

The Modernity of Japanese Buddhism and Colonial Korea: The Jōdoshū Wakō Kyōen as a Case Study

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THIS PAPER IS an attempt to examine Japanese Buddhist modernity by focusing on Japanese Buddhist social work projects in colonial Korea. It presents what I believe to be the salient characteristics of social welfare as conducted by the Jōdoshū 浄土宗 (Jōdo School) and the valences of modernity that can be seen in these activities. Through this examination, I hope to show how Japanese Buddhism was expressed as a “modern religion” within the colonial topos.

The common assessment of Japanese religious activity in modern East Asian colonies is that these sectarian denominations played a vital role in fostering collaboration with the Japanese war effort. In this field, most work has focused on the Ōtani-ha 大谷派 of Shin Buddhism. Further, in a chronological sense, much of this research is limited to what happened before Japan’s 1910 annexation of Korea.¹

¹ The proselytization activities of the Shinshū Ōtani-ha in colonial Korea are a topic of research that has received greater attention than the role of other Japanese Buddhist denominations in both Japan and Korea. Such work began in the pre-war period by scholars such as Eda Toshio (1933) and Mizutani Hisashi (1933). In the post-war period, research began appearing with “Nihon bukkyō to Chōsen shinryaku” 日本仏教と朝鮮侵略 by Sasabe Sōhei 雀部倉平 in 1968, which was followed by works such as “Kindai Chōsen bukkyō no ichi danmen: Toku ni Chōsen kaikyō o chūshin ni” 近代朝鮮仏教の一断面：特に朝鮮開教を中心に by Minamoto Hiroyuki (1974) and “Meiji bukkyō no Chōsen fukyō” 明治仏教の朝鮮布教 by Mifuji Ryō (1978), as well as “Chōsen fukyō no rinri” 朝鮮布教の倫理 by the same author (1989). In addition, Takahashi Masaru, who was influenced by Mifuji’s earlier article, published “Meiji-ki ni okeru Chōsen fukyō to shūkyō seisaku: Toku ni Shinshū Ōtani-ha o chūshin ni” 明治期における朝鮮布教と宗教政策：特に真宗大谷派を中心に (1987). Hashizawa Hiroko’s Master’s thesis, “Nihon bukkyō no Chōsen fukyō o meguru ichi kōsatsu: Okumura kyōdai no jirei o chūshin ni” 日本仏教の朝鮮布教をめぐる一考察：奥村兄

In my paper, which is based on both the findings and problematics posed by this prior research, I would like to examine Japanese Buddhist social activities not only from the standpoint of colonial policy but as an element in the process of the very modernization of Japanese Buddhism itself. As a representative example or case study, I will discuss the Jōdoshū's Wakō Kyōen 和光教園 (Wakō Teaching Academy).

Background of the Founding of the Wakō Kyōen

The Ōtani-ha's Kōjō Kaikan 向上会館 and the Jōdoshū's Wakō Kyōen can be taken as two of the representative Japanese Buddhist social work projects in colonial Korea.² Both facilities were established in 1921—following

弟の事例を中心に, was published as a part of *Chōsen josei undō to Nihon* 朝鮮女性運動と日本 (Hashizawa 1989), a collection of her essays. There are also works such as *Kindai shinshū kyōdan shi kenkyū* 近代真宗教団史研究 edited by Shigaraki Takamaro (1987) and Han Sōk-hūi's "Kaika-ha to Lee Dong In to Higashi Honganji" 開化派と李東仁と東本願寺 (Han 1987), but Han's book, *Nihon no Chōsen shihai to shūkyō seisaku* 日本の朝鮮支配と宗教政策 (Han 1988) is particularly worthy of note as it takes the history of Chōsen into account. One can point to Hishiki Masaharu's "Tōzai Honganji kyōdan no shokuminchi fukyō" 東西本願寺教団の植民地布教 (Hishiki 1993) as an example of representative research from the 1990s.

² Although there has been virtually no research published on the topic of social work projects undertaken by Japanese Buddhist organizations in the Korean colony, there are a few pieces that touch on this subject. From Japanese research, one can point to Kiba Akeshi's "Kaigai fukyō to bukkyō fukushi: Chōsen ni okeru domakumin ijū keikaku ni tsuite" 海外布教と仏教福祉：朝鮮における土幕民移住計画について (Kiba 1999). Kiba attempts to understand the social works projects of the Shinshū Ōtani-ha in the Korean colony based on the concept of "Buddhist social welfare." This approach can be seen as one that does not look at the social welfare activities of Japanese Buddhist organizations only from the perspective of cooperation with colonial policies, but tries to understand this phenomenon in terms of the "religiosity" of Japanese Buddhism. Recently, research on the Korean side has been marked by the appearance of works by scholars who have studied in Japan. Yun Jeoung-yook's book, *Shokuminchi Chōsen ni okeru shakai jigyo seisaku* 植民地朝鮮における社会事業政策 (Yun 1996) is a groundbreaking work based on the author's dissertation, which was submitted to Doshisha University. This book analyzes the formation and development of policies and activities related to social works projects in colonial Korea from the perspective of the policies of the colonial government. Also, in Park Jeong-ran's *Kankoku shakai jigyo shi: Seiritsu to tenkai* 韓国社会事業史：成立と展開 (Park 2007), the history of social works projects in colonial Korea is discussed from the viewpoint of their origins in the colonial period. This book is also based on a dissertation (Japan Women's University, 1997) and touches briefly on Wakō Kyōen. There, she describes the purpose for its activities stating, "the principle underlying the projects of the Wakō Kyōen was to take Buddhism as a pretense that served as one means for the implementation of an assimilation policy centered around the familialism of the emperor system." Since the works by both Yun and Park see the social works projects of Japanese Buddhist organizations from the standpoint of colonial policy for social works in Korea, it goes without saying that they have not focused heavily on Japanese Buddhism itself. However, we can also see from their research that the projects undertaken by Japanese Buddhist organizations in colonial Korea played a considerably important role alongside the projects carried out by the Government-General.

the March 1st Movement of 1919. In this paper, I will consider the nature of Japanese Buddhist modernity by focusing on just the Wakō Kyōen.

