

A Conceptual History of Gyoyang (Mind Cultivation) and the Evolution of Knowledge Culture in Korea*

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Abstract

This article is a new historical account of the concept of gyoyang (mind cultivation, literally meaning “teaching and nurtureing”) from two perspectives. The first is that the long tradition of Confucian humanities has intervened in forming the contents and examples of gyoyang. In the modern era, the original concept of gyoyang and its long Asian traditions have become fused with the Western ideas of the humanities. The second is that the everyday entrenchment of the word gyoyang and the spread of gyoyang-ism stemmed from the people’s aspirations for enlightenment and education as well as demands for intellectual equality. The history of the concept of gyoyang is deeply related to that of gyoyang-ism or the cultural history of struggles surrounding symbols of knowledge. Based on such perspectives, this article reviews the uses of the concept of gyoyang in Korea during its colonial period and its evolution in five instances: (1) character building, (2) education, (3) capabilities to learn knowledge and culture, (4) basic and wide-ranging knowledge, and (5) civil maturity and proficiency in the humanities in the Western sense of the word.

Keywords: gyoyang (mind cultivation), gyoyang-ism, tastes, common sense, character building

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Introduction: Significance of Debating the Concept of Gyoyang

Pyojun gugeo daesajeon (Standard Korean Dictionary), which is widely used today, interprets *gyoyang* as follows:

(noun)

(1) teaching and nurturing

(2) dignity attained through learning, knowledge and social life, or a wide-ranging knowledge of culture

This definition well condenses the meaning of the word *gyoyang*, but it is inadequate¹ because *gyoyang* denotes attainments of the humanities or reflective capabilities and is also often used as a term meaning subjects taught in colleges. And *gyoyang*, as explained in (2) above, means both knowledge and dignity. In fact, the term means basic or fundamental attainments of knowledge with which one can manage one's life, rather than the acquisition of a wide range of knowledge.

In the Korean language, *gyoyang* is often preceded by “have” or “don't have.” This example condenses the cultural and political aspects of the word *gyoyang*. Namely, “have” or “don't have” doesn't signify a situation, but is linked to values and norms. It implies that since a “have” situation is regarded as desirable while a “don't have” situation is considered undesirable, *gyoyang* should be regarded as something to be *learned* and *nurtured*. The most normative and centripetal example of having *gyoyang* may well be such criterion of the standard Korean language as “the contemporary Seoul dialect commonly used by people with *gyoyang*.” Those who are unable to use the standard language, according to the statement below by the National Institute of Korean Language, are not only people who do not have *gyoyang*, but also who do not fulfill the duties of citizens:

Therefore, all educators must above all be able to use precise stan-

1. *Yeonse hangugeo sajeon* (Yonsei Korean Dictionary), another dictionary in wide usage, defines *gyoyang* as “(noun) individual qualities equipped with sound knowledge of and power of judgment on culture including social life and arts.”

dard language. . . . Thus viewed, the standard language can be said to be a duty the citizens should fulfill, beyond the level of *gyoyang*. . . . Included here is the emphasis that those who are unable to use the standard language become men without *gyoyang*. Since the standard language is a common-use language devised for all citizens, it is an obvious and essential *gyoyang* that people engaged in public activities should be familiar with and correctly use the standard language.²

This considerably ideological and nationalistic notion links the standard language with *gyoyang*. *Gyoyang* as a norm is connected to the problem of another core dimension: the problem of *gyoyang*-ism. In this paper, *gyoyang*-ism refers to the assertion that people should have *gyoyang*, an absolute affirmation of the value of *gyoyang*, and the social perceptions and fulfillments arising therefrom.³ Namely, discipline was at the core of the concepts of *gyoyang* and *gyoyang*-ism. *Gyoyang*-ism has led the term *gyoyang* to function and be entrenched in the central language of all people. *Gyoyang*-ism is a form of knowledge culture and also a competitive arena in which opposing pairs such as control/suppression and consent/resistance emerge simultaneously. *Gyoyang* is perceived as to whether one possesses or lacks it. A possession or a lack thereof signifies ownership and is directly linked to capital; those who have *gyoyang* belong to the ruling class while those who don't belong to the ruled. *Gyoyang* is linked to the symbolic and cultural capital individuals possess. Such capital can be not merely symbolic, but entire paths through which individuals establish a large number of social relationships. There are numerous examples that show cultural controversies involving *gyoyang* and politics of *gyoyang*-ism. For instance, in his memoir, Roh Moo-hyun, a non-mainstreamer of Korean society who became a president and then committed suicide, stated, "I have no *gyoyang*" (Roh 2009).

2. See the homepage of the National Institute of Korean Language at http://www.korean.go.kr/09_new/dic/rule02_0101.jsp. All bold emphases in this article are mine.

3. *Gyoyang*-ism has something common with intellectualism, culturalism, humanism, and dilettantism, and is opposed to pragmatism, anti-intellectualism, and anti-culturalism.

The usage of *gyoyang* can also be seen in gendered terms. The adjective phrase *gyoyang-inneun* (“in possession of *gyoyang*”) is often placed before “people” or “women” in Korean society, but the usage is particularly common with the word “women.” The following explanatory sentence of *gyoyang* in *Yeonse hangugeo sajeon* (Yonsei Korean Dictionary) is very illustrative: “The woman introduced to me was a beauty in her late 30s who possessed *gyoyang* and from a wealthy family.” The illustrative sentence adds *gyoyang* to what a person should possess, namely, family, wealth, and beauty, and identifies woman as the subject who should embody such quality. Interestingly, *Sae urimal keun sajeon* (New Grand Korean Dictionary), edited by Shin Gi-cheol and published by the *Seoul Shinmun* in 1974, also carries “a woman of *gyoyang*” as an illustration of *gyoyang*. Furthermore, *Joseonmal dae sajeon* (Expansive Korean Dictionary), first published by the North Korean Language Institute, Academy of Social Sciences in 1992, also has an entry of “women of *gyoyang*” as an illustrative sentence of *gyoyang*. Why is *gyoyang* linked particularly with women in Korea, through all ages and transcending political systems? It may be because the term *gyoyang* is linked with the *habitus*⁴ of class and gender, and above all because the difference of *gyoyang* based on class becomes more pronounced with gender.

