

Patterns of Censorship in Colonial Korea as Seen through the Statistics of the *Chosen shuppan keisatsu geppo* (Publication Police Monthly of Joseon)*

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Abstract

Through analyzing the five types of statistical data compiled in the Chosen shuppan keisatsu geppo 朝鮮出版警察月報 (Publication Police Monthly of Joseon), this article explores the trends of Japanese colonial censorship and the intellectual and cultural landscape of colonial Korea. The censorship controls by the Publication Police were exercised intensively on Korean publications, especially Korean language newspapers such as Chosun Ilbo and Dong-A Ilbo, as well as Korean-Chinese language newspapers like Minshengbao 民聲報 (Voice of the People) published in Manchuria. With respect to the latter group, the Publication Police was more concerned with suppressing the inflow of publications from Manchuria and China than from Japan at the outbreak of both the Manchurian Incident and later the Sino-Japanese War. This study finds that the effects of censorship controls resulted in severe obstruction of the growth of knowledge culture within the colony on the one hand, but on the other hand, greatly enhanced the cultural position of the metropole as a source of modern knowledge.

Keywords: *Chosen shuppan keisatsu geppo* (Publication Police Monthly of Joseon), colonial censorship, publication capacity, colonization of knowledge

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Introduction

The *Chosen shuppan keisatsu geppo* 朝鮮出版警察月報 (Publication Police Monthly of Joseon), published by the Book Department of the Police Bureau under the Government General of Korea, consisted of confidential documents utilized to systematize censorship controls, and was used as an administrative reference in colonial Korea. The censorship of publications in Korea was first developed during the Russo-Japanese War for security reasons (J. Jung 2003). In the 1910s, the Japanese authorities obstructed the Korean publication of political writings by simply not issuing permits for vernacular newspapers. The 1919 massive national demonstrations, however, drastically changed the political atmosphere of the colony. The Japanese mitigated the harsh military rule of the first decade of colonial administration and launched the so-called “cultural rule” (*bunka seiji* 文化政治). Consequently, the issuing of permits to Korean publications became less restrictive.

The increased volume of publications necessitated a corresponding expansion of censorship. This censorship apparatus became systematized under the Book Department with a new set of censorship standards. The *Chosen shuppan keisatsu geppo* (hereafter, *Geppo*) was one part of this administrative renovation. A total of 123 issues of the *Geppo* were published from September 1928 through December 1938, of which 111 issues are now available (Jung and Choi 2006; J. Jung 2007). Among varied censorship materials published by the colonial authorities, the *Geppo* distinguishes itself by its ten years of continuity and by having the most detailed statistics and content about censorship administrative actions.

The *Geppo* consists of (1) five statistical tables summarizing monthly censorship actions, (2) listings of publications subjected to administrative action, and (3) selected translations of such publications. The five statistical tables of the *Geppo*, reveal its characteristics and intentions by showing the monthly totals of (1) submitted copies and publication applications, (2) administrative actions against books and magazines, (3) administrative actions against newspapers, (4)

incidents of seizure, and (5) incidents of warning in the order of appearance. In this statistical data—just as the census project uses various data, such as ancestral site, age, sex, current address, and occupation, to categorize each individual—each publication was identified by data such as applicable law, type of publication (newspaper or magazine), publisher, place of publication, and language (Lee 2010). Focusing on the classification system and identities of publications in the five tables, Lee (2010) attempts to analyze the self-representation attempts of the Japanese empire. She argues that although Japan was obliged to regard colonial Korea as a part of imperial Japan, in the areas of population, territory, and laws, Japan did not treat it as such.

This paper focuses on the statistical data provided by the five tables and aims to understand the pattern and meaning of the censorship controls implemented by imperial Japan. Statistics have often been used to represent the state power. National statistics preconditions the bureaucratic apparatus that guarantees hierarchical and systematic communications between the central and local agencies within the state. As the Italian root of the word, *stato* (state) and *statista* (statesman) suggests, the origin of statistics is deeply connected to the description of the state, more so than to applied mathematics or data processing (Park and Seo 2003, 5).

Therefore, it can be problematic to accept national statistics as representative of national realities. In fact, statistical data translates concrete realities into quantified abstractions, removing their peculiarities in order to transform them into equal, uniform units that are able to fit under the same category. Statistics, then, may at times be the best objective representation of realities, but it may also obscure these realities with the objective data itself. With that understanding, this study attempts to examine not only the censorship realities represented by the statistics presented in the *Geppo*, but also those concealed by the same statistics.

Typographic World of Colonial Korea

The core policy of Japanese colonial rule over Korea in its nature was discriminatory. One unique aspect of Japanese colonial administration, distinguishable from its Western counterparts, was its professed aim of *doka* 同化 (assimilation) and *naisen ittai* 內鮮一體 (“Japan and Korea as one body”). But these were idealistic euphemisms, masking the reality of discrimination found in all aspects of the Japanese colonial rule. The intent of this discrimination was two-fold: to disadvantage Koreans and to cover the inferiority complex that the Japanese felt due to remaining behind Western powers in the race of modernization (Park 2005, 236). The proclaimed ideals of equal citizenship were contradicted by the policies of outright discrimination against Koreans, indicative of the colonial Japan’s conscious bias against the colonized Koreans.

Japan’s censorship controls in colonial Korea illustrate this point perfectly. The censorship authorities applied two sets of laws, the Publication Law and the Newspaper Law, to Korean publishers, but applied a separate set of regulations, the Publication Regulations and the Newspaper Regulations, to publishers from Japan or other foreign countries. Moreover, all Korean publications were subject to pre-publication censorship, whereas Japanese/foreign publishers were subject to post-publication censorship. As stipulated under both the Newspaper Law and the Newspaper Regulations, in order to cover current events (i.e., political issues) and political editorials, publications were required to have a permit. However, the granting of this coveted permit to Korean publications was very restrictive. As a result, during the period from 1920 until 1940, only three newspapers and a few magazines were granted the permit allowing the publication of political topics. In 1940, Korean language publications were banned altogether.

