

## Making “Modern” Korean Subjects: The Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition of 1915

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# Making “Modern” Korean Subjects: The Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition of 1915

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## Introduction

**T**HE Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition (*Chosŏn mul-san kongjinhoe* 朝鮮物産共進會) took place in Seoul (then Kyŏngsŏng 京城, Jp. Keijō) over fifty days, from 11 September 1915 to 31 October 1915, at a moment of rapid modernization and industrialization in Korea that accelerated with the Japanese annexation of the peninsula in 1910 (figure 1).<sup>1</sup> As a specific example of the local articulation of modernity and as an unprecedented public event, the 1915 exhibition was staged on a nationwide scale that introduced the Korean general populace to modern forms of mass culture and spectacle.<sup>2</sup>

Just as international expositions have raised provocative questions about the cultural constructions of modernity, much of the cultural landscape of modern Korea has been shaped and influenced by the 1915 exhibition, from mass consumption and entertainment, to science and technology, urban planning, architecture, and visual art. While it was planned according to the principles of surveillance and disciplines as a modern institutional apparatus constructed by Jeremy Bentham’s idea of the Panopticon, the exhibition can be also understood as an educational event and cultural propaganda justifying Japanese colonial rule.<sup>3</sup>

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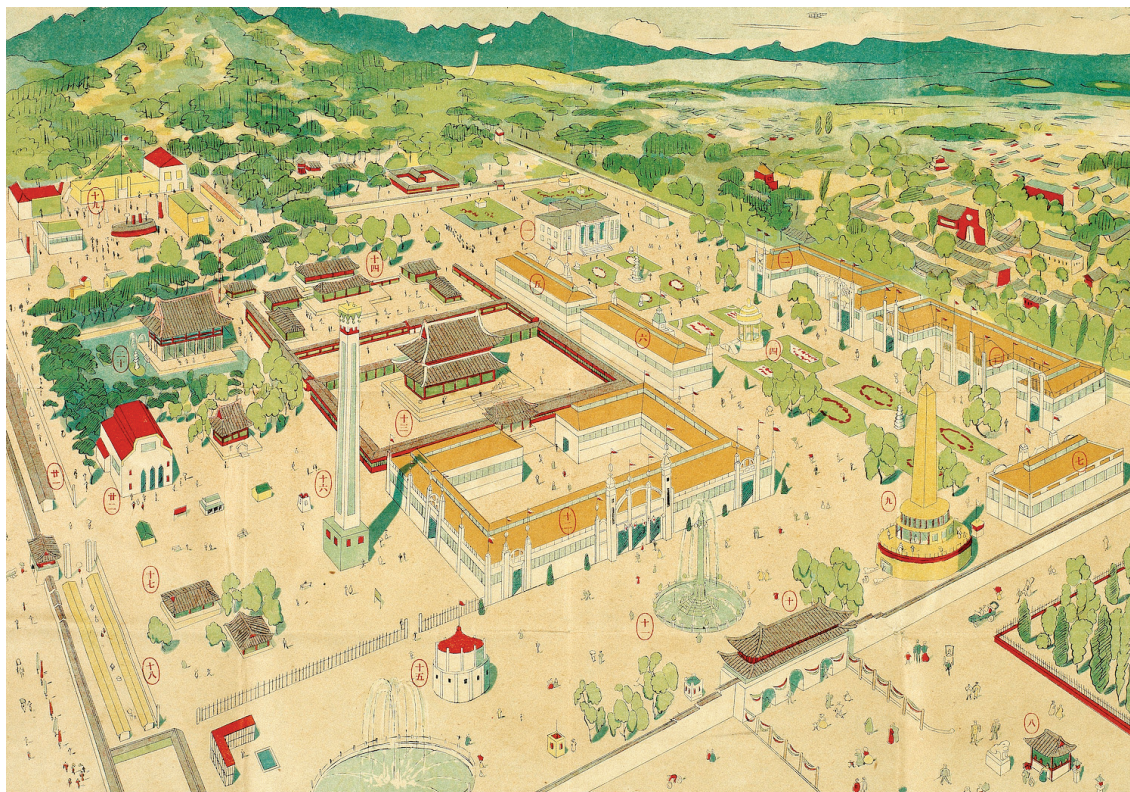
1 The term “Korea” in this article refers to the sovereign territory of the Chosŏn dynasty—dating back to 1392, but here referring mainly to the period of the opening of ports (1876–1910)—and to the territory of Korea that was colonized and ruled by the Japanese from 1910 to 1945. In this article, the transliteration of Korean terms and names follows the McCune Reischauer Romanization system. Exceptions are made in the case of terms that are already commonly recognized by a different spelling, such as Seoul, rather than Sŏul. Following East Asian practice, Korean, Chinese, and Japanese surnames precede given names, except in cases of authors whose English-language works are cited or whose names have been anglicized.

2 The official title of the 1915 exhibition is “Shijōng onyŏn kinyŏm Chosŏn mulsan kongjinhoe” 始政五年記念朝鮮物産共進會 (Jp.

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Shisei gonen kinen Chōsen bussan kyōshinkai), meaning “the Chosŏn Industrial Product Exhibition in Commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of Japanese Colonial Rule.”

3 According to Michel Foucault, modern factories, schools, hospitals, and prisons were constructed by following the principles of utility, regularity, surveillance, and discipline, adopting Jeremy Bentham’s idea of the Panopticon, a type of institutional building consisting of a central observation tower and a circle of prison cells. The orchestration of the act of viewing in the Panopticon generates a field of power that excludes any reciprocity: the occupant of the cell cannot see if they are being viewed, while the occupant of the tower at the center can view each cell unseen. As a result, the occupant of the cell must act as if they are being observed at all times, disciplining their own actions in anticipation of being under surveillance. The disciplinary machinery of the Panopticon, which works to produce self-regulating subjects, pervades



**Figure 1.** The 1915 exhibition site, panoramic view. From the exhibition guide map, 1915. Printed on paper, W 53.8, H 38.5 cm. From Seoul Museum of History Collection. Permission of Seoul Museum of History.

Contrary to the literature on Korean expositions that has focused almost exclusively on the colonial political context of the 1915 exhibition and its function as political propaganda, however, this article explores the exhibition as a cultural machinery whose meaning and effects are not reducible to its manifest political purpose, especially focusing on the question of “modern Korean subjects” represented in and constructed by the exhibition. Drawing on the premise that the 1915 exhibition was an economic, political, and cultural battlefield across which different visions of industrialization, modernization, and civilization fought for ascendancy in the shaping of a new “mod-

ern” Korean subject, this article examines how the 1915 exhibition captured and positioned visitors as the subjects of its new modern spectacle, addressing them as the modern subjects of a new national identity. To this end, this article closely analyzes the structure of the exhibition, such as specific architectural coding and presentational strategies to represent “modern” Korea, and seeks to show how visitors experienced and responded to the particular colonial narrative to shape “modern Korean subjects.”<sup>4</sup>

modern institutional relationships. For details on the Panopticon and its disciplinary technologies, see Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 195–228. Like the Panopticon in Foucault’s analysis, the exhibition involves a hierarchical distribution of space and visibility that creates power relations. Like the Panopticon, too, the exhibition aims at the disciplining, training, and normalization of its inmates—the visitors.

4 My understanding of the 1915 exhibition as a network of apparatuses that produced a new modern Korean subject owes a large debt to Foucault’s conceptions of disciplinary apparatuses. According to Foucault, an apparatus is “a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions.” See Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, p. 194. This conception is also related to Foucault’s understanding of the production of subjects: apparatuses are instruments of governance and subjectification that produce their own subject.





the superiority of Western industrial civilization and as one of the greatest embodiments of modernization. Korean officials' first direct encounter with an exposition can be traced back to the Chosa sich'altan 朝士視察團 Mission to Japan whose main task was to report on methods of adapting the successful Japanese modernization program to Korea. The Korean term *pangnamhoe* appeared for the first time in reports written by mission member Pak Chŏng-yang 朴定陽 (1841–1905) in 1881. After visiting the Second National Exposition for the Promotion of Industry (*Naikoku kangyo hakurankai* 內國勸業博覽會), held in Tokyo's Ueno Park in 1881, Pak wrote:

[Pangmulguk 博物館] manages *pangnamhoe* (expositions) and *kyŏngjinhoe* 競進會 (competitive industrial exhibitions) and it attempts to improve industrial and commercial techniques by preserving *pangmul* 博物 (extensive things or wide knowledge). It also develops and encourages industrial and commercial businesses by testing new products and inspecting their quality.<sup>6</sup>

The quote clearly shows that the officials understood the economic and educational importance of expositions. However, this knowledge was not yet accessible to ordinary Korean people. It was through more popular books, such as *Sōyu kyōnmun* 西遊見聞, published in 1895 and written by a Korean reformist politician, Yu Kil-chun 兪吉濬 (1856–1914), that the term *pangnamhoe* became more widely disseminated in Korea. *Sōyu kyōnmun* shows that Yu's understanding of expositions was heavily influenced by the teachings of his Japanese mentor Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤諭吉 (1835–1901).<sup>7</sup> Just as Fukuzawa understood

the purpose of expositions in the context of the project of modernization and Westernization, so, for Yu, the concept of *pangnamhoe* was bound up with the reformist discourse of *munmyōng kaehwa* (civilization and enlightenment), the advancement of *shiksan hūngōp* 殖産興業 (the promotion of industry), and nation formation through *puguk kangbyōng* (national prosperity and military strength).<sup>8</sup> There is no denying that the introduction of an exposition into Korea was, from the beginning, impacted primarily by Japanese conceptions and mediated by contact with Japanese modernization projects. Yet, the Korean understanding of an exposition did not come solely through Japan. The concept of *pangnamhoe* was transmitted to Korean intellectuals and the public by means of different and varied factors. Three other channels played an important role: a mission to the Western world, participation in international expositions, and experiences of national expositions and local industrial exhibitions in Korea.