People who are unwittingly involved in the *gyoyang* issue are susceptible to suffer from a sense of cultural inferiority or intellectual vanity. Accordingly, defining *gyoyang* as a pleasant means of communication (Schwanitz 2007) is only feasible in a very paradoxical way. *Gyoyang* hinders communications. *Gyoyang* causes differences in class, region, and schooling as well as a sense of inequality. Needless to say, it is not just *gyoyang* itself but also the effects of *gyoyang*-ism. *Gyoyang*-ism also bears ambivalence, just as *gyoyang* itself does. As is the case with people with *gyoyang*, *gyoyang*-ism serves the ruling class and state power. *Gyoyang*-ism produces among the people spon-

4. *Habitus* is a notion elaborated by Pierre Bourdieu, which refers to the internalized form of the class condition that affects one’s dispositions, perception, thought, and action.

taneous yearning for and subordination to controlling cultural formulae. *Gyoyang*-ism, therefore, is one of the most important forms of politics of knowledge and may be a *soft* cultural form of hegemony that the ruling class exercises over the ruled. *Gyoyang*-ism, on the other hand, may produce effects of resistance against control and the dominant culture. *Gyoyang* itself is a starting point for the equality of knowledge and the critical consciousness of the humanities. The history of the *gyoyang* concept is deeply related with the history of *gyoyang*-ism and the cultural history of struggles surrounding symbols of knowledge. This, no doubt, is related to the problem of how the holders of knowledge are established.

The term *gyoyang* (*jiaoyang* 教養 in Chinese) traces as far back as the Han dynasty (202 BC–AD 220).⁵ With the influence of modern concepts of (*das*) *Bildung* in German and “culture” in English, new meanings were added to the earlier sense of this term, that is, “teaching and nurturing a man.” This, as known, was made possible when the Japanese in their modern transition era selected *kyoyo* (*gyoyang* in Korean) for the translation of *das Bildung* or culture (Kawai 2007). And its connotations were enriched by Japan’s culturalism and humanitarianism during the Taisho era (1912–1926). And here in lies what should be corrected in researches into the hitherto concept of *gyoyang* or *gyoyang*-ism. The discourses thus far have focused on *gyoyang* in its Western sense, which was imported through Japan, and intellectuals’ discourses on *gyoyang*. This paper attempts to present two perspectives different from the existing discourses.⁶

The first notion is that the long tradition of Confucian humanities has intervened in forming the contents and examples of *gyoyang*. Namely, the meaning of the concept of *gyoyang* and the long traditions of cultivation in Asia has become fused with the Western ideas of humanism.

5. China’s *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 (Comprehensive Dictionary of Chinese) cites *Dongguan hanji* 東觀漢記 (History of the Later Han Dynasty) as an illustration of *jiaoyang*.

6. On the modern Western perception of *gyoyang* and intellectuals’ *gyoyang* discourses, imported through Japan, see Huh (2006, 2009a, 2009b) and Yun (2007, 2009).

Second, the notion that *gyoyang* has become a term of everyday usage and that *gyoyang*-ism has spread in Korea on the strength of the people's aspirations for enlightenment and education and the demands of intellectual equality. The dissemination of the terms *gyoyang* and *gyoyang*-ism in Korea has been prompted not by the formation of a Western bourgeois or civil society, but by intensive mass enlightenment and modernization movements. This can be verified through the expanded concept of *gyoyang* in the 1920s and 1930s as well as in the 1950s and 1960s. In terms of the history of the concept, it is a fact that the word meaning of *gyoyang* expanded in general correspondence with Japan's trends. The first half of the 1920s and the latter half of the 1930s in Korea, when *gyoyang* expanded to mean the "ability to enjoy culture," corresponded with the Japanese Taisho era of prevalent *gyoyang*-ism and the 1930s when it reached its boom. This is only a partial observation, however, considering the entire meaning of the word *gyoyang*. Since this paper cannot afford to delve extensively into the history of the concept of *gyoyang*-ism in the pre-modern times, it will only briefly summarize the premodern times before focusing on Korea's early modern and colonial periods.

Transition of Gyoyang during the Early Modern Times

Gyoyang is a term that has been used since the Goryeo dynasty and during the Joseon period, its usage is found often in *Joseon wangjo sillok* (Annals of the Joseon Dynasty) and other documents of literary men and Confucian scholars. It denoted "teaching and nurturing" in its surface word meaning. Important here are its connotations. *Gyoyang* was a term linked directly with the ideologies and practices of Joseon, a kingdom governed by literary men, and its values. Subjected to *gyoyang* were those who put into practice the Confucian doctrine of cultivating knowledge while functioning as rulers, encompassing all those from the crown prince to the students of Confucianism in rural areas. And the contents of *gyoyang* were qualities sought by neo-Confucian idealism and required of public officials.⁷ But it is

hard to regard that those outside of the literati class, such as the farmers, technicians, and merchants, were included as acquirers of *gyoyang*. While the term *gyohwa* 教化 (enlightenment) was used more often regarding the common people, *gyoyang* was seldom used. In this respect, the connotations of *gyoyang*, meaning “teaching and nurturing,” differ greatly from that of the contemporary period.

