

# A Locked City: The Japanese Company Nitchitsu's Building of Hŭngnam

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**Abstract** | Hŭngnam City has received scholarly attention as a symbolic space in which urbanization followed industrialization during the Japanese colonial era in Korea. The Japanese company Nihon Chisso Hiryo Kabushiki Kaisha (Nitchitsu) took this secluded region and built it into a city with world-class production and urban facilities, transforming it into an enterprise city dubbed “the kingdom of Nitchitsu.” However, there is a dearth of analyses which focus on Nitchitsu’s “planning,” “constructing,” and “ruling” of Hŭngnam rather than the aspects of its brilliant “modernization.”

In this regard, this article focuses on the city structure of colonial Hŭngnam and how this structure molded a “Japanese settler community.” In particular, this article examines how the families of lower-class laborers from Nitchitsu’s main Japanese factory in Minamata, through the process of moving into Hŭngnam, were formed into a “Japanese settler community” in which they were discriminated against in the colonial city. Furthermore, the article reviews Nitchitsu’s strategy for operating the city through an analysis of detailed records of the company’s donations.

The Japanese approach relative to Nitchitsu and Hŭngnam, in order to stabilize the “Japanese settler community” and maximize profits and operations, sought to plan and operate the city as a space only for themselves. Hŭngnam was built in a manner that concentrated all capacity towards the “Japanese settler community” and Nitchitsu, and blocked any “urban integration” which disrupted the company’s pursuit of profit, turning Hŭngnam into a locked “fortress city” built just for Nitchitsu.

In sum, this article, by offering a narrative analysis of the closed-minded manner in which Hŭngnam was made into a “fortress” closed to the rest of Korea to maximize profit margins, and shows the flawed historical development of this urban industrial complex that prefigured the Nitchitsu corporation’s role in the tragic emergence of “Minamata disease” in the region after World War II.

**Keywords** | enterprise city, Hŭngnam, Nihon Chisso Hiryo Kabushiki Kaisha (Nitchitsu), Japanese settler community, company donations, locked city

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## The Birth of Hŭngnam: Between Nitchitsu and Minamata Disease

Hŭngnam is an industrial city located in the northeast of South Hamgyŏng Province of what is today North Korea. It is North Korea's second largest city after the capital Pyŏngyang and is well known as the site of the "Hŭngnam evacuation," a large-scale military operation to move refugees out of North Korea during the Korean War. It is also a place symbolic of North Korea's technological and economic development in the 1960s as the home of an industrial park that produces the synthetic fiber Vinalon. However, what receives less attention is that the city was constructed by a certain Japanese company during the colonial era who would later become directly implicated in the regional historical disaster caused by emergence of "Minamata disease," a fact that further entangles Hŭngnam within the wider tragic history of the Japanese corporate-imperial project.

The Japanese company that led the development of Hŭngnam was Nihon Chisso Hiryo Kabushiki Kaisha (hereafter, Nitchitsu). Nitchitsu was founded in 1908 and grew through production of hydroelectric power generation and ammonium sulphate fertilizer. By 1940, it had forty different subsidiaries and was one of Japan's new conglomerates (*zaibatsu*).<sup>1</sup> This company in the mid-1920s within the once quiet region of Hŭngnam built what at the time was the largest production facility in East Asia, while also constructing urban facilities including company housing, hospitals, schools, and post offices, etc. It was the Korean Peninsula's largest "enterprise city." As a result, Hŭngnam was the largest city in South Hamgyŏng Province in terms of population by 1938 after construction started in 1926, and by 1940 it was the seventh largest city in all Korea. With its red-brick buildings and black smoke billowing from chimneys, Hŭngnam was an exotic city and had a very unique place in Korea's colonial history, as it was known as "the kingdom of Nitchitsu" and "the kingdom of Noguchi" (after Noguchi Shitagau, the owner of Nitchitsu) as the company dominated all facets of life in Hŭngnam including economic activity, social life, and political governance (Kim Ki-jin 1929; Yi Chong-mo 1936).

After Japan's surrender in August 1945, Nitchitsu lost the economic rights to all its property in Korea, including its production and urban facilities, and withdrew to Japan. At this time, the company returned to its base location, the Minamata factory in Kyushu. The Japanese managers and elite workforce

1. As of January 1944, the company's assets amounted to 1,120,010,000 yen and it had a total of forty subsidiaries. From its base in Hŭngnam, the company experienced rapid financial success during the colonial era (Chisso Kabushiki Kaisha 2011, 61).

previously based at Nitchitsu in Hŭngnam were very successful financially during post-war Japan's economic boom, repeating the "colonial glory" of the company's activities in Korea.<sup>2</sup> However, the victims of the "Minamata disease," a pollution-related illness that originated from the indiscriminate discharge of waste water from Nitchitsu's former factory in Korea, began emerging in the 1950s, and to this day there are over ten thousand people who have fallen ill.

This article examines the birth of Hŭngnam during the colonial era in between Nitchitsu and the emergence of the Minamata disease. A point I seek to stress is the problem of the "close-minded nature" that was consistently present during the process of building the city. That is, Hŭngnam was created as a space only for a specific group—Nitchitsu and the "colonizers (Japanese)"—with the goal of realizing excessive profits for the company and, to support this, the efficient operation of colonial control. It was as if the city was a "fortress" for the company and colonizers. As a narrative of the closed-minded manner in which Hŭngnam was made into a "fortress" by closing it off from the rest of Korea in the name of maximizing profits, this article offers a historical account of the activities of the Nitchitsu company in Korea that serves to frame the later emergence of "Minamata disease" in Japan.<sup>3</sup>

To do this, the article begins by examining the urban structure of Hŭngnam during the colonial era and the birth of the "Japanese settler community." In particular, it describes how the families of lower-class laborers at Nitchitsu's main factory in Minamata, through the process of moving into Hŭngnam, were formed into a "Japanese settler community" in which they were discriminated against in the colonial city. Next, I review the company's strategy for operating the city. In particular I pay attention to Nitchitsu's detailed records of donations which were concentrated towards investing in urban facilities. Through this we can investigate how Nitchitsu's financial support was focused on securing profits and on the settler community centered on Japanese residents. Based on this, we can see how Nitchitsu pushed forward with the process of urbanization that turned Hŭngnam into a closed-off "fortress" for its own benefit and that of Japanese society while strictly controlling the city and blocking other interference.

