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COLONIAL MODERNITY FOR AN ELITE

TAIWANESE, LIM BO-SENG

The Labyrinth of Cosmopolitanism

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#### THE QUESTION OF COLONIAL MODERNITY

In the context of Taiwanese history it is important to analyze the concept of colonial modernity, understanding both the attraction and the oppression of modernity, without regarding it simply as evidence of historical progress. Like so many other fashionable terms, however, the term “colonial modernity” is ambiguous: its meaning depends on each writer. Before we proceed we must first make clear what is meant by the term here.

As Leo Ching has pointed out, one of the intended effects of the term “colonial modernity” is to draw attention to structural similarities between Western imperialism and Japanese imperialism, and to emphasize “the interrelationship and interdependency of the specific Japanese case, with, and within, the generality of global capitalist colonialism.”<sup>1</sup> I would like to discuss a perspective here that investigates colonial modernity as generally as possible, while focusing mainly on Japan’s rule in Taiwan.

Colonial rule in the nineteenth and twentieth century was different from earlier colonial rule in that it was closely connected with modernization in various fields, such as politics, economic development, and the use of military power. Not only were the new rulers superior militarily, but they carried prestige as representatives of Western civilization. The notion of “civilization” involved a variety of elements, such as a political system based on parliamentarism, the capitalist mode

of production, scientific technology, and Christianity. Imperial powers situated people in a racial hierarchy, according to the degree to which they were “civilized,” and created a system that would allow and even justify the unjust treatment of those who were categorized as “barbarian.” Even those under imperial rule came to share in the desire to elevate themselves within the hierarchy of “civilization.” Modern colonial rule, while rooted in absolute military superiority, engendered a desire for civilization and maintained hegemony by addressing that desire.

Of course, creating an interest in modern Western civilization was not the same as actually introducing modern institutions and technologies. What was crucial for colonial modernity was that among the components of modern Western civilization there be a great gap between what was actually spread and what was prevented from being spread. It is this gap that characterizes colonial modernity. In the colony those who ruled economically were still mercilessly ensnared by a global capitalism that subordinated them to a political system that was far from democratic. Between the promotion of modernization as capitalization and the prevention of modernization as democratization in an ambiguous area that could be called a cultural stage.

New media, such as newspaper, movies, and radio—which were sometimes a means of propaganda used by power and other times a means of resistance used by the subordinated people—eventually established an urban and popular culture. Schools basically functioned as apparatuses facilitating political control, but they also served as both the producers and the consumers of new culture and technologies. As Gi-wook Shin and Michael Robinson have pointed out, “modernity can both assist and endanger a prevailing hegemony.”<sup>2</sup> Contrary to the general image of them as “the bearers of civilization,” the rulers were not necessarily active in spreading new cultures and technologies. Even when they tried to spread new initiatives, they did not want to give up the ability to determine the direction of the development.

In this situation, the ruled, in particular the male elites of the native class in particular, often participated in the ruling structure; by supporting the spread of such modern institutions as schools and hospitals, they became the agent that extended the hegemony of colonial rule to the bottom of society. The position of the native elite, however, was always unstable. While they were attracted to the modern Western civilization that the rulers had brought, and tried to accept it in full, they nevertheless faced racial discrimination from the rulers and discovered in the midst of their disappointment “their nation” as a subordinate entity capable of resistance. Importantly, between the moment when they faced the rulers from outside and the moment when they recognized “their nation,” there was a time gap. Nationalistic descriptions of history tend to assume that such a time gap should not exist. But we should remember that even Gandhi, before he took to his spinning wheel in simple, traditional clothes, had walked around the city of London in Western dress. When trying to understand experience of colonial modernity,

it is important not to read into the past the nationalism later discovered, but to focus on the aspirations and disappointments engendered by this time delay.

Here we must be sure that these conditions can be applied not only to Western imperialism but also to Japanese imperialism. The Japanese also flaunted their nation as the bearer of “the mission of civilization” to those both within its boundaries and beyond. The infrastructure construction that was promoted vigorously in the early stage of the occupation of Taiwan—including the construction of railways and harbors, for example—demonstrates that this intention as professed by the Japanese was not a mere pose. And there were Taiwanese elites who joined with the Japanese colonial system in trying to diffuse modern Western civilization.

Of course, there were differences between Western imperialism and Japanese imperialism. No matter how much the Japanese boasted of themselves as the bearers of the “mission of civilization,” it was obvious that their civilization was one that the Japanese had hastened to learn only after the Meiji Restoration. Not only outside the Japanese colonial empire but also within the empire, there were many Westerners, such as councilors, merchants, and missionaries, who were regarded as more “authentic” bears of civilization. The “civilization” that the Japanese intended to spread did not include Christianity.

