⁴⁸ The study mentioned argues that Kyōngsōng Imperial University students were from middle or upper-middle class families, pointing to the fact that the upper class sent their children abroad, rather than educate them in the colonial university. I generally agree, since only those in the middle class or above would be able to afford a monthly tuition payment of 50-60 yen. But it should be noted that only 10 percent of Korean households in Kyōngsōng had monthly earnings of over 80 yen in the 1920s, suggesting that the students came from quite privileged backgrounds, in comparison to the rest of Koreans. See my discussion on the middle class in the mud-hut chapter.

defined the middle class as follows:

“The middle class comprise persons who have attained positions with a certain degree of responsibility; or standing in their work, education, wealth or society; or persons with important responsibilities pertaining to the nation; whose lifestyle is below the capitalist or the affluent class, but whose status is above the working class. In other words, they are those who have been assigned important responsibilities as citizens (K. *kungmin*) or in the advancement of society. Social advancement cannot occur if [the middle class] is not assigned pivotal roles in society, as it would obstruct them from enjoying and obtaining the satisfactions of the so-called cultural life. [The middle class] includes most of the populace, except the capitalist and working classes. Given the social conditions of the Korean people, persons can only be called a “Korean middle class” if they have the ability to maintain [the middle class] lifestyle through modern knowledge and skills, make contributions to societal advancement materially and immaterially, and earn the respect of the majority.”⁴⁹

Sŏn description of a Korean middle class is distinct from the definition of the middle class in terms of wealth and income. It is more expansive, highlighting the socio-cultural role a Korean bourgeoisie is expected to play. What is interesting is that even as he states that most Koreans can be middle class, he emphasizes the societal position, status, and respect from others that the middle class is expected to earn. This suggests that not all could take part in this middle-class identity, which, in his view, was an elevated position than that of the masses at large. In fact, Sŏn was adopting the notion of the bourgeoisie as derived from the West. Capitalist societies, historically, have emphasized the moral-cultural leadership of the bourgeoisie in civil society, in which they are expected to “achieve a position of leadership or ‘hegemony’ based on broad popular consent.”⁵⁰ For Sŏn, the moral-cultural leadership involved endorsing modernization; that only those who embraced

⁴⁹ Sŏn Ujŏn, “Chosŏnin saenghwal munje ūi yŏn’gu” [Study of problems in Korean life], *Kaebŏk* 22 (Apr. 1, 1922): 8-9. Born in Hansŏng (Seoul) in 1899, Sŏn was educated in P’yŏngyang Advanced Elementary School (P’yŏngyang Kodŭng Pot’ong Hakkyo) and abroad in Waseda University’s Department of Agriculture. See Kuksa P’yŏnch’an Wiwŏnhoe, “Sŏn Ujŏn” in *Waejŏng inmul* vol. 1, *Han’guksa teito’ŏ peisŭ*, accessed Aug 24, 2017, http://db.history.go.kr/item/level.do?levelId=im_107_00326. Here, only portions are quoted and his serial is discussed further in the mud-hut chapter. This serial is one of the most comprehensive discussions of the Korean middle class. To access it in its entirety, see Sŏn Ujŏn, “Chosŏnin saenghwal munje ūi yŏn’gu” [Study of problems in Korean Life], *Kaebŏk* 20, 21, 22 (Feb. 8; Mar. 1; Apr. 1, 1922): 45-55; 14-26; 4-16.

⁵⁰ Eckert, *Offspring of Empire*, 188-89.

modernity attained the title of a bourgeoisie. He explained that while the Korean lifestyle was lagging behind others in civilization, it was still important to standardize Korean life under the global norm; the middle class.⁵¹ But he noted that because Koreans were poor, their incomes did not always reflect their social status; conversely, there were many who did not deserve middle class treatment, but accumulated great wealth. Sŏn, therefore, concluded that in Korean society, the middle class had to be persons with modern knowledge and skills, taking responsibilities to reform society, and worthy of gaining respect from the populace.⁵²

Sŏn was not alone in his conceptualization of the middle class. In 1921, Kim Hwallan (1890-1970), a teacher of Ewha Haktang, the first woman's modern education institution (present-day Ewha Woman's University),⁵³ stated the following:

"Cultural movement" is too vast to be defined in simple terms, but "culture" means civilization and moral reform (*kyohwa*). Generally, individuals gather to become a society, and societies gather to be a nation. If a person is civilized, society is civilized. And when society is civilized, the nation is civilized. Therefore, to generate a cultural movement, there is no other way but to enhance a person's knowledge. Improving a person's knowledge can be measured by the body, mentality, and spirit... In my view, the knowledgeable person is the upper class, the person who becomes knowledgeable through teachings is the middle class, and those who do not listen despite the preachings are the lower base... Societal elites should deliberate ways to save (*kuje*) [the masses] for the sake of Korean culture.⁵⁴

As I show in the chapters below, the fact that certain Koreans perceived of

⁵¹ Sŏn Ujŏn, "Chosŏnin saenghwal munje ūi yŏn'gu," *Kaebŏk* 22 (Apr. 1, 1922): 8.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵³ Kim Hwallan, who also went by Helen Kim, was the first Korean woman to receive a doctorate degree, which she received from Columbia University and later became the first Korean president of Ewha Woman's University. In the 1930s, she participated in various state-led *kyōka* organizations, such as Chosŏn Puin Yŏn'guhoe (Chosŏn Women Research Committee), Chosŏn Kyohwa Tanch'e Yŏnhaphoe (Federation of Chosŏn Moral Suasion Groups), and Kungmin Chŏngsin Ch'ongdongwŏn Chosŏn Yŏnmaeng (Chosŏn Association for the Total Mobilization of the National Spirit), which led her to be labeled a pro-Japanese collaborator in the post-liberation era. Recently, Ewha Woman's University students have campaigned for the removal of Kim's statute from campus, due to her collaboration history. Students demonstrated on campus and placed a large plastic bag over her statute. See *Kyŏngnyang sinmun*, Feb. 21, 2017.

⁵⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 22, 1921.

themselves as the middle class precisely because they were saving the masses with their modern knowledge and skills often complicated the campaigns and revealed many tensions within Korean society. A major problem was that the realities of their everyday life, such as income, wealth, and home, did not always match the ideals of modernity that they preached to the Korean masses. As fascination with modern life grew, ironically, the lives of the Korean middle class seemed to deteriorate, as shown in the housing shortage discussed in the mud-hut chapter.

Anxieties grew especially as the colonial era proceeded, which intensified the stratification of the Korean bourgeoisie. There were those in the Korean middle class, such as white-collars in finance and in bureaucratic positions, who received near-similar treatment to their Japanese colleagues, and were able to advance in their careers even as Japanese militarism intensified, while upward mobility was not given to other members of the bourgeoisie.⁵⁵ The colonial experience was uneven, even within the Korean middle class. Another problem was what I refer to as the “elitist disdain” for the lower class, which seems to have been widespread in the minds of the Korean bourgeoisie, a point that has been noted by other scholars.⁵⁶ This seems to have been a mixture of the premodern Confucian status consciousness and the modern notion of the moral-cultural leadership of the bourgeoisie, a point addressed in the bathing chapter, but also suggested here in Sön’s writing.

⁵⁵ Carter J. Eckert, “Total War, Industrialization, and Social Change in Late Colonial Korea,” in Peter Duus, et al., eds., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996): 26-27.

⁵⁶ See Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire*, 208-09; Michael Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea*, 74-75.

The Bottom-up Responses to *Kyōka*

The discussion thus far has focused the campaigns' promoters. Then, what was the bottom-up response to the moral suasion campaigns, namely the Korean masses who were the targets of *kyōka*? In historiography, the social policies of the GGK and the colonial modernity framework have been popular topics, but their impact on society and how Koreans dealt with them on a day-to-day basis is less clear. This is especially true regarding the response of the lower class and ordinary Koreans who were targets of moral suasion.

The campaigns generated a wide variety of responses from the Korean populace. The speaker shouting out the benefits and prestige of the modern lifestyle to those whom the promoters saw as the ignorant masses did not always reach every sector of society, nor were the ideas always attractive to all. This was because each person affected by the campaigns had a different understanding of or degree of receptiveness toward modernity and civilization. Often the campaigns were met with an unruly and angry populace. Sometimes, premodern customs, habits, and ways of thinking persisted among the masses that cannot be explained by the colonial modernity framework. This was an issue particularly visible in the bathing reforms, wherein many Koreans continued their premodern ways of bathing, but also where there were hints that the premodern status system, although formally abolished, persisted in people's minds. This, along with their capitalist class identities that were being formed in the colonial era, complicated the moral suasion campaigns on the ground.

The campaigns also impacted Westerners and settlers who lived their everyday life

in the colonial society along with Koreans.⁵⁷ Because these individuals had their own concerns about living in the peninsula, their everyday behaviors were sometimes at odds with the campaign's goals. For instance, while settlers believed in the need to modernize Korean bathing customs, they were also trying to create a bathable Chosŏn for themselves. This meant keeping scrubby-looking or undesirable Koreans away from their bathhouses, which directly contravened with the GgK's campaign to increase public bathhouses across the peninsula and encourage bathing. It also went against the assimilation policy put forth by the colonial state. In the animal campaign, Western missionaries, along with the wives of Korean and Japanese elites, directly imported the Euro-American idea of animal protection into the peninsula. But they were met with angry locals who argued that human welfare came before animal protection.

The bottom-up view also shows that even for its promoters, modernity was an ideal to be attained and not reachable for all. Proponents of *kyōka* who saw themselves as undertaking a civilizing mission of the Korean masses were themselves very much in the middle of the modernizing process, whether they were Japanese settlers, Western missionaries, or Korean elites. The ideas of the modern were raw, unrefined ideals in the experimental stage for not just the Korean bourgeoisie, but even for the Westerners and the Japanese, and were often unattainable goals fraught with contradictions; the animal protection movement and culture homes (*bunka jūtaku*), which were pricy, ultra modern homes designed for the upper class, being prime examples. But they were imposed on the Korean population as if their preachers had already mastered the art of being modern.

⁵⁷ For social works conducted by Japanese and Western religious groups, see e.g., Che Chōmsuk, "Singminji Chosŏn ilbon pulgyo ūi sahoe saōp tonghyang: Shinshu ot'anip'a ūi sahoe saōp ūl sarye ro," *Ch'asedae immun sahoe yŏn'gu* 6 (2010): 241-57; Pak Myōnggyu and Kim Paegyōng, "Singmin chibae wa hegemoni kyōngjaeng: Chosŏn ch'ongdokpu wa mi'guk kaesin'gyo sŏn'gyo seryōk kan ūi kwan'gye rŭl chungsim ūro," *Sahoe wa yōksa* 82 (2009): 5-39. On the activities of the Japanese settler community, see Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*.

Kyōka in the Everyday Realm of Colonial Modernity

My research began with a simple inquiry: what was it like for most Koreans to live in the colonial era, and how did grand colonial policies affect life in the everyday realm? The answer involves not just studying top-down policies, but breaking away from the meta-narrative and examining history from bottom up in its everyday form.⁵⁸ To borrow a terminology used by Chŏng Kŭnsik, “rupture” characterized the interaction between different groups.⁵⁹ Chŏng has argued that the everyday realm is a way to overcome the limitations of colonial modernity to examine areas of colonial rupture (K. *kyunyŏl*; J. *kiretsu*), where things did not go as intended or conceived by the colonialists. The realm was neither collaboration nor resistance in the nationalist sense, but rather “a more complex and diverse reality involving various aspects of the everyday, such as resistance, indifference, avoidance, amusement, and enjoyment.”⁶⁰ Likewise, in her study of settlers, Jun Uchida has stated, “The minutiae of their day-to-day may not tell us how colonial rule was exercised through high politics, courts, and markets. But they show how ethnic boundaries and cultural identities were constituted, negotiated, policed, and transgressed through the quotidian rhythms and routines of daily life, where contact was absorbed into one’s stream of consciousness.”⁶¹

⁵⁸ An excellent example of bottom-up scholarship would be Frank Baldwin’s study of the March First Movement. He deconstructs the meta-narrative on the movement to show the shaky alliance between the movement’s leaders, their distrust of the masses, various responses from ordinary people, with some joining out of pure curiosity without awareness its political agenda, as well as the surprisingly restrained and often non-violent responses by the Japanese police. See Baldwin, “The March First Movement,” especially, 52-123.

⁵⁹ Chŏng Kŭnsik, “Sŏjang: singminji ilsang saenghwal yŏn’gu ūi ūiŭi wa kwaje” in Kong Cheuk and Chŏng Kŭnsik, eds., *Singminji ūi ilsang, chibae wa kyunyŏl* (Seoul: Munhwa Kwahaksa, 2006), 14-19.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Jun Uchida, “A Sentimental Journey: Mapping the Interior Frontier of Japanese Settlers in Colonial Korea,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 70, no. 3 (2011): 708.

This study of moral suasion campaigns is very much aligned with the scholars who have argued for the importance of examining everyday life.⁶² Mundane events taking place in a daily setting can offer valuable insights into big history. The bottom-up view of *kyōka* points to instances in which things did not go as expected by the colonial state and the reformers preaching modernity. In many instances, the campaigns did not persuade the Korean masses because they were aspirational ideas of modernity that were even difficult to reach for the middle class. Further, the guidelines to reform Korean behavior were often impractical preachings that did not reflect the realities an ordinary person faced in his or her everyday life. Hence, they failed to resonate in the minds of the average Korean.

Just as the nationalist agenda of the Korean reformist elites should not be overestimated, neither should we think that the resulting unruliness in the Korean masses was necessarily driven by nationalism or resistance to colonial rule per se. Rather, these were instances in which the modern ideals imposed by the campaigns were deemed incompatible with the daily life of the masses, sometimes directly threatening their livelihoods. Holes in the colonial apparatus were clear; the GGK as both a colonial state and a modern regime could not monitor and control every undesirable behavior because Koreans could choose to ignore modern preaching when they wanted, even if that meant they would be pushed outside civilization as outcasts by devoted followers of modernity.

Materials Consulted

Primary sources consulted include official government reports, surveys, and laws

⁶² This focus on the everyday is not limited to the Korea's colonial era. Andrew Gordon has traced the history of the sewing machine in modern Japan to reveal how modernity affected the daily life of women and the middle class. See Andrew Gordon, *Fabricating Consumers: The Sewing Machine in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

enacted by the GGK; publications by Japanese policymakers, travelers, and settlers including those who were involved in *kyōka*; an ethnographic study of mud-hut dwellers conducted by Kyōngsōng Imperial University students; Korean and Japanese newspapers and magazines; observations by Westerner travelers and missionaries; Yun Ch'ihō's English diary, Korean plays, short stories, and novels; and most importantly, personal accounts and testimonies of ordinary people who lived through colonialism.

The study of everyday life requires capturing subtle moments in history that may normally go unnoticed; people's attitudes, thoughts, day-to-day behaviors, and observations about the mundane life surrounding them. Some of this has been published in secondary works, while a great more are scattered in sources, usually alongside mundane incidents and happenings. They provide insight into cultural and habitual norms, and how ordinary people reacted to, negotiated, and thought about top-down challenges to existing norms. They also show cross-cultural clashes, conflicts within Korean society, and tensions between premodern and modern ways of living; all of which, I present as worthy of historical investigation.

The dissertation also relies on numerous secondary works in English, Japanese, and Korean covering a wide range of subjects including social work, sanitation, animals, the Japanese empire, mud huts, lower class, bourgeois life, Japanese settlers, architecture, housing, schools, law, police, and everyday studies. The ingenious insights into Korean and Japanese history in the scholarly publications cited throughout the chapters provided significant guidance in the writing of this dissertation and my efforts to reconsider *kyōka*, colonial modernity, and everyday life in Korean history.

Chapter I. Disciplining Homes and Urban Residents: The Mud-hut Dwellers

That a major city like Keijō has so many people living in mud huts is a sorrow of life and a disgrace to civilization.

Zenshō Eisuke, “Life of the Poor in Chōsen” (1929)⁶³

1. The Colonial Gaze: The “Social Problem of Mud Huts

The Emergence of Mud Huts

From the 1920s, Korean newspapers began reporting on the people in Kyōngsōng who “dug holes in the ground and lived like animals.”⁶⁴ The holes, which were covered with straw mats and dried grass, were referred to as underground shacks (*umjip; anagura; 穴藏*) or earth tunnels (*t’ogul; dokutsu; 土窟*).⁶⁵ There were reports of death in the tunnels from the cold winter, starvation, or fire.⁶⁶ In 1924, it was alleged that about 300 *t’ogul* existed in the colonial capital.⁶⁷ By 1931, the number increased to 1,538 mud huts that housed 5,092 dwellers.⁶⁸ These people came to be known as *t’omangmin* (*domakumin; 土幕民*) or mud-hut dwellers.

From the 1920s, colonial authorities also began to take note of the people. The city of Kyōngsōng defined *t’omangmin* as “people who lived illegally on riversides and forests of

⁶³ Zenshō Eisuke, “Chōsen ni okeru hinmin seikatsu,” *Chōsen shakai jigyo* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1929): 2-5.

⁶⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, July 21, 1922.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, May 10, 1923.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1923 and Mar. 5, 1923.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 9, 1924.

⁶⁸ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten), 62.

government or private property.”⁶⁹ T’omangmin’s identity in the urban landscape was thus based on their illegal occupation of public and private lands. So strictly speaking, they were distinguishable from beggars, vagrants, or the lower class that lived in shabby, but legal homes. T’omak structures varied widely, especially in the later years of colonial rule, but generally, t’ogul and t’omak referred to the primitive-type homes illegally constructed by the Korean lower class. T’ogul was a “rougher version of t’omak, resembling a cave dwelling,” as explained by a GGK official, Zenshō Eisuke (善生永助, 1885-1972).⁷⁰ In 1929, Osaka city official Sakai Toshio (酒井利男) provided a more detailed explanation of the early mud huts:

On a rectangular piece of land, a hole about 4.95 square meters is dug with one side as an entrance. The upper part is a roof made from old stones, used straw mats or iron boards. The interior is a primitive life divided into two sections; a mat for a living area and another section for cooking. Here, it is relatively easy to endure the cold or the heat, and is where [the domakumin] lead a simple life in the holes. Nowadays, however, such simple structures are rare, with most of them more upgraded than t’omak or t’ogul; [they are] closer to barracks or temporary huts that can be seen nearby Keijō. But overall, they are referred to as t’omak or t’ogul in Chōsen.⁷¹

Growth of Mud Huts

As for figures, statistics vary somewhat across sources, but the available data suggests that t’omangmin increased throughout the colonial era. Scholars generally accept the statistics provided in Table A, which is a compilation of various sources provided by the GGK and Kyōngsōng Imperial University students.

⁶⁹ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Tokushu Saimin Chōsakai, “Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei—seikatsu chōsa,” *Chōsa geppō* 11, no. 11 (Nov. 1940): 49.

⁷⁰ Zenshō Eisuke, “Tokushu buraku to domaku buraku,” *Chōsen sōran* (Mar. 31, 1933): 735.

⁷¹ Sakai Toshio, “Domaku kara mita Chōsenjin jūtaku mondai,” *Shakai jigyō kenkyū* 17, no. 1 (Jan. 1929): 42-43.

Table A. Number of T'omak and T'omangmin in Kyōngsōng and Its Nearby Regions⁷²

Year	# of T'omak	# of T'omangmin	Population of Kyōngsōng ⁷³
1922	53	—	271,414
1923	99	—	288,260
1924	157	300	297,465
1925	217	—	336,349
1926	286	—	342,626
1927	475	3,000	315,006
1928	1,143	4,803	—
1931	1,538	5,092	365,432
1932	—	—	374,920
1933	2,870	12,478	382,491
1934	2,902	14,179	394,511
1935	3,576	17,320	404,202
1936	—	—	444,098
1937	3,248	14,993	—
1938	3,316	16,644	706,396
1939	4,292	20,911	848,400
1940	2,758	11,197	896,320 ⁷⁴
1942	1,728	1,470	1,096,199

Sources: See footnotes 300-302.

In Table A, the relative decrease of mud huts in 1937, 1940, and 1942 respectively are somewhat misleading, as they reflect the GGK's efforts to create state-sponsored; hence

⁷² For the numbers on t'omangmin, see Chōsen Shakai Jigyō Kyōkai, *Chōsen shakai jigyo* 18, no. 12 (1940): 34-35; Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Sōtokufu kokuji* 555 (Apr. 18, 1941); Keijōfu, *Keijō ihō* (Dec. 1931): 24-26; Keijōfu, *Keijō ihō* (Feb. 1943): 39; Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1942), 62; Kikuchi Kitami (菊池北深), "Hantō shigaichi ni okeru jūtaku mondai," *Chōsen shakai jigyo* 8, no. 6 (1930): 40. The given name "Kitami" requires check, so the kanji is provided. For the numbers in 1940, see Chōsen Sōtokufu Kōseikyoku, "Domaku oyobi huryō jūtaku chōsa," *Chōsa geppō* 13, no. 3 (Mar. 1942): 28, 35. For 1942, see Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, "Domaku oyobi huryō jūtaku chōsa," *Chōsa geppō* 15, no. 6 (June. 1944): 79.

⁷³ Again, statistics for Kyōngsōng's population vary across sources and scholars. Here, I have referenced the numbers provided by *Tonga ilbo*, which are based on population surveys conducted by the City of Kyōngsōng and its local police departments. See *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 12, 1924; Dec. 1, 1925; Feb. 18, 1928; Feb. 22, 1933; Feb. 20, 1934; Mar. 13, 1935; Apr. 1, 1936; May 1, 1936; Mar. 5, 1938; Oct. 2, 1939; May 1, 1940.

⁷⁴ In 1940, the city conducted two population surveys for wartime food rationing purposes. In the first, there were 157,492 households with 934,526 people, which made city officials suspicious that residents were inflating the number of people residing in their households in order to receive more food. The city's population had increased by nearly 100,000 in a few months from December of the previous year. So the city conducted a second survey that found 158,606 homes with 896,320 residents in the city. Numbers from the second survey is what referenced in Table B. See *Tonga ilbo*, May 1, 1940.

“lawful” t’omak regions as well as its attempt to distinguish mud huts from “poor-quality homes” (*huryō jūtaku*), which were “homes resembling shacks that are unhygienic or structurally unsafe.”⁷⁵ By definition, t’omak had to be an illegal occupation of land, so when the GGK relocated some of the t’omangmin to officially designated sites in the mid 1930s, they ceased to count as “t’omak” in the government records, even if they still maintained the mud-hut structures.⁷⁶ The numbers also did not capture all of the people actually living in mud huts, if they were deemed “poor-quality homes” by the state or escaped census due to their mobility and the fleeting nature of their homes. If we combine the mud-hut figures with that of poor-quality homes, the number increases. Table B provides the numbers for Kyōngsōng’s mud huts and poor-quality homes in the 1940s:

Table B. Number of T’omak and Poor-Quality Homes in Kyōngsōng

Year	# of T’omak	# of T’omangmin	# of Poor-quality Homes	# of Poor-quality Home Dwellers	Total # of People
1940	2,758	11,197	4,545	23,119	34,316 (7,303 homes)
1942	1,728	1,470	5,698	28,550	30,020 (7,426 Homes)

Sources: Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, “Domaku oyobi huryō jūtaku chōsa,” *Chōsa geppō* 15, no. 6 (June 1944): 79; Chōsen Sōtokufu Kōseikyoku, “Domaku oyobi huryō jūtaku chōsa,” *Chōsa geppō* 13, no. 3 (Mar. 1942): 28, 35.

These numbers may be more representative of the urban dwellers that lived in mud huts or in similar structures in the 1940s. In 1940, Kyōngsōng Imperial University students also remarked that government statistics were grossly underestimated and estimated the

⁷⁵ Kang Man’gil, “Ilche sidae ūi tosi pinmin saenghwal- t’omangmin ūl chungsim ūro,” *Han’guksa yōn’gu* 53 (1986): 125.

⁷⁶ Kim Kyōngil, “Ilche ha tosi pinminch’ūng ūi hyōngsōng: Kyōngsōngbu ūi irūnba t’omangmin ūl chungsim ūro,” *Munhak kwa chisōngsa* 3 (Dec. 1986): 217.

t'omak population to be over 30,000, based on their ethnographic research in which they personally visited t'omak neighborhoods.⁷⁷ Thus, until the end of the colonial era, mud huts were a serious problem pervading the colonial capital reflecting inadequacies in the availability of housing.

Location of Mud Huts

According to Zenshō Eisuke, mud huts first appeared in the northeastern outskirts of Kyōngsōng in Sindang-ri.⁷⁸ Sindang-ri was a barren region comprised mostly of graveyards, and was one of the largest t'omak communities in the 1920s.⁷⁹ It was alleged that people with contagious diseases first settled there in 1918, after being driven out from their original dwellings by their employers and landlords. It was common for diseased populations to relocate to deserted regions, after being ousted by local communities. Pusan had a similar history, in which lepers who arrived in the city to request treatment were refused by the hospital. With no funds to return to their hometowns, 34 of the patients settled behind Chosŏn Spinning Factory in 11 mud huts.⁸⁰

But above all, the mud-hut dwellings were constructed by migrants who could not afford homes and had difficulty maintaining their livelihoods.⁸¹ T'omak communities which had been limited to the city's outskirts also began to appear inside the city, especially in the 1930s when Kyōngsōng expanded its administrative territorial boundary. Graveyards and

⁷⁷ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabu, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, 62.

⁷⁸ Zenshō Eisuke, "Tokushu buraku to domaku buraku," 736.

⁷⁹ Kim Kyōngil, "Ilche ha tosi pinmin," 220.

⁸⁰ Zenshō Eisuke, "Tokushu buraku to domaku buraku," 738.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 736.

crematoriums were popular sites for mud-hut construction. Along with Sindang-ri, Tohwa-dong in Ma'po was another case of a graveyard that turned into a mud-hut community. Located southwest of Kyōngbok Palace near the Han River, Tohwa-dong was also a well-known red light district.⁸² To the west of Kyōngbok Palace, Songwŏl-dong and Hyŏnjŏ-dong (West Gate) housed major mud-hut communities. In 1931, 800 t'omangmin lived in Songwŏl-dong in 170 mud huts, and there were 155 t'omangmin in Hyŏnjŏ-dong's 31 mud huts.⁸³

T'omak settlements could also be found to the east of Kyōngbok Palace in Sindang-ri near Kwanghŭi Gate, as well as regions near East Gate, such as Sinsŏl-ri, Wangsim-ri, Yŏngdŭngp'o, and Ch'ŏngnyang-ri.⁸⁴ They were also in neighborhoods more familiar to us, such as Yongsan (U.S. military base), Yŏn'gŏn-dong (Seoul National University Hospital), and Ich'on-dong near the Han River.⁸⁵ By the early 1930s, it was clear that mud-hut dwellers were dispersed across Kyōngsŏng and its vicinities, and they were not going anywhere anytime soon. The settlements were big enough to be known under a collective name, such as "Songwŏl-dong t'omangmin" or "Ich'on-dong t'omangmin."

Although this chapter deals with the mud huts in Kyōngsŏng, t'omangmin were by no means limited to the colonial capital. Rather, they were dispersed across the peninsula and could be found in other regions of the Japanese empire. In 1928, it was reported that

⁸² Kim Kyŏngil, "Ilche ha tosi pinmin," 220.

⁸³ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 6, 1931 and Sept. 30, 1933.

⁸⁴ Kim Kyŏngil, "Ilche ha tosi pinmin," 225.

⁸⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 25, 1925; Oct. 27, 1928; June 7, 1929.

P'yŏngyang had several thousand mud huts.⁸⁶ In the same year, 52 mud huts could be found among the 670 poor-quality homes of Inch'ŏn.⁸⁷ Likewise, mud huts were found in Taegu, Pusan, and Kunsan.⁸⁸ In 1938, it was estimated that 75 percent of the peninsula's homes were either mud huts or poor-quality homes.⁸⁹ By 1940, a total of 3,939 mud huts were identified in Korea, housing 16,679 residents that included additional cities, such as Kaesŏng, Taejŏn, Chŏnju, Kwangju, Haeju, and Hamhŭng.⁹⁰ But if the number of mud huts is combined with that of poor-quality homes, there were a total of 22,845 inferior homes (3,939 mud huts and 18,933 poor-quality homes) housing 101,666 residents (16,679 t'omangmin and 84,987 residents in poor-quality homes).⁹¹ As with the case of Kyŏngsŏng, the figures for poor-quality homes included mud-hut structures that were constructed legally.

Mud huts appeared in other regions in the Japanese empire that were populated by Koreans. In 1929, it was reported that among the 4,749 Korean dwellings in Osaka housing 45,133 people, 144 were temporary "barracks."⁹² In combination with other illegally-constructed homes, about 20 percent of the Korean dwellings in Osaka (950 homes) were deemed poor-quality homes. In 1934, Manchukuo expelled 10,000 t'omangmin from the

⁸⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 8, 1928.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, June 29, 1928.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1934.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 29, 1938.

⁹⁰ Chŏsen Sŏtokufu Kōseikyoku, "Domaku oyobi huryō jūtaku chōsa," 35-37.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Sakai Toshio, "Domaku kara mita Chōsenjin jūtaku mondai" (Jan. 1929): 41-49.

city of Tumen.⁹³ In this context, mud huts came to be regarded as a social problem pervading the empire requiring state intervention.

T'omak's Origins and the Colonial Gaze

Colonial authorities saw the rise of mud huts as a post-1910 phenomenon, with Public Management Director of Kyōngsōng, Nagasato Eiji (長郷衛二, 1895- ?), stating that the word “domakumin” was basically an invented term in the colonial era.⁹⁴ Kyōngsōng Imperial University students agreed in their ethnographic study of t'omangmin, noting the absence of the word “t'omak” (土幕) in the Korean Language Dictionary (*Chōsengo jiten*) compiled by the GGK in 1920.⁹⁵

But colonial officials also located t'omak's origins in the premodern mentality of Koreans, in which there was little understanding of land ownership. In 1929, Sakai Toshio explained that Chosōn's local color (*kunigara*) had a “mysterious custom (*myō na hūzoku*), with a long-standing tradition of tolerance toward illegal construction of homes on vacant private and public properties.”⁹⁶ The Chosōn state had encouraged housing construction on public lands if they were barren and vacant. According to Toshio, this explained why the t'omangmin constructed mud huts in private and public lands “without blinking an eye (*heizen to shite*),” since as long as there was an empty lot, anybody could build a mud hut

⁹³ *Chosōn ilbo*, May 10, 1934.

⁹⁴ Nagasato Eiji, “Domakumin to sono shochi ni tsuite,” *Dōhōai* 37 (Jan. 1939): 37.

⁹⁵ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabu, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1942), 44; Chōsen Sōtokufu, ed. *Chōsengō jiten* (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1920), 874. The dictionary contains “t'ogul,” but only refers to its basic definition: “a large hole in the ground.” See *ibid.*, 872.

⁹⁶ Sakai Toshio, “Domaku kara mita Chōsenjin jūtaku mondai” (Jan. 1929): 44-45.

cheaply and easily.⁹⁷ In 1938, *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* (Korea and Manchuria) made a similar comment and further explained: “This mentality has persisted in the minds of some Koreans, as in the case of most domakumin. The mud-hut dwellers do not think they are doing anything particularly bad when they occupy government or private lands. They think it is a natural right to construct homes in empty lots.”⁹⁸

In fact, this “premodern mentality” of t’omangmin was part of a larger discourse on the Korean poor that was adopted by the proponents of *kyōka*. In his 1926 study of the Korean lower class, a social work official named Fujii Chūjirō (藤井忠次郎) explained:

The people of Chōsen have a natural disposition toward alcohol, tobacco, play, and gambling. There is a custom of moving only to “drink, stroke, and play.” Those who stroke their beards with a pipe in their mouth and do not work are regarded [by Koreans] as people with social status. This has led to negligence and lavishness, resulting in [a populace] with little awareness on the importance of saving money; diseased from failure to take care of their health; who live idly, while dabbling in speculation to make a fortune in a single stroke.⁹⁹

In his view, the inherent customs of Korea and the lax attitude toward life drove many to impoverishment, a view shared by Westerners who engaged in social work in the peninsula. Reverend George W. Gilmore (1858-1933), who taught at the first modern school established by the Chosŏn state (Yugyōng kongwŏn), remarked that the laziness of Koreans was “not innate, but result[ed] from the apathy caused by a knowledge that all fruit of toil above what is required for the veriest necessities is liable to be stolen from them by corrupt and insatiate officials against whom they are powerless.”¹⁰⁰ He added that foreigners who visited Korea after 1876 constantly remarked on the “wretchedly poor” state of the local

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ “Domakumin wa doko e iku,” *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* 373 (Dec. 1, 1938): 64-68.

⁹⁹ Fujii was a probation officer in Taegu Probation Office (*Taegu poho kwanch’also*). See Fujii Chūjirō, *Chōsen musan kaikyū no kenkyū* (Keijō: Teikoku Chihō Gyōsei Gakkai Chōsen Honbu, 1926), 118-19.

¹⁰⁰ George W. Gilmore, *Korea from its Capital: With a Chapter on Missions* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1892), 32.

population.¹⁰¹

At the same time, it could not be overlooked that mud huts were distinct byproducts of the colonial era.¹⁰² Nagasato Eiji admitted that while temporary huts built by the poor existed in Chosŏn Dynasty, they were of a different nature from the t'omak built by migrant populations in urban regions from the late 1910s.¹⁰³ Likewise, Fujii explained that the increase in the number of Japanese settlers (*naichijin*) created economic competition, leading to the impoverishment of Koreans.¹⁰⁴ As commodity prices soared and labor wages decreased, Koreans experienced commercial and business failures as well as unemployment. Modern developments, such as railroads, affected the Korean lower class with traditional occupations like coachmen, who lost their means of livelihood. Fujii explained that in this context, Koreans with no capital or ability became “the losers.”

Thus, the mud huts occupied a complicated realm in the minds of the colonialists. On the one hand, t'omak had structural and mental origins in the Chosŏn Dynasty that explained their perseverance in the colonial period. On the other hand, mud huts were unique urban problems generated upon colonialism.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 88.

¹⁰² “Domakumin wa doko e iku,” 64.

¹⁰³ Nagasato Eiji, 37.

¹⁰⁴ Fujii Chūjirō, 118-23.

Pre-colonial Origins of Mud Huts

In post-colonial works, Korean scholars have challenged the colonialist discourse by emphasizing t'omangmin as an exclusive social problem of the colonial era.¹⁰⁵ They have argued that premodern mud huts were minor and temporary occurrences that were incomparable to the massive migration of farmers to cities in the colonial era.¹⁰⁶ In this view, t'omangmin were unfortunate byproducts of colonialism; thus their premodern history was irrelevant.

A brief examination of the Chosŏn Dynasty may serve to balance the competing views of t'omangmin posed by colonialists and the subsequent challenges by post-colonial scholarship. Structurally speaking, dwellings resembling mud huts existed as early as the fifteenth century. During King Sŏngjong's reign (r. 1470-94), the mayor of Hansŏng (later called Kyŏngsŏng or Keijō; present-day Seoul) reported on the poor living near Ch'ŏnggye Stream, where dredging caused soil to pile and created sand hills.¹⁰⁷ These mounds (*kasan* · 假山 or *chosan* · 造山) attracted several hundred beggars who lived together. The mayor noted that they were causing daily commotions, and pleaded with the police bureau (Podoch'ŏng) to take action. To deal with this problem, the Chosŏn state designated leaders within the beggar groups, called *kkokchidan* (丐帥). These leaders functioned as intermediaries between the ruling class and the poor by paying respect to government

¹⁰⁵ See e.g., Hyŏn Chongch'ŏl, "Ilche chibaeha tosi pinmin saenghwal yŏn'gu- taedosi 't'omangmin' ūl chungsim ūro," 10-11; Kang Man'gil, "Ilche sidae ūi tosi pinmin saenghwal," 114; Masahiro Takenami, "Kankoku shakai hukushi no rekishi (1910-1945)," *Kawasaki igaku hukushi gakkaiishi* 15, no. 2 (2006): 356.

¹⁰⁶ Nam Yŏngu, "Ilche ha Kyŏngsŏngbu ūi t'omakch'on hyŏngsŏng," *Munhwa yŏksa chiri*, no. 1 (June 30, 1989): 39-40.

¹⁰⁷ Yi Kyut'ae, *Yi Kyut'ae ūi 600-nyŏn Sŏul* (Seoul: Chosŏn ilbosa, 1993), 245-48; Pak Kyŏngnyong, *Sŏul kaehwa paekkyŏng: ch'amŭl su ōmnŭn uri munhwa ūi kabyŏum* (Seoul: Susŏwŏn, 2006), 279-82. This region eventually ceased to house the poor in 1917, with the construction of Tongdaemun Elementary School. In 1922, the remaining sand piles were used to build Kyŏngsŏng Teacher's School (Keijō Shihan Gakkō).

officials and powerful local families during holidays, while maintaining order in the beggar communities.

Here may be where the structural origins of mud huts can be found. The premodern mounds that became homes for the poor are very similar to the early mud huts of the colonial era; the *t'ogul* (hole dug in the ground), an inferior form of *t'omak*. Both in the premodern and colonial eras, these structures provided shelter for the urban poor. And like the colonial mud huts, there is evidence that the temporary dwellings of the premodern era were occupied by migrants entering the city. When a series of famine and contagious diseases hit the peninsula in the mid seventeenth-century, large numbers of migrants entered Hansŏng and constructed temporary shelters.¹⁰⁸

Short-term establishments were tolerated by the Chosŏn state until they interfered with some sort of public project, an attitude similar to the GGK in the colonial era.¹⁰⁹ The premodern state permitted temporary structures built by fleeting residents called *kaga* (假家), until a state project on the land required their demolition. And state officials constructed temporary huts to accommodate the poor or those who lost homes to natural disasters. Records of government-sponsored huts can be found in King Sejong's reign (r. 1418-1450) and in King Sukchong's era (r. 1674-1720).¹¹⁰

The use of mud huts as social remedies continued in the Taehan Empire (1897-1910). In 1899, the City Hall of Hansŏng established mud huts in Ch'ŏnggye Stream and ordered the police concentrate the city's beggars there, so that they could be protected from the cold

¹⁰⁸ For statistics, see e.g., Ko Tonghwan, *Chosŏn sidae Sŏul tosisā* (Seoul: T'aehaksa, 2007), 387.

¹⁰⁹ U Tongsŏn, "Kaga e kwanhan munhŏn yŏn'gu," *Taehan kŏnch'uk hakhoe nonmunjip* 19, no. 8 (Aug. 2008): 183-92.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

weather.¹¹¹ This policy of using mud huts as a social measure lasted until 1905, when the state funded the construction of mud huts as a means to relieve the poor in the winter.¹¹² But like the colonial officials, Chosŏn bureaucrats also complained about illegal dwellings that crowded the roads, making it impossible for wagons to pass by, due to a large number of vagabonds in Hansŏng who wandered about the city without employment.¹¹³

These instances show parallels and continuities between the premodern situation and the colonial era, which may somewhat validate the colonial gaze and undermine the labeling of t'omangmin by Korean scholars as prototypical colonial victims. The structural origins of t'omak can be found in the premodern era, and the Chosŏn state tolerated temporary structures. But in contrast to what many Japanese officials assumed, it was not an unconditional tolerance; the premodern state only permitted the huts to exist until they interfered with state projects. Also, while it may have been the case that the colonial-era t'omangmin constructed mud huts with premodern mentalities, especially in the early years of the colonial era, as I later show, interviews of t'omangmin reveal that they argued for the legality of their homes, pointing to the taxes or rents they paid to the city and landowners. Colonial mud huts were also distinguishable from the premodern structures in that their numbers were much higher, especially from the 1920s, which led colonial officials to label them as social problems. In this respect, colonial mud huts were distinct from their premodern counterparts, and byproducts of modernization and urban development.

¹¹¹ *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, Jan. 27, 1899.

¹¹² *Kyŏngbu naegŏmun 2*, Inquiry no. 43, 51 (Dec., 14, 1903; Dec., 5, 1904), in Taehan Min'guk Mun'gyobu Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, ed., *Kaksa tŭngnok* (Seoul: Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, 1981).

¹¹³ Ko Tonghwan, 449, 472-73.

2. Governing the Empire's Slums: The Social Management of Mud-hut Dwellers

Early Policies on T'omak

In July of 1925, a major flooding of the Han River destroyed 300 homes in its vicinity. In response, the city established barracks and distributed imperial grants to residents and surviving family members of the victims whose homes were destroyed. However, Kyöngsöng refused to provide aid to t'omangmin who had also lost their homes to the flood. When 60 t'omangmin from Ich'on-dong arrived at City Hall requesting the imperial grant, officials refused on the grounds that vagabonds who did not pay a single penny of tax could not be treated like ordinary residents.¹¹⁴ Since t'omangmin did not have family registries, officials explained that it was impossible to know whether they were actual victims of the flood.

The city did not see mud-hut dwellers as targets of housing relief because they were illegible on the residential map of Kyöngsöng. Many of the t'omangmin were migrants, whose backgrounds were unidentifiable. They did not seem to be paying taxes or clarifying their identity by submitting family registries. It was also unclear whether these vagabonds were here to stay; everything about them—the temporality of their homes and professions—conveyed the message that t'omangmin could leave the city anytime, at will. Thus, in the early 1920s, the colonial state was without any policy toward t'omangmin, except sporadic evictions upon discovery.

In 1925, the city ordered the evacuation of 200 t'omangmin who were on government property near the city walls of Hwanggüm-jöng.¹¹⁵ Mud-hut dwellers came to

¹¹⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 22, 1925.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Mar. 25, 1925.

protest at City Hall, appealing to Mayor Umano Seiichi (馬野精一, 1884- ?) that they had nowhere else to go. Nagao Sen (長尾仟, 1875- ?), chief of Kyōngsōng's Internal Affairs Bureau (*Keijōfu naimu kachō*), stated that while he was sympathetic to their situation, the city had no immediate funds to help them. Fortunately, a nearby stock farm (Hirayama Bokujyō) offered to temporarily accommodate them.

In 1921, Kyōngsōng announced that it would construct government-managed homes (*puyōng chut'aek*) and distribute them to the poor. The city constructed 40 Japanese-style homes in Yongsan, 28 Korean-style homes in Pongnae-jōng, and 60 homes to the north of the military training center (Hullyōnwōn) in Namjōng-dong. Although the announcement was that these homes would be rented to the lower class, it was clear that the social relief gave priority to middle and upper-class residents.¹¹⁶ Among the 60 homes in Namjōng-dong that were occupied by 56 Koreans and four Japanese, 19 were allocated to city officials, 14 were bankers and salarymen, five were merchants, and five were those in the manufacturing industry, with the rest of the tenants consisting of pharmacists, policemen, and firemen.¹¹⁷

Ironically, the city's lower class infiltrated into Pongnae-jōng and Namjōng-dong, which led the public to deem the neighborhoods as slum districts by 1924.¹¹⁸ The city subsequently announced that the homes would only be available to Sōtokufu officials and moved to evacuate 352 residents. City official Nagao Sen explained that they could not permit "undesirable people" occupying the government-sponsored homes, when workers

¹¹⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, June 8, 1921.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1921.

¹¹⁸ Chōn Namil, et al., *Han'guk chugō ūi sahoesa* (Seoul: Tolbegae, 2008), 130-33. See also, "Kyōngsōng ūi pinmin: pinmin ūi Kyōngsōng" [Kyōngsōng's poor; the poor's Kyōngsōng], *Kaeb'yōk* 48 (June 1, 1924): 103-05.

employed by the GGK needed homes.¹¹⁹ Thus, in the early 1920s, the GGK only provided limited housing relief and even this did not cover the city's lower class.

Early Social Work by Civic Groups

Rather than the colonial state, private organizations and personal donations from the city's middle and upper classes provided housing relief to the city's poor and t'omangmin in the 1920s. One of the first organizations was the Housing Relief Association (Chut'aek Kujehoe) established in 1921 with Pak Yŏnghyo (1861-1939) as president. It had 115 members which included prominent individuals, such as Chi Sŏgyŏng (1855-1935), a medical expert who was also a scholar of *han'gŭl* (Korean vernacular script), Yu Munhwan (1874- ?), an attorney who was also *Chosŏn ilbo's* (Korea Daily) president in 1920, and Kim Kyosŏng (1860-1943), a member of Chungch'uwŏn (Chŭchŭin), the GGK's advisory council composed of Korean notables.¹²⁰ Renamed Porinhoe (Neighborhood Association) in 1922, the organization constructed a series of small-scale homes for the city's lower class throughout the 1920s.¹²¹ These were the first type of "row homes" constructed in the colonial era for the poor. The association's funds came mostly from public donations and personal funds of its members, many of whom came from the affluent sector of society.¹²² This was not unusual, as shown in the case of a personal donation by a man named Kim

¹¹⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 13, 1925.

¹²⁰ *Maeil sinbo*, June 5, 1921.

¹²¹ For more information on the Housing Relief Association, See Yu Sunsŏn, "Ilche kangjŏmgi Chut'aek Kujehoe e ūihan Kyobuk-dong kanp'yŏn chut'aek ūi sŏngkyŏk mit ūiŭi e kwanhan yŏn'gu," *Taehan kŏnch'uk hakhoe* 32, no. 2 (Feb. 2016): 103-10.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 104-05.

Hŭisŏk, who donated 22,000 yen for the construction of 80 brick homes on a government property in Sindang-ri, so that they could be rented out to the lower class free of charge.¹²³

Financial hardship led the organization to eventually ask tenants to pay a small fee of 2 yen, instead of the 10 yen that would have been charged in the housing market. But it was reported that residents had trouble even paying the 2 yen, leading to years of default payments that placed the organization in further financial trouble.¹²⁴ The association's activities were also limited in that they merely provided housing without attempting to improve the livelihood of the lower class. It was inevitable that the occupants could not pay the small rent they owed, unless fundamental issues of livelihood were resolved. These problems led the organization to abandon their housing program in the late 1920s, and instead, concentrate on providing social aid to children for the rest of the colonial era.¹²⁵

In the mid 1920s, a leftist relief organization also briefly provided housing aid to the city's lower class. In 1926, the leftist nationalist Yi Tongnyŏng (Yi Yang, 1869-1940), one of the founding members of the Korean provisional government in Shanghai,¹²⁶ established the Kyŏngsŏng Mutual Aid Society for the Poor (Kyŏngsŏng Pinmin Sangjohoe) and provided aid to mud-hut dwellers in Kwanghwa Gate. *Tonga ilbo* described Yi as a long-time resident of Russia who had returned to Korea several years earlier and founded the society

¹²³ *Chungoe ilbo*, Aug. 31, 1927.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, May 31, 1927.

¹²⁵ See e.g., *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 5, 1932 and Apr. 28, 1940.

¹²⁶ Yi Hyŏnhŭi, "Che 1-jang: Sŏgo Yi Tongnyŏng ŭi aeguk sasang kwa hwaltong," *Minjok sasang* 4, no. 1 (Aug. 2010): 9-39.

