

# TRANSACTIONS

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Korea Branch

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**COVER:** The seal-shaped emblem of the RAS-KB consists of the following Chinese characters: 權 (top right), 域 (bottom right), 菁 (top left), 莪 (bottom left), pronounced Kŭn yŏk Ch'ŏng A in Korean. The first two characters mean “the hibiscus region,” referring to Korea, while the other two (“luxuriant mugwort”) are a metaphor inspired by Confucian commentaries on the Chinese *Book of Odes*, and could be translated as “enjoy encouraging erudition.”

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of the  
**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY**  
**KOREA BRANCH**

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## *Korea Confronts the Outside: Triumphs and Tragedies*

Edward J. Shultz

On August 29, 1910 Sunjong, Korea's last monarch, issued a proclamation yielding both his throne and country to Japan, and turning this 500 year old kingdom into a colony. This was not the first time Korea confronted a powerful antagonist but this was the first time Korea's sovereignty had been so completely abridged and the country reduced to colonial status. Mislabeled by some as the "Hermit Kingdom," a quick look at Korea's long history reveals the contrary, as Korean kingdoms actively engaged the world around them. When its borders were infringed, Korean kingdoms successfully defended their interest with two notable exceptions: the Mongol invasions of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and the above mentioned Japanese annexation in 1910. This paper looks at the history of Korea's interactions with her powerful neighbors from earliest times to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the intent to understand how Korea successfully stymied outside onslaughts, with the exception of the Mongol interlude, until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It will then examine the differing conditions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that forced Korea to cede its sovereignty.

### **Early Korea**

The early history of Korea begins to emerge sometime after the start of the first millennium. The early polities of Chinha, Pyŏnhan and Mahan in the south and Koguryŏ in the north contended with the powerful Chinese states in various manners. The Han commanderies in the northern Korean peninsula, centered particularly around P'yŏngyang, were the most direct assertion of Chinese influence into the area. The southern polities benefited from random interactions with the commanderies, but by 313 Koguryŏ (37 B.C.E.- 668) ultimately took an aggressive stance and pushed direct Han influence off the peninsula. In the subsequent centuries, as China became embroiled in numerous internal political struggles, Chinese influence further waned. However, the slowly emerging states of Koguryŏ, Paekche (18 B.C.E.-660), and Silla (57 B.C.E.- 935) started to forge diplomatic ties with new Chinese kingdoms. During the fourth and fifth centuries, ties between the peninsular states and China were amicable as the peninsular states sought to enjoy the privileges and contacts China offered; however, this situation changed dramatically with the rise of the Sui dynasty (581-618).<sup>1</sup>

Sui unified China, bringing strong central rule that had been missing since the collapse of Han several centuries earlier. With a powerful emperor on the throne and an invigorated state, China began to press its influence into peripheral areas where it quickly came into conflict with Koguryŏ on its northeastern frontier. Koguryŏ by the mid sixth century had developed a strong central state with its capital relocated to P'yŏngyang. It had long pursued a defensive policy as it had been forced to defend its borders against the Xiongnu to the west and the Malgal and other tribal groups to the north and east. Koguryŏ also struggled with her neighbors Paekche and Silla to the south, sometimes enjoying amity and sometime reverting to outright warfare. But the greatest peril to Koguryŏ's existence came in 598 when Sui embarked on an invasion with the goal of taking over the kingdom.

Although Sui enfeoffed the Koguryŏ king with special titles in 591 and then exchanged tribute missions in 592 and 597, the *Samguk sagi* reports:

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<sup>1</sup> Ties were also forged with the fledgling polities emerging on the Japanese archipelago as first Pyŏnhan, Chinha, and subsequently Paekche and Silla had contacts with those units. As for the alleged Japanese colony on the peninsula called "Mimana," there is little evidence to support such a contention.

Year nine [598] [spring, second month]. [The King of Koguryō] led an army of over ten thousand Malgal troops and invaded Western Liao, but was driven back by the Commander-in-chief of the Ying Region Wei Chong. On hearing this the Sui [Emperor] Wendi was greatly enraged and ordered Wang Shiji and Liang, the Prince of Han, to be joint marshals, and with combined land and sea forces of three-hundred thousand men, they then attacked Koguryō. Summer sixth month. An imperial rescript [of Emperor Wendi] rescinded all the official ranks and titles of the Koguryō king.<sup>2</sup>

The record here indicates that Koguryō provoked the Sui attack, but it ended in failure because of heavy rains, high waves and strong winds that stymied Sui both on land and sea.<sup>3</sup> The remorseful Koguryō king relied on diplomacy to end the invasion, again the *Samguk sagi* states:

“Yet the [Koguryō] King was still apprehensive and dispatched an envoy [to Sui] to relay an apology in a memorial calling himself “your subject of the filthy land of Liaodong.” As a result, the Emperor [Sui Wendi] stopped the war, treating him as before.”<sup>4</sup>

In this first Sui invasion Koguryō staved off occupation through the help of weather and a diplomatic apology. Although Paekche sought to provoke Sui to attack again, the Sui emperor refused to be enticed.

Relations resumed between the two states but tensions rose in 607 when Sui demanded that the Koguryō king visit. When nothing resulted, Sui once again planned an invasion in 612 and declared,

“Puny Koguryō is foolish and disrespectful. Gathering between Bohai and Jieshi they again encroach upon the regions of the Liao and Hui Rivers. As Han and Wei repeatedly carried out action, their dens gradually declined. Because they [Han and Wei] have been distracted with various problems, the [Koguryō] tribes have again mustered and flourished as before.”<sup>5</sup>

Sui then according to the histories dispatched over a million troops.<sup>6</sup> Koguryō led by the famed general Ŭlchi Mundōk resisted and, in part because of poor Sui strategy, successfully blocked Sui. The Sui emperor again launched a new attack in 613 and in 614 planned yet another invasion, but by this time Sui was in turmoil and when Koguryō returned a captured Sui general, a truce followed. The Sui emperor died before any further action could be taken. Koguryō emerged victorious in these battles by relying on a stalwart defense, the brilliant strategy of its generals, and timely diplomatic moves. It was costly but Koguryō triumphed.

Tang (618-907) succeeded Sui and Koguryō resumed tribute ties with this new Chinese dynasty. But the Tang emperor, confronted by what he believed was the treachery of the then defacto ruler of Koguryō, stated in spring 644,

“Kaesomun murdered his king, terrorizes the ministers of state, cruelly abuses the people, and now disobeys my commands. We are left no choice but to subdue him.” ... Some cautioned, “Liaodong is far away, the transfer of provisions is difficult, and the eastern tribes [i.e., Koguryō] are good at defending their fortresses. You cannot make them fall quickly.”<sup>7</sup>

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*Samguk sagi* (hereafter cited as SS), Hanguk kojōn ch'ongsō edition, Seoul, Minjokmunhwa ch'ujinhoe, 1973, 20:1b.  
<sup>3</sup> SS 20:1b-2a, “Liang, Prince of Han, was leaving Linyuguan when heavy rains halted the progress of provisions. As a result, his troops, without food, again suffered from infectious disease. Meanwhile, Zhou Luohou from Donglai was crossing the ocean toward P'yōngyang when high waves and strong winds scattered and sank many of the ships.”

<sup>4</sup> SS 20:2a

<sup>5</sup> SS 20:3b.

<sup>6</sup> SS 20:5a.

<sup>7</sup> SS21:1b-2a.

But the emperor would not be dissuaded. Throughout much of 645 Tang troops spread over Liaodong and Koguryŏ territory, forcing again Koguryŏ to defend its territory. But once the cold of winter set in, Tang found itself overstretched and so withdrew.<sup>8</sup>

The Tang emperor lamented his losses, but finding Yŏn Kaesomun far too arrogant, once again plotted an attack on Koguryŏ. Skirmishes between Tang and Koguryŏ troops reoccurred in 647 and 648, but when the Tang emperor Taizong died in 649, warfare ended. After a decade of relative peace, relations between Tang and Koguryŏ became tense as battles erupted between Paekche and Silla. It was inevitable that Tang would be drawn into these peninsular divisions and in 660 Tang aided Silla in its attacks on Paekche. Once Paekche was subdued, Tang's ties with Koguryŏ became more strained, leading to another invasion there in the autumn of 660 which was stopped momentarily by objections from the Tang leadership in the summer of 661.<sup>9</sup> After a brief pause Tang continued its invasion, hopeful that success would follow.<sup>10</sup> This Tang invasion also failed to subdue Koguryŏ and once again cold temperatures and harsh climate rescued Koguryŏ. Silla joined the expedition against Koguryŏ and by 666 the battle reached a stalemate. Ultimately Silla and Tang emerged victorious over Koguryŏ, but the lessons of Koguryŏ's resistance to Tang are similar to those with Sui. Climate certainly aided Koguryŏ defenses, but equally significant was Koguryŏ's willingness to take to arms to defend its territory. Koguryŏ also relied on diplomacy as an added weapon in its arsenal. Silla's active role in the conquest of Koguryŏ and the fact that Koguryŏ's leadership was not united contributed to Koguryŏ's defeat.

Silla had carefully nurtured ties with Tang, yet Silla, like Koguryŏ, had to assert its own prerogatives to thwart Tang designs. In the suppression of Paekche in 660, because the famed Silla general Kim Yusin came late to a meeting with a Tang general, Tang was going to execute one of the Silla leaders. Enraged Kim Yusin addressed his troops and rallied them saying, "Being guiltless I cannot accept this indignity. We must first fight a decisive battle with Tang and then crush Paekche." The *Samguk sagi* goes on to report, "He grabbed his battle axe and stood at the entrance to the camp, with his hair raised up in anger." A Tang commander, sensing Silla was about to revolt, backed down, restoring amicable relations.<sup>11</sup> Silla was learning that a strong defense of one's position will bring a Tang retreat.

As the suppression of Koguryŏ continued, ties between the two allies were tested. For example in the spring of 662, Silla made the trek at Tang's request to P'yŏngyang and presented abundant supplies. But no sooner was this accomplished than the Tang troops returned to China leaving Silla to defend itself.<sup>12</sup> At the same time Tang tried to force Silla and the defeated Paekche into a treaty of amity. By 668 the suppression of Koguryŏ was nearly complete as Silla and Tang forces surrounded P'yŏngyang.<sup>13</sup> But even with this task accomplished, tensions between Silla and Tang spilled over when Tang occupied Paekche territory. In the spring of 670 warfare returned to the peninsula with clashes between Tang and Silla.<sup>14</sup> Silla turned to an enfeofed, former Koguryŏ noble naming him King of Koguryŏ as a way to thwart Tang.

Tang tried to bolster Paekche restorationists as a way to check Silla, but this only further provoked Silla.<sup>15</sup> Confronting Silla's willingness to go to battle, Tang sent a long memorial outlining

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<sup>8</sup> SS 21:13b. "Because the cold came early to the Liaodong region, the grass dried up, and water began to freeze, it was difficult to maintain soldiers and horses for long and what is more, provisions all but ran out, so the Emperor gave orders to withdraw."

<sup>9</sup> SS 22:6b. "Though Koguryŏ is a small country, why must China extend so much effort there? If Koguryŏ were in fact destroyed then you would be forced to dispatch soldiers there to hold it." ... Also encountering Empress Wu's objections, the Emperor then stopped."

<sup>10</sup> SS 22:9b-10a. "A Tang official was confident that divisions within Koguryŏ would assure a Tang victory. 'Now there is serious conflict between Namsaeng and his brothers providing us a local guide to allow us to grasp entirely the reality of their situation. Although their commanders are still loyal, their troops are thoroughly exhausted and for this reason I can say that victory will surely be ours.'"

<sup>11</sup> SS 5:16a.

<sup>12</sup> SS 6:3b.

<sup>13</sup> SS 6:10b.

<sup>14</sup> SS 6:14a-b.

<sup>15</sup> Again the SS 7:1b, "General Chukchi and others were dispatched to lead troops to trample the grain at Paekche's Karim Fortress, and then fought against Tang forces at Sŏksŏng Fortress, beheading 5,300 people and cap-

what it believed were Silla's offenses and threatened Silla with the full might of Tang's naval and field forces. Silla responded with an equally strong statement outlining its grievances with Tang. To the Tang charge of being a traitor, Silla replied,

Since this is not our true position, we are anxiously alarmed and fearful. If we enumerate ourselves how much we have contributed, we fear this will bring criticism. Yet by accepting censure with sealed lips, we fear we may fall into an unfortunate fate. Therefore we now briefly enumerate these false accusations to record that we have not been traitorous.<sup>16</sup>

Despite this protest in 672 and Silla's willingness to back down, battles did ensue with Silla waging war in Paekche as well as allying with Koguryŏ to end Tang's presence in P'yŏngyang. But Silla realizing that it was only weakening itself, finally invoked diplomacy and asked to be pardoned for its alleged crimes. The *Samguk sagi* quotes the Silla king,

If you were to pardon us because we obey and grace us permitting our bodies to be intact, even if I died, it would not be different from being alive. Although it is not my wish, I dare to reveal what I hold in my heart. Unable to win over the thought of throwing myself on my sword, I humbly dispatch Wŏnch'ŏn and others to offer this report in acknowledgement of my crime. Prostrate, I await the Imperial edict. I bow before you. I bow before you. My crime is deserving of death. My crime is deserving of death.

And then notes:

Along with this they presented 33,500 *pun* of silver, 33,000 *pun* of copper, 400 needles, 120 *pun* of oxbile, 20 *pun* of gold, 6 *p'il* of 40 *sŭng* cloth and 60 *p'il* of 30 *sŭng* cloth.<sup>17</sup>

In short, Silla had marshaled every defensive effort to block a Tang occupation of the peninsula, but ultimately relied on diplomacy, coupled with a healthy gift, to soothe imperial egos. But even with this capitulation, Tang and Silla still skirmished for the next several years. Tensions between the two states gradually dissolved with the passage of time as Silla triumphed as the sovereign power on the peninsula.

### **Koryŏ (918-1392)**

The peninsula was relatively free of foreign conflict from the start of the eighth century until well into the tenth century when the Khitan, who established the Liao dynasty (916-1125) in China, began to emerge in northeastern China. The Khitan had been a menace to Koryŏ's dynastic founder Wang Kŏn, and also contributed to the destruction of the Parhae state in 926, causing many Parhae leaders to flee to the Koryŏ kingdom (918-1392). Song China (960-1279), also vexed by these aggressive warriors, turned to Koryŏ in the late tenth century, hoping to check Khitan forays into China. It was only a matter of time before Koryŏ encountered a direct clash with the Khitan which came in 993 when the Khitan raided Koryŏ's northern border region. The Khitan, asserting that they were the successors to Koguryŏ, claimed the land around Koryŏ's Western Capital (modern P'yŏngyang). Koryŏ responded by blocking the Khitan incursion and also relied on the able diplomacy of Sŏ Hŭi, who adroitly and diplomatically stated, "Our country is the former Koguryŏ and that is why it is named Koryŏ and had a capital at P'yŏngyang."<sup>18</sup> Sŏ Hŭi's strong words and actions caused the Khitan to retreat and not challenge Koryŏ's sovereignty. As part of the truce Koryŏ agreed to use the Liao year titles.

Diplomacy did not work for long. The Khitans, demanding that territory south of the Yalu River be turned over to them, and sensing a Koryŏ betrayal in 993, launched their second assault in 1010. This time they bypassed P'yŏngyang, took and destroyed much of the capital, Kaegyŏng (Kaesŏng), and forced the Koryŏ king to flee south to Naju. In the truce that followed, Koryŏ agreed to establish regular tribute exchanges with the Khitan Liao. This truce lasted for eight years until 1018 when the

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turing two Paekche generals and six Tang Guoi [Courageous Garrison] vice commanders."

<sup>16</sup> SS 7:11b-12a

<sup>17</sup> SS 7:14a-b.

<sup>18</sup> *Koryŏsa* (hereafter cited as KS) Yŏnse edition, Seoul: Kyŏnginmunhwasa, 1972, 2:49b.



Khitan again invaded, but this time Koryŏ was prepared militarily. Not only had Koryŏ fortified its northern fortresses but also, under the skilled leadership of Kang Kamch'an (948-1031), Koryŏ routed the Khitans, ending further attacks. Koryŏ, in meeting the Khitan invasions relied on diplomacy and when that failed resorted to stiff military resistance which ultimately proved effective.

Roughly a century later another northern people, the Jurchen, began to push down on Koryŏ's northern frontier. Koryŏ initially met the Jurchen intrusion with diplomacy and encouraged trade offering food, cloth, and agricultural implements as an incentive. The Koryŏ kingdom also presented royal titles as a way to assuage Jurchen egos. These overtures were not sufficient to prevent military clashes in which Koryŏ initially suffered defeats in 1104. In 1107 Koryŏ launched a counter offensive, enlisting a special cavalry corps, that succeeded in expelling the Jurchen from northeastern Korea. Koryŏ resettled people into that area to assure its suzerainty over the region. The Jurchen in the meantime struggled with the Khitan, ultimately supplanted the Liao dynasty, and established its own rule in China taking the name Jin (1115-1234). As Jin held sway over northern China, Koryŏ quickly established tributary relations with this new power. In a pattern seen repeatedly up to this time, Koryŏ used diplomacy and military force in its dealings with foreign aggressors, and usually this dual strategy enabled the kingdom to survive and flourish.

The Mongols authority which started to interact with Koryŏ in the early thirteenth century proved to be a more formidable foe. By 1218 Koryŏ had already established a tributary relationship with the Mongols who were slowly moving out of Mongolia. Wearing by excessive Mongol demands, Koryŏ's ties with the Mongols grew tense and finally broke off in 1225 when bandits killed a Mongol envoy who was returning to the Mongol court.<sup>19</sup> Not until six years later in 1231 did the Mongols return and this time with a large invasion force. Koryŏ, aware of this possible onslaught, prepared its northern defenses and put out a great army to resist the invaders. One of the most famous scenes of resistance to the Mongols took place in the fortress of Kwiju where the Koryŏ commander Pak Sŏ blocked countless Mongol forays. A Mongol observer is said to have stated, "Since my youth I have followed the army, and I am accustomed to seeing the cities of the world fought over and defended but I have never seen anyone being attacked like this and to the end not surrendering."<sup>20</sup>

Ultimately Koryŏ, like Song China, was no match against the Mongols. The Mongols launched seven separate invasions of the Koryŏ kingdom between 1231 and 1254. Koryŏ resisted each time. Not only did Koryŏ field great armies but used a number of other ploys to hold off the Mongols. Unwilling to submit, Koryŏ leaders who now included powerful generals, moved the capital to the off-shore island of Kanghwa, and stayed safely ensconced there until 1270. Koryŏ leaders also turned to Buddhism, reproducing the tripitaka of Buddhist scriptures hoping for divine intervention to stave off the invaders. Pleas urging a cessation of attacks were so moving, it is reported that the Mongol emperor wept on hearing them. On the battlefield, Koryŏ people of all walks of life sought to protect their homeland and harassed the Mongols invaders with guerilla-like tactics.