To begin, it is necessary to trace the background of the Wakō Kyōen, which started in 1913 as a facility of the Jōdoshū's Chōsenjin Kyōkai 朝鮮人教会 (Jōdoshū Church for Koreans).

In March 1914, the land at 102 *banchi* in Gansu-Dong 觀水洞 (where Wakō Kyōen currently stands) was purchased along with a building that was formerly a schoolhouse to serve as the Jōdoshū Chōsenjin Kyōkai. Simultaneously, a Buddhist youth association and a night school for Japanese language were established. In time, a youth church was also founded. These activities continued until the fall of 1923. This church was used as the main missionary center in Korea and those who lived there alternatively took turns being involved in projects for the Koreans. Further, an affiliated establishment in Sajik-Dong 社稷洞 operated a women's association. In October of last year [1920] this establishment was renamed "Wakō Kyōen." It serves as an institute to implement a variety of social welfare projects. Along with continuing the missionary activities carried out by the Korean Church, it has begun to undertake newly planned social works. The current head monk, Kuge Jikō 久家慈光 [n.d.], who conceived of and planned this facility, hopes it will serve as the base for social affairs for the mission itself.³

Here, the Wakō Kyōen is understood simply as a Korean missionary base for the Jōdoshū—at least up until 1920. With the change of name to "Wakō Kyōen" in 1920, this establishment—following the "beginnings of a newly planned social project"—transformed itself into a modern social works project. This meant that the establishment's mission changed from merely disseminating Buddhist teachings to being focused on work that had a broader social dimension. The first work that was undertaken was the construction of a hostel for laborers. This can be understood as being undertaken in the same context as the domestic Japanese social movement to ensure workers' rights which ensued after Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭 (1872–1933) returned from Germany.⁴ It is of import, however, to note that

³ Egami 1921, p. 241.

⁴ It would not be an overstatement to say that the social works projects undertaken by the Jōdoshū within Japan were entirely reliant on Watanabe. Ultimately, these projects were essentially transplanted directly into colonial Korea. For instance, the bylaws for the Jōdoshū Rōdō Kyōsaikai 浄土宗労働共済会 (Jōdoshū Laborers' Mutual Aid Association), which was

workers' rights and endemic poverty in the Korean colony were both issues of a different dimension from what was occurring in Japan.⁵

founded under the direction of Watanabe in 1911, describe the purpose and the nature of its activities in a way that has many points in common with the social works projects undertaken by Wakō Kyōen. A portion of those bylaws, which appeared in the 3 April 1911 issue of *Jōdo kyōhō* 浄土教報 (no. 949), are as follows:

Chapter 1: Name and Location

Article 1: This association will be called the Jōdoshū Laborers' Mutual Aid Association and has been formed in order to repay the debt of gratitude for the delivery of an honorific name through the imperial decree at the time of the seven hundredth memorial for the great master and founder of our denomination [Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212)].

Article 2: This association will locate its main offices at the head temple Zōjōji 増上寺 and establish branch offices at locations deemed necessary.

Chapter 2: Purpose and Projects

Article 3: For the purpose of improving the state of the lives of laborers and of promoting an ethic of improvement, this association will undertake the following projects:

- (1) Lodging for laborers, (2) Supplemental payments for cost of food and beverages, (3) Daycare for children, (4) Introduction to employment, (5) Recreation and education, (6) Procedures for the protection and support of those with communicable diseases, (7) Improvement of housing, (8) Any other necessary activities. . . .

Chapter 4: Accounting

Article 5: The funds for this association will be made up of the income from these projects, from the donations of members, and from other sources.

⁵ The primary source of the problems of poverty in pre-modern Korea, which was originally an agrarian society, stemmed from natural disasters and other such calamities. Poverty was endemic and yet it was not understood to be the problem of each individual, but was instead seen to be the responsibility of the ruler and the shared responsibility of village society. However, after modernization, the problem of poverty was increasingly understood to be separate from village conditions, extended and immediate family, and instead seen as an individual's problem. The responsibility for poverty was also thought to fall with those poor individuals who had declined to the lowest levels of society; that is, in the indigent, themselves. After colonization, this situation became graver. In a sense, the land surveying project that was undertaken from 1910 to 1918, the agricultural depression of the late 1920s, and the repeated droughts that occurred frequently in the 1920s and 1930s, all combined to make it more difficult for farmers to sustain themselves. As more and more moved away from agrarian life, the number of indigent and poverty-stricken Koreans increased and came to the fore as a major social problem. For example, an article appeared in the 28 August 1924 issue of the *Dong-a ilbo* 東亞日報 with the title "Number of Beggars in City Increases: Drought Victims Gather in Kingjo, More Than Ten in the Area." Another article in the 8 November 1925 issue of that newspaper is entitled, "Crowds of Beggars Grow Rapidly, Frequency of Robberies Increases." These pieces clearly show this trend. In addition, we should note that the quickly increasing number of indigent became a group that opposed the social order, and in the foundation of those anti-social attitudes was the very negative view through which they were seen. In other words, the indigent came to be viewed as a brutish, polluted group that existed outside the boundaries of society. Naturally, the responsibility for policing of these elements, seen as existing outside the social structure, was left to the police, who often rounded them up and sent them off to social welfare facilities.

In order to more concretely explain the motives for establishing the Wakō Kyōen, I would like to consider the meaning of the passage entitled “Wakō Kyōen no shimei” 和光教園の使命 (The Mission of Wakō Kyōen)⁶ taken from the *Wakō Kyōen shakai jigyo yōran* 和光教園社会事業要覧 (Catalogue of Wakō Kyōen Social Projects). The first mission statement mentioned in this piece states that Wakō Kyōen was founded as an “attempt to make even a small contribution to the grand project of ‘purifying the Buddha land and fulfilling sentient beings’—that is, to purify society and create complete individuals—based on the fundamental spirit of Buddhism. A purified society in which individuals become complete, is ultimately based on the path of ‘purifying the Buddha land and satisfying all sentient beings.’” Here, we can note that Wakō Kyōen was an attempt at socio-religious praxis based on Buddhist principles.

