Panoptic apparatus: a study of the Japanese-built prisons in colonial Taiwan (1895–1945)

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ABSTRACT

Prison construction was among the most important infrastructural developments introduced into Taiwan by the Japanese colonial regime in the late nineteenth century. The Japanese-built colonial prisons were characterized by their adaptation of Western-style prison typology, which signified the successful transfer of multiple aspects of modernity from the West, first to an eastern nation and then to its colonies. Completed in 1921, the Chiayi Prison is the only existing Japanese-built radial-plan prison in Taiwan, of which the built form and spatial arrangement reflect how the authority disciplined the inmates. This paper firstly offers a summary of how the modernization of prisons developed in Euro-American countries and then how it was introduced to Japan and its colonies. Then it gives a comparative analysis of the three major prisons in colonial Taiwan. Using the Chiayi Prison as a primary case study, this paper examines the surrounding urban formation, architectural creation, and spatial effects of the prison and how it attempted to achieve the moral correction of the prisoners.

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1. Penal development from the West to the East

1.1. Prison reforms in Euro-American modernization

To better understand modern prisons built in the Japanese colonial period in Taiwan, it is first necessary to trace back to its origin—the modern penal development in the progress of Western Modernization. Before the seventeenth century, the punishment of criminals was usually in the form of corporal punishment that was intended to cause public humiliation, including whipping, branding, hanging, and the stocks and pillory. The prisons in this period functioned as dungeons and detention facilities where inmates were held until their trial or the actual punishment. Because of bad maintenance and lack of segregation, many inmates died of infectious diseases such as gaol fever.

The birth of modern imprisonment facilities started with a series of penal reforms in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. Historically, the forms of incarcerating dungeons embodied the places of terror, disease, and corruption. In contrast, the fundamental tenet of modern penal reform, as Robin Evans noted, was the moral reformation of souls rather than the physical punishment of bodies. John Howard, as the first humanitarian penal reformer, condemned previous jails as barbaric, filthy and disorganized in the 1780s. Howard proposed to enhance the physical and mental health of the prisoners and the order of the prison, which led to a separate system and improved sanitation. The nineteenth-century penal reformers, such as John Orridge, declared three “grand ends” of a reformed penitentiary to devise structures that embraced security, salubrity (the preservation of health), and a propensity to reform their inmates (amelioration of morals). As prison reform evolved, more prisons were designed according to the concept of moral rehabilitation in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Modern prisons became places where reformatory education could be instilled during imprisonment. With improved conditions, two concepts rose to dominate the architectural design of the modern prison: solitude and surveillance. Modern penitentiaries were designed as an enclosed space within which inmates could be rehabilitated through the techniques of classification, isolation, and constant supervision. The ideal modern penal systems not only quarantined the inmates but also had an obligation to ensure that the inmates could return to society through the cultivation of labor and education. It was hoped that by disciplining inmates through multiple techniques, the prisons could achieve the goal of moral reformation.

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*On modern penal reforms in England, see Robin Evans (1982).

†Evans (1982, 259).

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The architectural design of modern radial-plan prisons referred heavily to the Panopticon. As probably one of the most famous modern prison models, the Panopticon reached the press in 1791 (see Figure 1).\(^5\) Jeremy Bentham published this proposal of an ideal architectural design aimed at maximizing surveillance, where prison wings radiated out from the central inspection tower. Michel Foucault later argued that it was paradigmatic of the “disciplinary” institutions in the nineteenth century. The central control hall in such radial prisons epitomized the visibility and unverifiability of power, as Foucault noted.\(^6\) The tall central tower that every inmate would constantly see was a reminder that they were under omnipresent surveillance, and they must never know whether and when they were being spied on.\(^7\) The conscious bodies under the gaze could detect the power situation of the field. The major effect of the Panopticon was “to include in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power.”\(^8\) Foucault believes that the Panopticon was more a device than a building because it displayed the total surveillance on the inmates and the power of the authority.\(^9\) In this light, it was the constantly monitored situation that forced every inmate to unconsciously become their own guard unconsciously—to internalize the gaze, to supervise themselves to follow the norms, and finally to achieve a state of self-imprisonment.