From the Western perspective the Japanese were not qualified to call themselves the bears of the “mission of civilization.” The British missionary Thomas Barclay, working in Taiwan from the 1870s, witnessed the Japanese occupation of Taiwan in 1895 and reported to his mission headquarters: “one cannot but sympathise with the people, dissociated without their consent being asked from the ancient Empire of China, with all its tradition, of which they are so proud, and handed over to form part of a despised Empire.”<sup>3</sup> There was not even the superficial respect shown at least to the Chinese empire; Japan was nothing but “a despised empire.” Nevertheless, Barclay also wrote,

In the meantime, there seem to be some advantages to be hoped for. The change will improve the conditions of life for the missionaries, and the greater facilities of communication will greatly help our work. The destruction of the Mandarinate, and perhaps still more of the literacy class as a body, involving the discrediting of Confucianism, will remove many obstacles out of our way.<sup>4</sup>

Barclay expected Japanese colonial rule to promote modernization, and to dismantle the literacy class, which was seen as an obstacle to the propagation of Christianity. The interdependent relationship between British missionaries and the Japanese colonists was mediated through the realism that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend.”

When the Taiwanese, under the rule of the “despised empire,” accepted Christianity through contact with British missionaries, what was the relationship

among the Japanese, the Taiwanese, and British missionaries? This complicated relationship can be traced in the footprints of Lim Bo-seng 林茂生 (1887–1947), the subject of this article.

Lim Bo-seng was born in the city of Tainan in 1887. His father, Lim Ian-sin, a member of the literacy class, was converted to Christianity after he came in contact with British missionaries as a teacher of Taiwanese language and later was ordained as a pastor. Baptized as a young boy under his father's influence, Lim Bo-seng studied at the Tainan Presbyterian Middle School, established by missionaries, and after graduation went to Japan proper to study. He graduated from Tokyo Imperial University in 1916, and after returning to Taiwan gained a position as head teacher at the middle school from which he had graduated, as well as a position at a government school. In 1927 he went to Columbia University as a researcher under the auspices of the government-general, and there obtained his Ph.D. In 1930 he went back to Taiwan and assumed the directorship of the board of managers of the Tainan Presbyterian Middle School.

In Taiwan today Lim Bo-seng is famous as a martyr of the February 28 Incident, but he has not received much attention in the context of history of the anti-Japanese movement.<sup>5</sup> In the prewar era, through he was considered a representative intellectual and educator of Taiwan, he was also criticized for his “pro-Japanese” statements, and for having worked in a government school. I do not want here, however, to answer this criticism by listing his “anti-Japanese” speeches and actions. Instead, I want to ask what his experience of colonial modernity was. In what sense did he think it important to spread modern education in Taiwan? How did his encounter with British missionaries and his experience of studying in the United States influence his evaluation of education under Japanese colonial rule? Did he consider the Japanese to propagate modernity? Or did he dismiss Japanese rule as a deviation from modernity? If so, by internalizing the values of an “authentic” modernity, could he discover a way to escape imperialism? The answers to these questions are not simple.

I will here examine the contents of his dissertation, titled “Public Education in Formosa Under Japanese Administration: A Historical and Analytical Study of the Development and the Cultural Problems” (New York, 1929).<sup>6</sup> There is an excellent study by E. Patricia Tsurumi (1977) on the history of colonial education in Taiwan under Japan, but the task of this paper is not to describe that history “objectively.” Rather, it is to read his paper as a historical narration written from within that history, that is, to read it as an academic narration of history and at the same time as a testimony of that history. Then I will consider the significance of his dissertation as a part of the world of knowledge around 1930. Since I have already discussed elsewhere his activities with the Tainan Presbyterian Middle School and their failure,<sup>7</sup> I will make minimal reference to these issues here.

## COLONIAL/MODERN EDUCATION

The narration of history is a space of power/knowledge contestations; one need not quote the theory of postcolonialism to support this statement. Lim Bo-seng was aware of this, too. In the introduction to his dissertation, he pointed out that books written by those related to the colonial authorities are often “biased, partial, and misleading.” Furthermore, although the government-general's records were precise, they constituted propaganda because the government-general selected their contents with “preconceived viewpoints” (Lim 1929:7). He makes his own position clear while explaining his methodology: “personal observation has been carried on by the author for more than ten years as an educator serving government and private schools in Formosa, and also as a leader of the cultural movement of the intellectual class” (7). His writing style is appropriate for an academic research paper, and he does not mention his own personal experience directly, but both his choice of objects of study and his way of evaluating them do reflect his experiences, and the position from which he evaluates history may oscillate slightly between the objective and the subjective.

I will examine the contents of his dissertation in the following rough division of time: around 1900, the 1910s, and the 1920s.

### Around 1900

At the beginning of his main argument, Lim Bo-seng sees the political and economic conditions in Taiwan as a special case, in which “the governor-general still retains considerable arbitrary power in legislation and administration” (21). Any order by the governor-general of Taiwan had legal effect. Although the governor-general's power began to be restricted by the central government in the 1920s, a Taiwanese parliament was never established and the governor-general continued to possess arbitrary power.