“with the conviction that providing direct assistance to the lower class, as opposed to merely theorizing about them,” would benefit them more.¹²⁷

The society aimed at increasing literacy in t’omangmin children, providing food and entertainment, and assisting adult t’omangmin in finding employment.¹²⁸ It established its headquarters in Namjǒng-dong and provided aid to the poor who were forcibly evacuated from the city-sponsored homes to make room for Sōtokufu officials in 1925. The Mutual Aid Society also formed the Free Laborer Union of Kyōngsǒng (Kyōngsǒng Chayu Nodongja Chohap) in May of 1927,¹²⁹ but it seems that the society was soon shut down upon the GGG’s crackdown on leftist activities. There are reports of the society’s members being arrested by the police as political criminals, and the organization cannot be traced in the subsequent years.¹³⁰

Much of the success in social work came from Western and Japanese religious organizations. In 1927, it was reported that a total of 26,733 people received aid from them.¹³¹ Most notable were Severance Hospital, Catholic Orphanage, the Red Cross, and Wakō Kyōen. The Red Cross maintained a public shelter (*kongdong sukpakso*) that was open to anyone.¹³² As stated in my introduction, Wakō Kyōen, established by a Japanese Buddhist

¹²⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 15, 1927.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, May 8, 1927.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 10, 1927; *Maeil sinbo*, Mar. 31, 1928.

¹³¹ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 26, 1927.

¹³² *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1926.

sect upon the GGK's request, provided lodging and employment assistance to the lower class, which, by 1927, succeeded in providing lodging to 24,537 people.¹³³

Religious organizations argued that the life of the poor could be improved through proper *kyōka* and assistance. Sakamoto Raiji (坂本雷次), a social worker for Salvation Army, stated the need for a more permanent solution to Korean poverty, arguing that even those out of prison could correct their temperament and find opportunity to work if there was social support.¹³⁴ He emphasized that "Everyone in society should feel a collective responsibility and engage in social welfare."¹³⁵

In addition to relying on civil organizations, the colonial government tried to address poverty by adopting the *hōmen iin seido* (district commissioner system) of the metropole from 1927. This created local committees across the peninsula that researched the life of the poor and provided aid when necessary. However, like the civic groups mentioned above, funding did not come from the state, and the committees were dependent on charity donations.¹³⁶ They were essentially moral suasion organizations that were expected to be led by private donors and volunteers. The committees provided daily necessities, medical support, and employment assistance, but above all, they aimed at the moral education of the poor so that they could become self sufficient.¹³⁷

¹³³ Ibid., Feb. 26, 1927.

¹³⁴ Sakamoto Raiji, "Tōki no kyūmin ni tsuite," *Chōsen shakai jigyo* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1929): 15.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 20.

¹³⁶ Pak Sehun, "Kuje wa kyohwa- ilche sigi Kyōngsōngbu ūi pangmyōn wiwōn chedo yōn'gu," *Sahoe wa yōksa* 61 (2002): 130-31.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 145.

The committees were a convenient means for the colonial state to gather information on the lower class. Based on the committee's research, the lower class was divided into two categories and then officially registered in the city's "*saimin* (poor) card."¹³⁸ Category one had people who did not require immediate relief, but lived indigent lives. Category two included more impoverished people who could not live unless they received aid from others. In 1928, it was reported that about 12,000 Kyöngsöng residents lived in poverty, which included t'omangmin living near Kwanghüi Gate and West Gate.¹³⁹ In 1933, a total of 27,665 Kyöngsöng residents were registered as *saimin*.¹⁴⁰ The committee stated that the actual number of the poor was probably closer to 37,000. In 1937, the number increased to 80,000.¹⁴¹ These people were labeled the "card class" (*k'adü kyegüp*) in the colonial period.¹⁴²

However, the social relief provided by civil groups was not enough to solve the city's mud-hut problem.¹⁴³ And city officials were busy trying to remove the mud huts from their districts, a phenomenon *Tonga ilbo* sarcastically referred to as a competition to remove mud-hut dwellers.¹⁴⁴ With no effective state policy that directly addressed the mud huts, social relief sporadically provided by the city's middle class in the 1920s was inadequate to solve the mud hut problem.

¹³⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 8, 1934.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1928.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Dec. 8, 1933.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1937. For category one, there were 75,216 Koreans (16,995 households) and 54 Japanese (16 households). Category two comprised of 9,310 Koreans (3,986 households) and 67 Japanese (8 households).

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, June 21, 1940.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, Nov. 22, 1931.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1928.

In this setting, mud-hut dwellers became easy targets for exploitation. Sometimes people fraudulently posing as landowners collected rents from the mud huts.¹⁴⁵ In 1927, a Korean manager for the Kyōngsōng-Pusan Railroad Line notified t'omangmin of a government construction project that would need a hundred workers. The overjoyed t'omangmin sold all of their belongings to make funds for the trip and arrived at the scene. But only twenty of them were hired for the job and the rest did not have the means to return home. A fight ensued between the hiring managers and 80 t'omangmin who had been deceived.¹⁴⁶

The 1930s Relocation Policy and the Moral Suasion of T'omangmin

In the 1930s, the colonial state tried to take on a more active role in addressing the mud hut problem. It was becoming clear to city officials that mud huts were not going to decrease anytime soon. Mere evacuation orders did not solve the issue, as t'omangmin would simply pack up their belongings and building materials, move to another area in the city, and rebuild their mud huts. In addition, more migrants entered the city, resulting in larger numbers of t'omangmin than the 1920s. This meant that officials often had to fight with several hundred t'omangmin in order to cleanse a region free of mud huts.

The 1930s was also a time in which the GGK concentrated on transforming Kyōngsōng into an aesthetically-pleasing colonial capital. The 1934 Ordinance on Chosōn City Planning (*Chōsen sigaichi keikakurei*) divided Kyōngsōng into residential, commercial, and industrial districts. New regulations imposed building restrictions in terms of their height, location, and distance from public roads. There were also stricter requirements on

¹⁴⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, July 22, 1927.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1927.

housing structures to prevent the construction of poor-quality homes that were unsightly and hazardous. In this setting, the Kyōngsōng Scenic Beauty Committee (Kyōngsōng P'ungch'i Kyehoek Wiwōnhoe) was formed, which deemed the mud huts and its 15,000 dwellers to be a threat to hygiene and the scenic beauty of the city.¹⁴⁷ The solution was to relocate them to the city's outskirts with government money.

By this time, t'omangmin had become a problem of the Japanese empire at large. This was especially true for places like Osaka, where migrant Korean workers constructed mud huts in the city. Osaka official Sakai Toshio complained that the deteriorated conditions in Chōsen were sending an uncontrollable number of Koreans to the metropole. Even when they received low wages in Osaka, Koreans still came, since it was better than the mud-hut life in the peninsula. The only solution, he declared, "was to improve the homes of workers in Chōsen."¹⁴⁸ *Naichi* newspapers also began covering the "domakumin problem" in detail. *Osaka mainichi shinbun* (Osaka Daily Newspaper) reported that Keijō officials were agonizing over the removal of domakumin before the 1929 Chōsen Exhibition.¹⁴⁹ Another article explained that domakumin "lived like moles (*mogura*)," and were a problem of the entire Chōsen, with Kyōngsōng having the largest number.¹⁵⁰ Mud huts were no longer just a problem of Kyōngsōng; now, the Japanese empire as a whole was observing how the City of Kyōngsōng would handle their t'omangmin.

¹⁴⁷ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Jan. 21, 1934.

¹⁴⁸ Sakai Toshio, "Domaku kara mita Chōsenjin jūtaku mondai," *Shakai jigyo kenkyū* 17, no. 2 (Feb. 1929): 8.

¹⁴⁹ "Mondai no domakumin seiri" [The problem of clearing mud-hut dwellers], *Osaka mainichi shinbun*, Dec. 27, 1928.

¹⁵⁰ "Mogura no yō na seikatsusha ga yaku 4000 nin" [4000 people living like moles], *Osaka mainichi shinbun*, Feb. 15, 1930.

Kyōngsōng officials devised several relocation projects to transfer t'omangmin to the city's outskirts, mainly with the help of Wakō Kyōen. In 1930, 280 t'omak households were moved from Ich'on-dong to Tohwa-dong. In 1931, 280 Songwōl-dong mud huts relocated to Ahyōn-ri, where Wakō Kyōen provided them with assistance on the government-owned land. In 1933, 500 t'omak that were located in front of the GKG's official residence in Yongsan moved to Tohwa-dong. In 1935, more mud huts relocated to lands managed by Wakō Kyōen in Ton'am-jōng as well as Hongje, where the other Japanese Buddhist Organization, Kōjō Kaikan, managed mud-hut settlements. Sinsōl-dong t'omangmin were accommodated by Wakō Kyōen in 1938.¹⁵¹ By 1940, a total of 16,344 t'omangmin had relocated to these regions.

The moral suasion campaign of mud-hut dwellers had begun, with Wakō Kyōen as the leading organization. The settlements typically had schools, kindergartens, nurseries, and employment assistance centers for the residents, as well as shrines and temples for their moral suasion.¹⁵² *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* explained that these t'omangmin maintained a more disciplined lifestyle than the average lower class, with some fully qualified to work as Wakō Kyōen employees, as it was in the case of a man named Kim Wan'gūn.¹⁵³ However, 50 or so women in the Ahyōn-ri settlement worked as prostitutes, with some of them encouraged to do so by their husbands. Given the unruliness, *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* explained that it would be impossible to reform (*kyōka*) all of them and called for the enactment of laws that could regulate the mud hut dwellers.

¹⁵¹ Yun Chōnguk, *Shokuminchi Chōsen ni okeru shakai jigyo seisaku kenkyū* (Osaka: Osaka Keizai Hōka Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1996), 96.

¹⁵² "Domakumin wa doko e iku," *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* 373 (Dec. 1, 1938): 64-68.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

The relocations were not without resistance from the dwellers. In the 1930 relocation from Namsan to Tohwa-dong, 70 t'omak households complained that the government's compensation was too small. "We cannot do much with 10 yen. Not even a single t'omak can be built with that money."¹⁵⁴ *Chosŏn ilbo* criticized the relocation when it was revealed that the Tohwa-dong settlement was on a cemetery.¹⁵⁵ In 1935, the 300 t'omangmin in Tohwa-dong were ordered again to relocate to Hongje, which generated protest.¹⁵⁶ State-sponsored mud-hut settlements posed additional problems, as they were often located in the suburbs, far from the city's center where t'omangmin usually found work.¹⁵⁷ The dwellers complained that they did not have the means to commute to the city and as a result, only 30 percent of Hongje t'omangmin were employed. Some simply abandoned their life in the settlements and returned to the city to rebuild mud huts.¹⁵⁸ The absurdity of it all was expressed by a relocation village which the t'omangmin residents named "Haet'alch'on" (解脱村), meaning "Nirvana Village."¹⁵⁹

Ultimately, the relocation policy did not solve the problem of the city's mud huts because of a major restructuring of Kyŏngsŏng which expanded its administrative territory to include the city's outskirts. In 1936, the city enlarged its administrative boundary to

¹⁵⁴ *Chosŏn ilbo*, May 26, 1931.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 12, 1935.

¹⁵⁷ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Apr. 18, 1936.

¹⁵⁸ "Domakumin wa doko e iku," *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* 373 (Dec. 1, 1938): 64-68.

¹⁵⁹ Ch'oe Pyŏngt'aek, et al., *Kyŏngsŏng rip'ot'ū: singminji ilsang esŏ onŭl ūi uri rŭl poda* (Seoul: Sigongsa, 2009), 197-98.

include Koyang, parts of Kimp'o, and some of Sihŭng, which included Yŏngdŭngp'o.¹⁶⁰ The purpose of the expansion was to develop the city's outskirts into residential areas to accommodate the expanding population.¹⁶¹ This meant that t'omangmin, who had previously been outside the city's administration, were now officially the responsibility of the city. About 6,000 mud huts in the Ahyŏn-ri and Sindang-ri regions were now part of Kyŏngsŏng, as well as the mud huts in Yŏngdŭngp'o.¹⁶²

The gravity of the t'omangmin problem was discussed in the three-day National Conference on Urban Problems (Zenkoku Toshi Mondai Kaigi) that took place in Kyŏngsŏng in 1938.¹⁶³ Urban specialists from Japan, Taiwan, Manchuria, China, and Korea gathered to discuss the future of the empire's cities. Nagasato Eiji described the relocation policy of t'omangmin as largely a failure, explaining that the pre-1936 relocations had become useless, due to the subsequent expansion of Kyŏngsŏng in 1936. Now, these mud-hut settlements had "become part of the city's administration, harming the scenic beauty (*bigan*) of the city."¹⁶⁴ He further added that the absence of roads in the state-sponsored settlements turned the area into a cluster of poor-quality homes. And the defective sewage system caused flooding and contamination, which made it impossible to walk through the neighborhoods.

¹⁶⁰ Im Töksun, *600-nyŏn Sŏul: sudo ūi kiwŏn kwa chirijok palchŏn kwajŏng* (Seoul: Chisik Sanŏpsa, 1994), 112-13.

¹⁶¹ Katagi Atsushi, et al., eds., *Kindai Nihon no kŏgai jŭtakuchi* (Tokyo: Kajima Shuppankai, 2000), 536.

¹⁶² *Chosŏn ilbo*, Feb. 19, 1936.

¹⁶³ *Maeil sinbo*, June 10, 1938.

¹⁶⁴ Nagasato Eiji, "Chŏsen toshi tokushu saimin no shochi ni tsuite," *Toshi mondai* 27, no. 4 (Oct. 1938): 75-77.

The 1920s and 30s witnessed a moral suasion campaign with limited success in transforming the lives of the mud-hut dwellers. While civic organizations strove to educate and assist the t'omangmin so that they would voluntarily abandon their mud huts and lead a more orderly life, it was extremely difficult to control the fleeting residents. The account also portrays a passive, reluctant colonial state, dependent on civic organizations to provide aid and the city's wealthy residents to provide funding, and unwilling to interfere until it was absolutely necessary to do so. This could hardly be called a disciplinary regime that subdued its populace. Even the authorities themselves saw the mud-hut policy as largely a failure, questioning the omnipotent colonial state that is portrayed in the historiography of mud-hut dwellers. In fact, the true adversaries of the t'omangmin were the urban middle-class residents and capitalist developers who came to form a tenuous, complex relationship with the mud-hut population, a point to which I now turn.

3. Colonial Modernity: Capitalists and Illegal Mud Huts in the Modernizing City

T'omak in the Modernizing City of Kyōngsōng

The biggest challenge t'omangmin faced was modern construction projects that brought them into conflict with the city's residents, investors, and institutions. Mud huts were getting in the way of private and public developers who were constructing homes, schools, and government buildings. In 1925, mud huts in Yōn'gōn-dong were demolished, while people slept inside, for the purpose of constructing a section of Kyōngsōng Imperial University. Newspaper accounts described children who woke up crying and families who shivered under the blankets now covered in mud.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 25, 1925.

As Kyōngsōng underwent modernization, capitalists and landowners became more intolerant of the mud huts. In Sindang-ri, t'omangmin contested the land with Kyōngsōng School Union (Keijōfu Gakkō Kumiai) which planned to build an academy in the forest region where 2,000 t'omangmin lived,¹⁶⁶ as well as Shōwa Engineering School (Shōwa Kōka Gakkō) that wanted to expand its school yard.¹⁶⁷ Officials from the engineering school complained that students suffered from the daily exposure to the “unsanitary lifestyle” of t'omangmin. Yi Hūngsu (1895-?), who operated Kyōngsōng Rubber Industrial Plant (Kyōngsōng Komu Kongōpso), ordered his land manager to evacuate 40 t'omangmin from his Sindang-ri territory. Yi's manager explained that relocation fees of 5 yen would be provided to the most destitute dwellers. He acknowledged that some “physical violence” had to be used on the t'omangmin who did not evacuate on time.¹⁶⁸

Resistance by Songwōl-dong T'omangmin

In these instances of forceful evacuations, t'omangmin did not relent that easily. The Songwōl-dong t'omangmin is a case in point. On April 14, 1930, a group of policemen arrived at Songwōl-dong to crack down on 37 mud huts that housed about 170 residents, in a hilly region near Kyōnghūi Palace in Kyōngsōng. At the end of the day, the West Gate police arrested 20 protestors. Six days later, police returned to demolish 23 homes, threatening to set the rest on fire.¹⁶⁹ Here, upon the school's request, the police were cracking down on illegal homes built on the property of Kyōngsōng Middle School. School officials had plans to

¹⁶⁶ *Chosŏn ilbo*, June 26, 1929.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 19, 1936.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 10, 1938.

¹⁶⁹ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Apr. 23, 1930.

build a laboratory and had pleaded with the mud-hut residents to evacuate the school land for a year to no avail.¹⁷⁰

In May, violence by school inspectors caused another commotion, which prompted Sin'ganhoe, the Korean nationalist organization, to investigate the affair.¹⁷¹ A year and a half later, Kyōngsōng Middle School was still sending warning notices to mud-hut dwellers, who in turn, established a Petition Committee for Songwōl-dong Settlement, consisting of nine members "to create a united front."¹⁷² They represented 800 residents who were living in 170 mud huts.

The mud-hut dwellers claimed that they had been residing on the land since 1924. They knew that it was government property, but said that they did not know when Kyōngsōng Middle School had obtained permission to use the land.¹⁷³ School authorities claimed that they did not give permission to construct mud huts on the land, but the t'omangmin had continued to build them, especially during the night when school officials went home. In contrast, t'omangmin interviewed by *Tonga ilbo* said that 33 of the families had lived in the area since 1918. They had received building permissions from the police and since then, had been paying resident tax and registered their homes with the city. Their homes were "legitimate property."¹⁷⁴ In this interview, t'omangmin further explained that the middle school had never demanded their evacuation, but instead had approached the residents several years ago with the request to manage the land and care for the trees.

¹⁷⁰ *Chungoe ilbo*, Mar. 5, 1929.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1930.

¹⁷² *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 9, 1931.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* Kyōngsōng Middle School finished construction in 1913.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 10, 1931.

The incident came to the attention of city officials when the dwellers arrived at City Hall with appeals earlier in 1929. Initially, city officials were reluctant to interfere directly, sending a few officers to inform and warn the residents that this was school property. However, the situation escalated with warnings from the residents that they would establish a united front and fight “until the end” which attracted the press, and the City of Kyōngsōng took direct action. The situation in Songwōl-dong was causing unnecessary social commotion and public attention. When a big fire hit the village in March 1932, officials decided that this was an opportune moment to move them to the outskirts, to Ahyōn-ri in the government-sponsored mud hut settlement managed by Wakō Kyōen.¹⁷⁵

Problems arose when t’omangmin began bargaining with the city to demand relocation fees. The city became impatient and on April 7, 1932, sanitation officers arrived in Songwōl-dong with contract papers and forced the residents to sign and promise to evacuate by the end of the month.¹⁷⁶ In this process, physical violence by some of the officers became known to the public in a case which involved a female victim who had lied about her husband’s whereabouts. The Korean press became highly critical, and a lawyer commented, “Sanitation officers’ enforcement of evacuation orders is invalid and unheard of. It is not the job of sanitation officers to demand evacuation since evacuation involves property rights. Even if they were authorized to do so, using violence is most definitely unjust.”¹⁷⁷

Half a year later, Kyōngsōng Meteorological Observatory celebrated the completion of its new office in Songwōl-dong, by inviting 250 government officials and citizens to its

¹⁷⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 13, 1932.

¹⁷⁶ *Chungang ilbo*, Apr. 7, 1932.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

new, modern building.¹⁷⁸ The observatory later opened its doors to the public for a day so that the city's residents could marvel at the construction which cost the government 30,000 yen. Instead of a laboratory for the middle school, a weather station for the city had been built on the premise. Earlier that year, the former Songwŏl-dong t'omangmin quietly erected a memorial stone in Ahyŏn-ri, where they had been relocated to along with their mud huts. Engraved on the stone was their history from the Songwŏl-dong mud huts to the big fire, and their subsequent relocation to Ahyŏn-ri. T'omangmin explained that the memorial was erected so that their "history could forever be told to future generations" about the incident.¹⁷⁹ Whether the Ahyŏn-ri memorial survives to the present-day is unknown. However, the observatory's Western-style architecture lies intact in contemporary Korea, still in charge of forecasting the city's weather for its populace as Seoul Kisang Kwanch'ŭkso.

The Songwŏl-dong incident is not only a telling tale of the city's treatment of t'omangmin but also reveals t'omangmin's side of the story in the antagonistic relationship they had with the modernizing city. In contrast to the widespread belief that t'omangmin recklessly constructed mud huts on any empty land, the interviews reveal that the mud-hut dwellers constructed homes in barren areas, such as cemeteries, hills, and streams, where it was impossible to know to whom the land belonged to. Upon evacuation orders, a Songwŏl-dong t'omangmin replied, "How are we supposed to know this was government property?"¹⁸⁰ Others admitted to knowing, but explained that they did not think there

¹⁷⁸ *Chungang ilbo*, Nov. 26, 1932.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, July 24, 1932.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1931.

would be trouble if their homes were of a decent structure.¹⁸¹ The colonial government's ambivalent attitude aggravated the problem, as it sometimes permitted mud huts, while other times demolishing them. As the interviews reveal, some of the mud huts were listed on building registries and t'omangmin paid housing tax for them. The ambivalent attitude is also apparent in Kyōngsōng Middle School officials, who permitted the mud huts in exchange for managing the school's property until they needed to use the land for other purposes.

Thus, rather than a pervasive premodern mentality originating from the Chosŏn dynasty, the t'omangmin problem of the colonial era was aggravated by mixed messages sent by city officials, residents, and other urban establishments. There was no cohesive policy toward t'omangmin proposed by the city, other than the definition of t'omangmin that made them illegal. This was especially true in the early decades, in which the colonial police and the city lacked a unified policy that handled t'omangmin in an identical manner. Some officers issued building permits and allowed the mud huts to be registered as homes, while others ordered evacuation, creating confusion in mud-hut neighborhoods.

On private property, the situation was not that much different. Some landowners permitted the construction of t'omak on their land and charged rent. A Japanese landowner in Ich'on-dong, for instance, collected annual fees from the t'omangmin living on his land, ranging from 1 to 5 yen per household.¹⁸² In these types of situations, city officials functioned as intermediaries when landowners decided they no longer wanted mud huts on their lands, which provoked t'omangmin to demand proper compensation for the value of

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² *Chosŏn ilbo*, Mar. 17, 1929.

their homes and the rent that they had paid. As the city landscape transformed to accommodate new residents and modern establishments, more residents came to view mud-hut dwellers with scorn. Capitalists, schools, and city officials referred to the t'omangmin as "the infamous flies,"¹⁸³ and mud-hut communities as "a breeding-place for evil."¹⁸⁴

Culture Homes and the Sindang-ri Scandal

By far, the most controversial evictions involved those that were making room for the ultra-modern "culture homes" (*munhwa chut'aek*) with their signature red-roofs. Culture homes were Western-style, two-story houses constructed with red bricks or cement for the urban upper class. These homes had indoor kitchens and bathrooms furnished with a bathtub and a toilet, so they elicited the envy of the rest of the populace.¹⁸⁵ Between 1925 and 1937, a total of 23 culture home complexes appeared in the colonial capital, covering 400 acres of land.¹⁸⁶

In the process, developers "discovered" t'omangmin. In particular, the Sindang-ri development came with a much publicized scandal, which is well-documented in Ch'oe

¹⁸³ Ibid., Apr. 28, 1931.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., Nov. 13, 1936.

¹⁸⁵ Katagi Atsushi, et al., *Kindai Nihon no kōgai jūtakuchi*, 535. Katagi noted that the culture home construction from the 1920s was partly caused by the fact that many Japanese decided to permanently settle in Korea. By the end of the Taishō era (1912-1926), it had become clear that Korea was Japan's colony, as settlers witnessed the completion of modern buildings, such as the five-story Sōtokufu building in 1927. The architectural landscape of the city made colonial rule visible and permanent. This was also a period when many retired Sōtokufu officials engaged in business activities.

¹⁸⁶ For a complete list of the culture home complexes including date of construction, locations, dimensions, price, and residents, see Yi Kyōnga, et al., "1920-30 nyōndae Kyōngsōngbu ūi munhwa chut'aekchi kaebal e kwanhan yōn'gu," *Taehan kōnch'uk hakhoe nonmunjip* 22, no. 3 (Mar. 2006): 193.

Pyöngt'aek's work.¹⁸⁷ From 1925, major culture home complexes were developed in the eastern outskirts of Kyöngsöng, in Sindang-ri and Wangsim-ri. As rumors spread that the city planned to promote the region as a residential district, land prices soared and investors flocked to the area. In 1928, Shima Tokuzö (島徳蔵, 1875-1938), president of Osaka Stock Exchange Company who was also a major stockholder in the Oriental Development Company, succeeded in lobbying the city's mayor Umano Seiichi. He purchased the land at an extraordinarily low price: 3.2 yen per p'yöng (3.3 square meters).¹⁸⁸

But upon seeing the region packed with mud huts, Shima became unsatisfied with the deal he received. Claiming that he needed extra funds to remove the mud huts, Shima obtained a subsequent deal from Umano, who secretly promised that public roads would be built on Shima's land. When their deal was publicized a year later, Umano put on a public show by appealing his innocence with tears in his eyes at a press gathering, saying he was unaware of the road clause in Shima's contract.¹⁸⁹ In the meantime, Pang Kyuhwan (1889-?), a Korean capitalist in the housing construction business who also managed Shima's lands, ordered the evacuation of 200 mud huts. When t'omangmin appealed to the city, it was revealed that Shima had not even paid the land price in full at the time of purchase; he had been waiting until the roads Umano promised were constructed. In this setting, when Pang Kyuhwan complained to the press that the city was not doing its job of removing illegal residents from private lands, this generated public outrage for the project.¹⁹⁰

Assisted by public sentiment, t'omangmin mobilized to protect their homes. In

¹⁸⁷ See Ch'oe Pyöngt'aek, et al., 74-81.

¹⁸⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 24, 1929.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 27, 1929.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 25, 1930.

November of 1933, 240 t'omangmin households held a village conference and tried to negotiate with Pang Kyuhwan and purchase Shima's land to keep their mud huts.¹⁹¹ The t'omangmin committee established for this purpose had collected 300 yen from over 1,000 residents for the purchase. But in December, officials from Kyōngsōng District Court arrived in Sindang-ri and ordered evacuation.¹⁹² The amount t'omangmin proposed to Pang was 9 to 10 yen per p'yōng (3.3 square meters). Pang responded that the land could only be sold for 15 yen per p'yōng, which he offered, could be paid in installments lasting six years.¹⁹³ This was nearly five times the original price Shima had paid for the land. "We are at a loss for words [*kimakimnida*]," said a t'omangmin.¹⁹⁴

It turned out that neither Shima nor Pang really intended to sell the land to the mud-hut dwellers. A week after Pang's outrageous proposal to the dwellers, Shima relinquished the land, which was immediately purchased by Chosōn City Management Company (Chōsen Toshi Keiei), a branch of the Oriental Development Company.¹⁹⁵ Chosōn City Management was a major investor in housing construction, which had already built a culture home complex in the region, called Sakura oka (completed in 1931). In the process, it had been disputing with t'omangmin in other areas of Sindang-ri. The company had also, for several years, collected fees from mud huts that were on its empty property. But when it was decided that additional homes would be constructed in the region, orders of evacuation hit the residents.

¹⁹¹ *Chosōn chungang ilbo*, Nov. 11, 1933.

¹⁹² *Chosōn ilbo*, Dec. 17, 1933.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, Dec. 20, 1933; *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 18, 1933.

¹⁹⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 18, 1933.

¹⁹⁵ *Chosōn ilbo*, Dec. 28, 1933.

T'omangmin protested on the grounds that they were occupying the land as tenant farmers. Chosŏn City Management explained that there was no tenant-landlord relationship here, but rather, a debtor-creditor relationship. The company had "loaned" the land to the residents, adding that it would provide relocation fees and three-years of tenant fees in return for the land.¹⁹⁶ Here again, we see the legal ambiguities surrounding t'omangmin. Chosŏn City Management denied t'omangmin's claims that they were tenant farming on the land, but nevertheless, treated them as tenant farmers in the compensation. And city authorities sent mixed messages to the mud-hut dwellers, trying to evict them when negotiations were taking place with developers. And Shima was trying to exercise landlord rights when he had not even paid the land price in full. The city administrators lacked a unified, policy addressing such conflicts between investors and t'omangmin and neither did the city officials or landowners always act in accordance with the law.

In these circumstances, it is noteworthy that t'omangmin tried to use lawful means to argue for their cause. It usually began with an appeal to City Hall, claiming their status as residents of Kyŏngsŏng. Then, they negotiated with the property owner. These instances show that t'omangmin were very much aware of how they should present themselves to a modern state and its capitalists. It also shows that the dwellers were aware of modern laws and regulations, which they probably gained as they interacted with landlords, capitalists, city officials, and policemen who tried to evict them. The problem was that colonial Kyŏngsŏng was a realm in which capitalistic activities took precedence over lawful appeals by the lower class. The politics of capitalism was highly unpredictable and unfavorable to t'omangmin, where enforcements would suddenly begin upon the whim of the city,

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., Feb. 20, 1932.

investors, or landlords.

For these reasons, t'omangmin acquired a profound feeling of mistrust against the government, landowners, and capitalists. In 1925, *Sidae ilbo* (Current Daily) noted that this group of uneducated people generally lacked awareness of social issues, but that in recent years, “a deep sense of socialism pervaded the group and many resented government officials and the wealthy.”¹⁹⁷ Mud huts dispersed across the peninsula were experiencing similar situations. In 1936 Sösöng-ri, P'yöngyang, an aged woman cursed at the authorities who threatened to demolish the settlements. “Are they not enemies with blood-stained swords? Do you know how we built this house? I sew patches all day with back pains, while my son works without drinking a drop of the alcohol he loves so much... We'll see how well you live.” When the reporter asked whether they had tried appealing to the authorities, a t'omangmin replied. “Don't even talk about it. Of course we did. But appeals are of no use... How can appeals be useful in front of the law?”¹⁹⁸

Commodification of T'omak

But mud-hut dwellers were not mere victims of urbanization and modern developments. In fact, as the city ousted them from its developing regions, the mud huts themselves were undergoing capitalist development. As the colonial era proceeded, mud huts became stratified to vary considerably in size, shape, and price. In the 1940 study conducted by Kyöngsöng Imperial University students, t'omak could be divided into three categories respectively.¹⁹⁹ Type A, which was “the most primitive” mud hut, was a roofless,

¹⁹⁷ *Sidae ilbo*, May 13, 1925.

¹⁹⁸ *Chosön chungang ilbo*, Apr. 17, 1936.

¹⁹⁹ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Igaku Tokushu Saimin Chōsakai, *Chōsa geppō* 11, no. 11 (1940): 51-53.

triangular shape of roughly 3.3 square meters. Some had *ondol*, Korea's traditional under-floor heating. Others had a thick layer of mud over the structure to preserve heat in the winter, which made them resemble a cave. Alternatively, there was the t'omak surrounded by four mats that created walls around the mudded floor. These were most commonly found beneath bridges. While a better structure than the triangular shaped t'omak, the straw mats and wooden boards used to create the walls barely prevented winds. The students remarked that Type A dwellers were probably the lowest life of all the t'omangmin.

Next was Type B, a slightly improved version from Type A and the most commonly sighted mud-hut structure in Kyōngsōng. It consisted of a low roof and walls covering 4.95 square meters of living space. The study noted that the B types sometimes expanded sideways to look as if several homes were connected with walls in between, similar to a *nagaya*, the traditional Japanese row house. Type B was considered a mid-range t'omak.

Finally, there was Type C, which was a structure that combined several Type B mud huts. The inner quarters had several rooms, sometimes with spare rooms available for rent. Out of the 556 mud huts examined, there were 68 Type A mud huts, 221 Type B, and 267 Type C. This suggests the stratification within mud-hut dwellings, with the more well-to-do dwellers constructing larger homes of superior quality.

The study revealed that some of the affluent mud-hut dwellers were making money by renting out spare rooms. Indeed, there is evidence that the mud huts had become commodified, especially in the midst of the acute housing shortage that permeated Kyōngsōng from the late 1920s and intensified in subsequent decades. In 1929, Sakai Toshio wrote that a factor contributing to the already-existing domaku problem was that there were people who intentionally sold their land and homes: "With the large sum [of money

obtained from the transaction], they would construct a simple-structure in a t'omak village in violation of commercial law. Life in the t'omak was profitable since they did not have to pay rent and the life itself was convenient."²⁰⁰ And for this reason, Wakō Kyōen explicitly forbade the sale of mud huts in its settlements, but had difficulty enforcing it.²⁰¹

It seems that some of the middle- and upper-class Koreans took advantage of the mud huts which concealed them from state surveillance and housing laws. In 1939, *Sinsaenghwal* (The New Life) magazine marveled at the wealthy t'omangmin whose monthly income was over 100 yen and clearly of "upper-class origins."²⁰² Something was fundamentally wrong with Chosŏn's housing system, the article remarked, since these well-off t'omangmin were buying old t'omak and remodeling them into grand homes. "Perhaps they are forgetting that their homes are mud huts. Or maybe do not think it is a big deal."²⁰³

That the mud huts had their own housing market, where people built, bought, sold, leased, and rented homes was not limited to the more affluent mud-hut households. In 1940, among 542 mud huts, 212 were bought from former owners, 109 were leases, and 221 were occupied by the original owners.²⁰⁴ Table C shows the price of Kyōngsŏng's t'omak in 1940 according to the respective neighborhoods.

²⁰⁰ Sakai Toshio, "Domaku kara mita Chōsenjin jūtaku mondai" (Jan. 1929), 47.

²⁰¹ "Domakumin wa doko e iku," *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* 373 (Dec. 1, 1938): 64-68.

²⁰² "T'omangmin," *Sinsaenghwal* 11, no. 10 (Nov. 1939): 11.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁰⁴ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwŏn, 2010), 187.

Table C. Price of T'omak in 1940 across Kyöngsöng Neighborhoods (average amount in yen)

	Hongje -jöng	Ahyön/Tonhwa -jöng	Chegi- jöng	Yongdu -jöng	Tonam -jöng	Sindang- jöng	Han River, Yöngdüngp'o
Construction fee	337	67	72	162	356	—	44
Purchase fee	420	133	147	225	467	480	59
Lease fee (with deposit)	233	150	113	152	188	250	75
Monthly rent fee	3.95	4.50	4.64	4.56	4.00	6.00	4.16

Source: Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Igaku Tokushu Saimin Chōsakai, *Chōsa geppō* 11, no. 11 (1940): 58.

The commodification of mud huts created further challenges for the GGK in its attempts to cleanse the city. As the market for mud huts developed with elaborate structures resembling legitimate homes, it became extremely arduous to persuade t'omangmin to evacuate from public and private lands. They were not willing to let go of their homes which were valuable, as in the case of Songwöl-dong t'omangmin. Some of the dwellers protested on the grounds that they had taken out loans to build high-quality mud huts. The total cost of all the mud huts in the area equaled 15,300 yen, no longer the simple structure of the earlier years.²⁰⁵ This explains why t'omangmin's protests became much fiercer and mobilized in the 1930s. The mud hut market also gave the t'omangmin a basis to demand compensation upon relocation.

For the colonial state, the use of police enforcement was a sensitive matter, as it was often unclear whether the police had the right to interfere in the first place. If they approached it as a trespass to land, the dwellers were illegal occupants who had to leave. However, if the mud huts were seen in terms of home ownership, it was clear that t'omangmin were the rightful owners of their homes, given that they had constructed the mud huts with personal funds and sometimes paid housing taxes to the city. As explained by *Silsaenghwal* (Practical Life) magazine, this was a dilemma for the city officials in their

²⁰⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 9, 1931.

handling of the t'omangmin communities and partly explained why the city was still fighting t'omangmin in the late 1930s.²⁰⁶ In 1938, Sindang-ri's landowners were still negotiating with the mud huts in the region, ten years after Shima's scandal.²⁰⁷ And the mobilization of the mud-hut dwellers in the 1930s was not limited to Kyöngsöng. In 1935, 300 t'omangmin arrived at a Taegu courthouse with appeals and "caused a sensation."²⁰⁸ Thus, while colonial modernity served to marginalize the mud-hut dwellers from urban centers, the modernizing city simultaneously provided t'omangmin with the means to resist and bargain with city officials, capitalists, and landowners.

4. Slums as Spectacles: Disciplining and Standardizing Modernity in Kyöngsöng

Mud Huts versus Culture Homes

In early January of 1936, *Chosön chungang ilbo* (Korea Central Daily) featured a two-day serial, describing a reporter's journey into a Ahyön-ri slum district and a Sindang-ri culture home neighborhood on New Year's Day.²⁰⁹ On the first day, the reporter visited the mud-hut settlement. Upon entering, he saw 600 to 700 mud huts, clustered "like beehives." He searched for the most wretched-looking t'omak. There, he found a battered, middle-aged woman, whose appearance a "Singer lady would shed tears for." By "Singer lady," the reporter was referring to a bourgeois housewife who possessed a Singer sewing machine. When asked about her family's whereabouts, the middle-aged woman replied that her husband was hospitalized with a broken back. He had been laboring at a culture-home

²⁰⁶ "T'omangmin," *Silsaenghwal* 11, no. 10 (Nov. 1939): 13.

²⁰⁷ *Chosön ilbo*, Apr. 10, 1938.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 9, 1935.

²⁰⁹ *Chosön chungang ilbo*, Jan. 3 and 4, 1936.

construction site, when a pile of soil fell on top of him. The reporter went on to explain that this household made 0.9 yen a day.

The second article depicted a flashy night-time scene of a culture home, where couples tangoed throughout the night under chandelier lights, after whiskey and cocktails.²¹⁰ The article marveled at the fact that the barren graveyards of Sindang-ri were transformed to house such a stunning array of red-roof culture homes. The reporter explained that culture homes cost 30 yen per 3.3 square meters and that 30 yen could enable a five-person mud-hut household to survive for a month. The writer remarked, “The culture home residents whose hands have never touched a soil or dripped a sweat; could they be the fortunate of our age or dolls produced by this era?”

Here, the contrast between the two New Years scenes strikes the reader. In almost every sentence, the mud hut is juxtaposed with the culture home. The middle-aged t’omangmin whose husband was injured at a construction site of a culture home is contrasted with the bourgeois housewife who possesses a Singer machine. The exorbitant price of the culture homes is explained in terms of a five-person t’omak household. The article featured side-by-side photos of a mud hut and a culture home to highlight their differences. What goes unmentioned but is known to the readers, of course, is that these culture homes were constructed only after clearing the region’s mud huts.

While the visit to the t’omak is written as if the reporter has actually visited the site, the culture home scene seems almost like a fantasy, without interviews of the residents. Only the t’omangmin appears in the narrative to tell her heartbreaking story. And of course, the reporter goes out of his way to search for the most wretched-looking mud hut. In a

²¹⁰ Ibid., Jan. 4, 1936.

strange way, the scenes—one more imaginary and the other more real—work to present two extremes in the spectrum of modernity. Placed side by side, the two residential scenes implicitly suggest that neither is the norm, but that for most readers, their position would probably be somewhere in the middle of the two extremes presented.

The serial's depiction of the Sindang-ri culture home complex suggests that even when the culture homes were affordable for a very small minority of the urban residents comprising the upper class, the public did not hesitate to express their fascination and admiration for these ultra-modern homes that symbolized modernity, wealth, and elegance. In a 1933 survey, the magazine *Pyölgön'gon* (Another World) asked its readers, "If you had 100,000 yen, what would you do?" A waitress replied, "I would quit my job as a waitress and first, build a culture home in the suburb. Then, I would construct roads so that cars can go in and out, and buy a car. I would also buy a piano, create a flower garden, get a radio, and even make a small dance hall. It would be very nice!"²¹¹

Capitalistic development and the intensification of class stratification had generated a population highly conscious of homes as reflecting one's social identity and status. In a 1929 magazine article titled, "Special villages in Greater Kyöngsöng" (Tae Kyöngsöng üi t'uksu ch'on), the city was divided into the following categories: *munhwa-ch'on* (culture village), *pinmin-ch'on* (poor village), *söyagin-ch'on* (Westerner village), *chinain-ch'on* (Chinatown), *kongöp-ch'on* (industrial village), *nodong-ch'on* (labor village), and *kisaeng-ch'on* (red light district).²¹² The article went on to depict the types of people, their homes, and lifestyles in the respective towns with great detail. When passing by the Westerner's

²¹¹ "100-manwön i saenggindamyön uri nün öttöke ssülkka? Küdül üi önggtunghan isang" [If we had 1,000,000 wön, how would we use it? Their eccentric ideals], *Pyölgön'gon* 64 (June 1, 1933): 27.

²¹² "Tae Kyöngsöng üi t'uksu ch'on" [Special villages in the Great Kyöngsöng], *Pyölgön'gon* 23 (Sept. 27, 1929): 106-13.

village, for instance, one could hear the piano playing and blue-eyed children walking to school with a book or two in hand. In contrast, the poor villagers were “unsightly” (*kwayŏn nun ŭro polsu ŏpta*): “Without permission, they built a house overnight, did not pay taxes, and were irresponsible.”²¹³

This article shows just how much had changed in the colonial era. Foreigners and their homes were highly visible and Koreans saw themselves divided along the lines of the capitalist class structure and in accordance to their occupations and homes. Interestingly, neighborhoods of the Korean middle class are missing from the category, but it can be presumed that the writer was seeking to define homes and lifestyle norms for his readers by pointing out the atypical villages. Homes were a pervasive concern for urban dwellers, where it can be said that a preoccupation with housing was widespread.

The Housing Shortage

A major reason for the city residents’ anxieties was the housing shortage that was pervading the colonial capital, adversely affecting the lives of residents. Table D shows the gravity of the problem.

²¹³ Ibid.

Table D. Housing in Kyōngsōng and the Housing Shortage Rate

Year	# of Households	# of Homes	# of Shortage in Housing	Rate of Housing Shortage (%)
1926	68,862	64,889	3,973	5.8
1931	77,701	69,453	8,266	10.6
1932	78,261	57,965	20,296	25.9
1933	79,519	70,599	8,920	11.2
1934	80,961	68,186	12,775	15.8
1935	131,239	101,767	29,472	22.5
1936	138,583	107,946	30,637	22.1
1937	144,242	111,852	32,390	22.5
1940	164,110	121,559	42,551	25.9
1941	173,162	132,272	40,899	23.6
1944	220,938	132,000	88,938	40.25

Source: Yi Sōnmin, “1930 nyōndae tosi nodongja ūi chugōnan kwa chugō yangt’ae ūi pyōnhwa,” (Master’s thesis, The Graduate School of Catholic University, 2000), 9.

In 1938, it was estimated that about 60 percent of the city’s population did not live in dwellings that they owned; many people leased homes or rooms, and it was common for multiple family households to share a dwelling.²¹⁴ Lawsuits involving tenant-landlord disputes increased in Kyōngsōng, with 683 cases in 1937, 833 in 1938, and 916 in 1939, showing that the housing shortage was creating social tensions.²¹⁵ Yi Sūngil has noted that the number of actual disputes was probably higher, if we consider the people who dropped their lawsuits or came to a settlement.²¹⁶

The housing shortage was not merely a problem of the lower class, but a serious issue affecting all residents in Kyōngsōng, including its middle class. In a 1928, a magazine article featured Yi Chongnin (1883-1951), one of the leaders of Ch’ōndogyo religion.²¹⁷ For

²¹⁴ Yi Sūngil, “1930-40 nyōndae Kyōngsōng kōju kūbyō saenghwalcha ūi chugō saenghwal,” *Han’guk minjok munhwa* 58 (Feb. 2016): 350.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 364.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 365.

²¹⁷ Yi, Chongnin, *Pyōlgōn’gon* 16, no. 7, (Dec. 1, 1928): 43-44.

six years, he had been living at an inn (*yŏgwan*) with his family due to the unavailability of housing in the city. Without a home in his name, he had to move two or three times a month. He said that at one point, he had moved to the countryside, but returned to Kyŏngsŏng for his children's education. *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* noted that the housing shortage in Chōsen was not only a problem of the lower-class mud huts and poor-quality homes, but a widespread phenomenon affecting all classes. Lower-ranking government officials and salarymen who resided in Kyŏngsŏng all suffered equally from the city's shortage of homes.²¹⁸

As competition for housing intensified, t'omangmin were not only ousted from the city's center to remote regions, but also began to be looked unfavorably upon by Kyŏngsŏng residents. In 1936, residents of Tonam, Chŏngnŭng-jŏng, and Sŏngbuk-jŏng opposed the city's relocation plan of 15,000 t'omangmin to their neighborhood. Here, middle and upper-class Koreans were living in renovated *han'ok* (traditional Korean homes), and the region was a promising site for the development of modern homes. Thus, they were not happy to hear that mud huts would be placed nearby. A hundred residents opposed the relocation, asserting that mud huts were "hygienically problematic." The protestors claimed that the mud huts' location on the hilltop would invariably contaminate the reservoir and spread contagious diseases when the neighborhood lacked an adequate sewage system.²¹⁹

The residents' objection to t'omak settlements in their neighborhood reflected the

²¹⁸ "Jūtakanan no Keijōfu," *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* 373 (Dec. 1, 1938): 69-70. The cost of housing was burdensome even for government employees. In a 1940 survey of 1,953 Sōtokufu, Kyōnggi Province, and Kyŏngsŏng officials, it was revealed that Korean officials earned an average of 61.59 yen per month, of which 14.12 yen went to housing; Japanese officials earned an average of 127.78 yen per month, of which 23.84 yen was spent on housing. In a 1939 survey of about 600 employees working for Kyōnggi Province, 200 rented, with most of them spending 30 to 50 percent of their monthly earnings to pay rent, and those residing in more affordable rentals, spending about 10 to 20 percent of their monthly wages. See Yi Sŭngil, 365, 369-70.

²¹⁹ *Chosŏn ilbo*, May 21, 1936; *Maeil sinbo*, June 5, 1936.

fragmentation of Korean society. Their hostility toward t'omangmin signified the degree to which homes had become an important class marker in colonial Korean society. For Kyōngsōng's middle class, t'omangmin were a pitiful group, but one whose presence could not be tolerated in their neighborhoods. The problem was aggravated by the housing shortage, which resulted in a hypersensitive population when it came to issues of housing, where it seemed as if the entire city was homeless and turning into a large slum, as people constructed poor-quality homes as a resolution. In this context, the vernacular press disseminated information about the middle-class lifestyle in juxtaposition with that of the t'omangmin, which served to alleviate middle class fears caused by the city's housing problem, a point to which I now turn.

T'omak and the Disciplining of the Middle Class

In 1924, *Tonga ilbo* published a week-long series on a journalist's "journey" (*t'ambanggi*) into various "poor settlements" located across the city.²²⁰ The article explained that the dwellers lived on a public cemetery and made a living by selling snakes and moles. They were a pitiful group who would "risk their life for 30 chōn and gladly accept the capitalist's orders and become their slaves."²²¹ Even if their factory employer harassed and exploited them, their ignorance made them pray that the factory did not shut down. The writer remarked that these were people ousted from the city who "lived only because they could not die."²²²

Along with the *Chosōn chungang ilbo* series that contrasted mud-hut living with that

²²⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 7-11 and 15, 1924.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 10, 1924.