In addition to domestic publications by Koreans, overseas publications sent from Japan and other countries were also subject to censorship by the colonial publication police. The publications coming into Korea included those *transferred* from metropolitan Japan and those imported from foreign countries. The incoming publications, rather than the domestic (i.e. Korean) publications, account for the majority

of the administrative actions imposed by the censorship authorities. The total number of incidents of seizure, the most serious administrative action, is shown by publication location in Table 1.

Table 1. Incidents of Seizure by Location Based on the Statistics from the Geppo

Year	Published in Korea	Published in Japan	Published in foreign countries (esp. China)	Total
1928	71	390	215	676
1929	172	1,732	727	2,631
1930	172	1,100	790	2,062
1931	143	1,133	1,243	2,519
1932	151	1,839	2,790	4,780
1933	150	1,850	1,623	3,623
1934	121	1,341	1,247	2,709
1935	126	968	536	1,630
1936	147	1,309	882	2,338
1937	213	376	1,635	2,224
1938	100	484	1,881	2,465
Total no. of incidents	1,566 (6%)	12,522 (45%)	13,569 (49%)	27,657 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

As shown in Table 1, the ratio of publications in Korea subject to *seizure* was only 6%. However, this does not mean that the censorship control in Korea was relatively more relaxed than in Japan and Manchuria. In fact, the censorship power exercised by the Book Department of the Government-General of Korea (hereafter, GGK) was limited when it came to publications coming from Japan or China (mostly Manchuria). For them, the *seizure* of harmful documents by confiscating or putting them under custody at the publishing house was the severest action they could take in order to prevent their influx into Korea. While it could temporarily or permanently suspend Korean newspaper and magazine publications in question, the GGK could not

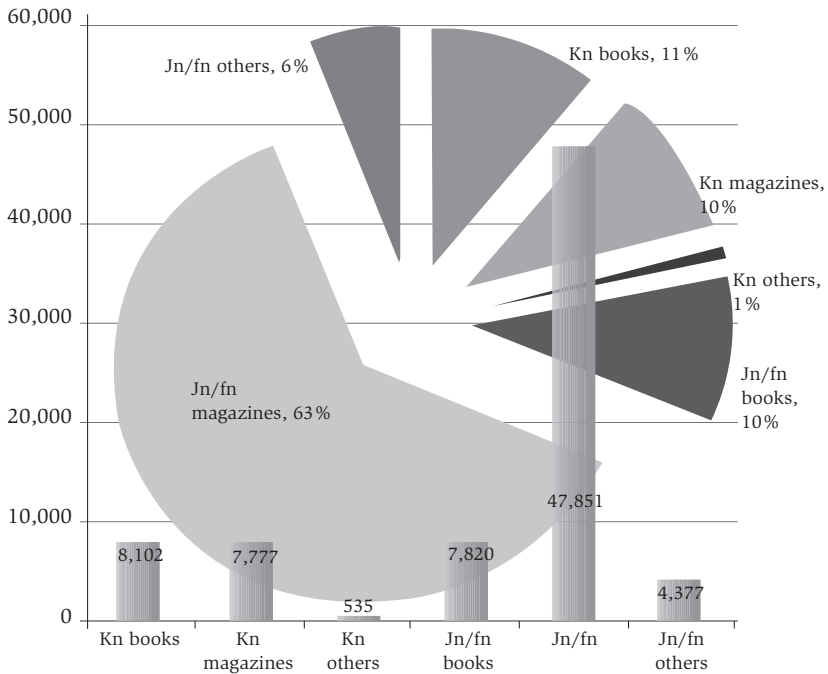
legally interfere with the publication activities of publishers beyond its jurisdiction of colonial Korea. Hence, in the case of publications either transferred from within the or imported from coming outside the empire (i.e., foreign countries), seizure of materials was the greatest censorship action the G GK could take. As Table 1 shows, the other important task of the censorship authorities in colonial Korea was to monitor and control the publications coming from abroad. The Police Bureau of the G GK made it clear that “the censorship nets should be extended to include newspapers, magazines, and other publications like pamphlets incoming from Japan and other areas outside Korea, so that Korean circles of readers and thinkers would be effectively shut off from [pernicious] influences from abroad” (*Chosun Ilbo*, October 31, 1934). The colonial authorities in Korea were deeply apprehensive that Korea was under formidable siege from the dangerous, though legal, publications from Japan and China. The censorship authorities’ intent was for Korea to remain an isolated island in the sea of modern publications. However, despite relentless seizure by the censorship authorities, overseas publications persisted and reached Korean audiences.

The censorship control over both domestic and foreign texts implies the serious suppression of the literary and cultural activities of colonial Korean intellectuals, many of whom studied in Japan, China, and Western countries. G GK did not want the knowledge gained by Korean intellectuals from the outside world to be expressed in Korea. Although Milton’s famous metaphor, which likens censorship to the futile attempt of “keep[ing] out the crows by shutting the park gate (Milton [1644] 1990, 60), argues that perfect censorship is impossible, Japan’s colonial censorship, suppressing both domestic and foreign modern texts, still had significant and negative impacts on the production and circulation of modern knowledge in the colony.

The obstruction of incoming publications ran parallel to the quantitative control of Korean publications, which was managed through the system of publication permits. *Table 1*¹ in the *Geppo*, titled “Totals

1. Five statistical tables from the *Geppo* are in italics to distinguish them from the tables created by the author of this article.

of Submitted Copies and Publication Applications,” is a tally of publication activities (excluding newspapers) in the colony, such as publication permit applications and published copy submissions. In the table, the submitted copies are classified into Korean and Japanese/foreign publications, as well as according to the laws applied, indicating the total volume of publications by Korean and Japanese/foreign publishers, respectively. Figure 1 shows the aggregated totals of Korean and Japanese/foreign publications (excluding newspapers) and their respective ratios, based on *Table 1* in the *Geppo*.



Note: fn = foreign; Jn = Japanese; Kn = Korean.