While the proposal of the Panopticon had a great influence on several early-nineteenth- and twentieth-century prisons, it was not until Joshua Jebb’s Pentonville that the attempt to construct a reforming environment was realized (see Figure 2).\(^10\) Known as the Model Prison, the prison architecture was built in 1850. It achieved omniscience, omnipotence, and...
omnipresence in its everyday practicability by adopting a radial plan of which the forming agency was the surveillance.\(^{11}\) The Pentonville Prison achieved the total deprivation of sensations of the prisoner, making it the Model Prison of solitude confinement. Every inmate was separated from each other and kept in their own space of total silence, and such an arrangement was supposed to inhibit the formation and spread of vices. It was in this way that architecture and engineering incorporated to demonstrate the moral effects of sensation on the mind.\(^{12}\) However, an opposing viewpoint claimed that the concepts didn’t work out as the reformers had hoped. Solitude confinement and sensory deprivation not only stimulated more vice communication but also damaged prisoners’ physical or mental health. It demonstrated to have the opposite effect to its intention and failed the inmates’ reformation.

Along with this series of modern prison design as a form of rehabilitation, new methods of imprisonment came up in the final phase of the penal reform. One of the most important prisons that had a global influence on over 300 prisons was Eastern State Penitentiary, an American prison designed by John Haviland and opened in 1829 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.\(^{13}\) The prison aimed to develop a humane way to discipline the inmates’ minds on a daily basis rather than harsh physical punishment. The prison building featured its radial floor plan with multiple wing buildings spreading from the central hall. The prison emphasized and improved the principle of solitary confinement which kept all prisoners in isolated cells. Hence, the separate system is also called the Pennsylvania system. The penitentiary was essentially an improved form based on the total surveillance of the Model Prison. It provided the environment for prisoners to reflect on their behaviors of crime in solitary and to cultivate virtues and habits of labor. As such, classification, inspection, and labor, methods to enforce morality, had supplanted security, salubrity, and reformation as the fundamental principles of a modern penitentiary.

### 1.2. Modern prisons in Japan and its colonies

The architectural typology of the panoptic prison is the tangible form through which one can learn about Asian’s adaptation of Western modernization. During the Meiji Restoration in 1868, a series of extensive reforms introduced the Western modern penitentiary into Japan. The prison, among many other infrastructural advances, was a product of Japan’s encounter with Western modernity, to create the combination of “Japanese spirit and Western technology” (wakan yōsai in Japanese). Knowing that they lagged the Western nations, the Japanese adopted Western tactics and techniques for the development of infrastructure and industries and became the first Asian nation to modernize based on the Western model.

The Japanese penal reform began with the appointment of Etō Shinpei (1834–74) as head of the Ministry of Justice in 1872.\(^{14}\) In the same year, the document “Prison Rules and Schemas” (Kangoku soku narabi ni zushiki) by Ohara Shigechika (1834–1902) was released to promote visions of penal reform and regulate the

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\(^{11}\)Evans (1982, 4).

\(^{12}\)Evans (1982, 230).

\(^{13}\)For the history of the ESP, please read the general overview on its official website: https://www.easternstate.org/sites/easternstate/files/inline-files/ESPHistoryOverviewrev5.2019v2.pdf.

\(^{14}\)For more information on Etō Shinpei, please see Mori Toshihiko (1987).
An interesting aspect of the Japanese prison design is the adoption of Western prison forms and establishing the architectural style of modern Japanese prisons. Here, the idea to build a system of disciplinary institutions is manifested. Inspired by the Western penal reforms, it transformed the brutal corporal punishment into an enlightened system of correction, characterized by rehabilitation and humanity. In addition to the description of the modern vision of penal system, the document also contained a series of schemas to vividly show the proposed design of prisons. The panoptic radial plan became the blueprint of Japanese prison buildings (see Figure 3). The configuration demonstrated its derivation from the Pennsylvania System with the radial shape and multiple wing buildings. Many Japanese prison design aligned with this prototype, including Sapporo Prison, Kumamoto Prison, Abashiri Prison, and Nara Prison.