²²² *Ibid.*, Nov. 8, 1924.

of the culture home, these articles were not uncommon. Throughout the colonial period, the Korean vernacular press frequently featured a journalist's "venture" into a mud-hut settlement, especially during the New Year's. On January 1, 1934, *Chosŏn ilbo* visited the Sindang-ri t'omangmin to see whether they celebrated the solar New Year's Day.²²³ A t'omangmin replied, "We don't have the luxury to distinguish between the lunar and solar New Year's. But since the lunar New Year's is more festive, why would we celebrate the solar New Year's Day?" The writer remarked, "Upon hearing and seeing them, this seemed highly plausible." Typically, the photos of mud huts and their dwellers accompanied the articles, with the caption "as reflected on the camera," a catch-phrase used to lure readers to its article on the t'omangmin. Along with the photos came vivid depictions of the journalist's encounter with the city's lower class.

As stated in the introduction, Korean newspapers and magazines press played a critical role in producing knowledge about modern life from the era of Cultural Rule (1919-31). In 1929, the Korean press had a circulation of 103,027, which reached 210,946 by 1937.²²⁴ The growth of the vernacular press, especially from the 1920s was the primary means by which t'omangmin came into the spotlight.

In this process, the urban middle class distributed and consumed information about t'omangmin. I say the middle class because although circulation increased in the colonial era, the literacy rate was not high. In 1920, only 10 to 20 percent of Koreans were literate,

²²³ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Jan. 1, 1934.

²²⁴ Michael E. Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 51; Kim Yŏnghŭi, "Ilche chibae sigi han'gugin ūi sinmun chŏpch'ok kyŏnghyang," *Han'guk ŏllon hakpo* 46, no. 1 (Dec. 2001): 62. For a comprehensive list of all newspapers and magazines published between 1883 and 1959, see Han'guk Oegugŏ Taehakkyo Yŏn'gu Sanhak Hyŏmnyŏktan, *Kŭndae munhwa yusan sinmun chapchi punya mongnokhwa chosa yŏn'gu pogosŏ* (Seoul: Munhwachaech'ŏng, 2010).

most of which were the middle and upper classes in cities.²²⁵ In 1930, 6.79 percent of the population comprehended both the Korean and Japanese language, 15.44 percent could only read Korean, 0.03 percent read Japanese exclusively, and the rest, 77.74 percent were illiterate.²²⁶ Thus, it can be inferred that it was mostly the urban bourgeoisie that produced and consumed information distributed by the vernacular press.

In general, t'omangmin were described as the city's poor in need of compassion and social management. But other times, t'omangmin served as a medium to express bourgeois dissatisfaction with the class stratification that was dividing Kyöngsöng. An article in *Kaebŷök* magazine exclaimed, "There is so much money on restaurant floors, below cars that emit dust everywhere, in front of Western-style home gates, and in the pockets of noble women!"²²⁷ But the article explained that the city's lower class could not escape poverty because the wealthy mistreated the lower class and took all the good jobs. Likewise, public outrage against Shima's political scandal in the culture-home development discussed earlier was expressed by extensive coverage of the mud-hut dwellers.

T'omangmin also appeared in literary publications, where Korean intellectuals saw the mud huts as geographies of resistance. In 1932, *Tonggwang* (Eastern Light) magazine featured a poem titled, "The Mind upon Demolishing T'omak" (*T'omak ūl hömunün maüm*), which depicted a t'omangmin whose home was torn down.²²⁸ The t'omangmin speaker curses at the "paradoxical world" that demolished his home, "Where will we go in this

²²⁵ Kim Yöngghŷi, 44-45.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ "Kyöngsöng ūi pinmin- pinmin ūi Kyöngsöng" [Kyöngsöng's poor- the poor's Kyöngsöng], *Kaebŷök* 48 (June 1, 1924): 105.

²²⁸ Sin Ok, "T'omak ūl hömunün maüm" [The Mind upon Demolishing T'omak], *Tonggwang* 36 (Aug. 1, 1932): 91.

night?” The narrator states he refuses to be let down. “You fools, do you think I will fall dead because of my torn-down mud hut? With my heart full of resentment, I will tear down the sky and shatter the earth.” He then goes on to urge the mobilization of mud hut dwellers: “Fellows, whose mud huts have been destroyed and evicted, let us gather. We will draw the bow with force and strike the sun.” Another poem titled, “Moonlit T’omak” (*T’omak ŭi talpam*) from 1934 described a graveyard mud-hut establishment where “those expelled from life” lived fruitlessly under the moonlight.²²⁹ There was also Yu Ch’ijin’s (1905-74) playscript *T’omak*, which featured a young, leftist t’omangmin who engaged in underground nationalist activities in Japan, only to have his remains be returned to the family’s mud hut at the end of the story.²³⁰

Todd Henry has argued that from early on, the GGK sought to cultivate civic morality by constructing public parks and orphanages in the colonial capital.²³¹ In similar ways, t’omak settlements inculcated civic morality in the urban middle class by functioning as the “uncivilized” spectacle in need of moral suasion. Korean newspapers encouraged their middle-class readership to donate to the mud-hut cause by portraying t’omangmin in their most wretched form possible.

For instance, in an article titled, “Estranged from the sun: T’omangmin—may they have a New Years’ full of hope,” the dwellers were described as “carriers of crime” and

²²⁹ Yi Sōhae, “T’omak ŭi talpam” [Moonlit T’omak], *Sin tonga* (Apr. 1934): 203.

²³⁰ Yu Ch’ijin’s *T’omak* was published in *Munye wōlgan* from Dec. 1931 to Jan. 1932. See Yu Ch’ijin, *T’omak* (1932), reprinted in, *T’omak: Pōdūnamu sōn tongne p’unggyōng* (Seoul: Chisik ūl Mandūnūn Chisik, 2014).

²³¹ Todd A. Henry, “Respatializing Chosōn’s Royal Capital: The Politics of Japanese Urban Reforms in Early Colonial Seoul, 1905-1919,” in Timothy R. Tangherlini, et al., eds., *Sitings: Critical Approaches to Korean Geography* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 31.

“tattered animal-like humans” who were viewed with scorn by society.²³² The article stated, “Drooping from the roofs of Great Kyōngsōng, straw-matted roofs and scraps of iron shield the wind. Perhaps they know of their embarrassing presence. The homes squat as if they are trying to hide underground.” In this narrative, mud huts were places where tragic suicides took place and people froze to death. The article urged readers to donate for their cause, saying “We must enlighten them that there is something gentle and warm called ‘compassion,’” and explained that charity was an “exaltation that went beyond the feeling of superiority.”²³³ Charity donation by a t’omangmin was publicized to act as an impetus for middle class participation in *kyōka*. When a t’omangmin donated 100 yen for the education of poor children, his act “deserved praise,” since it came from a person who “could not even see the sun inside his dark mud hut.”²³⁴

Ironically, the calls for the moral suasion of t’omangmin worked in turn to discipline the middle class. Mud huts functioned as a *kyōka* of the urban bourgeoisie both in terms of instructing them on what to do in the modern era and what to avoid. Participation in *shakai jigyo* was desirable, but living in a mud hut was not. Mud-hut settlements were where “the grave looked like a home and the home resembled a grave.”²³⁵ The press also tried to discipline middle-class infiltration into the illegal t’omak market by arguing that a background check of all t’omangmin should be conducted.²³⁶ If culture homes satisfied the public’s appetite for glamorous modern life, the dismal portrayal of mud huts served to

²³² *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 5, 1937.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Mar. 28, 1935.

²³⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 7, 1924.

²³⁶ “T’omangmin,” *Silsaenghwal* 11, no. 10 (Nov. 1939): 10-13.

alleviate the tensions caused by the severe housing shortage by consoling the residents that at least they were not living in situations where the grave looked like a home and the home resembled a grave. Throughout the colonial era, visual displays played a critical role in the *kyōka* of the populace, including exhibitions, leaflets, public lectures, bathing demonstrations or wartime propaganda films. Scenes from the mud-hut life were not exceptions.

The Korean press played a fundamentally ambivalent role, as it simultaneously spoke for the mud-hut dwellers' cause, while viewing the mud huts with contempt. In fact, the press was probably the only spokesmen for the t'omangmin's cause when city officials, developers, and landlords ordered evictions. When the city turned against mud-hut establishments, it was the press that arrived at the scene and ensured that t'omangmin had their say on the matter. Thus, for certain, the vernacular press played an important function in making t'omangmin's anguish known to the city's residents at large. Yet, the same newspapers portrayed the mud huts as everything but civilization. T'omangmin were juxtaposed against modernity as "the other side of civilized Kyōngsōng"²³⁷ and described as "the cancer of the city,"²³⁸ "dropouts (*nagoja*) from life"²³⁹—all of which resonated well with the Japanese colonialist discourse on t'omangmin. Mud-hut dwellers were an embodiment of what not to be in a modern world and were serving as "slum spectacles" in the process of standardizing modernity in colonial Korea.

The criterion was always the urban middle class, which was strange because the bourgeois life described by the vernacular press itself was highly embellished and an ideal

²³⁷ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Mar. 17, 1929.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, June 24, 1940.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 27, 1936; Oct. 29, 1936.

unattainable for most; the culture home being a prime example. But nonetheless, this ideal of the flashy modern, cultured life that was allegedly practiced by the Korean middle class was pressed onto the populace as if it was the norm, reinforced by interviews with upper-class housewives who, for instance, bathed their child daily in the household tub.²⁴⁰ In 1935, a writer remarked that he found a “strand of hope” in a mud hut where the parents and the eldest daughter worked diligently to send the 10 year-old son to elementary school.²⁴¹ “Don’t be astonished, but their daily living expense is 0.5 yen,” reported another.²⁴² These habitual, almost compulsive displays of the mud-hut dwellers’ dismal life led a t’omangmin to bitterly admit that they were a “good entertainment” (*choŭn kugyŏng*) for their fellow urban residents.²⁴³

The discourse on t’omangmin also reflected an anxiety to make Kyŏngsŏng into a modern, cultured metropole. While it had “yet to become a major global center,” the Korean press expressed the hope that the city would at least maintain its dignity (*ch’emyŏn*) as a “civilized city” (*munmyŏng tosi*).²⁴⁴ Kyŏngsŏng was still hygienically problematic, but the city could still have status of civilization if the public toilets were cleaned more often. The city needed more cultural facilities like music halls, even at the cost of demolishing one-third of the city’s homes. Great Kyŏngsŏng should not permit beggars who were a disgrace to the city. Something had to be done about the poor villages in Sindang-ri and the t’omangmin. Such arguments were put forth in 1940, at the height of wartime

²⁴⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 17, 1931.

²⁴¹ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Jan. 2, 1935.

²⁴² *Maeil sinbo*, Dec. 28, 1929.

²⁴³ *Chosŏn chungang ilbo*, Apr. 17, 1936.

²⁴⁴ “Kyŏngsŏng kaejoan” [Proposal to reconstruct Kyŏngsŏng], *Samch’ŏlli* 12, no. 9 (Oct. 1, 1940): 94-96.

mobilization.²⁴⁵

T'omangmin played an indispensable role in the ideological and physical standardization of the modern home and cultured living in colonial Korea, as the middle class consumed ideals of the modern. Thus, t'omangmin were excluded from civilization both in the actual urban realm as well as in the discourse produced and consumed by the middle class. Ironically, t'omangmin were deemed "outside the modern" when they were direct products of modernity. In Kyōngsōng "where modern girls increased daily in number, lumpen mud-hut dwellers formed a discrete class, whose disposal was necessary for the scenic beauty of the city."²⁴⁶ A journalist wrote, "When I saw the new women (*sin yōsōng*) parading down the main roads, smartly dressed with their parasols and complaining that the roads were too narrow, I once again recollected the miserable scene of t'omangmin."²⁴⁷

Anxieties of the Korean Middle Class

Housing crisis alone does not explain the Korean bourgeoisie's ambivalent attitude toward mud hut settlements. At play was a fundamental anxiety that was widespread in the Korean middle class, with respect to their newly formed identity in capitalist modernity. To understand this at a deeper level, we must return to Sōn Ujōn's discussion of the middle class, mentioned earlier in the introduction.²⁴⁸ In his article where he emphasized the socio-cultural role of the Korean middle class, he also provided a chart that divided Kyōngsōng's residents into four different classes, with three subdivisions respectively. This was based on

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ *Chosōn ilbo*, Oct. 8, 1933.

²⁴⁷ *Maeil sinbo*, May 23, 1936.

²⁴⁸ Sōn Ujōn, "Chosōnin saenghwal munje ūi yōn'gu" [Study of problems in Korean Life], *Kaebiyōk* 20, 21, 22 (Feb. 8; Mar. 1; Apr. 1, 1922): 45-55; 14-26; 4-16.

a 1921 survey of Korean residents by the City of Kyōngsōng, which revealed that the city had a total of 38,978 Korean households (97,176 male, 93,218 female; total of 189,394 people) with annual income ranging from below 400 yen to 106,500 yen.²⁴⁹ Table E shows Sōn's chart, which only included the annual income of the classes in the original, but I have added the monthly income of the respective classes.

The figures provide us with additional insights into the divisions within Korean society in the colonial capital. First, what he labels as the “middle class” only comprised 8.31 percent of the city's Korean residents. They earned a monthly income of 83 yen to 270 yen. Above the middle class, what Sōn refers to as the “upper” and “special” classes, together, comprised about 2.5 percent of the city's Korean population, with monthly income ranging from 310 yen to 8,875 yen. While he does not define what he meant by “special class,” one can surmise that this group included wealthy capitalists running major companies or those from *yangban* backgrounds with great wealth; both of which, typically maintained close ties with the ruling Japanese elites in government, business, and finance. Finally, about 90 percent of the city's Korean residents comprised the “lower class,” with monthly earnings of 71 yen or lower. This means that according to Sōn, only 10 percent of the Korean residents in Kyōngsōng were in the middle, upper, and special classes.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., (Feb. 8, 1922), 51.

Table E. Kyöngsöng's Korean Households According to Class and Monthly Income in 1921

Class Type	Division within class	Annual Income (in yen)	Monthly Income in yen (rounded up)	# of Households (Total: 38,978)	Total # of Households (for entire class)	Percentage in Kyöngsöng ²⁵⁰
Special Class (<i>t'üksu kyegŭp</i>)	Upper (上)	70,000-106,500	5,833 - 8,875	31	192	0.49%
	Middle (中)	34,800-60,900	2,900 -5,075	52		
	Lower (下)	19,900-30,200	1,658 -2,517	109		
Upper Class (<i>sangnyu kyegŭp</i>)	Upper (上)	11,300-17,300	942- 1,442	186	775	1.99%
	Middle (中)	6,510-9,900	543-825	219		
	Lower (下)	3,720-5,660	310-472	370		
Middle Class (<i>chungnyu kyegŭp</i>)	Upper (上)	2,450-3,240	204-270	470	3,239	8.31%
	Middle (中)	1,850-2,150	154-179	410		
	Lower (下)	1,000-1,610	83-134	2,359		
Lower Class (<i>hach'üng kyegŭp</i>)	Upper (上)	720-850	60-71	1,973	5,564 ²⁵¹ (for upper and middle)	14.27% (for upper and middle)
	Middle (中)	400-600	33-50	3,571		
	Lower (下)	Below 400	Below 33	29,208	29,208 (for lower)	74.94% (for lower)

Source: Sön Ujön, "Chosönin saenghwal munje ūi yön'gu," *Kaebŏk* 20 (Feb. 8, 1922), 51.

Sön's figures are solely based on income, not profession or family wealth; two

²⁵⁰ Sön provided this column in per-mille (‰), but for clarity, I have provided them in percentages (%).

²⁵¹ Note that 1,973 households of the "upper" lower class and 3,571 of the "middle" lower class do not add up to the total (5,564) provided. But I have kept the original numbers for the sake of accurately depicting Sön's chart as published in *Kaebŏk*. If 3,571 is correct, then the "upper" lower class should be 1,993, not 1,973. Alternatively, if 1,973 is the correct number, then the "middle" lower class should be 3,591, not 3,571.

additional factors that determined one's class in colonial society, since, again, a person from an affluent family could be unemployed or be engaged in a modern profession with modest earnings, but nevertheless comprise the middle or upper classes. Further research is needed, of course, but his figures are not too different from those given in other discussions from the 1920s and 30s that describe the wages and living situations of different occupations.²⁵² For instance, in 1931, a public elementary school principal stated that his monthly wage was 220 yen.²⁵³ In the early 1930s, doctors earned over 100 yen a month, a clerk at Industrial Bank (Shokusan Ginko) earned monthly wages of 95 yen, financial directors 70 yen, newspaper journalists 70 yen, pastors 50 to 60 yen, and magazine journalists 50 yen.²⁵⁴ In other words, how people in the colonial era conceptualized what "middle class" professions included, along with their respective wages, is pretty consistent with Sŏn's chart. The numbers also roughly match how the Korean press defined upper,

²⁵² In 1923, a survey of temporary workers hired by Kyŏngsŏng City, primary school (*sohakkyo*) teachers and clerks (*kowŏn*), revealed that their monthly cost of living ranged from 7 yen to 60 yen. Workers running errands for the city or the schools spent 8 yen per person in a month. The article explained that a family of four needed 32 yen a month to get by, and a family of five, 40 yen. Yet, some of the workers' monthly earnings were only 24 yen. See *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 8, 1923. In 1928, a survey of 17,240 policemen (10,278 Japanese and 6,962 Korean) revealed that the average monthly earnings of a Japanese policeman was 80 yen, while Korean policemen received 24 yen. See *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 15, 1928. In 1931, a barber in Kyŏngsŏng who charged the city's normal rate of 3 yen, had a daily profit of 1 yen; factory workers' wages were 15 yen a month, a life *Tonga ilbo* described as "wretched, should he have a wife to support,"; a telephone operator earned between 0.67 and 1 yen a day. See *Tonga ilbo*, Jan. 1, 1931. In 1936 Q&A published in *Tonga ilbo*, a reader asked whether his real estate property of 500 yen made him a middle class, to which the columnist answered that while a monthly wage of 80 yen would comprise the middle class in Korea, 80 yen in the metropole (*naeji*) would be "a person in hardship" and remarked, "At any rate, you are a lower class even in Chosŏn." See *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 9, 1931.

²⁵³ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 9, 1931.

²⁵⁴ Chŏn Pyŏngmu, "Ilche ha han'gugin pyŏnhosa ūi chagyŏk yuhyŏng kwa pyŏnhosa suip," *Han'gukhak non'chong* 44 (2015): 332.

middle, and lower classes in regions outside the colonial capital.²⁵⁵

What should be noted, though, is that many of the urban professions that the colonial society considered “middle class,” including teachers, journalists, and government officials, often received less than 80 yen a month; more like 60 or 70 yen.²⁵⁶ So it may be more appropriate to describe the middle class income as ranging somewhere between 60 and 270 yen, which would include the “upper-lower class” in Sön’s chart. This is still only 13.3 percent of the city’s dwellers that would comprise the “middle class,” and if combined with the upper and special classes, only 15.8 percent of Kyöngsöng’s Korean residents would be middle class and above.

Here, placing Sön’s class categories and financial figures into a broader perspective may be helpful. In 1926, the average annual income of persons employed in the United States was more than 2,000 dollars,²⁵⁷ which amounted to 4,000 yen (333 yen/month) in colonial Korea based on the dollar-yen exchange rate of the time.²⁵⁸ Thus, a person making 2,000 dollars annually in the United States would comprise the upper class in Sön’s category. Sön’s article provided that the average cost of living for the American middle class was

²⁵⁵ In a 1925 article concerning residents of Ansöng city in Kyönggi Province, 32 households with an annual income of 5,000 yen or more (416 yen per month) were described as wealthy households, 488 households with annual income between 1,000 and 5,000 yen (83 to 417 yen per month) were described as the middle class, and the rest; 11,799 households, were making less than the middle class. See *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 14, 1925. In a 1931 article, a study of 14,000 county residents (*kunmin*; county unspecified) revealed that 90 percent engaged in agriculture. Among them, 33 households were “wealthy” with annual income of 5,000 yen or more, 480 households were “middle class” with annual income between 1,000 and 5,000 yen; the remaining 13,500 households had an annual income of 1,000 yen or less. See *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 11, 1931.

²⁵⁶ Ch’a Namhüi, et al., “Kyöngsöng Cheguk Taehak kwa singminji sigi ‘chung’in ch’üng’ üi sangsüng idong” *Tamnon* 201 13, no. 4 (2010): 21; Yi Süngil, 365.

²⁵⁷ See “Says Our Masses are Not Prosperous: Prof. Irving Fisher Gives Figures,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 26, 1927, 14.

²⁵⁸ In 1926, the exchange rate was about 2.1 yen per dollar. See Carlos E. Campbell, “Factors Affecting the Price of Rice,” in U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Technical Bulletin*, no. 297 (Apr. 1932): 48.

4,500 yen, which amounted to about 2,250 dollars.²⁵⁹ Also in 1926, it was reported that 93 million out of 117 million Americans (80 percent of the population) had an annual average income of 500 dollars (1,000 yen or 83 yen/month), who were described by *The New York Times* as comprising the “poorest” and “lower middle” classes.²⁶⁰ In the context of colonial Korean society, they would comprise the “lower-middle class” in Sŏn’s chart, but safely fall into the middle class in my expanded view of the Korean middle class having a monthly income of 60 to 270 yen. This means that in the United States, about 20 percent of the population were considered middle class and above.²⁶¹ As stated above, Koreans who were middle class and above were about 10 percent of the city’s population in Sŏn’s chart, and 15.8 percent in my expanded view.

These figures allow us to reconsider colonial modernity; not only its effects on Korean society which was highly unevenly distributed across classes, given that only 10 or 15.8 percent of Kyŏngsŏng’s population led a middle-class life or above, but also its effects *within* classes, especially within the bourgeoisie. The data above suggests that the Korean bourgeoisie was highly stratified; that discussions about modernity and fascination with flashy, modern life generated by the Korean press was not only incompatible with the majority of the populace, but also unattainable ideals for many who considered themselves as part of the Korean middle class. In this respect, top-down calls for reform of the Korean lifestyle may have only been practiced in the everyday life by a very small sector of Korean society. And this was probably why Sŏn stressed the socio-cultural role of the Korean bourgeoisie, while playing down wealth or income, since, to state otherwise would mean

²⁵⁹ In 1920, the exchange rate was about 2 yen per dollar. See Campbell, 48.

²⁶⁰ “Says Our Masses are Not Prosperous: Prof. Irving Fisher Gives Figures,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 26, 1927, 14.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

that the majority of people, who saw themselves as forming the middle class, were leading lives that were not too different from that of the lower-class or the Korean masses that they were supposed to educate through moral suasion.

The Korean middle-class identity was also on shaky grounds because compared to the bourgeoisie of Japan and the rest of the world, it was evident that the Korean bourgeoisie were poor, an anxiety that dominated Sŏn's discussion.²⁶² When determining the appropriate cost of food, clothes, housing, and cultural-life expenses for the Korean middle class, for instance, he calculated the respective percentages based on the Japanese and American middle-class standards, but noted that the annual living costs of the Korean middle class (2,000 to 2,500 yen) was much lower than that of the Japanese (4,000 yen) and the American (4,500 yen; 2,250 dollars) middle classes.²⁶³

These situations led Koreans in modern professions to lament their state of affairs. A female teacher who was described as a "new woman" (*sinyŏsŏng*) by *Tonga ilbo* in 1929, wondered why a Korean middle class, such as herself, did not have enough money to get by and lived month by month:

"There seem to be so many content people, leading idle lives, but nevertheless, in luxury, but why is it that I seem to always be using my head and body, but cannot live a single month without worrying about life, having financial distress, and unable to enjoy even the smallest form of entertainment? I cannot help but think that the world is so unfair... When I see those who lead carefree lives in comfort, without much hardship from the time they were born, it angers me so much, and I cannot help but complain."²⁶⁴

It is likely that the anxieties were further complicated by the premodern status consciousness that carried on into the colonial era, a point I contemplate further in the

²⁶² Sŏn Ujŏn, "Chosŏnin saenghwal munje ūi yŏn'gu," *Kaebŏk* 20 (Feb. 8, 1922): 51; *Kaebŏk* 22 (June 1 1922): 33.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, (June 1, 1922), 37-38.

²⁶⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 16, 1929.

bathing chapter. Except for Koreans who managed to land in the “upper” and “special classes” in the colonial era—those from landed aristocratic families who succeeded in maintaining their status quo in the capitalist system, such as the Koch’ang Kims, or those from merchant and *chung’in* families who were able to succeed in upward mobility to accumulate great wealth and hence, “status” in the modern capitalist hierarchy—neither capitalist modernity nor their premodern status background, gave them security in the modern world. Even if they gained “middle class” status whether by accumulating some degree of wealth through modern education and skills, unlike the premodern status system, their social status in capitalist society was not fixed; it was not a status by birth. And it seems that Korean elites, in order to solve this dilemma, emphasized socio-cultural status, in which, even without the degree of capital required to gain a middle or upper-class status in the capitalist society, it was possible to retain social standing by other means, such as reforming and saving the masses with their modern knowledge and skills, to earn respect from the rest of society. Stated in other words, it was imperative that they use this socio-cultural definition of the middle class; otherwise, they would not be any more different from the masses at large. This may further explain the Korean bourgeoisie’s ambivalent attitude toward t’omangmin.

5. The Everyday Life of Mud-hut Dwellers and Incorporation into Empire

The Everyday Life in the Mud Hut

Then, what was the colonial everyday life actually experienced by t’omangmin? An answer can be found in the 1940 research conducted by Kyōngsōng Imperial University

students.²⁶⁵ This was a group of about 20 medical students, both Korean and Japanese, who conducted a detailed ethnographic survey of various t'omak establishments in the colonial capital. It was, in essence, an alliance of urban middle-class students that inquired into the life of the city's lower class and was one of the most comprehensive studies of mud-hut dwellers in the colonial era.

T'omangmin's Origins

Out of the 556 mud-hut households (2,548 t'omangmin) studied by the students, 443 (77 percent) had their place of origin outside Kyōngsōng.²⁶⁶ Even in the 123 households that listed Kyōngsōng as their place of origin, many had originally come from rural regions. When asked of their former residential area immediately prior to the current mud hut, 253 replied that they had lived in other mud-hut settlements of the city, 88 households stated that they came from Kyōngsōng's non-t'omak regions, and the remaining 192 households stated that they had not lived in the city prior to their current t'omak.

Thus, most of the t'omangmin were migrants from the countryside. They came to the city to find work. T'omangmin stated that the difficulty in maintaining their livelihood in rural areas led them to move to the capital.²⁶⁷ This included natural disasters, inability to make profit in farming, and the loss or decrease in land ownership. Other reasons put forth by respondents included illness in the family that led to bankruptcy, business failure,

²⁶⁵ The findings were first published in *Chōsa geppō* in 1940, and subsequently published into a book in 1942. See Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Igaku Tokushu Saimin Chōsakai, "Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei—seikatsu chōsa," no. 10-12; Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*. The citations provided hereafter are from the 2010 translation of the book into Korean. See Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwōn, 2010).

²⁶⁶ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwōn, 2010), 120-21.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 128-30.

adverse court decisions in a legal dispute, aversion to agricultural life, and the desire to school their children. While some responded that they had spent their youth without much purpose and just came to live in the city, most of the t'omangmin had compelling reasons for migrating to Kyōngsōng; economic reasons being a prime motive.

One issue that goes unmentioned in this study is that for many of the t'omangmin, family was an important factor that led them to mud huts. In a 1932 *Chosŏn ilbo* article, the interviewed t'omangmin explained that death of their parents or husbands caused economic hardship, leading them to mud-hut living.²⁶⁸ Inability to support elderly family members was another factor. Other times, the problem came from having too many family members, with few earning wages. In such a case, it was impossible to be a live-in servant (*haengnang sari*), as explained by a t'omangmin, which would have been a convenient solution for t'omangmin in both housing and employment, as live-in servants received food, shelter, and wages in return for their services.²⁶⁹

Haengnang sari was essentially a vestige of the premodern status system, in which households kept domestic slaves. Despite the abolition of the status system in 1894, the practice persisted in the colonial era, and continued even into the post-liberation period in rural regions. In a study of the colonial middle-class childhood based on interviews of nine individuals born between the mid 1920s and 30s, all interviewees stated that their households had live-in servants; some with as many as 16 servants.²⁷⁰ Likewise, Sŏn Ujŏn's 1922 serial included a lengthy article on the "Korean problem" of *haengnang sari*, in which

²⁶⁸ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Dec. 9, 1932.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1932.

²⁷⁰ Kim Ŭnhŭi, "Taegajok sok ũi aidŭl: ilche sidae chungsangnyuch'ŭng ũi adonggi," *Kajok kwa munhwa* 19, no. 3 (2007): 14.

he estimated that about 14,733 families in Kyōngsōng, or roughly two-thirds of the city's population was engaged in the endeavor.²⁷¹ While his estimate is mere speculation, it does suggest that *haengnang sari* could be commonly seen in Kyōngsōng, with Sōn complaining that even families with modest income kept live-in servants.²⁷² The problem was the status consciousness, he explained. In contrast to Westerners (including nobility) and the Japanese, who regularly visited shops in person to buy goods needed in the household, Korean households depended on live-in servants and messengers to clean, wash clothes, and buy goods, believing that to act otherwise was vulgar; a disgrace to one's dignity and status.²⁷³

Urban historian Son Chōngmok has put forth an interesting proposition that one reason for the increase of mud huts, especially from the 1930s, was due to the decrease in the number of people working as live-in servants.²⁷⁴ Son argued that from the 1930s, live-in servants declined rapidly in number and that many of them left for a mud-hut life, signifying the mental shift in the lower class to prefer self-owned mud huts over the live-in servant life. But Son's argument is without evidence, and in the 1940 study, none of the t'omangmin stated that they had previously worked as domestic servants. If proven, however, his theory would be a significant insight into the role of mud huts in disintegrating premodern notions of status in modern Korea.

²⁷¹ Sōn Ujōn, "Chosōnin saenghwal munje ūi yōn'gu" [Study of problems in Korean Life], *Kaeb'yōk* 21 (Mar. 1, 1922): 16-17.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

²⁷⁴ See Son Chōngmok, *Ilche kangjōmgi tosi sahoesang yōn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1996), 248-50.

T'omangmin's Occupations and Earnings

The city's t'omangmin earned a living through various means. Of the 2,548 t'omangmin, 819 had jobs, 736 of whom were men.²⁷⁵ This meant only about 30 percent of the surveyed population earned wages. The most common job was to work as a day laborer (302 t'omangmin). Others were involved in a wide range of vocations, from trash pickup for the city, transportation of goods, construction, factory labor, painting, mechanic, shoe repair, clock repair, and manufacture of socks, rubber, tents, and even hats to baker, street vendor, junk dealer, hair dresser, servant, driver, actor, fortune teller, sales clerk, and salarymen. About 40 t'omangmin were engaged in some sort of housing construction labor. Kyōngsōng Imperial University students remarked on how ironic it was that t'omangmin built homes for others, while they themselves lived in modest structures.

It is notable that 12 worked as government employees (five government officials and seven as contract workers), when the city was cracking down on the city's mud huts. Yet, their wages did not differ too much from the male t'omangmin's daily average of 1.3 yen. The study noted that these t'omangmin only had the fancy title of a government employee, and that other t'omangmin viewed them with pity.²⁷⁶ The list shows other occupations that we would not expect to find in mud-hut district, such as white-collar salarymen (seven individuals) and sales clerks (12 individuals). On average, the male t'omangmin with jobs worked 24.4 days in a month with their average age 35.4.

Out of the 819 employed, 83 were women who had a daily wage of 0.56 yen which

²⁷⁵ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabu, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwōn, 2010), 137-46.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 145.

was less than half of what male dwellers received.²⁷⁷ Women worked in light industries, such as textile and sewing, as well as peddlers selling bread, candy, and sesame oil. Others engaged in domestic labor, such as baby sitting, housekeeping, and laundry work. On the low employment-rate of women, the medical students explained that it was an old custom of Chosŏn that women do not work outside the home. In this context, domestic labor (J. *naishoku*; K. *naejik*) would be most ideal, but there were only two, three women engaged in home work.

Compared to other laborers in the city, some of the t'omangmin's wage was relatively high, but this was because they received more for physical labor. As for work requiring skill, such as painting, sewing, and printing, the dwellers' wages were much lower than the city's average. Also, the closer they worked to the city's center, the higher the wages. This was because day labor opportunities were more accessible than on the city's outskirts. The statistics showed that the average monthly income of a t'omak household was 40.3 yen, with 71.1 percent of it spent on food.²⁷⁸ A monthly income of 40.3 yen would be placed in the "middle-lower class" in Sŏn's chart (Table E).²⁷⁹

Education and Language Fluency

In general, t'omangmin were an uneducated group. Statistics for 2,606 dwellers showed that 77 percent were illiterate, a number drastically higher than that of the poor in

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 140-41.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 157-60, 164-66.

²⁷⁹ Sŏn Ujŏn, "Chosŏnin saenghwal munje ūi yŏn'gu," *Kaebŏk* 20 (Feb. 8, 1922), 51.

Japan, which was 19.6 percent.²⁸⁰ But this included 1,356 children below the age of seven. Among the males over age seven, 5 percent completed elementary school education, 22 percent had either quit in between or were currently enrolled, 40 percent read Korean and 33 percent were illiterate. The illiteracy rate for women was much higher; 75 percent. From 1,244 dwellers, 75 people responded that they spoke Japanese fluently. 199 dwellers said they could understand and have basic conversations in Japanese. The rest, 970 dwellers which was 78 percent of those examined, did not comprehend Japanese at all.

This is noteworthy, given that this study took place in 1940, 30 years into the colonial era. It suggests that despite decades of colonial rule and assimilation, Japanese hegemony did not reach all sectors of Korean society. It also suggests that the Korean lower class may have had minimal contact with the settler population or even if they did, the interaction did not require a high degree of fluency in the colonialist's language that the GGK had in mind in its assimilation (*dōka*) policy or *naisen yūwa*. One could live in the colonial era without adapting to the Japanese sphere of influence. In this respect, colonial governance and its control over the populace was limited in scope.

Future Prospects in the Mud Huts

The medical students also inquired into whether the t'omak experience itself had an adverse effect on the residents' lives by comparing the living standards of the dwellers with the duration of their t'omak experience in years. The findings are laid out in Table F.

²⁸⁰ Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabu, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwōn, 2010), 208-11.

Table F. The T'omak Experience with respect to Social Stratum²⁸¹

Years of Residence In T'omak	Upper Stratum (households)	Middle Stratum (households)	Lower Stratum (households)	TOTAL # OF HOUSEHOLDS
5 or more years	27 (13.9%)	103 (52.8%)	65 (33.3%)	195
Less than 5 years	23 (16.3%)	166 (57.5%)	53 (26.2%)	202
TOTAL # OF HOUSEHOLDS	60	219	118	397

Source: Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabu, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwōn, 2010), 215.

Based on this table, the students concluded that the longer a person lived in a mud hut, the more impoverished his or her life became. However, this conclusion is only based on 397 households out of the 2,758 mud-hut households that existed in 1940 Kyōngsōng. Further, one can see that the differences are rather minor between the strata. It cannot be said for certain that the dweller's lives deteriorated as years passed, especially if we consider the fact that many of them were impoverished migrants to begin with, as well as the fact that the number of mud huts decreased from the 1940s, as they "upgraded" into poor-quality homes. A mud-hut dweller's future depended less on the fact that he lived in t'omak, but more on the whims of capitalism and modernity. In other words, mud-hut dwellers' poverty was not due to living in mud huts; rather, the dwellers lived in the huts because they were poor.

When the students asked 103 households about their future prospects, all but eight replied.²⁸² 37 stated that they did not have particular hopes, which led the medical students to conclude that t'omangmin had a gloomy future. Yet, the responses from the rest of the interviewees suggest that this was not necessarily the case. 17 said they wanted to advance

²⁸¹ Here, what the students call "upper stratum" seems to be the dwellers that lived in type C t'omak, type B for "middle stratum," and type A for "lower stratum" provided in my earlier discussion of the mud hut stratification.

²⁸² Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabu, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei*, trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul: Minsogwōn, 2010), 216-17.

in their current occupations. 10 replied that they either wanted to start a business or change jobs. Four wanted to return to farming, and one said he was interested in going to Manchuria. The remaining 26 households spoke about improving the lives of their children either by education or technical skills. Some stated that they expected their children to earn money once they grew up and assist in improving the households' finances.

Thus, for the mud-hut dwellers, a bright future depended on improving their career or finding better opportunities for work, as well as the education of their children so that they would earn a living. By no means can these concerns and hopes be deemed “gloomy” or unusually pessimistic. They were no different from the concerns expressed by Yi Chongnin, the Ch'ōndogyo leader who lived at a *yōgwan* with his family to educate the children in the city.²⁸³ Above all, the replies indicate that the t'omangmin perceived a better life in the city and planned to stay to further enhance their lives; not too different from the concerns people have in the present.

The Incorporation of T'omangmin into the Empire

On February 26, 1942, *Maeil sinbo* published an article which stated that the city of Kyōngsōng decided to dispatch 570 of the city's t'omangmin to Hokkaidō, where they would work at a railroad and public works construction site.²⁸⁴ Already, 233 mud-hut dwellers had been successfully dispatched on February 23 and 24. The city stated its plans to send 170 additional t'omangmin in the nearby future in order to “remove all traces of mud-hut dwellers from Kyōngsōng.”²⁸⁵ This has been described by a post-colonial scholar, Kwak

²⁸³ Yi, Chongnin, *Pyōlgōn'gon* 16, no. 7, (Dec. 1928): 43-44.

²⁸⁴ *Maeil sinbo*, Feb. 26, 1942.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Kõnhong, as the “final fate” of the mud-hut dwellers under colonial rule.²⁸⁶ Son Chõngmok has stated that they were probably deceived into forced labor, with the promise of high wages.²⁸⁷

The wartime mobilization of t’omangmin has served to reinforce their victimhood as the colonial subject’s “ultimate fate” in the Japanese empire. However, the mud-hut dwellers were not an exclusive group mobilized for war in the Japanese empire; hence their treatment was not exceptional in Japanese colonialism. It is certainly the case that the t’omangmin were especially susceptible to forced mobilization due to their vulnerable status as a lower class without a stable means of livelihood or adequate housing. Nevertheless, the history of mud-hut dwellers’ in the final years of colonial rule is a bit more complex than how it is conveyed by post-liberation scholars such as Kwak and Son.

In the summer of 1940, the flooding of the Han River compelled 500 t’omangmin to evacuate from their 85 mud huts.²⁸⁸ By this time, the city knew how to take action. Within a few days, officials persuaded the owner of a horse-racing track to lend his territory to the t’omangmin, to which the owner agreed and accommodated the flood victims. Soon after, the city offered to act as an intermediary for any t’omangmin who would be interested in settling in northern Korea.²⁸⁹ There were 1,000 spots available and applicants would be provided with traveling expenses. What is called “wartime mobilization” of the dwellers was not too different from the 1930s relocation policies sending t’omangmin to the city’s outskirts. Both found solution to the city’s mud-hut problem in physical transfer.

²⁸⁶ Kwak Kõnhong, “Ilche ha üi pinmin: t’omangmin, hwajõnmin,” *Yõksa pip’yõng* 46 (Mar. 1999): 162-63.

²⁸⁷ Son Chõngmok, 281.

²⁸⁸ *Chosõn ilbo*, July 5, 1940.

²⁸⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, July 25, 1940.

The colonial state's handling of the dwellers in the 1940s was a considerable improvement from the earlier decades. For one, flood victims received immediate state assistance, a far cry from the earlier flooding of the Han River in the 1920s. Second, the city's reaction was instantaneous and its handling of the t'omangmin efficient. Within a matter of days, the city had come to the assistance of t'omangmin. It also swiftly demolished the t'omak settlements near the Han River on the grounds that their fragile structures would not hold up in the rain and endanger t'omangmin's lives.²⁹⁰ But these measures were probably less a consequence of heightened oppression in wartime, and more an indication that the city had become experienced with mud huts, after dealing with them for nearly 20 years.

Likewise, the mud-hut dwellers were not subdued by the wartime context, but continued to bargain with the colonial government in the 1940s. When the flood refugees were subsequently ousted from the horse-racing track on the grounds that the accommodation was attracting an uncontrollable number of refugees from the continuing rain, the t'omangmin knew what to do. 120 dwellers arrived at City Hall, drenched from the rain demanding aid, claiming that they deserved protection as legitimate residents of Kyōngsōng, meaning they were registered in the *saimin* (poor) card system.²⁹¹ In other words, they were arguing that the officials had acted illegally in demolishing the mud huts, which were lawfully registered with the city as lower-class dwellings deserving social aid.

Here, t'omangmin were demanding they be treated as legitimate subjects of the Japanese empire who would receive aid and protection. This was not something new. Even

²⁹⁰ *Chosŏn ilbo*, July 30, 1940.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, July 24, 1940.

in the 1930s when the city was reluctant to acknowledge mud huts as legal dwellings, t'omangmin never argued that they be excluded from the colonial capital, but always demanded they be protected as legitimate residents. It was only in the 1940s that their demands were heard, albeit in the height of war. In 1939, a GGK official stated, "Without a doubt, t'omangmin are also citizens. In the future, we plan to provide relief by creating a lower-class district to accommodate them."²⁹² In 1940, Kyōnggi Province held the Urban Purification Conference to discuss the moral suasion (*kyōka shidō*) of t'omangmin and delinquent children.²⁹³ The making of t'omangmin as imperial subjects had begun. And ironically, t'omangmin's demands to be legitimate subjects of the colonial state were fulfilled at the height of war mobilization. Perhaps they were the last ones to be incorporated into the Japanese empire, but at last, their everyday existence was acknowledged.

²⁹² Ibid., May 18, 1939.

²⁹³ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 3, 1940.

Chapter II. Washing the Body: The Bathing Campaign

1. Unwashed Bodies: Creating a “Bathable” Chōsen in the Tubless Peninsula

So an Englishman was once heard to say that the dirtiest man he ever saw was a clean Korean.

George W. Gilmore *Korea from its Capital* (1892)²⁹⁴

Early Impressions of Chosŏn

In 1887, American missionary Horace N. Allen (1858-1932) accompanied the first Korean legation to the United States on board a ship to Washington D.C. The legation, sent by King Kojong (r. 1863-1907), consisted of about a dozen Koreans, including prominent individuals, such as Prime Minister Pak Chōngyang (1841-1904) and Yi Wanyong (1858-1926). In his diary entry, Allen made the following observation:

They persist in standing upon the closet seats which they keep dirtied all the time and have severely marked with their hobnailed shoes. They smell of dung continually, persist in smoking in their rooms which smell horribly of unwashed bodies, dung, stale wine, Korean food, smoke, etc. I go regularly every morning to see the minister and get him up on deck. I can't stop long in their rooms as I have had to point out lice to them on their clothes.²⁹⁵

Allen was not alone in his impression of unwashed Korean bodies and the questionable hygienic practices of the peninsula. In 1894, a man named Honma Kyusuke (本間久介, 1869-1919) published *Chōsen zakki* [Miscellaneous Records on Korea] describing his personal travels across various regions of the peninsula in 1893.²⁹⁶ Observing ordinary Koreans, he wrote in horror, “I have seen them use urine to wash their faces... and I am told

²⁹⁴ George W. Gilmore, *Korea from its Capital: With a Chapter on Missions* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School of Work, 1892), 92.

²⁹⁵ Allen Diary, December 26, 1887, Allen MSS, New York City Library.

²⁹⁶ See Ryōshū Kōji (Honma Kyusuke), *Chōsen zakki* (Keijō: Shunshōdō Shoten, 1894). Honma Kyusuke (本間久介) published under the pseudonym, Ryōshū Kōji (如因居士) and also went by Adachi Keijirō (足立銚二郎). A journalist who later joined the Japanese rightist organization, Black Dragon Society (Kokuryūkai), Honma also worked as an official for the Residency General of Korea and the GKG. This book was a compilation of his serial published in Niroku shinbun. For more information, see Honma Kyusuke, *Chosŏn chapki: ilbonin ūi Chosŏn chōngt'amnok*, trans. Ch'oe Hyeju (P'aju: Kimyōngsa, 2008).

that women wash their private parts with urine. It must be why they cannot prevent the spread of syphilis infection.”²⁹⁷

Honma explained his misery in not having bathed during his travels due to the absence of bathing facilities in Korean lodgings.²⁹⁸ When he arrived at Haeju, Hwanghae Province, he had not bathed once for several weeks. However, his innkeeper informed him about a bathing place (*yokujō*) and offered to take him there. With soap in hand, he followed the innkeeper. Excited, he entered the interior and stripped down, only to find a tubless room in extreme heat, packed with dozens of scraggy, ailing-looking Koreans who were sitting and lying on the floor. Honma escaped in fear. Later he realized that he had experienced a steam bath (*hanjūng*) for the first time.²⁹⁹

Bathing Customs in Late Chosŏn

Soak bathing (*nyūyoku*; 入浴), at least the form that Japanese like Honma had in mind, involving a routinized process of entering a tub filled with water, was not a common custom in late nineteenth-century Chosŏn. Although hot springs (*onch'ŏn*) regions were frequented by the Chosŏn royalty and used by the local population, soak bathing was not

²⁹⁷ Ryōshū Kōji, *Chōsen zakki*, 133, English translation retrieved from Helen J.S. Lee, “Voices of the ‘Colonialists,’ Voices of the ‘Immigrants’: ‘Korea’ in Japan’s Early Colonial Travel Narratives and Guides, 1894-1914,” *Japanese Language and Literature* 41, no. 1 (2007): 10.

²⁹⁸ Ryōshū Kōji, 14.

²⁹⁹ For the full account, see “*Kaishū no yokujō*,” in *Chōsen zakki*, 14-17.

the norm in daily washings.³⁰⁰ *Imwŏn kyŏngjeji* (Thoughts on Rural Life) written by a late Chosŏn scholar, Sŏ Yugu (1764-1845), records something called *yokpun* among its list of household tools, which is a large basin made from carving wood that resembled a soak tub.³⁰¹ But Cho Hyosun has noted that *yokpun* was probably possessed by a very small number of households, given the bathing customs of the era.³⁰² In addition, it is hard to see *yokpun* as a common household item in Chosŏn, given that *Imwŏn kyŏngjeji* itself was a compilation of Chinese methods and ways of life that Sŏ Yugu deemed applicable to Chosŏn in reforming rural elites.³⁰³ There was also seawater bathing, but along with *hanjŭng* and *onch'ŏn*, it was primarily a therapeutic measure to treat illnesses, less a regular routine of cleansing one's body.³⁰⁴

The absence of a soak-bathing culture, by no means, meant that late Chosŏn people did not wash themselves. Washing was considered an important daily routine for maintaining health and hygiene; it was just that washing did not take place in the form of soaking the body in a pool of water. Rather than soak bathing in the nude, partial bathing (*pubun mogyok*), with clothes not fully stripped, was the most common form of washing. In

³⁰⁰ See An Okhŭi, et al., "Yet munhŏn ūl t'onghae pon han'gugin ūi mogyok ūisik: Samguk sagi, Samguk yusa, Koryŏsa, Chosŏn wangjo sillok ūl chungsim ūro," *Han'guk saenghwal kwahak hoeji* 13, no. 2 (Apr. 2004): 304. Chosŏn royal families regularly visited hot springs to cure illnesses, most notably Onyang Hot Springs in South Ch'ungch'ŏng Province constructed by King Sejong. A king's visit to a hot springs region was a grand event, involving mass mobilization of labor, goods, government officials and their families. It was a great burden on the local community because the royal congregation stayed for at least a week to over 50 days at a time. See Kim Ilhwan, "Chosŏn sidae wangsil ūi onch'ŏn mogyokpŏp e taehan yŏn'gu," *Yŏksa wa silhak* 58 (Nov. 2015): 37-83.

