

# **A NEW LOOK AT THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA**

**The annexation of Korea was absolutely necessary**

**The annexation of Korea was not colonialist policy**

**The annexation of Korea requires no apology**

**By Committee Against Government Apologies to Korea**

**Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact ©**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>On the Publication of A New Look at the Annexation of Korea .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Annexation of Korea Was Inevitable.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Timeline: 100 Years After the Annexation of Korea .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1. BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE ANNEXATION .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Pre-annexation Korea as Observed by Western Visitors .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Perceptions of Japan’s Annexation of Korea .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>How the Korean Standard of Living Improved Under Japanese Guidance .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>The Korean Peninsula: Always a Dagger Pointed at Japan’s Side .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>China and Korea in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Western Powers Unleash Exploitative Colonialist Zeal on Asia .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2. THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA WAS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>The Debate over Korea and Saigo Takamori .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Korea Finally Emerges from Isolation.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>The Imo Incident.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>The Gapsin Coup: China Once Again Blocks Korean Modernization Attempts.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Why Fukuzawa Yukichi Wanted Japan To Disassociate Itself from Asia .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Why the Japan-Led Korean Modernization Program Failed .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>The Real Enemies of Korean Independence and Modernization: The Daewongun and Queen Min.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>The First Sino-Japanese War: Japanese Blood Is Shed for Korean Independence .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Who Really Killed Queen Min? .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3. THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA WAS NOT COLONIALIST POLICY .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Russia Attempts To Hijack Japanese Achievements in Korea .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Korea Awakens After 15 Centuries of Subservience.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Victory in Russo-Japanese War Creates a New World Power: Japan .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Megata Tanetaro: Financial Advisor Who Rescued Korea from the Brink of Bankruptcy .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Why Japan Took Charge of Korean Diplomatic Affairs .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Duplicitous Gojong Betrays Japan: The Hague Secret Envoy Affairs.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Lee Wan-Yong: Hero or Traitor? Korea's Last Prime Minister and the Japan-Korean Treaty of 1907.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>How the Assassination of Ito Hirobumi by Terrorist An Jung-Geun Affected Korea.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Ijinhoe: Annexation Advocate.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>The Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty (Concluded on August 22, 1910) .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Korean “Illegitimate Annexation” Argument Soundly Defeated at International Conference .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Military Government of Terauchi Masatake, First Governor General: With an Eye Toward the Modernization of Korea .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Japanese Tax Revenue (¥16 Trillion!) Finances Korean Railroad Construction .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Japan Did Not Seize Korean Farmland .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Suppression of the March 1 Movement Was Essential.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>4. NO APOLOGY REQUIRED FOR THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Primary Agents of Strife in Asia: American Missionaries and the Comintern .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Third Governor-General Saito’s Cultural Rule: Seeking Reconciliation with Korea .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Japanese Protect Koreans During the Turmoil Accompanying a Natural Disaster .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Japanese Resurrect Korean Alphabet and Compile a Korean Grammar .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>The Dawn of Modern Higher Education in Korea: The Founding of Keijo Imperial University .....</b>	<b>83</b>

<b>The Drafter of South Korea’s Constitution Was a Leader of the Student Volunteer Soldier Movement.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Fuchizawa Yoshie: The Japanese Woman Who Brought Modern Women’s Education to Korea .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige’s Rural Development Program and the Japanese Who Supported It.....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Financial Cooperatives, Korean Farmers’ Lifeline, Sponsor Straw-Weaving Event .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Shigematsu Masanao: Guiding Spirit for Korean Farming Villages .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Nameless Fishing Village Transformed into Bustling Modern Industrial City .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>The Japanese Build the World’s Second-Largest Dam in Korea; Noguchi Shitago’s Philanthropy.....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Name-Change Policy Implemented in Response to the Wishes of the Korean People ..</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Japan Did Not Deprive the Koreans of Their Language.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Overwhelming Response To Special Volunteer System.....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>5. KOREA REPAYS JAPANESE KINDNESS WITH EVIL.....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Korea Commandeers Takeshima; Occupied Japan Powerless To Retaliate .....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Postwar Turmoil, the Third Nationals Problem, and the “Korean Occupation Forces” .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Don’t Blame Japan for the Division of Korea .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Korean Woman Writes Japanese-Style Poems About Korean War.....</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>The Japan-Korea Treaty of 1965 and the Concomitant Financial Burden on Japan.....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>It’s the Japanese Who Were Robbed .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Military Prostitutes: How Long Will the Koreans Go on Fooling Themselves? .....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Lies of Self-Proclaimed Korean Slave Laborer Exposed .....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Koreans Violate Basic Principle of Civilization: The Right to Non-Retroactivity of Law .....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>6. THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA: A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR JAPAN.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Crown Princess Yi Bangja Takes Handicapped Korean Children Under Her Wing .....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Women’s Lives and Cities Transformed During Annexation Period.....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Japan Earns Accolades from Lytton Commission for Government of Korea .....</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>Wilson’s Self-Determination Principle Engenders Stagnation in Philippines.....</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Korea Under Japanese Rule as Observed by Foreigners .....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Korea Under Japanese Rule as Observed by Koreans .....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Foreigners’ Observations About Japanese Rule and Subsequent Annexation of Korea .....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>7. EDITOR’S POSTSCRIPT .....</b>	<b>140</b>

## **On the Publication of A New Look at the Annexation of Korea**

August 29, 2010 marks the centenary of Japan's annexation of Korea.

The approach of this anniversary has prompted the South Koreans, under the pretext of correcting the historical record, to proclaim that Japan's annexation of Korea was in violation of international law. The Japanese government and media, as well as conservative organizations, have opted not to respond to this accusation. They have ignored the Korean posturing, as if it had no connection to them. This is not a new phenomenon. During the 65 years since World War II ended, our government and our compatriots have backed away every time the "Korean problem" reared its ugly head, refusing to discuss or debate it. Every time Diet representatives or scholars manage to summon up the courage to speak out on the legitimacy of Japan's actions, they are rewarded with a barrage of criticism from leftist groups and the media. At least one minister of state has been forced to resign. Such attacks, particularly those launched by the media, have succeeded in rendering the Japanese public mute.

The unlawful occupation of Takeshima (the Liancourt Rocks) and the abductions perpetrated by North Korean agents are unequivocal infringements of Japanese sovereignty. Nevertheless, the stance adopted by the Japanese government and media has been consistently irresolute, and the public reaction, inexplicably lethargic.

Why has Japan become such a cowardly nation?

The main reason is that during the postwar years, we have disavowed the very aspects of our history of which we should be proud.

We have chosen to deny and trivialize historical fact by adopting a negative view of the annexation of Korea. Perceiving it as encroachment into the Korean peninsula and the colonialization of Korea, we have concluded that the annexation is best forgotten, like any other shameful misdeed. The Koreans' distortion of historical fact is unforgivable, and injurious to our national interests. But we are to blame for fooling ourselves — we failed to counter their accusations out of a desire to avoid trouble. Some conservative commentators offer excuses like the following: "I refrain from challenging the Korean claims out of compassion; after all, their nation was stolen from them." However, we must be mindful that such sentiments are wasted on the Koreans, who have no intention of even attempting to appreciate them; our compassion is misplaced, hypocritical, and futile.

China ceded Taiwan, then completely undeveloped, to Japan after the First Sino-Japanese War. Japan's attempts at integration (not colonization, which was what the Western powers were doing) resulted in remarkably rapid modernization. The same can be said of Korea, bled dry by China, after 1,500 years of tributary status. When it was annexed by Japan, by the same process (integration) that took place in Taiwan, Korea too surprised the world by modernizing at an astounding speed. The Japanese used the same methods to build an industrial state

(Manzhouguo) in the wilderness that was Manchuria, in the short space of 15 years. There five ethnic groups coexisted in harmony. The Japanese won high praise from all five groups, who had entrusted them with the rule of Manzhouguo, for good government. Even the Western powers recognized Japan as the leader of Asia, both in name and in fact.

The hopes of the residents of Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria — that the good fortune that had befallen them would endure forever — ran very high. That those hopes were extinguished in the space of a moment with Japan's defeat may explain their subsequent resentment toward Japan. However, efforts toward modernization — the legacy of the Japanese integration process — bore fruit both in Taiwan and Korea. Japan's Manchurian legacy contributed mightily to the development of the People's Republic of China. Therefore, we have every reason to feel proud, and absolutely no reason to feel shameful, about the contributions our forefathers made in Asia. Furthermore, we must remind ourselves, again and often, that there is absolutely no need for us to apologize.

Any further masochistic behavior, indifference, or insincerity regarding these matters will only serve to destroy Japan and bring suffering upon our descendants.

We must act now to correct the mistakes of the 65-year-long postwar era, during which Japan's resplendent history — a source of unparalleled pride marred only by one defeat — was summarily discarded. Time is of the essence: we must call upon historical fact to help us revive Japanese pride.

Committee Against Government Apologies to Korea  
July 30, 2010

## **The Annexation of Korea Was Inevitable**

Sugimoto Mikio

After the Meiji Renovation in 1868, there were minor disputes between Japan and Korea. Japan wanted Korea to open its doors to trade. Korea continued to insist that all commerce with Japan be conducted through the Tsushima domain (located midway between Japan and Korea). In 1874 the Japanese attempted to change that situation, taking advantage of the transfer of power in Korea from Yi Ha-eung, the regent (Daewongun) to Queen Min (later known as Empress Myeongseong). The result was the Ganghwa Island Incident, in which shots were exchanged between Japanese sailors and Koreans. In 1876, after prolonged negotiations, the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity (Treaty of Ganghwa) was concluded; at long last, normal relations were established between the two states. Before long, Korea had forged commercial and diplomatic relations with the US, England and Germany as well.

We shall describe the annexation process in the sections that follow. As history marched on, the antagonism between Queen Min, whose wickedness was legendary, and the Daewongun became intertwined with the antagonism between Japan and China, and antagonism between radicals and moderates in Korea. Only a few laws had been enacted, and the Korean government did not enforce them. Korea was incredibly backward then; the punishments meted out there were of a cruelty unimaginable in Japan. For instance, the body of assassinated reformist leader Kim Ok-gyun was dismembered and displayed in public.

In 1882 the Imo Incident erupted, a battle between an elite, modern military unit trained by the Japanese and traditional military units. It would have been surprising if there had *not* been a mutiny, since men in the traditional military units had not been paid for 13 months. They were finally provided with rice rations, but less than promised. To make matters worse, the rice was mixed with sand or otherwise adulterated. Queen Min managed somehow to escape to the mountains; she appealed to China for help.

In response to her request, Chinese soldiers abducted the Daewongun and took him to China, where he was held captive for three years. His absence meant a steep decline in Japanese influence. Korea was, once again, in China's thrall.

The Donghak Rebellion, which triggered the First Sino-Japanese War, was also orchestrated by the Daewongun, working behind the scenes. Also participating in the rebellion was Ten'yukyo, a group of Japanese political activists led by Takeda Hanshi, a Buddhist priest. One of its members was Uchida Ryohei, who, together with Donghak Party official Yi Yong-gu, founded Iljinhoe, a pro-Japan organization. Iljinhoe became the driving force behind the annexation of Korea.

When Japan defeated China in the First Sino-Japanese War, Queen Min began making overtures to Russia. She revised many of the laws, regulations and imperial ordinances

instituted by the Japanese. She also packed her Cabinet with pro-Russian and pro-American ministers. A power struggle ensued, pitting Japan against a joint Russian-American effort to gain ascendancy in Korea.

One outcome of that struggle was the plot to assassinate the queen, engineered by a group of Japanese and Korean soldiers. The plot was a success, but in its aftermath Karl Ivanovich Weber, a Russian diplomat stationed in Korea, gained the upper hand. He was able to approach and comfort the bereaved King Gojong through the good offices of the latter's concubines and ladies-in-waiting. Having convinced the king that the Daewongun and the Japanese were going to usurp his throne, Weber ordered sailors on a battleship anchored at Incheon to abduct Gojong and take him to the Russian Legation, where he was held for a year. The king was forced to conduct the affairs of state from the legation; during that time he granted a variety of rights and interests to Russia.

Furthermore, two months prior to the king's abduction the Chunsaengmun Incident had broken out. It was an attempt on the part of Pro-Russian and pro-American Koreans to usurp the throne, but their efforts were thwarted.

Japanese intervention in 1897 put an end to this abnormal state of affairs. If the Japanese had not taken action, Korea would, without question, have become a Russian colony.

When King Gojong returned to the royal palace, he declared Korea an empire, and himself its emperor. At that time, the Treaty of Protection was concluded between Japan and Korea, and Japan sent diplomatic and financial advisers to Korea.

Russia was making encroachments into the Far East and, via the Tripartite Intervention, seeking concessions from China in Lushun (Port Arthur), Guangdong and other areas. From Korea, the Russians demanded concessions in Masan, a city near Busan (Pusan) and in Ryongchonpo at the Yalu River. A Russian foothold in Masan would have been a formidable threat to the Japanese, who countered the Russian threat by borrowing England's might via the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, concluded in 1902.

The Russo-Japanese War began in 1904. One by one, King Gojong's clandestine diplomatic machinations were exposed. After Japan emerged victorious from the war in 1905, the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty was concluded, which provided for the establishment of the office of Resident-General. Korea was now a Japanese protectorate.

Prior to the Hague Peace Conference in 1907, King Gojong again engaged in diplomatic maneuvering (for instance, he sent an emissary to the Hague to lodge a protest against Japanese actions in Korea) without consulting the Korean government. This behavior angered both the Japanese and Korean governments. At a Cabinet meeting, the Korean government decided to hold the king responsible, and forced him to abdicate. In July, Japan and Korea signed the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty.

However, the annexation created a great deal of resentment among the Korean people. Irregular military organizations called Righteous Armies sprang up to resist the Japanese;

bitter battles ensued. In 1909 Ito Hirobumi, the most distinguished statesman of the Meiji era, was assassinated by An Jung-geun, an independence activist.

In 1910, after the Righteous Armies uprisings were quelled, for the most part, through the efforts of Gen. Akashi Motojiro, the annexation went into effect. Terauchi Masatake, then governor-general of Korea, running what was essentially a military government, began implementing reform policies. He made so many radical changes, and ruled with such an iron hand, that he was at least an indirect cause of anti-Japanese demonstrations referred to as the March 1 Incident in 1919.

Looking back at these events, we see that Japan's good will and the dedication of government administrators were, time and time again, betrayed by Queen Min and King Gojong. That is why was absolutely necessary – the survival of the Korean people depended upon it.

Saito Makoto, the third governor-general of Korea, shouldered the responsibility of resolving the problems that had engendered the March 1 Movement. He held that position from 1919 to 1931, except for a two-year period (1927-29) during which he was replaced by Yamanashi Hanzo. Saito succeeded in restoring and preserving public order, establishing local administrative systems, expanding and improving education, and developing industry. He also drafted and implemented programs designed to improve transportation and public health.

The main force behind the Righteous Armies uprisings and the March 1 Movement was Cheondogyo (religion of the heavenly way), which drew from elements of both the Donghak Movement and Christianity. Saito released all activists after they had served their prison sentences, none of them longer than three years. He also conducted in-depth discussions with American missionaries, striving to earn their trust by making, to the extent possible, improvements they had suggested. One notable gesture was Saito's attempt to make peace with Cheondogyo leader Choe Rin by sending him to Ireland to observe the independence movement raging there at the time.

Today Saito's government is characterized as "cultural rule," as compared with Terauchi's "rule by military force." He raised educational standards in Korea, establishing Keijo (Gyeongseong) Imperial University (present-day Seoul National University), and significantly expanding the elementary school system.

The reign of the next governor-general, Ugaki Kazushige, was marked by the bolstering of infrastructure. Ugaki stimulated the mining and manufacturing industries by applying strategies that accomplished what was later referred to as the Korean Industrial Revolution. He also oversaw the development of rural areas.

In a speech delivered in 1931 at the Bank of Tokyo Club, Ugaki said, "When World War I broke out, partitioned Poland appeared to have been integrated into Germany and Russia. But as the war dragged on and the situation became untenable, the Poles betrayed both nations. Though the Poles seemed to be aligned with Germany and Russia, spiritually and materially, they were not. (...) To prevent something like this happening to Japan, we must transfer some Japanese jobs to Koreans, and create more jobs for them by promoting industrial development.



(...) There are plenty of fields that are ripe for such development. What we lack is wisdom and funds. I appeal to those of you here tonight for your cooperation in this effort.”

It was Ugaki’s ideas that proved to be the driving force behind the evolution of present-day South Korea. We know that, according to communist teachings, colonies are exploited by the nations that rule them. But according to modern economic theory, colonies and the nations that rule them are partners in the battle to survive competition with other nations. Unlike the Western colonizers, the Japanese adopted the latter theory, making huge investments in education and industrial development.

The result was that when the Special Volunteer System was initiated in 1938, eight times as many Korean men volunteered as were accepted (in 1943, 57 times as many as accepted). Many Koreans volunteered for the *tokkotai*, or suicide squads, and are enshrined at Yasukuni Jinja. Japan and Korea truly presented a united front in World War II.

After the war, not one of the many nations colonized by the Western powers even approached the degree of advancement achieved by Korea and Taiwan. Such progress is the greatest accomplishment of the annexation of Korea, and the greatest source of pride for the Japanese.

Not long ago NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) aired a program that described national self-determination (one of Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points) as an unassailable doctrine. But when we look for the cause of the current stagnation in the Philippines, we discover that the US opted to give the Filipinos the right of self-determination. The Americans granted autonomy to the Philippines, and drastically reduced their investments in the islands.

The Philippines came under American control in 1898, three years after Taiwan was ceded to Japan and 12 years before Korea became a Japanese protectorate. Prior to that, the Philippines had been ruled by Spain. There had been an infusion of Western culture, and Filipinos were certainly not less civilized than the inhabitants of Korea or Taiwan.

When the Americans first took over the Philippines, education was their first priority. The University of the Philippines was founded in 1908, prior to the annexation of Korea. In 1886, 70% of the 2,000 students at the University of Santo Tomas, established during Spanish rule, were Filipinos.

In 1913, Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson was elected president of the US. In keeping with his belief in national self-determination, Wilson made a policy shift, affording the Philippines a great deal of autonomy. At that point, American capital ceased flowing into the Philippines, causing its economy to slump and its educational standards to plummet. That situation persists even today.

Self-determination was a policy designed to write off the Philippines. However, by integrating Taiwan and Korea, by making them part of Japan, the Japanese were attempting to achieve coexistence and coprosperity. The fruits of Japan’s efforts are unmistakably visible today.

Today in Korea one hears a great deal of criticism about forced labor and forced prostitution during World War II. But such criticism is inspired by tainted information — distorted or

invented historical fact. Incredibly, former President Roh Moo-hyun championed a law intended to punish Japanese collaborators retroactively. The law was enacted, and in 2005, Roh seized the assets of the descendants of Lee Wan-yong because he signed the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, an event that took place 100 years ago! It is burdensome to have a neighbor with such a different set of values. A nation that refuses to look squarely at historical fact has no future.

## Timeline: 100 Years After the Annexation of Korea

April 13, 2010

Year	Event	Remarks
1868	Meiji Renovation (establishment of Meiji government)	
1871	Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty; abolition of <i>han</i> (domains) and establishment of the prefecture system	Signed to facilitate establishment of relations with Korea (China had sovereignty over Korea)
1875	Treaty of Saint Petersburg	Defines border between Japan and Russia; Karafuto (southern Sakhalin) exchanged for Kuril Islands
1876	Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity (Treaty of Ganghwa)	Ends isolation of Joseon-dynasty Korea
1879	Ryukyu <i>han</i> renamed Okinawa Prefecture; Ryukyu monarchy abolished	Formerly a tributary state of both Japan and China, the Ryukyus become Japanese territory
1882	Imo Incident (Imo Mutiny)	Massive soldiers' mutiny provoked by the Daewongun; Japanese legation attacked
1884	Gapsin Coup	Attempted coup led by Kim Ok-gyun and other reformers; suppressed by Chinese intervention requested by Queen Min
1886	Burma made part of British Raj and administered as a province of India	
1887	Vietnam invaded and colonized by France	
1887	Cambodia colonized by France and incorporated into French Indochina	
1889	Constitution of the Empire of Japan enacted	
1894	First Sino-Japanese War breaks out; ends in March 1895	

Year	Event	Remarks
1894	Donghak Peasant Revolution	Uprising of peasants dissatisfied with Korean politics; triggers First Sino-Japanese War
1895	Treaty of Shimonoseki	China agrees to cede Taiwan, grant independence to Korea, and pay reparations to Japan
1895	Taiwan comes under Japanese rule	
1895	Eulmi Incident	Assassination of Queen Min, wife of 26 <sup>th</sup> king of Joseon Dynasty
1896	Gojong takes up residence at Russian Legation	26 <sup>th</sup> Joseon King Gojong reigns from Russian Legation
1897	Korean Empire founded	
1897	Germany acquires Jiaozhou Bay (Shandong) concession	
1898	France acquires Guangzhou Bay (Guangdong) concession	
1898	Russia acquires Guandong (Manchuria) concession	
1900	Boxer Rebellion	06/1900 – 09/1901
1901	US invades and captures the Philippines; the islands become an American colony	
1902	Anglo-Japanese Alliance concluded	Terminated on 08/17/1923
1904	Russo-Japanese War	02/10/1904 - 09/05/1905
1904	Japan-Korea Convention concluded	Megata Tanetaro appointed consultant to Korean Finance Dept.; D.W. Stevens of Washington appointed consultant to Korean Foreign Office
1904	Indonesia colonized by the Netherlands	Renamed Netherlands East Indies
1905	Treaty of Portsmouth concluded	Japanese control over Korea formally recognized
1905	Second Japan-Korea Convention concluded	Known in Korea as the Eulsa Treaty
1905	Ito Hirobumi, first Resident-General of Korea, installed	
1905	France absorbs Laos into French Indochina	

Year	Event	Remarks
1907	King Gojong, hoping to restore Korean sovereignty, sends secret emissary to the Hague Convention; Gojong forced to abdicate	
1907	Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty concluded	Japan gains full control of internal government of Korea
1909	Great Britain colonizes Malay peninsula	
1909	Ito Hirobumi assassinated at Harbin Railway Station by An Jung-geun	
1910	Japan annexes Korea	
1910	Bhutan becomes British protectorate	
1912	Emperor Meiji dies	
1919	March 1 Incident (pro-independence demonstrations)	
1945	Japan defeated in World War II; new, independent government (South Korea) established on 08/13/1948 after three years of US military rule.	

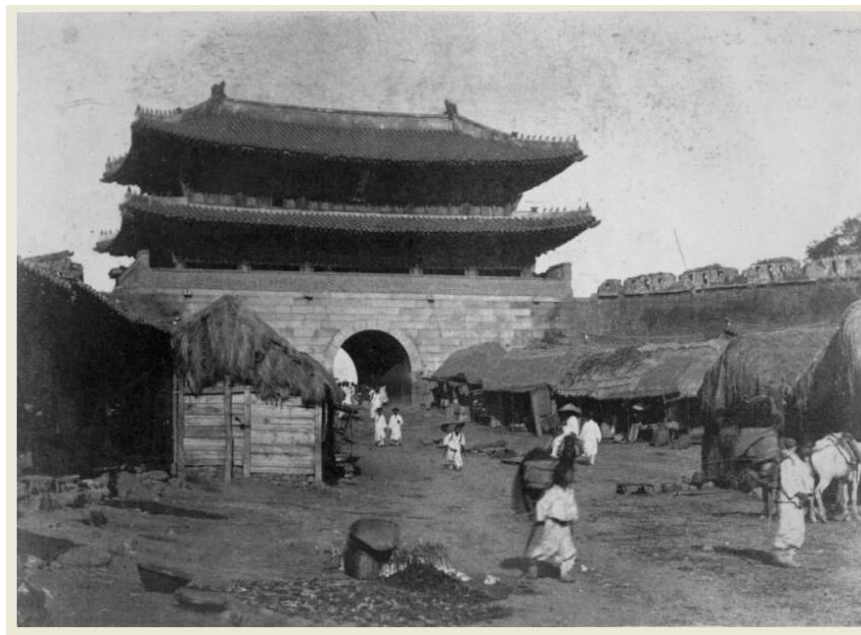
## 1. BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE ANNEXATION

### Pre-annexation Korea as Observed by Western Visitors

Isabella Bird, British writer (*Korea and Her Neighbours*)<sup>1</sup>

I thought [Seoul] the foulest city on earth till I saw Peking, and its smells the most odious, till I encountered those of Shao-Shing.<sup>2</sup> For a great city and a capital its meanness is indescribable.<sup>3</sup>

Yet [Seoul] has no objects of art ... no public gardens, no displays ... and no theatres. It lacks every charm possessed by other cities. Antique, it has no ruins ... no literature, and lastly an indifference to religion without a parallel has left it without temples ...<sup>4</sup>



---

<sup>1</sup> Isabella Bird, *Korea and Her Neighbours: A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position of the Country* (Rutland, Vermont: C.E. Tuttle, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> Shaoxing

<sup>3</sup> Bird, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

**Charles Dallet, French Catholic missionary (“Introduction to Korea”)<sup>5</sup>**

There is nothing national about scholarship in Korea. The books that one reads are Chinese books; the language one studies is not Korean, but Chinese. The history one studies is not the history of Korea, but that of China. The philosophical systems that attract followers are Chinese.<sup>6</sup>

Diplomas for the imperial examinations are awarded not to the most knowledgeable or capable candidates, but to those who have the most wealth or the most powerful protectors.<sup>7</sup>

Koreans have demonstrated virtually no progress in scientific disciplines, but their knowledge of matters industrial is even less advanced. In Korea, there has been no progress whatsoever in the practical arts for centuries.<sup>8</sup>



---

<sup>5</sup> Charles Dallet, *Histoire de l'église de Corée, précédée d'une introduction sur l'histoire, les institutions, la langue, les moeurs et coutumes coréennes* (Paris: V. Palmé, 1874), based almost entirely on the writings of Marie Nicolas Antoine Daveluy.

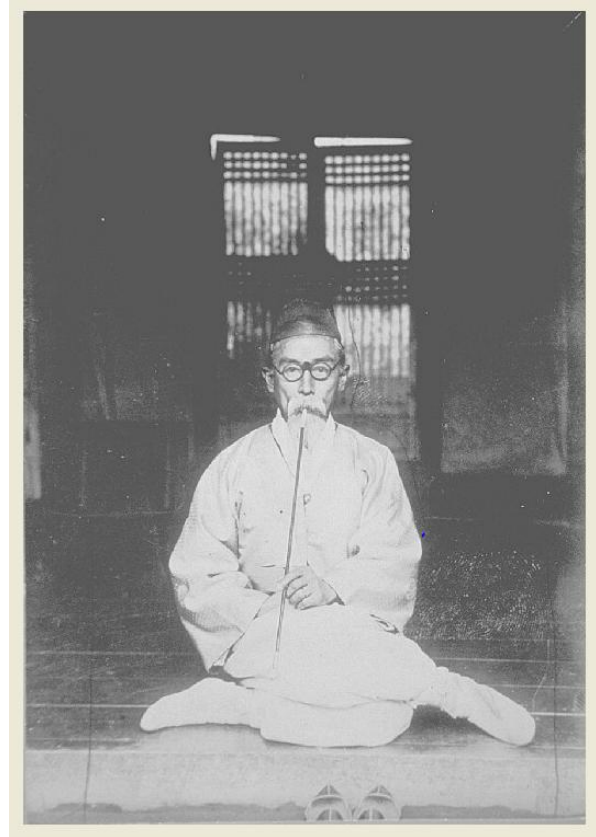
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. lxxi.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. lxxiv.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. clxxxii.

