UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Romancing Race and Gender: 
Interrace Marriage and the Making of a ‘Modern Subjectivity’ 
in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945 

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the 
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy 
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by 

Su Yun Kim 

Committee in charge: 

Professor Lisa Yoneyama, Chair 
Professor Takashi Fujitani 
Professor Jin-kyung Lee 
Professor Lisa Lowe 
Professor Yingjin Zhang 

2009
The Dissertation of Su Yun Kim is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego
2009
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PREFACE

Notes on Romanization:

I use the McCune-Reischauer system for Korean and the Hepburn system for Japanese. Korean names in Korean language sources are Romanized following the McCune-Reischauer System, unless personally preferred Romanization is known or previously published names are already in wide circulation, such as for Syngman Rhee and Yi Kwang-su. For geographical places, I follow the above-mentioned Romanization with exceptions for well-known cities such as Seoul and Tokyo (rather than Sōul and Tōkyō).
This project would not have been possible without generosity of my teachers. I could not have wished for a better advisor than Lisa Yoneyama. Professor Yoneyama’s supreme mentorship and genuine belief in my scholarship have nurtured me over the years not only as a scholar but also as a person. My scholarship is forever indebted to her. I also wish sincere thanks to my committee members, Tak Fujitani, Jin-kyung Lee, Lisa Lowe, and Yingjin Zhang. They witnessed my struggle in my graduate years and guided me tremendously and beyond their responsibilities. I am very fortunate to have such an incredible group of people help me through this dissertation process. Professor Namhee Lee at UCLA read portions of the earlier version of this dissertation and has been always encouraging. I also benefited from the great scholarship of other UCSD faculty: the mentorship and scholarship of Rosemary George, Shelley Streeby, and Stefan Tanaka have been invaluable for building the theoretical frame of this dissertation.

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During my research year in Seoul, many teachers and scholars let me join their established study groups, and their scholarship and enthusiasm in reading colonial materials provided broad knowledge and inspiration. Professor Kim Chul generously helped me in many ways during my research stay in Korea. I am grateful for the introduction to the Korea-Japan Literature Study Group (or the Wednesday Group), where I had opportunity to meet some of the top scholars of the Korean colonial era. Also one of the members of the group, Professor Lee Kyoung-hun, generously allowed me to audit his graduate seminars on Yŏsŏng and Yi Hyo-sŏk. Professor Lee’s class was instrumental in reformulating some chapters. The members of Samch’ŏlli Reading Group at Yonsei provided material and psychological support for my research year in Seoul. I am also thankful to Professor Michael Kim at Yonsei for his continuous interest and support for my research. Sonja Kim, Hijoo Son, and late Sophia Kim were the best office mates/study partners at the Institutes of Korean Studies. Their friendship made my archival research less daunting.

I must thank many friends at UCSD and beyond with whom I have exchanged ideas and criticism that contributed to this dissertation. Asian Studies Group grads in the Literature department provided me a platform to present my work-in-progress. My on-and-off long-distance writing group of past three years, Sonja Kim and Steven Chung, gave me the most helpful criticism and encouragement throughout years, and I thank them for being excellent scholars and heartfelt friends. Friends I met in California became my best friends in the U.S., provided me homes away from home. Thanks to Inyi Choi, Michael Cronin, Julie Hua, Shih-szu Hsu, Peter Holderness, Ji Hee Jung, Denise Khor, Jinah Kim, Gabriella Nuñez, Kazuyo Tsuchiya, Tomo Sasayuki, George Solt, and
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There are many more people for whom I am very thankful, who have shown me that this dissertation is a process, not the goal of my life. I am especially grateful for the love of Newman Center community at UCSD. I dedicate this dissertation to my family in Korea: Kim Bong-woon, Kim Jeol-ja, Kim Su-jin, Kim Su-mi, Park Yong-su, Park Jun-sung.

This dissertation would not have been possible without great mentorship and contributions from mentors, colleagues and friends, but any fault in the work is mine alone.
VITA

1997  Bachelor of Arts, French Literature and Language  
     Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea
2000  Master of Arts, Comparative Literature  
     Yonsei University
2000-2002 Teaching Assistant, Korean Language  
       Department of Literature  
       University of California, San Diego
2002-2003 Teaching Assistant, Making of the Modern World  
       Eleanor Roosevelt College  
       University of California, San Diego
2003-2004 Teaching Assistant, Critical Gender Studies Program  
       University of California, San Diego
2004  Candidate in Philosophy in Comparative Literature  
       University of California, San Diego
2004-2005 Teaching Assistant, Third World Studies Program  
       University of California, San Diego
2005-2006 Visiting Researcher, Institute of Korean Studies  
       Yonsei University
2007 Spring Teaching Assistant,  
       East Asia in Global Perspective: the 20th Century  
       Department of History  
       University of California, San Diego
2007-2008 Teaching Assistant, Korean Language  
       Department of Literature  
       University of California, San Diego
2008-  
       Visiting Instructor/Postdoctoral Fellow  
       Asian Studies and Department of Comparative Literature  
       Hamilton College, Clinton, New York
2009  Doctor of Philosophy in Literature  
       University of California, San Diego

FIELDS OF STUDY
Major Field: Colonial Era Korean Literature and Culture
Minor Fields: Transnational Feminism, East Asian Cinema and History.
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Romancing Race and Gender:
Interracial marriage and the Making of a ‘Modern Subjectivity’
in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945

by

Su Yun Kim

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Professor Lisa Yoneyama, Chair

This dissertation investigates the discourse and representation of interracial marriage and transnational romance through an examination of popular texts and colonial policies during the Japanese colonial era in Korea (1910-1945). For the colonial ruler, the unusual promotion of interracial marriages between the colonizer and colonized (Japanese and Koreans), which was a part of an assimilation policy, could act as a means to demonstrate the benevolence of the Japanese Empire and encourage Koreans to advance into full imperial citizens. For the colonized people, it might have started as a subjugating colonial project, but then it presented the possibility of becoming much-desired modern subjects, thus it changed construction of “modern subjectivity” and further complicating understandings of race, gender, and sexuality in everyday life. This dissertation traces how an assimilative colonial state program – the promotion of
intermarriage between Koreans and Japanese – turned into diverse discourses that
impacted public discourses and literary representations of racial and gender norms.

The dissertation is organized into four chapters. The first sketches the historical
context of interracial marriage between Koreans and Japanese. The remaining chapters
focus on analyzing popular texts and contextualizing them within particular issues
surrounding intermarriage and romance, such as the construction of domesticity in
intermarriage texts (Chapter Two), the representation of international marriage and
modern home in popular print culture (Chapter Three), and race and gender in
encountering others at the end of the colonial era (Chapter Four). In conclusion, this
dissertation aims to unveil the influence of colonial intimacy and articulations of race and
gender discourses in the making of a “modern subjectivity” in Korea in the time of
Japanese empire-building. It contributes to the growing discussion of modern
colonialism and imperialism by examining the everyday life of colonized territories and
how colonized people understood, articulated, and manipulated colonial discourse.
Introduction
Coupling Colonizer and Colonized

Korean and Japanese Inter‘racial’ Union

In the history of Japanese colonialism in Asia, Japan systematically sought to make its colonized Asian subjects assimilate to Japanese identity. Assimilation functioned differently than in enlightenment projects in which a “superior” power disciplines the savage with modern education and technologies, as typically seen in European and US imperialism. One might think that Japan’s attempt at assimilation would be smoother than European models of “yellow” assimilation into “whiteness,” since “Asian” people belonged to one “race” or shared similar “ethnicities” and cultural backgrounds. This assumption that governing would be easier because of an idea that “Asia is one big family” was historically accepted by not only the general public, but also by Japan’s ruling power and intellectuals.¹ On the one hand, there was emphasis on the Japanese racial superiority, which sought to preserve the essential and superior quality of the Japanese within the Asian racial hierarchy. The idea of superiority solidified the distinction of Japanese race, separating the group from the rest of the Asian races or ethnicities. On the other hand, a supposed similarity in race and

¹ Historians, including Oguma Eiji and Tessa Morris-Suzuki, have shown that the idea of Asians sharing one racial origin emerged in Japan most persistently from the Meiji era to the War Time era among intellectuals and government officials in the context of emphasizing the affinity of Japan to the rest of the Asia.
ethnicity that bonds Japanese with people in the colonies was consistently emphasized. In this case, Japanese race mythology and migration of people outside the Japanese archipelago were considered as key factors that defined the Japanese race.\(^2\) This “two-tiered” racial ideology seemed to lure the colonized subject who was “not quite Japanese but perhaps capable of becoming Japanese.”\(^3\) It offered the possibility of achieving full citizenship and receiving the benefits of being an imperial subject, which meant upward mobility for the most of colonized subjects. But towards the latter part of colonial rule, the rhetoric shifted toward the congeniality of different subjects in the mainland and the colonies. Asian similarity was highlighted when the Japanese Empire expanded its power to the wider Asian region, figuring its occupation as a mission to rescue pan-Asian brothers from White imperialism. The same logic was used in creating the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere in the late 1930s, which emphasized that nations under Japanese rule would enjoy economic prosperity.

Among the territories of the Japanese Empire, Korea is recognized as having undergone the most intensive assimilation program in the sense that it involved violent indoctrination and discriminatory treatment of Korean people, as many historians have shown, including a name-change campaign, mandating Shintoism, a ban on Korean language in public, and military and labor conscription. One unique assimilation program in Korea was the promotion of interracial marriage between Koreans and

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\(^3\) Patricia Tsurumi, “Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan,” The Japanese Colonial Empire, pp. 275–311.
Japanese. In the history of European and American colonialisms, regulation of
marriage and family is not rare, but the typical regulation was against intermarriage
between the colonizing and the colonized race. In the years of early-modern imperial
expansion, intermarriage served political and commercial functions for the frontier
economies of West Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Americas, but as mixed subjects
grew in numbers, anxieties about racial mixture also grew. As modern nation-states
consolidated their boundaries, European countries and the US mostly banned marriages
between their metropolitan citizens and colonial subjects, particularly after encountering
problems with identifying who could be their citizen in mixed families. The metropoles
of empire carefully formed modern bourgeois family boundaries that screened out
“miscegenation” and contained pure racial, cultural, and Christian values that denied
frontier conditions. Given this general terrain, obvious questions arise: What happened
in Korea? Why was intermarriage important to the Japanese Empire? The era of
Japanese colonization of Korea (1910-1945) coincided with an era of remapping and the
breakage of large imperial powers into contained nation states. In the case of the
Japanese Empire, the colonization of Korea overlapped with Japan’s formation of
bourgeois family structures, but it also incorporated interracial marriage in marked
difference from European and the U.S.’ strategies.

From the beginning of Japanese colonization in Korea, colonial rulers and
intellectuals considered intermarriage an effective way to make Koreans more Japanese
on both cultural and biological levels. In terms of assimilation policy, numerous studies
on Korea have argued that the assimilation policy was forceful and repressive, similar to
vicious religious persecution that caused great suffering to those who resisted the
conversion of their Koreanness into Japaneseness. Oftentimes, historical narratives focus on the process of stripping the Korean “essence” and “identity” from its people, focusing on how Koreans were made to be second-rate Japanese subjects. However, Japanese assimilation was welcomed by some (pan) Asianists when it was presented more widely in the 1930s. To be sure, in certain colonies, “becoming Japanese” was an attractive offer that the colonized subject could not resist. After all, the “White” and “Black” racial sensibility that framed much of European and US imperialism did not apply to the Japanese project. As Leo Ching observes, “[u]nlike the European encounter with its racial Others, this absence or invisibility of otherness posits a moment where a deferral between seeing and knowing, perceiving and conceiving is enacted, an instant where difference would be suspended and displaced if silence was kept” (Ching 1998, 65). Colonial subjects under the Japanese Empire sought ways to overcome racism, ironically, through colonial assimilation.

Korean-Japanese marriage during the colonial period raises some complicated questions that deserve careful unpacking. Despite the fact that “Koreans” and “Japanese” occupied different positions in the hierarchy of the colonial order, it is plausible, as posited by “contact zone” theories, that “transculturation” between residents and colonial settlers could result in an exchange of culture and people in everyday life, including marriage. At the peak of colonial rule, the number of Japanese

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4 The complexity of being Asianists at the time of the Japanese Empire is well-explored, and the research shows that the category of “Asianist” did not necessarily exclude “nationalist.”
residents, for example, spiked to 25% of Kyŏngsŏng’s (Seoul) population. With a large Japanese presence in the capital, there were social spaces where “disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other” within the hierarchy of colonial orders (Pratt 4). These sites, as I discuss in the later chapters, included material spaces such as commercial districts with department stores, restaurants, cafés, and bars, and institutional spaces like schools and family homes. Yet, Japanese colonial settler residents were segregated and limited to certain regions, cities, and even districts within a city, meaning that Koreans and Japanese were restricted in their types of exchange.

Although there were visible similarities and geographical proximities, marriage between the two “races” or “ethnicities” was considered to be uncommon, if not strange, for most of the colonial era. The existing archives show that Korean-Japanese marriage in Korea during the colonial era involved only a small fraction of the Korean population and intermarriage could not have caused any of the visible social problems seen in the Americas or in Southeast Asia. The twist in the Korean case is that from the late 1930s, intermarriage was promoted along with colonial/imperial war mobilization policies, thus making the idea of intermarriage more public and visible than its actual practice in the population. In the latter half of the colonial era, intermarriage was presented as the model coupling for a citizen in a time of war and became a symbol of successful


_6 In this dissertation, I use the term “intermarriage” to mean marriage between a Korean and a non-Korean, rather than “inter-racial” or “inter-ethnic” marriage. I do not define Korean or Japanese as a solidified “race” or “ethnicity.” Rather, I use the terms _injong _or _minjok _in the context of how they were referred to in a specific moment. When the text in discussion clearly uses _injong _or _minjok_, I use the term _race_ or _ethnicity_ accordingly. For further discussion of the genealogy of these terms, see Chapter One._
Japanization and imperialization. However, this twist conceives an interesting question: Is all intermarriage a symptom of colonialism?

This question leads to an important aspect of intermarriage discourse: that when it departs from the government’s initial promotion rhetoric, it yields discussion about the detailed makeup of the marriage process. Thus literature with an intermarriage plotline often contextualizes the courtship leading to marriage as well as the family and social relations that continue after the union. By investigating the colonial management of interracial marriage, this dissertation attempts to explain a colonial modernity unique to Korea in the twentieth century.

**On Colonial Intimacy**

Recent scholarship on imperialism and colonial history has taken new directions to investigate the colonial management of race and sexuality, particularly in the control of intermarriage in the colonies. Interracial marriage between white Europeans and natives of different continents, such as the Americas, Africa, and Southeast Asia, has been explored not only in the colonial context but also in the current moment. Particularly illuminating is Ann Stoler’s recent work on intimacy in colonial rule. Stoler has persistently shown that the politics of intimacy often generated detailed plans and management in the territories, reconstructing boundaries of empire as they

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progressed or regressed. She argues that in the European colonial domination of Southeast Asia, “sexual relations” and “familiarity” between the colonizer and colonized presented frustrating and burdensome issues for the colonial administration, as governance of the colonies meant controlling and managing family formations. “Cohabitation, prostitution, and legally recognized mixed-marriages slotted women, men, and their progeny differently on the social and moral landscape of colonial society. These sexual contracts were buttressed by pedagogic, medical, and legal evaluations that shaped the boundaries of European membership and interior frontiers of the colonial state” (Stoler, Carnal Knowledge, 110). Stoler convincingly argues that “the métis problem” was the political and social turmoil of drawing boundaries of the nation-state and its rightful citizenship, forging what Etienne Balibar calls “interior frontiers” in Europe. “Métissage represented not the dangers of foreign enemies at national borders, but the more pressing affront for European nation-states” (Carnal Knowledge 80). The colonial management of sexuality and familiarity in Southeast Asia was critical in the metropole for defining who could be “European.” In other words, colonial intimacy is central in imperial politics; its consequences and courses could threaten the well-being of empire.  

More recently, Taiwan anthropologist Paul D. Barclay summarizes the function of intermarriage in the pre-modern and modern worlds as follows:

The literature on interethnic unions in the context of European expansion has thus provided scholars with an opportunity to relate material conditions, cultural predispositions, gender relations, and intellectual currents as they affect and are

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transformed by a major watershed in global history: the movement from an early modern world of empires and local societies, in which fluidity, porous boundaries, and interethnic mixing were norm, to a modern world of putatively homogenous and distinct nations, created and preserved through practices of physical and symbolic boundary maintenance. (Barclay 324)

Barclay argues that changing attitudes towards intermarriage in modern empires were related to territorial changes and that they contributed to rebuilding racial boundaries as the boundaries of nation-state were further articulated. He also argues that the pre-modern practice of intermarriage was a direct result of the global empire system. In other words, intimate interactions in the colonies were not limited to what were considered “local” problems but were always a matter of the greater well-being of the empire, including that of the metropole. The transnational connections of colonial management of intimacy between the colony and the metropole draw us to larger comparative studies on the empire. Stoler points out that “the incommensurabilities between North American empire and European colonial history diminish when the intimacies of empire are at center stage” (Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties” 58). In this dissertation, I do not argue for a universal history of intimacy and colonial/imperial experience. The primary focus of my investigation lies rather in the colonial intimacy that revolves around the modernity in Korea. This question of colonial intimacy can be positioned better in the context of colonial modernity.

The study of modernity in Asia has been dominated by modernization theories developed in the context of the Cold War that prescribe modernity as the development of democracy and capitalism under the guidance of a Western “free” world. Questioning the meaning and value of modernity, groundbreaking work and new
approaches have emerged in the past few decades. Two of the first of these new
ttempts at understanding colonial history in East Asia are the 1993 special edition of
the journal positions titled “Colonial Modernity” and the subsequently edited volume
Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia. The volume returns a critical attention
to Japan as an imperial power in East Asia, a study which had been neglected under the
auspices of the Cold War politics and its gatekeeper, modernization theory, as well as
through the support of nationalist historiographies. As Tani Barlow acknowledges,
theoretically, “colonial modernity” is a product of post-structural and post-colonial
analysis influenced by Marxist political economy theory as well as Foucaudian
discourse theory. Exploring the East Asian version of modernity is not an attempt to
claim a modified version of modernity but to question the structure of the modernity
previously constructed by European imperialism. The overlapping experience of
Japanese colonialism and modernity in East Asia is the central concern of the colonial
modernity thesis. The volume attempts to “interrupt” and “reroute” the space and
temporality of “colonial modernity in East Asia” which was constructed by European
and Japanese imperialism, and also by Cold War politics (“Introduction” 19-20). In
terms of the Korean experience with colonial modernity, the quintessential value of
modernity – the construction of modern subjectivity – was challenged by the Japanese
Other from the turn of the twentieth century. In the volume, however, racialization
under Japanese colonialism is highlighted as different from the Western practice. The
difference is not presented as “incommensurability” but remains as a particularity in
Asian modernity. Citing Tomiyama Ichirō, Barlow argues “[Japanese] colonialist
practice was not narrated as an opposition of races and cultures; rather this
‘cooperativism’ reveals the existence of the ‘Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere’ as a discourse connected with such reforms as medicine, hygiene, and education. The scientific observing subject who reads signs from symptoms in a unidirectional fashion and constructs the Other is secured in the denial and affirmation of this practice.”

Barlow asserts that the unique and distinguishing quality of Japanese colonial discourses is that “the proper borders separating Self and Other are never sufficiently drawn” as “they are in European orientalism.” This is an important observation about “the national Self” of Japan for our investigation of intermarriage in colonial Korea. Slogans like “the Great East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere” and “assimilation” may give an impression that Japan created distinctive way of practicing imperialism in Asia, which leaned toward inclusiveness rather than excluding the “others” in the empire. Historians such as Oguma Eiji and Tessa Morris-Suzuki have shown that reorganizing “others” in and around the Japanese archipelago was a central part of “re-inventing” Japan as a modern nation. As a colony, Korea was also an important site of building “the national Self.”

Ironically, Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia does not include studies on colonial Korea, but focuses on questions about modernity in Korea that have emerged elsewhere, separate from studies on Asian modernity, from the 1990s.9 Discussions of Korean “colonial modernity” engender many possibilities for the interpretation of colonialism and post-colonialism and allow many scholars, such as Carter Eckert, to seek a way to “imagine […] a scholarship that is pluralistic in its focus

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9 For studies on (post)colonial experiences in North and South Korea, see Charles K. Armstrong, “Surveillance and Punishment in Postliberation North Korea” and Chungmoo Choi, “The Discourse of Decolonization and Popular Memory,” in the volume.
and approach” other than a single nationalist historiography (Eckert, “Epilogue” 371). In their seminal edited work, Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson acknowledge that “[t]he nationalist paradigm has dominated the historical presentation of modern Korea” (Shin and Robinson, “Introduction” 3). As a result, supporting and preserving the idea of the Korean nation as a coherent entity has been the goal of scholarly pursuits, and questioning its integrity or origin outside of Korea has run the risk of being seen as unsupportive of the nation or as anti-nationalist. 10 Eckert is clear about the shackles that nationalist historiography has put on our understandings of modern Korea: “[…] nationalist paradigms have so dominated intellectual life in Korea that they have obfuscated, subsumed, or obliterated virtually all other possible modes of historical interpretation.” As a result, Korean historiography has been a politically charged subject that refuses diverse interpretation and whenever “one dares to challenge the relevance or validity of the framework itself, [it] is often ignored as unimportant or castigated as morally deficient, regardless of the evidence” (“Epilogue” 366).

On this note, it is not surprising that in Korean Studies it is controversial to posit the origin of “modernity” in the colonial period. The nationalist framework is reluctant to acknowledge any beneficial effects that came of Japanese colonialism, but it is hard to ignore the Japanese influence in modernization and development processes in Korea. In the last decade, however, some scholars have begun to acknowledge that Japanese colonialism existed in Korea as a continuous time and space, rather than as an abrupt moment in proper Korean history. The understanding of the continuity of Japanese

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10 Along this line, Park Chan-seung argues that U.S. scholarship on Korea was not welcomed in South Korean academia due to its easy criticism of Korean scholars’ ‘nationalism.’ See Park Chan-seung for details.
colonialism has empowered scholars to explore modern Korean subjectivity under colonial discipline.

Another groundbreaking work in studies of colonial modernity in Korea is Kim Chin-kyun’s and Chŏng Kŭn-sik’s edited volume, Kŭndae chuch’e wa singminji kyuyul kwŏllyŏk (Modern subject and colonial disciplining power), which features excellent research in the social history of colonial Korea. This volume has created a ripple in scholarship in Korea, encouraging additional studies with Foucauldian perspectives on social and state institutions of the colonial era. It emphasizes the struggles of multiple micro-powers in diverse institutions rather than supporting the widely-accepted understanding of a single brutal and omnipresent central power, namely the Government-General of Korea. As the title of the volume suggests, the work is committed to understanding the construction of modern subjectivity under the disciplining power of colonial rule. It is also an attempt to escape the binary opposition of “Japanese imperialism” and “colonial minjung (mass).” In brief, it suggests that during the colonial era, the modern technology of state power was implanted and that this modern power has contributed to constructing modern subjectivity in Korea. As it locates multiple institutions of modern technologies – schools, factories, hospitals, police, and military – it reveals nuanced power struggles and disciplines across the state. However, the contributors’ perspective on the Total War’s imperialization known as kōminka (imperial subjectification) does not receive the proper Foucauldian analysis promised by the volume. The authors state that Japan’s emperor system derives from pre-modern feudalism, and that therefore Korean subjectivity under the kōminka does
not attain that of the “modern” Western subjectivity. In sum, this volume’s investigation stops at the late 1930s, and resists exploring colonial modernity in the 1940s.

The journal and subsequent edited volume have had great impact on studies of colonial modernity in Korea, in both English and Korean language scholarship. Reviewing Korean modern historiography for the impact of modernization theory, Colonial Modernity brings our attention to the Cold War theory in creating our understanding of modern Korean history (Shin and Robinson 1). The post-colonial Cold War effect has contributed to strong nationalisms in both Koreas that legitimate state power and further, have functioned as a kind of state religion in the nation-building process (Eckert “Epilogue,” 369). Thus, the authors approach the issue of nationalist historiography by questioning the legitimacy of a universal category of “nationalism.” Once we accept a new “understanding of nationalism as a fluid, constructed, and changeable category that is neither predetermined nor fixed on a unitary pathway of development,” we are able to challenge developmentalist notions of modernity as well (Shin and Robinson 2).

However, these studies have not yet impacted the discussion of Korean-Japanese intermarriage, as there have been only few and limited discussions of naesŏn kyŏrhon (內鮮結婚, J: naisen kekkon), which have sporadically emerged in several disciplines

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11 “Sŏjang: singminjich’eje wa kûndaejŏk kyuyul” (25).

12 For works that question how Cold War theory is embedded in modern Korean historiography, see Henry Em, “‘Overcoming’ Korea’s Division: Narrative Strategies in Recent South Korean Historiography,” positions 1.2 (1993). The Korean translator’s introduction of Colonial Modernity (2006) also highlights this point.
without serious consideration of an interdisciplinary approach.¹³

Broadly speaking, three different academic disciplines explore the issue of intermarriage in colonial Chosŏn (1910-1945). First, historians have surveyed the known Government General of Korea (hereafter GGK) archives, and have treated intermarriage as a rare and brief episode. In this type of study, intermarriage is framed within the context of naesŏn ilch’e, or an imperial assimilation policy suggesting that naesŏn kyŏrhon is only limited to the example of imperialization.¹⁴ Oftentimes, intermarriage appears as an example of discrimination when a study focuses on hojŏk (family registry) or racial hierarchy in colonial Korea.¹⁵ On other occasions, some scholars discuss naesŏn kyŏrhon as a vicious example of ethnic cleansing which was designed to biologically eliminate Koreans by adding Japanese blood.¹⁶ Despite the fact that historians generally agree on the impact of naesŏn ilch’e towards the end of the colonial era, there is disagreement on its effectiveness as an assimilation policy. While

¹³ I use the term “naesŏn kyŏrhon” strictly as a historical term which categorized heterosexual matrimonial relationships between Korean and Japanese during the colonial era. Although kyŏrhon was used in the early colonial period, t’onghon (通婚) and chaphon (雜婚) were more often used to emphasize the nature of inter-racial or ethnic relations, while naesŏn kyŏrhon was more commonly used in the public media to address Korean and Japanese marital relations from the second decade of the colonial era. For further discussion of etymology on naesŏn kyŏrhon, see Chapter One.

¹⁴ “내선일체,” is often translated as “Japan and Korea are one entity,” or “Japanese-Korean unity.” Also known as naisen ittai, it is a Korean local modification of kōminka campaign. See Chapter One for further discussion.

¹⁵ Yi Sùng-yŏp (2000). Here Yi states naesŏn kyŏrhon was used as an example of incomplete assimilation which, as propaganda, offered the chance of becoming Japanese, but at the practical level, hojŏk did not allow complete transformation to Japanese, instead leaving traces recognized as Korean.

¹⁶ Suzuki Yūko (1992). This argument is based on the assumption that both Korean and Japanese races/ethnicities are distinctive homogenous groups and that exogamy will alter the “blood” identity. Scholarship in both Korea and Japan oftentimes uses examples of “naesŏn marriage” and “name change campaign” as “malsal” of Korean minjok identity, which can be translated to “obliterating” or “purging.” For example, see Cho Jin-ki, p 433.
the majority of historians acknowledge the assimilation programs as having been forceful or harsh institutional systems, some argue that the programs failed in their fundamental goal, namely making Koreans proper imperial subjects.\textsuperscript{17} The disagreement among scholars over the effectiveness of assimilation programs is symptomatic of the on-going debates on Korean colonial history, and it derives from a previous understanding of assimilation and \textit{naesŏn ilch’e} as methods for creating “loyalty” to the empire. Any type of loyalty to this foreign rule is labeled as “ch’inil” (pro-Japan), the antithesis of nationalist historiography.

Second, anthropologists have produced groundbreaking studies on Japanese women who married Koreans during the colonial era and remained in Korea after 1945. Almost every Japanese resident left Korea immediately after liberation, except some of these intermarried Japanese women. These anthropological studies focus on a community known as “Puyonghoe” (芙蓉會), a Japanese wives club in Korea, and on some women who returned to Japan after 1945. The anthropological fieldwork was conducted in the 1990s and most presented the surviving women as “granny” storytellers, documenting their memories of settlement in Korea.\textsuperscript{18} From the

\textsuperscript{17} For example, Yun Kŏn-ch’a argues that \textit{naesŏn ilch’e} was not a major phenomenon to bring changes to Korean society. Yun’s comments respond to recent studies on the pro-Japanese intellectuals of the past and how they adopted the policy as a way of reaching the full imperial subjectivity. Some have argued that “collaborators” internalized assimilation policy and understood Japanization as a way of becoming a better Korean nationalist. This argument corresponds with a nationalist historiography that emphasizes “nationalism” as the foremost value of a colonial intellectual. This reading puts Japanization aligned with nationalist historiography. Yun Kŏn-cha argues, however, that \textit{naesŏn ilch’e} was not a widely practiced policy, and thus Japanization was a voluntarily practice that did not necessarily aim for the improvement of Korean nation. See Yun Kŏn-cha’s article.

\textsuperscript{18} The official name of the organization is “Resident Japanese Wives in Korea (chaehan ilbonin puin hyŏphoe).” Puyonghoe was established in 1963 with about 4,000 members. Tabata Kaya
perspective of women’s history, these studies trace and vocalize women’s experiences
long-silenced in both Korean and Japanese “official” national histories. Most of the
surviving Japanese women initially came to Korea with their families as colonial
settlers, mostly poor peasants, migrant laborers, peddlers or petty merchants. However,
the delay in research, more than 50 years after liberation, proves to be one serious
challenge. Both the quantity and quality of the studies have other limits as academic
research. With much of the work focused on the women’s lives after 1945, they tell
little about the colonial experience. This prevents researchers from drawing larger
connections between individual experiences and the structural mechanisms of
colonialism. Also, the condition of Japanese women in colonial Korea is very
different from that of Korean women, yet both subjects were formed under the similar
colonial-modern condition of Japanese empire. It is unproductive to compare Japanese

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19 See Kasetani Tomō, “Chaehan’ilboninch’ŏ ūi hyŏngsŏng kwa saenghwal chŏkŭng e kwanhan
yŏnk’u” [Study on the Formation and Settlement of Japanese Wives in Korea] (MA thesis,
Korea University, Seoul, 1994). This study focuses on Puyonghoe, interviewed Japanese
women who married Korean men and remained in Korea after the liberation. (Tabata Kaya,
“Singminji Chosŏn esŏ salatdŏn ilbon yŏsŏngdŭl ŭi sangwa singminjuŭi kyŏnghyŏme kwanhan
yŏnk’u” [Life and experience of Japanese women in colonial Korea] (MA thesis, Ewha Women’s
University, Seoul, 1996)). Tabata surveyed 23 Japanese women who lived in Korea before
1945 and conducted detailed interviews of five women. Only two of her 23 interviewees
remained in Korea after 1945; Choe Sŏk-yŏng, “Singminji siki ‘naesŏn kyŏrhon’ changrye
munje” [Encouraging ‘naesŏn marriage’ problem in the colonial period], Ilbonhangnyŏnbo (9:9,
2000).

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recorded that the membership in 1991 was 484 in her 1995 thesis, and recently the number has
Chosŏn esŏ salatdŏn ilbon yŏsŏngdŭl ŭi sangwa singminjuŭi kyŏnghyŏme kwanhan yŏnk’u”
University, Seoul, 1996), for more on these numbers. The first president of the group was the
former Princess Yi Pang-ja, then just returned from Japan and deeply involved in social work.
It is no surprise that Princess Pang-ja was the first president of the group, since the name
Puyonghoe means lotus flower, the floral representative of the Japanese imperial household.
The majority of members maintained Japanese nationality. However, while members who
participate in the group preferred to keep their Japanese identity, unknown numbers of people
who did not participate in the group might have passed as Korean.
wives to the “comfort women” conscripted to serve as military sex slaves, but when the studies of “Puyonghoe” emerged, they earned little or no attention from academia or popular media, overshadowed by the testimony of comfort women “grannies” emerging at the same time. Even the researchers themselves seem uncomfortable with the status of these Japanese wives, both marginalized minorities and colonial ruling subjects, and the anthropologists seem to maintain a careful distance from their subjects.

Third, literary and cultural critics have in recent years started to engage the study of Korean-Japanese marriages, after the recovery of key texts written in Japanese. These studies form a part of the broader emerging scholarship on Japanese-language literature written by Koreans in colonial Chosŏn, a body of work previously little-known. Japanese language texts were not acknowledged as “Korean” for scholarly analysis unless for their reflection on the status of collaboration. In the effort to expand the boundaries of Korean literature beyond monolingual writings and that of “ethnic Koreans,” the theme of Korean-Japanese marriage and romantic love is centered and illuminated as an ignored genre still within the boundary of national literature. These studies are still nascent and much of the effort seems directed toward aligning authors and texts along a clear and distinct binary – resistant-nationalist versus Japanese-collaborationist – depending on the plot line of the relationship. The binary seems to come from the overemphasis on the linear trajectory of intermarriage plots, and narratives are considered pro-Japanese if they end in successful marriage and resistant if the marriage is unsuccessful. Lack of historical contextualization aggravates apparent problems in these studies, which are due to the premise that “naesŏn marriage

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“literature” was written to support naesŏn ilch’e policy (Cho Jin-ki 434). However, intermarriage discourse also easily invokes celebrations of racial hybridity, representing intermarriage as a radical moment, and neglecting the colonial relations and management side of intermarriage. In addition, these studies are influenced by gaichi (exterior) literature studies, which have emerged as a prominent area in Japanese literature studies. Exterior literature includes works produced outside of the mainland or about the outside of the mainland, and includes texts written by authors originally from the outside. Particularly regarding Korean colonialism, some studies have explored texts by Korean authors written in Japanese and published in Japan, such as Kim Sa-ryang (Kim Siryŏ, 1914-1950?) and Chang Hyŏk-chu (Noguchi Minoru, 1905-1998). As this movement is still in its formative stage, it is difficult to predict its future.  

Despite the studies mentioned above, the question of interracial marriage has not yet been fully unpacked in Korean studies. First, when analyzed within the context of naesŏn ilch’e or kŏminka, intermarriage is emphasized as propaganda under the Total War aggression. As the result, its pre-1937 form, which did not bare the trace of state-

21 Some examples include Kimberly Tae Kono, “Writing Imperial Relations: Romance and Marriage in Japanese Colonial Literature” (Diss. UC Berkeley, 2001), Helen Jeesung Lee, “Popular Media and the Racialization of Koreans under Occupation” (Diss. UC Irvine, 2003), and Nam Bujin, Bungaku no shokuminchishugi: kindai chŏsen no fŭeki to kioku [Literature of colonialism: the landscape and memory of modern Korea] (Tokyo: Seikai Sihosha, 2005). Kimberly Kono’s work focuses on Japanese authors who narrate the colonial experience from the “outside” (gaichi). Other notable work in the field includes Melissa Wender, Lamentation as History: Narratives by Koreans in Japan, 1965-2000 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), which focuses on zainich, resident Korean writers in post-1965 Japan. Some studies attempt to explore Japanese colonial literature in other colonial territories, such as Taiwan. See Leo Ching, Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) and Faye Yuan Kleeman, Under an Imperial Sun: Japanese Colonial Literature of Taiwan and the South (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).
mandated assimilation policies, is often overlooked. Once intermarriage is seen
exclusively as a part of colonial assimilation policy, the stories about intermarriage then
fall under the category of pro-Japan or anti-Japan sentiments. It becomes difficult to
consider effects of intermarriage beyond assimilation, such as colonial management of
intimate/sexual relationship or questions of modernity in the constitution of gender,
marrige, and family. In addition, under the influence of nationalist historiography,
previous studies on naesŏn marriage rarely linked race and gender and colonial
modernity. Second, the examples of previous scholarship neglect the fact that personal
narratives of Japanese wives were not free from colonial ideology. When their subjects
claimed that they were unaware of naesŏn marriage programs, scholars tend to take the
statement at face value and separate “personal experience” from the “colonial
ideology.”22 In other words, personal narratives were understood as apolitical when
they concern family or gendered experiences. Even if interviewees do not acknowledge
it, they must have benefited from the legalization of intermarriage. The relationship
between the institution (the GGK) and subjects (naesŏn married couples) warrants an
investigation of the saturation of imperial ideology in everyday life. The issue of
chronology applies to literary analyses as well. If naesŏn marriage is isolated within the
frame of naesŏn ilch’e, it limits the literary practice as propaganda or ch’inil (pro-
Japanese collaboration) and does not leave much room for interpretation. Simply
reading that the success or failure of a marriage in a narrative either promotes or
opposes naesŏn marriage policy risks reading literature as a direct representation of

22 Some scholars, such as Choe Sŏk-yŏng, argue that Puyonghoe members did not know about
naesŏn kyŏrhon program at the time of their marriage, and that it was not, in fact, a widely
known policy among the populace.
historical facts. Another big challenge in literary analyses comes from the problem of how to relate “romantic love” (yŏnae) with intermarriage discourse. Authors were very interested in describing the details of courtship and the development of romantic relationships and their complications for familiar society. There is a danger of categorizing “naesŏn marriage literature” without considering subtle differences between texts, such as location, language, publication media, readership, and the relationship between the subject and state, which reflects the most important factor in Korean colonial literature, namely the transformation of the Japanese Empire during its 35-year presence in Korea.

My goal in this dissertation is to chart changing discourses of intermarriage throughout the colonial era, and how they both reflected and shaped the idea of modernity in Korea. Thus my work involves investigating both ends of colonialism – the colonial government’s indoctrination and colonized Koreans’ appropriation of colonial policy. While I challenge views of intermarriage as a manifestation of colonial contradiction, I attempt to show how discourses about interracial marriage articulate race, sexual relationships, domestic orders of family, courtship and marriage, as well as the impact of the Japanese Empire in Korea.

**Interrmarriage in Literature**

The recently recovered literature on intermarriage and romance has illuminated the significance of intermarriage, indicating the possibility of its greater influence on Korean society than previously believed. Many writers of the period probed the topics of interracial romance and marriage, and these texts manifest the internal struggles of
writers, intellectuals, and readers over how to be and not be Japanese. *Naesŏn* (Japanese-Korean) marriage became an important part of *naesŏn ilch’e* policy, and *naesŏn* marriage overall gained heavier promotion through *naesŏn ilch’e*. For this reason, even though Korean-Japanese marriage discourse existed before *naesŏn ilch’e*, in the post-1937 phase of colonial rule any Korean-Japanese marriage was imagined through the *naesŏn ilch’e* assimilation system. Once intermarriage was established as a direct effect of *naesŏn ilch’e* policy, it was easy to classify a marriage’s success or failure in terms of the outcome of the policy. As I mentioned earlier, in previous scholarship, mechanical categorization of the success and failure of a marriage in literature easily translated into affirmation of or antagonism toward Japanese colonialism, and critics rushed to label specific works of literature as propaganda or resistant nationalist practice. Within the paradigm of national literature, only resistant literature deserved further critical analysis because it purportedly possessed the complexity of good literature.