The targets of education were expanded to include the people under the social and cultural situations of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, and during this transition, the disposition and connotation of the concept of *gyoyang* subsequently changed. In the early twentieth century, *gyoyang* came to be used as a verb removed from the Confucian humanistic sense. In the early modern times, the current usage of the word *gyoyang* to mean “mind cultivation” and its verb form that means “to teach and nurture” coexisted, with the latter being used more often. Affecting the expansion of the term to include the meanings of “mind cultivation” as well as “things to be cultivated” was the Western concept of *gyoyang*. This was a result of the Japanese political and cultural influence, mainly through the channel of Korean students who studied in Tokyo, on Korean language, society, and intellectuals since the late nineteenth century. The meaning of *gyoyang* in Japan is said to have been associated with character building and had expanded to denote yearning for enjoyment of culture based on perfection of personality.⁸

The meaning of *gyoyang* in the Korean language, as influenced by

7. There are few instances in which *gyoyang* referred to what should be taught and nurtured found in documents published prior to the modern times. This piece in the appendix to volume 8 of *Sambongjip* 三峯集 (Collected Works of Sambong) is one of the few: “Tang had five items for managing men. *Gyoyang* calls for achieving talents and virtues Items were divided into sub-items. Being acquainted with Chinese classics of Confucianism and historical works, being well-informed in legal affairs, and being good at horse-riding and arrow shooting constituted items of *gyoyang*. Literature, skills, martial arts, and talents constituted requirements for appointment.” *Sambongjip* was first published in 1397 (the 6th year of King Taejo’s reign) and republished with additions in 8 volumes in 1486 (the 17th year of King Seongjong’s reign).

8. On the accommodation and transition of the concept of *kyoyo* in Japan, see Kiyotada (1992, 165-166) and Yun (2009).

Japan, expanded to include tastes, common sense, and abilities to enjoy culture. And the meaning of *gyoyang* was discussed and expanded in the course of pondering over and advocating the translated term of culture. In an essay titled “Munhwa saeop-ui geupseonmu-ro minjunggeuk-eul jean-hanora” (Proposing Mass Drama as an Urgent Cultural Enterprise), published in April 1921 issue of the *Gaebyeok* (Genesis), Hyeon Cheol, for instance, said “the *munhwa* (culture) originally contains many meanings,” and the *munhwa* linked to enlightenment and *gyoyang* means at least education, and moral upbringing. It also means edification, civilization, development, and illumination. Going a step further, it denotes culture or *Kultur* in German.” An identical line of thinking is found in an article, “Munhwa-ui uiui-wa gi baljeonchaek” (The Meaning of Culture and How to Develop It), printed in the June 1921 issue of *Hakjigwang* (Light of Learning). The writer Kim Hang-bok wrote, “*Munhwa* is a translation of the German term *Kultur* and of the identical English term ‘culture,’ and an abridgement of ‘civilization and edification.’ It also means cultivation, *gyoyang*, and edification.”

When looking at the entire transition of the meaning of *gyoyang* since the 1900s, however, the influence from Japan was partial. Furthermore, discussions centered on Japanese influence were based only on the expansion of Western influenced *gyoyang*-ism in Japan and Japanese intellectuals’ discourses on *gyoyang*. What is needed then is to review the accommodation and application of the concept of *gyoyang* against the backdrop of the entire evolution of the Korean knowledge culture.

Changes in the Meaning of *Gyoyang* and in Knowledge Culture in Early Modern Korea

The Discovery of National Identity and Populistic Gyoyang-ism

Though *gyoyang* perceptions that emerged anew in Japan in the 1910s influenced Korean intellectuals, the frequency in the use of

gyoyang in magazines like *Sonyeon* (Youth) and *Hakjigwang* (Light of Learning) in the 1910s was low. An entirely different trend emerged in the 1920s, however. As shown in the following table and graph, the *Dong-A Ilbo* used the term *gyoyang* quite often from the mid-1920s, indicating that the term began to be used in mass media and daily life. This was the biggest transformation that provided the most important inner motive for changes in the meaning of *gyoyang*.

Such a phenomenon is linked to the emergence of new partici-

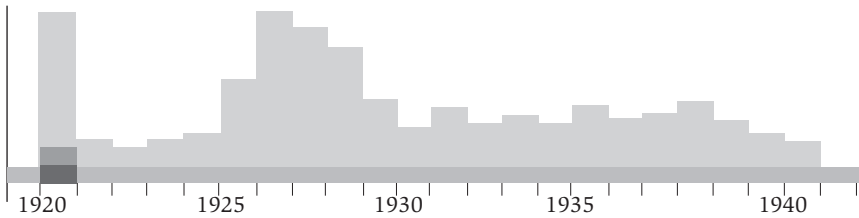


Figure 1. Instances of *Gyoyang* Appearing in Titles and Articles⁹

Table 1. Instances of *Gyoyang* Mentioned in the *Dong-A Ilbo*, 1920-1939

Year	<i>Gyoyang</i>	Year	<i>Gyoyang</i>
1920	13	1930	49
1921	26	1931	78
1922	16	1932	50
1923	29	1933	63
1924	34	1934	50
1925	125	1935	86
1926	235	1936	59
1927	208	1937	62
1928	174	1938	90
1929	87	1939	61

9. Figures in the following graph are retrieved from Naver's search engine, "News Library" (<http://newslibrary.naver.com>).

pants in education as well as national movements. The rise of newly motivated people accompanied by the expanded recognition that they are the prime movers of history prompted the spread of *gyoyang*. The term *gyoyang* then used carried social and cultural connotations different from the current meaning. And that concept differs also from what is connoted in the *Joseon wago sillok* as well as from the usage in journals like *Inmun pyeongnon* (Humanities Review) published by intellectuals who had studied in Japan.

The term *gyoyang* in the 1920s was mainly used as a verb meaning “to teach and nurture” the people, proletarians, farmers, and at times, women. Following are few examples of such usage in the *Dong-A Ilbo*: “A new group of youths, interested in teaching and nurturing the proletarians, plan to make a roving lecture tour in South and North Korea” (*Dong-A Ilbo*, January 1, 1924); “A plan is underway to establish an institute to teach and nurture old-fashioned housewives” (*Dong-A Ilbo*, January 2, 1926); “Teach and nurture the people” (*Dong-A Ilbo*, December 3, 1926); and “A plan to establish the Gwangmyeong Institute in Cheonan for the purpose of teaching and nurturing the children of the poor families rejected” (*Dong-A Ilbo*, May 14, 1928). *Gyoyang* mentioned here refers to minimum abilities needed for acquiring *gyoyang*, which is far behind the Western civil or ideological *gyoyang*. As *gyoyang* is gained by a continual reading, the acquiring of literacy was considered a minimum requirement to achieve *gyoyang*. In essence, *gyoyang* reformulated its meaning in the process of calling upon the people to become the prime movers of the country and its proletariat.