The court and the generals as in the past sued for peace on a number of occasions, but refused to yield to harsh Mongol demands and so the invasions continued. In 1239 the Koryŏ court dispatched a subordinate member of the royal family hoping the Mongols would interpret this as a gesture of submission.<sup>21</sup> This peace lasted until 1247. The final capitulation to the Mongols was not simple. The court under the control of the Ch'oe House was willing to submit, but the Ch'oe military leaders, fearful that their manipulation of the king and his advisors would end, refused to surrender. Although the Koryŏ court surrendered in 1259, because of a military rebellion it took eleven years for the capital and court to return to Kaegyŏng. Rather than fight on, the Koryŏ kingdom accepted Mongol domination for nearly a century from 1270 and became an allied state of the Mongol Yuan (1279-1368) dynasty in China. To hold off the Mongols, Koryŏ enlisted every tactic possible from appeals to divine

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<sup>19</sup> *Koryŏsa chŏryo* (hereafter cited as KSC) Hosa bunko ed., Tokyo: Gakushuin, 1969, 15:33b. "First month, the Mongol officials left the Western Capital and crossed the Yalu River only carrying the nation's gift of otter skins. The remaining silk and other things they had abandoned in the fields and left. In the road there were bandits who killed them. The Mongols on the contrary suspected us and finally ended relations."

<sup>20</sup> KS 103:26a. Also quoted in *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization*, edited by Peter H. Lee et. al, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 352.

<sup>21</sup> KSC 16:28a.

intervention, diplomacy, false declarations of allegiance to staunch military resistance, but ultimately the Mongol attacks were too sustained to be blocked.

### **Chosŏn (1392-1910)**

The Chosŏn kingdom emerged out of conflict over how best to resolve issues with China. The dynastic founder Yi Sŏnggye (1335-1408) chose practicality over idealism, refused to follow orders to attack Ming (1368-1644), and returned home to establish a new kingdom. Chosŏn pursued a careful policy toward China, wary that many of its challenges had historically come from the north, thus when the next major challenge to its sovereignty came from Japan in the late 16th century, the kingdom was utterly unprepared. Although there had been sporadic pirate invasions from the Japanese archipelago from earliest times, never had there been a major invasion.

In 1392, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (-1598), having united most of Japan under his banner, sought to conquer the world. Korea lay in his path. In well-documented histories, the records of this invasion and Korean resistance have been told. Chosŏn, like the earlier kingdoms, enlisted all forms of support to hold off the Japanese invaders. From innovative resistance such as Yi Sunsin (1545-1598) and his famed turtle ships, to strong guerrilla attacks, to diplomatic overtures, Chosŏn desperately sought to counter these invasions. In a play that differed from earlier tactics, Chosŏn also enlisted help from Ming China. It is difficult to discern which of these many tactics proved most effective, but with the death of Hideyoshi in 1598, the Japanese lost interest in pursuing this deadly folly and a truce ensued with Chosŏn winning a costly triumph.

Chosŏn's peace with the outside was short lived as the Jurchen Manchus rose in the north and invaded Korea in the early seventeenth century. As in the past, Chosŏn pursued diplomacy backed by military resistance. After sustaining several major invasions, Chosŏn accepted Manchu authority, and when the Manchu's established China's Qing dynasty in 1644, Chosŏn was already an allied state.

### **Late Chosŏn**

Chosŏn entered the late 19<sup>th</sup> century confident that through skillful negotiations, backed by a modicum of military strength, almost any foreign foe could be defeated. When the western forces represented by France and the U.S. launched brief forays in 1866 and 1871, Chosŏn resisted with limited success, certain that its tested policies would triumph. However, when the Japanese made their initial probes in the 1870s, Chosŏn reluctantly acquiesced to their demands for diplomatic exchanges. But by 1905 the situation in East Asia posed an entirely new set of issues to which Chosŏn was unable to respond.

As Japan started to assert its control over Chosŏn, Chosŏn could no longer rely on its traditional responses to outside threats: diplomacy and military resistance, for the conditions at the start of this new century were quite different. First, Korea was not confronted with an outright invasion of a foreign force as it had been in the Koryŏ or early Chosŏn kingdoms. When foreign troops entered Korea in the 1880s and 1890s it was ostensibly to protect Koreans or foreign legations. With the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, Japanese troops entered Korea allegedly for defensive measures not as an invading force. Following this virtual occupation, Japanese troops then remained in Korea to "protect" Korea, and to modernize Korea's military, Japan sent advisers which, in effect, assured the dissolution of a Korean armed force. Impossible for Korea to put forth a central army to repel the ensconced Japanese army, Korea could only rely on traditional techniques of resistance such as guerilla offensives seen in the righteous armies in 1906 and 1907, but these were no match for the heavily armed Japanese army. For all these reasons Korea was unable to put forth a military of defense.

Diplomacy as seen in previous struggles with foreign threats often proved to be an effective weapon of defense. Here too, as retold by many, the Japanese skillfully manipulated Korea's foreign contacts through a number of strategies. First Japan gradually took over Korea's foreign office so that by 1905, Korea became a protectorate of Japan's, relinquishing all rights to assert an independent foreign policy. But even more adeptly, the Japanese through its own negotiations and personal diplomacy, adroitly convinced the Western powers that Japan was best able to modernize Korea. In 1895 the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War effectively removed the threat of Chinese intervention in Korea. In 1902 Japan signed the Anglo-Japanese Treaty eliminating England from any possible role in

Korea. Russia's defeat in 1904 in the Russo-Japanese War also removed Russian influences from Korea. Japan likewise neutralized the United States, an early ally to Korea, through personal diplomacy. The popular history, *The Imperial Cruise*, retells this tale of Japan's personal relationship with then President Theodore Roosevelt and its devastating consequences for Korea.<sup>22</sup>

Korea never had a chance to defend itself against the Japanese seizure. At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Korea faced a foreign threat in new forms it had never experienced before. Japan through a slow, subtle intrusion had effectively eroded any unified military response from Korea. An in equally effective strategy, Japan had engineered events so that no foreign power would come to Korea's aid. Or to put it another way, Korea did not have one foe but many. Japan's imposed isolation created the mythology that Korea was a hermit. Korea's triumphs of the past no longer provided a lesson to block the tragedy befalling Korea at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>22</sup> James Bradley, *The Imperial Cruise*, New York: Little Brown and Co, 2009, p. 213 quotes Roosevelt's private correspondence, "The sympathies of the United States are entirely on Japan's side, but we will maintain the strictest neutrality." Although Americans had led Koreans to believe they would support Korea, "Roosevelt had written that 'impotent' countries were legitimate prey for the civilized nations."

*Forgotten People:  
The Koreans of Sakhalin Island, 1945-1991*

Andrei Lankov

In the early spring of 1946, hundreds of Korean miners and fishermen came to the small port city of Korsakov, located on the southernmost part of Sakhalin island. Southern Sakhalin had just changed ownership: after 40 years of Japanese rule, its territory had been retaken by the Russians, so the local Japanese were moving back to their native islands. Koreans came to Korsakov because rumors were circulating that ships would soon arrive to take all Koreans from Sakhalin back home to the southern provinces of newly independent Korea. Those who came to Korsakov wanted to be the first to board these ships. However, the ships never came.

This was, in a sense, a sign of things to come. The Sakhalin Koreans found themselves trapped on the island in 1945 and for a long time they hoped for some miracle that would let them return to their homes. This miracle did happen eventually, but only when it was too late for most of them, and when their children and grandchildren had completely different ideas about how life should be lived.

The present article is based largely on material collected by the author during a trip to Sakhalin in 2009. In recent years local historians have produced a number of high-quality studies of the Sakhalin Korean community and its history. Unfortunately, these thorough and interesting studies are not well-known outside the island, even in Russia, let alone overseas. This article is based on notes and materials provided by Sakhalin historians and activists and on various publications. Of special significance were my talks with Natalia Liede (chairwoman of the Korean Cultural Association), Viktoria Bia (editor of the local Korean newspaper), Mikhail Vysokov (professor of Sakhalin State University) and Anatoly Kuzin.<sup>1</sup> I am much indebted to these people.

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In 1905, after Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, the large (nearly one thousand kilometers long) island of Sakhalin, previously under the Russian jurisdiction, was divided between Russia and Japan. The victorious Japanese took the southern half. The island had large coal deposits and abundant fisheries as well as large forests, so it was of considerable value to the resource-poor Japanese empire. Developmental projects, however, needed cheap labor—labor that was found in Korea, then a colony of Japan.

The first Koreans appeared on the island around 1900. Beginning in the 1930s they began to arrive in growing numbers. At first it was a voluntary migration, Koreans being attracted by the high wages offered there. Indeed, around 1940 a Sakhalin coal miner could make 80–100 yen a month, a fortune for a Korean countryside lad who would be happy to get 15–20 yen a month back home. Initially these high salaries were indeed paid. But when the military situation began to deteriorate, obligatory “savings” were introduced. To this day descendants of those miners remain locked in a legal battle with the Japanese companies and banks involved, trying to recover this withheld money.

In the early 1940s even more Korean laborers began to arrive on the island, this time as a mobilized workforce. They were usually employed in the mines as well, where they had to work under increasingly dangerous conditions, producing coal for the empire.

By 1945 there were some 23,500 Koreans on the island. The population of Japanese Sakhalin was

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<sup>1</sup> The works of Professor Anatoly Kuzin are of exceptional importance for the history of the Sakhalin Koreans. A high-level official in the Soviet period, he became a prominent historian and a true master of document-based research. Most of the statistics in this article are taken from a collection of historical documents he recently published: A.T. Kuzin, *Sahalinskiie koreitsy: Istorii i sovremennost* (Sakhalin Koreans: Past and present) (Yuzhnosahalinsk: Yuzhnosahalinskoe izdatelstvo, 2006).

380,000, so Koreans constituted some 6–7% of the total.<sup>2</sup> The vast majority of these people came from what was to become South Korea. Few of them intended to stay on the island for more than a few years.

In those days many Japanese looked down on Koreans with racist disdain and a great deal of suspicion. It was widely believed that Koreans tended to have communist sympathies and might be even secretly siding with the Russians. It is a sad irony of history that in the Soviet Russia at the same time Koreans were also seen with suspicions as potential Japanese sympathizers. (The forced relocation of all ethnic Koreans from the Soviet Far East in 1937 was largely caused by the Soviet authorities' worries about their loyalties in the increasingly likely event of a war with Japan.)

These suspicions led to an outpouring of violence when the USSR finally entered the war against Japan in August 1945, the local Koreans being attacked by members of Japanese ultra-nationalist militias in the middle of that same month. The zealots believed that local Koreans were ready to serve the advancing Russian forces as guides and were secretly providing intelligence to the Soviet command.

The worst violence occurred in the small Korean village of Mizuho. The entire population of the village, 27 people including many children, was slaughtered with utmost cruelty by their Japanese neighbors, most of them youngsters intoxicated with nationalist propaganda. There were other outbreaks of violence as well across the island.<sup>3</sup>

The Russian military took control over the area in less than two weeks and immediately made it clear that a large population transfer was going to happen—much in line with the established practice of the post-WWII era when changing borders usually meant forced relocation of the population. The local Japanese, whether they wanted to or not, were required to leave the island within the next few years. Throughout the period 1946–1948 some 357,000 Japanese passed through large camps in the southern part of Sakhalin and then boarded ships for Japan.<sup>4</sup>

The local Koreans, meanwhile, learned that they, unlike the Japanese, would not be allowed to leave the island. It is not clear why the Soviet authorities initially made this decision. It is often argued that the major reason was the political impossibility of allowing these people to go to US-controlled Korea. The decision about the fate of the Sakhalin Koreans, however, seems to have been made in early 1946, when the future of Korea was by no means clear.

In spite of efforts by Sakhalin historians, no document explaining the rationale behind this decision has yet been found. Nonetheless, it appears plausible that the initial motive was not political, but economic: like their Japanese predecessors, the new Soviet masters of the island needed labor. In spite of government propaganda and rather generous incentives, few Russians were willing to move to Sakhalin, and many of those who did could not adjust to its harsh conditions. The local Koreans already living there—who, unlike the Japanese, were not perceived as an incurably hostile group—were therefore seen as an ideal source of labor. The industry of Sakhalin was then based on coal mining, fishing and logging, with timber being used for paper production. In all these industries, a large part of the unskilled and semi-skilled labor was provided by the Koreans, who were already familiar with the local climate and conditions.

Soon afterwards, a change in the political situation made repatriation to the southern part of the Korean peninsula politically impossible: Korea was divided, and under no circumstances would the Soviet authorities tolerate a large transfer of population to the “capitalist hell” of the South.

In the late 1940s, when the Japanese were boarding the ships that would take them home, some Koreans tried to pass as Japanese and sneak aboard, but it seems that almost no one succeeded. The Soviet officials in charge of repatriating the Japanese were reminded by their superiors to guard against attempts by Koreans to slip onto the ships.<sup>5</sup> Some elder Koreans told this author that a small number of Koreans did manage to embark for Japan (and then, presumably, to South Korea) using the

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<sup>2</sup> *Istoria Sahalina i Kurliskih ostrovov* (The history of Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands) (Yuzhnosahalinsk: Yuzhnosahalinskoe izdatelstvo, 2006), p. 459.

<sup>3</sup> The Mizuho massacre is not widely known outside the island. A detailed study of this tragic affair can be found in Konstantin Gaponko, *Tragediia derevni Mizuho* (The tragedy of Mizuho village) (Yuzhnosahalinsk: Rif, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> *Istoria Sahalina i Kurliskih ostrovov*, p. 460.

<sup>5</sup> A.T. Kuzin, *Sahalinskiie koreitsy: istoriia i sovremennost* (Sakhalin Koreans: Past and present) (Yuzhnosahalinsk: Yuzhnosahalinskoe izdatelstvo, 2006), pp. 122–123.

havoc and anarchy of September and October 1945, when some adventurous skippers were willing to cross the narrow strait at night and take fee-paying passengers to Japan without asking questions. Nonetheless, it seems that the Soviet authorities generally succeeded in separating the Japanese from the Koreans and preventing the latter from leaving the island.

In rare cases of mixed families, the Japanese spouse was allowed to leave Sakhalin if that was his/her wish. All Korean family members, however, had to stay in the USSR, so the Japanese spouse had to abandon them in order to leave. Unlike all other ethnic Japanese, the Japanese spouses of Koreans were also given the right to stay on the island with their Korean family if such was their choice. Nearly all the Japanese who were allowed to stay on Sakhalin after 1950 (there were some 700–800 of them) were spouses of Koreans or children from mixed marriages.

Facing grave labor shortages, the Soviet government decided to recruit more Korean workers in North Korea, then still technically under Soviet military administration. In the late 1940s a few tens of thousands of North Koreans signed up to work in the Soviet Far East; at some points in the late 1940s and early 1950s their numbers on Sakhalin alone exceeded 10,000 (about a third of the entire Korean community). It was assumed that these workers, usually employed in the fishing industry, would return home once their contracts expired, typically after one to three years. Some were indeed sent back home by 1950, but then the Korean War intervened and prevented further returns. According to a 1952 document, 9,500 North Korean workers and their family members lived on the island at the time.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of Sakhalin Koreans, natives of the provinces of southern Korean, looked upon these new arrivals from the North with some suspicion. The greatest degree of suspicion, however, was reserved for another, much smaller group: the so-called “continental Koreans” who also arrived on the island from Central Asia in the late 1940s.

From the very beginning, the Soviet authorities felt insecure about the presence of large numbers of Koreans, none of whom spoke Russian or had been indoctrinated into the ways of Soviet society. To control the community, but also to facilitate interaction between Korean workers and Russian managers and to provide the Korean population with basic services, bilingual translators, educators and journalists were needed.

Logically enough, such people were found in Central Asia, where there was a large Korean community, then numbering around 200,000. They were descendants of farmers who had escaped from northern Korea before 1917. They initially settled near Vladivostok, but in 1937 the entire Korean population was moved to Central Asia. Despite the cruelty of this measure and the subsequent period of discrimination, the “continental Koreans” were remarkably loyal to the Communist system; those who were not wisely kept their mouths shut. Needless to say, they were thoroughly Soviet in their education and worldview, and usually spoke fluent Russian.

The Soviet government accordingly selected some 2,000 politically reliable Koreans in Central Asia and sent them to Sakhalin to reeducate the local community in the true Soviet spirit. These “continentals” became school teachers and translators and administrators and clerks, police officers and KGB agents, editors of the local Korean language newspaper and officials in the bodies which dealt with the Koreans.

Not unsurprisingly, many members of the island community were not particularly eager to be reeducated. The “continentals” met with disdain and hostility which remained palpable until the 1980s. They were seen as agents of an authority system which the majority of Sakhalin Koreans were not happy with. Actually, if one takes into account not only the serious tensions between the two Korean communities but also the significant cultural and linguistic differences that separated them, it becomes difficult to talk about one Soviet Korean community. There were in fact two such communities: one that included the Koreans of Central Asia, and another, much smaller, that included the Koreans of Sakhalin island.

After the San Francisco Treaty was signed in April 1952, the Japanese government formally stripped all Koreans and Taiwanese of Japanese citizenship. This decision, which had a major impact on the Korean community in Japan, also influenced the Sakhalin Koreans: they officially became stateless.<sup>7</sup> They had lost their Japanese citizenship and were not allowed to become citizens of the

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<sup>6</sup> Kuzin, p. 150.

<sup>7</sup> On the “citizenship circular” and its impact on the legal standing of the Korean community, see David Chapman,

USSR or of any Korean state.

This resulted in considerable legal difficulties, for it was not easy to live in the USSR as a stateless person. Such a person had to go to a police station every three months to get his residence permit extended. Any trip outside one's native town or district required a special police permit, with the application for such a permit having to be lodged at least three days before the intended journey. Until 1956 it was also impossible for stateless Sakhalin Koreans to attend a college; after 1956 they were allowed only to enter a local pedagogical college. For a few years in the late 1940s they were not even allowed to marry citizens of the Soviet Union: for a period in the late 1940s and early 1950s Soviet law forbade marriages to foreign citizens, and Sakhalin Koreans had been officially made foreign. In some cases, "alien" Koreans were forcefully relocated from the vicinity of important military installations. And last but not least, they were ineligible for nearly all managerial jobs and were barred from joining the Communist Party, a prerequisite for any successful administrative career until 1991. It goes without saying that they could not travel overseas, since, being stateless persons, no government would issue them a passport. Even travel outside the island needed permits which were remarkably difficult to arrange.