The Japanese occupied a superior position economically as well, and Lim argues as follows:

Generally speaking, we find in Formosa agricultural and laboring population made up almost entirely of Formosan natives, with the Japanese in charge of most of the large commercial and industrial undertakings. (23)

Because the Taiwan natives, deprived of political rights, were confined to agricultural and industrial labor, and the nonnative rulers held political and economic power, Taiwan was unambiguously only a colony. And, like his contemporaries in the Taiwanese elite, Lim Bo-seng held critical attitudes toward the discriminatory institutions of colonial rule. When it came to education, however, the tone of his argument was different. He focuses his attention here on the words of Kodama Gentarō 兒玉源太郎, the governor-general in 1898:

Education is urgently needed on this island, but the ill effects of an education which wantonly introduced a superficial civilization which led people to discuss right and duty at random should be widely avoided. Therefore, great care should be taken in fixing our educational principles. (37)

As this statement illustrates, those on the side of the rulers showed reluctance to spread education. Lim Bo-seng critically examines this response using the expression “negative educational policy,” and seeks to pin responsibility for it in part on the conservative attitude of the Taiwanese themselves. He says:

The Formosan people, for reasons of their own, failed to appreciate the new type of culture that the Japanese were introducing. Their conservative attitude and strict adherence to their old culture reacted on the government and led the government to assume this negative educational policy (38).

Lim Bo-seng was trying to find a positive significance in “the new type of culture” that the Japanese had introduced to the island. His evaluation might reflect his own experience. When he was eleven, his father was converted to Christianity and he entered a Japanese-language school founded by a Buddhist association from Japan. After graduating from that school, he ran errands at a local post office using his newly acquired Japanese abilities.<sup>8</sup> Armed uprisings against the alien rulers continued in various places, and the father and son were in the minority in the choices they made. To them what was important was whether they should accept the new type of culture, rather than whether they were pro-Japan or anti-Japan. Lim Bo-seng regarded those who rejected this new type of culture as conservative, and he did not change his idea between 1898 and 1929, when he wrote his dissertation.

He used the term “new type of culture” as almost the equivalent of “Japanese culture,” but they were not exactly synonymous. A “new type of culture” had been introduced by the British missionaries. He wrote also the mission schools of Qing dynasty:

The most modernized and systematic educational work during the Chinese regime was carried on by the English and Canadian Presbyterian Missions, operating in the southern and northern halves of the island, respectively. The former began by merely training young men for the ministry, but in 1885 a middle school was opened in Tainan, with instruction in Chinese, history, geography, arithmetic, astronomy, and Scriptures. (27)

The middle school was the Tainan Presbyterian Middle School, where he had studied. Christianity was taught there, along with such subjects as geography and arithmetic. He considered this “the most modernized and systematic education

work,” and concluded that the Japanese language schools and missionary schools had played a similar role in initiating the new type of culture.

In another part of the dissertation, he strongly criticized education under the contemporary government-general. His high evaluation of the Japanese as bearers of a new type of culture leaves a rather strange impression, but we should probably think of this as the strangeness that characterizes historical descriptions written from within that history. Further, as his dissertation dealt with different time periods, his own stance underwent changes and a slight blurring.

### The 1910s

In discussing the post–Russo-Japanese War period, Lim Bo-seng emphasized that the Taiwanese began to recognize what seemed to be universal values in Japanese culture and education, which he calls “modern education.” He pointed to the increasing number of students at public schools established for the primary-level education of the natives, and to an increase in the number who went to Japan proper to study.

At the same time as the demand for modern education was rising among the Taiwanese, he came to realize that it was not enough to criticize only the conservative attitudes of the Taiwanese who did not accept the new culture, but that the discriminative practices of the colonial rulers in regard to post–primary-level education should also be questioned. On the one hand, the government-general organized secondary schools that would prepare students for entrance to universities in Japan proper, for the Japanese residing in Taiwan. On the other hand, however, the government-general did not prepare systematic educational institutions for the Taiwanese, but rather founded only a national language school for learning Japanese and a medical school.

In the 1910s, local Taiwanese elite society, dissatisfied with the policies of the government-general, initiated a movement to found a middle school for the Taiwanese. Lim Bo-seng discusses this movement in detail. He praised those people who donated a great amount of money for a school as “public-spirited Formosan Chinese.” He also mentioned the unsatisfactory result of the movement; contrary to the expectation of those “public-spirited Formosan Chinese,” the Taichu Public Middle School was founded by the government-general only as a lower-level institution than comparable schools in Japan. The curriculum of the school was one year shorter than that in schools in Japan proper and English was optional, while it was required in Japan proper (58–60).

The Taichu Middle School provided a turning point at which Lim Bo-seng’s historical understanding could become conscious of criticism of the educational policy of the government-general. Though we do not know whether he was aware of it, there arise from his dissertation multiple implications of “public.” There was a serious discrepancy between the founding of a middle school for which public-

spirited Formosan Chinese donated money, and the Taichu Public Middle School, which the government-general founded. While the former “public” means the collectivity of spontaneous will shared by each Taiwanese, the latter “public” means subordination to the government-general’s control. They contradict each other. In his dissertation, however, he does not highlight this dual conception of “public.” The meaning of “public education,” which he uses in the title of his dissertation, is not clear. This does not necessarily indicate a theoretical lack on his part, but is probably an expression of the ambiguous duality of the phrase “public sphere” under colonial rule.