According to the official 1930 statistics of the Korean Government-General, 77.74 percent of Koreans were completely illiterate (64% of males and 92% of females). The *Dong-A Ilbo*, in an editorial on January 12, 1926, noted that *gyoyang* was a newly-emerging term that was gaining popularity. It claimed that as the class movement, which was blossoming at the time, was focused on the education of the people, public attention was focused on *gyoyang*.¹⁰ Accordingly,

10. *Dong-A Ilbo*, “Gyoyang-ui mokpyo” (Goals of *Gyoyang*), January 12, 1926.

the explosive expansion in the use of the term *gyoyang* in Korea in the 1920s-1930s was owed not only to *gyoyang*-ism that originated in Japan. As the general public became increasingly eager to read, write, and attend schools, the demand that knowledge be equally distributed accordingly increased in the 1920s. Illiteracy elimination through various means and private institutions became the most important social agenda. This illustrates that *gyoyang* emerged as an issue in a different light from its usual notion that is associated with the dominant class (namely, citizenship and bourgeoisie).

The term *gyoyang* was most often and widely used between 1925 and 1928, reflecting the characteristics of that period. The background of this was the fact that power of mass intelligence grew remarkably and socialism- and nationalism-oriented enlightenment movements expanded.

Gyoyang and Its Relationship with Citizens, People, and Laborers

The changes in the concept of *gyoyang*, which were related to the growth of modern populism in Korea during the colonial period, can also be indirectly proved by the following method. Instances in which the terms *gyoyang*, *simin* (citizen), *minjung* (people), *nodongja* (laborer), and *nongmin* (farmer) are used simultaneously in an article, and in which two of the terms were used in tandem were searched for in the “News Library” database (<http://newslibrary.naver.com>) of Naver, the largest online portal website in South Korea.¹¹ Upon searching *gyoyang* and *minjung*, the number of instances in which these two terms formulated the context of a passage in an identical article peaked in the latter 1920s, overwhelmingly more frequent than in the 1930s and since the 1960s. Therefore, it can be said that it was only during the latter 1920s that *gyoyang* was used along with terms like *minjung* to constitute the relationship of the subject and predi-

11. The search applied a linguistic research on collocations and common-use terms. Although it was confined to the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the search is deemed to reflect the macroscopic trend. On details about this methodology, see Cheon (2012).

cate. It becomes more interesting when the outcome of a search with *gyoyang* and *simin* (citizens) is compared. This is related to the fact that the term *simin* was often used after the 1960s. Of course, results are similar when the terms *gyoyang* and *nodongja* (laborers) and *gyoyang* and *nongmin* (farmers) are searched, as indicated in the following graphs. *Gyoyang* may now perhaps be a term that is least likely to be coupled with *nodongja* or *nongmin* in an article or sentence, yet the situation was the opposite during the colonial period. For instance, “Farmers’ *Gyoyang* Day” was proclaimed in 1930.¹²

All in all, laborers and farmers, along with the people, were often used as the object of the verb *gyoyang-hada* in the early modern period. They were used to mean “to enlighten” farmers or laborers. Such instances abound and constitute the most important component in the context of the concept of *gyoyang* until the 1930s. Hence, a phrase like “laborers with *gyoyang*,” which is not used today, was in use then. An article, “Hyeondae gyeongje jojik-ui mosun” (Contradictions of the Modern Economic Organization), by Ju Jong-geon was published in the November 1923 issue of the *Gaebyeok*. The article describes a laborer who is aware of the contradictions of capitalist society and attends a lecture entitled “Contradictions of Capitalist Society and Missions of the Labor Class.” He is also described as one who is intelligent enough to criticize Yi Gwang-su’s “Minjok gaejoron” (Treatise on the Reformation of National Character). Hence, the author subtitled the article as “A Dialogue with an Unemployed Skilled Laborer Equipped with a Modicum of *Gyoyang*” (Ju 1923). The laborer of this article indicates his awareness that school curriculum like moral training and laws are compiled in a way favorable to the capitalist class. Thus, “laborers with a degree of *gyoyang*” connoted people who were awakened to class consciousness. Since the nation’s liberation from the Japanese colonial rule, however, the term *gyoyang* has been separated from the people, laborers, and youths, and has become more

12. *Dong-A Ilbo*, “Nongmin gyoyang dei 12 wol 1 il-e seongdaehi geohaeng, nongminsa juchoe-ro gaechoe” (Farmers’ *Gyoyang* Day Celebrated Colorfully on December 1 under the Sponsorship of Farmer Co.), December 1, 1930.

familiarly associated with college students and women.

In short, what can be observed in the evolution of the concept of *gyoyang* are its connections to the greater cultural and historic changes, ranging from the basic task of helping a majority of the people free themselves from illiteracy and feudalistic culture to achieving personal growth as citizens and attaining institutional education of *gyoyang*. Through such evolution, the semantics of *gyoyang* has changed and has also come to carry multiple meanings.