In 1953 the Soviet authorities finally decreed that Koreans would be allowed to take up Soviet citizenship if they wished. This offer initially had few takers; the Sakhalin Koreans were remarkably reluctant to naturalize. While most still wanted to return to their homes in South Korea, they had learned enough about the Soviet system by this time to understand that once they took Soviet citizenship, they would probably lose any chance of ever leaving the country. Until the late 1960s the Soviet government did not allow its citizens to go overseas for permanent settlement. Any attempt to do so was treated as a serious crime.

At the same time, the legal inconveniences of the Sakhalin Koreans' statelessness did not worry them that much. Most of the first generation Koreans were unskilled laborers who seldom needed to leave their towns and villages and were not qualified for any managerial job.

According to a 1958 Soviet internal document, of some 32,000 Koreans then living on the island, 6,891 had North Korean citizenship (they were workers and the children of workers recruited by the Soviet military administration of North Korea in the late 1940s), while some 3,000 were holders of Soviet passports (these were overwhelmingly "continental Koreans," officials and educators, sent to the island from Central Asia). All others—22,184—were stateless.<sup>8</sup> They believed that this was a way to eventually return home. The Korean Armistice of 1953, the normalization of the relations between Soviet Union and Japan in 1956 and other international events heightened these expectations about repatriation.

A small number of Koreans did indeed manage to leave in the late 1950s. As mentioned above, during the mass expulsion of the Japanese population in the late 1940s, some Japanese spouses of local Koreans were allowed to stay with their families (no Korean was allowed to accompany his or her Japanese spouse during the first population transfer of the late 1940s). In 1956 the Soviet government agreed to let Koreans follow their Japanese family members if the latter choose to go to Japan. A few hundred people left at this time, including 294 "stateless" Koreans. Among these was Pak No-hak, who later became an unofficial representative of Sakhalin Koreans in Japan. He was married to a Japanese woman.

Meanwhile, the economics of the Sakhalin community began to change. While most Koreans still worked in mining and logging, in the late 1950s many of them discovered a new, profitable activity requiring neither citizenship nor education, only a lot of hard labor and persistence: small-scale vegetable farming.

The Sakhalin food situation in the 1950s was remarkably bad. A professor of Sakhalin University, whose childhood was spent on the island in the 1950s, told me recently: "We would not have starved without the Koreans, perhaps, but we would have had to sustain ourselves on the almost uneatable stuff they used to ship here from the continent. You cannot imagine the disgusting taste of dried potatoes and dried onions which used to be our staple diet before the Korean farms began to flourish." Indeed, Russian farmers, unused to the peculiarities of the local climate and soil, could not produce suf-

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*Zainichi Korean: Identity and Ethnicity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 69–70.

<sup>8</sup> Kuzin, pp. 196–197.

ficient quantities of fresh food, especially under the notoriously inefficient system of the “collective farms.”

It was not legally possible to establish large private farms in those days, but Koreans nevertheless managed to get exceptional harvests from the small plots which they could privately own. By the 1960s a majority of Korean women (and many men) spent their days working on these tiny but efficient farms. They thus earned much respect from the locals—and also money which was soon invested into the education of their children, the next generation of Sakhalin Koreans.

Meanwhile, the first generation of southerners, then still in their 40s and 50s, badly wanted to return to their native lands in the southern part of Korea. The Soviet authorities would not allow such large-scale resettlement to South Korea, but they had a different attitude toward those Koreans who had arrived on Sakhalin in the late 1940s from North Korea. The authorities wanted them to leave. From 1954 onward instructions were frequently sent to the local police to persuade former North Korean contract workers that it would be a good idea for them to go home.

These attempts at persuasion found a good deal of support in Pyongyang. At around the same time, officials at the North Korean consulate in the port city of Nakhodka near Vladivostok became remarkably active on the island. (Vladivostok, being a naval base, was then off limits to foreign diplomats.) Obviously, North Korean diplomats and spies were encouraged by their recent political success in Japan. Japan had a large Korean population, many of whom—much like Sakhalin Koreans—were recent migrants from South Korea. The North Korean agencies succeeded in persuading them to choose North Korean citizenship and for two or three decades the Japanese-Korean community remained surprisingly loyal to Kim Il Sung’s regime. Their association, Soren (or Ch’ongruiyon), became a powerful state within a state which often broke Japanese laws with impunity and provided the North Korean regime with considerable funds and valuable intelligence. In the late 1950s and early 1960s Pyongyang also succeeded in luring some 95,000 ethnic Koreans from Japan to North Korea.

It is difficult nowadays to believe that North Korea, a brutal and impoverished dictatorship, once enjoyed great popularity among Asian countries and among Korean communities overseas. The fact remains, however, that starting around 1960 North Korea—due partially to its actual achievements but also to the remarkable skills of its propaganda arms—was seen as a beacon of progress in many Asian countries. The Sakhalin Korean community did not avoid this temptation, and for a brief time it appeared that Sakhalin Koreans were eager to side with Pyongyang and perceived North Korea as their ‘true motherland.’

North Korean diplomats and intelligence agents worked hard to persuade “stateless” Koreans to choose North Korean citizenship. They insisted that ultimately “Korea is one,” and that it would not matter in which province of the native country a person lived because unification—as they assured—was just around the corner. These efforts met with some success. In the late 1950s Sakhalin Koreans came to prefer North Korean rather than Soviet citizenship. For example, in 1958 the Sakhalin police office surveyed the local “stateless” Korean population (that is, Koreans who originally came from the South). According to the survey, 9,836 said that if given the choice they would prefer to remain without citizenship, 6,346 opted for North Korean passports, and only 1,008 expressed the wish to become citizens of the Soviet Union.<sup>9</sup>

Between 1956 and 1962 some four thousand Sakhalin Koreans moved to Kim Il Sung’s “paradise on earth.” This number included few formerly stateless Koreans who had taken DPRK citizenship.

At the same time, North Korean agents began to create a semi-clandestine network which they hoped would separate local Koreans from Soviet influence so that they could be redeemed as “loyal soldiers of the Dear Leader.” The “study groups” (*haksŭpcho*) that were formed looked innocuous at first. They taught Korean language, history and culture—thoroughly mixed with North Korean propaganda, of course. Soon, however, these groups began to change. Pro-Soviet Koreans who were present were pushed aside and sometimes subjected to violent attacks and a clandestine pro-Pyongyang network began to emerge.

It did not last. First, the Soviet Union was no Japan; the KGB would not tolerate a Ch’ongruiyon-type organization on Soviet soil. Despite the official rhetoric, relations between Moscow and Pyong-

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<sup>9</sup> Kuzin, p. 193–194.



yang in the 1960s were in fact tense, even hostile. Second, Sakhalin Koreans themselves soon grew disillusioned about North Korea. Stories about life in North Korea began to filter out in the late 1950s, and in no time the idea of repatriation to North Korea lost its appeal. The last group, some 500 people, left the island for North Korea in 1962. Since then, no one wanted to follow. By the mid-1960s few had doubts that life in the USSR, however poor and restricted it might be, was still free and affluent compared to what awaited in Kim Il Song's alleged "paradise on earth." Three former Sakhalin Koreans who made the mistake of going to the North staged a bold escape back across the Soviet border. They were allowed to regain their Soviet citizenship (one of them eventually became a journalist for Moscow radio). Others who could not escape smuggled letters out which left no doubt about how North Koreans really lived.

North Korea therefore became decisively unpopular among Sakhalin Koreans. As an elder Korean intellectual told me: "Frankly, we were not proud of being Korean until the late 1980s. Everybody then thought of North Korea as the sole Korea, and people here in Sakhalin knew very well what an awful place it was." The North Korean mirage, briefly attractive in the late 1950s, in short collapsed. However, it had an unintended consequence later, in the 1970s, when this short-lived infatuation with Kim Il Sung's regime was used by the authorities as a tool to silence emerging opposition on the island.

In 1974 a sudden change in the domestic and international situation led to a revival of hopes for repatriation, which by that time were almost dead. The USSR was by then far more liberal (and more affluent, for that matter) than at any point in its history. In the 1970s the Soviet government began to allow Jews to leave the country, signaling a change in the Soviet approach to emigration, which had hitherto been uncompromisingly negative. The Japanese government, meanwhile, stated in 1974 that it would accept those Sakhalin Koreans who would be allowed to leave by the Soviet authorities. Surprisingly, this offer was taken by Moscow.

It was initially assumed that the numbers of potential emigrants would be small, perhaps in the dozens. The younger generation of Koreans, after all, were well adapted to the new life and were doing well. But things then took another turn: to the embarrassment of Moscow, hundreds and then thousands of Sakhalin Koreans expressed a desire to apply. In some cases it seems that the Confucian family ethic was at work: while the younger generation did not really want to go, they were ready to obediently follow their parents for whom the return to the native lands was a long-cherished dream. At any rate, it was a potential humiliation. The North Koreans also put great pressure on Moscow, demanding that the process be stopped. To complicate things further, relations with Japan deteriorated when in 1976 a Soviet air force pilot defected to Japan with his new fighter jet in 1976. Late that same year the earlier decision was accordingly reversed: the Soviet authorities declared that no repatriations would take place.

This came as a shock to many older Koreans whose cherished dream suddenly collapsed after being so close to realization. Sakhalin, like most of the Soviet countryside, was habitually docile in matters of politics, but this time a spontaneous "repatriation movement" began to unfold. In late 1976 the family of To Man-sang, who lived in the small town of Korsakov on the southern coast of the island, took a desperate step: they staged a demonstration in front of the local Party office, holding placards demanding: "Let us go!" The Soviet Union of the late 1970s was a relatively liberal place compared to what it had been in Stalin's time, but it was still not as liberal as, say, South Korea under the "iron-fisted rule" of General Pak. The Korsakov demonstration constituted a dangerous and unprecedented challenge to Moscow. The Soviet authorities reacted swiftly.

Unfortunately for them, To Man-sang and his family held North Korean citizenship, even though they had originally come to Sakhalin from the South. Available documents do not clarify when and how they acquired it. It seems that they were among those Sakhalin Koreans who took North Korean citizenship in the late 1950s, being driven by nationalist feelings. If so, it was a bad decision. In early 1977 To Man-sang and his family were extradited to North Korea as "undesirable aliens." They were soon followed by three other families of prominent repatriation activists. Throughout 1977, 40 Sakhalin Koreans were sent—essentially as prisoners, under armed guard—to the border railway sta-

tion of Khasan, where they were handed over to the North Korean authorities.<sup>10</sup>

The Soviet government saved itself from the embarrassment of imprisoning people whose only crime was a desire to return to their native lands. At the same time, everybody understood: had the activists been tried in the USSR, they would have received a few years of imprisonment at the worst, whereas sending them to North Korea likely meant a sentence of death—death not just for them, but for their families too. Indeed, in 1977 North Korea was an exceptionally brutal dictatorship. The authorities there were not gentle with people who, although North Korean citizens, had openly expressed the wish to go to South Korea—and even worse, who had started a movement which nearly resulted in a serious loss of face for Pyongyang. At best, such “traitors” would be sent to a prison camp. More likely, they were immediately put to death. After 1990, the families of those sent to North Korea made inquiries along with concerned NGOs and official Soviet agencies about the fate of these people. Needless to say, Pyongyang did not respond.

The story terrified a community whose members by that time had no illusions about North Korea. The repatriation movement instantly died. An activist’s son explained to me the position of his father: “My father once told me: ‘I would perhaps not be that afraid of prison. But they could send me to North Korea, together with all of you. And that would be much, much worse than going to prison. North Korea is a hell.’ So my father dropped out.”

Meanwhile, the community at large was changing. Once the hopes of repatriation diminished and the Pyongyang mirage collapsed, the Sakhalin Koreans began to take Soviet citizenship. It liberated their children from manifold restrictions: being Soviet citizens, they could enter the best schools and occupy almost any job. Some discrimination persisted, however. It was an open secret that only people born Soviet citizens would be normally eligible for the most prestigious and/or sensitive jobs. Nonetheless, compared to the position of a stateless person, this change in status meant a dramatic improvement in available career prospects—and most good jobs were not seen as security-sensitive anyway.

Those who had acquired North Korean citizenship during the short period of pro-Pyongyang sentiment, or who had it from the beginning as former recruited workers, faced a major obstacle. In order to apply for Soviet citizenship, they had to formally renounce their North Korean citizenship and produce a proper certificate from the North Korean consulate. Since such were certificates never issued, Soviet officials devised a clever way to get around this uncompromising stance of the North Korean officialdom. They advised applicants to send their North Korean passports to the consulate by registered mail. The postal receipt had to contain a brief description of the envelope contents: a valid North Korean passport. After receiving no reply from the consulate for six months, the proper paperwork could then be processed. By the early 1980s the majority of Sakhalin Koreans were neither stateless persons nor overseas citizens of the DPRK. They were Soviet citizens—although their loyalty, to be frank, was not always perfect.

Signs of assimilation were increasingly apparent in the island community beginning in the 1960s. In 1945 few if any Korean could utter a word of Russian. Those who came to the island from North Korea in 1946–1949 to work in the fishing and timber industries did not have a much better command of the language. For a decade or two the Sakhalin Korean community therefore could function in Korean only.

In the 1950s, most Korean children on Sakhalin attended Korean-language schools. In the post-war Soviet Union, still a very poor place, it took a major effort to provide these schools with textbooks—either translated from Russian or specially written and then printed—and teaching materials, but it was done. A junior college was also maintained on the island in order to train teachers for the Korean-language schools. Until the early 1960s, Korean Culture House operated in the island’s administrative center. For a while, even a small Korean theater existed on the island. North Korean films were widely screened, and in some cases Korean subtitles were prepared for Russian language films.

In 1951 a Korean-language newspaper called *Lenin-ui kil-lo*, “Following Lenin’s Path,” began publication on the island. It was generously subsidized by the administration and was published five times a week from 1952, with a circulation of 10,000 to 12,000. Sakhalin radio stations made regular

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<sup>10</sup> Kuzin, p. 268–272.

Korean-language broadcasts as well.

In 1963–1964, however, a major change took place: all Korean schools were closed and the teachers and students were transferred to Russian schools. This step is often described as an attempt at forced Russification, but talks with elder Koreans have made this author skeptical. Witnesses insist that the major force behind the switch to Russian-language education were the Koreans themselves.

By the mid-1960s the Korean community on Sakhalin had greatly changed. While its elder members still hoped to return home, the younger generation had different ideas. To them, Russian Sakhalin and not South Korea was their home. In many cases, their parents also changed their minds, for like Koreans worldwide they highly valued education and the jobs associated with education. From 1956 even stateless Koreans could be accepted into a local college, and very soon they came to be overrepresented among the most successful students.

A Russian-language education, however, was necessary to increase the chances of success in a Russian-speaking environment. Graduates of Korean middle schools had problems with advanced education. Had their parents wanted their children to become fishermen or miners or vegetable farmers, they perhaps would not have minded. But they had more ambitious plans, to become engineers, doctors and professors, and that required that their children be taught in Russian. For an aspiring engineer or lawyer, learning Korean was essentially a waste of time. Few therefore endeavored to do so.

Even after the switch to Russian-language education, the Korean cultural sphere nevertheless survived on the island thanks largely to generous government subsidies. This was an interesting peculiarity of Soviet policy. On the one hand the state encouraged Russification, while on the other it spent large sums supporting minority languages and cultures—even when the minorities in question did not show much interest in their supposed ‘heritage.’

Despite these efforts, younger generations of Sakhalin Koreans were being increasingly assimilated into Russian culture by the end of the Soviet era. According to the 1970 census, 28,000 of some 35,000 Sakhalin Koreans listed Korean as their primary language. In 1989 the figure had fallen to 13,000. In other words, by 1990 some two-thirds of Sakhalin Koreans had limited or no knowledge of their ancestral language.

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What has happened to the Sakhalin Korean community in a new Russia since the end of the Soviet Union?

For Sakhalin, the disintegration of the Soviet system in 1991 was a mixed blessing. Initially, the island experienced a wave of enthusiasm for democracy and market economy. The events of the early 1990s, however, dealt a harsh blow to the region, which depended heavily on government subsidies. Incomes shrank and unemployment became the norm.

It thus comes as no surprise that nowadays many locals long for the lost stability of the Soviet era. A large statue of Lenin still dominates the main square of Yuzhnosakhalinsk (and incidentally, the above-mentioned Korean candidate ran for office on the Communist Party ticket). Only in the early 2000s did the economic situation begin to improve, thanks largely to an oil boom: rich oil and natural gas deposits were discovered in the seas around the island.

For the Korean community, perestroika meant the “opening” of South Korea, land of their ancestors. Beginning in the late 1980s stories about South Korea’s material prosperity and technological success were widely reported in the press—and enthusiastically retold by Koreans. Visits to Seoul soon became commonplace. Nowadays, Asiana operates daily flights to the island.

These contacts brought new employment opportunities, but also a new self-perception. For decades, Sakhalin Koreans saw North Korea as “their country”—and everybody knew that it was a destitute dictatorship. The “discovery” of South Korea in the late 1980s, after the 1988 Olympics, changed this perception. Cultural associations, language classes, national dance troupes and similar organizations flourished in the new environment. For a time people were saying that a general revival of Korean culture and language was just around the corner.

Finally, in the late 1990s, persistent efforts by Korean activists and their supporters in Japan, South Korea and other countries helped to solve the community’s oldest problem. Japan and Korea jointly funded the construction of a special apartment complex near Incheon. This complex houses those elder Koreans who wish to return to Korea. Applicants have to have been born before 1945 to be

eligible for this program, which entitles returnees to normal South Korean social benefits and an old age pension. By January 2009 there were 2,300 elder Sakhalin Koreans residing in this apartment complex. They had finally realized the dream which once was so important to Sakhalin Koreans.

Meanwhile, their children and grandchildren have done remarkably well at adjusting to the new life on the island, with Koreans nowadays being overrepresented among Sakhalin's professional elite. When judged by education level and income, Sakhalin's Koreans were very successful in the closing years of the Soviet Union and they have become even more successful since its demise. The post-Soviet social transformation meant that old restrictions became irrelevant. The quiet discrimination disappeared as well.

Contrary to earlier expectations, however, this success has not translated into a revival of Korean culture. In the early 1990s many young Koreans began to study their ancestral language but nearly all of them eventually gave up. For native speakers of Russian, learning Korean is exceedingly difficult, and fluency in Korean does not help the average inhabitant of Sakhalin that much. Younger Koreans therefore tend to make a rational choice: they prefer to study English if they decide to take up a second language, or Japanese if they want a challenge. (Japanese business is much present on the island.) It is telling that in the last few years the Korean-language department of Yuzhnosakhalinsk State University has struggled to find enough applicants to fill its quota of fully subsidized students—that is, students who study for free. Most of Sakhalin's Koreans are now becoming Russians—albeit a particular kind of Russian, with intense sympathies towards South Korea and strong anti-Pyongyang feelings, and also with a love for seafood generously spiced with chili pepper.

