



## Doctoring the Population: Medical Science, the White-Yellow War, and Fertility in Early Colonial Korea

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### Abstract

*This article examines the relationship between medical science and the population problem (ingu munje) in colonial Korea. In the Autumn 2022 issue of the Korea Journal, historian John DiMoia proposed that the genealogy of population research and discourse in Korea be reconceptualized. While most research on population and fertility studies has focused on family planning (FP) and related subjects in the postwar and Cold War eras, DiMoia suggests that we observe the scientific study of these issues and related policies on the Korean Peninsula over a much longer interval, arguing that concerns about the population and population studies date back to the mobilization period of the late 1930s. He further demonstrates the involvement and role of medical scientists and demographers in FP population implementations. In response to DiMoia's proposal, this study explores the origins of discourses and studies on population, beginning as early as the protectorate years (1905–1910) and the 1910s under Japan's colonial rule (1910–1945). It focuses on population research by two medical scientists: the military physician Sato Tsunemaru and Kudō Takeki, an obstetrician-gynecologist. By scrutinizing the development of population discourses in early 20th-century Korea, this article sheds light on the colonial trajectory of the population problem and its management.*

**Keywords:** population, medical science, White-Yellow war, fertility, colonial Korea, Sato Tsunemaru, Kudō Takeki

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## Introduction: In Search of the Origins of Population Concerns in Korea

During the COVID-19 pandemic in South Korea, concerns about the national population drew more media attention than ever, but such concerns were in no way new.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, Korea's total fertility rate—the average number of children a woman is expected to have during her reproductive years—was considered to have hit a record low, and, amid the nation's struggle with COVID-19, it was expected to fall even lower. According to Statistics Korea (KOSTAT), 2021's total fertility rate of 0.81 children was down from 2020's 0.84 and lower than the average rate of 1.6 across the world's most advanced economies as well as the global average of 2.32. Given that married couples are responsible for about 97 percent of births in South Korea, the decline in fertility seems to be a natural outcome of the country's continually diminishing marriage rates. Experts have stated that the 2021 figure for the fertility rate reflects a spike in home prices, higher living costs, and the impact of the pandemic, which contributed to the postponing of marriages and thus families. KOSTAT figures indicated that about 260,000 babies were born in Korea in 2021, and experts were concerned that South Korea might see fewer than 250,000 births in 2022. This would be only about half the number of babies born in 2003 (approximately 495,000). This decline affects many areas of South Korean society. By 2023, toward the end of the pandemic, South Korean citizens were even more alarmed by a *New York Times* article, "Is South Korea Disappearing?" which likened the decline of the South Korean population to the depopulation of Europe by the Black Death in the Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the South Korean state is attempting to launch a new ministry to cope with these population problems (*ingu munje*), including a low birth rate and an aging population.<sup>3</sup>

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1. "South Korea's Population to Shrink to 38 Million by 2070 Amid Rising World Population," *Korea Times*, September 5, 2022; Sung-eun Lee, "Korea's Fertility Rate Drops for Sixth Straight Year," *Korea JoongAng Daily*, August 25, 2022; Frances Mao, "South Korea Records World's Lowest Fertility Rate Again," *BBC News*, August 25, 2022.
  2. Ross Douthat, "Is South Korea Disappearing?" *New York Times*, December 2, 2023.
  3. "Korea to Launch Population Ministry to Address Low Birth Rates, Aging Population," *Korea Times*, August 24, 2024.

When did these concerns about the national population begin in Korea? Or rather, when did people begin to talk about so-called population problems in modern Korean society? In recent years, an increasing number of scholars have taken an interest in the history and genealogy of such problems, their associated policies, and efforts to control them in Korea and elsewhere in East Asia (Huang 2016; Jo 2018; Lee 2023; Lu 2019; Homei and DiMoia 2021; Homei 2023). It is true that in the 1960s and 1970s, in contrast to the current depopulation crisis, the South Korean state implemented family planning (FP) programs to deal with the problem of overpopulation and systematically research population phenomena from a national perspective (I. Kim 2023). Did population concerns and related research first appear in postwar, industrializing South Korea? In the Autumn 2022 issue of *Korea Journal*, the historian John DiMoia proposed a reconceptualization of the genealogy of population research and discourse in Korea (DiMoia 2022). While most research on population and fertility studies has focused on FP and related subjects in postwar and Cold War times, DiMoia urged a view of population control and the scientific study of population problems on the Korean Peninsula that covers a much longer period. He argued that the origins of population concerns on the Peninsula date back to the late 1930s, when the Japanese Empire was mobilizing for total war.

In this article, I respond to DiMoia's scholarly call and extend his ideas by tracing the origins of population research and describing its seminal actors in early colonial Korea. However, this study is distinct from DiMoia's work (and that of others) in several respects. First, I show that questions about population issues and the scientific investigation of population phenomena in Korea are found as early as the protectorate period (1905–1910) and the 1910s of Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945) in Korea. I argue that the discussions about population problems and associated field research did not arise only in the final stretch of Japanese imperial penetration (Park 2014; see also Yi 2023), but that in the early years of colonial rule, Korean society had already seen the appearance of population discourses supported by statistics.

Second, this essay identifies medical scientists as key actors of population research and producers of population discourses in Korea by scrutinizing the rare and unexcavated medical archives from the dawn of

Japanese colonial rule. In her recent book, *Science for Governing Japan's Population*, Aya Homei (2023) highlights the role played by scientists in the formulation of state population policy in modern Japan from the Meiji era to the postwar period. Homei shows how scientists, especially medical ones (e.g., Nagai Hisomu and Koya Yoshio), were deeply involved in state-sponsored population studies during Japan's nation- and empire-building in the first half of the 20th century. Their scientific findings, as Homei reveals, served as key knowledge for governing Japan's population. This close involvement in turn demonstrates the entwined nature of science and population policy. It also begs the question of how colonial medical scientists engaged in population studies and how they talked about the population problems in Japan's colonies. I acknowledge the complexity of demographic history and the impossibility of revealing it in its totality through this sort of individual study. While scholars like Pak Jiyeong have already begun to shed light on medical researchers of population science at Keijō Imperial University in Seoul in the 1930s (Pak 2020), this article makes an attempt to examine the works of two German-trained medical scientists mostly in the 1910s: Sato Tsunemaru, a military physician, and Kudō Takeki, a colonial state-hired public physician and obstetrician-gynecologist, suggesting possible links between population research and colonial state population policy. These physicians were “doctoring”—treating patients as well as the “population.” The involvement of physicians in population studies from the protectorate years is of central importance. The ways in which they established themselves as demographic experts predates the research activities of Jenshō Eisuke, who was commissioned in 1923 by the Government-General of Korea (GGK) to investigate and produce a series of reports and books on conditions on the Korean Peninsula, particularly the population phenomena and problems (Im 2021). This essay critically analyzes the two physicians' writings that appeared in GGK official journals, including *Chōsen ihō* (Bulletin of Korea) and other colonial magazines such as *Chōsen koron* (Korea Review) and *Chōsen oyobi manshu* (Korea and Manchuria).