Literary representation of *naesŏn* marriage requires more sensitive treatment than this binary stance. First, the literary gap between pre-1937 and post-1937 works should be recognized. Chronologically, intermarriage appears in literature before *naesŏn ilch’e* was implemented. Before *naesŏn ilch’e* and kōminka, there were discourses shaping intermarriage as an ideal assimilation practice. But as the following chapter argues, pre-*naesŏn ilch’e* assimilationalist policies cannot be equated with the intensity of *naesŏn ilch’e* and its *naesŏn* marriage programs. Second, most of this scholarship posits a direct connection between the colonial government’s policy and the decisions of subjects to marry, an assumption that has not been well-documented.
Official encouragement cannot straightforwardly translate into a subject’s decision.\textsuperscript{23}

On this note, there is an increase in the volume of literature which deals with naesŏn relationships in the post-1937 era, but the promotion of naesŏn marriage cannot have sole responsibility for this increase. Other influences must include censorship, movement of people, and manifestation of changes in the literary form. Thirdly, intermarriage projects imagined Koreanness and Japaneseeness in forms that were constantly shifting in comparative relations. In the latter era of colonial rule, the Japanese Empire expanded its sphere of influence, and the racial constructs of the empire changed accordingly. With growing numbers of Korean migrants in mainland Japan and Manchuria, and Japanese settlers residing longer and more permanently in the peninsula, naesŏn symbolized a racial relationship beyond Korea and Japan. In some literature, Manchuria had a serious influence on imagining Korean identity.\textsuperscript{24}

Thus, contrary to the understandings of previous scholarship, intermarriage in literature represents a cultural process that cannot be reduced to kōminka.

The earliest currently known intermarriage narrative in modern Korean literature is “Pinsŏnryang ŭi ilmiin” (A Japanese Beauty of a Poor Korean) published in 1912 by Yi In-jik (李人稙, 1862-1916).\textsuperscript{25} Yi In-jik is considered to be the pioneer of sinsōsŏl (new narrative) genre, and an enlightened man of Western and Japanese education. Intermarriage quietly penetrated modern Korean literature through elite writers like Yi.

\textsuperscript{23} On this enforcement level, the Korean version of promotion of intermarriage is different from Taiwan’s 1910-1915 Japanese-Aborigine marriage.

\textsuperscript{24} See Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{25} “貧鮮郞の日美人,” Maeil sinbo (1912.3.1). Although the title is phrased in Japanese, the entire story is printed in Korean.
Following this work, the intermarriage and romance theme was scattered in numerous fictions but rarely emerged as the central subject until the post-1937 moment. Recent scholarship, such as that of Nam Bujin, proves that interracial marriage and romance were quite popular topics, and the sheer number of “naesŏn marriage literature” texts listed by Nam, some 50 works, is impressive. The list is not definitive, and there is some doubt about his categorization, but the list demonstrates that Korean authors did pay attention to interracial relations in their writing during the colonial period.

Although I explored most published literature for any intermarriage plots, this dissertation is not a recovery project searching for “naesŏn marriage literature” from the archives, but rather an attempt to draw a cognitive map of intermarriage as a matrix of modernity under the influence of the Japanese Empire. Perhaps the label “naesŏn marriage literature” itself is a misleading category. I treat these writing not as a distinctive genre, but as a part of on-going discourse on intermarriage related to questions of modern subjectivity that became an important concern in the colonial era.

26 A scholar in Japan, Nam Bujin notes in his recently published book that there are up to 50 examples of interracial marriage literature. I have identified 10 more narratives that were not included in his listing. In this work, only 13 narratives were written by Koreans before 1937, which shows that the various conditions surrounding naesŏn ilch’ee policy and literature censorship after 1937 provoked or forced authors to write more about intermarriage. For the listing, see Nam Bujin, Bungaku no shokuminchishugi: kindaichōsen no hūkeito kioku [Colonialism in literature: the landscape and memory of modern Korea] (Tokyo: Seikai Sihosha, 2006), pp. 7-9. This listing also includes some works by Japanese authors on the desirable nature of Korean-Japanese relationships (not necessarily marriage) especially around the time of annexation (1910). I came upon Nam’s book after I finished my primary research and found that some of my archival research overlaps with his but my approach to the archive and perspective on colonialism differ.

27 In Bungaku shokuminchishugi, there are several works listed as naesŏn marriage that in fact do not involve Korean-Japanese relationships. For example, the Japanese travel writer’s senryū poetry genre should be questioned for its ambiguity. For discussion of the complicated relationship between colonialism and racialization in senryū poetry by Japanese settlers in Korea, see Helen J.S. Lee, “Writing Colonial Relations of Everyday Life in Senryu,” positions (16.3):601-628.
These texts offer rich insights into how Korean intellectuals and writers understood race, gender, and sexuality under the Japanese Empire.

Intermarriage and romance texts were mostly written in the late 1930s. Reflecting the publication trend in that era, they were printed in both Korean and Japanese. There are roughly three types of texts featuring Korean-Japanese relationships, which we can understand in terms of authorship and audience. First, Korean authors writing and publishing mostly for Korean readers, writing mostly in Korean but occasionally in Japanese. In the case of Korean language publications, it is hard to speculate that mainland Japanese were considered in the readership; second, Korean writers writing and publishing mostly for Japanese readers, expecting some Koreans with Japanese reading skill; third, Japanese authors writing mostly for Japanese readers in Japan but using their colonial experience outside of mainland Japan. Authors correspond with readership, and the language used by authors also indicates the scope of readership. For example, Korean authors sometimes published in Japanese either in translation or as the original language, but no Japanese authors published their work in Korean.

Of the writers analyzed in the following chapters, Yi Kwang-su (1892-1950), Yŏm Sang-sŏp (1897-1963), and Yi Hyo-sŏk (1907-1942), fit in the first category. Yi Kwang-su is well known for his novel, Mujŏng (1917), the first modern Korean novel published in Maeil sinbo as a series, which was written during his studies in Tokyo but published in Kyŏngsŏng. Ironically, this father of the modern Korean novel’s first

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28 It should be noted that, as Japanese was used as Lingua Franca in the empire, a great range of Japanese language texts were circulated and read throughout the colonies of the empire.
published fictional work was in the Japanese language. Throughout his prolific writing career, the majority of his work was in Korean, until the late 1930s, when he made a public endorsement for the cause of the Asia-Pacific War. Yi Kwang-su is a controversial figure, a nationalist turned pro-Japan collaborator, but he was a popular writer, public speaker, teacher, and one of the few authors who could support himself with income from his writing. Yŏm Sang-sŏp was also schooled in Tokyo and, upon his return to Korea in the 1920s, became an influential author of modern Korean literature. Although Yŏm once said he conceptualized his stories in Japanese, his published works were in Korean for a Korean readership. Yi Hyo-sŏk emerged much later than Yi Kwang-su and Yŏm Sang-sŏp. Unlike his predecessors, by the time Yi Hyo-sŏk attended school, full Japanese-language institutions were available for a handful of elites. He was educated in Japanese-language schools and became fluent in Japanese. Still, most of his oeuvre was published in Korean until the late 1930s.

For a small number of authors, literature was published in the Japanese language even when published in Korea. These include the occasional contributions of Korean authors for the Japanese-language publications of the GGK, and several Japanese-language magazines at the end of the 1930s. A notable source of Japanese-language literature by Korean authors is Kungmin munhak (國民文學).

29 “Love” (愛か aika) (1909).
30 See Chapter Two for further discussion of Yi Kwang-su and Yŏm Sang-sŏp.
31 See Chapter Four for analysis of Yi Hyo-sŏk.
The second group of writers, Koreans who wrote for a Japanese readership, is made up of those who actively published at the heart of the empire. This group includes writers such as Kim Sa-ryang, Chang Hyŏk-chu, and Kim Sŏng-min, who were born in Korea but later relocated to Japan and started their writing careers publishing in Japan and in the Japanese language. Oftentimes, their subjects were Korea-related, and featured either Korea or Korean characters in Japan. The success of Kim Sa-ryang and Chang Hyŏk-chu in Japan became a topic of round-table debates among writing elites in Korea and in discussions of what makes “Korean” literature.33

The third type of writer produced what is called “gaichi bungaku” or exterior literature, a genre label recently coined in light of empire studies in Japan. It is difficult to limit the time frame of gaichi bungaku to the Korean colonial era, because authors continued to write about their experience with the empire in the post-1945 era.34 These texts include interesting narratives by writers such as Nakajima Atsushi and Yuasa Katsue (Katsuei).35 In many cases, the author’s biographical experience in Korea as a

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33 For example, “Chosŏn munkak ū chŏngŭi: irŏke kyuchŏng haryŏ handa!” [the definition of Korean literature], Samch’ŏnri 8.8 (1936.8.1) asks twelve renowned authors their opinion on the definition of Korean literature.


35 Some well-known works are Nakajima Atsushi’s “Toragari” (Tiger Hunt) and Yuasa Katsue(Katsuei)’s Kannani. I argue elsewhere that Kannani is not in complete form due to multiple censorships – from ruling authorities and from the writer himself in recuperation. Yuasa’s “Natsume” [棗 cigar leaf, 1937] is a short story that portrays a boy named Kim Taro, whose father is a Korean yangban and whose mother is a Japanese concubine. He lives with his Japanese mother in the outskirts of Seoul, excluded from his wealthy father’s house in the center. On the periphery, Kim Taro and his mother hide his Korean heritage and Taro only sees his father occasionally. A similar case is found in “Nam Ch’ung-sŏ” (1927), written by Yŏm
In this dissertation, I focus my research on the first category, which includes texts that targeted readership in the Korean peninsula and that were published during the colonial era (1910-1945). It is important to contextualize literature about interracial marriage and romance within the writer’s broader oeuvre and also to connect it with other contemporary discourses about marriage and romance in general. Therefore, I broaden my investigation on intermarriage to include an analysis of the way it was consumed and modified in colonized territories as well as consider how it affected the representation of intimacy. This enables my study to focus on changes within the Korean language community under colonialism, but most importantly, to investigate how colonized people reacted to a colonialism and imperialism that was imposed on them. My investigation aims to analyze intermarriage discourse and its role in the construction of modern subjectivity in the colonial era, both from the colonial governing position and colonized subjects’ reactions.

Another complication in categorizing “naesŏn marriage literature” in the colonial period is the very concept of marriage. Because naesŏn ilch’e was a state-promoted program, marriage became bound to matrimonial law under the auspices of the state. Registered marriage was restricted to the bourgeois heterosexual monogamy sanctioned by the modern nation-state. According to this policy, common law marriage or polygamous relationships and offspring born out of legal wedlock had no place in the social order. Despite the fact that legal rulings and state programs worked to define the

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Sang-sŏp. Ch’ung-sŏ was raised in his yangban father’s house as a full-Korean without knowing that the Japanese second wife whom he often visited was actually his birth mother.
proper modern subject in marriage, oftentimes legal and familiar issues were unclear in literary representation.

Literary texts display a different understanding of marriage systems from that reflected in the governing authority’s political slogans. While state promotion focused on the practice of consummation, the vast majority of literary texts engaged with the pre-marriage stage, courtship or “romantic love” (戀愛, K: yŏnae, J: ren'ai). In these texts, heterosexual romantic love is not necessary for courtship and does not always result in matrimony, but it is presented as a necessary step for modern coupling processes in which protagonists’ modern ethics and values are tested. In other words, in literary narratives, romantic love is the place of conflict and agony, as well as the source of love and happiness, leading to the climax of plotlines where all these tensions erupt in chaos. Romantic love, in modern Korean literature, is a symbol of bourgeois family institutions and modern technology, and interracial romance is no different. Intermarriage and romantic love signaled a new technology of intimacy that was highly desirable for the colonial elites, as it represented civilized customs, progress, and enlightenment.

Again, this prompts a question about genre: must all “naesŏn” marriages be read exclusively in terms of the colonial relationship? The majority of literature featuring Korean-Japanese familiar relationships comment directly on imperialism in one way or another, either directly stating the goal of naesŏn ilch’e or metaphorically referring to the assimilation rhetoric. But some texts do not include any social commentary on the state’s effort at assimilation or on Japanese imperialism in relation to interracial relationships. This is another reason to reconsider naesŏn marriage literature. For
example, *Nam Ch’ung-sŏ* by Yŏm Sang-sŏp (analyzed in Chapter Two) and “Letter from Asami” by Yi Hyŏ-sŏk (analyzed in Chapter Four) do not directly comment on *naesŏn ilch’e* or colonial condition, but both texts present a nuanced picture of intermarriage, race, class, and the colonial condition.

In Korean-Japanese marriage and romance literature, there is a certain gender imbalance in coupling. On a simple structural level, it is worth noting that the consistent relationship between Korean men and Japanese women. Although this seems to oppose the usual pattern of colonizer-colonized coupling seen in European and American colonial relationships, the gendered imbalance matches the circulated Korean-Japanese coupling statistics of the time. These statistics, published in print media many times in the late 1930s and early 1940s, were reinforced by the literature, even though the numbers could not have been an accurate account of intermarriage.  

I argue in Chapter One that it is unwise to assume that circulated statistics were an accurate portrayal of intermarriage or that they represented the actual number of intermarried couples in the Korean peninsula. What we can read from this archive, against the grain, is that the state – via its census authority – was invested in monitoring the Korean male population and that the statistics were discussed in elite literary circles. In literary representation, Korean male characters in interracial relationships are almost always intellectuals. This phenomenon does not seem to be derived from one particular cause but rather from a combination of factors. First, we should remember that these writers were Korean male intellectuals themselves, either educated in mainland Japan or in prestigious schools in the colonial capitol, Kyŏngsŏng. Further, representations of

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36 See Chapter One for a discussion of statistics.
Japanese women reflect not necessarily the reality of Japanese women at the time in Korea, but particular images of Japanese women both in Korea and Japan. The femininity imagined by Korean male elites tends to fall into a category of either modern or pre-modern, a stark contrast to the world surrounding male intellectuals.

Lastly, in considering literature from the colonial era, especially texts dealing with favorable themes for colonial rule, there is the issue of colonial language. Except during the very end of the colonial period, modern Korean literature thrived under Japanese colonial rule, which helped keep Korean language intact as written language for modern fiction and prose. The venue for publishing significantly diminished after 1940, for a few reasons. Some authors published their fiction in Japanese, but fiction as a genre came to be published less frequently than non-fiction writing. In the past, print materials in Japanese were considered the GGK’s “propaganda” and excluded from “national literature” regardless of their content. Some literature dealing with the theme of interracial marriage or romance falls into this category, and the process of labeling work “propaganda” is very complex. On the surface, it may appear that a text supports a theme endorsed by the GGK, but it could be that the literature in question actually illustrates the writer’s perception of cultural negotiation and subtle changes in private and public matters, offering the writer’s perspective and not that of the GGK. In the following chapters, I will show how writers and elites explored these sites of negotiation and contributed to the work of colonial hegemony.

Colonial Intimacy and Modern Subjectivity

Although Japan began its colonial domination over Asia later than its European
competitors, imperial policy incorporated racial assimilation in its territories and
encouraged intermarriage between the colonizer and the colonized from the beginning.
When Japan heightened its war efforts in the late 1930s, the interracial marriage policy
was integrated into colonial ideology. The naesŏn ilch’e policy further intensified the
Japanese Empire’s quest to assimilate all similar Asian “brothers,” and supported
folding the Korean race into the Japanese race. When faced with the task of promoting
intermarriage between Koreans and Japanese, however, the articulation of racial
division complicated the original goal. Interestingly, the articulation of assimilation
encouraged new examination and scrutiny of the intermarriage practice that directly
questioned the boundary between Korean and Japanese races. Ironically, supporting the
cultural distinctiveness of Koreans was also part of the assimilationalist rhetoric that
constituted empire-building. In the middle of empire-building and expansionism that
sought the universal category of the imperial subject, discourse about marriage –
particularly intermarriage – overlapped with modern state policy that guided the process
of becoming a modern state subject.

If naesŏn ilch’e had trouble defining its concept, naesŏn marriage did not. In a
way, naesŏn marriage could crystallize the concept of Koreans and Japanese melding
together through the metaphor of familiarity and sexual relations. This union of
Koreans and Japanese living under the same roof provided an obtainable picture of
assimilation. The metaphor of family continued to appear in the literature dealing with
naesŏn marriage and romance, as this subject matter became one of the few realms
which Korean writers could freely explore. Naesŏn marriage was picked up by naesŏn
ilch’e proponents as a good way of becoming one, as expressed in “sentimental union.”
This discourse of intermarriage underwrote the institutions of modern marriage and family, highlighting certain aspects of the modern family. The modern subject that intermarriage and romance discourses construct thus belongs to a modern state, nation, and society geared toward the building of Empire.

On this note, I want to restate the role of colonial intimacy in the study of modernity. Ann Stoler, among others, has argued the importance of the management of familiar relationships in colonial rule. Stoler’s work shows that formation of family and marriage was one of the most elaborated and controlled colonial projects of Western imperialism in Southeast Asia.³⁷ My study follows the stated premise of Stoler’s research, that “matters of the intimate are critical sites for the consolidation of colonial power,” and that “management of the domains provides a strong pulse of how relations of empire are exercised, and that affairs of the intimate are strategic for empire-driven states.”³⁸ By teasing out “colonial intimacy” in the study of colonialism and imperialism, we can frame the material relationship between empire and its colonized land as constructed by emotional relationships – or sentiments – between the colonizer and colonized in intimate and sexual relations. The consequences of intermarriage and mixing provoked European empires to regulate the boundary of their citizen’s bodies and forced them to explicitly articulate the requirements for becoming European.

The colonial Korean case of intermarriage brings different meaning to “colonial

intimacy.” Both systems – European and Japanese Empires – had a strong interest in managing intimacy between the colonizer and colonized. But the Japanese Empire promoted intermarriage at the peak of its expansion and in the midst of producing its modern family (J: ie) system and modern family state. Presented as a part of the bourgeois family, intermarriage was consumed by both Koreans and Japanese as a means of becoming a modern subject. Studying interracial marriage and romance discourse on the level of colonial discourse and Korean intellectuals’ response will allow us to analyze both the colonial management of colonial intimacy and the colonized subject’s use of intimacy for their own purposes. Perhaps we can revise this concept and call it “imagined colonial intimacy.” “Imagined colonial intimacy” was important to empire, but it was also critical for the colonized subjects to imagine, envision, and even desire what they lacked – intimacy with the colonizers. Korean literature demonstrates clearly how the colonial intellectuals played with their sentiments in the imaginary world. Intimacy was not only a medium for leading subjects into becoming proper Japanese imperial citizens, but it was also a critical tool for constructing modern subjectivity as an integral part of the state institution.

Chapter Structure

The dissertation is organized into four chapters. The first sketches the historical context of intermarriage between Koreans and Japanese. The remaining chapters are organized around issues that stand out in representations of intermarriage in popular texts. Questions of domesticity arise repeatedly in intermarriage and romance texts. Chapter Two focuses its analysis on domesticity: the management of the house and
home as well as family relationships in literary texts that feature intermarriage and romance as their underlying frameworks. This theme of domesticity continues in Chapter Three, which explores discourses on international marriage in Yŏsŏng magazine. Despite the fact that it was published in the late 1930s when naesŏn marriage was promoted, Yŏsŏng and other publications did not discuss naesŏn marriage at all when they portrayed “international” marriage in Korea. Rather, their approach to intermarriage between Koreans and non-Japanese was sensationalist and promoted Western domesticity. This chapter also shows how racialization and the othering process were predominant in intermarriage discourse. Chapter Four continues to investigate the relationship between race and gender in the context of an aggressively expanding Japanese Empire. Focusing on writer Yi Hyo-sŏk, Chapter Four posits Yi’s work as a particularly illuminating instance of the Korean intellectual’s reaction, via intermarriage, to the expansion of the Japanese empire.

The first chapter, “Coupling Colonizer and Colonized: Promotion of Intermarriage in Colonial Chosŏn,” explores, through the analysis of legal discourses, official documents and magazines, how marriage between Koreans and Japanese was introduced and promoted, and how assimilation policies such as naesŏn ilch’è (內鮮日體) and hwangminhwa (皇民化) allied with intermarriage. To approach this complicated issue of intermarriage in colonial Korea, this chapter investigates construction of its discourse in the beginning of the colonial rule, legal changes that followed to support the system, and how the colonial government presented intermarriage as a state system. It explores three areas: the relationship between interracial marriage and assimilation policy during the colonial era; the view of the
Government-General of Korea on Korean-Japanese marriage; and Naisen ittai magazine.

I trace the introduction of intermarriage between Koreans and Japanese in Korea in the early part of the colonial era, and then analyze in the late 1930s how interracial marriage gained important political implications and became part of the colonial assimilation policy. As opposed to naesŏn kyŏrhon program, which was designed to accelerate the Japanization of Koreans, intermarriage sometimes contributed instead to articulations of difference between Koreans and Japanese, widening the gap between the imperial colonizer and the colonized. Through close reading of Naisen ittai magazine, I argue that even an apparently obvious pro-imperialism publication revealed gaps and holes in the assimilation program.

The second chapter, “Under the Same Roof: Creating New Colonial Domestic Space in Intermarriage,” examines how intermarriage and romance literatures portray “new” colonial domestic spaces as distinct from existing “old” Korean home spaces. Reading many works of interracial marriage and romance fiction, this chapter pays close attention to “Nam Ch’ung-sŏ” (1927) and Love and Crime (1927-1928) by Yŏm Sang-sŏp (1897-1963) and “Their Love” (1941) and When Hearts Truly Meet (1940) by Yi Kwang-su (1892-1950), each of which centers around conflicts at home when Japanese style of domesticity is introduced. Intermarriage texts reveal the intervention of colonial power in home and family space, shifting the discourse of home life after marriage. These texts redefine domesticity, the order of domestic spheres, in a way that is acceptable to both Koreans and Japanese, and demonstrate how it became a contested arena of domination and power in modern everyday life.

The third chapter, “International Marriage as Intermarriage,” contextualizes
“international (kukje)” marriage within contemporary discourses on modern marriage and home life at a time when intermarriage was promoted. It also questions how interracial and transnational marriage between Koreans and non-Koreans fit into women’s print culture by analyzing articles and interviews on “sweet home” in newspapers and magazines including Ÿósŏng and Samch’ölli.

The last chapter, “Constructing Race and Gender: Yi Hyo-sŏk and Otherness,” investigates the portrayal of intermarriage and romance and the representation of non-Koreans by the writer Yi Hyo-sŏk (1907-1942). I focus on his fiction and travel writings because he is one of the few Korean authors who wrote not only about interracial relations between Koreans and Japanese but also between Koreans and non-Asians. I particularly focus on the novel The Endless Blue Sky (1940) and the short story “A Story of Asami” (1941). I argue that new imagined frontiers such as Manchuria inspired Yi to explore colonial selfhood and colonial intimacy due to his encounter of the “foreign” and “otherness.” I consider how Yi addressed his anxiety as a colonial intellectual in his writings about interracial marriage and romance. These texts explore the construction of race and gender and the cognitive space that emerged in the latter years of the Japanese Empire. This final chapter explores colonial intimacies in the context of a global framework of expansionism and imperialism.

Notes on Linguistic Hybridity

The colonial era in Korea was a space of hybridity and mixing in many respects. Instead of rehashing the familiar tropes of the U.S. melting pot or, conversely, South African segregation, I want to look at colonial Korea as a space of negotiation and
strategic containment. Given that this dissertation is written in English, I have made some editorial decisions on how to translate and Romanize certain historical terms. When I refer to kōminka (imperial subjectification) in the context of the entire Japanese Empire, I Romanize it in according to the Japanese reading rather than the Korean local reading. However, I read hanja terms in Korean when practiced in colonial Korea rather than reading them in the Japanese pronunciation. For example, I have Romanized 内鮮結婚 as naesŏn kyŏrhon rather than naisen kekkon, and 内鮮一體 as naesŏn ilch’e rather than naisen ittai. Most of my primary texts, when written in Korean, transcribe these terms both in hanja and hangŭl. When they were written in hangŭl, Korean pronunciations were used. However in the cases where they were inserted in fully Japanese language texts, I Romanized them in Japanese, accordingly.

My decision to Romanize naesŏn ilch’e ideology not as naisen ittai is meant to strategically reveal lingual hybridity in the colonial era. In the film Spring of Korean Peninsula (K: Pando ūi Pom, 1941), Seoul is announced as “keijō” by a Japanese-sounding railroad official. Keijō is Japanese reading of Kyŏngsŏng (京城), the colonial name of Seoul. In the same film, however, the characters refer to Seoul as “sŏul,” not “kyŏngsŏng” or “keijō,” the common Korean name of the city. This example shows how multiple place names were used in the colonial era, but it also provides a glimpse of the era’s linguistic hybridity. Despite the fact that Japanese was the Lingua Franca or “national language” in the colonial era, Koreans continued to appropriate Japanese in Korean reading. It is more likely that naesŏn ilch’e was used rather than naisen ittai by Korean speakers, as many Korean language texts show, even at the last moment of the colonial period. In Korean language newspapers, in fact, Governor General Minami Jirō
was referred to as Nam ch’ongdok, the Korean reading of his name and title.

For publications’ article titles, I have followed the dominant language that publication used. For example, Naiseitai magazine was all in Japanese though it was published in Korea for Koreans. The same goes for Ryokki. Nevertheless, I Romanized Kungmin munhak in accordance with the Korean rather than Japanese reading, because of the journal’s complicated history.39

39 Kungmin munhak is a repackaging of Inmun p’yŏngron, a literary journal in Korean. Even though Kungmin munhak’s inaugural issue was printed in Japanese, its initial goal was to publish in both Korean and Japanese alternatively.
Chapter 1

Promotion of Interracial Marriage in Colonial Chosŏn

Introduction

This chapter pays close attention to how discourses of intermarriage shifted throughout the colonial era, corresponding with changes in the goals of colonial rule and with changes in the socio-political implications of marriage and family. It explores three areas: the relationship between interracial marriage and assimilation policy during the colonial era; the view of Government-General of Korea (hereafter, GGK) on Korean-Japanese marriage; and Naisen ittai magazine. To approach this complicated issue of intermarriage in colonial Korea, this chapter investigates constructions of its discourse in the beginning of the colonial rule, legal changes that followed to support the system, and how the colonial government presented intermarriage as a state system.

Interracial Marriage in Korea in the early part of colonial era

While Korean-Japanese marriages might have been a part of the interaction between the two nations for many centuries as a result of their geopolitical proximity, noticeable discourse only emerged as Korea became a Japanese protectorate in 1905 and was annexed in 1910. It was time of modern nation-state building for both Korea and Japan, which meant redrawing boundaries as a congenial nation-state and a building a strong governing presence in the territory. This was also an era when Japan
incorporated new territories as a modern nation-state: Okinawa in 1879, Taiwan in 1895, Karafuto and Kwangtung leased territory in 1905, Korea in 1910.

Interr marriage discourse itself is a symptom of modernity, grown from the process of boundary-drawing between nation-states. The first ideological discourse about interracial marriage between Koreans and Japanese emerged from the eugenics debates in Japan focused on improving the Japanese race that occurred at the end of the nineteenth century. Throughout the Meiji era (1868-1912), Japanese intellectuals emphasized the physiology of race. Influenced by Western colonial eugenics and science, some theorists were determined to seek ways to improve the Japanese race, and suggested that marriage between “whites” and “yellows” would serve their goals. For example, a mixed marriage between a Japanese man and a white woman was posited as an advantage in some writings. However blood-mixing was not common in general debates on the improvement of the Japanese race in the Meiji era.¹ Rather than blood-mixing of completely different races, mixing of similar races was suggested as a better course of improvement. And since the Korean race in particular was believed to be similar to the Japanese race, mixing Korean with Japanese blood came to be seen as more favorable than mixing with white blood. Traces of these arguments can be found in eugenic studies, such as those carried out by one of the pioneers of Japanese eugenics, Unno Kōtoku, who previously wrote “Theory on Converting Japanese Race,” and published an article in 1910 entitled “On Mixed Marriages between the Korean and

Japanese Races” in the popular magazine Taiyō.² He argues for exogamy between the Japanese and a similar race, and further, argues that mixing Korean and Japanese race would bring a superior quality to the latter.³ On the other hand, according to Oguma Eiji, “the mixed nation theory argued that the Japan nation consisted of a mixture between a conquering people and a previous aboriginal people,” and that the Japanese race was already a multi-racial composition of neighboring nations (Oguma 15).⁴ Along this line, the Korea-Japan common ancestor theory, nissen dōsoron (K: ilsŏn tongjoron) supports the mixed nation theory. The common ancestor theory claims that the inhabitants of the archipelago are the descendants of people who originally came from the Korean peninsula and have existed since the Edo Period.⁵

Several historians, including Tessa Morris-Suzuki, argue that the idea of Japanese as a single homogeneous race emerged in late nineteenth century as a modern phenomenon. The formation of the modern nation-state required creating a people as an organized group, and Japan as a grown empire accepted both “racial purity” and “racial hybridity” discourses as they served the goals of empire. But throughout the Korean colonial era, racial hybridity rhetoric proved more popular. Morris-Suzuki points out

³ Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng, p 271. Note the word used here to describe Koreans and Japanese is “race,” not “ethnicity.”
⁴ For a discussion of the changing process of the national polity theory as the ideology of imperial rule, see Oguma Eiji’s A Genealogy, especially Part One and Two.
⁵ Similar to Kiki mythology of Japan, Ch’oe Chae-sŏ’s short story “Minjok ŭi kyŏrhon” (minjozu no kekkon) published in Kungmin munhak imagines mixed race theory through the intermarriage between the ancient loyal families.
that Japan, as a newly established colonial power, “needed ideologies that might appeal to its colonial subjects as well as to the people of the colonizing homeland (naichi)” (Morris-Suzuki 90). This fits nicely with the “‘melting-pot’ image of Japanese origins” which “meshed beautifully with colonial assimilationist policies.” If Japan, in the past, had succeeded in melding people from a wide range of racial and linguistic backgrounds, surely it could do the same again with its new colonial subjects in Taiwan and Korea” (92). Melting-pot rhetoric also works well with the image of intermarriage in ancient times. Historian Kita Sadakichi states in 1929:

> From the first, we Japanese people have not been a homogeneous ethnic group [tanjun naru minzoku]. Rather, many people of different lineages have lived together in this archipelago for long periods of time and in the process have intermarried, adopted on another’s customs, merged their languages and eventually forgotten where they came from. Thus an entirely united Japanese ethnic group has come to be created. (Morris-Suzuki 91, cited from Kita 1978, 214-215)

Prehistoric assimilation of people was the essence of yamato minzoku identity. “Yamato minzoku [...] had emerged from an intermingling of people drawn from most corners of the present-day Japanese empire” (91). The melting-pot rhetoric supports “the Yamato minzoku” theory that casts Japaneseness as “the still center” into which “cultural difference is continuously absorbed, consumed, and transformed into cultural homogeneity” (95). This theory imagined Japan that had attracted different Asian people and cultures to contribute to Japanese race and culture. In terms of race, the melting pot theory argues that Asian diversities penetrated Japanese race in the old days in the process of creating the Yamato race.

Apart from the discourses that emerged from eugenics and mythologies in Japan,
Japanese authorities in Korea referred to mixed marriage as a good way of teaching Japanese custom and culture to Korean subjects. The goal was to help Korean people advance through assimilation to Japanese ways of things. These discourses regarding mixed-race in mainland Japan seem to have affected the way race was understood in Korea by Japanese authorities, but there is no concrete evidence that the mixed-race theory or a common ancestry mythology had any direct impact on the policy-making of the GGK. However, as we will see below, there is ample evidence that intermarriage was carefully discussed and analyzed as an important system for managing people in favor of the GGK. The GGK, in other words, was fully aware of the function of marriage in the making of state-subjectivity and colonial citizens. Maeil sinbo, the GGK subsidized newspaper, often published articles about mixed-marriages in the early part of the colonial rule. One such piece, entitled “Japan-Korea Assimilation and Marriage,” argues for the effectiveness of interracial marriage for assimilation; another, “Marriage of Japanese-Korean,” suggests that mixed marriages would re-invoke the pre-historic status when Japanese and Korean were a single ethnic/racial group. One opinion piece on assimilation (yunghwa) even claimed that mixed marriages were a necessary step in the complete assimilation process.6

An example is found in the discussion within the GGK on how to promote the intermarriage program. According to a memo to Governor-General Saitō Makoto (R: 1919-1927 and 1929-1931) and Vice Governor (Administrative Superintendent) Mizuno Rentarō in 1919, Japanese Prime Minister Hara Takashi (Hara Kei) suggested

6 “ilsŏndonghwa wa kyŏrhon” (1914.3.2), “sasŏl: naesŏnin ŭi t’onghon” (1921.6.16), “Nonsŏl: naesŏnin yunghwa” (1926.10.29) in Maeil sinbo. (Korean language publication.)
the promotion of mixed marriage (*chaphon*) between Japanese and Koreans to improve communication and build harmony in colonial Chosŏn. 7 Prime Minister Hara related his hope that mixed marriage would encourage Koreans to assimilate to Japanese customs, habits, and language. 8 Conveying the same idea, the GG Saitō also expressed his support for interracial marriages on several occasions from 1919. 9

The rhetoric from the ruling power seems to be focused on the management of Korean people in a way that would ensure cooperation with Japanese rule and further create a bridge between Japan and Korea. Another example:

> “Promote mixed-marriage of Japanese and Koreans”: There is nothing better than mixed marriage of Japanese and Koreans for communication wise and assimilation of thoughts. Currently, for the fact that many of prominent pro-Japan [Korean] people are married to Japanese wives, whom work as middle men between Japanese and Koreans, it shows how important is sentimental union (*sŏngnyŏng*). Particularly, effect on the children of those couples is great. That is a short-cut of assimilation to become like Japanese in customs, habits, and language. (Chosŏnkun

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7 “Chosŏn t’ongch’i sagyŏn.”
8 “Chosŏnkun Ch’ammopu,” 1919 July 14, Chosŏn *sibo*, vol 26, photocopy reprinted in *Hyŏndaesa charyo 26* (1967), pp. 643-656, cited from Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng, p 272. Hara Takashi’s argument that interracial couples are cooperative and helpful to Japanese colonial government seems to come from his experience in Taiwan. While he was in Taiwan as an under-secretary of the Foreign Ministry to the Bureau of Taiwan Affairs in 1895 (1895-96), Hara submitted a memo, “Two Solutions for Taiwanese Problem” to the then Chair of the committee Ito Hirobumi, where he argues for expansionism [*naichi enchō*], to apply all of the legal system of Japan proper to Taiwan. This needs to be compared with Japan’s Taiwan experience on the interracial marriage. See Paul Barclay, “Cultural Brokerage and Interethnic Marriage in Colonial Taiwan: Japanese Subalterns and Their Aborigine Wives, 1895-1930” in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 64:2 (May 2005), pp 323-360. After his post in Taiwan, Hara also served in Korea from 1896-1897.
This statement by the colonial military/political leader reveals an official view of the GGK on Korean assimilation and intermarriage. Intermarriage is suggested for Korean males, who can then help rule as middlemen between Japan and Korea. Intermarriage will lead these potentially loyal Koreans to easy assimilation and further produce proper Japanese citizens. Thus “sentimental union” is proposed to make Korean men to learn Japanese “customs, habits, and language” through intimate relationship with Japanese women. This type of promotion mimics rhetoric of intermarriage in Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. According to Paul Barclay, the Government-General of Taiwan embraced intermarriage as a solution to the problem of “aborigine administration” in Taiwan’s rugged mountain interior. The model used for Japanese colonial rule comes from tongshi of Qing rule (1683-1895) in Taiwan, who were Han Chinese men who “married local women.” Tongshi were oral interpreters and cultural brokers who participated in commerce and rural administration, but more importantly, they were political allies for the mainland rulers (Barclay 325-327). Japanese-Aborigine marriages served the same political and commercial functions for the Japanese rulers, similar to the “sentimental union” mentioned in the quote above. But while the encouragement of intermarriage both in Korea and Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule had similar goals, the consequences of intermarriage were quite different. The Government-General of Taiwan did not publicly acknowledge Japanese-Aborigine marriages in its vital statistics reports. For

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the years 1905 through 1934, not a single “Aborigine wife-Japanese husband” marriage is reported, excluding these intermarriages from the state-recognized family system or Meiji family ie that was enshrined in the 1898 Civil code (Barclay 344). In other words, Taiwanese government-brokered marriages were not incorporated into the modern nation-state boundary as in colonial Chosŏn.

The promotion by the GGK included the timely and well-known royal marriage between crowned Prince Ûimin (Yi Ün, reign name: Yŏngch’ın) of the Great Han Empire (K: Taehan cheguk, 1897-1910) and Princess Pang-ja (J: Masako), a Japanese blueblood, in April of 1920. This public event served as a good reference of intermarriage in the early part of the colonial era. After the royal marriage, intermarriage gained a popular reference for explanations of the Korean-Japanese union. Also the royal marriage was used as a reason to change Korean family law in discussions that appeared in print media. The royal marriage was designed to demonstrate the political harmony between the two nations when the turbulence of the colony in the previous year deflated the confidence of the Japanese Empire in colonial...

11 The participants in the “government-brokered marriages” from 1908 through 1914, between Japanese males and Atayal women (the northern Aborigines), however, “ended up divorced, abandoned, dead, or disgraced as a result of the ‘political-marriage’ policy” (Barclay, 325). Colonial Taiwan’s riban policy (1910-1915), a five-year plan of managing the natives by marrying Japanese policemen and aborigine Atayal women ended in complete failure.

12 Problems with aborigines in Taiwan during the colonial era is highlighted by the Musha Uprising. See Leo Ching (2001), especially chapter four, “From Mutineers to Volunteers: the Musha Uprising and Aboriginal Representation of Savagery and Civility.”

13 Prince Ûimin was the first Chosŏn royal family member who was married to Japanese blue blood in the colonial period and afterwards, several interracial marriages were followed. Kojong’s youngest daughter, fourth child, Princess Dŏk-hye was married to Count Sŏ Takeshi, who was descended from the lords of the Tsushima domain (but ended in divorce) and one of Kojong’s grandsons (Yi Kŏn, Momoyama Kenichi) wedded Matsudaira Keiko (松平佳子), who was related to Princess Masako on her mother’s side, in 1931. All of these weddings were conducted in Japan, during Korean royal family’s captive residence in Tokyo.
management. Although the wedding date was set immediately after the 1919 March First Movement, which was King Kojong’s funeral, Prince ìimin was arranged to marry a Japanese blueblood for quite some time before the event. It was strategically planned when Korea became Japan’s protectorate in 1905; Prince ìimin was brought to Tokyo under captivity in his early boyhood (1912) and resided in Japan even after he was crowned in 1926. The intermarriage decision was announced in early August 1916, four years prior to the 1920 wedding in Tokyo. The couple was not allowed to visit Seoul until 1922, for a brief trip. Movement of the royal family was under careful surveillance and it was controlled with further care after the March First Movement. The marriage was intended to ease tensions, but it shocked the nation, breaking what was believed to be 500 years of Chosön Kingdom’s pure royal blood lineage through mixture with that of the foreign colonizer. Perhaps public display of “assimilation of blood” was the overriding intent of the royal marriage designed by the Japanese Empire. It was a performance of the harmonious union between the two nations and, at the same time, functioned as disciplinary event for the Korean populace.