## Charles Dallet

The status of Korean women is shockingly wretched and humble. A Korean woman is not a companion of her husband. She is his slave ... an instrument of pleasure or of labor.<sup>9</sup>



## Bishop Marie Nicolas Antoine Daveluy (whose writings form the basis for Dallet's book)

Korean nobles comport themselves like masters or tyrants. (...) They never return what they have borrowed. When they purchase land or houses from common people, they seldom pay for them, and there is no official capable of halting such thievery.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. cxvi.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. cii-ciii.



## **Perceptions of Japan's Annexation of Korea**

**Do any of the following statements match your perception?**

### **Japanese perceptions of the annexation of Korea**

1. It was an encroachment on Korean territory, similar to Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasions in 1592 and 1594.
2. It was the colonialization of Korea, following the colonialization of Taiwan. Japan, the upstart empire, was emulating the Western powers.
3. The First Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War were wars of aggression against other Asian nations, like the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Greater East Asia War that followed.
4. Japan must be denounced as an amoral nation for having behaved so badly to Korea, to which it owed a huge cultural debt.
5. It is the height of hubris for the Japanese to state that their actions benefited the Koreans, who were robbed of their very nation.
6. Japan inflicted the shame it experienced when Perry's black ships forced it to open its doors on Korea, using military might to establish commercial and diplomatic relations with Korea.
7. The Japanese assassinated the Korean queen, used military force to annex Korea, and killed Koreans involved in the March 1 Movement.
8. Japan made huge investments in Korea to exploit its new colony.
9. The Japanese abducted Koreans and forced them to work under the worst possible conditions, treating them like slaves; they also forced Korean women to serve as military prostitutes.

### **North and South Korean perceptions of the annexation of Korea**

1. The Japanese used military force to annex Korea; conquest was their true goal. The annexation violated international law.
2. Japanese inroads into Korea destroyed independent Korean efforts toward modernization before they could bear fruit.

3. Neither the First Sino-Japanese War nor the Russo-Japanese War had any connection with Korea; both were Japanese wars of aggression in Asia.
4. Japan robbed Korea of everything: its ruler, its sovereignty, its citizens' lives, land, resources, language and names (the seven deprivations); Japan was a villainous, nefarious nation.
5. For Japan, the modernization of Korea was just one facet of a colonialization policy; its intent was efficient exploitation.
6. The Japanese, considered barbarians within the Chinese sphere of influence, cannot be forgiven for taking control of Korea, which was part of the civilized world – a little China.
7. The Japanese abducted Koreans and enslaved them; they transported Korean women to war zones and forced them to serve as military prostitutes.
8. Until we go to war with the Japanese and defeat them, our hatred for them will not disappear.

**The examples listed above are perceptions held by people who dislike the Japanese. For the facts, see the next section.**

## How the Korean Standard of Living Improved Under Japanese Guidance

### Because of 36 years of Japanese imperial control:

- The population of the Korean peninsula doubled
- Average life expectancy (24 years) increased by 30 years or more
- Slaves (30% of the population) were freed
- Child prostitution and the buying and selling of children were abolished
- Limits were placed on patriarchal power
- Korean women, previously relegated to the status of livestock, were given names
- Weights and measures were standardized
- The *Hangul* Korean alphabet was revived; a standard Korean language was established
- A large number of textbooks and other educational materials for Korean language education were produced or imported
- More than 5,200 elementary schools were established
- More than 1,000 teachers' colleges and high schools were established
- Nearly three million (2,390,000) Koreans enrolled in schools; the literacy rate rose from 4% to 61%
- Universities and hospitals were established
- Shamanistic medicine was prohibited
- Water-supply and sewer systems were built
- Open sewers were eliminated
- Japanese were subject to conscription, many of them dying in war zones, while Koreans were drafted for only one year just before the war ended, and required only to serve as laborers in Japan proper
- When Korean soldiers who enlisted died in action, they were enshrined as heroes just as the Japanese were
- Korea's railways, which covered only 100 kilometers prior to annexation, were extended to 6,000 kilometers
- Many ports were opened; electricity became available throughout the peninsula
- Companies were founded; the barter system was replaced by a currency economy
- Residences of two stories or more were built
- Koreans were encouraged to bathe
- Six hundred million trees were transplanted to bald mountains; reservoirs were built
- Half of Korea's reservoirs were built by the Japanese
- Roads, rivers and bridges were improved
- Farmland doubled in area
- Crop yield increased by a factor of 3 when Koreans were taught modern agricultural techniques
- Korean women learned about modesty, and began to cover their breasts
- Before the Koreans knew it, their nation had modernized

## The Korean Peninsula: Always a Dagger Pointed at Japan's Side



**Battle of Hakusukinoe**



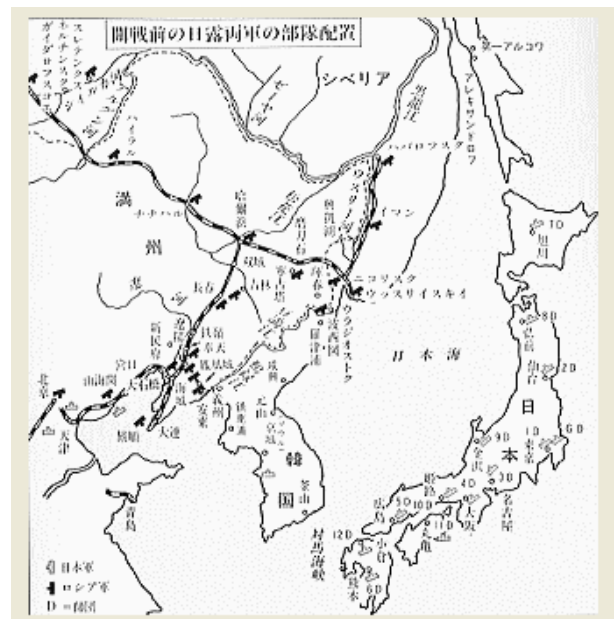
**Mongol invasion of Japan**



**First Sino-Japanese War**



**Russo-Japanese War**



**Map of Russo-Japanese War**

Are you familiar with the argument that Korea has always been a dagger pointed at Japan's side? In geopolitical terms, it certainly has. Japan's worries began in ancient times, with the fear of invasion by Tang dynasty troops after Japan (and Baekje<sup>11</sup>) were defeated in the Battle of Hakusukinoe (663). Then there were two Mongol incursions (1274 and 1281) during the Middle Ages. Modern times brought the fateful wars with China (1894-95) and Russia (1904-05). Even today the threat of a military outburst from North Korea is a cause of anxiety.

<sup>11</sup> One of the Three Kingdoms of Korea until 660; the other two were Goguryeo and Silla.

After Japan opened its doors to the rest of the world, the Western powers surged forward with colonialist ambitions. At that time the only completely sovereign nations governed by people of the yellow race were Japan, Turkey, Siam (Thailand) and Ethiopia. That was the age of imperialism, when the use of military and economic might to destroy other nations' civilizations and colonize them seemed just as natural as breathing.

Japan had exactly two options when strong-armed into emerging from 260 years of isolation: become a colony of a nation ruled by the white race, or reinvent itself as the first yellow empire. Japan chose the latter.

The first step taken in that direction was the Meiji renovation, accomplished so rapidly that no Western power ever had the opportunity to invade Japan. The resulting Meiji government chose "Enrich the nation, strengthen the military" as its slogan, and transformed Japan very rapidly from a feudal agrarian society into a modern industrial nation. Japan adopted international law as practiced by the Western powers, and concluded trade agreements, however unequal, with those powers. The next challenge Japan faced was its closest neighbor, Korea, which seemed like a dagger pointed in its direction.

Japan's concerns focused on Korea more than on the Western powers, since the latter were distant from the Far East. If China or Russia were to gain control of Korea, Japan's security would be threatened. As a tributary state of China, Korea was in no position to maintain stability on the Korean peninsula. Even while Japan was closed off from the rest of the world, the Japanese engaged in trade with China and Korea. Therefore, they were conversant with the situations in both countries. But the aggressively expansionist policy of Russia, a new empire, brought fear to the hearts of the Japanese throughout the greater part of the Edo period (1603-1868).

Symbolic of the situation was the Tsushima Incident, which broke out in 1861. Seeking a winter anchorage, the Russians sent a ship southward and attempted to claim Tsushima (located midway between Japan and Korea) for Russia. For a full six months, they refused to listen to Japanese protests, and were convinced to leave only when British warships arrived on the scene.

Once the Japanese learned that might makes right, they sought to ensure the security of Japan by rushing headlong into two fateful wars – one with China and one with Russia.

## China and Korea in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The decline of the Qing dynasty coincided with the advent of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A spate of major setbacks began in 1840, when the Chinese were forced to cede Hong Kong after losing the First Opium War, and to accept extraterritoriality. They also lost tariff autonomy, and were forced to grant most-favored-nation status to several of the Western powers.

Anglo-French forces occupied Beijing during the Second Opium War. With Russian diplomat Nikolai Ignatiev acting as mediator, the Convention of Peking was concluded between Britain and France, and the Qing emperor's brother, Prince Gong. According to the terms of the Convention, the port of Tianjin was opened to foreign vessels, the Kowloon peninsula was ceded to Great Britain, and Chinese were permitted to travel abroad.

### Li Hongzhang, Superintendent of Trade for the Northern Ports



The Russian mediator reaped rewards for his country as well. The Treaty of Aigun (signed in 1858) ceded Outer Manchuria (present-day Primorsky Krai) to Russia. There the Russians built the military port of Vladivostok, where they stationed their Pacific Fleet. This expansionist move was one of the causes of the Russo-Japanese War.

Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Japan in 1853. In 1858 Japan signed treaties of amity and commerce with the US, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and Russia.

Korea had also been closed, but by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, French missionaries were infiltrating the country and proselytizing. The Daewongun at first tolerated their presence. However, demands from

Confucianists to expel them and concerns about Chinese disapproval convinced him to change his policy. The Daewongun had nine missionaries and several thousands of their converts executed. The French reaction was to send nine warships to Korea in 1866, but the Korean military managed to rise to the occasion and drove them away.

Six months earlier, the *General Sherman*, an armed merchant steamer, had sailed up the Taedong River and invaded Yanggak Island, near Pyongyang, seeking trade with Korea. The local officials there intended to supply the ship with food, firewood and water, and then order it to depart, as was their custom. But the crew of the American ship abducted Yi Hyun-ik, the Korean emissary. Then the *General Sherman* opened fire on the crowd that had gathered on the bank of the river, killing more than 10 people; it then attempted to depart.

Enraged onlookers attacked the ship, which ran aground after several days of fighting. Under the direction of Pak Gyu-su, governor of Pyongyang, the *General Sherman* was set on fire,

and everyone on board was killed. In retaliation, the Americans dispatched six warships in 1871, which attacked Ganghwa Island, but they too were repelled by Korean troops. Korea was a tributary state of China, which meant that it was obligated to pay tribute to China each year, and to use Chinese era names and the Chinese calendar. In return, the Koreans could ask China to send reinforcements when Korea was attacked by a foreign nation.



**Yeongeun Gate, where Chinese envoys were received**

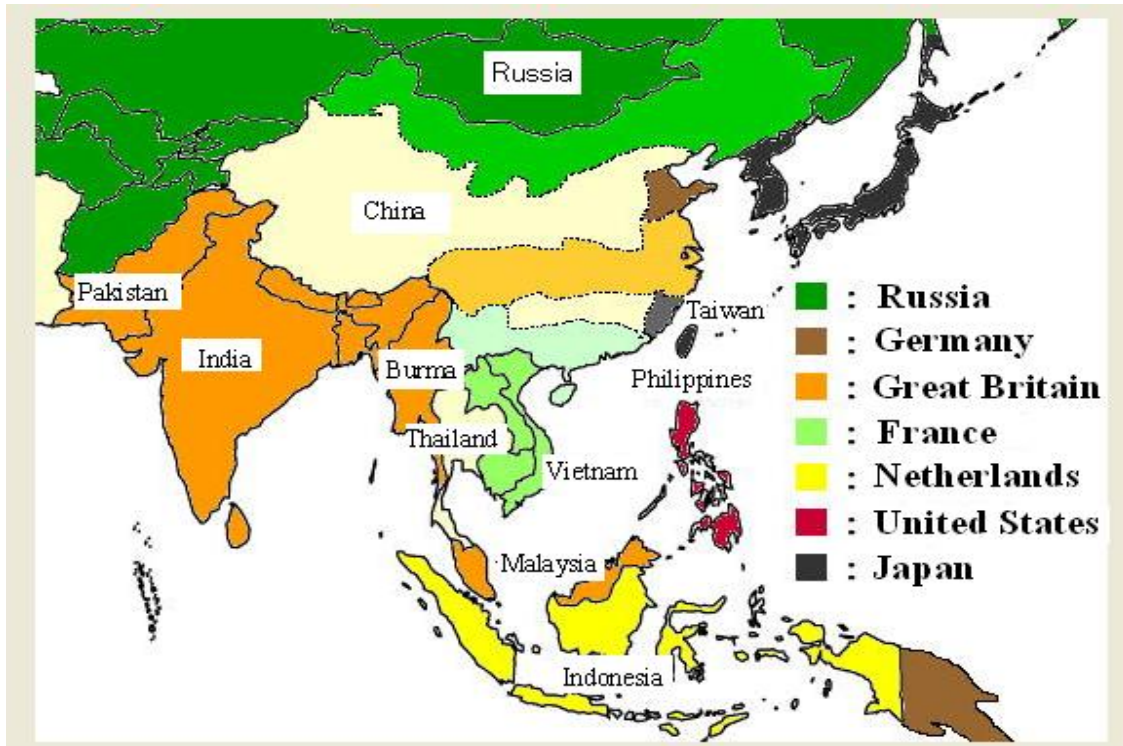
Since the kings of Korea, the subservient state, needed a place to receive emissaries from the Chinese imperial court, they had the Yeongeun Gate built. During the Qing dynasty, Korean kings greeted Chinese emissaries with the full kowtow (the three-kneelings-and-nine-kowtows ritual).

When the Imo Incident erupted in 1882, Queen Min asked Qing China for help, in accordance with the rules governing the tributary relationship. China responded by sending troops. Not long thereafter, more troops, commanded by Yuan Shikai, arrived and stationed themselves in Korea.

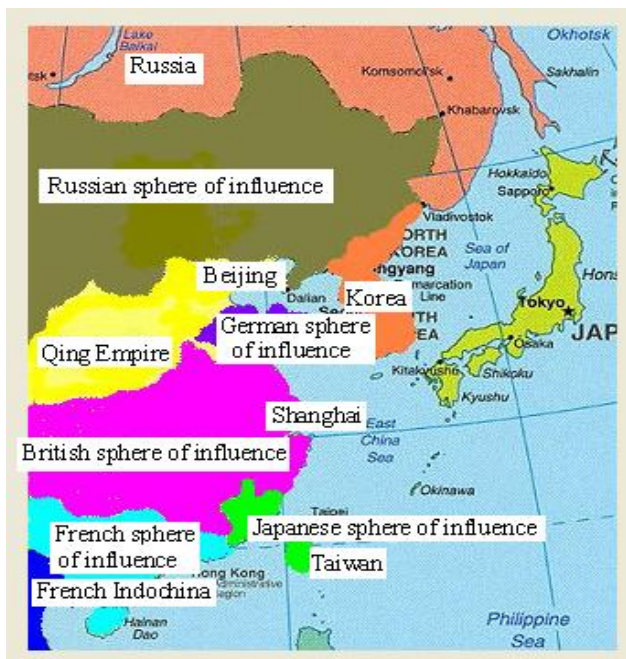
After the First Sino-Japanese War, the Yeongeun Gate was torn down and replaced by the Dongnim (Independence) Gate.



## Western Powers Unleash Exploitative Colonialist Zeal on Asia



Colonies and spheres of influence in Asia in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century



Spheres of influence in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century



COLONIZATION TIMETABLE		
Year	Colony	Colonizing nation
1571	Philippines	Spain
1639	India	Great Britain
1842	Hong Kong, China	Great Britain
1863	Cambodia	France
1886	Burma	Great Britain
1887	Vietnam	France
1893	Laos	France
1897	Jiaozhou Bay, China	Germany
1898	Guangzhou Bay, China	France
1898	Guangdong province	Russia
1898	Philippines	United States
1904	Indonesia	Netherlands
1909	Malay peninsula	Great Britain
1910	Bhutan	British protectorate
1910	Korea	Annexed by Japan

## 2. THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA WAS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

### The Debate over Korea and Saigo Takamori

*Some scholars claim that Saigo Takamori, a man often referred to as the last true samurai, believed that Korea must be conquered, and argued in favor of invading that nation. But is this view accurate?*



*The truth is that Saigo sincerely hoped for peaceful interchange with Korea.*

On three occasions at the beginning of the Meiji era, the Japanese government issued letters requesting diplomatic and commercial relations with the Joseon dynasty. But the Korean government refused to accept them on the grounds that they contained the Chinese characters for *emperor* and *imperial edict*.

In the minds of the Koreans, inhabitants of a vassal state over which China exercised political control, those Chinese characters could only be used by the Qing emperor. From the Korean

perspective, it was rude for a “culturally backward” country like Japan to call its ruler an emperor.

Then in 1871 the Koreans objected to Japan’s calling its diplomatic mission in Busan the “Great Japan Legation.” The Japanese government held a Cabinet meeting, during which deliberations on that problem and on the Koreans’ refusal to accept the letters from the Meiji government took place.

Count Itagaki Taisuke’s proffered his opinion: “We need to send troops to Busan to protect Japanese nationals residing there. I suggest concurrently sending an envoy to negotiate with the Koreans.”

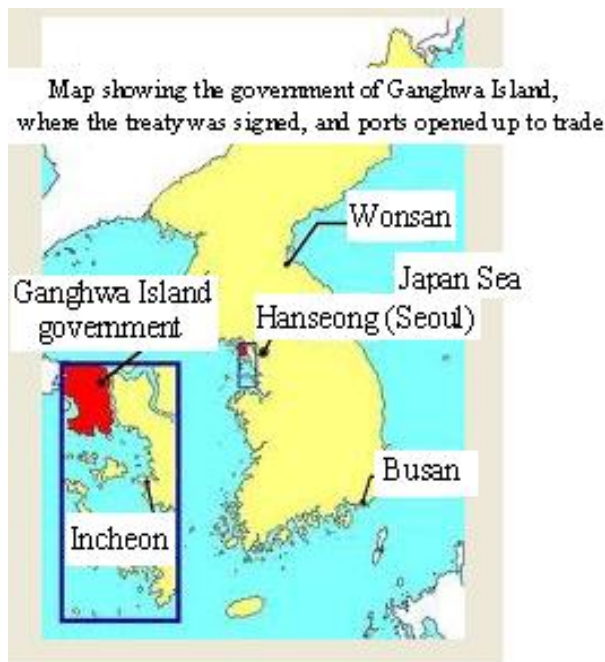
Saigo’s response: “Sending troops there immediately will serve only to anger the Koreans needlessly, thus jeopardizing subsequent negotiations. I will be the envoy, and I will go alone. If I explain our position in good faith, the Korean government will surely understand the importance of good relations between our two countries. If the negotiations are unsuccessful, and the Koreans become hostile, they might even kill me. That would give you a reason to exercise military force.”

It is generally believed that Saigo Takamori was the chief advocate of invading and conquering Korea. But that belief is a myth created to conform to a biased historical perception, i.e., that Japan acted on ambitions of Asian conquest that had been nurtured in the early days of the Meiji era.

## Korea Finally Emerges from Isolation

*A closed Korea was a threat both to itself and Japan.*

*In 1876 Japan finally succeeded in convincing Korea to open its doors to the world, after seven years of negotiation, in accordance with the principles of international law as recognized in the West. Subsequently, the Western powers followed Japan's lead and established diplomatic relations with Korea.*



**Woodblock print depicting the signing of the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity**



**Count Kuroda Kiyotaka, ambassador plenipotentiary**

### ■ The Ganghwa Incident

In September 1875 a Japanese warship, the *Un'yo*, was measuring the western coastline of Korea. When it approached Ganghwa Island, where its crew hoped to obtain drinking water,

the ship was fired upon by a battery on the island. The *Un'yo* fired back and then landed troops, who seized the battery. The next year the Japanese government sent Kuroda Kiyotaka to Korea, as ambassador plenipotentiary, to negotiate with the Koreans on two matters: (1) the Korean government's having refused to accept official letters from the Japanese government and (2) the attack on the *Un'yo*.

#### ■ Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity

The Koreans acknowledged that they had been at fault in both cases. In February 1876 the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity was concluded between the two nations. Article 1 of that treaty contains the following language.

Korea is an independent state possessing rights equal to those enjoyed by Japan.

In other words, "Korea is not subordinate to any other nation." What Japan wanted from Korea was for it to become independent from China at the earliest possible opportunity. Japan wished to trade with Korea on an equal basis, to enjoy a relationship that would benefit both nations, and for Japan, Korea and China to form a united front, one that would enable the three nations to successfully oppose invasion by the Western powers.

According to the treaty, Korea would, in addition to opening the ports of Busan, Wonsan and Incheon, recognize Japanese consular jurisdiction in those port cities. This arrangement was in line with precedents established during the Edo era (1603-1868), when there was commerce between the two nations. Additionally, a Japanese legation would be established in Hanseong (Seoul).

The Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity revived relations between Japan and Korea.

## The Imo Incident

*Why Korean efforts toward independence and modernization encountered their first stumbling block*



**Yuan Shikai, Chinese commissioner in Korea**



**The Daewongun during confinement in China**



**Queen Min**



**Soldiers from a Japanese-trained modern military unit**

- Imo Incident



Korean military units were poorly outfitted. Their equipment was outdated to the point of being virtually useless in defending their nation from foreign invaders. Relatives of Queen Min (King Gojong's consort) now controlled the government. Military advisers invited from Japan formed a modern army and began training the soldiers in Western-style combat. However, the Daewongun (Gojong's father and now the former regent) and his followers rebelled against Japanese-led modernization policies and military administration reforms.

In July 1882 soldiers in the traditionally equipped military units rioted due to a delay in their salary payments. The Daewongun took advantage of the incident by attempting to seize the government from the Min family. At his instigation, the soldiers broke into the palace and killed Min family members who held high positions in the court. Queen Min's life was also in danger, but she managed to make a miraculous escape.

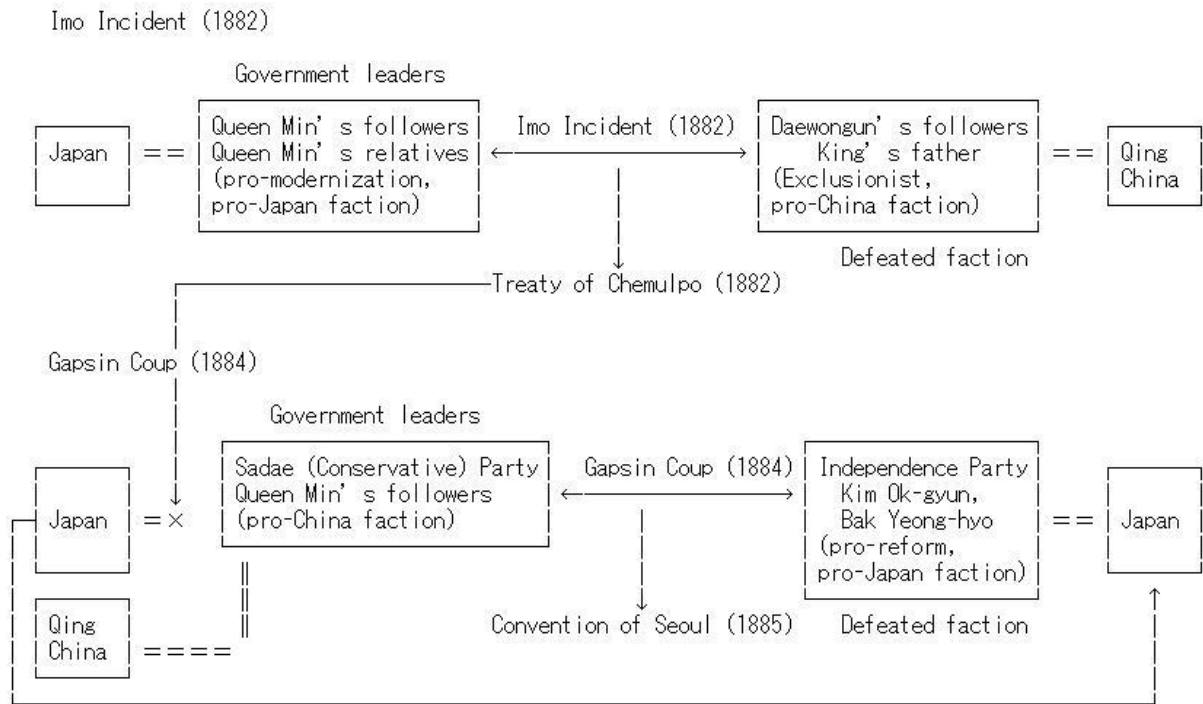
Koreans who resented the Japanese joined the rebelling soldiers in attacking the Japanese legation. More than 30 Japanese (military advisors and local residents) were killed in the attack. Hanabusa Yoshitada, head of the Japanese legation, and 28 members of his staff barely escaped with their lives.

#### ■ Korea once again in thrall to China

Qing China responded to a request from the Korean government by dispatching troops to Korea, who quelled the riot. The Daewongun, who had briefly taken over the government, was escorted to China, where he was held for three years. Having witnessed Japanese impotence during several incidents, the Min family shifted its policy from cultural enlightenment (modernization) to friendship with China. China used the Imo Incident as an excuse to station troops in Korea, and once again began offering advice to the Min government.

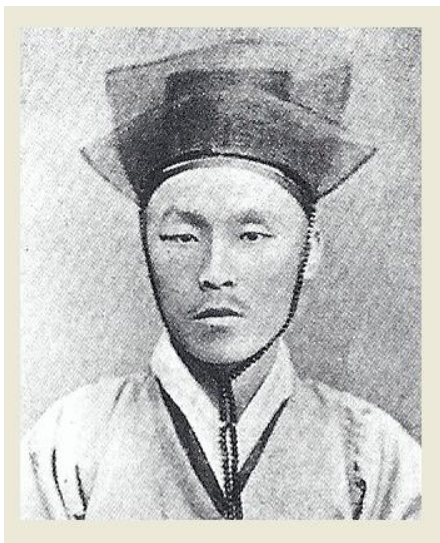
Consequently, the Korean government scrapped its modernization policies, and instead of striving to become the "independent state" described in the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity, reverted to its former status: subservience to China.

## The Gapsin Coup: China Once Again Blocks Korean Modernization Attempts



Japanese forces retreat to prepare for war with China

**Kim Ok-gyun (pro-reform)**



**Bak Yeong-hyo (pro-reform)**



**Kim Ok-gyun asylum in Japan; assassinated in 1894 after having been lured to Shanghai in a plot concocted by Queen Min.**



## ■ The Gapsin Coup

Two years after the Imo Incident, when Korea was once again subservient to China, pro-modernization patriots like Kim Ok-gyun, Bak Yeong-hyo and Seo Jae-Pil emerged. These men realized that Korea must become independent in order for Japanese-style modernization to take place. King Gojong, who was unhappy because Korea's fate was in the hands of China and the Min clan, supported the independence movement. In December 1884 the Independence Party executed a coup d'état and formed a new government, with Japanese support. Soon that government announced that it would implement the following revolutionary policies:

1. The king of Korea shall no longer be a king, but an emperor, and shall conduct himself like the ruler of an independent state.
2. The practice of paying tribute to China shall be abolished.
3. The Cabinet shall be dissolved, the taxation system amended, and the employment of eunuchs shall cease.
4. An Imperial Household Ministry shall be established; it shall ensure that the shroud of secrecy surrounding the king's court is removed.