Lim Bo-seng was not necessarily opposed to education sponsored by the government-general. The problem was that the government-general did not build schools in response to Taiwanese demands for education.

### The 1920s

For the period of the 1920s, when he wrote his dissertation, the stance of his writing changes drastically. He first emphasizes the “awakening of national consciousness among the Formosan people” (73) in the 1920s. After World War I, those who studied in either Japan or mainland China came back to Taiwan with a new democratic spirit: “they were free, outspoken, critical” (74). “They” perhaps included Lim Bo-seng himself. He mentions the growth of an anti-Japanese movement, including the establishment of the Taiwan Cultural Association in 1921. Although he worked as a summer school lecturer for the association, we cannot find any further connection between him and the group. While he shared in the “awakening of national consciousness” with those who devoted themselves to the anti-Japanese movement, he probably found his own role in the reform of education and culture, rather than in political movements per se. In any case, a young man who entered a Japanese-language school in the late nineteenth century while anti-Japanese armed uprisings were still occurring found himself a nationalist by the 1920s.

He now criticized the government-general for making its educational policy more culturally assimilatory in exchange for the equalization of educational institutions. He assumed this cultural assimilation policy was a reactionary response to the growth of Taiwanese national consciousness. He argued:

With the growth of this liberal attitude on the part of people, the result was restraining force on the part of the government and consequently stricter assimilation. This is why in the year 1922 those Formosans were now merged and consolidated so as to mold the Formosan people more closely to the Japanese pattern and extend the principle of assimilation. (93)

The government-general greatly revised its “negative” educational policy through the 1922 reform mentioned above. It created a way for some Taiwan-

ese to go to elementary school, and established the principle of coeducation between the Taiwanese and the Japanese beyond secondary schools. In addition, it founded Taipei Imperial University in 1928. Den Kenjirō, the governor-general, praised himself, saying that he had abolished educational discrimination and brought about complete equality.

Lim Bo-seng, however, paid more attention to the question of cultural assimilation as being to some degree the price of the equalization. In the last half of his dissertation, he discusses the question intensively, focusing on the proper use of the Japanese language and of coeducation between the two ethnicities.

He does not deny the value of the Japanese as the official language for education, but he questions whether it would be acceptable for the native language to be extinguished:

To solve this problem it is important to understand the status of the “Formosan language.” There are two dialects of Chinese spoken in Formosa, and the written language in both dialects, as in all dialects throughout China, is exactly the same. Of these two spoken languages, the Fukienese is dominant and spoken widely even among the Cantonese districts. (116)

Furthermore, no matter how broadly Japanese spread, the importance of the mother tongue would not disappear: “This language is not in a decadent state but [still] alive, growing, changing, and expressing the thoughts and sentiments of the Formosan people” (117–118). He manifests a typically nationalist way of thinking.

He intensively discussed questions of “our language” and “our culture,” which he had omitted from the first half of his dissertation, where he talked about the importance of the new type of culture being introduced by the Japanese. The meanings of his terms however, were not self-evident, as he had to explain what the “Formosan language” was. He charged, for example, that “the curriculum was so designed that it left out entirely any consideration of the old Formosan culture—Chinese.” “Old Formosan culture” is here equivalent to “Chinese culture.” But it was unclear what a “new Formosan culture,” different from “Chinese culture,” would be. Besides, the expression seldom appeared in his dissertation. He uses the adjective “Chinese” for culture, but “Formosan” for language, a telling dichotomy.

In this way, neither “our language” nor “our culture” was self-evident. But he stressed their importance: it was obvious that ignorance of these terms put Taiwanese children and youth at a disadvantage. The fact that Japanese was the language used in the middle school entrance exam was a severe impediment to the Taiwanese. Although in principle there was to be coeducation for the two ethnicities, some schools were mostly for the Japanese and others were mostly for the Taiwanese. The former had “an unwritten law” that allowed Taiwanese to comprise no more than ten percent of the total number of students. He maintains:

If this actual, though not on the surface apparent, racial discrimination is maintained as it is now, it is not only an injustice to those who apply for admission, but also to these ten percent admitted to enter, for they are in the minority, so that no individual differences are provided for in actual teaching, and these students consequently cannot appear to the best advantage. (139)

Before coming to New York to study, Lim Bo-seng had gone, with the title of professor, to Tainan Commercial College. Because there were only two Taiwanese professors at universities and colleges at the time he enjoyed rare social status. He was in a position to recognize implicit but institutionalized racial discrimination. Because of this, his opinions carried weight. He probably also knew through experience that young Taiwanese entering as minorities a school designed for Japanese would be exposed to the pressures of cultural assimilation.