As seen in the Figure 1.1, when the marriage was announced through print media in colonial Chosön, it showed two photographs of Prince ìimin and Princess Pang-ja together in one frame. While the prince is dressed in a western military suit, a customary outfit for male royals, the princess is posed with Japanese-style garments and hair. The display of royal marriage as intermarriage set the foundation for a general

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14 “Yiwangseja kyŏrhon,” Maeil sinbo (1916.8.4).
15 Although it was customary for one royal family member to wed to a neighboring kingdom’s royal member all over the world including Asia, Chosŏn Dynasty never had a foreign woman to be wedded to the crowned prince.
understanding of intermarriage during the colonial period. The fact that the wedding took place in Tokyo while Prince Ŭimin was in captivity added to the depth of the royal marriage as a part of colonial condition. The wedding photo (Figure 1.2.), however, shows Princess Pang-ja in western wedding dress, taking up “western” procession of wedding. Figure 1.2. was not circulated in the media at the time, which might have drawn a different reaction to this particular intermarriage.
Figure 1.1. Pictures of Ŭimin and Princess Pang-ja.

* Source: “Seja karye (世子嘉禮),” Tonga ilbo (1920. 4.)
Figure 1.2. Wedding photo of Prince Úimin and Princess Pang-ja.
The royal marriage set the stage to change family laws to accommodate Korean-Japanese marriage. In the year of the royal marriage, a new law was published in mainland Japan and the following year, June 1921, the “Mixed Marriages between Japanese and Korean Act” was announced in Korea.\(^{16}\) Previously, family law in colonial Chosŏn was changed through “Chosŏn minsaryŏng” which was amended on March 12, 1912, and enacted on April 1, 1912, containing some foundational support in terms of Korean-Japanese marriage.\(^{17}\) However, this previous \textit{minjŏk} law and new mixed-marriage act did not support the legal transfer of the family registry in Korean-Japanese marriages, a loophole pointed out in a Tonga ilbo article.\(^{18}\) The law continued to prohibit the movement of the original residency (\textit{ponjŏk}) between Chosŏn and mainland Japan throughout the colonial era. Like the loophole on the transfer of family registry, all of these legal changes regarding marriage still conflicted with laws on nationality and \textit{hojŏk} (family registry). The final changes for the naesŏn marriages were made much later, on November 10, 1939 with “Chosŏn minsaryŏng chung kaechŏng ŭi kön” (Article 11, section 2). Thus, before the changes in 1939, the legal status of Korean-Japanese marriage depended on case-by-case verdicts of the local registration office.

The legal changes that allowed Korean-Japanese marriages were a part of the gradual changes to family law that the colonial rulers attempted in order to coordinate Korean with mainland Japanese family law. Laws about intermarriage were

\(^{16}\) “Chosŏnin kwa ilbonin kwaŭi honin ŭngŭi minjŏk susok e kwanhankŏk,”1920. “Naesŏnin t’onghonpŏpan,” Ch’ongdokpuryŏng No 99, in a total of eleven items.

\(^{17}\) Chosŏn minsaryŏng (Civil Ordinance) included \textit{minjŏk} (family registry) laws.

\(^{18}\) “T’onghonminjŏk susokpŏp palp’o e ch’uihaya,” Tonga ilbo (June 10-11, 1921).
different than other family laws that did not imbricate with those in the mainland Japan, leaving some inconsistency, particularly on the movement of people between the colonies and metropole. This inconsistency was not viewed as critical problem in need of attention until the late 1930s. In fact, the effort overall was not systematic until the 1930s. According to colonial legal scholar Chulwoo Lee, “at least in theory, Korea had a separate legal system and Japanese laws did not simply ‘extend’ to Korea, as might be suggested by the principle of naichi enchō, a logical corollary of the policy of assimilation.” With annexation, various Japanese codes were imposed on Koreans through the Ordinance on Civil Matters in Korea (Chōsen minjirei) and Ordinance on Penal Matters in Korea (Chōsen keijirei), both issued in 1912. However, “as for civil law, the Ordinance on Civil Matters in Korea left room for Korean customs to apply to a wide range of practices. Between Koreans, customs were given priority over statutory rules that did not concern public policy, and the [Japanese] Civil Code’s rules on capacity, kinship, and succession did not apply to Koreans” (Chulwoo Lee, 1999, 27). This is different from Taiwan, where Civil Code was simply extended.19 In sum, the legal changes that permitted Korean-Japanese marriages in the Korean peninsula were neither part of systematic extension of the Japanese family law nor a part of simultaneous changes in both areas, although intermarriage created potential relocations and movement of both Koreans and Japanese. The rhetoric of intermarriage, proposed immediately after the annexation, reveals more about assimilation goals. Ruling power

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19 “In March 1921, the Hara cabinet proposed the ‘the law concerning the ordinance to be enforced in Taiwan’ (usually called the Law No.3) to replace Law No.31. With this, the laws of the Japanese homeland were in principle to be enforced in Taiwan, under the condition that the Taiwan governor-general’s law making power was to be recognized.” Yun-han Chu and Jih-wen Lin, “Political Development in 20th Century Taiwan,” The China Quarterly (2001), p 107.
was interested in intermarriage lay as a means to make the immediate promise of assimilating Koreans into Japanese culture and making them docile to the rule, but it did not counter migration laws or support merging assets between the colony and mainland. Intermarriage laws were carried out separately in Korea by the political necessity rather than as a component of a grand plan.

**Assimilation and Intermarriage**

Apart from rhetorical displays, interracial marriage became a more systematic part of imperial assimilation policy from the mid-1930s. During the 35-year colonial rule, the two dominant assimilation ideologies in Korea were dōka and kōminka, and both implemented series of campaigns and legal changes on colonial territories, not only in Korea but also in Taiwan. Dōka (同化, K: tonghw) in colonial Chosŏn was introduced to alleviate anti-colonial and nationalist sentiments after the famous uprising of the March First Movement in 1919, which shook the colonial government’s confidence in colonial management. As a result, the newly appointed Governor-General of Korea, Saitō Makoto, responding to the more accommodationalist policies of the metropolitan government of Hara Takashi (Hara Kei), instituted a new program of “Cultural Rule” (K: munhwa chŏngch’i, J: bunka seiji). Saitō adopted dōka and reshaped it to “naesŏn yunghwa” (內鮮融和) or “ilsŏn yunghwa” (日鮮融和) (E: Japan and Korea or Japanese and Korean in harmony) to promote more “peaceful” co-existence of Koreans and Japanese in the peninsula. Naesŏn yunghwa aimed to mollify the disgruntled Korean population by extending more opportunity and a greater degree of autonomy for Koreans. With slogans promoting and claiming “harmonious
coexistence,” the GGK attempted to portray their rule in Korea in a positive light. As the vehicle of “harmonious co-existence,” “Cultural Rule” generated more public media outlets for Koreans, such as national language newspapers and radio broadcasting. In contrast to the first decade of colonial rule, when the GGK refused to issue a permit to a single Korean newspaper, the second decade, under the GG Saitō, saw the advent of the policy of Cultural Rule, allowing Korean newspaper and magazine publication, political participation, and permits for cultural, academic, student, and citizen associations. While granting these concessions, the Japanese strove to tighten control indirectly by strengthening intelligence-gathering and oversight functions in an expanded and reorganized police system (Robinson 1999, 54).20

In the yunghwa period, assimilation policy was based on the distinction between different races or ethnicities in the Japanese Empire. In other words, up to this point, Koreans and Taiwanese were considered to be different from the Japanese race, and thus Koreans and Taiwanese had to learn ways to improve themselves and achieve the quality of a proper Japanese. Also up to this point in the 1920s, Korea and Taiwan were the only two major colonies outside of Japanese archipelago, which meant that assimilation was localized and targeted at specific groups. However, as the Japanese Empire expanded further, assimilation was not only the key goal of the empire, but also became the meter for success of rule in the outside territories. Later in the late 1930s,

as the Empire turned into a war state, a newly introduced policy, kōminka, generated more adamant laws and programs. It should be noted that the launch overlaps with the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on July 7, 1937, which marked the coming of a new era for the colonial populations (Chou 44-45). In the post-1937 wartime-empire, mobilization of the colonial population was critical, but certain types of mobilization, such as military conscription, required assurance of loyalty to Japan. Thus it required more forceful forms of assimilation programs that guaranteed firmer loyalty from the colonized people. In comparing the differences between dōka and kōminka, Leo Ching succinctly argues that while dōka focused on making colonized subjects more like the “Japanese” from the colonizer’s perspective, kōminka stressed the responsibilities of the colonized subjects to voluntarily and dutifully become loyal imperial subjects. The shift of responsibilities from the state in educating its subjects to the subjects in acquiring the necessary skills and quality was an important turning point in colonial management and was felt through intermarriage as well. The shift of colonial

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21 Wan-Yao Chou, “The Kōminka Movement in Taiwan and Korea: Comparisons and Interpretations,” in Duus, Myers, and Peattie, eds., The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996). “Kōminka in Japanese literally means ‘to transform [the colonial people] into imperial subjects.’ […] The primary and ultimate aim of kōminka was to make the colonial peoples ‘true Japanese,’ not only in deed but in ‘sprit’” (Chou 41-42). Present-day scholars also have a tendency to refer simply to the kōminka movement, whether in Taiwan or Korea […]” (Chou 42). Generally kōminka refers to war mobilization effort that attempted to register loyalty to the Empire. “Technically speaking, the Japanization movement in Taiwan and Korea had different names. In Taiwan, this movement was invariably referred to as kōminka undō (imperialization movement), whereas the colonial government in Korea called its efforts to Japanize Koreans kōkoku shinmin ka [皇國臣民化], literally meaning “to transform [Koreans] into the imperial nation’s subjects.” However, the term kōminka was also used informally in Korea, as kōkoku shinmin can be abbreviated as kōmin (Chou 44). As I explained earlier, kōminka was referred as hwangkuk sinminhwai in Korea.

22 Chou, pp 40-41.

23 Leo Ching, Becoming “Japanese”, p 91.
management does not necessarily mean that the people in the colony simultaneously changed their views on intermarriage. But overall, the post-1937 moment’s wartime condition brought a more aggressive form of subjugation of colonial subjects.

*Kōmin*ka implemented a series of campaigns from 1937 to 1945. Overall, two kōmin*ka* movements in Korea and Taiwan had four famous programs, namely “‘religious reform,’ the ‘national language’ movement (kokugo undō), the name-changing campaign (kaiseimei in Taiwan; sōshi kaimi in Korea), and the recruitment of military volunteers (shiganhei seido)” (Chou 45). However, as earlier dōka was carried out differently in the two countries, so did kōmin*ka* movements in mainland Japan and colonized territories proceed differently. It appears that the two colonies adopted and approached Japanization movements differently, so kōmin*ka* in Korea and Taiwan were not identical.

In the case of Korea, kōmin*ka* posed a strong state ideological apparatus. Korean hwangmin*hwaw* or hwangguk sin*min*hwaw first publicly appeared on October 2, 1937, when the GGK introduced the “Oath of Allegiance of the Imperial Subject” (J: kōkoku shinmin no seishi), a compulsory pledge that Koreans had to make in all public gatherings, and which was also printed at the head of all publications in Japanese. The oath for adults reads:

1. We are the subjects of the imperial nation; we will relay His Majesty as well as the country with loyalty and sincerity.
2. We the subjects of the imperial nation shall trust, love, and help one another so that we can strengthen our unity.
3. We the subjects of the imperial nation shall endure hardship, train ourselves, and cultivate strength so that we can exalt the imperial way. (Chou 43)
In addition to this public oath recitation, other types of assimilation programs had stricter guidelines and rules in Korea.\textsuperscript{24} One of the reasons for different modification of kōminka in colonial Chosŏn is the strategic location of Korea within the Japanese Empire. Japanese colonial rule in the Korean peninsula had been gradual, but changed notably after the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and throughout the 1930s. For example, the Japanese army stationed in Korea had been seriously considering the possibility of involving Koreans in the military as early as 1932 (Chou 62).

The management of kōminka confirms the common observation of Japanese colonial history scholarship that there was a much more violent interaction between the ruler and ruled in Korea (Chou 67). Naesŏn ilch’ê (內鮮一體, J: naisen ittai, E: Japan and Korea are one entity or Japanese-Korean unity) is one of the renditions of kōminka in Korea and it is term a commonly used for any policies, campaigns, or programs that supported the idea of promoting equal rights and responsibility of Koreans in the Japanese Empire.\textsuperscript{25} After various naesŏn ilch’ê campaigns were launched, Korean-Japanese coupling became a part of imperialism that “makes” Koreans gain a Japanese essence, meaning the construction of a modern subjectivity. Shifting the responsibility

\textsuperscript{24} For Taiwan, since there wasn’t any drastic appearance of such oath, it is roughly measured that kōminka appeared sometime in late 1936, which was one of tree principal policies adopted by the Governor General of Taiwan, Kobayashi Seizō (r: 1936-1940). It is viewed that the first implementation of kōminka was on April 1, 1937 when the use of Chinese in newspapers was abolished as a result of the pressure of the colonial government (Chou 44).

\textsuperscript{25} Naesŏn ilch’ê is sometimes translated as “unity of the Mainland and Korea.” The word “nae” (內) refers to the colonial self-address of Japan as the “mainland” or “interior,” and “sŏn” (鮮) refers to “Chosŏn” (朝鮮) as in the Chosŏn Dynasty. The combination of two characters references specifically to the time of Japanese colonialism. When Japan is referred as “mainland” (內地, K: naeji, J: naichi) rather than “Japan” (日本, K: ilbon, J: nihon), it emphasizes the continuity of Japan as the metropole and Korean peninsula as a constitutive part of the Japanese empire.
of becoming a proper imperial subject from colonizer to colonized opened various opportunities for Koreans to believe they could eliminate discrimination as second-class citizens. Becoming a proper modern subject was closely related to becoming a loyal imperial subject.

Fundamentally, *naesŏn ilch’e* policy was enforced to support this effort in making colonial Chosŏn a loyal imperial territory and a military conscription-ready country by the newly appointed Governor-General of Korea Minami Jirō (r: 1936.8.5-1942.5.28). Minami advocated limited suffrage and conscription of Korean males to incorporate Koreans in the on-going war effort (Ch’oe 28, 32). A series of campaigns and policy changes after the start of the 1937 war supported war mobilization: language policy in the third and fourth Education Ordinance, military volunteer campaigns, name change campaigns, national mobilization movements, and military conscription (Ch’oe 10).26

Historian Ch’oe Yu-ri characterizes five basic ideas about *naesŏn ilch’e* which highlights the program as an umbrella ideology that implemented various programs to create loyalty to the Japanese Empire. First, the foundational idea of *naesŏn ilch’e* was *ilsidongin* (一視同仁, everyone is equal under the emperor’s eyes) which placed emphasis on the people becoming “imperial subjects” (k: hwang’guk sinmin, J: kōkoku shinmin).” This process was designed to insert allegiance to the Japanese emperor.

Second, *naesŏn ilch’e* ideology included strategic argument of that Japan had historically made others Japanese imperial citizens. Earlier in the chapter, I explained

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26 See Wan-Yao Chou’s “The Kōminka Movement in Taiwan and Korea: Comparisons and Interpretations” for comparative studies on kōminka in Taiwan and Korea. However, this article does not sufficiently discuss naisen ittai and its different applications among Korea and other Japan’s “former” imperial territories. For “name change campaign” in Korea, see also Miyata, Kim, and Yang (1992) and Kim Yong-dal (1997).
that modern Japanese race theory often produced narratives that supported heterogeneity of Japanese race, along with other theories that categorized Japanese as a homogeneous race. Proponents of naesón ilch’e used race theories that supported the heterogeneity of the Japanese race to explain the validity of naesón ilch’e ideology. This argument finds its origin in ancient texts such as Nihon shoki that narrate Japan’s absorption of various Asian ethnicities and ideas such as “hakkō ichiu” (八極一字, eight corners of the world under one roof) to support the Japanese Empire’s expansionism ideology, the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.

This argument leads to the third point of naesón ilch’e, that Japan should be the rightful inheritor of Asia, not Western imperialists. After 1940, naesón ilch’e was often referred in support of hakkō ichiu that claims the order of “Asia by Asians” would restore peaceful world order. Fourth, particularly in the case of Korea, it argued that Koreans and Japanese shared the same cultural and racial root (naisen dōsoron, same ancestors) which made naesón ilch’e all the more “natural.” Based on naisen dōsoron, scholars generated many cases in the past that explained the shared origin theory and argued that these past cases proved naesón ilch’e as the “destiny of history.” Lastly, it advocated Japanese culture to be implanted in Korea (Ch’oe 27-34).

From Ch’oe’s description, it is clear that naesón ilch’e promoted the unity between the nation-state and its subject. Unity between the colonizer power and the colonial subject was bound to create some tension. The rhetoric of oneness between the state and the subject was the key idea naesón ilch’e repeatedly stated, and it had to be modified to either accommodate or completely overcome racial/ethnic distinction. For example, at a meeting of “The Korean Federation for the Mobilization of the National
Spirit” (Kungmin chōngshin ch’ongdongwŏn Chosŏn yŏnmaeng yŏgwŏnhoe), the GG Minami Jirō stated that naesŏn ilch’e meant “one (J: ittai),” in appearance, heart, blood, and flesh (Ch’oe 28-29). Following his statement, an article in Chosŏn Sasanggye of the Green Flag League (K: Nokki yŏnmaeng, J: Ryokki renmei) stated that naesŏn ilch’e was “not based on relative relationship between Chosŏn and mainland Japan but a single-body rhetoric, organically and internally, based on the Japanese state-body.”

This statement highlights the unity of states through the metaphor of body. Another example, the Third Chosŏn Education Policy of 1938 explains that through “respect and trust,” Korea and Japan will become “one” and Koreans will cooperate with the state and “sacrifice” when needed to become proper imperial subjects (Ch’oe 58). The metaphor of “one-body” works in two ways, implying unity between the state and its subject, and unity between Koreans and Japanese.

What were the effects of naesŏn ilch’e and its rhetoric of state-subject unity, and how did they shape the idea of intermarriage? The impact of assimilation policies on intermarriage was significant. At the time of dōka, interracial marriage was suggested as a promising cultural practice, and print media occasionally discussed the advantages

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27 May 30, 1939. “Minami Jiro […] implored his readers to understand that naisen ittai, the melding of Koreans and Metropolitan Japanese into one body, should be understood as more than just a metaphor. It did not mean just ‘trepidly holding one another’s hands, melding into one form, and so on.’ Instead, it signaled that ‘it is necessary to become in form, in spirit, in blood, and in the flesh - in each and everyone of these ways becoming one body.’” (Fujitani, “Gender,” 6) at a meeting of “The Korean Federation for the Mobilization of the National Spirit” [Kungmin chōngshin ch’ongdongwŏn chosŏn yŏnmaeng yŏkwŏnhoe].

28 Ch’oe, p 29, cited from Ryokki Renmei’s publication, Kŭmil Chosŏn munje (1939). Ryokki renmei was a think-tank of the Government-General office located in Seoul. The early form of the group was established in 1925, took Ryokki as its name in 1930. Koreans first joined the group in 1937. Despite the fact that this was very close to the center of the Government-General, it maintained its own power and organization throughout the years. See Ilchehyŏpyŏk tanch’e sajŏng (2004).
of the intermarriage for the Koreans in the assimilation process. It certainly was discussed as an opportunity for Koreans to become imperial subjects. The rhetoric of marriage in naesŏn ilch’e still used tonghwa and yunghwa, that intermarriage would bring harmonious living of two races and further enhance Japanization. After the introduction of kōminka, Korean-Japanese marriage was heavily promoted and became a significant part of the colonial machine. For this reason, it is often assumed that this promotion of intermarriage was part of a violent Japanization, and thus generated subversive responses from Koreans that resulted in failure and a very small number of people who complied with the colonial rule to marry Japanese. My argument in this chapter is that even though naesŏn ilch’e reshaped intermarriage into a distinctive imperial experience, intermarriage itself cannot be reduced to a matter of complying with colonial rule. Naesŏn kyŏrhon or Japanese-Korean marriage under naesŏn ilch’e was a state-promoted campaign but never forced upon a certain population or made mandatory for certain group. This is a different strategy than that of other naesŏn campaigns and programs such as name-change or Shintoism. On the other hand, naesŏn kyŏrhon was a popular topic for print media and public thinkers to use as a reference to naesŏn ilch’e. When naesŏn marriage was discussed by various writers in different mediums such as newspaper articles, opinion pieces, and literary fictions, because it was inherently an ambiguous concept, writers were forced to think through what it meant to have a relationship with the Japanese. What is interesting is that in articulating a familiar relationship, writers were actually offered opportunities to modify the original proposal of the GGK. For example, a Korean male writer fancying a Japanese woman hardly qualifies as full compliance with colonial rule. In this sense,
naesŏn kyŏrhŏn had contributed to the discussions of colonial intellectuals with new complicated layers of colonial intimacy, affect, and desire that had not been dealt with before.

**Against the Archival Grain**

Although naesŏn marriage was advocated by the GGK as part of naesŏn ilch’e, there were not many reported cases of Korean-Japanese marriages according to the census by the GGK. According to these census data, despite the various promotional campaigns, discussions in the public media and literature at the late 1930s and early 1940s, naesŏn marriage did not gain broader support from the colonial population. The widely circulated data in recent scholarship comes from two different documents from the late 1930s and early 1940s. Table 1.1 and Table 1.3 show the number of Korean-Japanese marriages and the number of in-marriage couples. Table 1.1 is originally prepared for the GGK’s publication in 1938 and first circulated in mass printings in 1939 and reprinted in newspapers such as Tonga ilbo, and magazines such as Samch’ölli and Naesŏn Ilch’e. Table 1.3 was less known to the public at the time, but was accessible to the GGK and Korean elites. Table 1.3 is based on the data from Chŏsen jinkŏ dōtai (K: Chosŏn in’gudongt’ae t’onggye) which was annually published by the GGK from 1938 to 1942.

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29 In this data, yearly couple numbers are accumulative. However, the data presented in Hosaka’s book is added total of already accumulated numbers, thus makes the data incorrect. Unfortunately, his miscalculation is refereed as correct numbers in several scholarly works.
Table 1.1: The number of Korean-Japanese marriage between 1923 and 1937. The numbers are accumulative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total number of couples</th>
<th>J male + K female</th>
<th>K male + J female</th>
<th>Adopted to J family</th>
<th>Adopted to K family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1,017</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1,121</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2. Chart of Korean-Japanese marriage between 1923 and 1937

* Source: Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng (280).
Table 1.3: The number of Korean-Japanese marriage between 1938 and 1942. The numbers are accumulative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total number of couples</th>
<th>J male + K female</th>
<th>K male + J female</th>
<th>Adopted to J family</th>
<th>Adopted to K family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1,258</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>1,418</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1,028</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.4. Chart of Korean-Japanese marriage between 1938 and 1942

* Source: Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng (280)
According to the census, the total number of naesôn couples reached 1,418 by 1942. Other data collected and presented by the GGK officials to the Japanese Imperial Diet in December of 1944 indicates slightly different numbers: there were 907 naesôn couples in Korea in 1938, a number that increased to 1,528 in 1942. According to official records, a yearly count of registered naesôn marriages found about 50 couples in the 1920s and 100 in the 1930s and 1940s. This relatively low number of naesôn marriage couples was addressed by the authority, who explained that their data did not represent the actual number of intermarried couples. In other words, the authority acknowledged the gap between their data and reality due to undocumented marriages. In 1939, a GGK document states that the number should be two or three times more, while by 1944, the authority guessed it would be “ten times or several hundred times” more than those in the tables. Also the tables indicate the number of naesôn couples in the Korean peninsula only, leaving out migrant populations in the mainland Japan and Manchuria. Reports in 1944 estimated the number of common-law marriages in the metropole between Koreans and metropolitan Japanese to be as high as 10,700.

Thus, there remains unsolved the question of what was the exact number of intermarried population after the launch of its systematic promotion. This question is


31 In 1939, Chosen no jinkô mondaí mentions the unregistered intermarriage would be two or three times larger than the registered number (113). Later in 1944, another report guesses ten times more than the collected data.

32 Takashi Fujitani, “Gender,” pp 5-6. As mentioned earlier, the number of Puyonghoe’s inaugural members in Korea was about 4,000 in 1963. This number represents only a fraction of Japanese wives who remained in Korea and intermarried couples returned to Korea in the post-1945 era. Since Korea-Japan relationship was normalized in 1965, it is unlikely to have a high number of Korean-Japanese marriages in Korea after 1945.
troublesome for scholars: historically the circulated numbers were accepted as the exact representation of naesŏn marriage because Table 1.1 in particular was reprinted in numerous newspapers and magazines in late 1930s, which served as the main source of reference by scholars for many years. Considering the numbers in Table 1.1, intermarriage seemed to be a failed campaign for it did not generate a significant impact on the population. On the other hand, an imbalanced gender ratio in intermarriage from the data generated some commentary about the intermarriage practice. For example, according to Tables 1.1 and 1.3, until 1937, the ratio of Korean-male and Japanese-female couple is slightly lower than Japanese-male and Korean-female couple. However, from 1938, the data show a dramatically reversed ratio until the data ends in 1942. Because naesŏn marriage was promoted vigorously after 1937, it would not be an overstatement to say that this gendered pattern (Korean-male and Japanese-female) was the common form of naesŏn marriage. Historian Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng argues that the sudden increase relates to the war mobilization: while eligible Japanese men were conscripted to the war, Korean men were relocated to Japan as migrant laborers or through forced conscription. The uneven ratio of eligible partners led Korean men to wed Japanese women.33 This is quite a compelling argument, and some studies have shown that there were cases where women in Japan married Korean laborers without knowing their ethnicity. Another scholar argues that the overwhelming number of Japanese women marrying Korean men is in accordance with the work of eugenic policy regarding mixing Korean blood and implanting Japanese motherhood into

33 See Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng, “Singminji sigi ‘naesŏn kyŏrhon’ changrye munje” (Encouraging ‘Naesŏn marriage’ Problem in the Colonial Period), Ilbonhak nyŏnbo (9:9, 2000).
Korean culture.\textsuperscript{34} On the other hand, feminist sociologist Cho Hyejeong argues that the Korean patriarchal family system did not favor sending daughters to foreign families, but did not mind having a different female coming into the family.

Thus far, none of these arguments can explain in full the reason behind the unbalanced ratio in naesŏn marriage practice. First, Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng’s argument is viable only for the cases in Japan, but previous census actually did not include marriages in mainland Japan. Second, eugenic discourse arguments might have had some impact on marriages in the earlier part of the colonial period, but as eugenic discourses faded in Japan in the 1930s, we can doubt their effects on intermarriage for the latter period. And lastly, Cho Hyejeong’s argument cannot explain the opposite case of the post-liberation phenomenon, where intermarriage was overwhelmingly between Korean women and US military service men or the recent phenomenon of “international marriage” in South Korean industrial cities between foreign migrant male workers and Korean females.

More importantly, these theories collapse if the given ratio is incomplete. The compiler of the data, the GGK authority, admitted that the data is presumably incomplete due to “unregistered” marriages and insufficient documentation of the national population.\textsuperscript{35} In other words, they just did not know the exact number of intermarried couples, just like that they did not know the exact population of Koreans until the last moment of the colonial era. The preference for cohabitation over

\textsuperscript{34} See Yi Sŏn-ok, pp. 279-280.

\textsuperscript{35} In 1938, the GGK recorded the Korean population as 16.9 million, but it dramatically jumps up to 22.5 million in 1940. This difference between the two years shows the gaps in the data collection by the colonial government.
conjugality was not uncommon in any type of union even after the modern state enforced disciplinary registration on its citizens. In the case of Korea, the colonial state institutionalized the *hojok* system in 1921 (as a form of *minjok*), but the system was not widely utilized until much later for the preparation of mandatory military draft of Korean men. Before 1937, the key moment for a shift in Japanese colonialism towards more aggressive war mobilization in Korea, the Korean population was considered to be a large bulk of mass in need of better control. So the exact number of intermarried couples remains puzzling now, just as it was for the GGK. With the limited GGK’s resources, the GGK authority and proponents used intermarriage as “a hope for the future” and a long-term project with which they wanted to engage.

While it is important to recognize the limits of census data, it is equally important to read what these data can tell us against the archival grain. As Vicente Rafael says, “census reports are curious texts.” They do not have one identifiable author, but are complied by anonymous government workers and published by the state

36 The population of the Korean peninsula was never exactly calculated before the colonial state planned the military draft and civilian labor mobilization in the war years. In May 1942, the GGK announced the extension of military conscription to Koreans and in September 1942, the Korea Temporary Domicile Ordinance was enacted in attempt of keeping an accurate record of household registers and people residing outside of their native places. See Fujitani, “Right to Kill, right to Make Live,” p 20. These studies indicate that the GGK was not only unsure of the number of Korean population, but it was also uncertain about the residency of the mass. One working-age male might be registered in his hometown under his father’s hojok, then reside in different location, possibly an urban city for work which made even harder for the GGK to track down eligible male population for war conscription.

37 “Regarding the marriage between Japanese and Koreans, it is assumed that other than the numbers above, unregistered couples who privately living together(私通同居) in secrete (内密) would be many. Still, if the [unregistered] numbers are two or three times more than above mentioned 1029 couples, it is difficult to expect [the marriage] as the harmonious unity of the two minzoku (nations), but we should expect long term future.” Cited from Ch’oe Sŏk-yŏng, Chosŏn no ingumunje, 1939. p 113.
with authoritative voice. The transcendent nature of the authoritative voice in these texts can be blamed for scholars not questioning the obvious undercount of the intermarried couples’ number. But rather than focusing on explaining the gender unbalance in the census, the data points to the GGK’s interest in and effort to identify conscription-eligible male in the peninsula. The 1938-1942 census report shows higher number of Korean-male and Japanese female couples and it is a possible result of a greater focus on Korean male population in Korean peninsula. It follows the rhetorical argument that intermarriage would bring assimilation and civilization necessary for Korean males who needed to be prepared for war mobilization. Thus there census reports fit representational texts of naesŏn marriage under the imperial subjectification.

The civilizing mission for Korean male is apparent in articles published in Naisen ittai and discussed in the following section. Once more, reading against the archival grain, I argue that discussions in the magazine often escape assimilationist rhetoric of making Koreans more like Japanese, and explore difficulties that naesŏn marriage brings to the family, community, and society.

**Naisen ittai Magazine and Promotion of Intermarriage in Public Media**

The GGK continued to promote naesŏn marriage in the 1940s. This became even more apparent with the emergence of a magazine called *Naisen ittai* (1940-1944), which sought to intensify publicity for naesŏn marriage. The title, “naesŏn ilch’e”

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38 内鮮一體 was printed in the Japanese language. The level of language and the content of the magazine suggest that it aimed at a general readership with basic knowledge of Japanese. According to Ch’oe Tŏk-kyo’s *Han’guk chapchi paengnyŏn* (2004), the magazine is published from January of 1940 to October of 1944, a total of thirty eight issues. The only remaining
bluntly displays its didactic purpose of spreading the ideology in the daily lives of the colonized. What is interesting about this magazine is that it foregrounds naesŏn marriage as an important part of naesŏn ilch’e and devotes large portions to discussion of naesŏn marriage, particularly in the first two years of its publication. Intermarriage was a great vessel of naesŏn ilch’e, as it provided rich examples for colonial management discourse, imperialization, and Japanization.39

The magazine was published by the Association of Practicing Naesŏn ilch’e (内鮮一體實踐社, Naesŏn ilch’e silch’ŏnsa), which was founded by a Korean entrepreneur Pak Nam-kyu – also known by his ch’angssi kaemyŏng Japanese name, Ōtomo Saneomi – who had a close relationship with the GGK and particularly with the Governor-General Minami Jirō.40 Hyŏn Yŏng-sŏp, a key member of Ryokki Renmei, joined the board of committee from the second issue and contributed numerous articles to the magazine. While the extent of financial support from the GGK is unclear, it should be noted this magazine was one of the few print media which was allowed to publish after the language censorship and tighter publication control were enacted. The distribution of the magazine and type of readership is unclear as well; judging from the content of the magazine, it seems to aim for educational purpose rather than commercial

issues in accessible public archives in Korea are twenty issues from 1940, 1941, 1942, and 1944. For more information on the magazine, see Ōya Chihiro, “Chapchi Naesŏn ilch’e enatanan naesŏnkyŏrhon Ŭi yangsang yŏnku” (Study on Naesŏnkyŏrhon represented in magazine Naesŏn ilch’e) (MA thesis, Yonsei U, Seoul: 2006). So far, this thesis is the most extensive study on the representation of the naesŏn marriage in the magazine.

39 Another thing to consider is that the fact magazines and newspapers stop printing in Korea around 1942, thus leaving few options for print materials.

40 Pak Nam-kyu (Ōtomo Saneomi) himself was married to a Japanese woman and wrote about his experience in the magazine.
or entertainment value. It is also possible, due to the lack of other print media available for readers at the time, that even this kind of educational magazine might have enjoyed a wide readership.

This magazine stands out from other publications for its representation of naesŏn marriage. From the inaugural issue, the editorials paid particular attention to naesŏn marriage.\textsuperscript{41} To be sure, the objectives of the Association of Practicing Naesonilch'e include advocating naesŏn marriage as one of the key goals.\textsuperscript{42} The GG Minami’s personal commitment to promoting naesŏn marriage led to collaboration with different sub-groups under the GGK; the magazine being one of these sub-groups, it published detailed stories on the matter. He contributed to the promotion of naesŏn marriage by providing his hand-written hanging scroll which the Korean Federation of the National Spirit Mobilization (Kungmin chŏngsin ch’ongdongwŏn chosŏn yŏnmaeng yŏkwŏnhoe) gave to naesŏn couples as awards in 1940.\textsuperscript{43} This event was thoroughly reported in the magazine, which demonstrated the close networks among the sub-groups.

Why did naesŏn marriage receive such great attention from this magazine? To answer this question, we must ask what the role of marriage practice was in promoting naesŏn ilch’e ideology for the magazine. I discussed earlier how marriage fundamentally offered a good metaphor for explaining how Koreans and Japanese can

\textsuperscript{41} “Naesenkekk'on sŏdanfu kaisetsu ni tsuite,” (88), and Kim Yong-che, “Naisen kekkonkan,” (60) Naesen ittai, Vol.1.No.1 (1940.1).

\textsuperscript{42} “wakasano kŏryŏ,” Naesen ittai, Vol.1.No.5 (1940.12)

\textsuperscript{43} “hyŏshyŏsareta naisen kekkonja,” Naesen ittai, Vol.2, No.4 (1941.4), p 67. The hand-written phrase is also published in Tonga ilbo. Chosŏn vol. 311 (1941.4). “By practicing naesŏn kyŏrhon, it is enough to be a model for others in regards to the Mobilization of the National Spirit, and promoting naesŏn ilch’e, [I] present you this gift.” Showa 16. March 21.
become one body. By using familiar references of intimacy and affect, writers could easily suggest “naturalness” and “normalcy” of the union without evoking animosity of imperialization. For example, one of the early issues of the magazine’s cover image (Figure 1.3) displays how the magazine used intimacy as a colonizing tool. In this picture, a pre-teen boy and girl are sitting next to each other on the grass, outdoors, presumably on the outskirts of a rural village. Both of them are wearing traditional style clothing, the girl wearing Korean dress and a boy in Japanese with matching shoes. Surrounding these two children are changsūng poles, Korean totem village-guard figures, one male and the other female on each side. Under the watchful eyes of two changsūngs, two children look at each other with friendly smiles. At first, the image conveys harmonious union between the two nations the children represent. But when we look at the details, a fine gendered composition emerges in the metaphor. Each changsūng is placed following the child’s gender: the boy is under the eyes of male changsūng and the girl with a female changsūng. While the male changsūng is slightly taller than the female, the boy is also slightly bigger than the girl. Indeed male poles are generally erected taller than the female counterpart. But there is nothing natural about positioning the Japanese person under the male changsūng to impose greater power. It is arbitrary to compose four figures in this arrangement of gender and power relationships. Another interesting symbol in the image is the appearance of changsūng poles. Changsūng is usually located at the entrance of rural village as the protector of the village, but it originated from ancient totem of fertility worship. The use of Korean folk customs, rites, shamanism, animism, seems to promote the approval of Korean heritage in a Korea-Japan harmonious union.
Figure 1.3. Cover image, *Naisen Ittai* (1941. 1).
Let’s look more closely at some of the content of the magazine. While Korean-language publications occasionally reported on naesŏn couples, Naiseen ittai carried a far higher number of articles on the topic. It also posted statistics regarding naesŏn marriages in Korea and mainland Japan, and printed detailed private information of married couples, such as names, current addresses, and original hometowns. The posting of names in particular attests to the importance of the project. First, different from the nameless numbers appeared in the census reports, detailed information such as names, address, and hometown (birth place) make these couples tangible figures which exist within the same nation. Second, the disclosure of information in public contributes to reaffirmation of “normalcy” that the GGK desired. Commentaries on the people in the colony who live the ideology serve the magazine’s goal of spreading naesŏn ilch’e ideology.

Another article type that was frequently featured is the report or interview with “successful” naesŏn couples, narrating in detail the couples’ past and present, as well as their commitment to the naesŏn ilch’e ideology. These interviews were often conducted at their homes, and included descriptions of their home environments and arrangements. Again, naesŏn couples are linked directly to naesŏn ilch’e because the union symbolizes daily practice of the ideology. The combination of domestic space and political ideology is an important strategy in this “home-visit interview” genre.44 This genre was another popular format in journalism, especially in woman’s magazines, where interviews usually focused on enlightened figures such as politicians, writers,

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44 For example, “Reports on the home visit of Mr. Yoshino” (1940.1). There are diverse genres of writings: interview, roundtable, essay, and letter from readers.
artists, teachers, and entrepreneurs.\textsuperscript{45}

The postings, reports, interviews of \textit{naesôn} couples were also featured in other print media at the time. But \textit{Naisen ittai} stands out among others for its systematic effort in the \textit{naesôn} coupling project to initiate interaction between the magazine and its readers. From the very first issue, the magazine introduces the Counsel for Naisen Marriage (naisen kekkon sōdanhu) to provide matchmaking services for readers.\textsuperscript{46} In an article announcing the launch of this counsel, advertisements call for Japanese and Korean brides who are interested in \textit{naesôn} marriage.\textsuperscript{47} The page which follows the advertisement includes the guidelines of the Counsel and lists necessary documents and information for \textit{naesôn} marriage-seekers. The guidelines are not limited to female participants. These ads appear almost in every issue. The guidelines are: 1) a copy of \textit{hojōk} (family registry); 2) identification document issued by local authority; 3) résumé; 4) recent photograph; 5) terms desired; 6) letter of explanation for divorcees; 7) proof of physical examination by doctor.\textsuperscript{48} The categories ask the participants to identify himself/herself within state institutions, such as family registry and medical regime.

The requirement list is not just limited to people who want to participate in

\textsuperscript{45} I discuss the representation of international couples in my Chapter Three and the significance of “home-visit interview” genre.


\textsuperscript{47} The call for Japanese and Korean future brides suggests that participation from men outnumbers that of women. This call, however, does not specify the occupation or region of participating men.