But Qing China could not stomach a pro-Japanese government in Korea. In collaboration with Queen Min, China orchestrated the destruction of the new government and the thwarting of modernization efforts. Chinese troops – 1,500 men led by Yuan Shikai – drove Independence Party members Kim Ok-gyun, Bak Yeong-hyo and their followers out of the palace. Together with Korean soldiers, the Chinese assaulted the Japanese legation, killing Japanese diplomats and their guards. The troops also attacked Koreans and Chinese and Japanese residents, killing everyone they encountered. Kim and Bak escaped to Japan. The new government collapsed in only three days.

## ■ China earns Japanese suspicion for not adhering to the Tientsin Convention

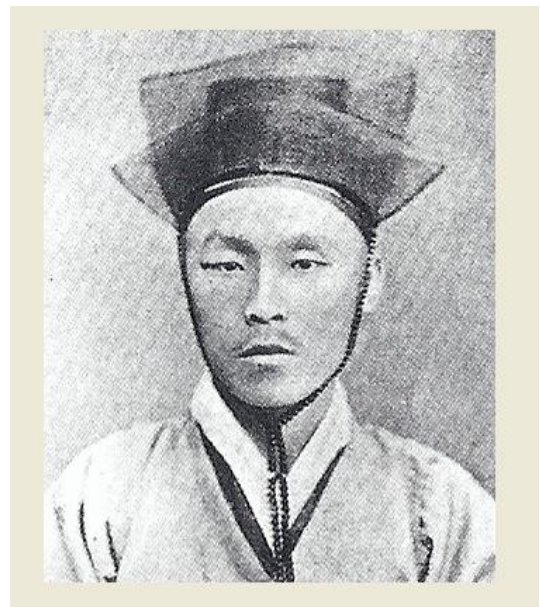
In April 1885 Japan concluded the Tientsin Convention with China. According to the treaty, (1) Qing China promised to punish the officers who had been involved in the attack on the Japanese legation, (2) both Japan and China would withdraw military personnel from Korea, and (3) each party promised to inform the other when sending troops to Korea.

However, China did not punish the officers, failed to remove its soldiers from Hanseong, the Korean capital, and continued interfering in Korean government affairs.

## Why Fukuzawa Yukichi Wanted Japan To Disassociate Itself from Asia

*Was Fukuzawa disdainful of Asia? By urging Japan to “leave” Asia, was he simply inventing an excuse to invade Korea, as anti-Japanese elements claim?*

*The “leaving Asia” argument expresses the despair Fukuzawa felt when China and Korea did not respond to Japan’s urging that the three nations cooperate in countering invasions by the Western powers.*



**Kim Ok-gyun, then a rising star**

**Fukuzawa Yukichi hoped Korea would emulate Japan and renovate**

With the dawning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Western encroachment on East Asia reached a peak. The Russians were exhibiting particularly aggressive behavior. In a southward drive, they were poised to invade the Korean peninsula.

Political scholar Fukuzawa Yukichi reacted to Russian expansionism as follows: “Western advances into Asia are like a rapidly spreading conflagration. To protect the house that is our

nation from the fire, we must do more than build it with stone blocks. If our neighbors have wooden houses, they will not escape the flames.”

What he meant was, “If we are to defend ourselves from invasion by the Western powers, it is not enough for Japan to become a modern nation. We must ensure that Korea and China, our neighboring states, also modernize. Then we three nations must pool our resources to stave off invasions by Western forces.”

The philosophy of the Japanese government coincided with Fukuzawa’s. Both supported modernization efforts by Korean activists. But Qing China, which viewed Korea as a tributary state, was opposed to Japan’s having *any* influence on Korea. The Chinese joined with traditionalist Korean elements in obstructing Korean modernization policies.

Fukuzawa lent his support to reformers like Kim Ok-gyun and other young Koreans studying in Japan by allowing them to enroll in Keio Gijuku (today Keio University), a school that he had founded. However, his generosity did not bear fruit – the reformist movement was suppressed.

Such setbacks caused Fukuzawa to despair, and to argue in favor of leaving Asia. Nevertheless, he continued to hope that Korea and China would see the light.

## Why the Japan-Led Korean Modernization Program Failed

*Korean politician Kim Hong-jip was painfully aware of the need for modernization.*



**Donghak Party leader Jeon Bong-jun**

**Prime Minister Kim Hong-jip**

### ■ The Donghak Peasant Revolution

In the spring of 1894 peasants rioted, outraged at the suffering they had endured because of the corrupt and incompetent government run by Queen Min's relatives and the *yangban* (nobles). The peasant soldiers, guerrillas who called themselves the Donghak army, were highly motivated, so much so that government troops were unable to suppress them. The Korean court asked its suzerain, Qing China, to help quell the uprising. The Chinese obliged by dispatching troops to Asan. In accordance with the Tsientsin Convention, Japan sent troops to Hanseong (Seoul).

The Donghak army, which had not anticipated foreign intervention, quickly made peace with government forces. The peace conditions included the following: (1) corrupt bureaucrats and nobles would be punished, (2) arbitrary taxation would be prohibited, (3) land would be distributed equitably, and (4) bureaucrats would be recruited fairly.

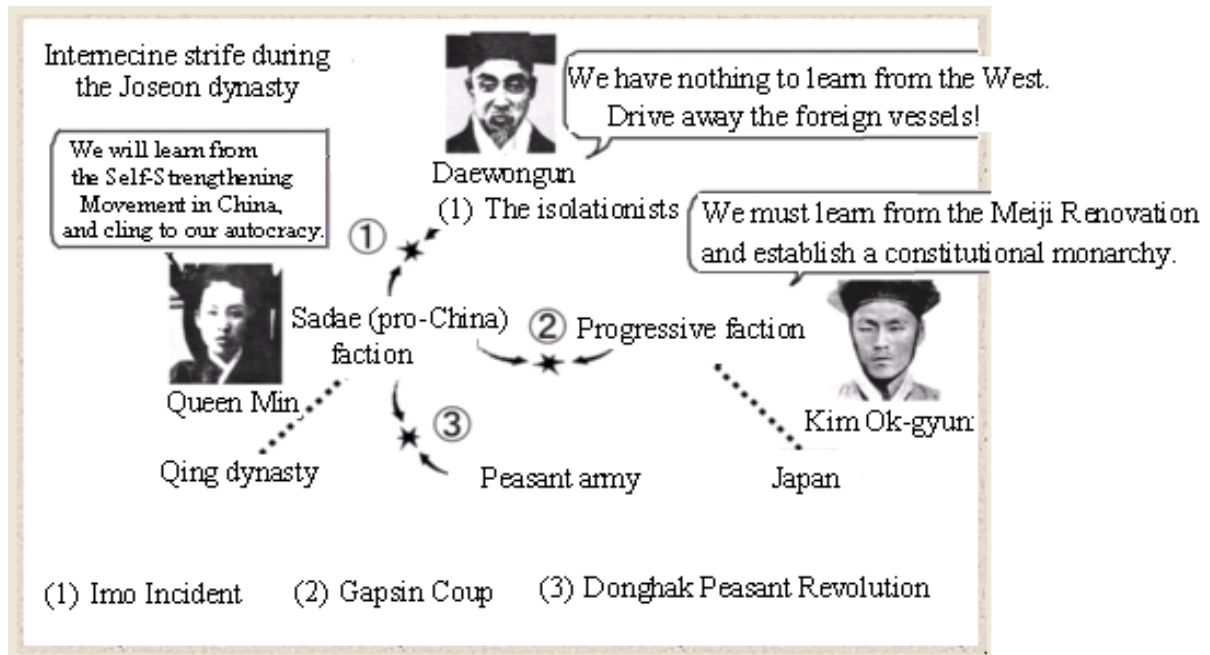
### ■ Japan-led Gabo reform

Given the deplorable state of the Korean government, the Japanese judged that the peace conditions would never be met. Therefore, they suggested a drastic overhaul, jointly supervised by Japan and China, of the Korean government. However, since the Chinese viewed Korea as a tributary state, they rejected the suggestion.

The Japanese realized that the reforms needed to protect Japanese national security could not take place until the yoke of tributary status was lifted from Korea's shoulders. To free Korea, Japan would have to go to war with China. As soon as hostilities (the First Sino-Japanese War) commenced in July 1894, the Japanese asked the enterprising Kim Hong-jip to form a Cabinet and begin reforming Korea's government. To complement concessions already made to Donghak demands, Kim made the following reforms: (1) elimination of imperial examinations, (2) establishment of courts and police departments, (3) prohibition against human trafficking, and (4) abolition of guilt-by-association laws whereby relatives of criminals were punished along with the criminals themselves. These were sweeping reforms intended to eradicate feudalism.

Unfortunately, pro-Russian *yangban* who opposed the reforms gained the upper hand in 1896. They staged a coup d'état and amid the ensuing chaos, Kim Hong-jip was clubbed to death by a Korean mob.

## The Real Enemies of Korean Independence and Modernization: The Daewongun and Queen Min



Korean patriots rose up and fought for independence and modernization for their country in 1882 (the Imo Incident), 1884 (the Gapsin Coup) and 1894 (the Donghak Peasant Revolution). However all their efforts were for naught. They failed because of a power struggle in the palace that totally ignored the national interest, an unwavering conviction that the right thing to do was serve mighty China (with which Korean minds had been poisoned), and Chinese determination to keep Korea in its thrall.

When Cheoljong, the 25<sup>th</sup> Joseon king, died in 1863, his family chose the 11-year-old Gojong as the next king. But it was Yi Ha-eung, the boy's father, who ran the government as the Daewongun, or regent. In 1858 Gojong married Queen Min; unlike the rather weak-willed Gojong, his consort was shrewd beyond her years. The struggle between the unscrupulous, cunning Daewongun and Queen Min (who earned the hatred of the Korean people), was the main cause of the strife that plagued Korea until 1895, when she was assassinated.

In 1873 Queen Min dismissed the Daewongun on the grounds that King Gojong had reached adulthood, and attempted to seize the reins of government. But she did not succeed until 1882, when the Imo Incident broke out.

Traditional military units, angered by discrimination against them (and favoritism shown to the modern forces supported by the Japanese), attempted a coup d'état intended to install the

Daewongun as the ruler. Queen Min managed to escape to the mountains; from her refuge she sent an envoy on a secret mission to China seeking help. Qing China responded by sending 4,000 troops, who subdued the revolting soldiers, abducted the Daewongun and transported him to China.

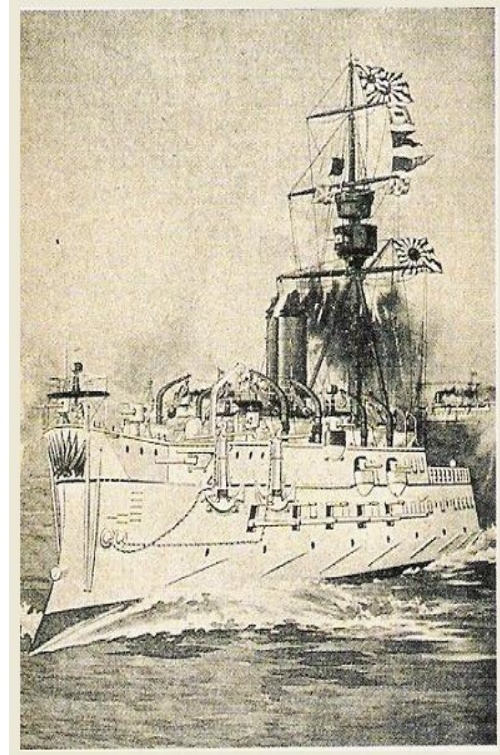
Subsequently Queen Min continued to rely on China, but when Japan emerged victorious from the First Sino-Japanese War, she attempted a rapprochement. But when she discovered that Japan's position was weak (having fallen victim to the Triple Intervention), the queen pinned her hopes on Russia. Her subjects came to loathe her not only because she was responsible for the deaths of many Korean patriots, but also because she dabbled in complex international intrigue. Additionally, she misused government funds to the point of bankrupting Korea, making that nation the laughingstock of the international community. She was finally assassinated. It is truly unfortunate that Gojong was so spineless. But it was the Japanese who brought the Daewongun back to Korea after a three-year period of confinement there.



## The First Sino-Japanese War: Japanese Blood Is Shed for Korean Independence



Progress of the War



*Matsushima*, flagship of the Combined Fleet



Signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki

By 1894 the Donghak Peasant Revolution had gained so much momentum that the Korean government could not suppress it. The court asked Qing China to send troops. China immediately sent 2,400 soldiers. In accordance with the Convention of Tsientsin the Japanese also dispatched soldiers, 4,400 of them. The uprising was quelled and the ringleaders executed.



But neither the Japanese nor the Chinese would withdraw their troops from Korea, resulting in a standoff, which culminated in the battle of Pungdo. Prior to the commencement of hostilities, the Japanese had interceded with Queen Min and other conservatives, attempting to convince them of the necessity of ordering the withdrawal of Chinese troops, whose presence impeded the progress of Korean self-determination and independence and the dissolution of Korea's tributary status. Unfortunately, their arguments fell on deaf ears. Therefore, the Japanese drove Min family court officials out of the government, and installed the Daewongun as head of a new government. Then they had the Daewongun order Chinese troops out of Korea; on August 1 Japan declared war on China.

- Treaty of Shimonoseki and the Triple Intervention: Japan endures hardship while waiting for the right opportunity to exact vengeance

The Imperial Rescript, the instrument whereby Japan declared war on Qing China, states as the goals of the conflict Korean independence and reforms, and peace throughout East Asia. Battles were fought on sea and on land, with Japan dominating throughout. The Japanese occupied the Liaodong peninsula, and in April of the following year a peace treaty was concluded. However, six days after the treaty was signed, Russia, France and Germany pressured Japan to impose less stringent conditions on defeated China, claiming that those set forth in the treaty were too harsh.

Japan had no choice but to comply with this insulting demand, and returned the Liaodong peninsula. However, the same treaty gave Japan Taiwan and reparations in the form of eight million kilograms of silver (the equivalent of ¥400 billion yen at today's values), and made Japan the leading power in Asia.

Meanwhile, once the Western powers had wrested territory from Japan, they proceeded to acquire leaseholds in China. Russia gained the Liaodong peninsula, Germany, Jiaozhou Bay; Great Britain, Weihaiwei in Shandong province and Kowloon; and France, Guangzhou Bay.

Consequently, Qing China was forced to recognize its only tributary state, Korea, as an independent nation, while the Western powers carved up Chinese territory, forcing China into a semi-colonial existence.

The 10-month-long conflict cost Japan ¥200 million. Two hundred forty thousand soldiers were mobilized; there were 13,000 casualties (including 1,900 men killed in action).

## Who Really Killed Queen Min?



**Daewongun**



**Queen Min**



**King Gojong and  
his son Sunjong**



**Assassination of Queen Min as  
fictionalized by Korea**



**U Beom-seon**



**Miura Goro,  
resident minister**

At the Independence Hall of Korea located in Cheonan, there is a tableau with life-size wax figures allegedly recreating the assassination of Queen Min. Nearby is a stele engraved with “Site of the assassination of Empress Myeongseong” (Myeongseong is Queen Min’s posthumous name.) In front of the stele are two murals. They depict two Japanese men brandishing swords in Queen Min’s direction, as if about to murder her. Anyone looking at the murals would know that the Koreans think the assassins were Japanese. But were they?

In 1895 a rumor spread that an army unit trained by the Japanese was going to be disbanded and replaced by an American-trained defense unit. To Ambassador Miura Goro, who had arrived in September, the rumor was very worrisome. The Daewongun and the reformers, who

were concerned about Queen Min's overtures to Russia, were equally concerned; they began to contemplate ways of eliminating the queen and her followers.

On October 7 the Japanese-trained unit received orders to disband and disarm. Instead of obeying the orders, the soldiers revolted, and together with Japanese sympathizers broke into the palace and murdered Queen Min. After the assassination, the Daewongun once again took up the reins of government. He stripped the former queen of her royal status and declared her a commoner. This coup is referred to as the Eulmi Incident.

Since the international community suspected that the Japanese ambassador was complicit in the assassination, the Japanese government had Miura and other Japanese nationals transported to Japan and tried at the Hiroshima District Court. Back in Korea, however, Gen. Yi Chu-hae came forward to take responsibility for the assassination; he and two other Koreans were executed, and the case was considered closed. The Hiroshima District Court dismissed the case against Ambassador Miura *et al.* due to lack of evidence, since the guilty party had been determined in a Korean court.

Gojong, who was present when the assassination took place, testified that "it was my disloyal servants who killed the queen." His son, Sunjong, testified, "I saw my mother's enemy, U Beom-seon, kill her." U admitted to the crime.

In 1903 U Beom-seon was assassinated in Kure, Hiroshima, by a killer hired by Sunjong.

### 3. THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA WAS NOT COLONIALIST POLICY

#### Russia Attempts To Hijack Japanese Achievements in Korea



*Japan viewed from Russia: The Russians fully intended to invade Japan, building military ports at Ryongchonpo and Masanpo, in addition to Port Arthur. They did so knowing full well that they were violating the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.*

#### ■ Royal confinement at Russian Legation (reckless Russian-Korean act)

In February 1896 the Russians mobilized 120 sailors from one of their ships anchored at Incheon. The men abducted King Gojong, under orders; he was forced to conduct state affairs from the Russian Legation. This part of his reign is referred to as “royal confinement at the Russian Legation.” During his residence there, Korea ceded important interests to Russia.

This extraordinary situation was resolved in February 1897, when King Gojong returned to the royal palace after consultations between [Resident Minister] Komura Jutaro and Karl Ivanovich Weber in Korea, and between special envoy Yamagata Aritomo and Prince Alexei Lobanov. Gojong proceeded to change the name of Korea to Empire of Korea, and elevate his

rank from king to emperor. Gojong gave a new name (Gwangmu, or “shining courage”) to the current era. He also demolished the Yeongeun Gate, where Chinese envoys had been received, replacing it with the Independence Gate, in commemoration of Korea’s independence.

### ■ **Fall of the Qing dynasty**

In 1895, when Qing China was defeated in the First Sino-Japanese War, the Western powers descended on China like vultures. Thanks to the Triple Intervention of 1895, Russia leased the Liaodong peninsula, and other European nations began dissecting China, with Great Britain taking Weihaiwei and Kowloon; Germany, Jiaozhou Bay; and France, Guangzhou Bay.

### ■ **Russian threat to Japan**

Additionally, Russia captured the right-of-way for a southern Manchurian branch of the Chinese Eastern Railway, extending from Harbin to Dalian and Port Arthur. The Russians also gained leaseholds in Masan (near Busan in the southern part of the Korean peninsula) and attempted to open military ports there.

### ■ **Anglo-Japanese Alliance aids Japan**

The threat to Japan would have been immense if the Russians had succeeded in building a military port near Busan. The Japanese decided to look to the British as an alliance partner. The draft of an agreement issued by Great Britain in 1901 stated that the governments of Great Britain and Japan wished to maintain the status quo and general peace in East Asia. Both nations promised to maintain the territorial integrity of China, and agreed that Korea was not to be taken over by any other nation. However, the Japanese had wanted a guarantee protecting their special rights in Korea, which did not appear in the draft.

In a confidential agreement, the Japanese requested a naval alliance (citing Russia as the theoretical enemy nation) and a guarantee of their special rights in Korea. The negotiations were difficult, but in January 1902 an agreement was reached. Article 1 states that both parties, “having mutually recognized the independence of China and Korea, declare themselves to be entirely uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies in either country. Having in view, however, their special interests of which those of Great Britain relate principally to China, while Japan, in addition to the interests which she possesses in China, is interested in a peculiar degree politically as well as commercially and industrially in Korea, the High Contracting Parties recognise that it will be admissible for either of them to take such measures as may be indispensable in order to safeguard those interests if threatened either by the aggressive action of any other Power, or by disturbances arising in China or Korea, and necessitating the intervention of either of the High Contracting Parties for the protection of the lives and property of its subjects.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> For the complete text of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, see <http://www.jacar.go.jp/nichiro/uk-japan.htm>.

For Japan, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance provided the legal underpinning for military financing, eliminated the possibility of French participation in a war with Russia, paved the way for military aid from Great Britain, and strengthened efforts to prevent further Russian expansion.

Two years later, in February 1904, hostilities commenced between Japan and Russia, from which Japan emerged victorious.



## Korea Awakens After 15 Centuries of Subservience

### *The establishment of the Korean Empire*



**Emperor Gojong in the days of the Korean Empire**



**Dongnim (Independence) Gate: Pillars from the former gate (Yeongeun Gate), a symbol of subservience, remain**



**King Gojong during the Joseon dynasty**



**Yeongeun Gate: emissaries of the Qing emperor were received here when Korea was a tributary state of China**

The unusual situation that had the Korean king conducting affairs of state at the Russian Legation lasted approximately one year. It ended in 1897 when, thanks to the diplomacy of Resident Minister Komura Jutaro and special envoy Yamagata Aritomo, Gojong resumed residence in the palace.

Some of the terms of the resulting Komura-Weber Memorandum were:

1. The Korean king would return to the royal palace.



2. Suitable persons would be recommended for official positions.
3. Japanese troops would protect telegraph lines between Hanseong (Seoul) and Busan.
4. Japanese and Russian military units of equal strength would be stationed in Hanseong, Busan and Wonsan.
5. Financial reforms, to be approved by both Japan and Russia, would be made.
6. Joint supervision of Korean military and police organizations
7. Recognition of Japanese-owned telegraph cables and approval of Russian construction of telegraph lines between Hanseong and the Russian border.

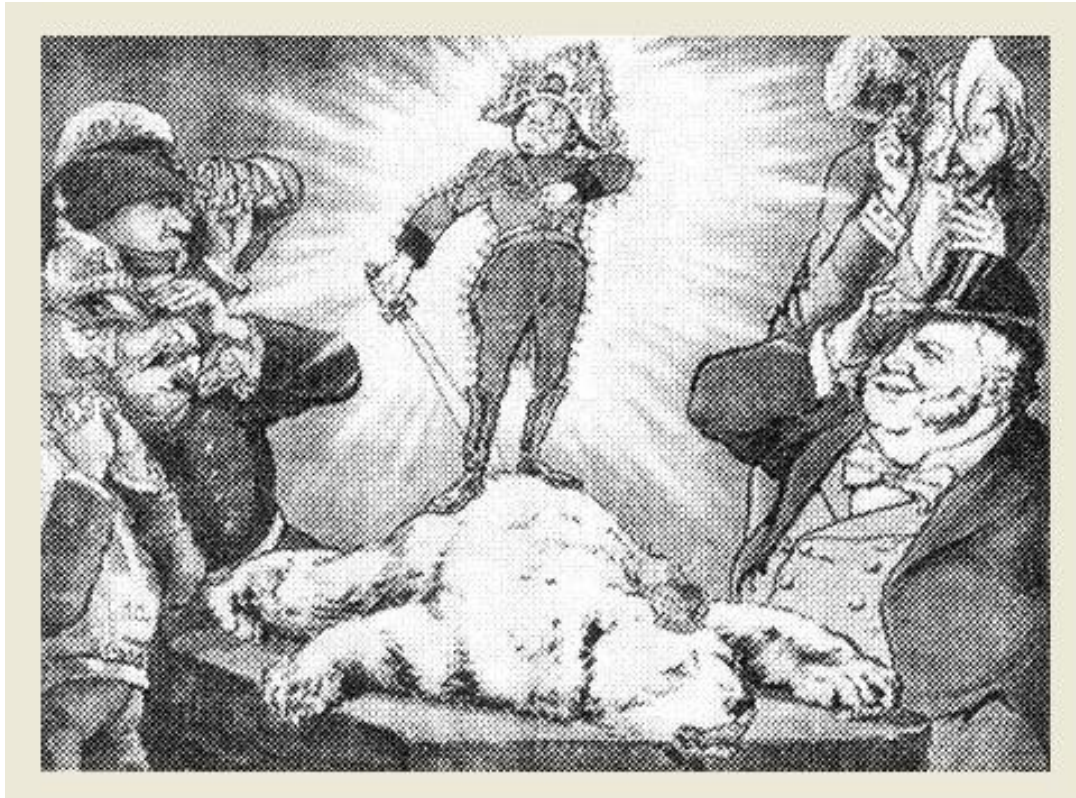
After Gojong returned to the royal place, he proclaimed Korea an empire and himself its emperor.

He changed the era name to Gwangmu, and tore down the Yeongeun Gate, a symbol of Korea's former tributary status, replacing it with the Independence Gate.

After 15 centuries, Korean subservience to China had come to an end. Korea began taking its first steps as an independent nation.

What would have happened if Japan had not intervened, and the abnormal relationship between Russia and Korea had been allowed to continue? Korea would, without a doubt, have been absorbed by Russia, and languished under Stalin's yoke throughout the Russian Revolution. We should take pride in the fact that Japan helped Korea achieve independence and liberated Korea from Russia.

## Victory in Russo-Japanese War Creates a New World Power: Japan



*Japan, basking in the limelight after having disposed of the much-feared Russian Empire (polar bear in illustration), now strikes fear in the hearts of the Western powers*

The Russo-Japanese War was waged between the Japanese and Russian empires between February 1904 and September 1905. Its battles were fought primarily in Korea and southern Manchuria.

After the Triple Intervention and the Boxer Rebellion, Japan's victory prevented the Russian Empire, with its footholds in Manchuria, from taking control of Korea. It also helped ensure Japanese national security and protect Japanese interests in Korea.

Aligned with Japan were the British Empire, the United States and the Ottoman Empire. Siding with Russia were the French and German empires. Qing China declared neutrality early on. The Korean Empire also declared neutrality, but the Iljinhoe (Progress) Party, pro-Japanese intellectuals and the *yangban* supported Japan. The ruling class, including Gojong and pro-independence intellectuals, sided with Russia.

At negotiations between Japan and Russia commencing in August 1903, the Japanese proposed exchanging their interests in Manchuria with Russian interests in Korea, thereby bringing the Korean peninsula under Japanese control and Manchuria under Russian control. But the Russians, convinced that Japan could never be a threat to their mighty empire, refused outright. Since it would be easier for the Russians to move troops stationed in Europe to the Far East once the Trans-Siberian Railway was completed, Japanese public opinion was leaning toward going to war with Russia before completion. On February 6, 1904, Komura Jutaro, Japan's foreign minister, summoned Ambassador Roman Rosen to the Foreign Ministry and announced that Japan was breaking off diplomatic relations with Russia. On February 23 the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904 was concluded, which afforded the Japanese freedom of military movement in Korea. Contrary to the Western powers' prognostications, the Japanese dominated the Russo-Japanese War, and after the following events had transpired, emerged victorious.

May 1904	Japanese defeat Russians in Battle of Yalu River
August 1904	Japanese win Battle of the Yellow Sea and Battle off Ulsan, thus gaining control of the seas
January 1905	Port Arthur falls to the Japanese
March 1905	Japanese win Battle of Mukden
May 1905	Japanese win Battle of Tsushima; Russia's Baltic Fleet destroyed
September 1905	Japan and Russia sign Treaty of Portsmouth

Japan's victory greatly heartened people of the yellow race whose lives were controlled by one Western power or another. The Russo-Japanese War was the first step toward the annexation of Korea for the benefit of the Koreans, people who had consistently betrayed Japan.