Finally, this study argues that the population in early colonial Korea was discussed not simply as an isolated, insular colonial problem in Korea but as a complex biopolitical-geopolitical issue from a global perspective. Indeed, a

critical scrutiny of Tsunemaru and Kudō and their writings compels us to see that the population problems at the turn of 20th century Korea were defined and discussed by both the biopolitical issues surrounding birth and death rates and the geopolitical matters concerned with imperial expansion, war, and land (Bashford 2016). At the heart of the early deployment of population discourse were the *medical* ideas of racialized global power struggle between the White and Colored populations and the special importance of the colonial population for the fight. In particular, the population problems of the Korean Peninsula from the perspective of Japanese imperialism and colonial governance substantially overlapped with the power dynamics of Western and East Asian imperial powers, the struggle between White and non-White races, and the vitality of colonial Korean bodies, both male and female. To understand the so-called population problems on the Korean Peninsula, the inquiry must begin by taking seriously questions of race and imperialism in early colonial Korea.

It can be said that the effort to delve into the population problems of early colonial Korea is extremely timely and all the more imperative, given that this year marks the centennial anniversary of the first national census conducted on the Korean Peninsula. KOSTAT has established an advisory board of the population expert group to recognize a hundred years of Korean population history as well as to plan for future censuses, including that of October 2025, and to address projected population issues (e.g., the aging population) of South Korea. This article serves as a critical foray into the medical discourse of the population problems imbued with ideologies of Japanese imperialism and colonialism before the administration of the first national census in 1925.<sup>4</sup>

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4. “Tonggyecheong, senseoseu 100 junyeon mata 2025 ingu jutak chongjosa je 1-gi jamundan chulbeom” (Statistics Korea to Establish Advisory Board to Prepare for the 2025 Census and Centennial Anniversary of National Census in Korea), Statistics Korea Press Release, 1pm, September 18, 2023; So-jeong Park, “Census Illustrates 100 Years of South Korea’s Social and Economic Evolution,” *ChosunBiz*, February 3, 2025, <https://biz.chosun.com/en/en-policy/2025/02/03/LJZXRCEV5NGZJNKOQXAAHMAFKY/> (accessed November 26, 2025).

## Population Dynamics, Comparative Statistics, and Military Power

Census administration and the precise calculation of national populations were centrally important for the governance of Japan's imperial holdings (Homei 2023; Lee 2023). From early in the Japanese Empire, state scientists, especially medical doctors, were at the forefront of the meticulous investigation of colonized lands and peoples. For Taiwan, which became Japan's first colony in 1895, the first national census took place in 1905. This comes as something of a surprise, as it was only in the 1920s that the census was implemented throughout the Japanese archipelago. Established by a 1902 law, Japan's national census was originally planned for October 1, 1905 in Japan proper as well as in Hokkaido, Okinawa, southern Sakhalin, and Taiwan. However, this census was never carried out due to the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). The 1905 census in Taiwan was instead made possible by that colony's powerful civil governor Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929). As is well-known, Gotō was a medical doctor who had studied in Germany and was familiar with German scientific colonialism. Arriving in Taiwan in 1898, he was keen on using statistical surveys as tools for successful colonial governance. Together with the governor-general Kodama Gentarō (1852–1906), Gotō oversaw a series of statistical investigations of Taiwanese society, including the establishment of the Temporary Land Survey Group in 1898 to carry out a countrywide land survey and the 1905 census. The execution of these surveys was supported by the colonial police and technical bureaucrats, such as statistics expert Mizushima Shichisaburō, who was recruited by Gotō. Both Gotō and Taiwan's other colonial administrators firmly believed that the population figures produced by the community of statisticians would greatly enhance their effectiveness in governing the Taiwanese population. In turn, the population as a concept produced by modern statistics and statistics scientists became intricately entwined with Japan's empire-building efforts (Homei 2023, 40–57).

The first census on the Korean Peninsula was supposed to take place in 1920 as part of an empire-wide census under the name *kokusei chōsa* (survey of national strength). However, this plan was interrupted by the March First Independence Movement, with massive protests following the passing

of King Gojong in 1919. Thus, the Korean census was delayed until 1925, taking place every five years thereafter. However, this does not mean that no surveys of the population were performed prior to 1925. One of the first tasks of the Residency-General after Korea was declared a Japanese protectorate in 1905 was to conduct statistical surveys, including measurements of the population size. The results were published in *Tōkanfu tōkei nenpō* (Annual Statistical Reports of the Residency-General of Korea) beginning in 1907, and after Korea's formal annexation in 1910, *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpō* (Annual Statistical Reports of the Government-General of Korea) until 1944 (Pak and Seo 2003, 51–74; K. Hwang 2015, 195–209). At the behest of the Residency-General, the Korean government enacted a new “civil registration law” (*minjeokbeop*) in 1909 to replace the late Joseon household registration (*hojeok*) system that had been used to determine taxation and mobilize the populace when necessary. However, the Joseon system did not provide an accurate count of the population, as it excluded the *yangban* (aristocratic) class as well as slaves. The Korean state attempted to modify the system through Royal Decree No. 61 (Hogu josa gyuchik) to include all people in the country, but this plan did not come into fruition for several reasons, including a lack of manpower to fully implement the survey. As Kyung Moon Hwang explains, the new 1909 law was aimed at constructing an accurate image of the population, with the view that “the household should consist not of people living as a single economic unit...but rather of people who belonged in the same family through marriage and patrilineal ties, as the Japanese practices did” (Hwang 2015, 202). Under the colonial regime, the household registration survey took place annually toward the end of each year, and it recorded both population data and vital statistics (Pak and Seo 2003, 70).