Figure 1. Aggregated Totals of Publications by Publisher and the Ratio to the Total

In Figure 1, the stick graphs represent the aggregated total while the circle graph represents the ratio. Remarkably, the submitted copies by Korean publishers account for only 22% of the total, thus comprising less than one fourth of the publication production (excluding newspapers) in colonial Korea. This diminished position of Korean publications vis-à-vis Japanese/foreign counterparts is further pronounced when considering the publication ratio compared to the population ratio.

During the *Geppo* publication period, the Korean population in colonial Korea was 20,350,918 on average, while the Japanese population was only 550,658. The population ratio, then, between Koreans and the Japanese was 97.3% to 2.7% (Song et al. 2004, 90-91), whereas the publication ratio between the two was 22% to 78%. In other words, the Japanese, who made up a far smaller percentage of the population produced the majority of the publications in colonial Korea. This enormous gap in the publication capacity of the two groups should be kept in mind when comparing the records of administrative actions issued to Korean and Japanese publications.

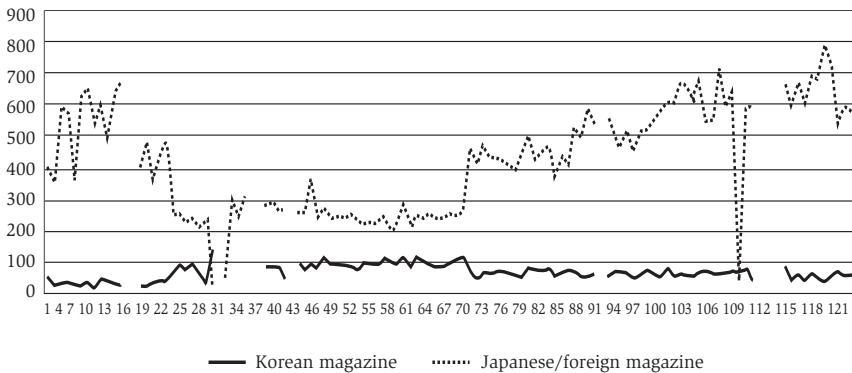


Figure 2. Trends in the Totals of Magazine Copies Submitted
Based on the Statistics from the *Geppo*

Figure 2 shows the trends in the numbers of both Korean and Japanese magazine copies submitted to the censorship authorities during the

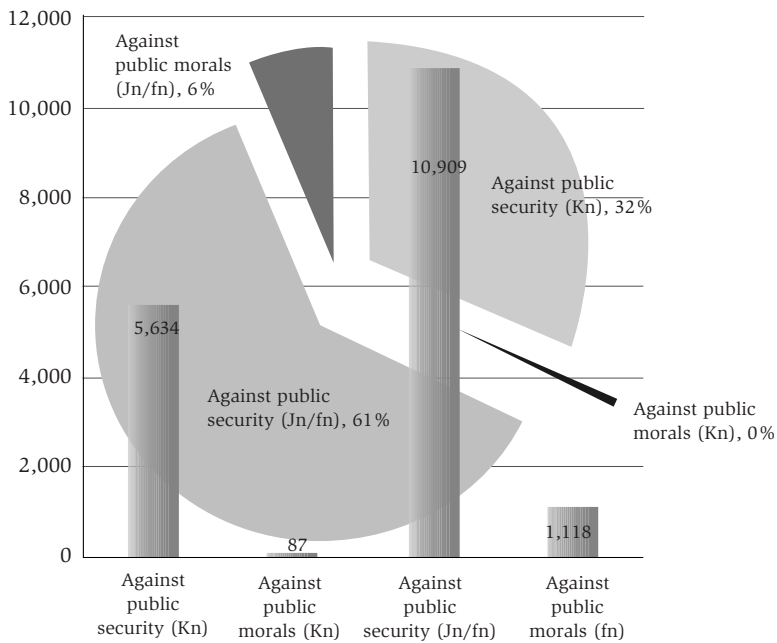
Geppo publication period. Interestingly, the number of Japanese copies varied considerably over time, while that of Korean copies remained stagnant around the level of 100. The lack of growth of Korean magazines should not be misunderstood as a lack of dynamism in Korean publication communities. Rather, underneath this seeming inertia were many changes, such as the shifting of intellectual interests, the spread of mass-oriented culture, and the proliferation of expressive methods. Therefore, due attention should be paid to the dynamic undercurrents of Korean publications.

The intention of the censorship authorities in allowing only three Korean newspapers was obviously to curb the politicization of the Korean press. Then, what can be inferred by the modest growth of Korean magazines? The answer can be found by examining the characteristics of Korean magazines at the time. In general, the magazine's timeliness in communicating information was not as quick as the newspaper, but its ability to convey in-depth knowledge was greater than the newspaper. Though the magazine covered varied topics, it could also focus on special topics by its editorial policy. Moreover, the magazine was used as a vehicle for concerned groups to present their identities to society. Regardless of their designs, however, the censorship authorities were effective in regulating opportunities for Korean magazines to develop these abilities by imposing stricter control over them.

In short, the intellectual activities of the colony were impaired by the curtailed production and circulation of modern knowledge and information under the censorship system. Above all, the statistical tables in the *Geppo* outline the size and contour of the typographic world in colonial Korea. With no more than three Korean newspapers and the number of Korean magazines stagnating over time, coupled with the truncated inflow of overseas publications, it is safe to argue that the typographic world of the colony was marginalized in the Japanese empire. In light of modern knowledge as a crucial agent in informing modernity, the impacts of the topographic marginalization of the colony are worthy of serious consideration. In particular, the knowledge and information current in the metropolitan Japan was not

allowed to be transmitted to the colony, creating an intellectual hierarchy within the empire. The peripheral status of colonial Korea was perpetuated not only in the spheres of politics and economics through oppression and exploitation, but also in the intellectual and cultural spheres through censorship controls. The colonial intellectuals' simultaneous resentment of and aspirations for the metropolitan Japan may have originated from the marginalized nature of the colony.