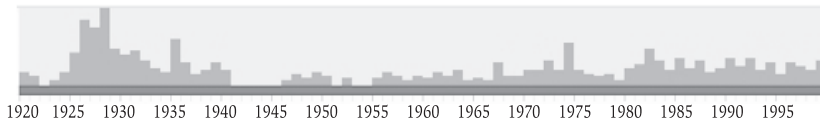


Figure 2. Instances of *Gyoyang* and *Nodongja* (Laborers)

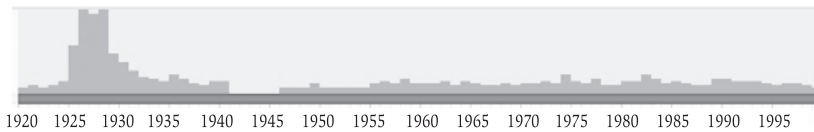


Figure 3. Instances of *Gyoyang* and *Cheongnyeon* (Youths)

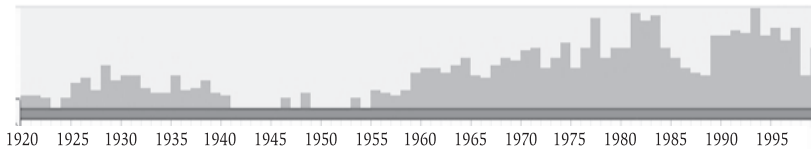


Figure 4. Instances of *Gyoyang* and *Nongmin* (Farmers)

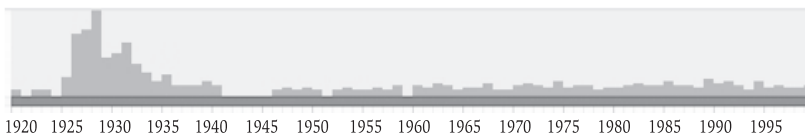


Figure 5. Instances of *Gyoyang* and *Simin* (Citizens)

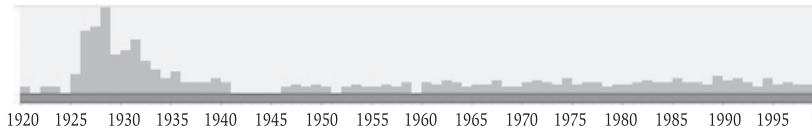


Figure 6. Instances of *Gyoyang* and *Daehaksaeng* (College Students)

Broadening the Semantics of *Gyoyang* and Redefining Its Overall Meaning

In this chapter, I will examine the ways in which the term *gyoyang* has become a word with multiple meanings since the 1920s, and along with the new connotations discussed above, how it became established in the language of the people. Foremost, the term *gyoyang* was explained in dual-language dictionaries published between the 1890s and 1920s.¹³ With the English term, “mind cultivation,” its meanings and contents developed entirely in its relations with culture (Fisch 2010). However, its development process in Korea differs considerably; *gyoyang* has never appeared as a title term in dual language dictionaries. Nonetheless, how the Korean term *gyoyang* gained and expanded its meanings can be inferred from the English terms “culture” and “education” and the Japanese term *kyoyo*. Horace Grant Underwood’s *Yeonghan jajeon* (An English-Korean Dictionary), published in 1890, has no entry for “culture.” The dictionary, however, has an entry for “educate” and defines it as “to nurture, teach, refine, instruct.” It also interprets “education” as *gyohun* (instruction) and *gyoyang*. Both George Heber Jones’ *An English-Korean Dictionary* (1914) and James Scarth Gale’s *Present Day English-Korean: Three Thousand Words* (1924) define “culture” as “education and enlightenment.” The *Yeonghan jajeon* (An English-Korean Dictionary), compiled by H. G. Underwood and H. H. Underwood and published in 1925, explains “culture” as “(1) farming, cultivating, tillage, cultiva-

13. This is based on Hwang and Lee (2012). I wrote this paragraph with the help provided by Hwang Hoduk and Lee Sang Hyun (2012).

tion; (2) nurture, training; (3) research, self-discipline, enlightenment, education.” It interprets “educate” as “(vt.) to nurture, teach, *gyoyang-hada* (instruct), refine, edify, educate.”

What follows below are detailed examples of the various ways in which the term *gyoyang* was classified and used in the 1920s-1930s. The meanings existed in parallel at times and in combination at other times to produce the history of the concept of *gyoyang*.

Gyoyang Used in the Sense of “Character Building”

A *Dong-A Ilbo* editorial of January 12, 1926, titled “Gyoyang-ui mokpyo” (Goals of *Gyoyang*), is important as it shows the changing trend in the concept of *gyoyang* in the first half of the 1920s. The editorial begins with an assertion that it is natural and desirable that the class movement aims at the “*gyoyang* of the proletariat.”

[T]he slogan *gyoyang* has gradually emerged and attracted public attention. . . . Since the *gyoyang* of the proletarian class occupies importance even in great countries, where education has thoroughly developed, it is natural for Korea to emphasize *gyoyang* and we have to emphasize it. Therefore, it should be said it is a proper demand rather than a new phenomenon.¹⁴

But what did they intend to teach the proletarian class? Most discourses on the *gyoyang* of laborers, farmers, and proletariats in the 1920s dealt with minimum knowledge of the world. In discussing the question of what the contents corresponding to the term should be, the editorial asserts that “character building” should be the goal of *gyoyang*. Namely, it says that “character building as members of society, family, and nation” is the center of the *gyoyang* issue. The assertion is based on a notion that “hindrances in the daily life movement, factionalism, and betrayal of human trust in the national movement camp” arise from insufficiency in character building.

14. *Dong-A Ilbo*, “Gyoyang-ui mokpyo” (Goals of *Gyoyang*), January 12, 1926.

Under the present circumstances, we would like to emphasize that the goals of *gyoyang* are placed on character building (although character building is the biggest premise in all eras), we want to set character building as the center or goals of *gyoyang* because the major defect of our society is that we have not become men of trustful personality as businessmen and as members of society, family, or nation. A shortage of men of character greatly hinders the development of our daily life movement. . . . Convinced that the *gyoyang* issue should be the center of all movements, we again emphasize the significance and authority of character with a view to revitalizing our daily movement.¹⁵

This argument itself is naive in that it blames the character of campaigners for Korea's ineffective national or social movements, akin to the national reform advocates' argument that Korean national decline is due to its people's negative personalities. With this in mind, let us assess the two contextual usages of the concept of *gyoyang* in this 1926 editorial.