³⁰¹ Sŏ, Yugu, "Sŏmyongji," in *Imwŏn kyŏngjeji* 22, 540, retrieved from Cho Hyosun, "Uri nara mogyok ūi p'ungsoksajŏk yŏn'gu," *Poksik* 16 (May 1991): 69.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Yŏm Chŏngsŏp, "Imwŏn kyŏngjeji ūi kusŏng kwa naeyong," *Nongŏpsa yŏn'gu* 8, no. 1 (June 2009): 6.

³⁰⁴ Sometimes, Chosŏn kings constructed these facilities as a public health measure to cure the sick. See Ku Hyŏnhŭi and O Chunho, "Chilbyŏng ch'iryŏ wa konggong ūiryŏ e hwaryong toen Chosŏn sidae mogyok yobŏp yŏn'gu," *Minjok munhwa* 40 (Dec. 2012): 286-90.

a typical aristocratic household, a wide variety of basins were in place that were shaped differently according to which body part was to be washed.³⁰⁵ The most frequently washed areas of the body were the face, hands, and feet.³⁰⁶ Cho Hyosun has suggested that Koreans washed their hair monthly in the Chosŏn era.³⁰⁷ Yet, her claim is without citation, and more importantly, that an ordinary person had a set routine each month to wash their hair in the late Chosŏn Dynasty seems inconceivable, especially in light of the irregular bathing activities of the Korean populace in the colonial era. More correct to presume, is that other than the daily cleansing of the face, hands, and feet, other body parts were washed irregularly. The routine of hair washing, if any, was likely reserved for the festive times, such as the New Year's, Tano, and Ch'usŏk.³⁰⁸

Hence, scholars have generally referred to the Chosŏn era (1392-1910) as a period in which there was an overall decline of bathing culture.³⁰⁹ The prevalence of partial bathing in the Chosŏn Dynasty has been attributed to Confucian ideology, which discouraged nudity in front of others, and was in sharp contrast to the more liberal bathing culture that had existed in Koryŏ Dynasty (918-1392), where there was even evidence of

³⁰⁵ Cho Hyosun, 68.

³⁰⁶ Kim Hyŏnjŏng, "Chosŏn sidae sean munhwa e taehan koch'al," *Tong Asia munhwa yŏn'gu* 65 (May 2016): 44.

³⁰⁷ Cho Hyosun, 71.

³⁰⁸ Kim Hyŏnjŏng, 44. Tano and Ch'usŏk are two major celebrations in Korean tradition. Tano is the fifth day of the fifth moon by the lunar calendar when people visited their ancestral graves, performed ceremonies and made prayers. Ch'usŏk ("Harvest Moon Festival") is the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month; a mid-Autumn celebration.

³⁰⁹ See e.g., Cho Hyosun, 67; Kim Hyŏnjŏng, 39. A study of *Chosŏn wangjo sillok* [Veritable records of the Chosŏn Dynasty] revealed a decline in the number instances that record bathing in late Chosŏn as compared to early and mid Chosŏn. See An Okhŭi, et al., 5.

mixed-sex bathing.³¹⁰ By late Chosŏn, a conservative culture dominated the aristocratic yangban, in which exposing one's body in front of others was perceived as indecent.³¹¹ Here, I say "late" Chosŏn because the earlier periods, when Confucianism was not so embedded in the aristocratic culture, probably maintained a more lax attitude toward nudity, continuing the Koryŏ norms. I also mention this as an "aristocratic" culture because it was they who adhered more strictly to Confucianism than the general populace.

To elaborate briefly on the latter point, Korean attitudes toward nudity was probably not uniform and varied across not only regions in late Chosŏn, but also determined by one's status in the Confucian social hierarchy. The bathing habits of premodern royalty and elites are better documented, but the prevalence of outdoor bathing by ordinary people in the colonial era suggest that premodern commoners had more liberal bathing habits than *yangban*.³¹² In addition, the early postcards of Chosŏn consumed by foreigners in the late nineteenth century feature Cheju women revealing their breasts after giving birth.³¹³ These factors suggest that the Confucian ban against nudity in front of others was not absolute or shared unilaterally by people across the peninsula. Nevertheless, Confucianism was the prevailing state ideology practiced by the societal elites in both the capital and rural regions. Hence it is hard not to imagine that the elite's conservative attitude toward nudity had a cultural force in shaping societal norms in Chosŏn.

³¹⁰ Kang Chunman, "Han'guk mogyok ūi yŏksa: Hongjewŏn mogyok esŏ tchimjilbang yŏl'pung kkaji," *Inmul kwa sasang* 116 (Dec. 2007): 153. See also, Cho Hyosun, 70.

³¹¹ Kim Hyŏnjŏng, 41-42.

³¹² While outdoor bathing would be a form of soaking the entire body in literal terms, it was not quite the "soak bath" conceptualized by Japanese bathers like Honma.

³¹³ Takekuni Tomoyasu, *Kankoku onsen monogatari: Nitchō mokuyoku bunka no kōryū wo tadotte*, 2004, trans. So Chaedu (Seoul: Nonhyŏng, 2006), 57.

Bathing in Late Nineteenth-Century Japan and the West

As Japanese entered the peninsula, Korean customs, such as partial washings using basins or steam baths, were deemed by the early colonialists as inadequate local practices that did not amount to bathing, a view that was subsequently maintained by the GJK. In Japan, a bathhouse culture had developed in the Edo period (1603-1868), in which, due to fire regulations, only societal elites were able to keep a heated bath in their homes, resulting in the need for public bathing facilities for the masses.³¹⁴ Thus, by the Meiji era (1868-1912), when Japanese like Honma came to the peninsula, soak bathing in public bathhouses were widespread in Japan, in addition to modern notions of hygiene derived from the West. It was also during the Edo period that wearing clothes in the bath was completely abandoned, and naked bathing became the norm.³¹⁵ Hence, along with the absence of soaking tubs in the peninsula, the washing activities of late-Chosŏn Koreans with their clothes on, may have strengthened the early Japanese visitors' convictions that Koreans did not bathe.

In eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century United States, the notion of cleanliness was virtually nonexistent. In 1850, more than four out of five Americans "lived in preindustrial, hygienically primitive situations on small farms or in country villages," where while sanitation was "not unknown, the great majority felt no urgency about cleaning up."³¹⁶ As a scholar put it, Americans were "dreadfully dirty": "If and when teeth were brushed, it was with table salt and a chewed twig," and "pungent odors could be found everywhere" in

³¹⁴ Scott Clark, *Japan, A View from the Bath* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 29.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

³¹⁶ Suellen M. Hoy, *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4.

large cities.³¹⁷ But industrialization, urbanization, and the development of modern water pipes and the sewage system from the 1820s, gave rise to a concern of diseases and a heightened interest in personal hygiene among the bourgeoisie. From then on, the urban middle class began to stress cleanliness as a way to distinguish themselves from the lower class and the countrified.³¹⁸ For people with running water inside their homes, they washed themselves either in the kitchen or on the back porch, and by 1850, pitchers, basins and slop jars were common fixtures in the bedrooms of middle class homes, but this was a small minority; in the 1860s, only about five percent of American homes had running water.³¹⁹ It was also from this era that urban dwellers began to view outdoor washing as “backward.”³²⁰

Thus, Americans who arrived in Korea from the 1870s, such as Horace Allen, were bringing their bourgeois notions of cleanliness. It may have shocked Allen to see Koreans on the boat, who were the highest elites of their society, not properly taking care of their bodies, since even while majority of Americans still had questionable hygienic practices at the time, it is likely that Allen expected the societal elites to be more conscious of sanitation, as that was the case in the United States. The perception of “dirty Koreans” expressed by Americans was also related to a widespread discourse in the American bourgeoisie, in which immigrants who were arriving in large numbers from the late nineteenth century were perceived as needing instructions of the “American manners and customs,” one of which

³¹⁷ Suellen M. Hoy, *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 5, 14.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5, 14.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

included proper bathing.³²¹ Most Americans considered the “unwashed” to be the millions of immigrants who were arriving from Europe in large numbers, and this generated a bathing campaign to “make them Americans,”³²² explaining why so many American missionaries took part in the bathing campaigns of the colonial era described in this chapter.

Taking all of this into consideration, we can infer the following. In the modern era, describing a person or a group as “unwashed” or “dirty” meant that they were inferior and backward. And this way of speaking about other cultures deemed “less civilized” seems to have been widespread. In other words, to say that a person was unwashed was the speaker expressing a cultural or societal superiority, which signified that the speaker was of a more civilized status than the person who was being described as filthy. Both the Japanese and Westerners who came to Korea engaged in this kind of expression when describing Koreans. In addition, the assumption underlying the belief that Koreans did not bathe, was that the proper form of washing one’s body was stripping down in the nude and entering a soak bath. The opening of the ports in 1876 was bringing in the idea that there was an exclusively correct way of washing the body. As I show below, the result was a hegemonic discourse centered on soak bathing, in which alternative washing practices, including the customs of late Chosŏn, became inferior methods that came to be perceived as unfit for modern life, and a hindrance to the practice of personal hygiene.

³²¹ Ibid., 89-90.

³²² Ibid.

A “Bathable” Chōsen: Early Settler Bathhouses

The absence of soak baths was a major challenge to the early settler community. As stated above, since the Japanese considered *nyūyoku* as the proper form of bathing, they came to form the stereotype that Koreans did not bathe and for those who did, the method was fraught with problems. For instance, an 1894 guidebook for Japanese soldiers explained that other than hot days when Koreans would go in the water, there was no custom of a warm tub bath, so the Japanese had to use kitchen bowls to wash themselves.³²³ Thus the colonialists’ dilemma was twofold. On the one hand, they watched aghast at the Korean washing habits, which they perceived, was highly inadequate and unsanitary. On the other, the Japanese realized that they themselves had no adequate place to bathe in the peninsula.

The latter concern was more pressing for the early settler community, as shown in the bathhouses regulations that appeared in the aftermath of Kanghwa Treaty (1876). In 1881, Japanese Minister in Pusan, Kondo Masuke (近虚眞勵, 1840-92), instructed bathhouse owners to build adequate outer walls so that nudity could properly be hidden from public view.³²⁴ He also ordered the separation of the men’s bathing area from that of women’s. The two orders were incorporated into the 1882 Pusan Port List of Minor Offenses against Police Regulation (*Pusankō ikei zaimoku*), at a time when there were 1,519

³²³ Kuribayashi Tsugihiko, *Jūgun hikkei Chōsen hitori annai* (Kumamoto: Shimomura Yukisada, 1894), 19-20.

³²⁴ Takekuni Tomoyasu, 66, 74.

Japanese in Pusan residing in 306 homes.³²⁵ In the 1890s, this developed into the Regulations Controlling Bathhouses (*Yuya torishimari kisoku*) containing 25 provisions.³²⁶ This suggests that Japanese bathhouses appeared quite early in the peninsula and were immediately regulated by the Japanese state.

The early bathhouse laws were direct imports of Meiji regulations. Japan's first modern bathhouse law was Tokyo's Regulations Controlling Bathhouses of 1879 (*Yuya torishimari kisoku*), which underwent several revisions to become Regulations Controlling Bathhouses and Bathhouse Businesses in 1920 (*Yokujō oyobi yokujō eigyō torishimari kisoku*) and further revised until 1942.³²⁷ Similar bathhouse laws appeared in other regions of Japan from the 1880s. Like their Meiji counterparts, the bathhouse regulation that governed the early-settler communities included registration requirements for bathhouse owners, separation of male and female bathing areas, instructions on cleaning, maintenance, fire prevention, and adequate screens protecting the entrance way and windows to conceal nudity from public view.³²⁸ As the provisions show, nudity was a main concern for Japan's newly modernizing state. And whereas mixed-sex bathing had been common in the Edo period, from the Meiji era, the state began to ban such activities in public bathhouses along

³²⁵ "Pusankō ikei zaimoku (promulgated Feb. 1882), in Takagi Sueyoshi, *Tokansha hikkei* (Pusan: Chōsen Sibōsha, 1897), 88-89. *Tokansha hikkei* was a publication providing information to the settler community on major laws such as treaties, Chosōn's domestic laws, and applicable Japanese laws that governed Japanese residing in Korea. The book is accessible online at Pusan Metropolitan Simin Municipal Library's website, in the ancient archive section (Korea-Japan diplomatic documents), accessed Aug. 28, 2017, <http://siminlib.koreanhistory.or.kr/help/help.jsp>.

³²⁶ "Yuya torishimari kisoku," in Takagi Sueyoshi, 117-9.

³²⁷ Kawabata Miki, "Yuya torishimari kisoku oyobi yuya eigyō torishimari kisoku ni kan suru kōsatsu," *Core Ethics* 2 (2006): 59-73. Kawabata's study focuses on the 1942 revision which excluded unsupervised mental patients from entering public bathhouses, but it is a nice overview of the bathhouse laws that developed in modern Japan.

³²⁸ "Yuya torishimari kisoku," in Takegi Sueyoshi, 117-9.

with nudity to prevent its populace from being perceived as barbaric by Westerners.³²⁹ These provisions were adopted into bathhouse regulations in the colonial era, and as I show later, the issue of nudity and mixed-sex bathing created many tensions in the colonial everyday bathing.

Japanese took further efforts to secure adequate bathing grounds for themselves by turning their attention to hot springs regions of the peninsula. In 1883, Japanese consul of Pusan, Maeda Kenkichi (前田獻吉, 1835-94), obtained permission to use Pusan's Tongnae Onch'ŏn by the Japanese Residents' Association of Pusan (Pusan Kyoryūmindan Yakusho) at a fee of 13 chŏn per entrance, which, in 1898, developed into a ten-year permit over Tongnae Onch'ŏn for use by the association for 25 yen a year.³³⁰ Subsequently, Tongnae attracted Japanese entrepreneurs who built inns (*ryokan*) and vacation homes in the area, giving the region a Japanese flavor. During the protectorate era (1905-10), a military bathhouse for Japanese soldiers was constructed in the Onyang Onch'ŏn located in South Ch'ungch'ŏng Province.³³¹ The Sanitation Bureau of the Protectorate's Home Ministry (Naibu eiseikyoku) also conducted a search across the peninsula for hot springs regions.³³² These efforts set the ground for subsequent development of the onch'ŏn industry in the colonial era.

The early expansion of bathing facilities aimed at creating a bathable Chosŏn for the

³²⁹ Pak Ch'an'gi, "Edo sidae ūi kihaneng munhak kwa onch'ŏn munhwa: Arima onch'ŏn ūl chungsim ūro," *Ilbon munhwa hakpo* 47 (Nov. 2010): 151; Takekuni Tomoyasu, 50.

³³⁰ Kim Sŭng, "Ilche kangjŏmgi haehang tosi Pusan ūi onch'ŏn kaebal kwa chiyŏk sahoe ūi tonghyang," *Chibangsa wa chibang munhwa* 14, no. 1 (May 2011): 212.

³³¹ Yu Changgŭn, "Singminji wisaeng sisŏl eso tagi'nŭng ūi saenghwal konggan ūro: Masan chiyŏk mogyokt'ang ūi 100-nyŏn yŏksa," *Kara munhwa* 27 (Dec. 2015): 56.

³³² *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, Sept. 24, 1908.

settler population. The influx of Japanese soldiers, merchants, government officials, and their families into the peninsula from 1876 meant that the Japanese had to conduct their everyday activities in a foreign land, including bathing. Hence, bathhouses began to appear in regions populated by the Japanese.³³³ These modern bathing facilities were not intended to sanitize Korean bodies, but to clean the Japanese bodies from the dirt, pollutions, and germs of the land that would become Japan's colony. Accordingly, the early bathhouse laws governed facilities that aimed at protecting the health and sanitation of the early settler community by monitoring bathhouses and placing them under state surveillance, less for the hygienic reform of the Korean populace. Inadvertently, however, these facilities attracted Korean bathers, causing problems for the settler bathers.

Bathing with Koreans: The Early Settler's Gaze

Japanese-owned bathhouses appeared in the capital Hansŏng (Seoul) as early as 1897, evidenced by an article in *The Independent*. It described a commotion involving a Japanese bathhouse near Supy'o Bridge, Ch'ŏnggye Stream and a Korean man named Kang Hakki.³³⁴ Kang had urinated inside the bathhouse and the outraged owner took him to the Consulate, demanding that he pay a penalty of 10 chŏn. This early episode suggests that Koreans were showing up in the Japanese bathhouses, creating uncomfortable cultural encounters. Settlers reacted with hostility to Korean bathers finding their bathing manners repugnant. In 1906, a Japanese reporter who visited a Chin'namp'o Hot Springs explained that he bathed at night to avoid bathing with Koreans:

³³³ A picture diary presumed to be from this era by an unknown Japanese traveler depicts drawings of Japanese bathing in Korea. See *Saishūtō ryokō nisshi*, seq. 30, 38, reproduced in Sun Joo Kim, ed., *Chejudo yŏhaeng ilchi* (Seoul: Minsogwŏn, 2016).

³³⁴ *Tongnip sinmun*, Jan. 14, 1897.

In order to show how filthy Koreans are we shall observe their behaviors at hot springs. They do not care to wash their hands after going to the toilet, nor do they wash themselves before jumping into the tub. What is more, they go as far as spitting in it. So actually there are spit and phlegm floating in the tub water. In addition, many of them urinate in the tub, and this is why the tub water smells... [W]e have to place Koreans in between pigs and humans because Koreans are like human animals that are close to pigs.³³⁵

Such early accounts suggest that the impression of the unhygienic Korean was widely shared among ordinary Japanese people. It also reflected the strong desire of the Japanese to keep the bathing activities of the two groups separate, which worked to challenge the bathing campaign in the colonial era. Helen J.S. Lee has noted that the idea that Japan carried the burden of enlightening Koreans was prevalent even among poor Japanese immigrants.³³⁶ Yet, it was clear from early on that the Japanese residents wanted to carry this burden from afar, with enough physical distance from the “appalling odor” of the man who wore the A-frame carrier (*chige*) as observed by a poor Japanese immigrant in 1914 and from the Korean bodies “full of lice” as a Japanese housewife would later remark in 1933.³³⁷

Thus, the colonial gaze on bathing had two contradictory components. Japan had the burden of bringing civilized bathing to the peninsula. Yet, it was imperative that Korean bathing remained segregated from that of the Japanese. In some respects, Korean bathing had to remain filthy and infrequent so that the Japanese need not share their bathing facilities. In a 1909 guidebook, *Tokan no susume* [Recommendations When Going to Korea], the writer Samura Hachirō (佐村八郎, 1865-1914) noted that Japanese bathhouse owners

³³⁵ Shiozaki Seigetsu, *Saishin no hankandō* (Osaka: Aoki Sūzandō, 1906), 114, English translation retrieved from Helen J.S. Lee, “Voices of the ‘Colonialists,’ Voices of the ‘Immigrants’”: 16-17.

³³⁶ Helen J.S. Lee: 29.

³³⁷ Jun Uchida, “A Sentimental Journey: Mapping the Interior Frontier of Japanese Settlers in Colonial Korea,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 70, no. 3 (2011): 711; Helen J.S. Lee: 26.

typically separated the soaking area of Korean customers from that of the Japanese, suggesting actual physical segregation of the two groups was being practiced by early settler bathhouses.³³⁸

Hence, Japan's colonial policy of civic assimilation via hygienic campaigns had inherent limitations, not only because of its ultimate aim to protect the settler community as argued by Todd Henry,³³⁹ but also because from early on, settlers expressed a strong desire to segregate what they perceived were unhygienic washing habits of the Koreans from the sanitary acts performed by the Japanese. Settlers struggled to preserve their *naichi* bathing habits, while protecting themselves from what they perceived was a "contaminated" colony. Such attitudes worked to create tensions in the bathing campaign subsequently enacted in the colonial era, where settlers continued to maintain the dual attitude of perceiving Koreans as filthy and in need of a good soak bath, but preferably away from where the Japanese bathed. In a 1920 publication, *Mansen ryokō annai* [Manchuria and Korea Travel Guide], the writer Kanaoka Sukekurō (金岡助九郎, 1875-1947) explained that it was only with Japanese influence that Koreans began soak bathing, under a subheading titled, "Chōsen that does not bathe" (*Mokuyoku senu Chōsen*).³⁴⁰ Likewise, the GJK emphasized the unique Chōsen custom of non-bathing, which served to justify its moral suasion campaign for bathing reform.³⁴¹ Yet, in the instances where the bathing campaign succeeded in "molding" a Korean mind to accept the Japanese way of soak bathing, there

³³⁸ Samura Hachirō, *Tokan no susume* (Tokyo: Rakuseisha, 1909), retrieved from Takekuni, 77-78.

³³⁹ Todd A. Henry, "Civic Assimilation: Sanitary Life in Neighborhood Keijō," in *Assimilating Seoul: Japanese Rule and the Politics of Public Space in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 130-67.

³⁴⁰ Kanaoka Sukekurō, *Mansen ryokō annai* (Osaka: Shinshindō Shoten, 1920), 274.

³⁴¹ See e.g., Chōsen Sōtokufu, ed., *Chōsen no fukusō* (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1927), 113-16.

was the problem of Korean infiltration into the Japanese bathhouse. Thus, within the colonialists' calls for the moral suasion of Korean bathing, was a perverse reluctance to admit Korean bathers into their realm, and a strong desire to keep Korean bathing away from the "cultured" bathing of the settlers.

2. Bathing as Business and Entertainment: The Peninsula's Hot Springs

Bathing as Business

Japanese settlers' efforts to create a "bathable Chōsen" continued into the colonial era. In 1910, it was reported that Seoul had 23 bathhouses of Japanese ownership, with 93 employees. The GGK responded by promulgating the Regulation Controlling Bathhouse Businesses (*Yuya eigyō torishimari kisoku*) of 1911, which contained 16 provisions that placed bathhouses under direct supervision of the police.³⁴² All bathhouses had to be registered with the police and were subject to police monitoring for proper hygienic maintenance, public morals, and theft. The regulation gave detailed structural guidelines, such as requiring a locker in the dressing rooms, shielding the interior from public view, and separating the dressing and bathing areas between men and women. It also provided different cleaning instructions for various areas that constituted a bathhouse facility. Mixed-sex bathing was forbidden, unless it involved children under the age of ten (later revised to the age of twelve). And the law permitted bathhouses to be open until midnight.

The regulation forbade specific acts, such as loud singing or boisterous acts in the bathhouses, illustrating a modernizing state's attempt to discipline daily behaviors of its subjects. Entry by people who required assistance, both young and old, was prohibited

³⁴² Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 367 (Nov. 16, 1911). The regulation was revised in 1912 and in 1914 with additional requirements in the bathhouse structure, maintenance of the facilities, and process for obtaining police permit.

without the presence of their caregivers. And people with infectious diseases and other illnesses that the public would “find detestable” were banned from entering bathhouses.³⁴³ It also required bathhouses to establish associations, which later became a channel for bathhouse owners to collectively oppose reduction of entrance fees imposed by the police.³⁴⁴ Thus, the regulation aimed at disciplining unruly bathing by the populace and provided a ground for state intervention. The provisions also suggest that the bathhouse laws were enacted, less for the purpose of imposing hygiene on the colonized, but more to monitor the business activities of entrepreneurs who were mostly settlers, and to place them under police surveillance.

The state’s supervision of bathing business was timely. The settler’s agenda shifted from their initial aim of creating a “bathable Chōsen” for themselves in the late nineteenth century to see bathing as a potential means of profit by extending the bathing enterprise to the “unbathed” Korean masses. In 1909, Samura Hachirō, who had observed the segregation of Korean and Japanese bathers practiced by settler owners, remarked that “If more Koreans were let into the Japanese bathhouses, they would make a huge profit... Even if a fraction of Koreans bathed nightly, Keijō would need 30 to 50 bathhouses [to accommodate them].”³⁴⁵

Bathing as Entertainment: Korea’s Hot Springs

In this setting, began the colonial project of developing Korean hot springs. The expansion of bathing facilities in the colonial era often began in the hot springs regions. By

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ See e.g., *Tonga ilbo*, June 5, 1921.

³⁴⁵ Samura Hachirō, *Tokan no susume*, retrieved from Takekuni (2006), 77-78.

1918, the GGK's Sanitation Bureau had located 51 hot springs across the peninsula.³⁴⁶ Between 1909 and 1940, about 40 companies were engaged in hot spring (onch'ŏn)-related businesses, most of which were owned by the Japanese.³⁴⁷ But many Korean entrepreneurs joined the venture as well. The hot springs were viewed as ideal places for investment and quickly grew into major sites of tourism and leisure, especially with the development of railroads.³⁴⁸ Famous sites included Tongnae Onch'ŏn, which the South Manchurian Railroad Company (SMR) purchased from the Tongnae Magistrate (*kunsu*) in 1922, Yusŏng On'chŏn, jointly developed by the SMR and Kim Kapsun (1872-1961), a Korean capitalist, and Onyang Onch'ŏn, which had been under Japanese control from the Protectorate era.³⁴⁹

The justification for developing Korea's hot springs regions was given in the form of a civilizing mission; a means to bestow modern bathing on the Korean populace. In 1924, a Kyōto Imperial University geologist and former GGK official named Nakamura Shintarō (中村新太郎, 1881-1941) remarked, "The Koreans are a race that does not soak the body. Except for those who live in cities, it is normal for them to live their entire life without entering a tub. They merely wash their hair and face, or in the summer time, remove debris and sweat in the river."³⁵⁰ He further explained that *hanjŭng* was the only form of bathing, which he described in English as a "mud-sweating room," but even this was practiced only for curing illnesses. It was only in the past decade that more "adequate" bathing facilities

³⁴⁶ *Maeil sinbo*, Jan. 12, 1929; *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 24, 1929. For a list of the hot springs regions, see Nakamura Shintarō, "Chōsen no onsen," *Chikyū* 2, no. 1 (July 1, 1924): 139-41.

³⁴⁷ Han Kyōngsu, "Uri nara onch'ŏn mit onch'ŏnyok ūi yŏksa," *Kwan'gwang yŏn'gu* 27, no. 5 (Jan. 2012): 581.

³⁴⁸ Kim Sŭng, 218-23.

³⁴⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 14, 1922; Mar. 11, 1923.

³⁵⁰ Nakamura Shintarō, "Chōsen no onsen," 132.

were available, constructed by the Japanese.³⁵¹ Nakamura concluded that the development of the 50 onsen regions was necessary for the Korean people who had not been able to enjoy them until now, due to the failed politics of the Chosŏn state.³⁵²

Thus, one rationale behind the colonial onsen project was the moral suasion of the Korean populace. To a certain extent, this was successful, as the development of various hot springs regions enticed the Korean populace to bathe. The large numbers of visitors convey this. In 1931, it was reported that Sinch'ŏn Onch'ŏn in Hwanghae Province attracted 150,000 visitors annually.³⁵³ Songhwa Onch'ŏn, another hot springs in Hwanghae Province had 39,868 men and 24,022 women (total of 64,000) visitors in 1932.³⁵⁴ In 1930, 160,000 people visited Tongnae On'chŏn, with Tongnae's public bathhouse which was a popular site for Korean bathers, attracted 100,000 customers annually; a large number considering the fact that the population of Pusan at the time was 130,000.³⁵⁵

The hot springs regions also became major sites for leisure and tourism among the Korean populace, with group tourism especially popular. In 1921, Taejŏn Public Commercial and Technical School students stopped by Yusŏng Onch'ŏn before visiting Kyerong Mountain.³⁵⁶ And Korean mass publications regularly recruited readers for onch'ŏn trips, indicating their popularity.³⁵⁷ Likewise, the GGK advertised discounted roundtrip tickets to

³⁵¹ Ibid., 133.

³⁵² Ibid., 134.

³⁵³ *Chungang ilbo*, Apr. 3, 1932.

³⁵⁴ *Chosŏn chungang ilbo*, Oct. 21, 1933.

³⁵⁵ Kim Sŭng, 203. For visitor numbers of other hot springs regions, see Han Kyŏngsu, 579.

³⁵⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, May 11, 1921.

³⁵⁷ Han Kyŏngsu, 578.

Tongnae Onch'ŏn in its official gazette.³⁵⁸ It was not uncommon to find tickets to the hot springs sold as a package with railroad tickets and offered at a discounted price to attract interested travelers.

These regions were managed under separate laws called the Regulations Controlling Hot Spring Zones (*Onsen chiku torishimari kisoku*), which were promulgated by the provincial governor.³⁵⁹ This opened the way for locals to exercise a certain degree of power in voicing their views in the development and management of the onch'ŏn, a point also revealed by Kim Sŭng in his study of the dispute surrounding mineral water distribution in Tongnae.³⁶⁰ Hot springs regions were contested sites between Korean localities and developers (both Korean and Japanese) as they competed for the distribution rights of mineral water. Even if large companies such as the SMR ended up taking over, it is not hard to imagine that local communities nevertheless profited from the large number of tourists that came to the region for onch'ŏn.

Indeed, the on'chŏn districts provided many amenities, including restaurants, gardens, hotels, and *yŏgwan* (inns), as well as public bathhouses, swimming pools, and even a golf facility in the case of Haeundae Onch'ŏn.³⁶¹ The abundance of available bathing facilities can be discerned by Tongnae Onch'ŏn, which in 1919 had eight soaking tubs and

³⁵⁸ Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 0406 (May 9, 1928).

³⁵⁹ See e.g., Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 2399 (Aug. 9, 1920), which provides for the Regulation promulgated by the governor of South Kyōngsang Province, which was later revised in 1930 (*Pusan ilbo*, Sept. 18, 1930). For the Regulation promulgated for Hwanghae Province, see Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 3309 (Aug. 21, 1923). Like the Bathhouse Regulations, the enacted laws were enforced by the police, and required a permit from the governor for excavation works.

³⁶⁰ Kim Sŭng, 244-53.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 234.

22 washing areas.³⁶² The hot springs regions also offered all sorts of recreation; from concerts, sumo wrestling matches, cherry blossom festivals, and *kisaeng* (Korean female entertainers equivalent to the Japanese *geisha*) to traditional swing (*kŭne*) contests and archery. These were typically sponsored by the township and its residents, newspapers, and railroad companies.³⁶³ The onch'ŏn districts had a festive element to them and the variety of entertainment available suggests that they were not mere hygienic facilities that solely existed for the purpose of cleansing the body.

Tensions in the Onsen Waters

Having said this, the onsen developments also exposed the dark side of colonial modernity. Despite the framing of the hot springs development as a benevolent gesture to provide modern bathing opportunities for the Korean populace as stated by individuals like Nakamura, the prime motive in developing Korea's hot springs regions was to allow the Japanese to use and enjoy them.³⁶⁴ This is evident in the early "seizures" of the hot springs by the Japanese military, settler associations, and entrepreneurs in the protectorate era, as well as the Japanese-style luxury resorts that were constructed in the onch'ŏn regions during the colonial period. In the mid 1930s, the Haeundae Onch'ŏn featured a 1.6 acre garden, a railroad sponsored hotel, swimming pool, and a golf course which were visited by the Japanese imperial family and Governor Generals Ugaki Kazushige (宇垣一成, 1868-1956)

³⁶² Ibid., 213.

³⁶³ Han Kyŏngsu, 580; Kim Sŭng, 234.

³⁶⁴ Nakamura Shintarō, "Chōsen no onsen": 132.

and Minami Jirō (南次郎, 1874-1955).³⁶⁵ By receiving prominent visitors from the *naichi* and the colonial government, the on'chōn regions served as leisure sites for the ruling elites of colonial society and the Japanese empire at large.

This included the Korean upper class. Pak Yōnghyo (1861-1939) and Song Pyōngjun's (1857-1925) vacation homes were located near Haeundae On'chōn.³⁶⁶ But above all, this is exemplified by Yun Ch'ihō (1864-1945), who was a hot springs enthusiast. His journal entries reveal that he visited an onch'ōn almost once a month, especially Onyang Onch'ōn because it was close to his parents' graveyard.³⁶⁷ A typical trip began early in the morning from his Kyōngsōng home.³⁶⁸ He got on a train and arrived at the hot springs, took a bath, and returned home generally on the same day. It is noteworthy that his bathing trips did not stop in wartime but persisted nearly until the end of the colonial era, with the last entry of a bathing trip recorded in 1943.³⁶⁹ This suggests that wartime did not entirely obstruct leisurely bathing activities of the upper class in colonial Korea, at least not until the very last years of war.

³⁶⁵ Kim Sūng, 234.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 216.

³⁶⁷ Yun Ch'ihō, *Yun Ch'ihō ilgi*, vol. 11 (Sept. 24, 1939), in *Han'guk saryo ch'ongsō* 19 (Seoul: Kuksa P'yōnch'an Wiwōnhoe, 1973-1989).

³⁶⁸ Yun Ch'ihō may have had other homes, but in general, two are known; one in Kaesōng (Koryō-dong in Songdo township), where he was found dead in 1945, and the other in Kyōngsōng (Kyōnji-dong, Chongno). See *Chosōn ilbo*, Dec. 8, 1945, and *Tonga ilbo*, Jan. 11, 1930. Here, I say Yun's trip to the hot springs began from his home in Kyōngsōng because while it is not mentioned explicitly in his diary, he wrote in 1919 that he watched Emperor Kojong's funeral, and several newspaper articles from the colonial period indicate that he resided in Kyōngsōng, including one episode, in which an insane woman allegedly visited his home, posing as someone he knew. See *Tonga ilbo*, Jan. 11, 1930; May 10, 1933. His Seoul home no longer exists, and we do not know what happened to his home in Kaesōng, as it is in North Korea. In the colonial period, his Kyōngsōng address was Kyōnji-dong 68, which in the 1980s was Kyōnji-dong 46, in Chongno, where his son was living. See *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 29, 1924 and *Kyōnghyang sinmun*, Sept. 30, 1980. For more information on the present-day location of Yun's Seoul residence, see "Hwangsōng sinmun yet t'ō rül ch'ajasō" [Searching for the vestige of *Imperial Gazetteer*], *Sin tonga* (Dec. 2003).

³⁶⁹ Ibid., (Sept. 27, 1943).

Yun's diary reveals several tensions in the colonial onch'ŏn regions, which are worth mentioning. Although the hot springs areas attracted both Korean and Japanese developers as shown in Han Kyŏngsu's study, the takeovers by the Japanese were met with much resentment.³⁷⁰ On the takeover of Onyang Onch'ŏn, Yun Ch'ihŏ wrote in 1921 that this whole area had been royal property with 53 cottages named after 53 magistrates because when the king visited, magistrates of 53 counties came to serve his needs.³⁷¹ He expressed disbelief that the entire property was sold to the Japanese in the protectorate era for the trifling sum of 20,000 yen by three Koreans:

The rascals would no doubt excuse themselves for the dirty transaction by saying that the Hot Springs would have been seized by the omnivorous Government General anyway and that they had therefore sold really a Japanese property and not a Korean royal estate. "If I didn't do it some other rascal would have done so" has been the most popular and convenient formula of justification of those Koreans who have sold out every natural and political right in Korea... The "Palace" has become a Japanese inn. As a railroad is being built to connect this Spring with the main Pusan-Seoul line, this little village is bound to become a great resort of the Japanese.³⁷²

This diary entry also reveals that even when the hot springs were open to all, Koreans (and probably the Japanese) seemed to know which facilities were intended to accommodate settlers, a point also revealed by Korean newspaper discussions. On the progress of Sinch'ŏn Hot Springs which were undergoing development in 1923, *Tonga ilbo* explained that "Korean public bathhouses" (*Chosŏnin ūi kongdong yokchang*) were to be "distinctly" (*sŏnmyŏng*) constructed, along with "Korean inns" (*Chosŏnin yŏgwan*).³⁷³ Here, the "Korean" bathhouses and inns may have meant a facility for Korean customers or

³⁷⁰ Han Kyŏngsu, 581.

³⁷¹ Yun Ch'ihŏ, *Yun Ch'ihŏ ilgi*, vol. 8 (Feb. 26, 1921). Although this particular entry does not explicitly state it is Onyang Onch'ŏn that he is referring to, this can be inferred by the entry from the previous day, where he states that he visited his father's grave. See *Ibid.*, vol. 8 (Feb. 25, 1921).

³⁷² *Ibid.*, vol. 8 (Feb. 26, 1921). See also, a later that laments on how in Korea, lands and homes were seized by the Japanese without any compensation to the owners. *Ibid.*, vol. 8 (Mar. 26, 1921).

³⁷³ *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 29, 1923.

alternatively, a facility owned by a Korean person. Whatever it was, this tacit understanding that distinguished Korean facilities worked to segregate the bathing activities of the Korean masses from that of the settlers and the Korean upper class.

This is reflected in the number of people who used the Tongnae Public Bathhouse, which was under Korean management. In 1930, there were a total of 2,138 Japanese bathers (1,159 male and 979 female), while the number was 101,988 for Koreans (63,448 male and 38,540 female).³⁷⁴ Out of the 104,126 people who visited the bathhouse in 1930, only 2 percent (2,138 persons) were Japanese and 98 percent (101,988 persons) were Korean. Further, despite the activities of Korean entrepreneurs in the bathing industry, their numbers should not be overestimated. In 1927, it was reported that among the 60 or so bathhouses of Kyōngsōng, only five or six had Korean ownership.³⁷⁵ The rest were owned by the Japanese. Another factor that worked to separate the Korean and Japanese bathers was that some of the settler-owned bathhouses charged higher fees. In Sinch'ōn Hot Springs, a settler-owned bathhouse charged an entrance fee of 7 chōn, which was higher than the 3 chōn charged by a nearby Korean public bathhouse.³⁷⁶ This is not surprising, as the Japanese bathing facilities were typically run by a *ryokan*, which were generally more upscale than the public bathhouses frequented by Koreans.

Kim Sūng has argued that in general, Japanese-owned facilities were far superior in quality than the bathhouses run by Koreans, especially in the quality of water, a point also

³⁷⁴ Kim Sūng, 227.

³⁷⁵ “Hyōndae chinjigōp chōllamhoe: ttaekkuk ūro mōkko sanūn saram” [Exhibit of today’s rare occupations: persons who make a living by soiled water], *Pyōlgōn’gon* 3 (Jan. 1, 1927): 53.

³⁷⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, June 29, 1926.

noted by Yun Ch'ihō.³⁷⁷ The novelist Yi Kwangsu's (1892-1950) 1924 description of a bathhouse in the Japanese-run Tongnae Hotel reveals an exquisite facility that had imitation marble flooring and clean water in the tubs.³⁷⁸ This was in direct contrast with the situation in a Korean-owned Tongnae public bathhouse observed in 1925 by Im Wŏn'gŭn (1899-1963), a member of the communist organization Hwayohoe (Tuesday Society), who was visiting this region as part of his work for the Chosŏn Famine Relief Association (Chosŏn Kigŭn Kujehoe). He expressed shock at the lukewarm, filthy water of the Korean-owned public bathhouse which, by the evening, emitted a foul odor.³⁷⁹

Kim Sŭng has also pointed out that the majority of Koreans who came to Tongnae Onch'ŏn were probably locals who bathed in the public bathhouses run by Koreans, not outside tourists who visited for leisure, as it was only those with enough wealth and time who could enjoy a leisurely and costly bath in the hot springs.³⁸⁰ Given Yun Ch'ihō's diary entries recording his onch'ŏn trips to various regions across the peninsula, this was probably the case, a point I will return to later. For now, I turn to the public bathhouses which were constructed as part of *kyōka* and populated by Korean bathers.

³⁷⁷ Kim Sŭng, 223-26; Yun Ch'ihō, vol. 9 (Dec. 25, 1928).

³⁷⁸ Yi Kwangsu (Ch'un Wŏn), "Kyŏngsangdohaeng" [Trip to Kyŏngsang Province], *Kaebŷŏk* 53 (1924): 59-60, retrieved from Kim Sŭng, 223-24.

³⁷⁹ Im Wŏn'gŭn, "Yŏngnam chibang sunhoe p'yŏn'gam" [Brief impressions of touring the Kyŏngsang region], *Kaebŷŏk* 64 (1925): 67, retrieved from Kim Sŭng: 224-25.

³⁸⁰ Kim Sŭng, 229.

3. Publicizing Privacy: Social Management of Korean Bodies in Colonial Bathhouses

Bathing and the Hygienic Campaign

Colonial bathhouses appeared as part of the state-led moral suasion campaign that aimed at encouraging Koreans to soak bath. This in turn, was part of a larger campaign for hygienic reform. Calls for modern hygiene had been initiated by the Chosŏn state in the Taehan Empire (1897-1910), but from 1905, the Japanese took over and escalated it into a full-scale project of cleansing the peninsula and its people.³⁸¹ The peninsula-wide survey of Korean customs conducted in 1914 by the Sanitation Bureaus of thirteen Provincial Police Headquarters (Keimusho), mobilizing 5,572 hygienic policemen (2,344 Japanese and 3,228 Korean), affirmed the belief that Koreans maintained highly unsanitary customs in their everyday lives driven by local superstitions.³⁸²

Hygienic campaign was a form of social management that aimed at penetrating directly into the personal realms of the populace at large. For the first time in Korean history, people were constantly bombarded by institutional and informal preachings on how important it was to stay free of germs.³⁸³ Hygiene seemed applicable to every sector of society—from schools, office buildings, streets and public areas to kitchens, toilets, bedrooms, and underneath one’s clothes—which made possible for it to be a very invasive ideology.

In essence, the bathing campaign was a private variety of the hygienic campaign. In

³⁸¹ For hygienic campaigns of the protectorate era, see Todd A. Henry, “Sanitizing Empire: Japanese Articulations of Korean Otherness and the Construction of Early Seoul, 1905-1919,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 64, no. 3 (2005): 639-75. For hygienic campaigns in the colonial era, see Todd Henry, *Assimilating Seoul*.

³⁸² Chōsen Sōtokufu, ed., *Chōsen Sōtokufu shisei nenpō*, no. 5 (1918), 370.

³⁸³ The hygienic campaign was not limited to colonial Korea, but was part of a larger project pursued by the Japanese empire. See Ha Seborg, “Kukka ūi kyemong kwa yuhok: Osaka wisaeng pangnamhoe (1926-nyŏn) ro ponŭn kŭndae tongasia pangnamhoe esŏ ūi sinch’e,” *Tongyang sahak yŏn’gu* 99 (June 2007): 311-45.

conjunction with the middle class, the colonial state showered the Korean populace with detailed instructions on how they should perform the act of bathing as part of their regular routine in the everyday life. The project aimed at reaching one of the most intimate acts performed by the colonial subject; the cleansing of one's body. In this respect, the bathing campaign was a very intrusive form of *kyōka*.

Bathing through the Education System

In the bathing campaign, the primary role played by the colonial state was the construction of bathing facilities and compelling bathing in official institutions; most notably, the school system. The Japanese Resident General (T'onggambu) and the GGK published moral culture textbooks (*sushinsō*) for elementary schools, which instructed schoolchildren to bathe and wash their hair.³⁸⁴ Schools were convenient sites to initiate the bathing campaigns, as it was possible for teachers to monitor each student daily to ensure that they kept in line with the sanitary measures promulgated by the state.

There is evidence that some of the schools physically compelled students to bathe once they arrived at school. A 1924 article alerting school parents to the list of supplies that were needed for the new semester included 30 *chōn* (0.3 yen) for five baths (6 *chōn* each).³⁸⁵ This generated resistance from Korean families. In 1921, a parent complained that a private school (name unknown) was forcing male and female students to bathe at school, charging 3 *chōn* per student.³⁸⁶ The school had punished students who refused, saying they had already bathed at home. The parent threatened to send their child elsewhere; worried

³⁸⁴ Kim Sunjōn and Chōng Chumi, "Chosōn ch'ongdokpu py'ōnch'an 'pot'ong hakkyo susinsō' e nat'an'an 'sinch'ejōk kyuyul,'" *Ilbonō munhak* 33 (June 2007): 352-53.

³⁸⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 11, 1924.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1921.

that forced bathing in the middle of December would lead the child to come down with an illness. The episode also suggests that it was not only the public schools that enforced bathing, but also the private schools that engaged in bathing their students.

Eventually, student bathing in the education system became a common sight, especially in schools with dormitories and private schools established by missionaries which typically had a separate bathing site.³⁸⁷ For the schools that lacked a bathing facility, the teachers led student groups to nearby lakes and streams to bathe.³⁸⁸ The acceptance of school bathing by Korean students and their parents was partly because of the moral suasion campaign led by Korean reformists who stood by the GgK's bathing campaign by distributing the notion that clean bodies were desirable. This will be discussed in detail in the following section, but for now, it suffices to point out that in 1928, Korean newspapers were urging schoolteachers to instruct their pupils on proper manners in the bathhouse.³⁸⁹ Yet, even as school bathing became the norm, resistance to the bathing campaign in the education system persisted. In 1930, it was reported that despite a school's offer for higher scores for students who bathed, some of the children remained unconvinced and their bodies stayed unwashed.³⁹⁰

While the school bathing campaign continued into the wartime, with the city of Kyōngsōng's ambitious announcement in 1940 that it would construct bathhouses in every public elementary school to foster healthy children, its wartime context should not be

³⁸⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 16, 1928.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Aug. 24, 1923.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 13, 1928.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1930.

overestimated.³⁹¹ As the above shows, school bathing occurred well before wartime mobilization; hence, the school bathhouses were not unique wartime developments designed solely to mobilize Korean bodies for war. Bathhouse constructions of the wartime were not anything new or different from the earlier bathhouses of the 1920s and 30s constructed by the GGK as part of *shakai jigyo*, which I explain below.

Public Bathhouses

Outside the school system, the GGK was constructing public bathhouses across the peninsula for Koreans as part of *shakai jigyo*. Much of this occurred between the 1920s and 30s, beginning with urban regions and eventually reaching rural areas where there was a conspicuous shortage of bathing facilities. In the mid-1920s, it was reported that Taegu, Ch'ongjŏng, P'yŏngyang, Ŭiju, Tongnae, and Kunsan had public bathhouses.³⁹² In 1933, the list expanded as follows: South Chŏlla Province (Kunsan), South Kyŏngsang Province (Tongnae, Chinhae), South Hwanghae Province (Paekch'ŏn, P'yŏngsan, Masan, Songhwa, An'ak, Sinch'ŏn, Talch'ŏn, and Samch'ŏn), South P'yŏng'an Province (P'yŏngyang), North Py'ŏng'an Province (Ŭiju), and Kangwŏn Province (Kangnŭng, Yanggu).³⁹³ Typically, the GGK funded the construction and depended on the entrance fees for its maintenance.³⁹⁴ By 1937, the GGK's survey of 720,675 villages across the peninsula revealed that 483 public

³⁹¹ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 12, 1940.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, July 1, 1921; Feb. 14, 1922; Dec. 24, 1925.