Patterns of Colonial Censorship as Seen through the Statistics from the *Geppo*



Note: fn = foreign; Jn = Japanese; Kn = Korean.

Figure 3. Aggregated Administrative-Action Totals and Ratios of Korean and Japanese/Foreign Books and Magazines Based on the Statistics from the *Geppo*

While *Table 1* in the *Geppo* outlines the publication volume in colonial Korea, *Tables 2* and *3*, titled “Total Publications (i.e., books and magazines) Subject to Administrative Actions,” and “Total Newspapers Subject to Administrative Actions,” respectively, outline the patterns of administration action. The figures for *Table 2* are based on magazines and books, while *Table 3* is based on newspapers. Therefore, the total of both tables comprise the sum total of censorship activities, classified into seizure, deletion, and warning in the order of severity. Based on *Table 2*, Figure 3 shows the totals and ratios of Korean and Japanese/foreign books and magazines in violation of two categories of censorship standards, namely, “injurious to public security” or “subversive to public morals.” The rate of Japanese/foreign books and magazines subject to administrative action due to the public security standard was higher in by both the percentage (60%) and total absolute numbers of occurrences (10,900). However, although the rate for the Korean counterparts was lower in the percentage (32%) and total

Table 2. Comparison of Yearly Administrative Actions between Korean and Japanese/Foreign Publications

Year	Against public security		Against public morals		Total
	Korean	Japanese/ foreign	Korean	Japanese/ foreign	
1928	149 (27%)	347 (64%)	1 (0%)	45 (8%)	542 (100%)
1929	310 (18%)	1,295 (76%)	0 (0%)	104 (6%)	1,709 (100%)
1930	291 (17%)	1,367 (78%)	1 (0%)	86 (5%)	1,745 (100%)
1931	466 (32%)	951 (64%)	0 (0%)	58 (4%)	1,475 (100%)
1932	847 (41%)	1,182 (57%)	0 (0%)	51 (2%)	2,080 (100%)
1933	676 (33%)	1,204 (59%)	3(0%)	142 (7%)	2,025 (100%)
1934	664 (38%)	936 (53%)	14 (1%)	147 (8%)	1,761 (100%)
1935	718 (44%)	731 (44%)	31 (2%)	166 (10%)	1,646 (100%)
1936	568 (36%)	894 (56%)	16 (1%)	107 (7%)	1,585 (100%)
1937	490 (41%)	596 (50%)	15 (1%)	96 (8%)	1,197 (100%)
1938	455 (23%)	1,406 (71%)	6 (0%)	116 (6%)	1,983 (100%)
Total	5,634 (32%)	10,909 (61%)	87 (0%)	1,118 (6%)	17,748 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

(5,634), we must also consider the fact that the total volume of Korean publications was less than one fourth that of Japanese publications.² In short, Korean publications stood a higher chance for censorship actions than Japanese/foreign publications.

Table 2 shows the yearly totals and ratios of administrative actions made against Korean and Japanese/foreign books and magazines. The administrative actions against Korean books and magazines in violation of the public security standards peaked at 847 incidents in 1932. The high volume of administrative actions around this time could imply the continued Korean resistance against censorship control and/or the tightened censorship regulations.

With regard to Japanese/foreign books and magazines, though high in number, most of the incidents in regards to incoming materials, as noted earlier. In the *Tables 2* and *3* in the *Geppo*, the seizure category was subdivided in two: “published in Korea” and “coming from abroad,” with seizure being the sole penalty for the latter.

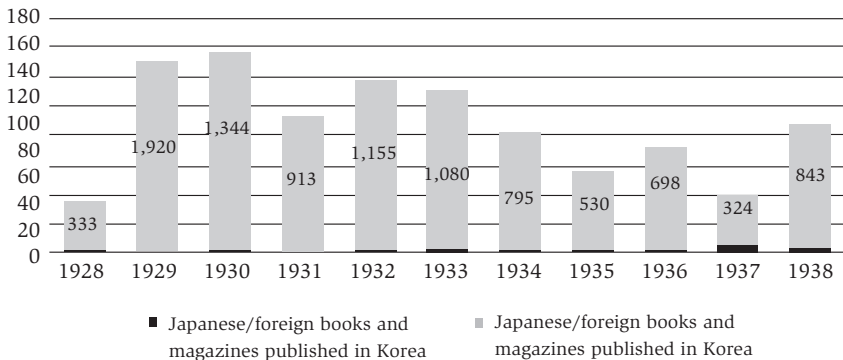


Figure 4. Seizure of Japanese/Foreign Books and Magazines in Violation of the Public Security Standards, Either Published in Korea or Coming from Abroad

2. During the *Geppo* publication period (September 1928 through December 1938), the total number of publication permits was 16,414 for Korean publications versus 60,048 for Japanese publications.

Figure 4 shows yearly seizure totals of Japanese/foreign books and magazines in violation of the public security standards, either published in Korea or incoming from abroad. The Japanese/foreign books and magazines published within the colony were paltry in number. In other words, it was predominantly the incoming materials rather than the colony-published materials that were subject to the seizure.