First, the discourse regarding *gyoyang* as character building can be seen as influenced by Japan. It was in Japan in the 1900s that *gyoyang* was linked to the Eastern concept of character or mind building. Second, the concept of *gyoyang* in the editorial was also influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the Western concept of civic refinement. The editorial's bemoaning a shortage of men of character may be interpreted as a lament of insufficiency or lack of citizens' rationality and norms.

Calls for *gyoyang* of laborers and peasants during Japan's colonial rule, as discussed above, had the primary goal of eliminating ignorance and illiteracy. But *gyoyang* also encompassed the concept of character building as well as Western notion of citizens' refinement.

Gyoyang Used in the Sense of "Education"

Botong hakgyo joseoneo sajeon (Korean Dictionary for Primary School

15. *Dong-A Ilbo*, "Gyoyang-ui mokpyo" (Goals of *Gyoyang*), January 12, 1926.

Students) compiled in 1925 by Shim Ui-rin, a teacher at Keijo Normal School, and deemed to be the first dictionary of the Korean language, contains the title term *gyoyang*.¹⁶ It defines the term as “teaching and nurturing.” The *Joseoneo sajeon* (Korean Dictionary), published in 1920 by the Korean Government-General,¹⁷ has the entry *gyoyang*, but treats it as a synonym of education without interpreting it separately by saying, “*gyoyang* (noun), identical with education.” It interprets “education” as “fostering knowledge through raising and nurturing.” This shows that scholars who compiled the dictionary viewed education and *gyoyang* as synonyms.

There are numerous instances in which the Japanese used the term *gyoyang* as a synonym for education. The Korean Government-General Official Gazette No. 553, dated October 30, 1928, for instance, carries “Bylaws of Regulations for the *Gyoyang* of Police Officers shall be stipulated as follows” (Government-General Decree No. 35, October 30, 1928), and “some provisions of allotting *gyoyang* classes for police officers and their teaching methods shall be revised as follows” (Government-General Decree No. 595, December 22, 1928). The December 1931 issue (no. 308) of *Keimu iho* 警務彙報 (Police Affairs Bulletin) has a similar instance.¹⁸ In Japan itself, many examples are found in books concerning civil servants and civilians. *Gyoyang*, as a synonym of education, was very widely used, which would have subsequently influenced Korea.

A regularized dictionary of the Korean language, the *Joseoneo sajeon* (Korean Dictionary) published in 1938 by the Korean Dictionary Publication Society and authored by Mun Se-yeong with 80,000 entries, too, interprets *gyoyang* as “teaching and nurturing.” In this process, the dictionary definition of *gyoyang* became, in a plain and simple manner, to “teach and nurture,” maintaining the meaning of

16. Accessible at present is the third printing of the 1930 photographic edition of the dictionary, arranged by Bak Hyeong-ik and published by Taehaksa.

17. The dictionary lists entries in Hangeul (Korean Alphabet) according to their phonetic sounds in Chinese characters and explains them in Japanese.

18. *Keimu iho* 警務彙報 (Police Affairs Bulletin), “Shobo kyoyo to sono kunren 消防教養と其の訓練” (Firefighting *Kyoyo* and Training), December 1931.

its Chinese characters. Needless to say, such an interpretation must have been influenced by both the Japanese and Chinese dictionaries. As aforementioned, however, the term “education” was rarely used during the Joseon era, and the contexts of “teaching and nurturing” was complicated.

Gyoyang Used in the Sense of “Enjoying Knowledge and Culture”

As discussed at the beginning of this article, in the modern Korean language *gyoyang* is used most often in the sense that one either “has” or “does not have” *gyoyang*. *Gyoyang* is a certain ability, or quality that should be nurtured. Hence, it can be said that *gyoyang* has broadened its meaning to include the contents (certain qualities) of a certain act, like “teaching and nurturing,” as the object of a verb or gerund. Such instances began to emerge in earnest in the 1920s.

There are many instances in addition to Ju Jong-geon’s above-mentioned article in the *Gaebyeok* (Ju 1923). The *Dong-A Ilbo*’s August 23, 1928 editorial, titled “Crashes between Ordinary Office Workers and Farmers,” accused some farmers and laborers who confronted ordinary office workers of “being enslaved by inertial sentiments,” and claimed that “This trend is more common among farmers and laborers who lack *gyoyang*.” This example shows that the uses of *gyoyang* can be extended to meanings indicating quantity and quality like insufficient, plenty, small, and high from “have” and “do not have.”

The description of “have” or “do not have,” meanwhile, was used not only for laborers and farmers, but also for the general public including males, females, readers, and students, as the following examples indicate:

- (a) “But what is chastity? Is it satisfying a male’s sexual desire with a female on the condition of guaranteeing her livelihood? Or is it a desire for a so-called man with *gyoyang* to satisfy his noble hobby?”¹⁹

19. Yeom Sang-seop, “Jeya” (The New Year’s Eve), *Gaebyeok* (Genesis) 21 (March 1922).

- (b) Korean writers' handicaps are not confined here. It is an undeniable fact that an absolute majority of the readers with intellect, *gyoyang*, and taste, who are capable of understanding and appreciating literature, are enjoying the world's top-class literary works, both classic and modern, through original texts or Japanese translations.²⁰

The person with *gyoyang* is a male in (a) and a reader in (b). "Males with *gyoyang*" is a phrase no longer used in Korea. *Gyoyang* has been closely linked with "women" or "females" and has been used overwhelming more often as "women or females with *gyoyang*." Example (a), therefore, can be said to be an instance of a time when the term *gyoyang* was not gendered. The trend of associating gender with the term rapidly expanded from the 1950s, when "females" began to become special bearers of *gyoyang*.²¹

In addition, (b) is an instance that is only feasible with the premise of cultural audience including readers or the people. *Gyoyang* being an important mechanism of classification, the concepts of "people without *gyoyang*" and "readers with *gyoyang*" were possible when cultural distinction between the people and intellectuals or between the people and elite were becoming clearer. On the other hand, there also is an instance of referring to "writers with writing talents and great *gyoyang*."²² Nowadays, no one would describe writers or intellectuals as possessing *gyoyang* in this manner.