When discussing the situation of around 1900, he expected much of Japan as the introducer of new type of culture, and he criticized the Taiwanese for their conservatism. But his hopes for the Japanese were being betrayed by their racial discrimination. The next passage indicates that he was becoming aware of this:

Modern education aims to develop the individual from within, not impose a development from without for fear that it would spoil the creative power on the part of the child. Assimilation sets out to impose standards for its own from without which are not desired, for the need is neither imperative nor recognized. (125)

In this passage, he supposes that for the Taiwanese children “native culture” should be respected, according to the principle of individual development “from within.” His point of view, from which he identified modernity in the new type of culture introduced by the Japanese, enabled him to criticize the “negative” educational policy, but not the cultural assimilation policy. This is because the positioning of native culture in human formation had to be negative in principle. In this dilemma, he reconstructed his own perspective, asking first of all what modern education was at a basic level. What is worth noting here is that when reconstructing his own perspective, he referred to the thought of John Dewey, then professor at Columbia University. For example, in the paragraph that follows the passage above, he cites Dewey’s expression “modern life means modern democracy; democracy means freeing intelligence for independence effectiveness [cited from Dewey, *Elementary School Teachers* (1903), 125].” Dewey’s thought was well known in Japanese education, and so his citing of Dewey itself is not especially novel. What is important is that Lim Bo-seng appropriates Dewey’s thoughts in the context of criticizing assimilation policy in the colony. By placing his thoughts in this context, he discovers the actuality of Dewey’s thought in the contemporary imperialistic global order, which was perhaps beyond Dewey’s own intentions.

However, the appropriation of Dewey’s thought introduces a kind of split into Lim Bo-seng’s position. The theoretical ground from which he criticizes cultural assimilation is the principle that individuals’ creative power should not be undermined. “The loss of one’s culture is ominous, for it forebodes the crumbling of personality and the undermining of one’s very existence, especially when it is forced from outside” (123). His focus is “personality.” Both “individuals’ creative power” and “personality” are notions conceptualized by a psychology aimed at individuals. A cosmopolitanism based on individuality is opposed to a nationalism that emphasizes “our language” and “our culture.” And there is also the conflict over whether nationalism should be Formosa-based or Chinese-based. Individuality and “our language” and “our culture” are barely connected here in the context of criticizing cultural assimilation, but there is a danger that they might be dismantled outside this context. This is an inherent theme of colonial modernity in Taiwan.

Furthermore, no matter how much he criticized cultural assimilation, Lim Bo-seng did not totally criticize education in Taiwan as colonial education. He did not surrender the possibility that modern education, apart from cultural assimilation, could be realized under Japanese colonial rule. He proposed that Taiwanese be used as a complementary educational language and that middle schools be built, some exclusively for the Japanese and others exclusively for the Taiwanese, separately in big cities. These are at best proposals for improvement within the framework of colonial rule. Moreover, in the final part of his dissertation, he points out as an important consideration for the future of Taiwan “the use of power wisely directed to the guiding of the destiny of colonial people by seeking for the source of misunderstanding and, through careful application of modern education, by establishing a spiritual unity that goes beyond the barriers of ethnicity.” Although he began to experience nationalistic feelings after he faced Japanese racial discrimination, at the base of his thinking he was still cosmopolitan.

#### THE CONSTELLATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE IMPERIALISTIC WORLD

Could the hope that Lim Bo-seng derived from cosmopolitanism have been realized in Taiwan under colonial rule? Subsequent history shows that his vision was too optimistic. In the mid-1930s, the Taiwanese language was completely erased from the school curriculum, just the opposite of his proposed solution. Harsh attacks from the Japanese led to his banishment from Tainan Presbyterian Middle School. British missionaries now began to collaborate with the Japanese, and betrayed him (Komagome 2001). Rather than review these events in detail, I would like to consider the significance of his dissertation for the imperialistic global order.



Lim Bo-seng's dissertation was not published in Japan or in Taiwan. Even if he had intended to publish it, it would have been impossible. For example, Yan-naibara Tadao's article "Taiwan Under Imperialism (Teikoku shugika no Taiwan 帝国主义下の台湾)," which Lim Bo-seng cites in his dissertation of 1929, was banned in 1930 in Taiwan. It was a time when even a book written by a professor at Tokyo Imperial University was banned; there was virtually no chance that Lim Bo-seng's dissertation could be published. We cannot find a direct response to his dissertation, but one article does provide an indirect clue: Abe Shigetaka's 阿部重孝 "Education in Formosa and Korea," which was published in the *Educational Yearbook, 1931* edited by I. L. Kandel, a professor at Columbia University. The ideas in Lim Bo-seng's dissertation are in contrast with Abe's experience.

In 1923 an international research institute was founded at Columbia University with a donation from the Rockefeller Foundation, and Kandel was named a researcher there. The institute began to publish its *Educational Yearbook* in 1924, with Kandel as editor. Special theme issues from 1929 to 1933 were:

1929: The philosophy underlying national systems of education

1930: The expansion of secondary education

1931: Education in the colonial dependencies

1932: The relation of state to religious education

1933: Missionary education

Since missionary activities were pursued mainly in the colonies, the 1933 theme is closely related to the 1931 and 1932 themes. Colonial education became an important topic in the early 1930s, as international tension was increasing after the Great Depression in 1929. The Columbia University institute conducted research on the Philippines and Puerto Rico under U.S. colonial rule and published its reports. For instance, in *Twenty-Five Years of American Education* (New York, 1924), edited by Kandel, one chapter was devoted to education in the Philippines.