## **Megata Tanetaro: Financial Advisor Who Rescued Korea from the Brink of Bankruptcy**



*Baron Megata Tanetaro (1853-1926)*

*Politician, civil servant, legal scholar, judge, attorney, member of the House of Peers, envoy to the League of Nations, advisor to the Privy Council and financial advisor to the Korean government. Megata was one of the founders of Senshu College (today Senshu University) and of the Tokyo Music School (today part of Tokyo University of the Arts)*

The Japan-Korea Convention, concluded in 1904, appointed Megata Tanetaro, then head of the Finance Ministry's Tax Bureau, financial advisor to the Korean government.

Megata's first surprise when he assumed his post was the irresponsible manner in which the Korean finances were administered. The financial administration procedures introduced during the Gabo reforms, and regulations governing public administration now existed in name only. There might as well not have been a budget, and there were, of course, no financial statements.

The most pressing task was the separation of court expenses and public finances. Court officials would arbitrarily demand funds, claiming that His Majesty had requested them. But a solution was found where it was least expected.

One day a request came to Megata directly from the emperor: "Court expenses amount to two million yen, but I have access to only 20,000 yen.<sup>13</sup> I would like that amount to be increased slightly. Furthermore, the court officials' salaries are too low."

Not long before the royal request, Megata had discovered that bureaucrats were paid very poorly. He announced that bureaucrats' salaries would be doubled to stop rampant corruption. Megata did not mention any increase in the remuneration for court officials. However, when

---

<sup>13</sup> ¥2 billion at today's values

Emperor Gojong heard about his announcement, he asked for more money for himself and the court officials as well. Now Megata had an opportunity to state his opinions about court expenditures. With the exception of contingency funds, he increased court expenditures by 80% to ¥1.3 million, thus succeeding in separating court expenses and public finances.

Megata's next task was reforming the currency system. At the time a barter system was in effect in Korea. The monetary system was still at an embryonic stage there. In circulation were coins denominated in *mun* (then the main currency). Anyone planning a long trip or a major purchase would fill straw bags with coins, which would then have to be transported on horseback.

The decision was made to mint 2.5-sen copper-nickel coins. However, until then, the government had always sold minting rights to high-ranking officials. The result was a wide variety of styles (all of poor quality) that ended up being sold at prices far below face value.

Megata created, for Korea, a currency system equivalent to the one in place in Japan, using a Japanese bank, the Daiichi Ginko. He also improved finances by abolishing an antiquated bills-of-exchange system, and establishing a new bills-of-exchange union. The union would guarantee bills issued by its members.

His contribution to Korean modernization was huge: not only did Megata restructure the Korean financial system, he also established budgets and a financial reporting system, a tax collection agency, an irrigation cooperative system, and financial cooperatives.

## Why Japan Took Charge of Korean Diplomatic Affairs



**Ito Hirobumi,**  
Japanese statesman who opposed annexation



**Gojong, author of his own downfall**

### ■ Russo-Japanese War and Japan-Korea relations: the road to annexation

Date	Event
January 21, 1904	Korea declares neutrality
February 6, 1904	Hostilities between Japan and Russia commence
February 23, 1904	Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904 concluded
August 22, 1904	Japan-Korea Convention concluded
March 26, 1905	Gojong's secret missive to Russian emperor discovered
July 1905	Gojong sends secret envoy to Russia and France
September 5, 1905	Russo-Japanese War ends
October 1905	Gojong sends secret envoy to the US and Great Britain
November 17, 1905	Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty concluded
December 21, 1905	Office of Resident-General of Korea established
June 1907	Gojong sends secret envoy to the Hague
July 20, 1907	Gojong abdicates because of secret envoy incident
July 24, 1907	Japan-Korea Treaty of 1907 concluded

When the Koreans realized that war between Japan and Russia was inevitable, they immediately declared neutrality, realizing that the Korean empire was the cause of the conflict. Japanese Foreign Minister Komura Jutaro, who was making a strenuous effort to maintain peaceful and friendly relations with Russia, rejected the Korean declaration, maintaining that the time was ill chosen for talk of war and neutrality.

Shortly after war broke out, the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904, whereby Korea guaranteed Japanese troops freedom of movement within Korea, and Japan took on the responsibility of defending the Korean empire and the imperial court, was concluded.

In August 1904, after Japan defeated Russia in the first battle of the war, the Japan-Korea Convention was signed. There were provisions in this treaty for the assignment of diplomatic and financial advisors selected by Japan to Korea. An American named Durham Stevens was chosen as the diplomatic advisor due to the presumption that he would be effective in negotiations with the Western powers. Once Japan had control over Korean foreign affairs and finance, the only remaining Japanese objective was the formation of a sound, pro-Japanese government.

Since the Japanese were experiencing difficulties governing Taiwan, Ito Hirobumi and Sone Arasuke, the second Resident-General of Korea, were adamantly opposed to direct Japanese rule over Korea. They argued that the Russo-Japanese War had emptied the nation's treasury, leaving no funds to invest in Korea.

But in February 1905 the Korean emperor, who strongly disapproved of the Japan-Korea Convention, sent a secret envoy to Russia. This was a blatant act of betrayal, since Japan and Russia were at war. To make matters worse, the Japanese discovered that between July and October Gojong had sent secret envoys to Russia, France, the US and Great Britain. Intending to make Korea a Japanese protectorate, the Japanese began lobbying the Western powers with that goal in mind. Assuming that the Koreans had no intention of honoring the Japan-Korea Convention, whereby the Korean empire was required to consult with the Japanese government about diplomatic matters, the Japanese demanded that the Koreans sign the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty, which gave Japan total control over Korean diplomacy.

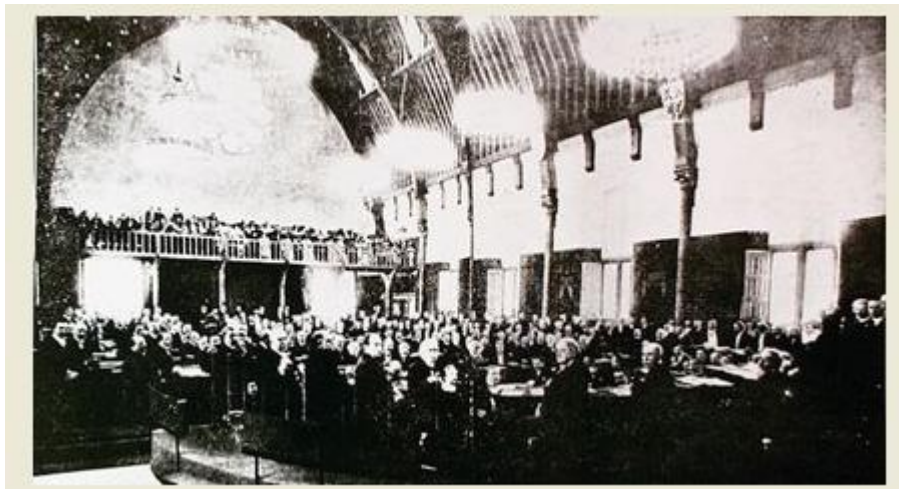
In November 1905 the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty was concluded; Korea was now a Japanese protectorate. Ito Hirobumi was installed as the first Resident-General of Korea.



## Duplicitous Gojong Betrays Japan: The Hague Secret Envoy Affairs



Daily newspaper describing activities Second Hague Conference



The Second Hague Conference

In June 1907 Korean Emperor Gojong secretly dispatched envoys to the Second Hague Conference. The envoys presented an appeal for the restoration of Korean diplomatic representation. However, they were unable to accomplish their mission because the great powers would not allow them to participate in the conference.

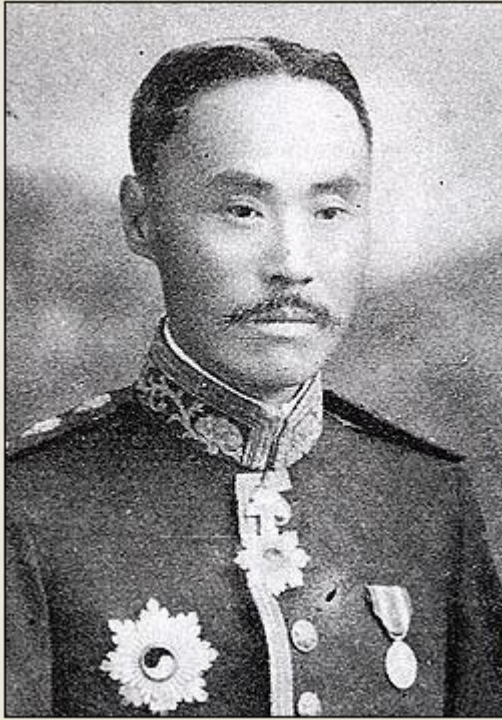
The claims Gojong made in the personal message he entrusted to the envoys follow:

1. I have never approved the treaty (Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty) signed on November 17, 1907 by the Japanese emissary and Park Che-soon, nor did I affix the Seal of the State thereto.
2. I objected to Japan's distributing the Treaty without consulting me.
3. I have not transferred the rights of the independent Korean empire to any other nation.
4. An unnecessary treaty relating to diplomatic rights has been forced upon me; I have not recognized any clauses whatsoever relating to Korean domestic affairs.
5. I have not authorized the stationing of a resident-general in Korea, nor have I given permission to a foreigner to exercise my imperial rights.
6. I hope that the nations of the world join together with me to protect Korean diplomatic rights.

Not only Japan was outraged by Gojong's incorrigible, traitorous duplicity. The Korean Cabinet too was up in arms about his irresponsible behavior, and demanded that he atone for it by abdicating. Ito Hirobumi, equally outraged by Gojong's treachery, supported the Cabinet's decision. Gojong was compelled to abdicate.

Precisely because the great powers recognized the legality of the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty, they refused to hear the Korean empire's appeal at the Second Hague Conference.

## Lee Wan-Yong: Hero or Traitor? Korea's Last Prime Minister and the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1907



**Prime Minister Lee Wan-yong**

*Lee Wan-yong (Yi Wan-yong) 1856-1926*

*A politician active during the waning days of the Joseon dynasty, Lee helped pave the way for the annexation of Korea. He passed the imperial examination in 1853, and worked in the US from 1887 to 1891. Soon after his return to Korea he came to the fore as a politician with an international outlook. The Japanese bestowed the title of Count on him in 1910, and that of Marquess in 1920. In 1926 Lee was awarded the Grand Cordon of the Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum, Japan's most prestigious decoration. He was the only Korean who received it prior to World War II.*

Today in Korea former Prime Minister Lee Wan-yong is reviled as one of the five “Eulsa traitors” for having supported the signing of the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty and the subsequent Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty. The current government has designated him a collaborator with the Japanese, and confiscated land owned by his descendants.

But Lee was certainly not categorically pro-Japanese. After Queen Min's assassination in 1895, he joined forces with pro-Russian and pro-American elements in a plot to overthrow the Daewongun's government (the Eulmi Incident), which ended in failure. Lee also was instrumental in King Gojong's escape to and confinement in the Russian Legation in 1896. After toppling Kim Hong-Jip's government, he was appointed foreign minister. In 1901 Lee sided with pro-American elements attempting to suppress pro-Japanese activists. In other words, he was consistently involved in anti-Japanese activities.

But in 1904, when the Russo-Japanese War broke out, he began to show more sympathy for Japan. In 1907 he assumed the post of prime minister, thanks to the recommendation of Resident-General Ito Hirobumi. When Gojong dispatched a secret envoy to the Hague, Lee sided with Japan. Together with Ito, Lee adopted a harsh stance toward Emperor Gojong, who habitually opposed Japan. Gojong was forced to abdicate, and Lee was instrumental in the conclusion of the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1907.

Having won both the First Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, Japan had acquired a good deal of prestige in the eyes of the Western powers. It was this new status that convinced Lee Wan-yong to cast his fate and that of his nation with Japan. From the speech he delivered on the occasion of annexation, we can sense his anguish.

“Given the Korean race’s current level of competence, there is absolutely no possibility of Korea’s preserving its dignity as an independent nation. Our nation’s ruin is inevitable. Only annexation can save us from that fate, and there is no nation more suitable than Japan as an annexation partner. Europeans and Americans view Koreans as pigs or dogs, but the Japanese are different. I find it annoying that they attempt to impose their moral code on us and have a tendency to nag, but they do this because they view us as their peers. Japan is the only nation that can guide Korea and enable us to participate in the civilization of all mankind. There is no other way for the Korean race to escape from the pig sty and enjoy the prosperity to which, as human beings, we are entitled.”<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Nagoshi Futaranosuke, *Nikkan 2000 nen no shinjitsu* (The truth about the 2,000-year-old relationship between Japan and Korea) (Osaka: Kokusai Kikaku, 1997), p. 303.

## How the Assassination of Ito Hirobumi by Terrorist An Jung-Geun Affected Korea

*Bullets from An Jung-geun's gun did not kill Ito Hirobumi. The two fatal shots were fired from a French cavalry gun wielded by an assailant on the second floor of Harbin Station. A total of 13 shots were fired, but only Ito and a Japanese aide were hit. None of the five shots fired by An struck Ito. We still do not know for certain who killed Ito. If it turns out that An Jung-geun was not the killer, then what action will the Koreans take?*



**Ito Hirobumi in Harbin on October 26, 1909, immediately before he was assassinated; he was to meet with Vladimir Kokovtsov, Russian finance minister (far right)**



**Korean stamp commemorating An Jung-geun**

On October 26, 1909 at Harbin Station, terrorist An Jung-geun aimed his gun at Ito Hirobumi, then 68 years old, and fired. Ito had just arrived there for a meeting with Vladimir Kokovtsov, the Russian finance minister.

At that time Christian missionaries from Europe and the US, who harbored racial prejudice against the Japanese, were inciting their Korean converts to engage in anti-Japanese activities. One of those converts (to Roman Catholicism) was An Jung-geun. As Japan took control of Korea, An joined one of the militias referred to as “righteous armies.” He never awakened to the realities of the international situation, i.e., that the Western powers were preparing to pounce on the Far East, and that Korea was capable of neither countering Western encroachment nor surviving as an independent nation. Instead, An continued to engage in

terrorist acts, without once stopping to look at Korea with a critical eye. His loathing of Japan and Ito Hirobumi never diminished.

The assassination sent shock waves through Japan and Korea. Fearing retaliation from Japan, the Koreans (including the government) began leaning toward annexation, an eventuality that had been talked about for some time. Japanese public opinion too was largely in favor of annexation. Ironically, An Jung-geun's crime, committed without a true understanding of the international climate, accelerated annexation (ironically, because Ito opposed annexation).

Emperor Gojong, who had abdicated when the Japanese discovered he had sent a secret envoy to the Hague, spoke about the assassination as follows:

The loss of Ito is a calamity, not only for our nation, not only for Japan, but also for the entire Far East. I am sorely ashamed that the man who committed this heinous act is a Korean. The Japanese emperor has lost an irreplaceable elder statesman.

That notwithstanding, His Majesty has been gracious enough to agree to continue to educate the crown prince of the nation that spawned the brute who felled Ito. How can I possibly show my appreciation to the Japanese imperial family, to whom I owe a debt higher than a mountain and deeper than the sea?<sup>15</sup>

It is extremely likely that Korean resistance to annexation lessened when the populace heard Gojong's impassioned words.

On February 14, 1910, prior to annexation, An Jung-geun was executed. Today the South Korean government celebrates this terrorist, referring to him as a patriot and the savior of his nation. Lee Wan-yong, who was instrumental in Korea's modernization, with considerable Japanese help, is condemned as a traitor. Which was the true patriot? Will the day come when the Korean people can contemplate this question dispassionately?

---

<sup>15</sup> Report entitled *Ito ko sonan ni tsuite no Kankoku kyuchu no moyo* (Korean court's reaction to the assassination of Ito Hirobumi) prepared by Wakabayashi Raizo, Korean police superintendent-general.



## Iljinhoe: Annexation Advocate



**Yi Yong-gu**



**Song Byeong-jun**



**Bongyeongmun (Welcome Gate) built by Iljinhoe to commemorate the annexation**

Iljinhoe (literally, “progress society”), a group that emerged in 1904, at the beginning of the First Sino-Japanese War, was an outgrowth of the Donghak movement. At the time, it was the largest political group in Korea, with several million members. Its objectives were political reform and democracy. The group was in favor of a Japan-Korea military alliance to stave off Russian encroachment, prevent the Western powers from gaining control over Asia, and facilitate a Korean rebirth.

One of its leaders, Yi Yong-gu had read political activist Tarui Tokichi’s *Great Asian Union*, and was particularly inspired by the following passage: “To compete with the Western nations, there is no choice for the Asian peoples but to pool their resources and strength and form a coalition headed by Japan.”<sup>16</sup> Another Iljinhoe leader, Song Byeong-jun, had become involved in the pro-Japanese movement in 1875, when he was employed as an aide by politician Kuroda Kiyotaka on the occasion of the latter’s traveling to Korea to negotiate a treaty concerning the opening of ports (the Treaty of Ganghwa). Song was an avuncular sort famous for his chivalry.

In December 1909 Iljinhoe drafted a manifesto demanding a merger between Japan and Korea, and sent it to Emperor Sunjong, to Sone Arasuke, the second resident-general of Korea, and to Prime Minister Lee Wan-yong. In the manifesto, Yi Yong-gu included the following appeal, which he said represented the hopes of a million members, for the formation of a federation that would put Korea and Japan on an equal footing.

---

<sup>16</sup> Tarui Tokichi, *Daito gapporon* (Great Asian union), 1893.



Thanks to Japan's having expended an enormous amount of funds and countless human lives during the Sino-Japanese War, Korea is now an independent nation. Furthermore, by fighting the Russo-Japanese War, in which Japan incurred 20 times more casualties than we suffered in the Donghak Peasant Revolution, Japan saved Korea from being swallowed up by Russia, and preserved peace in the Far East. We are at fault for failing to express our gratitude to Japan. Instead, we made overtures to several other nations. Consequently, we lost our right of diplomatic representation, and were forced to sign a protectorate treaty. It is difficult to predict what sort of danger may come our way, but whatever it is will be our fault as well. We must appeal to our emperor and to the emperor of Japan to help us develop a government and society that will enable us to become first-class citizens.

On August 22, 1910, the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty was concluded. Soon thereafter, the Governor-General's Office ordered Iljinhoe to disband.

## The Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty (Concluded on August 22, 1910)

*The annexation was brought about not by declaration, but by treaty.*



**Emperor Meiji**



**Emperor Sunjong**

### Article 1

His Majesty the Emperor of Korea makes the complete and permanent cession to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea.

### Article 2

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan accepts the cession mentioned in the preceding article and consents to the complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.

### Article 3

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will accord to their Majesties the Emperor and ex-Emperor and His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Korea and their consorts and heirs such titles, dignity, and honor as are appropriate to their respective ranks, and sufficient annual grants will be made for the maintenance of such titles, dignity and honor.

### Article 4

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will also accord appropriate honor and treatment to the members of the Imperial House of Korea and their heirs other than those mentioned in the preceding article, and the funds necessary for the maintenance of such honor and treatment will be granted.

Article 5

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will confer peerage and monetary grants upon those Koreans who, on account of meritorious services, are regarded as deserving such special recognition.

Article 6

In consequence of the aforesaid annexation the Government of Japan assume the entire government and administration of Korea, and undertake to afford full protection for the persons and property of Koreans obeying the laws there in force to promote the welfare of all such Koreans.

Article 7

The Government of Japan will, so far as circumstances permit, employ in the public service of Japan in Korea those Koreans who accept the new regime loyally and in good faith and who are duly qualified for such service.

Article 8

This treaty, having been approved by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and His Majesty the Emperor of Korea, shall take effect from the date of its promulgation.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.international.ucla.edu/eas/documents/kore1910.htm>

**Korean “Illegitimate Annexation” Argument Soundly Defeated at International Conference**



**Professor James Crawford**



**Sunjong, Korea's last emperor**



**Prime Minister Lee Wan-yong**



**Document surrendering sovereignty over Korea to Japan (given to Lee Wan-yong by Emperor Sunjong)**

*Let Korea brandish its claim that the annexation was unlawful! Japan must not apologize.*

About 10 years ago, a debate raged among Japanese and Korean scholars over the validity of the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty. The Koreans argued that the treaty was unlawful because it was forced on them. When there was no clear victor even after two conferences, scholars of other nations were invited to join the discussion so that a resolution could be reached.

“A Reconsideration of the Japanese Annexation of Korea from the Historical and International Law Perspectives,” an international conference, was hosted by the Harvard University Asia Center on November 16-17, 2001. The gathering was funded by an international interchange foundation affiliated with the Korean government and organized by Korean scholars. Its attendees hailed from the US, the United Kingdom, Japan and Korea.

Cambridge University Professor James Crawford, a specialist in international law, challenged the Korean claim. He said that at the time of the annexation, it was not rare for one country to assume control of another if the latter could not survive on its own, from the perspective of preserving international order. He added that the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty was not illegal in terms of international law.

Unsurprisingly, the Koreans voiced strenuous objection, contending that Korea had been coerced into annexation. Crawford dismissed their argument, stating that coercion, if indeed there was any, had no connection with the legitimacy of the treaty. When the Koreans argued that Gojong neither signed nor gave formal consent to the treaty, the British scholar replied that international law did not require those actions.

At the same conference, Prefectural University of Hiroshima Professor Harada Tamaki stated that Emperor Gojong approved of the 1905 Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty, and overrode Cabinet ministers critical of the treaty. Professor Harada’s presentation (based on the analysis of sources like *Ilseongnok* (diaries of the Joseon kings) and *Seungjeongwon Ilgi* (records of the Royal Secretariat)) garnered considerable attention, and deeply disappointed the Korean attendees, who had failed to prove their case.

This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the annexation of Korea. Koreans are intent on convincing Japan to admit that the annexation was illegal. But both they and the Japanese should be mindful that today, as in 1910, the international community recognizes the legitimacy of Japanese control of the Korean peninsula.

## **Military Government of Terauchi Masatake, First Governor General: With an Eye Toward the Modernization of Korea**

*When governing people of a different ethnicity, it is necessary to implement policies compulsorily without a mandate from the governed, backed by military force. One can generally expect such government to result in the rapid and efficient implementation of policies, and a gradual transition to civilian rule and government by rule of law. These were precisely the products of Terauchi's regime.*



**Ito Hirobumi, first resident-general**



**Sone Arasuke, second resident-general**



**Terauchi Masatake, third resident-general and first governor-general**

In May 1910 Sone Arasuke, the second resident-general, resigned due to poor health. He was replaced by Terauchi Masatake, who served concurrently as minister of the Army. In August of the same year Japan annexed Korea, and the Government-General was established. Terauchi (still serving as minister of the Army), received a new title: governor-general. With the formation of the Saionji Cabinet in 1911, Terauchi was relieved of his duties as minister of the Army, and was able to devote all his energy to his duties in Korea.

In governing Korea, Terauchi inaugurated the following five policies:

1. Preservation of public order
2. Creation of a local government system
3. Improvement and augmentation of the educational system
4. Development of industry
5. Establishment of transportation and sanitation systems

For his local government system, Terauchi divided the peninsula into 13 *do* or provinces. Of the 13 heads of the provinces he appointed, six were Koreans. For his administrative structure he created geographical divisions, i.e., *bu* (cities), *gun* (counties) and *myeon* (townships). Terauchi made an effort to appoint Koreans to important posts wherever possible. Koreans served as mayors of counties and townships, and councilors in each province and city. Terauchi also created a vast administrative organization, and formulated cost-cutting strategies.

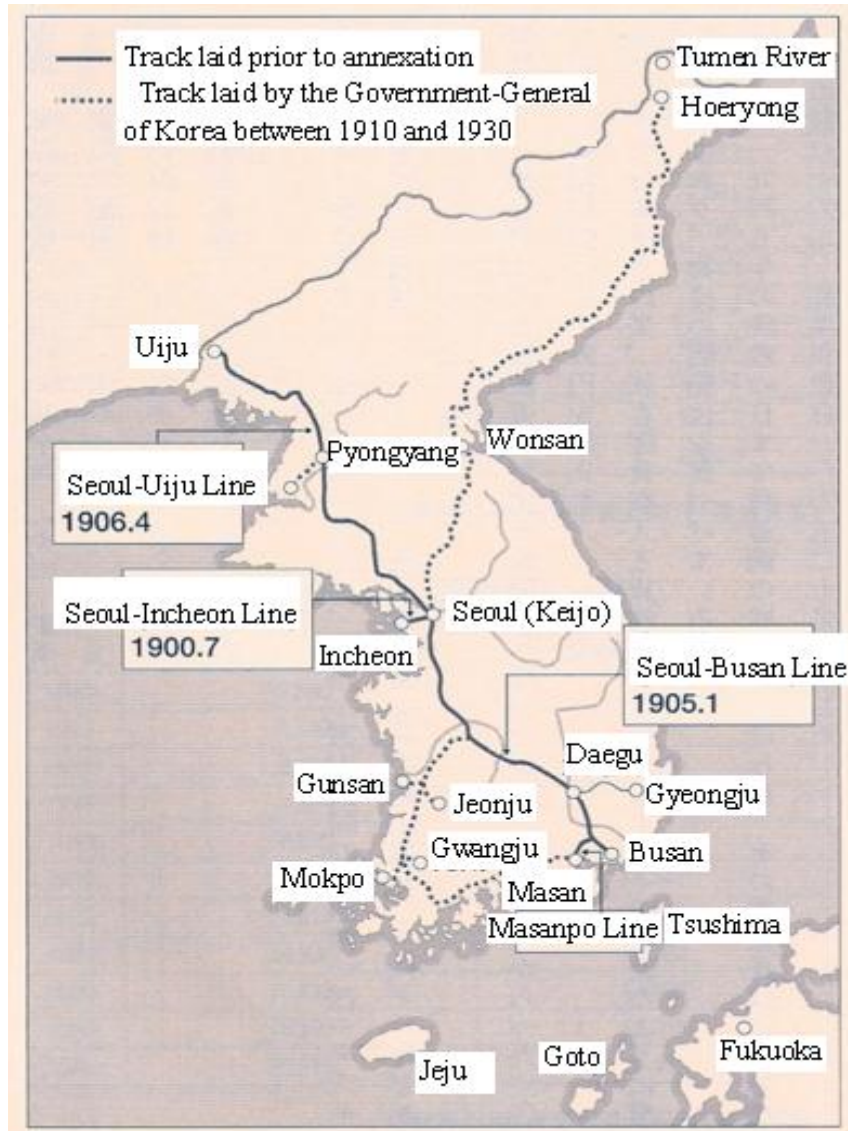
The governor-general also conducted a land survey, which determined the rightful owners of land. However, when the government confiscated land whose ownership could not be clearly established, opponents of annexation accused it of theft.

Terauchi's reforms must have seemed drastic when compared to the irresponsible behavior of the Korean government. In fact, they may have provided some of the impetus for the March 1 Movement.



## Japanese Tax Revenue (¥16 Trillion!) Finances Korean Railroad Construction

### Korean Rail System Completed with Japanese Capital



Even before Korea became a Japanese protectorate, Japan invested huge amounts of money in Korean railroad construction projects. The first Japanese-sponsored project was the Seoul-Incheon Line in 1900. By the time the Seoul-Busan Line was completed in January 1905, the Japanese had overseen the laying of 450 kilometers of track.