\textsuperscript{48} “Naisenkekcon sōdanfu kiyaku,” \textit{Naisen ittai}, Vol.1, no.1 (1940.1), p 89. This type of advertised call for marriage candidate and marriage counsel might be modeled after the practice in the metropole regarding eugenic marriage. Other Korean language magazines, particularly women’s magazines ran similar ads for match makings in the early 1930s.
intermarriage, but readers who are interested in imperialization. Thus it reminds them what is required to be a proper imperial citizen: modern institutional technologies.

Since the archival holdings of this magazine are limited to about a half of its original volumes, it is impossible to conclude whether the extensiveness of the campaign and the number of successful matches were the direct result of the council’s work. The only published result of the council’s work is featured in December 1941 and counts the number from April to October of 1941: 110 submissions. On the other hand, there are rich discussions on the challenges of the campaign and naesŏn marriage in the surviving issues. Time and again, the magazine attempted to convey to the readers that naesŏn marriages became “natural” in recent years. In the cases of narratives of older intermarried couples, narratives offer retrospective experiences of couples and evaluate obstacles couples had to overcome in the past. Contrasting the hardship in the past, these narratives highlight the changes over time leading to wider acceptance of intermarriage in Korea at the time of publication.49 Interviewees frequently point to evidence of wider acceptance for the increasing number of naesŏn marriages, and the fact that intermarriage weddings eventually ceased to make scandalous headlines in newspapers attests to that acceptance. The claim of widespread acceptance and the normalcy of naesŏn marriage itself shows the anxiety of the magazine on intermarriage.

What were the challenges that naesŏn couples faced in Korea? Articles suggest that the negative opinions of families and neighbors were the biggest challenges for intermarrying couples. In contrast to the encouragement of the GGK, families and

49 “naisen kekkon no shujusō” 1941.2 (2:2).
neighbors were still opposed to the idea. The reason for opposition from the family and community was cited to be the difficulty of overcoming difference, biologic and cultural. These external challenges made the couples vulnerable. Several articles confirm these problems stake a claim to the future, saying the communal opposition will soon disappear, on the grounds that eventually people will recognize the benefits. As a natural course of rationality, people will come to an understanding of the admirable quality of naesŏn marriages and respect naesŏn couples for the cause of naesŏn ilch’e. Here, the magazine does not try to dismiss the assumed biological differences between Koreans and Japanese, but argues that naesŏn marriage does more good than bad for what it offers to the cause, the principle of imperialization. In a way, the magazine confirms the notion of difference, and emphasizes the fact that despite the difference as imperial citizens, we should all overcome the big racial/ethnic gap.

It should be noted that this is in direct contradiction to naesŏn ilch’e ideology. Earlier, I explained that this ideology in the state level claimed naisen dōsoron or same-ancestors theory, as part of kōminka. But here, articles that discuss the challenges of naesŏn marriage do not debunk the ethnic/racial difference, but move on to arguing for naesŏn marriage’s importance in naesŏn ilch’e. This contradiction derives from diverse voices of the colonial rule and how the colonial intellectuals understood the colonial ideology. The point of naesŏn marriage under naesŏn ilch’e was not to eliminate the ethnic/racial difference, but to emphasize the position of citizenship under the empire. The act of marriage was the same as devoting oneself to the state. One article by key figure of the magazine shows this view. Kim Yong-je states:
I believe that *naesŏn* marriage should start from family life, the couple’s pure love and understanding, same as other types of marriage. *Naesŏn ilch’e* is not a political or economical problem, but is everyday life (*saenghwal*) and is completed by love. [...] It is conjugal love and at the same time, love for the state and the humanity.\(^{50}\)

This statement shows on the one hand, the proponents argue that it is absolutely the same as marriage among Koreans in foundation, based on love and understanding between the couple. On the other hand, the writers stress on the significance of following *naesŏn ilch’e* ideology, describing *naesŏn* marriage as a way to manifest an individual’s patriotism for the state. This statement shows conjugal practice is a way to integrate an individual into the state, and to gain modern subjectivity.

**Korean Women and *Saenghwal* as Challenges of Intermarriage**

When articles in the magazines discuss the woman’s role in intermarriage, it is often to describe the supporting role of a woman in making the family and husband into proper imperial units. In comparison to Korean women, Japanese women are lauded for their skills in *saenghwal* and kyoyang (culture). Writers often contributed explicit views on the marriage. Their view on women is based on who better fits the imperialization effort and the domestic life that supports imperialization and the on-going war effort. Kim Yong-je suggests that Japanese women are better in culture and everyday life.\(^{51}\) Hyŏn Yŏng-sŏp argues that Korean woman are lacking in Japanization so marrying a Japanese woman would be better solution for Koreans to become

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\(^{50}\) Kim Yŏng-je, “naisen kekkon gakan” 1940.1 (1:1), 56-62.

\(^{51}\) Kim Yong-je, ibid.
Japanese. The writers found the lack of Korean women’s enthusiasm in *naesôn* marriage based on the reports published thus far. Particularly one set of data published in *Chosen* and *Naisen ittai* in April of 1941 issue states that *naesôn* marriages in the previous year produced 137 couples, and overwhelming majority of 106 consisted of Korean male-Japanese female coupling. This particular data is different from other census reports that I mentioned earlier. I do not attempt to argue the validity of the census or the GGK’s numbers, but I analyze how the writers reacted to these reports. The low numbers of intermarried couples reported met with skepticism from some writers, and one writer questions an inherent obstacle in intermarriage. Other commentators jumped to give their own analysis on this gender imbalance, blaming the ill-preparedness of Korean woman. This comparison of Korean and Japanese woman in intermarriage parallels the discussion of Korean woman ill-prepared for the war mobilization and unsupportive of their husbands or sons in participating in the Japanese military.

The rhetoric of ill-suited Korean woman is based on the same reasoning of criticism of Korean woman for ineptitude in domestic work. These types of rhetoric portray woman as supporting staff in the house and to the state, connecting the family with the core of the state. In one article, the writer introduces herself as a Japanese housewife living in Korea and suggests that Korean women’s “morale” needs to be improved, based on her experience with her house help. Her Korean house workers

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53 Takeyama Tatsunori (竹山龍伯, 安龍伯 An Yong-bak), “minzoku tôgô to naisentsuhon” (1941.1), p 46. An Yong-bak supported naesôn ilch’e, published articles in *Chosen* and *Ryokki* as well.
have shown that they do not have the cultural skills demanded in a Japanese-style household. The article shows perceived gender and class role of Korean women under naesŏn ilch’e. Korean women are constantly constructed as objects in need of improvement, enlightenment, and education both by Japanese authority and Korean intellectuals.

Some challenges and difficulties of naesŏn marriage, as I discussed in the above section, are framed as outside forces that the couple cannot change. When talking about difficulty within the couple, the “difference” in culture between Korean and Japanese is described in terms of “everyday life.” Saenghwal (生活, J: seikatsu), a newly-coined term which indicates daily life or making a living and that sketches out the private space and interiority of a person. The discussion of saenghwal is not limited to Naisen ittai magazine, but extends to intermarriage throughout the colonial era. What is the function of the saenghwal discussion in intermarriage? The discourse of saenghwal moves away from the eugenic discourse to a more intricate level of biopolitical distinction. Rather than talking about biological difference between the two groups, discussion about cultural difference and saenghwal requires a more sophisticated analysis of distinction and discrimination. It is ironic that at the time when the GGK focused on the making Koreans more Japanese by exclusively using the Japanese language, adopting Japanese Shintoism, and changing to Japanese family institution through registry and names, that the strongest concern from naesŏn marriage proponents was what they perceived to be subtle cultural differences. And these minute

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details were considered challenges that the cultures could never overcome.\textsuperscript{55}

The prescribed limits need to be questioned. What were some of consequences of the repeated emphasis on the concept of \textit{saenghwal} as a core problem? Firstly, \textit{saenghwal} discourse, ironically, constructed all marriage matters as personal when actually \textit{naesŏn} marriage was promoted by the state. By focusing on \textit{saeanghwal}, discussants avoided criticizing the structural colonialism of the \textit{naesŏn} marriage. In the end, they did not question any inherent hierarchy of colonial subjects – colonizer and colonized – and the goal of Japanization that undercut segregation, or the social and sexual practices of marriage.

Who made good candidates for \textit{naesŏn} marriage? Some proponents argue that \textit{naesŏn} marriage would be ideal for Japanese women who live in Korea. These women are more susceptible to Korean men and to understand the challenges of the colony than the women in the mainland. And undoubtedly, the obvious larger targets for \textit{naesŏn} marriage were Korean men who were candidates for imperialization. But more importantly, the right question to ask is: Who were the people that \textit{naeŏn} marriage discourses wanted to affect? The magazine clearly promotes \textit{naesŏn} marriage with its counsel and articles stressing the importance of \textit{naesŏn} marriage, but the magazine wants to reach beyond the participants of \textit{naesŏn} marriages. On this note, \textit{Naisen ittai} published articles related to \textit{naesŏn} marriage more frequently in 1940 and 1941 issues, but later issues (in 1944) focus more on the war-front and war mobilization than matters at home.

\textsuperscript{55} This pattern of \textit{saenghwal} discourse mirrors function of “polite racism” that David Theo Goldberg suggests. For further discussion see David Theo Goldberg (2002).
In this chapter, I argued that Naisen ittai targets the promotion and support of GGK ideology, showing uneven voices of naesŏn marriage, sometimes accentuating the differences between Koreans and Japanese, and perhaps thus delaying the imperialization. The marriage discussion is also framed within gendered roles that figure Korean men as possible military conscripts and women as help in the domestic space. In order to understand the complexity of naesŏn marriage, we need to investigate discourses that appeared in other print media, including fictional representations. The following chapters will investigate the literary representations of intermarriage in the colonial era.
Chapter 2

Colonial Domestic Space in Intermarriage Texts

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that naesŏn marriage crystallized the concept of Koreans and Japanese melding together through the metaphor of familiarity and sexual relations. The union of Koreans and Japanese living under the same roof provided those in the colony with an obtainable picture of assimilation. This chapter explores the construction of family and home in intermarriage and romance texts. Intermarriage texts reveal the intervention of colonial power in home and family space, and its power to govern the consciousness of colonized subjects in imaging the nature of domesticity for both Koreans and Japanese. These texts redefine domesticity in a way that is acceptable to both Koreans and Japanese aspiring for modernity. They represent the bourgeois domesticity that became the model idealization of family, conjugal relations, and daily home practices in the colonial era.

Dwelling and Melding

Although the idea of intermarriage in the official policy intended to bring harmony and assimilation of Koreans to Japanese culture, custom, and ultimately, citizenship, literature concerning intermarriage often focused on post-marital affairs –
family, domestic life, and every day practice within the home space. Texts dealing with
the direct consequence of intermarriage display how the household of a multi-racial
family created a space that mixes the cultures of the colonizer and colonized.
Intentionally or unintentionally, the Japanese style, or the colonizer’s domestic culture,
was presented through these texts as the “new” type of domesticity that intermarried
families should cultivate. The Japanese images of family and home challenge what was
portrayed as antiquated, if not traditional, ways of managing the domestic space with
“modern” practices that are “advanced” in the degree of civilization. In the realm of
literature written by colonial elites, the new domestic space was modeled upon the
upper class, urban, modern, nuclear family homes. Their image dominated the popular
representations of domesticity in the Japanese Empire. This “new” domestic space was
not exclusively Japanese or Western, but was also mediated through Korean elites’
understanding of bourgeois family life in the Japanese Empire. Modernized domesticity
was premised on the form imagined in the Japanese metrople, hence the Japanese model
of domestic space was often represented as progress for Koreans. However, simply
“assimilating” to Japanese culture was not the goal of these texts. Rather, the central
concerns were “becoming modern” and “escaping” what was perceived as the ancient regime of decaying Korean society was the central concerns for Korean colonial elites.
Their negotiation between Korean “past” and Japanese “modern” was carefully carried
out yet the conflict between the two was inevitable. Thus one possible choice was to
create a third way that was neither “Korean” nor “Japanese.” These literary texts
carefully examined the conflicts that rise in intermarried homes before accepting the
premise of intermarriage proposed by the GGK and the public media. Another point to
note is that by contrasting the “Korean” and “Japanese” ways of life, these texts portrayed Korean way of things as old and traditional, the elements that the progressing society needed to overcome.

Why is this type of negotiation so rigorously examined in these texts? Why couldn’t Korean authors accept the Japanese lifestyle of domesticity that intermarriage bring into Korea at face value and change the domesticity accordingly? It is important to note that in the post-1937 era, intermarriage texts could serve to catalyze naesŏn ilch’e policy. Naesŏn ilch’e of Koreans and Japanese – a policy described as the “melding” of Korean and Japanese “bodies” by the Governor General of Korea Minami Jirô – was understood in the intermarried home as the mixing of two “different” racial and cultural subjects under the same roof. This union was well exploited as a perfect example of harmonious assimilation of two groups in various government slogans and news media. Contemporary literary texts, however, depended on popular readership, and they did not repeat the propaganda or official position of the Government General of Korea (hereafter, GGK) or the concurring arguments from assimilationalist Korean elites, which would not have been welcomed by Korean readers during most of the colonial era. ¹ In other words, authors faced the challenge of framing narrative plots that could illustrate plausible conditions of assimilation and intermarriage that might appeal to the Korean readers at large, yet at the same time not agitate the GGK censorship authority.

¹ Here, my study is focused on the Korean language publications. From the late 1930s and the early 1940s, Japanese language publications more directly supported the GGK policies.
My assumption here is that in the process of setting a plausible narrative situation of intermarriage, writers focused heavily on details of family and home affairs. Writing about private space was a way to avoid the colonial censorship since it ostensibly eluded obvious political confrontations with the colonial state. Given the repressive forces of colonial regime, it was no coincidence that intermarriage and romance literatures turned to exploring domestic space and presented it as a site well-insulated from the overt debates about colonial policies. Yet ironically, this literary focus in turn produced the domestic space as a very site where the conversion of Koreans into proper Japanese subjects could be pursued through the detailed observations of family relations and daily life practices. Learning disciplines and proper roles in domestic space was perceived as belonging to the Japanese bourgeois family and thus became the key to becoming Japanese. This is why the politics of dwelling was at the core of the socio-political condition of the colonial state. As I will argue below, it is in this context that the discourse on everyday life (saenghwal) came to gain discursive focalization of the intermarriage literatures.

My goal in this chapter is to analyze intermarriage and romance texts by questioning how domestic space was understood when the Japanese style was inserted into the “Korean” family and home. These intermarriage and romance texts often investigate notions of domesticity to show a sensitive negotiation between the colonizer and colonized. In the space of home and family relationships, intermarriage also raises a political question – whether to accept and assimilate to colonizer’s culture or to maintain Korean everyday practice. Fiction written by Yŏm Sang-sŏp and Yi Kwang-su demonstrate the confusion and negotiations involved in intermarried homes. Within the
oeuvre of Yŏm and Yi, the texts I choose here stand out not only because of their subject matter – intermarriage and romance – but also because of the interconnected relationships between intermarriage affairs and family affairs in domestic space. Instead of highlighting the Korean and Japanese couples’ yŏnae and conflicts, Yŏm and Yi try to weave the intermarriage theme into the questions of modern family life and domestic spheres. I chose Nam Ch’ung-sŏ (1927) by Yŏm, and Their Love (1941) and When Hearts Truly Meet (1940) by Yi, to focus on the creation of colonial domestic space for several reasons. First the novella by Yŏm Sang-sŏp is groundbreaking in intermarriage and romance texts. Nam Ch’ung-sŏ was published in 1927 before the systematic promotion of intermarriage, and yet it thoroughly examined the consequences of intermarriage within the Korean family system. Because this novella was published before naesŏn ilch’e and hwangminhwa, these policies are not central concerns for the story. Japanization and colonial conflict are still present in the story, as in other colonial literature. Like Yŏm’s other celebrated family romances, such as Mansejŏn (1922) and Three Generations (1931), Nam Ch’ung-sŏ investigates aKyŏngsŏng (Seoul) yangban family’s trouble and confrontations among different generations, old and new, in the new era of colonial rule. Nam Ch’ung-sŏ features a mixed-race protagonist that is rare in colonial literature. Moreover, the novella focuses on the Nam family’s domesticity shaped particularly around the intermarriage and mixed-race question.² Such stories in Yi Kwang-su’s writings were published in the

² I use “race” and “ethnicity” when the text clearly point to “race” or “ethnicity.” I use English word “race” here because Nam Ch’ung-sŏ uses “injong” to describe Korean. Both terms, injong and minjok were used interchangeably, one being more frequently used in print media depending on the period.
1940s, at a time of heightened policy of naesŏn ilch’e. Within his varied and large body of works, Yi Kwang-su produced important literature that reinvented family relationships and yŏnae in modern Korean literature. These two particular works by Yi connect family and yŏnae relationships in relation to intermarriage. Also domesticity raises practical questions of everyday life, when yŏnae evokes more conceptual questions about the couple.

**Construction of Domestic Space**

In this chapter, I refer to “domesticity” as the order of domestic spheres, in addition to its usual meaning as the state or condition of being “domestic” or “domesticated.” “Domestic spheres” represent not only a spatial concept of home and house, but also activities occurring in and around the home as well as familiar and non-familiar relationships confined by home and house. Not all intermarriage and romance plots take domesticity as their main theme, but when they are set in domestic space, domesticity emerges as the focal tension that determines the characters’ interracial family relationship. The colonial hierarchy works into these texts, when the Japanese style of domesticity is portrayed as a better way of life for Koreans. Power and discipline, however, are always struggling to make order of this space as characters negotiate a way to make kajŏng (home) work for both Koreans and Japanese. In literary texts, Japanese styles do not always emerge as the best solution.

Thematic of domesticity in intermarriage texts emerged from the earliest known Korean modern literature fiction to use the theme of intermarriage. “The Poor Chosŏn Man’s Japanese Beauty” (1912), a short story by Yi In-jik (1862 – 1916) features a
Japanese woman who moved to Korea with her Korean husband. Class hierarchy is here set into the gender roles in Korean male – Japanese female couples. In these cases, Japanese women appear to come from an under-privileged background, often times working as kisaeng or from other working class families. Secondly, Korean men have access to mobility – traveling back and forth between Korea and Japan– while Japanese female settle in Korea to start a family or to integrate into the existing extended family. These patterns show how female characters were subscribed to endure an uprooted life, underscoring resettlement upon marriage in the patriarchal order. Thirdly, these intermarried and mixed-race households demonstrate conditions of coloniality by portraying the tensions of family matters.

The protagonist of “The Poor Chosŏn Man’s Japanese Beauty” is an educated Korean male who now resides in Kyŏngsŏng (colonial name of Seoul). He lives with his Japanese wife who came to Korea from Japan upon marriage. She reveals that he convinced her to move to Kyŏngsŏng by promising her quasi-ideal status of the colonial elite. Underlining assumption here is that he promised that marrying a Korean elite and moving to Korea would open a path of upward mobility for her. She is soon disappointed, however, as her husband fails to uphold his old status as yangban under the new colonial system with his unstable income. This scholarly elite rejects some job prospects as unworthy. This couple’s relationship demonstrates the colonized elites’ unsuccessful transition in new colonial system.

Interruption is used in this story to highlight the Korean man’s inability to earn living for the couple. In the time of new colonial rule, previously privileged class fell to

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3 This archetypal story appears in patterns of the intermarriage texts that followed.
the status of powerless colonial subjects. The colonial era was also a time of shifts and changes in which many scholarly elites, those of the yangban class, failed to maintain their high positions when they could not keep up with the fast changing economic system. Seeking upward mobility, the Japanese wife complains about their poverty, claiming that she is the only poor Japanese wife in the city. Her complaints show that other colonial settlers were well-to-do at this time of early colonialism. The underlying irony is that the Japanese wife is “poor” despite the fact that she lives in Korea. Also, the story suggests that it is usual for a poor Korean male to have a Japanese wife. Like the title suggests, “the beauty” – the Japanese wife – is an irony for a poor Korean; only the rich can afford a beautiful Japanese spouse.

This early format of intermarriage text, published just a few years after Korea’s annexation, sketches out a rather somber picture of colonial elites, using intermarriage as a peculiar and privileged elite practice. Metaphors of family affairs, as shown, act as a critique of the colonial rule. The Korean patriarch is faced with fallen status due to the colonial rule but ironically, the anti-colonial criticism comes from the figure of the Japanese wife who demands a stronger Korean patriarchy. The gender roles in this case criticize a colonized masculinity’s lack of power. This story represents the contradiction of intermarriage that colonial domination has created for the Korean people. As this example shows, intermarriage and romance texts can undercut colonial hierarchy and criticize colonial power. Because these texts use gendered family relationships, we see colonial politics within very private, domestic spaces.

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4 The narrative follows a scolding wife and inept intellectual husband, characters which often appear in modern Korean literature such as “Society that makes you drink” (1921) by Hyŏn Chin-kwŏn or “Wings” (1936) by Yi Sang.
Under the Same Roof, Unintegrated

In this section, I will focus on Nam Ch’ung-sŏ (1927), a novella written by celebrated author Yŏm Sang-sŏp. At the end of this section, I will also discuss Love and Crime (1927-1928), a novel written by the same author, which features a character similar to Ch’ung-sŏ as a minor character. Yŏm Sang-sŏp (1897-1963) was born into a rich, elite family in Seoul and educated in both Seoul and Japan. When his studies were stopped by the March 1st movement in 1919, Yŏm started his career as a journalist in Tonga ilbo and a writer with a short story called P’yobonsil ŭi ch’ŏnggaeguri in 1921.

Nam Ch’ung-sŏ is quite similar to Yŏm’s trademark family romances set in the elite yangban households during an era of turmoil through Westernization and new capital investment. It was also an era in which new modes of privilege and authority have emerged. Intermarriage is imposed on his trademark family stories with a twist: “What if the family successor is a mixed-race person?” This question is explored as a family affair, as an exceptional case that could possibly though rarely happen to an elite family with a large estate. The story is set around the main character, Nam Ch’ung-sŏ, who is a mixed-race man in his twenties from a Kyŏngsŏng yangban family, the third richest family in the city. He is the eldest son of a wealthy man of letters, Nam Sang-ch’ŏl, and one of his concubines (ch’ŏp), a former Japanese kisaeng (entertainer, geisha). The entire narrative begins and ends at the home of Ch’ung-sŏ’s birth mother, Mijwasŏ

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5 Yŏm Sang-sŏp, “Nam Ch’ung-sŏ” (南忠緖), Tonggwang (東光) (Jan. - Feb. 1927) Rpt. in Yŏm Sang-sŏp Chŏnjip, Vol. 9 (Seoul: Minŭmsa, 1987). I use the Minŭmsa chŏnjip version because it is considered the most reliable full collection of Yŏm and the most widely used in scholarly writings. I also refer to the original text when necessary.
(美佐緖, J: Misao), in the Namsan area of Seoul, a Japanese Quarter. In a few hours, Ch’ung-sŏ’ tries to persuade his angry and resentful mother to move back to the Nam’s family estate with his younger sister Hyo-ja. While he makes his arguments to his mother, the narrative is interrupted with numerous flashbacks – or rather, more like short reports – of Ch’ung-sŏ’s memory and the Nam family’s past disgruntlement over Ch’ung-sŏ’s marital affairs. Ch’ung-sŏ’s reflections reveal recent family conflicts and questions about his cultural and racial heritage, and self-identity.

I focus on three things that emerge in this story due to the complications of intermarriage: the family feud; the role of a Japanese mother and sister in relation to Korean bourgeois domesticity; and the escape-narrative as a solution to problems at home. Later, I will explore similar escape trajectories in Love and Crime.

Family Feud over the Estate

In Nam Ch’ung-sŏ, the family feud erupts over the issue of managing the house and securing the family estate. After the death of Ch’ung-sŏ’s father’s first wife from an illness, possible replacements emerge to compete for a place in the family. The father, Sang-ch’ŏl, would choose a new wife not only to be his spouse, but also to be the powerful and prestigious manager of his household and large estate. This arrangement changes Ch’ung-sŏ’s place in the family as well. Whomever becomes the first wife can produce the rightful inheritor. The two possible inheritors are Ch’ung-sŏ and his

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6 Mijwasŏ is a Korean reading of her Japanese name, 美佐緖 (Misao). Throughout the story, she is referred to and addressed in Korean. The hanja of her name shows that the last character is shared with her son’s name, Ch’ung-sŏ (忠緖), and the story states that this was done by Mijwasŏ’s request. Ch’ung-sŏ’s father boasted to Ch’ung-sŏ’s Japanese school teachers that he intended for seamless Japanese reading, Minami Tadao (277).
younger half-brother. Ch’ung-sŏ has the advantage of being the first-born-male, even	hough his birth mother is the second wife who lives apart from the Nam family estate. Because the Nam family raised him as the legitimate first-born-male from the first wife rather than a sŏja, even allowing him to believe that he was the son of the first wife in his youth – the status of his birth mother does not obviate his right to inheritance. However, his birth-mother’s Japaneseesence haunts him as a disadvantage or potential threat to his inheritance. His Japanese heritage does not, in fact, work against Ch’ung-sŏ in his public life in schools in Kyōngsŏng and college in the metropole. It comes as a disadvantage only in his familiar relationship and in domestic matters such as his own marriage and responsibilities as the head of the Nam estate.

Ch’ung-sŏ’s younger half-brother, Ch’ung-o also has a strong claim to inheritance because of Ch’ung-sŏ’s long absence from the family. Ch’ung-sŏ’s stay in Tokyo as a college student allows him to delay his marriage and responsibilities of becoming the successor of the estate. His freedom from family affairs has prolonged his adolescence, but will be halted when he faces the “long-delayed issue,” which is becoming a “full person” though marriage (264). His own marriage will decide which

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7  Sŏja can be any son of an unrecognized wife or concubine. Before the Minjŏk law in 1912, there was no regulation on the number of wives or concubines that a man could marry. Before 1912, multiple wives could be registered on hojŏk if the head of the family wanted to do so. But in practice, it was only wealthy men who could afford to have multiple wives and their children. And only the “first wife” could give birth to the rightful male inheritor of the family name. However, in case where the first wife could not produce a male heir, other wives or concubines with a male heir could claim him as the family successor. In that case, the mother would gain status as the first wife, depending on her family background. A woman from a privileged yangban family, in general, would only become “the first wife” of a man from the same or higher social status, and concubines or second and third wives were usually from lesser family backgrounds and economic status. For further discussion, see Hong Yang-hi, Chosŏn Ch’ŏngkŏkbu ū kajokch’ŏngch’ak yŏn’gu: ‘ka’chedo wa kajŏng ideollogi rŭl chungsim’uro [The policy of family by Japanese colonialism in Korea: in a focus on a family system and home ideology], (Diss. Hanyang U., Korea, 2005).
side he would take; it represents a choice between being a child and being an adult, between allegiance to his father and mother, between Koreanness and Japaneseess. Having a Korean father and a Japanese mother, Ch’ung-sŏ feels that he is raised neither as “full Korean nor Japanese,” and he is still in “a strange place in home and society” (264). Since learning that Mijwasŏ is his birth mother, Ch’ung-sŏ simply cannot identify with one “race” and thus remains reluctant to become a “full person,” a complete adult with a clear self-identity. By prolonging his “not-fully-grown” stage, Ch’ung-sŏ feels an ambiguity that makes him anxious. Marriage becomes his way of becoming an adult and entering a mature social space. But if Ch’ung-sŏ marries a Japanese woman, a match his mother tries to make, his mixed race identity would become irreversibly “Japanese,” and he might lose his family inheritor status. On the other hand, if Ch’ung-sŏ were to marry the elite Korean candidate his father supports, Chŏng-hŭi, he would become a full Korean, and further secure his own elite class status in Korea.

Author Yŏm Sang-sŏp incorporates intermarriage in this bourgeois yangban family and sets mixed identity in a complicated household as a liability that causes a stir. In the beginning of the story, it is revealed that Ch’ung-sŏ already married Chŏng-hŭi two months ago. Ch’ung-sŏ’s choice of Chŏng-hŭi as his wife was necessary for him to inherit his share of the family fortune and estate. Yet his choice of spouse is portrayed as physical attraction to Chung-hŭi, and ideal yŏnae (romantic love) among students, since he saw her himself at a school event and later in newspaper about her (270-271). Chŏng-hŭi was the match for Ch’ung-sŏ recommended by his father, but the final decision to marry her was made by Ch’ung-sŏ himself based on her appearance.
“chat’ae”). Ch’ung-sŏ’s decision is rationalized as his own “choice” rather than something pushed by his father or by inheritance problems. Thus his marriage does not clarify his identity, but it does it secures his place in the family for the moment.

_Ambiguity of Mixed-Blood Children in Bourgeois Family._

Part of the reason Ch’ung-sŏ lived with an uncertain identity stems from his class status. His conflict comes from his privilege as a rich heir educated in Japanese schools both in Chosŏn and Japan. When his colleagues in “PP” (a socialist political group) address him by name, they complain about Ch’ung-sŏ’s different surnames. Ch’ung-sŏ reports that his proper name should be ‘Minami,’ which is the Japanese way of reading the Korean surname ‘Nam.’ His patriarchal values make Ch’ung-sŏ reluctant to take his mother’s Japanese name, ‘Yano,’ yet his mixed-race identity does not grant him enough confidence to take a full Korean name, ‘Nam.’ By interpolating his name in Japanese style, Ch’ung-sŏ maintains a hybrid – “in-between” – self-identity. In a way, as his PP colleagues point out, the core of his problem is the self-affliction caused by his family status because it is only “bourgeois like him” have many surnames (286).

The rhetoric of blood which is often evoked in intermarriage texts, is present in this story as well. But the discussion of mixed-blood can be read as substitute for other problems in the narrative. The insertion of blood rhetoric in Nam Chung-sŏ is a narrative tactic that writer Yŏm uses to introduce more depth to the understanding of

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8 This novella was published in 1927, 15 years prior to the GGK’s Name Change Campaign. “Nam” is one of few Korean names which can pass as a Japanese name. The protagonist in “Into the Light,” by Kim Sa-ryang, is also named Nam, and he goes by “Minami” to pass as Japanese. The GG Minami Jirō’s surname is the same name. Korean print media often printed GG Minami as “Nam ch’ongdok.”
class tensions. For example, Sang-ch’ŏl tells himself that it is necessary to keep the Korean blood line in the Nam family. The narrator points out that even a “true ch’inil” (a pro-Japan person) like Sang-ch’ŏl knows that marrying another Japanese into the family would permanently damage (“tarnish”) the family’s bloodline (267). Bluntly explained in pseudo-eugenic scientific terms, for Sang-ch’ŏl, “half” blood Korean Ch’ung-sŏ is acceptable, yet any further amalgamation is not acceptable. Ch’ung-sŏ also reflects on minjok (ethnos, nation, blood-related community) at the end of the story, thinking through the values of “tradition” and minjok while having tea with his mother and sister. Sitting across his Japanese mother and sister, he concludes, internally, that tradition is hard to destroy and one cannot live without one’s minjok. Although both Sang-ch’ŏl and Ch’ung-sŏ state that these factors are the most important things for them in consideration of Ch’ung-sŏ’s marriage, other problems, such as resolving family feuds, emerge as central concerns. The reference to blood thus appears merely a rhetorical tactic for displacing more imminent class issues. For a yangban family, respect and prestige of lineage in marriage is a precondition, but true objectivity lies on gaining power and monetary asset which actually make or break a marriage.

_Bourgeois Colonial Domesticity and Japanese Femininity_

I will now discuss Ch’ung-sŏ’s marriage in terms of house management. Ch’ung-sŏ’s choice, Chŏng-hŭi, was Sang-ch’ŏl’s pick because she would give Sang-ch’ŏl an opportunity to re-marry a younger woman of his preference. With the prospect of having a respectable lady as the head of household management, Sang-ch’ŏl can scout a younger bride without a burden of domestic duties. The management of the
household is an important issue that exposes the inability of Mijwasŏ. This job is unfit for Mijwasŏ who is a former geisha living in safe Namch’on haven. Actually, management of the household of Nam’s family estate is a daunting task for anybody, since the house is described as the third largest one in Kyŏngsŏng. Similar to Ch’ung-sŏ’s “strange in-between” position in family and society, his Japanese mother Mijwasŏ also occupies an in-between position in the family. Right after the death of the first wife, Mijwasŏ assumed her place and took over the responsibilities of running the Nam family household. But even after living twenty-some years in Korea, she has never tried to adopt the local culture and bounded herself in the Namsan Japanese settlement space in the city. She had been “wearing marumake, haori, and wandering around hot springs in Japan and Chosŏn” (Yŏm 245), enjoying her leisure time. Mijwasŏ is portrayed as an immature, hot-tempered and fickle woman who personifies the stereotypical kisaeng femininity. Her past unwillingness to be adapted to a Korean lifestyle proves to be a barrier for her when she acquired the first-wife status. She became impatient with household tasks. The responsibility of running a large yangban Korean household overwhelmed her and she gave up the task to escape back to her Japanese-style home.⁹

Mijwasŏ’s resistance to Korean culture or her unwillingness to assimilate to the local culture was well fostered by Sang-ch’ŏl (her husband) throughout their lives together. Sang-ch’ŏl not only believed in the differences between the Korean and Japanese-style, but also valued the Japanese-style domestic life over the native style.

⁹ Hong Yang-hi (2005). Hong points out that household management of a big yangban family is similar to running a mid-size company.
He maintained two different homes in Kyŏngsŏng because of different “situation, tastes, and relationship” (266). Having a second Japanese-style home in the Japanese settlers’ quarter also offers him certain social status. One of the main locations of narrative is Namch’on, a Japanese settlement residential area. In the 1920s, the norm for Japanese settlers in Kyŏngsŏng was to live segregated from the local colonized population. The segregated community included residential and commercial areas that provided any products available in the metropole. Daily tasks that require encountering Korean vendors and merchants were easily taken care of by bilingual Korean or Japanese domestic workers. On the other hand, for Mijwasŏ, maintaining Japanese culture is legitimate, if not sensible, in the context of colonial modernity since she cannot be comfortable in a Korean house’s poor “structure” and “hygiene” (269). For sure, Koreans with access to Japanese culture and commodity visited Namch’on’s department stores, restaurants, and bars, but Japanese settlers with prestige would not mingle at Korean residency or markets. Exposures to “uncivilized” local customs were thought to bring degradation for Japanese settlers.

But in fact the story reveals Mijwasŏ rejects head-ladyship not for reasons related to structure or hygiene, but because of her failure to cope with the vast amount of work required of the position of the matriarch, one equivalent to running a large business. This representation shows that in the Korean class system, an elite yangban woman carries far more complex responsibilities than a working class Japanese female can handle. Mijwasŏ’s fickle personality contrasts sharply against the enduring and tolerant image of first wives, such as Ch’ung-ŏ’s mother or Chŏng-hŭi.
Despite the fact that Mijwasŏ gave up the head-manager role, she wants to secure her position as legitimate wife by registering her name in the family “minjŏk,” the household registration system.\(^\text{10}\) Without legal recognition, she fears that she will not inherit any of her husband’s fortune, despite the fact that she had two children with him. This was a keen concern of any spouse who was not the legitimate first wife, and even first wives worried about their position after the launch of the new minjŏk and hojŏk system. The state had to recognize their marriage to enable any claim on property. The new minjŏk and hojŏk, the nation-wide movement of registering every citizen in the state-registry system, was a part of the movement that transplanted the Japanese ie (家) system into Korea.\(^\text{11}\) On the flipside of family system is that it also created a legal consciousness among individuals by inserting state power into marriage and inheritance rights. This state power not only affected the future wife’s status but also that of their children. In the story, one of Mijwasŏ’s major concerns is how to secure her younger daughter Hyo-ja’s share of the family fortune.

Hyo-ja is Ch’ung-sŏ’s younger sister, also mixed-blood child of the family, but she does not receive much attention in the novella.\(^\text{12}\) Perhaps it is only natural that Hyo-ja receives little attention in the story for the fact that Ch’ung-sŏ is perplexed and lost when it comes to his younger sister. Hyo-ja, in fact, has a different upbringing from Ch’ung-sŏ. She grew up with their birth-mother from the beginning in the Japanese

\(^{10}\) *Minjŏk* is an earlier name for the family registry system.


\(^{12}\) Although the novella carefully explains Ch’ung-sŏ’s name, Hyo-ja (孝子) is always read as a Korean reading of her hanja name. Japanese reading of the name is mentioned once, “Taago” (279) which could be a Korean reading of Tako or misprint of Takako.
quarter and presents herself completely as Japanese, using her mother’s Japanese surname, Yano, in her Japanese school. Hyo-ja’s complete embrace of Japaneseness gives Ch’ung-sŏ an eerie feeling that prevents him from building an emotional connection with her. Ch’ung-sŏ feels uncomfortable with her lack of Korean language skills and tie to her father’s lineage. For Ch’ung-sŏ, Hyo-ja, who is unambiguously Japanese, is a part of Mijwasŏ’s persistent Japanese lifestyle. This contrast between Ch’ung-sŏ and Hyo-ja deserves careful attention. She is the antithesis of Ch’ung-sŏ, unambiguous in her self-identity, and comfortably aligned with her maternal heritage. Being female, Hyo-ja is not considered a family heir, which ironically brings more freedom from family responsibilities. Thus gender is the structuring difference in their familial and racial affiliations. Without any claim to the Nam estate, Hyo-ja was raised in the Japanese-quarter home, almost ignored by the Nam family. Despite the fact Ch’ung-sŏ and Hyo-ja share the same mixed-blood identity, Ch’ung-sŏ struggles and agonizes over negotiation with the family, while Hyo-ja is left untouched, tucked away under the shadow of Mijwasŏ. This difference is due to Ch’ung-sŏ’s social status as a male first-born in the prestigious family. Hyo-ja’s absence in the family and the narrative shows that once again, mixed-race identity becomes problematic only when intersected with gendered social class.

The Escape Narrative

Ch’ung-sŏ is depicted as an irresolute elite trapped in conflicts between family pressure and social expectations, his Japanese mother and his Korean father. As the novella closes in on Mijwasŏ’s home, the story returns to its beginning point without
much progression. As the story is told from the Mijwasŏ’s home, we soon learn that Ch’ung-sŏ married Chŏng-hŭi despite Mijwasŏ’s disapproval, and now he is trying to leave for the U.S. for a couple of years with his new wife, accepting the possibility that he might lose successor status in the Nam family. Of course, because he opted for Sang-ch’ŏl’s choice, his travel is paid by his father. The fulfillment of becoming a “complete person” is deferred in the novella as his escape to America materializes. Traveling to America as an idle yangban with the family’s financial support works against Ch’ung-sŏ’s becoming a “full person,” because he deserts his filial duty, even though he is now married. Location is also key to the narrative. The novella starts and ends at Mijwasŏ’s home in Namch’on. It is two months after Ch’ung-sŏ’s marriage to Chŏng-hŭi, and his choice of brides is explained as if race did not influence him at all. And at the end of the novella, Ch’ung-sŏ is informing his mother of his decision to leave the country. Mijwasŏ’s failure to control the Nam family inheritance and Chungso’s voluntary exile unite the characters and accentuate the failure of each. The patriarch, Sang-ch’ŏl, gained everything he wanted while Ch’ung-sŏ and Mijwasŏ continue their unpredictable future.

It is resolved for now as he leaves home, but there is the possibility of another family feud and of resuming the family duty upon his return.