In the 1910s, these statistics received close attention not only from statistics experts but from medical scientists as well. A notable example is Sato Tsunemaru (1872–1954), a military physician and specialist in internal medicine. Sato graduated from the medical school of Tokyo Imperial University in 1896 and became a military physician the following year. In 1907, he went to Germany for further studies, obtaining a medical doctorate in 1911. Having returned to Japan, Sato was appointed as the director of the Japanese Red Cross Hospital in 1920 and became surgeon general of

the Japanese Imperial Army in 1922. Sato's colonial career also extended to Korea. Following an instructorship in the Japanese Imperial Army medical school, he served as director of the medical section of the Japanese Army in Korea (a division of the Japanese Imperial Army called the Korean Garrison Army [Chōsen chūshagun 朝鮮駐車軍] from the Russo-Japanese War and the Korean Army [Chōsengun 朝鮮軍] after 1918) and Keijō (Seoul) Garrison Hospital in 1910.<sup>5</sup>

Sato carried out a comparative study of population phenomena in Germany, Japan, and Korea and published a lengthy article titled, "Nihon chōsen oyobi tōitsu ni okeru jinkō dōtai tokei kansuru kōsatsu" (Study on the Population Dynamics and Statistics of Japan, Korea, and Germany) in 1917, in *Chōsen ihō*,<sup>6</sup> the official monthly journal of the Government-General of Korea (renamed *Chōsen* [Korea] in 1920) (Sato 1917). Based on my examination of the entire set of volumes of this journal, Sato's 50-page article was unusually extensive—almost no other contributions matched its length throughout the journal's history. Arguably, this is indicative of the importance placed on his investigation by the colonial state in the first decade of its administration, known as the military rule (*budan seiji*) period. For his study, Sato indicated that he made use of official statistical yearbooks published by three sources: the Japanese imperial state (33rd edition, published in December 1914), the Government-General of Korea (1915 and 1916), and the German state (1912, 1913, and 1914). He also acknowledged that he had been subscribing to the German magazine *Die Woche* (Weekly Journal, 1899–1944) for more than ten years and used its materials for his research (Sato 1917, 160). It is important to note that whereas Jenshō Eisuke undertook his population studies both to prepare for and to utilize the results of *kokusei chōsa* conducted in 1925 and 1930 during his tenure in Korea (Im 2021, 223), Sato, prior to this, carried out and published his population research in the midst of World War I.

Careful scrutiny of Sato's research helps us to imagine how imperial and colonial officials approached statistics on population dynamics and worked

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5. Wikipedia Foundation, "Sato Tsunemaru" 佐藤恒丸, <https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/佐藤恒丸> (last modified August 25, 2025).

6. For the characteristics of *Chōsen ihō*, see M. Hwang (2005).

out major categories of analysis, which they possibly used to understand population problems and management in relation to empire-building and colonial governance in the early 20th century. In his studies, Sato examined the population dynamics of three countries/races (*kuni/jinshu*) in terms of six major categories: 1) growth rates, 2) births, 3) age groups, 4) deaths, 5) age at marriage, and 6) epidemics. Each subsumed a group of analytical subcategories. For instance, under the category of births, Sato provided the number of births, stillbirths, and deaths per 1,000 people for both Japan (1906–1910) and Korea (1912–1914), as well as the number of births per month in Korea. It is important to note that he distinguished Japan from Korea, even though the Korean Peninsula had already been incorporated into the Japanese Empire. Moreover, for purposes of comparison, he clearly differentiated statistics from Japan, Korea, and Germany. When referring to Japan, Sato often used the expressions *naichi* (lit. inner Japan) or *waga kuni* 我國 (our country). Sato also differentiated the three countries and population groups by using the word *jinshu* (race). In other words, Sato understood the population phenomena of Korea, Japan, and Germany directly as characteristics of the three races.

Among the six categories, Sato provided substantial data and the most detailed analysis for age groups (1917, 13–16) and deaths (1917, 13–46). This emphasis displays his primary interests and those of the colonial state regarding population problems, as his study was printed in the GGK's official journal. Arguably, Sato was much more concerned with the demographic characteristics of the *Chōsen minzoku* (Korean race) than the inhabitants of the *naichi*, as the Korean population's size and age distribution were relevant for the mobilization and projection of military power.

In his investigation of age group demographics, Sato was not necessarily concerned with all age groups equally but rather with the particular range of the male population that was eligible to serve in the military. He began his inquiry by putting together a table using demographic statistics from 1908, 1914, and 1910 in Japan, Korea, and Germany, respectively. He organized the population distribution into five-year intervals, beginning with children under 5 years old, followed by those above 5 and under 10, up to people over 100 and under 105 years old. In this arrangement, he considered the male and

female populations separately. Claiming national defense as his motivation, Sato divided the male population into five age ranges and calculated the total number of each: 15 and below, between 15 and 20, 20 and 40, 40 and 50, and over 50. Specifically, he was interested in the percentage of the male population between 20 and 40 because this age group was the most important for national defense. Sato calculated the percentage of this age range out of the total population to be 32.4 percent for Korea, 30.5 percent for Germany, and 29.7 percent for Japan, and he speculated that the high percentage for Korea was due to its low child mortality rate. He also considered the segment of the population that was above 15 and under 50, because men in this age range could at least enlist in the army as office sergeants. According to Sato's calculations, in Germany this group amounted to 50.8 percent and in Japan 48.9 percent. He could not arrive at a Korean figure, but he was positive it would surpass those of the other two countries (Sato 1917, 13–16).

Sato paid much attention to analyzing mortality patterns. In fact, he devoted three-fourths of his paper to describing them (Sato 1917, 16–46). The subcategories of mortality that Sato sought to investigate ranged from the infant mortality rate, age at death for both males and females, number of deaths by month, and deaths by illness to suicide rates organized according to age and motivation. Sato extensively discussed the characteristics of suicide in Korea compared to Germany and Japan (1917, 40–44). Providing a table with statistics for suicides in Japan in 1908 and 1912, Germany in 1912, and Korea in 1914, he explained that the rate was highest in Germany followed by Japan. The Korean rate was a quarter of Germany's. Sato also attempted to evaluate suicide rates by gender and found the Korean numbers extremely peculiar. The suicide rate for German women was 31.4 percent of that of men in 1910 and 31.8 percent of same in 1911. For Japanese women, it was 60.2 percent of the men's rate for both years. Relative to Korean men, Korean women had suicide rates of 119.4 percent and 112.8 percent in 1912 and 1913, respectively. Sato believed that this merited special attention because, in both Germany and Japan, more men than women committed suicide. He finally attributed the higher suicide numbers among Korean women to their inherent nature and emotional traits (*seikaku kanjō*) which he argued were significantly different from those of Japanese women (1917, 42). In Sato's view, such a difference

reflected the characteristics and emotions of Korean women and the Korean race.