Visible in quotations (a) and (b), meanwhile, are contiguity or synonymous relationship between *gyoyang* and *chwimi* (tastes). Tastes and *gyoyang* are often used in close contexts even today, but *gyoyang* cannot be replaced with tastes or used as its synonym. The

20. Ju Yo-seop, "Munye ugam (sam): daejung muhnak sogo" (A Thought on Literature for the People), *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 21, 1938.

21. Refer to these following articles: *Dong-A Ilbo*, "Suncheon nyeocheong-e ireon" (An Advice to the Suncheon Women's Association), February 25, 1926; *Dong-A Ilbo*, "Jigeop buin doel bun-eun dasi hanbeon banseong-hara" (Women Who Aspire for Occupation Should Self-Reflect Again), April 5, 1929.

22. *Dong-A Ilbo*, "Bak Tae-won gi jina soseoljip" (Chinese Novels by Bak Tae-won), May 9, 1939.

uses of tastes and *gyoyang* were very similar, however, in the early modern times. *Chwimi-itda* (“to have taste”), which is no longer in use, was used in a similar meaning as *gyoyang-itda* (“to have *gyoyang*”). This was possible on account of the cultural meaning of *chwimi*, which was uncovered anew and the semantics of which changed in the early modern times (Cheon and Lee 2006; Moon 2008). The contiguity of *gyoyang* and tastes, as shown in the following quotation from Chae Man-sik’s *Tangnyu* (The Muddy Stream) (1938), lasted for a long while.

“Why is that chit so crazy about movies?”

“You meddler! You chit, who reads novels day and night in a banal manner like you?”

“Hmm! Novel reading taste is considered a decent element of *gyoyang*.”

“But it’s somewhat cheap . . . But it’s nonetheless admirable that you don’t read *Chuwolsaek* and *Yu Chung-yeol jeon*.”

“However, you claim to do it in order to enjoy modern sensations, if a girl frequents movie houses too often, the letter “no” is bound to be scribed on the back of your head. Okay? Do you understand? A delinquent girl . . .” (Chae [1938] 1989).

Gyoyang Used in the Sense of “Basic and Broad-Based Knowledge”

This instance indicates that *gyoyang* in the abstract sense of abilities to enjoy knowledge, culture, and arts is vulgarized. *Gyoyang* here means universal, easy, convenient, and basic knowledge. Nowadays, *gyoyang* is most frequently used in conjunction with such words as “subjects” and “departments.” Compound words like “*gyoyang* subjects” and “*gyoyang* departments” were virtually never used in newspaper articles in the 1920s and 1930s. It was in the 1950s that the vocabulary “*gyoyang* subjects” began to emerge and in the 1960s that it was used in earnest. This indicates that *gyoyang* was absorbed by the school system, and that beneficiaries of school system became persons capable of wide-range, general education, or *gyoyang* subjects. It was from the 1960s that *gyoyang* was used to distinguish

“basic” from specialization or expertise, and recognized as a kind of general subjects within college education.

It was in the 1920s, however, that *gyoyang*, used along with “lecture” and “course” as well as in the sense of easy and convenient knowledge began to emerge. Needless to say, this was influenced by similar uses in Japan.²³ In its February 15, 1932 editorial, “Abundant Job Opportunities: To Graduating Students and Leading Citizens,” the *Dong-A Ilbo* advises Korean youths, aspiring to help the poor people, “to visit factories and conduct (1) literacy education and running night classes for grownups and children, (2) industrial technology improvement and instruction, (3) common sense and *gyoyang*, (4) physical exercises, and (5) producers’ guilds.” *Gyoyang* mentioned in this sentence means “to teach and nurture” and also parallels with *sangsik* (general knowledge). The following instance also shows a close word association between *chwimi* (tastes) and *sangsik*. In Yeom Sang-seop’s serialized novel, *Sarang-gwa joe* (Love and Sin), published in the *Dong-A Ilbo* from August 5, 1927 to May 4, 1928, Jang Maria seeks her role model as a salon lady.

A group of poets, writers, and painters gather at a high-class Western salon. The lady acquires the honor of being a socialite only if she provides a series of conversations by telling them various stories, displaying plentiful of *chwimi* and *sangsik*, so that the guests are not distracted (Yeom [1929] 1987, 31).

Of course, both *sangsik* and *gyoyang* referred to a shared sentiment and were considered knowledge and acquisitions that should be spread to the Koreans urgently. The term *sangsik* was often used as something “to be acquired” in the early twentieth century, yet to “have *gyoyang*” and “to have *sangsik*” began to carry different nuance along the way. The former implied the possession of a higher level of

23. Examples of this are: *Keizai chiri no kyoyo* 經濟地理の教養 (The *Kyoyo* of Economic Geography) by Tanaka Kaoru 田中薫 (Tokyo: Kokin Shoin, 1928); and *Ippanteki kyoyo to shite no sugaku ni tsuite* 一般的教養としての數學について (On Mathematics as General *Kyoyo*) by Yoshie Takuji 吉江琢兒 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1935).

cultural acquisitions, while the latter minimum knowledge and basic acquisitions. Although combinations of *gyoyang* and *sangsik* have been widely used since Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule, the semantics in today's context denotes general and popular knowledge, opposite to professional knowledge.

Gyoyang Used in the Western Sense of "Civil Maturity or Humanities Capability"

As Western sense of the ideals of humanism, education, civil maturity, and cultural literacy, the meaning of *gyoyang* is both comprehensive and abstract. Such uses introduced from Japan began to emerge in the 1930s. An entertainment-page article of the *Dong-A Ilbo* in August 1937 takes an issue with misconducts theater troupes commit in provincial towns, including forcing female members to engage in prostitution. That Korean entertainers "lack in *gyoyang* and social training" and get low pays, the article said, is "because they have many defects in terms of *gyoyang* and commit many deeds betraying common sense."²⁴ *Gyoyang* referred to here denotes not the attainment of knowledge or spirit, but the combination of the two and something similar to self-reflection.