The first, a diplomatic mission of reformist officials to the United States, provided the occasion for the first direct encounter of Korean officials with the Western form of the exposition. A year after the United States–Korea Treaty of 1882, King Kojong dispatched to the United States the Pobingsa 報聘使, a mission group of ten reformist officials. To date, Korea had acquired its experience of Western knowledge and institutions largely through China and Japan, and thus its understanding was shaped by the Chinese theories of *haifang* 海防 (overcoming Western powers [by knowing them]) and *yangwu* 洋務 (learning from the West) and by the Japanese program of *bunmei kaika* 文明開化 (cultural enlightenment). This meditated encounter with Western knowledge and institutions was often prone to misunderstanding and mistranslation. By contrast, the Pobingsa Mission provided an opportunity to observe the West directly, free from Japanese or Chinese overlay. By visiting factories, banks, hospitals, department stores, post offices, schools, newspaper offices, and firehouses in the United States, the mission members sought to acquire knowledge that would advance the development of modern institutions in Korean society. In Boston, they were particularly intent on attending the American Exhibition of the

6 Pak, "Pangmulguk kakkyuch'ik" 博物館各規則 (n.p.); Huh, *Chosa shich'altan kwan'gye charyojip*, vol. 2, p. 30. Similarly, in his delegation report, *Ilsa chimnyak* 日槎集略, Yi Hŏn-yōng 李鎭永 (1837–1907) recorded that "*pangnamhoe* (expositions) serves a dual purpose: one is to help sell products, and the other is to show off the nation's prosperity and riches." See Yi, "Mun'gyŏllŏk" 聞見錄.

7 Fukuzawa had remarked: "In the major cities of the West, therefore, a convention of products has been held every few years, which is a place to announce their accomplishments to the world and to exhibit specialty products, useful machines, antiques, and rare items from each country to people from around the world. This is called a *hakurankai* (exposition) ... to teach and learn from each other and to take advantage of each other's strengths." See Fukuzawa, *Seiyō jijō*, fols. 41b–43a.

8 Yu, *Sōyu kyōnmun*, p. 451.

Products, Arts, and Manufactures of Foreign Nations.<sup>9</sup> As they were impressed by the modern spectacle and the technological innovations at the exhibition, the reformist officials planned to mount an international industrial exposition in Seoul the following year.<sup>10</sup> However, this ambitious plan failed to materialize due to a lack of capital and the political turmoil following the failed coup d'état of 4 December 1884, the *Kapsin chōngbyōn* 甲申政變.<sup>11</sup> While unsuccessful, the efforts that followed the Pobingsa Mission were notable for seeking to present Korea as an autonomous member of the international community and for attempting to speed up the introduction of Western institutions, such as international expositions and modern public schools.<sup>12</sup> This also led to broadening discussions and press coverage of international expositions in the late 1880s and 1890s. The first serious discussion of expositions in the print media, “Pangnamhoesöl” 博覽會說 (Exposition Theory) in fact appeared in March 1884, the year following the Pobingsa Mission,

and introduced the Korean public to the notion of *pangnamhoe*.<sup>13</sup> In 1900, the year of the Exposition Universelle in Paris, in which Korea participated, more extensive discussions of the concept of the exposition were published by numerous newspapers, especially *Tongnip shinmun* 獨立新聞, *Cheguk shinmun* 帝國新聞, and *Hwangsōng shinmun* 皇城新聞, spreading the idea of the exposition more widely in Korea.<sup>14</sup>

The second wave of international expositions came through Korean participation in the Chicago World Columbian Exposition of 1893 and in the Exposition Universelle of 1900 in Paris. From the 1890s through the early 1900s, the policy of the Chosŏn administration was driven by the theory of *tongdo sōgi* (Eastern ways and Western technologies) in an effort to preserve Korea's traditional culture and values while modernizing through the acquisition of Western technologies. Korea's participation in international expositions was part of this drive to understand and absorb Western technologies and social institutions, following the model of Japan. However, the Korean Pavilion in the 1893 Chicago Exposition did not attract much positive or popular attention, and it was hardly known to the Korean public.<sup>15</sup> Despite the expanded scale of the Korean Pavilion or “Pavilion de la Corée” in the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900, once again, Korean aspirations were to be thwarted. The impressions of the Korean Pavilion were shaped by established ideas of an exotic “Hermit Kingdom.”<sup>16</sup> Still, Korea's self-presentation in Paris was a declaration of the country's independence as a newly established, modernizing empire—Taehan cheguk 大韓帝國, the Great Korean Empire (1897–1910) proclaimed by King Kojong in 1897. The declaration of the empire also launched the *Kwangmu kaehyōk* 光武改革 (Kwangmu Reform),

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- 9 On their second visit, the mission members entered Korean material into the exhibition. The Korean items were displayed in the exhibition and recorded as “COREA. FROM THE GOVERNMENT: 1. Porcelain and china vases, jugs, etc.” in the official catalogue of the exhibition. See Norton, *Official Catalogue, Foreign Exhibition*, p. 315.
- 10 According to a contemporary *New York Times* article, “Minister Min Yong Ik [閔泳翊, 1860–1914] further expressed his great appreciation of the agricultural implements which he saw at the Boston exhibition.” See “The Exhibition in Corea [Korea]: Manufacturers of the Country Invited to Take Part,” *New York Times*, 16 December 1883.
- 11 The *Kapsin chōngbyōn* was initiated by the radical *Kaehwadang* 開化黨 (Enlightenment Party), whose members included Pobingsa mission members, Hong Yōng-sik 洪英植 (1856–1884), Sō Gwang-bōm 徐光範 (1859–1897), and Pyōn Su 邊燾 (1861–1891), under the leadership of Kim Ok-kyun 金玉均 (1851–1894). The *Kaehwadang* sought to curtail Chinese interference, as well as advocating for more rapid and radical reforms. It was launched with Japanese support as Japan and China struggled for dominance in East Asia. Despite successfully seizing the royal palace, the coup was soon suppressed by the Chinese military. Chinese influence was reasserted and the reformists of the *Kaehwadang* were either killed or exiled to Japan. As a result, on returning from the Pobingsa Mission, Minister Min Yōng-ik was compelled to sever all political and personal relations with the reformists and to suspend plans for an industrial exhibition so closely associated with the Japanese model and the program of radical reform.
- 12 See “Coreans [Koreans] Preparing to Go Home,” *New York Times*, 8 November 1883: “The Coreans [Koreans] have been close observers during their stay in this country [the United States], and as one of the results of their visit will recommend on their return home the establishing of a postal system modeled after the one in this country. A Customs system has just been established, the nation favoring a protective policy.”

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- 13 This discussion was published in *Hansōng sunbo* 漢城旬報, Korea's first Korean-language newspaper, issued three times a month. See “Pangnamhoesöl,” *Hansōng sunbo*, 18–19 March 1884. *Hansōng sunbo* also published further accounts of Western expositions, including the Crystal Palace in London and French industrial expositions. See *Hansōng sunbo*, 16 April 1884; *Hansōng sunbo*, 25 May 1884; and *Hansōng sunbo*, 4 June 1884.
- 14 For example, see “P'ari pangnamhoe” 巴里博覽會, *Hwangsōng shinmun*, 12 April 1900; “Pōpkuk pangnamhoe sōnghwang” 法國博覽會盛況, *Hwangsōng shinmun*, 18 August 1900; “Pōpkuk p'arig'yōng man'guk pangnamhoe” 法國巴里京萬國博覽會, *Cheguk shinmun*, 8 June 1901.
- 15 Bancroft, pp. 178, 221–22.
- 16 For a detailed description of exhibits in the Korean Pavilion, see Gers, *En 1900*, pp. 205–208.



a modernizing project aimed at Westernizing the political, military, industrial, and educational structures of Korea. The presentation of the Korean Pavilion at the 1900 Exposition Universelle thus reflected Korea's aspiration to modernization and its short-lived assertion of independence both from Chinese influence and from the impositions of Japanese power. King Kojong was also convinced that staging such expositions in Korea would provide unique opportunities to advance Korean modernization. In 1902, therefore, he established the Provisional Exposition Department (*Imshi pangnamhoe samuso* 臨時博覽會事務所).<sup>17</sup> In the following year, the Provisional Exposition Display Hall (*Imshi pangnamhoe chinyölgwan* 臨時博覽會陳列館), a permanent exhibition hall for commercial and industrial products and Korea's first public exhibition site, was built "in order to collect and display all natural and artificial products for national and international visitors."<sup>18</sup> Beyond its contents, it can be said that the Display Hall marks in itself the introduction of a new economy of display—a modern visual experience through which the populace was to be educated and enlightened. Such initiatives show that the Korean government clearly recognized the significant role of expositions in encouraging industries and promoting national identity.

The engagement of the Korean government with both Western and Japanese forms of exposition took two forms: externally, it involved Korean participation in foreign expositions, and internally, it was manifest in the organization of national expositions. Here, the third impetus to the conceptualization of *pangnamhoe* as a symbol of modernization came through Korea's internal experience of smaller national expositions and local industrial exhibitions in the 1900s. The first such event officially titled "exposition" (*pangnamhoe*) was the Japanese-Korean Merchandise Exposition (*Irhan sangp'um pangnamhoe* 日韓商品博覽會, Jp. *Nikkan shōhin hakurankai*) held in 1906 in Pusan, the largest city in South Kyōngsang Province. After that, despite the social and political turmoil that marked 1907, the first major exposition put on in the capital, the Kyōngsōng Exposition (*Kyōngsōng pangnamhoe* 京城博覽會, Jp. *Keijō hakurankai*), was held in



**Figure 3.** The front of the 1907 Kyōngsōng Exposition (Seoul Exhibition), 1907. Picture postcard, W 14.1, H 9.1 cm. From East Asia Image Collection, Imperial Postcard Collection, Lafayette College. <https://digital.lafayette.edu/collections/eastasia/imperial-postcards/ip0980>.

Kyōngsōng (figure 3). The Kyōngsōng Exposition not only provided the first opportunity for large numbers of Koreans to experience an exposition, but also served to establish the main features that would come to characterize later colonial expositions, including local industrial exhibitions in the early 1910s and the Chosōn Industrial Exhibition of 1915. The most important such feature was the staging of a contrast between the "modern" space and the "premodern" or "old" space. While displays of industrial products in a newly constructed or renovated Western-style pavilion represented aspirations to modernity, Korean folk arts and customs were exhibited as a way to contrast Korea's backwardness with Japan's modernizing progress. This strategy of contrast would be adopted by local industrial expositions as key components of success, and reappeared in the 1915 Chosōn Industrial Exhibition, albeit in a more advanced and complicated form.