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## *Haengju Mountain Fortress on the “River of Hell”*

Samuel Hawley

As you approach Seoul by bus from Incheon International Airport, you pass a bluff overlooking the Han River, where the orange-painted Banghwa Bridge gracefully curves to meet the north bank. If you look up to your right you can just catch a glimpse of a gray stone cenotaph rising through the vegetation at the top of the hill. It is a monument to a battle that was fought here four centuries ago, in the second year of the Imjin War, Japanese dictator Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea, 1592-98. It was an epic struggle for survival that is remembered by every Korean today: The Battle for *Haengjusansong*, Haengju Mountain Fortress. To understand what took place on this spot is to better understand how Koreans think, and what motivates “Dear Leader” Kim Jong-il and his maddeningly recalcitrant compatriots to the North.

It was a Sunday afternoon the last time I visited the place on the local bus, Number 921. I was the only passenger to step down into the dust along the side of the highway, the only one to trudge past the colorful restaurant signs advertising stewed dog and up the twisting road to the top of the hill. Was I, a foreigner, more interested in this place than the Koreans? No, the crowds were there. They just don't arrive by public bus any more. In these days of affluence they come in luxury tour coaches and shiny new cars.

Inside the front entrance the children was already cutting up badly, racing about and shrieking and rolling on the grass. “Little Emperors,” they'd be called in China. After four years writing a history of the Imjin War, battle sites such like this fill me with reverence and emotion. Can't those parents keep their kids in check? Can't they teach them to show a little respect? But then I come upon a granite marker bearing an account of the battle, and a father guiding his daughter through a reading of it, running a stick like a pointer down the vertical lines. The text is dense. The girl solemnly drones for four minutes. She reads the whole thing.

It began in the year known in Korea as *Imjin*, “water-dragon,” 1592 in the West. On the twenty-third of May a 158,800-man invasion army departed from the Japanese island of Tsushima to land at Pusan Hideyoshi's objective: to conquer Korea, then China, and then the whole of Asia. During the first few months of the invasion the Japanese moved up the peninsula with such ferocity and speed that it seemed increasingly likely that they would soon arrive at Beijing. Then, after taking Pyongyang, their advance ground to a halt. It was stopped in part thanks to the Korean navy under Yi Sun-sin, which was preventing Japanese ships from ferrying supplies north to the front via the Yellow Sea. Local resistance was building up inland as well, from bands of civilian volunteers known as *uibyong*, “Righteous Armies,” and from units of monk-soldiers responding to a call to arms from the venerated Buddhist master Hyujong. These irregular Korean forces would combine with government troops and a 35,000-man army from China to drive the Japanese out of Pyongyang in February, 1593.

March. The Japanese were resting comfortably for the moment in Seoul. They had halted the advancing Chinese on February 27 in the Battle of Pyokje just north of the city, inflicting such heavy casualties that Chinese supreme commander Li Rusong lost all desire to fight. There still remained a knot of resistance near the capital, however, that they wished to erase: 2,300 Korean troops under Cholla Province army commander Kwon Yul, holed up at Haengju a few hours' march to the west, in a earth and wood fortress on a bluff overlooking the Han River.

Kwon Yul was a fifty-five-year-old civil servant from a family of note in Andong in the southeastern province of Kyongsang. Upon the outbreak of Imjin War in May of 1592, Kwon, then magistrate of Kwangju in the south of Cholla-do, led a body of troops north in a failed attempt to halt the

Japanese advance before it reached Seoul. He then returned south and participated in the defense of Cholla Province, which the sixth contingent of the Japanese army under Kobayakawa Takakage was threatening to overrun. Kwon distinguished himself by defeating Japanese units in two engagements, the Battles of Ungchi and Ichi, in the second week of August. Recognizing his ability, the government appointed him Army Commander of Cholla Province in the following month.

By this time Kwon had come to the conclusion that the Japanese were too skilled in warfare to be defeated on open ground, and that the Koreans should therefore fall back on their traditional strength of fighting from behind walls.<sup>1</sup> He would make his first attempt at this in October of 1592 from a base at Tok-san, a mountain redoubt two day's march south of the capital, overlooking the main road between Pusan and Seoul. From an ancient Paekche dynasty fortress that they strengthened and enlarged, Kwon and his men attacked enemy foraging parties and small units passing along the road, and generally proved troublesome enough that the Japanese high command in Seoul sent a company south to besiege the fortress. The effort, we are told, was soon abandoned. According to one report, Kwon fooled the Japanese into giving up and returning to Seoul by having a horse rubbed down with rice grains until its coat sparkled in the sun. To the Japanese watching from the distance it appeared that the animal had just been washed, a sign that the Koreans had ample stores of water to withstand a lengthy siege.<sup>2</sup>

Early in 1593 Kwon Yul led his men further north in preparation for the anticipated attack on Seoul by allied Chinese and Korean forces. Proceeding by a back route to the north bank of the Han River, he had a rough stockade constructed from earth and logs on the site of an ancient fortress on a hill outside the village of Haengju, some ten kilometers to the west of the capital. It was a highly defensible position, protected at its rear by a steep drop-off down to the Han. If an attack came, it would have to be made uphill and from the north, straight into the Koreans' concentrated fire.

With the retreat of the Ming army, Kwon Yul's fortress at Haengju emerged as the greatest immediate threat to the Japanese in Seoul. On March 14 they decided to do something about it. Some hours before dawn, the west gate of the city was opened and a long line of troops filed out and turned towards Haengju, marching along the north bank of the Han to the accompaniment of drums and horns and gongs. The daimyo on horseback in the lead constituted an all-star cast from the Korean campaign. There was Konishi Yukinaga, leader of the first contingent that had spearheaded the Japanese invasion in May of the previous year, recently back in Seoul after the retreat from Pyongyang. There was third contingent leader Kuroda Nagamasa, and Kobayakawa Takakage, hero of the Battle of Pyokje. There was Hideyoshi's adopted son Ukita Hideie, the 20-year-old supreme commander of all Japanese forces in Korea, and the veteran Ishida Mitsunari, one of the overseers sent from Japan to help him out. Accompanying them were more than half the troops garrisoning Seoul, a total of 30,000 men.<sup>3</sup>

Inside Haengju fortress, Kwon Yul's 2,300 government troops had been joined by contingents of monk-soldiers, civilian volunteers, and women from the surrounding countryside, bringing the number of defenders to something approaching 10,000. They watched the noisy approach of the enemy multitude with growing trepidation. When the Japanese arrived at the base of their hill in the soft light of dawn, the Koreans observed that each soldier had a red-and-white banner affixed to his back, and that many wore masks carved with fierce depictions of animals and monsters and ghosts. Panic was now hovering just beneath the surface, held in check by the calm authority of commander Kwon Yul. As the Japanese busied themselves below with their pre-battle preparations, he ordered his men to have a meal. There would be no telling when they would have a chance to eat again.

The battle commenced soon after the sun came up. The Japanese, so numerous that they could not all rush at the ramparts at once, divided into groups and prepared to take turns in the assault. Their strength must have seemed overwhelming to the Koreans. For once, however, the muskets of the Japanese were of only limited use, for in having to fire uphill they were unable to effectively target the de-

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<sup>1</sup> Yu Song-nyong, *Chingbirok* (Seoul: Myongmundang, 1987) p. 170. (Yu was Prime Minister of Korea during the Imjin War. He wrote *Chingbirok* c. 1604-07.)

<sup>2</sup> Hanguk chongsin munhwa yonguwon, *Hanguk-in muldae sajon* (Seoul: Chungang ilbo, 1999), vol. 1, p. 160; Wilbur D. Bacon, "Fortresses of Kyonggi-do," *Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 37 (April 1961), p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Yi Hyong-sok, *Imjin chollan-sa* (Seoul: Imjin chollan-sa kanhaeng hoe, 1967), vol. 1, p. 697.

fenders holed up within. Their lead balls simply flew in an arc over the fort and into the Han River beyond. The advantage was with the Koreans, firing down upon the attacking Japanese with arrows and stones and anything else that came to hand. They had a number of gunpowder weapons as well, including several large *chongtong* (“generalissimo”) cannons and a rank of *hwacha* (“fire carts”), box-shaped devices built onto wagons that fired up to one hundred gunpowder-propelled arrows in a single devastating barrage. Alongside these more traditional weapons was an oddity that employed a spinning wheel mechanism to hurl a fusillade of stones. It was called the *sucha sokpo*, the “water-wheel rock cannon.”

Konishi Yukinaga’s group led off the Japanese attack. Kwon Yul waited until they were within range, then beat his commander’s drum three times to signal the attack. Every Korean weapon was fired at once, bows, *chongtong*, *hwacha*, and rock cannons, raking Konishi’s ranks and driving his men back. Ishida Mitsunari was the next to the attack. His force too was driven back, and Ishida himself was injured. Next up was Kuroda Nagamasa, the Christian commander of the third contingent, otherwise known by his baptismal name Damien. He had been burned once before by Koreans fighting behind walls, at the Battle of Yonan the previous year. This time he took a more cautious approach, positioning musketeers atop makeshift towers so that they could fire into the fortress while the rest of his force held back. A fierce exchange of fire ensued, then Kuroda’s men too were forced to retreat.

The Japanese had now attacked Haengju three times, and had failed even to penetrate the fortress’s outer palisade of stakes. Young Ukita Hideie, determined to make a breakthrough in his, the fourth charge, managed to smash a hole in the obstacle and got near the inner wall. Then he was wounded and had to fall back, leaving a trail of casualties behind. The next unit to attack, Kikkawa Hiroie’s, poured through the gap Ukita’s forces had opened, and was soon attacking Haengju’s inner wall, the last line of defense between the Japanese and Kwon Yul’s troops. The fighting now went hand-to-hand, with masked warriors attempting to slash their way past the defenders lining the barricades, while the Koreans fought back with everything they had – swords, spears, arrows, stones, boiling water; even handfuls of ashes thrown into the attackers’ eyes. As the fighting reached its peak no sound came from Kwon Yul’s battle drum. The Korean commander had abandoned drumstick and tradition in favor of his sword, and was now fighting alongside his men. At one point the Japanese heaped dried grass along the base of Haengju’s log walls and tried to set the place ablaze. The Koreans doused the flames with water before they could take hold. In the seventh attack led by Kobayakawa Takakage, the Japanese knocked down some of the log pilings and opened a hole in the fortress’s inner wall. The Koreans managed to hold them back long enough for the logs to be repositioned.

As the afternoon wore on the Korean defenders grew exhausted, and their supply of arrows dwindled dangerously low. The women within the fort are said to have gathered stones in their wide skirts to hurl at the attacking Japanese. This traditional type of skirt is still known as a *Haengju chima*, “Haengju skirt,” in remembrance of this day. But stones alone were not enough to repel the enemy for long. Then, when all seemed lost, Korean naval commander Yi Bun arrived on the Han River at the rear of the fortress with two ships laden with ten thousand arrows. With these the defenders of Haengju were able to continue the fight until sundown, successfully repelling an eighth attack, then a ninth.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, as the sun dipped below the horizon out beyond the Yellow Sea, the fighting petered out and did not begin again. The Japanese had suffered too many casualties to continue. Their dead numbered into the many hundreds, and their wounded – including three important commanders, Ukita Hideie, Ishida Mitsunari, and Kikkawa Hiroie – were many times more. They had in fact been dealt a terrible defeat, the most serious loss on land so far in the war at the hands of the Koreans. Throughout the evening the survivors gathered up what bodies they could, heaped them into piles, and set them alight. Then they turned around and walked slowly back to Seoul. One Japanese officer in the disheartened assembly would later liken the scene beside the Han River that day to the *sanzu no kawa*,

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<sup>4</sup> *Sonjo sujong sillok* (Annals of King Sonjo, Revised), 2nd month/Sonjo 26 (March 1593); Sin Kyong, “Chaejo bonbangji,” in Yi Nae-ok et. al., eds., *Saryoro bonun imjin waeran* (Seoul: Hyeon, 1999), pp. 170-171; Kang Song-mun, “Haengju daechop-eso-ui Kwon Yul chonnyak-gwa chonsul,” in Chang Chong-dok and Pak Jaegwang, eds., *Imjin waeran-gwa Kwon Yul changgun* (Seoul: Chonjaeng kinyomgwang, 1999), pp. 110-113.

the "River of Hell."<sup>5</sup>

When they were gone, Kwon Yul and his men came out and recovered those bodies that the Japanese had been unable to retrieve. They cut them into pieces and hung them from the log palings of their fort. These grisly trophies were an indication of how much had changed for the Koreans since the beginning of the war; of how ten months *in extremis* had transformed them from indecisive scholars Toyotomi Hideyoshi had derided as "long sleeves," into bloodthirsty warriors, bent on revenge.

With a large Chinese army encamped thirty kilometers to the north, and with the Koreans displaying an increasingly grim determination to fight back, the Japanese knew their only reasonable option was to abandon Seoul and fall back to the south. After a series of negotiations with Chinese supreme commander Li Rusong, they evacuated the capital on May 19, 1593.

The Battle of Haengju is remembered today as one of the three "great victories" (*dae chop*), won by Koreans in the Imjin War. (The other two are the Battle of Hansan-do of July 1592, in which Yi Sun-sin and his navy destroyed more than 70 Japanese ships, and the First Battle of Chinju later that year in November, in which the Koreans under Kim si-min repelled an attack by a vastly larger Japanese force.) The site of the battle, once a blasted knoll, has been reclaimed by nature over the years, and is now a peaceful, forested national shrine. The remains of the earth wall still can be easily discerned. The wooden palings that stood on top of it, of course, are long gone. Gazing west towards the center of Seoul from the top of the hill, one can imagine what it might have been like to have stood here four centuries ago, watching 30,000 Japanese warriors march out from the city and prepare to do battle. One can imagine the fear that the Korean soldiers, the civilian volunteers, the monk-soldiers and women all must have felt. And in imagining that fear one may get a glimpse - just a glimpse - of the determination that kept them standing firm at the walls, resisting the repeated attacks of a much larger and stronger and better-armed force, beating it back until it eventually gave up.

Back at the entrance families are having their pictures taken in front of the statue of Kwon Yul, many clutching baskets for a lunch under the trees. More kids have arrived in cars and buses and are racing wildly about. I'm feeling annoyed now that I felt annoyed. Everyone seems to be smiling and happy. The meaning to the battle does not seem to weigh heavily upon them. But it is there, somewhere deep inside. The seven-year-long Imjin War, in which the Battle of *Haengjusansong* was just one of many do-or-die struggles, resulted in an estimated two million Korean deaths and a twenty percent decline in the nation's population.<sup>6</sup> It is in part what makes the Koreans the people they are today: fiercely proud, polite and friendly, but tough and aggressive when confronted with a threat.

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<sup>5</sup> George Sansom, *A History of Japan, 1334-1615* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 358.

<sup>6</sup> Tony Michell, "Fact and Hypothesis in Yi Dynasty Economic History: The Demographic Dimension," *Korean Studies Forum*, no. 6 (Winter-Spring 1979/1980), pp. 77-79.





## Two Early Articles about Korea

Transcribed by Robert Neff

*Many members of our Society are unaware of the large collection of books that the RASKB possesses. Our Library contains early volumes of the journals published not only by our own branch of the RAS but by the North China and Japan branches as well. Many of our books were part of the personal libraries of members who donated them to our Society with the view of protecting these valuable documents for the use of future generations. We would like to encourage members to consider donating their own documents and books pertaining to Korea to our collection in an effort to increase its scope.*

*In order to generate interest in our collection we are publishing here two accounts of early visits to Korea, one that appeared in The Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan of 1883 and the other in the very difficult to find The Journal of the North China Royal Asiatic Society of 1883-1884.*

### **A Secret Trip into the Interior of Korea<sup>1</sup>**

After studying Korean for several years and becoming pretty well acquainted with the language, the idea entered my mind to make a tour of observation through the interior of the country in disguise. So letting my hair and beard grow, my general appearance, in course of time, resembled that of a Korean. I then took counsel with a Korean, donned some mourning clothes (the Korean mourning-hat is deep and covers the face, so that it is convenient for disguise), and in this way succeeded in penetrating the interior of Korea. This was on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1875. Before noon I passed through Pusan, and turning to the west, travelled a distance of about 4 ri, and arrived at an inn at Nyang-san, where there was one apartment vacant. I went in and rested myself. It was not long before the tables were laid. The food was rough and coarse, and assailed my nose with such a stench that indicated that it was putrid. One glance at it was quite sufficient to create a bitter taste in the mouth. To give a specimen or two of the dishes – one was herrings and shrimps pickled in salt (the latter cut in small pieces), exceedingly offensive to the smell. The soup or broth, made of bean sauce (Daidzu and wheat are boiled, then mixed together, pounded and made into lumps; these are piled up, with straw between for several weeks, after which they are again taken out, and, when dried, are ready for use), is thick like mud. With the exception perhaps, of the pickled shrimps, I could not bring myself to eat any of these dishes. As to the pickled vegetables served up therewith – there were *daikon*, chilies steeped in brine, and such an immense quantity of rice that no single man could eat it all. The price of this meal was eight mon (it was of the lowest quality, and the price in Japanese money is about two *sen*, six *rin*). As I might run the risk of exciting suspicion if I did not eat, I ate as best I could.

In the afternoon at half past four I put at an inn (Murukama) where the food was the same as before. There happened to be a guest there, and he suddenly came into my room. My Korean companion found great fault with this irregular entry. Henceforward we arranged that I was to pass for a sick man, and that other guests were not to be allowed into our room, and to make a similar arrangement with the landlord before putting up anywhere. I felt very uneasy at the time, lest the guest should ask any questions, and guess the truth; but luckily he went away without any dispute.

*March 17.* – I started at 7 a.m., and after walking about a ri came to a large river. On paying the one *mon* of Korean money we were ferried across in a boat. This river is called the Nak-tong-gang. It takes its rise in the vicinity of Antong (source not exactly known), discharging itself into the embouchure of Ha-dan. Lighters pass up and down this river. The shape of those boats is very peculiar;

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<sup>1</sup> This account is from *The Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 1883 (Volume XI), it was submitted by W. J. Kenny who had received the document from a Japanese man from the island of Tsushima, the only place that could legally trade with Pusan prior to Korea's opening to the West.

they are narrow in width, and about 10 *ken* (60 feet) in length. The breadth of the river itself varies considerably, the widest part being between one and two *cho* (about 200 yards) and the narrow parts not more than from twenty *ken* to ten *ken* (40 to 20 yards). The inhabitants cast nets into it and catch *Koi* and carp. It cannot be forded. Going further on we came to a barrier. This barrier encircled a mountain and overlooked the river. It is very strongly built, and in construction somewhat resembles the gate of the castle of Tong-nai. Reaching Mil-yang, the fields and rice-plantations become wider in extent, and the soil more fertile. On the way I met the procession of the Pusa returning from Tai-ku, and thought that I should have to perform some act of salutation on meeting him. As I was in painful hesitation, one of the passers-by called out to me, "You mourner, get out of sight!" Luckily I managed to conceal myself behind a mud-built stall that was on the side of the road. From this I first learned that it is the invariable custom for mourners to avoid meeting people of the higher class. After this I had another rencontre with a labouring man who was carrying a *sabo* (Chhaipong) on his back (an implement which the inhabitants use for carrying burdens). He asked my companion was I not a Japanese? "No," was the reply; "there are a great many people in the world who resemble one another in appearance." I did not know of this at the time, but afterwards, when he called me and told me to be careful, I heard it for the first time, and determined to use more caution in the western hills. I stopped at an inn at Ha-yu-chhon, in the district of Chhong-do. The food as before.