³⁹³ Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, *Chōsen no shakai jigyo* (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1933): 82-3, and *Chōsen shakai jigyo yōran* (Keijō: Sōtokufu, 1933), 88-95.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, *Chōsen no shakai jigyo*, 82-3.

bathhouses were in place with 63 bathhouses in the colonial capital.³⁹⁵

The construction of bathhouses in non-urban regions was in effect, an overlap of the bathing campaign with the Rural Revitalization Campaign.³⁹⁶ In 1927, the GGK explained that while public bathhouses were more common in urban regions due to the settlers' influence, there were still short in number.³⁹⁷ And in nonurban regions, the problem was much worse because bathing was virtually nonexistent. Given the early development of bathing facilities in cities like Pusan and Keijō, it was probably true that the lack of bathhouses in the countryside reflected the relative absence of Japanese settlers in those regions.

According to the profiles of 16 public bathhouses provided by the GGK in 1933, the numbers of daily visitors were as follows.³⁹⁸ The Yanggu Youth Association Bathhouse (Kangwŏn Province) built in 1929 had a low number of three bathers a day. Bathhouses that had 60 to 90 visitors per day included the cities Ŭiju (70 people) in North P'yŏng'an Province, Ongjin (61 people), Masan (61 people), and Shinch'ŏn (93 people) in Hwanghae Province. As expected, the bathhouses with the largest number of daily visitors were those located near a hot springs region or major cities. The Kunsan Public Bathhouse located in Meiji-machi (constructed in 1923) had 190 bathers a day, Tongnae-ŭp Public Bathhouse (constructed in 1922) 332 daily, a P'yŏngyang bathhouse had 210, and Taegu's Public

³⁹⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 3, 1937 and Oct. 29, 1937.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Mar. 30, 1936 and Apr. 3, 1936.

³⁹⁷ Chōsen Sōtokufu, ed., *Chōsen no fukusō*, 113-16.

³⁹⁸ For the bathhouses and their visitor numbers discussed in this paragraph, see Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, *Chōsen shakai jigyō yōran*, 88-95. The publication has detailed fact sheets on each of the bathhouses, including their location, date of construction, management, entrance fees, daily visitors, land and building sizes, as well as opening and closing times.

Bathhouse a daily average of 600.

Generally, the facilities were run and managed by the township. Entrance fees were between 3 and 6 chŏn (0.03 and 0.06 yen) for adults, 1 to 3 chŏn for minors (usually age 3 to 14), which was also the standard in the colonial capital.³⁹⁹ The bathhouses in Ch'angsŏng and Ŭiju were unique in that they had a separate fee of 7 chŏn for a one-time woman's hair wash.⁴⁰⁰ In addition, the facilities located in the hot springs regions had special rates for family soak tubs (*kazokuyu*). A bathhouse in Sinch'ŏn Hot Springs charged an adult 10 chŏn (instead of the normal 3 chŏn) and a minor 2 chŏn (rather than the usual 1 chŏn) to use the family soak tub. The facility run by Paekch'ŏn Hot Springs Association had something called a "special rate," which charged 30 to 40 chŏn, which was five, six times higher than the normal rate for adults (6 chŏn). Some of the bathhouses offered day passes as in the case of P'yŏngsan bathhouse (5 chŏn for adults, 2 chŏn for minors), which was slightly higher than the one-time entrance fees (2 chŏn for adults and 1 chŏn for minors).⁴⁰¹

These findings suggest the wide range of different bathing experiences that were available in the peninsula. One's experience of bathing in a facility that offered a family soak tub would have been very different from the Youth Association Bathhouse that only attracted three bathers a day. Strictly speaking, not all bathhouses were "colonial hygienic facilities" per se; especially those that offered day passes or family soak tubs, indicating they had a leisurely element to them. And probably, the quality of the facilities varied greatly across bathhouses, a point previously made by Korean intellectuals on the qualitative difference of a bathhouse run by a Japanese *ryokan* as opposed to a local public bathhouse

³⁹⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 17, 1922.

⁴⁰⁰ Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, *Chōsen shakai jigyo yōran*, 88-95.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

in Tongnae.⁴⁰²

Even so, the bathhouses were colonial hygienic facilities in that they were part of the GGK's larger project of constructing modern sanitary facilities to eliminate undesirable Korean customs under the slogan of *seikatsu kaizen* (lifestyle improvement).⁴⁰³ Along with public bathhouses, the colonial state constructed public laundry sites and barbershops as part of its *kyōka* campaign.⁴⁰⁴ The barbershops were facilities that aimed at encouraging Koreans to shed their traditional topknot (*sangt'u*) and endorse modern hairstyles. The public laundry sites were established to discourage Koreans from bathing, washing clothes, and drawing drinking water in a single place, a very common practice that could be seen in local streams, rivers, or lakes.⁴⁰⁵ The GGK viewed this as a direct threat to public health. Accordingly, it prohibited clothes-washing activities in local waters, such as Ch'ōnggye Stream and established public laundry sites (*kongsŏl set'akchang*; *kōsetsu sentakujyō*).⁴⁰⁶ These were, in reality, outdoor areas with stoned floors, a water supply, and a sewage structure that enabled the draining of soiled water.⁴⁰⁷ But this was an attempt by the colonial state to separate the bathing and drinking activities from the clothes washing actions of the Korean populace.

⁴⁰² See Kim Sūng, 223-25.

⁴⁰³ Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, *Chōsen no shakai jigyō*, 82-83.

⁴⁰⁴ For detailed fact sheets on some of the barbershops and public laundry sites established in the colonial era, see Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, *Chōsen shakai jigyō yōran*, 96-105.

⁴⁰⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 9, 1931; See also, *Ibid.*, July 10, 1940.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 3, 1937.

⁴⁰⁷ The public laundry sites were called *kongdong set'akchang* (joint laundry sites) by Korean newspapers. See e.g., *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 24, 1922. For photos, see Chōsen Sōtokufu Gakumukyoku Shakaika, *Chōsen no shakai jigyō*, 82-83.

Compelled Bathing in Prison

I should briefly mention a colonial realm where the most forceful penetration of the colonial state in compelling Koreans to bathe probably took place: the prison. Here, 20 or 30 inmates were lined up and proceeded to bathe under the commands of the prison officer.⁴⁰⁸ They took off their clothes when the officer yelled, “*Datsui*” (strip), entered the tub when he yelled “*Nyūyoku*” (enter the bath), came out upon “*Dero*” (out), finished washing up upon “*Senmen*” (wash), and stopped all action when they heard “*Yame*” (stop).⁴⁰⁹

In this respect, prison bathing epitomized top-down, colonial hygienic governmentality, bodily discipline, and Japan’s success in its making of docile imperial subjects; all of which are put forth by proponents of Foucault in characterizing Korea’s colonial era.⁴¹⁰ Yet, this theory rests on the assumption that the sanitation measures carried out by the GJK were truly “sanitary,” and that the hygienic campaigns were effective in cleaning Korean bodies. We now know forced bathing in schools did not succeed in washing all of the students, and the public bathing facilities established by the GJK had questionable sanitary conditions.

The situation was not too different in the colonial prisons. In 1920, 47 Korean nationalists arrested for their participation in the March First Movement, including Son Pyŏnghŭi (1861-1922), informed outsiders that they were compelled to bathe once every

⁴⁰⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 12 and 21, 1930.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1930.

⁴¹⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977). For scholarship that applies Foucault’s theory to the hygienic campaigns of the colonial era, see e.g., Yi Chongch’an, “Wisaeng ūi kŭndae: sahoejŏk mom e taehan t’ongch’i ūi sul,” *Inmun yŏn’gu* 51 (2006): 61-88.

five days.⁴¹¹ Female nationalist Hwang Aedök (1892-1971), who was imprisoned in Taegu for the so-called Korean Patriotic Women's Society Incident (Aeguk Puinhoe sakön) of 1919, stated that she bathed once a week, but only for three minutes each: "After 120 to 130 women were done bathing, what remained was muddy water. Bathing was what I despised the most in the world."⁴¹² Another nationalist, Yi Kang (1878-1964), expressed the discomfort he felt in P'yöngyang Prison: "There must have been many sick people but the only hygiene we had was bathing in filthy water for ten minutes once a week, without even a single wash bin in our cells."⁴¹³

Prisoners expressed disgust at the fact that they had to bathe in the polluted water, entering and exiting the tub at the whim of the prison officer's command.⁴¹⁴ The officer's mood determined the duration of the bath. If the officer had a bad day, he would yell, "Get out!" (*dero*) even before the prisoners had a chance to wet their bodies, a situation that an inmate referred to as a "thunder bath" (*pyörak mogyok*).⁴¹⁵ These testimonies indicate that the alleged "hygienic" facilities in the modern prisons devised by the GGK were not so hygienic after all; neither were they effective in subduing Korean bodies to be thoroughly cleansed. Colonial hygienic governmentality, even in its most repressive and intrusive form, could not generate immaculate, imperial bodies for empire.

⁴¹¹ *Tonga ilbo*, June 20, 1920.

⁴¹² "Kamok üi hwangt'osaek, Pusan, Taegu, Södaemun, Haeju, P'yöngyang" [Yellow earth color of prison, Pusan, Taegu, Södaemun, Haeju, P'yöngyang], *Tonggwang* 27 (Nov. 10, 1931): 48-49.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 12, 1930.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Evaluation of the GGG's Bathing Campaign

Some final observations can be made from the GGG's bathing campaign. First, although the campaign helped to mainstream the notion that soak bathing was the proper form of washing the body, the colonial bathing facilities worked to segregate the bathing activities of most Koreans from that of the Japanese. It also hints at the stratification within Korean society, something I emphasize in the discussions below. A study of the hot springs regions and public bathhouses reveals that whereas the luxury bathhouses were frequented by upper-class Koreans and settlers, the inferior public bathhouses constructed as part of the GGG's social work were reserved for the Korean masses.

Second, except for the situation in colonial prisons, it is noteworthy that unlike other hygienic campaigns of the colonial era, the state remained relatively out of the picture when it came to bathing. The bathing campaign stands out among the forceful vaccinations, compelled cleaning of public areas, and intrusions into Korean homes by the hygienic police.⁴¹⁶ It is true that the GGG constructed public bathhouses and employed the school system to spread bathing across the peninsula, but it let the system go from there. In general, the population was left to bathe voluntarily. Even in the forced bathing in the education system, schools came up with their own ways to encourage students to bathe, which varied

⁴¹⁶ Todd Henry has noted that the hygienic campaigns in Korea were much more intrusive and oppressive than its counterparts in Japan, due to the everyday practices of Koreans "stealing public bathroom doors, uprooting roadside trees, and refusing to pay the burdensome sanitation fee... which [led to] more forceful hygienic impositions." See Henry, "Sanitizing Empire": 669. Likewise, novelist Cho Youngman (1909-1995) recalled the days when sanitary officers visited his home twice a year for home inspections and census surveys. From early in the morning, his family worked busily with brooms and mops until mid-day, when officers entered the home and observed each room. Cho explained that sometimes the officers made multiple visits in the same day, which only ended in the evening when they received a sticker stamped by the police (red in the spring and blue for fall). The worst, he recalled, were the Korean officers who were clearly assistants, but nevertheless managed to find the remote, dusty area which they ran their fingers across, and barked, "Why didn't you clean here?" He stated that Korean officers refused to hand over the sticker out of spite, until his grandfather angrily protested, which prompted the Japanese officer to hand over the sticker to a servant after a polite salutation, with "the flushed Korean assistant nearby." See Cho Yongman, *Kyōngsōng yahwa* (Seoul: Tosō Ch'ulp'an, 1992): 43-46.

to a great degree.

Perhaps state intrusion into bathing was greatest in the colonial prisons. But even there, it was evident that the authorities could not demand the level of sanitation that modernity required, to a point where the Korean prisoners did not feel sufficiently cleansed by the baths. Neither did it meet the standards in Japanese commentaries that repeatedly remarked on the “Chōsen that does not bathe,” which was all supposed to change once Japan “bestowed” civilized bathing on the peninsula.⁴¹⁷

4. Bathing as *Kyōka*: Middle-class Endorsement of Bathing and the Elitism Within

Oh, how I wish I could plunge into a big tub of cool water and have a thorough bath to my hearts' content! Happy Japanese! They beat any people under heaven in bathing facilities.

Diary of Yun Ch'ihō (July 14, 1892)⁴¹⁸

Early Calls for Bathing Reform within Korea

In the colonial bathing campaign, specific instructions on what to do and what not to do when washing one's body was a task largely left to the middle class. This included civic organizations led by missionaries and Japanese religious groups, as well as the Korean middle and upper classes, who joined the reformist activities of the civic organizations and spread knowledge about bathing in mass publications. In many respects, the Koreans' instruction of their populace in the *kyōka* campaign was much more intrusive than that of the colonial state, and their criticism of Korean bathing much harsher than those of the Japanese.

But it was not from the colonial era that Koreans endorsed the modernization of

⁴¹⁷ See e.g., Kanaoka Sukekurō, *Mansen ryokō annai*, 274.

⁴¹⁸ Yun Ch'ihō, *Yun Ch'ihō ilgi*, vol. 2 (July 14, 1892).

Korean bathing. It began much earlier, during Korea's internal quest for modern hygiene in late Chosŏn, before the Japanese-led hygienic campaigns of the protectorate era. The Kabo Reforms (1894) established a Sanitation Bureau (Wisaengguk) in the Home Office (Naemu amun), Korea's first administrative organ that dealt with modern hygiene which operated until the Taehan Empire.⁴¹⁹ The Sanitation Bureau divided its task into public hygiene, medicine, and cholera prevention, which were all enforced by the hygienic police. Records suggest that in 1896, the Sanitation Bureau provided several large bathing facilities for indigent people in Hansŏng.⁴²⁰

Whether they resembled the modern bathhouses is unclear. It may have been the case that they were *hanjŭng* (steam bath) structures that earlier Chosŏn kings provided to the public to cure diseased populations.⁴²¹ In 1901, a bathing facility was remodeled into a *hanjŭng*, so this is a possibility.⁴²² Given that a settler-owned bathhouse existed in the capital in 1897, however, it is also probable that the bathing facility was modeled after the Japanese soak baths.⁴²³ For certain, the facilities made available by the Sanitation Bureau in 1896 were distinctively modern, signifying the state's endorsement of modern hygiene, with the belief that sanitation led to national strength.

By this time, Korean leaders had traveled abroad and witnessed the bathing

⁴¹⁹ Chŏng Kŭnsik, "Singminji wisaeng kyŏngch'al ūi hyŏngsŏng kwa pyŏnhwa, kŭrigo yusan- singminji t'ongch'isŏng ūi sigak esŏ," *Sahoe wa yŏksa* 90 (2011): 224.

⁴²⁰ *Tongnip sinmun*, June 27, 1896.

⁴²¹ Throughout his reign, King Sejong (reign 1418-1450) authorized the construction of seawater bathing facilities for the sick. In 1425, when Sŏnggyun'gwan (Confucian Academy) students became ill with eczema, King Sejong constructed ondol (traditional Korean floor heating) and bathing facilities in the students' residences. He also permitted commoners to enter certain grounds of Onyang Hot Springs. See Ku Hyŏnhŭi and O Chunho, 286-90. See also, Kim Ilhwan, 114.

⁴²² *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, Aug. 27, 1901.

⁴²³ *Tongnip sinmun*, Jan. 14, 1897.

customs of the outside world. In 1888, Pak Yŏnghyo wrote a memorial to King Kojong during his exile and recommended the construction of bathhouses so that the people could stay free from dirt and contagious diseases.⁴²⁴ The memorial also urged the king that public areas needed to be cleaned, since foreigners were ridiculing the piles of dust, urine, and human excrements that looked plated on the royal palaces, roads, cities, and gutters.⁴²⁵ During this period, Yun Ch'ihŏ's diary marveled at the Japanese bathing culture that he had experienced earlier and lamented the unsanitary washing habits of Koreans.⁴²⁶ An 1896 article from Sŏ Chaep'il's (1864-1951) newspaper, *The Independent*, recommended bathing once every two days to cleanse the body and prevent disease.⁴²⁷ Obviously, this recommendation was stating an unattainable ideal of the modern, given the frequency (or precisely, the lack of frequency) of Korean bathing even later in the colonial era. Nevertheless, bathing reform was undoubtedly on the minds of early Korean reformists. They equated bathing with civilization, as shown by an article from *The Independent* which stated that one could "estimate the grade of civilization of any people by the amount of water they use."⁴²⁸

⁴²⁴ Pak Yŏnghyo, "Naejŏng kaehyŏk ūl wihan kŏnbaeksŏ" (Memorial to the throne), Feb. 24, 1888, trans. Kim Kapch'ŏn, "Pak Yŏnghyo ūi kŏnbaekso: naejŏng kaehyŏk e taehan 1888-nyŏn ūi sangsomun," *Han'guk chŏngch'i yŏn'gu* 2 (1990): 273. Pak Yŏnghyo's 1888 memorial was originally published in Gaimushō, ed., *Nihon gaikō bunsho* 21: 10 (Chōsenkoku kankei zakken no. 106) (Tokyo: Nihon Kokusai Kyōkai, 1936-63).

⁴²⁵ Pak Yŏnghyo, "Naejŏng kaehyŏk ūl wihan kŏnbaeksŏ," trans. Kim Kapch'ŏn, "Pak Yŏnghyo ūi kŏnbaekso": 271-72.

⁴²⁶ Yun Ch'ihŏ, *Yun Ch'ihŏ ilgi*, vol. 2 (July 14, 1892).

⁴²⁷ *Tongnip sinmun*, June 27, 1896.

⁴²⁸ *The Independent* [English edition], Apr 30, 1896, retrieved from Sonja Myung Kim, "Contesting Bodies: Managing Population, Birthing, and Medicine in Korea, 1876-1945," (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2008), 48.

From Confucianism to Bathhouses for “Noble Men” and Mixed-sex Bathing

Advertisements featuring new bathing facilities also began to appear in Korean newspapers from the late nineteenth century. In 1898, Suwöllu Restaurant (owner Yi Sijik) advertised its grand opening near Kwangt’ong Bridge, Ch’önggye Stream for a week in *Maeil sinmun* (Daily News).⁴²⁹ This was one of the early newspapers in the Korean vernacular script (*han’gŭl*), revealing that the advertisement targeted the Korean audience. It stated that the restaurant offered Korean and Western dishes, a variety of alcohol beverages, as well as a clean, quiet dwelling in the back with a bathing facility for “noble men” (*kunja*). This was an early indicator that even when Korean elites like Pak Yönghyo and those later in the colonial era spoke of bathing reform, the actual access to modern bathing came in the form of entertainment and leisure for the aristocracy. The bathhouses frequented by former *yangban* diverged greatly from the bathing experienced by the masses. This division within the Korean populace was evident even before the development of colonial bathhouses and hot springs regions, contributing to the diversification of bathing experiences in the colonial era.

The advent of bathhouses targeting the Korean aristocracy also signified a mental shift from the conservative Confucian ideology of covering the body to a more liberal attitude that embraced the idea of revealing one’s body in public to bathe with strangers. The private act of bathing could now be carried out in public with commercial prospects for interested businessmen. This shift in attitude probably began with the advent of settler bathhouses in the peninsula, as well as the travels abroad where Korean elites witnessed public bathhouses. In 1888, Yun Ch’iho had even bathed with women in one of Tokyo’s

⁴²⁹ *Maeil sinmun*, Aug. 23-30, 1898.

mixed-sex bathhouses. In 1893, he reminisced, “In Tokyo at least, the partition wall between the male and female apartments in a bathhouse is by far more complete than even five years ago. I remember having bathed in one apartment with women.”⁴³⁰ Hence, merely a year after Horace N. Allen expressed horror at the unwashed bodies of the Korean legation to North America, Yun Ch’iho had been exposed to Japan’s mixed-sex bathing.

A deeper look into the mental transition of a Korean *yangban* is possible by examining Yun’s diary entry a few days after when he visited Nagasaki:

“In a bathhouse I saw a pretty young woman in her alluring nudity. The indifference with which a Japanese can look upon such sight is due to his vice rather than his virtue. He is indifferent not because he can easily control his passion but because he can easily gratify it. For any desire that we have power to gratify anywhere and anytime never gets violent. But the nudity of pretty women which we witness in bathhouses and elsewhere in Japan is certainly a trying temptation to one upon whose passion a social or especially religious check is laid. All honor to the young Japanese Christians who can go through these fiery trials unhurt!”⁴³¹

It seems that Yun was receptive to the idea of mixed-sex bathing, despite his *yangban* status, as well as his new identity as a Christian convert. But not all Korean elites shared his openness and some found the open nudity of the Japanese repulsive. In a 1919 March First Independence document of Han’guk Ch’inhoe (League of the Friends of Korea), a society organized by Sŏ Chaep’il in Philadelphia, Korean nationalists complained that Japan’s annexation caused moral degradation in Korea with the arrival of mixed-sex public bathhouses, “a serious threat to Korea’s norms on virtue and chastity and would have a negative impact on growing generations.”⁴³²

The comment on mixed-sex bathing is interesting, since as previously mentioned,

⁴³⁰ Yun Ch’iho, *Yun Ch’iho ilgi*, vol. 3 (Nov. 1, 1893).

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, (Nov. 12, 1893).

⁴³² Philadelphia Han’guk T’ongsinbu and Han’guk Ch’inhoe, “Han’guk ūi tongnip” (1919), in Kuksa p’yŏnch’an wiwŏnhoe, ed., *Taehan min’guk imsi chŏngbu charyojip* 18, kumi wiwŏnbu II, (Dec. 2007).

colonial bath laws explicitly banned it. Certain bathhouses may have permitted it, in defiance of the regulations. There was also the “family tubs” offered by some of the bathhouses which were, strictly speaking, a form of mixed-sex bathing. Alternatively, the nationalists may have been referring to bathhouses with inadequate structural divides between the male and female corridors. Or it may be the case that the document was referring to the bathhouse culture as a whole, where men and women entered the same premise to bathe, even if the corridors were divided between the sexes. Nonetheless, not all Korean elites found the imported bathing culture from Japan as enticing as Yun Ch’iho did, even after decades of exposure to public bathhouses in the peninsula.

Middle-Class Civic Groups in the Bathing Campaign

In the colonial period, the bathing campaign attracted the middle class, which worked in conjunction with the GGK to promote modern bathing in the peninsula. If the colonial state was in charge of constructing bathhouses and discovering Korea’s hot springs regions, it can be said that the middle class was in charge of educating the populace on the details of proper bathing, as well as making bathing more accessible to the public. In general, the middle class proponents of bathing reform consisted of three groups; organizations engaged in social work (*shakai jigyo*) which were mainly religious organizations, the Korean press, and the architectural community. These groups distributed information to the masses on bathing under the banner of promoting personal hygiene.

Civic organizations taking on social work typically targeted a specific group for moral suasion. In the bathing campaign, groups targeted included mothers and their children, laborers, mud-hut dwellers, and the poor. The Japanese religious group, Wakō Kyōen, for instance, constructed a laborer house in Chongno, which provided free bathing

once a week for workers who lived in mud huts.⁴³³ Local governments also provided bathhouses as a social welfare measure. In 1921, the City of P'yöngyang constructed a residence for 30 laborers next to a public bathhouse so that the workers could have easy access to a washing facility.⁴³⁴

Western missionaries joined in the venture, including the YMCA which opened its bathhouse to the public in 1919.⁴³⁵ The YMCA also established local YMCAs (Chibang Ch'öngnyönhoe) which promoted the reform of the Korean lifestyle and argued for the construction of bathhouses to further hygiene.⁴³⁶ From 1927, T'aehwa Women's Clinic (T'aehwa Yöjagwan), led by Elma T. Rosenberger (1884- 1968), American missionary and trained nurse, opened its bathhouse twice a week for a nominal fee to mothers visiting the clinic with their children for a physical examination.⁴³⁷ On these days, 30 to 40 children were bathed by their mothers under staff supervision, sometimes attracting 70 children on crowded days.⁴³⁸ The clinic also bathed the neighborhood's poor children for free once a week, which amounted to 800 children annually.⁴³⁹ Earlier in 1924, T'aehwa's staff

⁴³³ *Tonga ilbo*, May 15, 1923.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, 1921.

⁴³⁵ Yun Ch'ihö, *Yun Ch'ihö ilgi*, vol. 7 (Jan. 30, 1919).

⁴³⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, June 18, 1920.

⁴³⁷ Sonja Myung Kim, 217.

⁴³⁸ Ellasue C. Wagner, "The Center," *The Korea Mission Field* 23 (Feb. 1927), 60, retrieved from Hwang Misuk, "1920-nyöndae naehan yössänggyosa tül üi kongjung pogön wisaeng kwa yua pokchi säöp," *Han'guk kidokkyo sinhak nonch'ong* 103 (Jan. 2017): 129.

⁴³⁹ Ellasue C. Wagner, "The Center," *The Korea Mission Field* 23 (Mar. 1927), 49, retrieved from Hwang Misuk: 129; Yi Kkot-me and Kim Hwajung, "Ilche sidae söngyohoe üi pogön kanho säöp e taehan yöksajök yön'gu," *Chiyök sahoe kanho hakhoeji* 10, no. 2 (1999): 459.

members had made 290 visits to households and personally bathed infants.⁴⁴⁰

In 1929, T'aehwa expanded its bathing campaign in the colonial capital by forming Kyöngsöng Alliance Association for Child Sanitation (Kyöngsöng Yönhap Adong Pogönhoe).⁴⁴¹ The alliance was founded with the support of Rosenberger and consisted of the mother's clubs (*cha'mohoe*, called "Cradle Roll Club" by missionaries) of T'aehwa, East Gate Women's Hospital (Tongdaemun Puiin Pyöngwön), and Severance Hospital respectively, with Dr. Douglas Avison (1893-1952) as its director, a missionary pediatrician at Severance Hospital.⁴⁴² The three sites shared personnel and resources to provide free bathing to children and hold public bathing demonstrations for mothers.⁴⁴³ It was estimated that the association provided free bathing to 1,258 children in 1930 alone.⁴⁴⁴ In 1932, a total of 1,782 children received free baths and in the same year, the association visited a total of 752 homes to provide bathing demonstrations for free.⁴⁴⁵

The association was also known for holding baby contests throughout the colonial era, initiated by T'aehwa in 1924, to raise awareness on infant welfare, where "superior babies" (*uryanga*) received awards.⁴⁴⁶ The contests were highly popular from the

⁴⁴⁰ Elma T. Rosenberger, "Seoul Social Evangelistic Center," *Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* 27 (1925): 60, retrieved from Hwang Misuk, 129.

⁴⁴¹ The association also went by Kyöngsöng Yönhap Yönga Pogönhoe (Kyöngsöng Alliance Association for Infant Sanitation).

⁴⁴² Sonja Myung Kim, 217. In 1939, the alliance consisted of five nursery departments from T'aehwagwan, Tongdaemun, Kongdökchöng, Södaemun, and Wangsimni respectively. See *Tonga ilbo*, May 6, 1940.

⁴⁴³ The association held lectures on proper child-rearing, which provided all-day free dental inspections and bathing demonstrations for the attendees. See *Tonga ilbo*, May 4, 1935.

⁴⁴⁴ Kim Hyegyöng, "Ilche ha chanyö yangyuk kwa örinigi üi hyöngsöng 1920-30 nyönda," in Kim Chin'gyun and Chöng Künsik, eds., *Kündae chuch'e wa singminji kyuyul kwölyöök* (Seoul: Munhwa kwahaksa, 1997), 255.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ See e.g., *Tonga ilbo*, May 5, 1924; June 3, 1933; May 10, 1935; May 6, 1940. See also, Sonja Myung Kim, 216.

beginning. The 1924 contest held by T'aehwa unexpectedly attracted 500 children and their mothers, which created a commotion as any child who came was to receive a toy.⁴⁴⁷ T'aehwa had to purchase all of the toys from two toy stores to accommodate the visitors.⁴⁴⁸ Perhaps for this reason, from the subsequent year, the contest was only open to children who visited T'aehwa at least once a month. Five physicians from the GJK, Severance Hospital, and East Gate Women's Hospital formed a judge panel to examine every inch of the child's body, including whether the child drooled and how frequently the child bathed.⁴⁴⁹ In 1929, the mother of an award-recipient baby emphasized that it was the daily bathing that kept her baby healthy, in defiance of Korean traditional medical books that stated children younger than three should bathe less to stay healthy.⁴⁵⁰

Sonja Myung Kim has noted that free baths were especially common in missionary-led welfare programs as it could bring mothers and even older street children into contact with the staff, who then could visit their homes to evangelize.⁴⁵¹ Indeed, missionaries in other regions of the peninsula engaged in similar activities. In P'yŏngyang, there was Edith F. Gaylord, who led social work on child welfare, public health, and sanitation. She distributed thousands of material to the public on these matters and held lectures twice a week for mothers on child rearing, including the importance of bathing.⁴⁵² In Haeju, a missionary named Pearl B. Lund, opened a clinic in 1924, where she held baby-bathing demonstrations

⁴⁴⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, May 5, 1924.

⁴⁴⁸ Yi Kkot-me, et al. "Ilche sidae sŏn'gyohoe ūi pogŏn kanho saŏp e taehan yŏksajŏk yŏn'gu": 458.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Kim Hyegyŏng, 261.

⁴⁵¹ Sonja Myung Kim, 217. See footnote 31.

⁴⁵² Hwang Misuk, 135.

every morning to mothers.⁴⁵³ Once their baby became four-months old, these mothers in turn educated other mothers in the local *Cha'mohoe* for six months.⁴⁵⁴

While missionary-led, these civic organizations attracted middle-class Korean women who were newly educated as nurses. Most notable was Yi Kŭmjŏn (1900-90), a graduate of Ewha Girls' School trained at Severance Hospital and subsequently studied abroad in Canada, who then returned to Korea and worked closely with Rosenberger at T'aehwa.⁴⁵⁵ Likewise, the Korean mothers and their children who became involved were largely from the more affluent sector of Korean society. In 1927, *Tonga ilbo* remarked that the children who visited the clinics were of middle and upper class origins, and their mothers of the "educated class" (*yusik kyegŭp*) that held, at a minimum, a middle school diploma.⁴⁵⁶ Thus, the bathing campaign by civic groups was largely an endeavor by and for the upper stratum of Korean society, with few exceptions.

Housing Reform in the Bathing Campaign

The bathing campaign also attracted architects, such as Pak Kilryong (1898-1943) who took part in the construction of the GGK building, Kyŏngsŏng Imperial University and Hwasin Department Store, and artist Kim Yubang (Kim Ch'anyŏng, 1889-1960) who majored in Western painting at Tokyo Imperial University. They argued that Korean homes needed a separate bathing area, like Western and Japanese homes which retained separate

⁴⁵³ Ibid., 136.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Yi Kkot-me, "Han'guk chiyŏk sahoe kanho ūi sŏn'guja Yi Kŭmjŏn e kwanhan yŏksajŏk koch'al," *Chiyŏk sahoe kanho hakhoeji* 24, no. 1 (Mar. 2013): 78.

⁴⁵⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, May 22, 1927.

areas for the toilet and bathing.⁴⁵⁷ The expansion of the bathing campaign into the housing sector was not a novel development. Already in 1899, *Hwangsŏng sinmun* (Imperial Gazetteer) was remarking on European homes that had a separate area for bathing, an observation also made by Yu Kilchun (1856-1914) after his tour of Europe and North America.⁴⁵⁸ Such observations made by Korean elites on Western bathrooms should not be overestimated, however, since it is highly likely that they only interacted with the middle and upper classes of Western society, who showed them facilities more exquisite than the average. While the bathroom was becoming a common fixture in upper and middle class American homes, between the 1880s and 1900s, running water was by no means universal, and working-class households lived in old dwellings where it was physically and financially impossible to bring the bath into the home.⁴⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the bourgeois homes of Western society were described as the norm practiced in the West by Korean elites who returned to Korea.

In general, late nineteenth-century Korean homes lacked a discrete place for bathing. It was typical to wash one's body in the kitchen, next to a large pot of boiled water.⁴⁶⁰ So when the Japanese soldiers said they had to use kitchen bowls to wash themselves in 1894,

⁴⁵⁷ Chŏn Namil, et al., "Chugŏ nae paesŏl mit mogyok konggan ūi pyŏnch'ŏn kwa ilsang saenghwal e taehan misijŏk koch'al," *Han'guk chugŏ hakhoe nonmunjip* 18, no. 1 (Feb. 2007): 22. See also, Kim Yubang, "Uri ka sŏnt'aek hal sojut'aek, munhwa saenghwal kwa chut'aek" [Small housing that we will choose, cultured life and housing], *Kaebiyŏk* 34 (Apr. 1, 1923): 56-61.

⁴⁵⁸ *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, June 27, 1899; Yu Kilchun, *Sŏyu kyŏnmun*, 1895, trans. Hŏ Kyŏngjin (Seoul: Sŏhae Munjip, 2004), 319.

⁴⁵⁹ Alison K. Hoagland, "Introducing the Bathroom: Space and Change in Working-Class Homes," in *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 18, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 15, 18, 33.

⁴⁶⁰ Chŏn Namil, et al., "Chugŏ nae paesŏl mit mogyok konggan," 21.

they were adopting to local norms.⁴⁶¹ The situation in aristocratic households was no different. Usually, basins filled with water were delivered to the bedrooms by servants, affirmed in the oral history of Yi Kyusuk (1905-2006), a woman who married into a prominent *yangban* family in Pukch'on (North Village) of Kyöngsöng,⁴⁶² which was not out of the ordinary when compared to the West, in which it was common for the American bourgeoisie to keep pitchers, basins, and slop jars in their bedrooms in the 1850s.

The first wave of change came from former *chung'in*, upon the abolition of the status system in 1894. *Chung'in* (middle people) who were below the *yangban* aristocracy in the Confucian status system, began renovating their homes to flaunt their wealth. Construction of expansive, flashy homes was now possible for *chung'in*, as the abolition of the status system meant that they were no longer subject to the size restrictions in housing construction that had previously been enforced on non-*yangban*.⁴⁶³ Some of the *chung'in* boldly turned the household ancestral shrine area (*sadang*) into bathing places, a remarkable development which would have been unthinkable in the earlier Confucian world of Chosön.⁴⁶⁴ It also points to the great wealth being accumulated by merchants and others who were of lower status than *yangban* in the Confucian hierarchy. Yet, these were a minority; most Korean homes lacked separate bathing areas even in the colonial era.

Chön Namil has put forth an interesting proposition on why so many foreigners

⁴⁶¹ Kuribayashi Tsugihiko, *Jūgun hikkei Chōsen hitori annai*, 19-20.

⁴⁶² Yi Kyusuk and Kim Yōnok, *Yi 'Kyedong manim' i mögün yōdūnsal: pan'ga myōnūri Yi Kyusuk ūi han p'yōngsaeng* (Seoul: Ppuri Kip'ūn Namu, 1984), 90-91, retrieved from Cho Hyosun, 70. As the daughter-in-law of Min Hyōnggi, who served as director of Finance Bureau (T'akchibu) in the Taehan Empire, Yi Kyusuk was known during her life as "Kyedong manim" (Kyedong madam). Her residence in Pukch'on, where she lived in the colonial era after marrying into the Min family, is now home to Pukch'on Cultural Center and is representative of an affluent *yangban* residence.

⁴⁶³ Hong Hyōngok, *Han'guk chugōsa* (Seoul: Minūmsa, 1992), 278-79.

⁴⁶⁴ Chön Namil, et al., "Chugō nae paesöl mit mogyok konggan," 23.

commented on the “unsanitary” local homes of the peninsula, which relates to the inadequate spatial divides between various household activities.⁴⁶⁵ He noted that traditional Korean homes used the same heating system to cook and to warm the rooms. One had to heat the furnace (*agung’i*) to cook, which automatically turned the *ondol* (floor heating) on. Chŏn postulates that this probably generated an intolerable odor, especially in the summer time and created all sorts of problems relating to sanitation.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, architectural calls for housing reform intended at solving the inadequate spatial divisions of the traditional Korean household.

Accordingly, homes with separate bathing rooms began to appear in the colonial period.⁴⁶⁷ Bathing rooms could be found in the culture homes (*munhwa jut’aek*), which were ultra modern homes resembling Western suburban residencies discussed in the previous chapter, as well as in renovated *han’ok* (Korean traditional homes).⁴⁶⁸ These developments were limited to the upper class residencies, reflecting the stratification of homes according to the capitalist class structure.

The Yŏngdan Chut’aek is a case in point. Constructed in 1940, Yŏngdan Chut’aek was built to address the severe housing shortage that was pervading the colonial capital. The homes were meant to be distributed to Japanese government officials, as well as the Korean and Japanese middle and lower classes. The blueprint of the complex reveals five types of

⁴⁶⁵ Chŏn Namil, et al., *Han’guk chugŏ ūi sahoesa* (Seoul: Tolbegae, 2008), 73.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ I use “bathing room” as opposed to “bathroom” to avoid confusion with present-day connotations of the term “bathroom.”

⁴⁶⁸ Chŏn Namil, et al., *Han’guk chugŏ ūi sahoesa*, 102. See also, Se-Mi Oh, “Consuming the Modern: The Everyday in Colonial Seoul 1915-1937,” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2008), 125-33.

residencies to accommodate the diverse class background of the prospective residents.⁴⁶⁹ The three superior structures intended for Japanese government officials and the urban middle class had a separate toilet room and a separate bathing room, while the two lowest-grade homes lacked the baths. Rather, a shared public bathhouse was to be constructed for every 50 lower-grade homes. Thus, the availability of bathing facilities both in and outside the home depended largely on one's status in the capitalist structure. As the bathing campaign proceeded, bathing more people, act of bathing became a class marker that reflected one's wealth and social status in not only colonial Korea, but also in the ladder of civilization.

Mass Publications on Bathing and Elitism within Korean Reformism

Korean mass publications voiced their support for the bathing campaign. Sometimes, this appeared under the slogans of lifestyle reform (*saenghwal kaesŏn*) and national progress (*minjok palchŏn*). In 1924, *Tonga ilbo* recommended bathing at least once a week in the winter and twice a week in the summer to avoid ridicule by foreigners: "What would a foreigner say when he sees unbathed bodies smeared in dirt? He would think Koreans are a lazy bunch."⁴⁷⁰ Articles taught mothers how to bathe their children properly for national progress, while demanding more bathhouses to colonial authorities in order to accommodate the Korean populace.⁴⁷¹ A more cynical comment came from Yun Ch'ihŏ, a day before the March First Movement, when he had observed the funeral rehearsal for the late Emperor Kojong. He remarked on the "picturesque but childish" sight of the attire and

⁴⁶⁹ Chŏn Namil, et al., *Han'guk chugŏ ūi sahoesa*, 142-43.

⁴⁷⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, Jan. 1, 1924.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 18, 1921 and Sept. 4, 1925.

rituals, antique customs developed centuries ago when human society was at an infancy stage.⁴⁷² He then wrote, “How dare we speak about independence when we only crawl while our neighbors fly? We who can’t run a bathhouse talk about running a modern state!”

What was distinct about the civic promoters in the bathing campaign was that in contrast to the colonial government, they provided extremely detailed guidelines on how one should cleanse various parts of the body. This was especially true for the instructions provided by Korean newspapers.⁴⁷³ But the logic went beyond the simple rhetoric of sanitation and health, and involved societal pressure on the populace to bathe properly for the sake of etiquette and consideration for others. For instance, Korean women were instructed to wash their hair at least once a month and bathe even more often so as to prevent them from emitting foul odor on the trains and streets.⁴⁷⁴ It was not only the proper way of bathing that was being preached, something missionary organizations were doing. But the Korean reformist calls went further by using social pressure, saying that improper bathers would be ousted from the cultured norms of civilization. This was distinguishable from the GKG’s construction of bathhouses which in a sense maintained a certain distance. In contrast, the moral suasion by Korean reformists exerted a much more intrusive and coercive disciplinary power than that enacted by the colonial state.

In essence, Korean reformists were displaying their bourgeois norms. Again, I regretfully turn to Yun Ch’iho who probably did not expect his personal diary to be globally accessible decades later. His diary reveals the bathing routines of the Korean upper class, and is also suggestive of the elitism shared by proponents of bathing reform. For Yun, the

⁴⁷² Yun Ch’iho, *Yun Ch’iho ilgi*, vol. 7 (Feb. 28, 1919).

⁴⁷³ *Tonga ilbo*, Jan. 28, 1925 and Feb. 4, 1925.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, July 28, 1926.

early bathhouses in the capital were sites of disgust and filth. In 1906, he wrote, “In this city of 250,000 or more souls, there is only one bathhouse, the Haechuntang (Haech’önt’ang). The bathroom itself is badly kept, is so closely surrounded by filthy gutters, and W.C.s. that one feels worse after a bath than before.”⁴⁷⁵

It is unclear whether Yun had a bathtub in his home, but his diary reveals a startling number of days when he bathed, implying that bathing was routinized in his everyday life. In 1910s, Yun Ch’iho frequented the bathing facility of the YMCA and from 1920s and onward, he mainly resorted to visiting the various hot springs sites that were being developed in the peninsula.⁴⁷⁶ In later years, Yun also took advantage of numerous developments in the bathing enterprise, including something called an “electric bathhouse,” which he explained was a novelty in 1938.⁴⁷⁷ A Japanese bathhouse in Kyöngsöng called Sakura was home to the electric bathhouse, which allegedly had electricity pass through the water to cure rheumatism.

As he took advantage of the numerous bathhouses that developed in the colonial era, Yun Ch’iho also commented on the bathing conditions and habits of the Korean populace. In 1919, when Salvation Army was providing relief to homeless children in the form of clothing, food, and free baths, Yun wrote, “In a few days four boys ran away—one of whom was found dead by a dust bin! Last Sunday eight more ran away. Then children actually seem to prefer dust bin life to a comparatively comfortable home!”⁴⁷⁸ He displayed a similar attitude to the

⁴⁷⁵ Yun Ch’iho, *Yun Ch’iho ilgi*, vol. 6 (June 16, 1906).

⁴⁷⁶ For entries on Yun’s bathing in the 1910s, see e.g., *Yun Ch’iho ilgi*, vol. 7 (May 16, 1916; Jan. 30, 1919; Feb. 28, 1919; Apr. 15, 17, 22, 1919; May 17, 1919; June 17, 1919).

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 11 (Jan. 2 and 5, 1938; Feb. 20, 1938; May 25, 1938).

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 7 (Jan. 20, 1919).

Koreans at Onyang On'ch'ŏn. In 1925, he noted the rudeness of a Japanese ticket seller who ignored Yun's "polite salutations" and wrote, "I suppose they are so not only because they are the baser sort of the Japanese but because they associate or deal with the lowest grade of the Koreans here—who seem to be dirty, spiritless and lazy to an astonishing degree."⁴⁷⁹ Upon revisiting Onyang in 1928 which now had newly renovated facilities, Yun remarked, "Strange Japs allow really dirty looking Koreans go into this fine bath—I suppose they do it now as a piece of advertisement."⁴⁸⁰

Yun Ch'ihŏ was not alone in his view of the bathing habits of the Korean masses. Elites' distrust and repugnance for Korean's way of bathing was a conspicuous element in the moral suasion campaign for bathing. One major area of concern was the unruliness that Koreans displayed in public bathhouses. To the dismay of intellectuals writing for the press, Koreans fought with each other in the bathhouses, splashed water on other people's heads, did not close the entrance doors behind them in the winter, jumped into the tub without first washing their bodies, spit saliva and nasal discharges into the wooden basin that was for the common use, and washed their clothes in the tubs.⁴⁸¹ Some urinated inside the tub and scrubbed their bodies directly in the tub, while others would pour cold water in the heated tub, which *Tonga ilbo* explained were displayed by even the "more advanced classes of us, such as students of woman's high school."⁴⁸² These articles suggest that even middle-class status did not guarantee proper bathing manners; there seemed to be a fundamental problem with Koreans' way of bathing at large.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., vol. 8 (Mar. 25, 1921).

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., vol. 9 (Dec. 25, 1925).

⁴⁸¹ *Tonga ilbo*, May 15, 1926.

⁴⁸² Ibid., Jan. 13, 1928.

From the 1930s, this perception of unruly Koreans with unsanitary habits grew into a widespread fear that the public bathhouses carried germs.⁴⁸³ Articles expressly associated the unhygienic bathing habits of Koreans with the spread of germs in the bathhouses, displaying a striking resemblance in its logic to the early settlers' and Westerners' perception of unwashed Koreans.⁴⁸⁴ One article stated that 25,000 Koreans had died from an infectious disease in 1932 and lamented, "No other nation's bathhouses give the unpleasant feeling that Korean bathhouses do. Upon visiting, it feels like the body is soiled with debris and germs. It is not an exaggeration to say that public bathhouses and barbershops are breeding grounds for infectious germs."⁴⁸⁵ And sometimes, these fears materialized. In a Q&A article, a doctor advised a woman who showed signs of vaginal infection after a trip to the public bathhouse.⁴⁸⁶ The colonial hygienic facilities had become a threat to public health.

Korean newspapers blamed the unsanitary bathhouses on the Korean washing habits. Sometimes, they described the Japanese bathhouse discrimination against Koreans as justified. *Tonga ilbo* explained in horror that Korean families would collectively enter the soak tub and use soap to remove debris from their bodies inside the water, while simultaneously washing their clothes sitting in the tub.⁴⁸⁷ If a nearby bather objected, the Korean bather replied, "It is none of your business."

Although Todd Henry has described the Korean participation in the colonial

⁴⁸³ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 2, 1932.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1938.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1933.

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1932.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1934.

hygienic campaign as “cultural nationalism,” to characterize the Korean reformist calls primarily as form of nationalism is somewhat misconstrued, as suggested by above.⁴⁸⁸ First, not all who spoke of or practiced modern sanitation were nationalists. More accurately, they consisted of Korean intellectuals, such as novelists, journalists, and architects, as well as others forming the urban middle class, who were beneficiaries of the colonial education system, and engaged in modern occupations. Many who practiced modern bathing were also part of the affluent upper class, commonly with a *yangban* background, and enough wealth in the family to reenact and routinize the ideals of the modern life, such as frequent bathing with proper manners. Yun Ch’iho is a classic example. It is hard to see all of these individuals as a “nationalist.” Second, as the Korean newspaper discussions reveal, the calls for bathing reform were more elitist than nationalist. The scorn and the aversion toward what the middle class saw as the unruly and unhygienic bathing habits of the Korean masses was evident, and in some ways resembled the colonialist discourse.

Simply put, I do not believe that the Korean elites preaching for bathing reform identified with the Korean lower class or vice versa. The records from the colonial period affirm this. If the plea for bathing reform was any form of nationalism, it was one with a great disdain for the masses and their habits displayed in the public bathing realm. The elitist scorn was much more prominent in matters concerning Korean bathing, than in other ideas of the modern. While dirty public roads or even the poverty and misery of the mud-hut dwellers could be blamed on the GGK’s inadequate management of the peninsula, the unwashed bodies of Koreans could only be blamed on the actor that had failed to bathe his body. Korean middle-class writers did lament the dearth of bathing facilities for the Korean

⁴⁸⁸ Todd Henry, *Assimilating Seoul*, 155, 167.

population, especially in the rural regions, but more unbearable for the bourgeoisie was the undisciplined bathing of the populace which they had to personally encounter in their everyday life.