With the completion of the Seoul-Uiju Line (499 kilometers) in April 1906, Korea now had a trunk line extending from Busan in the south to Uiju in the north. The total investment of

Japanese tax revenue in those lines was ¥66,380,000 or, multiplying that figure by 100,000 to arrive at the value in today's yen, ¥6.6 trillion!

The Koreans dismiss these achievements, maintaining that Japan built the railway lines for its own purposes – to facilitate further encroachment on the Asian continent. But the majority of passengers were Korean, and the round trip between Seoul and Incheon, which had once taken five or six days, was reduced to two or three hours. Furthermore, the journey from Seoul to Busan or Uiju, which previously took more than a month one way *on foot*, could now be accomplished in just a few days, and seated, at that. It is obvious that the Koreans reaped incalculable benefits from those railroads. In fact, the preparation of railroad infrastructure formed the foundation for Korean modernization, facilitating the flow of people, goods and money on the Korean peninsula. Since total Korean tax revenue in 1905 was only ¥7.84 million, the Korean empire could never have made such a huge investment in infrastructure on its own.



**Railroad construction in Korea (ca. 1904)**

After annexation the Government-General continued to invest heavily in railroad construction. The purpose of these investments was not encroachment on the Asian continent this time, either, but to add regional and local lines. A total of ¥257 million in Japanese tax revenue was poured into railroads and railroad-related projects (more than ¥10 trillion in today's yen).<sup>18</sup>

If, in the face of this evidence, the Koreans continue to claim that Japan's sole motivation for building the railroads was the pursuit of its own interests in Asia, we would like them to answer one simple question: Why did you not destroy all the railroad facilities when Korea achieved independence after World War II?

Obviously they did not destroy the railroads, and their failure to do so weakens their argument considerably. First the Koreans must destroy the railroads, the legacy of the annexation, since further accusations of this sort will serve only to make them look ridiculous.

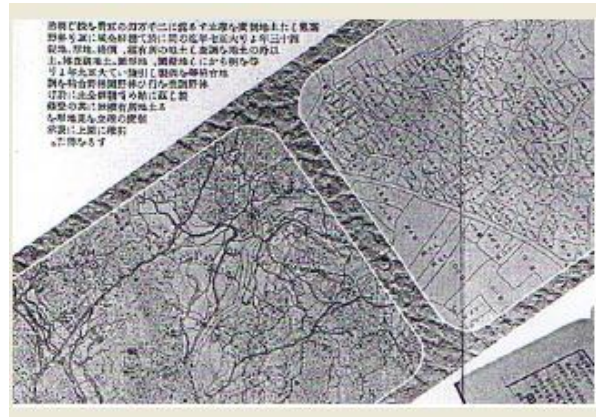
---

<sup>18</sup> Choe Ki-ho, *Nikkan heigo no shinjitsu* (The truth about the Japanese annexation of Korea) (Tokyo: Bijinesusha, 2003).

## Japan Did Not Seize Korean Farmland

### The seven deprivations

According to the delusional Korean historical perception, the Japanese annexation deprived Koreans of (1) their emperor, (2) their sovereignty, (3) their lives, (4) their land, (5) their resources, (6) their language, and (7) their names.



Page in land survey register



The screenshot shows a news article on the Chosun Online website. The article title is "李栄薫教授「厳格なジャッジなき学界が歴史を歪曲」" (Professor Yi Yong-hun: "Without a strict judge, academia distorts history"). The sub-headline reads "李栄薫/ソウル大教授インタビュー(3/4)". The main text snippet states: "ところで李栄薫教授は、『大韓民国の話』の中で、「土地調査事業により全国土の40%が日本のものになった」「食糧の半分を日本に強制的に持ち去った」というのは、何ら根拠のない話」と主張している。"

“In the absence of a strict judge, academia distorts history” (from interview with Seoul University Professor Yi Yong-hun).

But in *The Story of South Korea*, Yi writes that there is absolutely no basis for accusation like, “as a result of land survey, 40% of the nation’s territory ended up in Japanese

**hands” or “ the Japanese made off with half the food in Korea. ”<sup>19</sup>**

Since Korea did not have a land ownership system, after annexation Japan expended an enormous amount of money, ¥2.4 million, on a land survey conducted between 1910 and 1918. The survey revealed that contrary to estimates of 2.8 million *chobu*,<sup>20</sup> there were 4.2 million *chobu* of farmland. It also revealed that the ownership of 900,000 *chobu* of uncleared land was uncertain. It is true that the government appropriated that land, but it was *uncleared* land, not farmland.

According to a Korean high school history textbook published in 1995, approximately 40% of all farmland was illegally acquired by Japanese nationals after the land survey was conducted. However, in 1922, only four years after the land survey was completed, only 6% of the farmland in Korea was Japanese-owned. Most of that was purchased in a lawful manner. How do we account for this huge discrepancy?

After many years of misgovernment, the ownership of a great deal of land in Korea was open to question, for a variety of reasons. In some cases caretakers had become landowners. In others, farmers who couldn't pay their taxes simply disappeared, and the vacated land was bought or sold illegally. The most serious problem was ownership disputes between the public and private sectors involving parcels that had originally been state land or land belonging to the Korean court, but were now in the hands of private citizens.

In making its decisions, the Government-General examined the records of the past several hundred years, and assigned land that clearly belonged to it to the court. In many other cases, it was impossible to find written records, and therefore impossible to establish ownership, so those parcels of land were appropriated. However, only 6% of them were purchased by Japanese, and those via legitimate, aboveboard transactions.

Furthermore, farmland appropriated by the government was sold on an installment basis. The proceeds were applied to social welfare projects, such as the building of additional educational facilities and research on and improvement of irrigation and agriculture.

In recent years scholars like Jo Seok-gon, author of “Reconsidering the Colonial Era,”<sup>21</sup> and Yi Yong-hun, author of *The Story of South Korea*,<sup>22</sup> are now acknowledging that claims of widespread confiscation of land are distortions of historical fact.

---

<sup>19</sup> Yi Yong-hun, *Dai kan minkoku no monogatari* (The story of South Korea), trans. Nagashima Hiroki (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 2009).

<sup>20</sup> One *chobu* is equal to 2.45 acres.

<sup>21</sup> In *Creation and Criticism*, Summer 1996.

<sup>22</sup> Yi Yong-hun, *Dai Kan minkoku no monogatari* (The story of South Korea), trans. Nagashima Hiroki (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 2009).



## Suppression of the March 1 Movement Was Essential



**Hasegawa Yoshimichi,  
2<sup>nd</sup> governor-general**



**Monument to the March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement  
at Tapgol (Pagoda) Park in Seoul**

Casualties of the Independence Movement			
Source	Participants	Killed	Wounded
<i>The Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement</i> <sup>23</sup>	2.03 million	7,509	15,961
Government-General (6/20/1919)	1.06 million	561	1,567
Korean Army Headquarters (9/29/1919)		407	936

*According to research conducted by Korean journalist and educator Kim Won-seop, the March 1 Movement was an insurrection, not an independence movement.*

On February 8, 1919, some Korean exchange students who had heard about US President Woodrow Wilson’s reference to self-determination in his “Fourteen Points” speech gathered in Tokyo and issued a manifesto demanding independence from Japan. News of their activities

<sup>23</sup> Book written in 1920 by Park Eun-sik, a historian and later president of the “provisional government” of Korea headquartered in Shanghai. Park relied on hearsay and newspaper articles for his estimates of casualties.

soon traveled to Korea, where it coincided with a gathering at Pagoda Park in Seoul to mourn the passing of former Emperor Gojong. The students' manifesto was read aloud there.

The assembled crowd, numbering in the tens of thousands, began marching and soon launched into a rampage, engaging in acts of vandalism, some of which involved destroying railroad cars. The violence continued into the next day, when disturbances began breaking out in other parts of Korea as well.

The violence escalated until it had spread throughout the entire Korean peninsula. Crowds attacked village mayors' offices and military police offices. They also set fires and assaulted police officers and pro-Japanese landowners. The Government-General strived mightily to restore order, augmenting the police force with military personnel, but there were many casualties on both sides. This was the one and only unfortunate event in 35 years of annexation.

Estimates of the casualties of this incident are shown in the chart above, but they differ significantly according to the source consulted. It is impossible to arrive at accurate figures, but the Japanese added up the numbers reported when they polled each village, whereas the Korean figures were compiled by an anti-Japanese organization in Shanghai (the so-called "provisional government of Korea") and accompanied by a note describing the difficulty of ascertaining accurate information about the movement's activities.

Trials of those arrested for acts of violence were held, with surprising outcomes. Despite the fact that the defendants were charged with insurrection, a serious crime, Governor-General Saito adopted a conciliatory policy. Even the principal agitators were sentenced to prison terms not exceeding three years, and only 37 people were found guilty. Not one activist was executed.

After the incident, the Government-General abandoned military government in favor of cultural rule. He did away with the military police system whereby military personnel augmented the police force, and afforded the Koreans a measure of freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

It is worth noting here that the chief proponents of the March 1 Movement were Christians and members of the Cheondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way). Beginning with the righteous armies wars, Christians were at the forefront of the anti-Japanese movement, and the subsequent May 4 Movement in China. They were involved in subsequent anti-Japanese guerrilla warfare, and the primary cause of the Greater East Asia War that followed.

## 4. NO APOLOGY REQUIRED FOR THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA

### Primary Agents of Strife in Asia: American Missionaries and the Comintern

**Five Eulsa Traitors** (five statesmen who acceded to the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty in 1905, which paved the way for Japanese control of Korea)

Lee Wan-yong	Minister of Education
Lee Geun-Taek	Minister of the Army
Yi Ji-yong	Minister of the Interior
Bak Je-sun	Foreign Minister
Gwon Jung-Hyeon	Minister of Agriculture and Industry

In Korea these men are reviled as traitors.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Assassination attempt on Governor-General Terauchi**

In August 1910, after Terauchi had been appointed Governor-General of Korea, several attempts were made on his life. Since the majority of the 122 suspects were Christians, Japanese suspicions that American missionaries in Korea were the masterminds behind the plots created friction between Japan and the US.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Chungsaeng Gate Incident**

On November 28, 1895, Russian and American troops stationed in Korea and pro-Russian former Minister of Agriculture and Industry Yi Beom-jin engineered a counter-coup whose objective was the assassination of Prime Minister Kim Hong-jip. Their plan to abduct Gojong and force him to issue an imperial order for the dismissal of Kim Hong-jip did not succeed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Seven Jeongmi Traitors** (seven ministers of state who forced Emperor Gojong to abdicate after he dispatched secret envoys to the Hague)

Lee Wan-yong	Prime Minister
Song Byeong-jun	Minister of Agriculture and Industry
Yi Byeong-mu	Minister of the Army
Go Yeong-hui	Minister of Finance
Jo Jung-eung	Minister of Justice
Yi Jae-gon	Minister of Education
Im Seon-jun	Minister of the Interior

In Korea these men are reviled as traitors.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **New People's Society (Sinminhoe)**

A clandestine, US-based Korean independence activist group headed by Yun Chi-ho, the New People's Society was dismantled by the Japanese government during the investigation of the attempt on Governor-General Terauchi's life. Later Yun turned pro-Japanese and was awarded the title of baron in the peerage system.



An examination of the unrest that rocked Asia between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century discloses astonishing facts, in particular how deeply involved American missionaries were in fomenting it.

Until the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese did not view Christian missionaries as dangerous adversaries. They were more worried about Russia and the US joining forces against Japan. But it is clear that American missionaries were actively involved in the Chunsaeng Gate Incident. Upheavals occurring after the Russo-Japanese War pitted armies consisting of Christians and members of the Cheondo religion against Japan.

Christians like An Jung-geun were at the forefront of incidents that took place after the Hague Peace Conference (1907).

In 1911 there was an attempt to assassinate Governor-General Terauchi. That attempt ended in failure. However, it is widely believed that the US-based New People's Society was hoping to win the sympathy of foreign nations by assassinating the governor-general and Cabinet ministers it had designated as the five Eulsa traitors and the seven Jeongmi traitors.

The leaders of the March 1 Movement were also Christians. When Saito Makoto was appointed Governor-General in 1919 to restrain the activists, his most important mission was making peace with the Christians.

Christians were also responsible for the May 4 Movement, which arose in China in 1919, the same year as the March 1 Movement. The demonstrators staged a series of anti-Japanese terrorist acts, which escalated until Japan was enmeshed in the Second Sino-Japanese War and then the Greater East Asia War. And adroitly manipulating the Christians was the Comintern, organized after the Russian Revolution.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century communism spread like wildfire, and support for the dictatorship of the proletariat grew, under the guise of freedom and equality. Just as the Christians had hoped, China embraced communism. But did communism bring happiness to the Chinese people? This question needs no answer.

## **Third Governor-General Saito's Cultural Rule: Seeking Reconciliation with Korea**



**Saito Makoto, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> governor-general of Korea and 30<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Japan**



**General Government Office Building (demolished in 1995)**

Saito Makoto was governor-general of Korea for the better part of 12 years, between August 1919 and June 1931, with the exception of a two-year period during which he was replaced by Yamanashi Hanzo. Since Japan ruled Korea for 36 years, that means that Saito oversaw that government for one-third of its duration.

Saito's appointment came when Governor-General Hasegawa resigned to take responsibility for protests against Japanese rule referred to as the March 1 Movement. His most pressing task was reconciliation with the Koreans. However, when he arrived in Seoul, someone in the crowd of people who had come out to welcome him threw a bomb into the carriage that Saito and his wife had just boarded. Pandemonium ensued. Fortunately for Saito, his belt saved his life; he wasn't even injured. However there were two holes in the belt where it had been penetrated by shrapnel. More than 20 people were injured by that same bomb.

Unlike Terauchi and Hasegawa, who ran what was essentially a military government, Saito practiced "cultural rule," meaning that the Koreans were offered some cultural autonomy. But first, he needed to restore order in Korea. He began by eliminating intimidating uniforms and swords worn at the belt, except for certain occupations such as the police. Saito also narrowed the disparity between the status of Koreans and Japanese, although that had to be done in stages. He raised salaries too, so Koreans were earning as much as Japanese nationals for the same work.

An analysis of the riots and demonstrations that occurred reveals that American missionaries were heavily involved in every single one of them: the March 1 Movement, the attempted assassination of Governor-General Terauchi and, going back to pre-annexation times, the righteous armies wars. That is why Saito made every effort to placate them. For instance, he abolished caning as a form of judicial punishment, since the Christians hated it so much.

Saito also made significant investments in education. While emphasizing elementary and secondary education, he established Keijo University (now Seoul National University) so that Koreans could acquire the knowledge they needed to make them employable.

Saito attempted to improve communication by encouraging Koreans to learn the Japanese language. He also encouraged Japanese government employees residing in Korea to learn Korean, offering monetary rewards to those who made the effort. Other cultural improvements included allowing the publication of newspapers in the Korean writing system, and sponsoring exhibitions of Korean art. He also helped to preserve Korean culture in many ways, some of which were supporting the compilation of Korean history works and building an annex to the Government-General Office to serve as a museum.

## Japanese Protect Koreans During the Turmoil Accompanying a Natural Disaster



**Monument honoring Okawa Tsunekichi, Tozen Temple: home of the police chief who protected Koreans**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Tozen Temple: home of the monument to Okawa**

When the Kanto earthquake struck on September 1, 1923, rumors began to spread through Tokyo that Koreans were planning a riot, and had already set fires and poisoned well water. Some Japanese panicked when they heard those rumors, and organized vigilante groups that attacked and killed many Koreans.

According to a contemporaneous survey conducted by Tokyo University Professor Yoshino Sakuzo, 2,613 Koreans were killed: another survey conducted by the Home Ministry's Bureau of Police and Public Order had the total at 231. A recent work by Kudo Miyoko, *The Facts about the Murder of Koreans in the Kanto Earthquake*, concurs with the Home Ministry's figures.

At the heart of the problem were cells of Korean and Japanese socialists ensconced in the city who were intent on staging a violent revolution. We know this is so from information political activist Uchida Ryohei obtained through personal contacts and provided to the government. But it is true that those false rumors stirred some Japanese to action, with tragic results.

However, in the Tsurumi district of Yokohama, Police Chief Okawa Tsunekichi saved the lives of many Koreans by taking them under his wing. An angry crowd gathered and demanded that he hand them over. Okawa confronted the mob and said, "These Koreans are law-abiding people. The police will take charge, so you need not concern yourselves with them. If they escape, I will make amends by committing *harakiri*."

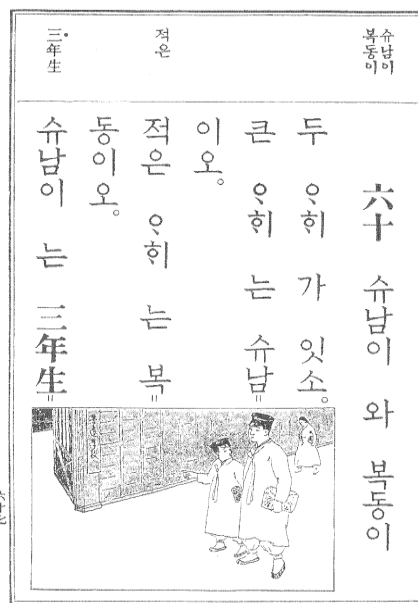
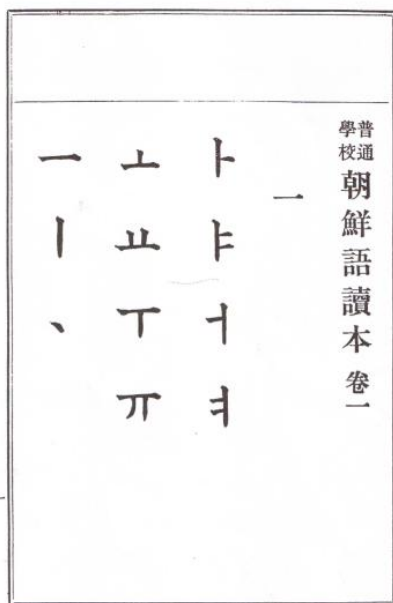
In 1953 after World War II had ended, the members of the Tsurumi chapter of the Koreans' United Democratic Front in Japan expressed their gratitude to Okawa by having a monument erected in his honor on the grounds of Tozen Temple in Tsurumi, where his remains are enshrined. The inscription reads, in part: "We dedicate this monument to Okawa Tsunekichi, who risked his life to right a wrong, and in doing so saved more than 300 lives. May he rest in peace, and may his virtues be extolled for all eternity."

Okawa is just one of the Japanese who went out of their way to save Korean lives. Numerous examples of the heroism of other police officers, Army and Navy personnel under the Yokosuka command, and even private citizens, can be found in official records.

Conventional wisdom would have us believe that Koreans were the only victims of violence associated with the earthquake, but it is important to remember that some Koreans did in fact commit acts of violence, taking advantage of the confusion that reigned.

## Japanese Resurrect Korean Alphabet and Compile a Korean Grammar

In Korea one often hears the claim that during the annexation, the Japanese deprived the Koreans of their language and prohibited the teaching of Korean history. However, the truth of the matter is the exact opposite. The Korean alphabet (Hangul) had fallen into disuse because the Korean literary elite shunned it, considering it inferior to Chinese. Japanese political scholar Fukuzawa Yukichi discovered the alphabet while studying Korean culture. He assigned Japanese and Korean scholars the task of developing a modern alphabet. After Japan annexed Korea, the Government-General had a great many elementary schools built in an effort to raise the nation's educational standard. (In fact, during the 35-year annexation, the number of elementary schools rose from 100 to 5,000.) Korean was the language of instruction at those schools, and the Government-General committed itself to the diffusion of the Hangul alphabet. Shown below is an elementary school textbook issued by the Government-General. Obviously, the Japanese not only did *not* prohibit Hangul, they also encouraged its use.



In addition to the alphabet, the establishment of a standard Korean language was another benefit of the Government-General's modernization policies. When the annexation took effect, the numerous dialects of Korean spoken sometimes prevented Koreans from different locales from communicating with each other, and obstructed modernization. The Government-General decided upon the language spoken in Seoul and its environs as standard Korean, and disseminated it throughout Korea via the elementary schools. This form of the language took hold and remains standard Korean to this day.

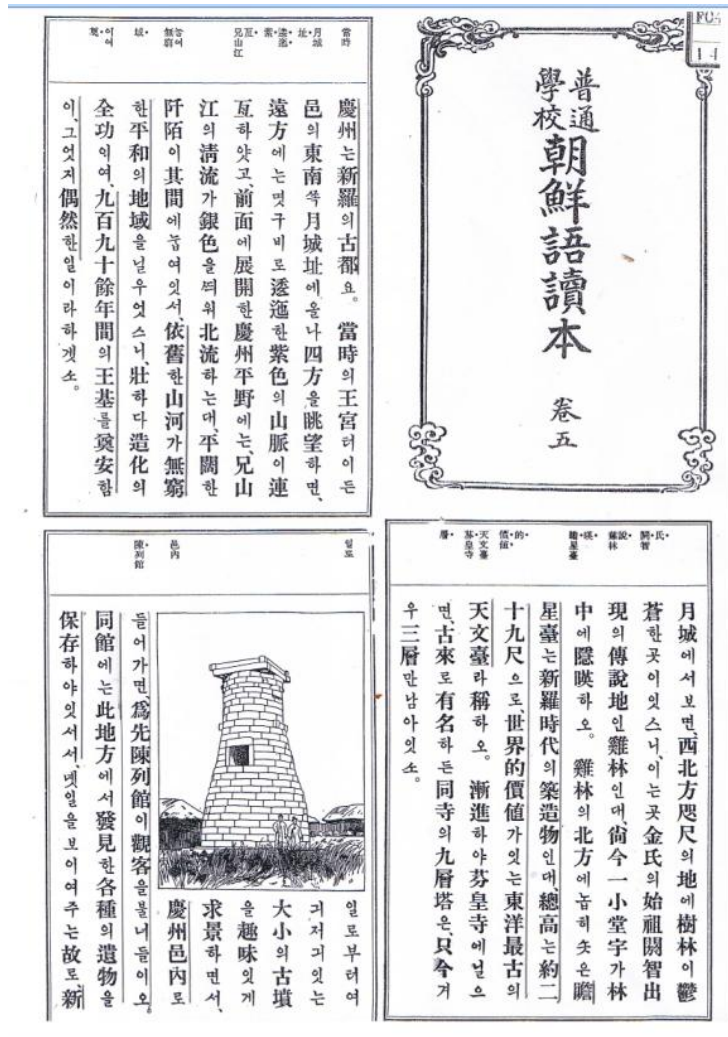
The accusation that Japan forbade the teaching of Korean history is an outright lie. To the left are excerpts from a textbook issued by the Government-General in 1924 for use by fifth

graders in Korea. The book contains detailed descriptions of Korean historical events. Some examples follow.

“The Cheomseongdae (platform from which one looks at the stars) was built in the Kingdom of Silla in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The structure, which stands 9.4 meters high, has international value and is the oldest observatory in East Asia.”

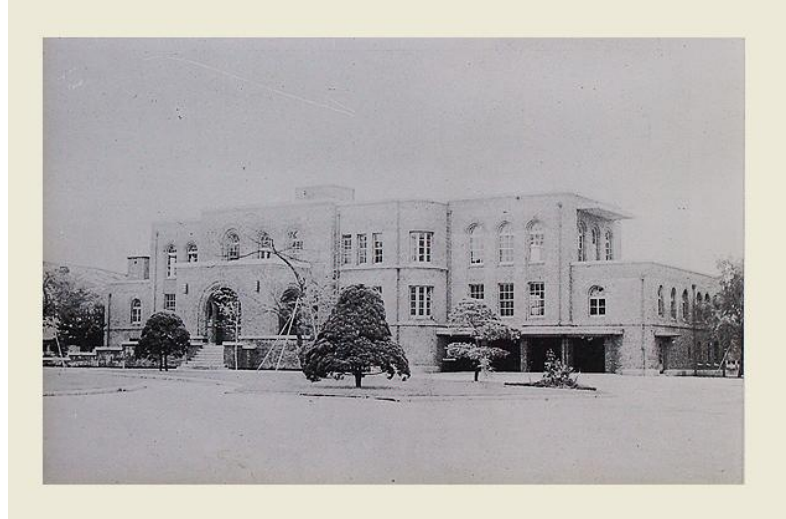
“Gyeongju was once the capital of the Kingdom of Silla. The natural landscape conveys a sense of eternal peace. It is no accident that the city flourished for more than 990 years as the capital of a kingdom.”

In addition to the *Korean Language Reader* shown at left, the Government-General published history textbooks that described Korean historical events in great detail. The Japanese made a concerted effort to instill pride in the Koreans by teaching them about their history. The claim that the Japanese proscribed the teaching of Korean history is a distortion of fact, a lie spawned by postwar anti-Japanese education.





## The Dawn of Modern Higher Education in Korea: The Founding of Keijo Imperial University



**Keijo Imperial University<sup>24</sup> Medical School in 1926**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Keijo University Preparatory School in 1924**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Japan has been accused of treating Korea like a colony. We would like to ask the accusers if Great Britain established an Oxford or Cambridge in India? Did France found a Sorbonne in Vietnam? The answer to both questions is no. But the Japanese established universities in Korea and Taiwan, which they modeled after the most prestigious universities in Japan, and at which they offered the best possible education to the local population.*

In 1924 the Keijo Imperial University Preparatory School was established, representing the sixth imperial university founded by Japan. In 1930 law and medical schools were established, and not long after that, a department of science and engineering. The university was the highest institute of learning in Korea.

Yu Jin-o, who served as president of Korea University after Korea achieved independence, was the first graduate of Keijo Imperial University's Faculty of Law. As a student he showed a great deal of promise and scholastic aptitude. Soon after he entered the university's preparatory school, he joined a social group whose members were both Korean and Japanese. One night members of the group went out drinking and, with the courage alcohol bestows,

---

<sup>24</sup> Known today as Seoul National University.

paraded around the city, singing and shouting, astonishing city residents. They jeered at police officers, infuriating them. Their “pranks” were written up and criticized in the newspapers.

Yu, along with a Japanese representing the Japanese students involved, apologized to the university president. This was just one event in an otherwise productive youth. He and the other Korean students were careful not to neglect their studies. In fact, they spent most of their time engrossed in them. After World War II, Yu Jin-o reflected on his student days.

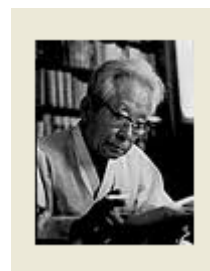
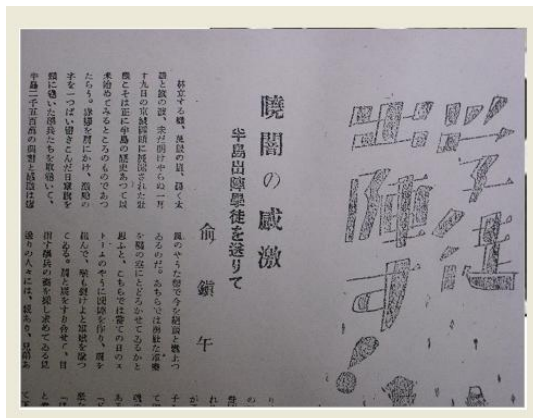
“In the academic and technical disciplines, I think I did very important work. If there had been no Keijo University, nation-building would have been much more difficult for Korea. In that sense, the university contributed a great deal to the Korea of today.”