In terms of the actual prison architectural design, Keijiro Yamashita (1867–1931), an engineer in the Meiji period, was an important figure in actively introducing Western prison forms and establishing the architectural style of modern Japanese prisons. He was appointed as the technician for the Ministry of Justice. He visited many Euro-American countries and investigated the prison facilities between 1901 and 1902 sponsored by the Meiji government. When he came back to Japan, he was responsible for the design of "the Meiji Five Great Prisons" across the country in Chiba, Kanazawa, Nara, Nagasaki, and Kagoshima, many of which were already destructed or out of use.

Although Japanese prisons were affected by the Western modern prisons, they demonstrated differences in design and management due to the difference in political and cultural background, climate and natural resources, and ethnic beliefs. Yamashita brought out the outlines of prison design in his articles "How to Improve Prisons" and "Observations on the Euro-American Prison Architecture." He advocated the prison's layout as the radial plan from the Pennsylvania style, and adapted to the natural and financial situations by using the red brick and wooden structure instead of the stone construction as the Western prisons would normally use. With the consideration of modern concepts of hygiene and health, the new prisons payed much attention to the ventilation and heating. In terms of imprisonment, the prisons adopted the modern concepts of solitary confinement and kept the inmates in separate cells to

Figure 3. The Prison illustrated in the “Prison Rules and Schemas.” Source: National Diet Library Digital Collections, Japan.

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15The document "Prison Rules and Schema" refers to 監獄則並びに圖式 in Japanese. Botman translates it as "Prison Rules with Charts." For more information about its contents, please see Botman (2005), 154–164.
16The translation from Japan to English is cited from Botman (2005), 154.
17Keijiro Yamashita refers to 山下啓次郎 in Japanese.
18See the introduction of the oldest prison of the five, Nara Prison: http://former-nara-prison.com/en/architecture/.
19Architectural Magazine of Japan, 1902, Vol. 16, No. 187.
prevent from the spread of vices. Inmates would also be required to do service work in the workshops and follow a strict daily timetable. This new model of Japanese prisons not only conformed to Western standards of modernization, but also developed unique features of Japanese architecture by applying the wooden structure to the prison construction.

As the modern Japanese penal reforms were taken place during the successful Meiji Restoration, Japan embarked on wars in a quest to extend the Japanese hegemony over Korea and to the entire Asia-Pacific region. After the First Sino-Japanese Wars of 1894–95, Japan became the dominant foreign power in China, and it enforced the latter into signing the Treaty of Shimonoseki on 17 April 1895. It was this treaty that severely threatened Chinese sovereignty and ceded to Japan the island of Taiwan and its appertaining islands. Japan thus gained the dominant control over Taiwan, its first foreign colony. The outcome of the Sino-Japanese War was significant because it stimulated the modernization process in Japan and then in its colonies in Asia, including the establishment of modern penal system in Taiwan, which will be further discussed in the following section in this paper.

Above all, the establishment of modern imprisonment systems in Japan signified the successful transfer of multiple aspects of modernity from the West to the East. The birth of the Japanese-built colonial prisons was characterized by their adaptation of Western-style prison typology. The construction of the prison in Japan had two significant roles. On the one hand, the prisons were in use for the authority of colonial rule. On the other hand, the establishment of the penal system also contributed to the imperial aspiration to achieve the standards of Western civilization and rank among Western power regimes.

2. A comparative analysis of three colonial prisons in Taiwan

After gaining control over Taiwan Island, the Japanese colonial regime began to establish the penal system and built three major prisons in Taipei, Taichung, and Tainan. Other prisons appeared in all areas of Taiwan in the following years, such as Hualien Prison and Chiayi Prison (see Figure 4). In this section, this paper gives a comparative analysis of the three cases of colonial prisons in Taiwan: the Taipei Prison, Taichung Prison, and Tainan Prison.