Indeed, it is imperative to consider how Sato conflated the concepts of population and race in his discussion of age at marriage. Immediately following his interpretation of suicide statistics and the peculiarity of the Korean female suicidal rate, Sato claimed that the average age for marriage was affected by a country's (*koku*) climate along with its people's (*kokumin*) customs and traditions, while the marriage age in turn influenced the nation's reproductive power, its physical constitution, and its mortality rate. Sato maintained that for these reasons, he wanted to collect and compare the marriage ages of the couples of Japan, Korea, and Germany, naming them as three distinct "*jinshu*" (races) (1917, 46). It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Sato's investigation of population dynamics was intricately related to contemporary understandings of population and racial differences.

Although this idea may require further examination of the archival materials from Sato's era, we can at least consider how elite imperial military officials linked population dynamics/vital statistics with *race* in population research from 1910s Korea. In the colony, Sato was not the only medical researcher concerned with population, war mobilization, and racial difference. The colonization of Korea had not advanced very far before other physicians began to take up these issues in their own scientific studies of the population. Included in this group of elite medical scientists was Kudō Takeki, who discussed the population problems of the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Empire from the perspective of obstetrics and gynecology.

### **Global Population, the White-Yellow War (白黃戰), and the Colony's Fertility**

Along with Sato, Kudō viewed population problems as a central subject of investigation in the pre-colonial period and the 1910s onward, using colonial monthly magazines like *Chōsen oyobi manshu* (Korea and Manchuria) and *Chōsen kōron* (Korea Review) as important sites of knowledge transmission. Like Sato, Kudō was employed by the colonial state, but he was a "public

physician” (*kōi*) who was intermittently called in for GGK events and campaigns when needed, while being allowed to run his own private clinic (Y. Pak 2005, 267–277). Whereas Sato had only a limited tenure on the peninsula, Kudō was a settler doctor who built his professional career in the colony from Japan’s protectorship over Korea in 1905 to the final years of colonial governance. In his almost four-decades-long career on the peninsula, Kudō was distinguished not only by his cutting-edge medical studies but also by the sheer number of medical and nonmedical books and articles he produced, including those on demographic issues. He was an exemplary medical figure who deserves critical attention as his case provides a rare opportunity to come to terms with medical scientists’ participation in colonial discourse, policy, and management of population problems, including fertility, from Japan’s protectorate years.

Kudō moved to Korea in December 1905, following his medical education and training at Nagasaki Medical School, the University of Tokyo, Würzburg University in Germany, where he earned a doctorate in obstetrics and gynecology, and the University of Berlin, where he worked as a medical researcher under the supervision of the renowned ob-gyn Robert von Olshausen. While still in Germany, Kudō was invited by the Japanese Legation in Korea to serve as director of the ob-gyn division at Hanseong Hospital, run by the Japanese Navy (Y. Pak 2005, 90–98). Not long after, he established his own clinic called Keijō fujin byōin (Seoul Women’s Clinic) in 1908 and ran it throughout the colonial period (Choe and Kim 2015). Kudō identified himself as a physician trained in Germany and often referred to his experiences at various scientific and medical institutions in the United States and Europe, including the radium laboratory of Marie Curie at the University of Paris from 1911 to 1913 (Choe and Kim 2015, 663). From the early years of Japan’s colonial rule, Kudō led the discussions of population issues, capitalizing on his specialization, i.e., obstetrics and gynecology, a new field in biomedicine, itself an emerging discipline. If Sato’s study serves to show how keen Japanese imperial scientists were on the identification of the size of the male population for military mobilization, Kudō’s writings demonstrate how central colonial settler doctors considered the female population for Japanese imperial penetration.

Indeed, critical assessment of Kudō's works in the protectorate years into the 1910s holds central importance, as it provides a rare look into the *early* deployment of colonial population discourse revolving around the female population, birthing, and fertility. In her pioneering study on population control and the rise of birth control (*chulsan tongje*) in modern Korea, So Hyeon-Soog (2000) asserts that the colonial state maintained its stance on pronatalism and population increase from the beginning of its colonial rule.<sup>7</sup> As she elaborates, in 1912, the GGK promulgated and continued to administer the Colonial Criminal Law, based on the Meiji Code of 1882, which made abortion illegal (see Burns 2014; Kanazu and Boogert 2003). Korean intellectuals of the 1930s began to advocate for birth control, especially encouraged by contemporary eugenic ideas and the 1933 establishment of the Korean Association of Eugenics (Joseon usaeng hyeophoe). However, they lost ground in the face of the breakout of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, which was accompanied by the colonial state's wartime mobilization of the colonial population as human resources of the empire. While So's work vividly illustrates the intersection of colonial population control and Korean birth control in the 1930s, we remain curious about the earlier formation of population discourse on the peninsula. Both Sato and Kudō's works are invaluable evidence with which we can understand the early colonial contexts. In particular, my scrutiny of Kudō's archives, which have hitherto remained unexamined, illuminates how population studies by colonial state-hired doctors such as Kudō, revolving around Japan's imperial pronatalism and the related issues concerning the birthing, fertility, and maternity of the Korean population, were inseparable from the ideas of the global population and race. They were closely knitted with a racialized fight engulfing world populations, the leadership of the Japanese Yamato race in what Kudō called *hakuosen* 白黃戰 (White-Yellow war), a racialized global population-territory war, and the

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7. Sonja Kim (2008) has similarly found that, in colonial Korea, there was a feminist position advocating birth control that emerged in conjunction with the New Woman movement of the 1920s. It emphasized a "women-centered view" supporting reproductive choice. Nevertheless, Kim indicates that such feminist causes soon dissolved due to the persistence of the "maternalist agenda," which prioritized women's roles and their contributions as mothers.

importance of the colonial Korean population for victory in that war.