In the introduction to his dissertation, Lim Bo-seng expressed "his deep gratitude to Professors Paul Monroe, I. L. Kandel, and L. M. Wilson for their valuable suggestions and criticisms and their friendly interest during the preparation of this work" (iv). He also cites a statement by Kandel regarding education in the Philippines as compared to Taiwan:

The 3,500,000 Formosans, or 95 percent of the total population, do not feel that they lack a common languages as is the situation in the Philippines, where English is a coordinating factor to bring together eight dialects which otherwise can only be barriers and obstruction to progress. (116)

He also cites Kandel's book in his notes concerning educational conditions in the Philippines. Kandel argued that English played a role in removing obstructions to progress. But Lim Bo-seng stressed a difference between Taiwan and the Phil-

ippines. We can sense that he feared that if he did not stress this difference, the ground upon which he criticized the government-general's policy of excluding the Taiwanese would be undermined.

Abe Shigetaka, author of the article about education in Taiwan and Korea, graduated from the College of Literature of Tokyo Imperial University in 1913. It was three years before Lim Bo-seng's graduation from the same college, and, if we consider that both majored in philosophy, we might suppose that they had known each other there. After 1915, Abe was in charge of investigating educational conditions all over the world after World War I, as a contract researcher for the ministry of education. He became an assistant professor in the Department of Literature at Tokyo Imperial University in 1922, and he went to the United States the next year to study as a research worker from the ministry of education. In Japan at that time, where a type of pedagogy influenced by German philosophical education was predominant, he became well known as a person who insisted on the establishment of educational science through incorporating empirical research methods from the United States.<sup>9</sup>

Abe conducted research on education in Taiwan from 1925 to 1926. Lim Bo-seng mentioned this research in his dissertation: he says that "in 1926, Prof. Abe from Tokyo Imperial University came to Formosa to give intelligence tests at the leading schools," but as far as the author knew the result had not yet been published (137). According to Tokiomi Kaigo, who was one of Abe's students, Abe conducted the research entrusted to him by the government-general of Taiwan, but "the results were not published out of concern for colonial rule because the intelligence and the scholarly attainment of the Japanese, Chinese, and Taiwan natives residing in Taiwan became obvious."<sup>10</sup> Although the results were not published, it seemed the research threatened Lim Bo-seng, as did the statement in Kandel's book about the Philippines. If by any chance the result had revealed that the Taiwanese were intellectually inferior, it would have given a "scientific" ground to the government-general's discriminatory educational policy.

How, then, did Abe discuss "education in Taiwan and Korea"? He first states that "the educational system of Formosa and Korea differ somewhat from education in colonial dependencies because their fundamental aims are exactly the same as those of Japan proper," and he differentiates the position of Taiwan and Korea toward Japan from that of colonies toward Western nations. In his opinion, educational institutions in Taiwan and Korea are "extensions of the educational system of the homeland, and are expected to carry out the same ideals as were common to Japan proper." At the root of his opinions was the idea that Japan's colonial education was based on equality while colonial education under Western nations was discriminatory; however, he is not explicit about this, since he wrote his piece for readers in English-speaking countries.

After insisting on the principle of commonality between education in Japan proper and the colony, he says:

A slight variation, however, has been found necessary in Formosa and Korea, because of their different languages, customs, and manners, and the level of their culture which is much lower in general than that of the Japanese people at home. Nevertheless, it must not be assumed that education in these parts of the Empire is controlled with any sense of discrimination. The ultimate aims of their education are to cultivate the newly annexed peoples in order to raise their social and economic, as well as political, positions to the standard of those of the Japanese, and to realize the principle of “give and take.”<sup>11</sup>

Abe is arguing that the Japanese, with their high level of culture, were educating the Taiwanese and Koreans, with their lower level of culture, in order to raise their standards. This rhetoric is often employed to justify colonial rule. At the time when Japanese education was received as the new type of culture, this rhetoric might have been accepted. But at the time when a national consciousness had emerged among the ruled, and the government-general’s cultural assimilation policy was being questioned, Abe’s rhetoric was out of date. He was not able to realize that inequality could be reproduced by means of culture.

To borrow a bitter expression from Lim Bo-seng, Abe’s article was propaganda. Why, then, did Kandel place this “propaganda” in the *Education Yearbook*, which he himself had edited? He had supervised Lim Bo-seng during the writing of his dissertation—didn’t he then question the content of Abe’s article? It is hard to answer these questions. There is no source that suggests concretely the ways in which Kandel was involved in the editing of the *Educational Yearbook*. But it is worth clarifying here how he discusses colonial education in the introduction of this book.