As the novella ends with Ch’ung-sŏ’s escape to a foreign country, it suspends conflicts within the narrative. This escape motif is reused in Yŏm’s next novel, Sarang kwa choe (Love and Crime) (1927-1928).13 Love and Crime is written and published

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just after Nam Ch’ung-sŏ. It evolves a different storyline from Nam Ch’ung-sŏ, but they are similar in their background, setting, and sentiment. Most strikingly, one of the central characters in Love and Crime is also mixed-blood with a prestigious and rich Korean yangban father and a Japanese geisha mother.

The family of Love and Crime’s Ryu Chin resembles that of Ch’ung-sŏ. Like Ch’ung-sŏ, Chin’s father is one of richest men in Kyŏngsŏng, who is in the process of getting a new wife. Like Ch’ung-sŏ’s, Chin’s biological mother is a Japanese woman who lived as a “ch’ŏp” and was not registered in the minjŏk. After his marriage, Chin seeks to travel abroad for a while, leaving behind a family feud over estate inheritance. Chin’s father is relatively young, in his mid-forties, thus he is still capable in running the large family and business. Chin expresses that he is free from questions about his racial identity, claiming that he is an isolated self-entity, not belonging anywhere. Chin tells his friend,

“Nationality is good for nothing. I am not non-citizen, but not really citizen either.”
“What are you then?”
“I am just being “I”!” (134)

Here, Chin proclaims his self-sufficiency by disowning both his Korean and Japanese heritage. His moment of self-revelation and act of escape – his plan of leaving for Russia or the U.S. –supposedly draws on the self-realization of Nora Helmer of A Doll’s House by Henrik Ibsen; the narrator states he is the “male Nora”(265). Translations of the Ibsen play and book were widely read in literati circles, and Nora was referred to as a symbol of the modern woman, one who rejects the conventional role of wife and mother in order to find herself.
The escape narrative might be the easiest way to handle the irresolvable questions regarding an idle elite disputing family duty, racial identity, and social class in the colonial era. The choice of the U.S. (or Russia), rather than Japan, suggests the desire of colonized elites to find enlightenment in westernization.

**Entering the Master’s House: Adoption Narrative**

In this section, I discuss two novels by Yi Kwang-su in which intermarriage plots emerge within adoption narratives. The adoption narrative details how becoming a live-in member of a Japanese family means becoming submerged in Japanese domestic spheres and learning Japanese domestic rhetoric as a route to assimilation of a Korean subject to the Japanese Empire. While *Their Love* (1941) portrays the adoption of a Korean male into a Japanese settler family, *When Hearts Truly Meet* (1940) explores temporary adoptions of a pair of Japanese siblings to a Korean home and a pair of Korean siblings to a Japanese home.

While Yŏm Sang-sŏp’s novellas of the 1920s explore households that already accommodate intermarriages and mixed-race generations, intermarriage texts published post-1937 were preoccupied with the imminent political environment such as the then emerging ideology of *hwangminhwa* (*J*: ᴷōminka) – imperial subjectification - in the peninsula. Political discourse and rhetoric on the peninsula were so strong and clear that, in a way, they didn’t leave much space for literary imaginations for a subject free from heavy identification with the nation. At this time, Korean-Japanese intermarriage and romance were almost always imagined through *naesŏn ilch’e* and on-going wartime mobilization. *Naesŏn ilch’e* often appeared as slogans that trigger “imperial
subjectification” and also intermarriage between Koreans and Japanese. For example, in *The Shell* (1942), when the protagonist Hak-chu’s younger brother announces that he will join the volunteer army, Hak-chu is thrilled at the prospect of the bright future for this younger generation. In “A Soldier in Illusion,” (1941) a Korean girl, Yŏng-sun, adores a Japanese soldier whom she met at a military camp near her hometown and becomes inspired about the Empire by the presence of the Japanese military, she declares her allegiance to the Japanese military’s causes. In “Confession of a Girl” (1944), the narrator plans to join the factory mobilization so she can support the war. These narratives clearly encouraged Koreans to participate in voluntary enlisting in the Japanese military and labor mobilization.

The shift in literature exploring *naesŏn ilch’ē* themes is obviously based on the political circumstances within writing circles. During this later period, a growing number of Korean elite writers, including Yi Kwang-su, who in the past had shown nationalistic resistance toward Japan, began leaning toward collaboration with the warring empire. In the early part of 1940s, the state of war was heightened after the outbreak of Sino-Japanese war and Pearl Harbor attack, which showcased the growing power of the Japanese Empire in the South East Asia and the Pacific theaters. Japan’s military power and presence overwhelmed the Korean peninsula with its war effort and

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14 Chŏng In-t’ae, “The Shell,” *Ryokki* (1942. 1)
15 Ch’oe Chŏng-hi, “maboroshino beishi.”
16 Yi Kwang-su, “Confession of a Girl” (Shŏjo no kokuhaku) in *Shintaiyŏ* (1944.10). trans in *Chinjŏng maŭim i mannasŏya mallo: Yi Kwang-su ch’ini sosŏl palguljip*, ed. Lee Kyoung-hoon. (Seoul: Pyongminsa. 1995): 424-439. This short story is controversial because the girl decides to join Chŏngsindae (the spirit corp), which was later revealed as one of the sources of “comfort women” recruitment, or forced sexual slavery for the military. Lee Kyoung-hoon suggests that Yi Kwang-su must have known about the relationship between the factory volunteer program and comfort stations when he wrote this piece.
assimilation programs began to take on the element of war mobilization. At this time, intermarriage texts showed more direct references to *naesŏn ilch’e* ideology as well as war causes, demonstrating how Korean subjects could contribute to the imperial war. However, even in these circumstances, domestic matters were the central concerns in intermarriage and romance texts.

Adoption as a way of becoming Japanese

Similar to Yŏm Sang-sŏp, Yi Kwang-su’s (1892-1950) early education was in Japan, and upon his return in 1910 he became a school teacher. Yi returned to Tokyo to attend Waseda in 1916, and serialized his famous *Mujŏng* (Heartless) in 1917. Like Yŏm, Yi also left Japan due to his involvement in March 1st Movement, and returned to Kyŏngsŏng in 1921. Yi worked as a journalist in Tonga ilbo and Chosŏn ilbo, but he was one of few writers who could support himself from his writing income. Yi Kwang-su used intermarriage and romance themes in his writing before these two novels which I analyze in this secton. Earlier in 1924, his short story “The Blood Letter” (hyŏlsŏ) portrayed a tragic relationship between a Korean college student in Japan and a Japanese woman whose love for him caused her illness and subsequent death.17 "The

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17 Yi Kwang-su, “Hyŏlsŏ (The Blood Letter)” *Sŏkwangsŏa* (19 Aug 1924). Rpt. in *Han’guk hyŏndae taep’yo sosŏlsŏn*. Vol.1. Eds. Im Hyŏng-taek et al. (Seoul: Ch’angjak kwa pip’yŏngsa, 1996). Narrator Kim recalls an incident when he was in Tokyo’s “T” University 15 years ago. A mysterious Japanese lady (Nobuko) visits his home a few times and his landlady gives him her letters. Kim refuses to meet her but is curious enough to look for her. When Kim comes back from his summer break, Nobuko’s brother, Matsuda, who turns out to be his old schoolmate, visits to explain that his sister is in love with him. Kim is very touched by the Japanese woman’s love, but declines her proposal, saying he has bigger goals. A month later, another letter comes from Matsuda that Nobuko is on her death bed. Kim finally meets her and accepts her love but she dies a few days later. At her grave, Kim mourns and addresses her as his wife.
“Blood Letter” does not show any enthusiasm for intermarriage, especially as compared to Their Love. In fact, the 1924 story ends rather tragically both in terms of romance and marriage. The different approaches in the two stories show that the political and cultural environment has changed by the time Their Love was published.

Their Love was published in 1941 in the Korean-language journal Sinsidae. The story is set in Kyŏngsŏng and describes a Japanese family and its encounter with a Korean college student that the son has befriended. The growing number of Japanese settlers in Seoul is reflected in this novel through the main characters’ interactions with Japanese students and families, particularly in Kyŏngsŏng Imperial University.

Their Love (1941) is mostly set in 1928, around the same time as Yŏm Sang-sŏp’s Nam Ch’ung-sŏ and Love and Crime were published. By setting the story about ten years earlier into the past, Yi Kwang-su was able to illustrate that the culture of intermarriage had changed dramatically over a relatively short period. The contrast with the past is highlighted through the depiction of a failed romance between the protagonist and the Japanese daughter of the house. In 1941, a critical moment for the Japanese Empire’s expansion, the failed romance undercuts the contemporary imagination about the achieved Korean assimilation in the Japanese Empire. With this scheme of intermarriage and romance as overarching frame, the story focuses on Wŏn-ku and his process of becoming Japanese by becoming an honorary member of a Japanese family in Seoul.

Their Love starts at the Nishimoto family’s home where Dr. Nishimoto comes across a newspaper article on Yi Wŏn-ku, a man who just discovered a groundbreaking alternative fuel. It is quickly revealed that Wŏn-ku was a former schoolmate of Dr. Nishimoto’s son, and that Wŏn-ku lived in the home for three years a decade ago. We immediately learn that Wŏn-ku once proposed marriage to Dr. Nishimoto’s daughter, Michiko during his stay. This angered Dr. Nishimoto, who eventually forced Wŏn-ku to leave the house. In the newspaper article, Yi Wŏn-ku described Dr. Nishimoto as one of his two father figures in his life. The story returns to 1928 just before Wŏn-ku’s move in to Nishimoto family. When Wŏn-ku had to take over his own family’s economic responsibilities after his father’s death, he considers quitting his pre-med program at Kyŏngsŏng Imperial University to support his mother and sister as a school teacher. His classmate, Tadashi Nishimoto, the son of Dr. Nishimoto, intervenes as a savior for Wŏn-ku and his financial crisis. Tadashi has been inspired by Professor Ishimoto, a faculty member at the Kyŏngsŏng Imperial University, who advocates the equality of Koreans to the university’s Japanese students, and suggests that Wŏn-ku stay with the Nishimotos as a private tutor for the younger siblings while continuing his studies. Wŏn-ku is hesitant at first but touched by Tadashi’s “true heart” at helping a Korean, and he accepts the offer.

The family metaphor in this story is a key aspect of becoming Japanese. In the newspaper article profiling Wŏn-ku, he described Dr. Nishimoto as his “father.” The process recalls the sŏyangja system (mukoyōshi engumi, son-in-law adoption) in which Wŏn-ku would marry the daughter of the family and become its legitimate inheritor while changing his family name to Nishimoto. However, as we learn at the very
beginning of the story, the marriage plot was unsuccessful and adoption was never completed. Clearly, even after evicted from the house, Wŏn-ku maintains emotional ties to the Nishimoto family. His failed romance with Michiko, due to Dr. Nishimoto’s opposition, must have engendered unresolved tension between the Japanese family and their Korean adoptee. This tension can also be understood as his failure to become a full Japanese.

In the first part of the story, the plot reveals new interaction between Tadashi and Wŏn-ku and how Tadashi comes up with idea of having a Korean man in his house. The second part of the novel explores Wŏn-ku’s first impression of the Japanese household (121) and its punctual and disciplined family (141-142). This part revolves around Wŏn-ku, showing how he deals with a Japanese family and its living style which is described as very different from his Korean upbringing. Here, Wŏn-ku and Tadashi discuss the similarities between Koreans and Japanese and what Koreans need to do in order to become proper Japanese imperial citizens.

In the beginning, Wŏn-ku’s role in the Nishimoto family is a tutor, a paid employee of the family rather than a guest. The family treats Wŏn-ku as more than a tutor, however, and even as more than a temporary guest. Wŏn-ku’s move into the Nishimoto family leads to a subtle shift in his socio-political positions. An episode surrounding Wŏn-ku’s laundry illustrates the dilemma: Wŏn-ku is asked by the housemaid to give him his dirty laundry, but he is too embarrassed to give his clothes to the maid. Instead, he does his own laundry in secret. Informed by the maid, puzzled Ms. Nishimoto finally asks Wŏn-ku about his laundry, and encourages Wŏn-ku to use the housemaid’s service. This episode illustrates how Wŏn-ku’s position changes from
employee to guest. As Wŏn-ku starts using the housemaid's service, he slides into a new position in this bourgeois domestic management. As a quasi-family member, Wŏn-ku gains more confidence in the family and begins to adopt the family’s daily rituals.

From this adoption narrative, author Yi Kwang-su describes how a Korean can become a full Japanese person. Minute cultural habits in the domestic space are presented as necessary traits of everyday life (saenghwal) that must be adopted in the process of becoming Japanese. These domestic habits translate naesŏn ilche’s policy into disciplinization of modern bodies. For example, once Wŏn-ku moves into this elite colonial settler’s home, he is most impressed with the family’s daily regimen. Getting up early and having meals at certain hours of the day (136) and paying mutual respect (yeŭi) among the household members – these prove to him that this Japanese family is superior to any Korean family he knows. Wŏn-ku ardently tries to fit into the family by mimicking all the domestic habits. He becomes most interested in cleaning, and the act of sweeping and wiping becomes his pleasure, even claiming the time he spent with them as his happiest time since his father’s death (143-144). Learning the domestic rituals in everyday life (saenghwal) – e.g. waking up early in the morning, cleanliness, disciplined relationships, etc – is presented as a key to “becoming Japanese.”

The physical presence of Wŏn-ku in the Japanese home in turn provides the Nishimoto family with the opportunity to learn that he is the same as a Japanese person. Tadashi confesses that in the beginning, the family found Wŏn-ku different from them especially in his “manners, Japanese pronunciation or intonations” (139). But once they discovered his “real self (chŏngch’e, or the real body),” the differences are identified as
insignificant mannerisms and “dialect.” Tadashi argues the bodily differences are not essential to the two races because they can be overcome. The method for overcoming these differences, of course, is *hwangminhwa*. Relevantly, Tadashi is able to recognize Wŏn-ku as equal to Japanese because of the latter’s “loving heart for the state” (patriotisms, aekuksim), for Japan and the emperor. Tadashi’s rhetoric parallels the common GGK’s ideology of hwangminhwa which insists that becoming Japanese is a matter of one’s true “heart,” the affective state of a person. The racial difference between Korean and Japanese is overcome through the unity of the “hearts.” This is a direct reflection of *naesŏn ilche*, where the Governor General Minami Jirō emphasizes the importance of people’s “hearts,” or the affect, in his policy promotion.19

Interestingly, Tadashi believes that Wŏn-ku’s “aekuksim” has to be recognized by Dr. Nishimoto. In other words, Wŏn-ku’s loyalty for the Japanese Empire has to be approved by Dr. Nishimoto, the father figure, and also the symbolic figure of the older generation. Tadashi plainly tells Wŏn-ku, “my father worries about it [aekuksim]” (140). This division between younger generation and older generation was often used in the assimilation discourse too. Korean assimilationalists who believed that Japanization would bring the advancement for Koreans often doubted the older generations in mainland Japan, that they would not support giving equal rights to colonized people. Here, Wŏn-ku has to assure the Japanese citizens at large that colonized Korean citizens are assimilated enough to have a strong loyalty to the Japanese Empire. In a way, one has to be a proper “imperial subject” to achieve *naesŏn ilch’e*. The conversation between Tadashi and Wŏn-du sheds light on the relationship

19 See Chapter One for the quotation.
between colonial domesticity and imperial subjectification. Because imperial subjectification requires the “true heart” of Korean subjects, the metaphor of family and affect, proving oneself to other family member or showing one’s true heart, becomes a natural way to show the potential for imperial subjecthood. In this case, Wŏn-ku’s mimic of domestic habits is one way of showing his true heart. Learning to be a natural Japanese family member and learning to love Japan as a nation come in hand-in-hand.

However, the discussion of hwangminhwaja and loyalty to Japan turns into possible romantic love between Wŏn-ku and Michiko. Tadashi ends his demand for hwangminhwaja by telling Wŏn-ku about Michiko’s revelation. He informs that Michiko was the first person in his family who saw Wŏn-ku as the same as any Japanese, one who has a potential to realize full Japanese assimilation. The hwangminhwaja discussion now turns into romantic fantasy for Wŏn-ku, now that he learned that Michiko was interested in him. At this point, Wŏn-ku has already developed secret crush on Michiko, after having spent time with her at the family vacation in Wŏnsan.

Learning and appreciating the Japanese everyday life (saenghwal) is the beginning of truly becoming imperial Japanese citizen which requires holding “Japanese spirit/psyche.” Wŏn-ku’s potential of mastering Japanese spirit has been revealed through his assimilation to domestic rituals and romantic pairing with Michiko, but he is never able to fully own it. The author, Yi Kwang-su, seems to suggest that even if Wŏn-ku realizes the full Japanese spirit, Japanese settlers such as Dr. Nishimoto would not accept him as a full Japanese son. The novel’s series is incomplete, and the narrative does not reveal how and why Wŏn-ku was ejected from the Nishimoto home. But at the end of the published serials, Wŏn-ku is lost and confused by the resisting
anger that other Koreans seem to hold against his loving host family. Wŏn-ku faces hostility from his Korean school peers over his living with a Japanese family. Revealingly, Wŏn-ku fails to convince other Korean students of the merits of Japanese domestic life or the merits of becoming full Japanese citizens. At this unfinished ending, both Japanese settlers and Koreans remain unconvinced of the merit of Korean integration to the Japanese Empire.

Adoption Provides the Affect

Just one year after Their Love, Yi Kwang-su wrote a different story of intermarriage and romance and family adoption. When Hearts Truly Meet shows interaction between two pairs of siblings – a Korean brother and sister, and a Japanese brother and sister – in Seoul at the time of the Sino-Japanese war. They learn each other’s culture and domestic life through what I call temporary adoption, a practice in which a couple would stay with each other’s families for a short period of time. I propose temporary adoption because the duration of stay is longer than a mere friendly visit but less permanently arranged compared to patriarchal adoptions. Temporary adoption in Yi’s story is intended to be a learning experience for the both parties, as if preparing for future adoption of a new family member. These home-visits introduce the couples in the story to the mutual domestic cultures, bring the siblings from both sides of the family closer, while nurturing romantic relationships. By learning each other’s domestic culture first-hand, the characters realize the similarity between Korean and

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Japanese culture and moreover, physicality. The understanding that complete assimilation through the space of home is possible once again highlights the importance of emotional attachment and affect. It constitutes the domestic sphere primarily as a space of culture, personal attachment, and conjugal bonding, while at the same time foregrounding it as a crucial site of imperialization through the disciplinizing literary gaze over the minute domestic routines of household management, home education, and family relations. The core foundation of becoming Japanese requires the “true heart,” an affective investment of a person that is both nurtured and managed in the domestic spheres.

While Their Love was published in Korean, When Hearts Truly Meet was serialized in Japanese in Ryokki magazine, a “pro-GGK” publication. Although these two novels were published in different languages and through different venues, targeting different readership, they share similar themes in their narratives. First, both novels contend with the idea of Korean assimilation to Japanese culture.

Second, the publication record reveals that these two novels were serialized in monthly magazines but halted in the middle of the series, preventing full plot development and freezing the action at its peak of narrative tension. These abrupt discontinuities in Yi Kwang-su’s writings raise questions about how Yi handled the issue of Koreans and Japanese living harmoniously under the imperial gaze. Literary critic Lee Kyoung-hoon argues that the reason for the abrupt cancellation of the When Hearts Truly Meet serial is evidence that the author might have been trapped in his own

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21 Ryokki magazine was the main publication from Ryokki renmei, which was considered a think-tank of Government-General. The readership, of course, is quite familiar with GGK policy.
narrative plot. Yi Kwang-su had a clear political agenda but could not incorporate it within the narrative. *When Hearts Truly Meet* ends abruptly without resolving character’s lives or their political arguments. Similarly, *Their Love* ends precisely at the juncture where the physical connection of Korean and Japanese students is left ambiguous.

Third, aiming at different readership, the intermarriage plots in the two stories develop into different directions. It is obvious that the novels want to reach an audience not completely assimilated and with little or no understanding of imperialization and Japanization. While *Their Love*, aiming for Korean language readership, revolves around a Korean protagonist’s progression into a Japanese house, *When Hearts Truly Meet* rotates Japanese and Korean characters for its narrative voice before settling on the Japanese protagonist to lead the story.

*When Hearts Truly Meet* describes temporary adoption to a family as a better solution for the Japanese settler to understand the Korean culture. The families in this novel are privileged elites in the city, respected by their own communities, both in Korean and Japanese settler ones. The four main characters are elite leaders of the younger generation who face the challenge of the Japanese Empire at the time of war. The story begins with a rescue scene after a hiking accident. Kyŏngsŏng Imperial University graduate and medical doctor Kim Ch’ung-sik rescues two Japanese hikers stranded at Insubong, the peak of Pukhan mountain. Ch’ung-sik takes the two siblings, Higashi Takeo and Higashi Fumie, to his home for few days to convalesce. While recovering, the Japanese settler siblings become friends with Ch’ung-sik and his

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younger sister, Sŏk-ran. Although Ch’ung-sik’s father is a “pulryŏngsŏin,” a Korean who disobey Japanese rules, Takeo falls in love with Sŏk-ran while Ch’ung-sik grows to like Fumie. As their friendship deepens, all four volunteer for the war mobilization, inspired by the GG Minami Jirō’s naisen ittai slogan. When Takeo joins the Japanese imperial army, Ch’ung-sik follows his footsteps and volunteers as a military medical doctor. At the war frontier in China, Ch’ung-sik reunites with Sŏk-ran and Fumie who have just arrived as volunteered nurses. Soon Takeo is delivered to the unit with a serious eye-injury. Despite careful treatment, Takeo becomes permanently blind.

Nevertheless, he is determined to continue his mission as a soldier by meeting Chinese military leaders in person to persuade them of the Japanese military’s true intent – the Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Spheres. Sŏk-ran joins this road-trip to the heart of enemy territory and becomes his faithful guide and translator. The final installment of the series ends with Takeo and Sŏk-ran in a Chinese prison after a long attempt to convince a Chinese commander to join Japan’s pan-Asian project; we never find out their fate.

The temporary adoptions in this story begin with the introduction of the two Japanese siblings to Ch’ung-sik’s home in Pulgwangri, after their hiking accident. At first, Takeo and Fumie are being adopted in Kim’s family for their recovery. Both were welcomed by the hospitable Kim family, and the family’s care allows the Higashi siblings to learn about Korean domestic life. Before their rescue, the Higashi siblings had never been to a Korean household. After several visits to the Kim’s home, the Higashi siblings invite the Kim siblings to their home in Kyŏngsŏng to stay overnight, and to nighttime visit to Ch’angkyŏng palace to see the cherry tree blossoms. Of course,
these exchanges include cultural cross-dressing. During his rescue stay, Takeo finds himself dressed in Korean garment when he wakes up. In this initial cross-dressing, Takeo finds it uncomfortable, even unpleasant, but soon doesn’t mind being dressed in Korean style due to the generous care from the Kim family. Later, when the siblings revisits the Kims, Fumie tries on chosŏnbok with Sŏk-ran and all of them find it pleasant and well suited (31). The overnight stay left great impressions of kindness and gallantry and led to a deeper friendship amongst the four characters. The initial temporary adoption is triggered by an accident but the exchanges and friendship that followed are constructed as courteous gestures to the benefactors. Gallantry and respect are presented as vital factors for building friendship between Koreans and Japanese.

From the moment Ch’ung-sik rescues Fumie and her brother, some romantic tension is established between the two; they are more than just the rescuer and the injured victim. However, without fully developing the romantic plotline between these two, the story moves to Takeo, and later to Takeo and Sŏk-ran as a couple. After the rescue, the third-person narrative focus never really returns to Ch’ung-sik. Also the relationship between Ch’ung-sik and Fumie does not further develop after their reunion in the war front. The novel is serialized in five installments and the last episode focuses on Takeo and Sŏk-ran as a couple on a mission. The story seems incomplete, as the two end up in a prison with no recognizable patriotic achievements.

Takeo’s interest in Sŏk-ran is more legible, and he takes some romantic action against his family’s will. Although the Higashi family shows kind hospitality towards the Kim siblings, Mr. Higashi (the father) has some reservations about the Kims, particularly for their father’s reputation as a “pulryŏng sŭnin.” Takeo’s mother, Kikuko,
on the other hand, worries about the yōnae between Takeo and Sŏk-ran. Kikuko is alarmed when Takeo appears to turn away from the Japanese woman with whom he has been arranged to be married. Takeo says he would not want to be married before serving in the army (43), but readers are aware that he has already fallen in love with Sŏk-ran. As the yōnae between Takeo and Sŏk-ran develops as a more promising relationship than the one between Ch’ung-sik and Fumie, Takeo’s point of view begins to dominate the novel. Through Takeo’s eyes, the narrative focuses on how Japanese can understand Koreans as equals. This narrative style foregrounds an idealized Japanese form of assimilative ideology that might not necessarily reflect the Korean view or the actual Japanese settlers’ mentalities. Takeo realizes that the Kim siblings are good people with respectable education and Japanese-like behaviors and mannerisms, and he comes to believe that they are the same as the Japanese. He apologizes to Ch’ung-sik on behalf of the Japanese Empire saying, “we Japanese lacked the love and respect for the Koreans.” At the same time, Takeo urges Ch’ung-sik to become “one” with the Japanese Empire, following the slogans of GGK Minami Jirō (40).

In the earlier story, Their Love, the advocate for the Korean equality was a university professor also known as a controversial figure. Tadashi, the Japanese university student in the novel, needed a mediating figure to gain inspiration to advocate for Korean equality within Japanese imperialism. In contrast to Takeo in When Hearts Truly Meets is directly inspired by the GGK’s slogan naesŏn ilch’e and has learned to internalize the ideology in his daily life. The interpretation of the government policy on this personal level must mobilize emotion and affect. Takeo tells Fumie:
“I didn’t care for the affect (chŏng 情) before. […] But now I think what moves people is the affect. It is not the emotion that psychology defines, but normal human affect (人情). […] I believe naesŏn ilch’e is the same way. If the mainlanders and Koreans are not connected with affect, it is not real.” (46-47) (italic is my emphasis)

Takeo’s focus on affect comes naturally because of his interest in Sŏk-ran and the Kim family’s home (kajŏng). This novel illustrates how intermarriage and romance discourse can translate the assimilationist policy into personal and domestic terms and, as the result, it highlights the importance of affect for individuals in becoming full Japanese imperial citizens.

On the other hand, the readers, especially those Koreans with some education, are expected to be aware of the colonization of their homeland and not necessarily in favor of outside rulers and settlers. These novels must strive to entertain a wide spectrum of readership but also need to avoid any controversial perspectives that might agitate the censorship authority. The tension is central yet muted as these stories challenge the colonization of supposed homogeneous nation, and yet without altogether rejecting the value of assimilation of Korean household into the Japanese bourgeois family and home models.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have explored intermarriage and romance texts, focusing on their use of domesticity. These fictions construct colonial domesticity of respectable bourgeois families according to the model that is believed to be Japanese style. Making a bourgeois family and home was in the interest of colonial authority and colonial elites.
The intermarriage and romance become effective means for introducing the affective state of imperialism, an array of emotions related to the nation, state, and the empire. Examples from Yŏm Sang-sŏp and Yi Kwang-su show that these texts construct the ideal images of Japanese domesticity and demonstrate how it can or cannot be incorporated into Korean domesticity.

In both cases, protagonists easily recognize the advantage of the Japanese way-of-things in everyday domestic space. However, the narratives do not always directly promote the intermingling of two groups, describing instead the troubles and challenges that intermarriage and romance create in colonial domestic space. Yŏm Sang-sŏp’s Nam Ch’ung-sŏ illustrates how the Japanese wife/mother’s working class status prohibited her from upholding either the idealized Japanese domesticity or responsibility of a traditional Korean yangban matriarch. The protagonist’s unresolved struggle over his racial, cultural, and social identity is related to the impossibility of incorporating Japanese domesticity into Korean domesticity because of his mother’s class status. In the end, Ch’ung-sŏ fails to choose one side even with his marriage to a Korean woman. In contrast, Yi’s Their Love takes adoption rhetoric as the foundation of new Japanized identity. Politics over domestic space remains a constant theme, while other themes such as romantic love (yŏnae) become prevalent in stories in the late 1930s and 1940s. In the work of both Yŏm and Yi, representations of domesticity reflect the politics of colonialism both before and after naesŏn ilch’e policy.

In closing, it may be worth noting that it was rather provocative at the time for a colonial writer to have a Japanese character to claim the equal rights of Korean in his story. In When Hearts Truly Meet, it was the Japanese male character that cited the GG
Minami’s *naesŏn ilch’e* policy and insisted that Koreans are equal to Japanese. Yet, that Yi Kwang-su was able to reinterpret and re-present *naeson ilch’e* as an attainable ideal through the mobilization of “affect” between the two people proves my point. That is, *naeson ilch’e* ideology offered enough flexibility for colonial elites so that they could freely interpret it to aid their attempts at articulating alternative ways of being a modern subject that was not necessarily subsumable by the Japanese colonializing project.
Chapter 3

“International Marriage” as Intermarriage

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore discourses of intermarriage in the broad spectrum of popular print media, especially newspapers and women’s magazines. I will examine how intermarriage between Koreans and those who were neither Koreans nor Japanese, so called kukche kyŏrhon, was discussed at the time when naesŏn kyŏrhon was promoted by the colonial state in the 1930s and 1940s. Discourse on kukche kyŏrhon (international marriage) visibly emerged in the 1930s in print media and became a part of popular discourse in women’s magazines in the late 1930s. Kukche kyŏrhon discourse, similar to naesŏn kyŏrhon discourse, presented intermarriage as a sign of modernity in popular print culture. But discourse surrounding inter-“racial” and trans-“national” marriages between Koreans and non-Japanese foreign subjects focused much more on images of modern home space and family relationships. The emergent image of the “sweet home” coincided perfectly with international marriage to suggest that international marriage in Korea, as an alternative form of domesticity, could be part of modern life.

This chapter is presented in three parts. First, I discuss how courtship and marriage became two different entities, separated and reconstructed in the 1920s Korea.
“Romantic love” (yŏnae) and “free marriage” (chayu kyŏrhon) were new keywords for the print media that not only changed the social relationship between men and women, but also the concepts of family and home. New gender roles and the construction of womanhood were emphasized in the then emerging “cult of domesticity.” Second, I analyze what I call the “home visits” genre that appeared in Yŏsŏng magazine. The “home visits,” in which reporters visit the homes of interviewees and conduct interviews on site, were regular features of the magazine, and this standard format was soon applied to “international marriage” reporting. Different from biographical interviews, the “home visits” genre included accounts by reporters who physically visited to witness the couples’ home lives and observed their private space in detail. I consider the implications that such “ethnographic reporting” might have had in disseminating images of international marriage. Third, I analyze several images on the “international home” that appeared in Yŏsŏng magazine.

**International Marriage as Intermarriage**

In August 1934, Tonga ilbo featured a three-part, three-day series on “international” marriage.1 The featured couple for this series was Korean male Kim Chu-hang and an American woman named E.M. Davis. Although Kim and Davis were not the first couple to be “internationally” married in Korea, they were certainly the couple most covered by the media in the colonial era.2 Kim and Davis gained media

1 Tonga ilbo (Aug 11 - 13, 1934).
2 After the publication of this report, the couple was profiled in several other media including magazines such as Ahŭi saenghwal (Children’s life) (Sep 1934, 9:9), Samch’ŏlli (Aug 1935, 7:7) and Yŏsŏng (Woman) (Nov 1938, 3:11).
celebrity for having gone through international marriage. International marriage was
certainly rare, but it did not attract so much media coverage before the Kim and Davis
story. Why, then, is there this sudden shift in the treatment of intermarriage in the print
media? What makes Kim and Davis’s marriage different from previous intermarriages?
To answer these questions, I look first at their relationship as reported in Tonga ilbo.

As the title “Love has No Border” shows, the story focuses on the love story
between Kim and Davis which crossed national boundaries and was successfully
consummated in Korea (Figure 3.1). According to the report, Kim was a Christian
minister who came back to Korea after his studies in the United States where he met Ms.
Davis. In the U.S., they were romantically involved, but Kim did not ask her to come to
Korea with him. One year after his return, Davis decided to follow Kim to Korea,
determined to marry him. Despite Davis’ love and devotion, there was no guarantee
that Kim would marry Davis, and the report says Davis was prepared to work in Korea
for the rest of her life, even if Kim refused her. Of course, Kim was moved by Davis’s
determination. They were happily married and settled down in the country where Kim
worked as a minister. This narrative tells the reader that Davis crossed the border and
pursued Kim to Korea to be married.

All three installments of Tonga ilbo ran under headlines of “international
marriage,” which shows that the newspaper sensationalized the couple by focusing on
the elements of foreign and romantic love in the story. As the headline shows, Davis’s
perspective and active pursuit of Kim is more pronounced in these newspaper articles.
What makes this story more sensationalistic it that a “foreign person” (sŏyangin) came
all the way to Korea and professed her “love with no boundary” to a Korean male. The
editorial comments, published after the series, represent the newspaper’s perspective on the Kim and Davis story. The comments claimed that the Kim and Davis story brought “sensation” to the readers. What makes the editor call this a “sensational” story? The international marriage story emphasizes the strong “romantic love” of the couple who sacrifices much to cross national and racial boundaries for marriage. It supposedly proves that not only can love conquer all odds, but that foreigners are also willing to become Koreanized by migrating to Korea for love. This Tonga ilbo series is focused on Kim and Davis story from their first encounter in the U.S. to their settling in Korea.
Figure 3.1. “Sarangen,” Tonga Ilbo (1934.8.11).
The Kim and Davis story shows the typical trajectory that international marriage brought attention to the public. What happened to them after they were married? The women’s magazine Yösông (1936-1940) fulfilled this curiosity by repackaging intermarriage as a “kukche kajŏng” (國際家庭), an international home which highlights the domestic dimension of intermarriage discourse.

“International marriage” (kukche kyŏrhon), or the marriage between Koreans and non-Japanese non-Koreans, was a popular topic in women’s magazines, particularly in Yösông. The neologism “kukche” was only used for marriage between Koreans and non-Japanese foreigners. Since both Korea and mainland Japan were located within the Japanese Empire, marriage between Korean and Japanese were always referred as a “naesŏn” and never a “kukche.”

Some international marriages were treated as celebrity events by the mainstream media. In these articles about international marriages, reporters or interviewees never mention naesŏn marriage. Both naesŏn and international marriage discourse encouraged becoming modern subjectivity through enlightenment and modernization, but the process of becoming one was presented differently. While naesŏn marriage leaned toward assimilating to Japanese culture, print media articles on “international marriage” often focused on becoming “Western.”

The different treatment distinguishing “international marriage” from naesŏn marriage shows that print media and its writers – elite intellectuals – understood “international marriage” as an occasion to celebrate emerging “western” ideology such as “romantic love” and “sweet home” (switŭ hom), a new phenomenon of bourgeois domesticity that

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3 Not all international marriage involves westerner. International marriage reports also included China, with very specific description.
emerged in the 1920s. In interviews conducted during home visits, writers constantly emphasized how “different” the experience of intimacy and familiar relationship were in the couple’s courtship and married life. These accounts also described the difference found in the physical arrangement of domestic space and the household management.

As I argued in previous chapters, naesŏn marriage in the post-naesŏn ilch’e policy was a product of imperial ideology, but it is one that often confounded the blurry boundaries between the imposition of imperial or colonial policies and what was deemed as personal choice in conjugal and familial commitments. Regardless of the actual couples’ intention, however, all naesŏn marriages automatically came to be regarded as acts of proper colonial citizenship, beginning in the late-1930s. Any type of intermarriage – naesŏn or international – started with a premise of “difference” whether between two cultures, races, ethnicities, nationalities or domesticities. In the case of naesŏn marriage, couples were expected to take on Japanese culture and domesticity. As argued in earlier chapters, the difference between what are understood as “Korean” and “Japanese” styles of domesticity was treated with great seriousness by many writers and often portrayed as the cause of various agonies, adjustments, and negotiations for the couples and their families. This seriousness comes from the fact that the naesŏn marriage theme is, after all, a product of imperialism, a point that its proponents and writers could not ignore. International marriage, on the other hand, was never bounded by imperialism and state-ideology; for Korean marrying a non-Japanese foreigner could not create or guarantee status as a proper imperial citizen. There is a heavy emphasis on “freedom of choice’ in the international marriage discussion when presenting it in print.
media. In this way, international marriage, like naesŏn marriage, becomes a defining part of modern subjectivity.

A difference between naesŏn and international marriage is that while the former often appeared as themes in the work of elite male intellectuals and writers, the latter received much wider attention in popular print media, especially newspaper and magazines: wider reach of audience means more popularized representation of intermarriage. Featured as newsworthy current issues, international marriages were showcased to demonstrate how and where a modern couple would live their daily lives. Coverage of these marriages would feature the “sweet home,” whereas the common thematization of naesŏn marriage centered on household conflicts brought about by differences in race, culture, and social identities. The racial and cultural differences inherent in international marriage were given almost no worthy attention from the magazine articles. These articles suggested there was no need to negotiate differences between Korean and western domestic styles; instead, they suggested that choosing one over another is natural. One simply takes Korean customs for living in Korea, even though housing styles or various domestic managements follow western style.

Similarly, biracial children were described simply as “foreign” rather than as a hybrid or ambiguous presence that might in reality have confounded racial, national, and cultural boundaries. In sum, international marriage was overtly “western” and “sweet,” a characterization that emphasized the modern and affectionate aspects of family life in the popular print media.

Finally, because international marriage in Korea at this time was limited to a small number of Koreans who were educated abroad or those married to foreign settlers
or missionaries who moved to Korea, articles featuring intermarried couples also
demonstrated an elite lifestyle of the time, which was also marked as “Western.” Even
when an international couple lived in Korea, the representation of their home and
lifestyle were frequently reported with emphasis on an accentuated “Western” taste. In
these interviews, the visualization of home became more on elite upper class homes.
“Home visits” interviews on naesŏn couples were not published in popular media,
except in Naisen ittai magazine which did not focus on visualizing home space.

**Sweet Home as Affect**

Scholars have described the rise of discourses on “sweet home” in the colonial
era as a part of the emerging patriarchal ideology that bound women to the home space
with a new sensibility of women’s duty and scientific house management.\(^4\) The
neologism “sūwit hom,” which derived from the English phrase “sweet home,” came to
Korea through Japan, but the phrase did not become popular until the 1930s when the
idea of kajŏng was settled as a modernized style of domesticity.\(^5\) Creation of a “sweet
home” as a modern domestic space was conditioned by various aspects of modern life.
The process not only required a material structure of the modern homes – western style
housing and the interior design – but also that everyday life within the given home
space would follow “western” and “modern” lifestyles. “Sweet home” was not just
about home life, but also addressed domestic management and family relationships

\(^4\) See Kwon Myoung A and Theodore Jun Yoo.

\(^5\) For the discussion of kajŏng [家庭], see Chapter Two. For a short history of representation of
happy kajŏng see **Sweet Home ŭi kiwŏn** (2005). “Sweet home” came to be popular far later
than the popular use of neologism kajŏng.
within home space. Sweet home assumed a modern and western way of life: coupling was consummated by romantic love (yŏnae); a nuclear family was normalized; and, friendly and closer family relationships became the model. Thus the “sweet home” was not just a sign of newly assigned women’s duties at home, but it also represented a new familiar affect and relationship in a new type of marriage.