Fueling the diffusion of the Western concept of *gyoyang* were two elements: the introduction of modern educational system and the institutionalization of Western school system. The following is what the heroine Choe Deuk-ju said in *Cheongchun museong* (Exuberant Youth), a novel Yi Tae-jun published in 1940:

Does anyone want to get that sort of education? Even if they urged me to, I won't go now. Daughters of wealthy families read Ten-nyson's poems and count the calories of cabbage. Hmm! I eat cabbage without knowing its calories. Nonetheless, I do enjoy beer (Yi [1946] 1988).

24. *Dong-A Ilbo*, "Yeonye sigam: sunhoe geukdan-ui jeonghwa" (Entertainment Commentary: Purification of Roving Troupes), August 8, 1937.

What was implicit in this story was that the heroine Choe Deuk-ju was a student of Ewha Woman's Junior College, the predecessor of Ewha Womans University. *Gyoyang* in the 1940s, when they read Tennyson's poems and counted cabbage calories, was quite similar to what it is today. Although Choe Deuk-ju, given the low schooling and high illiteracy rates at that time, belonged to an exceptional minority group, the overall changed aspects of *gyoyang* in the twentieth century can be observed through her experience. Students attending junior colleges' humanities departments at that time studied Introduction to Literature, English Literature, Chinese Literature, Eastern Civilization, Western Civilization, Introduction to Philosophy, and Philosophical History. And *Gyoyang* was becoming firmly institutionalized in education.

The second influence was intellectuals who studied in Japan and elsewhere and accommodated Western humanism. Their existence linked *gyoyang* to the Western ideal of humanities education, and they provided an arena for *gyoyang* discourse, by and for intellectuals. The *gyoyang* discourse was modern in nature, delving into general conditions of *gyoyang* and its particular realizations. A group of critiques like Choe Jae-seo, Yi Won-jo, Im Hwa, Bak Chi-u, and Yu Jin-o, for instance, contributed to a special *gyoyang* discourse edition in the November 1939 issue of *Inmun pyeongnon* (Humanities Review). Dealt with in the special edition were relationship between Western *gyoyang* and intellect, intellectuals' attitude toward the so-called transitional period, and relationship between civil *gyoyang* and Korean *gyoyang*. The reviewers participating in the discussion were all well versed in English, German, and French literature, and the level of discourse sophistication was almost comparable to that of today. Most important for them was how to ingrain in Korea the civil *gyoyang* developed in the West in modern times. Civil *gyoyang* refers to capitalist rationality and individuals' qualifications and training to achieve civil society.

Conclusion

Reviewed above are how the concept of *gyoyang* was established in the early modern times and how it has since evolved. The concept of *gyoyang* earned a new meaning along with the emergence of acquirers of modern knowledge. *Gyoyang*-ism in the 1920s and 1930s provided the first bridge between the establishment of Western civil *gyoyang* and the drives for mass enlightenment and illiteracy elimination. Though the distance between the two notions of *gyoyang* was not insignificant, it is the culture of modern learning that opened a route of communication between the two, but that simultaneously divided and endlessly complicated the route. And the institutionalization process of humanities education corresponded with that of *gyoyang* education. This was also a process under which *gyoyang* as universal or humanist intellect was fixated in course subjects. Through the process, the term *gyoyang*, which was previously used more frequently and longer than the term *gyoyuk* (education) and was used in the sense of “education” in the early twentieth century, acquired new meanings.

In the 1950s, the term *gyoyang* began to reemerge in the mass media and broaden its meaning. Since *gyoyang*-ism was linked to the new version of domesticity and self-development aspirations, even among classes with no access to college education, had a great effect on the lives of the people denied of education. It was in 1955 that *Sasanggye* (World of Thoughts), a journal widely read by high school students as well as collegians, installed a *gyoyang* column. And the late 1950s and 1960s saw the boom of collected works, all of which were composed of scores of books, under series titles such as “New *Gyoyang* Books,” “Selected Writings on *Gyoyang*,” “A Series of Famous *Gyoyang* Books” and “Complete Works of Children’s *Gyoyang* Books” (So 2010). In addition, *gyoyang*-ism led low-class women like bus conductors and housemaids to read books. *Gyoyang* and women established a strong relationship of collocation at that time.

In short, *gyoyang* was the language of a discourse that was disseminated by political power, publication capitals, and educational

institutions in the 1950s and 1970s. The Park Chung-hee administration, though of military dictatorship and authoritarianism, conducted a massive reading drive, dubbed free *gyoyang* movement, mobilizing students and young people, and also emphasized the value of classics (Yeun 2007). It was also in this period that ideological *gyoyang*, shared by the Koreans, produced and expanded its particular contents (the self knowledge of Korea and Koreans, namely nationalism and Korean Studies).

The frequency of using the term *gyoyang* in society and its word-coining ability in the 1960s and 1970s seems to have been greater than today. For instance, community bus firms had the job title of “Manager of *Gyoyang*,” which indicated that the term *gyoyang* had been widely generalized among the populace, extending to the lowest rung of society. Such institutionalization of *gyoyang* and the expansion of *gyoyang*-ism are reflected in dictionaries published during that period. *Gugeo daesajeon* (Comprehensive Dictionary of Korean), compiled by Yi Hui-seung and published in 1961, interprets *gyoyang* as “dignity produced by learning and knowledge; brilliance of mind nurtured by accumulating a wide range of knowledge about culture.” It also has this interpretation: “learning and knowledge in specialized fields.” This interpretation is the exact reverse of the current usage. This example illustrates that the term *gyoyang* has continuously evolved.

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