By the early 1910s, the idea of *pangnamhoe* had seeped down to the local level, spawning a series of local industrial exhibitions, or *kongjinhoe* 共進會 (Jp. *kyōshinkai*). These industrial exhibitions were important precursors of the 1915 exhibition and continued to extend and popularize the idea of expositions among the wider Korean public.<sup>19</sup> The word *kongjinhoe*, instead of the more popularized term

17 *Kojong shillok* 高宗實錄 42, 12 July 1902; *Kojong shillok* 42, 29 August 1902.

18 "Mulp'um chinyöl" 物品陳列, *Hwangsōng shinmun*, 2 June 1903.

19 The actual name might vary, with terms such as *kyōngjinhoe* (competitive industrial exhibition, Jp. *kyōshinkai*), *kyōnbonshi* 見本市 (sample fair, Jp. *mihon'ichi*), and *p'ump'yōnghoe* 品評會 (product show, Jp. *hinpyōkai*) being used. The terms

*pangnamhoe*, became the official title of the Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition in 1915.<sup>20</sup> The term, literally meaning “gathering for mutual progress,” originated in the Japanese agricultural product exhibition held in Yokohama in 1879.<sup>21</sup> The Japanese *kyōshinkai* 共進會 (industrial exhibition) was initially a small competitive exhibition for a single kind of agricultural product, but it came to refer to a large-scale exposition that not only displayed products but also staged spectacular, entertaining events in Japan. After the industrial exhibitions were introduced into Korea, local governments also began to plan to mount industrial exhibitions, *kongjinhoe*, in Korea.<sup>22</sup> In the first stage of Japanese colonial rule of Korea, while maintaining a coercive political repression and a harsh administration that stifled the cultural and political lives of Koreans, the colonial government held a number of cultural events, such as a field day, lantern parades, a bicycle race, and a writing contest.<sup>23</sup> It was in this context that the local industrial exhibitions were held with the purpose of developing local industries and mobilizing local people to the government-driven events. Since Korea’s first *kongjinhoe*, the West Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition (*Sŏchosŏn mulsan kongjinhoe* 西朝鮮物産共進會), was held in 1913, a series of local industrial exhibitions had taken place. Not only did the local industrial exhibitions disseminate the idea of expositions to local

Korean people who had hardly been exposed to Western culture and modern technology, they also heralded the beginning, in earnest, of a series of colonial expositions that had played a crucial role in Japan’s colonial project in Korea since the official annexation of 1910. The national expositions and industrial exhibitions held in this period thus reflected both Korea’s failed struggle against the increasing Japanese political and economic domination and Japan’s intention to justify Japanese colonial annexation.

### Representations of “Modern Korea” in the 1915 Exhibition

The Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition took place in 1915, a significant year for Japan, as it marked not only twenty-five years of the constitutional government in modern Japan and the coronation of the new Taisho emperor, but also the passage of five years since the Japanese annexation of Korea. The annexation of Korea in 1910 established Japanese economic and political hegemony over East Asia, and more importantly, insinuated the legitimacy of Japan’s imperialism as the agency of the modernization of a backward region in East Asia. In this context, the 1915 exhibition offered an opportunity for Japan to impose itself as the hegemonic regional power and to gain international approval and internal legitimation for colonial rule. The 1915 exhibition was thus planned as political and economic propaganda to justify colonial rule, displaying “progress” and “modernization” established during the new regime. The exhibition was especially planned to educate and edify the local Koreans who had an antipathy not only against the Japanese colonial regime but also towards Western modernization itself. It can be said that, for the 1915 exhibition organizers, architecture was one of the most effective means of representing and visualizing modernization, because the first thing to catch a visitors’ eye upon entering the exhibition was a series of huge pavilions.

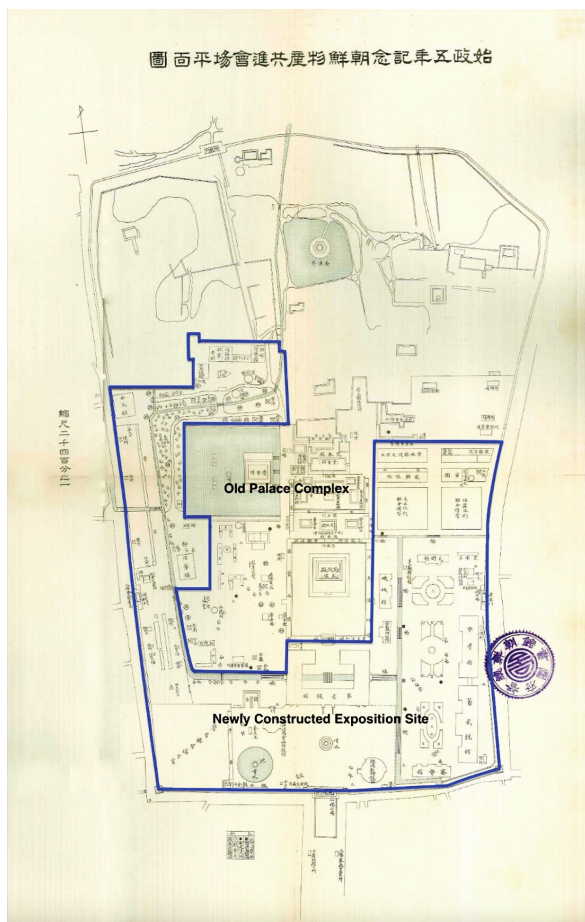
The 1915 exhibition took place at Kyōngbok Palace (Kyōngbok kung 景福宮), a prime symbol of the Chosŏn dynasty and the largest of the five grand palaces of the dynasty. For the Japanese colonial government, on the one hand, the Kyōngbok Palace itself was a symbol of Korean royal authority to be destroyed, but on the other hand, this symbol of power

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*pangnamhoe* and *kongjinhoe* were reserved for large-scale events.

- 20 In 1913, the first Japanese Governor General, Terauchi Masatake 寺内正毅 (1852-1919), approved the plan for holding a “great commemorative exposition” in Seoul. However, he changed the official title of the event, from *pangnamhoe* to *kongjinhoe*, insisting that “it should not be called an exposition to collect and display this limited, small number of exhibits.” See “Taegyōngsōng pangnamhoe kyehoe” 大京城博覽會計劃, *Maeil shinbo* 毎日申報, 29 July 1913; “Kongjinhoe wiwōne taehan ch’ongdok hunshi” 共進會委員에 對한 總督訓示, *Maeil shinbo*, 19 August 1914.
- 21 Impressed by the French agricultural fairs aiming to promote the improvement of agricultural products through competition and awards, Matsukata Masayoshi 松方正義 (1835-1924), then head of the Agricultural Promotion Bureau in the Ministry of the Interior, organized the first *kyōshinkai*. See Reischauer, *Samurai and Silk*, pp. 221-22.
- 22 The contemporary Korean newspapers covered the Japanese industrial exhibitions, such as the Fukuoka Kyōshinkai of 1909 and the Nagoya Kyōshinkai of 1910. See *Hwangsōng shinmun*, 23 November 1909; *Hwangsōng shinmun*, 9 February 1910.
- 23 See, for example, “Chōn’go mijūngyuūi taeundonghoe” 前古未曾有の大運動會, *Maeil shinbo*, 29 April 1912, and “Ssangnyun kyōngjaengūi sōnghwang” 雙輪競爭의 盛況, *Maeil shinbo*, 15 April 1913.





**Figure 4.** The 1915 exhibition plan (old palace space and new exhibition space), 1916. Site map marked by author. From Chōsen sōtokufu, *Shisei gonon kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*.

could be appropriated for their own ends, to represent the colonial government's legitimacy as making "new modern" Korea. The Government General attempted to justify colonial rule in Korea by clearly contrasting the corrupt, incompetent old Chosŏn dynasty with the remarkable achievements of the new colonial regime. Accordingly, the architecture of the 1915 exhibition represented a visible dichotomy: the traditional Korean palace buildings on the northwest, and newly constructed Western-style pavilions on the east (figure 4).

A large part of the palace structure, a floor space of 791.8 *p'yōng* 坪, or approximately 28,172 square feet, including fifteen palace buildings and nine gates, was destroyed for the construction of new



**Figure 5.** First Main Exhibition Hall, the 1915 exhibition, 1916. Photograph. From Chōsen sōtokufu, *Shisei gonon kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*.



**Figure 6.** Machinery Hall, the 1915 exhibition, 1916. Photograph. From Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Shisei gonon kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*.

exhibition pavilions.<sup>24</sup> As a symbol of modern and Western architecture, the First Main Exhibition Hall (figure 5) was constructed on the former site of the Hŭngnye Gate (Hŭngnye mun 興禮門) sphere, a plaza with a secondary gate, between the Kwanghwa Gate (Kwanghwa mun 光化門) and the Throne Hall, Kŭnjōng Hall (Kŭnjōng jōn 勤政殿). East of the building, the former site of the Tong kung 東宮 (eastern palace complex) was used as the main site for newly constructed exhibition pavilions, such as the Machinery Hall (figure 6) and the Forestry Special Exhibition Hall.

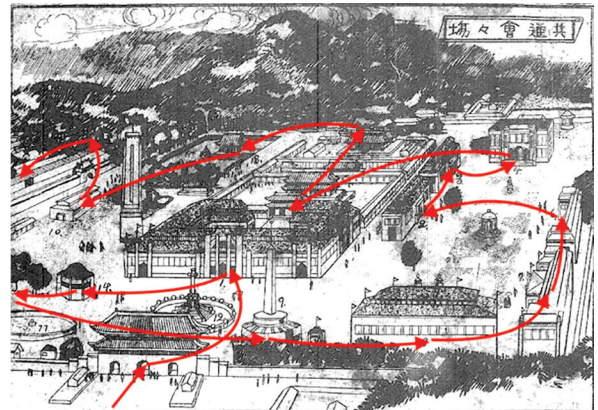
24 Munhwajaech'ōng, *Kyōngbokkung Pyōnch'ōn*sa, pp. 71-72.