The second mission is described as follows:

Based on the founding spirit of our nation (*kenkoku no seishin* 建国の精神), Wakō Kyōen must develop the undeveloped; come together with those who have fallen behind; give peace to those without peace; light to those without light; make apparent our wish to contribute to the great work of the three-thousand-year project of spreading the empire; make all people members of one family with the Emperor; and assimilating all from the four corners of the earth. First we must eradicate the poverty that is the source of myriad evils. Then we must work as one and help one another, realizing true coexistence with our brethren (*dōbō no shinsei kyōzon* 同胞の真生共存). . . . The Wakō Kyōen serves this country that is one great meritorious family, and we stand on our own with the singular intention of making this establishment a missionary training ground for our new brethren.⁷

We can clearly see how the Wakō Kyōen mission was, for the Japanese, who were in a more “civilized” position, to help disseminate “culture” to the “underdeveloped” Koreans and also to create a “training ground” in which the Jōdoshū could proselytize to their “new brethren.”

The third mission statement reads:

As the crystallization of this pure spirit, and based on our knowledge and experience, Wakō Kyōen intends to undertake a comprehensive and systematic plan under the name of a “settlement

⁶ Wakō Kyōen Shuppanbu 1927, pp. 4–5.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 2–3.

project.” By shining the light of the singular path for those living in urban poverty, we expect to improve the lives of the impoverished, actively protect children, advance the social status of laborers, promote ethnic assimilation (*minzoku dōka* 民族同化), and spread the teachings [of Buddhism] to society. We intend to march forward to the true realization of these [plans] together with the improvement of the [present] economic situation.⁸

This is basically the same goal as that seen in the establishment of the Jōdoshū social welfare works undertaken in Japan: projects for securing workers’ rights and improving quality of life, which was the goal of the foundation of the Jōdoshū Rōdō Kyōsaikai in Japan, were directly imported to Korea.

The founding goal, then, of the establishment of the Wakō Kyōen was an attempt to respond to multiple social issues brought about by the colonization process. Although the wish to actualize the spirit of Buddhism is expressed in this mission statement, we have seen that this mission also connoted a stance wherein Japanese (the “civilized”) had to transmit “civilization” to the Koreans. By looking at how these missions were actualized within the colonial topos, we can delineate the modern nature of the Jōdoshū in the Korean colony.

The March 1st Independence Movement, which was a major influence in the establishment of the Shinshū Ōtani-ha’s Kōjō Kaikan, also played a significant role in the founding of Wakō Kyōen.⁹ The following passage from the *Wakō Kyōen shakai jigyō yōran* speaks of this influence:

Not even this deeply ingrained seriousness and effort could serve to suppress the fatigue from the torrents of daily life and the devastation it wrought on the hearts of men. The drastic changes of the times can be truly surprising: even among the impoverished of Kingjo, who were so poor, destitute, and thirsty that they barely showed any vitality at all, the influence of the great war in Europe led to the eruption of riots for independence. And it led to a real-

⁸ Wakō Kyōen Shuppanbu 1927, pp. 4–5.

⁹ One can find evidence that the March 1st Independence Movement was a major factor behind the founding of the Ōtani-ha’s Kōjō Kaikan. See for example, an article that appeared in the 19 September 1920 issue of the *Chūgai nippō* 中外日報 entitled “Sōtokufu Ōtani-ha no tame ni Senjin kyōkahi o keijō su” 總督府大谷派の為に鮮人教化費を計上す (The Government-General Budgets Funds for Teaching Koreans for the Ōtani-ha).

ization of the vast gulf between rich and poor, such that extremist winds blew intensely throughout all corners of Korea. These hungry ghosts, resentful of their suffering, began to writhe, turning the tides of the times and bringing the rule of government to a critical juncture. Taking into account this state of affairs, the Jōdoshū appointed Kuge Jikō, who was familiar with the temperament of the Koreans, to serve as the head of the Korean missionary district and installed him as resident minister at the mission in June of 1920. Kuge considered the needs of the day and the conditions of the impoverished. Seeing the necessity for a settlement project that would quickly and effectively work toward the improvement of the welfare [of these people], he laid the plans for the foundation of this facility. He relied on his close friend, the philanthropist Fukunaga Seijirō 福永政治郎 [n.d.], for funding and chose Gansu-Dong, where he had previously engaged in projects for religious edification. The site of its establishment was a lot of 260 *tsubo* 坪¹⁰ and a two-story building of seventy *tsubo* with its incumbent structures. He further borrowed ninety-eight *tsubo* of land and a building in the third block of Jongno 鐘路 Street. He then turned over the management of all of its affairs to Ogino Jundō 荻野順導 [n.d.], who is the current director of this facility. [In this way,] today's Wakō Kyōen was born.¹¹

We can see the influence of the March 1st Movement as a motive for the founding of the facility more clearly in this source than from the previously quoted mission statement. Hence, the central Jōdoshū figures involved in the facility's establishment were Kuge and Ogino. About Kuge, it is written:

Presently [1921], he is the head priest of the Missionary School and the head of Jōdoshū missionary activities in Korea. Formerly, after graduating from a religious university in Tokyo, he quickly left for Korea, where he became a Korean language research student and part-time Japanese language teacher. However, he soon ended up going to the United States. He again entered Kingjo by way of Hawaii two years ago. He quickly devoted himself to propagating [Buddhism] to Koreans after arriving in Kingjo and also planned several social welfare projects. However, since he

¹⁰ One *tsubo* is approximately 3.306 square meters.