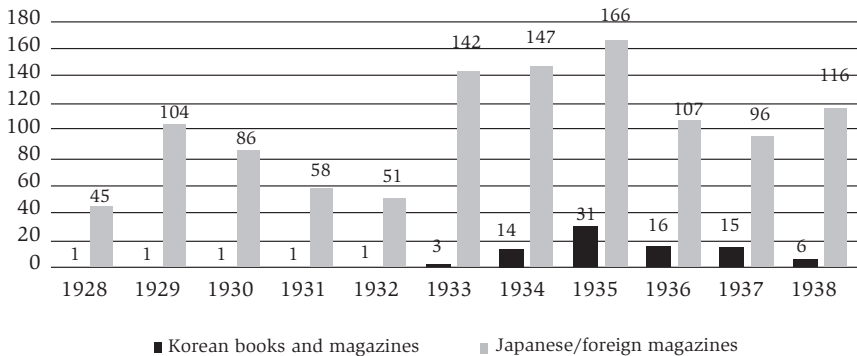


Figure 5. Administrative-Action against Korean and Japanese/Foreign Publications in Violation of the Public Moral Standards

Figure 5 shows yearly totals of Korean and Japanese/foreign books and magazines subject to administrative action due to the violation of the public moral standards, such as violent expressions and indecent, erotic descriptions. It illustrates that Japanese/foreign books and magazines were far more liable to administrative action due to their public moral violations, while few Korean publications were subject to that penalty, especially before 1934. Hence, when the censorship authorities cited “yellow journalism” to emphasize the need for stricter censorship, it was superfluous in regards to Korean publications. Yet, the rise of Korean books and magazines in violation of the public moral standards between 1934 and 1937 was related to the arrival of mass-media culture in colonial Korea. The incidence of such publications, however, decreased after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War (1937).

Table 3 below shows the overall trends of the publications in violation of the public moral standards throughout the *Geppo* publication period.

Table 3. Comparison of Yearly Violations of the Public Moral Standards between Korean and Japanese/Foreign Publications

Year	Korean books and magazines	Japanese/foreign books and magazines	Korean newspapers	Japanese/foreign newspapers	Total
1928	1 (2%)	45 (92%)	0 (0%)	3 (6%)	49 (100%)
1929	0 (0%)	104 (74%)	2 (1%)	35 (25%)	141 (100%)
1930	1 (1%)	86 (98%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	88 (100%)
1931	0 (0%)	58 (88%)	1 (2%)	7 (11%)	66 (100%)
1932	0 (0%)	51 (78%)	1 (2%)	13 (20%)	65 (100%)
1933	3 (1%)	142 (60%)	0 (0%)	92 (39%)	237 (100%)
1934	14 (2%)	147 (26%)	9 (2%)	400 (70%)	570 (100%)
1935	31 (6%)	166 (30%)	1 (0%)	356 (64%)	554 (100%)
1936	16 (3%)	107 (18%)	4 (1%)	452 (78%)	579 (100%)
1937	15 (7%)	96 (43%)	2 (1%)	109 (49%)	222 (100%)
1938	6 (2%)	116 (47%)	8 (3%)	118 (48%)	248 (100%)
Total	87 (3%)	1,118 (40%)	28 (1%)	1,586 (56%)	2,819 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

The Korean publications in violation of the public moral standards accounted for only 4%—3% for books and magazines and 1% for newspapers—of the total violations, suggesting that the surge of violations came from Japanese/foreign publications. Still, the protection of public morals was evoked routinely to give moral mantle to the censorship authorities in their exercise of censorship power in the colony.

As for the statistics on administrative actions, Table 4 shows the cases of administrative actions by year against Korean books and magazines due to violations of public security standards: seizure, deletion, warning, and no-permit.

The majority of censorship actions against Korean books and

Table 4. Yearly Totals and Ratios of Korean Books and Magazines Subject to Administrative Actions Due to the Public Security Standards Violation

Year	Seizure	Deletion	Warning	No-permit	Total
1928	34 (23%)	85 (57%)	2 (1%)	28 (19%)	149 (100%)
1929	69 (22%)	205 (66%)	0 (0%)	36 (12%)	310 (100%)
1930	48 (16%)	152 (52%)	39 (13%)	52 (18%)	291 (100%)
1931	48 (10%)	340 (73%)	25 (5%)	53 (11%)	466 (100%)
1932	26 (3%)	706 (83%)	5 (1%)	110 (13%)	847 (100%)
1933	19 (3%)	510 (75%)	59 (9%)	88 (13%)	676 (100%)
1934	24 (4%)	464 (70%)	148 (22%)	28 (4%)	664 (100%)
1935	14 (2%)	524 (73%)	135 (19%)	45 (6%)	718 (100%)
1936	11 (2%)	421 (74%)	110 (19%)	26 (5%)	568 (100%)
1937	12 (2%)	274 (56%)	172 (35%)	32 (7%)	490 (100%)
1938	12 (3%)	218 (48%)	189 (42%)	36 (8%)	455 (100%)
Total	317 (6%)	3,899 (69%)	884 (16%)	534 (9%)	5,634 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

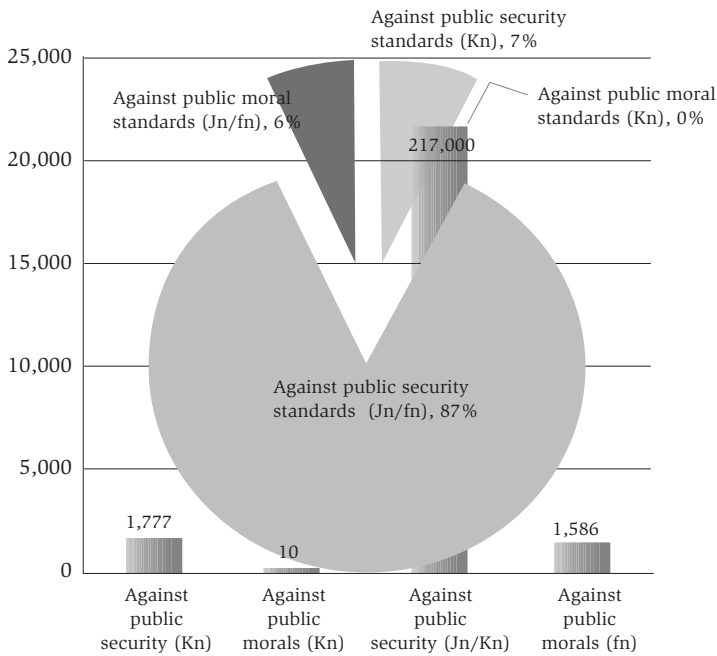
Table 5. Cases of Japanese/Foreign Books and Magazines Subject to Administrative Actions Due to the Public Security Standards Violation by Year