Kandel defines as “assimilation in education” the policy that transplants the education system of the metropole directly to the colony, and argues that this kind of educational policy is failing. For example, he charges that “the educational unrest in India, although closely interwoven with the nationalist movement, is equally a manifestation of the failure of the attempt to transplant the educational system of one country to another.”<sup>12</sup> He argues that American education in the Philippines and Puerto Rico had failed, even if it was carried out as “the most advanced experiment in democratic spirit.” As evidence, he pointed out that study that required the reading of materials based on “alien culture and environments” may have “resulted in psittacism, and external polish, which was of no value in itself and only resulted in rendering the learner unhappy in his own environment.”

Lim Bo-seng and Kandel seem to agree with each other in that both criticize assimilation policy. For instance, when Lim Bo-seng says that through assimilation, “the freedom of action and effectiveness of independent intelligence will be subordinated to the mere imitating habit” (125), he follows on Kandel’s discussion of “an external polish.” This is a perspective that Abe lacks. More detailed

observation, however, forces us to recognize that Kandel and Lim Bo-seng differ importantly from each other on why they disagree with assimilation policy. For example, Kandel argues as follows:

The premium placed on book learning and the neglect of any other type of education weaned the native away from his everyday work; the man who could read and write felt it beneath his dignity to engage in manual occupations. The rudiments of an elementary education were just as disinteresting among backward peoples as the expansion of secondary education among advanced peoples is so far as they led to aspirations for “white collar” jobs. That considerable mischief has already been done by the assimilation policy can be abundantly proved.<sup>13</sup>

Kandel criticizes assimilation policy and insists on the necessity of “adaptation to social and economic needs” because, as the passage above indicates, he is afraid of backward people’s aspiration for “white collar” jobs. Doesn’t this opinion tend to indicate a return to negative educational policy? At least, Kandel does not suggest any reason to refute this. We should notice that whereas he discusses native people’s social and economic needs, he does not mention political rights. In a context in which respect for native culture could not be considered together with the expansion of their political rights, he seems almost to be saying that natives should be engaged in manual occupations. Although both Kandel and Lim Bo-seng criticize assimilation policy, their theoretical grounds are clearly different.

While Dewey’s article provides Lim Bo-seng with a critical perspective, Kandel’s writing has implications that imprison him once again within the cage called imperialism. Where does this difference come from? Kandel was critical of the movement that called for progressive education, promoted mainly by Dewey. But we cannot reduce the different meanings that these two people’s arguments had for Lim Bo-seng simply to the difference between these two positions. Rather, it seems to stem from the fact that while Dewey’s argument is a theoretical principle, which it is possible to appropriate, Kandel’s is more related to the reality of colonial education. That is to say, modern education essentially contains these dual characteristics.

Modern scholarship and the space of the university not only granted Lim Bo-seng an academic career, but also made him recognize the importance of “the freedom of intelligence,” to borrow Dewey’s expression. He probably regarded it as the origin of all cultural values. But modern scholarship and the university had another aspect which oppressed him, as a member of the elite from the colony. This aspect is suggested by the fact that Kandel placed Abe’s out-of-date article in the *Educational Yearbook*. Of course, it is possible that Kandel did not know about the content of Abe’s article and that he entrusted the writing of an article to him only because Abe was a professor at Tokyo Imperial University. If so, we will have to ask whether there was any way for member of the elite from colonial



Taiwan also to become a professor at Tokyo Imperial University. Although there was a very little chance, that does not mean that there was none. According to his son's recollections, although Lim Bo-seng was asked to take a professor's post at Taipei Imperial University by the government-general when he came back from New York, he turned down that offer, believing that the purpose of this university was to bring up manpower in order to promote Japan's southward expansion policy.<sup>14</sup> Imperial universities, as the names suggest, were organs for training high-class bureaucrats for the colonial empire of Japan. The universities were by no means free from the cage of imperialism. The article by Abe that was included in the *Educational Yearbook* edited by Kandel was already predicting the catastrophe that Lim Bo-seng would face in the 1930s.

### CONCLUSION

Gi-wook Shin and Michael Robinson have made the following comments about Korean colonial modernity.

Koreans participated directly and indirectly in the construction of a unique colonial modernity—a modernity that produced cosmopolitanism (a sense of shared universals) without political emancipation. Colonial modernity possessed liberating forces and a raw, transformative power, and it affected more nuanced forms of domination and repression in the colony. Its sheer complexity must be recognized.<sup>15</sup>

These comments could be applied to Lim Bo-seng as well. He was not simply a recipient of modern Western civilization: he actively participated in the construction of colonial modernity in Taiwan. In his writing, such key terms such as “liberalism,” “freedom of action,” and “independent intelligence” occupied important positions. As such phrases make clear, he believed in the liberating forces of modernity. It is probable that he was much influenced by Christianity. Lim saw continuity between British missionaries and the Japanese, the new rulers from outside who would bring a new type of culture to Taiwan. And he criticized as conservative those Taiwanese who rejected this new culture.