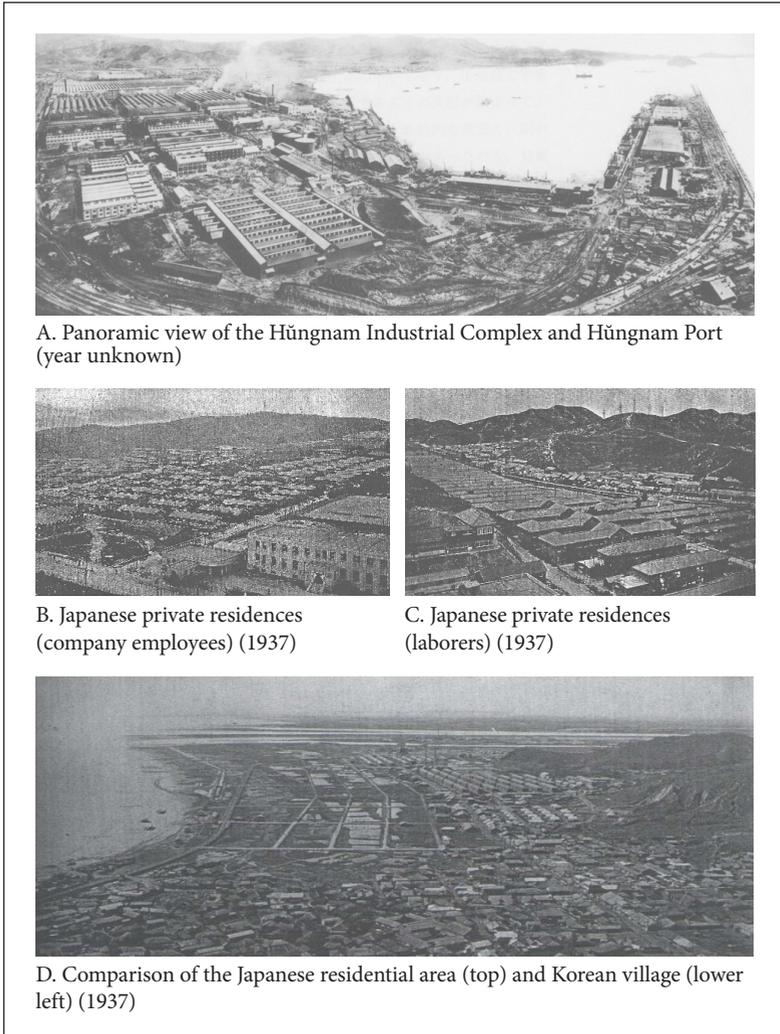
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2. For more on the changes to Nitchitsu after liberation and the Minamata disease, see Nishimura and Okamoto (2006).

3. The excellent strategy for operating the company prior to liberation has already been revealed in detail by Molony (1990). There is also a great deal of research, including Walker (2011), on the outbreak of Minamata disease. However, outside of Ishimure's (2003) fictitious description, there is no research on the history of the Minamata disease's connection with Nitchitsu's colonial operations.

## Making the Japanese Settler Community: The Settlement of Japanese Laborers' Families in Hŭngnam

### 1. The Urban Structure of Hŭngnam



Source: A. Nihon Chisso Hiryo Kabushiki Kaisha, No Title (n.d., stored in Noguchi Kinen Shiryo-kan); B.-D. *Chosen jigyo ezu* in Nihon Chisso Hiryo Kabushiki Kaisha (1937, 224-25).

Figure 1. Panoramic view of Hŭngnam during the colonial era

Hŭngnam had a unique environment in Korea as well. All the Japanese people were in their homes or the shopping district far removed from the Koreans. Their only contact with Koreans was through the older women who came to sell things or at markets where Koreans came to buy things. There were many Japanese people and an exclusively Japanese society was taking shape. I was a primary school teacher, but I was not at all aware of Koreans as I taught the children. It nearly felt as if I were at a school in Japan. There were primary schools for Japanese children in Hŭngnam, Yongsŏng, and Sŏhojin. There was probably a primary school for Koreans, but I do not know where it was. (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 181-82)<sup>4</sup>

Hirao Yoshito left Japan for Hŭngnam in 1940 to be a teacher. She remembers her time in Hŭngnam during the colonial era as “living in a place with only Japanese people, teaching Japanese children at a Japanese school, and not really being aware of Koreans.” Whether it was the town or community, it was a society of only colonizers, and there was no face-to-face contact with the colonized. Because of this, she never had an opportunity to think of herself as a “colonizer.” She remembers that she was in a colony but that it was the same as a Japanese city.

This attitude of perceiving the experience of living in a colonial city as an experience of being in a community only for colonizers as if they were still in the home country was something stated by some Japanese people in some regions of Korea (Kweon Sug-in 2008, 114-18) as well as by some Europeans who resided in Africa and Southeast Asia (Veracini 2010, 79). In broad terms we can raise two kinds of questions about such records. First, was the “society of only colonizers” real or metaphorical? That is, was the Japanese settler community realized by the separation of spaces or was it just a belief or hope of the colonizers? Second, what power allowed for the maintenance of a real or perceived “Japanese settler community?” Was it through the power to structure spaces or through the will of the Japanese settler community? Here we seek to answer these questions by first conducting an analysis of the organization of Hŭngnam.

Figure 1 shows a panoramic view of Hŭngnam during the colonial era. As shown in picture A, the center of Hŭngnam was occupied by large factories, including the Hŭngnam nitrogen fertilizer factory (completed in 1928) and smelting factory (completed in 1932), the magnesium factory (completed in 1934), the Pongŭng factory (completed in 1936), and Yonghŭng factory (com-

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4. Vol. 5 of *A People's History of Minamata Written after Listening* (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990), which is a main primary source for this article, is a collection of interviews conducted in Minamata in the 1980s and 1990s of Japanese people who had returned from Korea.

pleted in 1941), etc., as well as a massive industrial port. Also, as shown in pictures B and C, Japanese employees and laborers and their families lived in red-brick modern houses in a residential area. Conversely, Koreans who worked in the factories as laborers for construction work or as fisherman, etc., resided in a “natural village” that was separated from the modern city as shown in the lower left of picture D. If we look more closely at the pictures, the brick buildings in the residential area are well-organized but the village where Koreans lived is crowded with houses, the roofs of which are touching one another. If we turn our gaze downward, we can see that basic urban services such as water or sewage could not be built in the Korean village which was made up of a labyrinth of small alleyways.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. The Status of Low-Class Japanese

Ogata Kikuno was from the extreme southern city of Izumi in Kagoshima Prefecture. She had a farm in the mountains and was married with children, but as she was having trouble with the children’s education she moved in 1929 at the age of twenty-seven to nearby Minamata. Her husband worked as a day laborer at the Nitchitsu’s carbide factory, and Ogata worked a potato farm. In 1935, seven years after her initial move, her husband said that “if we stay in Minamata it will be difficult to become a factory worker, but if we go to Korea, I can immediately become a factory worker and earn enough money.” Thus, they moved to Hŭngnam. They first moved in with her husband’s cousin’s family who had come to Korea six years earlier and together seven people lived in a single house. Then her husband was hired as a factory worker two months later and they moved into their own home (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 193).