*March 18.* – We started on the road at 6 a.m. As yesterday I had suspected and as now my money for travelling had almost come to an end, I compressed my travelling-basket and lightened it of clothes, buying a *mon's* worth of rice-bread (*mochi*) at the mud-built stalls as I went along to satisfy, in some degree, my hunger. Quickening my steps I passed the office of a Chal-pang-gwan (postmaster) on the side of the road, the construction of which somewhat resembles that of similar establishments at Chaopiang and Pusan; then crossing over the crest of a large hill, I entered Kyong-san. About a *ri* farther on I happened to hear more dolorous cries proceeding from a peasant's house on the way side – a kind of wailing chant which I had previously heard used at burials, and which is but a hollow display of simulated grief.

In the fields, as we went along, I saw woodmen engaged in raking pine leaves together and gathering withered branches, straw and grass, which they use in place of firewood. This would seem to show that firewood and charcoal are scarce, and also that very little attention is paid to farming. At about ten o'clock that night I arrived at a certain village in the jurisdiction of the Castle of Tai-ku, and stopped at the house of the nephew of a friend. My friend was not at home at the time; they told me he had gone to Chin-ju. I accordingly waited till he returned. This home was thatched. It was in a dilapidated condition and stood by itself. Comparing it with houses in the country districts of Japan, I find its exact counterpart in the seaweed huts (the Tsushima peasantry enclose seaweed-manure in the middle of their fields; with these I compare it).

*March 23.* – A little snow fell. A man came and inquired for me. After the exchange of the usual compliments, we drank some of the home-brewed muddy drink together, and spent some time in conversation and gossip. At sunset he took his leave and told me he was going home. I went out after him and asked him to let me see the interior of the Castle of Tai-ku; he, however refused to do so, so I therefore determined to go by myself, regardless of the darkness of the evening and the steepness of the ascent, and went on ahead of him, so that he was compelled to go with me. But to my great vexation, owing to the darkness of the evening, I was unable to see anything clearly.

*March 27.* – This evening a curious incident took place. In this house I stopped about a fortnight (they did farm-work and also hawked about pots and pans), observing the domestic economy of the house and the way in which they received their guests. Their food was rice or pulse, sometimes mixed, half and half, with wheat; and as to vegetables (they rarely used cultivated vegetables, but generally picked young shoots of wild herbs), they steam them, dip them into vinegar and soy, and then use them. During the fortnight or so I remained at this house I never saw them eating meat once. It is said that even the middle and higher classes find it difficult to eat meat, and can only eat salt fish. The articles of food are for the most part rancid in smell. They make no particular change in their garments for inside and outside wear. Their bodies and limbs are impregnated with filth; their clothing is a nest of vermin. As they usually lie down and get up without washing their feet, their houses are in complete litter, the stench of which offends the nose in a well-nigh unendurable manner. There appears, however,

to be much friendly feeling in the way they receive their guests, offering them large quantities of sake; chiefly of a thick, muddy description – so sour and acrid in taste that one can hardly drink it. The middle and higher classes brew a *sake* themselves, which they call “Medicine-wine” and drink it. It tastes like Japanese sake of the worst kind, with, a rank smell. “Medicine Cakes,” “Medicine Rice,” “Cock’s-Comb *Sake*,” “Fragrant *Sake*” and such like are assuredly not to be found in the peasants’ houses. The house where I stopped being only a peasant’s hut, I could not form a just idea from it of the general customs; but as far as the uncleanness of their clothes, food and dwellings is concerned, I know that I can speak generally.

March 31. – Cloudy. My friend came to the house and slept with me in the same room that night. In the middle of the night the dogs suddenly began to bark and a noise was heard of people calling out “Thieves!” “Thieves!” Soon afterwards a woman came to the door outside, asking where the thieves were, and after her four or five men came and said that the robbers are concealed in this house and manifested great suspicion. They were then about to make a search, but at this stage my friend got very angry and shouted out asking them what they meant by treating him as a thief, and how they would explain their conduct if they searched another person’s house and did not find any thieves there. They went away without a word. I was afraid at the time that I might fall under the suspicions of these men, and was in great terror, gathered together my things lying about beside me. However, I fortunately escaped this danger.

April 1. – A little cloudy. A friend came and invited me to remove to his house. I had been here already a fortnight, and was afraid that something might at last draw attention to me, so I changed quarters and on that day went with my friend to see the interior of the castle. The castle is built on level ground, and the circuit is about ten ri; the height of the stone walls is about 15 feet. There are large gates on all four sides with guards stationed at them. I entered by the eastern gate and went along towards the northern gate; there is an official building on one side called the Tal-song; it is here that the Kamsa of Taiku comes on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of every month, in order to make profound bows in the direction of the capital. Passing this building I went to the Western Gate, and, on inspecting this, saw that half the interior was crowded with convicts. Over the Southern Gate there is a tablet with the words “The first gate of the Southern Summit” written on it in large characters. After going a distance of about two hundred and forty yards I came to another large gate, over which there is a tablet with the characters, viz: \*\*\*\* (Barrier of Finance). Outside the gate there is a post on which it is written “Officials lower in grade than Shol-to-sa must dismount here.” From this it was said to be 240 yards to the Governor’s house. Within the Eastern Gate there is a busy street bustling and crowded; the shops are as close together as fishes’ scales. In front of the shops native productions and foreign cotton goods were displayed. The interior of the castle is pretty clean and well laid out. The houses number three thousand seven hundred and are in a prosperous condition.

At 9 a.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> I parted with my friend and the others. Two Koreans accompanied me as I left the Taiku. I took the way home and passed the Kyong-san, Cha-in, etc. In the afternoon at 4 o’clock, regardless of the rain, I arrived at Chhon-do and stopped there that night.

April 5<sup>th</sup>. – I started at 6 a.m. and travelled along a steep path over hills and through moors. After passing Won-yang I was greatly fatigued and tired out, and arriving at a town named Myang-san in the middle for the night I stopped at a certain house in a certain district there. But the interior of this house smelt very badly. On one side I saw some dried beef, and on asking about it was told that it was the carcass of a diseased cow. I discovered that the dried meat which Koreans ordinarily carry about for sale is not to be eaten incautiously.

April 7<sup>th</sup>. – Rain. I met the Pusa of Ton-nai on the road. Three singing girls were riding in palanquins in advance: - at a distance of about (1 cho) 120 yards behind came the palanquin of the Pusa, attended by about twenty followers. It was said that they were going to the temple of Pom-o-sa for amusement. Passing Tong-nai and Pusan I arrived at our office in the middle of the night.

### Some Notes Of A Trip To Corea, by G. James Morrison<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Journal of the North China Royal Asiatic Society*: Vol. XVIII, XIX pt1 1883-1884 pages 141-157 – the trip took place in July-August 1883

In placing the following paper before the Society I hope it will be understood that it is only intended to be of a superficial character. In first visiting a strange country one sees many new things, but one is sure to make egregious mistakes if he generalizes too quickly and on insufficient bases, and I would rather have the paper characterized as incomplete than as incorrect.

I left Shanghai on the morning of Sunday the 8th July, and after a rather stormy passage the Ferrier Islands were sighted on the morning of Tuesday the 10th.

These islands are at what may be called the entrance to the harbor of Jenchaun, inasmuch as after passing them the course lies among islands all the way up to the anchorage. Passing the Ferriers at about 10 o'clock, we arrived at Roze Island at about 5 p.m. The official name of the port is Jenchuan which is the name of the nearest place of any importance, but the spot where the Custom House has been temporarily located and where it is purposed to make the foreign settlements, is called Chi-mul-poo and the port is usually spoken of by that name. In front of Chi-mul-po there is an island called by the French Roze Island, immediately to the west of which there is a good anchorage for a large number of vessels. The scenery between the Ferriers and Roze Island is very pleasing when the water is high, but at low tide the vast extents of mud flats detract much from the beauty of the landscape. There is a rise and fall of about 28 feet at spring tides at Chi-mul-poo, and at low water there is a foreshore of mud about two-thirds of a mile in width. In some of the bays in the neighbourhood the extent of foreshore is very much greater. The Custom House has been placed close to a small bluff which projects some distance into the bay, and here it has been possible to construct a small jetty of reasonable length reaching down to low water. At present the vessels lie about a half a mile to a mile south-west of Roze Island, and against the tide it sometimes takes an hour for a boat to reach one from Chi-mul-poo. The charge for a boat to a steamer and back is from \$1 upwards, but as trade increases this charge will no doubt be much diminished.

On a bright day and at high tide the view of the islands from Chi-mul-poo is very picturesque; the view of the mainland from the sea is not so pleasing, - still it compares very favorably with Chefoo or any of the places which residents in Shanghai have opportunities of visiting during a short holiday, and there is every reason to hope that some day a very delightful watering place may exist on some point on the south-west coast of Corea.

Chi-mul-poo can hardly as yet be called a model settlement, but it may possibly have a great future in store.

Immediately to the south of the knoll or bluff above-mentioned lies the Japanese settlement. Here the Japanese have built a considerable number of shanties, and offer for sale a most heterogeneous mass of commodities. They seem to have settled down determined to cast in their lot with the place, and it may only be a few years before some of these men who are at present owners of a shanty and a few dollars worth of stores will be wealthy storekeepers. The great difficulty to be encountered is the absence of the trading class, who could exchange commodities with the foreign importer. I feel quite certain, however, that the difficulty does not arise from the inability of the country to furnish exports, but from the absence of a class which hitherto has not been required, and which the usual law of supply and demand will soon call into existence. Among the Japanese storekeepers there are I believe now one or two Europeans, but there were none when I was at Chi-mul-poo.

Immediately to the south of the Japanese settlement lies the foreign settlement - for foreigners other than Japanese. I cannot say that I think the choice of a site has been a happy one. The ground is low and must be raised with disintegrated granite, a process which is generally considered very unhealthy; but putting aside this, which after all is but a temporary difficulty which will disappear after the settlement is all raised, nothing can ever improve the two-thirds of a mile of mud foreshore at low water. Even if after 30 or 40 years they became rich enough to reclaim all of this, it is very doubtful if the result would not be to throw out another mud flat in front.

There were no houses on this settlement when I was there, and it is to be hoped that the question of the location of the settlement may be reconsidered. The anchorage is undoubtedly very good, and if the settlement must be in that neighbourhood, either Roze Island or the land immediately to the north of the Custom House knoll would be preferable to the present place. As all the goods would be taken into the country in boats by the Seoul river, there is very little objection to the settlement being on an

island, particularly when the distance to the mainland is only a few hundred yards.

The European portion of the population is almost entirely confined to the customs staff. The Commissioner, Mr. Stripling, is an old and valued member of this Society, whose hospitality to strangers in that country will astonish no one who knows him here. His residence is situated rather more than a mile from the settlement, and most of the staff live in the adjoining house; but ere long (that is as soon as the receipts begin to flow in) it is intended to build houses better suited to the requirements of the place.

On landing at Chi-mul-poo I found that I could ride to the capital, but my baggage would have to be carried by bulls. The idea of veritable bulls being used as beasts of burden was new to me, but it appears that when hard-worked they are very quiet, and I soon got accustomed to seeing them toil under enormous loads. A few cows are used for the same purpose, but their number is very limited compared with the number of bulls. (It may be remarked here that all the male cattle as well as the horses are entire, the process of castration not being practised in Corea except in the case of eunuchs required for the palace). The breed of cattle is remarkably handsome, but the cows do not seem to give much milk.

Through the kindness of Mr. Stripling I was provided with a first-rate pony, but in spite of this the journey to the capital was rather tiresome. The country, though somewhat pretty, is on the whole uninteresting. The soil consists of disintegrated granite and other rocks, and consequently there are many large barren patches to be seen in every direction, some of the hills being absolutely bare.

As usual when travelling in such countries with some of the attendants on foot, it was necessary to go at a walk, and the consequence was that starting from Chi-mul-poo at 10 a.m. on Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup>, we did not reach our resting place at the capital till 7.30 p.m., - the distance being about 25 or 26 miles.

The Capital of Corea – Han-yang or Seoul as it is called on maps, Seoul as it is generally known by Coreans and by foreigners, and Hwang-cheng as it is usually called by the Chinese – is a large but not very densely populated city.

It is surrounded by a wall, and has large and somewhat handsome gateways. The main roads are very wide, somewhat after the character of the roads in Peking, but being composed of disintegrated granite they dry very quickly after rain, and are much cleaner than the roads in the Chinese capital. The smaller streets are filthy. They have side ditches into which is thrown all the refuse from the houses, and the smell is almost unbearable. Compared to the palaces and some of the public buildings of Western countries, or of those of Eastern countries which retain buildings erected in the days of their prosperity, they are very inferior.

The shops are very poor, many if not most of them being mat sheds erected in the main streets, but they are good enough for the wares exposed for sale. The natives display some ingenuity in ornamenting their pipe stems and in the manufacture of articles inlaid with mother-of-pearl, but a visitor wishing to bring away some memento of his trip may walk about a long time before he finds anything worth carrying away which is at the same time characteristic and pretty.

At Seoul I was most hospitably entertained by Mr. P.G. von Mollendorff, a member of the Korean Foreign Office and Chief of the Customs. The house in which he lives is one of the best in Seoul. It was the residence of one of the princes, who was murdered in it at the emeute in 1882. In consequence of this murder having taken place, none of the native officials cared to live in the house, and thus it was available when a residence was required for Mr. von Mollendorff. There is a large enclosure with several detached buildings.

The Coreans are in the habit of removing their shoes on entering a house, and the floors of the better houses are polished or covered with strong oiled paper. The roofs are low, and the doors being made to suit the small proportions of the Coreans, are in many cases very trying to the skulls of foreign visitors.

After spending a few days at Seoul I received permission to make a trip into the interior. One of my greatest difficulties was an interpreter; I found to my horror that no one could be found who could speak Corean and English, and I feared my intercourse would be confined to what could filter through my boy, whose knowledge of English was of the most limited character, and a Corean who spoke Chinese; but I soon found that though my Chinese is of the feeblest, it was exactly the same dialect as

that of my interpreter, and before the end of the journey we got on capitally.

My party consisted of myself, an interpreter, a boy, and a coolie, all mounted on ponies, three ponies carrying baggage, and a chair and two chair coolies. The greater part of the time I travelled in company with a Korean official, and thus was permitted to lodge at the Yamens in the various cities which I visited. This official had a servant who rode a pack pony, while he himself had a chair with four bearers. The speed at which such a party can travel does not exceed  $3\frac{1}{3}$  miles per hour, so that a 30 mile journey takes nine hours besides the time lost in stoppages, say two hours per day. Thus starting at 6.30 and travelling 30 miles one may expect to arrive at his destination at about 5.30 p.m.

My pony was only about ten hands, and I feared he would not be able to carry me, but he stood the journey remarkably well, only requiring a little care when the day's distance was exceptionally long. The chair was taken in case the pony should give out, and I tried it once to see how I liked it. Like other Korean chairs it had no seat, so that one had to sit cross-legged, and ten minutes was enough for me.

Every Korean who rides has a man to lead his pony. The saddles of the officials are so high that one wonders how the rider manages to keep his balance. The lower classes when riding have generally a certain amount of baggage, on top of which they sit. The servant of the official in whose company I travelled rode a China pony, and the baggage was so arranged as to give a level surface right across the two bundles and the pony's back. On top of this was laid a carpet, and there the servant squatted, sitting cross-legged, and smoking and fanning himself all day, while a mafoo led the pony. The Koreans exhibit considerable ingenuity in packing their own baggage on the pack ponies, but foreign baggage bothers them a good deal, and even such a thing as a bundle made up in a different way from what they accustomed to, seems to present difficulties, though square boxes, large boots, jars of oil, deer's horns, and all sorts of incongruous articles to which they are accustomed, seem to fit together like the parts of a dissected map. My portmanteau, if I did not watch it, was sure to be placed so that any rain would run into it; and on occasion my bed, which was wrapped up in waterproof sheet, was placed so that when opened after some three hours' heavy rain the sheet was half full of water, and I could not use my bed for three nights, while enough rain had got in at one end of my portmanteau to wet about two inches of every article in it.

My baggage sustained a little damage on another occasion in fording a river which turned out to be a little deeper than was expected, but luckily at the worst ford which I crossed I was without baggage, as I was making only a day's excursion from a village where I was staying. At the last mentioned ford the water took the men nearly up to the arm pits. There was a village close by where the inhabitants were expected to supply men to carry travellers across the stream. The stream runs with considerable velocity when in flood, and it is hardly safe for one man to cross it alone. I was taken across on a chair, borne on the shoulders of six men; the officials, interpreters, &c., were carried in the same way; while the attendants and all the tag-rag and bob-tail that the fasten on to a travelling party stripped, placed their clothes on their heads, and forded the stream two or three in company. Some ponies swam by themselves, others were held by a halter. I passed this same ford a week later with baggage, but the water was then low and there was no trouble. Getting one's baggage wet is one of the greatest annoyances in travelling, and I could not bear having my sleeping room heated to dry it, as I had had one night's experience of that and preferred damp clothes.

In a short visit one has hardly time to form any definite ideas regarding the manners and customs of the people, but certain peculiarities are sure to be brought prominently to one's notice.

The first night after I left Seoul I got into a miserable inn, and after having some dinner sat down on my bed to write a few notes. The night seemed oppressively hot but I saw no help for it, so had my mosquito net put up; but in tucking it under my bed, I found the floor so hot as almost to burn my hand. On enquiring I found that all proper sleeping rooms had fire places under them to warm them in winter, but in the poorer class of houses, for the sake of economy, this heating was done by the kitchen fire. As the thermometer during the day had been over 80 degrees, I felt no inclination to be cooked at night, so declared my intention of sleeping in the stable. At last, however, a room was found in a house about a quarter of a mile off where the fire had been out for some hours, and I managed to get through the night there, though the heat and the insects allowed me little rest. Subsequently in the better places I took care to give orders not to light the stove under my room, but I found that the native officials

sometimes had theirs lighted in wet weather, in spite of the heat.