Different ideas of marriage and home emerged in Korean literature at the turn of the century, that is, several decades before the appearance of sweet home discourses. For example, Yi In-jik’s Tears of Blood (1906) introduces changing notion of marriage and domesticity through the protagonist’s journey to Japan and the U.S. at the turn of the century. A young girl from P’yŏngyang, Ong-nyŏn is sent to Japan as an adopted daughter of a Japanese general during the turmoil of Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) after she was led to believe both of her parents were dead. After some schooling in Japan, Ong-nyŏn moves to the U.S. to continue her studies. When Ong-nyŏn graduates from a high school in Washington D.C., she finds her father whom she thought was dead. Once Ong-nyŏn is reunited with her father Kim Kwan-il, her guardian in the U.S. Ku Wan-sŏ asks her father for permission to marry her. Kim, who has been also studying the “Western knowledge” in the U.S., suggests that the couple should discuss this matter themselves and even advises them that they should complete their studies in the U.S. and to be wedded in Korea, where Ong-nyŏn shall educate other Korean women upon her return. The father’s guidance to Ong-nyŏn and Wan-sŏ reflects what is portrayed to be enlightened way of approaching the matter of marriage and courtship. First, he insinuates that the marriage should be decided by the couple, not by parental
arrangement or consent. Second, he suggests that the nation-building project needs to be considered before the couple’s marriage.

For these reasons, literary critic Kwon Bodurea argues that in *Tears of Blood*, even though Ong-nyŏn’s marriage seems far different than arrange matchmaking of her class at the time, marriage is suggested as a “rational contract” based on the enlightenment project of the nation rather than *passion amour*. She argues that in sinsosŏl (new fiction), individual desire such as “free marriage” (freedom of choosing one’s spouse) was framed within the project of nation-state building.\(^6\) In this figuration, romantic love and marriage exist within the boundary of the nation and the enlightenment discourses; personal intimacy is manifested in terms of political affect.

The mixture of personal and political affect is perhaps imbedded in the Confucian understanding of “love.” Scholars of Korean literature have argued that the emergence of “romantic love” comes from the translation of the English word “love” into the Chinese word of (lian’ai, 戀愛) followed by Japanese rendering of the same word “renai.”\(^7\) A missionary in China, W.H. Medhurst, translated the English “love” into “lian’ai” in his English Chinese dictionary (1847-1848). This is believed to be the first use of the word in East Asia. Invention of a new hybrid word does not mean there was absence in indigenous concept of affect and emotion. Kim Hung-gyu points out the use of affect (chŏng 情) and sarang (사랑) in the 16\(^{th}\)-19\(^{th}\) century *sijo* poetry to describe

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romantic feelings.\textsuperscript{8} Chŏng, like the use of “ching” in Chinese texts, was used to connote a broader concept of affect in regards to the family, neighbor, and heterosexual relationship. As for sarang, Kim argues since 18\textsuperscript{th} century it was exclusively used to point to the love between men and women, rather than its previously mixed use of ‘to think’ and ‘to ponder.’\textsuperscript{9} Some points out that Christian missionary’s writings used the word \textit{sarang} to describe God’s love in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century which added English meanings of love to sarang. By the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, sarang became equivalent of ‘love’ in English. On the other hand, since the popularization of Swedish feminist writer Ellen Kay’s books in the mid 1910s in Japan, the English word ‘love’ was translated into ‘yŏnae’ rather than ‘sarang.’\textsuperscript{10} The Sino-script based languages traditionally use the word ‘yŏn’ to illustrate the passion between man and woman, but the new word “yŏnae” described the heterosexual relations as a western and modern practice. However, yŏnae as the romantic love of a heterosexual couple is different from previous profess of affect in ‘sarang hada’ and ‘chŏng,’ in highlighting the social relations and action attached to the affect. Thus translation of ‘love’ from English and western practice of love influenced outcome of the term yŏnae.


\textsuperscript{9} “Sarang hada” (to love) and “saenggak hada” (to think or to ponder) both derives from hanja, 思.

\textsuperscript{10} Kwon Bodurae, “Yŏnae ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwa toksŏ,” p 111. Ellen Kay’s books, such as \textit{Love and Marriage} and \textit{Love and Ethics} were translated in Japanese and were widely popular in Japan, Korea, and China.
Despite its recent emergence, by the late 1910s and early 1920s, yŏnae further gained popularity in the literary world. Yi Kwang-su’s novel Mujŏn (無情 Heartless) (1917) is one of the key texts that, due to its unprecedented popularity, disseminated the concept of yŏnae. In 1926, writer Kim Ki-jin informed “yŏnae has come into use very recently,” and added that it was a shortened form of “chayu yŏnae” (free love). So in the 1920s, yŏnae is not only the practice of romantic love, but it was understood as romantic love by one’s decision (choice). “Chayu,” which means “free,” was a concept that described the younger generation’s attempt in family institutions to make their own choice of marital partner, while resisting the arrangements made by the family. The idea of chayu freedom directs to the subject’s choice, as the symbol of modernity and enlightenment, a possibility of constituting one’s family based on romantic feelings, rather than family’s social status. This yŏnae practice of romantic love prior to marriage was possible in new bourgeois families and developed in tandem with Westernization. The class which was able to take yŏnae is reflected in the literature: the literature portraying romantic love was mostly centered on new intellectuals and students studying in metropolitan cities in Korea, Japan, or the United States. In other words, romantic love was more about performativity in modern world, symbolized in “freedom of choice” and overcoming the past.

In the 1930s, the popularity of romantic love increased in literature and print media. By this time, romantic love has become a prerequisite for any modern marriage, including intermarriage that I discuss here. Discussion of romantic love, then, becomes

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a discourse of marriage itself, home life after the wedding became part of yŏnae discourse. Print culture portrayals of international marriage sought different formations of home-life, more Western and “modern” than the experience of the vast majority of couples and families. The sweet home discourse confirmed that the normative family structure was a nuclear family based on a heterosexual, conjugal bond and that it ought to support the idealized modern society and the state. It also described the home space as one requiring an appropriate physical structure that can foster modern family relationships. In other words, a modern building structure was deemed suited for accommodating a couple performing the new gender roles – a patriarch devoted to wife and children and a figure of wise mother and good wife.

**International Marriage**

*Yŏsŏng Magazine*

I chose Yŏsŏng for the analysis of “international marriage” here for several reasons. Yŏsŏng was the only magazine that featured serialized reports “international” married couples’s home visits. While kukche marriage Headlined other newspapers and magazines, Yŏsŏng was heavily devoted in delineating home life of international marriage after their marriage. Yŏsŏng was the only Korean women’s magazine published at the time of naesŏn ilch’e, the official colonial policy which heavily influenced the understanding of intermarriage in Korea. Second, as a women’s
magazine, *Yŏsŏng* devoted itself to building an imaginary of middle class/bourgeois
domesticity, targeting young adults (high school girls) and married women.\(^{12}\)

*Yŏsŏng* was published from April of 1936 to December of 1940. It was
published by *Chosŏn ilbo*, one of the major newspapers during the colonial era.\(^{13}\)
During its 5-year run, the magazine published 57 issues, each about one hundred pages
long with color inserts.\(^{14}\) *Yŏsŏng* followed the tradition of earlier women’s magazines
published by general magazine publishers. The practice of having a woman’s magazine
as a major publishers’ sub-publication enabled established journalists and writers to run
the magazine. The most notable women’s magazines, *Sinyŏsŏng* was published from
1923-1926 and 1931-1934 by *Kaepyŏk* magazine, while *Sin’gajŏng* was published from
January 1933 to September 1936 by *Tonga ilbo*.

*Yŏsŏng* maintained stable publishing because of the financial stability of a
mainstream media *Chosŏn ilbo*. *Chosŏn ilbo* also published *Chogwang*,\(^{15}\) a general
magazine, and *Sonyŏn*,\(^{16}\) a children’s magazine. These three magazines constructed a
family relationship for its readership with specialized magazines targeting heterosexual
nuclear family: father reading *Chogwang*, mother reading *Yŏsŏng*, and the son *Sonyŏn*.
Because *Yŏsŏng* was related to *Chogwang* and its rich resource of contributing writers,

\(^{12}\) *Yŏsŏng* often featured special reports on women’s schools, short interviews on celebrity
status bachelors, newly weds, and renowned writers’ essays on romantic love, marriage, and
childrearing, among others.

\(^{13}\) *Chosŏn ilbo*, 1920-1940, 1945- present. The magazine ceased its publication shortly after
*Chosŏn ilbo* was shut down in August of 1940.

\(^{14}\) Issues in 1936 are under 60 pages. The current archive holding misses seven issues.

\(^{15}\) 1935.11-1944.8.

\(^{16}\) 1937.4-1940.12.
Yŏsŏng carried articles, columns, essays and serialized fiction from renowned authors of the time. From the content, we can see that Yŏsŏng serialized more fiction than previous women’s magazines, presenting itself as more of a literary magazine than other women’s magazines. 

Although imagined readership for Yŏsŏng can be speculated to be female, the targeting age and class appear to be rather broad. Rather than framing the readership as housewife such shown in Kajŏng, it showed heightened interest in courtship and marriage, New Woman debates, and domestic life. Marriage was one of the keen interests of the magazine, and from the beginning, Yŏsŏng showed a clear interest in the stories of famous people’s marriages, in terms of how the couple entered the marriage and how their married lives were different from those of the commoners. The introduction to new domestic styles also came via descriptions of ‘western’ style homes that were contrasted to traditionally Korean ones. This new model was presented as more desirable and modernized, as if this was the trend for the future. By presenting ‘western’ and ‘modern’ cultural practice, it supported and encouraged a particular type of women’s life that was different from the ones that were common at the time. Stories about cultural elites might have been surreal and unattainable for many readers; but their stories surely offered new models of modern domesticity that the readers could fancy, observe, and aspire to.

Home Visits Genre

The magazine features stories about cultural elites – writers, artists, educational and religious leaders with cultural capital, often educated in western style schools if not
abroad – and their domesticity. Often times their stories were approached as “marriage story,” inquiring after how they were married, or what kind of marriage do they want to have in the future for singles. In the December 1936 (1:9) issue, “Stories of Prominent People’s Marriage” (myǒngsadūl ū kyŏrhon iyagi) profiles writers Yun Chi-ho and Cho To’ng-sik and Olympic medalist Son Ki-jŏng and Nam Sŭng-yong. The article focuses on the marriage: how the husbands met their current spouse and what type of women they find are desirable for the Olympic athletes.

Following this issue the magazine began to feature “Report on Peaceful Home” (kajŏng’aep’yŏnggi), a monthly interviews of cultural elites.17 The June 1937 issue (2:6) features the ninth installment of “Stories of Prominent People’s Marriage,” and introduces the term, “sweet home,” in the subheading for the first time.18 The next issue of the “Peaceful Home” series (July 1937) does not refer to “sweet home” at all, but the title includes “p’ŏnghwaw” (peace).

Every 1937 Yŏsŏng issue included “Report on Peaceful Home” series which highlighted a domesticity perceived as different from that of the “traditional” Korean home. Although the term ‘sweet home’ was introduced in 2:6 issue, ‘peaceful home’

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17 1936 October (1:7) pp 4-5, seems to be the first appearance of the series, but it says “2” at the end of the title, indicating this is the second installment of the series. 1936 November and 1937 March issues are missing in the archive. 1937 January (2:1), Feb (2:2), April (2:4) May (2:5)—8th installment, June (2:6)—9th installment, “The sweet home of Pak Chun-sŏp and Song Kŭm-sŏn” July (2:7)—10th, August (2:8)—11th, and September (2:9)—again it numbers 11th installment.

18 “Pak Chun-sŏp, Song Kŭm-sŏn ssi ūi sūwit hom – kyŏrhon ūn yŏnae wa tarŭdako malsŭmhasyŏssŏpniwa” (The sweet home of Pak Chun-sŏp and Song Kŭm-sŏn: [they] said marriage and yŏnae are different)
was equated as sweet home in the series. For example, in August 1937 issue, sculptor Kim Pok-chin’s home is introduced with a photograph of the couple in his home studio. The family lives in a “cream color western house” which is also called “culture house” (munhwa chut’ae).

The “Report on Peaceful Home” series consistently frames the domestic peace as a foundation for sweet home. The sweet home is also a space of western-style housing. In it, the marriage is often the product of free romance (chayu yŏnae). But the report on Pak Chung-sŏp and Song Kŭm-sŏn provocatively suggests the process of yŏnae does not necessarily results in marriage, defining yŏnae as different practice from courtship-marriage sequence.

The home visits genre developed out of the print culture’s fine balance between civilizing mission and sensationalism. It started from interviewing Korean cultural elites such as artists, writers, and other modern-figures who often appear in the public eyes. The articles consisted of a brief introduction of the couple, the behind stories about how they have met, their marital relationships and daily habits, as well as reports on their domestic space and housing. All of these features are exposed to the curious gaze of the reporter who attempts to find in these modern couple’s homes any trace of difference from what is considered common and mundane. Often times, this genre tries to sensationalize interviewees’ lives for entertainment value.

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19 In the remaining archive, this installment is 8th installment, there are several missing issues and dropped pages, but the magazine’s own numbering might not be accurate since it states “11” for the September issue (2:9) again.

20 Culture House (J: bunka jūtaku) became prominent key word since the exhibition of Culture Village (Bunka mura) in the 1922 Peace Memorial Exposition (Heiwa kinen hakurankai) held in Tokyo. It is not clear since when culture house became a popular neologism in Korea, but the word was used to call any type of Western houses to emphasize its modernized style. Later, it indicated any non-traditional housing. For the studies on the culture villages in Taisho Japan, see Jordan Sand, House and Home, especially Chapter 7 on Culture Villages.
The spatial observation is important in this genre to visualize what photographs cannot show. In Yŏsŏng’s case, photographs appear with the home visit articles are not taken during the interview, but taken in advance, or provided by the interviewees. Some interviews included photographs of the front façade of the house. The practice of visualizing the home space underscores the sense of difference, sensationalizing and exoticizing the sweet home.

Reading these Home Visits, there are clear limits of these types of writing. The home visit narration is always favorable to the couple and their home and does not go beyond what they tell the reporter. It is not an in-depth or investigative report. Even though the narrative is framed within the reporter’s interest, it rarely includes criticism. For example, in the case of Mr. Peters and Ms. Han, Yŏsŏng once featured an article by a contributing writer who criticized Ms. Han’s decision to marry a foreigner. [article title] But in the home visit interview published only a few month later did not mention that such a criticism existed. Although other articles and columns about the interviewees could be critical of the subjects, the main purpose of Home Visits seemed to be glorifying the couple. Within convention of Home Visits, international marriage is framed.

From late 1937, the magazine focuses on the international marriage for their home visits genre, introducing different as “sweet homes.” The November 1937 issue (2:11), for example, featured Kim and Putsūki in an article headlined “Pilgrimage to Sweet Homes” (Sŭwit’ŭ hom sunrye).  

21 Mr. Kim married Ms. Putsūki while studying in Germany and returned to Korea together. See the section on Kim and Putsūki in later this chapter.
In the following, I will explore several magazine articles featuring international marriage. In these articles, the concept of “sweet home” appears as pivotal in the representation of modern domestic space. Without offering any information about what constitutes “sweet home,” the articles conjure up the unspecified yet powerful imaginary of “sweet home” practiced by different couples. If the family is made of international marriage, the couples’ homes were always called “sweet home.” In the case of Korean homes, any trace of foreignness qualified as “sweet home.” In other words, “sweet home” was a loosely deployed category, one that was not always defined according to such moral features as the family love and respect, but more often by spatial structure of home or the concrete domestic practices that the couples would perform.

A close look at the following magazine articles also reveal that the media representations of international marriage are inflected by gender. In general, when a couple consists of a foreign woman and a Korean man, the woman is often celebrated for her commitment to assimilate to Korean household practices and for her devotion to settling in Korea. Nonetheless, maintaining a western-style housing – architectural and spatial arrangement – in Korea earns interest and prestige. In those cases where the husband is a foreigner and the wife is Korean, the reports are not always favorable to the latter.
International Marriage as Kukche Kajŏng (international home)

A. International Sweet Home in the City

After several reports of “sweet home” of Korean public figures, Yŏsŏng ran a special feature on international marriage couples in Seoul titled, “International Sweet Home in the City.” The title indicates couple of things: first, international marriage creates international home, showing that there is seamless continuity between marriage and home; second, sweet home discourse is inserted in the international marriage discourse, highlighting the desirable modern aspects of these international marriages.

This feature carries three “home visits” sections. The three couples are Kim Pil-su and Putsūki, Crowe and Kim Yŏn-sun, and Yu Il-han and Ho Mi-ri. My argument here is that all three shows desire of becoming modern through Western and cosmopolitan culture. In these international marriages, western identity is flexible and easily gained through Western practice, rather than having a fixed racial identity. Rather than having a fixed idea of what is “sweet home,” these writings are in the process of defining what can be constituted as a part of “sweet home.” As the result, they include irregularity of heterosexual nuclear family, such as polygamy or arranged marriage. In these cases, international marriage was strong enough to package the couple and family as “sweet home.” On the other hand, it was natural that these irregularities or cracks were part of seemingly happy domestic life of sweet homes. This might be related to the reason why this women’s magazine was interested in the domesticity of international marriage. It was introduced in the magazine to highlight the foreign and western culture which was

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believed to be a foreground to be modern subjectivity. I will discuss each cases of the feature article in the following section.

1) The case of “Kim Pil-su and Madame Putsūki”

The first section is about a Korean man named Kim Pil-su and his German wife Ms. Putsūki. They met in Germany during Mr. Kim’s studies, and the “Berlin woman” followed Mr. Kim to Korea, knowing that Kim had already been married and had six children back in Korea. Instead of divorcing the first wife, Kim lives in the same estate with both wives and his children from the first wife, in separate buildings. The second wife narrative was quite common at the time, particularly among yangban elites who were arranged in early marriage in their early teens and later traveled to big cities or abroad for their educations. The common narratives usually depicted these elites as meeting New Women or fellow female students while living in new cities, falling in love, and remarrying.

In this story of Kim and Putsūki, it is interesting that Kim neither divorced his first wife nor abandoned his children, but lived in the same family estate. But the home that Kim and Putsūki live is described to be a newly built “western” house, located in front of an older Korean-style house. The couple’s house is introduced as “sweet home” and described through the detailed portrayal of the ivy-covered fence around the house and the sounds of children playing piano that welcomes the approaching writer. The story introduces the greeting step when the reporter visited Kim family. The

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Madame Putsūki’s name is transcribed in hangūl, her Romanization is unclear in the article. I romanized her printed hangūl script here.
reporter met the Kim family in the “parlor” of their western house, and Mr. Kim directed his daughter to play the piano and sing for the guest. The contrast between two buildings within the gate shows how two styles of domesticity co-exist in Kim’s family life. Having two different styles, a Korean one for Kim’s first wife (kuyŏsŏng or traditional woman) and a western one for his second wife (sinyŏsŏng or new woman), appears to be logical for the Kim family. This is similar to the Nam Sang-ch’ŏl’s logic of maintaining two different styles of home in Nam Ch’ung-sŏ, where Sang-ch’ŏl explains that his Japanese wife deserves to live in Japanese style home rather than being integrated into Korean style home.24 In both cases of Nam Ch’ung-sŏ and Kim family, Korean-style housing is considered as inconvenient and inferior compared to Japanese or western style.

The picture in the magazine shows four children and the couple posing as a happy family, but the image belies what is in fact a polygamous family. The photo and the interview both exclude and ignore the first wife and the Korean-style house at the back of the property. The existence of first wife and two living styles are curiously hidden in the report, but emerge indirectly in Madame Putsŭki’s answers. When the reporter asks Madame Putsŭki “what is the worst thing in Korean home everyday life (kajŏn saenghwal),” she first hesitates by stating that everything has changed recently and nothing is intolerable any longer but still concludes that cleanliness of the kitchen is a problem. She then adds that customs of polygamy are troubling, and indicates the fact that she lives as a second wife only because of the “early marriage” arranged by the family. She points out that in Germany, marriage is decided by the couple’s “hearts”

24 See Chapter Two.
rather than fortune, status, or family. Although she criticizes the polygamy practice in general, she does not directly criticize her status or family in polygamous situation. Her reasoning for being a second wife is blamed on early marriage, in this case, an arrange marriage without love. Thus proving romantic love between Kim and Putsûki is important for the story to maintain the view on this family being “sweet home.” To conclude the article, the reporter reveals that Madame Putsûki is thirty-six years old and currently heavy with pregnancy, after a failed pregnancy a year ago. The report comments that at her age she is old enough to be “a grandmother,” suggesting the expecting mother’s desperation in creating and maintaining a picture perfect family. The report sutures sweet home to the love of Madame Putsûki as follows: “leaving her parents and siblings, only tending one person, she says she will be buried in Korea. That is a frightening love and passion; I looked at her again when I was leaving the house.” The reporter emphasizes passion amour of Ms. Putsûki but yet troubled by it. “Frightening love and passion” indicates the reporter’s portrayal of Ms. Putsûki’s blind love. Perhaps moving to Korea for her love and her attempt to have a first child in what is considered old and uncommon at the time are laid out as evidences. In terms of the “love without borders” plot, her story is similar to the case of Kim and Davis, yet it is not the most desirable case for a modern love. Instead, the article gives Ms. Putsûki opportunity to criticize polygamous marriage and offer her German experience in romantic love, marriage, and family system. To make this family a “sweet home,” the narrative conspicuously erases Kim Pil-su’s first wife and emphasizes the family’s western style housing. Like Kim and Davis story, Ms. Putsûki’s passion amour is established as the foundation of this family’s unconventional relationship.
2) The Case of “Mr. Crowe and Madame Kim Yŏn-sun”

This second home visit reports on a couple who had been married for twenty-five years. The couple met in P’yŏngando where Mr. Crowe has been working at a mine but currently has two homes in P’yŏngan and Kyŏngsŏng. The reporter only visited their Kyŏngsŏng home and interviewed the wife, Kim Yŏn-sun. Mr. Crowe stays in P’yŏngando for his business and the family resides in Kyŏngsŏng for the children’s school, and the whole family reunites in P’yŏngando only during the children’s school breaks. The separation of the family does not raise much curiosity from the reporter, but he/she does observe unconventional practices related to this Kyŏngsŏng home. For example, the reporter describes that there are two name plates on the front gate, one each for Mr. Crowe and Kim Yŏng-sun, rather than having one for the patriarch, which seems to be “peculiar.” Having the name of both husband and wife can be a sign of equality in marital relationship, which is sought after by writers of these home visits genre. But here, what is more apparent is Ms. Kim’s sole presence at their Kyŏngsŏng home might have required her name to be on the door as well. Thus Mr. Crowe’s name plate ironically hints his absence from the house.

In the absence of the foreigner in intermarriage, the home visit focuses on things unrelated to the couple. First, the home space is described in a way to highlight its non-Korean features. The photograph on the page shows that this Kyŏngsŏng home is a western-style building. The western style housing seems to be the norm in international marriage homes: a three-story red-brick house, lawn, the piano, chairs, and a fireplace.

25 Mr. Crowe’s name is Romanized in English on this report. It states “American Crowe” in the sub-heading, but in the interview, Ms. Kim informs that he is Canadian.
Second, the reporter asks about the spoken language at home between Ms. Kim and Mr. Crowe. To the reporter’s surprise, Ms. Kim she does not speak English because she never had formal school education and because of Mr. Crowe’s absence from home, she has never had a chance to learn English. Mr. Kim informs that Mr. Crowe speaks fluent Korean, a “mining dialect” spoken in the northern P’yŏngando. Despite the fact that they are international marriage couple and having a western style housing, the couple speaks perhaps “mining dialect” Korean at home. This spoken language issue was not raised in the earlier Kim and Putsŏki report, but must be raised as an issue because of the type of language – English-, and because the reporter was talking in Korean with Mr. Kim. Another point that this language issue shows is that Ms. Kim is not so called New Woman, but an uneducated housewife who was married by arrangement between her parents and Mr. Crowe. Thus this international marriage couple does not have stories of romantic love that often came with international marriage.

Third, the focus of this home visit goes to bi-racial children and their foreigner’s schools. Interestingly, the children are described to be undoubtedly foreign by the reporter rather than bi-racial or partly Korean. The blunt assertion of foreignness of the children adds to the fact that this home is different than other Korean homes. The first description of the children is their twenty two years old first son’s photograph hung above the fire place, stated as “western young man.” His absence, like his father, for his studies in the U.S. adds further foreignness to the son. The readers are lead to ignore that fact that this young man must had been born in Korea and only spoke Korean until he learned English in the Foreigner’s School in Chŏngdong. Same is the case for the
youngest daughter Lucy. The reporter describes her as “doll-like” girl, implying western style beauty in her. To the reporter’s surprise, she only speaks Korean. This moment of surprise, again, reveals the assumption of the reporter, that these biracial children are western and foreign, strangers in Korea due to their biological lineage.

3) The Case of “Yu Il-han and Ho Mi-ri”

The last home visit of this issue carries rather different voice from the two previous sections. In contrast to Kim-Crowe marriage the article introduces the story of Yu Il-han and Ho Mi-ri as one that has a “home with considerable romance.”26 Yu Il-han is a renowned businessman who runs Yuhanyanghaeng, but his fame comes from his prior success in the bean sprout business in the U.S.27 Yu met his wife, a Kwangdong-born (C: Guangdong) Chinese American, also in the U.S. while he was studying in Michigan. The article reports that the couple met in middle-school and continued “yōnae” for fourteen years before getting married. Ms. Ho speaks Chinese at home but the reporter mentions that she is fluent in English. This interview also features a picture of western-style house and includes such details as the white bricks of the building, the front yard covered with green grass, a “blue-eyed” German Shepherd in the yard, and a male “cook”28 in the house (as opposed to more traditional women domestic workers). The reporter asks if the couple enjoys “sightseeing” or “excursions.” Yu answers that they go out for “picnic” quite often. These are new

26 Ho Mi-ri is Korean reading of her Chinese name.
27 Yuhanyanghaeng, or Yuhan Corporate, still operates in South Korea in pharmaceutical and home-related products.
28 “k’uk” is a direct transcription of the English word “cook.”
ways of leisure that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, activities associated with the West, practiced by modern boys and modern girls. The reporter tries to evoke Western qualities of this couple by analyzing the couple’s everyday practice. As for Ms. Ho, her Chineseness is differentiated from popular representation of China. Her career, romantic love, and domesticity are named as the international “sweet home.” Here, China is not part of an international, but a particular representation of China – a cosmopolitan Chineseness – accepted as international. This is possible because the magazine only explores domesticity – home and family – of intermarried couples. In both cases of Ms. Putsūki and Ms. Ho in which wives are the foreigners marrying Korean men, they are praised for settling in Korea, particularly for legally registering into the Yu family. Compared to naesŏn marriage, the international couples are praised for settling in Korea and being embraced by their Korean family. In naesŏn marriage, it is expected that Japanese way of living takes over Korean style. In international marriage cases, domestic space is portrayed as “western” and automatically considered “sweet home.”

B. The Case of Mr. Peters and Han Hŭng-pok

The story of Mr. Peters and Han Hŭng-pok was reported several times in 1938 by Yŏsŏng magazine. While other international marriage couples were reported in other print media before they were featured in Yŏsŏng, the Peters and Han couple was its own discovery. Yŏsŏng not only reported on any and all international marriage stories, but also actively searched for unreported intermarriages that fit for its editorial direction. However, this couple’s story had some unfavorable narratives unlike other
couples. One month after the first feature of the couple, “Kukkyŏng ŭl nŏmnŭn kyŏrhon: sinp’an” (Marriage crossing the border: new version)\(^29\), the magazine ran an editorial column written by Pak In-ho – a female writer – in its February issue. In this editorial, Pak criticized the recent trend of glamorizing “international romance” including Yŏsŏng’s own article about Peters and Han. Pak shockingly reveals that Han’s mother was opposed to the marriage so vehemently that she committed suicide in rage. Pak does not explain any detail about what made Han’s mother angry, but it is assumed that marrying a foreigner had caused her opposition. This odd claim, however, is contained in this one particular editorial, and such criticism does not appear anywhere else in the magazine. Even after Pak’s editorial, Yŏsŏng ran another lengthy feature on Peters and Han a few months later.

The first article on Peters and Han, titled “Marriage crossing the border: new version,” reports on “international romance” (kukchejŏk romance) of a soon-to-be-married couple. This article focuses on their pre-marital stage and wedding plans. Interestingly, it also provides a space for Ms. Han and her reasons for marrying Mr. Peters: “love” and nothing else. Similar to other international marriage interviews, true love is highlighted as the sole reason for intermarriage. Another interesting characteristic about Mr. Peters is that he is a “Koreanized” missionary, famous among his peers for his unconventional approach to his work: he dresses in Korean traditional clothes and rubber shoes, discarding his “American style” life, and living among his pastoral communities. The accompanying photo of the couple in the article shows two people in traditional Korean dress. Han says theirs will be a traditional Korean wedding.

\(^{29}\) Yŏsŏng (1938.1): 80-82.
because Peters loves “Korean ancient aesthetics.” These displays of Koreanification of foreign male and further, Koreanification of the couple is unusual compared to other international home visits reports. While other reports mostly focus on the westernization of the couples and their homes, this report highlights the foreign male’s Koreanification and his love of local culture. In the case of foreign females, their effort on localization is mostly to adopt family habits and values, rather than cultural transformation. In other words, these women’s western values are kept and praise while they adopt Korean domesticity. But in the Peters’ case, his Koreanification is the center of these interviews.

The second article about the couple follows the home visits genre convention and explores the newlyweds’ home in Kangwŏndo Kŭmhwa to follow up on their marriage. This second interview is a friendly one and provides details about their life in the country. While the first report focuses primarily on an interview with Ms. Han, the second report mostly recounts Peters’ story about the romantic love between them. The seven-page spread includes transcripts and photocopies of Peters’ love letters to Han written in Korean which were mentioned in the first magazine story. This home visit interview continues to highlight both the romantic love of Peters and Han and the Koreanification of Mr. Peters. Peters’ proficiency in the Korean language is presented as a rare skill for a foreigner, but his display of intimate affection to Ms. Han also makes this couple different from other Korean couples. In a way, Mr. Peters portrayed

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30 “Malsŏng mandun kukje kyŏr hon ŭi huildam” (The story behind a troubled international marriage), Yŏsŏng (1938.5): 42-48.

31 This report is written by reporter R, which seems to be No Cha-yŏng (1901-1940). No Cha-yŏng is poetess and journalist, one of the founding members of journal Paekcho.
as fully assimilated to Korean culture, but at the same time, he is defamiliarized by heavy emphasis on the Western style romantic love.\textsuperscript{32} This is the contradiction of narrative around this couple.

\textit{C. The Case of Kim ju-hang and Miss Davis}

While Peters and Han became new celebrities through the \textit{Yŏsŏng} coverage, the romance between Mr. Kim Chu-hang and Mrs. Davis had already been well reported in several different venues since their return from the U.S. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed representations of Kim and Davis in \textit{Tonga ilbo} as an example of popular discourse of international marriage. \textit{Yŏsŏng}’s narrative on Kim and Davis follows the magazine’s other home visits genre convention, adding emphasis on the couple’s home as a “sweet home.”\textsuperscript{33} In the November 1938 issue, the reporter visits the home of Kim and Davis, producing a piece titled, “Home of Love is in Peace” (sarang ŭi kajŏng ŭn pyŏngghwa hada).\textsuperscript{34} This article focuses on the house that Kim built in the country. The interview is conducted in a room that functions both as a “parlor” and “library,” showing the distinct features of western-style house. The reporter tours the house and introduces readers to the various domestic details of the house – the layout of the kitchen, laundry room, a basement for storing food, and the bathroom. These features

\textsuperscript{32} One interesting comment about Mr. Peters comes from a neighbor who says that Peters “looks like a Korean when I see him from the back, I can’t really tell [if he is a westerner].” The reporters portrays that Peters is fully assimilated to the local community.

\textsuperscript{33} The writer of this report is bylined as “ilkija” (a reporter), unidentified. However it is likely to be No Cha-yŏng who has been writing about home interviews in previous issues.

\textsuperscript{34} The reporter is bylined as “ilkija” [anonymous reporter] but there are two reporters, the writer and reporter R, which is an initial for No Cha-yŏng.
are new to the Korean housing style at the time, different from the more traditional *hanok* style. Since their courtship and wedding stories have been well known to their readers through other media, the article focuses on the couple’s new life in the countryside as a follow-up story. It visualizes the house and domestic lifestyle in details since the building is designed and built by Kim himself, and explains that these types of ‘western’ style are uncommon in the rural area. The survey of Kim and Davis home exoticizes the couple’s home as unusual taste in the countryside, so that their presence in the country is news worthy. But the same time, it shows that Kim and Davis are making a peaceful “sweet home” in the country, away from scandals and sensationalisms in the city.

**Othering Foreign Domesticity**

Thus far, I discussed the discourses on international marriage – marriage between Koreans and non-Japanese foreigners. Theses marriages were limited to the homes within Korea. But from 1939 issues, *Yŏsŏng* shows broader interest in international homes and foreign domesticity similar to the discourse on international marriage. In the January 1939 issue of *Yŏsŏng*, there are several articles discussing “oeguk” or the foreign country, based on the writers’ and round table participants’ experiences on foreign domestic lives. One article, “Round table discussion on everyday life of foreign universities” (oeguk taehak saenghwal chwadamhoe), features nine participants and four reporters from the magazine.\(^{35}\) The participants are all men,

\(^{35}\) *Yŏsŏng* (4:1), pp 32-36. There is a large photograph of the participants in office-like setting, people sitting in couches and coffee cups on the tables.
although the photograph included in this article shows some women sitting on a sofa. The opening remarks indicate that the roundtable is meant to inform “women readers” about college life in a foreign country, including how “enriching,” “developed,” and “progressed” its lifestyle can be. Participants previously studied in the U.S., England, France, Germany, and China. Their discussion includes reflection on the school systems, the participants’ experience in making a living while studying, the cost of living, “foreign women’s temperament” (kijil) and lastly, the commencement ceremony. The foreign women described in this article are empowering, as participants uses words such as “knowledgeable,” “active,” “physical,” “leading,” and “bold” to describe them. The constructed image of foreign women by Korean male intellectuals are presented as reliable and factual since the participants experienced foreign female students during their studies in abroad. These gendered stereotypes continue to overshadow in other articles, such as “Foreign Women whom I Met” (naega mannabon oeguk yōja). Active,” “free,” and “audacious” are typical descriptors in this piece.

Illustrated in these articles is the civilizing discourse targeting female readership. On the one hand, they emphasize that the foreign, mostly western, women are empowered and active in their academic and domestic lives. These characteristics are presented as good qualities that Korean women should aspire to. On the other hand, they are exoticized and pictured as “foreign,” easily dismissed for its incommensurability with Korean tradition. However, the following article in the same issue shows foreignness that exists in Korea.

36 Munchŏn kija (reporter Munchŏng), “Naega mannabon oeguk yōja” (Foreign women whom I met), Yŏsŏng (4:1), pp 46-51. This article features five male elites who encountered women in Germany, the U.S., England, Italy, and France.
“Oegugin kajŏng ūn ŏttŏhan’ga?” (How is a Foreigner’s Home?), an article that features two sections, “View of a Chinese Home” and “View of an American Home.” They visit foreigners residing in Seoul and reports on the home life and their culture. The magazine article follows the “home visits” genre convention: the reporter visits the home of famous cultural elite figures and sketches out the difference from common domestic spaces of the time. In these interviews, recurring theme is the materiality of the home space, such as the garden, western housing, and western furniture that occupies the space. “View of a Chinese Home” reports a visit to the home of a Chinese consular officer. The wife, Pumwang kyejŏng (Korean reading of her Chinese name), gives the house tour and answers questions regarding Chinese family and home customs. Although the foreign home in this report is Chinese, the reporter attempts to frame it in a Western-style perspective. The consul’s home is described as Western style housing, and the interviewee, the consul’s wife, is repeatedly associated with The Good Earth. The reporter states, “I associated her with Pearl Buck’s female protagonist O-lan in The Good Earth.” The reporter sometimes prefaces questions with “according to Pearl Buck’s The Good Earth” and mentions the movie version of the novel to Pumwang kyejŏng. This fixation delivers several layers of meaning. First, the statement might simply show the reporter’s knowledge of The Good Earth (both the novel (1931) and movie (1937)), which had been already introduced in Korea at that time. These cultural texts, however, offer a view from an American writer and the reconstructed notion of China. Describing the consul’s wife as a character of Pearl Buck, therefore, detaches

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37 Ilkija (anonymous), “Oegugin kajŏng ūn ŏttŏhan’ga” (How is Foreigner’s Home?) Yŏsŏng (4:1), pp 64-70.
China from Asia and put it instead in the realm of exotic others. Like the roundtable, Chinese home is described to be ‘westernized.’ China is no longer the “China” that has continually defined itself from the pre-modern era as the center of Asia, but instead is a new exotic other placed in-between “tradition” and the “modern,” like in the case of Ms. Ho Mi-ri. This reflects the diverse images of China at the time.\(^{38}\)

On the other hand, “View of an American Home” visits a home of American dentist, Dr. Pputsū (John Boots) at Severance Hospital in Seoul.\(^{39}\) The picture on the first page of the article shows a western-style living room with a western-looking family, sitting in front of a fireplace. The second page of the article reveals that the opening image was not of the family, as it features a photograph of the actual Boots family, all posing in traditional Korean style garments. The contrast between the replica of a supposedly “American home” with a stand-in family and the actual photo of the Boots family – in Koreanized attire – in next page helps us understand the editorial intentions of the magazine. While the family does not appear to be ‘authentic American’ in their Korean dress, the article constantly searches for the trace of “western” home.

This article has a similar format to the review of the Chinese home. It starts with a description of the house, followed by the reporter’s interview. The questions are not identical to those of the aforementioned article, but they share a similar focus and interest. The questions are based on the assumption of bourgeois family life. For instance, the reporters ask if the wife works in the kitchen, whether she is dependent on

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\(^{38}\) Also see Chapter Four for discussion on Russian culture in Manchuria.

\(^{39}\) John Boots’s English Romanization does not appear in the article. From the description, it matches with Severance Hospital’s dentist of this name.
domestic help, who oversees home economics, about children’s education, wife’s career after marriage, and about appropriate marrying ages.