Year	Seizure	Deletion	Warning	Total
1928	340 (98%)	3 (1%)	4 (1%)	347 (100%)
1929	1,295 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1,295 (100%)
1930	1,353 (99%)	4 (0%)	10 (1%)	1,367 (100%)
1931	914 (96%)	18 (2%)	19 (2%)	951 (100%)
1932	1,163 (98%)	4 (0%)	15 (1%)	1,182 (100%)
1933	1,097 (91%)	28 (2%)	79 (7%)	1,204 (100%)
1934	808 (86%)	107 (11%)	21 (2%)	936 (100%)
1935	542 (74%)	154 (21%)	35 (5%)	731 (100%)
1936	712 (80%)	103 (12%)	79 (9%)	894 (100%)
1937	372 (62%)	80 (13%)	144 (24%)	596 (100%)
1938	869 (62%)	399 (28%)	138 (10%)	1,406 (100%)
Total	9,465 (87%)	900 (8%)	544 (5%)	10,909 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

magazines was deletion (69%), with warning and no-permit also being considerable. The remarkably low rate of seizure indicates that the pre-publication censorship against Korean publications and Korean publishers' compliance with censorship standards made the particular penalty mostly unnecessary. The increasingly pliant attitude of Korean publishers was due in large part to their self-censorship, in order to avoid the financial loss incurred by the seizure of their publication materials. The self-censorship practice became evident in the 1930s (Han 2002), as illustrated by the seizure rates in the table.

Table 5 shows the cases of administrative actions by year against Japanese/foreign books and magazines due to violations of public secu-



Note: fn = foreign; Jn = Japanese; Kn = Korean.

Figure 6. Aggregated Administrative-Action Totals and Ratios of Korean and Japanese/Foreign Newspapers in the *Geppo*

rity standards: seizure, deletion, and warning. The predominant censorship actions against Japanese/foreign books and magazines was predominantly seizure (87%), because the bulk of the materials was coming rather than produced in the colony. The deletion rates rose in the mid-1930s, suggesting stricter censorship regulations over Japanese materials published in the colony.

Figure 6 shows the aggregated administrative-action totals and ratios for Korean and Japanese/foreign newspapers, based on *Table 3* in the *Geppo*. The administrative-action incidents in violation of the public security standards totaled 23,477, accounting for 94% of the total. Thus, public security was the primary concern of the censorship authorities in controlling the newspapers distributed in the colony. *Table 6* below shows the yearly totals and ratios of administrative actions made against Korean and Japanese/foreign newspapers.

Table 6. Comparison of Yearly Administrative Actions between Korean and Japanese/Foreign Newspapers

Year	Public security		Public morals		Total
	Korean	Japanese/ foreign	Korean	Japanese/ foreign	
1928	43 (15%)	235 (84%)	0 (0%)	3 (1%)	281 (100%)
1929	139 (5%)	2,513 (94%)	0 (0%)	35 (1%)	2,687 (100%)
1930	130 (15%)	722 (85%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	853 (100%)
1931	195 (6%)	2,877 (93%)	0 (0%)	7 (0%)	3,079 (100%)
1932	254 (6%)	3,789 (93%)	0 (0%)	13 (0%)	4,056 (100%)
1933	290 (10%)	2,390 (86%)	0 (0%)	92 (3%)	2,772 (100%)
1934	262 (12%)	1,538 (70%)	3 (0%)	400 (18%)	2,203 (100%)
1935	147 (11%)	798 (61%)	1 (0%)	356 (27%)	1,302 (100%)
1936	14 (6%)	1,814 (75%)	3 (0%)	452 (19%)	2,414 (100%)
1937	53 (2%)	2,198 (93%)	3 (0%)	109 (5%)	2,363 (100%)
1938	119 (4%)	2,826 (92%)	0 (0%)	118 (4%)	3,063 (100%)
Total	1,777 (7%)	21,700 (87%)	10 (0%)	1,586 (6%)	25,073 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

The rate of Korean newspapers subject to administrative actions was merely 7% on average. But it must be remembered that there were only three Korean newspapers and a handful of Korean magazines published under the Newspaper Law (i.e., those granted the permit for political topics). In terms of numerical trends, the incidents of administrative actions soared in the year of the massive student demonstrations in 1929, but declined after peaking (290 incidents) in 1933.

Table 7. Comparison of Yearly Violations of the Public Security Standards between Korean and Japanese Newspapers

Year	Public security			Total
	Korean newspapers	Korean newspapers published in Korea	Japanese newspapers coming from abroad	
1928	43 (15%)	32 (12%)	203 (73%)	278 (100%)
1929	139 (5%)	97 (4%)	2,416 (91%)	2,652 (100%)
1930	130 (15%)	97 (11%)	625 (73%)	852 (100%)
1931	195 (6%)	204 (7%)	2,673 (87%)	3,072 (100%)
1932	254 (6%)	371 (9%)	3,418 (85%)	4,043 (100%)
1933	290 (11%)	276 (10%)	2,114 (79%)	2,680 (100%)
1934	262 (15%)	286 (16%)	1,252 (70%)	1,800 (100%)
1935	147 (16%)	127 (13%)	671 (71%)	945 (100%)
1936	145 (7%)	715 (36%)	1,099 (56%)	1,959 (100%)
1937	53 (2%)	639 (28%)	1,559 (69%)	2,251 (100%)
1938	119 (4%)	1,266 (43%)	1,560 (53%)	2,945 (100%)
Total	1,777 (8%)	4110 (18%)	17,590 (75%)	23,477 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

Table 7 above shows the yearly totals and ratios of Korean and Japanese newspapers, either published in Korea or coming from abroad, in violation of the public security standards. The much higher rate (75%) of the incoming materials subject to censorship actions may

lead to the impression that the censorship authorities in colonial Korea focused on incoming materials. But it is important to underscore that Korean publications, though much smaller in volume, were always under the watchful eyes of the censorship authorities. Table 8 below lists the individual newspapers subject to administrative actions, and shows the focus of concern exerted by the censorship authorities.