When travelling by night it is necessary to get a proper pass from the officials. With this one has a right to demand torches and guides at each village. Sometimes the people object, and occasionally it results in a fight. It so happened that on the only two occasions when I travelled all night I was not in company with any official, and although I ordered all the torches to be paid for and all the guides to have a small present, I don't feel sure that the money always went to the right person. On one occasion at a lonely hamlet the people were very wroth at being turned out at one o'clock, and declared they had no torches; however, after a little bit of a free fight and a fruitless search in one or two houses, the attendants broke into one rather better-looking house and soon appeared with a large bundle of torches. Proceedings of this sort are to be deprecated, but at the moment I was passing on over and uninteresting bit of country to reach a city I wanted to see before the arrival of the steamer, as I had had nothing to eat since tiffin, and my boy nothing to eat since early breakfast at five o'clock, we were too anxious to get torches to be over particular as to the action of our attendant guards, who after all were only acting according to usual customs.

Some of the torches consist of bundles of straw, but the best are branches of Scotch fir dried and partially split. On a dark night when the atmosphere was clear, our party of half a dozen ponies with their mafoos, and six or eight attendants with large torches looked quite picturesque. The route I followed from the time of landing at Chi-mul-poo till I embarked was Chi-mul-poo to Seoul, thence to a point some 30 miles beyond Kin-ching, thence by a somewhat different route back to the capital, thence to Chio-ha, and thence by an entirely different route to Chi-mul-poo, a distance altogether of about 350 miles. During my stay in the capital I had seen very few women; that is to say, most of those I had seen had their faces covered to a greater or lesser extent. Subsequently when travelling in the country I saw many. These were so ugly that at first I thought the pretty ones must all take great care to conceal their charms, but after having caught sight of a few whom I managed to see before they had time to wake up, I got fair proof that the uglier the women were the more they tried to hide themselves. I was confirmed in this view of the case by the fact that the only decent specimens of feminine humanity which I met with made no attempt at concealment, and I finally came to the conclusion that the women knew how hideous they were, and for the credit of their country they hid themselves from strangers as much as possible.

The attempts at hiding occasionally gave rise to amusing manoeuvres. On one occasion I came suddenly on a woman who had just crossed a river. The bank at which she had arrived offered no means of shelter, while the other bank was wooded. Though the river was 100 yards broad and tolerably swift, she at once turned and recrossed it, and as the water came a long way above her knees the proceeding was not one which modesty would have suggested to a European.

The dress of the women consists of loose trousers covered by a skirt somewhat larger than that worn by Milk women in London. The skirt or petticoat has a very high waist. The shoulders and arms are covered by a very short jacket with long sleeves. The jacket is so short that it is little more than a collar, and between it and the skirt there is a lucid interval of five or six inches through which the breasts protrude or generally hang. Even when the face is carefully concealed, the women think nothing of exposing this part of their persons, and if the cloak over the face covers this also, it is only as a secondary affair.

The dress of the men is too well known by residents in Shanghai to require much description: trousers covered by a loose robe generally of linen, and a sort of long scarf of blue gauze, with a wide-brimmed hat of black horsehair. This hat is rather an elaborate affair; first there is a sort of fillet which encircles the head and is fastened by strings and connected with the knot of hair, which all Korean married men wear on the top of the head. On top of this a small brimless hat fits. This hat is worn indoors, and varies in shape according to the rank of the official. The non-official class wear a very plain hat, but almost all have a slight knob or boss in front to make room for a jewel, which is often worn attached to the fillet above mentioned. The brimless hat is worn in the house, and in the case of the non-official class the wide-brimmed hat is worn over it. In the case of high officials the indoor hat is of too elaborate a description to be worn under the other hat, and it is therefore replaced by a plainer one before the out-of-doors hat is put on. To a European it would appear that if it were not for the honor of the thing a man would be as well off without a hat as with it, because being composed of very open



horse-hair gauze it must offer very little protection from the sun or wind. The unmarried men do not tie up the hair in a knot, but part it in the centre and plait the ends into a queue at the back. Many of them have a great deal of hair, and when a traveller first sees them (generally in a boat at some little distance) he almost invariably supposes them to be women.

In some respects one travels in Corea with much more comfort than in China. Although a foreigner is much more of a curiosity there than in the latter country, he is much less pestered by inquisitive crowds. In those parts of China where a foreigner is nearly unknown, the crowds of rough natives are a source of much inconvenience and discomfort, even where they have no wish to do any harm. In Corea there are not so many large cities where roughs abound, and besides this the people are much more gentle in their ways, and though anxious to see seem equally anxious not to annoy. The accommodations, except in the Yamens, is simply filthy. Even there, although there is a show of cleanliness, as exemplified by the men taking off their shoes and by papering the floor, there is an amount of insect life perfectly appalling to a European, and I would strongly advise any intending traveller to provide himself with a pieul of Keating's insect destroying powder.

The food which one can obtain is pretty much the same as in China: rice, chickens, eggs, vegetables of various sorts, Indian corn, beef, dried fish, and I presume in some localities fresh fish. The general drink of the people seemed to be cold water. This is accounted for by the magnificent streams of water, as clear as crystal, which are met with all through the country. Pools five or six feet deep are perfectly transparent, and even when the rivers are in flood after heavy rains only the slightest possible trace of turbidity is discoverable. This description does not apply to the tidal portions of the Seoul River, after passing Mapoo (near Seoul) this river runs through a great deal of low-lying alluvial country, and towards its mouth becomes muddy; and the mud from this and similar rivers seems to be the source of the soft slime which covers the foreshore in the neighbourhood of Jenchuan.

It was with difficulty that I could be persuaded that the Corean rivers in the district which I visited contained no fish, but such I found to be truly the case, and it is accounted for by the fact that at certain seasons they are nearly dry.

Before passing from the drink question, I may mention that the Coreans seem to be much more advanced in the matter of the use of spirituous liquors than their neighbours the Chinese. Their ordinary spirit is I think a good deal stronger than the ordinary Chinese samshoo, and either from this cause or from their imbibing in larger quantities, numerous drunken men may be seen reeling or lying about the streets. That this is due entirely to the spirit and not to any special inability [sic.] to carry it is rendered quite certain by a series of most careful experiments with Scotch whiskey.

As one travels into the interior of Corea, though the formation of the country cannot be said to be materially changed, the scenery and the general appearance of vegetation gradually improves. Towards the coast the rock is near the surface and is barely covered with a thin stratum of poor soil. Inland, though the rocks still belong to the very old formation, there is a covering of rich black mould. The fields are more fertile and better cultivated; one sees rice, millet (Kao-liang), small millet (Siao-mi), beans, Indian corn, oats, barley, cotton, jute, flax, tobacco, and numerous other crops. The hills in many places are cultivated to the summit; in other places they are covered with woods. As far as I went I saw no forests, but at the furthest point which I reached some large trees were to be found in the woods.

For some distance inland the bottoms of the valleys were level plains from which the hills rose abruptly on either side, and through which ran a winding stream, clearly indicating that the valleys had been filled up by material brought down by the streams from the higher districts, and that little of the material was derived from the hills at the side. It seemed hard to reconcile this with the fact of the extraordinary clearness of the water, but most of the detritus consists of clean sand, and a considerable quantity of that can be rolled along the bed of a river without making it in the least turbid. After getting 60 to 80 miles inland, I found the character of the valleys changed entirely. The hills no longer rose abruptly from level plains, but from the bottom of the hills proper there was a slope more or less steep reaching down to the stream, which no longer seemed free to wind about the valley at its pleasure, but was confined to one bed. After this country was reached, the scenery was very fine indeed. There were no mountains to be seen, but there were numberless very high hills, and when one reached the summit of a pass and could get an extensive view of the surrounding country, he felt well

repaid for all the discomforts of a pretty trying journey.

The people as a rule seem poor. The cities, with the exception of Seoul, are without walls, and the villages are collections of miserable huts. In one city which I visited, Chia-ho, or Chio-ha, not only were there no ponies to be had, but there was not even a stable to be found. Notwithstanding this, the chief magistrate when carried in a chair was preceded by trumpeters and men with gongs, and was accompanied by a band, and the people prostrated themselves before him with the greatest respect. In every city which I visited I saw the same submission to the officials.

At a magistrate's Yamen at night a piece of music is played by a band. This music which lasts four or five minutes could not be mistaken for Chinese music; but further than saying that it has a character of its own I am unable to describe it.

Like China the country is cursed with an inordinate number of officials, and expectant officials. There being no road to distinction except through office, the number of candidates is necessarily out of all proportions to the posts. Many of the subordinate expectant officials have an allowance of rice and about \$2 a month. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that on one occasion on leaving a place I was told I owed a dollar for some eggs and a few other little things I had bought, and when I paid it at least 20 respectable-looking men sat down on the floor and went into an elaborate system of accounts to see how much belonged to each for the portion he had provided. These men seem to be absolutely without occupation, and appear to a stranger to be a useless, lazy lot of hangers-on at the Yamen. If any man can stand several years of such a life and still preserve some energy for work when his time comes, he must be a man of considerable strength of character, and perhaps well worthy of the respect which is shown him.

The agricultural classes seem to a great extent to provide for their own wants, that is to say they grow crops in the first place for their own use, and only sell the balance. One came upon no districts where apparently the people grew one crop for sale and lived on the proceeds. The whole family works, when necessary, in the fields. I saw women on many occasions transplanting rice, a sort of work which I have never seen them perform in China. There seems to be an utter absence of the class of merchant. The producer seems to sell his surplus to the retail dealer, and there are no large stocks of manufactured articles anywhere. I was informed that even in the matter of hats it was difficult to find one ready made: they were all made to order.

The Coreans make use of very few mechanical contrivances, but I noticed one for hulling rice similar to the ones used in Formosa and other parts of China. It can only be used in places where the streams have a considerable fall, and is unsuitable to a flat country. A long beam fixed on a pivot carries a sort of cistern at one end, and a hammer or pestle at the other. This is placed on the bank of a stream, and water from a higher portion of the stream is brought along an artificial channel and made to discharge into the cistern. As soon as the cistern is full, it weighs down that end of the beam – raising the pestle, but in doing this it practically upsets the cistern and allows the water to run out into the stream below. When the cistern is emptied, the pestle falls with great force on the rice which is placed in a mortar. This action brings the cistern again under the spout of water, and the process is repeated. The cistern hold about a ton of water, and the machine gives about four strokes per minute.

There is one implement, I might almost say one agricultural machine, in use in Corea which deserves some notice, viz: the spade. I have heard of an egg so big that it required two hens to lay it, and of a window so large that it required two people to see out of it, but I never expected to see in Corea a spade so large that it required five men to use it. The spade or shovel consists of a flat piece of wood shod with iron, and provided with a long handle. To each side of the blade of the shovel there is attached a rope, and in the large shovels each of these ropes is split into two. When in use one man takes the handle of the shovel to direct it, but apparently does little in the way of supplying power, which is furnished by the four men who pull the ropes. The directing man, the helmsman so to speak, inserts the point of the shovel in the stuff to be moved, the rope pullers give a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, and, if the ropes do not break, about half a shovelful of earth is detached and thrown a small distance. To anyone who believes that it is the duty of a government to find the greatest amount of work for the greatest number this invention would appear to be of the highest utility.

There is I believe an abundance of game in some parts of Corea, but there was very little to be seen along the route that I travelled. I saw some deers' antlers, and the skins of some small wild pigs,

but I saw no live specimens, and only one pheasant and a few cranes and any number of paddy birds. I was told there were tigers in the woods, but that they were never seen. Probably there used to be tigers, but they have now gone north to the more thinly populated districts.

Of the insect life (with the exception of the domestic parasites above alluded to) I can say little, but once could not fail to remark the magnificent butterflies, some gaily colored and other jet black, with wings as large as the palm of my hand. The green and red dragonflies, metallic beetle and other attractive insects were very common. Near Seoul there are numerous scissor-grinders; up-country I heard scarcely any, but there were millions of wee-wees which, which as far as I know, are unknown south of Peking.

The measure of weight, of distance and of value are apparently much the same in Corea as in China, though it is really difficult to get information on such apparently simple matters. The Coreans had, however, the picul, the catty, and the tael for weight, and their *li* is as nearly as possible the third of an English mile. For money they have little besides cash in use, but they count by the tael. A short time ago silver coins of 1, 2, and 3 mace value were struck or rather cast, but they have been recalled, being supposed to be rather too high in value, and likely to leave the country. The ordinary cash are about the size of Chinese cash, but they are exchanged at the rate of 750 cash to a tael or 525 to a dollar.<sup>3</sup> This makes them equal in value to about 2 Shanghai cash.

The exchange does not vary, but this of course arises from the fact that practically all transactions are in cash, and when one speaks of a payment of 100 taels one only means 100 bundles of 750 cash each. When business begins to flourish, and traders begin to make bargains for payments in silver, exchange must vary unless the system of a standard coin and token currency can be introduced, which would be very difficult, though the attempt would probably not be so hopeless as in China. At present the tael may almost be taken as a token for 750 cash, and the large cash which are equal to 5 small cash invariably pass at their proportionate value. The general impression left on my mind was that Corea was a country of great capabilities, but the primitive condition of the people and the absence of any large native trade place great obstacles in the way of rapid opening up of the country.

The country is capable of producing exports of many kinds, but these have not yet been produced in sufficient quantities to exchange them for any considerable quantity of imports. It is impossible to produce any of the export articles at a moment's notice, and for several years while an export trade is being worked up, a small amount of imports must be doled out to them, leaving a very small and very problematical profit to the foreign merchants. The fact that the country was shut up inspired most exaggerated ideas regarding the enormous trade that was sure to spring up immediately it was opened. These ideas have I think been pretty well dissipated, but believing as I do that the poverty is more in the people than in the country, I think there is fair reason to hope ere many years are past the open ports of Corea may be flourishing centres of trade.

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<sup>3</sup> A few months after this was written, foreign intercourse had raised the rate of exchange of the dollar at Chi-mul-poo to over 700 cash. G.J.M.

## *Jiří Viktor Daneš: Czechoslovak Geographer and Diplomat in Colonized Korea<sup>1</sup>*

Jaroslav Olša, jr.

The first confirmed Czech traveller to visit colonized Korea after the end of World War I and the departure of the soldiers of the Czechoslovak Legion from Vladivostok<sup>2</sup> was probably the geographer Jiří Viktor Daneš (1880–1928), the founder of Czechoslovak geomorphology. Daneš was a world-renowned expert on karst regions, and wrote numerous scientific monographs on limestone landscapes based on his firsthand research in such places as Java and Jamaica, Australia and Mexico, the United States and the Balkans. Daneš was only the third Czech to have left a contemporary published travelogue of a visit to Korea.<sup>3</sup> Although Korea was for him one of many stops on his long trip, which he undertook while returning from his post as the first Consul General of Czechoslovakia in Sydney in 1923, his views and descriptions are interesting as being very sympathetic toward the Korean people.

Jiří Viktor Daneš was born on August 23, 1880 as the eleventh child of a rich landowner and his second wife living in the vicinity of the historical Czech capital, Prague. After his father died when he was only three years old, Daneš, the only child of his mother, moved with her to Prague and studied at the most elite Czech schools as "the revenue from his large estate allowed him to study and travel without any problems." (Rozhoň 2005:68) He started travelling while still a student at the prestigious Charles University in Prague. His first trips were to the Balkans (mainly Bosnia and Herzegovina), which for the rest of his life remained his favourite destination.<sup>4</sup> After finishing his university education in Prague, Daneš left to study in Berlin for a year and later on he continued to the United States to participate at the 8th International Geographical Congress in 1904. He used the opportunity to spend a couple of months studying there by visiting many of its National Parks. From then on he would regularly attend international geographical congresses all over the world. Two years later he returned to the Americas, spending more than a month conducting pioneering research on the limestone topography in Jamaica, (cf. Chubb 1976) and then traveling around Mexico, the latter being a venue of another congress.

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<sup>1</sup> This article is an updated and expanded version of part of a longer text published by Jaroslav Olša, jr. in 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Between 1918 and 1920, the 60,000-strong Czech and Slovak army, the so-called Czechoslovak Legion, was based in and around Vladivostok. Its soldiers and leaders had multiple contacts with Koreans living in Russia, Manchuria and Korea. Most notably, the Legion's supreme commander, General Radola Gajda, met Yeo Un-hyeong on several occasions and had talks with members of the Korean Provisional Government while in Shanghai. It is thus possible that some Czechs may have visited Korea at this time. The first confirmed Czech visitor to Korea following WWI was Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, soon to be the first Czechoslovak president, who travelled across the peninsula by train in 1919. However, neither he nor anybody else left us any written travelogue about their Korean stay

<sup>3</sup> Daneš's predecessors were other leading Czech travellers—Josef Kořenský (Kořenský 1903-04) and Enrique Stanko Vráz (Vráz 1904, Vráz 1919)—but both of them visited Korea more than two decades earlier, in 1901. More about these early Czech travellers (in English) cf. Klöslová (2000), Olša, jr. (2011), Todorovová (2008, 2011). Daneš was followed by another three Czechs - A. V. Novák, Bohumil Pospíšil and Barbora Markéta Eliášová – who visited Korea in the 1920s, too (in English: cf. Olša, jr. 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Daneš visited various parts of the Balkans at least ten times between 1899 and 1918. He began his life-long interest in limestone formations there and fell in love with this part of Europe, notably Bosnia and Herzegovina. He was also greatly influenced by another leading karst topography expert, Serbian professor and later president of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, Jovan Cvijić (Јован Цвијић, 1865–1927), with whom he remained in close personal and scientific contact throughout his life. Looking over Daneš's bibliography, it is not surprisingly that both short scientific and popular works from this region of south-eastern Europe are the most numerous.

From the very beginning Daneš wanted to travel freely and see the places of his scientific interests with his own eyes. Thanks to his financial situation, he was able to do so. In 1909 he embarked on his first, fifteen-month-long, Asian trip. With his friend, Czech botanist Karel Domin (1882–1953), Daneš crossed the continent, spending some time in Ceylon and Java. They moved to Australia where Daneš joined with the Australian L.C. Ball to develop geological maps of the northern part of Queensland. (Later a small valley in the vicinity of the isolated town of Burketown in northwest Queensland was named after Daneš.)

Upon his return to Prague, Daneš was appointed to the position of full professor. The same year a two-volume travelogue of more than 1,300 pages long was published. *Dvojím rájem* (Across Two Paradises) (1912) was written jointly by Daneš and Domin. Before and during World War I, Daneš repeatedly returned to the Balkans and published another series of scientific articles on geology and geography.