As early as 1907, Kudō demonstrated his interest in the demographics of the Korean people, and women in particular, and the circumstances surrounding the delivery of children that affected Korea's population size. In August 1907, while still working as director in the ob-gyn division of Hanseong Hospital, Kudō published an article in *Sankafu zasshi*, a magazine published by the Japanese Association of Obstetrics and Gynecology (Kudō 1907). In this article, he begins by saying "Korea is a neighboring country that Japan shares a narrow strait with and the rise and fall (*shōchō*) of its people tremendously affects our country. In the first place, the nation's *shōchō* correlates with the population propagation rate" (1907, 3). Kudō referred to several nations, including ancient Sparta and contemporary Germany, as exemplars of *fukoku kyōhei* (strong army, wealthy nation) that implemented strong state policies for boosting their populations and constructing facilities for safe child delivery. By contrast, those countries that neglected the multiplication of offspring, such as Hawaii, lost national power and experienced either the destruction of the nation or descent into tributary status. In this vein, Kudō explained, Japan had imported the new knowledge of obstetrics about thirty years previous and subsequently experienced a drop in the number of deaths during delivery. He then went on to take up the case of Korea and its Joseon dynasty (1392–1910). Although the dynasty had existed over five hundred years, since its establishment, it had produced no midwife (*jōsanfu*) to assist with childbirth. Kudō claimed that there was no national statistics for the peninsula, thus he had to rely on the survey by the Department of the Police Advisory of the Residency-General of Korea to calculate the total population of Korea, established as 9,638,578. Kudō sought to compare this with the population of Japan in order to come up with a population increase rate for Korea proportionate to the size of its current population. Japan's total population was 45,260,604 and its estimated annual increase rate was 1,600,362. Based on this estimation, Kudō stressed that Korea must have an annual average of 349,618 deliveries. Kudō sneered that, for a long time, Koreans had proudly and repeatedly boasted that they had 20 million people when the actual number was 9.6 million at most. He viewed this as pitiable (*hisan*), especially given that Korea

was currently Japan's protectorate. Kudō's diagnosis was that the stagnation of Korea's population derived from the lack of specialized knowledge and books within Korean traditional medicine and the low status of Korean women, who seldom received proper medical treatment during delivery and the puerperal period. These factors negatively combined with poor hygiene surrounding puerperium meant that Korea tended to lose about 100,000 mothers and babies annually. To warn about this loss and the *shōchō* of the Korean population, Kudō drew attention to Thomas Malthus and his book on *Jinkōron* (An Essay on the Principle of Population). Quoting Malthus, Kudō argued that the population increase of the progressive nation (*kokumin*) was not arithmetic but always geometrical. Korea was just the opposite; its population size stood still, a sign which Kudō accentuated as not simply a stop but a regression.

When he began to serialize his study of Korean women in the colonial monthly magazine *Chōsen* (Korea)—renamed *Chōsen oyobi manshu* (Korea and Manchuria) after January 1912—Kudō again focused on the issues of women's delivery and childrearing to highlight their importance for the propagation of the Korean population (Kudō 1908b). This time the focus was not merely on the population increase, but Korea's progress in relation to that of other races. In comparison with Japan, Kudō found it truly bizarre that Korea's gross geographical size was a bit more than half the size of Japan and yet its population size was only one fifth that of his native country. Kudō reintroduced Malthus and his population theory on the progressive nation to indirectly indicate Korea's *backward* status. Korea's population problems had to do with the lack of advanced biomedical facilities and experts to assist women's delivery, as well as the narrow-minded, uncivilized national character (*kokuminsei*) of Korea, which considered the value of women lower than a horse or cow. Korea's insular nature was also due to its geopolitical circumstances, occupying a precarious position between strong nations and without any sense of foundation due to internal political instability and economic hardship. In this context, Koreans historically loathed fecundity, leading to the pervasiveness of miscarriages and abortions. All of this led to Korea's current population problems. Kudō maintained that the growth or deterioration of the Korean people (*Kankoku kokumin*) and their place and

rank in the hierarchy of national power among different races (*minzoku*) would be determined by Korean women's birth rates, the death counts of both mothers and babies during these births, and the childhood survival rates?

Kudō brought into these discussions another theorist, Robert von Olshausen (1835–1915), who he identified both as his mentor during his time at the University of Berlin and as a world-renowned authority in the field of obstetrics and gynecology. Kudō stressed that the great ob-gyn Olshausen's theory was that a skilled midwife's attendance at a delivery reduced the death rate by half. Kudō excoriated Korea's lack of any modern, biomedical facility to train midwives despite the fact the country had a great *gwangi* (courtesan) school. Kudō emphasized that the Korean nation, with a population of roughly 10 million, did not have even one midwife knowledgeable in the most advanced medicine and that this adversely affected the reproductive capacity of 4.8 million Korean women; he predicted would continue to be the case unless something changed. Kudō's calculated that in Korea, 68,508 infants and 18,366 mothers died annually during the puerperal period due to the lack of midwife assistance. He argued that, according to his great German mentor, this could be reduced by half. He projected the long-term, ten-year effect of the current rate of birth mother and newborn deaths, which would amount to an accumulated total of 1,344,400 deaths. Kudō urged his audience to come to terms with how much such losses could stymie national power and economic progress (Kudō 1908b, 45–46).

In her recent book on population discourse in modern Japan, Sujin Lee (2023) shows that from the 1920s onward, sexologist, eugenicists, and feminist intellectuals and activists increasingly advocated for birth control in dealing with Japan's problem of "overpopulation." As Lee elucidates, the proponents of birth control, including Yamamoto Senji and Ishimoto Shizue, were motivated by varying and complicated issues concerning Japan's domestic politics, and influenced by neo-Malthusianism. Even though Kudō repeatedly referred to Malthus and his population theory, he was not a proponent of neo-Malthusianism for Korea. On the contrary, Kudō was rather firm on pronatalism, both for the empire's metropole and its Korean colony, but for different reasons. Whereas, for Japan, Kudō deployed his population ideas to argue for and to ensure the leadership of Japan in the global population

war and in politics, for Korea, Kudō did so to promote the necessity of the mobilization of the colonial Korean population as, in Kudō's term, *dōhō* (fellow countrymen), for that global struggle.

Kudō's idea of the global population war revolved in particular around what he called *hakuosen*, the White-Yellow war—a bipolarized race struggle. Kudō's formulation of the White-Yellow war could be understood as a racialized global population-territory war and one that underscored the role of Japanese imperialism and the Japanese Yamato race in the war between the White race (*hakujin* 白人) and the Yellow race (*Kōjin* 黃人). As I will explain later, Kudō's articulation of the Koreans as *dōhō* in the 1910s cannot be separated from Japan's preparation and advancement of *hakuosen*. Even before Japan's formal annexation of Korea in 1910, Kudō had developed his theory of the White-Yellow war. It is possible that this perspective resulted from the racial consciousness he had developed during his time in Europe combined with Japan's rise as an imperial power in East Asia following its victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Initially, Kudō described the “negotiations of the White and Yellow races” (*hakuo jinshu no kōshō*) (1908a, 31) in world politics, asserting that the world was witnessing large-scale maneuvering between the White and Yellow races. However, in his publications from the 1910s, especially around the beginning of World War I, references to White-Yellow dialogue disappeared and were ostensibly replaced by intimations of a White-Yellow war. At this point, his primary motivation was to urge the Japanese Yamato race to take the lead in the global war between the White and Yellow races, to ensure the defeat of the first and the survival of the second (Kudō, 1913a; 1913b; 1914a; 1914b; 1915; 1919).