The case of Ogata is a representative example of the process of low-class Japanese families moving to Korea from Japan in 1935-36 when the Japanese population of Hŭngnam increased most rapidly. Japanese people first began moving to Hŭngnam in groups in 1927 as the Nitchitsu factory was being constructed and at first those who moved to Korea were those specifically relocated by Nitchitsu to their new factory.<sup>6</sup> Those who came later were from

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5. Descriptions of the excellent facilities in Japanese houses and their comparison with the labyrinth of alleyways, spread of infectious diseases, and terrible smells in the villages near Hŭngnam such as Kuryong-ri frequently appear in the Korean literature about labor: Yi Puk-myŏng, 1934, “An Ill Man” (*Pyŏngdŭn sanai*), *Chosŏn munhak* (January), reprinted in An Sŭng-hyŏn (1995, 79); Yi Puk-myŏng, 1935, “Factory District” (*Kongjangga*), *Chungang* (April), reprinted in An Sŭng-hyŏn (1995, 144) as well as newspaper articles written in Korean (“Kyotŏng sago pindo” 1931; “Hŭngnam kongga kyŏkch’u” 1933).

**Table 1.** Annual population statistics of Hŭngnam (Unit: Number of people)

	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942
Japanese	7,364	9,417	9,608	9,760	11,216	13,336	17,043	18,139	20,054	23,308	25,684	28,456	29,214
Korean	15,360	13,585	15,450	14,409	18,263	24,653	26,477	39,297	46,701	68,013	85,458	122,064	133,101
Foreigners	2,277	497	402	410	496	1,103	776	641	711	732	841	964	1,088
Total	25,001	23,499	25,460	24,579	29,975	39,092	44,296	58,077	67,466	92,053	*125,417	151,484	163,403

\* The error is in the original source. The numbers add up to 111,983.

Source: Chōsen Sōtokufu (each year); Shading of figures done by the author.

the Minamata region and used their relationships with those relocated by the company to move to Hŭngnam, and often in family groups.<sup>7</sup> Most of the emigrants were those who chose to move to Hŭngnam to avoid the economic difficulties brought on by the Great Depression. The population statistics of Hŭngnam after 1930 show this trend in emigration.

As shown in table 1, the Japanese Government-General of Korea's annual statistics on the population of Hŭngnam show that from 1930 to 1942, the number of Japanese, Koreans, and other foreigners living there increased. Here, the other foreigners were mainly unskilled Chinese laborers who worked as seasonal workers. We can clearly examine the characteristics of the Japanese migrants if we compare them with the rise of the Chinese population.<sup>8</sup> In the case of Japanese migrants, even if we allow for a natural increase in their population, there were large increases in the socioeconomic population in 1931 and 1936. Conversely, the Chinese population increased greatly in 1930 and 1935 but decreased significantly in the following years (1931 and 1936). We can

6. Prior to 1927 there were some Japanese people living in the Hŭngnam area. They lived in the Sōhojin region and using motorboats engaged in pollack fishing and warehousing. However, Sōhojin was not part of the Hŭngnam administrative area prior to the city's expansion in 1944, so it is difficult to understand why this prior generation of Japanese people were in the region. For more on Sōhojin, see Hŭngnam-siji P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe (1988, 107-108).

7. Other than these people, there were many discharged soldiers who had served in Hamgyŏng Province in the area. In particular, those who served in the Hamhŭng Regiment near Hŭngnam were mostly from the Tōhoku region of Japan, and they made up a majority of Tōhoku region natives who worked in the Hŭngnam factories. Isogaya Sueji is a representative example of soldiers who finished their military service in Nanam and secured work as a day-laborer at a Hŭngnam factory (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 202; Isogaya 1988, 65). See Yang Jihye (2015) for a detailed introduction of Isogaya.

8. In the case of Koreans, not only is it difficult to examine the difference between the natural variations and social and economic variations because of the large increase in population, the frequent expansion of the Hŭngnam administrative area (after 1937) makes grasping the degree of the population influx even more difficult.

see similar trends between the increases of the Korean and Chinese populations in 1930 and 1935 as well. That is, Chinese and Koreans entered the city when factories were being enlarged or when urban facilities were being constructed but then left after construction finished or stayed while the Japanese migrants arrived after construction of factories was completed seeking employment in the new factories.

The Japanese people who moved to Hŭngnam could also enjoy a relatively more relaxed life compared to living in Japan. Japanese migrants found it easy to secure employment through colonial discriminatory policies of “preferential hiring for Japanese,” and promotions came quicker than in Japan. In Hŭngnam, those with experience as day laborers at the parent company’s factory in Japan were hired as factory workers, those who had been factory workers in Japan could become foremen, and those who had been foremen in Japan could take even more senior level positions (managing many factory workers) (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 76-80). After becoming employed, Japanese workers received, in addition to their regular salaries, an allowance for living in Korea, a family allowance, a food allowance, and other benefits.<sup>9</sup> However, we should be aware that Japanese workers had differential access to these benefits based on their class background. Where class differences were most apparent was in the living conditions of the Japanese workers.

Private housing was not given to all Japanese residents in Hŭngnam; it was provided only to those employed as factory workers or higher who were married. The layout of houses was differentiated based on the workers’ rank. So, while the plant manager had a private house that was 28 *p’yŏng* (92 square meters) with additional facilities, normal factory workers lived in apartments that were only 4 *p’yŏng* (13 square meters) with limited facilities. Moreover, even if the houses were in the same area, the private residence of the plant manager and the apartments of the normal workers could be distinguished by the architecture and position vis-à-vis the main road.<sup>10</sup>

This distinction among houses within the residential area was also a way for white-collar workers, who were bound together with lower-class laborers as part of the same “Japanese” ethnic group, to distinguish themselves from the lower-class laborers. The engineers who lived in Hŭngnam enjoyed a life that was

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9. For more details on the preferential treatment and benefits given to Japanese workers in the wage plan of Nitchitsu, which was centered on the allowance for living in Korea, see Yang Jihye (2016).

10. In the same housing complex in Honam-ri, areas were divided by company rank, and there were separate facilities (gymnasiums and workers’ clubs) as well as roads for each area based on rank (Tsujiyama 2012, 138).