¹¹ Wakō Kyōen Shuppanbu 1927, pp. 2–3.

was so busy (as he was entirely on his own), he was not able to fully devote himself [to this work].¹²

At this time he was seeking out a qualified individual to help him. He brought on Ogino in 1920. Ogino, the head of Wakō Kyōen, is described thusly:

A friend of Kuge's from university, he [Ogino] lived in Tokyo for many years. After researching social welfare establishments and projects, he was appointed by the city of Tokyo to engage in projects involving juvenile delinquents. Upon hearing of the situation in Korea, he could no longer be silent. He was a passionate man who left his project in Tokyo up to someone else and soon crossed over to Korea, bringing his family with him. The establishment of the Kyōen was realized with his arrival, and his knowledge of social welfare projects took on a tangible form.¹³

As can be seen from the above, Kuge, the founder, was less involved in social welfare projects and was rather a figure that was knowledgeable in Korean affairs. In contrast, Ogino was a figure knowledgeable in matters of social welfare. Accordingly, the actual operation of the projects at the facility was carried out by Ogino.¹⁴

It goes without saying that this project began through making contact with the Japanese Government-General in Korea. At the time of the project's inception, first in October of 1920, in order to develop a plan for the project, the Government-General was visited and the various heads of the individual social welfare departments were consulted to receive their astute opinions. A survey of conditions of the Korean lower classes was also conducted.¹⁵ In this way, the project was carried out with the support of the Government-General from the planning phases onward. As noted above, in April 1920 the Government-General offered ninety-eight *tsubo* of land and a building in Jongno (3-chome, 27-banchi) for the project at no charge. In November of 1926, it made a similar grant of 337 *tsubo* of land at Gansu-Dong (120-banchi) and gave the project title to a former two-story government build-

¹² Wakō Kyōen Shuppanbu 1927, pp. 2–3.

¹³ Egami 1921, p. 244.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Wakō Kyōen Shuppanbu 1927, p. 6.

ing comprising eighty-nine *tsubo*. Further, on the occasion of the 1922 commemoration of the founding of the imperial lineage, the Kunaishō 宮内省 donated five hundred yen. To mark the reception of such a privilege from Saitō Minoru 齊藤実 (1858–1936), the Governor-General, the Wakō Kyōen constructed a thirty-five-*tsubo* pavilion to serve as their main hall (Onshi Kinenkan 恩賜記念館 [Hall Commemorating Gratitude]).¹⁶

This aid from the Government-General, which began in the earliest days of the establishment of the Wakō Kyōen, can be seen as an unusual measure that reflects both the depth of the Government-General's anxiety over social unrest and the extent of the expectations that it held for the site's projects.¹⁷ Only a mere two-month preparation period had passed, in fact, from the original planning (October 1920) to its establishment in December 1920. The fact that Wakō Kyōen was able to begin its activities in such a short time indicates that the plans of the Government-General to stabilize colonial society in the wake of the March 1st Movement played a major role in the background of its establishment. In other words, the Jōdoshū's shift from missionary-based activities to socially based ones was greatly influenced by the designs of the Government-General.

Based on the above, the following can be said about the origins of the founding of Wakō Kyōen. As an alternative possibility to help quell the March 1st Movement, the discovery of a pragmatic means by which to both stabilize and legitimize colonial rule became an urgent concern for the Government-General. That is, it was in need of social proselytization projects that could answer to the needs for both religious salvation and social unification in Korean society. Japanese religions were expected to answer this demand. The Jōdoshū Wakō Kyōen was able to take advantage of this situation and was also able to quickly move from missionary work to social projects. One can point out that since these social projects were carried out in the unique situation of a colony, colonialist dimensions are apparent. During the transitional period in the modernization of Japanese Buddhism, there was a shift within the Jōdoshū toward socially focused religious praxis. This arose from self-reflection and the development of self-awareness on the part of some Japanese Buddhists.¹⁸ As this sort of religious

¹⁶ Wakō Kyōen Shuppanbu 1927, pp. 2–8.

¹⁷ Yun 1996, p. 166.

¹⁸ About the necessity for these early social works projects, Watanabe says the following: "In future philanthropic projects, a philosophy of repaying our debts of gratitude is definitely

practice entered Korea, while partially reflecting the nature of such projects undertaken within Japan itself, it took on a colonial form.

Social Activities

Having examined the background of the establishment of Wakō Kyōen, I would like to delve into the details of its activities in the Korean colony. What was characteristic of this group's activities was that they employed the Jōdoshū's domestic (i.e., Japan) works to a tee. These works laid emphasis on the improvement of daily life, hygienic awareness, domestic happiness, economic knowledge, and the promotion of ethics and general morality.¹⁹ It goes without saying that—within the context of colonialism—these social works were, rather than stemming solely from the internal concerns of the Jōdoshū, undertaken based on the designs of the Japanese Government-General.

Immediately after its establishment, the Wakō Kyōen began a hostel for laborers, the Wakō Gakuen 和光学園 (Wakō School), and a medical welfare project. We can see that from its inception, “labor,” “education,” and “hygiene” were emphasized.

Just as the sign says, boarding fees are five sen per night, per person (limited to single, male laborers). However, some five or six unemployed homeless come each day seeking work, and we treat these as others from within Kingjo prefecture. One of them became an employee of the Government-General and commutes

necessary. These projects today seem to be overly materialistic, which is undesirable. They must be undertaken with the spirit of mutual love for humanity. My hope is that [these projects] will be done with the best possible methods based upon a philosophy of gratitude and an attitude of experimentation.” Further, he emphasizes that “the most essential idea of philanthropic activities” is that “in the same way as the current medical field researches methods to prevent illnesses, philanthropic projects should perform social inoculations” (Yoshida 1982, p. 13). In this context, we can see the movements for religious engagement in social practices as having been brought about by realizations and reflections of people within the denomination. Further, this trend was not limited to the Jōdoshū alone, but also applies to all the denominations of Japanese Buddhism.