Following his studies overseas and in particular his research at the University of Paris between 1911 and 1913, Kudō drew attention to the population fluctuations of the White and Yellow races (Kudō 1913a; 1913b) as part of his discussion of the White-Yellow war. From the perspective of gynecology, he sought to compare the futures of the Japanese (*Nihon minzoku*) and the White race in their projects on overseas development (1913b) in terms of *bunben keisū* (delivery [birth] rates). Referring to ten northern and western European countries, including England, the Netherlands, Germany, and France, and providing their delivery rates in the late 19th century and

the previous ten years (ranging from 29.9 [England] to 32.2 [Finland]), Kudō said that without a doubt, the White race (*haku jinshu*), regardless of country (*kuni*), had seen a decline in both the delivery rates and the population size of childrearing, with the caveat that he was not sure of the delivery rates of the White race in their overseas, colonial territories, as gynecologists could not survey them all. Kudō persistently argued that to become a world power (*kyōkoku*), a country must have a sufficient population and an abundance of land to accommodate that population. Thus, the world powers as he saw them were in fierce competition to secure overseas colonies. However, countries like France, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands (all imperial powers) were at pains to cope with their decreasing reproductivity. Unlike the White race powers, it was well-known that the Japanese Yamato race was currently demonstrating a delivery rate of 37, a rate that had tended to increase, both at home and in its overseas territories. The Yamato race was splendidly adapting to foreign climates and witnessing their delivery rate increasing in their colonial settlements, including on the Korean Peninsula.

Along with these European powers, Kudō attempted to discuss the White American imperial power or the confrontation between Japan and America as a conflict between “living things” (*seibutsu*), an expression he used euphemistically instead of “race” (Kudō 1913a). Of central importance, Kudō sought to take up and elaborate upon the issue of *hakuo ryō jinshu* (White and Yellow races) from the geopolitical as well as biopolitical viewpoint of imperial power, the global population, and the world’s land area, along with the past and present of the two opponents (Kudō 1913a, 11–12). In Kudō’s estimation, the world was composed of fifty independent countries who ruled roughly 1.6 billion citizens or nationals (*kokumin*). Among these, Europe collectively and the United States controlled twenty countries each, while only about ten countries on the American and Asian continents remained independent. In North and South America, the White race dominated all except two or three. At present, Kudō argued, about 74 percent of the world was under the control of the White race. This area under White control comprised about 1.1 billion people, or about 69 percent of the world’s total population. While countries like Persia, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Morocco were nominally independent countries, they were on the brink of destruction. In the case of

Japan's neighbor, Kudō argued, China was a superbly strong country in terms of its vast land and population. Nonetheless, it was still subject to intrusion by Western imperialism and therefore in a perilous situation. Consequently, he asserted that "it was only the Japanese Yamato race, as a non-White race (*hakujin igai no jinshu*), that could stand against (*kikkō*) the unruly and restless (*chōryō bakko*) state of the White race" (1913a, 12).

Kudō then moved on to compare Japan and the United States' populations, land size, and fertility. As far as Kudō explained, the fact that the United States received many immigrants from diverse countries made it difficult to come up with a precise fertility rate. Nonetheless, he was confident that the United States' fertility rate would definitely be lower than for other White powers because he believed that due to the constant influx of immigrants, the pure White population's fertility in the United States was definitively in decline. Moreover, Kudō added that the country's mixed-race population was increasing though it was generally accepted in the field of obstetrics and gynecology that the fertility of the mixed-race population and their descendants tended to eventually decline. Although the total population of the United States would continuously grow, he reckoned that the population of White Americans would not greatly increase. Most importantly, Americans would never have the same level of commitment to the people, the state, and their leaders as the Japanese typically had. This commitment, he resolutely declared, was one of the key attributes (*shūsei*) of the Japanese race (*Nihon minzoku*) (Kudō 1913a, 17).

To make his argument more substantial, Kudō continued to delve into the fertility rates of the United States. In the January 1914 issue of *Chōsen oyobi manshu*, Kudō discussed his visit to the United States and his observation of fertility phenomena there (Kudō 1914a). Kudō indicated that this visit was part of a larger plan to study the fertility rates of different races. For this purpose, Kudō could not resist examining what he called *kokudo* 黒奴 (lit. negro slaves) as he thought slavery had deeply affected the racial constitution of the US population. Kudō claimed that his observations of obstetrics and gynecology practices in the US revealed that delivery rooms were often filled with Black women, whom he referred to using the Japanese term *kokudo*. He did acknowledge that they were no longer enslaved, but he argued that their

free status created a fatal problem. According to Kudō, “negro slaves” had lived like barbarians in the past, fighting against beasts in fields and mountains and suffering from inclement weather, intense heat, animal attacks, and poisonous insects in Africa until recent times. These conditions, he claimed, did not help with advancing the fertility rate of *kokudo*. Nonetheless, “now that they were in the United States, these obstacles were no longer present, and the negro slaves experienced mild temperatures and abundant food, so that their fertility increased tremendously. I predict that it will not stop increasing” (1914a, 24). Kudō further alleged that, unlike the negro slaves whom he said had a negligent, rude, and ignorant nature along with vicious instincts and habits, the Japanese were honest, diligent, and faithful. Kudō concluded from his inspection of the American continent that there was no race that could prevail over the Japanese in the project of cultivating the vast fertile plains of the United States. If Japanese led the development of this land, Kudō asserted, they would prevent the “tyranny of the negro slaves” (*kokuno no ōbō*) (1914a, 25).