Table 8. Top Ten Newspapers Most Frequently Subjected to Administrative Actions

Order	Newspaper	Frequency	Language	Publication location
1	<i>Minshengbao</i> 民聲報	451	Chinese (58%) Korean (42%)	Jiandao, China
2	<i>Dong-A Ilbo</i> 동아일보	255	Korean	Seoul, Korea
3	<i>Chosun Ilbo</i> 조선일보	255	Korean	Seoul, Korea
4	<i>Zhongyang ribao</i> 中央日報	252	Chinese	Shanghai, China
5	<i>Minguo ribao</i> 民國日報	208	Chinese	Shanghai, China
6	<i>Xinwenbao</i> 新聞報	162	Chinese	Shanghai, China
7	<i>Shenbao</i> 申報	147	Chinese	Shanghai, China
8	<i>Chosun Jungang Ilbo</i> 조선중앙일보	113	Korean	Seoul, Korea
9	<i>Xinmin wanbao</i> 新民晚報	94	Chinese	Fengtian, China
10	<i>Zhongshengbao</i> 鐘聲報	86	Chinese	Zhifu, China

In the *Geppo*, the statistical tables are followed by listings of publications subject to administrative actions and partial translations and summaries of selected materials. It is reasonable to assume that the selection of target materials reflects the censorship authorities' focus of concern. In Table 8, one mixed Korean/Chinese language newspaper and two Korean newspapers rank as the top three in frequency on that list. Here it becomes evident that the Korean language newspapers were closely watched by the censorship authorities.

The censorship patterns of newspapers were similar to those of books and magazines. While Korean newspapers were mostly subject to deletion, Japanese/foreign newspapers were largely subject to seizure; deletion accounted for 69% (1,218 incidents) of actions against Korean newspapers, whereas seizure accounted for 84% (18,264 incidents) of actions against Japanese/foreign newspapers.

Colonial Press in the Empire, and Identities of Publication Materials

While the major categories of *Tables 2* and *3* in the *Geppo* are types of publications (books, magazines, and newspapers, respectively), the major categories of *Tables 4* and *5* in the *Geppo* are administrative actions (seizure and warning, respectively). In particular, *Table 4* in the *Geppo* uses multiple criteria for classifying the publications. Its horizontal line details types of publications, and its vertical line sets the publication location, nationality of publisher, and printed language. This detailed rearrangement of the publications subject to seizure reflects the focus and concern of the censorship authorities in collecting the censorship data. To give the general picture based on *Table 4* in the *Geppo*, the aggregated totals of the major types of publications on the horizontal line and the locations of publications on the vertical line are combined in Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10.

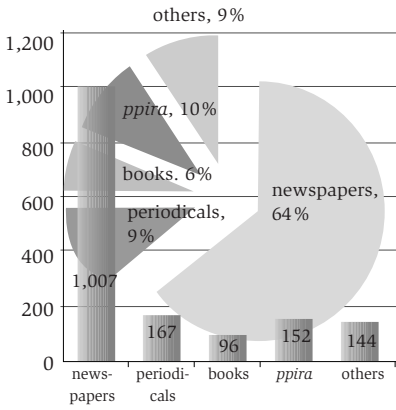


Figure 7. Seizure Totals Published in Korean

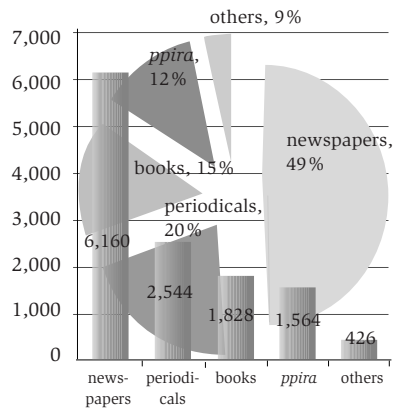


Figure 8. Seizure Totals Published in Japanese

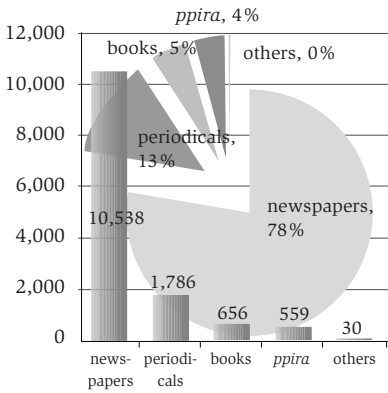


Figure 9. Seizure Totals Published in Foreign Countries

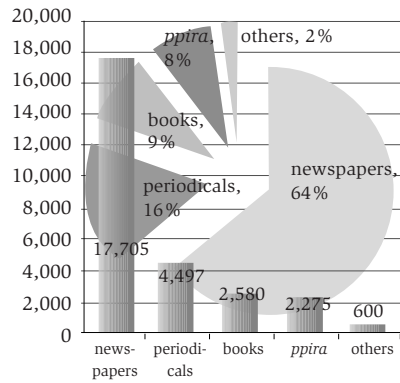


Figure 10. Seizure Totals of All Publications

Among the types of publications subject to seizure, newspapers suffered the largest by far, as shown in the figures above. In particular, the seizure rate was the highest (78%) for newspapers published in foreign countries (mostly China), as indicated in Figure 9; then it is highly probable that, among foreign publications, Chinese newspapers were an important source of news and propaganda for Korean read-

ers. According to Ryu's (2010) study on the *Geppo* and censorship records of the Book Department at the outbreaks of the Manchurian Incident (1931) and the Sino-Japanese War (1937), Chinese and Korean language publications produced in China during these two periods came under close scrutiny by the censorship authorities. In fact, the majority of foreign publications subjected to seizure in the *Geppo* were Chinese language publications (Ryu 2010). The fact that the *Min-shengbao* (Voice of the People) published texts in mixed Chinese and Korean, and also suffered from incidents of seizure most frequently, suggests that the newspapers published in Manchuria targeted Koreans as a significant readership.