While this can be partly attributed to the class stratification upon colonial capitalist development, the elitist scorn toward Korean bathing also seemed to come from the premodern social norms that continued into the colonial era. As I stated in the earlier chapter, while the Confucian-based status system was formally abolished in 1894, there is evidence that it nevertheless continued in the minds of many Koreans.⁴⁸⁹ In his recollection of the colonial era, novelist Cho Yongman explained that the GJK's distribution of food and necessities in wartime probably helped to disintegrate the premodern status consciousness in Korean localities.⁴⁹⁰ He noted that Korean elites were extremely sensitive to family backgrounds and refused to mingle with people from non-*yangban* origins. Upon the food rationing of wartime, however, "aristocratic women had to line up with commoner women to receive the same proportions as the latter. In this context, it was impossible to maintain the pretense of a *yangban*," Cho explained.⁴⁹¹ Even in the post-liberation era, it was common for everyone in a given locality to know which household was the *yangbandaek* (*yangban* household).

Hence, Yun Ch'ih'o's contempt for the Korean masses and their ways of bathing may have been the continuation of the premodern disdain for those lower in the status system than oneself. Yun himself was the son of a concubine (*sŏŏl*), but one did not necessarily have

⁴⁸⁹ Kyung Moon Hwang, *Beyond Birth: Social Status in the Emergence of Modern Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 350.

⁴⁹⁰ Cho Yongman, *Kyŏngsŏng yahwa*, 241.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

to be from the most exalted *yangban* background to maintain a disdainful attitude toward lower status groups. In the colonial era, this status consciousness may have contributed to the frictions in public bathhouses, where everyone, regardless of their background, entered the same tub in the nude. Those who perceived themselves as higher in social status, whether by their aristocratic background or their capitalist class, may have found it repulsive to perform an intimate act of bathing with others who visibly looked unclean (which itself was relative, of course), displayed indecent manners in the public bathhouse, or were of a lower status than themselves. Further research is needed, but the bathing history hints at a Korean society with profound divisions and conflicts within the populace, with a complex interplay of social hierarchies and status consciousness, both modern and premodern. The following section reveals some of these tensions, as I explore additional deficiencies in colonial bathing, as well as actual bathing activities of the Korean populace to unfold more telling realities of how people actually bathed in the colonial period.

5. Tensions on the Ground: Bathing in the Everyday Realm of Colonial Korea

Bathhouse Shortage and Inadequate Facilities

One reason why Korean bathhouses faced challenges to its sanitation was because unlike the Japanese bathhouses that were commonly connected to the modern public waterworks built by the GGK, many Korean bathhouses lacked proper sewage and water was supplied manually.⁴⁹² This was attributed to the poor water quality in Korean bathhouses compared to the cleaner water supply in the Japanese bathhouses. A bathhouse in Kijang (Kyöngsang Province) was alleged to have cold water in the tub, and even that was

⁴⁹² *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 7, 1937.

“only filled to a person’s ankles.”⁴⁹³ Some bathhouses had trouble maintaining their facilities, such as the public bathhouse in Ch’ōngjōng, which had been constructed with fees collected from the locals.⁴⁹⁴ As a solution, the local government tried to collect a general bathing fee from the residents, regardless of their use of the facility, which caused a commotion.

Another problem was the sheer unavailability of bathing facilities for many Koreans across the peninsula. In Pu’an (Chōlla Province), it was reported in 1933 that six percent of its population went bathless for a whole year.⁴⁹⁵ In Chinyōng (Kyōngsang Province), which had 5,000 residents in 1,100 homes, there was no public bathing facility even in 1936.⁴⁹⁶ So residents had to go to Masan to access a bathhouse, which cost 60 to 70 chōn per trip. The bathhouses were also difficult to access for the lower class, a problem that continued until the end of the colonial era and beyond.⁴⁹⁷ To make up for the absence of facilities, some businesses constructed bathing facilities for their workers. In 1935, Taech’ang Fabric Factory built a bathing facility to accommodate 400 female laborers.⁴⁹⁸

Not all laborers were so fortunate. In 1924, 120 workers of a Masan cotton factory went on strike, demanding higher wages, retirement wages, and the construction of a bathhouse.⁴⁹⁹ In 1937, 600 workers from Haeju Chosōn Cement Company went on strike, in

⁴⁹³ *Tonga ilbo*, Dec. 27, 1925.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 14, 1922.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1933.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 26, 1936.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 11, 1940.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 23, 1935.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 10 and 13, 1924.

which they demanded among other things, a bathing facility.⁵⁰⁰ These reports are a telling indicator of the actual deficiencies on the ground. It was clear that not everyone had access to a bathing facility, even if the top-down bathing campaign succeeded in persuading some people to desire soak bathing more than before.

Bathing as Class Marker: General Perceptions of Elite Bathing

If the general populace lacked adequate access to the bathing facilities, what was their perception of the Korean elites that frequented the bathhouses, like Yun Ch'ihō? Sources suggest that even in regions with more facilities than others, not everyone had *regular* access to them but the most privileged. And the people were aware of this. In 1929, *Maeil sinbo* (Daily News) remarked, "At noon when the survival of the fittest is most intense, a person enters the bathhouse with a towel across his shoulder, it can be said that he is one of the luckiest bunch in Kyōngsōng."⁵⁰¹ The article was alluding to the fact that only those with enough fortune, who did not need to be earning wages in the middle of the day, could be seen sauntering into a bathhouse. A man named Pak Honggi, who had lived near Tongnae Hot Springs in the late 1930s, made a similar statement. He recalled that he often saw the Korean upper class taking leisurely strolls in their bathrobes and *geta* (Japanese slippers).⁵⁰² He explained that Korean elites were sometimes more welcomed than Japanese visitors in the Japanese lodgings, as they always left a generous tip. But Pak himself scoffed at their demeanor, which he perceived was a vulgar form of elitism.

The demeanor of Korean elites in the hot springs has been parodied in the Tongnae

⁵⁰⁰ Yu Changgŭn, "Singminji wisaeng sisŏl eso tagi'nŭng saenghwal konggan ũro," 65.

⁵⁰¹ *Maeil sinbo*, Jan. 7, 1929.

⁵⁰² Takekuni, 178.

Hallyang Dance, which was designated as an intangible cultural asset (no. 14) by Pusan City in 2005. Historically, the term “*hallyang*” was a military rank in the Chosŏn Dynasty, but by late Chosŏn, it referred to military men who were unemployed and regarded as having a semi-*yangban* status.⁵⁰³ However, the meaning changed in the subsequent eras to refer to a wealthy playboy from an aristocratic (*yangban*) background that spent most of his time in leisure and entertainment, without a clear occupation.⁵⁰⁴ The Tongnae Hallyang Dance depicts the flock of *hallyang* that came to bathe and play with *kisaeng* in Tongnae’s hot springs.

This dance is considered one of Korea’s “traditions” in present-day Korea, implying pre-colonial origins, hence the treatment as an intangible cultural asset. However, the dance seems to be an invented tradition with origins in the 1900s.⁵⁰⁵ The earliest dancers were born in the 1880s, who then transmitted the dance to Mun Changwŏn (1917-2012) and Kim Chinhong (1935-), both born in the colonial era.⁵⁰⁶ Thus, it can be surmised that the dance originated from Tongnae hot springs in the context of Japanese influence in the region from the 1900s and beyond, suggesting that the dance parodied aristocratic Koreans who leisurely visited Tongnae hot springs for entertainment in the modern era. This was in stark contrast to the majority of Koreans situated in less pleasant bathing conditions.

⁵⁰³ Sun Joo Kim, *Marginality and Subversion in Korea: The Hong Kyŏngnae Rebellion of 1812* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), 150 (footnote a).

⁵⁰⁴ Yun Yŏsuk, “Tongnae hallyang ch’um yŏn’gu,” *Muyong yesulhak yŏn’gu* 15 (Spring, 2005): 183.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 184-86.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.* Mun and Kim were given the title of intangible cultural asset for the Tongnae Hallyang Dance. See the electronic archive of Pusan Cultural Foundation, accessed Aug. 28, 2017, <http://e-archive.bscf.or.kr/main.php>.

Naked Tensions: Cross-cultural Encounters with Naked Settlers

If the discussion so far focused on the stratification *within* the Korean populace, I now revert to a topic mentioned earlier; namely, the tension between settler bathers and the Korean populace in the hot springs regions. Due to the bathing campaign, more Koreans entered settler bathhouses than the late Chosŏn era. These bathhouses quickly became sites of intense conflict between the settler community and the Korean locality. A major issue was the nudity displayed by the Japanese.⁵⁰⁷ In 1920, *Tonga ilbo* reported an incident that occurred in one of the settler bathhouses in Kyŏngsŏng, where a naked Japanese man suddenly burst into the women's zone.⁵⁰⁸ He considered the male bathing area as too crowded and the water too filthy, so decided to bathe in the women's zone, to the horror of bathing Korean women who promptly began screaming.

The article explained that naked Japanese were causing commotions elsewhere, near wells and public waterworks, where they did not hesitate to bathe in the nude to the terror of Korean women who had come to collect water. If a Korean reprimanded him, the Japanese retorted, "How dare you" [*nama iki*]. "It is hard to know whether this is because the Japanese are too civilized or because the barbaric customs of the pre-emperor years persist," the article remarked.⁵⁰⁹ This was a witty comment that depicted whom the writer perceived was a "barbaric" colonialist shamelessly full of himself in the nude, while flaunting his higher status in the colonial hierarchy along with his private parts.

Strictly speaking, bathing outdoors nude was illegal. In addition to the bathhouse regulation that required adequate structures to conceal nudity from public view, there was

⁵⁰⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, July 30, 1923.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, June 21, 1920.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

the 1912 Regulation on Police Punishment of Minor Offenses (*Keisatsu hanshobatsu*), which explicitly forbade nudity in public.⁵¹⁰ These two laws signified the modern distinction between acceptable forms of nudity, such as those in the public bathhouses for hygienic maintenance of one's body, as opposed to the intolerable nudity displayed outdoors. For the Japanese state, the former was encouraged, while the latter was perceived as unruly and vulgar in need of disciplining.

Yet, these colonial laws did not seem to be effective in controlling the unruly, naked settlers who popped up in various regions of the peninsula to bathe outdoors. Naked Japanese appeared even in South Ch'olla Kurye County, where a Japanese teacher from Kwang'ŭi Elementary School was notorious for appearing naked every morning at the streams, where he would offend Korean housewives who came to collect water.⁵¹¹ When reported to the police, he responded audaciously that it was nobody's business and that he was free to bathe nude.

Some expressed concern that the settlers' receptivity to nudity was tainting Koreans who associated with the Japanese. At a mineral spring in Ch'ungju, it was alleged that a group of men joined hundreds of women who were bathing at the site. One of them included a Korean man named Yi Chonggŭn. The article that reported this incident, remarked, "Could it be something he learned from his friends?"⁵¹² This may have been an unintended consequence of the bathing campaign. As more Koreans became receptive to the idea of soak bathing in the nude, more naked Koreans began to appear in outdoor regions to bathe.

⁵¹⁰ For the bathhouse regulation, see Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 367 (Nov. 16, 1911). For the Regulation of Minor Offenses, see *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 470 (Mar. 25, 1912).

⁵¹¹ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 5, 1924.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, Aug. 30, 1925.

In particular, the Taedong River was famous site for women nudity, where it one could see young, Korean females soaking their uncovered bodies in water.⁵¹³

Naked Tensions: Settler Bathhouse Discrimination and Violent Encounters

In the colonial bathhouses, theft was a common problem.⁵¹⁴ But by far, the biggest problem was discrimination by settler bathhouse owners. This was especially acute in the 1920s; an irony, given that this was the more liberal era of Cultural Rule. Minami Yonekura-chō (present-day Namch'ang-dong) in Kyōngsōng was notorious for having settler bathhouses that discriminated against Koreans.⁵¹⁵ If a Korean tried to enter, the owner would block him, saying “Yōbo san wa ikenai” [No Koreans].⁵¹⁶ “Yōbo san” was a derogatory term referring to Koreans, which combined “yōbo” (Hello in Korean) with “san,” an honorific term in Japanese meaning “sir or madam.” *Tonga ilbo* noted that those who wore *geta* (Japanese slippers) did not get such treatment, no matter how stained or ragged their apparel.⁵¹⁷

Discrimination by settler bathhouse owners could be found in other regions of the peninsula and was very conspicuous. In Taejōn, a Japanese bathhouse in the Yusōng Hot Springs had two bathing rooms; one with a door plate that said “men” and the other that said “Korean.”⁵¹⁸ The former offered beverages, while the latter did not. Another bathhouse

⁵¹³ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 29, 1926.

⁵¹⁴ See e.g., *Tonga ilbo*, June 17, 1928 and July 4, 1928.

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 22, 1922.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Aug. 12, 1921.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Aug. 31, 1921.

in Taejŏn had a doorplate which stated that Koreans could only enter after 8 p.m.⁵¹⁹ Time restriction was a common policy of discrimination advanced by settler owners, so that Japanese customers could bathe in the clean water first, before Koreans entered.

It seems that police intervention was minimal or ineffective. In P'yŏngyang, when a Japanese owner kicked a Korean man out of the bathhouse upon discovering his ethnicity, refunding the paid entrance fee, police said they would promptly address the issue of settler discrimination in bathhouses.⁵²⁰ But the problem continued. Sometimes, the police sided with the settler owner. When a Korean youth destroyed the doorplate of a Taejŏn bathhouse which said, "Koreans enter from 10 p.m.," he was beaten by the owner and other settlers who were in the bathhouse. When the police arrived at the scene, they let the owner go free, but charged the Korean youth with anti-Japanese activity, and demanded a written apology.⁵²¹

The problem of settler bathhouse discrimination was aggravated by the fact that there was a dearth of Korean-owned bathhouses. As previously mentioned, in 1927, it was reported that among the 60 or so bathhouses in Kyŏngsŏng, only five or six had Korean ownership.⁵²² Korean magazines lamented the scarcity of Korean-owned bathhouses in the colonial capital.⁵²³ An article commented that it was simply impossible to go bathing because if one wore Korean clothes or spoke in Korean, they would face humiliation at the

⁵¹⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 6, 1921.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, Apr. 6, 1923.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, June 7, 1922.

⁵²² "Hyŏndae chin'gwihan chigŏp chŏllamhoe: ttaekkuk ūro mŏkko sanŭn saram" [Exhibit of today's rare occupations: persons who make a living by soiled water], *Pyŏlgŏn'gon* 3 (Jan. 1, 1927): 53.

⁵²³ Pak Talsŏng, "Kyŏngsŏng hyŏngje ege t'anwŏn hamnida! Tae-Kyŏngsŏng ūl kŏnsŏl ki wihaya" [I petition Kyŏngsŏng brothers! For the construction of the Great Kyŏngsŏng], *Kaebŏk* 21 (Mar. 1, 1922): 45.

bathhouse.⁵²⁴ Settler owners' discriminatory policies against Koreans could be found as late as 1938, with their infamous doorplates that said "No Koreans" on them.⁵²⁵

In this setting, it is not surprising that nude cross-cultural encounters resulted in physical violence. In 1924, a settler bathhouse owner in P'ohang beat a naked 40 year-old Korean woman for taking two towels with her into the washing area.⁵²⁶ This owner forbade Koreans from entering the bathhouse until after 9 p.m. He was also notorious for grabbing the topknots on Korean men's heads and shaking them, before kicking them out. *Tonga ilbo* asked, "Is this a mogyokt'ang (bathhouse) or a moyokt'ang (humiliation house)?"⁵²⁷ Koreans sometimes expressed their fury by resorting to violence, which others joined, ending in a swarm of Koreans and settlers attacking each other.⁵²⁸

Cross-cultural tensions in the bathing realm were not limited to settler bathhouses. In 1926, a Japanese Tokyo University Law School student got into a fight with a Korean named Ko Sangmok in Masan Swimming Pool.⁵²⁹ He was arrested immediately before he was about to stab Ko with a knife. The Tokyo University students were visiting Korea, probably on a school trip. Ko had met the students in front of Masan Station a few days earlier, when one student purposefully pushed Ko with his shoulder, when passing by. In the same year, a fight ensued in an Osaka bathhouse when a Korean stepped on a Japanese man's foot. The situation became serious when Korean laborers in the vicinity heard about

⁵²⁴ "Hamnam esō pon ikkol chōkkol" [Things I saw in South Hamhŭng Province], *Kaebŷōk* 53 (Nov. 1, 1924): 118.

⁵²⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 30, 1938.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1924.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, June 11, 1925.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1926.

the fight and showed up armed. They barged into the bathhouse, attacking the Japanese. One laborer died from the incident, after being hit by a Japanese man with a pickax.⁵³⁰

These encounters were instances in the everyday realm where ordinary Koreans and Japanese expressed their hostility against each other. They were neither Korean nationalists nor colonial officers, but ordinary people in the Japanese empire whose actions posed a major challenge to the bathing campaign. Although there was no colonial policy of segregation between Korean and Japanese bathers, with few exceptions, Koreans understood from early on that the Japanese-owned bathhouses were meant for the use of settlers. Often, only the Korean who “looked” clean enough, well-dressed, with enough physical evidence of Western or Japanese influence in his demeanor and attire was permitted inside. This discriminatory attitude of the settler community worked to segregate the washing activities of most Koreans from that of the Japanese, in addition to, the class stratification imposed by the quality of the facilities.

If a Korean crossed this tacit border, he was promptly reminded of his place in the colonial hierarchy by the bathhouse owner, who deemed him as an intolerable *chōsenjin*. While discrimination was less overt from the 1930s, with the development of hot springs regions that became popular sites for Koreans and the Japanese, by then, the colonial government had also constructed public bathhouses in various regions as a social measure, in which there seemed to be a tacit understanding that these facilities would be used by locals, while the more luxurious places built and owned by settlers were out of reach for the Korean masses at large, either due to their high cost or discrimination by settler owners. Thus, colonial bathing developed in a manner so that Koreans would be instructed to bathe

⁵³⁰ *Maeil sinbo*, Mar. 25, 1926.

more, but on their own, and preferably away from the Japanese facilities.

Despite Japan's assimilation policies and its bathing campaign, bathing activities in the peninsula developed in unsettling ways for the Japanese empire. The unintentional consequence of the campaign was that it attracted morally-suaded Korean bathers to settler bathing zones. The dilemma for the colonial state was the fact that settlers were undermining the hygienic campaigns and policy of assimilation, with their scorn for Koreans as a filthy cluster, and were highly reluctant to share their bathing facilities.

The violence in the bathhouses is also noteworthy. It suggests that the colonial everyday realm involved violent tensions that reached their peak in the bathing zones, probably because they were sensitive sites of unintended, spontaneous cross-cultural encounters where Koreans and Japanese came across one another in a man's most vulnerable state; engaging in the private act of washing with one's body parts exposed. The act of bathing was a crude reminder that Japan and Korea were not "one" and perhaps also that Koreans were not "one" either.

Bathing of the Korean Populace: Frequency and Outdoor Bathing

In 1931, an upper-class female artist named Pang Mu'gil (1899-1936) proudly explained an aspect of child rearing that was unique to her household; namely, that her six children bathed daily.⁵³¹ Her husband, Yi Kapsu (1899-1973), was a Professor of Kyōngsōng Women's Medical Professional School in the Physiology Department, after having earned a medical degree in Berlin and Kyoto Imperial University. He was one of the 88 founding members of the Chosŏn Eugenics Association (Chosŏn Usaeng Hyŏphoe), along with prominent Koreans, such as Yun Ch'ihŏ, Kim Sōngsu (1891-1955), founder of *Tonga ilbo* and

⁵³¹ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 17, 1931.

Kyōngsōng Spinning and Weaving Company, novelist Yi Kwangsu, Ch'ōndogyo leader Choe Rin (1878-1958) and leftist nationalist, Yō Unhyōng (1886-1947).⁵³² The association argued for the eugenic reform in the peninsula to create healthy and superior subjects for total mobilization,⁵³³ so it is not surprising that Yi Kapsu bathed daily with his children. Mrs. Bang explained that when Professor Yi came home from work, he would gather the children and bathe with them in the bathtub inside their home, which was a great exercise for the children.⁵³⁴ This was one of the most frequent, regularized bath cycles I came across in the colonial archive.

Actual bathing frequency of Koreans was much less. The 1940 study of Kyōngsōng's mud-hut dwellers shows that out of 556 t'omak households, 34 bathed once in ten days; 126 bathed once every ten days to a month; 162 households bathed once every month or two; 83 households bathed once in every two to six months; 27 bathed once every six months to a year; and 64 stated they had never been to a public bathhouse.⁵³⁵ A footnote explained that "In general, Koreans do not bathe often and even in middle-class households, it was rare to find a tub in the home" and that the mud-hut dwellers rarely washed their entire body in a given year, other than the trips to the river in summertime.⁵³⁶

Other sources provide additional insight into how often Koreans bathed. In

⁵³² *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 14, 1933. Founding members of the Eugenics Association included medical professionals, educators, journalists, and politicians trained in the West and in Japan, Christians, Buddhists, and Ch'ōndogyo leaders. For a full list of the members, their professions and educational background, see Sin Yōngjōn, "Singminji Chosōn esō usaeng undong ūi chōn'gae wa sōngkyōk: 1930 nyōndae 'usaeng' ūl chungsim ūro," *Ŭisahak* 15, no. 2 (Dec. 2006): 133-55.

⁵³³ For more information, see Sin Yōngjōn, 133-55.

⁵³⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 17, 1931.

⁵³⁵ 60 households did not reply to the survey. Keijō Teikoku Daigaku Eisei Chōsabū, ed., *Domakumin no seikatsu, eisei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1942), trans. Pak Hyōnsuk (Seoul, Minsogwōn, 2010), 186.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*

Women's schools with dormitories where upper-class female Koreans were educated, bathing occurred at least once a week, as shown in a *Tonga ilbo* article.⁵³⁷ The article explained that Paehwa School students bathed once a week; Chinmyŏng Girls' High School students bathed three times a week and washed their hair on Saturdays. In Ewha Girls' School, which attracted many students from wealthy families, students bathed every Thursdays and Saturdays; Sungmyŏng Girls' School students bathed every Tuesdays and Fridays; and Chŏngsin Girls' School students bathed once a week.

It was only the privileged sector of Korean society that bathed as often as these students. In the sock-manufacturing and rubber-manufacturing factories that developed in South P'yŏng'an Province, especially around P'yŏngyang, it was reported in 1929 that there were no bathing facility for the 800 factory workers.⁵³⁸ Many went bathless for two months. Even if there was a public bathhouse nearby, not all laborers could afford the entrance fees. The acute shortage in bathing facilities for the Korean lower class prompted Korean newspapers to demand that factory owners provide bathhouses for their workers.⁵³⁹

And the bathhouses erected as part of the Rural Revitalization Campaign did not reach all regions. By the 1930s, it seems that the bathing campaign succeeded in spreading the notion that soak bathing was the proper form of washing. However, the campaign may only have created such a norm within the urban middle and upper classes. In 1936, *Tonga ilbo* reported that the tubless situation in Kanghwa Island was an embarrassment, an

⁵³⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 16, 1928.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, May 28, 1929.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*

indicator that the region had fallen behind in “cultured life.”⁵⁴⁰

The rest of the population did not necessarily see themselves as lacking something they deserved when no soak-bathing facilities existed in their locality. In these regions, bathing customs of the local populace showed signs of premodern continuity. In Kanghwa Island, the elderly population still used the *hanjŭng* bathing method.⁵⁴¹ A man born in 1924 in a rural neighborhood in South Kyōngsang Province stated that the only “bathing” he did was after laboring in the summer, nearby a well, in the form of splashing water on his upper torso.⁵⁴² His village did not have a public bathhouse. It was only with the wartime draft that sent him to Fukushima when he experienced a soak bath in a bathhouse for the first time. He said that soaking his body felt like he was “flying in the sky.”⁵⁴³ A Korean woman born in 1933 recalled that she bathed in her home. There was no separate bathtub, but she bathed in the caldron that the family used for cow grass (*sojuksot*).⁵⁴⁴ The servant’s son was paid to wash the caldron and heat it with water, where she sat and bathed once a week. But she noted that soap could not be used, as her bathwater went to the cows afterwards. A 1939 article reported that in rural regions, there were still many farmers who had never seen a bathhouse.⁵⁴⁵

In fact, even those living in urban areas, did not always use the public facilities. A Korean woman recalled, “I only began going to public bathhouses after liberation. There was

⁵⁴⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 22, 1936.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴² Takekuni, 87.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁴ Chōn Namil, et al., “Chugō nae paesōl mit mogyok konggan,” 23.

⁵⁴⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 5, 1939.

only a handful in the city... But even when I went, I could not bring myself to go in the tub. I thought, wouldn't the warm temperature of the tub water invite people to urinate? So on the days I did visit the bathhouse, I only washed myself near the sewer so that I did not have to go in the tub."⁵⁴⁶ These testimonies suggest that the bathing campaign did not succeed in reaching all sectors of Korean society. Although the campaign may have led to more frequent washings of the body, the moral suasion did not result in eliminating premodern ways of bathing, such as partial washing near wells and in kitchens.

But above all, premodern customs persisted in the form of outdoor bathing. The exact numbers are unknown, but newspaper reports suggest that a large number, perhaps the majority of Koreans, did not bathe the public facilities, but instead, outdoors in nearby rivers, streams, and lakes. This phenomenon was widespread across the peninsula and well documented until the end of the colonial era, even in urban centers where bathhouses were available.⁵⁴⁷ This was especially true in the summer time. Each summer, Namdae Creek in Tanch'ŏn (South Hamgyŏng Province) attracted hundreds of people daily.⁵⁴⁸ Taedong River in P'yŏngyang and the Han River in the colonial capital were also famous sites that attracted as many as 30,000 people daily in the summer.⁵⁴⁹

Outdoor bathing was often indistinguishable from swimming or playing in the water; it seemed that many people saw the two activities as one.⁵⁵⁰ Outdoor bathing was a form of leisure that did not require train tickets or entrance fees, unlike the public bathhouses or

⁵⁴⁶ Chŏn Namil, et al., "Chugŏ nae paesŏl mit mogyok konggan," 22.

⁵⁴⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 14, 1939 and June 17, 1940.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Aug. 23, 1924.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 3, 1932.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 4, 1939.

the hot springs. Above all, outdoor streams and rivers were open to all. And the Korean populace took advantage of them to conduct various activities, from play and bath to collecting water for food and washing their clothes. The availability of outdoor bathing was also convenient for schools without bathhouses; Paesǒng Christian School in Wǒnsan was such a case.⁵⁵¹ Yun Ch'ihō's diary suggests that even he occasionally took breaks from high-end bathing and bathed outdoors.⁵⁵²

In many respects, outdoor bathing was a continuation of premodern customs. Tǒkjin Pond in Chǒnju was a popular site for Tano bathing (bathing on the fifth day of the fifth month in the lunar calendar), where it was believed that those who bathed first on Tano would be cured from their illnesses. On July 18, 1938, 30,000 bathers came to the pond to celebrate Tano.⁵⁵³ The bathing was more festive than hygienic, more folk than modern, and thus, distinct from the modern form of bathing endorsed by the colonial hygienic campaign.⁵⁵⁴ And there was an unruliness that accompanied these celebrations that went beyond the control of the colonial state or the Korean reformists, to the horror of both. Women stripped naked and fought to enter the pond first, so that their illnesses would be cured, while many men came to see the large number of nude female bodies.⁵⁵⁵ It was a spectacle that could not be explained by the colonial bathing campaign.

The unfortunate consequence of outdoor bathing was that it resulted in casualties,

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., Aug. 24, 1923. This bathing by Paesǒng students was in the news for the fight that broke out between Westerners and the students in the city's foreigner town, where the former allegedly punched a student, saying it was an insult to bathe in front of them.

⁵⁵² Yun Ch'ihō, *Yun Ch'ihō ilgi*, vol. 10 (Aug. 25, 1935).

⁵⁵³ *Tonga ilbo*, July 18, 1938.

⁵⁵⁴ Song Hwasǒp and Kim Kyǒngmi, "1930-nyǒndae Chǒnju Tǒkjin Yǒnmot ūi tano mulmaji," *Chibangsa wa chibang munhwa* 16, no. 1 (May 2013): 165-97.

⁵⁵⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, July 18, 1938.

the usual means by which one comes across the subject of outdoor bathing in the colonial newspapers. Countless lives were taken away by the bathing that occurred in the peninsula's rivers, streams, and lakes. Each summer, newspapers were flooded with articles describing who drowned from bathing on what day. The fatal baths were not a tragedy limited to the lower classes. People from diverse backgrounds in their age, class, and occupation drowned from bathing outdoors. This included teachers, students, infants, children, white collars, and athletes.⁵⁵⁶ The Taedong River was notorious for discharging dead bodies in the summer time.⁵⁵⁷ Han River was called "Ma ūi Han'gang" (the evil Han River) because it would generate so many casualties in the summer. Drowning was so common that upon hearing an incident, a person would remark dryly, "Dead again."⁵⁵⁸

Final Remarks on Bathing

Sunamoto Fumihiko has noted that despite the expansion of public laundries in the colonial era under the slogan of *shakai jigyo*, the custom of washing clothes in nearby waters persisted.⁵⁵⁹ The same can be said about bathing. The bottom up view of colonial bathing reveals that the bathing customs of the Korean masses varied widely in its frequency and method. A great number of Koreans had their own ideas of bathing, which ran contrary to the bathing campaign. Some continued the premodern custom of partial, infrequent bathing in their kitchens or in the nearby lakes, rivers, wells, and streams. Even as the number of bathhouses increased, the notion of "bathing" encompassed much more than simply sitting

⁵⁵⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Aug. 1, 1920; June 17, 1922; June 20, 1922; Aug. 23, 1922.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 23, 1922; July 15, 1923; July 31, 1928; June 17, 1940.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, July 27, 1925; July 11, 1939; Aug. 4, 1939.

⁵⁵⁹ Sunamoto Fumihiko, "Shokuminchi-ki Chōsen hantō ni okeru kōsetsu sentakuujō ni kansuru kenkyū," *Nihon kenchiku gakkai keikakukei ronbunshū* 80, no. 710 (Apr. 2015): 981-90.

in the Japanese-style soak bathtubs, the hot springs, or in the private baths of modern homes. In this respect, the *way* of bathing remained relatively free from the compulsiveness of modern sanitation and its imposition by the GGK and the urban middle class.

The history of colonial bathing allows us to reassess the GGK's hygienic campaign. While the bathing history is not quite capturable by the rhetoric of "modern hygiene" and took place in a variety of forms, it nevertheless sheds light into the realities, limitations, and dilemmas faced by a colonial modern state in its imposition of modern sanitation on the populace. While bathing reform was an important part of the state-led project, to only see it as a story of Koreans under surveillance and eventually subdued into "imperial subjects" by hygienic governmentality, may be distorting how personal sanitation was practiced and understood by the Korean masses. The story shows the difficulties and impracticalities a modern (or colonial) state faces when it attempts to "mold" the populace's act of washing their bodies. The deliberate act of washing oneself is the epitome of practicing modern hygiene. Yet, at the end of the day, bathing is one's *voluntary* motional act to clean one's private parts, which is almost impossible to compel, however authoritarian a government. Perhaps modern, state-led hygienic campaigns face its ultimate obstacle when it reaches the most private hygienic activity; the cleansing of the body.

Chapter III. Conceptualizing Animals and Civilizing Chosŏn: The Animal Campaign

One noticeable feature of the town is the abundance of dogs. As the stranger passes along he will notice that almost every door has a small square hole at the bottom, for every one of which there is at least one cur. The number of these animals is legion, and their behavior is an unending source of amusement to all the foreigners. It is the peculiarity of these dogs that they take not the slightest notice of Koreans along the streets; but let a foreigner approach one of them so engaged as not to see him, and the dog thus caught unaware upon sight of the interloper, rushes off in the utmost terror, tail tight between its legs, and darts through the hole in the door, almost breaking its back... Abject fear of foreigners seems to possess all Korean dogs... They are miserable looking creatures, and show that they are but poorly fed. In summer, they are an eye-sore because of the swarms of flies which crawl over them and make their wretched life still more miserable.

George W. Gilmore, *Korea from its Capital* (1892)⁵⁶⁰

1. Reconsidering Animals in Korean History

In 1983, the South Korean government faced a crisis when animal welfare organizations from the West exposed Korea's dog-meat consumption to the world at large. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) distributed graphic photos of Koreans slaughtering dogs and turning them into soup. They threatened to boycott Korean products and urged the participation of the global community in the opposition to Korea's dog-eating culture.⁵⁶¹ The campaign generated public outrage in the international arena. Western communities threatened to boycott the 1988 Olympics that were scheduled to be held in Seoul, should the Korean government continue to permit the sale of dog meat.⁵⁶²

The Korean government's response was immediate. On September 8, 1983, the Ministry of Health and Welfare announced the Regulation on Food Sanitation Law (*Sikp'um*

⁵⁶⁰ George W. Gilmore, *Korea from its Capital* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1892), 55-56.

⁵⁶¹ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 7, 1983.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1983.

wisaengbŏp sihaeng kyuch'ik) banning the sale of dog meat in major cities and tourist areas, including downtown districts, public roads, and hotels of Seoul and Pusan.⁵⁶³ The regulation prohibited the sale of any food item which was deemed “repugnant to Korean nationals” by the governor, mayor, or the Minister of Health and Welfare.⁵⁶⁴ “Repugnant” included snake soup, laggard, earthworm soup, and anything made out of dog meat.⁵⁶⁵

In reality of course, the regulation was not intended to ban food repugnant to Korean nationals, but dishes that would be offensive to the foreign eye in the upcoming Olympics, especially the Western animal organizations that were closely monitoring the South Korean government. The only exception to the law was rural regions at the township level, where sales were permitted if presented as a cooked dish.⁵⁶⁶ The idea was to prohibit sale in urban areas which would be exposed to the foreign gaze, but permit them in other regions where it was less likely to have foreign visitors. From May of 1984, the regulation expanded to ban any sale of such “repugnant” food items in the entire region of Seoul.⁵⁶⁷ March was a grace period that gave restaurants time to voluntarily close before the start of compelled shutdowns from May.

Three years after the Olympics, South Korea enacted its first animal protection law in 1991.⁵⁶⁸ Aimed at “cultivating respect for life amongst citizens, safeguarding animals, and preventing animal cruelty,” the law provided basic provisions for government sponsorship

⁵⁶³ *Maeil kyŏngje*, June 10, 1983.

⁵⁶⁴ Pogŏn Sahoebu, “Sikp’um wisaengbŏp sihaeng kyuch’ik,” Art. 19, Sec. 21 (Sept. 8, 1984).

⁵⁶⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, June 22, 1984.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁷ *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, Feb. 27, 1984.

⁵⁶⁸ Nongnimbu, “Tongmul pohobŏp,” no. 4379 (May 31, 1991).

of animal protection campaigns, standards for animal owners, and a ban against cruel killing and torture, as well as laws on abandoned animals and animal testing.⁵⁶⁹ Despite criticism that the law was simply a mouthpiece to silence the international community without real enforcement powers, the animal protection law has since undergone 15 revisions, expanding from the original 12 articles to a whopping 47.⁵⁷⁰ In recent years, new bills pertaining to animal welfare have constantly been introduced to the National Assembly, including “animal cafe law,” which would enhance government regulation of animal-related businesses, such as cat cafes, pet hotels, and dog kindergartens.⁵⁷¹

Further, in the post-Olympic era, there has been a surge of citizen movements aimed at improving animal welfare by endorsing top-down legal reform as well as bottom-up efforts to educate the populace and expose instances of animal cruelty in Korean society. With the rise of the internet, domestic animal organizations are playing a central role in protecting animals in Korea. To the relief of the Korean government and perhaps Korean companies conducting business abroad, South Korea now appears to be treading the same path as the advanced nations in its animal welfare enterprise.

Despite substantial developments in South Korea’s legal and social arena, there is a conspicuous lack of scholarship on the animal protection movement or about animals in general, both in English and in Korean academic writings. Only a handful of works are existent and in general, it can be said that animals occupy a very small field in Korean

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁰ Nongnim Ch’uksan Sikip’umbu, “Tongmul pohoböp,” no. 13023 (amended Jan. 20, 2015).

⁵⁷¹ *Herald kyöngje*, Oct. 17, 2015.

history.⁵⁷² This chapter is an attempt to fill this gap by tracing the early developments in Korea's animal history, which began as a form of social management in the colonial era. From the colonial era, the state and members of civil society sought to mold how the populace interacted with and thought about the peninsula's animals. Animals became intricately tied to the degree of Korea's modernity by both the state and the civil promoters of the animal campaigns. The latter proclaimed compassion for animals, while the former perceived animals to be a subject matter requiring state control and management. The introduction of modern animal institutions, such as the state-managed slaughterhouses, zoo, and other animal exhibitions, combined with the modern police and the military, generated a meta-narrative in which animals became newly classified as objects to be protected, observed, consumed, or destroyed, depending on the needs of the state.

The colonial animal protection movement was essentially a *kyōka* campaign, in which members of the newly formed Korean bourgeoisie endorsed the notion of animal welfare derived from the West. The movement argued that Koreans needed to do away with their premodern understandings and treatments of the peninsula's animals, and encouraged dealing with animals along the lines of the norms established by Western societies. I trace how Western notions of animal welfare entered the peninsula and interacted with the colonial state and the Korean populace at large. As I show below, the movement received the tacit support of the colonial government, as Japan endorsed animal protection as an exemplification of civilization and modernity.

Yet, the campaign did not succeed in persuading the Korean lower class; the group

⁵⁷² A pioneering work in this field is the study of Korean tigers by Joseph Seeley and Aaron Skabelund. See Joseph Seeley and Aaron H. Skabelund, "Tigers—Real and Imagined—in Korea's Physical and Cultural Landscape," *Environmental History* 20 (2015): 475-503. Other works will be mentioned later in this chapter.

that most frequently handled animals in their everyday life. The campaign also occupied a tenuous position in the Japanese empire because despite gaining the tacit support of the GGK, the movement faced challenges by other animal campaigns that the GGK prioritized over animal protection. Animal welfare was a dubious enterprise when it conflicted directly with the modern mission to control the animal population under the rubric of sanitation, resource control, and imperial monuments, such as the modern zoo and the Chosŏn native dog. In addition, the 1930s generated fascist forms of modernity, in which animals were mobilized for the military, posing additional challenges to the animal protection movement.

This early history is important for reconsidering the widely-held assumption that Korea was a nation without much to say about animals until the 1988 Olympic incident.⁵⁷³ Animals have long been an intricate part of Korea's nationbuilding and its path to modernity. Much of South Korea's animal enterprise has its origins in the colonial era, not only institutionally, but also culturally, in how people came to conceptualize animals. It can be said that much of the systematic categorization of animals, as understood by South Korea in the present, had been in place by the end of the colonial era.

This chapter is an attempt to understand how the Korean peninsula came to systematically embrace animals as part of an indispensable undertaking of the modern. Before turning to the animal protection movement, though, I should stress that the notion of "animal protection" did not have a singular, static meaning across Korean history, nor was it the same within a single era. People had varying notions of what it meant to protect animals. As with other ideas of the modern, animal protection was a modern construct, which requires proper historicization.

⁵⁷³ See e.g., Yu Sŏnbong, "Miguk ūi tongmul haktae kŭmjibŏp kwa kŭ sisajŏm: Han'guk ūi tongmul pohobŏp sang munjejŏm kwa kaesŏn pangan," *Anam pŏphak* 26 (2008): 477-513.

2. A Moral Empire: The Animal Protection Movement

Between these miles of mud walls, deep eaves, green slimy ditches, and blackened smoke-holes, few besides the male inhabitants and burden-bearers are seen to move. They are the paradise of many dogs. Every house has a dog, and a square hole through which he can just creep. He yells furiously at a stranger, and runs away at the shaking of an umbrella. He was the sole scavenger of Seoul, and a very inefficient one. He is neither the friend nor companion of man. He is ignorant of Korean and every other language. His bark at night announces peril from thieves. He is almost wild. When young he is killed and eaten in spring.

Isabella L. Bird, *Korea and Her Neighbors* (1897)⁵⁷⁴

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

On September 19, 1924, wives of foreign consuls gathered in front of the British consulate building in the colonial capital to announce the founding of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tongmul Haktae Pangjihoe).⁵⁷⁵ “Like humans, animals had emotions and could feel pain. To abuse such living creatures by inflicting unspeakable violence is intolerable,” explained the society.⁵⁷⁶ The society avowed to protect the animals of the peninsula. If Mahatma Gandhi stated, “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated,” the society proclaimed, “The degree of a nation’s advancement in civilization can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”⁵⁷⁷

Later renamed as Animal Protection Society (Tongmul Aehohoe) in 1934, this was the first animal protection organization in Korean history. Founded by Hana Glover Bennett (1873-1938), wife of the British consul Walter George Bennett, the society soon expanded

⁵⁷⁴ Isabella L. Bird, *Korea and Her Neighbors: A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position of the Country*, 1897, reprint, (Seoul: Yōnsei University Press, 1970), 45.

⁵⁷⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 19, 1924.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁷ “Chōsen dōbutsu gyakutai hōshikai ni tsuite,” *Chōsen shakai jigyō* 6, no. 8 (Aug. 1928): 29-31.

its membership to include prominent individuals from both the Korean and Japanese upper stratum of the colonial capital. Vice-Governor Generals (*keimu sōkan*) Kodama Hideo (兒玉秀雄, 1876-1947, in office 1929-31) and Imaida Kiyonori (今井田清徳, 1884-1940, in office 1931-36) served as honorary chairmen and donated generous funds to the organization.⁵⁷⁸ Other members included directors of the Police Bureau, the Industrial Bureau, the Railroad Bureau; the president of the Horse Race Association, patrolmen, veterinarians, and those engaged in *shakai jigyō*. In 1928, the society consisted of 300 members.⁵⁷⁹ Even in wartime, the colonial state allowed the organization to continue its activities. In 1942 at the height of war and when the peninsula's population was receiving food rationing, the league reported its total asset to be 11,151.40 yen.⁵⁸⁰ The society remained an officially registered organization until January of 1944.

While the identified members were mostly men, upper-class women played a central role in the day-to-day administration of the organization. This included wives of Kyōngsōng Imperial University professors, as well as teachers from all-female high schools.⁵⁸¹ They worked closely with female Western members to promote animal protection. With husbands in prominent sectors of the colonial society, they were able to mobilize funds by receiving donations until the very end of colonial rule. Because the society had links to the West, donations came from abroad as well, from London and the United States.

⁵⁷⁸ Matsuzaki Matagorō, "Dōbutsu aigo no seishin ni moete," *Chōsen shakai jigyō* 9, no. 8 (Aug. 1931): 22-28.

⁵⁷⁹ "Chōsen dōbutsu gyakutai hōshikai ni tsuite."

⁵⁸⁰ Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 4761 (Dec. 12, 1942).

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.

What was remarkable about the society was that upper class women campaigned for animal protection on the public streets of the colonial capital. They engaged in a wide variety of activities, such as placing pails of fresh water in public roads for cows and horses that pulled carts.⁵⁸² While the movement called for the protection of animals in general, the society's day-to-day campaigns generally targeted the city's working animals and their owners. The society employed workers for the specific job of cleaning the pails to ensure water remained fresh for the working animals, a task that continued until as late as midnight.⁵⁸³ The society hired veterinarians to search for injured or sick animals, and provide treatment free of charge to their owners.⁵⁸⁴ And they received the support of the colonial police, who monitored public areas for any instances of animal cruelty by the general populace.

Although members comprised of the colonial upper class, the society aimed at expanding into a public campaign for animal welfare. The organization encouraged participation from the general populace by offering membership for an annual fee of 2 yen with a special discount of 50 chōn (0.5 yen) for students and children.⁵⁸⁵ Hence, the fee of 2 yen for a year of membership may not have been extraordinary, especially for the upper class, but not many in the Korean society may have been willing to pay such a fee for the purpose of joining a group on animal protection. While sources on the society's activities are limited in scope, it appears that the group's activity was not limited to the colonial

⁵⁸² *Tonga ilbo*, May 26, 1927.

⁵⁸³ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 23.

⁵⁸⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, May 26, 1927.

⁵⁸⁵ "Chōsen dōbutsu gyakutai hōshikai ni tsuite," 29-31.

capital. Members held lectures in other major cities, such as Taegu and Inch'ŏn.⁵⁸⁶

Animal Protection as Imported from the West

In Kyōngsŏng, the British Embassy played a key role in providing support for their cause. The Embassy made its grounds available to accommodate the public when the society gave lectures on animal protection. These lectures were typically advertised in Korean newspapers.⁵⁸⁷ This also suggests the active role Westerners played in promoting animal welfare in colonial Korea. This is not surprising, as the notion of animal protection originated in Europe. In 1824, the first animal protection organization was established in Britain, called Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Other nations followed Britain's lead to form animal societies, including the France in 1845, and the United States in the 1860s.⁵⁸⁸ These state also began passing laws banning animal cruelty.

Kathleen Kete has argued that Europe's animal movements were influenced by the proliferation of pet-keeping culture by the urban middle class between 1850 and 1890.⁵⁸⁹ This gave rise to a bourgeois culture which involved dog-care books, pet cemeteries, and pet-grooming salons, as well as the entrance of cats into the domestic realm for the first time as pets. Pets came to symbolize bourgeois culture. But animal activism, such as those by the *Soci t  protectrice des animaux* (Animal Protection Society) in Paris, reflected middle-class apprehension of the city's lower class, and their anxieties about modern

⁵⁸⁶ *Maeil sinbo*, Dec. 11, 1926; *Tonga ilbo*, May 26, 1926.

⁵⁸⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 12, 1926.

⁵⁸⁸ David Newton, *Contemporary World Issues: The Animal Experimentation Debate: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, ABC-CLIO, 2013), 35.

⁵⁸⁹ Kathleen Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-century Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

science, capitalist class structure, and modern professions.⁵⁹⁰

Meiji Japan was quick to endorse the Western notion of animal protection.⁵⁹¹ From 1899, discussions on animal protection began appearing in Japanese publications. In 1902, a religious scholar named Hiroi Tatsutarō (廣井辰太郎, 1876-1952) founded the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Dōbutsu Gyakutai Hōjikai), which had 56 members consisting of scholars, professors, high school teachers, congressmen, and military officials.⁵⁹² In the early years of modern Japan, interest in animal protection grew in conjunction with the rise of studies on social problems (*shakai mondai*), such as poverty.⁵⁹³ This explains why the animal movement came under the rubric of *kyōka undō* in both the metropole and the peninsula.