First of all, the three prisons were built after Japan took control of Taiwan and were designed by Yamashita, who was also the engineer of the famous Sugamo Prison in Tokyo. Yamashita visited Taiwan and was employed to design prisons by the Taiwanese Governor’s Office in August 1899. Taipei Prison was completed in 1904 (see Figure 5). It was the largest among the three prisons in colonial Taiwan. Taichung Prison was built in 1896 (see Figure 6) and Tainan Prison was built in 1895 (see Figure 7). All three prisons were located at the rural-urban fringe of their cities. For example, Taipei Prison was in the southeast corner of Taipei, Taichung Prison was in the southwest corner of Taichung, and Tainan was in the south of Tainan. It was an intentional choice to build the prison facilities away from the city center for the purpose of isolation and safety. They followed the same rule to make the entrance face the direction of the city center.

In terms of the architectural design, it is noteworthy that the major Japanese-built penitentiaries were designed in the radial plans, conforming to Yamashita’s proposed Japanese prison model and the Pennsylvania system. The prisons with a radial floor plan consisted of a control hall in the center and several wing buildings as

Figure 4. Mapping of Prisons in Taiwan, April 2020. Diagram by the author.

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20Spraine (2003, 293).
21On the First Sino-Japanese War, see Jansen (2000, 430–436).
22Jansen (2000, 430–436).
23Taiwan Daily News, 1900.4.6, “Taipei Prison’s Construction Works of the Year.” It says “... the engineer Keijiro Yamashita designed the latest prison building, focusing on lighting and monitoring convenience. That is, a rectangular prison building is set up in a radial direction with the guard room as the center ... There is a temporary red brick manufacturing plant in the construction site of Taipei Prison, which uses a large amount of earthwork excavated from the construction work as raw materials and arranges the prisoners to make ...”.
24Taiwan Daily News, 1900.4.6, “Taipei Prison’s Construction Works of the Year.”
25Taiwan Daily News, 1907.7.5, Page 5.
male cells spreading from the center. In addition, there were several workshops circling around the wing buildings. The women’s cell was an individual building. In the case of Taipei prison, the male cells consisted of four wing buildings and the workshops were connected to the end of each wings. Taichung Prison had four wings as the male cells as well, while the workshops were connected to the cells and formed a semi-circle boundary. As the largest among the three prisons, Tainan Prison also adopted the radial floor plan, but the prison extended five wing buildings as the male cells. The women’s cells were located in a separate area with four wing buildings to accommodate a large number of prisoners. Workshops were also circling around the cells for easy management.

The overall planning of the prison varied due to the site conditions, but they all followed the principle of an overarching central axis. The buildings of different functions were connected by the axis in an orderly manner, from the entrance to the offices to the control center and finally to the cells. In this way, it rendered the dominant power of the authority to discipline the inmates from top to the bottom. Through a comparative study of the three Japanese-built prisons in colonial Taiwan, it has been demonstrated that the form of the radial-plan colonial prisons defined the power structure within the prison architecture. It has also manifested a way of consolidating the colonial regime’s authority beyond simply the correction of inmates (Figure 8). Despite the distinctive various forms, essentially, these plans were arranged based on an overarching power mechanism: the control hall was located in the center of the architecture and the prisoners’ cells radiate out from the control hall. With the guards from the control hall taking control of all the cells all the time, this mechanism signified the supreme power’s omnipresence and constant surveillance over the colonized inmates.