While the Government General destroyed a considerable number of palace buildings and built new Western-style pavilions at the site, the remaining palace buildings, such as the Kŭnjŏng Hall, Sajŏng Hall (Sajŏng jŏn 思政殿), Kangnyŏng Hall (Kangnyŏng jŏn 康寧殿), and Kyot'ae Hall (Kyot'ae jŏn 交泰殿) were utilized as small exhibition halls and supplementary facilities such as a reception hall and exhibition offices. The organizers carefully arranged pavilions and facilities on the ground, positioning the new Western-style pavilions on the east and the old palace buildings on the west. Furthermore, according to the exhibition guidelines published in two major newspapers, the *Maeil shinbo* and *Keijō nippō* 京城日報, visitors were supposed to follow the specific route the exhibition organizers offered:

The exhibition office announced a tour guide for general visitors' convenience, providing a proper visiting route in the exhibition, numbered from one to twenty, as follows:

- (1) First Main Exhibition Hall 第一號館; (2) Oriental Development Company Special Exhibition Hall 東洋拓殖會社特別館; (3) Livestock Hall 畜産館; (4) Fishpond; (5) Railway Special Exhibition Hall 鐵道局特別館; (6) Development Display Hall 審勢館; (7) Second Main Exhibition Hall 第二號館; (8) Product Display Hall 參考館; (9) Forestry Special Exhibition Hall 營林廠特設館; (10) Machinery Hall 機械館; (11) Education and Training Hall 教育實習館; (12) Outside Displays (Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6); (13) Art Museum 美術館; (14) Fishery Annex; (15) Agriculture Annex; (16) Benevolence Hall 博愛館; (17) Art Museum Annex 美術館分館 1 and 2 (one outside the Annex); (18) Print and Photography Hall 印刷寫真館; (19) Special Observatory Hall 觀測特別館; (20) Shops and Entertainment Facilities.<sup>25</sup>

The route was intended to guide visitors to the exhibition space that was divided into two contrasting parts,



**Figure 7.** Flow of visitors in the exhibition, 1915. Map marked by author. From *Maeil shinbo*, 3 September 1915.

the “modern” space and the “premodern” or “old” space (figure 7).

After entering the gate, visitors' tours began at the First Main Exhibition Hall, which was designed as a massive, monumental building to arouse visitors' admiration for size and visual modernity. The deliberate experience of “modernity” at the exhibition continued in the following exhibition pavilions that were built and decorated in a modern, Western style, such as the Railway Special Exhibition Hall, the Development Display Hall, the Second Main Exhibition Hall, the Product Display Hall, the Forestry Special Exhibition Hall, the Machinery Hall, and the Art Museum. After witnessing “progress and development” inscribed in the spectacular modern buildings, visitors encountered the old buildings used as an ancillary exhibition hall or supplementary facility of the exhibition, such as the Kŭnjŏng Hall, the Sajŏng Hall, and the Kyot'ae Hall, which were once symbols of a splendid and powerful dynasty. This architectural representation followed a precedent of that of the Tokyo Taisho Exhibition (*Tōkyō Taishō hakurankai* 東京大正博覧会) of 1914, where the Western-style pavilions denoted “modernizing Japan” and the Chosen (Korean) Pavilion was built in the traditional “native” Korean style.<sup>26</sup> This visual contrast was echoed in the official poster of the 1915 exhibition, with the juxtaposition of two locations of the exhibition site in the background: the desolate and empty Kyōngbok Palace surrounded by autumn leaves, and the crowded bright space of new exhibition

<sup>25</sup> “Tae kongjinhoe: Kak kwanūi kwallamsun” 大共進會: 各館の觀覽順, *Maeil shinbo*, 17 September 1915; “Kanran junjo” 觀覽順序, *Keijō nippō*, 18 September 1915. In his book, *Kongjinhoe shillok*, the journalist Sōnu Il 鮮于日 (1881–1936) described a more detailed but very similar route with a map. See Sōnu, *Kongjinhoe shillok* and the map on the first page of the book.

<sup>26</sup> Tanaka, *Guide to the Tokyo Taisho Exhibition*, p. 40.



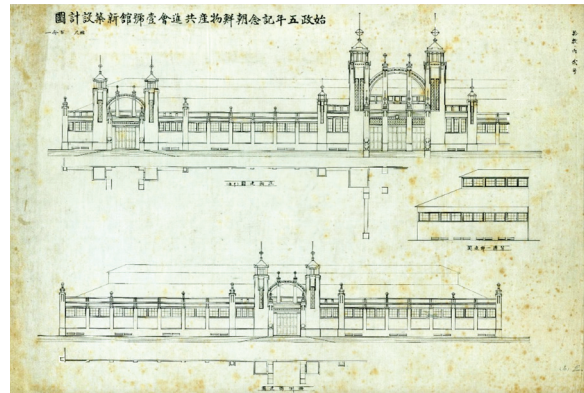


**Figure 8.** The official poster of the 1915 exhibition, 1916. Photograph. From Keijō Kyōsankai, *Shisei gonen kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai keijō kyōsankai hōkoku*.

pavilions decorated with flowers (figure 8).

According to the official report of the 1915 exhibition, the pavilions of the exhibition, except the Railway Special Exhibition Hall and the Grand Event Hall, were designed in the Renaissance style with decorative elements of the Secession style such as linear and geometric patterns or floral-shaped ornamentation.<sup>27</sup> Though the architects had originally aspired to create outstanding grand pavilions, they ended up constructing temporary wooden structures made of inexpensive pine and cedar wood due to a limited budget and a short timeline, with the exception of the Art Museum, the

27 Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Shisei gonen kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*, vol. 1, pp. 54–56. However, the architectural style of the pavilions was, technically, more of an American Beaux-Arts style than Renaissance style.



**Figure 9.** Architectural drawing for the construction of the First Main Exhibition Hall, 1915. From Kukka kirogwōn, *Ilche sigi kōnch'uk tomyōn haeje*, p. 180, fig. 114.

only permanent stone building in the 1915 exhibition.<sup>28</sup> In order to better optimize the efficiency of these simple and functional structures similar to warehouses or factories, the architects constructed them using monitor roofs with clerestories for day lighting and indoor illumination (figure 9). In sharp contrast to the simple wooden buildings, the façade of each building was decorated magnificently in the Renaissance and Secession styles. In a strict sense, the façade itself was not designed in the authentic Renaissance style as it used high towers and much higher arches over the roof, which is rarely found in typical Renaissance architecture.<sup>29</sup> The high towers and arches were also found in the 1914 Tokyo Taisho Exhibition architecture that adopted the Renaissance and Secession styles. In contemporary Japan, the Renaissance style signified Western civilization and its authority, while the Secession styles denoted the most recent, up to date Western model.<sup>30</sup> The architects of the 1915 exhibition made a very similar decision. In addition to Western architectural styles, the architects intended to make the main exhibition halls look much higher and grander, by mounting high towers and arches on the façade.

28 In contrast to the temporary pavilions, the Art Museum was constructed as a permanent, two-story building in the authentic Renaissance style. The exhibition in the Art Museum was the first major public art exhibition open to ordinary Koreans on a large scale and introduced “Korean art” framed by colonial and institutional discourses.

29 Kang, “Kūndaeüi hwansang,” pp. 290–92.

30 Fujimori, *Nihon no kindai kenchiku, jō*, pp. 34–35.

The adoption of the novel Western architectural style served as a tangible expression of eager aspiration toward Westernization both in modern Japan and Korea. The Rokumeikan 鹿鳴館 is one example of the Japanese government's preference for Western architecture in the late nineteenth century. This large two-storied building, designed by British architect Josiah Conder (1852–1920) and completed in 1883, was a diplomatic space to entertain Western visitors and a symbol of Japan's rapid Westernization in the Meiji period.<sup>31</sup> By the same token, since he proclaimed the Taehan Empire in 1897, King Kojong constructed Western-style buildings in the Kyōngun Palace (Kyōngun kung 慶運宮) that presented an image of modernity. Examples are the Chungmyōng Hall (Chungmyōng jōn 重明殿), the Tondōk Hall (Tondōk jōn 惇德殿), and the Sōkcho Hall (Sōkcho jōn 石造殿).<sup>32</sup> Just as Japan had sought to identify itself with Western powers by adopting a Western lifestyle and Western architecture, the construction of Western-style buildings in the Kyōngun Palace was intended both to affirm the sovereignty of the Korean Empire on equal terms with the West and to demonstrate that Korea had joined the “civilized” Western world. In the protectorate period and the early colonial period in Korea, the Japanese colonial authorities continued to construct modern institutions in Renaissance architectural style, such as the T'akchibu 度支部 (Ministry of Finance) building in 1907, the P'yōngniwōn 平理院 (High Court of Justice) in 1908, the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce building in 1910, and the Oriental Development Company building in 1911. The buildings show that the Japanese colonial rulers adopted the Western architectural style to visualize “modernity” and “civilization.” In the same context, although it was not the authentic Renaissance style, the organizers of the 1915 exhibition attempted to present a “modernizing Korea” by constructing the unfamiliar, large Western-style edifices that contrasted with the traditional palace buildings.

While the exterior of the new pavilions was decorated with a splendid and magnificent façade, the safety and durability of the buildings took second place to the symbolic significance of the architecture in displaying

the achievements of the colonial government. The exhibition buildings were temporary structures hastily built under time pressure, and thus some structural problems were discovered even before the opening of the exhibition.<sup>33</sup> Despite the architectural shortcomings, however, it is easy to imagine that Korean visitors would have recognized the striking contrast presented in the new modern pavilions and the old palace. The new buildings' style and the huge scale were unfamiliar and overwhelming to the local Korean populace, and a Korean visitor described it as “surprisingly marvelous architecture.”<sup>34</sup> Contrary to the embodiment of the Western virtues of progress and modernity in the new pavilions, the old palace, as an antithesis of these virtues, was an effective site to symbolize the colonial discourses proposed by the colonial government. But at the same time, the symbolic meaning of the palace was not simply deconstructed nor removed from the collective memory of Korean people. Rather, it brought mixed and often ambivalent responses of visitors to tradition and modernity, which played an important part in generating the discursive field that complicated the Korean nation, nationalism, and the modern subject in the early colonial period, as will be discussed later in this article.