Since the student body of Keijo Imperial University consisted of two (or sometimes three) Japanese students for every Korean student, one could argue that there was discrimination. But the demographics were such that the ratio of Japanese to Koreans was about three to one. Furthermore, since three out of four Korean children were unable to attend to school in the mid-1930s because their families were too poor, a surprisingly large number of Korean students were able to receive higher education. Toward the end of the annexation period, about half the Keijo Imperial University students were Korean. The Korean students were truly elite, and Keijo Imperial University nurtured them – the leaders of postwar Korea.

## The Drafter of South Korea's Constitution Was a Leader of the Student Volunteer Soldier Movement



Korean Student Volunteer Soldiers



Yu Jin-o

“Inspiration before Dawn,” a report written by Yu Jin-o

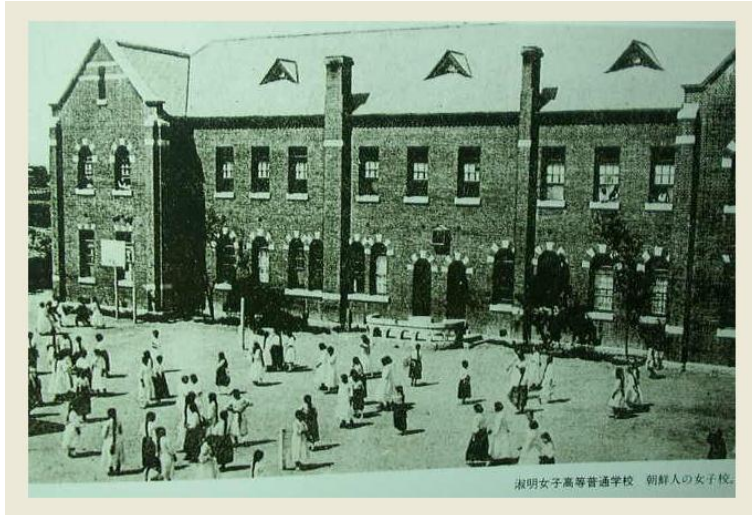
On October 21, 1943, the Ministry of Education sponsored a send-off event for students who had volunteered for military service, in the stadium in the Outer Precinct of the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo. On that rainy day several tens of thousands of young enlistees from the Kanto District were in attendance. In Japan students had been urged to go to war as the decisive phase of the Greater East Asia War approached, as they had been in Europe and the US.

Students were also encouraged to join the military in Taiwan and Korea, both under Japanese rule. At the forefront of the drive to promote student enlistment in Korea was Yu Jin-o (1906-1987). He was the first graduate of Keijo Imperial University, and served as an administrator of the Korean League for Total National Power. He represented Korea at the Greater East Asian Writers' Congress held in August 1943. There he garnered a great deal of attention with a speech entitled "Establishing Principles for Decisive-War Literature." In November of the same year Yu wrote an editorial for the *Mainichi Shinpo*, a Korean newspaper, entitled "Military Service Is Power," which convinced many students to enlist. On January 19, 1944, the day the first Korean student soldiers joined the Army, Yu wrote a report entitled "Inspiration before Dawn" in which he described that inspiration: "I am certain that the spectacle I viewed on January 19 in front of Keijo Station has never been seen in all the history of Korea."

Yu Jin-o was also the man who drafted the constitution of South Korea, promulgated in 1948. He later became president of the prestigious Korea University. Events in his past caused Yu to be condemned, even in death, by a Korea that perceives him as a collaborator. But while Korea was governed by the Japanese, Yu was guilty only of refining his intellect, studying law and developing his talents. He did exactly what any other Japanese citizen of his station would have done. One needs profound erudition and education to draft a nation's constitution. We should be proud that someone like Yu blossomed after having benefited from the educational environment in the Japanese Empire.

We cannot hold out much hope for the spread of forthright wisdom to the world from Korea, a nation that continually perpetrates imbecilic acts like condemning Yu Jin-o for all eternity, simply because he was involved in pro-Japanese activities.

## **Fuchizawa Yoshie: The Japanese Woman Who Brought Modern Women's Education to Korea**



**Girls dressed in Korean costume at the Sookmyung Girls' High School**



**Fuchizawa Yoshie**

Fuchizawa Yoshie (1850-1936) was a Japanese woman who made an immense contribution to modern women's education in Korea. She studied in the US for several years. In May 1905, when the Russo-Japanese War was coming to an end, she traveled to Korea. When she arrived there, she was overwhelmed by the abysmal social status of Korean women. Almost immediately, she vowed to dedicate the rest of her life to their education.

In 1906 she established the Myeongsin Girls' School, the forerunner of modern women's education in Korea. The school was built on land donated by Princess Eom (one of Gojong's concubines), who also contributed others of her assets. Yi Jeong-suk was appointed principal because of her closeness to the princess. Fuchizawa was dean of the school and, for all practical purposes, principal as well.

In 1910, the year of annexation, the school's name was changed to Sookmyung Girls' School (the name has endured). Its first students were daughters of Korean nobles, but soon girls from ordinary families were admitted, and the school flourished. But when the March 1 Movement broke out, a great many of its students participated in anti-Japanese demonstrations.

In 1927, 400 students stayed away from classes in protest against Japanese rule of Korea. But Fuchizawa never got angry at the girls who were arrested for participating in demonstrations. She but did her best to protect them, convincing the police to release them into her custody.

Such behavior was a manifestation of her deep-seated maternal affection for her students. The students returned that affection, and trusted her implicitly.

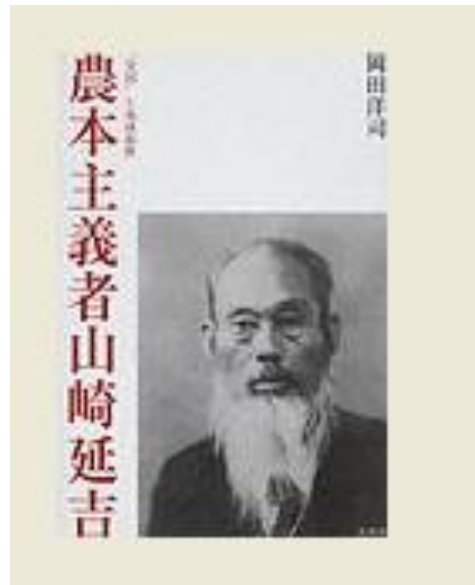
In 1935 at a ceremony commemorating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Government-General, Fuchizawa was presented with a distinguished service award.

Today the school is known as Sookmyung Women's University. Its original incarnation, Sookmyung Girls' School, is famous as one of the foremost institutions in Korea with a unified middle and high-school education program for girls.

## Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige's Rural Development Program and the Japanese Who Supported It



**Ugaki Kazushige,  
4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> governor-general  
of Korea**



**Biography of agriculture-first  
proponent Yamazaki Enkichi**

In June 1931, during the Great Depression, Ugaki Kazushige was appointed governor-general of Korea.

In a speech commemorating his appointment delivered in 1931 at the Bank of Tokyo Club, Ugaki said, “At the time of World War I, partitioned Poland appeared to be part of Germany and part of Russia. But as the war dragged on, and the situation became untenable, the Poles betrayed both nations. Though the Poles seemed to be aligned with Germany and Russia, spiritually and materially, they were not.

“What about Korea? Compared with the time four years ago, when I took over the duties of former Governor-General Saito (Minoru) while he was attending the Geneva Naval Conference, the standard of living has declined both spiritually and materially, because we are in the midst of a great depression.

(...)

“To prevent something like this happening to Japan, we must transfer some Japanese jobs to Koreans, and create more jobs for them by promoting industrial development.



“What industries should be promoted in Korea? First we should consider the exploitation of mineral resources, such as gold, iron ore and coal, which are plentiful in Korea. Then we should make effective use of the forest resources of northern Korea, as well as the wilderness and the coastline. We should also develop water-power resources, and take advantage of the cheap and abundant labor force. There is a wealth of possibilities. What we lack is wisdom and funds.

There are plenty of fields that are ripe for such development. What we lack is wisdom and funding. I appeal to those of you here tonight for your cooperation in this effort.”

Soon after he became governor-general, Ugaki made an inspection tour of farming villages and launched a rural development program. Part of it involved teaching villagers that cultivation of the spirit is as important as cultivation of the fields.

Ugaki summoned pioneering agricultural educator Yamazaki Nobuyoshi to Korea to help with the program. Yamazaki’s guiding principles were service, cooperation and self-reliance.

Another Japanese, Shigematsu Masanao,<sup>25</sup> worked together with rural Koreans, helping them improve their standard of living. He brought hope to demoralized farmers, who came to consider him a saint. He was one of many Japanese who devoted their lives to helping the Koreans.

In 1970 ROK President Park Chung-hee initiated the Saemaul Movement, a rural revitalization movement. Its guiding principles were independence, hard work and cooperation. Both Yamazaki and the Saemaul Movement were inspired by the teachings Ninomiya Sontoku, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Japanese philosopher, economist and promoter of agriculture.

---

<sup>25</sup> See p. 86

## Financial Cooperatives, Korean Farmers' Lifeline, Sponsor Straw-Weaving Event



**Awards ceremony  
Korean farmers at a straw-weaving event**

The weaving of *kamasu*, or straw bags, is a craft that was once highly valued in rural Japan. Villagers wove straw into bags that were used to hold and carry fertilizer, grains and salt, among other things. According to historical records, there was a great demand for *kamasu* in Korea, but the craft was not practiced there. Even as late as the 1920s, a great many were imported from Japan. Obviously, the time had come for Korea to supply its own *kamasu*.

In the early days of annexation, approximately 80% of the Korean population consisted of farming families, the majority of which were indigent. The Japanese established financial cooperatives to help the villagers make ends meet (an unjust social system had caused them to lose hope and, consequently, the will to work) . But simply helping them manage their finances was not going to make them prosperous. They needed to learn a skill or craft that would earn money.

The Japanese directors of the financial cooperatives in each region assembled the villagers and encouraged them to acquire agricultural skills and crafts. One of them was the weaving of *kamasu*. The photograph above shows a weaving event. Villagers of all ages are seated in front of looms, preparing to begin weaving. At such events they competed with each other to see who could produce the best quality and the largest quantity. If the results were good, there were prizes and commendations to be had. Friendly competition helped the villagers raise their standard of living.

The Korean financial cooperatives, the joint effort of Japanese officials and private citizens, infused Korean farming villagers with a new vitality. They continued to operate even after World War II ended, and persist today in the form of the Korean Agricultural Bank.

The cooperatives were actually the model for microcredit (the offering of very small loans), for which the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006. That is how innovative they were.

## Shigematsu Masanao: Guiding Spirit for Korean Farming Villages



**Shigematsu Masanao**



**Shigematsu Masanao, standing to right of monument**

Agricultural economist Shigematsu Masanao had been working at a Korean financial cooperative for two years, when he was shot by a Korean in 1919, during a March 1 Movement uprising. Though he nearly died, Shigematsu recovered, but never regained full use of his right leg.

For a brief time after the shooting, Shigematsu did desk work to lessen the strain on his leg. But he found himself unable to go back on the vow he had made: to share good and bad times with Koreans. He headed back to the fields.

At the time he was living in a place called Kangdong, in South Pyongan (today part of North Korea). Farming families comprised 80% of the Korean population; most of them were very poor. By the time each spring came, they would have no food left, and there would be a long wait until the first harvest of the year. At that point the desperate farmers would borrow rice from landowners or usurers, which they would pay back in the fall. But they would face the same problem the following spring.

Shigematsu began teaching the farmers to raise chickens, funding the project with his own money. He encouraged the villagers to raise and sell chickens and eggs, and save the money they earned. His selfless acts and his passion for them were contagious. Gradually, the previously apathetic villagers became hopeful. Even near-miracles occurred (for instance, the son of a poor tenant farmer became a physician). Under Shigematsu's guidance the villagers

prospered. More and more of them became able to send their children to school and pay their taxes.

Word of Shigematsu's good works as the guiding spirit for Korean farming villages soon spread to Japan. He was commended by Prince Takamatsu, who gave him a silver vase. To the villagers, Shigematsu was a saint. To show their appreciation, they built a monument to honor him after he died. Shigematsu was a miracle worker, a man who transformed the Koreans' hate into boundless love. His good works in Korea served as a symbol of Japan-Korea relations in the Showa era, which evolved from conciliation to union.

Shigematsu's distinctive physiognomy, his horn-rimmed glasses, beard and cane also made him memorable to the point that even Koreans who had never met him knew who he was.

Shigematsu Masanao became quite famous, but neither the Japanese nor the Koreans should forget the human love shown by many of his lesser-known countrymen who worked side by side with Korean farmers, and helped improve their lives.

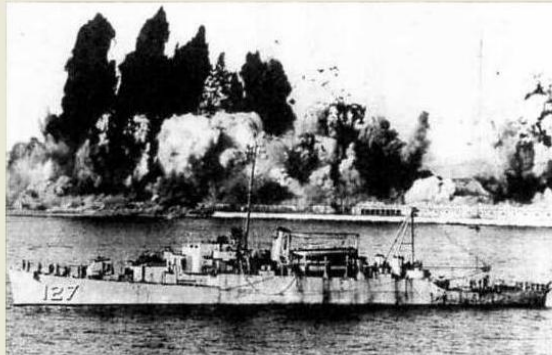
## **Nameless Fishing Village Transformed into Bustling Modern Industrial City**



**Heungnam, North Korea: modern industrial city built by Japan**



**Noguchi Shitago**



**Because of the threat it posed, US troops bombed Heungnam city during the Korean War**

Noguchi Shitago was an engineer, a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University. He was also an entrepreneur who operated chemical plants manufacturing rayon, nitrogen and ammonium sulfate in Nobeoka and Minamata, Kyushu. All of these enterprises used electric power, generated inexpensively thanks to an abundant water supply, and all of them were successful. In 1926 Noguchi decided to participate in the development of Korea.

On the east coast of the Korean peninsula a chain of mountains more than 1,000 meters high stretches from north to south. The western side of the mountain range slopes gently down to the Yellow Sea, into which three major rivers (the Yalu, Taedong and Han) flow.

Noguchi dammed up the Bujeon and Jangjin rivers, two tributaries of the Yalu River at its upper reaches, creating two artificial lakes. Then he excavated a waterway in the steep Taebaek Mountains. Water poured from a great height onto the Japan Sea side (in Hamgyeongnam province), where it produced electricity. One artificial lake generated 200 megawatts, and the other, 400 megawatts of electric power.

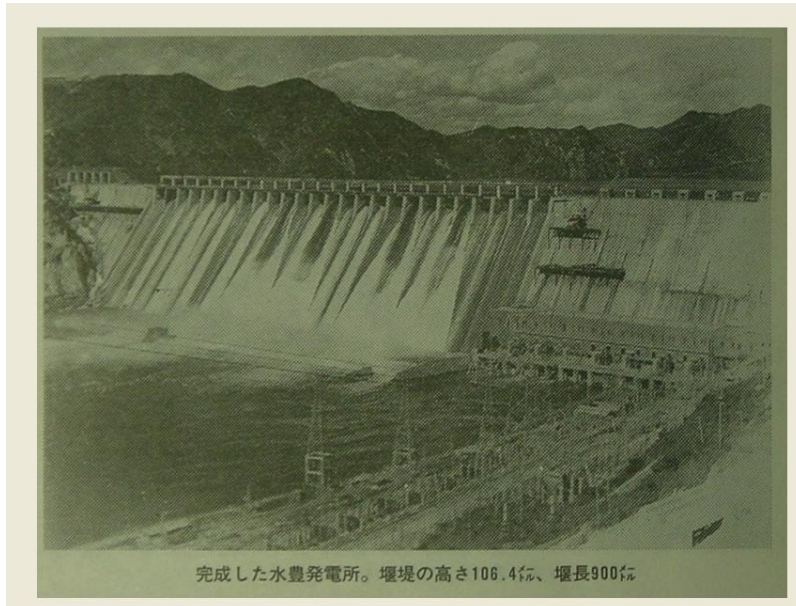
Then Noguchi chose a nameless fishing village south of Hamheung, the capital of Hamgyeongnam, as the site for what became the second largest nitrogen fertilizer plant in the world, as well as gunpowder, magnesium and fire-resistant brick factories.

The fishing village was transformed into a modern industrial port city named Heungnam. Even during the cold winters, each of the company units housing the 180,000 residents of the city had hot water. After it had generated electricity, the water irrigated more than 15,000 new rice fields. Further downstream, it was destined for industrial use in Heungnam.

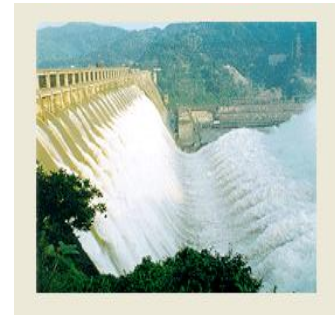
Since Heungnam is located north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, the city fell into the hands of the North Koreans after World War II, like a gift from heaven. When the Korean War broke out, realizing that it presented a significant threat, the Americans bombed Heungnam, reducing it to ashes.



## The Japanese Build the World's Second-Largest Dam in Korea; Noguchi Shitago's Philanthropy



**Supung Dam upon completion; height, 106.4 m; length, 900 m**



**Supung Dam today viewed from China**



**North Korean national emblem featuring Supung Dam**

In 1937 construction began on the Supung Dam, a joint project of the governments of Korea and Manzhouguo, in the Yalu River flowing between Korea and Manchuria. Near the dam one of the largest hydroelectric plants in the world was built. When completed in 1944, the plant generated a total of 700 megawatts. Its construction provided social infrastructure that rapidly transformed Korea, then an agrarian society, into an industrial one. Playing central roles in the mammoth construction project were Noguchi Shitago, the owner of Nihon Chisso, and engineer Kubota Yutaka. (The Korean side of the dam is shown at the bottom of the photograph.) It is easy to comprehend the immensity of this project when we realize that the entire hydroelectric output of Japan at that time was 2.8 gigawatts.

Assets created by Japan in Korea prior to World War II were estimated, on August 15, 1945, at ¥89.12 billion (calculated at ¥15 to the dollar). Of those assets, ¥46.22 billion were created in North Korea; they are worth ¥8 trillion today.

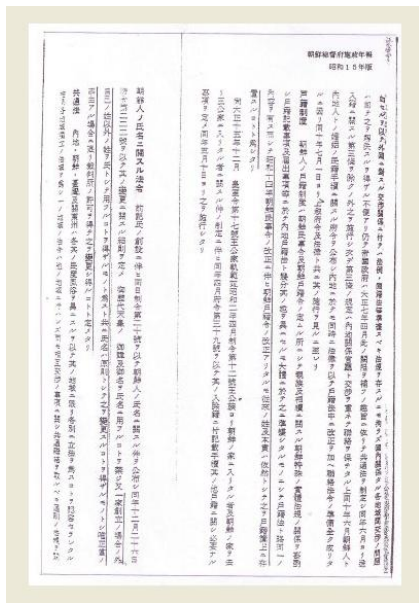
In August 1945, when the war was nearing an end, the Soviet troops invaded the Supung Dam area, and appropriated five of the seven generators, which they transported back to the USSR. The dam was also the target of American air attacks, but it was so solidly built that the attacks failed to destroy it.

Those who think the exploits of Noguchi Shitago (1874-1944) were motivated by rapacity will be surprised to learn that after suffering a cerebral hemorrhage in 1941, he willed all his assets, which amounted to ¥30 million, to public works projects. Noguchi donated ¥5 million to the Government-General's scholarship fund for Korean students. These acts of charity were, needless to say, greatly appreciated by the Korean people.

## Name-Change Policy Implemented in Response to the Wishes of the Korean People

In Korea the prevalent perception about the name-change policy is that the Government-General robbed the Koreans of their surnames and forced them to take Japanese names. This perception is a flagrant distortion of history.

Soon after the annexation, the Government-General issued Ordinance No. 124 (Concerning the Changing of Surnames and Given Names), which prohibited Koreans from using Japanese given names out of respect for Korean customs.



Thirty years later, some Koreans argued that the prohibition was discriminatory, since they were, for all intents and purposes, Japanese. Koreans who had settled in Manchuria were particularly insistent because they sensed danger. Apparently, unless they bore Japanese names, they risked being attacked by mounted bandits or other outlaws.

Operating from an impartial position that did not brook discrimination, the Government-General decided to allow Koreans who wished to adopt Japanese names to do so. That was the essence of the name-change policy.

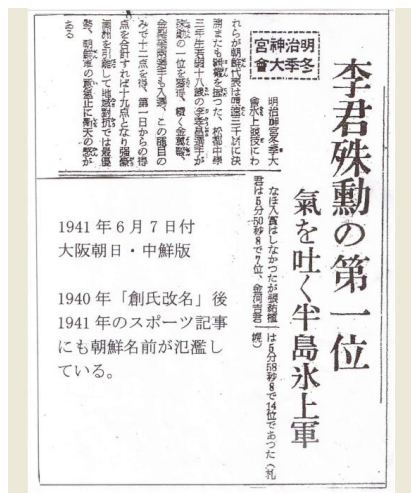
Page from 1940 Government-General Yearbook outlining name-change policy

## Japanese names never forced upon Koreans



A grassroots movement arose among Koreans (sometimes entire towns or villages!) who wanted to show their appreciation to the Government-General by adopting Japanese names. However, Governor-General Minami Jiro, issued instructions that there be absolutely no coercion, on three separate occasions. The newspaper article shown at left center bears the headline “The Adoption of Japanese surnames is totally discretionary.”

Article from *Osaka Asahi Shimbun*, central Korea edition, March 6, 1940



The article simply states that the adoption of Japanese surnames is in no way compulsory, but an opportunity offered to Koreans by the Emperor to help them achieve complete equality with their compatriots in Japan proper.”

**Article from sports section of *Osaka Asahi Shimbun*, central Korea edition, June 7, 1941; a year after implementation of name-change policy, Korean surnames still predominated**

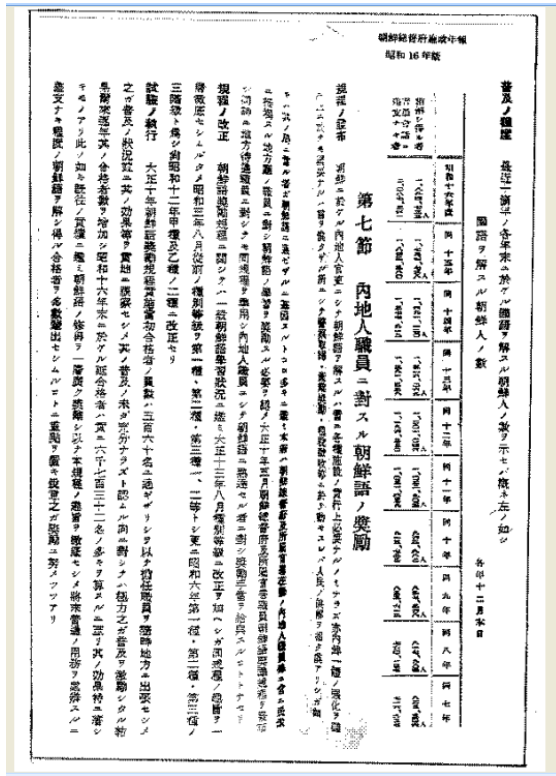
### **Surnames remained unchanged even when Japanese names were adopted**

According to the name-change policy, Koreans wishing to adopt Japanese surnames had six months to enter them in the “surname” column of their census records. The Korean surname would remain in the record, unchanged. Those wishing to change their given names to Japanese names were free to do so, if they obtained approval from a family court.

The policy is stated clearly in the Korean Government-General’s 1940 Yearbook, shown at upper left. The article at bottom left, which was written a year after the name-change policy went into effect, describes a national athletic event held in Japan proper. Many Korean names appear in it, including the winner, a Mr. Yi Lt.-Gen. Hong Sa-ik is a famous example of a successful man who retained his Korean name. But the article also shows clearly that ordinary citizens who retained Korean names experienced no repercussions whatsoever.

Article from sports section of *Osaka Asahi Shimbun*, central Korea edition, June 7, 1941; a year after implementation of name-change policy, Korean surnames still predominated

# Japan Did Not Deprive the Koreans of Their Language



The Korean claim that Japan deprived them of their language and forced the Japanese language on them is patently untrue. An examination of the page shown at left from the Government-General Yearbook for 1941, reveals the truth, and conclusively so. As of December 31, 1941, there were 3.9 million Koreans (16% of the population) who could speak at least a few words of Japanese. If the Koreans had been forbidden to speak their own language, then the remaining 84% of the population would have had to manage without a language. In fact, Korean was the national language throughout the annexation period. The Government-General encouraged Koreans to learn Japanese so they could communicate with their Japanese compatriots (Koreans were considered Japanese citizens).

Page from 1941 Government-General Yearbook

## Many Japanese studied Korean

The aforementioned yearbook also contains a notice encouraging Japanese government employees to learn Korean. It reads, in part, as follows:

Misunderstandings attributable to the inability of Japanese employees of the Government-General and associated entities to speak the Korean language might arise during the conduct of police matters, the stimulation of industry, the collection of taxes, and other, similar situations. Accordingly, the Government-General recognizes the necessity for employees of regional government institutions who interact with the Korean people on a regular basis to learn the Korean language. We wish to offer encouragement in the form of an allowance to be awarded to those Japanese employees who demonstrate proficiency in the Korean language, in keeping with criteria to be announced by the Government-General.

As of 1941, Japanese employees were making a concerted effort to learn Korean. The Korean argument about being robbed of their language is ridiculous.

### **Japanese language accelerates Korean modernization**

The Japanese language was immensely instrumental in the modernization of Korea. Most of the modern words and terms in the Korean language are literal translations of Japanese terms. Words in the academic vocabulary like *politics*, *economics*, *philosophy*, *chemistry* and *medicine* are examples of this phenomenon, as are even more common words like *company*, *chairman of the board*, *president* and *manager*. The great majority of words in the language of modern civilization put down roots in Korea through Japanese language education provided during the annexation period. For Koreans, the Japanese language opened the window to the world's technologies and intelligence.



## Overwhelming Response To Special Volunteer System

Special Volunteer System			
Korean enlistment rate (Ministry of Home Affairs statistics from May 1945)			
Year	Recruitment goal	Volunteers	Over-achievement factor
1938	406	2,946	7.3
1939	613	12,628	20.4
1940	3,060	84,443	28
1941	3,208	144,743	46.1
1942	4,077	254,273	62.4
1943	6,300	303,294	48.1

Source: NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF JAPAN, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records  
<http://www.jacar.go.jp/>



**First training session in urban warfare for Korean volunteer soldiers**  
**Photographed on March 10 by Nishimura Masao**  
**From *Asahi Graph*, March 29, 1939**



**Elite Korean unit under the command of Maj. Jeong Hun**



Today we are reasonably certain that the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (July 1937) was the work of CCP (Chinese Communist Party) agitators. The incident escalated into the Second Sino-Japanese War, which raged with no sign of ending. Japanese soldiers were dispatched to north China in a steady stream via the railways of the Korean peninsula.

At that time Koreans were neither obligated nor eligible to serve in the Japanese military. But in April 1938, the Special Volunteer System was inaugurated, and Korean men who wished to join the Japanese Army could now do so. The official opening of the Training Center for Korean enlistees was held on June 15, 1938.

The recruitment goal for fiscal 1938 was 400 men, but the number of volunteers, at 2,946, was nearly seven times that! The next year's goal was larger (600 men), as was the number of volunteers (12,628).