3. Panoptic effects of the city and the prison in colonial Taiwan

3.1. Urban remodeling

Chiayi is located on the Chiayi Plain in southwestern Taiwan. The urban development of Chiayi has been dominated by the changing ideologies of several regimes. In the Ming Dynasty, the regime of Zheng
Chenggong (1624–1662) inherited the structure of the Dutch colonists’ vestige and adopted the spatial segregation policies between different ethnic groups. In the Qing Dynasty, Chiayi was encircled by city walls and four gates, which separated the core and suburbs. The main public facilities were concentrated in the north of within the city walls, including offices, city halls, schools, and the police station. Industry and commerce were concentrated near the east and north gates. During the Japanese Occupation period, the urban planning in Chiayi was largely revised by the colonial government. According to the 1936 Map of Occupations in Chiai (see Figure 9), the city’s business district was mainly distributed in the northwest part with dense shops. There were fewer commercial activities in the east and north. Government agencies were located mainly in the north, including the Chiayi City Hall, tax office, police station, official residence, court, museum, library, health laboratory, and the Chiayi prison (see Figure 10).

The remaking of urban space in colonial Taiwan reflected a parallel principle to gain broader panoptic effects in the city. The urban structure was largely replaced by western-style boulevards, namely the gridded checkerboard planned structure (see Figure 11). It was completely different from the previous period, which was a more organically proliferation of properties (see Figure 12). The Governor’s Office of Taiwan adopted the Parisian model instead of Japanese or the Chinese urban development method, because most of the municipal bureaucrats who have been the supporters of the Meiji Restoration Movement since 1866, had studied European urban development. In addition, in order to transfer natural resources and enhance city development, the colonial authority demolished city walls and constructed the west railroad in 1904. Another positive

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*Figure 6.* The plan of Taichung Prison, 1943. Source: Taiwan Governor’s Office Archives. Collection Number: 00011151005.
Figure 7. Tainan Prison, Plan, 1901. Source: Taiwan Governor’s Office Archives. Collection Number: 00011151006.

Figure 8. The underlying power mechanism behind the plan of the colonial prisons in Taiwan. Diagram by the author.
3.2. Architectural form

The construction of Chiayi Prison began in 1919 and was completed in 1922.27 Located in Chiayi City in the plains of southwestern Taiwan, it was built as an affiliate of Tainan Prison. While archives have shown that Yamashita designed the three main prisons in Taiwan, as mentioned above, he didn’t seem to directly participate in the design of the Chiayi Prison. However, his ideas and visions of prison architecture undoubtedly had an influence on the design of Chiayi prison. Chiayi prison exemplified the prison of the Pennsylvania-system, the common features of which included a central hall with several radiating wing buildings as prison blocks, separated from the central hall by large metal bars. In a more recent period, Chiayi Prison was designated as the national monument in 2005 and renovated as the National Prison Museum opened in 2011. Indeed, the architecture of Chiayi Prison has been a very valuable colonial heritage. It is the only extant radial-plan Japanese-built prison in Taiwan, as most colonial prisons were demolished with the advent of the postcolonial era.

Chiayi Prison’s layout unequivocally represented its own identity and function (Figure 13). The spatial arrangement embedded in the radial plan manifested the power relationships within the prison walls. An orderly hierarchy was reflected in the buildings’ dimensions and their distance from the central axis (see Figure 14). The administrative hall and the central control hall, embodying the power of the Japanese authority, constituted the central axis of the prison with the wing buildings spreading radially. The auxiliary buildings, including the farm, workshops, and warehouses, were not linked to the central axis. The volume was gradually reduced from both the front to back and from the center to the periphery, revealing the decline of power. The enclosure of the Chiayi Prison began with a grand gate symbolizing its solemnity and the fearsomeness of imprisonment. The entrance had a stone porch that led into the vestibule and the administrative building. The uniqueness of the cell area lay in the central control hall and three radial male cell wing

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26Botsman (2005), 156.
27See the official website of the National Penal Museum of Taiwan, http://prisonmuseum.moj.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=38&CtNode=3&mp=1.
buildings. The female cells were located in an independent building separated from the male cells. Workshops and farms scattered around the walls, encircling the three cell wings.