¹⁹ The point of emphasis for the activities at the Wakō Kyōen is expressed as follows: “Based on the participation of followers of religious color, they will be divided into associations for the elderly, women, youth, and children, and alongside of working toward the improvement of religious faith through regular sermons and teaching, [Wakō Kyōen] will make efforts to teach our brethren extending to the improvement of their lifestyles, the expansion of an ethic of cleanliness, the peace and prosperity of families, encouragement of economy, and other aspects of usual ethics and mores” (Egami 1921, p. 242).

every night to accounting school. To the other vagrants who find their way in here, we teach the sacredness of labor as best we can, loan out the pack carriers that we keep here, and make four or five of them go to work every day. Although one must pay in advance, there are those who, due to circumstance, ask if they can pay the next day and we treat them kindly. Further, no one is forced to sleep in the street, and every second day they are allowed to use the bath, for free, of course. Also we loan them clippers so that they can take care of their hair and cut it as they wish. In the future, we plan on holding monthly recreational events. For the time being, we can only let them play *shōgi* 将棋. In summer one can get a good night's sleep even under the shade of trees or on top of rocks. Hence, there will not be a dramatic increase in boarders for some time. However, in the season when the winds chill one's skin, the number of unemployed who come seeking a place to sleep is almost infinite.²⁰

The laborers' hostel was conceived to house both unmarried male laborers and unemployed men. Along with paying the price of five sen a night, boarders were expected to work and maintain personal hygiene. In addition, proselytization was carried out through various recreational activities.

Among the Wakō Kyōen projects, the Wakō Gakuen, after its founding in 1921, had a good deal of success. The popularity of the school greatly stemmed from the Korean desire for education. The educational projects at Wakō Kyōen directed toward the impoverished connected with this desire of the Korean people and thus the school itself had less coercive aspects than the other projects there. In September of 1921, 387 students were admitted (120 of whom were female). The program "established two courses, a general and a supplemental one, for those who are poor and for those who were too old for compulsory education. The oldest student is thirty-nine and the youngest is nine." Without regard to gender, education was conducted by eight teachers who were said to have "an amazing array of pupils, including a married couple, and a parent with a child."²¹

The number of projects undertaken at the Wakō Kyōen increased annually. This included the establishment of a clinic in 1921. This was followed by the creation of departments for employment, general consultation services, meals, barbers, and the sale of discounted goods in 1922. A department for

²⁰ Yoshikawa 1921, pp. 270–72.

²¹ Ibid.

Name of Department	Type of Service	Number of Participants (1935)	Total Number Served	Description of Service
Schools	General Education	552 (Male) 378 (Female)	658 444	To protect children not in school and provide the equivalent of six years of primary education.
	General Education (Simplified Course)	14 (Male) 25 (Female)	14 25	To provide the equivalent of two years of primary education to impoverished youth. Free tuition.
	School at Dongdaemun 東大門	187 (Male) 71 (Female)	233 106	To provide the equivalent of two years of primary education to impoverished youth and those not in schools.
Childcare	Wakō Kindergarten	31 (Male) 31 (Female)	36 41	To care for children and provide kindergarten training.
	Jikō 慈光 Kindergarten	34 (Male) 24 (Female)	47 35	To provide daycare and babysitting services.
Proselytization	Wakō Kyōkai 和光教会	1,500 (Main facility) 980 (Dongdaemun facility)	1,500 980	To provide lectures and sermons about Buddhism for adults regularly and on special occasions.
	Wakō Sunday School	1,106 (Main facility) 399 (Dongdaemun facility)	5,797 4,666	Buddhist education for youth. Held twice every Sunday.
	Youth Association	17 (Male)	204	To provide training for youth. Affiliated with the Kingjo Allied Youth Association.
	Young Women's Association	60 (Female)	365	Holds monthly meetings to provide training for young women.
Lodging	Laborers' Hostel	4,408 (Male)	27,144	To provide housing for day laborers. Five sen per night.
	Women's Hostel	3,898 (Female)	11,631	To provide housing for women. Five sen per night.
Job Counseling	General Work	1,441 (Male) 4,921 (Female)	1,441 4,921	To provide free job introduction services for the unemployed and recently out of work.
	Daily Work	3,591 (Male) 518 (Female)	3,591 518	Same as above for day labor.
General Counseling	Counseling	401 (Male) 182 (Female)	463 197	To provide general counseling for problems of daily life.
Emergency Relief Works	Temporary Emergency Relief Center	401 (Male) 521 (Male)	463 197	To provide one meal and one night's lodging for those suddenly in dire circumstances.

Meals	Simple Cafeteria	8,132 (Male) 2,366 (Female)	12,315 7,110	One meal served at cost for seven sen. Used by lodgers.
Hair Cutting	Simple Barber's Shop	1,036 (Laborers) 1,034 (Students)	12,431 12,413	Barber's shop established in order to promote hygiene. Children's haircuts for five sen and adults' for ten sen.
Bathhouse	Bathhouse	372 (Male) 325 (Female)	1,870 1,250	For the same reason, bathing is free. Boarders are required to bathe.
Vocational Services	Knitting Department	35 (Male) 21 (Female)	418 222	To provide vocational training by teaching how to knit wool to produce socks.
	Laundry Department	10 (Male)	26	
Discounted Goods	Discounted Goods Shop	658 (Male) 444 (Female)	658 444	To provide writing utensils at wholesale prices. For use by students.
Total		43,108	119,893	

Figure 1. Participation statistics for each department at Wakō Kyōen for 1935, based on pages 10 to 12 of *Wakō Kyōen shakai jigyo yōran* (Ogino 1936).

emergency relief work began in 1923, departments for a bathhouse and vocational services began in 1924, and a department for laundry services started in 1926. By 1935, the Wakō Kyōen's project comprised twelve departments and twenty-one different divisions, making it "Korea's only comprehensive social works project."²²

As noted above, Wakō Kyōen's social welfare activities emphasized education, labor, hygiene, and Buddhism. The twelve departments in figure 1 can be classified into four categories: education (departments for schools and childcare); labor (departments for lodging, job counseling, general counseling, emergency relief works, vocational services, and discounted goods); hygiene (departments for hair cutting, the bathhouse, and meals); and proselytization (department for proselytization). We can see this welfare work was organizationally formed into a modern topos. In other words, these works acted as a mechanism by which those Koreans involved could experience modernity.