Table 2. Comparison of facilities based on class in the Hüngnam Nitchitsu residences

	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Location	Honam-ri	Honam-ri	Honam-ri	Kuryong-ri	Kuryong-ri
Rank	Employee (plant manager–lower-level employees)	Junior employee	Group leader	Japanese factory workers	Japanese factory workers
# of Rooms	3–7 (Based on rank)	3	2	2	2
Size	9 <i>p'yöng</i> –28 <i>p'yöng</i>	6 <i>p'yöng</i> –9 <i>p'yöng</i>	4.5 <i>p'yöng</i> –6 <i>p'yöng</i>	4 <i>p'yöng</i> –6 <i>p'yöng</i>	4 <i>p'yöng</i> –6 <i>p'yöng</i>
Structure	Individual home	Individual home	Individual home	Apartment	Apartment
Additional facilities	Large kitchen	Large kitchen	Small kitchen	Small kitchen	Small kitchen
Indoor bathroom	Separate bathrooms for men and women	Separate bathrooms for men and women	Shared bathroom	Shared bathroom	Shared bathroom
Bath	Individual, indoor	Individual, indoor	Shared, outside	Shared, outside	Shared, outside
Garden	Yes, with trees	Yes, with trees	Yes, no trees	No	No

Source: Matsuzaki and Okamoto (1990, 171-72, recollections of Tsushita) and Tsujihara (2012, 135-42).

separated from the laborers based on their privileged company housing as members of the super-elite class, relative to their academic ties with the Imperial University of Tokyo.<sup>11</sup> Conversely, those who lived in the residences designated for laborers were absolutely not privy to the culture of these elites despite being Japanese.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, those who were unmarried or had low positions such as

11. According to the testimony of company executives, after 1945 the Nitchitsu group had become managed by graduates of the Imperial University of Tokyo's applied chemistry program which linked the work of these individuals to the peak of the organization (NHK Shuzaihan 1995, 35-39).

12. The recollections of one spouse who had lived in District 5 housing are emblematic. According to her, the houses in Districts 1 to 3 were called the "*yangban* (aristocrat's) houses" but she had no idea about what kind of facilities were inside (Interview of Nishi Misu, who was ninety-four years

day laborers did not reside in company housing and lived separately. Such people lived with acquaintances from their hometowns or stayed in boarding houses in nearby villages or bunkhouses for laborers.<sup>13</sup>

In this respect, it is useful to remember that in Hŭngnam, although there was a substantial population of Japanese people, within that group there were disparate elements stratified by their social status. Lower-class people in Japan such as farmers and day laborers who moved over to Hŭngnam were incorporated into a lower class among the colonizers. These people could receive stable jobs and earned much more money compared to their lives in Japan. But, there was a rank and racial differential structure such as “Japanese plant managers and executives > Japanese factory workers > Japanese day laborers > Korean factory workers > Korean day laborers > and Chinese day laborers.” Japanese people born into the lower class in Japan were at the bottom end of the Japanese society in Korea at the boundary between Japanese and Koreans. These Japanese people who lived with Koreans in boarding houses in adjacent villages participated in labor movements with Koreans and were the targets of radical ideologies or were seen as the main culprits of the imbalances in the Japanese residential areas or family discord caused by divorce (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 177-81).<sup>14</sup> As “Japanese” people based on their ethnicity they could occupy a relatively advantageous position in colonial society, but still as part of the urban lower class they faced similar issues of disenfranchisement alongside Koreans and shared their instable position in society.

### 3. The Paradox of “Becoming Japanese”

When Miura Makoto turned fourteen in 1939, he moved to Korea with his grandmother. At first he lived with his aunt in Hŭngnam. He often felt embarrassed because of his grandmother. One day he was on his way to a theater in Kuryong-ri. A couple in front of them said, “Look there. She came all the way to Korea to plow the fields with a manure bucket like a farmer. I thought

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old at the time of the interview on July 22, 2012).

13. Boarding houses can be seen as a major means for living for both Koreans and Japanese in Hŭngnam. In Japanese houses, families often housed as few as two and as many as five or six boarders. There were also many professional boarding houses in the villages outside of private residences. Boarders often lived in Korean and Japanese housing for economic reasons. For more on the boarding house businesses targeting Japanese people, see the oral history of Ogata Kiku in Matsuzaki and Okamoto (1990, 179) as well as the recollections of Isogaya Sueji (Isogaya 1988, 66).

14. Isogaya Sueji (1988) is a representative example. Additionally, newspaper articles about labor movements often show that Japanese workers took part (“Cho Chil ilchikkong” 1931, “Hŭngnam Chilso chikkong” 1932).

she was a *yobo* (a derogatory Japanese slang word to refer to Koreans) but she is a *naichijin* (Japanese).” When Miura looked in the direction the couple was facing, he saw his grandmother tending to her field. His grandmother was hauling feces-filled water from a toilet at a residence in Kuryong-ri to use as manure for her field (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 200). On another day, he felt ashamed while taking his grandmother to the hospital. The doctor took one look at his grandmother and called a nurse saying, “A grandmother who needs an interpreter has come.” The doctor could not understand his grandmother’s dialect. As a result of these experiences, Miura remembered that “compared to Minamata, Hŭngnam was a big place where people from all of Japan had come. People who had come from the countryside or provincial towns were regarded as stupid country bumpkins. Isn’t Minamata dialect somewhat violent? I tried my best to speak standard Japanese. But the elderly had come all the way to Korea and still used dialect ...” (202).

Miura’s story shows the process of applying the standards of “Japanese-ness” suitable for “Japanese people in Hŭngnam” to the lower-class Japanese people from the countryside who came to Hŭngnam. To such people, their speaking of dialect and engaging in agricultural work was a symbol of their rustic and rural nature, and this meant that they were not only seen as backward and old-fashioned but were “Korean-like” and “not Japanese-like.” This rejection of the rural also brought about an important change among lower-class women. Japanese families after moving to Hŭngnam saw the men (husbands and sons) become employed at factories and resultantly have relatively more free time in their lives. Given these circumstances, farm work was not seen as suitable or, worse, a lowly form of work for Japanese women (mothers, wives, and daughters) as seen through the above-mentioned conversation about Miura’s grandmother between the Japanese couple. In Korea, “if you are Japanese, regardless of your circumstances, you are now a ‘madam.’” Korea came to be thought of as an “earthly heaven” or a “women’s paradise” (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 74). However, on the other hand, some found it difficult to rid themselves of the habit of engaging in farm work and some became conflicted about the idea of this new “Japanese woman.” We can see this through the above-mentioned case of Ogata:

As soon as I arrived, I rented a 3.5 *p’yŏng* field. It must have been about five months after I arrived and I started growing squash and vegetables. After about two or three years, I was able to expand my field. Others would often say to me, “Ogata, why did you come all the way to Korea just to do the work of farmers?” I would respond that I did not come to Korea to play. The women who wanted to play the part of “madam would wear long *kimono* and wear fancy things from

their heads to their toes. My face was very dark and I did not wear any makeup so others would have probably looked at me and thought I was peddling goods. (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 195)

As described in the above quote, Ogata continued to engage in agricultural work after crossing over from Japan to Hŭngnam, and as a result she had many experiences of other Japanese people in Hŭngnam looking down upon her. Although she would tell others that she “did not come to Korea to play,” she could not help but be conscious of how other Japanese people viewed her, as can be gleaned from the statement towards the end of the quote in which Ogata assumed others saw her as someone “peddling goods.” For many low-class women, they kept a distance from agricultural life after moving to Hŭngnam. They thought “there was no need to do such work in Hŭngnam” and stayed away from such, but problems remained.<sup>15</sup> As this photograph demonstrates there remained visible traces of their former lives as farmers given their heavily suntanned faces and calloused fingers from years of working in the fields, and the woman on the far left has a white handkerchief covering her hands as “the sight of swollen knuckles from farm work was [considered] ghastly” (figure 2; Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 202). Low-class women wore makeup and wrapped handkerchiefs around their hands to cover their dark skin and worn hands as they were aware of the gaze of other Japanese people in Korea and sought to create some distance between themselves and Korean women.