The contrast presented in the 1915 exhibition architecture was echoed in the particular hierarchical display strategies based on the temporal order and teleological framework of development in which Korean industry and society were presented as evolving from the backward past to the more advanced and modernized present stage. Since the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace in 1851, international expositions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had turned the abstract idea of “progress” into a visual and corporeal experience through dazzling spectacles of abundant industrial products. The idea of progress was enhanced in particular at the colonial expositions in order to make the benevolent contribution of colonial rule to the colony's development more convincing. In the same context, the rhetoric of “progress” in the 1915

31 Kirishiki, *Meiji no kenchiku*, pp. 89–90.

32 For more on the Western-style buildings constructed in the Kyōngun Palace during the Taehan Empire, see Woo, “Kyōngun'gungūi yanggwandŭl.”

33 After heavy rain on 21, 22, and 25 August 1915, for example, water leaked through cracks in the walls of the exhibition pavilions, just a few weeks before the opening day in September of 1915. “Kanguwa kongjinhoejang” 強雨와 共進會場, *Maeil shinbo*, 27 August 1915.

34 “Kongjinhoe kwallam chessiege” 共進會 觀覽 諸氏에게, *Maeil shinbo*, 6 October 1915.



exhibition was directly connected to the Japanese colonial government. As emphasized repeatedly in the 1915 exhibition documents and contemporary print media, the displays in the exhibition were principally designed to review and showcase the “moral and material progress” made since the annexation “in a more tangible and effective form.”<sup>35</sup> As introduced in a considerable number of American newspapers, “side by side with the new are frequently placed products of the old Korean regime with the idea of bringing to public notice the results of the new Japanese administration.”<sup>36</sup> The rhetoric of “progress” in the 1915 exhibition also rested on the principle of classification by nations, focusing on the striking difference and gap in national strength between Korea and Japan.<sup>37</sup> The effective strategy of comparison and contrast between objects was most evident in the exhibitions of the First and Second Main Exhibition Halls and the Development Display Hall. Although innumerable industrial products displayed in the First and Second Main Exhibition Halls were arranged in a hierarchical order of development, the Development Display Hall presented products and materials submitted by the thirteen provinces in Korea.<sup>38</sup> According to the exhibition organizers, this allowed a comparison of developments between provinces, highlighting the current progress under the colonial government. In the Product Display Hall, too, a sharp contrast between Korean and superior Japanese products was intended to manifest the status of the Japanese empire as a powerful political and economic leader in East Asia and to jus-

tify Japan’s “benevolent intervention” to lead progress in Korea.

The displays in the 1915 exhibition were framed and espoused by the specific discourse of “civilization” in which the Korean local discourse of *munmyōng kaehwa* and the discourse of Japan’s civilizing mission were intertwined and contested. Just as the Western international expositions represented the binary opposition between the civilization and modernization of the colonizers and the barbarity and savagery of colonized peoples, Japan also needed to emphasize differences between “backward Korea” and “modern Japan” to justify its duty to lead the barbarous Korean people to the civilized modern world. In this context, the exhibition organizers attempted to contrast Korea’s uncivilized past with the civilizing and modernizing Korea accomplished by Japanese colonial rule. Nowhere was this more evident than in the Second Main Exhibition Hall, for example, in the displays of penitentiary systems and hygiene exhibits.<sup>39</sup> Comparing the old and new penal systems, visitors were led to witness the apparently dramatic shift from the brutal and savage punishment and interrogation methods to the more rational and civilized penitentiary system. The new penal system was one of the important civilization and modernization projects led by the colonial government, even though the brutal corporal punishment was not abolished until 1920, but rather was strengthened by the colonial authorities and disguised under the “modern” form of a new penitentiary.<sup>40</sup> Also, exhibitions on hygiene clearly showed the dichotomy between the “backward” traditional healthcare and modern scientific medicine. In Japan, the Sixth National Exposition for the Promotion of Industry in 1907 and the Tokyo Taisho Exhibition in 1914 presented the ideas and practices of modern hygiene and sanitation by displaying bacteria samples, anatomical specimens, and modern medical appliances and systems to create an international image of Japan as a civilized modern country, and domestically to show a set of schemes or programs by which the state applied

35 Government General of Chosen, *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen 1915-16*, p. 1.

36 “Japanese Fair Opens in Korea: Comparison Made Between Industrial Stage, Now and Before Japanese Control,” *Wausau Daily Herald*, 8 November 1915; “What Japan has done for Korea: A Big Industrial Exposition Showing Results of Japanese Rule Opens in Seoul,” *The High Point Enterprise*, 8 November 1915.

37 The rhetoric of progress in the international expositions in the late nineteenth century, as Tony Bennett has argued, had been transferred “from the relations between stages of production to the relations between races and nations by superimposing the associations of the former on to the latter.” See Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p. 82.

38 The Development Display Hall (Shimsegwan, literally meaning “hall to assess current conditions”) was originally named Tosegwan 道勢館, a hall to show the conditions of the thirteen provinces (*do* 道) in Korea, which later changed to Shimsegwan, a hall to assess conditions and development (of each province). For a detailed description of the early plans of the 1915 exhibition, see Kukka kirogwōn, *Ilche sigi kōnch’uk tomyōn haeje*, pp. 170-85.

39 For the displays of penitentiary systems in the Japanese colonial expositions, see Yamaji, *Kindai Nihon no shokuminchi hakurankai*, pp. 127-28.

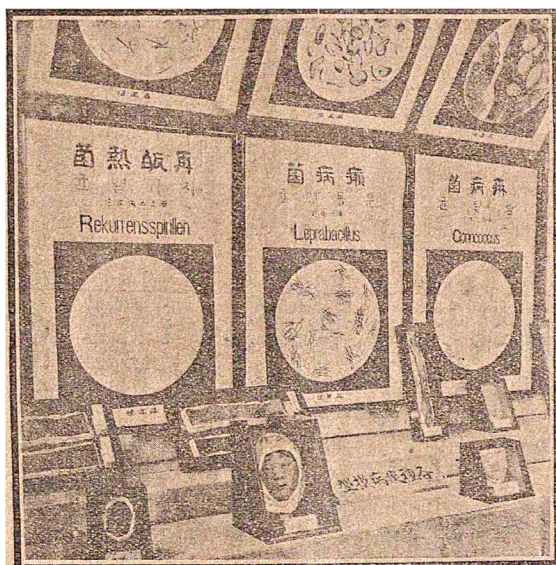
40 Due to a limited budget, the Government General could not construct enough new prison buildings to hold the increasing number of criminals, and instead of corporal punishment considered a more effective and lower cost punishment method. See Yum, “1910 nyōndae ilcheūi t’aehyōngjedo shihaenggwa unyong.”

**Table 1.** Exhibition pavilions and facilities of the 1915 exhibition. Based on Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Shisei gonen kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*, vol. 1, pp. 107-27.

	Pavilion / Facility	Purpose
<b>Main Exhibition Pavilion</b>	First Main Exhibition Hall (Cheirhogwan 第一號館)	Exhibition: Division 1 (Agriculture) through 6 (Manufacturing Industry)
	Second Main Exhibition Hall (Cheihogwan 第二號館)	Exhibition: Division 7 (Provisional Imperial Monetary Grants Project) through 12 (Police Affairs and Penitentiary)
	Art Museum (Misulgwan 美術館)	Exhibition: Division 13 (Fine Art and Archaeology)
<b>Special Exhibition Pavilion</b>	Development Display Hall (Shimsegwan 審勢館)	Exhibition: Colonial Achievement in the 13 Local Provinces
	Oriental Development Company Special Exhibition Hall (Tongyang ch'ōkshik hoesa t'ūksōlgwan 東洋拓殖會社特別館)	Exhibition: Performance of the Oriental Development Company
	Railway Special Exhibition Hall (Ch'ōltoguk t'ūksōlgwan 鐵道局特別館)	Exhibition: Trains and Railway Models
	Product Display Hall (Ch'amgogwan 參考館)	Exhibition: Foreign Products
	Forestry Special Exhibition Hall (Yōngnimch'ang t'ūksōlgwan 營林廠特設館)	Exhibition: Forest Resources
	Machinery Hall (Kigyegwan 機械館)	Exhibition: Foreign Machines
	Benevolence Hall (Pagaegwan 博愛館)	Exhibition: Red Cross Relief Supplies
<b>Additional Exhibition Hall / Outside Display</b>	First Main Exhibition Hall Annex (Cheirhogwan pun'gwan 第一號館分館)	Exhibition: Agricultural and Fishery Tools
	Art Museum Annex (Misulgwan pun'gwan 美術館分館)	Exhibition: Division 13 (Fine Art and Archaeology)
	Reference Art Museum (Ch'amgo misulgwan 參考美術館)	Exhibition: Division 13 (Antiques, Contemporary Artworks)
	Ancient Tomb Replica Hall (Kobun mohyōnggwan 古墳模型館)	Exhibition: Ancient Tomb Replica
	Print and Photography Hall (Inswae sajin'gwan 印刷寫真館)	Exhibition: Division 6 (Photographs and Stationery)
	Special Observatory Hall (Kwanch'ūk t'ūksōlgwan 觀測特別館)	Exhibition: Weather Research Craft and Astronomical Instruments
	Education and Training Hall (Kyoyuk shilsūpkwan 教育實習館)	Exhibition: Industrial Education
	Livestock Hall (Ch'uksan'gwan 畜產館) and Fishpond	Exhibition: Cowshed, Pigsty, Coop, Fishpond
	Outside Display Space	Exhibition: Ceramics, Irrigation Association Model, Flowers and Plants

<b>Entertainment Area</b>	Music Hall (Ŭmaktang 音樂堂)	Band Performance and Concert
	Grand Event Hall (Yönyegwan 演藝館)	Dance Performance, Play Performance, Traditional Korean Performance, Festival Event
	Entertainment Facilities (Hünghaengjang 興行場)	Diorama, Maze, Mystery Room, Circus, Swing Ride, Zoo, Motion Picture Theater
<b>Supplementary Facility</b>	Ceremonial Hall in Künjōng Hall (Künjōng jōn 勤政殿; Thorne Hall)	Official Ceremonies
	Guesthouse in Kyot'ae Hall (Kyot'ae jōn 交泰殿; Queen's residing quarters)	Receptions
	Reception Hall in Kyōnghoe Pavilion (Kyōnghoe ru 慶會樓; Royal Banquet Hall)	Receptions
	United Mission Hall (Yōnhapchōndogwan 聯合傳道館)	Mission Works by the Council of the Presbyterian Church in Korea
	Exposition Office, Province Offices, Provisional Branch of the Customhouse	Administrative Office
	Exhibit Review Department	Review of Exhibits for Reward
	Security Office	Security Management
	First-aid Station, Rest Area, Fire Station, Pressroom, Restroom	Visitor Support Facility
	Post Office, Police Office	Visitor Support Facility
	Shops	Sale of Local Products

its control on the social body.<sup>41</sup> In a similar vein, the 1915 exhibition was an important opportunity for the colonial government to educate, discipline, and control the Korean populace in terms of modern public health and sanitation. The exhibitions on hygiene in the Second Main Exhibition Hall consisted of two parts: propagandistic displays to show the improved results brought about by the colonial administration, such as statistics of disease incidence rates and diagrams of modern medical institutions, and educational and informative exhibits including bacteria specimens, photographs and drawings of germs, blood samples, anatomical models, and modern and traditional medical appliances and remedies (figure 10).<sup>42</sup> It clearly shows the exhibition organizers' intention to emphasize the



**Figure 10.** Second Main Exhibition Hall, displays of Division 11 (Hygiene and Charity), diagrams of bacteria and viruses, 1915. Photograph. From *Maeil shinbo*, 14 October 1915.