The activities in the categories of education, labor, and hygiene all culminate with the fourth category: proselytization. Taking into consideration the

²² Ogino 1927, p. 38.

colonial situation, it is clear that the act of proselytization as a social works project harbored a complex set of meanings. While it was an attempt to spread the teachings of Japanese Buddhism and was naturally colored with religious hues, it also contained elements of the government's assimilation policy.

Let us now turn to a more detailed examination of the proselytization department, which is taken to be the most important of all the departments. In the *Wakō Kyōen shakai jigyō yōran*, this department is explained as follows:

The proselytization department is the center of the settlement project and is our establishment's most important work. The home of our facility, the Gansu-Dong site (dating back to 1913), is a place where projects to promote spiritual well-being have been undertaken. Buddhism, in particular the Jōdoshū teachings, will continue to serve as the directing spirit of this proselytization. Of course, the services (*jōnenbutsu-e* 常念仏会) and regular lectures that used to be held were continued. For teaching adults, the Wako Kyōkai 和光教会, the Youth Association (later renamed the Youth Group), the Young Women's Association, and the Compassionate Mother's Association were established. The Wakō Sunday School is held to teach children. Our activities have grown even more prominent with their correspondence to social proselytization, such as the movement for spiritual development, and are emitting a unique light among our Korean brethren.²³

Although this is said to be the most important project, we can note that the scope of this project went beyond the bounds of religious instruction and placed significant emphasis on social proselytization represented in its "movement for spiritual development." As I stated above, this reflects the multivalent nature of the proselytization undertaken at the Wakō Kyōen, and regardless of whether the people engaged in these activities were aware of it, we should keep in mind that they were performed within the hegemony of colonial authority.

These efforts at teaching were not simply a project of the proselytization department, but can be seen in all aspects of the establishment's activities. Section 4 of the bylaws of the Wakō Sunday School, whose participants made up a large portion of the total membership of the proselytization department, was composed of three articles: one for religion, one for self-improvement, and one for recreation. As seen in section 10 of the bylaws,

²³ Ogino 1936, p. 15.

which states “Wakō Gakuen faculty is responsible for teaching in this school [i.e., the Sunday School],” the teachers who were in charge of the educational projects were also involved in the affairs of the proselytization department.²⁴ Further, in the bylaws for the lodging department, a section describing what was to be encouraged of the lodgers states: “[They] should be made to save a portion of their earning each day and participate in the services before the Buddha each night. Those who have saved considerable funds and wish to live on their own will be given employment advice and facilitation.”²⁵ In addition to providing free bathing facilities and hair cutting services to the lodgers (in order to engrain proper hygienic habits), the lodging department also performed various proselytization activities such as “other activities for self-development, moral instruction, entertainment, and recreation.”²⁶ Simply put, the activities of the proselytization department played a significant role that informed the entire system of social works projects at Wakō Kyōen.

Next, I would like to examine the teaching activities of the people involved with the Jōdoshū Rōdō Kyōsaikai in Japan itself. One such person describes the religious training that was performed using recreational activities and holidays in the following way: “By encouraging the pursuit of labor and saving money, eventually the effects of these proselytization efforts come to fruition and significant results will be gained in terms of treatment, as well. The success and failure of proselytization is determined by opportunities and people, so if one keeps this in mind and continues to carry out such work, I believe you will not be off the mark.”²⁷ It is highly possible that the same strategies being used in Japan were also being applied to the unique colonial situation in Korea.

Now let us see how these Jōdoshū activists in colonial Korea behaved in reality. The following newspaper articles give us a glimpse.

Last fall, a teacher named Nakamura Gentetsu 中村玄哲 [n.d.] came from Japan and became the head teacher for fourth-year students. His verbal violence traumatized those children who

²⁴ Ogino 1936, pp. 102–3.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 103.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 104.

²⁷ Nakanishi Yūdō 中西雄洞 (n.d.), who managed the daily affairs of the association, describes his experiences in a piece entitled “Shukuhaku kyūgo jigyo” 宿泊救護事業, which appears in vol. 21 of *Jōdoshū fukyō zensho* 浄土宗布教全書 (Nakanishi 1931). This discussion owes much to Andō Kazuhiko’s “Watanabe Kaikyoku to Jōdoshū Rōdō Kyōsai: Shakai teki jissen undō no keitai” 渡辺海旭と浄土宗労働共済: 社会的実践運動の形態 (Andō 2000, p. 140).

had come from abusive families. For example, he was constantly speaking ill of others to the Korean children, openly scolding them, and even going on to complain to the students of the other grades. One day, because the third-year students were acting up a bit, he came over from the fourth-year class and made all kinds of unpleasant comments, such as “Korean kids are completely immature, and the third-year students are the worst.” Due to this, yesterday (the 18th) the third-year students sent a demand to the principal saying that they would quit school unless Nakamura was forced to resign.²⁸

Another article touches on a different dispute at the school:

Three Wakō Regular School teachers, Kim Ei-kang 金永煥 [n.d.], Choe Woo-yong 崔右鏞 [n.d.], and Byeon Rak-ha 邊落河 [n.d.], displaying their dissatisfaction with Principal Ogino, resigned their posts. According to the school, they resigned because their monthly salary of thirty-five *won* was inadequate. The teachers who resigned say that they began working at the Jōdoshū’s Wakō school facility after graduating two or three years ago from the Jōdoshū School of Commerce in Gaeseong. Nevertheless, they were not provided a place to reside in spite of their low salaries, and they were not provided with morning and evening meals. Last winter, they lived while sleeping on the second-floor of the schoolhouse. This year, after discussing this situation with Egami Shūjō 江上秀静 [n.d.], the schoolmaster, they were able to rent one of the rooms in the hostel for laborers and also began to repair it. Principal Ogino, however, was dissatisfied with this, and hence they were no longer allowed to reside there. They say that many Koreans [at the facility] have been subjected to almost insufferable humiliation for a long time, but in this case they could no longer tolerate it and chose to resign from their posts.²⁹

²⁸ “Nichijin kyōshi no bujoku de Wakō Futsū Gakkō san nen sei no dōmei kyūgaku” 日人教師の侮辱で和光普通学校三年生の同盟休学 (Wakō Regular School Third-Year Students Resign in Solidarity Due to Japanese Teacher’s Cruelty) from the 19 November 1924 issue of the *Chosun ilbo* 朝鮮日報.