Meanwhile, Japanese men were confronted with worries about how to distinguish themselves from Koreans and Chinese men who held job positions of the same rank. In general within the male-dominated space of the factory, Japanese men would see Korean and Chinese men daily. Just as what Japanese women sought to do outside the factory, Japanese men inside the factories sought to create boundaries between themselves and other races by distinguishing between “jobs for Japanese men” and “jobs for Korean men.” Among Japanese men, comments such as “What’s this? Are you a day laborer? Ummm, this seems like work for a Korean.” could be heard (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 83), and this atmosphere caused embarrassment for low-class Japanese men employed in the lowest ranks of the company. In the case of Fukuyama Heiichi, we can see a change in the emotions of low-class Japanese male laborers between when they were hired to work in factories in Hŭngnam and after experiencing work-life.

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15. Interview of Ishimure Satoshi, who was seventy-nine years old at the time of the interview on July 24, 2012.



Source: Matsuzaki and Okamoto (1990, 201).

Figure 2. Commemorative photograph of lower-class women

While moving over to Korea I thought to myself that I should become more brazen. Within the factory hierarchy there was a strict distinction between a day laborer and a regular factory worker. To day laborers with not much experience, becoming a factory worker was like becoming a god. It was everything. But the Korean factory workers bowed deeply to the Japanese day laborers. The experience of Japanese workers was relevant only to Japanese factory workers. But Japanese day laborers made fun of Korean factory workers saying, “You guys are *yobo, yobo*.” Part of my duties was to divvy out work when orders came down such as “Take the Korean workers and tell them to do this. The task is to do such and such work.” That was my responsibility. ... If I did not think that there were people who were below me, I would not have been able to use the Koreans. And if I could not use the Koreans, I would not have been able to live in Korea. (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 163)

Fukuyama, who was seventeen years-old when he arrived in Hŭngnam in 1930, was employed as a day laborer, the lowest rank at a factory. He remembers that he improved his own station in the factory by belittling the Korean factory workers. In a situation in which his position was, according to others, “work for Koreans,” his disparaging of Korean workers was less a natural manifestation and more so a conscious choice based on the needs of his circumstances. We can see in the statements of other low-class Japanese men that the criticism of Korean workers as ignorant and unprincipled was constant.

“[Koreans] had no sense of responsibility.”

“Koreans did not know loyalty or compassion. Nor did they know kindness.”

“Koreans had no desire to improve themselves.”

“Koreans caused a lot of issues. That is because they are cunning.” (Matsuzaki

and Okamoto 1990, 119-20, 140)

There is a wide scope of criticisms of Korean workers and the low-class Japanese men who belittled Koreans. If we return to Miura's recollections, we can see the need to understand the relationship between the standardization of negative images of Koreans and one's "Japanese-ness."

Life in Minamata was horrible, just miserable. There was no way to survive outside of begging for food. The feeling of escaping that misery was foremost in our minds. Because we were free of eating food that would have been given to cattle or horses, that cattle or horses would have enjoyed. Moreover, we were free of the clothes of beggars. We were sick of the sadness of being the second or third sons of tenant farmers who had 40 or 60 percent of their crop taken. So, when we came to Hŭngnam, we were so happy that we did not have to be a farmer anymore. We all had this sensation of "Why would we come all the way to Korea to be dirty!" and "I do not want to remember life as a farmer!" If you peel back one layer of the place called Korea, you can see that it is where people from all over Japan who had lost their livelihoods congregated. I was sick of my life that was miserable in every regard and came to Korea where I could live a life of luxury. I wanted to mock the life of poverty that I had escaped. (Matsuzaki and Okamoto 1990, 203)

Miura's words show the extreme repulsion to the destitute life in Japan. The memories of begging for money and food and being the child of a tenant farmer remained strong and influenced their experience of life in the colony. These low-class Japanese people who took their first steps up the social ladder after arriving in a new society in Hŭngnam fixed their images of their previous selves onto the Korean people and pushed Koreans further down the social ladder.

The low-class Japanese men and women who moved to Hŭngnam consciously put space between themselves and the Korean and Chinese people with similar backgrounds or with the Korean and Chinese people whose positions in society could not be clearly distinguished from their own. This was an effort to find their "Japanese-ness" by establishing a standard corresponding to these other groups. Their use of standard Japanese dialect, makeup, handkerchiefs, and abusive language was an attempt to stay within the boundaries of "Japanese-ness" separate from the Korean and Chinese people, and, at the same time, reflects how low-class Japanese people, who were paradoxically in an ambiguous social position, tried to create new standards and make a closed-off society strictly for Japanese people within the city of Hŭngnam.

## Empowering the Japanese Settler Community: Selective Company Donations and Hŭngnam's Japanese Society

How then did Nitchitsu react to the settlement of these Japanese laborers in colonial society? Here I examine the corporate donations of Nitchitsu for the financial affairs of Hŭngnam and the process of their use.

"Donations" during the colonial era were the main sources of income for local government. The Government-General of Korea in 1911 enacted the Regulations on the Control of Collecting Donations which legally regulated the entire process of collecting and using donations. In order to raise donations, a plan of how the funds would be used had to be submitted to the local government and receive approval from the authorities. After the funds were collected, the police also had the right to inspect the financial ledgers. The local government would then include the donations in the budget for the region and use them for daily affairs or designated projects. In this way, donations during the colonial era can be seen as a very valuable device for examining the direction of power, as donations were used as "money" in city operations on the Korean Peninsula. If we limit our examination to the finances of provincial governments, donations were quite influential as they made up 16 percent of provincial budgets in the pre-colonial era (Chŏng T'ae-hŏn 2003, 161). Compared to provincial governments, local city governments were even more short of funds and thus donations played a central role in the operations of city government.

Table 3 shows the donations and "quasi-donations" provided by Nitchitsu from 1927 to 1945 based on the expense reports submitted by the Hŭngnam factory, Pongung factory, and Seoul office to the Nitchitsu headquarters. The expense reports include items designated as "donations" as well as items labeled "membership dues" and "stock purchases" which functioned as "donations," hence classified as "quasi-donations." First, we can examine annual changes in donations.