41 For the exhibitions on hygiene, see Ono, "Seiketsu" no kindai, pp. 138–39.

42 Sōnu, *Kongjinhoe shillok*, pp. 530–53.

“enlightened and civilized” present brought about by the colonial government’s modernization projects.

By the time of the 1915 exhibition, Japan had been consolidating its political and economic domination over East Asia, offering an opportunity for Japan to impose itself as the hegemonic regional power and to gain international approval and internal legitimation for colonial rule. The 1915 exhibition not only reflected the Japanese government’s interest in showing its colonial accomplishments, but also represented delicately designed blueprints for the future of a modernized and civilized Korea that could only be achieved by the Japanese colonial project, as the Government General explicitly manifested that “the exhibition was planned not only to commemorate the successful administration of the new regime for the past five years and to show its results, but also to stimulate the further improvement of industries, agriculture and other measures” in Korea.<sup>43</sup>

### Experiencing Modernity and “New Modern Subjects”

The 1915 exhibition performed one of the traditional functions of international expositions: a presentation of industrial progress and modernization of the country. However, the exhibition was not just a machine for constructing political messages and cultural meanings; it was also a training machine, positioning visitors as the new national subjects of its modern spectacle. In order to understand it, it is important to identify the subject of address of the exhibition, focusing on the ways in which visitors, especially ordinary Koreans, experienced, understood, and responded to the exhibition. It is difficult to explore audience reactions because material relevant to visitors’ experiences or responses is limited and scattered, and the contemporary print media did not show the various responses of spectators but rather propagandistic appraisal managed or censored by the Government General. Perhaps the most detailed and comprehensive description of Korean visitors to the exhibition appears in a report by an American missionary, Edwin Wade Koons (1880–1947):

They are all here to see, and most of them are getting more new impressions in an hour than they usually do in a month, spent in the placid routine of the home farm or little village. They are storing up memories that will be the basis of conversation for a decade. When the Spring vaccination time comes around, they can tell all about how the vaccine is prepared, for they have seen the whole thing in the Medical Exhibit. They have seen the light-houses, and the mechanically moved steamships on the big map. They have smelled the fish section (no one will ever forget that experience) and admired the little models that show the latest in irrigating projects. They have seen the power pump that makes a waterfall in the machinery building, and have marveled over the new farming machinery and tools, so different from all they have ever tried, and yet, strange to say, so handy that one can do twice as much work in a day as with the old Korean hand-hoe. Some of them have bought trinkets and gifts for the ones at home, and all of them have new ideas seething in their brains, ideas that will be working out their fulfillment in the coming years. The crowd is the thing, here as everywhere. One longs to know what they are really thinking of it all, and wishes he could follow them home, and really understand them.<sup>44</sup>

The article shows the visitors’ varied experiences in the 1915 exhibition: to visit the exhibition site and the capital city from their rural local provinces; to see the novel exhibits and spectacular performances; to learn to behave properly by following instructions; to purchase industrial products; and to return home with memories of the exhibition. Also, a *Maeil shinbo* newspaper article provides valuable clues on visitors’ experiences and responses.

Before the industrial exhibition opened, there was much concern among the government officials that the exhibition site might be extremely crowded, chaotic, and disordered. Contrary to expectation, however, there has been no disorderly conduct, even though streets and shops in the city have been very busy and overflowing with a huge number of visitors and spectators. Almost ten days

43 Government General of Chosen, “Plan of Industrial Exhibition,” *Annual Report*, pp. 134–35.

44 Koons, “Impressions of the Industrial Exhibition,” p. 345.



have passed since the opening of the exhibition, but no one got drunk; no one argued; no one behaved recklessly in the exhibition site. Visitors have maintained their dignity as people of a civilized nation, by behaving modestly and seeing the exhibitions in an orderly manner, which means that the exhibition is playing its role properly. This calls for a celebration.<sup>45</sup>

The exhibition organizers attempted to control and normalize the behavior of visitors and to subject them to new kinds of disciplines, inducing them to dress properly, to behave properly, and to follow the specific codes of viewers at the exhibition. Given the descriptions of visitors and their responses discussed above, we can see the 1915 exhibition as an efficient and successful training machine in constructing a “civilized modern subject” and, to use sociologist Tony Bennett’s term, “a voluntarily self-regulating citizenry.”<sup>46</sup> However, the 1915 exhibition was not just a rigidly organized and seamlessly managed place where the body of visitors was physically controlled and regulated; it was a site of contestations and conflicts between the organizers’ original intentions and visitors’ actual responses, as well as a space of discrepant and conflicting experiences of the Korean masses. Above all, there was another danger that was never entirely eliminated or controlled: public hygiene.

The 1915 exhibition held safety and health implications for over one million people who came to Kyōngsōng. It was noted that epidemics often broke out in the hot and humid summer months in Korea, and thus the Government General had to try to prevent an

outbreak of any epidemic disease such as cholera and dysentery. As a result, in June 1915, the government established the Special Department of Hygiene for the 1915 exhibition and proclaimed the Ordinance for the Prevention of Communicable Diseases (Chōnyōm-byōng yebangnyōng 傳染病豫防令) with specific sanitary regulations. It was followed by regular hygiene inspections by sanitary police to check household sanitary conditions, including toilets and wells.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, in August 1915, the Kyōngsōng police embarked on a series of general cleanups and sanitary projects, modifying and installing toilets and wells, and exterminating vermin.<sup>48</sup> For Korean reformist elites, too, the promotion of public health by the colonial government may have been considered one of the essential means of civilizing and modernizing the Korean nation. As we have seen above, the striking exhibition of bacteria specimens or modern medical appliances drew viewers and connected them to the issues of modern hygiene and public health. According to the Government General, the host city of Kyōngsōng itself was an exhibition space to display modern hygiene and sanitariness and to effectively educate its visitors.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, around the time of the 1915 exhibition, Koreans in Kyōngsōng often had to experience or endure the coercive, even humiliating random inspections of households and physical examinations by sanitary police that usually entailed the harsh corporeal punishment of people who violated the regulations. It is therefore not surprising that the regulations generated severe conflict between the colonial government and the Korean populace who had persistently resisted the sanitary policies incompatible with their traditional principles and values.<sup>50</sup> In the 1915 exhibition site, too, the sanitary regulations related to public toilets, disinfection procedures, and personal hygiene rules entailed conflicts and disagreements with visitors, which were partially due to the low number of sanitary police officers in the exhibition compared to the huge crowds of visitors.<sup>51</sup>

45 “Kongjinhoe kugyōng (12)” 共進會 구경 (12), *Maeil shinbo*, 20 September 1915. On 12 September 1915, the *Maeil shinbo* carried two photographs of visitors standing at the exhibition entrance, the Kwanghwa Gate, with a caption stating “thousands of officials and people who are properly dressed are waiting for the opening ceremony in a highly orderly manner.” See “Kaejangsōnōn tae Kongjinhoe” 開場宣言 大共進會, *Maeil shinbo*, 12 September 1915.

46 Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p. 63. Bennett argues that, following the Chartists’ mass protests, the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London was a counter-revolutionary measure, pacifying crowds and disciplining visitors as they took part in its display: “One of the architectural innovations of the Crystal Palace consisted in the arrangement of relations between the public and exhibits so that, while everyone could see, there were vantage points from which everyone could be seen, thus combining the functions of spectacle and surveillance.” See Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p. 65.

47 “Kongjinhoewa kyōngch’al” 共進會外 警察, *Maeil shinbo*, 17 June 1915.

48 “Kongjinhoewa taesoje” 共進會外 大掃除, *Maeil shinbo*, 1 August 1915; “Kongjinhoe chōn kyōngsōng wisaeng ch’ōnggyōl saōp” 共進會前京城衛生清潔事業, *Maeil shinbo*, 6 August 1915.

49 Chōsen Sōtokufu, “Keijō ni okeru eisei setsubi no kinkyō,” p. 126.

50 “Hanyak p’ibyōngwōn munje” 韓藥 避病院 問題, *Maeil shinbo*, 11 July 1915.

51 According to the *Maeil shinbo*, only three police officers took on the duties of cleaning and food hygiene inspection in the 1915

Yet, perhaps a more significant concern of the organizers was the visitors who were distracted from the original messages of the exhibition. The 1915 exhibition offered a forum not only for the display of progress or industrialization, but also for the transmission of concepts about “modern” life, especially represented in the spectacles of technology, entertainment, and consumerism. This was, in fact, the main reason that attracted the Korean populace to the exhibition. While the Government General, exhibition organizers, and local government officials sought to create various strategies to mobilize Korean visitors, the number of visitors was not merely a result of the colonial government’s forceful mobilization policy: it would not have been possible without the collaboration of the local elites and the voluntary reaction of the Korean populace. For many local Korean people, it was the first opportunity to see the capital city and to experience not only a national event, but also “modern” technologies, such as trains, trams, and electric lights. The American missionary William Arthur Noble (1866–1945) described the local Korean people he encountered at the 1915 exhibition site: “The people came from all over the country, men and women who had never seen the capital before. They came from the most distant mountain villages, delightful, simple folks [...]”<sup>52</sup> Indeed, an enormous number of Korean people from every corner of the country crowded around the exhibition site and encountered various new “modern” landscapes. The spectacle of various modern technologies and rides in the entertainment area thus gathered a huge number of visitors, but it inevitably drew visitors’ attention away from the “serious” main exhibitions carefully designed by the organizers to emphasize “civilized and enlightened” Korea under Japanese colonial rule. Furthermore, thousands of visitors jostled each other to see the displays in the extremely overcrowded exhibition halls, which hampered their close observation of the exhibits.