The prison architecture reinforced an omnipresent gaze on the prisoners. It was proposed that with the help of the spatial arrangement and the surveillance techniques, the inmates began to regulate their behaviors according to the norms and the institutions to achieve self-inspection. The central hall not only represented the authority of the colonial power, but also facilitated the state of internalized omniscience. Simply staying at the control center where the three wing buildings converged, the watchman could take control of the three cell blocks at the same time (see Figure 15). In this way, just a few watchmen were able to monitor many prisoners. Moreover, the narrow one-direction peephole on the door maintained an unequal relationship of visibility: the watchman could easily approach the cells without being heard or seen, and immediately saw everything in the cell.

In terms of the panoptic effects on the prisoners, what made Chiayi Prison different from its Western paradigms was that it had a unique structure for total surveillance and easy management, which was the continuous air corridor above the cells (see Figure 16). The corridor was accessed by the entrance of the truss under the wooden roof. The guards would climb into the corridor by the ladder on the wall to monitor the behavior of occupants inside their cells. If any vicious conduct was found, the guard would pour water into the cells to punish the inmates. In doing so, the extent of surveillance and control was extended into the individual space, making it much broader than that in Western modern prisons. Ideally, the solitary confinement in the Western precedents should focus on reforming the inmates to achieve self-inspection. In reality, however, the panopticon surveillance embedded in the Chiayi Prison served as a tool of physical oppression and mental domination.

Chiayi Prison also adopted the system of self-isolation for moral reformation. However, solitary imprisonment was used as a form of psychological punishment. For example, prisoners were held in a compressed cube if they conducted wrong behavior. The space inside the cube was intentionally designed so compressed that the occupant was isolated physically, emotionally, and mentally. This was meant to control and change the inmate’s behavior. The brutal punishment exacerbated one problematic feature of the prison, the total deprivation of
sensation. While the use of solitary confinement was originally planned as a reform based on the notion of penitence, in the end, total isolation can be as brutal as corporal punishment. The use of solitary confinement was seriously criticized by Charles Dickens and regarded as “immeasurably worse than any torture of the body” after his visit to Eastern State Penitentiary.28 By sentencing inmates into solitary confinement, the isolation can cause anguish, provoke serious mental and physical health problems, and work against rehabilitation for inmates.

4. Prison as a power apparatus

The Japanese regime not only invested in infrastructure and enterprises in the colonies of Taiwan and Korea, but it also implemented a policy of cultural assimilation for the ideological construction in the late 1930s.29 The cultural policy was known as the Kōminka Movement (the Nationalization Movement), with the goal of making the Taiwanese people become a true believer in the Japanese emperor. The policy undertook the mission of massive cultural incorporation of the indigenous populations by two components. First, the Kokugo Undō (national language movement) promoted the teaching of the Japanese language and abandoned the use of the Taiwanese Hokkien, their indigenous languages, in the press as well as in their daily life. Second, the Kaiseimei (name changing) program replaced Taiwanese’s Chinese names with Japanese ones. The cultural policy emphasized the creation of a “common East Asian culture.”30 Colonial prisons therefore became an apparatus for assimilating the “uncivilized” through several techniques to fulfill its role, including rituals, education, and labor.

4.1. Rituals

The first technique in the colonial prisons for Nationalization or Japanization was the rituals. As the Japanese colonists initiated the hegemonic cultural policies, the national religion Shinto dominated the prisons. Colonial prisons often set up a “lecture hall” as a holy place equipped with statues of Buddha and
the Emperor of Japan. Rituals thus became a significant aspect of the mission to the Japanization of the inmates. It was through these religious ceremonies and daily rites where the worshippers surrendered to the authority that the Emperor of Japan was deified.

Some of the rituals were required in the inmates’ daily routines. In the control hall where the three wings intersected in Chiayi Prison, for instance, a shrine was set up on the top of the wall with the statue of the Emperor of Japan (see Figure 17). On a daily basis, the prisoners would gather at the central hall to be inspected, and every time they passed through the shrine, they were required to bow and pray to the Emperor statue before they were taken to the workshop or returned to their cells. The lives of the prisoners in the cells were fixed and strictly scheduled.