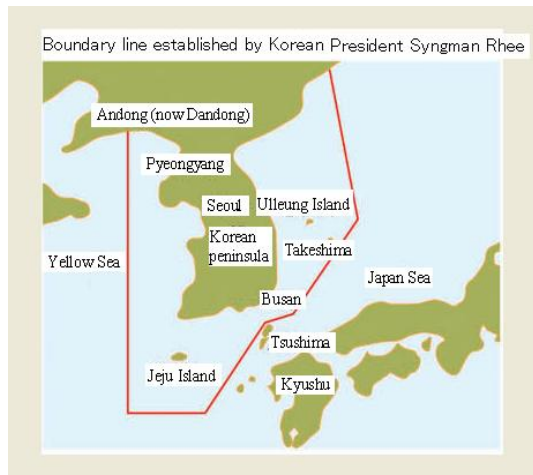
In 1940 and 1941 higher goals were set (3,000 men). Again, the response was overwhelming: 84,443 and 144,743, respectively.

The number of volunteers increased dramatically in 1942, when the quota was 4,500 men and the number of volunteers 254, 273.

These statistics show definitively that, despite the rises and falls in the relationship between the government and the governed, the Koreans gradually came to accept Japanese policy.

## 5. KOREA REPAYS JAPANESE KINDNESS WITH EVIL

### Korea Commandeers Takeshima; Occupied Japan Powerless To Retaliate



**Boundary line established by Korean President Syngman Rhee**



**February 24 is Takeshima Day**  
The two main islets are located at 37° 15' east longitude and 131° 52' north latitude; they and the rocks surrounding them are Japanese territory.



**Japanese protesters demanding the abolition of the Syngman Rhee Line**



**Korean military police interrogating Japanese fishermen**

After Japan's defeat in World War II, Korea asked to participate in the drafting of the Treaty of San Francisco as a victor nation. The Allies denied the request. The Koreans also insisted

that both Tsushima and Takeshima were Korean territory, but the US rejected their claim via the Rusk documents, official diplomatic correspondence dated August 10, 1951.

The Treaty of San Francisco, signed in September 1951, went into effect in April 1952. However, in January 1952, Korean President Syngman Rhee, precipitously, unilaterally and in violation of international law, established a military demarcation line, which came to be referred to as the Syngman Rhee Line, in the Japan Sea. Within the demarcation line was Takeshima, which Rhee then declared was Korean territory. This was an outrageous act of thievery and aggression on the part of Korea, cleverly scheduled to take place during a gap in diplomatic relations and three months before Japanese sovereignty was restored.

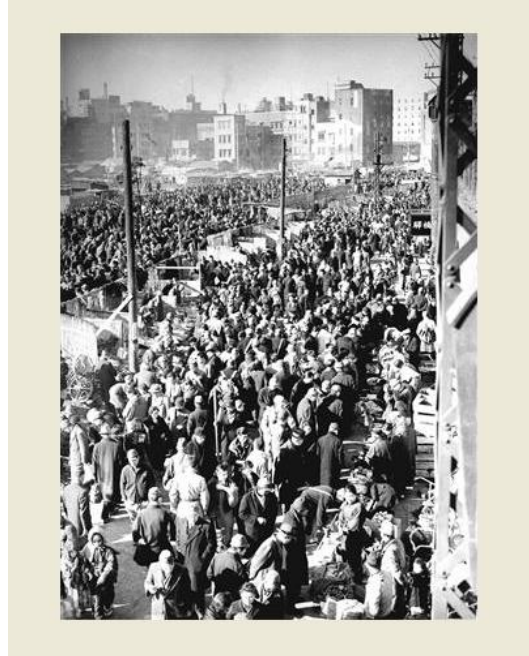
Subsequently, scores of Japanese fishermen were captured and held by the Koreans, charged with having breached the Syngman Rhee Line; some were even shot to death. Until 1965, when the Japan-Korea Fishing Agreement went into force, 3,929 Japanese were detained in Korea, 328 fishing vessels were seized, and 44 Japanese were killed or wounded. To relieve the terrible suffering of families whose husbands and brothers had been unjustly abducted and held in Korea, the Japanese government reluctantly agreed to release 472 Korean criminals (repeat offenders and perpetrators of serious crimes) from Japanese prisons and allow them to remain in Japan, in exchange for the return of the Japanese fishermen.

Nearly 60 years have passed since Takeshima was stolen from Japan. The Japanese government has urged the Korean government to settle the matter at an international tribunal. But the Koreans, well aware of how weak their position is, refuse to cooperate. To curry favor with international public opinion, they take advantage of every possible opportunity to proclaim that Takeshima is their territory. When Japan establishes a Takeshima Day or mentions Takeshima in textbooks, the Koreans create a huge uproar about Japanese "aggression." It is unfortunate that Japan does not protest such behavior, but even more unfortunate that the Koreans behave so hatefully toward the Japanese, to whom they owe them so much.

## Postwar Turmoil, the Third Nationals Problem, and the “Korean Occupation Forces”



**Banner reads “Central Headquarters, Federation of Koreans Residing in Japan” (this group claimed to be the Korean Occupation Forces)**



**Black market in Shinjuku**

On August 15, 1945, Japan acceded to the Potsdam Declaration and surrendered. At the time the Japanese media was describing the declaration as “absurd” and “contemptible,” and implied that there was to be a decisive, final battle fought in Japan proper. But when the Japanese people learned of the sudden surrender from an imperial rescript, they calmly accepted it. However, some segments of society (Koreans and a few Taiwanese) seized upon the situation to create havoc, even though they had supposedly sided with and fought alongside the Japanese in the war.

At first the occupying forces assumed that Koreans and Taiwanese had been oppressed under Japanese rule. The Allies did not state clearly what the legal status of those people was (Japanese, citizens of a victor nation, or neither), but they did treat them differently from the Japanese. For that reason, Korean and Taiwanese residents of Japan demanded to be treated as citizens of victor nations, and these demands were followed by a sudden increase in crimes against Japanese nationals.

Particularly reprehensible was a group of 30,000 Koreans that called itself the Korean Occupation Forces. Arming themselves with pistols and Japanese swords, its members

ambushed helpless police officers (who were not permitted to carry weapons) and war-weary, ordinary Japanese. The Koreans stole land, money and other valuables. They robbed banks, committed murder, armed robbery, aggravated assault and rape. The violence soon spread from Tokyo throughout Japan. According to GHQ records, which are not exhaustive, more than 4,000 Japanese were killed during those rampages.

The crisis came to a head on December 20, 1946, in an attack on the prime minister's official residence. More than 10,000 Koreans stormed the building. Japanese police were unable to repel the attackers; not until American military police were called in was the situation brought under control. At one point, Japanese organized crime groups, no longer able to stomach crimes against their compatriots, attempted to retaliate by taking the law into their own hands.

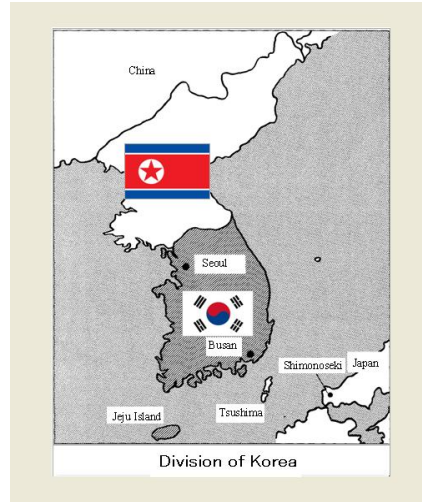
The term *sangokujin* (third nationals) was coined to describe Koreans and Taiwanese residing in Japan after World War II, since they were neither Japanese nor citizens of a victor nation. At long last, the Allies grasped the seriousness of the situation, and issued instructions to the effect that Koreans residing in Japan were subject to Japanese law. The Korean Occupation Forces (in reality, the Federation of Koreans Residing in Japan would later transmogrify into the League of Koreans in Japan. A further split resulted in the formation of two separate groups: the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan) and the General Association of Korean Residents of Japan (Chongryon) due to differing political views and loyalties.

We should be mindful that members of both organizations committed despicable acts against the Japanese during the chaotic period immediately following the war, even though they were greatly indebted to us.

## Don't Blame Japan for the Division of Korea



**South Korean President  
Syngman Rhee**



**North Korean President  
Kim Il-sung**



*So that he could become president, Syngman Rhee arranged for the assassination of political rival Yeo Un-hyeong, who favored cooperation with Japan. According to the late political scholar Nagoshi Futarasuke, if Yeo had lived, Japan-Korea relations would have been the exact opposite of what they are today. The South Koreans claim they achieved independence on August 15, 1945 (August 15 is a public holiday in South Korea); the correct date is August 13, 1948.*

**Yeo Un-hyeong, Korean politician assassinated in 1947**

On August 9, 1945 the USSR joined the Allied nations in the war against Japan, in violation of the Japanese-Soviet Nonaggression Pact, and invaded North Korea on August 12. The Americans, still fighting in Okinawa, were caught off guard, and were ill prepared to invade Korea. A hasty decision was made to occupy the portion of Korea south of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel.

In North Korea the Soviets rounded up and imprisoned Japanese military personnel, civil servants and police officers. Then they made a sweep of the area for Japanese sympathizers. They organized commissariats (departments) staffed mainly by Communists, in each province, on which they bestowed administrative authority. Then they designated Kim Il-sung, whose

return home coincided with the Soviet invasion, leader of a government scheduled to take office in February 1946.

Back in South Korea, the Americans established a military administration, which they staffed with Korean civil servants, former employees of the Government-General. In January 1946 an indirect election was held to form a temporary legislature. In February 1947 (one year later than North Korea) a provisional government was established, with former independence activist An Jae-hong at its head.

At the Yalta Conference it was decided that Korea would be a UN trusteeship until March 1948. However, due to tension between the US and USSR, negotiations broke down, and in August 1948 the Republic of Korea, with Syngman Rhee at its president, was born. In September the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded under the leadership of Kim Il-sung.

Under Kim Il-sung, North Korean public policy gradually took shape. In the south, things did not go smoothly, given the disparate assortment of people involved: former bureaucrats, politicians returning from exile, and Communists released from prisons. Matters were made worse when the US military, at first pro-Communist, allowed former Communist political prisoners to form labor unions. There were strikes all over the country, and widespread social disruption.

Beginning in about October 1946 the US made a policy shift toward the suppression of communism. But when Syngman Rhee was elected president in August 1948, his first order of business was a purge of pro-Japanese Koreans. Consequently, many of the competent bureaucrats trained by the Japanese were summarily ousted. Then came the sale of confiscated Japanese assets and the redistribution of farmland.



## Korean Woman Writes Japanese-Style Poems About Korean War



**Choe family photograph**



**Pitched battle during the Korean War**

The Korean War commenced suddenly on June 25, 1950, when the North Korean army invaded South Korea. It escalated into a large-scale war in which soldiers of the same ethnicity battled each other; it claimed several million victims.

Choe Yong-suk, a schoolteacher during the annexation period, had the misfortune to lose two of her three children (sons Jeong-ho and Jeong-ik) to the war. Inconsolable, Choe turned to Japanese *tanka*, 31-syllable poems to express her grief. She wrote more than 70 poems, three of which follow.

*In the distance, beyond the mountain on which I stand, beyond the next mountain and the next  
Is the place where my sons, who went off to war, are fighting*

*See the young leaves so brilliantly shining there, in the gorge?  
That must be the place where my sons fought and died, last year at about this time.*

*Those two stars aligned so harmoniously in the evening sky  
Remind me of my two sons in happier times.*

Her poetry was published in Japan thanks to the efforts of poet Kim So-un. Here is an excerpt from the letter Choe wrote to him.

My only hope is that the teachers who instructed and guided my children years ago will be proud of Jeong-ho and Jeong-ik and praise them for having fought bravely. As their mother, I am convinced that until the moment they perished on the battlefield, they fought with all their might for freedom, for their country, and for their compatriots' glory and happiness.

An article about Choe Yong-suk and her poems, which appeared in the June 1953 issue of *Fujin Gaho*, a leading women's magazine, drew an overwhelming response from the Japanese public.

## The Japan-Korea Treaty of 1965 and the Concomitant Financial Burden on Japan

Main Postwar Economic Aid Packages to South Korea	
1. Economic cooperation specified in Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the ROK (1965)	
Grants	\$300 million
Government loans	\$200 million
Private loans	\$300 million
TOTAL	\$800 million
1965 Korean national budget	\$350 million
1965 Korean export targets	\$100 million
1965 Japanese foreign currency holdings	\$1.8 billion
2. Economic assistance provided by Japan in 1983 per agreement between Prime Minister Nakasone and President Chun	
Yen loans	\$400 million
3. Assistance provided during 1997 financial crisis	
IMF	\$21 billion
Japan	\$10 billion
World Bank	\$10 billion
US	\$5 billion
Asian Development Bank	\$4 billion
A significant portion of the funds supplied by the World Bank and the ADB originated in Japan.	

### Miracle on the Han River (wrought with Japanese funds)



South Korea lay devastated after the Korean War, a conflict that pitted compatriots against each other. Because with maverick despot Syngman Rhee at its helm, the ROK had no creditworthiness, other nations shied away from investing in South Korea. To rebuild the country, there was no choice but to accept financial assistance from Japan. Lacking the military power to eliminate the unlawfully drawn Syngman Rhee Line, the Japanese had

exactly one, very unattractive option: respond to Korean requests for aid in the hope that doing so would help resolve the territorial problem. In 1965 the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea was concluded.

During the negotiations the Koreans made an extraordinary demand: they requested war reparations, claiming that South Korea was one of the victor nations. However, the Japanese stood firm; they insisted that since Japan had acquired control of Korea lawfully, and had never waged war against Korea, they were not obligated to pay war reparations. In Article II of the aforementioned treaty, both parties agree that all treaties concluded between Korea or the Korean Empire and Japan prior to Japanese annexation are now null and void. Article III recognizes South Korea as the only lawful government on the Korean peninsula, and normalizes diplomatic relations. Economic assistance accompanying normalization was to take the form of grants and government and private loans amounting to a total of \$800 million. With this treaty, Korea relinquished its right of claim. Furthermore, the ownership of Takeshima was set aside as a problem to be resolved separately.

In its explanation to the Japanese public, the Japanese government described the treaty and the economic aid as gestures made to commemorate the independence of a nation and assist a developing nation. The Korean government, however, characterized them as reparations resolving problems relating to assets and claims against Japan, compensation and economic cooperation.

The \$800 million provided in 1965 was more than twice Korea's national budget. In accordance with the wishes of the Korean government, it was used for national development, especially development of heavy industry and infrastructure. It funded postwar economic development referred to as the "miracle on the Han River." The Japanese had hoped that it would be used to compensate individuals, but only \$5.8 billion was used for that purpose, a decision whose repercussions are felt even today.

Since then Japan has dispensed huge amounts of money every time South Korea experiences an economic crisis. However, still unable to extricate themselves from the annexation mentality, the Koreans have never expressed gratitude to Japan. What is more, they are certain to make demand after demand for compensation or for historical insults *of their own invention*. During the first interactions between Japanese and Korean diplomats after the war, the Koreans were rude and arrogant. Not once did they acknowledge the benefits they had derived from annexation. On their part, the Japanese have failed to show pride or satisfaction at having ruled Korea so wisely and well. They have also failed to reclaim Takeshima. The deferential doling out of huge amounts of money for economic assistance after World War II represents a tragic defeat, as evidenced by subsequent relations between the two countries.

## It's the Japanese Who Were Robbed

### Japanese Financial Aid to Korea During Annexation Period

Advances paid	1907-1910	¥104 million
Supplementary funds	1911-1944	¥535.31 million
Unredeemed government bonds		¥1.43971 billion
TOTAL		¥2.07902 billion
(¥60 trillion at current values)		

### Japanese Assets Confiscated by Korea after World War II

Total value	\$6 billion (¥16.93 trillion at current values)
Non-military private assets	\$5.3 billion (¥15.1 trillion at current values)

(Source: GHQ Civil Property Custodian survey)



### Korean Government-General Revenue and Expenditures (fiscal 1935-39)

#### ■ Financial support from the Japanese government to the tune of ¥6 billion!

Total tax revenue for the Korean Empire in fiscal 1906 was only ¥7.48 million. Estimating that the modernization of Korea would cost at least ¥30 million per year, the Japanese government decided to foot the bill for the balance.

Beginning in 1907, Japan provided financial assistance in the form of advances (financial assistance to the Korean Government-General) and direct support (for the construction of hospitals, harbors and railroads) amounting to approximately ¥30 million per year (nearly ¥2 trillion in current values). Even after annexation took place, the

Japanese government invested between ¥2.5 and ¥3 million in the form of subsidies (financial assistance to the Government-General) and the purchase of Korean government bonds.

The chart at top left was taken from the 1941 edition of the *History of Korean Government-General Administrative Policy for 1935 to 1939* and shows Government-General revenue for those years. Even in 1939, 25% of Government-General income emanated from Japan (subsidies and government bond purchases).

The Japanese government's burden during the entire annexation period, calculating with a 30,000-to-1 adjustment in the real value of the yen, was ¥60 trillion at current values.

### ■ Japanese forced to abandon private assets

In addition to the amounts cited above, private Japanese assets on the Korean peninsula totaled ¥5.3 billion at the end of World War II, according to a GHQ Civil Property Custodian survey and "The Financial History of Japan: The Allied Occupation Period, 1945-52" edited by the Ministry of Finance, Financial History Section and issued by Toyo Keizai Shinposha in 1984.

By rights, these assets (the property of private citizens) should have been returned to Japan. But they were confiscated by the Koreans, and their owners forced to leave Korea with little more than the shirts on their backs.

Yoko Kawashima Watkins was 11 years old when World War II ended. In *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, she describes the terrible plight of Japanese families attempting to return to Japan with their families. So many of them were attacked, raped, or murdered by Koreans. Her book was assigned as supplementary reading at middle schools in almost every state in the US.

Korean organizations in the US reacted by hurling invective at Watkins, accusing her of distorting history. They made such a fuss that the book was removed from school reading lists.

During the 35 years of annexation, the citizens of Japan were saddled with the obligation of supporting Korea. They suffered under the burden of heavy taxation. Many of them settled in Korea where they worked day and night, planting trees and rice fields, building harbors, contributing significantly to the modernization of Korea. How were they repaid? By having all their assets confiscated, and labeled as aggressors. Many Japanese lost their lives.

It is the Japanese who were the victims, robbed by Korea and the Koreans. What is more, after the war the Koreans claimed that theirs was a victor nation, and demanded astronomical reparations (\$2.5 billion - \$10 billion), amounts that would have bankrupted Japan. This is a reversal of the worst kind.

We must be mindful that the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula will never understand our good intentions.

## Military Prostitutes: How Long Will the Koreans Go on Fooling Themselves?



The newspaper articles reproduced here tell the whole story.

They are contemporaneous advertisements for military prostitutes offering a generous monthly salary (¥300). Just as at other similar instances in history, a great many poor women found the pay so attractive that they were willing to accept the concomitant risks.

### Advertisement in *Keijo Nippo* (Seoul Daily), 26 July 1944 edition

#### URGENT RECRUITMENT DRIVE FOR COMFORT WOMEN

Age requirements: Must be between the ages of 17 and 23

Place of employment: Behind-the-lines comfort station attached to Military Unit X

Monthly pay: ¥300 (may authorize advance pay of up to ¥3,000)

Working hours: 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., subject to consultation

Apply to: Imai Agency  
4-20 Shinmachi, Keijo City  
Telephone: East (3) 1613

### Advertisement in *Mainichi Shinpo*, 27 October 1944 edition)

#### URGENTLY SEEKING MILITARY COMFORT WOMEN

1. Place of employment: comfort station attached to Military Unit X
2. Qualifications: Must be between the ages of 18 and 30, and in good health
3. Application dates: October 27 - November 8
4. Estimated departure date: November 10
5. Contract and working conditions: To be determined at interview
6. Number of persons to be hired: 40-50
7. Interested parties are to inquire immediately at location listed below

Apply to: Chosen Inn  
195 Paradise Street, Shoro  
Keijo City  
Telephone: Hikari (3) 2645  
(Ask for Mr. Ho.)



Today Koreans argue that hundreds of thousands of young Korean women were victims of a nationwide, systematic policy that involved rounding them up and forcing them to become military prostitutes (usually referred to today as “comfort women”). These are confusing military prostitutes with members of the Women’s Volunteer Labor Corps, in which young women between the ages of 14 and 25 were obligated to serve.

This accusation is, plainly and simply, a distortion of history. At the time Korea was, as Japan is today, a nation governed by the rule of law and therefore incapable of forcing its nationals (Koreans were Japanese nationals then) into prostitution.

### **Government officials rescued women deceived by procurers**

From the 1930s to the early 1940s, malevolent procurers ran rampant on the Korean peninsula. Many young women were deceived by them and sold off to brothels. Japanese government officials made a concerted effort to investigate such cases and rescue the victims. The articles excerpted below provide vivid, *factual* descriptions of the prevailing situation.



**(Dong-a Ilbo (East Asia Daily), 15 March 1939 edition)**

Article bearing the headline “Ha Yun-myeong Case Has Widespread Repercussions” describes the arrest of Ha Yun-myeong, an unscrupulous procurer who buys the daughters of poor families under false pretenses and sells them to brothels. Police attempt to rescue the young women, but find that they have been resold to buyers outside Korea. Prosecutors launch probe of recruiters, forming special investigative unit.



**(Dong-a Ilbo, 31 August 1939 edition)**

Article bearing the headline “Deceitful Procurers Run Rampant” reports that procurers have kidnapped more than 100 young women from farming villages.

Since the Koreans insist that Korean women were coerced into prostitution, we must ask them why they did not rise up in anger. At the time ethnic Japanese represented only 2% of the population of the peninsula, and half the police officers were Korean. The Korean population was certainly capable of rebelling or rioting.

But there were no rebellions. There was no rioting. If there were indeed abductions of young women, did Koreans stand by in silence while their daughters, sisters and girlfriends were abducted by a small number of Japanese and forced into prostitution? The Koreans of that era were neither apathetic nor powerless. The absence of riots or rebellions proves beyond a doubt that there were no abductions.

The bottom row of newspaper articles tells us that Korea supplied prostitutes to American troops stationed there. Korea is certainly guilty of launching a nationwide effort to recruit prostitutes to service the military personnel of another nation.

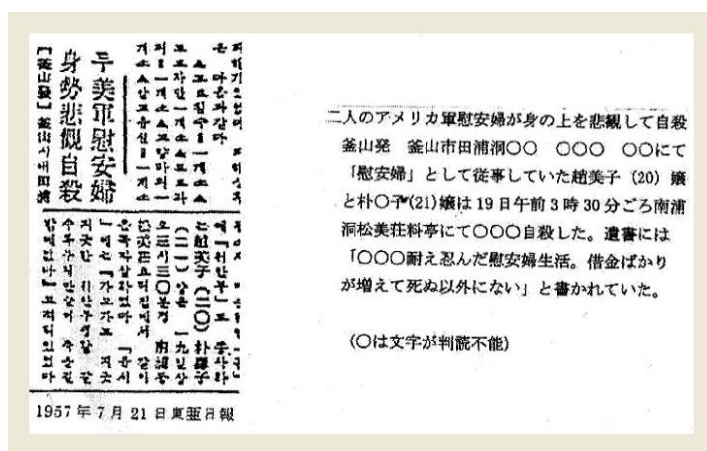
Korean government authorities directly involved in recruiting prostitutes to service US military personnel.



**(Dong-a Ilbo, 31 January 1961 edition)**

The article shown above, which carries the headline “Training Course for Military Prostitutes Sponsored by Idam Substation,” reads as follows:

*A training course for approximately 800 military prostitutes was held on January 27 at 11:00 a.m. at the Donggwang Theater. The course, sponsored by the Idam Police Substation, was also attended by many other persons, including American officers from Military Police Headquarters and the Civil Service Bureau, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and other representatives of the US and Korea. The emphasis of the course was on taking strict precautions to prevent the spread of venereal disease. Afterwards some of the prostitutes provided entertainment, displaying their singing and dancing prowess.*



**(Dong-a Ilbo, 21 July 1957 edition)**

Two Korean Prostitutes Commit Suicide: Despondent over Servicing American GIs

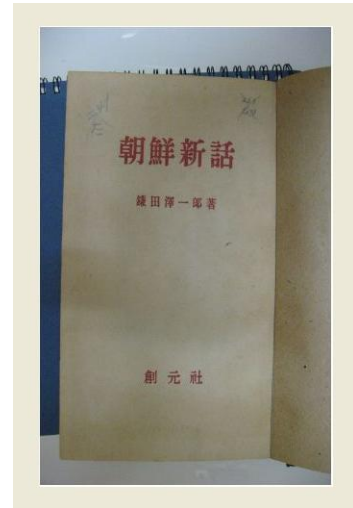
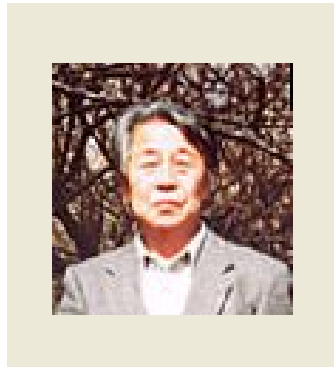
*PUSAN. Two prostitutes who serviced American GIs at an establishment in the Jeonpodong section of Busan, a Miss Jo (20) and a Miss Bak (21), died at the Songmijang Inn in Nampodong at approximately 3:00 a.m. on July 19, after taking poison. In a suicide note, they wrote, “Life as a military prostitute*

*is unbearable. We will never be able to pay our debts. Death is our only escape.”*

## Lies of Self-Proclaimed Korean Slave Laborer Exposed



**Cover of *Accounts of Conscripted Koreans* Bak Gyeong-sik**



**Cover of *New Reports from Korea* by Kamata Sawaichiro**

*Accounts of Conscripted Koreans* by Bak Gyeong-sik is supposedly the authoritative work on this subject. However, the book has a fatal flaw. Let us demonstrate by offering an excerpt.

Worst of all was the conscription of laborers. As the war intensified, a volunteer system for soldiers, like those put into effect in other countries, was inaugurated in Korea. At the same time, the quota for conscripted laborers increased. Recruiters who took the time to persuade Koreans to serve as laborers would never have achieved their quotas. Instead, they resorted to violence. They would go to towns or villages in the middle of the night or at dawn, break into homes, surprise men in their sleep and abduct them. In some cases the recruiters would confront men working in the fields and invent excuses to get them into a truck waiting nearby. When they had rounded up enough men, the recruiters transported them in groups to coal mines in Hokkaido or Kyushu.<sup>26</sup>

This excerpt was purportedly taken from a book entitled *New Reports from Korea* by Kamata Sawaichiro. However, in *New Reports from Korea*, the last sentence cited is followed by: “The Government-General never issued conscription orders, but Korean petty bureaucrats eager to curry favor with their superiors took it upon themselves to use these methods.”<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Bak Gyeong-sik, *Chosenjin kyosei renko no kiroku* (Accounts of conscripted Koreans) (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1965).

<sup>27</sup> Kamata Sawaichiro, *Chosen Shinwa* (New reports from Korea) (Osaka: Sogensha, 1950).

The same phenomenon occurred when the name-change policy was instituted. In *Accounts of Conscripted Koreans*, one of the works cited as evidence that Koreans were conscripted is a photograph of the cover of *Personnel Management of Recruited Korean Laborers*. In actuality, that book is a manual containing advice about instilling good work habits in recruited laborers and keeping their morale high. It does not contain anything remotely resembling stories of exploited Koreans.