The First Modern Law on Animal Protection

Japan also reformed its laws modeled on the West. In 1908, the Meiji state enacted the Regulation on Police Punishment of Minor Offenses (*Keisatsu hanshobatsu kisoku*), which contained Japan's first law on animal cruelty.⁵⁹⁴ The GGK enacted a near-identical law in 1912, also called the Regulation on Police Punishment of Minor Offenses.⁵⁹⁵ As in Japan, the 1912 law provided a provision on animal cruelty, which was Korea's first modern law on animal protection.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 2, 12.

⁵⁹¹ Chikamori Takaki, "Dōbutsu aigo no kigen: Meiji 30-nendai ni okeru kutsū e no hairyo to dōbutsu aigo undō," *Kyōto shakaigaku nenpō* 8 (Dec. 2000): 81-96.

⁵⁹² Ibid., 87.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., 81.

⁵⁹⁴ *Genkō teikoku keiji hōten* (Tokyo: Ganshōdō, 1909), appendix 11-19. See also, Chul Woo Lee, "Legal Culture and the Rule of Law in Korea," *Pōphak nonch'ong* 16 (1999): 399.

⁵⁹⁵ *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 470 (Mar. 25, 1912).

I have briefly mentioned this law as containing the nude-ban provision in the bathing chapter, but it deserves a bit more attention here. The Regulation on Police Punishment of Minor Offenses was the foremost legal device for controlling the daily behavior of the populace. The decree listed 87 acts that could be criminally prosecuted, such as urinating in public, displaying outrageous behavior (*shūtai*) like excessive and unnecessary exposure of one's body parts, lying down in public roads, performing shamanism in front of the sick, begging, and loitering without a job or a home.⁵⁹⁶ Offenders paid fines or were sent to the detention house. Thus, *Keisatsu hanshobatsu* was the chief device for controlling the everyday life of the colony through the police system. This colonial regulation was later renamed as the Punishment of Minor Offenses (*Kyōngbōmjoe ch'ōbōlpōp*) by the South Korean government in 1954, and continues to monitor public behavior in present-day Korea.⁵⁹⁷

The provision on animals prohibited “infliction of physical pain on animals in conspicuous public areas,” and banned “imprudent acts which would excite an animal.”⁵⁹⁸ This meant that violators could be subject to fines or be detained by the police. The regulation provided substantial assistance to the Animal Protection Society's cause, and explains why the group was able to receive the cooperation of the colonial police. It also meant that policemen could directly intervene in human-animal interactions in public. Supporters of the animal campaign used this modern regulation to their advantage and worked closely with the police to monitor the populace for acts of cruelty toward animals.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ Depending on the needs of the government, the law was amended throughout the post-liberation era and regulated citizens' activities in public.

⁵⁹⁸ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 28.

Animal Protection as *Kyōka*

In 1929, the Chosŏn Expo (Chosŏn Pangnamhoe) featured a special exhibition of animals from September 12 to October 31 in Kyŏngbok Palace. The Expo was celebrating the twentieth anniversary of Japan's colonial rule over the peninsula. Hence, it displayed various accomplishments of the Japanese empire to the world at large. The Expo's animal exhibition was led by the Chosŏn Animal Husbandry Association (Chosŏn Ch'uksan Hyŏphoe), which demonstrated the use of livestock to the public by bringing in live animals.⁵⁹⁹ The exhibition also educated the public on Animal Loving Day (*tongmul aeho dei*), held a dog show and a memorial service for animals, and showed motion pictures featuring animals. These exhibitions functioned as moral suasion campaigns in the form of popular entertainment, where the public was educated about animals. The expos transformed animals into spectacles of modernity and emblems of civilization. They were top-down efforts by the colonial state in conjunction with civic organizations, to inculcate new, modern understandings of animals onto the Korean masses.

In the meantime, the Animal Society strove to transform Koreans' treatment of animals in the everyday realm. Funds were used to host animal protection exhibitions (*tongmul aeho chŏnsihoe*).⁶⁰⁰ The society sometimes sponsored animal protection poster competitions, giving awards to the best artwork.⁶⁰¹ From 1927, the society retained its own patrolmen (*kamsi*) who wore official uniforms and made rounds around the city in bicycles

⁵⁹⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 11, 1929.

⁶⁰⁰ "Dōbutsu aigoten," *Chōsen*, no. 245 (Oct. 1935): 135.

⁶⁰¹ *Chosŏn chungang ilbo*, June 21, 1935; *Tonga ilbo*, May 16, 1935.

to deter animal abuse.⁶⁰² The main target was the hackmen with their work animals, which was the most common means of transporting goods and people in the city. According to a 1911 survey of the peninsula, there were only two cars, 1,217 rickshaws, and 1,804 hand carts, but there were a total of 38,337 ox carts and 695 horse wagons.⁶⁰³ The patrolmen typically checked the weight of the cart load. If overloaded, the hackmen was reported to a nearby police officer.⁶⁰⁴ In this case, he would be charged with a fine or detained under a 1913 Regulation which set the maximum weight of cart loads on Ox Carts and Horse Wagons.⁶⁰⁵

The central forum for moral suasion was “Animal Loving Days” that the society sponsored with the Kyōnggi Police Department.⁶⁰⁶ Typically, these were all-day events, in which members established a first-aid station for work animals in Kyōngsōng’s centers, including East Gate, West Gate, South Gate, the Postal Office, and bridges. And throughout the day, public areas came under police surveillance to catch acts of animal cruelty on work animals, as well as to prevent road accidents involving animals. Horses and cows were provided with water, food, and luxury goods. Veterinarians offered free treatment for sick cows, horses, dogs, and cats. Members distributed pamphlets educating the city’s residents on the importance of clean drinking water for work animals, how to care for sick animals, why heavily-loaded carts should be avoided, as well as the proper, hygienic care of cows and

⁶⁰² *Tonga ilbo*, May 26, 1927.

⁶⁰³ Sōul T’ūkpyōl Sisa P’yōnch’an Wiwōnhoe, ed., *Sōul yukpaengnyōnsa* vol. 3 (Seoul: Sōul T’ūkpyōlsi, 1979), 977.

⁶⁰⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, May 26, 1927.

⁶⁰⁵ Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 247 (May 27, 1913). See also, Yi Chongmin, “1910-nyōndae Kyōngsōng chumindül ūi ‘choe’ wa ‘pōl’: kyōngbōmjoe rūl chungsim ūro,” *Sōulhak yōn’gu* 17 (Sept. 2001): 107.

⁶⁰⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 6, 1934 and May 16, 1936; *Chosōn chungang ilbo*, May 16, 1935.

horses in the summer and winter.⁶⁰⁷

These events received volunteers from the Student Horseback Riding Alliance, the military veterinarian staff, provincial veterinarians, and students from the Youth [Military] Training Institute (Ch'ŏnghunsaeng).⁶⁰⁸ Thus, the animal campaign attracted those engaged in modern animal-related professions. It was also receiving the support of the colonial state and the military. All participants were engaged in a collective venture to construct a moral empire.

3. The Korean Response and the Failed Campaign

Animal Protection in the Korean Press

The Animal Protection Society's campaign generated all sorts of responses from the Korean populace, many of which were probably unanticipated by the campaign. One development was in the realm of Korean nationalism inspired by Wilsonian idealism in the 1920s. This was a time in which Korean nationalist intellectuals saw themselves as part of a global citizenry led by the League of Nations in the aftermath of World War I. The argument was put forth that preventing cruelty to animals was necessary because violence toward animals led to violence amongst humans, going against the international norm that was now centered on humanitarian justice (*indo chŏngŭi*).⁶⁰⁹

In Korean magazines, anthropomorphized animals appeared and spoke about their mistreatment by humans. "I am a 20 year-old cow" was a short story featuring a cow that

⁶⁰⁷ Chōsen Dōbutsu Gyakutai Hōshikai, "Tōki gyūba no toriatsukai kokoro e," *Chōsen shakai jigyō* 6, no. 12 (Dec. 1928): 32.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ "Sasöl: indo chŏngŭi ŭi palchōnsa ro kwanhan kŭmil ihu ŭi modŭn munje" [Editorial: Problems from today onward as shown in the history of the development of humanitarian justice], *Kaebŷŏk* 4 (Sept. 25, 1920): 8.

stated, “Humans exploit me, hit me, and curse at me. And now they will take my leather, eat my flesh, and lick my bones.”⁶¹⁰ Ch’oe Sŭngil’s (1901- ?) novel, *Padugi*, featured a dog that relayed the life of his friend Padugi, who was beloved by his owners but was eventually slaughtered for meat.⁶¹¹

In general, however, the Korean press expressed skepticism toward the animal campaign. In 1924, *Tonga ilbo* reported on the establishment of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Explaining that it was founded by Westerners, the article went on to state, “If charity organizations are necessary in the present, the society’s founding may be justified. But we still want to quietly whisper into the ears of the founders. Before establishing a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, you should be founding a society that prevents cruelty against every pitiful person you have mistreated.”⁶¹²

Such remarks continued throughout the colonial era in Korean mass publications. A 1930 commentary wrote about a board director of the Osaka Animal Protection Society as a “person who will go to animal heaven” and went on to describe him as follows: “He goes around feedings peas and sweet potatoes to cows and horses with his personal funds... For people like us whose fellows are dying of starvation, this kind-hearted virtue is utterly impossible to understand... Let us deliver Nietzsche’s words to the cows and horses that are happily stuffed: ‘Charity is the most subtle form of selfish morality.’”⁶¹³ The commentary ended with a remark that he probably took pleasure in smelling horse shit.

⁶¹⁰ Nurōngi, “Nanŭn sŭmusal mögŭn hwangso” [I am a 20 year-old cow], *Kaebŏk* 55 (Jan. 1, 1925): 109-16.

⁶¹¹ Ch’oe Sŭngil, “Padugi,” *Kaebŏk* 66 (Feb. 1, 1926): 20-39.

⁶¹² *Tonga ilbo*, June 10, 1929.

⁶¹³ “Modŏn poktŏkpang (ku modŏn)” [Modern realtor’s office (old modern)], *Pyŏlgŏn’gon* 34 (Nov. 1, 1930): 151.

That it was the upper-class women who were preaching animal protection to lower-class male laborers further diminished the legitimacy of the campaign. A 1930 commentary described them as “women who held cows to their bosoms” and stated the following:

“Recently, women who leisurely hold pet cats to their bosom, have gotten the nerve to venture out in public to hug cows and horses on the streets. Mrs. Cooper, a professor of Hunter Women’s College in New York, just donated 400 dollars to this organization. She expressed her desire to donate all of her assets to this Society upon her death. It won’t be long before slaughterhouses disappear and yellow-faced vegetarians walk about. But when it is time to eat *kalbi* and *sukiyaki*, do they temporarily close their eyes and become slaves of their appetites? The ridiculous things people come up with to kill time when their stomachs are full...”⁶¹⁴

In another article, where it appears that a fictional American accuses Koreans of animal cruelty and eating pets, a Korean retorts:

Koreans do not inflict cruelty on animals. We offer sacrificial ceremonies to dogs and cats. We provide gourmet dishes like rice cakes to our cows and horses... It is you who inflicts cruelty on animals. Before you slaughter cows for consumption, they are kept alive to have all of their milk squeezed out. Even after they are butchered, you use every single body part; from the meat and bones to the fat and hair. How is it possible to eat and sleep with dogs in the same room? The American women probably commit lovers’ suicides with their dogs.⁶¹⁵

Such articles were critiques of Western and Japanese imperialism, which preached compassion for animals, but permitted colonialism to continue. They also pointed to the commodification of animals in the industrialized nations, which inflicted more suffering on animals than in the peninsula. Korean journalists challenged the ideas of “cruelty” and “charity” put forth by the animal campaign, arguing that social relief for humans should come before animal protection. The chief reason for animal cruelty in the peninsula was in the fact that “too many of the people who handled animals were going hungry.”⁶¹⁶ The controversy surrounding animal protection reflected the stratification within the colonial

⁶¹⁴ “Modŏn poktŏkpang” [Modern realtor’s office], *Pyŏlgŏn’gon* 27 (Mar. 1, 1930): 46-47.

⁶¹⁵ “Man’guk p’ump’yŏnghoe taejaengnongŭi” [Major dispute in the show of all nations], *Pyŏlgŏn’gon*, 12-13 (May 1, 1928): 222.

⁶¹⁶ *Chungŏe ilbo*, Apr. 17, 1930.

society and the ambiguities in the march toward modernity and civilization. While admiration for modern life was widespread, the extra step toward animal protection in the civilization ladder was not something that most Koreans were willing to take. As shown in the above, the Korean press questioned the validity of the movement by pointing out that the Western-derived notion of animal protection, endorsed by some of the urban bourgeoisie, was at odds with their consumption of animals as *kalbi* and *sukiyaki*, two gourmet dishes whose consumption was confined to the upper class in the colonial era.⁶¹⁷ The same could be said about the bourgeois culture of “eating and sleeping with pet dogs,” which went against modern notions of hygiene. Thus, the Korean press turned the ideology of civilization and enlightenment against the proponents of the animal campaign.

Modern Pet Keeping in Colonial Korea

The animal campaign had additional limitations. The notion of “humane treatment of animals” entered the peninsula along with other bourgeois norms derived from Western civilizations, such as hygiene, modern homes, proper child rearing, and bathing. However, the concept of pet keeping; namely, living with animals in the inner quarters of the home remained somewhat of a foreign activity for most Koreans, until it became popularized in the recent post-liberation era. Rather, ordinary Koreans perceived animals as livestock either to be used in agriculture, transportation, or as a food source. In particular, cows were greatly valued for their utilitarian function in the Korean household, where it was even said that “One could live without a house, but not without a cow.”⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁷ On meat consumption in the colonial era, see Yi Kyujin, “Kūndae ihu 100-nyŏn kan Han’guk yungnyu kui munhwa ūi pyŏnhwa,” (Ph.D. diss., Ewha Womans University, 2010).

⁶¹⁸ Miura Yōko, “Ilche kangjŏmgi Chosŏn nan’gok kigye nongjang ūi taegyumo nongjangje yuch’uk chŏnjak nongŏp kyŏngyŏng silt’ae,” trans. Kim T’aegon, *Nongŏpsa yŏn’gu* 7, no. 1 (June 2008): 163.

Dogs were a common sight in Korean neighborhoods in late Chosŏn and the colonial era. Many families kept canines in their yards, which was what led George Gilmore to remark, “Almost every door has a small square hole at the bottom, for every one of which there is at least one cur.”⁶¹⁹ But for most Koreans, these household dogs were not pets. They did not signify social status or wealth in the Western sense. If anything, the handling of animals signified a person’s low status in society, due to the fact that it was the lower status groups who managed animals in the premodern Confucian status system.

Thus, the dogs that were kept by ordinary Korean households were not “pets” in the Western bourgeois sense, but were domesticated livestock that served various functions for the household, as well as being a good source for meat. They were referred to as *ch’ukkyŏn* (domesticated dogs) and although it was common household practice to keep one in the *madang* (open courtyard) of the home, they served a utilitarian purpose, similar to chickens.⁶²⁰ A greater number of the peninsula’s dogs were “roaming dogs” (*yagyŏn*), which later came to be perceived by the GGK as a significant problem that required state intervention.⁶²¹

Within a small enclave of the colonial upper class, however, pet keeping was practiced. While there was no Korean equivalent to the pet salons and pet cemeteries of Europe, sources suggest that an organization called Kyŏngsŏng Aegyŏn Kurakpu (Kyŏngsŏng Pet Club) sold pure-bred dogs imported from the West.⁶²² And Japanese books on dog care were sold in the city, including Kobayashi Shinzō’s “Inu no kaikata” [How to

⁶¹⁹ Gilmore, 55.

⁶²⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 16, 1925.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1933.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, Mar. 20, 1936.

Raise Dogs] which had been published in *Shufu no tomo*, and Suzuki Tokichirō's *Inu wo kau chishiki to jitsueki* [How to Raise Dogs and its Practical Benefits].⁶²³ Given the topic (raising pet dogs) addressed by the books, and the fact that they were sold in their original format in Japanese, it can be inferred that readership was limited to the Japanese and Korean upper classes in colonial society.

Within this small enclave of pet-keeping elites, foreign dogs became emblems of affluence and civilization. The Shepherd, Terrier, and the Japanese Shiba were considered superior breeds that would never be found in an average Korean household, but in the culture homes of the urban elite.⁶²⁴ Shepherds were also employed by the Japanese police and eventually the military, and came to be known as “military dogs” (*kun'gyōn*) under Japanese militarism. Foreign dogs were a rarity in colonial Korea, as shown in a 1934 survey on Hamhŭng Province's dogs. Among the 13,361 dogs that existed in Hamhŭng, 24 were of Japanese origin, 27 were Western dogs, 276 were mixed breeds, and 13,334 were native dogs.⁶²⁵

That the colonial elites associated foreign dogs with social prestige was an unfortunate consequence of imperialism, in which Westerners who visited East Asia in the late nineteenth century described native dogs as “primitive, wolfish, aggressive, cowardly curs,” all of which Aaron Skabelund has described as “canine imperialism; the rhetoric of

⁶²³ Ibid. See also, Kobayashi Shinzō, *Inu* (Tokyo: Maruzen, 1929); Suzuki Tokichirō, *Inu wo kau chishiki to jitsueki* (Tokyo: Bunshō Shōin, 1929).

⁶²⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 22, 1936.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., June 15, 1934.

civilization and scientific racism.”⁶²⁶ Indigenous dogs were conceptualized into the hierarchy of civilization in the new era of imperialism. Native populations adopted this language and came to regard Western dogs as having “attributes worthy of imperial power.”⁶²⁷ In this context, the Western dog was purebred, thoroughly domesticated but powerful. In contrast, the native dog was primitive, wild, and aggressive but cowardly, and without a pedigree.

Influenced by such notions, the modern Japanese state designated certain native dogs, such as the *shiba* and elevated their status to “national dogs.” Along with Western pure-bred canines, the Japanese dogs were displayed as emblems of civilization in the peninsula. In the 1920s, dog shows and exhibitions featured canines of British, German, and Japanese origins, but there was no mention of Korea’s indigenous dogs.⁶²⁸ Thus, in colonial Korea, foreign dogs were displayed as emblems of civilization, discipline, intelligence, superior genes, and attractive physical traits, while the indigenous dog was categorically left out of the modern. In this context, canines came to be associated with their national origins, with the assumption that clear national origins indicated the pure-blood status of the canines. In 1926, *Tonga ilbo* reported on the abundance of domesticated dogs in P’yŏngyang, which were of superior breeds because there were more Japanese, Chinese, and Russian dogs than indigenous dogs.⁶²⁹

These conceptions did not serve to change the existing custom of regarding dogs as

⁶²⁶ Aaron H. Skabelund, “The Native Dog and the Colonial Dog,” in *Empire of Dogs: Canines, Japan, and the Making of the Modern Imperial World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 18.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶²⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, July 29, 1923 and Oct. 20, 1923.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 19, 1926.

domesticated livestock by the rest of the populace. If any dog could attain the status of a “pet,” it was only the breeds from Western and Japanese origins. The colonial elites’ conceptualization of canines reinforced the notion that native dogs were mere domesticated livestock. Those who kept dogs as pets were a minority of the minority, consisting primarily of Westerners and upper class Koreans and Japanese, indicating that unlike the case of Europe, the animal protection campaign in Korea occurred without a substantial culture of dogs as pets in the bourgeois sense. Had the campaign endorsed the native dogs as possible candidates in the “pet” category and encouraged the populace to reconsider their domesticated dogs as pets, the outcome may have been different. But the campaign did not, because even for the bourgeoisie who called for animal welfare, the native dogs were deemed insufficient to be elevated to the status of a “pet dog” in the bourgeois household.

Tensions on the Ground: Elitism of the Animal Campaign

On June 10, 1929, *Tonga ilbo* reported on an incident involving a 43 year-old patrolman named Yi Anch’il who was hired by the Animal Protection Society to deter instances of animal cruelty on the streets.⁶³⁰ He was preaching animal welfare to a hackman in front of Kyōngsōng station when the enraged hackman, together with other hackmen beat Yi until he dropped unconscious. A passerby saved his life by taking him to the Severance Hospital, but during his treatment, his three-year-old son, who had been gravely ill, died. Yi’s fate in the society’s campaign was not exceptional. Matsuzaki Matagorō (松崎又五郎), the director of the Animal Protection Society who was also a livestock technician (*ch’uksan kisu*) in the City of Kyōngsōng, lamented how their efforts were often

⁶³⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, June 10, 1929.

met with physical violence by the lower class.⁶³¹ Upon hearing the society's preachings, hackmen retorted, "This is my horse so it is none of your business how I use it or if I slaughter it" or "I will do as I please. How dare you have the nerve to interfere?"

The antagonistic response led society's members to frame the animal problem as a "Korea problem." The society argued that historically, Chosŏn lacked compassion for animals.⁶³² Dogs were killed with unusual cruelty by having their tongues cut off. Likewise, chickens had their wings torn off alive. As with other *shakai mondai* identified in the peninsula, the animal problem lay in the Korean lower class. Madam Kainō (戒能千枝, Kainō Chie), whose husband Kainō Yoshishige (戒能義重, 1871- ?), was an English Professor and the director of the Kyōngsŏng Imperial University Preparatory School, explained, "Not a single person who respects life exists in the lower stratum of Chōsen society due to the absence of education and religion."⁶³³ According to her, the Korean lower class was generally prone to violence and cruelty not just toward animals but also toward people. She admitted that the problem was, to a certain degree caused by poverty, but it still appalled her to see Korean children playing with the dead bodies of dogs and cats, while their parents watched them in admiration. "Koreans foster cruelty from childhood," she explained. Madam Kainō further stated that her involvement in the animal campaign inevitably compelled her to frequently come in personal contact with the Korean lower class, indicating that the animal campaign was one of the few realms where an upper-class settler woman directly interacted with the Korean lower class. In 1930, Madam Kainō allegedly

⁶³¹ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 28.

⁶³² "Chōsen dōbutsu gyakutai hōshikai ni tsuite," 29-31.

⁶³³ Kainō Hujin, "Dōbutsu aigo ni tsuite," *Chōsen oyobi Manshū* 262 (Sept. 1, 1929): 85.

died from a heatstroke in the midst of carrying for a sick horse in the sun.⁶³⁴

Her account suggests that the animal movement only targeted the Korean lower class that earned wages with work animals. Strictly speaking, the animal campaign should have addressed all forms of animal mistreatment, since its general slogan was to end any cruelty inflicted on animals, but it did not. It was inconceivable to the activists that animal abuse could take place in more “modern” realms, such as those of the veterinarian community, the military, as well as the police. Because the movement assumed that animal abuse was occurring only in the lower sectors of society, that modern professions could also inflict cruelty on animals was unthinkable. Hence, modern professionals in medicine, commerce, government, and the military were never considered as part of the populace in need of *kyōka*. Instead, they joined the animal campaigns as promoters because they were viewed as individuals that had already attained civilized status evidenced by their modern professions.

In the society’s 1938 annual meeting which was held in Tōksu Palace, members reported a total of 1,367 instances of animal cruelty in the previous year.⁶³⁵ 165 were instances of cart overload, 185 involved employing sick horses; 259 involved employing malnourished horses; 522 were cases of physical abuse; 91 were failures to provide animals with water on public roads; 67 involved employing horses without proper horseshoes; and 46 were miscellaneous acts of animal cruelty. 34 of the cases were reported to the police, while in 195 instances, the members successfully persuaded the hackmen to unload the overweight cart. The report stated that the society should look into unlicensed

⁶³⁴ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 27.

⁶³⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, June 15, 1938.

veterinarians' unlawful handling of animals as a potential site of animal abuse. These statistics illustrate just how narrowly the society construed its animal campaign in colonial Korea.

Its members went even further to assert that humane treatment of animals contributed to national security and that work animals could be mobilized for war.⁶³⁶ Keeping the peninsula's animals healthy was vital for the Japanese empire, especially because Chosŏn was surrounded by Russia and China that posed as formidable threats. They also argued that animal welfare was economically practical, as the presence of 1,000 cows and horses in the colonial capital, was an enormous financial asset to the empire.⁶³⁷

Thus, the animal campaign reproduced the capitalist stratification of Korean society, where only those who engaged in "primitive" professions, such as hackmen could inflict cruelty on animals. By and large, the moral suasion campaign consisted of individuals from the most privileged sector of colonial Korea, who preached their love for animals to the lower class, oblivious to the possibility that cultured groups like themselves could also be prone to animal abuse. In 1933, Kim Chongho, a member of the society, was reported to the police for beating his maid.⁶³⁸ Kim, who not only owned a company but also a pet cat, had severely beaten his maid after discovering that she had not properly cooked the meat that was to be served to his cat. When the incident became known to the maid's father, a factory worker, he mobilized his colleagues and barged into the society's meeting hall, and exposed Kim's atrocious behavior to all. But his shouts could not change the society's conviction that only the lower class could display acts of cruelty.

⁶³⁶ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 26.

⁶³⁷ Kainō Hujin, 86.

⁶³⁸ Kim Chongho, "Kwangmyōng ūl ōtki kkaji," *Chōsen shuppan keisatsu geppō*, no. 55 (Mar. 6, 1933).

Tensions on the Ground: The Hackmen of the City

An additional challenge for the animal campaign was that unlike other *shakai jigyō* that aimed at improving the lives of members of the lower class targeted for *kyōka*, it adversely affected the lives of the lower class that were targeted for moral suasion. For instance, unlike the bathing campaign which purported to bring better health and an improved lifestyle for the populace, the animal protection movement preached social welfare for the same of animals, not humans. In this respect, the animal campaign was fundamentally different in nature from other moral suasion campaigns of the colonial era. The campaign activities often posed as direct threats to the lower class' means of livelihood. Members got in the way of hackmen delivering goods to places. Since hackmen typically received compensation upon delivery, the activism prevented them from earning wages from their daily tasks. If police got involved, the hackmen were subject to fines or detainment, in which case they would suffer serious losses.⁶³⁹

In fact, the colonial capital was not an amenable place for hackmen and their work animals. The modern traffic regulations enacted by the GGK made it illegal to park or unload goods from wagons in congested areas.⁶⁴⁰ For the hackmen and their animals, the modern regulation was impractical, and often impossible to follow. The colonial capital did not have designated parking spots for animal carts; neither were there bicycle lanes or walkways for commuters. The city's streets displayed a zigzag pattern of humans, animal carts, bicycles, and trains, requiring a skillful maneuvering to avoid accidents. Collusions were common, as well as instances of hackmen and their animals falling in hilly places that resulted in serious

⁶³⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, July 20, 1933.

⁶⁴⁰ Yi Chongmin, "1910-nyōndae Kyōngsōng chumindül ūi 'choe' wa 'pōl,'" 105.

injuries.

To unload goods, the carts had to be left temporarily on the streets, which meant that animals were left alone for some time. In these situations, animals acted in unpredictable ways, which created all sorts of accidents in the congested city. In 1927, when two horses began fighting on the bridge, a woman dropped her baby from the bridge when she tried to dodge them.⁶⁴¹ The responsible hackman was arrested for negligence and homicide. In another case, a hackman died from a kick by his agitated horse on a crowded street.⁶⁴² Taking animals around the city with heavily-loaded goods was a dangerous venture for the workers. There was much at stake should an accident arise, since they could face criminal prosecution and job loss upon a spontaneous act by their animals. And to keep their animals under control, the hackmen frequently resorted to beating them to submission.

Unfortunately, Animal Protection Society members were oblivious to the realities of what it was like for the lower class to work in the city with animals. Hence, they did not succeed in reaching the Korean populace with their ideas. The hostile reaction by the lower class obliged the society to defend its cause with unusual force, with the director claiming that the colonial laws should be amended to bestow the society's patrolmen with police authority (*keisatsuken*).⁶⁴³

But as the director himself acknowledged, the organization diminished into a social club for the elite (*shikōkai*) where prominent politicians, businessmen, and their wives

⁶⁴¹ *Tonga ilbo*, July 19, 1927.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*, May 1, 1935.

⁶⁴³ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 26.

gathered informally in private.⁶⁴⁴ The society praised those who expressed particular affection for animals, and held annual meetings in lavish sites such as the Chosŏn Hotel, while the rest of the populace was mobilized for total war.⁶⁴⁵ In 1940, members gathered at Kyŏngsŏng Hotel to discuss whether animal butchery should be curbed for alternative food sources in the height of war.⁶⁴⁶ In the early 1930s, the society was even able to use airplanes to distribute leaflets for the sole purpose of explaining to the populace that their “blue cross” mark, which derived from Britain’s animal protection movement, was not to be confused with the Red Cross symbol.⁶⁴⁷ That the group had the means—funds, social connections, and government approval—to employ airplanes is remarkable. Unfortunately, these efforts were in vain, further attested by the fact that upon liberation, it took nearly half a decade for another animal campaign to surface in the peninsula, with no one remembering its origins in the colonial period.

4. The Colonial Apparatus of Animal Categorization: Discovering Imperial Animals

Imperial Animals: The Modern Zoo

While the GGK largely stood in the background and permitted the activities of the Animal Protection Society until 1944, this did not mean that the colonial state remained out of the colonial animal campaigns. In fact, the GGK was engaged in its own animal campaign that attempted to transform the way Koreans thought about animals. The first area was the zoo.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., 22, 25.

⁶⁴⁵ *Maeil sinbo*, May 30, 1937.

⁶⁴⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, May 26, 1940.

⁶⁴⁷ Matsuzaki Matagorō, 26-27.

On November 1, 1909, Korea's first modern zoo and botanical garden opened its doors to the public for a fee of 10 chŏn for adults and 5 chŏn for children. Located in the grounds of the former royal Ch'anggyŏng Palace, the zoo exhibited a total of 361 animals, including 29 species of mammals and 43 species of birds consisting of bears, tigers, camels, monkeys, parrots, cranes, and hawks.⁶⁴⁸ Earlier, Japan had opened its first modern zoo in Ueno Park in 1882. Originally, the zoo and the botanical garden had been designed for the entertainment of Emperor Sunjong (r. 1907-10). However, the GGK opened the premise to the public for civic education. Likewise, Korean newspapers described the zoo as a site of social *kyōka*.⁶⁴⁹ Within two months, the zoo attracted 15,000 visitors.⁶⁵⁰ By 1921, the zoo was attracting 239,750 visitors annually.

The Ch'anggyŏng Palace Zoo was a showcase of Japan's accomplishments in the peninsula, which was seen as a destitute land without any greens or trees.⁶⁵¹ As Ian J. Miller has argued, Japan's modern zoos had an imperial character to them, in which the empire's success was measured by the number of imported animals.⁶⁵² Within a day, colonial subjects could tour the zoo and witness the modern regime's successful disciplining of nature. The zoo also functioned to discipline the daily behavior of the urban populace. Regulations forbade drunk, insane, or unsightly-dressed persons from entering its premises,

⁶⁴⁸ *Han kyŏre sinmun*, Mar. 21, 1995.

⁶⁴⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, May 1, 1921.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Feb. 14, 1925 and May 1, 1921.

⁶⁵¹ Sŏ T'aejŏng, "Taehan chegukki ilche ūi tongmulwŏn sŏllip kwa kŭ sŏngkyŏk," *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndaesa yŏn'gu* 68 (Mar. 2014): 10.

⁶⁵² Ian J. Miller, *The Nature of the Beasts: Empire and Exhibition at the Tokyo Imperial Zoo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

and the entrance fee further worked to filter the admission of undesirable people.⁶⁵³ Nevertheless, the zoo was highly popular even in the mid 1930s when Japan was mobilizing the peninsula, and functioned as a site of moral suasion in the form of public entertainment throughout the colonial era.⁶⁵⁴ Sometimes, the zoo extended its hours precipitating all sorts of festivals nearby that offered movie showings, music, stage performances, and luminous light shows into the night.⁶⁵⁵

The zoo introduced a novel way of understanding the natural environment that was different from the conventional use of animals for food and agricultural purposes. It introduced a new form of animal commodity. For the first time, a large number of the Korean populace was exposed to exotic animals, such as pelicans, camels, and hippopotamuses, and learned how to consume animals in the form of viewing them in a disciplined setting.⁶⁵⁶ The disciplining occurred for both the viewer and the viewed. Animals were properly restrained in their cages in the middle of the city, while the visitors followed the rituals of paying an entrance fee, entering the zoo, and moving from exhibition to exhibition to watch the animals neatly categorized according to their species.

The Disciplining of Animal Slaughter, Exportation, and the Rise of Meat Consumption

Outside the zoo, the meat industry was undergoing modernization. In the Chosŏn Dynasty, meat processing had been monopolized by *paekchŏng*, an outcast group with very

⁶⁵³ Sŏ T'aejŏng, 35.

⁶⁵⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 13, 1935.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid. See also, *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 9, 1935.

⁶⁵⁶ *Maeil sinbo*, May 26, 1921; *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 26, 1927.

low status in the Confucian social hierarchy.⁶⁵⁷ During the Taehan Empire (1897-1910), the Chosŏn state enacted the Regulation on Butcher Shops (*P'osa kyuch'ik*), which required butcheries to obtain licenses and pay taxes.⁶⁵⁸ From this time on, the state gradually eliminated *paekchŏng's* monopoly of meat processing. During the protectorate period, another regulation on butchery (*Tosu kyuch'ik*) restricted the butchering of cows, horses, and pigs to certain regions designated by the state, and created meat inspectors to ensure that the rules were complied with.⁶⁵⁹ These regions were developed into state-controlled slaughterhouses in the colonial era. In 1910, there were 1,089 state-managed slaughterhouses in the peninsula, which expanded to 1,936 slaughterhouses in 1915 and declined to 1,381 in 1930.⁶⁶⁰ The slaughtering of animals had come directly under state surveillance.

In this context, Korea's first modern veterinary institutions appeared. Under the 1909 Quarantine Law on Cattle Export, the Quarantine Station for Cattle Export (Such'ul U Kŏmyŏkso) and Rinderpest Antiserum Manufacture Institute (Uyŏk Hyŏlch'ŏng Chejoso) were established.⁶⁶¹ These institutions were designed to prevent the exportation of diseased cows to Japan, when it was believed that Korean cows that were sent to Japan after

⁶⁵⁷ The subsequent development of state-controlled slaughterhouses ended *paekchŏng's* traditional monopoly of butchery and led to the deterioration of their livelihood as the meat industry expanded in the colonial era. See Joong-Seop Kim, "In Search of Human Rights: The Paekchŏng Movement in Colonial Korea," in Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999): 317.

⁶⁵⁸ *Chosŏn wangjo sillok*, Kojong 34, year 33 (Jan. 18, 1896).

⁶⁵⁹ *Ilŏngnok*, Yunghŭi era, year 3 (Aug. 21, 1909).

⁶⁶⁰ Yi Sŏngdo, "Yŏksa sok sigyuk munhwa wa tongmul poho," in *Suŭi kwahak kŏmyŏk chŏngbo* (Kimch'ŏn: Nongnim Ch'uksan Kŏmyŏk Ponbu, 2007). See also, *Maeil sinbo*, Oct. 23, 1941.

⁶⁶¹ Sim Yujŏng, et al., "Kŭndae suŭi chŏnmun kigwan ŭi sŏllip kwajŏng kwa yŏksajŏk ŭimi: Such'ul U Kŏmyŏkso wa Uyŏk Hyŏlch'ŏng Chejoso rŭl chungsim ŭro," *Nongŏpsa yŏn'gu* 10, no. 1 (Sept. 2001): 76-77.

the Sino-Japanese War, were disease-ridden. From early on, Japan saw the peninsula's cows as a promising food supply for the metropole. Between 1902 and 1922, 32 surveys were conducted across the peninsula to research the status of Korean livestock and disease transmission in agricultural regions.⁶⁶² In 1897, 950 cows were exported to Japan at a price of 15,570 yen. The number increased to 10,927 cows in 1915; 55,326 in 1920; 68,421 in 1935, and reaching its peak at the height of war with 80,049 cows in 1940.⁶⁶³

As cattle exports to the metropole increased, the sort of quarantine station that was located in Pusan appeared in other port cities, such as Inch'ŏn, Chinnamp'o, Wŏnsan, and Sŏngjin. The 1932 Regulation of the Prevention of Chosŏn Livestock Disease permitted the Governor-General of Korea to quarantine any region he deemed fit.⁶⁶⁴ Subsequently in 1942, the Livestock Sanitation Research Center (Kach'uk Wisaeng Yŏn'guso) was established in Sihŭng, Kyŏnggi Province, which laid the foundation for the present-day Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency of the South Korean government.⁶⁶⁵ Prior to the adoption of such modern institutions that dealt with animal diseases, animal illnesses had been treated by shamanistic ceremonies. The colonial developments paved the ground for the subsequent development of veterinarian institutions and quarantine agencies in the post-liberation era.⁶⁶⁶

As state management of meat processing became the norm, meat consumption

⁶⁶² Ibid., 78.

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 81.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid., 80.

⁶⁶⁵ *Chōsen Sōtokufu, Chōsen Sōtokufu kanpō*, no. 4607 (June 6, 1942).

⁶⁶⁶ For a study of colonial cattle management in English, see Lim Chaisung, "Korean Cattle and Colonial Modernization in the Japanese Empire: From 'Cattle of the Peninsula' to 'Cattle of the Empire,'" *Korea Journal* 55, no. 2 (Summer 2015): 11-38.

increased in the colonial era until 1941, when the GGK restricted the sale of beef.⁶⁶⁷ However, meat consumption, especially beef, was a luxury not available to all. It was mostly in the cities where much of the processed meat was consumed. In 1935, a *Chosŏn ilbo* article commented on the concentration of meat consumption in the colonial capital. It stated, “In July alone, 1,832 cows, 1,441 pigs, and 7 horses totaling 3,280, have been consumed by the city’s residents. This amounts to 218,373.7 yen. Compared to last July, the city consumed 238 more cows and 351 pigs. Without a doubt, Kyŏngsŏng is a city of carnivores.”⁶⁶⁸ The reason that meat consumption centered on the cities was, in part, due to the increase of restaurants in urban areas.⁶⁶⁹ *Pulgogi* and *sukiyaki* were especially popular dishes for urban elites. For the rest, cows were considered valuable working household assets, where consuming them as meat was unthinkable for most, even on celebratory days such as weddings.⁶⁷⁰ Nevertheless, it was the colonial era when meat dishes became more accessible to the public by the rise of the modern slaughterhouses. These developments set the foundation for the expansion of the meat industry in the post-liberation era and the invention of *pulgogi* as a traditional dish of the Korean nation.

⁶⁶⁷ Yi Kyujin, 66. For statistics on meat consumption in the colonial era, see Yi Kyujin, 60-62.

⁶⁶⁸ *Chosŏn ilbo*, Aug. 8, 1935.

⁶⁶⁹ Yi Kyujin, 67, 77.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

The Natural Monument and the Classification of Imperial Animals

“Description” has been central... in the colonial discourse. It was by assembling a monstrous machinery of descriptions...that the colonial discourse was able to classify and ideologically master the colonial subject, enabling itself to transform the descriptively verifiable multiplicity and difference into the ideologically felt hierarchy of value.

Aijaz Ahmad, “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory’” (1987)⁶⁷¹

Outside the zoo, the colonial state was also engaged in the ambitious project of identifying and classifying the peninsula’s animals. As noted by Hyung Il Pai, Japanese colonialists took great efforts to excavate and “discover” the culture and history of Chosŏn, leading to the development of modern archeology.⁶⁷² Likewise, the peninsula’s animals were “discovered” and categorized into species as part of the modern classification apparatus. To the colonialists, the premodern Chosŏn state lacked the means to control its natural resources. Like Western imperialists, Japan saw its colony as a barren wilderness with great potential to be a natural reserve for the metropole; hence in need of greater management than done by the premodern state.

The project involved discovering animals worthy of being classified as imperial treasures (*munhwajae*) and transforming them into natural monuments (*ch’ŏnyŏn kinyŏmmul*) in need of state and civic protection. The Chosŏn Cultural Artifacts, Scenic Heritage, and Natural Monuments Protection Act (1933) authorized the designation of certain animals and plants as natural monuments, and announced that they would be managed by the state.⁶⁷³ In 1934, the GGK announced 250 imperial treasures, of which 21

⁶⁷¹ Aijaz Ahmad, “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory,’” *Social Text* 17 (Fall 1987): 6.

⁶⁷² Hyung Il Pai, *Constructing “Korean” Origins; A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-Formation Theories* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

⁶⁷³ Yu Sünghoon, “Ilche sigi munhwajae pohobŏp ūi ‘chungjŏm poho chuŭi’ wa ‘p’ogwaljŏk pŏpche e kwanhayŏ,” *Yŏksa minsokhak* 17 (Dec. 2003): 312.

animals and plants were designated as natural monuments.⁶⁷⁴

Aaron H. Skabelund has argued that the natural monument campaign of the 1930s involved a search for a “pure Korean dog” that could become the symbol of Chosŏn.⁶⁷⁵ Already in 1931, Saitō Hirokichi (齋藤弘吉, 1900-64), founder of Japan’s Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Dog, had discovered the Akita dog, after years of traveling to remote regions of the archipelago to locate purebred dogs and campaign for their protection.⁶⁷⁶ The Society expanded its work into the colonies, Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria. In 1937, Saitō Hirokichi, together with Miyoshi Manabu (三好學, 1862-1939), a Tokyo Imperial University botanist, received the help of a Kyōngsŏng Imperial University zoologist and discovered the Chindo dog in the southwest coast of Korea, which had “sporting pricked-up ears and curled tails,” just like Japan’s native dog.⁶⁷⁷ In the same year, the Chindo dog was elevated to the status of a natural monument.⁶⁷⁸ In 1942, the P’ungsan dog, another indigenous canine found in the northern regions of the peninsula, also attained the title of “natural monument.”⁶⁷⁹

Skabelund has observed that the nationalization of the two indigenous dogs was a facet of colonial modernity, in which the GGK assigned imperial meanings on to the local

⁶⁷⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, May 3, 1934.

⁶⁷⁵ See his following chapter. Aaron H. Skabelund, “Fascism’s Furry Friends: The Loyal Dog Hachiko and the Creation of the Japanese Dog,” in *Empire of Dogs*, 87-128.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁶⁷⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, June 10, 1937.

⁶⁷⁹ Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs*, 106.

dogs to naturalize colonial rule and further assimilation.⁶⁸⁰ At the popular level, however, it seems that the Chindo and the P'ungsan dogs did not receive special treatment. Sources do not discuss them, other than the fact that they attained natural monument status.⁶⁸¹ It seems that they were treated no differently from the other indigenous dogs in the peninsula, even with their elevated status by the colonial state. Rather, it was in the post-liberation era when the South and North Korean governments endorsed this colonial categorization to designate the dogs as national dogs, in which the public began to see the dogs as having a special status in the nation.

The GJK's search for imperial animals native to Chosŏn was met with enthusiasm by the Korean press, which explained that this was necessary for industrial and scientific development.⁶⁸² The press called for a thorough investigation of the peninsula to find all hidden plants and animals, and place them under state protection. The GJK's activities set the ground for the post-liberation state management of the peninsula's animals. Animals began to be conceived under the rubric of modernization and national progress from the colonial era, a notion that complimented South Korea's nation-building in subsequent decades. While *shakai kyōka* leaders took measures to enforce the preservation of natural monuments in their respective local communities, by punishing those who destroyed or failed to protect them,⁶⁸³ the real *kyōka* effect of the colonial categorizations took place in the post-liberation era. The colonial developments were significant in that they set the ground for postcolonial disciplining of the populace in their interaction with the peninsula's

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁸¹ For instance, see *Tonga ilbo*, June 10, 1937.

⁶⁸² *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 22, 1936.

⁶⁸³ Ibid., July 20, 1938.

animals. In the colonial era, another campaign had a more immediate impact on the society, which concerned the peninsula's dogs.

5. Sanitizing, Disciplining, and Mobilizing Dogs for Empire

The Dog Crushing Campaign

Exported cattle and animals butchered for meat were not the only ones targeted by the hygienic campaign. The indigenous dogs that George Gilmore had witnessed in the 1890s came under the target of the GGK. In January of 1909, the Regulation of Domestic Dogs (*Ch'ukkyŏn tansok kyusok*) was enacted which provided that any unrestrained dog, if discovered, would be exterminated by the police.⁶⁸⁴ Their bodies were sent off to Ch'anggyŏng Palace and fed to the animals in the zoo. This was only the beginning. Throughout the colonial era, the GGK conducted a series of crackdowns on roaming dogs and initiated vaccination campaigns for rabies prevention. Dogs that wandered on the streets without identifiable owners were massacred under the slogan of "Stray Dog Crushing" (*yagyŏn paksal*) authorized by the Regulation of Domesticated Dog Control (*Ch'ukkyŏn ch'wich'e kyuch'ik*). In 1931, the total number of canines eradicated across the peninsula under the dog crushing campaign was 20,237.⁶⁸⁵ By 1938, dogs that were captured and killed under this campaign amounted to 39,992 in South Kyŏngsang Province alone.⁶⁸⁶

The justification provided by the GGK was that it protected the populace from

⁶⁸⁴ *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, Jan. 25, 1909; *Taehan maeil sinbo*, Jan. 25, 1909.

⁶⁸⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 2, 1931.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Mar. 18, 1938.

animal-transmitted diseases, especially rabies.⁶⁸⁷ In 1921, the regulation on the sale of rabies medicine was amended to be offered free of charge for those who could not afford the vaccinations.⁶⁸⁸ As with the case of the hygienic campaign that enforced sanitation in public areas and private homes, the colonial hygienic police (*wisaeng kyŏngch'al*) took on the role of vaccinating domesticated dogs and removing roaming dogs from the streets.⁶⁸⁹ The local police departments also provided the rabies vaccinations. Ironically, it was the modern police that massacred stray dogs, while simultaneously assisting the Animal Protection Society's campaign to prevent cruelty on the streets. This was a moment when the twin aims of modernity—sanitation and animal protection—came into direct conflict; with the latter clearly sacrificed for the former. Interestingly, the Animal Protection Society remained completely silent about the dog massacre that was occurring in colonial Korea. Not a single mention of the dog crushing campaign was found in their publications.

As the upper class kept pet dogs in their modern homes and the Animal Society lectured on compassion for animals, the fear of rabid, unruly dogs grew. Newspapers featured horror stories of dogs suddenly attacking people.⁶⁹⁰ Rumor had it that there were eight to nine cases of dog bites that occurred daily in the colonial capital.⁶⁹¹ This seems to have been an exaggerated number, since in a 1930 statistics provided by the GGK, there were 80 instances of people bitten by rabid dogs in the entire peninsula, resulting in 20

⁶⁸⁷ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 4, 1924.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Dec. 7, 1921.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 18, 1938.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, June 25, 1937.

⁶⁹¹ *Ibid.*, May 30, 1922.

deaths.⁶⁹² The government statistics also revealed that the total number of rabid animals in the peninsula was 734, of which 650 consisted of dogs and 84 of cows. While the number of rabid animals decreased to 297 in 1937, there were a total of 1,143 injuries and 24 deaths.⁶⁹³

The widespread fear of rabid dogs was aggravated by a severe shortage in the availability of vaccines, even with the police department's free distributions.⁶⁹⁴ Simply put, there were not enough vaccinations to go around to all of the peninsula's dogs. For instance, in 1937, the colonial state manufactured 20,000 grams of vaccine, but this covered only 60,000 dogs when it was reported that there were over 130,000 dogs in the peninsula.⁶⁹⁵ The dog crushing campaign was an alternative solution; to sanitize dogs through extermination. In 1931 where 47,337 dogs were vaccinated, 20,237 stray dogs were exterminated under the dog crushing campaign.⁶⁹⁶ In particular, the GGK took exceptional care to eliminate roaming dogs in Japanese residential neighborhoods like Yongsan.⁶⁹⁷ It is not difficult to see why the animal protection campaign failed to resonate in the Korean populace. The colonial authorities were treating dogs as pests that required extermination and authorizing massacres under the banner of hygiene and public health.