²⁹ “San kyōin no dōmei jishoku: Kōchō no taigū ga totemo reikoku shite Wakō Gakkō sensei sannin dōmei jishoku” 三教員の同盟辞職：校長の待遇がとても冷酷して和光学校先生三人同盟辞職 (Group Resignation of Three Teachers: Three Wakō Teachers Mistreated by Principal Resign) from the 10 September 1922 issue of the *Dong-a ilbo*.

Although these are just two examples, we can clearly see from these articles that those in charge of the affairs of the Wakō Kyōen were, essentially, “rulers.” These incidents, while appearing as one modern expression of Japanese Buddhism in the Korean colony, evince another side of the modernity (one different from the narrative of Japanese Buddhism as attempting to achieve universal religious modernization) of Japanese Buddhism. For example, when we examine the early position of the head of Wakō Kyōen, Ogino (who had also been engaged in social works projects in Japan and whose motivation for going to Korea was to run the projects at the facility), we find the following:

When our establishment was founded, we first set up the departments for education, proselytization, and lodging. However, none of us had any idea of where to begin. There was about 250 *tsubo* of land, so we set up a slide and some swings. Gazing out from our homes, we found that neighborhood children would play there from morning until nightfall. As far as we could tell, none of them looked like they were attending school. At that point I said, “I am thinking of building a school. Do you kids want one?” They all said they wanted one. Thus in October 1920 we set up the education department, and since those kids used to just play from morning until night, we supplied them with writing pencils and did not charge tuition. At first we had about eighty pupils, but more and more people wanted to participate. Soon there were over a hundred students, so at the beginning of the new semester in April of the next year, we started a two-semester system.³⁰

Here Ogino shows that his earliest motivation was based on “good intentions.” In articles in the *Dong-a ilbo*, however, we find few hints of religiously motivated “compassion.” This is a very difficult point to interpret, but it is safe to say that the colonial situation played a role. We can also say the same of the behavior of the missionary Nakamura Gentetsu. Although I cannot elaborate here, one can also find evidence of welfare work directed to the acutely impoverished and donation collection activities in the newspapers of the time.³¹

³⁰ Ogino 1929, p. 33.

³¹ Among the articles appearing in the *Chosun ilbo* about Wakō Kyōen, fourteen are related to its educational projects (the school and the kindergarten) and these primarily relay the activities of the Wakō Kindergarten, particularly the attempts to collect donations for its operation. There are also two articles about student strikes at the Wakō School. Other pieces touch

The Jōdoshū's Wakō Kyōen was established in the Korean colony to provide comprehensive social services for impoverished Koreans. Yet we can see from the above newspaper articles that from the Korean standpoint, these figures had a multilayered significance in which their roles shifted between being religious men who were rulers and rulers who were religious men.

Conclusion: The Modern Nature of Japanese Buddhism in the Korean Colony

The methodology used in previous scholarship to understand the “modernization” of Japanese Buddhism (or “Modern Japanese Buddhism”) is varied. The emphasis on the internalized faith of Seishinshugi 精神主義, the social engagement of Shinbukkyō 新仏教 (New Buddhism), the development of sectarian autonomy as seen in organizational changes within various Buddhist denominations, and the moves made to counter the West by Japanese Buddhism as seen in the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions (which James Ketelaar discusses) have, among other examples, all been seen as salient aspects of Japanese Buddhist modernity.³² This paper, while taking

on subjects such as a fire at the facility, breakouts of contagious disease at the laborers' dormitory, and activities related to groups that were the object of discrimination (*tomakmin* 土幕民). From these accounts, we can see that the organization placed emphasis on its educational activities aimed at poverty-stricken children and that considerable resources were devoted to the education at the kindergarten. In the *Dong-a ilbo*, pieces about the Wakō Kyōen treat a variety of subjects: ten articles on the achievements of the various projects (which touch on subjects such as additions to the facilities and other efforts), eight articles on the dormitory for laborers, five about the educational projects, two about projects aimed at *tomakmin*, and five other pieces on different subjects (a suicide, fire, an embezzlement scandal). This paper treats a wider variety of subjects related to the Wakō Kyōen than the *Chosun ilbo*, so it provides a clearer picture of the development of the social works projects there over time. Although the *Dong-a ilbo* does not treat the educational activities in detail the way the *Chosun ilbo* does, from the pieces in this paper one can learn a good deal about the day-to-day activities at the Wakō Kyōen, as it relays information about the Korean people at the facility and other details like embezzling by an employee from the social works projects. The articles referenced here appeared in both papers between 1920 and 1940.

³² In previous research, there has been much discussion about what can be used as a gauge to describe the “modernization” of Japanese Buddhism. The establishment of faith as a personal, interior issue by Inoue Enryō 井上円了 (1858–1919) and Kiyozawa Manshi 清沢満之 (1863–1903); the manifestation of modernity seen in the various reform movements and efforts that appeared together with that interior faith; the modern nature of Japanese Buddhism seen from the perspective of the reorganization of the various denominations as self-governing institutions begun with the reformation of the Honganji-ha 本願寺派—all of these have been offered as points to locate the modern nature of Japanese Buddhism. (See, for

into account this prior research, has looked at the modernity and modern nature of Japanese Buddhism (which has generally been discussed from the perspective of sectarian modernization) by instead focusing on social activism in colonial Korea in light of “imperialism” and “colonialism.” The nature of the modernity of Japanese Buddhism that is evinced by the social works projects of the Jōdoshū in Korea can be summed up in the following manner.