**Conclusion**

The goal of the home visits interviews in newspapers and magazines was to introduce to readers what was understood as ‘western’ as a desirable modern feature of domesticity. As we have seen, the “sweet homes” of international marriage did not necessarily generate a uniform image. Rather, “sweet home” was a symbolic categorization of a home space that had a hint of westernization. Different from naesŏn marriage, international marriage, in so far as it was marked as “western,” automatically gained the status of “sweet home.” When naesŏn marriage had to be seriously scrutinized for its race, domestic rituals, and proper citizenship, international marriage was celebrated for its western taste, romantic love, and freedom of choice. However, the notable difference of international marriage and international home is that the foreigners in Korea are often willing to adopt Korean customs without much struggle. Koreanification of spouse was not considered as requirement of intermarriage, but rather portrayed as usual circumstances that drew reporters’ curiosity. Also different from naesŏn marriage, international marriage’s “sweet home” was presumably unaffected by the on-going war or the political complication under colonization, at least in the realm of popular print media representations. In the following chapter, I will discuss writer Yi Hyo-sŏk’s different perceptions of international marriage and naesŏn marriage in his fictional writings.
Chapter 4

Constructing Race and Gender: Yi Hyo-sŏk and Otherness

I wouldn’t have a Chosŏn woman, even if anybody offered me one for nothing. The old-fashioned women, they are modest but ignorant, so they can’t help me make friends with Japanese people. And the New Women, they wouldn’t do either, because they may not be ignorant, but they are conceited. So, old-fashioned or new, I wouldn’t have anything to do with Chosŏn women. Japanese women are the best. Every one of them is pretty, proper, tender, and even the ones that aren’t ignorant are modest. How lovely they are!

- Ch’ae Man-sik, “My Idiot Uncle” (1938)

Introduction

1.

In the earlier chapters, I have examined the policy, opinion pieces, and literature discussing naesŏn ilch’e which not only promoted a way of imperial subjectification (kōminka) but also demonstrated how the assimilating Koreans can become “Japanese.” On the policy level, it was mostly Koreans who were made to follow the guidelines of the Government General of Korea (hereafter, GGK) in becoming loyal imperial subjects. The conventional understanding of Japanese assimilation policy was to improve the colonized races (e.g. Koreans and Taiwanese) to the level of the

1 Chae Man-shik (Ch’ae Man-sik), “My Idiot Uncle,” The Rainy Spell and Other Korean Stories, trans, Suh Ji-moon (London: Onyx Press, 1983), p 60, with my revision on some translations. “My Idiot Uncle” is narrated from a young nephew’s point of view. The young man criticizes his uncle, who is incapable of holding a steady job after his college education and imprisonment for political activism. The sarcasm toward his uncle is read to be ironic throughout the story. Thus, the comment cited above about Korean and Japanese women is also ironic. Still, it reveals the racial composition of Japanese women in Korean literature. Japanese women are portrayed as ‘ideal’ and an alternative femininity to that of Korean women.

2 See Chapter One for discussion on the difference between dōka and kōminka and the influence of naesŏn ilch’e on naesŏn kyŏrhon program.
colonizer race (i.e. Japanese). As I mentioned earlier, however, some Korean writers presented the opposite course of assimilation, namely, that of non-Korean “others” becoming Korean. In the realm of fictions in which the fantasy of writers was manifested, assimilation worked in multiple directions and promoted by both the colonizer and colonized. In this chapter, I will continue this investigation by focusing on the post-1937 writings of the writer Yi Hyo-sŏk (1907-1942).

One of the reasons why I focus on Yi Hyo-sŏk is because he was exceptional at the time in that he explored the realm of both “international marriage” (국際結婚, K: *kukche kyŏrhon*, J: *kokusai kekkon*) and “Japanese and Korean marriage” (內鮮結婚, K: *naesŏn kyŏrhon*, J: *naisen kekkon*) in his fiction. Another reason is simply chronological: Yi’s intermarriage and romance fictions fall in the post-1937 era (Sino-Japanese War) when colonial management took a more draconian approach to Korean assimilation under the influence of the Japanese Empire’s Total War effort and expansionism. The writings of Yi discussed here bear the footprint of imperial expansion and intermarriage promoted in that context. It should be noted that at the time of his writing, colonial/imperial power had already begun to impact the lives of colonized subjects through various regulations which sought to rearrange the boundaries of public and private space. For example, the state had initially regulated the language (Japanese) allowed in the public space, and later strongly campaigned to speak Japanese.

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3 Among Yi’s writings, there are four fictions that feature significant Japanese female characters. “Silver Trout” (ŭnipit songŏ), “Spring Dress,” “A Story of Wild Thistle,” and The Blue Tower. The latter two address intermarriage. Other stories, such as “Harbin” and The Endless Blue Sky feature Russian female characters courted by Korean protagonists, but only the latter one presents intermarriage.
in the domestic space as well. Various family laws under the state regulations also
constrained communal practices. The laws had begun to be instituted as early as in the
1920s, but they became more rigorously enforced during the late colonial period. The
birth and death of all family members had to be reported to the state, as well as the
marriage status and residency of each member. Separate from the wedding ceremony,
which granted a couple communal approval of their marriage based on social consensus,
Korean subjects now had to register their marriage with state authorities for recognition.
These regulations were important because they instilled the awareness among the
colonized that the state’s controlling power over individuals extended even into the
realm of familiar matters.4

The reach of institutional power into private space is a significant sign of state-
modernity; it implies that sentiments and emotions of the individual are under the
management of the state. And for the very reason that sentiments govern individual
desires and fantasies, the metaphors of familiarity and sexual relations had to be an
integral part of the discourse of colonial management. In colonial Korea, any form of
institutional power was a colonial exercise. The perception of penetrating state power
into everyday life appears to have been extensively shared among the colonized

4 Korean scholars Kim Chin-gyun and Chŏng Kŭn-sik propose that the modern subjectivity in
Korea should be understood to have emerged from colonial disciplinary power in the discursive
fields of family, school, factory, hospital, and social welfare. The premise of their study is the
Foucauldian notion of discipline that the individuals practice the production of discipline in
everyday life, willingly or unwillingly, and through the practice, individuals’ subjectivities are
constructed. See Kim Chin-gyun and Chŏng Kŭn-sik, “Singminji ch’êje wa kündaejŏk kyuyul
kwŏllyŏk,” Kündae chuch’e wa singminji kyuyul kwŏllyŏk, ed. Kim Chin-gyun and Chŏng
I analyze Yi Hyo-sŏk’s literary works in order to explore the reaction of Korean intellectuals to such colonial regimen. I argue that, because of their conflicted consciousness as modern subjects, the intention of writers and colonized intellectuals such as Yi were not as unequivocal as the GGK’s straight-forward policies. These writers demonstrate how literature offered a field of negotiation whereby the top-down institutionalization could be manipulated and even transmuted in the colonial subjects’ own understandings of imperialism, race, and gender.

It should be noted that it is not my wish to categorize individual stories as fictions that either exclusively support or oppose naesŏn marriage; the goal of this chapter is not to determine whether the naesŏn literature was in agreement or disagreement with the colonial ideology. Rather, I argue that the making of modern subjectivity required complex processes of negotiation, self-assertion and rearticulation that defy any reductive form of labeling.

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5 In colonial Korean literature from the 1930s, modernism and sasosŏl (私, 小說, I-novel) genres, writing delving into private spheres and interior landscape of everyday life emerged as a popular style. This movement toward inner-self and private space is closely related to the repressive mode of colonialism. See Janet Poole (2004), pp. 10-11, and Christopher Hanscom (2006). One of the contributing factors to this phenomenon is the final dissolution of KAPF (Korea Artista Proletaria Federacio) on May 21, 1935. Janet Poole explains, “[i]t is illogical to assume that the KAPF writers all converted to modernist style or another after their ‘conversion’ [(K: chŏnhyang, J: tenkō)], but the disappearance of any social consciousness thoughts and emergence of introvert exploration in literature shows the transitional stage in the literary circle rather clearly. Portraying inner-self and private space at least avoided risking charges of being anti-imperial at the peak of the Asian-Pacific War.” Some writers who used a modernist style dealing with private space include Yi Sang, Pak T’ae-wŏn, Yi T’ae-jun, and Kim Tong-in. For the significance of KAPF in Korean literature, see Kim Yoon-shik, “KAPF Literature in Modern Korean Literary History,” positions 14:2 (2006): 405-425; and Han’guk kŭndae munye pip’yŏngsa yŏngu [A Study of Modern Korean Literary Criticism] (Seoul: Hanŏl Mun’go, 1973).

6 I discuss etymology on naesŏn kyŏrhon in Chapter One.
2.

One of the ideas that I want to stress is that even though intermarriage was part of the colonial naesŏn ilch’e policy, marriage had its own genealogy and practice that exhibited traits different from other imperial assimilation policies. While the meaning of naesŏn ilch’e was ambiguous for both Koreans and Japanese, the idea of naesŏn marriage was tangible and accessible for a broad range of people. This idea of Koreans and Japanese “living under the same roof” provided a readily legible picture of assimilation. Through the metaphor of family and sexual relations naesŏn marriage could crystallize the concept of Koreans and Japanese melding together.

Turning to the broader imperial history of management of familiar relationships, Ann Stoler shows in her study of Southeast Asia’s experience of European colonialism that formation of family and marriage was one of the most elaborated and controlled colonial projects.7 This study also follows what Stoler proposes to be the premises of her research; she puts, “matters of the intimate are critical sites for the consolidation of colonial power,” and the “management of the domains provides a strong pulse of how relations of empire are exercised, and that affairs of the intimate are strategic for empire-driven states.”8

Concept of “colonial intimacy” therefore does not simply represent the romantic and sexual relations, domesticity, and familiarity between the colonizer and colonized;

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rather, it is an analytic through which one can observe the colonial administration’s strategic efforts to manage the intimate sentiments of interracial relations. By teasing out “colonial intimacy” in the study of colonialism and imperialism, we can reframe the material relationship between the empire and its colonized land as one that was constructed by emotional relationships – that is, relationships of affects and intimate sentiments – between the colonizer and colonized. As Stoler demonstrates, European empires had keen interest in managing and controlling the familial and conjugal relationships of their subjects and took this matter seriously, precisely because it involved miscegenation and producing métissage between, for example, white (Europeans) and non-white (natives). The consequences of marriage and miscegenation provoked the European empires to regulate the boundary of their citizens (or who could be “European”), and forced it to explicitly articulate the prerequisites for becoming European. This is where Stoler’s perspective can be useful in conceptualizing naesŏn kyŏrhon; it allows us to draw attention to the racial and sexual politics of the empire and how it changed the boundaries of race, gender, and class. The observation of colonial intimacy allows us to critically examine the workings of colonialism at the everyday level and to understand the ways in which colonial subjects were affected by the imperial power that constructed and regulated the boundaries of family and marriage.

The GGK’s promotion of intermarriage, however, created a different meaning of “colonial intimacy” than one deployed in the context of Western European colonialism. Both colonial authorities – European and Japanese Empires – had strong interests in managing intimacy between the colonizer and colonized. But the Japanese Empire promoted intermarriage at the peak of its expansion; this was the very opposite of the
European strategy. Using colonial intimacy as an overarching framework but at the same time shifting our attention to tracing the colonized subjects’ sentiments, this chapter explores a perspective different from one that has been offered by Ann Stoler’s study. I will focus, for example, on the concept of modern love and courtship that heterosexual unions coveted and the celebration of spontaneous sentiments, freedom, and individuality in such relationship. Studying naesŏn kyŏrhon on the levels of colonial discourses on the one hand and Korean intellectuals’ responses on the other will allow me to analyze both the colonial management of colonial intimacy and colonized subject’s use of that intimacy for his/her own purposes. Colonial intimacy was important for the empire but also equally crucial for its colonized subjects. The modern Korean literature of this period shows how colonial intellectuals creatively countered the colonial management of the intimate sentiments.

**Yi Hyo-sŏk and Exterior**

*Novelistic Landscape*

In exploring the representation of Korean-Japanese marriage in Yi Hyo-sŏk’s works, we find international marriage as a theme that unites Yi’s interests in the space of Manchuria, particularly Harbin and the presence of Russian culture there. Located at the northern exterior of Korea, China and Manchuria was visited by Koreans long before the colonial tourism became popular. But in modern Korean literature, the region existed as an abstract land to which uprooted people could escape, elope, and
After the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo (1932-1945), and soon after a more rigorous launch of the ideology of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, Korean literary representations began to lean toward civilizing discourses of development. Many writers imagined this northern land in relation to the Japanese Empire.

Like many Japanese imperial metropolitan officials and writers, Yi Hyo-sŏk toured Manchukuo in 1939. While the vast majority of migrants to Manchuria came from Japan and Korea as poor agricultural farmers and peasants, it was common for Korean writers to write travel essays or short reports on their visits to the area. Taking trips to various parts of the empire and its adjacent territories to write travel essays and diaries of their experiences was one way that writers provided service to the empire. In these writings, often the tone of the writing implied that the observers were in the position of colonizer rather than colonized. Undoubtedly, in his journey to the new frontier, Yi followed the civilizing discourse of imperialization (kŏminka).

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9 Some exceptions are KAPF literature that dealt with the migration of Korean peasants to the area.


11 According to his travel essay “The Shell of Continent,” Yi visited Harbin in 1939 for the first time. It seems his visit was arranged by the Kyŏngsŏng ilbo or some authority related to this newspaper since the trip was reported in the newspaper. In his autobiography, it is not clear how often Yi had visited Manchuria prior to this trip. In his short story “Hapibin” (Harbin) (1940), the narrator says he visits the city every year (“Hapibin” 109).

12 Yi T’ae-jun is another famous writer who toured Manchuria and published his travel essays in the Japanese language. See Janet Poole (2004). Previously, Japanese writers such as Natsume Soseki have published travelogues on their visits to the exterior (gaichi). For more on the connection between Natsume Soseki’s Kokoro and Man-Kang tokorodokoro, see James A Fujii.
hierarchy of colonial empire, by mimicking the colonizer’s position and gaze and by
distancing themselves from the barbaric uncivilized mass, colonial elites secured the
upper hand against the colonized subjects. The gaze of imperial conquerors also
guaranteed access to a new perspective with which the writers imagined their position
within the empire. Edward Said’s study on imperialism shows that “the idea of empire
as novelistic landscape” was available for use to novelists in outlying territories of the
empire in their imaginations. Said’s analysis demonstrates how the empire’s writers
had the benefit of extending their perspective and gaze as a result of the empire’s
territorial expansion. With this newly acquired territory, accessible even in its distance,
 novelists’ imaginations developed a new sense of topological boundary of the empire.
By sketching out the inner and outer territories, writers gave the empire an opportunity
to readjust its relationship between the center and peripheries. Without this novelistic
landscape, Korean writers would not have had the chance to become authoritative
subjects and take up the colonizer’s gaze to differentiate themselves from the abject
colonized subject.

The novelistic landscape of Yi Hyo-sŏk rewrites Manchuria as Manchukuo, the
new frontier for the Japanese imperial expansionism. In his early 1930s writing,
“Northern Country,” Manchuria and Russia are associated with Marxism and
revolutionary leftists. Russian culture, at this point, represents “Marxist exoticism” or

Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative (Berkeley: U of
California P, 1993) especially pp126-150 and “Writing Out Asia: Modernity, Cannon, and
Natsume Soseki’s Kokoro,” in Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia (Durham: Duke
is used as a means of romanticizing Marxist culture. However, later in the same decade, the northern country lost its Marxist color and turned into a marker of cosmopolitan diversity. By the 1930s, Harbin was known as “the Paris of the Orient” for its diverse population, which included Europeans and in particular a large number of Russian settlers. In Yi’s essay, “The Shell of the Continent,” Harbin is noted for its similarity to New York in terms of its size and the city’s cosmopolitan character. The cosmopolitanism in Yi’s writing is the key to analyzing intermarriage in The Endless Blue Sky and “A Story of Wild Thistle.” But this cosmopolitanism clearly derived from the Japanese Empire and its Greater East Asia Sphere ideology that claimed to be inclusive of all different territories and races. I will explain this point further in the following section.

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13 In his early writing career Yi is often labeled as a “fellow traveler” (tongban chakka), leaning to a leftist writing style, and in his early 1930s writing he often made reference to the northern country as a Marxist utopia. “The Northern Country,” “Pukguk Sasin” (A Private Epistle from the Northern Country) (1931), and “Pukguk Chŏnngueng” (Sketches from the Northern Country” (1931) feature male Koreans who have been Russified, such as “kkŏreai” (Koreans whose families had been in Russia for several generations and assimilated to Russian culture), as well as the terms “Rosia” and “AraSa” (an older name for Russia in Korean) and occasionally “Enggelsŏ gŏl” (Engels girl) or “Marūkūsū gŏl” (Marx girl). Jin-kyung Lee argues “Their fetishization of the Russian language, Russian culture and Russian Marxists and their work seems to transfigure these men’s ethnicity.” Lee also points out that Yi Hyo-sŏk’s “Ch’uŏk” (Remembrance) (1931) portrays “an intense romanticization of Marxism and Marxist ideas.” Here, Lee states “the ethnicist reception of universalist Marxism, on the one hand, reveals Marxism’s unintended and thus inevitable ethnicism/racialism. On the other hand, Marxism, grasped by the ethnicized, colonized intellectuals as an ideology of European origin and of the white race, functions as an agent that de-ethnicizes and whitens. Jin-kyung Lee, “Performatve Ethnicities: Culture and Class in 1930s Colonial Korea.”

14 While reasons for disappearance of Marxist thoughts in Yi’s writing is unclear, proletarian literature hardly survived in printed materials after series of crackdown of KAPF and its dissolution in 1935.
Discrimination and (D)alliance

To further explore this question of cosmopolitanism, I turn to Yi’s serialized novel *Pyŏkkong muhan* (碧空無限, The Endless Blue Sky).\(^{15}\) It is the only novel of Yi’s that fully explores Manchuria and Russian culture in the form of intermarriage. The central plot revolves around protagonist Ch’ŏn Il-ma’s trip to Harbin to commission a symphony orchestra for a concert in Seoul. In Harbin, Il-ma runs into trouble with a Korean actress who is obsessed with him. At the same time, he encounters an ex-girlfriend who is having marital problems. All seems to go well when he strikes some financial luck and returns to Seoul with a Russian wife. His fiascos with women continue in Seoul but everything settles down after a successful concert of the Russian orchestra of the South Manchurian Railroad Company.\(^{16}\)

It is worth considering why the novel *The Endless Blue Sky*, despite the setting and plot is largely located in Manchuria, does not feature any significant Han Chinese, Manchurian, Mongolian, or even Japanese characters. Rather than interacting with locals or the Japanese authorities, the main Korean character, Ch’ŏn Il-ma, wanders around the Russian part of Harbin, interacts with the Russian orchestra, falls in love

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\(^{15}\) It was published in *Maeil sinbo* from 25 January 1940 to 28 July 1940, in a total of 148 installments, all in the Korean language. When it was published as a full-length book in 1941, the title was changed to *Ch’anggong* (Blue Sky). In *Yi Hyo-sŏk chŏnjip*, the novel is reprinted under the originally serialized title.

\(^{16}\) “ch’oldo ch’ongkuk” (52) is the South Manchuria Railroad Company. Russian Railway was centered in Harbin but it was sold to Manchukuo in 1935. Thus the Symphony Orchestra was constituted of former Russian musicians who were now under the management of Manchukuo (and the Japanese Empire). The South Manchurian Railroad Company managed various companies in Manchuria, acting as a colonial agent of the Japanese government. See Kobayashi Hideo’s *Manch’ŏl* (Mantetsu).
with a Russian dancer, and helps her troubled Russian friends. Nominally, Il-ma is sent to Harbin to manage business with the Harbin Symphony Orchestra, but he spends only a minimal amount of time on this work and passing his stay instead by stringing along his love interests or exploring the city.

Russian culture, in Yi’s writing, is fairly accessible even to Korean visitors, with seldom a language barrier or any difficulty in enjoying local Russian culture. Surprisingly, instead of Koreans changing or adapting to Russian culture, Russian characters are willing and ready to adapt to Korean culture. An extreme case of an adapting character would be Naaja, Ch’ŏn Il-ma’s Russian bride.17 Since the time she was in Harbin, she has shown her eagerness to learn more about Korea and to settle with Il-ma in Korea despite the fact that she has never been to the area. After having relocated to Kyŏngsŏng (Seoul), Naaja is described in a scene as a fair, blonde Russian wife comfortably seated on the heated floor of her new home, having a Korean-style dinner with Il-ma and his friends. The narrator states:

Whether the color of hair is black or red, [...] we are all the same and there is nothing unnatural about it. [...] Whether you eat wheat or rice, the fundamental difference is simply insignificant. If there is a strong love, assimilation of humanity must be easier than simply flipping over one’s hand. (Endless 310)18

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17 나야자 [Na-a-ja]; This might be mispronunciation of Russian name Nadya [NAH-dya] shorten for Nadezhda [nah-DYEZH-dah] or German name Nadja. In “The Shell of Continent,” Yi mentions a dancer named Naja. Here, I am Romanizing the Korean following the McCune-Reischauer system.

18 My translation from Korean to English. The original text is in Korean.
The aspiration for an assimilated humanity is remarkable, as the narrator argues for a facile achievement of unity between Western and Asian people/races, of course, for the sake of love. From the beginning, after having met her only a few times, Il-ma intuitively feels “closeness” to Naaja (Endless 58). Il-ma’s male friends describe Naaja as physically “docile” with an “innocent posture.” She stands out from other “fussy foreign women” because of her “Asian-like,” composed “calmness” (Endless 51).

“Naaja’s face looks like that of Asians. She has a true Western face with Asian features. Her eyes, eyebrows, and nose are that of a docile Korean. She just has white skin and blond hair” (Endless 169). The narrator uses Naaja’s “Asian-like” qualities to emphasize that it is easy to transform from one race to another — as simple as “flipping over one’s hand” (310). Writer Yi Hyo-sŏk’s analogy of assimilation or racial transformation is not an alien or unique concept, but rather it resembles the dominant rhetoric of Korean assimilation at the time. Previously, a famous speech on naesŏn ilch’e by the Governor-General Minami Jirō (r: August 1936 - May 1942) explained the idea as the melding of two bodies into one. According to Minami this melding did not mean just “tepidly holding each other’s hands, melting into one form, and so on,” but instead, a process that was “necessary to become one body in form, in spirit, in blood, and in the flesh - in each and every way.”

19 On May 30, 1939, at a meeting of “The Korean Federation of the National Spirit Mobilization” [Kungmin chŏngsin ch’ongdongwŏn chosŏn yŏnmaeng yŏkwŏnhoe], cited from Ch’oe Yu-ri, pp. 28-29. In Korea, the National Spirit Mobilization movement began on July 7, 1939, about one year after it started in mainland Japan. Ch’oe Yu-ri also observes that the campaign in Korea was more focused on the issue of “spirit,” saying that “the power of national’s spirit and mind” was the most important factor in the total war. The campaign becomes the National Total Power Movement (國民總力運動) in 1940. See Ch’oe Yu-ri, p 87.
shows that the Japanese colonial authority’s ideology could work through Korean intellectuals’ psyches to create representations of any body as flexible and transformable if there is strong conviction. But Naaja is not Korean or of any major race in the Japanese Empire; rather, she is a descendant of the minority White Russians (paekye roin) who mostly resided in Harbin. What then are the implications of having a Russian character marrying the Korean protagonist? To answer this question, we have to examine the figuration of Manchuria in Yi’s literary landscape.

The establishment of the puppet state Manchukuo (1932-1945) increased Korean migration to the area, which had reached 1.5 million by 1942, up from a modest 200,000 in 1910 (Hyun Ok Park 46). After its establishment Manchuria was pictured in the Korean imaginary as a “new, fertile land” (Park 25), a land of opportunity and prosperity, and place for second chance for poor peasant farmers from Korea and Japan. Like the images in Park’s studies, The Endless Blue Sky also pictures Manchuria as a land of diversity and endless opportunity. These might be typical characteristics of literature allowed to be printed in Maeil sinbo in 1940. The fact that this novel was printed at a time when other newspapers were either forced to shut down or down-size suggests that Yi maintained a friendly relationship with the GGK. Along this line, even the unrealistic plotline seems to fit the Japanese Empire’s promoted view of Manchuria. For example, protagonist Ch’ôn Il-ma strikes great

20 An Su-gil, Kang Kyōng-ae, and Yi T’ae-jun are some of the writers who wrote about the image of Manchuria.

21 Kim In-su, “Ch’ongryŏkkī ilbonŏ kūlssŭkkii ῥi sasang kongkan kwa ῥŏnŏ kŏmyŏl,” Singminji ūi ilsang, chibae wa kyunyŏl (Munhwa kwahksa, 2006).
fortune by winning the Manchurian state lottery and also winning big at the horse races during his short stay at Harbin – a great contrast from his modest life in Seoul. The narrative of opportunity and luck may have been designed to pass the colonial censorship.

Similar patterns emerge in Yi’s travel essay, “The Shell of the Continent,” (1939)22 written about a half-year before the first installment of The Endless Blue Sky, which shows that the author had traveled the area with the intention of promoting the knowledge about the region among the literary public. “The Shell of the Continent” is based on Yi’s trip to three cities in Manchuria, Pongch’ŏn (Simyang; Sŏnyang), Sinkyŏng (Changch’un), and Harbin. The three cities were the main stops on the Manchurian railroad and popular destinations for visitors. As the title indicates, Yi felt that he had witnessed only the “shell” or the surface of the area due to time constraints. He expresses his regret for not having experienced the continent to a fuller extent. Yi’s trip and his desire to experience the region more extensively resonates with the Japanese Empire’s desire for expansion, because Manchukuo was located at the tip of the Asian continent and a strategic juncture for Japan’s deeper expansion into the continent. Manchuria became easily accessible via the railroad that began Pusan, Korea.

It is hardly surprising that the psychology of colonized elites reflects the desires of empire. Yi is very comfortable looking through the lens of the Japanese Empire, choosing his place as that of a superior being in Manchuria, rather than as a colonized

Korean subject. The following is Yi’s first impression of the Manchurian people at his first transfer stop:

I was considering changing my itinerary to leave for Harbin by the day train right away. I walked to the train station’s restaurant to have lunch, and was surprised to see the chaos in the restaurant. The place was an extension of the Korean peninsula [pando], so the patterns were similar, but the confusion and the disorderly crowdedness of the newly constructed streets was apparent. Half an hour passed and my lunch order didn’t show up. The train’s departure was coming soon, so I had to change my dish to whatever could be done in time. I could tolerate the slowness of the system, but the obscure filthiness of the restaurant was unbearable. When I paid more attention to it, [I noticed that] the filthiness did not come from the building, but it came from the flood of people in the place. The worming of the mixed crowd of people of different languages and appearances made me want to vomit. National clothing (kungminbok) was definitely worn by the majority, but it was obvious that it would take quite a while to make order of this place.

The chaos extended to the inside of the train. When I switched to take the second-class compartment, the fully loaded train was like the exhibition of Five Ethnicities [of Manchukuo], ranging from a mother with kunyang [a Chinese girl] to diverse human faces. (146-147)23

In this scene, Yi is waiting in Sinkyŏng (Changch’un), the capital city of Manchukuo and also a major train depot where the rail track changes to head toward Harbin from both Korea and Japan. He is already in Manchurian land, and the people in this station are mostly rural peasants and laborers from Korea and Japan migrating to Manchuria. Yi associates the crowd he saw in Sinkyŏng and on the train with filthiness and worm-like movement, even showing resentment toward the mingling of various ethnicities. Although Manchukuo’s official slogan is to promote “harmony” among five

23 My translation from Korean to English. [ ] indicates my insertion.
recognized ethnicities. Yi sees his ethnic others as still barbaric and uncivilized. They create an unexpected chaos that disturbs his peace. Yi also holds himself apart from the working class and migrants - Japanese and Korean agricultural laborers - to the area. These people are marked by wearing “kungminbok (國民服),” a plain and coarse suit that the Japanese state promoted and required industrial workers and farmers to wear during the Total War. In this observation, Yi becomes one of the upper-class elites of the metropole rather than a part of the local “five ethnicities.” It is interesting to see the condescension directed towards the embarrassingly coarse gestures of Japanese workers in Harbin. As an intellectual of the Japanese empire traveling the Manchurian state, Yi is voicing an elitist concern over the uncivilized manners of the laborers.

While expressing his repugnance toward and racist superiority over the Chinese and Manchurian, Yi also reserves some hope for civilizing them in the future. Japanese civilizing discourse seems to pervade the tone of the publication venue of the essay, Kyōngsōng ilbo, the official newspaper of GGK published in Japanese. In order to be published here, the essay should rightly promote Manchurian expansion and furthermore should follow the official guidelines of GGK. Accordingly, the new Manchurian state and its people would be represented as needing assistance from the Japanese Empire in order to modernize.

By exploring a booming part of the empire and taking up its perspective, “The Shell of Continent” may be supporting imperialism and, further, the colonization of

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24 Korean is one of the five: Japanese, Korean, Han Chinese, Manchurian, and Mongolian.
Korea. The idea is complicated by Yi Hyo-sŏk’s good friend and writer Yu Jin-o, who once stated of Koreans in Manchuria that “there are people who treat Koreans as Manchurian but some treat them as Japanese” thus “Korean’s position is complex and sensitive in between Japanese and Manchurian.”

Korean literature scholar Lee Kyoung-hoon argues that the novel “accepts” or complies with the Japanese rule of Korea and the Japanese expansion of the East Asian Sphere, and furthermore displays the desire to be a “second-ranked” citizen of the empire (226), especially since the narrative and its imagination are closely related to the Manchurian railroad. The railroad was the backbone of Japanese empire in the northern country, and was an important infrastructure that supported the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Spheres (224). While I agree with Lee’s sophisticated placing of the novel in conjunction with the Japanese empire, I argue that Yi’s position as an intellectual rendered ambivalence in his understanding of Koreans in Manchuria and the larger imperial state itself. By taking the position of criticizing Manchurian and Chinese conditions, Yi also reveals Korean intellectuals’ anxiety and worries about the Korean position in the Japanese empire. Let me reiterate Yi’s articulation of Manchurian space: “When I paid more attention to it, [I noticed that] the filthiness did not come from the building, but it came from the flood of people in the place.” Here, Yi separates the space from the people, and points to people as the source of chaos and uncleanness. This comment reveals that,

if Manchukuo is an important space for Japanese expansion, then maintaining superiority over the people of Manchukuo is even more important for Koreans. The advantage of Colonial Korea over the new territories of Manchuria, the Southern islands, and later Southeast Asia, was considered to be its labor power and strategic location. Thus the depiction of the Manchurian people as uncivilized and far from becoming proper imperial citizens reflects the Korean colonized intellect’s bitter self-glorification. The new territory in the empire is a new-found source of opportunity, and yet at the same time the source of anxiety.

Indeed, Yi does not present Manchuria exactly as the Japanese Empire would want readers to see it. Yi’s impression of Manchuria is two-fold: the uncivilized condition of Manchuria, and the sophistication of Russian culture. Yi’s embrace of Russian culture and people raises questions about his colonized intellectual subjectivity.

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27 Japanese Empire’s expansion into Southeast Asia and islands came after 1940, but there were considerable expectations of the expansion to the South in the late 1930s.

28 Kwon Myoung A argues that the newly acquired territories of the Japanese Empire, such as Southeast Asia (Nambō, 南方) escalated Korean intellectuals’ awareness of the “Korean position” in the empire. The newly found territory gave the intellectuals enthusiasm over taking advantage of the natural resources but at the same time, anxiety over the devaluation of the Korean territory in comparison. See Kwon Myoung A, Yōksachōk Pasisūm [Historical fascism] (Seoul: Ch’aeksesang, 2005) and “Hegemony Surrounding the Positions within Empire: Strategy of ‘Survival’ of the Korean in the Pacific War” (unpublished manuscript, AAS Annual Meeting, Boston, 2007). The question about Southeast Asia is a complicated one. The Japanese Empire’s expansion to the Southeast Asia is relatively late compared to its access to Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria. Even when the SEA region fell under control of the Japanese Empire, the nations were formally independent; hence the term “informal empire” was used for this era. However the importance of the region had been emphasized for a longer time. See Mark R. Peattie, “Namshin: The ‘Southward Advance,’ 1931-1941, as a Prelude to the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia,” ed. Duus, Myers, and Peattie, The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996). Similar rhetoric can be found in discourses on Manchuria. Manchuria, rather than the source of anxiety, was more of a source of opportunity for Koreans to act more like Japanese mainlanders, taking the position of colonizer. See Peter Duus’ and Carter Eckert’s book, and Jun Uchida’s dissertation, especially Chapter 8.
Rather than completely assuming a Japanese metropolitan perspective, Yi aligns himself with White Russians who had become the sign of a fallen empire. The Russian population in Harbin was mostly White émigré, or the White Russian bourgeoisie, defeated by the Red Army in the Russian Revolution and civil war of 1917 and 1918. In the early 1920s, Harbin had the largest population of Russians outside of Russia. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, they were living in exile, away from their homeland, economically deprived, and under the rule of the Japanese Empire. Although Russia was part of a “superior European culture” which Yi had knowledge of and the privilege to consume properly, Russians in Harbin were the losers of civil war and pushed out of their homeland. Thus, this alliance with Russian culture and people complicates Yi’s understandings of imperialism and colonialism.

Returning to the novel The Endless Blue Sky and the implications of featuring a Russian character wedded to the protagonist, we can turn to Yi’s sentiment of feebleness or “tchukchǒng-i” to obtain some useful insights. The narrator of The Endless Blue Sky states, “because he [Il-ma] is a loser, he could have united with Naaja. One loser and another belong to one class. If neither of them were losers, the union of today could not have happened” (Endless 129). Naaja’s status as a White Russian descendent is undoubtedly significant, and her poverty makes her “the most pathetic woman Il-ma knows,” a point of attraction for him (Endless 58). For Yi Hyo-sǒk,

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29 See Lee Kyoung-hoon’s article.
30 It literally means “empty head of a grain.”
Russians in Harbin are like Koreans in that they know what it is like to experience the loss of power. This sentiment of alliance makes Naaja more likable.

Yi further laments the sadness of a city filled with poor Russians who once enjoyed prosperity under the Russian Empire. Yi thinks the whole city looks “sad” and feels “grief” (155) because of the presence of these poor Russians. As he portrays the sadness of the Russians, Yi inserts a short commentary about the strength of nation.

“The nation-state (國家) or social institutions have to be strong. Suffering of individuals may not be wrong for the eyes of the god, but it is unbearable for us” (156). Yi’s comment on national strength seems to be general enough to avoid creating tension with the Japanese authority. National polity (國體, J: kokutai) was already a popular topic of debate in the Japanese empire on both the mainland and the Korean peninsula. But the status of the fallen Russians in the Japanese Empire must have felt familiar to Koreans at the time of the nation’s disenfranchisement. For this reason, Yi’s affinity for Russian culture was more than simple admiration of a European culture.

As a male intellectual, Yi criticizes the Japanese empire through an alliance, or more precisely, dalliance with Russian women. Yi talks to a Russian dancer about how a Japanese tourist has a “Mongolian” face, (“The Shell of Continent” 157) demoting Japanese to a less “civilized” ethnicity, and builds a bond with Russians. The narrator says the ugliest looking man in the world is dancing with a pretty Russian dancer-for-hire. Yi laments that this is the “look of the continent” at the moment (157). The mediation by the figure of a white woman supports the Korean intellectual’s superiority
over the colonizer. By pairing a “white” woman with a colonizer, Yi criticizes the inferiority of the Japanese man as a savage disguised in consumerist and political power.

In another short story by Yi entitled “Harbin” (1940), the narrator also wanders Harbin’s Russian quarter with a dancer named Yuura whom the narrator has met in a cabaret called P’ant’ajia (Fantasia). On their walk to the European residential area, Yuura point out to the narrator the French and the Dutch consuls’ offices. In front of the French Consul’s office, Yuura tells him,

“It is not just Kitaiskaia that changed but also this Consul office [has changed too].”
“They lost the war with Germany.”
“It has been a while since they lost communication with France and money has stopped coming in, so it is hard for the Consul’s family. The newspaper says they have sold their car and jewelry.”
“The world is meant to change constantly.” (“Harbin” 113)

In this scene, Harbin signifies the demise of empires, a perception that could not be attained in Colonial Chosŏn. The city exhibits the consequences of failed empires; it is clear that the Western powers can now barely manage to maintain their presence. Like Naaja from The Endless Blue Sky, Yuura the Russian woman acts as a guide to Harbin’s European quarter. She makes it possible for the narrator to criticize imperialism and its negative effects. When Yuura laments that Kitaiskaia and Harbin are losing their European quality and turning into the “rubbish and disorderliness” of a “colonized land” (“Harbin” 110), she is speaking of Yi’s rejection of a new empire (109). Yuura is the figure of the past and at the same time a figure of critical eyes. It is

31 [Yu-u-ra]. It might be mispronunciation of Russian female name Yuliya [Yulia] or variation of male name Yura.
undeniable that her whiteness gives her legitimacy for Yi. Through this racialized and gendered Russian mediation, the author is empowered to criticize the Japanese empire and its aggression. At the same time, the criticism is rather muted as we simultaneously see the intellectual’s attempt to position himself to be a ruling colonizer. This ambiguity might indeed be read as the sign of colonial intellectuals’ liminality.

Korean-Japanese marriage and Gender Flexibility

Marriage as Institution

In 1941, one year after The Endless Blue Sky, Yi Hyo-sŏk published a very interesting short story on naesŏn (Korean-Japanese) marriage titled, “A Story of Wild Thistle.” This story is the only one in which Yi confronts the naesŏn marriage issue at the core. Contemporary to its 1941 publication, the story portrays the trials and tribulations of a Korean man named Hyŏn and his Japanese “wife,” Asami, set in Seoul. Like Il-ma in The Endless Blue Sky, the male protagonist in this story is a newspaper journalist. Women the Korean intellectuals are romantically involved with in both stories are “modan garu” (“modern girls”) who work in bars, cafés, and cabarets. They are significantly visible on the streets and in urban scenes in a time of new capitalist modernity. Like Naaja, Asami, a Japanese woman, meets her Korean lover at her

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workplace, a high-end bar in Seoul where many of the barmaids are Japanese. This bar is a typical example of a “contact zone” for Koreans and Japanese, a newly emerging space in the center of the colonial capital which replicates the characteristics of the Japanese metropole. The bar hosts Koreans and Japanese clientele for consumption, entertainment, and bodily exchange.34

Similar to other naesŏn marriage fictions, “A Story of Wild Thistle” centers on the obstacles a Korean-Japanese couple faces in legitimizing their conjugal relationship as cultural, communal, and familial oppositions stubbornly intervene. Familial and cultural barriers often block the state recognition of marriage (hojŏk) and such a threat to the viability of marriage becomes the source of constant agony for the couple’s relationship. These obstacles are presented as conservative elements that work against the couple’s desire to form a new, modern household. In colonial Korean literature, it is common to see the portrayal of those marriages built around larger networks of communal and familial system as feudal and conservative, while nuclear families formed by the couples’ “romantic love” and conjugal bonds represented as modern and advanced.

The idea of marriage and family underwent a dramatic change during the Waitress Serving Modern Japan,” in Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan, ed., Stephen Vlastos, (Berkeley: U of California P, 1999) 208-228, and “The Modern Girl as Militant,” Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945, ed. Gail Bernstein (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1991) 239-66. For a discussion of New Women and modan garu in Korea, see Kim Su-jin (2005). However, Kim Su-jin argues that unlike Japan’s modan garu, which represented an alternative view of the New Woman, in Korea, modern garu was introduced relatively later than Japan (in the mid-1920s) and by the 1930s, it was used interchangeably with New Woman without any distinction between the two.