According to *Accounts of Conscripted Koreans*, the work Korean laborers were forced to do was so hard that many of them escaped. At the same time, the book states that they would escape after two or three days because they didn't want to work in the mines. The truth of the matter is that at that time, the only way Koreans could work in Japan proper was as conscripted laborers. Therefore, many of them signed up for mining jobs (or other, similar work, most of it in remote locations), planning to escape at the earliest possible opportunity and make their way to a city, where life was more exciting. Their employers were certainly placed in a difficult position.

As we have shown, Bak Gyeong-sik quoted his sources out of context. He simply omitted any passages that contradicted his argument in his attempt to prove that the Government-General was engaged in an insane activity like the rounding up of human beings.

According to *Diary of a Conscripted Worker*, written by Jeong Chung-hae, the author was befriended by a Japanese war widow, who allowed him to live in her home while he worked in a factory in Hiroshima. There is no description of abduction or harsh treatment of any sort in this, or in any of the other works mentioned here.

## **Koreans Violate Basic Principle of Civilization: The Right to Non-Retroactivity of Law**



**Member of Korean National Assembly defacing the Japanese flag**



**Former President Roh Moo-hyun**



**Koreans use Japanese flag as a doormat**

In 2002 Korean voters elected Roh Moo-hyun, a member of the Democratic Party, South Korea's 16<sup>th</sup> president. An entrenched leftist, Roh enacted laws broadening freedom of speech. Two of them are the Newspaper Law, which provides economic support to minor newspapers, and the Press Arbitration Law, which permits victims of libel to initiate court suits.

Roh Moo-hyun approached the presidency with a strong desire to reexamine history. He pressed for investigations into past incidents, including some dating back more than 100 years, like acts of collaboration with the Japanese before or during the annexation, atrocities against private citizens by Korean soldiers during the Korean war, and suppression of human rights during military governments.

Under his leadership the Korean National Assembly advanced legislation designed to right past wrongs. Including those passed during the Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung administrations, 13 special laws went into effect. One of them ostracizes the descendants of Koreans who cooperated with the Japanese during the annexation. This particular law clearly violates the principle of non-retroactivity, not to mention the Korean Constitution. For that reason, individuals whose names were listed as collaborators by the Korean media have filed protests.

Furthermore, the Investigative Commission on Pro-Japanese Collaborators' Property [sic] has announced its decision to confiscate the assets of descendants of nine "pro-Japanese collaborators," with an estimated worth of 3.6 billion won (ca. ¥4.08 million).

Among the confiscated assets were those owned by the descendants of former Prime Minister Lee Wan-yong, who signed the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, and nine others. To date 255,000 square meters of land has been confiscated in this manner, and is now Korean government property.

The aforementioned commission was formed in August 2010 in accordance with the Special Law Concerning the Redemption of Pro-Japanese Collaborators' Property, enacted in 2005. Also established in August 2010 was the Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism (PCIC) [sic], which in December of 2010 publicly disclosed the names of 406 Koreans who cooperated with the Japanese during the annexation period.



## 6. THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA: A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR JAPAN

### Crown Princess Yi Bangja Takes Handicapped Korean Children Under Her Wing



**Princess Yi Bangja (1901-1989)Princess**



**Bangja and Prince Eun**

Princess Yi Bangja was the eldest daughter of Japanese Prince Nashimoto Morimasa; her Japanese name was Masako. In 1916 she became engaged to Yi Eun (Uimin) of the royal Yi family. The wedding was delayed until 1920 because of the illness (cerebral hemorrhage) and death of Gojong, the Korean king.

The crown princess once wrote in her diary, “I am expected to serve as the foundation upon which harmony between Japan and Korea is established. I understand the notion, but it seems extraordinarily burdensome and mystifying.” She also wrote that she stood in her garden night after night, wishing she could vanish.

After World War II the Korean government was extremely unsympathetic to the Yi family, failing to show any support even when Crown Prince Eun suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. Its stance changed after 1961, when Park Chung-hee led a successful coup d'état. Then the government began issuing a stipend to the Yi family and paying Prince Eun's medical expenses. The prince was finally permitted to return to Korea in 1963, but by that time he was in a permanent vegetative state.

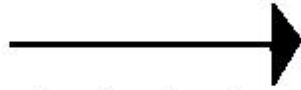
Upon her return to Korea, Princess Bangja launched a campaign to raise funds for social service programs for the handicapped. She was widely criticized by the Korean public, and



called shameless and brazen, but her determination never wavered. Eventually she was able to build two facilities for the handicapped. One was a school for deaf-and-dumb children and polio victims called Myeonghwiwon; the other, a school for mentally retarded children called the Jahye School.

Princess Bangja's fund-raising activities continued in earnest even after the schools opened. Ordinary people couldn't understand her students when they spoke, but the Princess did, perhaps because she loved them so much.

## Women's Lives and Cities Transformed During Annexation Period

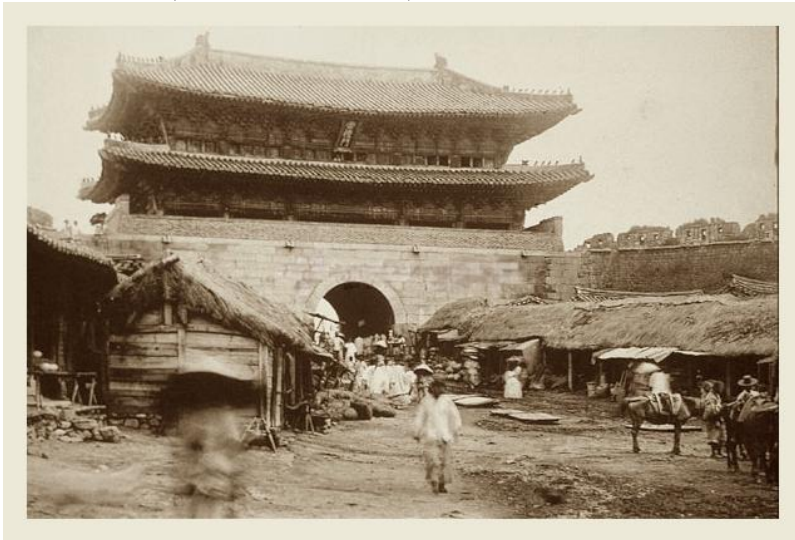


Transformation of  
the Korean woman



Modern dancer Choe Seung-hui

Nandaemun (South Grand Gate) before annexation



Nandaemun after annexation



## Japan Earns Accolades from Lytton Commission for Government of Korea



Members of Lytton Commission pay their respects at Yasukuni Jinja

Cover of the Japanese translation of *People and Power in the Far East: Impressions from a Journey with the Lytton Commission* by Heinrich Schnee, who represented Germany on the Commission

China issued a protest against the Manchurian Incident, which occurred on September 18, 1931, to the League of Nations. In January of the following year the Lytton Commission was formed to investigate the incident. Its members travelled to Manchuria and at the end of June 1932, toured the Korean peninsula on their way to Japan.

When the group arrived in Seoul it paid a visit to then Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige. Maj.-Gen. Frank McCoy, the American representative shared his impressions with the governor-general. They were recorded by Kamata Sawaichiro, one of Ugaki's aides, who included them in *New Reports from Korea*, published in 1950.

Last night I experienced an epiphany, which was perhaps the greatest reward reaped from this long sojourn in the Orient. At the same time, I must confess that I am thoroughly ashamed that I failed to inform myself better about Korea. What I speak of is simply the huge difference between my previous perceptions and the reality. Since Korea is essentially an extension of Manchuria, geographically speaking, we assumed that bandits would be running rampant, that there would be a dearth of industry, and that we would find the people leading idle lives on red clay beneath bald mountains. Yet, when our train crossed the bridge over the Yalu River, we were amazed at the sights that greeted us through the windows: luxuriant expanses of green, farmers busily working in the rice fields or engaged in other forms of agriculture. In Pyongyang and other cities we observed smoke emanating robustly from factory chimneys. The people we observed at train stations were dressed neatly, behaved in an orderly fashion, and seemed content. Public order was well maintained; we had no fears whatsoever. Korea seemed to be centuries ahead of Manchuria. We were very pleased to observe all these phenomena, which were clear signs that Japan's colonial policy was effective and that the governors-general had ruled with passion and wisdom. We will surely continue to make drastic adjustments of our perceptions of Korea.<sup>28</sup>

McCoy was quite conversant with the situation in European and American colonies throughout the world. After having visited many of them, he had nothing but praise for Japan's government of Korea.

At that point only 21 years had passed since Japan had begun to rule Korea. Japan was in the process of accomplishing the most brilliant economic feat in the world.

---

<sup>28</sup> Kamata, *op. cit.*

## Wilson’s Self-Determination Principle Engenders Stagnation in Philippines



ウイルソン米国大統領

In 2010 NHK, Japan’s national public television service, aired a special program entitled “Japan and the Korean Peninsula, Part 2.” During the broadcast mention was made of national self-determination, a principle reiterated by US President Woodrow Wilson during World War I, as though it were an immortal canon.

Taiwan, Korea and the Philippines came under the rule of another nation (Japan in the case of the first two, and the US the third) at approximately the same time and for the same duration. South Korea and Taiwan became advanced nations, while North Korea and the Philippines are still struggling, developing nations. How do we explain the difference?

### US President Woodrow Wilson

NATIONAL PER CAPITA INCOME (IN US DOLLARS)					
	1955	1965	1970	1975	1980
South Korea	121	120	250	580	1,450
North Korea		190	330	450	450
Philippines	198	150	210	380	710

#### ■ Modern economics

Workers and capitalists are partners in the race to prevail in intercompany competition.  
 Colonizers and the colonized are partners in the race to win the competition among nations.

#### ■ Communism

Workers are exploited by capitalists.  
 Colonies are exploited by colonizers.

The development of Taiwan and Korea, as undertaken by Japan, was based on the theories of modern economics: investing capital, emphasizing education, and working to enhance the innate strengths of the Koreans and Taiwanese. It is obvious from the present-day situation in those two nations that the Japanese path was the correct one. Note that three of Korea’s presidents (Roh Tae-woo, Kim Young-sam, and Kim Dae-jung) expressed gratitude to Japanese mentors when they were elected.

After World War II, North Korea chose to embrace communism, and has yet to emerge from abject poverty. With the collapse of the USSR and some of the Eastern European nations, it became clear that communism had been a mistake.

The Philippines came under American control in 1898, three years after Japan began governing Taiwan, and 12 years before Japan took control of Korea. Previously the Philippines had been a Spanish possession; therefore, aspects of Western culture had already infiltrated the islands. The Philippines were certainly more civilized than Korea or Taiwan.

In the early days of US rule, the Americans put most of their efforts into education, believing that they were empowering the people by educating them. The University of the Philippines was founded in 1908, prior to the annexation of Korea. In 1886 70% of the 2,000 students at the University of Santo Tomas, established during Spanish rule, were Filipinos in 1886.

In 1913 when Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, was inaugurated as President of the US, he awarded the Philippines a great deal of autonomy, shifting to a self-government policy. The results were that the flow of American capital into the Philippines dwindled, the Philippine economy stagnated, and the quality of university education declined. The situation has changed little since then.

Giving the Philippines national self-determination amounted to abandoning them. Precisely because the Japanese considered Taiwan and Korea nations just like Japan, and worked toward coexistence and coprosperity, we can enjoy the fruits of their labors today.

## Korea Under Japanese Rule as Observed by Foreigners

*The following article appeared in the August 26, 1910 edition of Journal de Saint-Pétersbourg,*

*a French-language newspaper issued by the Russian Foreign Ministry between 1825 and 1914. Despite the fact that Russia and Japan had fought each other in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05), the Russians were clearly in favor of Japan's annexation of Korea.*

If this is true, then the human race should rejoice in the addition of a new and prosperous nation to the civilized world.

When France lost Alsace-Lorraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina were incorporated into the Habsburg Empire, the word *annexation* acquired an unpleasant connotation, becoming a synonym for thievery among nations.

Yet we cannot apply this meaning to Japan's seizure of Korea. In fact, it evokes memories of the benefits reaped from the transfers of sovereignty that took place when France annexed Algeria, when England occupied Egypt, and when Russia acquired the Caucasus and the Khanate of Khiva.<sup>29</sup>

From 1904 to 1905, when Russia and Japan were at war, Korea was an uncivilized, backward nation. It was the breeding ground for endless disorder, and engendered competition among its neighbors. Consequently, it was the primary cause of war between China and Japan, and between Russia and Japan. Since coming under Japanese rule, Korea has progressed beyond our wildest dreams.

Practically overnight a far-reaching railway system, as well as telephone and telegraph systems, were established. Now public buildings and factories are rising, and many more children are receiving an education.

Agriculture too is flourishing. Exports have increased threefold in only five years. Korea is in excellent financial health.

Korea's ports are bustling with activity. The judicial system has undergone reforms, and court procedures are on a par with those used in the courts of Europe.

As the world stands by in amazement, the magic wand of Japanese vitality waved at the plains of Manchuria and in Port Arthur and Tsushima. The changes wrought will no doubt render all remnants of the old Korea undetectable in four or five years.

---

<sup>29</sup> Part of present-day Uzbekistan.



Civilization is defined as progress achieved by peaceful means. From this standpoint, Japan's annexation of Korea will become a new facet of Far Eastern prosperity and progress.

## **Korea Under Japanese Rule as Observed by Koreans**

**Bak Yeong-cheol**

*Fifty Years of Recollections*

Bak Yeong-cheol entered the Imperial Japanese Army Academy in 1902, prior to annexation. He rose to the rank of major in the Imperial Japanese Army, and later served as a provincial governor. In *Fifty Years of Recollections*, published in 1929, Bak moralizes on the destruction of Korea by means of Japanese annexation:

A certain critic once said, “If we were to express an observation – one formed fairly and impartially, that is – we would have to conclude that Japan is practicing good government in Korea, [no matter how opposed we are to the government of Korea by Japan. No matter how much we loathe Ito (Hirobumi), we cannot help but appreciate his intentions.” In any case, it was not Japan that destroyed Korea; therefore, we cannot blame Japan. Furthermore, we should not attack Lee Wan-yong or others in high positions at the time. No, the responsibility rests with us – all 20 million of us. Korea lacked the requisites for independence, and was not able to move forward on its own power. Throughout history all Koreans have been lazy and impotent, and have truly brought their troubles on themselves. After the Russo-Japanese War, when Japan made a concerted effort to protect and develop Korea, Koreans in all levels of society refused to believe that Japan was acting in good faith. They hatched out plots and conspiracies openly and secretly, treating Japan like an enemy. Consequently, Japan was forced to exercise its last resort: the annexation of Korea. (...) We have no one to blame but ourselves for the situation in which we find ourselves today.<sup>30</sup>

### **Widow of Korean suicide squad member meets Japanese newspaper reporter**

The following account appears in *The Truth about the 2,000-Year-Old Relationship Between Japan and Korea*.

I learned that the husband of a Korean elementary school principal had joined a suicide squad and died in action in Okinawa. When he made the decision to join the squad he went to the elementary school he had attended and planted a cherry tree there. His widow became principal of that school and, over time, the cherry tree matured. Whenever she felt lonely she would stand under the tree; there she felt at peace. I thought the Japanese people should hear her story, and passed it on to a Japanese journalist in Seoul.

The reporter, employed by Newspaper A, interviewed the school principal. She showed him where the cherry tree was, and together they stood under it. The reporter

---

<sup>30</sup> Bak Yeong-cheol, *50 nen no kaiko* (Fifty years of recollections) (Tokyo: Osaka Yago Shoten, 1929).

said, “I am deeply sorry that your husband was deceived by Japanese militarism.” The normally deferential widow bristled at the word “deceived.”

“My husband wasn’t the sort of man who could be deceived. He went on his mission of his own volition. Your suggestion that he was deceived is insulting. I have nothing more to say to you.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Kim Man-cheol (Korean critic from Jeju)**

Korea modernized on its own power? What an absurd claim! Korean modernization was accomplished through the infusion of a huge amount of Japanese capital and manpower.

Korea resisted Japanese rule? Don’t make me laugh! What my fellow Koreans did was to meekly accept Japanese government, like sheep. There was some resistance on the part of a very few Koreans, but the great majority of Koreans admired Japan, and attempted to become Japanese.

Korea is solely responsible for achieving independence? Such a claim leaves me speechless. Nobody wanted independence from Japan. The US forced us to become independent.

The Han River miracle? The miracle was accomplished because Japan supplied an enormous amount of financial and technical assistance (in the name of reparations). With gifts like those, any nation, no matter how backward, will experience economic growth.

---

<sup>31</sup> Nagoshi, *op. cit.*

## Foreigners' Observations About Japanese Rule and Subsequent Annexation of Korea

The inhabitants of the Korean peninsula are united in a campaign, which they call the “reexamination of history” with respect to the annexation. That campaign involves expunging or rewriting aspects of history that show the Koreans in an unflattering light, and creating events that they can be proud of. Spearheading this exercise in pandering are charlatans posing as scholars, who have cast aside all pride.

On the other hand, conscientious scholars who refuse to espouse the government's position and attempt to publish research results contesting it are branded pro-Japanese, i.e., traitors, and their assets are confiscated. We cannot stop the Koreans from behaving badly in their own nation, but we cannot allow them to cram their invented or distorted history down Japanese throats. The worst example of such behavior was perpetrated by the Mindan (Korean Residents Union in Japan) and Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan), controlled by the South and North Korean government, respectively. These organizations were used as the advance guard in outrageous national attacks on the *New History Textbook* published in Japan in 2005.

No matter how patiently and carefully the Japanese attempt to expose the truth in the context of historical fact, the Koreans close their ears. To them, history is nothing but a political tool. At the same time, the Koreans, who aspire to a position among the advanced nations for their country, are hypersensitive to Westerners' opinion of their country. In that case, it might be a good idea to require them to read foreigners' opinions of the Japanese annexation of Korea.

In the meantime, we must remember that Japanese hypocrites who pander to the Koreans and delight in damaging Japan's reputation who are our real enemies.

- Helen Mears, *Mirror for Americans, Japan*

The [First Sino-Japanese War] was an unqualified success from the Japanese point of view. The Western Powers applauded, and one after another gave up their “special privileges” and admitted Japan as an equal sovereign Power. The Japanese bestowed freedom on the Koreans, and to celebrate the event, the Korean King assumed the title of Emperor to indicate that he was now an equal of the Chinese and Japanese Emperors.<sup>32</sup>

\*\*\*

When, in 1910, the Japanese annexed Korea, it was because the new Emperor “petitioned” them to do so. In commenting on Japan's relations with Korea, many

---

<sup>32</sup> Helen Mears, *Mirror for Americans: Japan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), p. 190.

pre-Pearl Harbor Western historians have noted how punctilious the Japanese were in following the legal niceties of international relations as taught them by the Western Powers. As Professor [Payson Jackson] Treat comments, "... every step in the process was 'correct' diplomatically, and the final annexation was consummated by ... treaty, not proclamation." As a matter of record, Japan's annexation of Korea had considerably more "legal" documentation than most of the empire-building of the Western Powers.<sup>33</sup>

- *London Times*, 28 September 1904 edition

The Japanese Government are understood to have two principal aims in view. They desire to promote Korea's foreign commerce ... and to regulate her foreign relations so that there shall be a minimum of friction and blundering. (...) It has therefore been agreed that Korea shall accept a financial adviser recommended by Japan, and Mr. Megata, one of the ablest among the junior members of the Japanese Treasury, has been chosen for the post. (...) Then, in the conduct of her foreign relations also, Korea is to have the benefit of an adviser franked by Japan – Mr. D. W. Stevens, during many years Secretary of the United States Legation in Tokio, and now counsellor to the Japanese Legation in Washington, a man of well proved ability.

(...)

The Koreans have had ample time to appreciate the advantages of reform, but they have never shown the least disposition to be appreciative. There is only one faint hope – namely, that although Korea cannot discern the things making for her own good, she may learn to value them by experience of their uses. On that slender foundation Japan intends to build, and if she succeed in raising a solid edifice she will deserve much credit.

- *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 March 1908 edition]

D.W. Stevens, diplomatic adviser to the Korean Council of State, was an arrival yesterday on the Nippon Maru (...) In 1904, under the treaty between Japan and Korea, he was appointed to his present position.

Stevens says the Korean people have been greatly benefited by Japanese protection and that they are beginning to look more favorably on it. He says the Japanese are doing for the Koreans what America is doing for the Philippines. Continuing, he said,

"You can get some idea of the condition of Korea before the war from the statement that the Government was spending 3,000,000 yen annually on a standing army and 60,000 yen on public education. The people are divided into two classes, the peasantry and the official classes. The former was ground down until nothing but a bare existence was left from their labor, while the official class was thoroughly corrupt.

---

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

“The peasants have welcomed the Japanese, while the official class has not, but even the officials are beginning to see that the only hope for the country lies in a reorganization of the old institutions.”

- George Trumbull Ladd: American educator and philosopher

Nationally, a new life opens up before Korea. Japan has sent her veteran statesman to advise and guide Korea, the man to whom in the largest sense Japan owes so much – the most conspicuous statesman in Asia to-day, Marquis Ito. Plans for the reform of the Government, codification of the laws, development of the industry and business of the people, and extension of education, have been formulated, and in a comparatively short time most promising results achieved. In spite of difficulties which necessarily for the present encumber the situation, the outlook is most hopeful.<sup>34</sup>

- *New York Times* (29 April 1905 edition)

Wonderful is the spectacle of transformation in Korea.

The reforms already effected are remarkable and are an unmixed benefit to the people, but they are causing dismay to the Emperor and his corrupt Court of attendants, soothsayers, fortune tellers, and foreign parasites. The Emperor has suffered a cruel disillusion, but is still hoping for the ultimate success of Russia, a power which has fostered the worst influences of his barbaric reign.

- Correspondent Esson Third in the *North China Herald* (18 August 1905 edition)

Japan, meanwhile, is being soundly rated by the ignorant classes and by some foreigners for her whole course of action during the past year. She is threatening a protectorate, we are told. But what of that? We have had a protectorate ever since the treaty was signed and since war broke out.

(...)

In a word the bane of Corea to-day is not the Japanese, but the Palace, where ignorance, superstition, and cruelty hold sway.

(...)

To the fullest extent of her territory and influence, [Korea] stands responsible for the war. In the blood and sweat and suffering of it she has shared nothing. Let us help her to see her faults, her sins, her good-for-nothingness, help her to awake to an earnest, diligent, honest life, and it will be time enough then to declaim against a protectorate and the high-handedness of the Japanese.

---

<sup>34</sup> George Trumbull Ladd, *In Korea with Marquis Ito* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1908), p. 168.

- *North China Herald* (24 November 1905 edition)

Even those who like the Koreans best, and all who know them allow that they have many amiable qualities, are forced to admit that Korea cannot maintain herself in the twentieth century as an independent State.

- Comments made by General Dmitri Horvath, general manager of the Chinese Eastern Railway, about the assassination of Ito Hirobumi in *Kharbinskii viestnik* (a Russian-Manchurian newspaper)

The more I contemplate [the assassination], the more miserable I feel.

If Russia had heeded the advice of Marquis Ito prior to the great war of recent times [the Russo-Japanese War], both that cruel war and the dishonor defeat brought to Russia could have been avoided.

Everyone knows that the purpose of Marquis Ito's visit to Harbin was decidedly not empty, ritualistic diplomatic exchanges with our finance minister.

- *Shen Bao* (Chinese-language newspaper published in Shanghai between 1872 and 1949; 01 September 1910 edition)

Korea has perished. Nevertheless, the Korean emperor is smiling, the Korean liege lords are ecstatic, and the former emperor (Gojong) too bears no grudge. All of them seem to be skilled at acquiring special treatment from a foreign nation. Only the students are gloomy and disaffected.

- *London Times* (04 October 1904 edition)

Of all the many remarkable circumstances of this Far-Eastern war, the fact that dominates everything else is the courage and conduct of the Mikado's armies. We recognise, almost grudgingly and in spite of ourselves, the existence of a moral force that appears to govern and sway the whole conduct of a whole people, inspiring not a caste but a nation from highest to lowest, to deeds that are worthy to rank with the most famous of history or of legend. We want to know what this force is, whence it comes, and what it means; the sense of its existence makes us jealous, uncomfortable, almost annoyed. We are told that the Japanese are scientific fanatics; in effect that is apparently the result; but effects are nothing and causes everything. What we desire to know is the cause, the underlying motive that inspires the deeds of valour, too numerous to name, that are told us from all sides, without a single dissentient voice, both from one side of the battlefield and from the other, even finding a generous acknowledgment in a rescript of the Tsar's. (...) Valor is nothing new to the West, since the annals of all armies are crowded with it. It was not that; there was something more behind, something which, had all Western armies possessed it, would have prevented black marks which besmirch the military escutcheons of all nations of the West without exception. What was it? What is it?



- Alleyne Ireland, British historian

From such a study [of the available data], which has occupied me for more than three years, and of which the results are presented in this volume, I have formed the opinion that Korea is today infinitely better governed than it ever was under its own native rulers, that it is better governed than most self-governing countries, that it is as well governed as any of the British, American, French, Dutch, and Portuguese dependencies which I have visited, and is better governed than most of them, having in view as well the cultural and economic development of the people as the technique of administration.<sup>35</sup>

\*\*\*

From year to year since annexation the number of prisons has increased, and their condition improved, so that today, the larger prisons, at least, will bear comparison with those of any country, and are greatly superior to most of the prisons in the United States.<sup>36</sup>

In the fiscal year 1918 public schools for Korean children numbered 466 throughout the country, and the expenditure for them amounted to 1,835,000 yen, of which only 195,000 yen, namely about ten per cent of the whole, fell upon the Korean population, the average burden on each household being as low as six sen (1 sen = ½ cent U.S.), while the rest was met by government assistance. However, in view of the growing need of common education among the people a programme was drawn up in 1919 to found 400 more schools within the next four years on the standard of “one school to every three villages at least,” and this necessarily meant [a] large increase in expenditure and consequent increase in the incidence of the school tax, as well as in the amount of government aid. (...) It is to be noted that between 1918 and 1922 the expenditure on the elementary education of Koreans increased nearly eight-fold.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Alleyne Ireland, *The New Korea* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1926), p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-134.

## **7. EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT**

For more than 100 years, beginning in 1910, the Koreans have made it a national cause to broadcast their condemnations of Japan and their claims that the annexation was invalid to all the world. Their ultimate objective is to have the Japanese government announce at a Diet session that Japan's annexation of Korea was both unlawful and invalid, and to issue an apology. Should such an event actually come to pass, Japan would be refuting its grand mission, validated by the world's leading nations when it was put into effect. It would also be refuting the very existence and survival of the Japanese people from their origin, through the present, and into the future, as well as herculean efforts of our ancestors, of which we should be proud.

We cannot tolerate the insulting behavior of the Koreans, who refuse to face the facts of history squarely, or of hypocritical Japanese politicians or intellectuals who, time after time, turn their backs on their country and apologize where no apology is due. For that purpose, we must dispense with any feelings of chivalry or pity for the Koreans, whose hate for Japan and the Japanese knows no bounds (and no reason), and who insist their country was stolen from them. We must, boldly and resolutely expose the facts of history and demonstrate our pride in the annexation of Korea. We must also prevent any of our politicians contemplating indulging the Koreans by issuing an apology from dishonoring themselves by following in the footsteps of former Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi or former Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei, both of whom issued needless apologies.

It is our hope that this booklet will inform our compatriots and equip them with the ammunition they need to engage in a debate with the Koreans.

Committee Against Government Apologies to Korea  
July 30, 2010