First, Japanese Buddhist modernity can be seen as manifesting elements of what may have been referred to as “civilization” or the process of “civilizing.” What Wakō Kyōen provided—education, work, and hygiene—were necessary and inseparable elements of the modern system. Although there is the need to further examine exactly how such projects were actually applied to Koreans, we can no doubt surmise that these were presented as symbols of modernity. Regardless, it is important to keep in mind that within the foundations of this “civilization,” the justification of inhumane acts (oppression) in the name of the advancement of “civilization” was omnipresent.

Second, we can discern a Japanese Buddhist modernity that took on a social nature by being “universal,” which can be seen in how the social praxis of Japanese Buddhism shifted to social work (something that might be termed the “socialization of philanthropy”). Changes during the modernization process within Japan proper—where Japanese Buddhism shifted from philanthropic activities and relief projects focused on spreading Buddhist teachings to purely secular social work projects—were, no doubt, premised on the influence of state authority. But this shift also arose from conditions within Japanese Buddhism itself. Buddhist philanthropy, which had existed only in an isolated and individualistic form, was transformed in response to social problems into a body of philanthropic thought based on notions like “benefiting the other” (*rita* 利他) and “being one with our brethren” (*dōbō* 同朋). Together with these philosophical changes, the institutionalization and socialization of Japanese Buddhist social works projects were carried out. The Wakō Kyōen, which the Jōdoshū founded in colonial Korea, was heavily influenced by this sea change. Even though demands

instance, Hōzōkan Henshūbu 1961–63, Yoshida 1959, 1964, 1998, Ikeda 1976, and Kashiwaha 1990.) Research that attempts to rediscover Japanese modern thought by moving away from the narrow perspective of Buddhism and broadening its focus to include East Asia as a whole (Sueki 2004) is also another recent path of inquiry. Others have pointed to the persecution of Buddhism in Japan and the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago as the most important elements in the modernization of Buddhism and have argued that from this an orthodox and modern form of Buddhism was defined (Ketelaar 1990).

from the Government-General played a crucial role, without this trend toward the development of social works projects as part of the modern system of Japanese Buddhism, the creation of a modern religious facility like Wakō Kyōen would have been impossible.³³ At the same time, we must also note that “universality” as discussed here is ambiguous. That is, this “universality” existed as “universality” only within the colonial topos.

Third, we should notice that the modernity of Japanese Buddhism was “imperialistic” and “colonial.” Of course, in the unique situation created by the colony, one can see colonial modernity regardless of religion. Previous research has addressed Japanese Buddhism from the standpoint of missionary activities and collaboration. And, of course, the activities of Japanese Buddhist organizations that used social works projects as a medium in the Korean colony have been similarly noted. Japanese Buddhist social works in the Korean colony were, in form, often copies of social work projects carried out by Buddhists in Japan itself; but at the basis of such projects, there were always demands from and cooperation with the colonial authorities; this even led to specific sociopolitical initiatives. Although these Japanese Buddhists were charged by the government to “clean up” and “teach” the impoverished Koreans, in the latter task, we can conclude that the tendency toward fostering Japanese assimilation policy was stronger than transmitting religion per se. Here is the true role of Japanese Buddhism in the Korean colony. This sort of Japanese Buddhist modernity was brought out through its encounter with the “other” that was the Korean people and appeared in a form that attempted to transform the “nationalism” of the “resistant other” into assimilation.³⁴

Finally, the various forms of modernity in Japanese Buddhism did not exist as disparate elements in this colonial space but had a degree of simultaneity with concurrent events in Japan itself. Hence, contradictions naturally arose as intimately related modernities collided. I would like to label the modernity of Japanese Buddhism that arose from these contradictions of simultaneous, conflicting modernities as “colonial modernity.”³⁵ That is,

³³ Yoshida Kyūichi’s work on the social works projects undertaken by Japanese Buddhist organizations within Japan is particularly useful. See Yoshida 2004, 1998, 1979, and 1964.

³⁴ Yonetani 2005, p. 15.

³⁵ “Colonial modernity” has recently become a key point that expresses a new research trend in Korea that delves into the history of colonial Korea. It also questions the nature of colonial modernity from a postmodernist stance and pays attention to the inseparability of colonization and modernization in colonial settings. In particular, it attempts to analyze the working of authority at the level of the daily lives of Koreans in colonized Korea by employing

the role of Japanese Buddhism as a medium to transmit “civilization” contained within it a sense of superiority and dominance. Social works projects conducted from such a position were characterized by a modernity with a stronger inclination toward imperialism and colonialism than the Japanese Buddhist modernity which was seen as being “social” and “universal.” The Wakō Kyōen, founded on Buddhist principles, was designed to engage in a wide range of social welfare activities for impoverished Koreans. However, in looking at those who carried out these works, an imperialistic and colonial modernity that cannot be discussed solely from the perspective of religion—and wherein oppression and human rights violations arose from discrimination—is evident. One can add that the attempt to make a universal space in order to negotiate with the other (such as Wakō Kyōen), however conscientious the founders might have been, could not help but bring about opportunities for violence.³⁶ This itself is the expression of Japanese Buddhist modernity as it appears from its encounter with the “other” of the colony. We can further say that this expression of Japanese Buddhist modernity in the colonies was also one element of Japanese modernity itself.

At the same time, from the standpoint of the Japanese Government-General, by having Japanese Buddhist organizations lead social works projects in the unique situation posed by the colony, the negative image that Koreans held of their colonizers (and their association with ideas such as “oppression,” “subjection,” and “control”) could be obfuscated, or at least mitigated by the presentation of these projects as charitable religious activities. The ruling government most likely hoped that the efforts undertaken by Japanese Buddhist organizations would serve as part of their policy to assimilate Korean subjects.

(Translated by Ryan Ward)

new analytical concepts such as “disciplinary authority,” “hegemony,” and “gender.” These concepts do not only apply to Korea as a colony, but are also applicable to the ruling colonizer Japan. In this light, the Japanese Buddhism that performed social works projects is representative of “colonial modernity.” Ultimately, it is necessary to consider the issue of modernization in both Japan itself and its colonies when discussing the issue of the modernization of Japanese Buddhism.

³⁶ Isomae 2010, p. 67.

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