After the independence of Czechoslovakia in 1918, Daneš accepted the offer of the new Czechoslovak government to enter the diplomatic service. Lacking trained diplomatic and consular staff, the new government opted for well-known personalities to represent them abroad. Being a friend of many leading Czechoslovak politicians, he hoped to become an envoy in Belgrade, but he accepted the post in Sydney. As he knew and was known in Australia,<sup>5</sup> Daneš was the ideal person to head up the establishment of the new Czechoslovak consulate.<sup>6</sup> He began his consular and diplomatic work after a three-month-long trip to Australia in August 1920. Daneš always knew that his job was temporary, but he stayed in Australia for almost two-and-a-half years, representing his country with distinction<sup>7</sup> and also "every single free moment, when he was not bound by his official duties, Daneš used for his scientific work." (Rozhoň 2005:219) In January 1923, Daneš was recalled to Prague. He left Sydney with his wife and, no longer bound by official obligations, embarked on a six-month journey through New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, Hawaii, Japan and Korea.

Daneš and his wife did not spend a long time in Korea, travelling from Busan to Keijo (Seoul) and later on further north towards the Chinese border. Two years later, Daneš published his second weighty travelogue, the two-volume *Tři léta při Tichém oceáně* (Three Years at the Pacific Ocean) (1926), which covered his travels to Australia and back. The chapter "V Korei (Čosenu)" (In Korea [Chosen]) deals exclusively with Korea and is "probably the first Czech account of Korea under the Japanese which introduces Czech readers to matters relating to Japanese rule. Daneš stands up for the Koreans and contradicts books that he had read before going to Korea." (Klösslová 2000:139)

As we read in his travelogue, Daneš had a good understanding of the situation on the Korean peninsula, although he was no more than a well-prepared and educated tourist viewing the sights and beauties of the country. He was not an investigative journalist or human rights activist. Everywhere on his trips, presumably travelling first class, he hired only the best guides and stayed in the best hotels to satisfy his interests. His uneventful travels were definitely planned on the basis of pre-existing travel guides or on the few descriptive travelogues then available. This approach resulted in him seeing only the more favorable side of the new Japanese regime, but this did not mean he was amazed by it, as were many foreigners who visited Korea in the 1920s. On the contrary, he was pro-Korean and unsympathetic to Japan's strategy in the subjugation of Korea, although, like many others, he hesitantly "acknowledged the technological and economic improvements introduced (albeit for the

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<sup>5</sup> At least ten scientific articles by Daneš were published (not only in Czech, but also in English, German and French) on the geography of Australia before his appointment to Sydney, with six more (in Czech and English) published after he returned from his diplomatic mission. (cf. Votrubeč 1990)

<sup>6</sup> Daneš was one of several Asia experts to accept a diplomatic posting. Others included Professor Otakar Pertold (1884-1965), a leading Czech Indologist who in 1920 was the first Czechoslovak consul in Bombay, and Jan Klecanda (1883-1964), a prolific writer and expert on Southeast Asia and the Far East, better known by his pen-name Jan Havlasa, who was proposed for the post of first Czechoslovak envoy to China only to be reassigned as the first Czechoslovak envoy to Brazil.

<sup>7</sup> Daneš was extremely active in Australia, as we can see both from his reports kept in the archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, and in the contemporary Australian press. He was behind the establishment of the first Australian-Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce in March 1922 and his work for both Czechoslovakia and Australia was repeatedly mentioned in the local press. His obituary was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on May 15, 1928.

benefit of the colonial power)." (Uden 2003:XXIV) His attitude was certainly shaped by his personal experiences as a Czech under the Austro-Hungarian rule of Bohemia and also as a frequent visitor to the Balkans, which were very much under the same sort of colonial "care" of the Austro-Hungarian empire as Korea was under Japan.

We have more than just Daneš's texts today. Literally thousands of his photographs and colour slides were donated by his wife to various Czechoslovak institutions—the National Museum, the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures and the Geographical Institute—after his untimely death in 1928. An additional 500 colour slides, donated by Daneš's relative in the late 1980s, are also part of the collection of the regional museum of Kladno. (cf. Kuchyňka 2001) Although partly catalogued, these slides have never been published and likely include some interesting shots of Korea.

After his return to Czechoslovakia, Daneš could not have imagined that he had only five years left to live. He resumed his professorship at Charles University in Prague and briefly served as dean of the Faculty of Science. His life ended tragically during a long tour of the United States which he began in October 1927. Daneš was supposed to deliver lectures at numerous universities there and conduct further research for the whole year for his planned comparative monograph of the world's karst regions. His trip was cut short by a tragic accident. While on his way to a meeting in Hollywood, Daneš stopped his car alongside the road to photograph an oil well and was hit by a passing car. He died the following day, April 11, 1928, at the age of 47.

With a long list of monographs to his credit covering important karst sites all around the globe and having been published in many languages during the 1910s and 1920s, Daneš was undoubtedly one of the world's most capable geomorphologists. Even the influential scientific journal *Nature* published his obituary, saying that Czech science and indeed the whole world had "lost one of its leading professors." (*Nature* 1928, 121, pp. 874-875)

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*views of Korea* – 1901 년 체코인 브라즈의 서울 방문. 체코 여행기들의 서울 이야기 (2011, with Kang Hong Bin).





## *In Korea (Chosen)* (*V Koreji /Čosen*)

J. V. Daneš (1926)

*(This text was originally published in a travelogue “Tři léta při Tichém oceáně” (1926), by J. V. Daneš. It has been translated from the original Czech by Jaroslav Olša and Rob. S. Burrett.)*

*Sea phosphorescence. Fusan. The Koreans. Country along the railway track. Keijo. The Japanese policy in Korea.*

We spent a marvellous night aboard a very comfortable ship sailing as fast as do the speedy ocean postal steamers, more or less eighteen nautical miles per hour. The view of the coast on both sides of the strait dividing the islands of Hondo and Kyushu is most attractive. As the ship quickly moved away the details faded and all that remained were large, twinkling clouds lit by the intense, rotating light of lighthouses. We were on board for a long time, remembering the fatal battle of Tsushima that took place hereabouts on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1905. It decimated the Russian fleet of Admiral Rozhdestvensky who, after having circumnavigated Africa and tropical Asia, was trying to help the remaining Russian South Asian squadron.

Going to our cabin we soon fell asleep. After a while I was awoken by my wife who was disturbed by a strange, bright light filling the cabin coming through our window. I looked out and saw a rare, marvellous spectacle. It looked as if the water surface was burning with petrol or spirit flames. The edges of the ripples caused by the ship were glittering with an intense golden brilliance that was glimmering and jumping on the crests of the waves that were radiating out from the ship until they sank back into the pale blue glow of the ocean which extended to the horizon.

We went up to on deck to watch this unusual glow that, for its intensity and scale, outshone any sea radiation we had seen previously. We were sailing on a vast glowing sea; a phenomenon probably caused by a huge number of tiny organisms, although we saw near to the ship many small lumpy pieces of a greenish coloured substance that glowed like tiny light bulbs.

Early next morning we landed at Fusan, Korea. This is the starting point of the railway connection via Seoul (Keijo) to Mukden. From there it extends as the Chinese Eastern Railway to Peking and Harbin and connects from there to the Trans-Siberian Railway.

Fusan is located in a bay, set amidst high, steep hills—bare rock and scree covered in trees. The Japanese quarter spreads out adjacent to the harbour while the Korean one lies apart at the base of the hill of Ryutosan, from the top of which there is a beautiful view of the bay, the city and the surrounding mountains. We passed quickly through the Japanese town, went to enjoy the view from the hilltop and then rushed back to the Korean quarter and its market. We were eager to learn about the citizens of this nation whose history has been so unhappy and distressful in the last few decades.

Our first impressions of the Koreans were positive. The walk itself along the cobbled, dusty streets between narrow, adobe-built dwellings was not attractive, but it was the people, the men and the women, who surprised us most. From what we had read we expected a dirty, unsightly folk whose faces bespoke of bad character, national depravity which was the moral cause of their sad political decadence. Instead, we met well-built men dressed in clean, long white clothes who evidently took considerable pride in their appearance.

The bony, oblong faces of the men were decorated with a thin, stiff, well-kept moustache. On their heads was a knot of hair on which they placed a strange, lacelike small hat made from black horsehair. Its only purpose can be to protect and decorate their hair-do.

Most of the elderly Koreans seemed ridiculous to the eyes of Europeans. Their serious, dry faces, often decorated with big glasses, brushy beards and toy-like reticular hats, look funny. A very long

pipe with a tiny bowl in no way increases their attractiveness. On the other hand, their well-built bodies, determination and carefree outlook had a positive effect on us. Many people feel sorry for the Korean women, suggesting that they are treated like pack animals, but we did not get the impression of a downtrodden, oppressed poor waster. In the market especially they are full of energy, able to handle cartloads of merchandise and make good use of their expressive vocal organs, reminding us of markets everywhere.

I dare say that we felt very comfortable walking amongst the Koreans. They are an honest, well-built people who, despite their mistakes and shortcomings, have many good and positive features. It was a relief to get out from the enchanted world, though beautiful, to watch a people who are not puppets of their customs, as are the Japanese.

With pleasure we shall always remember the beauties of Japan; admiring and respecting the wonders that have been created by the traditional Japanese sense of beauty, their ability to harmonise their creations with nature, so creating artistically exquisite and by far more enchanting settings. However, here in Korea we felt more human, freer as we met with these citizens of a different nation whose nature is so contrary to the aesthetic, industrious qualities of the Japanese.

Not only in its people but also in its landscape is Korea in marked contrast to Japan. In Japan every inch of land is used. Nothing is left unworked, the slopes are conscientiously forested and in the valleys and plains there are terraced fields, one set upon the next. Everywhere there are shades of green. Here in Korea the hillsides have been woodless for ages, the valleys are empty, mostly given over to rough-and-tumble mountain brooks carrying masses of scree from the bare hills. There are no villages encircled in green, instead aggregates of grey, low buildings with small yards surrounded by clay fences.

I get the sense of being somewhere in Albania or in the underdeveloped parts of the Italian Apennine Mountains. Between the settlements along simple packhorse paths, only a few of which have been changed into passable roads, travelled small caravans of tiny horses burdened with massive packs. Elsewhere there were women carrying heavy loads on their backs trailing uphill and down dale on rocky tracks. The roads carried little traffic and the only relief from the vast, empty brown-grey picture were occasional white figures, sitting or walking. By the streams on nearby boulders women eagerly washed and dried white clothes.

We had no occasion to find out whether the reputed lack of personal cleanliness was really as terrible as has been described, but their clean white clothing shows an appreciable personal care for appearance. Also the filigree caps worn by the male population need regular care.

The Japanese have done much to raise the level of agriculture in Korea and their efforts are obvious, especially in regions where through irrigation they have made effective use of large areas of fertile soil. Also in the mountainous areas their care is evident in forestation. In this the Japanese have done much and I know nowhere else in the whole world where forestation is as intensive as in Korea. On previously bare slopes alongside the entire rail track from Fusan to Seoul now grow conscientiously planted coniferous stands. Entire slopes right up to the crests many hundreds of meters above the valley floor have been planted as far as the eye can see. Some are already substantial groves, others still consist of very small trees. It is an immense and costly exercise which is not fully appreciated by the Koreans—the forests being for them, as with most people living in desolate regions, simply a source of fuel that they plunder ruthlessly.

Even if the Japanese do nothing else for Korea, their forestation of the bare hills to that extent they have done should be a blessing for the future in this otherwise fruitful and rich country.

Southern Korea has always had closer contacts with Japan. It was here in the late Ancient Era and in the Middle Ages that there existed flourishing empires with their own strong cultural identity, so different in many ways from their basic Chinese foundation. Their contacts with Japan have been intensive and it was through here that ancient Chinese Buddhist elements reached the Imperial Island.

Korea fell under Chinese control during the Mongolian Dynasty, assisting the famous Kublai Khan in his sea expeditions against Japan. These came to grief as similarly happened to the so-called Spanish Armada of Philip II, once sent to conquer Britain.

At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Seoul became the capital of a new empire, whose dynasty ruled until the monarchy was recently abolished. Since that early time a major feature of Korea's history has

been a strict isolation from all foreign influences accompanied by a gradual decline of its unique culture. The aggressive campaigns of the Grand Japanese Shogun, Hideyoshi, devastated a major part of the peninsula, causing huge losses to the Korean Empire. However, despite the superior force of the Japanese armies they were not strong enough to take permanent possession of the entire country.

Korea was able to maintain its isolation against foreign influences until the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Christian missionaries and other intruders were cruelly put to death and punitive campaigns seeking vengeance on the Korean government were blocked by force and bombardment—the sad result of their poisonous policy towards foreigners.

In an effort to oppose the growing pressures of the superpowers to open its ports to international business, as had happened in China and Japan, Korea made approaches to Japan as China, which had long claimed control over the peninsula, showed its ineffectiveness. The opening of contacts with Japan did not strengthen its position. Korea was forced to acquiesce, making agreements with the superpowers and allowing missionaries to enter the country. It also found itself yielding more and more to its expansive and better-organised neighbour, who saw Korea as an excellent addition to its domain. Japan made successful use of the disintegration and demoralization at the Seoul royal court, rotten by intrigues and unable to oppose unscrupulous Japanese violence.

The trip up through Korea was interesting. The day was bright and sunny, hot by midday. The air was dry and breathing was easier than in Japan during its cool rainy season.

We arrived in Seoul late in the evening, taking up residence in a well-appointed hotel fitted with many comfortable facilities. It had been built in the capital by the head office of the Korean Railways; a company belonging to the South Manchuria Railway Company. Next day while we were enjoying our breakfast we met a compatriot, Mr Studený, who as a musician plays every evening in a quartet at our hotel. He has lived for many years in the Far East and enjoys his present job.

In his company we made a morning tour to the public Nanzan Park<sup>1</sup> that covers the steep slopes of Nanzan<sup>2</sup> Hill. Step by step a gorgeous panorama of Seoul opened before us. It must be the most beautifully located inland city that we have seen.

The downtown is located on flatland and there is no river there. However the vast palace gardens surrounding buildings of picturesque shapes break the grey monotony of the streets and houses. Old walls with huge gates climb up the surrounding foothills almost enclosing massive hills whose barren, rocky cliffs tower high above—desolate slopes glittering white in the sunshine. These are dangerous, deserted mountains that provide refuge for wild beasts, even now. It is said that there are big pale tigers which, during harsh winters, leap over the fences, force their way through the dilapidated roof of a Korean dwelling to carry off their prey.

Seoul (Keijo-fu) has more than a quarter of a million inhabitants and covers a large area. It has a healthy climate. Winters are cold and dry and summers are hot, but it is all quite bearable and Europeans enjoy coming here to recover from the unbearable, sweltering heat of the ports of China and Japan.

Traffic in the streets of Seoul is vibrant. Except in the neighbourhood of government buildings one sees few Japanese people. There are many more Chinese but typical Koreans predominate, filling the local electric trams which look strangely out of place in a setting which otherwise recalls the Middle Ages. We often met richly decorated palanquins; numerous ancient-looking carriages with frightful grating wheels leaving the markets; and many earnest gentlemen wearing glasses and walking determinedly—considering their energy and self-confidence one fears their very determination to rid themselves of foreign rule.

The narrow Korean strait seemed to us a bigger cultural divide than the thousands of kilometres of the Asian interior. Were it not for the typical Korean dress, Seoul's streets and its market scenes would, for instance, resemble any other in Russian Central Asia. It is so different from the Japanese ones.

A shortage of draught cattle and packhorses on the islands is only one factor accounting for this big difference. Rather it is the result of fundamentally different ways of living that have emerged over the ages. In contrast to the charming, aesthetically elaborate and precise ways of the Japanese, here in

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<sup>1</sup> Namsan Park

<sup>2</sup> Namsan

Korea one can feel the very expansion of the deserts. They savour neither the beauty of nature nor appreciate the green forests where these are not protected by the authority of the state or the magic power of their gods and priests. Their monasteries, sanctuaries and palaces are the only oases in a country so unscrupulously deprived of its greenery.

The royal palaces are still in the possession of the former king, now Prince Li, who is said to have reconciled with having been relieved of his royal power and is now living on his rich pension and revenue from his estates that are being developed by the Japanese. Many other Korean aristocrats are probably also happy with the present state of things since the Japanese have bought their sympathy with titles and sinecures; they love the safety of their lives and properties so are unwilling to risk anything for political dreams and plots.

In Seoul there are two major groups of palaces, one in the northwest and the other in the northeast of the city. The former is still the residence of the prince and his family, and all one can see is the outer part containing the so-called audience hall. This is a massive Chinese-style roof resting on huge granite pillars and columns, on all sides surrounded by broad moats full of water in which, alas, now rots a mass of dense vegetation. A pleasant pond extends from the back of this hall up into a park—a dendrologist's paradise with greens of many shades contrasting with a background of dark and solid outlines of coniferous trees.

The eastern palace together with its surrounding park is dedicated to education. The main palace buildings have been turned into museums containing a rich treasure trove of royal collections. Linking these are beautifully decorated outbuildings recalling the former splendour of the royal courts.

The style of these weatherworn outbuildings reminds one of Japanese palaces combined with Chinese fashion, yet they look more massive and heavy. Their marble staircases, creating terraces of different heights, connect the palaces and give the whole complex a unique, cheerful impression.

Eagerly we browsed through remnants of the various periods in the development of Korean art and were surprised by how much they closely resembled Chinese artefacts. We had not expected to find such similarities in the arts of these two countries, nor had we known that that of Japan depends so heavily upon Korean and Chinese standards.

We were later to reflect on what we saw. An undeniable testament to the power of the Japanese spirit has been their ability to combine the borrowed models of China and Korea with their love for nature and intimate sense of stylized beauty and haleness of the countryside of their homeland. While in Japan this sense of the complex beauty of living nature and an appreciation of fine artistic creations exists even within the masses, in China and Korea this remains the right of the privileged classes—rulers, their hangers-on and the clergy. The attitude of the commoners, especially towards nature, is absolutely barbarian, brutally devastating.

One part of the gardens adjacent to the palaces has been turned into a botanical park and redeveloped in accordance to Japanese rules of garden design; another includes a fairly nice zoological garden.

We were most disappointed by the famous marble pagoda, which is imposing neither aesthetically nor in its size. Another attraction often shown to foreigners is a huge bronze bell whose low, resounding peal is audible all around the city. They say it was made in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and as a sacrifice a child was thrown into the glowing, liquid metal.

We visited the queens' tomb that lies behind the eastern gate of the city. It is surrounded by many roughly cut statues and reliefs made in Chinese style as well as a number of temples. They do not represent anything of artistic value and probably reflect a time of serious decadence in the arts of Korea.

The government buildings erected by the Japanese are concentrated in the western part of the city next to the railway station. They create a modern quarter consisting of huge European-style buildings only slightly adapted to the fashion of Far East architecture.