Japan’s leadership and victory in the White-Yellow war, Kudō argued, was dependent upon women’s reproduction, fertility, and population propagation in the era of imperialism. To do so, Kudō wanted to make the different missions of men and women clear. He brought up Japan’s mythical story of Momotarō. Robert Tierney (2020) has argued that, in his 1907 essay, Nitobe Inazō, Japan’s first professor of colonial policy studies, used the folktale of Momotarō, an early Meiji fixture in elementary education, to inspire insular Japanese youth to imagine and explore beyond the borders of the Japanese archipelago. Kudō found the Momotarō story extremely interesting and useful from the standpoint of gynecology. By directly quoting Nitobe, Kudō explained that in the tale Momotarō, born out of a *momo* (peach), symbolized a multitude of offspring; the Yamato race having an infinite reproductive capacity had to conquer the enemy races, spearhead into overseas countries, and develop them so that its motherland remain atop the mountain. Further, for Kudō, it was the men who were destined to climb the mountain, while the women were destined to go down to a river for laundry and maintain the family. Kudō strongly asserted that women were to be occupied within the womanly realms, that is, menstruation, pregnancy, child delivery, and

lactation, and that those ambitious women interested in politics were absolutely pathological (Kudō 1914a, 65).

From such a point of view, Kudō emphasized the *bunben nōryōku* (delivery capacity) of Japanese women. He directly stated his prediction of a future White-Yellow conflict and called on his country to prepare for the coming race war by raising the fertility rate. He expressed his views on the colored confrontation more openly after the outbreak of World War I. If we consider one of Kudō's 1915 articles, "Fujin kagaku tekini kansatsu seru nihon no shōrai" (The Future of Japan Observed from the Viewpoint of the Science of Gynecology), it becomes apparent what he envisioned, amid World War I, as the fate of the Yamato race in the White-Yellow conflict (Kudō 1915). As if he were referring directly to the war, Kudō claimed that the struggle between biological groups (*seibutsu dantai*) was ceaseless, and humans were no exception to this rule. He predicted that, in the near future, the White and Yellow races would, as opposing tribes (*shuzoku*), come into inevitable conflict. In fact, Kudō viewed the Russo-Japanese War as a remarkable event in which a small island of the trivial Yellow race (*ōjin* 黄人) in the Far East splendidly defeated Russia—a White nation far larger than Japan in both population and land size. Kudō asserted that the Russo-Japanese War had indeed been a great lesson for the Yellow race, which had long believed resistance to the White race to be utterly impossible. But Japan's victory revealed that the Yellow race could avenge itself and free itself from White pressure. The Yamato race had unfortunately been asleep during the isolationist policy of the Edo period but over the last fifty years it had risen to become a hegemonic power in East Asia and awakened other *ōjinshu* 黄人種 (Yellow races). Kudō reckoned that the second *hakuosen* (White-Yellow war) had already begun, and it was the time to advance into the stormy seas. On the brink of the second war between White and Yellow, the Yamato race had to cement its leadership role in the struggle. Kudō stated that he was confident about the *bunben nōryōku* (delivery capacity) of Japanese women and that they would play a crucial role in the fight against the differently colored enemy tribe (1915, 56). "Women of the Yamato race, take care of yourselves," urged Kudō (1915, 59).

While stressing the fertility of Japanese women for victory in the White-Yellow war and the Yamato race's war against White imperial powers on

the global stage, Kudō maintained focus on the internal situation facing the Japanese Empire, i.e., the population phenomena and the cultivation of the colonies, including the Korean Peninsula (Kudō 1914b; 1919). Several months prior to the breakout of World War I, Kudō expressed his opinion as a scientist concerning the population propagation of the empire and the colonial migration of the Japanese (Kudō 1914b). He was very optimistic and confident regarding the expansion of the Japanese Empire, describing the imperial project as full of hope in varying aspects, including marriage rates in relation to Japan's colonial development in Korea. He particularly stressed Japan's superb female-to-male population ratio of 100:103, as opposed to England's 100:93.63, Germany's 100:96.88, and the Netherlands' 100:97.56. It was the most problematic when women were a majority. Whereas Western societies were suffering from a larger ratio of females, Japan was happily an exception with a higher number of males. From this point, Kudō was well pleased that it had been historically proven that the success of colonial power and domination was contingent upon marriage rates and related productivity. Japan's annual marriage rate per 1,000 population was 33.2, followed by Germany (32.3), England (26.3), and France (19.7). Kudō strategically commented that Japanese and Koreans/the Korean race (*Chōsenjin*) were innately different in a biological sense and should be treated differently, as British and Indians used separate toilets in colonial India. However, from a medical perspective, the Korean Peninsula was in a far better condition than other colonies, such as Manchuria and Taiwan, with respect to temperature and climate. Kudō accentuated that the Japanese Yamato race deserved respect from Koreans and had to be treated differently, a remark which encouraged more emigration of Japanese to the Korean Peninsula (Kudō 1914b, 10–12).

Despite his hierarchical understanding of Koreans and their putatively lower biological status, Kudō also underscored that the propagation of the Korean population was vital in preparations for the White-Yellow war. After World War I broke out, Kudō came to approach Korea and the Koreans in a different light (Kudō 1915). Kudō came to view Korea as indispensable, conceptualizing the Korean population/race (*Chōsen minzoku*; *Chōsenjin*) to be *dōhō* (fellow countrymen). Due to the ongoing World War I, Kudō anticipated that Europe would soon face a depopulation crisis and require

immigrants, as would the United States given that it used to receive emigrants from Europe. Kudō reiterated his view on the migration of the Japanese, namely, that for Japan to prepare for the White-Yellow war it was necessary to consider the emigration of the Yamato race to Japan's settlements, as the Yamato people were more capable of adaption than the Teuton tribe and Japanese women's delivery capacity was extremely promising. At the same time, it was not only important to propagate the Yamato race, but also those who faithfully followed the Yamato ideals. Those tribes with different "skin colors" (*hihu no iro*), including those in the Pacific, would definitely unite in alliance due to their declining delivery rates. Kudō emphasized that the Yamato people thus needed those who were on their side to resist the White powers and that the Yamato nation would feel firmly grounded if it possessed strong *dōhō* faithful to the ideals of the Yamato race (*ware minzoku*) (Kudō 1915, 59).