In total there are 105 entries, eighty-eight of which are donations and seventeen of which are "quasi-donations" (in the following all "quasi-donations" will be referred to as "donations"). It can be seen that at a minimum two donations were given annually while the maximum for one year was eighteen donations. Here it is demonstrated that donations were particularly high in the year factory construction commenced (1928 – seven donations), in years that factory expansion was ongoing (1936 – eight donations; 1937 – nine donations), and after the outbreak of the Pacific War (donations in the 1940s ranged from thirteen to eighteen annually). In the following, a more detailed examination is provided by designating three periods based on the years mentioned above and

Table 3. Number of donations given by Nitchitsu annually

Year	Education				Administration						Organizations				Miscellaneous							
	Vocational	Japanese primary	Middle	Korean primary	Sacks	Office construction	Mobilize labor	Road construction	Shine construction	Accommodation construction	Infrastructure	Disaster relief	Wartime	Labor		Event	Regional	Police	Military	Media	Communication	Contribution
1927	3																1					
1928	7	2						1				1					2			1		
1929	2								1											1		
1930	2										1											
1931	2(1)	1				(1)											1					
1932	3(1)						1			(1)							1			1		
1933	2(2)	1		1						(2)												
1934	2(1)	1				(1)					(1)						1			1		
1935	2(1)	1															1			(1)		
1936	5(3)			1	1	2											(2)	1		(1)		
1937	9						1			2					1	1	3	1				
1938	1(4)												(2)									
1939	3												2					1	(1)			1
1940	13	2		1		1			1				1		2	1	1	1	1			1
1941	13(1)	1	1	2	(1)	1						1	2	2					2			
1942	1												1									
1943	-																					
1944	16(2)	2		1	1				1			1	4(1)	2						(1)		1
1945	2						1										1					

Source: Kawamura (1989-91, unpagged).

※ Note 1: Numbers in the table represent the number of donations, numbers within parentheses represent the number of quasi-donations.

※ Note 2: In this article, the records of only the Hüngnam factory, the Pong'ung factory, and the Seoul office are reviewed. The records of subsidiary companies, such as Chosön Sujón, Changjüngang Sujón, and Shinhüing Chólto, as well as the Nitchitsu headquarters in Japan were not reviewed.

※ Note 3: The shading of the box containing the annual total signifies the absence of some original documents. In the case of 1939, only documents from October to December are available. Documents for 1942 and 1943 are not available at all. (The one donation recorded in 1942 comes from 1944 documents, so the author included it in the 1942 total.)

※ Note 4: The establishment of categories was done at random by the author for the convenience of discussion, and large classifications were made according to the recipient and the sub-classifications were made based on the purpose of the donation.

examining who was the recipient of the donations and the purpose of the donations.

First, we shall review the breakdown of donations during the “construction period” of 1927 to 1935. If we exclude 1928 when seven donations were given, there were only an average of three donations annually during this period. Compared to later periods, this number is relatively small. The organizations that received the donations were mainly institutions related to education (9), administration (10), the police (6), and the post office (5). If we look at the detailed purposes of the donations, eight of the donations for education were related to primary schooling (*shōgakkō*) for Japanese students while only one was for Korean students' primary education (*pot'ong hakkyo*), signifying a strong focus on the education of the children of Japanese employees. For administration related donations, two were for road construction, two were for the construction of administrative offices, five were for the provision of land for town facilities such as markets, and one was for the construction of a shrine, showing that the company was cooperating on the construction of city infrastructure. The remaining donations of six for the police, five for the post office, and two for the fire department were given to build office buildings and accommodation for these organizations. In sum, donations given during the “construction period” were mainly aimed at constructing basic urban infrastructure, preparing educational facilities for the children of the company's Japanese employees, strengthening facilities for public order (including controlling ideological thought by punishing labor movements), communication, and disaster prevention.

Next is examined the “expansion period” of 1936 to 1939. During this period, Nitchitsu was building several new factories including the Pon'gung factory and the chemical factory, and at the same time, in 1937 and 1939, Hŭngnam grew larger as the jurisdiction of the city was expanded. Bearing in mind that there are no documents from 1939, the number of donations during this period was a bit larger than the previous “construction period” with a maximum of nine and a minimum of five donations each year. As during the previous period, donations were given to institutions related to education (3), administration (5), police (3), and the post office (1). But there were also new recipients during this period including various organizations (4), the military (3), the media (3) and for disaster relief (1). Looking at the specific purposes of the donations, in the area of education one donation was provided for Japanese primary schooling, one for Korean primary schooling, and one for the secondary education of Japanese students (a Japanese middle school; at that time, Korean students went to a “secondary school” [*kodŭng pot'ong hakkyo*]).

Compared to the previous “construction period,” the total number of donations for education decreased, but we should note that the company provided funds for the secondary education of the children of their Japanese employees. In terms of donations for administrative issues, two donations for each of office building and accommodation construction were given and one donation for road construction. This is also comparatively less than the previous period, but we can see donations were provided newly for the construction of accommodations for administrators. In terms of the various organizations that received donations, four donations were provided to various military and political organizations such as the Military Sponsorship Federation (Kunsa Huwŏn Yŏnmaeng) and the Research Association for Current State of Affairs (Siguk Yŏnguhoe), something that was rare in the previous period. Also, two donations were provided for government agencies and interest groups to hold events and another donation was provided for the founding of the Hŭngnam Association for Commerce (Hŭngnam Sanggonghoe). Among the other donations given during this period, the police received three donations for expanding the police station and operating expenses for border guards, the military received two donations (one of which was for an army sanatorium), three donations were provided to the media so they would cooperate on company marketing and the Government-General’s efforts to control the press, one donation was for the post office, and one donation was provided to the central and southern Korea (chungnam-Sŏn) disaster relief fund. In sum, while donations for the education of Japanese employees’ children was maintained, donations aimed at civilians in terms of education and city operation facilities declined compared to the “construction period.” Instead, donations to groups for political purposes increased as did donations to the military.

