

Jo Eunjoo 조은주, *Gajok-gwa tongchi: Ingu-neun eotteoke jeongchi-ui munje-ga doeetna* 가족과 통치: 인구는 어떻게 정치의 문제가 되었나 (Family and Government: How Population Became a Political Problem). Paju: Changbi, 2018. 376 pp.

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South Korea (henceforth, Korea) has been known as a country that showed remarkable success in family planning in the 1960s. Its total fertility rate dropped from 6.0 in 1960 to 2.06 in 1983. Regarding this change, several international organizations appraised the Korean government's program as the most successful family planning in the twentieth century. How did this change happen? Did it result from the Korean government's authoritative power in the 1960s? To date, given the rise of military regime in the 1960s, the role of the authoritative government has been much highlighted in understanding Korea's family planning. Jo Eunjoo's new book, *Family and Government*, however, stresses a need to move beyond such a narrow analytic scope. Korea's family planning was neither just a story of Korea nor that of its government. Putting Korea in the context of Cold War, the author reveals a wide range of stakeholders like international organizations, public officials, non-profit organizations, doctors, statisticians, surveyors, nurses, drivers, and housewives – which constituted a new form of governmentality in Korea. From a historical and sociological viewpoint, the author examines Korea's family planning from the 1960s to the 1970s, which poses important questions on the role of government, society, and family in the rise of biopolitics.

Regulating the number of the Korean population was a crucial political and economic problem for both the local government and the Western bloc in the Cold War. Because of the “anxiety that the Third World's overpopulation and poverty could lead to Communism,” Western bloc countries, especially the United States, was concerned with coming up with a way to control their population (47). Considering this geopolitical context of the mid-twentieth century, the author reveals the influence of capital, knowledge, and technology from the United States in shaping Korea's family planning. It was no accident that the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Population Council, built in the 1950s United States, played notable roles in

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initiating family planning in Korea. Nevertheless, as the author emphasizes, such influx had been “mediated” in a particular way via local stakeholders’ visions on their future polity (56). Before the 1960s, the idea of population regulation was unacceptable in Korea since it conflicted with the politicians’ visions that preferred to deregulate it for political and security reasons. In short, there was a certain moment in Korea when its population became the site of governmental inspection and regulation. That is the reason why it is valuable to ask “how population became a political problem” as indicated in the book’s subtitle.

By focusing on the growing attention on population in Korea, the author argues that the 1960s witnessed “the rise of a new form of government power” (33) which showed “a qualitative rupture” in governmentality (263). From the beginning, the author elaborates two different types of government power in modern politics: disciplinary power and bio-power. While the former disciplines and dominates “citizens” for the sake of their “sovereignty,” the latter rules over “population” in the name of “guaranteeing population’s security and well-being” (26). According to which government power is being played out, the relation between government and society is distinctively shaped. The author underlines the importance of grasping different forms of government power — though acknowledging their interplays — which would embody a distinctive array of artifacts, knowledge, and people. From this perspective, the author stresses how insufficient it would be if we simply understand the governmentality of Park Jeong-Hee’s military regime (1963-79) with “coup, martial law, *Yusin*, and torture,” in terms of its disciplinary power (33). Instead, with the case of family planning, the author unveils the formation of bio-power deployed from the 1960s under the guise of the population’s well-being. In doing so, this book deepens our understanding on the relations between power, body, and government in a developmental state.

The biggest contribution of this book is to bring out multiple stakeholders’ voices and activities that shaped Korea’s family planning. It involves not only the story of public officials, but also that of statisticians who continuously gathered information about Korea’s population, surveyors who visited every house with inquiry sheets, non-profit organization workers who delivered new knowledge and techniques about family planning, drivers who brought those workers to not only urban but also rural places, and housewives who came to take on the responsibility for managing their own families. All their engagement (as well as their resistance) built up a new form of governmentality in Korea. Thus, the author unravels those networks of engagement which were established in a particular historical context of social change, such as growing middle-class workers in Korea from the mid-1960s. Thereby, this book brilliantly brings both political and economic fluctuations in this rapidly industrialized country in line with its change in family members. Here, this change did not come from a well-planned strategy or knowledge. Rather, governing population often went hand in hand with making knowledge about population and society. Thus,

the author pays attention to various knowledge and technology that was in the making and in contest.

For historians of technology, it would be interesting to see a wide range of contraception techniques in this book — from intrauterine devices, condoms, oral contraceptive pills, mini-laps, tubal surgery to vasectomy — that had been promoted by the Korean government. There were some reasons for one to be prioritized over others at certain times. The author noted that “each technique required heterogeneous [governing] technologies like distinctive manpower and different administrative procedures” (77). Thus, finding a proper technique was not easy or straightforward. It was directly linked to forming desirable ways to build and exercise a new government power in Korea. To settle this question, it was necessary to develop knowledge about the nature of the Korean population and Korean society. The author explains how such knowledge came to be systematically pursued and collected as to Korean urban and rural areas from the 1960s. It is interesting to see that the author considers “science in this period [and scientific knowledge about population per se] ... as the result of academic, intrinsic, and spontaneous pursuit regardless of government intervention” (119). Though the author’s interpretation needs further elaboration from the perspective of the sociology of scientific knowledge, this book opens broader questions on the role of science and technology in the formation of biopolitics in a developmental state.

Amid this contested knowledge and technology in family planning, the author stresses that “family became the privileged instrument” and “the fundamental relay” for population control (29-30). The author vividly captures the transformation on the way “family” was imagined, nurtured, and realized in the name of modernization in Korea. A clear comparison was notable between underdeveloped vs developed, pre-modern vs modern, life as an animal vs life as a human, rural vs urban areas, and tradition vs science in Korea’s family planning. As the author demonstrates, it also influenced the way people understood sexuality and reproduction in Korea. Because Korea’s family planning aimed to regulate population, it can be easily assumed that the Korean government would suppress peoples’ sexual life. However, the author reverses such assumption and reveals that Korea’s family planning was “far from an ascetic attitude or conservative standpoint” (184). As stated by the author, the Korean government “explicitly and continuously supported hedonic sexuality separated from reproduction” which led to redefining the concept of marriage as well as the status of women. It is curious, however, why many Koreans are still putting efforts into keeping chastity before marriage until now and why Korea ranked at the lowest rate of using oral pill, according to the 2015 United Nations’ report on “Trends in Contraceptive Use Worldwide.” Though this book does not give a clear answer, it provides an analytical insight that allows us to explore the (trans)formation of sexuality and subjectivity in relation to specific government power in play.

Among the eight chapters in this book, Chapter 1 and Chapter 8 would be stimu-

lating for those interested in theoretical discussions over governmentality, government, biopolitics, population, family, and sexuality. From Chapter 2 to Chapter 4, the author pays attention to the process of making and managing family planning in Korea from the perspective of the government and various experts. From Chapter 5 to Chapter 7, the author shifts one's gaze to families and especially women who were under transformation in the name of modernization. Of course, those who seek to understand the rise of biopolitics and intertwined relationships between government, society, and family, I strongly recommend reading the whole book from the beginning to the end. In terms of scale of analysis, this book is highly valuable because it travels from global geopolitical contexts of the mid-twentieth century to the then local political and economic situations and also from the activities of government to that of women in a family. As an in-depth sociological and historical examination upon Korea's family planning, this book will be highly useful for scholars working in the history of modern Korea, the history of science and technology, science and technology studies, and gender studies.