Figure 7 shows the seizure totals and ratios of all publications produced in Korea. The rate of seizure of periodicals and books was low. However, in order to measure the response to censorship controls, the number of publications not permitted should also be taken into account. These banned publications accounted for 19% to 23% of the total publication applications from 1928 to 1934.

Table 9. Yearly Seizure Totals and the Ratio of All Publications Published in Foreign Countries by Printed Language Based on the Statistics from the Geppo

Year	Japanese	Korean	Chinese	English	Russian	Others	Total
1928	6 (3%)	70 (33%)	137 (64%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	215(100%)
1929	48 (7%)	275 (38%)	377 (52%)	12 (2%)	2 (0%)	14 (2%)	728(100%)
1930	14 (2%)	327 (41%)	382 (48%)	21 (3%)	13 (2%)	35 (4%)	792(100%)
1931	68 (5%)	134 (11%)	955 (77%)	30 (2%)	17 (1%)	37 (3%)	1,241(100%)
1932	192 (7%)	62 (2%)	2,479 (89%)	37 (1%)	4 (0%)	16 (1%)	2,790(100%)
1933	169(10%)	9 (1%)	1,356 (84%)	66 (4%)	8 (0%)	14 (1%)	1,622(100%)
1934	72 (6%)	41 (3%)	1,102 (88%)	30 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (0%)	1,247(100%)
1935	125(23%)	32 (6%)	284 (53%)	85(16%)	5 (1%)	5 (1%)	536(100%)
1936	151(17%)	47 (5%)	590 (67%)	90(10%)	0 (0%)	4 (0%)	882(100%)
1937	23 (1%)	59 (4%)	1,210 (74%)	231 (14%)	87 (5%)	25 (2%)	1,635(100%)
1938	175 (9%)	19 (1%)	483 (26%)	1,097(58%)	57 (3%)	50 (3%)	1,881(100%)
Total	1,043 (8%)	1,075 (8%)	9,355 (69%)	1,701 (13%)	193 (1%)	202 (1%)	13,569(100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

Table 9 shows the seizure totals and ratios of all publications produced in foreign countries, categorized by printed language. Remarkably, the Korean language publications dropped sharply after 1931. It is quite possible that the colonial Japanese agenda of hegemony after the Manchurian Incident (1931) effectively stopped the clarion calls from Manchuria to the Korean audience.

With regard to the publications published in Japan, the seizure rate of newspapers was relatively low, while the rates for periodicals and books were high, as shown in Figure 8. This fact suggests the differing censorship patterns between the metropole and the colony. Thus, it is understandable why the first modern Korean literary magazine, *Changjo* (Creation), was published in Japan first and then shipped to Korea. Table 10 below shows the seizure totals and ratios of *ppira* (propaganda leaflets) by publication location. The rates for *ppira* printed in Japan were the largest, suggesting the political activism of Koreans in Japan.

Table 10. Yearly Seizure Totals and Ratios of Ppira by Publication Location Based on the Statistics from the Geppo

Year	Korea	Japan	Other countries	Total
1928	21 (9%)	165 (67%)	61 (25%)	247(100%)
1929	45 (6%)	508 (66%)	211 (28%)	764(100%)
1930	46 (6%)	495 (65%)	215 (28%)	756(100%)
1931	20(10%)	121 (63%)	50(26%)	19(100%)
1932	9 (4%)	203 (92%)	8 (4%)	220(100%)
1933	0 (0%)	58 (97%)	2 (3%)	60(100%)
1934	6(43%)	4 (29%)	4(29%)	14(100%)
1935	1(14%)	6 (86%)	0 (0%)	7(100%)
1936	3(30%)	1 (10%)	6(60%)	10(100%)
1937	0 (0%)	1(100%)	0 (0%)	1(100%)
1938	1(20%)	2 (40%)	2(40%)	5(100%)
Total	152 (7%)	1,564 (69%)	559 (25%)	2,275 (100%)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the percent of each total.

The seizure rate of *ppira* peaked in 1929, but dropped sharply after 1932. This radical flow and ebb of *ppira* corresponded to major political events that deeply affected the Korean nationalist movement. While the 1929 student demonstrations greatly prompted the movement, the Japanese militarism after the 1931 Manchurian Incident severely repressed it.

Concluding Remarks

The colonial authorities in the 1920s witnessed the effective activism of socialists in mobilizing student and citizen forces nationally, instigating the two major anti-Japanese uprisings in colonial Korea in 1926 and 1929. The systematization of the publication control apparatus by establishing the Book Department and arranging vast censorship records ran parallel to the outbreak of these massive anti-Japanese incidents (Jung and Choi 2006).

On the other hand, it should be noted that by the time the first issue of the *Geppo* appeared in September of 1928, Korean resistance against colonial censorship had already been substantially subdued. The resistance was at its most fervent from 1920, when the Korean press was allowed to work, until around 1927. During this period, suspension and seizure penalties against Korean newspapers were frequent and the *Gaebyeok* (Genesis), the largest Korean magazine that was at the forefront of Korean intellectual circles, went out of print in 1926.³ Aside from administrative actions, many Korean publishers also suffered criminal punishments. Having to consider both the repressive censorship controls and financial sustainability, many Korean publishers began to practice self-censorship beginning around 1928 (Park 2005). Remarkably, the urban capitalistic mass culture content was given increased importance once in the newspapers and magazines in the 1930s, reflecting in part the cultural development taking

3. During the period of 1926 to 1927, the Japanese protest against the censorship system was also fierce.

place in cities like Seoul, as well as the increased need for publishers' self-censorship to avoid financial loss. These trends should also be given their due attention in future studies that review the statistics found in the *Geppo*. Additionally, since this paper only dealt with the statistical data compiled in the *Geppo*, the listings of subversive publications that received special attention from censors, along with the translations and abstracts of publications subjected to administrative penalties, also contained in the *Geppo*, offer other rich sources for further research. The quantitative data compiled, which help us understand the reasons for censorship controls and penalties, will also provide keys to understanding the real conditions of knowledge culture and thought control in the colony.

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