Prisons also performed solemn rituals on festival occasions. Prisoners got fed with a special quantity of food when sacrifices were made. At the festival ceremonies, chaplains would promote the meaning of Japanese festivals to make the inmates aware of the cultural significance of Japanese rituals. The Emperor of Japan was further symbolized by the regulations that inmates would be given amnesty and allowed to return to civilian life following the marriage or funeral relevant to the emperor. Through the state apparatus combined with the worship of the national Shinto religion, the imperial empire cultivated the colonized body with loyalty to the Emperor of Japan and consolidated the ideology of the Emperor System in its colonies.

4.2. Education

The fundamental approach to carry out the cultural assimilation policy on the colonized inmates lay in offering them opportunities for education. During the war, the imperial gaze shaped the daily life of the inmates and disciplined their minds and bodies through the teaching assemblies with patriotic slogans. The goal of education was not merely to cultivate skills or virtues for

Figure 12. Map of Chiayi before the Japanese urban scheme, 1904. The original urban structure of Chiayi was chaotic and organic. Photocopy by the author from National Taiwan Library.

31 Hsinchu Juvenile Prison Newspaper, 1933.10, p8–12.
32 Lin (2014, 224).
33 Lin (2014, 224).
34 Lin (2014, 225).
the inmates to be able to return to society but to shape their loyalty to the Emperor of Japan. The prison hosted assemblies on important occasions, where the instructors would indoctrinate the meaning of the Japanese national spirits. The title of such assemblies was mostly related to the situation of the Sino-Japanese war and the spirit of Japanese imperialism, such as “Japanese Spirit,” “Consciousness of Japanese People,” “Looking up to the Holy Grace,” “Sacrifice,” “Emphasis on the Concept of State,” “Superiority of Japan,” “National spirit mobilization movement,” etc.

Moreover, the prison administrator would selectively unveil the mystery of the prison through the means of media such as newspapers and radios, and let the public know the prisoners’ loyalty. On the one hand, such propaganda promoted the glories of the empire’s civilization and modernization, and on the other hand, they achieved the effects of mobilization of the indigenous people to wholeheartedly participate in the work for the benefit of the colonial governance. The empire, in this way, created docile bodies both inside and outside the prison and strove to ignite the patriotism of the indigenous people so that they could contribute their labor and property to the Emperor of Japan and the imperial empire-building in the wartime colony.

4.3. Labor

Encouraging the prisoners to engage in service work was regarded as another essential aspect of the rehabilitation of the inmates. The goal of the colonial prison was to help the prisoners gain the motivation, skills, and pleasure of labor and hopefully, to be able to live on their own and readapt to the society when they came out of the prison. As mentioned before, one of the key components of the colonial prisons was the workshop, which was normally attached to the cells to form a closed circulation. To stimulate a positive attitude toward labor, the superintendent asked the inmates to work with dedication because such behaviors would be appreciated by the Buddha. In this way, they inculcated the spirit of hardworking in

35Lin (2014, 225).
36Taiwan Criminal Affairs Monthly, 1937.6, p47. Translated from “皇道精神; 日本国民的自觉; 礼尊圣恩; 牺牲; 国体观念的强调; 日本的优越性; 国民自觉运动。”.
37Lin (2014, 226).
38Lin (2014, 225).
39Taiwan Criminal Affairs Monthly, vol.1 no.7, 1935.7, p45.
40Taiwan Criminal Affairs Monthly, vol.2 no.1, 1931.1, p63.
the inmates’ daily life to shape the prisoners’ habit of labor.