Following World War I, Kudō became more explicit about a pronatalist population policy and how to increase the population of Koreans as *dōhō* (Kudō 1919; 1920). In a 1919 article, Kudō maintained he knew nothing of the power struggles at Versailles, as he was neither a politician nor a diplomat (Kudō 1919). Though he asserted he was not capable of predicting the future of world politics and diplomacy, he was able to foresee the superiority (*yūretsu*) of each race in light of science and biology. In Kudō's view, it was obvious in the aftermath of World War I that the notion of racial superiority was inseparable from the population phenomena. Kudō asserted that the potentiality of the Anglo-Saxons in England and America was in decline due to the reduced population growth. Russians and Germans had a high level of mixed-race population which did not help with the population propagation. As for France, they were already experiencing a regression in the average age of the total population and hardly knew how to reverse it. In contrast to Western nations that had reached the end of civilization and were witnessing the waning of their power, the "pure Yamato race" similar to the Germanic race and along with them, had the highest rate of population growth. With such population propagation, it was the mission of the Yamato race to proliferate, develop, and move forward (Kudō 1919, 46).

While researching the pronatalist population policies of various countries

(*kakkoku jinkō jōshoku seisaku*), Kudō emphasized in particular their wartime mobilization of colonial races. Kudō referenced the pronatalist state policies specifically of the Euro-American imperial powers in relation to the circumstances faced by Japan. Kudō believed that, in the past, strong states had considered it imperative to defend themselves with their own people, but this was no longer the case. During World War I, imperial nations such as England, France, and the United States had to mobilize hundreds of thousands of Indians, French Algerians, or American “negroes.” Hence, he asserted that “we have to protect our nation with our own hands, and thus we have to increase our population” (Kudō 1920, 48). For such a pronatalist stance, Kudō compared the population propagation of both Japanese (*Nihonjin*) and Koreans (*Chōsenjin*) (Kudō 1919). They demonstrated the same level of birth rates. Nevertheless, the Korean race (*senjin*) had lower rates of infants and children receiving childcare, since according to Kudō, the *senjin*’s level of hygiene was low and the temperature and climate of the Korean Peninsula were less favorable than those of Japan, and thus Korea suffered from higher infant and child mortality rates. Despite these defects, Kudō was optimistic about the high level of delivery rates in Korean and found it pleasing that the future of the Korean race was promising in light of biology. Kudō had no doubt that Koreans would propagate greatly once their hygiene and childcare methods improved (1919, 46). Kudō’s evaluation regarding the growth prospects of the Korean population followed upon his elaboration on the bright future of the Japanese and the mission of the Yamato race to move forward toward global empire.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have examined the origins and development of the population discourse and population research in early 20th-century Korea under Japanese colonial rule. With the colonial state’s statistical calculation of the total population and its administration of the census, Korea became an “enumerated society,” to quote In-soo Kim (2021). With the birth of enumerated Korea, there was also a rise in the scientific study of population and a growing

population discourse. Here I have focused on two medical scientists—Sato Tsunemaru and Kudō Takeki—and their studies on population in the protectorate period and into the 1910s. The military physician Sato Tsunemaru's comparative statistical study specified critical categories, including birth rates and mortality rates, for investigating the complex population phenomena of Korea in relation to Japan and Germany. Sato was keen on identifying and counting the size of the (young) male population to enlist them for military purposes. The examination of obstetrician-gynecologist Kudō Takeki and his scrutiny of the population problem shed light on the intersection of empire, power, and reproduction. Kudō's research is indicative of how a colonial settler doctor took up population studies as a centrally important subject and produced a pronatalist knowledge in service of Japanese imperial and colonial ideologies. Most importantly, a critical scrutiny into Kudō's works on the population in protectorate and early colonial Korea, allows us to observe the roles assigned to Korean women and how women's reproduction and fertility were viewed and articulated by colonial scientists.

An examination of the studies of both these physicians reveals that the early formation of the population discourse in Korea revolved around questions of war and race in an age of the global empire. The population problem and race were intricately interwoven and could not be dissociated from each other. Sato meticulously traced and studied subcategories of the population, such as suicide rates among Korean females, to argue that such rates derived explicitly from the inherent nature and emotional characteristics of the Korean race (*jimshu*) compared with the Japanese and the German races. My analysis of Kudō's writings from 1907 into the late 1910s helps us better understand how German-trained colonial doctors like Kudō approached pronatalism, women's fertility, and Japanese imperial and colonial subjects in light of the White-Yellow war, or a racialized global population-territorial war in which imperial Japan and the Yamato race were fighting, and for which they needed to increase and mobilize Korean subjects as *dōhō*.

It would be worth investigating how these early population discourses evolved into the 1920s and 1930s and how they influenced medical research on demographic statistics and the implementation of eugenic and racial hygiene, which scholars have already begun analyzing. As Pak Jiyeong has shown,

researchers like Mizushima Haruo of Keijō Imperial University Medical School, building on his doctoral work at the Johns Hopkins University, conducted meticulous demographic research that went beyond simply using vital statistics to track population size and growth. Mizushima focused on promoting the development of superior racial subjects and strengthening racial vitality, primarily among the imperial Japanese population. Mizushima, along with many other pioneers of Japanese population science like Nagai Hisomu and Koya Yoshio, considered eugenics to be the ultimate purpose of population studies and statistics (Pak 2020, 204–214). An exciting line of future study will be to examine whether previous studies like Sato's served as a bridge between other researchers of his time and the later colonial period.

While I await further scholarly efforts investigating varying population problems and seminal actors of population discourse from multiple perspectives, I would like to end this article by showing how we can still hear echoes of Kudō's 1913 work in the 1930s. Kudō's narratives about the White-Yellow war, the struggle between the White race and the Colored races, and the White race's domination of the world, were found in the work of Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige (Ugaki 1936). In his article "Jinkō mondai to waga nippon" (Population Problem and Our Japan) that appeared in the GGK monthly journal *Chōsen* (Korea), Ugaki highlighted the inequalities of race, population, and geopolitics on a global scale. He argued that the approximately 600 million members of the White race dominated the roughly 1.35 billion people of the Colored races in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Australia and the natural resources that those lands possessed. Ugaki urged the interrogation of the population problem from the standpoint of the Colored states (*kokka*) and Colored races, who were being exploited under the domination of the White race and the colonial rule of White powers. Ugaki warned that the White Western states should confront these unjust circumstances and stop contemplating a "war between skin colors" (*hihu no iro no sensō*). He further stressed that Japan must maintain its pronatalist policies to prepare for a *holy war* (*seisen*) to emancipate the Colored races by propagating the populations of both home and colony.

Now the fact that this echo is heard not in the realm of medical science but in the hallways of colonial state policy-making and the discourse regarding

demographics by the Governor-General of Korea compels us to weigh the ideological weight of the *medical* discourse on the population problem, as well as the consequential effects of *doctoring* the population in early colonial Korea.

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