Despite the concern about distraction, the visitors’ impressions of spectacular scenes of electric illumination (figure 11) were one of the most common responses published in the official reports and government bulletin on the exhibition, because, in part, it was in

accord with the colonial government’s intention to stress “modernizing” Korea. After coming back from the 1915 exhibition tour, for example, the local Korean people in Yŏngyang of North Kyŏngsang Province described how amazed, even frightened, they were when they encountered the spectacles of modern technology.<sup>53</sup> The electric illumination in the exhibition site was described as the “most striking” scene and something that “led people to be lost in a reverie and a fantastic world.”<sup>54</sup> The technology of electricity was a symbol of enlightenment and modernity both for the Korean reformist officials and for the Japanese colonial government. The electric lighting that had been limited to the Royal Palace buildings and foreign residential areas of Kyŏngsŏng in the late 1880s had been expanded throughout the city in the early 1900s by extending networks of electric lines as the public lighting project of the Taehan Empire. It had an important symbolic role in visualizing the modernization projects as a way of enlightening the Korean public. The 1915 exhibition organizers, too, employed the electric light in order to attract visitors and propagandize the colonial government’s duty to enlighten and civilize the “dark” and “barbarous” Korean masses. For Korean spectators, especially for local residents who had hardly had an opportunity to see electric light, the illumination at the 1915 exhibition site was, not surprisingly, an unprecedented spectacle, and they called the exhibition “the exhibition of fire” and “the exhibition of light.”<sup>55</sup>

The festive atmosphere with illuminations was further heightened by the entertainment area, the most popular and crowded attraction in the 1915 exhibition. However, both the exhibition organizers and Korean reformist elites criticized the festive atmosphere and the ignorance of the Korean populace, who were so preoccupied with the entertainment that they never understood the exhibition’s significance and original meaning:

Most visitors have given no thought to the exhibits, just saying, “All is great” or “Everything is surprising and marvelous.” [...] However, they

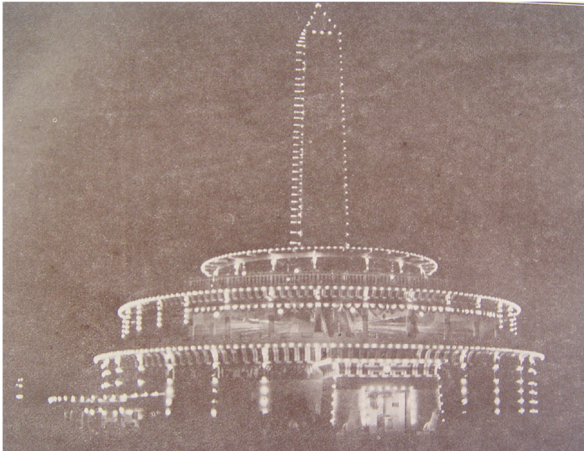
exhibition site. See “Chudohan changnae kyŏngbi” 周到한 場內 警備, *Maeil shinbo*, 1 October 1915.

52 “Evangelistic Effort in Korea,” *The Wilkes-Barre Record*, 10 December 1915, p. 23.

53 “Karyū kanransha no danpen” 下流觀覽者の談片, *Tōyō jihō* 東洋時報, 2 January 1916, quoted in Keijōfu, *Keijō fushi*, vol. 3, pp. 264–65.

54 “Kongjinhoe ilgi,” p. 56.

55 “Kodaedoenün pam kwanggyōng” 苦待되는 밤 光景, *Maeil shinbo*, 12 September 1915.



**Figure 11.** Illumination of the Railway Special Hall, 1916. Photograph. From Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Shisei gonen kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*.

totally misunderstood the exhibition. They just considered the exhibition as an attraction that should be full of marvelous and extraordinary things to watch and listen to.<sup>56</sup>

As this quote from the *Maeil shinbo* suggests, it is evident that the majority of the Korean visitors did not really understand the political and educational meanings and intentions of the 1915 exhibition, and so the colonial government and exhibition organizers published and disseminated a considerable number of articles about the “proper” way of seeing and the “desirable” perspective of visitors.<sup>57</sup> However, while the Korean reformist officials and elites noted and stressed the significant role of the 1915 exhibition in developing Korean industries, most of the Korean populace were excited to see the spectacular performances and events in the exhibition, being surprised and amazed by the spectacles of technology and amusement. A considerable number of local visitors did not even try to see the carefully staged exhibits or understand what they saw at the exhibition pavilions.<sup>58</sup> Accordingly, while the visitors’ behavior

was continually regulated and disciplined by police and exhibition officers, their viewing experiences and interpretations were hardly manageable as intended by the organizers. This reveals the contradictions between disciplinary regulation and recruitment by spectacle, which involve different modes of seeing that are hardly compatible: the architecturally and spatially orchestrated look of the disciplined viewer, as opposed to the distracted viewing of the pleasure-seeking consumer of spectacle. It was on this point that the government’s attempt to produce a docile civic subject conflicted with Korean people’s desire to position themselves as the “modern spectators” being seduced by new, technological, and entertaining spectacles.

There was another, just as important attraction that greatly distracted visitors’ attention. A number of visitors flocked into the local shop area to look around thousands of products ranging from everyday commodities to luxury goods (figure 12). In the 1910s, the colonial government attempted to attract Japanese capital into Korea and to expand new markets for Japanese products into Korea and China. It was during this period that capitalism’s global promotion and competitive expansion generated new forms of commodified spectacle for the consumption of the Korean public, and this was nowhere better displayed than in national expositions and industrial exhibitions. The 1915 exhibition was thus bound up with the orchestration of a new form of spectacle and new relations of modern consumption, as “a phantasmagoria into which people entered in order to be distracted” or “the universe of commodities,” in the words of Walter Benjamin.<sup>59</sup> The shop area lined with booths and the displays of industrial products resembled the space of a modern department store in many ways, especially in their architectural character, techniques of display, and sales method of products.

56 “Kongjinhoe kugyōng (8) 共進會 구경 (8), *Maeil shinbo*, 16 September 1915.

57 For example, see “Kongjinhoe kwallam kamsang” 共進會 觀覽感想, *Maeil shinbo*, 8 October 1915; “Ch’ongdogūi chaaee sangshimyōlbok” 總督의 慈愛에 喪心悅服, *Maeil shinbo*, 12 October 1915.

58 See “Karyū kanransha no danpen,” *Tōyō jihō*, 2 January 1916, quoted in Keijōfu, *Keijō fushi*, vol. 3, pp. 264–65. According to the 1915 exhibition review survey conducted in Hyesan City

(Hyesanjin 惠山鎮), South Hamgyōng Province (Hamgyōngnam-do 咸鏡南道), the most impressive and popular sites were, in descending order, “first, the parade of Prince Kan’in; second, the fountain near the Kwanghwa Gate; third, the stuffed specimen of a whale; fourth, the charcoal from P’yōngyang City; fifth, the gemstone from the Tanch’ōn region; sixth, the miniature map of Korea; seventh, trick cycling and circus riding; and lastly, the performance of humans and tigers in the entertainment area.” This survey shows that the visitors were mostly interested in seeing spectacular scenes, rare exhibits, or entertaining performances. See Chōsen Sōtokufu, “Kyōshinkai kanran senjin no kansō,” p. 148.

59 Benjamin, “Grandville or the World Expositions,” pp. 165–66.





**Figure 12.** Local shops of the 1915 exhibition, 1916. Photograph. From Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Shisei gonen kinen chōsen bussan kyōshinkai hōkokusho*.

Since the 1915 exhibition officers commenced the sale of exhibit items on 27 September 1915, each exhibition hall “looked like a battlefield where overcrowded people were jostling to purchase the displayed products.”<sup>60</sup> The section of the Mitsukoshi Kimono Shop (later the Mitsukoshi Department Store) was also one of the most crowded places in the exhibition, selling fabric for Western-style suits, the most popular and best-selling item. They not only displayed and sold their clothes and fabrics in the exhibition, but also established their branch office in Kyōngsōng to expand their market further.<sup>61</sup> In addition, a number of local visitors flocked to the shop area to make purchases of varied industrial products as souvenirs, such as scissors, cosmetics, and rubber shoes, commemorating the monumental event and its “universe of commodities.”<sup>62</sup> The Exhibition Sponsor Association, merchants, retailers, and photographers produced a variety of commemorative souvenir items: picture postcards of Korean customs, exhibition commemoration postcards, exhibition paintings and photographs, souvenir cups with images of the exhibition, and traditional Korean crafts and home goods, such as dolls, fans, pottery, matchboxes, and ashtrays. While a visit to the exhibition was an ephemeral experience, the tangible and concrete souvenirs served as a reminder of

these collective, once-shared simultaneous experiences at the exhibition site.<sup>63</sup> The spectacle of commodities served as concrete evidence that promised the experience of consumer culture and modernity, providing a common ground for everyone and figuring the visitors as consuming subjects regarded as socially equal. In this context, the “modern” subject produced by the exhibition was the subject seduced by the spectacle of commodities that represented a newly modernizing and industrializing Korea. This burgeoning commercial economy also heralded the coming flourishing consumer culture of Kyōngsōng that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s.

Yet, the machinery of the 1915 exhibition represented more than just a combination of modern spectacle and disciplinary training operating through identification and consent. It was also a colonial exposition conceived by the Japanese colonial government as a more coercive and oppressive machine. It is important to understand, therefore, that the Korean national subject shaped by the 1915 exhibition differed significantly from the civic and national subject called into place by international expositions in Britain, France, or the United States. The attractive modern spectacle presented by the 1915 exhibition, designed to celebrate the birth of the “modern Korean nation,” played an important role in constructing the legitimacy of Japanese annexation, but also served to conceal its brutal colonial control. In this context, the conflicted Korean subject was shaped and reshaped not only through education and discipline, or seduction and spectacle, but also through coercive bureaucratic control and colonial domination. As Timothy Mitchell points out, examples of the Panopticon and similar disciplinary modern institutions were, in many cases, developed in colonial places such as India and Egypt. For the Japanese government, Korea similarly provided “the opportunity to help establish a modern state based on the new methods of disciplinary power.”<sup>64</sup> This reveals the controlling and disciplinary aspects of the 1915 exhibition to transform the formerly “ignorant populace” into civilized members of the new modern nation and, more importantly, loyal subjects of the Japanese empire, which inevitably involved physical compulsion, violence or constraint, corresponding

60 “Shiryongp’umūn t’aehi maeyangnyo” 實用品은 殆히 賣約了, *Maeil shinbo*, 29 September 1915.