Labor was an important factor in the prisoner’s evaluation by the prison administrator. The prison adopted a reward system to honor good performances. The requirement of prisoner’s labor can be found on the administrative document in Tainan Prison Chiayi Branch (see Figure 18), stating that the prisoners in Chiayi Prison needed to do tasks such as woodworks, wheat growing, and farming. The grid was used to document each inmate’s workload for different tasks. To answer the question of how such tasks were arranged, there was one record from Chiayi Prison of every prisoner’s laboring schedule in August 1943 (see Figure 19). On the schedule, the first row lists a variety of tasks that the prisoners were required to complete, including woodworking, printing, tailing, boot-making, and farming. The first column is divided by day and gender. Each prisoner was assigned different arduous tasks, and they were asked to work to fulfill the required hours every single day.41 The two pieces of the official document show how the prison kept track of the inmates’ devotion to service work, their physical capacities, and their level of diligence.

It is also noteworthy that in some cases, inmates were arranged to participate in the construction of infrastructure and facilities for city development

41Lin (2014, 232).
under colonial rule. The prisons accepted the commission of the private sector or contracted business from the administration. For instance, the monumental brick gate of Chiayi Prison was constructed by its prisoners (see Figure 20). This was also true of many other colonial prisons, including the Taichung Prison and Tainan Prison. In addition, the income of the laborers paid for the urban constructions to make up for the lack of budgetary subsidies in the authority. According to the 1911 Taiwan Law Monthly report,
Figure 18. Labor-related issues in Chiayi Prison. The requirement of prisoner’s labor can be found on this administrative document. Source: Taiwan Governor’s Office Archives. Collection Number: 0001148900.

Figure 19. Tainan Criminal Affairs Office Chiayi Sub-Branch Labor Schedule. On the schedule, the first row lists a variety of tasks that the prisoners were required to complete, including woodworking, printing, tailing, boot-making, and farming. The first column is divided by day and gender. Source: Taiwan Governor’s Office Archives. Collection Number: 00011151008.
the income from penal labor exceeded 130,000 yuan each year, accounting for more than two-thirds of the management fee.\textsuperscript{43} It was considered that using the prisoners’ labor to gain profit for the prison management was to cope with certain financial difficulties during wartime, yet on the other hand, it also demonstrated that the imperial government exploited the prisoners’ labor, time, and incomes to acquire certain economic profit to construct is colony and consolidate its authority.

5. Concluding remarks

The prison architecture throughout the centuries have developed constantly. Western penal reforms such as Howard and Orridge advocated for a humanist prison for the inmates’ moral rehabilitation rather than harsh physical punishment. Since then, a series of experimental prison models emerged including the Panopticon, the Pentonville, and the Eastern State Penitentiary. Modern penitentiaries aimed at providing a secure, health, and reformative environment. Using the archives collected from the libraries, museums, and administrations, this paper has highlighted the crucial relationships between the Western modern penitentiaries and the colonial prisons in East Asia, particularly on the Japanese-built prisons in colonial Taiwan in terms of the architectural forms, spatial arrangements, and penal managements.

The three major colonial prisons in Taiwan were modeled on the Pennsylvania system, reflecting the colonial regime’s aspiration to learn from the Western modernization. It was true of the urban remaking in Taiwan which was changed into Parisian boulevards. Both the city and the prison achieved the panoptic effects on the colonized subjects. While the prisons humanely intended to promote the self-inspection and moral reformation of the prisoners, it has been demonstrated that, just as the ESP, the prison’s treatment of the prisoners, such as omnipresent surveillance, solitude confinement, and sensory deprivation, could lead to negative psychological and physical health effects. Moreover, the colonial prisons functioned as a power apparatus to discipline the colonized otherness. The omnipresent surveillance went beyond the simple physical confinement. By asking the prisoners to participate in the rituals, lectures, and workshops, the prison attempted to brainwash the prisoners to become the true believer in the emperor and to contribute their labor to build the colony. It has been demonstrated that the prison operated as the power apparatus to acquire the docile bodies and minds and to consolidate the colonial authority through a system of political control, cultural hegemony, and physical exploitation.

Disclosure statement

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\textsuperscript{43}Cai (2010, 129).
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