34 For a discussion of Namch’on (Japanese settlers’ residential and commercial area) and Chongno (Korean/Japanese commercial area), see Chapter Two.
colonial times. The early criticism of the backwardness of Korean marriage and the family system came from the late 19th century enlightenment reformers who criticized the so-called “early marriage” (chohon). For example, the Kabo Reforms of 1894 sought to eliminate child marriage and allow widow remarriage. Soon after the annexation in 1910, reformers sought to coordinate the family and marriage law with that of mainland Japan. Kim Hye-kyung and Chung Chin-Sung also point to three main issues concerning family that were debated in colonial Korea: first, the traditional family system was criticized from the perspective of the civilizing discourse and nuclear family was presented as an alternative; second, it was proposed that love ought to be at the center of familial relationships, prioritizing conjugal relationships over respect (hyo) for parents; and third, the family law and the emergence of a state-oriented family system replaced the patrilineal family system. After Korea’s annexation, nationalists continually argued for marriage and family reform. Kim and Chung note that a series of legal changes, along with urbanization and industrialization in the 1920s and 1930s, brought a new understanding of the nuclear family system. The nuclear family as a foundation for the new conjugal relationship, they argue, was a hybrid idea of the “Western modern” and “Japanese modern” implanted in Korea.

35 “In 1922, the colonial state promulgated the Chōsen Civil Code Ordinance Number 13, which set the minimum age of marriage at seventeen for men and fifteen for women. This conformed with the old Japanese Civil Code Articles 765, 780, and 781,” Theodore Yoo, p320 n69. For analysis of the debates on early marriage, see Chŏn Mi-kyŏng, Kündae kyemonkki kajokron kwa kungmin sangsan pūrojektû (Seoul: Somyŏng ch’ulp’ansa, 2005) and Theodore Jun Yoo.

36 For an explanation of the construction of the patrilineal system in family law in the colonial era, see Hyunah Yang, “Singmin sigi han’guk kajokpŏp ǔi kwansŭp munje,” Sahoewa yŏksa 58 (2000): 35-70.

37 Kim Hye-kyung and Chung Chin-sung, “‘Haekkajok’ nonŭi wa ‘singminjijŏk kûndaesŏng’;
These studies show that the overarching changes in the family system affected the understanding and practice of marriage. Victorian ideals of companionate marriage had been introduced during the Enlightenment Period (Kyemonggi, 1894-1910) and literature on romantic love and freedom circulated in the 1910s and 1920s; it was from the mid-1920s that legal changes followed. The adoption of the Japanese “ie” (family) system through the hojŏk (the family registrar, 1924 Chosŏn Hojŏk Ordinance) began to contribute to the changes in the marriage and family system. In addition to the structural changes in the family, the idea of marriage and family had therefore been changing over a number of decades. By the 1930s woman’s magazines frequently featured stories about companionate marriage, the new role of the wife in nuclear household, as well as her duties in the domestic space with the knowledge of domestic science, etc. (Kim and Chung 227).38

However, with all the “progress” in marriage and family, conflicts still remained. Newly introduced changes in marriage and family system created uneven development in the society. As one scholar noted, the Korean family seemed to have degenerated into complete disorder. For example, efforts to abolish early marriage in the late nineteenth century had no visible impact in the countryside. “One study showed that of 128,258 women who married in 1932, 85,878 (67 percent) were under the age of

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38 However, when described about domestic space, it often related to the discipline of the domestic order and scientific everyday life. See Chapter 2.
nineteen and 12,575 (9.9 percent) were under seventeen years of age.\textsuperscript{39} The uneven progress corresponds with the criticism of the New Woman in the 1930s who rejected traditional marriage and thus got in conflict with \textit{kuyōsōng}, mothers-in-law (Kim and Chung 229). By the late 1930s, the New Woman debate had lost its edge, without realizing a full-fledged feminist movement in the empire.\textsuperscript{40} The post-1937 colonial state enforced the role of woman as supporters of the imperial cause under new guidelines such as the National Spirit Mobilization. The Total War effort imposed upon women the duties as mother, daughter-in-law, and labor provider for the state.\textsuperscript{41} By redefining women as faithful keeper of both family and the state, such process of imperialization further contributed to channeling the debates about marriage and family into a state-oriented discourse.

Symptomatic of “uneven modernity,” we thus see in the latter part of the colonial era the co-existence of great contradictions and differences not only among class and region but also between the two genders. Modern sensibilities encapsulated by such concepts as “freedom” or “choice” were revered as Western and fervently aspired by educated generation and class of men. Still, the notion of ideal womanhood remained tethered to the existing notion of family and duty.

Amidst the heightened contradictions in marriage and the family system, “romantic love” functioned as an important ideological suturing mechanism. The value of romantic love was introduced in Korean literature in the late 1910s. By the late

\textsuperscript{39} Theodore Jun Yoo, p 306.

\textsuperscript{40} See Kim Su-jin

\textsuperscript{41} See Kwon Myoung A.
1930s, the notion of love in marriage was a coveted idea for New Women. In a 1938 survey conducted by the magazine Yŏsŏng, an overwhelming ninety percent of the graduating class of female students agreed that marriage and love were two separate ideals that had to be distinguished. In order to bring love and marriage together, one needed to first seek *uchŏng* (friendship) before committing to marriage. Pang In-kŭn, a feminist writer who drew heavily on Ellen Key’s writings, argued that all forms of old “tyrannical and oppressive” marriage system (i.e. forced and early marriage) had to be replaced by the new ideal of love. Hyŏn and Asami’s coupling in “A Story of Wild Thistle” is presented as “romantic love” in contrast to the arranged marriage that is associated with the past and backwardness.

In Yi’s story, Hyŏn and Asami start their “cohabitation” (*kongdong saenghwal*) as a conjugal relationship based on romantic love and freedom of choosing one’s partner and domestic lifestyle. Their household is modeled after nuclear family system that is free from traditional practices of concubinage or polygamy. Still, they must struggle with the challenges from Hyŏn’s family who live in the countryside where the “backward” values and ethics of arranged marriage continue to thrive. Hyŏn’s family opposes the idea of their son marrying a Japanese woman by insisting that “the

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42 Yun Sŏng-sang, “Kyŏrhŏn ūn yŏnae ŭi kyŏlsil ikirul mit’nunda” [Belief that marriage is the result of love], *Yŏsŏng* (May 1938): 31-35, cited from Yoo.

43 Pang In-kŭn, “Kyŏrhŏn ūn yŏnae ŭi chŏngch’a chang” [Marriage is an impediment to love], *Samch’ôlil* (Nov 1933) 94.

44 When Hyŏn’s father proposes Hyŏn’s marriage to a renowned high-class lady, Hyŏn comments on the greedy side of the older generation, deriding the attempt to upgrade one’s social status by marrying the right family. Hyŏn scoffs at the idea as a “shallow attempt” (sisihan il) unfit for contemporary people (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 108).
difference of blood” would make the marriage not “normal.” Yet the family’s refusal of a Japanese wife is also converged in the story with their antagonism toward the idea of romantic love, the sign of new, modern age. Opposition to intermarriage is thus portrayed as a backward attitude of stubbornly refusing progress and enlightenment in the realm of family and marriage. Even though naesŏn marriage is an imperial-state managed institution, colonial male intellectuals like Yi found it desirable insofar as it featured modern romantic practices and marital relations.

Especially intriguing in this story is the way the romantic love between Hyŏn and Asami is celebrated as the thrills of modern courtship and hetero-sociality. The couple’s romantic love is exhibited in spaces of modernity: promenades in the park, cohabitation in an apartment which was the newly emerging urban architectural space, and the locales of consumption like department stores and hotels. In contrast, the people opposing the couple’s romantic love are represented as the passé, or the tradition-bound people trapped in corrupt homo-sociality and unenlightened obedience to patriarchal authorities. At the same time, challenges to intermarriage come from not only the family but also clashes and contradictions within the couple’s relationship. On the one hand, quarrels over such everyday habits as eating garlic, a culinary practice deemed specific to Korean culture, is treated as an issue that both Asami and Hyŏn can easily overcome (110). More serious conflict comes from Asami’s personality. Asami

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45 We see these themes again in Han Sŏr-ya’s “The Blood” (1942), although the gap between Korean and Japanese is not discussed as much throughout the story, at the end, however, the narrator Kim suddenly blames his “blood” for his agony and sorrow in letting a Japanese woman go (“The Blood” 186). On the other hand, in “The Blue Tower,” the Korean character An Yŏng-min was able to do a blood transfusion for the sick Yuko because both of them have type-B blood. Yŏko’s uncle even praises their “marriage by blood” (411).
has to be a strong-minded woman who can fight against the “unreasonable” family oppositions and their disapproval of her character. Throughout the story, Asami exhibits resilient persona and crude characteristics with her expressive comments and aggressive attitude with which she takes matters into her own hands. It is Asami who picked Hyŏn as her favorite customer among her regulars at the bar and led them to their “cohabitation” (kongdong saenghwal) (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 103). It is Asami who financially supports them when Hyŏn becomes unemployed. At the end of the story, Asami chooses to leave Hyŏn after it became obvious that she cannot convince him to legalize their marriage. She thus embodies traits of the so-called “modern girl” who can be found in the cafés, bars, and various new female workspaces which emerged with urbanization and industrialization. Her persona fits the stereotype of the “modern girl” or New Woman who is considered “Western.”

Western characteristics are also embodied in Asami’s name. The name Asami is a pun on Azami, a flower which is known less for its beauty than strength and resilience. Once, Hyŏn picks out a “western” wild thistle (Azami) at a department store. He sees the similarity between Asami and the image of the flower: “The red western wild thistle’s strong feature, as if it was in rage overlaps his wife’s face” (96, my emphasis). Hyŏn’s recognition of the flower “in rage” succinctly illustrates the fiery, hot-tempered personality he finds in Asami. It is not a coincidence that the flower perceived as “western” is found in a department store. Asami, the Japanese wife, is a figure upon which the images of the West, blossoming consumerism, and the signs of domestic
modernity converge.\textsuperscript{46}

In contrast to Asami’s strong modern femininity, Hyŏn’s younger sister represents traditional and contained femininity of a dutiful daughter. When Hyŏn’s parents want him to marry a respectable Korean woman in their hometown, his sister urges Hyŏn to follow their parents’ arrangement. She writes a letter to Hyŏn repeating the wishes of their parents, informing him that their parents have settled Hyŏn’s arranged marriage with the neighbor and asked him to return to their home in the country. When the letter fails to make any impact, she even accompanies the potential marriage partner, Yŏhŭi, to Hyŏn’s apartment, asking Hyŏn to be “considerate” toward his parents, Yŏhŭi, and herself (131). Here, the sister aligns herself with the arranged marriage candidate, slipping deep into traditional values. Hyŏn’s younger sister, who appears as the stumbling block to the couple is in essence the negative influence of anti-modern backwardness that hold back the couple from progress. Suggestively, she remains nameless throughout the story, identifiable only through her relation to her brother as “younger sister.”\textsuperscript{47} Asami stands as an anti-thesis to the backward traditional value. This new modern womanhood, even with her faulty temperament, was the value that a civilized Korean intellectual would pursue. Women’s reform was one of the central agenda for social reformers in the colonial era. Despite the patriarchal tendency

\textsuperscript{46} The “West” in this context differs from the West and cosmopolitanism of Harbin and Russian culture.

\textsuperscript{47} Women in familial relationships were often referred to by the common noun for her role in the family, rather than her name, but with the advent of modern literature, female characters gained names, often with some significant meanings, as can be seen in the case of Mujŏng (1917). The familial relationship between male and female sibling is a key structure of modern Korean literature.
of social reform, women’s “freedom” was always valued, especially by Yi who often featured a “modern woman” (*hyŏndae yŏsŏng*) who acts according to her goals and desires. Bourgeois intellectual men who studied in the Japanese or U.S. metropoles often sought out educated New Woman for their partners rather than a traditional woman (*kuyŏsŏng*) steeped in old values. For Hyŏn and other Korean intellectuals Asami’s untamed headstrong persona was considered desirable.

However, this did not mean that colonial Korean intellectuals were nurturing and encouraging subversive feminists against the patriarchal order. The woman’s role was still limited by the boundaries of home, family, and the state. Asami acts out of her own will, but her petite feminine figure diffuses any serious threats to Hyŏn’s masculinity. To be sure, although Asami becomes the breadwinner for the household when Hyŏn loses his job, she stays in a disadvantaged position in the relationship because of her inability to legally secure the position as his wife. Her weaker position

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48 This is not unique to Korea but seem to be course of “late modernities” in other parts of the world. Dipesh Chakrabarty also talks about efforts by Indian nationalists and the colonial state’s to improve the domesticity of Bengali womanhood. See Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for “Indian” Past?”

49 Theodore Jun Yoo observes that both the new women and national reformers agreed that the traditional ideology of the *hyŏnmo yangch’ŏ* (wise mother, good wife) held little appeal for the new generation of educated women. The new way of womanhood was imagined within the boundary of family and home, creating domestic duties and a space more “scientific” and “efficient.” “Domestic household scientific management,” which included a combination of family, science, and time management was the key (Yoo 310). The top institutions for women at the college level were more concerned with matching up their girls with educated modern men (often in Japan and the US). Ewha and other girls’ schools, taught new domestic science courses. “In the 1920s an increasing number of young men returned from the US with college degrees and wanted to marry college-educated women.” In response to this demand, the home economics department was set up to prepare Ewha women to be desirable brides by teaching them how to cook western food (311-312). Thus the new *hyŏnmo yangch’ŏ* needed to be capable of modern “scientific” household management.
is stressed when she shows her insecurity in their relationship. Asami is conscious of the neighborhood Korean women’s “glimpses of contempt” which indicates their disapproval of the couple’s cohabitation (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 104). Most of all, it is Asami who demands the legalization of marriage, the security of the heterosexual nuclear family system. Asami becomes deeply dissatisfied with her failure to obtain a proper marriage. To her this failure is an indication of Hyŏn’s lack of conviction and commitment. Asami escalates her demand for legalization of their marriage even more aggressively when she learns her neighbor Midori, another Japanese woman working in a bar, is soon to be wedded to a Korean boyfriend. Asami confesses that she wants a “proper wedding and be registered in the hojŏk,” claiming that these two are “the most important goals in a woman’s life” (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 106). In a way, this neighboring couple’s success in registering their marriage suggests that as long as the son has a strong will it is not at all impossible to convince even the traditional and backward Korean parents to consent to his bringing in a Japanese wife.

The couple’s pronounced desire for legalization (hojŏk) concerns much more the law per se; it is the desire for social acceptance and family recognition, and further, the state’s recognition of being a proper modern subject. Since naesŏn marriage was supported by the colonial state, the system of marriage had to be incorporated as an integral part of the administrative policies of producing proper members of the modern empire. The state-recognition of marriage guaranteed for an individual a path to becoming a modern citizen-subject. 50 “A Story of Wild Thistle” thus speaks to the

50 I have argued elsewhere that systematizing the family and marriage for the state’s
exasperating condition of colonial modernity perceived by Yi and other male intellectuals. While intermarriage was promoted officially by the imperial state as a way of building a multi-racial empire and as an effective way to promote modernity, these men also internalized intermarriage as a path toward modernity. And yet, the residual elements of the society and the nation ceaselessly intervened to frustrate this process.

**Racial Cross-Dressing as Universalism**

In the story, whether the marriage between Hyŏn and Asami can be legalized hinges on the latter’s ability to become Korean. Like the Russian woman who goes through cultural transformation to become a suitable match for her Korean husband, Asami undergoes partial Koreanification; yet that she can actually succeed in passing as Korean creates a problem.

Asami’s passing is enabled by ethnic/racial cross-dressing.\(^{51}\) One Sunday morning, when the couple steps out of their apartment for promenade, Asami wears *Chosŏn bok* (Korean traditional dress, also known as *hanbok* in contemporary terminology). It is Asami’s own choice to wear Korean dress as she claims it is her “taste” (*ch’wihyang*), and we find out that she often wears Korean dress for their management, especially at the post-1937 moment where the grasp of population is directly related to war mobilization, had led Koreans to become modern citizen-subjects for the empire. See Chapter One.

\(^{51}\) In most of intermarriage and romance texts, Korean partners are already Japanized or Westernized but their Japanese partners are interested in becoming Koreanized or trying Koreanification once they are involved in the relationship. In the case of Japanese women, they are willing to try Korean clothes or food but Japanese males do not try anything Korean.
outings. Looking at Asami wrapped in Korean dress, Hyŏn sees Asami as a newly born person (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 114) and he is almost convinced that Asami can be one of those to whom he is “blood related,” that is, a member of the greater Korean race. Hyŏn, Asami’s closest confidant and the one who knows her best, adds to the validity of her passing by commenting on its credibility. Asami also finds herself deeply affected by the transformation. When she walks in Tŏksugung (Tŏksu palace) park, she bursts out as follows: “being in the middle of antique buildings, I feel like I was born and raised here, like this dress” (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 115, my emphasis). Just by wearing traditional dress, she instantly becomes more connected to the Korean space and culture. This seems effortless on her part since her Korean passing happens only temporarily in her occasional outings. She can easily return to her Japanese identity once she slips back into her regular yangjang, or the modern-western outfit.

As in The Endless Blue Sky, wearing Korean dress is presented as an important part of becoming Korean.52 Why is there so much emphasis on wearing Korean traditional dress in these stories? What are the implications generated by dress? Throughout the history of Korea, class-status was closely linked with clothing style in everyday life. In modern Korea, even after the abolition of status distinctions in 1894 (known as kabo kaehyk or kabo reform), women’s clothing and hair styles were important issues for reformers when the vast majority of women kept wearing Chosŏn bok despite the fact that men had begun wearing western suits in the public

52 In Endless, Il-ma imagines Naaja in Korean traditional dress (chosŏn ot) (117) and Naaja claims that she plans to learn the Korean language, and study the dress, and want to wear it (179). However, she never actually wears “chosŏn ot” in the novel. On the other hand, Yŏko in “The Blue Tower” and Mihoko in “Spring Dress” put on Korean dress.
space. Thus fashion markers such as the yangjang (Western dress) skirt and hisashikami, a short hair style, stood out as the visible signs of New Womanhood. In the reality of the colonial Korean setting, especially in Kyōngsŏng’s Namch’on (the Japanese settlers’ residential and commercial quarter), clothing was a significant marker for racial and class identity especially since visual raciality between the colonizer (Japanese) and colonized (Korean) could be suspended if people did not speak either language. Towards the end of colonial times, when an increasing number of Koreans spoke fluent Japanese, clothing gained even more significance among other external cultural markings. In colonial space, the practice of wearing traditional dress especially for woman was not simply a matter of keeping the old ways but significantly related to the displaying of racial and class status.

On this note, Asami’s cross-dressing raises some interesting questions. Why does a Japanese woman, a colonial settler or migrant in a colonial land, like to wear colonizer’s clothing? Asami even claims that she feels as if she were a Korean in an amicable manner, showing some nostalgia for the antiquity of the lost Korean kingdom.

What does it mean to “miss” something “Korean” and “traditional” in the 1940s?

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54 For the importance of spoken language sounds (subtle differences in Japanese pronunciation between mainland Japanese and Korean speakers), see Hwang Ho Duk’s “Kyōngsŏng chiriji, ijungŏnŏ ü changsoron: Ch’ae Man-sik ü “Chongo ü chumin” kwa singmin tosi üi (ŏnŏ) kamkak” [Kyōngsŏng topos, field of bilingual: Ch’ae Man-sik’s “Resident of Chongno” and the colonial city’s language sentiment], Taedongmunhwa yön gu 51 (2005): 107-141.

55 In an interview with the Governor General Minami Jirō, some Korean elite women show anxiety and discomfort with the erasure of visible class distinction due to non-class-bound dresses.
According to recent studies on Japanese Empire and its universalism, this celebration of Korean cultural traces was actually a sign of global imperialism that assigned a naturalized “local” to Korea within the Japanese Empire. It seems ironic that, at a time of growing effort for imperial subjectification throughout the empire and especially in colonial Korea, Korean cultural specificities were celebrated rather than erased as unique and essential artifacts and even considered useful and worthy of preservation. In the post-1937 moment of Japanese Empire, it is clear that the empire had to incorporate diverse races, ethnicities, and cultures, and universalize the characteristics of the empire. The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Spheres is constructed along these lines. At this time of celebrating diversity, the discussions about “local color” materialized as a way to incorporate the different areas as integral parts of the empire. Both in mainland Japan and colonial Korea, discussions on “local color” dominated many journals and magazines in special issues. The discussion on local color paralleled and supported the colonial-modern discourse on Korean traditionalism and what were “Korean-like” (朝鮮的, K: Chosŏnjŏk) things. Thus according to Ch’a Sŏng-ki, “‘Chosŏn’ was neither a reference to a geographical location […] nor of a colonized political entity which had lost its sovereign power to an empire, but was imagined as a self-contained

56 For discussion of “new locals” see Yun Tae-sŏk, “‘kungmin munhak’ ŭi yanggasŏng” in Transtoria 3 (2003) and Suh Serk-bae, “Empire and Nation: the Debates of Japanese and Korean Intellectuals on Nation and Culture from the 1930s through 1950s” (Diss. U of California, Los Angeles, 2006), especially chapter 3 on Ch’oe Chae-sŏ.

57 See Ch’a Sŏng-ki, “1930 nyŏndaehupan chŏnt’’ongnon yŏn’g” (Study of tradition discourse in the late 1930s) (Diss. Yonsei University, 2002) and Kim Ye-rim, 1930 nyŏndaehuman kūndaehuminsik ŭi t’ulkwa miŭisik (the structure of modern epistemology and aesthetic of the late 1930s) (Seoul: Somyŏng Ch’ulp’ansa, 2004).
cultural unity [that existed] throughout time” (Ch’a 28). Unlike the previous traditionalism debates, the “Chosŏnjŏk” debate in the 1930s had its foundation in the shared epistemology of the “crisis of modernity” (Ch’a 28-30). Along these lines, we can think about the famous episode of Governor General Minami Jirō and Tsuda Setsuko: they posed for photographs wearing Korean dress and the circulation of their images in newspapers and magazines was seen as validating local “folk” tradition under the management of empire.

In terms of racialization within the Japanese Empire’s universalism, both the assimilation program and the localization of Korea within the empire brought some further contradictions to ethnic/racial boundaries, hardening and weakening them at the same time. According to Yun Tae-sŏk, there was “ambivalence” toward the assimilation program on the part of the colonial government. In the case of Japanese colonialism in Korea, the difference from Western colonialism in Asia was that the racial differences between the colonizer and colonized were seemingly invisible, such that the complete cultural transformation of Koreans into Japanese actually brought some anxiety to the Japanese authorities. Thus Yun argues that even the program of assimilation and imperialization tried to leave a final marker (or final determination) as Korean, preventing a colonized subject becoming a complete imperial subject. This “incomplete assimilation” of leaving some mark of discrimination for the convenience

58 For further studies of “crisis of modernity”, see Harry Harootunian, Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community in Interwar Japan (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000), and Hiromatsu Wataru, Kūndae Ch’okukron.

59 Yun T’ae-sŏk, Singminji Kungminnunhakron [study on colonial national literature], (Seoul: Yŏkrak, 2006).
of colonial management seems to be the conclusion of most Korean historians and Japanese scholars on assimilation and imperialization.\textsuperscript{60} Apart from the colonizer’s intention, the idea of the complete submersion of one race to another was a source of unease to both colonizer and colonized. For the colonizer, not having a mark of inferiority on the colonized body is a threat to colonial management, while for the colonized, losing complete identity as the “other” race means losing the standpoint for anti-colonial resistance in the form of cultural nationalism. Given such context, then, what does it mean to perform Koreanness and Japaneseness for the literary imagination of late colonial era?

In Asami’s cross-dressing scene, there are two boundaries that are being crossed. One is racial-crossing to become a Korean woman; and the other is class-crossing to become a bourgeois \textit{kuyösòng}, traditional woman. Firstly, the symbolic nature of Korean dress erases Asami’s “Japaneseness” and implants “Koreanness” onto her body. As I mentioned earlier, her changes in racial identity are so effortless and complete, they actually become a threat to Asami. While strolling in the Tōksukung park, Hyŏn and Asami run into one of Asami’s bar clients, a middle aged man in “yangbok” (“western suit”),\textsuperscript{61} who recognizes her and calls her by her professional barmaid name,

\begin{verse}
\textsuperscript{60} See Yi Sŭng-yŏp and Miyata Setsuko’s book, and see Chapter One for the previous scholarship on \textit{naesŏn iche}.\\
\textsuperscript{61} “yangbokjaengi” is another term often used, which literarily is a pejorative word for a person wearing a Western-style suit. Lee says “Western Suit” often appears in the leftist and leftist-leaning literature in order to point to the class disparity and its racializing effects between the colonized proletariat and the colonizing Korean ruling class, including the lower-level Korean colonial officials. “Also in some short stories, a character’s ethnicity is not explicitly stated, but rather, visual identification of him in his Western suit temporarily suspends his ethnicity. Only later, the reader is often, not always let in on these characters’ ethnic identity, either Korean or
“Mihoko.” By interpellating her work name, this man “outs” Asami as a Japanese disguised in Korean identity. However, the man goes further and shatters Asami’s core racial identity by asking her “were you not born here? If not, it is impossible that the dress suits you so well” (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 117, my emphasis). Incidentally, since this story was published in Japanese, the whole conversation takes place in Japanese, thus the only marker for racial identity is visuality rather than spoken language.

At first, the accusation seems to be no more than a passing joke by an irritating customer. Since phenotypic features between the Korean and Japanese “races” are undistinguishable, a mere change of garment would offer a complete transformation from one race to another. If visuality serves as distinguishable marker for one’s “race” and “ethnicity,” then in reverse, the visual appearance confirms the person’s race or ethnicity. Thus by wearing the attire from a certain culture, one can embody its identity, and in this case, the cultural identity dictates the biological identity. Asami is playing with the cultural norms that construct racial identity and going against the belief that Korean race/ethnicity is a biologically constituted group. Her “performative practices” and passing bank on the belief of the biological distinctiveness of the Korean race and the assumption that it is distinguishable from other races/ethnicities such as Japanese or Japanese.” In this case, we do not find the racial identity of the customer. In the setting of Seoul, the western suit function even more as an ambiguous racial disguise for Japanese bureaucrat and merchant settlers who heavily populated Namch’ŏn, located close to the Tŏksugung (Tŏksu palace). It also brings our attention to the racial makeup of Asami’s customers, who could be both Koreans and Japanese.
This is why the client is claiming that since Asami exhumes her true beauty in her Korean dress, she must be Korean.

This idea is well explored in Yi’s another short story, “Spring Dress” (1941), which was written Japanese in the same year. The story begins with a scene where a Japanese woman Mihoko and her Korean friend exchange their dresses when posing as models for a Korean painter To Chae-uk. Impressed with this unexpected scene, To Chae-uk thinks that this is Mihoko’s most beautiful moment. A big twist of this story, however, comes when Mihoko reveals that she is actually biracial, part Korean and part Japanese. At the gallery, when Mihoko spots To’s portrait of a Korean mother and son in Korean dress, she lingers on the portrait. To Chae-uk is curious about Mihoko’s fixation on the painting and offers it to Mihoko as a gift. When they finally sit together for dinner, Mihoko reveals that her mother was Korean and she was born and raised not in Japan as she had previously told him but in Kyōngsŏng. In her “hometown,” she used to wear Korean dress in her childhood. As proof, she shows an old photograph of herself and her mother mirroring the image of To’s portrait of mother and son (“Spring Dress” 94). Mihoko’s experience of putting on Korean dress and gazing at a familiar painting at the gallery brought her to confess her secret to her friends. Her Koreanness explains the uncanny familiarity of Mihoko in Korean dress. A Japanese woman who can embody the beauty of Korean culture ought to be of Korean heritage.

Similarly, Asami in “A Story of Wild Thistle” who passes as Korean with such

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62 For “performative practices,” see Judith Butler, Gender Trouble.
63 In Pandojakka Sininchip (May 1941), translated in Ŭnipit songŏ (2005).
ease and creates uncanny familiarity and beauty from the dress can actually be of
Korean heritage. Asami’s pseudonym for her work is also Mihoko, the same as the
character in “Spring Dress,” adding suspension to her true identity. The performative
practices of cross-dressing create new tension because if Asami is indeed Korean there
should be no problem with their legalization of marriage. It will also end the story
because the narrative progress is built on the dispute over getting social and state
recognition of the couple’s conjugality.

Racial-crossing for Asami adds another twist. Korean dress, which is supposed
to be a signifier of respectable bourgeois sexuality, becomes a marker of her work status
and a feature that enhances her value as a sexual commodity. When her customer for
the bar praises Asami for her beauty in Korean dress, he means to suggest that it is
sexually arousing: “It looks so great on you, I can’t stop admiring. Why have you not
been wearing this dress at the bar? I assure you it will be a great hit. Just test it
tomorrow evening” (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 116). Asami’s dress, which in the
earlier scene made her as a bourgeois traditional woman who is strolling in the park
with her husband or respectful companion, now turns her into a sexually promiscuous
female body which invites other men’s flirtation. In fact, the reason why Asami loves
Korean dress is that it reveals her body well. “Under the chōkori-top, her skirt makes
small pleats, and her legs show out of the skirt, making her look more glamorous than
when she wears western dress (yangjang)” (“A Story of Wild Thistle” 113-114). For
Asami, Korean dress offers feminine sexuality that she had not possessed before. Here,

64 Yi Hyo-sŏk often used same names in his other fictions, sometimes repeating similar
characteristics.
traditional dress of Korean feminine respectability becomes a marker of sexual desirability and hyper-femininity of a Japanese woman. It does not only accentuate her beauty but also makes her a dangerous trouble-maker. Such insinuation of Asami as a desirable sexual commodity makes her customer fantasize over her raciality.

On the other hand, the act of cross-dressing offers an easy access to transformed identities. It is also easy to go back to the original subjectivity. Assigning Koreanness to Asami did not work in the end. However, I would argue that this imagination of the flexible racial/ethnic boundary of Koreanness by a Korean writer is a significant manifestation of the late colonial moment. Highlighting the transgressing bodies, such writerly imagination challenged the conventional fixed notions of race, gender, and class to render the possibility of disrupting the colonial order.

At least on its surface, “A Story of Wild Thistle,” depicts the Koreanification of a Japanese woman as a failure, since the couple splits at the story’s end and Asami storms out of their home to return to Japan. Even though Hyŏn remains optimistic about their future, the physical separation of the couple, one in Korea and the other in Japan, neither seems to be promising nor following the official guidelines of intermarriage. For these reasons, literary critic Yi Sang-gyŏng claims this work belongs to the list of “literature against naesŏn kyŏrhon.”65 I agree that this story may not be the best example of naesŏn marriage promotion, but I disagree that the absence of a happy ending can be read exclusively as anti-Japan or anti-colonialism. For one, the

65 Yi Sang-gyŏng, “Ilche malgi sosŏl e nat’anan ‘naesŏn kyŏrhon’ ŭi ch’ŭngui” [Representation of naesŏn marriage in late colonial period literature], Kim Chae-yong et. al. Ch’inilmunhak ŭi naechŏknolli [Internal logic of pro-Japanese literature], (Seoul: Yŏngnak, 2003), 118-152. See especially pp. 148-151.
protagonists’ desirable romantic love is challenged throughout the story by a backward anti-reformist family who will not accept the new age of modern technology. Thus, while naesŏn marriage was no doubt an imperial-state managed institution, on a fictional level it offered a desirable theme for exploring the possibilities of modern sexuality and gender relations. This is exactly where the imperial ideology of the colonial management of intimacy goes through a significant transmutation, at least in the realm of the colonial-modern literary imaginations.

**Conclusion**

The narratives explored in this chapter demonstrate that the colonial intimacy constructed by the imperial authorities decisively shaped the colonized subjects’ social experiences and literary imaginations. The stories examined here show the diverse fantasies about the geographical endeavors into north-east Asia or exploration of new relationship with various racial others; and the condition for such imagination was made available by the imperial state. Imagined colonial intimacy on the part of colonized subjects such as Yi Hyo-sŏk came through subjugating exotic others – Russian and Japanese females – as well as by juxtapositioning them to the image of “Koreanness,” an unstable category that was being constructed through the invention of traditions.

In discussing the metaphor of the Asian body in the U.S. in relation to race and sexuality, David Eng once noted that “racial fantasies facilitate our investments in sexual fantasies and vice versa.” Therefore, racial fantasies and sexual fantasies “must be understood as mutually constitutive, as drawing their discursive legibility and social power in relation to one another” (Eng, *Racial Castration* 2). He also points out we
cannot think of race as an affixed or singular essence. It is a co-constitutive formation in which multiple social contradictions converge to organize a socially dominant view of identities. In other words, as Eng puts, “the conceptualization of racial and sexual difference as if they were distinct categories of analysis is a false construction that serves the political power, economic interests, and cultural hegemony of a mainstream social order.” In Korea under the Japanese Empire, colonial subjects also constructed racial and sexual fantasies in their mutually constitutive relationship formed around the given racialized and gendered social orders.

Here I want to return to the epigraph of this chapter. The narrator of “My Idiot Uncle” is a young man who works at a Japanese-owned store. He criticizes his “idiot” uncle for wasting his life in education and political ideology, and tells his uncle that he will focus instead on pleasing his Japanese boss to be successful. Interestingly, in order to be successful, the narrator claims that he will marry a Japanese woman. He states:

I wouldn’t have a Chosŏn woman, even if anybody offered me one for nothing. The old-fashioned women, they are modest but ignorant, so they can’t help me make friends with Japanese people. And the New Women, they wouldn’t do either, because they may not be ignorant, but they are conceited. So, old-fashioned or new, I wouldn’t have anything to do with Chosŏn women. Japanese women are the best. Every one of them is pretty, proper, tender, and even the ones that aren’t ignorant are modest. How lovely they are!

The narrator fantasizes Japanese woman’s femininity in opposition or at least as an alternative to Korean femininity, as an ideal womanhood for partnering with him. This racialized gender and sexuality (or sexualized raciality) can only be constructed within the colonial hierarchy where one has an inferior counterpart.
As we have seen here, instead of limiting himself to what the official colonial discourse had to offer, Yi demonstrated that the colonized subject could also mimic the imperial discourse and ultimately assume a position of superior colonizer over more recently colonized subjects. In doing so, the top-down assimilation policy was redefined and rearticulated as the newly found “Koreanness” was inserted into colonized subjectivity. In his writings the metaphors of familiarity and sexuality are enmeshed with racial fantasies. This also coincided with the emergence of the discourse of “locality” that was inseparably tied to the question of what it means to be superior among the differently colonized subjects. The way such authors as Yi redefined colonial intimacy shows that the notion of locality and cosmopolitanism influenced each other in their understanding of the empire and its boundaries.

Amidst the progression of the Japanese Empire, the very formation of race and gender, once again, reveals flexibility, if not fictiveness, of these categories. Fictions written by colonial intellectuals often reflected the ways in which such flexibility of social identities enabled the authors to reimagine the materiality of colonial relationships that defined the given social conditions. These works do not simply support or resist Japanese imperialism and colonialism, but rather point to both the complexity and centrality of intimate sentiments. The politics of sentiments deployed by colonial intellectuals such as Yi provided the readers with an enlightening tool for revealing the multifaceted economic and political contradictions of the Japanese imperial rule.
Conclusion

Empire of Intimacy

In this dissertation, I attempted to analyze discourses of intermarriage in Korea during the colonial era. Although intermarriage between Koreans and Japanese was promoted as part of naesŏn ilch’е policy between 1937 and 1945, the idea of intermarriage had emerged earlier during the Protectorate era (1905-1910) as a tool of Korean assimilation to the Japanese empire. The colonial regime operated on the belief, like other colonial regimes around the world, that intermarriage would bring the colonized population (in this case, Korean) to the state of compliance – easier to manage – by learning Japanese culture and customs. Here, intimacy at home is translated to less resistance and better colonial management for Japanese rule. Discourse on intermarriage gradually shifted after 1937 toward presenting Korean-Japanese intermarriage as a way to become good imperial subjects. Here, the assumption of the GGK was that intermarriage would further create modern “Japanese” family suited for imperial subjectification, that is ready for war mobilization.

However, as I argued throughout this dissertation, intermarriage was much too complicated to offer immediate transformation of Koreans into imperial subjection. For one, Korean-Japanese intermarriage was previously understood as a modern form of marriage and a good method of assimilation, but never as a tool that guaranteed automatic and complete assimilation. There was an expectation that Korean and
Japanese customs and cultures would clash as two different ethnicities or races made one home. Moreover, because of the colonial relationship and hierarchy, there was even more emphasis on the clash between the two. Secondly, Korean discourses on intermarriage between Koreans and non-Japanese subjects, so called “international marriage,” were peculiarly free from questions that often associated with naesón marriage discourse. In other words, international marriage phenomenon did not uplift the Korean side to Western status, but often, these internationally married people were portrayed as Koreanized by the Korean print media. This seems to be contradictory to the original goal of naesón marriage promotion by the GGK, but in fact, does not contradict intermarriage representations in Korean literary texts, as I discussed in Chapters Three and Four.

Thirdly, representations of intermarriage in literary texts inevitably reflect policy changes on intermarriage, but these changes are not the sole reason that shapes them. In other words, even though the state turns more fascist and state-propaganda controls the art, the art product does not only reflect the fascist ideology. In the case of intermarriage in Korean literature, I argued that naesón ilch’e cannot be the sole denominator that distinguishes characteristics of intermarriage and romance. In Chapter One, I argued that naeòn ilch’e policy promoted naesón marriage, but not all Korean-Japanese intermarriage should be equated to naesón marriage. In this vein, not all literature that features intermarriage and romance should be equated to naesón ilch’e or imperial subjectification. More than often, the core concerns of this type of literature were issues that occupied Korean literature since the beginning of the colonization. My interest lay in how the idea of living in the Japanese Empire has impacted Korean
literary texts in portraying questions of domesticity, racialization, gender and sexuality, and class. Also, visible concerns of these intermarriage texts were how to live after marriage – such as domesticity – or creating images of “Koreanness” and the counterpart “Japaneseness.” In these texts, the focus goes beyond becoming Japanese, but to being a universal modern subject that can be acceptable for colonized Korean readers. In a way, this idea of becoming a universal subject was the key concern that transcends all colonial writings.

In this dissertation, I conducted close reading of literature produced in Korea and written in the Korean language. Some exceptions were made when the author had produced most of his work in Korean but occasionally published in Japanese. Even in these cases, works analyzed were published in Korea targeting Korean readership with reading knowledge of Japanese. For future studies, it is important to consider texts written in the Japanese language on intermarriage produced throughout the Japanese Empire. In terms of studying race and gender in the colonial Korean context, it is equally important to analyze representation of Korea in mainland Japan through translation of Korean cultural texts, such as novels, films, and theatrical performances. These types of works offer good comparison to imperial writings of *gaichi* literature.

In conclusion, this dissertation attempted to explore both ends of colonialism by analyzing the colonial government’s indoctrination and colonized Koreans’ appropriation of colonial policy through analyzing various popular texts. My readings add more context of how Korean intellectuals and writers understood race, gender, and sexuality precipitated under the Japanese Empire. It contributes to the growing discussion of modern colonialism and imperialism by examining the everyday life of
colonized territories and how colonized people understood, articulated, and manipulated colonial discourse.
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Kyŏngsŏng ilbo (J: Keijō nippō)

Fictions


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1 Korean names are Romanized following the McCune-Reischauer System, unless personally preferred Romanization is known.
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