At the turn of the century, a person like Lim Bo-seng belonged in the minority. But in the 1910s, the demand for modern education among the Taiwanese grew greatly, and at the same time, the problems with the government-general's negative education policy became obvious. In the 1920s the government-general enhanced the trend of cultural assimilation in the educational curriculum, as a reactionary response to the growth of national consciousness among the Taiwanese. At this point, Lim Bo-seng could not help becoming aware that education by

the Japanese contradicted the liberating forces of Taiwanese modernity. When racial discrimination, which he himself must have experienced, reinforced this perception, he voiced the opinion that cultural assimilation was opposed to the principles of modern education, but even at this point, however, he did not reject imperialistic colonial rule per se. The expression “cosmopolitanism without political emancipation” explains well his thinking. Eventually, in the 1930s, even the plans for improvement that he had suggested came to nothing.

We must conclude that his political vision was overly optimistic, although it is easy for us to say that from today's point of view. The important thing, however, is that belief in the liberating forces of modernity deeply captured the elite Taiwanese Lim Bo-seng, and that this belief led him into a dead end.

Gi-wook Shin and Michael Robinson's statement suggests that what I have presented on Lim Bo-seng here can be observed quite generally, whether in Taiwan or in Korea. But Taiwan, no more than a peripheral part of the Qing Dynasty, offered a clearer cosmopolitanism in its longing for modernity. But even if they intended to resist cultural assimilation by mobilizing native culture, it was not clear what should be considered “our language” and “our culture”; a gap developed such that the adjective “Formosan” was used for “language,” and “Chinese” for “culture.” Also, it may have been influential that the occupation of Taiwan by Japan took place at a stage when reforms for modernization in Taiwan were just beginning. Though it was obvious that Japanese culture was not identical to modern culture, it was even harder to find a way of reaching the latter without going through the former.

In this circumstance, the example of mission schools and the experience of studying in the United States could become footholds from which to relativize the modernity that the Japanese brought. Utilizing fully these opportunities, Lim Bo-seng tried to seek an alternative education in mission schools. Also, by appropriating Dewey's thoughts, he criticized Japan's policy from a perspective that asked what education was in its original sense. But while the British empire and the United States overtly respected institutions based on modern values such as freedom, equality, and democracy, the expansion of colonies and of areas of influence that they promoted abroad was based on national interests, and often contradictory to modern values. Therefore, it was not easy to inspire Westerners to sympathize and collaborate with the colonized. In fact, Kandel, one of Lim Bo-seng's advisors, discussed colonial education from the point of view of the imperialistic ruler. In the deep recesses of modernity, which produced the attractive catchphrase “cosmopolitanism,” racism was waiting. The experience of colonial modernity for Lim Bo-seng was to wander in that labyrinth.

In 1939, as a birthday gift to his son Lin Tsung-yi 林宗義, who had decided to major in psychiatry at Tokyo Imperial University, Lim Bo-seng gave a calligraphic rendering of the following poem by Wang Yang-ming 王陽明:

Where is utopia?  
 The deepest place in the mountains of the west  
 It is not necessary to ask a fisherman  
 Walking along the valley, stepping on flowers, and leaving<sup>16</sup>

One cannot find utopia even when one visits the deepest place in the mountains of the west. It is not necessary to ask fishermen who say that they have found utopia. The path of the valley can be dangerous, but flowers are blooming. . . . Or, though this might be an extreme interpretation, the expression “the deepest place in the mountains of the west” could refer to his own experience of seeking the possibility of modernity as its deepest point by an experience of the West that brought him to the United States to study. And, when we interpret the poem in this way, his intention rises to the surface: even while running toward the dead end of “colonial modernity,” he had intended to go beyond.

## NOTES

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2. Shin Gi-wook and Michael Robinson, *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 12.
3. Thomas Barclay, *The Church in Formosa in 1895: The War, Mission Work, the Outlook* (London: Publication Committee, 1895), 3, Presbyterian Church of England Archives, School of Orient and Africa Studies, University of London, microfiche no. 153.
4. Ibid.
5. Regarding the February 28 Incident, see Tsung-yi Lin, ed., *An Introduction to 2–28 Tragedy in Taiwan: For World Citizens* (Taipei: Taiwan Renaissance Foundation, 1998). The editor of the book, Tsung-yi Lin, is the son of Lim Bo-seng.
6. Lim Bo-seng’s original dissertation is deposited in the Columbia University library; in 2000, the Taiwan Renaissance Foundation published a Chinese translation as well as an English version of the dissertation. Although in the course of research I consulted the original text in the special collection of the Department of Education, Columbia University, pagination here refers to the English version published by the Taiwan Renaissance Foundation.
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13. Kandel, “Education of Indigenous Peoples,” xii.
14. Li Xiao-feng, *Lim Bo-seng*, 109.
15. Shin and Robinson, *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, 11.
16. Lin Shu-fen, *Catalog of Calligraphy by Lim Bo-seng* (Taipei: Taiwan Renaissance Foundation, 2002), 130.

TAIWAN UNDER JAPANESE COLONIAL RULE  
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*This book is dedicated to the memory of Huang Wu-chung (1949–2005),  
writer, editor, collector, scholar, teacher, and pioneer  
in Taiwan's New Literature movement fieldwork.*