61 Mitsukoshi, “Chōsen bussan kyōshinkai to Mitsukoshi gofukuten.”

62 “Kongjinhoewa changsap’an” 共進會와 展示館, *Maeil shinbo*, 4 October 1915.

63 Jachman, “The Legacy and Meanings of World’s Fair Souvenirs,” p. 199.

64 Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p. x.



to the coercive military rule of the 1910s.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, this control through a certain cultural form could be also understood in a positive context as a convincing measure of civilization, enlightenment, and modernization, especially for the Korean reformists and local elites. The positive image of the 1915 exhibition toward modernization might play a leading role in the mobilization of such a massive audience. By the time of the 1915 exhibition, furthermore, the discourse of *shiksan hūngōp* (the promotion of industry) was heavily published in the print media, including the *Maeil shinbo* and the journal *Shinmun'gye* 新文界. It was not only used as a pretext for the Government General's colonial policy, but also corresponded to the *chagang* (self-strengthening) movement by Korean reformist elites who aspired to national strength through industrial development.<sup>66</sup> It was no coincidence, therefore, that a number of Korean elites had demonstrated support for the 1915 exhibition, as seen in a newspaper article written by reformist journalist Chang Chi-yŏn 張志淵 (1864–1921).<sup>67</sup>

When visiting the industrial exhibition, the most important thing is to appreciate the exhibition properly, from which we are able to invent and develop our own industries under the current circumstances. [...] In general, a nation's wealth, prosperity, and power depend on its people who diligently prompt and develop industries.<sup>68</sup>

This quote shows that, for most Korean reformists, the 1915 exhibition was a great opportunity to develop industries, but also, more importantly, to enlighten all strata of Korean society by making them recognize the current situation of Korea. The Korean reformist elites, who advocated the discourse of *munmyōng kaehwa* as a means of strengthening the nation, had pursued the same capitalist modernity as Japanese colonialists had done, albeit for different and even opposite goals. While the Japanese colonial government introduced modern institutions into Korea for more efficient colonial management, the Korean reformists considered the modern institutions as a means of strengthening the nation's potential for independence and constituting an autonomous nation-state. A local nobleman and government official, Yun Pong-kyun 尹鳳均 (1899–1983), shows a similar perspective in his diary. After visiting the 1915 exhibition, Yun recorded “the significance of seeing expositions” in constructing a modern nation.<sup>69</sup> Here, the strong anti-Japanese sentiment against the cruel colonization of the Japanese became obscured, at least partially, by the assertion of *chagang* in the 1915 exhibition. It was in this context that the 1915 exhibition revealed the Korean nation's processes of negotiation and conflict surrounding the drive to modernization. Here, Tom Nairn's argument on the connection between uneven development and nationalism provides a theoretical foundation for understanding Korean nationalism around the time of the 1915 exhibition.<sup>70</sup> As an inevitable response to the uneven development of capitalism, nationalism was “the effort by one ‘backward’ culture and people after another to appropriate the powers and benefits of modernity for their own use,”<sup>71</sup> which explains the Korean nation's complex response to global capitalism and modernization and its nationalist awakening. Therefore, the emergence and development of nationalism in Korea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be understood in the context of the global expansion of capitalism, the conflict between the center and the periphery, and the resultant

65 Though the 1915 exhibition was a great success in terms of attracting visitors, the aggressive and almost coercive visitor-mobilization strategies inevitably brought about severe criticism from some Korean intellectuals and officials who denounced it for imposing a heavy burden on impoverished local peasants and for causing severe labor shortages in rural areas during the harvest time. A Korean reformist official, one of the editors of the *Tongnip shinmun*, Kim Yun-sik 金允植 (1835–1922), for example, wrote about the problem in his diary, *Sok ūmch'ōngsa* 續陰晴史: “The exhibition has caused serious problems: the price of goods has soared, and in particular, the price of vegetables has increased several fold; people deeply resent this, complaining of their burden, since local county governments collected group tour expenses from county people.” See Kim, “1915. 9. 11,” p. 426.

66 For the 1915 exhibition and promotion of industry, see the articles published in the journal *Shinmun'gye*: “Siksan jangnyōwa kongjinhoe”; “Kongjinhoe wa sangōp”; and “Kyōngsōngūi hyōnhwang.”

67 Chang Chi-yŏn also wrote a famous editorial against the signing of the Protectorate Treaty in 1905; see Chang, “Siirya pangsōng taegok” 是日也放聲大哭, *Hwangsōng shinmun*, 20 November 1905.

68 Chang, “Sanōpkaebalchi kŭmmu” 産業開發之急務, *Maeil shinbo*, 4 November 1915.

69 Yun Pong-kyun, *Taeryak Ilgi*, 5–6 September 1915; quoted in Kim, “Ilcheshidae ch'eje chōhanggwa hyōmnyōng saūi chungganjidae,” p. 9.

70 Tom Nairn argues that “most typically it [nationalism] has arisen in societies confronting a dilemma of uneven development—‘backwardness’ or colonisation.” Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, p. 30.

71 Nairn, *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited*, p. 71.

rise of nationalism and the emergence of nation-states. As elsewhere in the undeveloped world, the reactive development of Korean nationalism marked a profound ambivalence, representing both an attempt to resist the outside forces of modernization and an attempt to take them over. This ambivalent embrace of modernization and capitalization was greatly accelerated following the Japanese annexation of Korea, and clearly represented in the 1915 exhibition.

Given the colonial relationship between Korea and Japan—a neighboring nation, not a distant Western power—the question of Korean national identity at the time of the 1915 exhibition is very complex. Japan was capable of colonizing its closest neighbor under the banner of a “civilizing mission.” Even while the Japanese colonial government was seeking to remake civic identity in Korea, however, a resistant Korean nationalism was also being born as a response both to Western penetration and to the Japanese invasion, both of which posed threats to the traditional political, social, and economic order of Korea. The discourse of national identity is thus not unified or monolithic: there was not just one nationalism—rather, internally conflicted nationalisms crossed a political landscape of struggle and dispute. The early colonial period was a time of material progress as carefully displayed in the 1915 exhibition, but at the same time, it was a harsh, dislocating period with the experiences of strict censorship, denial of civil liberties, and a barrage of coercive new regulations and brutal punishments that caused massive resistance against the colonial government in the late 1910s. As the responses of Korean spectators revealed a confused and conflicting perspective between resistance to Japanese colonialism and a desire for modernization, the “new modern Korean subject” was complex and never unified. It may be characterized by continual conflicts and oscillation between a collective of the new modern subjects and the traditional subjects of the old monarchy, between the disciplined civic subjects and subjects distracted and seduced by consumption and commodified spectacles, and between the new national modern subjects and oppressed colonial subjects of the Japanese empire.

## Conclusion

With the Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition of 1915, the new era of expositions had begun in modern Korea.

Between 1915 and 1940, a total of thirty large and small expositions (*pangnamhoe*), industrial exhibitions (*kongjinhoe*), competitive industrial exhibitions (*kyŏngjinhoe*), and product shows (*p’ump’yŏnghoe*) were held in Kyŏngsŏng and local cities in Korea.<sup>72</sup> As the first government-sponsored national event in the colonial period, the 1915 exhibition not only displayed many features also seen in later colonial expositions, such as the Chosŏn Exposition in 1929 and the Great Chosŏn Exposition in 1940, but also introduced the Korean public to modern forms of mass culture and commodified spectacle. As such, the 1915 exhibition provides a valuable resource for understanding the Korean nation’s complex and ambivalent response to modernization and the emergence of a new kind of national subject shaped by modern institutional apparatus and disciplinary machines.

The processes by which the concept of the international exposition was introduced and elaborated in Korea show the nation’s struggle over modernization and Westernization in the context of the global and regional development struggle. The international expositions came to be conceptualized as a means to modernize the Korean nation—though, at the same time, this would also serve as a justification for Japanese colonial annexation. It was in this interplay of national and international economic and political forces that the Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition of 1915 took shape as a specific cultural machinery constructing particular social messages but also calling into place a new kind of modern Korean subject. Accordingly, the 1915 exhibition cannot be viewed as an impartial representation of the state of Korea after five years of Japanese rule. Rather, it was a staged event where specific messages and meanings were conveyed by the spatial layout, architectural coding, and display strategies. The semiotics and rhetoric of the 1915 exhibition, framed and invested by the intersection of political, cultural, and institutional discourses, were an attempt to propagandize colonial rule by redefining, controlling, and disciplining Korea’s material culture and people, but at the same time, this would also serve as a device for future colonial rule. However, the exhibition was not simply a machine for constructing specific messages, but was also a cultural machinery that called into place a new kind of “modern Korean

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72 Yoshimi, *Pangnamhoe: Kŭndae ūi sisŏn*, pp. 319–21, appendix 2.

subject” through its orchestration of the display of objects into a modern form of spectacle. The account of visitors’ experiences and responses shows the complex formation of the conflicted Korean subject, as shaped and reshaped by the exhibition through seduction and spectacle, education and discipline, but also through bureaucratic control and colonial domination. It thus betrays contradictions and conflicts in the interpellation of the subject of the exhibition, between disciplinary regulation and recruitment by spectacle, between the architecturally and spatially orchestrated look of the disciplined viewer and the distracted viewing of the pleasure-seeking consumer of spectacle. As a central symbol of modernization and a monumental cultural event, the 1915 exhibition provides a more comprehensive platform for better understanding an understudied era in Korean cultural history: the period of ten years following the 1910 Japanese annexation of Korea, usually called the “dark period.” It also brings questions of representation and subject formation in the early colonial period to bear on a field that conventionally had been devoted to the political and economic frameworks of colonial rule.

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