⁶⁹² *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 2, 1931.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, June 26, 1937.

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, May 23, 1921.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, June 26, 1937.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1931.

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1924.

The Dog Tax Controversy

A hidden agenda of the dog crushing campaign was to identify tax evaders. From 1909, the state began collecting dog tax (*ch'ukkyōnse*) from those who kept dogs in their household.⁶⁹⁸ It was a highly unpopular tax from the beginning. The enactment led people to abandon their domesticated dogs, and the alleged number of dog ownership declined by 60 percent. Nevertheless, the tax continued to be imposed on the populace. In 1917, a *Maeil sinbo* article stated that the dog tax would be increased to two yen in order to finance the rabies campaign.⁶⁹⁹ In 1922, the city of Kyōngsōng set the amount to 3 yen per year, and collected the tax from the owners of 1,186 canines.⁷⁰⁰

Initially, the dog tax was only implemented in the colonial capital. However, local governments in other regions of Korea began to consider implementing the tax. In 1917, North Kyōngsang Province contemplated the adoption of the dog tax in order to fill financial deficiencies in the local government. At the time, it was estimated that there were a total of 20,000 dogs in the region, of which 15,000 had identifiable owners, and the plan was to collect 25 chōn (0.25 yen) per dog.⁷⁰¹ In 1928, Pusan generated the revenue of 1,392 yen by taxing the owners of 696 dogs.⁷⁰² P'yōngyang implemented its own dog tax in 1918, followed by Chōnju in 1923 which collected 1 yen from dog owners and 3.5 yen from hackmen with work animals.⁷⁰³ Likewise, Wōnsan enacted the dog tax in 1926, followed by

⁶⁹⁸ *Hwangsōng sinmun*, July 21, 1909.

⁶⁹⁹ *Maeil sinbo*, Apr. 19, 1917.

⁷⁰⁰ *Tonga ilbo*, May 30, 1922.

⁷⁰¹ *Maeil sinbo*, Feb. 7, 1919.

⁷⁰² *Pusan ilbo*, Sept. 5, 1928.

⁷⁰³ *Maeil sinbo*, May 14, 1918; *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 27, 1926.

Hamhŭng Province in 1931, and Haeju, South Hwanghae Province in 1936.⁷⁰⁴

The colonial administration had problems enforcing the tax, due to many evaders and the difficulty in determining who actually owned dogs. In 1930 Kyŏngsŏng, 710 dogs were subject to the tax, generating revenue of 2,130 yen.⁷⁰⁵ This was an increase of 846 yen and 282 more taxed dogs from the previous year, but a significant decline from the 1,370 dogs registered with the city in 1923, indicating that people abandoned their dogs to avoid paying the taxes.⁷⁰⁶ *Maeil sinbo* remarked on the difficulty of imposing this tax: “How can government officials catch the evaders? They cannot possibly follow every dog. Even if they do, it is difficult to know which household the dog belongs to.”⁷⁰⁷ The article presumed that Kyŏngsŏng had about 2,000 dogs, with only a third of their owners identified. An earlier article by *Tonga ilbo* estimated the number of dogs which were “fed” by people to be over 10,000.⁷⁰⁸

As a solution, the GJK tried to determine ownership by ordering the police to identify dog owners when distributing the rabies vaccinations. This was a cleverly devised plan. If a person did not want his dog to catch rabies, he had to register with the state, which in turn, compelled him to pay the dog tax. It was a catch-22. As for the dog crushing campaign, it was an opportunity for the colonial state to accomplish the twin aims of hygienic reform and the taxation of the populace. Before embarking on the crushing, the police department would forewarn Korean household to keep their dogs in the yard or place

⁷⁰⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 27, 1926; *Maeil sinbo*, July 11, 1931 and Apr. 5, 1936.

⁷⁰⁵ *Maeil sinbo*, Feb. 6, 1930.

⁷⁰⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 27, 1923.

⁷⁰⁷ *Maeil sinbo*, Feb. 6, 1930.

⁷⁰⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, May 30, 1922.

identification tags around their neck.⁷⁰⁹ The police stressed that any roaming dog unregistered with the police and without a proper identification tag would be deemed “stray” (*yagyōn*) and immediately killed.⁷¹⁰

As Aaron Skabelund stated, the dog tax was a Western import designed to encourage those who could not afford to pay tax to turn their dogs in for extermination.⁷¹¹ In 1893, Nagasaki officials implemented a dog tax from 1893 after a rabies outbreak, and authorized dogcatchers to destroy any unregistered canine. Because the campaign was such a success in Japan, it was extended to the colonies to fight rabies. In the colonial setting, however, it was not dogcatchers and pounds that handled the extermination, but the police.

Yagyōn versus Ch’ukkyōn

The dog crushing campaign and the dog tax were simultaneous attempts to discipline the populace by a modern regime to use canines to discipline the populace. The effect was to create two categories of dogs; the domesticated dog (*ch’ukkyōn*), which was to be managed by the state through the dog tax and registration, versus the stray dog (*yagyōn*), which was to be exterminated by the state. In this respect, modernity required state validation in order for any animal to continue its existence, whether it be wildlife, zoo animals, domesticated dogs, or livestock. Only the animals that earned the validation of the state as natural monuments, modern spectacles, or as legitimate properties, could join the humans in the grand march toward civilization. The rest were deemed illegal on the colonial landscape and eliminated accordingly. Modernity found no contradiction in preaching

⁷⁰⁹ *Tonga ilbo*, May 28, 1925.

⁷¹⁰ *Maeil sinbo*, Feb. 6, 1930.

⁷¹¹ Aaron H. Skabelund, “Civilizing Canines; Or, Domesticating and Destroying Dogs,” in *Empire of Dogs*, 81.

animal welfare to the lower class, while slaughtering the animals owned by those who refused to pay taxes.

For the general populace, this was a major change from the traditional way dogs were managed and conceptualized. George Gilmore correctly observed in the late nineteenth century that indigenous dogs were left to roam freely on the Korean landscape. This included domesticated dogs, whose owners permitted them to wander freely about. There was no custom of tying dogs in the household yard. Therefore, the colonial government had to take extra measures to mold the populace so that households would confine their dogs to the home. The attempt to control roaming dogs was, in essence, an effort to control the everyday customs of the Korean people. The enactment of the dog tax and the subsequent enforcement mechanisms aimed to cultivate a new norm in Korean society in which stray dogs were not to be tolerated. In addition to the dog registration requirement, any pups born in the household were to be reported to the police within six months of their birth.⁷¹²

Sources indicate that the dog taxes were not well-received by the Korean populace at all. Despite the fact that it applied to all dog owners, Koreans saw it as a special tax for the privileged (*t'ŭksu kyegŭp ūi segŭm*) that should not be applied to the entire population.⁷¹³ Domesticated dogs continued to roam freely about, along with stray dogs, and no one really understood why they had to register and pay tax for keeping a dog in the household, in a society where the populace did not place much significance on dog ownership in the first place, unlike the West, where pet-keeping was widespread. For most Koreans, keeping

⁷¹² *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 4, 1924.

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1933.

domesticated dogs in the household was simply a continuation of the Chosŏn custom of keeping them as livestock. Thus the dog tax resembled the animal protection campaign, an imported Western notion that was incompatible with local norms, and colonial state was implementing a system that seemed incomprehensible to the populace at large. In a 1933 assembly of Chŏnju congressmen, Korean officials demanded that the tax be abolished, calling it a “vicious tax” (*akse*) that burdened farmers.⁷¹⁴ When Hamhŭng Province implemented the tax in 1931, only 453 people came forward saying they owned dogs.⁷¹⁵ Four years later, Hamhŭng abolished its dog tax.⁷¹⁶ P’yŏngyang reduced its dog tax from 3 yen per dog to 1.5 yen because allegedly, city officials could not collect such a high amount from dog owners in the midst of total mobilization.⁷¹⁷

In the post-liberation era, the U.S. Military Government continued to implement the dog tax in South Korea under the 1946 Provincial Taxation Law (number 109).⁷¹⁸ By this time, the tax had increased to 30 yen per dog. Whether it was properly enforced requires further research, but the tax existed until 1949.⁷¹⁹ By the 1970s, the idea of a dog tax had become so remote that only a handful of voices argued that it should be implemented in Korea.⁷²⁰

In retrospect, it turned out that the failed dog tax was not an impediment to the

⁷¹⁴ *Tonga ilbo*, Mar. 30, 1933.

⁷¹⁵ *Maeil sinbo*, Nov. 23, 1931.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 18, 1935.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 11, 1935.

⁷¹⁸ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 15, 1949.

⁷¹⁹ *Chayu sinmun*, May 29, 1949.

⁷²⁰ *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, July 5, 1975.

GGK's control over Korean society and its canines, as the Japanese empire also had the more urgent task of mobilizing humans and resources for the military.

Mobilization of Dogs for the Military

With the Manchurian Incident in 1931 and the new military imperialism in the Japanese empire,⁷²¹ the modern apparatus of animal categorization devised by the GGK took on a new turn. Two policies developed; one that discouraged dog ownership, and the other that encouraged raising dogs for the military. From the mid-1930s, the GGK prohibited lower-class agricultural households from owning dogs, in order to encourage the domestication of chickens and pigs.⁷²² There were too many dogs in the peninsula that were fed by its populace, when people could be raising other animals for the war cause. Provincial governments, such as the South Chōlla Sanitation Department came up with a plan to exterminate dogs so that the number would decrease from 6,268 to 2,843.⁷²³ Under Japan's new militarism, the colonial state began to view the domesticated dogs owned by the Korean masses as a waste of the peninsula's resources. The result was another canine policy of discouraging dog ownership that was at odds with the policy of legitimizing dog ownership and mapping dogs as property to be taxed.

The slogan remained the same; the need to control animal diseases for sanitation.⁷²⁴ But here, the agenda was to discourage the populace from owning dogs so that they could

⁷²¹ Carter J. Eckert, "Total War, Industrialization, and Social Change in Late Colonial Korea," in Peter Duus, et al., eds., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996): 28-29. See also, Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 55-182.

⁷²² *Tonga ilbo*, Sept. 6, 1935.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, May 10, 1935.

spend more of their energy on raising animals that could supply the military with food. In 1936, as part of the Rural Revitalization Campaign, South Chōlla Province initiated the movement to eliminate the “unproductive” acts of dog-raising and replace it with the raising of pigs.⁷²⁵ The city of Sunch’ōn purchased 1,145 dogs from their owners and massacred them. In turn, the owners bought piglets with the money they received from the city. In 1938, the Sanitary Department of the Pusan Police exterminated 39,992 dogs and heightened the criteria for dog ownership by requiring authorization from the police for those who wanted to keep their dogs.⁷²⁶ Unauthorized dogs would be treated as stray and eliminated. From June 1, 1935, police permit was required to domesticate more than three dogs, horses, or pigs in the cities of Kyōngsōng, Inch’ōn and Kaesōng.⁷²⁷

Militarism also created a new use of the peninsula’s dogs; namely as military dogs (*kunyong kyōn*). Under this policy, the GJK began to encourage people to raise dogs for the military, indicating that while there was the policy of discouraging dog ownership, military dogs would be treated differently. The military established the Imperial Military Dog Association (Cheguk Kunyong Kyōn Hyōphoe), which held series of military dog competitions in the 1930s to generate awareness and support from the colony.⁷²⁸ Canines were carefully evaluated and the qualified dogs received a certification.⁷²⁹ Dogs that were qualified as “military dogs” could be exempt from the dog tax.

Yet, the number of dogs that actually qualified as “military dogs” was very small. As

⁷²⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, Feb. 11, 1936.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, Mar. 18, 1938.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, May 10, 1935.

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1939.

⁷²⁹ *Maeil sinbo*, Sept. 17, 1933.

a solution, from the mid-1930s, colonial administrators in various regions took the additional step to abolish the already unpopular dog tax, so that the populace would be and contribute them to the military. These officials had realized that encouraging Koreans to raise dogs for the military was more profitable than trying to collect taxes from dog owners, which was generating meager revenue.⁷³⁰ So, on the one hand, there were local governments that discouraged dog ownership so that other animals deemed useful to the war cause could be raised. On the other hand, there were localities that encouraged the populace to raise “military dogs.”

In 1940, the Imperial Military Dog Association advertised that it would purchase Western dogs of ages between one and three from Kyōngsōng residents.⁷³¹ In this context, another form of moral suasion developed in which the urban elites worked with the colonial authorities to promote foreign imported dogs as the ideal military dog.⁷³² Dogs that were deemed fit for the military included the German Shepherd, Doberman, and the Airedale Terrier.⁷³³ From the 1930s, Korean newspapers had featured Western dogs as being particularly useful to the human race. Articles categorized dogs according to the respective functions each dog played in contributing to human civilization.⁷³⁴ There was the police dog, the military dog, the fighting dog, the rescue dog, and the sheep dog. In Samwōl Department Store, exhibitions featured movies of the military dog for public consumption.⁷³⁵ In the

⁷³⁰ *Maeil sinbo*, Jan. 18, 1935.

⁷³¹ *Tonga ilbo*, June 18, 1940.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1939.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1933.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1934.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1934.

fascist discussions of ultramodern canines, the indigenous dog played no role.

In particular, the German Shepherd came to epitomize the ideal military dog. The GGK encouraged donations of pure-bred male German Shepherds of age one or two years, and also began to raise Shepherds on its own.⁷³⁶ The military veterinarians, who had participated in the Animal Protection Society's campaign against cruelty, was in charge of examining each dog to ensure that the Shepherds were of pure-bred, young, and male. Military dog training centers opened in Yongsan to mobilize the Western canines, while a series of military dog expos were held for the public.⁷³⁷ The Kyōngsōng Pet Dog Fraternity (Kyōngsōng Aegyōn Kurakpu), which sold Western-imported dogs, established a Shepherd demonstration site and held daily shows featuring the employment of Shepherds by the military.⁷³⁸ And the dogs that earned the "military dog" status participated in various military training sessions that were held across the peninsula, such as Inch'ōn, Hwanghae, and P'yōngyang.⁷³⁹

The militarized mobilization of dogs generated, for the first time, a commodification of dogs that went beyond the small enclave of the urban upper class. In 1936, a German Shepherd pup was sold for 50 yen, an amount that was higher than the monthly wage of many urban dwellers.⁷⁴⁰ And from the 1930s, illegal smuggling of the Shepherds across the border became widespread, to a point where the GGK employed hundreds of military dogs

⁷³⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Oct. 4, 1934.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1933 and Jan. 6, 1934.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1939.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1933.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, July 6, 1936.

to monitor the Apnok and Tuman Rivers.⁷⁴¹

As for the indigenous dogs that were excluded from the “military dog” category, they were subject to another form of canine mobilization; sacrifice for military wear. The colonial government began accepting donations of dogs to supply the military with fur and dog skin. The campaign targeted indigenous dogs only. The Department of Agriculture explained that Chosŏn dogs were most fit for making military wear, and worked with various dog owners in Kyŏnggi Province to accept donations of native dogs.⁷⁴² In other regions of the peninsula, local governments ordered the populace to bring their dogs to government buildings for inspection. Those that passed the inspection were slaughtered for their skin and fur.⁷⁴³

In Iksan, the aim was to collect 150 dogs from each town for this purpose. This campaign created a spectacle of Korean households—mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters—bringing out dogs of all sizes and ages to the local government office on leashes, in their arms, and on wooden A-frame back-carriers (*chige*).⁷⁴⁴ Some of the women cried, reluctant to let go of their dog that had lived with them for several years. That year, the local townships in Iksan had a surplus of dog meat, so an article remarked that the Lunar New Year celebration was a “festival of dog meat.”⁷⁴⁵ And under the new fascist modernity, the sacrificed dogs were properly ritualized as martyrs of the Japanese empire. North Chŏlla Province established a canine altar in its slaughterhouse to commemorate the 2,252 dogs

⁷⁴¹ *Tonga ilbo*, Nov. 2, 1934 and Nov. 15, 1934.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1938 and Oct. 1, 1933.

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1938.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

that had been sacrificed for military fur coats.⁷⁴⁶ North Kyöngsang Province set up a canine altar in Yech'ön, where local leaders held a ceremony for the dogs whose furs and skins were mobilized for war.⁷⁴⁷

Thus, if the Western dogs owned by the urban elites were promoted as imperial dogs, the native dogs kept by the rest of the populace sacrificed their skins and furs for the empire; although, their final fate was not too different in the end, since the imperial dogs would sacrifice their lives too, once dispatched to the battle front. It should also be noted that the native dogs sacrificed for the military were the same dogs that later became the chief source of dog meat in the post-liberation era. The military's collecting of indigenous dogs for fur and skin had led to an abundance of leftover dog meat, reinforcing their identity as food sources. Western-derived dogs were not perceived as food sources, but rather, as pets or as having other important modern functions. But the colonial apparatus had engrained the notion that indigenous dogs served a purely utilitarian purpose.

Arguably, this was not too different from the role that domesticated dogs had traditionally played in Korean households. However, the scale was different. The modern state's systematic treatment of the indigenous dog as either pests in need of "crushing" or alternatively as a military supply, as opposed to the Western dog that attained the prestige of imperial dogs worthy of admiration, was decisive in setting the fate of the peninsula's canines. Even in the post-liberation era, foreign dogs continued to be equated with prestige, having desirable traits of advanced nations; hence the bourgeois desire to own them as pets continued. One could point out that in the end, both were commodities of the modern, one

⁷⁴⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, Apr. 17, 1938.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Mar. 8, 1938.

as pets and the other as meat. But the commodification occurred at two levels. Depending on which category the dog was placed in, it drastically affected how they were treated by humans, not only in the colonial era, but beyond. And there was a permanence to these classifications, with little likelihood that a canine in one category could be moved to the other.

Reconsidering the Animal Protection Campaign

In light of what was happening outside the context of the animal protection movement, it is not hard to see why the moral suasion campaign, led by the Animal Protection Society, failed. It was resisted by the population and sacrificed by the colonial state that pursued other animal projects that it deemed more urgent. The notion of extending compassion to animals could not overcome other modern projects, such as the establishment of zoos, imperial natural monuments, commodification of cattle in mass scale, extermination of roaming dogs for hygiene, and finally, the mobilization of Western dogs as military dogs and the simultaneous sacrifice of indigenous dogs for military wear. Again, it is remarkable that the animal protection campaigners did not extend their moral suasion to these other sectors, and limited themselves to the cruelty inflicted on animals by the Korean lower class. We might take a moment to wonder why this was so.

First, it seems that the activists did not see a contradiction in their endorsement of animal protection, with the simultaneous participation in, or acquiescence of, the colonial states' animal campaigns, such as the dog crushings, and the commodification of animals in the form of zoos, meat, military dogs, and military wear. As previously noted, it was the police, veterinarians, and government officials who took part in both the animal protection

campaign and the dog crushing campaign. Participants saw both activities as a legitimate modern enterprise; they saw no contradiction in claiming compassion for animals, while arguing that the animal protection movement supported Japan's imperialist agenda by nurturing healthy animals, so that they be valuable resources for the empire.

Second, both were a single enterprise in that they entailed quintessential behaviors of the modern. Modernity required a humane treatment of the animal, while at the same time, finding the most effective use for animals to further mankind. This was why the activists found no paradox in exterminating canines that were deemed to pose threats to human health, or in exporting exotic animals and placing them in zoos, where they would be caged for the rest of their life.

The notion that animals deserved protection disappeared in Korean history for several decades, until the late 1980s resurrection in conjunction with the Seoul Olympics. While the colonial animal protection campaign did not succeed in changing the attitudes of most Koreans in their treatment of animals, the colonial era marked the beginning of a modern regime's control over animals, and its interaction with humans, that had lasting legacies in the post-liberation handling of animals. From modern zoos, slaughterhouses, and extermination campaigns, to military and police dogs, imperial heritages, dog meat, and the bourgeois hobby of pet keeping, the modern apparatus of animal categorization had been complete by the end of the colonial era. Animals had become legitimized subjects to be disciplined, cleansed, bought, sold and utilized by humans under modernity, imperialism, and capitalism.

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Conclusion: The Making of Modernity in the Colonial Everyday Life and Beyond

Summary of Findings

This dissertation examined how ordinary people experienced Japanese colonialism, using moral suasion campaigns as case studies. By showing precisely how the campaigns played out on the ground, I tried to re-narrate Korea's colonial experience in its everyday form.

In the mud-hut chapter, I diverged from the typical narrative on t'omangmin as colonial victims, to emphasize the complicated relationship they had with the rest of Kyöngsöng. I also tried to retrieve as many of their voices from colonial sources as possible. The findings suggest that t'omangmin actively contested urban space with others, and argued that their identities and homes be acknowledged by not only city officials, but also capitalists, landlords, and residents, whose activities shaped the mud-hut dwellers' colonial experience. I also deconstructed the "Korean middle class," a term that is often used in historiography, but rarely defined, and the stratification within this group that caused the experience of colonial modernity to vary widely, and led many to be anxious with their newly formed bourgeois identities. Finally, in studying the role of the Korean press, I tried to go beyond the conventional emphasis on their role in modern Korean nationalism, and point out their ambivalent relationship with the city's lower class.

In the bathing chapter, I examined a form of hygienic campaign, as experienced by the populace at large; the bathing campaign. This revealed that despite the moral suasion, bathing activities of the Korean masses did not always conform to the ideas put forth by the modern hygienic discourse, but varied widely, creating cross-cultural conflicts and tensions within Korean society. Numerous factors led bathing to be experienced differently by each

individual. Although public bathhouses appeared and grew in large numbers in the colonial era, bathing habits depended not only on one's class status, but also on whether one decided to accept the modern notion that the proper washing of the body involved soak bathing in a public bathhouse regularly and frequently. To bathe, or to not bathe, was purely a personal decision that could not be compelled by the colonial state or *kyōka*, except in very few realms, such as the prison and perhaps the military. But even in these places, it is questionable that the facilities and the instructions to bathe by colonial officials were sufficient to sanitize the targeted bodies to the level and extent of cleanliness promoted by the hygienic discourse. The chapter also suggests that the bathing campaign idealized what was actually being practiced by "civilized" Western societies or by the Korean bourgeoisie. I also incorporated voices of ordinary settlers who came to the peninsula with their own ideas and behaviors that often posed as a major challenge to the colonial state's assimilation policy and its bathing campaign.

In the animal chapter, I wanted to show a moral suasion campaign that would generally not be deemed so important as to fall into big history, because it involved a more exclusive group of promoters with loftier aims than the norm, a campaign that was ideologically at odds with state-led projects, and perhaps one of the most unpopular reformist calls in the colonial era; the animal protection movement. The fact that the campaign's ideals contravened conceptualizations of animals put forth by the state reveals fundamental contradictions inherent in modern projects. Its history also points to an instance in which a "modern" or "Western" idea was rejected even by devoted followers of modernity, suggesting that it was not the case that Korean modernists unconditionally embraced all things modern or Western-derived.

The three campaigns generated a wide range of responses from the Korean masses, often suggesting that top-down projects had limited success in changing the daily practices of the Korean people. The mud-hut dwellers resisted the 1930s relocations to regions managed by Japanese Buddhist groups, because the dwellers felt that they were not fully compensated by the city and their landlords for abandoning the mud huts, and because moving to the city's outskirts would deprive them of their livelihoods. And while many in the Korean middle and upper classes may have endorsed the modern way of bathing imposed by the bathing campaign, a greater number of Koreans continued to bathe infrequently, often outside the context of the colonial bathhouses and hot springs developed by the GgK, capitalists, and settlers, with hints that premodern bathing customs persisted. Calls for animal protection generated angry responses from not only the targeted lower class workers, whose livelihoods were threatened by the Animal Society's activities, but also from many in the Korean middle class, who believed social work should prioritize humans before animals, and found irony that the preachers could inflict more pain on animals than the Korean masses they sought to reform. And despite the GgK's efforts to regulate the peninsula's dogs and their owners, the problem of roaming dogs persisted, with people able to evade the highly unpopular dog tax; but, the GgK's animal campaign inadvertently succeeded in morally inculcating South Koreans in the post-liberation era by creating modern categories of animals according to their respective functions.

Implications for Historiography

The findings have several implications for Korean historiography. First, one cannot stress enough the importance of everyday history. It is only through the examination of the "nitty-gritty" mundaneness that for instance, terms, such as *kyōka*, can be released of their

colonial baggage. I say “nitty-gritty,” because such, I believe, may be the only way to truly determine the degree to which grand policy schemes devised by the colonial state actually affected daily life in colonial Korea. It is only by looking at the trivial, uneventful dynamics of the everyday that we glimpse what it was truly like to live in the colonial era, in the midst of the policy of assimilation, militarism, moral suasion campaigns, urbanization, Korean nationalism, the so-called “modern life” of the Korean bourgeoisie, and other components of colonialism and modernity that historiography deems as quintessential emblems of Korea’s colonial experience. The mundaneness reveals unsettling moments that Koreans, settlers, Western missionaries, and even the GGK faced on a day-to-day basis, which are generally not seen as sufficient enough to be part of big history, yet a telling tale of just how diverse the quotidian experience could be in the colonial era. Most importantly, it is in the study of everyday life where colonial-era people can be released from the labels and identities assigned by historiography thus far, enabling us to reconfigure the history in imaginative ways, to make possible a deeper understanding of Korea’s colonial experience.

Second, the findings suggest that top-down colonial policies can have limited impact on the everyday life of the populace. Not everyone in Korean society was receptive to the modern way of living put forth by the campaigns, especially when it was deemed incompatible with their daily lives; nor were all Koreans immediately subdued into docile subjects for the Japanese empire. There was a sense of unruliness that cannot be explained by the colonial modernity framework, which has the dangerous tendency to overstate the advent and spread of modernity in the colonial era, and depict Koreans as unconditionally embracing modernity, capitalist development, and the flashy modern life; or assume that top-down impositions of modern governance, such as *kyōka*, were effective governing tools

of the Japanese state so that they were successful in subduing the Korean populace.

The latter point specifically relates to scholarship in the Korean language, where there has been a series of works adopting Michel Foucault's concept of "disciplinary power" in conceptualizing Japan's colonial governmentality, especially upon the popularity of the colonial modernity framework.⁷⁴⁸ In this context, the assumption is that moral suasion campaigns, whether in the context of total mobilization, assimilation, or *shakai jigyo*, worked to normalize thought and behavior to create docile, modern subjects capable of self-discipline for the Japanese empire.⁷⁴⁹ The problem with this framework, of course, is that it assumes that the colonial state exerted absolute control over the daily life of Koreans through *kyōka* and that the campaigns functioned only for the colonialists' cause. More often than not, the conclusion that derives from this approach is that colonial rulers were effective in subduing their subjects, and that the disciplining of the Korean populace was a success. What is missing from this overriding focus on the modern or colonial state's interventionist disciplinary enterprise is the bottom-up response to the disciplining that took place in the colonial era, which often forced the GGK to modify its policies.

A bottom-up view of the colonial era shows not only a populace that was more unruly than orderly, but also insights into the nature of Japanese state's governmentality

⁷⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977). For works that apply Foucault's theory to the colonial era, see e.g., Chōng Kūnsik. "Singminji wisaeng kyōngch'al ūi hyōngsōng kwa pyōnhwa, kūrigo yusan-singminji t'ongch'isōng ūi sigak esō," *Sahoe wa yōksa* 90 (2011): 221-70. Kim Chin'gyun, and Chōng Kūnsik, eds., *Kūndae chuch'e wa singminji kyuyul kwōllyōk* (Seoul: Munhak Kwahaksa, 1997); Pak Sehun, "Tongwōn toen kūndae: ilche sigi Kyōngsōng ūl t'onghae pon singminji kūndaesōng," *Han'guk kūnhyōndae misul sahak* 13 (Dec. 2004): 119-49; Yun Haedong, *Singminji ūi hoesaek chidae: Han'guk ūi kūndaesōng kwa singminjuūi pip'an* (Seoul: Yōksa Pip'yōngsa, 2003).

⁷⁴⁹ For instance, Han Kwiyōng explained that the primary function of social welfare in the colonial era was establishing normality by identifying and separating out those in need and concluded, "Whether it was a social aid program by the Japanese or by private organizations, *shakai jigyo* operated on a pessimistic strategy of imprisonment, punishment, and monitoring of each individual to generate bodies suitable for colonial rule." See Han Kwiyōng, "Kūndaejōk sahoe saōp kwa kyōllyōk ūi sisōn," in Kim Chin'gyun and Chōng Kūnsik, eds., *Kūndae chuch'e wa singminji kyuyul kwōllyōk* (Seoul: Munhwa kwahaksa, 1997), 339.

that cannot always be explained by adopting Foucault's theory. The campaigns reveal not an almighty colonial state mobilizing and directing civil groups to lead a submissive mass, but a vulnerable state that was often ineffective in the management of the colonized subjects, and dependent on civil society to deal with the recalcitrant populace. This was true despite the GGK's implanting of various modern governance tools, like the police system, centralized government, schools, and modern laws into the peninsula. Here, a major problem was the ambiguities in the modern laws and institutions the GGK established which often lacked coherence, leading them to be applied inconsistently to colonial society. Understanding this requires an acknowledgment to the fact that the Japanese state was also in the midst of modernizing the metropole. Accordingly, any system of modern governance it was importing to the peninsula always risked being premature and imperfect. It was not an almighty, ultramodern Japan that had completed its process of modernization bestowing civilization on the Korean peninsula, but rather, a Japanese state with a tenuous colonial power, undergoing its own process of experimenting with modernizing, that implemented various schemes to test the modern in the peninsula. In many respects, the same can be said for the Westerners who took part in *kyōka*.

Also important was the voluntary nature of civil participation in the moral suasion campaigns. The proponents of *kyōka* saw it essentially as a progressive force, an inculcation of modern practices, so that members of Korean society would shed their premodern customs to perform modernity in their everyday life, be it residing in state-approved, legal homes, bathing frequently and in the right way, or reconsidering their understanding and treatment of animals. For its promoters, moral suasion was more modern than colonial in that they truly believed they were spreading a notion of modernity that was universal, not a

tool for “furthering colonial rule, as commonly argued by Korean scholars.⁷⁵⁰ There was a proper way to dress, eat, reside, and think if one lived in the modern age, an ideal that everyone should follow.

Recognizing the modernity component of *kyōka* supports the proposition put forth by scholars, such as Miriam Silverberg and Andrew Gordon, who see Japan’s path to war as not a deviant form of modernity, but as an ultra form of modernity and a global one, with similarities to European fascism, and who argue that despite the context of war, people were unwilling to let go of modern culture.⁷⁵¹ The fascination with modernity was a shared phenomenon across the world that helped to promote the *kyōka* campaigns in colonial Korea. *Kyōka* was not an abnormality produced by Japanese imperialism, but shared concerns that other Western nations had at the time, whether that be the management of the poor, hygienic reform, or idealizing the middle-class lifestyle. In terms of social work, a recent study has noted that Japan’s endorsement of social work in its colonies was part of a global phenomenon especially in the post World War I era, where nation states increasingly became concerned about the adverse effects of industrialization and the consequences of the war.⁷⁵² For Korean historiography, these views help to reconcile the binary between colonial and the modern in the “colonial modernity” framework, by acknowledging that both colonialism and modernity can be oppressive, in the sense that both regimes aim to

⁷⁵⁰ See e.g., Cho Kyōnghŭi, “‘Onjōng’ kwa ‘kyohwa’ ūi singmin chuŭi- 1910 nyōndae Chosōn ch’ongdokpu ūi sahoe kuje saōp kwa kŭ imgye,” *Yōksa munje yōn’gu* 25 (Apr. 2011): 235-71; Pak Sehun, “Kuje wa kyohwa-ilche sigi Kyōngsōngbu ūi pangmyōn wiwōn chedo yōn’gu,” *Sahoe wa yōksa* 61 (2002): 125-56; So Hyōnsuk, “Kyōnggye e sōn koadŭl- koa munje rŭl t’onghae pon ilche sigi sahoe saōp,” *Sahoe wa yōksa* 73 (March 2007): 107-41

⁷⁵¹ Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Andrew Gordon, *Fabricating Consumers: The Sewing Machine in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

⁷⁵² Sayaka Chatani, “The Ruralist Paradigm: Social Work Bureaucrats in Colonial Korea and Japan’s Assimilationism in the Interwar Period,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, no. 4 (2016): 1006.

discipline their subjects by encouraging certain acts that are seen to be desirable traits to inculcate in society, while discouraging others.

Third, to say the obvious, the chapters highlight the usefulness of a wholistic approach to the colonial era, not only in terms of the time period examined, but also the various groups at play in a given topic. For instance, *kyōka* is only able to shed its imperial baggage when examined beyond the framework of total mobilization, acknowledging its history from the late nineteenth century, in which the peninsula already had Korean, Japanese, and Western forces that were arguing for the reform of the Korean way, each with distinct agendas, actions, perceptions of the Korean populace, and concerns about living in the peninsula, who came together the moral suasion campaigns of subsequent years. And the real impact or non-impact of *kyōka* can often be discerned in the post-colonial era, which shows the importance of examining the colonial era developments into the post liberation era.

Here, studying premodern thoughts and behaviors, perhaps even before Korea opened its doors in 1876, is critical, as it shows not just how Koreans eventually came to endorse modernity, but more importantly, why certain ideas of the modern were rejected by the Korean masses in the colonial era. It can also reveal complications in colonial society that cannot be explained by an overriding focus on modernity, development, and change. To be more specific, examining the colonial period in conjunction with the premodern era, gives us insights into subtle things that can have a major impact on Korea's modern history, such as ordinary people's customs, mentalities, and behaviors; all of which would go unnoticed if studies of the colonial period limited themselves solely to the period between 1910 and 1945 or to particular groups. In other words, premodern societal norms can

provide us with a richer explanation of Korea's path to modernity, making it possible for a more refined and nuanced evaluation of colonial modernity.

In particular, I have sided with scholars, such as Carter Eckert and Michael Robinson⁷⁵³ on the importance of the premodern status consciousness, which persisted into the colonial era (and beyond) to complicate Korean society in the modern era. In fact, the impact of premodern status consciousness on Korean society may be much deeper than my chapters suggest. This is related to the importance of acknowledging multiple actors in shaping the colonial experience; not just Korean elites, the Korean press, as well as Japanese and Western missionaries who engaged in various social activities, but also, the rest of the people, whose ordinary lives shaped Korea's colonial experience, such as the early Japanese and Western travelers, mud-hut dwellers, hackmen, middle class Koreans with modern professions, upper-class housewives preaching animal protection, bathhouse owners, and bathers, including even the naked Japanese schoolteacher bathing outdoors.

While a list of groups and people are given above, it is imperative that their identities be further deconstructed than they have been by this dissertation and beyond what historiography has thus provided. Fine distinctions within groups and their relationship with the rest of the people in colonial society can provide us with new understandings of the colonial era. For instance, looking at the Korean press beyond its role in cultural nationalism or as proponents of the glamorous modern life, gives us their ambivalent attitude toward mud-hut dwellers, modern life, and the middle-class identity, as well as insights into cross-cultural encounters in mundane places like the bathhouse or the

⁷⁵³ Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 208-09; Michael Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 74-75.

streets where settlers, Koreans, and Westerners preached animal protection to the Korean lower class. There was a non-political realm in the Korean press where ordinary people expressed their ambivalence toward modernity and their insecurities in an era where there was a mix of the old and the new. And these all point to tensions and divisions within Korean society, not only across classes but within each class. The resulting deconstruction of the Korean middle class has made it possible for the chapters to present them as a diverse group with different backgrounds, concerns, and motives, which were not always politically driven. This suggests that the colonial experience was diverse; much more so than suggested by historiography and even by these chapters, and that we should not overestimate the various attributes of colonial modernity that was allegedly practiced by the populace, especially the urban middle class, as asserted by the colonial era's mass publications, whether that be the new women (*sinyŏsŏng*) and their modern lifestyle, culture homes (*munhwa chut'aek*), modern hygiene, or the rise of consumption culture in the urban middle class.

Post-Liberation Mud Huts, Bathing, and Animals

Tracing the moral suasion campaigns in post-colonial Korea is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but one cannot help but briefly mention them, especially given my emphasis on the wholistic approach to the colonial era. Upon liberation in 1945, the colonial mud-hut dwellers ceased to become traceable, due to the influx of returnees from abroad, called *chŏnjaemin*,⁷⁵⁴ which created a severe housing shortage, leading the Korean people to construct illegal homes all over Seoul. This was soon followed by the Korean War (1950-53),

⁷⁵⁴ Hwang Pyŏngju, "Mi kunjŏnggi chŏnjaemin kuho undong kwa 'minjok tamnon,'" *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 35 (Mar. 2000): 76-113.

which destroyed countless homes and generated a substantial population movement in the peninsula. The South Korean government tolerated illegal homes to meet the acute housing shortage that resulted from the series of chaotic events that followed liberation. Further, the civil war worked to create a universal discourse of poverty; a “we were all poor” narrative that became embedded in the nation’s memory of the immediate post-colonial era.

All of this made it further possible to sever the urban poor of the colonial era, from the *ch’ōlgōmin* (people facing eviction), who appeared from the 1960s and onward. Because of this rupture created between 1945 and the Park Chung Hee era (1961-79), where modernization and economic development again led to a surge of urban slum districts, it was possible to forget that the colonial mud huts were an urban problem with a long history. Thus, the colonial t’omangmin were left in historical memory, only with a communal identity of “colonial victimhood.” Although the colonial mud-hut dwellers ceased to be traceable, history did, in a sense, repeat itself, in a renewed modernization campaign under Park Chung Hee, as shown in the history of *ch’ōlgōmin* and their illegal *p’anjajip* (temporary homes built with inexpensive boards) that exist to the present.

I should mention a recent 2015 controversy, in which the city of Inch’ōn devised a program for the public to experience life in its shantytown.⁷⁵⁵ This so-called “*Kwaengi Puri Maül ch’ehōm*” involved experiencing impoverished life in Kwaengi Puri Town, where by paying a fee of 10,000 wŏn, one could sleep overnight in what was supposed to be a reenacted home of the “old days when life was difficult,” featuring a black and white television, a *yogang* (urinating basin), and a humble sleeping area. The problem was that the town still had lower-class residents who lived there. They protested the program on the

⁷⁵⁵ *Tonga ilbo*, July 13, 2015.

grounds that they refused to be a spectacle. The reenacted home was where the residents held town meetings. Although the project was never executed, due to public outrage that the city was commodifying poverty, one cannot help but think about the colonial era's "journey into mud hut" articles that were featured on New Year's Days.

As for bathing, probably the biggest legacy is that while the colonial campaign served to partly spread the notion that proper washing involved soak bathing in designated public facilities or areas of the home, it did not immediately change the overall bathing habits of the Korean masses in any significant respect. In 1954, Seoul had 496 *yŏgwan* (inns), 300 barbershops, 256 salons, and 47 bathhouses.⁷⁵⁶ Newspapers lamented the acute shortage of bathhouses given that the population of Seoul was 1,400,000. A *Chosŏn ilbo* article stated that comparing the ratio of bathhouses with the number of Seoul residents, people could not even bath once a month.⁷⁵⁷ By 1957, the number of bathhouses in Seoul had increased to only 103, charging 20 wŏn per visit.⁷⁵⁸ But the reports lamenting the shortage of bathhouses are somewhat misleading, because they are written under the assumption that all Koreans wanted to bathe often in public bathhouses. Kang Chunman has noted that the public bathhouse was not a place that ordinary Koreans entered on a regular basis, even in the 1960s.⁷⁵⁹ He explained that the bathhouses across the nation only became jammed before *Ch'usŏk* or the New Years, as most people visited the bathhouses two or three times a year, to a point where an ordinary Korean would feel compelled to "get his

⁷⁵⁶ *Chosŏn ilbo*, July 6 and 14, 1954.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1956.

⁷⁵⁸ *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, February 17, 1957.

⁷⁵⁹ Kang Chunman, "Han'guk mogyok ūi yŏksa: Hongjewŏn mogyok esŏ tchimjilbang yŏl'pung kkaji," *Inmul kwa sasang* 116 (Dec. 2007): 163.

money's worth" upon a visit.

Likewise, a Masan resident named Yi Chöngyong, born in 1948, recalled that in the 1950s and early 60s, he visited the public bathhouse once or twice a year, and that he was "swarming with lice in the wintertime."⁷⁶⁰ In the apartment constructed in the post-liberation era, if the bathroom had a tub, the washing of garments and the body occurred simultaneously, and families removed the sink and used basins; a phenomenon Chön Namil explained as the continuity of traditional washing habits, despite modernization.⁷⁶¹ Notwithstanding the bathhouses and the development of hot springs across the nation, a great number of people continued to bathe in nearby lakes, rivers, and streams, until the 1960s or 70s. It was only from the 1970s and beyond that public bathhouses became popularized. In 1971, Seoul had 711 bathhouses, charging 60 wön per visit, when a pound of beef cost 300 wön, beef stew soup 90 wön, udon 50 wön, coffee 35 wön, and a visit to the barbershop 180 wön.⁷⁶² The bathing habits of Koreans in the immediate decades following the post-liberation era make it all the more questionable whether the colonial hygienic campaign was truly as intrusive and effective as it purports to be.

And until recent decades, the public bathhouse was always jammed with people, with questionable hygienic conditions. In a 2013 documentary film, Pak Hüiwön, owner of Yukkaksu Bathhouse in Chongno, one of Seoul's oldest surviving bathhouse, stated that on average, 150 to 200 people came to bathe on the weekdays, with weekends and holidays completely packed, adding: "Even when dead skins were floating in the tubs, no one

⁷⁶⁰ Yu Changgün, "Singminji wisaeng sisöl eso tagi'nüing saenghwal konggan üro: Masan chiyök mogyokt'ang üi 100-nyön yöksa," *Kara munhwa* 27 (Dec. 2015): 70.

⁷⁶¹ Chön Namil, et al., "Chugö nae paesöl mit mogyok konggan üi pyönch'ön kwa saenghwal e taehan misijök koch'al," *Han'guk chugö hakhoe nonmunjip* 18, no. 1 (Feb. 2007): 24.

⁷⁶² Yu Changgün, 77.

complained. If one person got out of the tub, another would go in.”⁷⁶³ A common phrase used to describe bathhouse congestion was “bathtubs jammed like a jar full of bean sprouts,” which allows us to visualize just how crowded the bathhouses could be.⁷⁶⁴ It should also be noted that it was only in the 1960s and 70s that the Tongnae Hot Springs and Onyang Hot Springs became a popular site for Koreans, especially a preferred designation for honeymoon trips.⁷⁶⁵ Finally, it was probably only in the late twentieth century that the colonial bathing campaign attained its goal of people washing their bodies daily in the form of “showering” and the rise of modern bathing facilities called *tchimjilbang*, a multifunctional bathhouse and an entertainment site where one can eat, sleep, watch TV, play, and bathe.

As for animals, moral suasion campaigns continued in the post-liberation era, under South Korea’s nationbuilding endeavors. In this context, animals became intricately tied to the nation’s degree of advancement as a valuable national resource, and a cultured activity of the bourgeoisie. The animal apparatus created by the colonial state remained largely intact, and the modern institutions and laws on animals established by the GGK served important roles in South Korea’s modernization. Having a pure-bred Western dog was, and still is, a status symbol for the Korean middle class. Dogs were categorized according to their origins, meticulously maintained and strictly bred. Koreans kept dogs not only as a means to display modernity in the domestic capitalized structure, but also as a means to join advanced nations in the grand march toward civilization and progress.

⁷⁶³ Han’guk Kyoyuk Pangsong Kongsā, *Ŭnmilhan munmyōngsa mogyok: hamkke ssitnūn sahoe, kongjung mogyokt’ang*, produced by Kim Yuyōl, EBS, Sept. 16, 2013.

⁷⁶⁴ *Kyōnghyang sinmun*, Apr. 16, 1951.

⁷⁶⁵ Han’guk Kyoyuk Pangsong Kongsā, *Ŭnmilhan munmyōngsa mogyok: ch’iyu ũi mogyok*, produced by Kim Yuyōl, EBS, Sept. 17, 2013.

The post-liberation era was also a period of reinventing the national tradition through the promotion of the native Chindo dog, which had previously been designated as an imperial treasure by the GGK. The South Korean governments maintained the colonial classifications, and continued to promote certain animals as national symbols, while others were treated as pests in need of eradication. From the 1970s, the international environmental movement came to the peninsula and Koreans argued for the protection of the nation's natural resources. So from early on, South Korea recognized the significance of animals in building the nation, and generating nationalism for the newly established republic. It was a global phenomenon of modernity that Koreans took active part in, and they were very conscious of the fact that their treatment of animals was a critical parameter of the nation's advanced status in the world.

Hence, the hostile reaction by the international society on Korea's dog-meat consumption in the 1980s came as an unanticipated surprise. Up to that moment, Koreans had seen themselves as dutifully taking part in the global animal enterprise fully endorsing the modern by participating in the "cultured and civilized" activities of preserving the nation's natural resources and owning pure-bred Western dogs as pets. Yet the reaction toward Korea's dog-meat was an unexpected hurdle to be overcome. Not all Koreans conceded to the idea that eating dogs was barbaric; in fact, the crisis generated an opportunity to frame dog-meat consumption as another activity of the nation; entailing a reinventing of the national tradition and history. In effect, Korean society became polarized, whereby those siding with the Western animal activists and proclaiming dog-meat as cruel conflicted with others who argued this was a national tradition. However, owning Western dogs as pets and consuming dog meat were a single enterprise in that both entailed

quintessential behaviors of the modern. Modernity requires the humane treatment of an animal which acquired the status of a “family pet”; but attacks on the Korean nation’s food consumption as barbaric can amount to a direct attack on Korea’s progress toward modernization. The invention of dog-meat consumption as a national food tradition was a necessary measure to defend the Korean nation from any challenges, especially from abroad and particularly from advanced nations.

Final Remarks

If one asks a Korean grandmother about her experience of living in the colonial era, more often than not, she will begin her story by explaining where she lived, in what house, what elementary school she attended, her family, friends, and neighbors, and their *yangban* status, if any—which is always mentioned. An average person who lived through the colonial period probably worried less about Korea’s independence, but thought more about mundane issues that affected his or her day; where to live, where to work, and perhaps, where and when to (or when not to) take a bath. As Professor Eckert once remarked in a graduate seminar, those deemed “nationalists” or “collaborators” by historiography were probably a very small minority in the colonial society, with the majority of the people being neither. And even the nationalists and collaborators faced mundane concerns in the colonial period, such as which school to send their children, where to live, and what to have for dinner. Arguably, such mundane events and concerns shaped one’s experience of the colonial era, as much or more than anything else. Thus, how grand colonial policies actually seeped into the everyday life of the ordinary person deserves more recognition in Korean history.

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