Next, if we review the documents from the “Asia-Pacific War period” of 1940 to 1945, except for the years of 1942 and 1943 during which documentation is unavailable, we can see that the annual number of donations increased greatly to an average of thirteen. In particular during this period, there were donations for education (12), administration (8), and organizations (16). Looking at the specific purposes of the donations, we can see that five of the donations for education were for a vocational school, one for Japanese primary schooling, two for secondary education (according to the ordinance on education, Koreans and Japanese students were integrated into “middle schools” during this period), and four donations for Korean primary schooling (according to the documents, these donations were explicitly for “restraining Koreans”). There were more donations for educational purposes during this period compared to the prior period and there were new purposes including vocational and Korean primary

education. In the case of donations for administrative purposes, one donation was given to the Industry Association (Sanöp Hyöphoe) as a grant for producing sacks for fertilizer (the real recipient was the Government-General), three donations for office building construction (including construction of air-raid shelters), two donations were given to the Hamhüng Prison (Hamhüng Hyöngmuso) in exchange for their mobilizing of prisoners for labor (used as laborers at the Hamhüng factory), and one donation for the construction of a shrine. Furthermore, donations for organizations included nine donations for political organizations such as the National Defense Women's Association (Kukpang Puinhoe) and the Association for Enhancing the Imperial Way (Hwangdo Sönyanghoe), two donations in exchange for providing laborers, two donations for events such as the Korea Exposition, and one donation for the Hamhüng Imperial Association (Hamhüng Chëyuk Hyöphoe). The recipients or purposes of the remaining donations were the fire department (2), the police (3), the military (1), the media (3), the post office (1), disaster relief (1; fire in Hamhüng), and one miscellaneous donation (money given in exchange for the arrest of thieves who stole from a factory). In sum, donations were provided on the one hand for vocational education and for primary schooling for the children of Korean employees, and on the other hand for securing manpower through providing money to such places as a prison. Donations to political organizations also increased greatly during this period.<sup>16</sup>

In broad terms, donations by Nichitsu were given mainly for three purposes: (1) regional development (town operations and infrastructure such as education and administration, etc.); (2) politics (construction of office buildings for administrators, construction of accommodations, wartime donations to organizations, police, military, media, etc.), and; (3) increasing the company's productive capacity (production of bags for fertilizer, donations given in return for labor mobilization, donations to labor-related organizations, etc.). However, the rate of donations toward these purposes differed by period. During the "construction period," the number of donations given for regional development (particularly education of Japanese students) and political purpose was similar, but during the "expansion period," money for regional purposes decreased while money for political purposes increased. Finally, during the "wartime period," regional-related donations increased, particularly for the education of Koreans, but donations for political and production purposes also increased. We can gain a clearer understanding by checking the total amount of money given for each

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16. For more on the Hüngnam factory's strategies to secure and manage manpower during the wartime period, see Yang Jihye (2016).

purpose.

Table 4. Amount of Nitchitsu's donations by category

(Unit: Won)

	Subcategory				Category			
	Specific item	Within the province	Outside the province	Total	Regional		All	
					Within the province	Outside the province	Total	%
Education	Vocational	573,000	60,000	633,000	1,356,401	61,000	1,417,401	61.5
	Japanese primary	527,901	0	527,901				
	Middle	150,000	1,000	151,000				
	Korean primary	105,500	0	105,500				
Administration	Sack production	0	160,000	160,000	106,274	163,000	269,274	11.7
	Office construction	51,500	3,000	54,500				
	Mobilize labor	48,000	0	48,000				
	Road construction	5,500	0	5,500				
	Shrine construction	800	0	800				
	Accommodation construction	474	0	474				
	Infrastructure	-	0	-				
Disaster relief					151,000	15,300	166,300	7.2
Organizations	Wartime	20,000	100,900	120,900	47,200	108,900	156,100	6.8
	Labor	25,400	1,500	26,900				
	Event	0	6,500	6,500				
	Regional	1,800	0	1,800				
Police					105,887	0	105,887	4.6
Military					50,000	30,000	80,000	3.5
Media					20,500	27,900	48,400	2.1
Communications					42,105	0	42,105	1.8
Contributions					2,000	15,500	17,500	0.8

**Table 4.** Amount of Nitchitsu's donations by category (continued)

	Subcategory				Category			
	Specific item	Within the province	Outside the province	Total	Regional		All	
					Within the province	Outside the province	Total	%
Miscellaneous					0	3,000	3,000	0.1
Total					1,881,367	424,600	2,305,967	100.0

Source: Kawamura (1989-91, unpagged).

\* Note 1: For the sake of convenience, donations made for use in Hŭngnam and the Hamhŭng region, including South Hamhŭng Province, where Nitchitsu's production facilities are located are designated as donations "within the province," while all others are designated as "outside the province."

\* Note 2: Given the difficulty of calculating values of donated things such as buildings or land, these donations are excluded from the table. Among the types of donations, "annual contracted donations" (a certain amount of money is donated by agreement every year) are only recorded in the year in which the details are specified in the documents (that is, even if the donation was actually paid according to the agreement, it is not reflected in the above table unless it was recorded in the reviewed records).

Table 4 shows the amount of money donated by category. If we divide the total amount of donations given in terms of purpose, education (61.5 percent) received the most funds, followed by administration (11.7 percent), the fire department (7.2 percent), organizations (6.8 percent), police (4.6 percent), military (3.5 percent), the media (2.1 percent), the post office (1.8 percent), contributions (0.8 percent), with the remainder (0.1 percent) in other areas.<sup>17</sup>

Let us look at each category in detail. In the category of education, we can see that the roughly 630,000 won for vocational education was the largest sum given, and this was followed by approximately 520,000 won for Japanese elementary schools, 150,000 won for middle schools, and 100,000 won for Korean elementary schools.<sup>18</sup> Within this category, the vocational school received 45 percent of the total donations for education, Japanese elementary schools received 37 percent, middle schools received 11 percent, and Korean elementary schools received 7 percent. The largest single donation for educational

17. Here the case of a one-time "miscellaneous" donation (a donation given in exchange for the arrest of thieves) has been excluded.

18. In general, support for educational expenses provided by modern companies has been institutionalized as a form of corporate benefits. However, the corporate benefits provided by Nitchitsu during the colonial era were at a very low level, thus the only allowances provided were given based on seniority or performance and separate support for education did not exist.

purposes was a donation of roughly 550,000 won in March 1940 for a vocational school called the Hüngnam Technical School (Hüngnam Kongöb Hakkyo). If we consider that in April 1940, when the Hüngnam Technical School opened, the ratio of Japanese students to Korean students was roughly even at sixty-eight to sixty (see Yi Pyöng-rye 2011, 152), this donation was not given based on Nitchitsu's "ethnic bias" towards the "Japanese group," but rather it was a donation given to maximize profits during wartime as the demand for technologically-competent workers increased in Japan and Nitchitsu sought to secure future operations. On the other hand, in the case of the donations consistently given for primary school education from the "construction period" up to the "wartime period," we can clearly see the company's racial bias reflected in its donations.<sup>19</sup> As shown above, the amount of money given for the primary education of Japanese students was five times larger than that given for the primary education of Koreans, and there is a large gap between the average donation of 52,790 won for Japanese primary schools and the 17,583 won average for Korean schools. If we consider the amount of money donated on a per capita basis divided by ethnicity, we can see that Nitchitsu gave 18 won for the primary education each Japanese resident (527,901 won / the 1942 Japanese population of Hüngnam of 29,214 people) while only 0.79 won (or 79 *chö*n) was given for each Korean resident (105,500 won / the 1942 Korean population of Hüngnam of 133,101 people). That is, Koreans only received one twenty-second of the amount of money that Japanese residents received. In sum, we can see that donations for education were on the one hand given during the "wartime period" to secure profits by securing a source of highly skilled labor to compensate for the shortage of such coming from Japan, while on the other hand this reflected the company's racial bias in providing more money for the education of Japanese employees than for Korean students.

Next, we shall examine the donations made for administrative purposes. The

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19. This can be seen as reflecting the influence of Nitchitsu's policy on employment. As shown in previous research, Nitchitsu preferentially hired Japanese workers over Koreans based on racial prejudice. As a result, through the outbreak of the war between Japan and China in 1938, the ratio of Japanese to Korean workers at the Hüngnam fertilizer factory favored the Japanese at a rate of 6:4. This contrasts sharply with the fact that, in the same year, the ratio of total population in Hüngnam of Japanese to Korean was 3:7. Later on as the war continued, the total Japanese population declined, and the ratio of Japanese to Korean workers began to shift with the rate in 1943 being 4:6, in 1944 it was 2.5:7.5, and in 1945 was 2:8. Thus we can see that the reason more money was invested in the education of Japanese employees was not a mechanical reflection of the ratio of workers employed by the company; the racial prejudice that was applied to hiring workers was also impacting the provision of social capital in the form of "donations." For more on the ratio of workers based on ethnicity at Nitchitsu and the impact of racial prejudice in hiring policies, see Yang Jihye (2016, 194-95).

largest single donation was for the production of sacks at 160,000 won, then the construction of administrative office buildings (54,000 won), donations given in exchange for the mobilization of labor (48,000 won), road construction (5,500 won), and individual projects for temple or accommodations for workers construction at 1,000 won each. In addition, quasi-donations were also provided in the form of selling land at bargain prices to be used for town infrastructure. But if we exclude these quasi-donations in the form of land sales and other donations where the amount of money cannot be calculated, 95 percent of the donations were given for the production of sacks (58 percent), construction of office buildings (19 percent), and in exchange for labor mobilization (17 percent) with each of the remaining donations accounting for less than 2 percent of the total. In other words, donations given for “administrative” purposes ultimately had three aims. First, donations for the production of bags for fertilizer and given in exchange for the mobilization of labor were actually related to business operations. Second, donations provided for the construction of administration buildings and accommodations for administrators were given to strengthen relations with local officials. And third, social donations aimed at supporting civilians such as road construction were similar to the sale of land at low prices for urban infrastructure and can be seen as genuine donations; but we should also note that the amount of money given was also small.

Next, if we look at donations given to organizations we can see that the most money was given to wartime political groups at 120,900 won. This was followed by 26,900 won given to labor-related groups, 6,500 won for events, and 1,800 won for regional organizations. If we break it down by percentages, 77 percent of all donations in the category of donations to organizations were given to wartime political groups, and 80 percent of these donations were given to interest groups located in Seoul such as Research Association for Current State of Affairs and National Defense Women's Association. That is to say, the company's donations to “organizations” were mainly political in nature as they sought to strengthen relationships with the political and business communities in Seoul during the war.

The remaining donations are classified into a miscellaneous category which includes donations for strengthening colonial control and improving necessary facilities for protecting the company and improving communication. This includes donations to the fire department (approximately 160,000 won), police (approximately 100,000 won), military (approximately 80,000 won), and post office (approximately 42,000 won). Money was also given to media organizations (roughly 48,000 won) per the wishes of the local authorities and to strengthen company marketing efforts. And, of course, there were further

contributions made for disaster relief per the requests of the local government (approximately 17,000 won).

In sum, Nitchitsu's donations were given with three considerations in mind. The first was the regional situation: donations were for the region (Hüngnam); the wider context of colonial Korea; or the wider Japanese Empire. The second was the target of the donation: donations were made to the local people; the local government; or for the company itself. And third, the purpose of the donation differed from case to case: it was for social purposes; political reasons; or to increase profit. However, if we pay attention to the amounts of money given, donations by Nitchitsu were, by and large, to support Japanese colonial control and as political support during the war, to boost the relationship between the company and government officials and administrations in Hüngnam and in the capital of Seoul, to stabilize the education of the children of Japanese employees in Hüngnam, and to protect and improve the production facilities of the company in Hüngnam. In this way, Nitchitsu used "donations" as a method to plan and control the development of Hüngnam, and more broadly Korean society. However, here "society" refers to the colonizers that operated the local government, the police force, and military, the leading members of government in the political and business communities in Seoul, and the Japanese employees in Hüngnam. The donations were essentially limited to the framework of "Japanese society" in Korea and ended at the edge of this closed-off domain.

### **Nitchitsu's Fortressed City: Hüngnam**

Hüngnam has received attention as a symbolic spatial realization of how urbanization took place based on the process of industrialization during the Japanese colonial era. Here, Nitchitsu took a quiet rural region, built world-class production facilities and urban infrastructure, and turned Hüngnam into an enterprise city known as the "the kingdom of Nitchitsu." However, this is not a story of fantastic "modernization"; and there is a lack of thorough analysis regarding Nitchitsu's strategy for "planning," "constructing" and "ruling" this city.

In this regard, this article has focused on the urban structure of Hüngnam and the birth of the "Japanese settler community" which ruled it. In particular, it has described the context of the formation of the "Japanese settler community" and its segregated position within the colonial city through the process of lower-class Japanese workers and their families moving to Hüngnam from Minamata

where Nitchitsu's Japanese headquarters was located. Next, this article reviewed Nitchitsu's urban operation strategy through the detailed records of its donations. Through this, we can understand how the company sought to expand its influence inside and outside Hŭngnam through the use of donations. Nitchitsu, through its donations, supported Japanese colonial rule and its war effort, furthered the company's relationships with administrators in Seoul and Hŭngnam, sought to strengthen Japan's hold on Korea by turning the children of its Japanese employees into "colonizers" through improving their education, and protected and expanded the company's production facilities.

As this analysis has shown, Nitchitsu and the Japanese society of Hŭngnam, in order to stably maintain the "Japanese settler community" which took the lead in boosting corporate profits and managing the business, sought to plan and operate Hŭngnam as a space only for themselves. Hŭngnam was built into a closed "fortress city" for the Nitchitsu company and its associated "Japanese settler community" by reserving all capacity for themselves and rejecting "urban integration" which would inhibit the pursuit of profit.

This article is a narrative of the closed-minded manner in which Hŭngnam was made into a "fortress" by closing it off from Korean society in the name of maximizing profit margins, and shows the flawed historical development of the urban industrial complex in Hŭngnam that prefigured the tragic emergence of "Minamata disease" in the region after World War II.

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