As for transportation, health services and law and order, the Japanese authorities have done a lot for Korea. Previously they had almost no railways and roads; the country and its people were sunk in disorder and dirt, and at the mercy of all kinds of brigands. The corruption of the Korean court and its authorities was well known; organised gangs of bandits were playing havoc in all parts of the country, sharing out the poor and defenceless peoples' earnings with thieves in the ranks of officialdom.

There is no doubt that the previous Korean kingdom was an ineffective anachronism and that any successful order that has come about is of benefit to the majority of its sorely tried citizens. It is a question as to who is to blame for this situation. Is the national character of the Koreans all bad? Nations under despotic and exploitative regimes are usually unable to advance their better and more industrious qualities, so it is wrong for critical foreigners to misjudge the Koreans to be worse than they really are.

Before we travelled through Korea, we had read with dismay articles describing the Koreans as people with absolutely no honour, malformed, weak, full of bad habits and serious criminal intensions who fully deserved to be deprived of their independence to Japanese regimentation; that the strict Japanese order was a genuine benefaction for them.

These statements seemed familiar to us—from another part of the world, from our own experiences under a foreign yoke in the not so distant past. The Germans and their international friends spread similar sentiments about the Slavic nations. Western Europe believed them and, except for a small number of individuals, nobody seriously questioned such defamations. If there had not happened the conflict between Germany and Western Europe, because of problems which were much more important for them than us, nobody in the world of politics would have raised moral objections to the Germans' historical re-educating of the Slavs to become ideal citizens in accordance to their own model.

We suspect by instinct that such writings disparaging the Koreans for foul habits, both personal and political, serve the cause and continuing supremacy of the foreign nation that controls them, possibly only unconsciously. There may be many positive practical aspects, but from a moral point of view it is incorrect. It sanctions its own egoistic interests, hiding them behind the so-called re-education of the Korean nation to a better way of life.

I cannot elaborate more extensively on the benefits that the Japanese administration has brought to Korea or on the complaints of its opponents. To some extent the Korean problem has many similarities with the former Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is beyond doubt that the Japanese have brought order to this country, hurt for a long time by chaos and brutality. Instead of anarchy and exploitation there now appears safety for the people and their property. The Japanese administration is perhaps excessively large and its citizens occupy too many positions to which the Koreans are entitled. But Japanese clerks are honest and diligent. As for public works, much has been achieved. The ports have been reconstructed to suit modern requirements; they have built a large part of the national railway network which is being well maintained; agricultural production, fisheries and mining have all improved. The organization of the healthcare service is more progressive, while their efforts in education have shown remarkable results, although still only a minority of children attend schools.

Taking into consideration that Korea is a country 50 percent smaller than our own Republic<sup>3</sup> with just 17 million inhabitants, we must acknowledge that Japan has taken on a big burden and has done much in investing its own finances to cover the expenditures which Korea would not have achieved through its own budget. Japanese banks and private investors have invested big money in Korea and have done much to open up new resources to the betterment of the Korean people.

The Japanese community numbers less than 400,000 men. It is concentrated mainly in the cities, working as officials in both state and private enterprises. There are also many independent entrepreneurs, businessmen and craftsmen.

Supporters of the Japanese regime argue that progress in Korea would be even greater were it not thwarted by intentional misunderstandings and frequent civil disturbances. The latter were especially common before 1919. In that year the existing government structures, largely military, were changed into a civil administration with a policy of giving the Koreans a larger role. They were trying to appease the fully justified reasons for the Korean citizens' frustration.

There is not, and perhaps never has been, friendly relations. The Japanese look down on the Koreans with an aloofness occasioned by their assumptions of Korean personal dirtiness, economic backwardness, and political and military inability. The Koreans feel adverse towards the Japanese

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<sup>3</sup> The Czechoslovak Republic

because of their terrible Shogun expeditions at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and despise them because of their small, weak bodies and the lack of an authentic Japanese culture.

The way that the Japanese have crushed the weak Korean state has brought them no sympathy. They did not respect even the most basic form of legal procedure and during the military occupation the Japanese acted with Koreans with extreme brutality. In addition, the Koreans complain that the Japanese have precedence in every single thing. All profit and development of the Korean economy goes first to the Japanese, they say, while Korean enterprises lack the necessary political patronage of the administration. On the contrary, the Japanese blame the Koreans, saying that they are unable to administer larger entrepreneurial activities and only a few are capable of holding responsible jobs in the administration or private enterprise. The Japanese say that the Koreans are irresponsible, disorganised and that they are easily corrupted.

Japanese statesmen solemnly declare that the reforms achieved in the last few years are designed to educate the Koreans to be more responsible in self-government, which is to be wider, and that the Koreans will get more rights as soon as circumstances allow.

There is little doubt that the Korean problem is one of the most interesting in modern history. The attitude of the European powers towards the subjugation of the Korean nation has been the same as that towards the atrocities committed against the Slavs. None of them spoke out against Japan, even when it used the most brutal means to enslave this thousand-year-old country; even Russia, which until the Russo-Japanese War had a hankering for Korea, was unable to protect the oppressed. The public policy displayed by these powers has always been trivial, their concern for economic and business interests taking precedence over principles of justice and humanity.

In Korea one sees an edifying illustration as to the problems of the self-determination of nations. Before our eyes a populous nation lost its independence. In the name of achieving order and progress and under the silent acceptance of the so-called civilised nations, Korea was given a foreign rule—an administration that is doing its utmost to turn Korea into a colony tightly bound to the island Empire. It is without a doubt that this has brought the Koreans convenience and taught them guiding principles, sometimes learned indirectly and as a result of very violent means, that will enable them in the future to protect themselves against oppression, denationalization and most importantly to take charge of the administration of their own matters.

The Japanese declare they have never intended to denationalize the Koreans and that they have always tried to make them their useful allies and friends. Whether they are able to achieve this through implementing reforms to the civil government remains to be seen.





# *The Return of the Uigwe, Official Record of Korean Royal Court Ceremonies*

Alan C. Heyman

## **Introduction**

In a December 8, 2010 article entitled “The Long Journey: Repatriating *Uigwe*: Looted Korean Royal Books to come back from France 144 Years after the 1866 French Invasion,” the *Korea Herald* reported as follows:

In November [2010] the French and the Japanese governments announced they would return the Joseon-period royal books on court rites and ceremonies that had been taken by force from Korea in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The announcements mark the end of years of negotiations between governments and relentless efforts by activists to have the priceless artifacts repatriated.... The looted “Uigwe” books...are designated by UNESCO as part of world heritage, and contain both text and hand-drawn illustrations of significant royal rites and ceremonies of the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910). It was announced in November that a total of 464 volumes of Uigwe—167 from Japan and 297 from France—will be “virtually returned” and “transferred” to Korea by the two countries.... While the French took the books during its 19th century invasion of Korea, the Japanese seized the copies during its colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945.

The first shipment of 75 books from France arrived on April 14th, 2011. The remaining 222 books were sent back in 4 separate shipments by May 27th. All the books have been returned under a 5 year loan agreement made between France and Korea. *Uigwe* books are unique in that they display both text and hand-drawn illustrations of significant rites and ceremonies of the royal family of Joseon, including weddings, funerals, banquets, and the receiving of foreign envoys, as well as other state rituals and celebrations. Experts say such royal records do not exist in any other Asian country. The 297 *Uigwe* books in France were made in the 17th and 18th centuries and were stored in the *Oegyujanggak*, an annex of the *Gyujanggak* or Royal Library on Ganghwa Island—ironically for safe-keeping against invaders.

The first *Uigwe* book is believed to have been published during the reign of King Taejo, the first Joseon king, in the 14th century, but the surviving books are mostly from the 17th century, according to Hwang Jung-yon, curator at the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage. Hwang states that the *Uigwe* books had to be very neatly written by scribes who were experts in calligraphy, and that they usually made nine copies of each book: for the king, for the crown prince, and for each government office.

For a look at what makes the *Uigwe* contents so valuable, the writer, largely from a poetry, dance, and musical standpoint, would like to point out the following example taken from the 70th birthday celebration of the Queen Mother, Queen Shinjung (1808–1890), during the 14th year of the reign of King Kojong of the Choson dynasty (1877), at which the following poetry, dances, and music were performed.

### **1. Dance of Longevity (*Jang Saeng-boyeonji-mu*)**

In 1829, the 29th year of the reign of King Sunjo, Crown Prince Hyomyong created this dance imitating a performance from China’s Sung dynasty. A reference to the original Sung dance is found in *The Complete Classics Collection of Ancient China*, which states that it was the 7th of 25 pieces of court

banquet music that were performed during the Sung dynasty.

Some revisions and improvements were made in 1887. As a result, it was performed with two pole bearers, who functioned mainly as ushers leading the other dancers in and out of the performance area standing in front and dancers dressed in blue, red, yellow, white, and black costumes standing in the four directions and the center, respectively. Stepping forward, the two pole bearers sang this opening refrain: "A long and lonely day in spring, / A grand banquet is held at the royal court, / Auspicious clouds hover in the sky, / The music of the spheres resounds, / We hold an audience with his majesty and sing this song."

After the song, one pole bearer moved to the left and the other to the right with the lead dancer in the center. The other four dancers stepped forward, knelt down, and bowed. The lead dancer then moved forward and sang this song of praise: "His Honorable Majesty / Possesses benevolence and displays unchanging virtue, / Blessings so great are without end, / A reign of peace will be enjoyed."

After returning to her original position, the lead dancer and four attendant dancers sang as they danced. Then the two pole-bearers entered and sang this closing refrain: "At this lavish banquet, all kinds of dances have been performed. / Nine pieces of music have been played on jade flutes, harps, and lutes. / We bow twice in the front yard and, following each other, we take our leave."

The accompanying music, called *Pohoja* or *Changchoon-Pulloji-kok* ("Long life as eternal as the spring"), was originally from Tang- and Sung-dynasty China, but later was Koreanized. This was followed by *Hyang-Tang Kyoju*, an alternate playing of native Korean and Tang-dynasty music, which was performed by two orchestras, one on a terrace and the other in the courtyard, on instruments such as the *Kongo*, a huge barrel-shaped drum supported by a pole; the *Sukgo*, a long barrel-shaped drum; the *Unggo*, another barrel-shaped drum, the *Kyobanggo*, another barrel-shaped drum hung on a stand; the *Changgo*, a double-headed hourglass-shaped drum struck with a bamboo stick and the hand or a mallet; the *Pyunjong*, a set of bell chimes hung on a stand; the *Pyungyung*, a set of stone chimes hung on a stand; the *Panghyang*, a set of iron chimes hung on a stand; the *Uh*, a wooden tiger with a serrated back; the *Chook*, a square mortar with 4 sloping sides and struck with a pestle; the *Kayagum*, a 12-stringed instrument; the *Bipa*, a 4-stringed lute; the *Komungo*, a 6-stringed instrument; the *Ajaeng*, a bowed 7-stringed instrument; the *Haegum*, a two-stringed bowed fiddle; the *Yanggum*, a dulcimer; the *Tanso*, a vertical bamboo flute; the *Taegum*, a long transverse bamboo flute; the *Tangjuk*, a short transverse bamboo flute; the *Ka*, a bamboo wind instrument; the *Saenghwang*, a mouth organ with vertical bamboo pipes; the *Piri*, a vertical bamboo oboe; 2 large round drums struck by the dancers; and the *Pak*, a wooden clapper employed by the conductor to start and stop the orchestra and to signal changes in dance movements.

## 2. Ball-Throwing Dance (*Bosang-mu*)

This dance was newly created during the reign of King Sunjo of the Joseon dynasty. It featured a tray-table with high sides placed in the middle of the performing area holding a jar decorated with a lotus design. One dancer stands on the west side while six dancers take turns at throwing a beautifully painted ball into the jar. If the ball goes into the jar, the dancer is rewarded with a flower. If it does not, she is punished by having an ink dot painted on her cheek. To the left of the table stands a dancer holding the flowers, and to the right a dancer holding a paintbrush. The other dancers stand behind the table, three to the east and three to the west. They all come forward, kneel down, and bow. Then they rise and sing together: "The holy sun shines on the brilliant performing area with jade curtains, / The place of the bamboos is clothed anew in silken raiment."

The six dancers then move to the back and return to their positions, and the flower and paintbrush bearers place the colored balls to the left and right of the table. The first dancers on the left and right come forward, kneel down to pick up a ball, and sing: "The music of the immortals comes from the pavilion in the clouds of five colors, / The colors of the rainbow dance on the railings decorated in jewels."

With the table between them, the two dancers hold their hands up and move forward and backward twice, then take turns throwing the ball into the vase. Then the second pair of dancers sing: "Pushing the silken curtains aside, the colored sleeves come into clear view, / When the jade screen is raised, the balls give off their scent."

Then the third pair of dancers come forward and sing: “Don’t push us between the flowers with the music of flute and drum, / Our only concern is not to fall where the flower petals are.”

### **3. Boating Dance (*Sonyurak*)**

According to the royal protocols for a court banquet in the year 1829 (the 29th year of the reign of King Sunjo), this dance was a recreation of a boat setting sail. Two child dancers are aboard, one at the bow and the other at the stern, while two officials clad in the “robes of heaven” and wearing red caps command the boat standing at the bow armed with bow and arrow and sword. Six dancers, three on each side of the boat, pull the boat ropes, while 32 dancers on the outer circle rotate around the boat singing as they move. When the boat arrives at the center of the performing area, the anchor is dropped and the dancers, again whirling around the boat, sing a long narrative song (*Kasa*) called the “Song of the Fisherman” (*Obusa*). Some maintain this was sung to invite spiritual blessing of the fishing fleets, while others say it was sung to wish a bon voyage to high-ranking court officials about to embark on a voyage.

The dance, performed at various court banquets and celebrations from 1829 to 1901, begins with an accompaniment by royal military processional music called *Taechwi-ta* (“Great Winds and Percussion”) performed on such instruments as a conical oboe (*Taepyong-so*), long clarion (*Nabal*), conch shell (*Hoon*), brass cymbals (*Chegum*), hourglass-shaped drum (*Changgo*), and round drum (*Yonggo*) by musicians dressed in yellow robes and hats. When the “Song of the Fisherman” begins, the accompaniment is provided by the court orchestras mentioned previously.

### **4. Drum Dance (*Mugo*)**

This dance dates to the time of King Chungnyeol (r. 1274–1308) of the Koryo dynasty, when a scholar-official in exile found a piece of wood that had floated in from the sea and fashioned it into a drum. Called a *Mugo*, it was placed between two dancers who struck the drum as they danced around it. The drum is said to have made a majestic sound, and the dancers were compared to butterflies circling a flower or a dragon flying up to heaven with a wish-granting bead in its mouth.

In the early Joseon dynasty, the dance was performed by two, four, or eight dancers. By the time of the reign of King Sunjo (r. 1800–1834), it had been revised to feature one large drum encircled by four lead and four attendant dancers, a version which has been handed down to the present.

The dance is performed around the drum placed in the performing area with its head facing upwards in the manner of a snare or kettle drum. The drum stand is covered on all four sides by a bright red and blue silk cloth, revealing only the four posts that emerge above the drumhead. The four lead dancers constitute the inner circle and the four attendant dancers form the outer circle. The lead dancers carry a drumstick in each hand while the attendant dancers carry flowers. They take turns in approaching and retreating from the drum. When the lead dancers approach they strike the drum, which emits a large earth-shaking thud. The attendant dancers merely touch the drum elegantly with their flowers. This alternation of the two circles moving inward and outward creates a lovely floral kaleidoscopic pattern, while the alteration of the very loud and inaudible sound creates an effective contrast—an artistic panorama of sight and sound that is a joy to the eye as well as the ear. The dance draws to a close when the lead dancers execute a cadence on the drum and return again to join the attendant dancers in a circle dance.

The accompanying music is *Hyang-Tang Kyoju* mentioned previously.

### **5. Dance of Receiving the Emperor’s Benevolence (*Hahwangeun*)**

When King Sejong received recognition as king from the emperor of Ming China, the scholar-official Byeon Gye-ryang was commanded to write a congratulatory poem commemorating the event. The poem was entitled “Receiving the Emperor’s Benevolence” (*Hahwangeun-sa*):

Our brilliant founding father founded this nation of ours,  
Handed to his descendants good kings from generation to generation,  
That precious visage, with wisdom inbred, filial and respectful,  
benign and sincere,

Learned in Neo-Confucianism, constantly working,  
the son knows the will of the enlightened king,  
And so he is entrusted to take care of the nation.

The permission of the emperor granted,  
the wonderful edict is bestowed.  
His Majesty bows his head, truly divine is the emperor.  
Because the emperor is divine, no benevolence reaches Joseon,  
And all the people and ministers dance, gratitude fills heaven and earth.  
May Jongmyo [royal shrine] and Sajik [altar of earth and harvest],  
endure for tens of thousands of years.

The Dance of Receiving the Emperor's Benevolence (*Hahwangeun*) was created to accompany the poem. It was originally performed at banquets for foreign envoys, but in the latter half of the Joseon dynasty it was often performed at all kinds of court ceremonies.

In formation, 15 dancers holding ceremonial implements stand on the left and right sides. In front of them stand a scroll bearer and two pole bearers with three dancers behind each on the left and right. The lead dancer stands in the middle behind the scroll bearers, and behind her stand three dancers carrying parasols. The scroll bearer and two pole bearers step slightly forward and the pole bearers sing the opening refrain: "Receiving the special grace of the emperor, the throne was put to right. / We sing of the great virtue of our king, / May his grace spread far and wide. / We dare to look at the face of our king, and offer up this song."

The pole bearers then step back and stand on the left and right, and the lead dancer comes forward to sing this song of praise: "*Hahwangeun* means receiving the divine edict of the emperor. / In the name of the emperor, the king carries out affairs of state. / Upholding the will of the emperor, the people rejoice and create this dance."

After this song, the lead dancer steps back and returns to her original place. With six dancers from each side, she sings the *Hahwangeun* poem while bending forward and rising again. Next, she dances in the center while the other dancers on the left and right create a square, two in the north, one in the east, one in the west, and two in the south. When she moves to face the two in the north, they turn around and dance together, followed by those in the east and south, and then those in the west and south. Then she returns to her original position, and the two pole bearers enter to sing this closing refrain: "Feasting and making merry, propriety reigns with satisfaction, / Thriving and prosperous, we pray this lasts for eternity. / As the music draws to a close, we bow, and announcing our departure, we take our leave."

After this, the pole bearers and scroll bearer step back, and the dancers come forward, kneel down, and bow. They rise, step back, and leave through the southern entrance.

## 6. Dance of the Golden Ruler (*Monggumcheok-mu*)

When Yi Seong-gye was a general during the Koryo dynasty, he had a dream in which a celestial being descended from heaven and gave him the following oracle: "The Koryo rulers are virtuous and upright but too old, and very respectable but not flexible. You are skilled in both literary and arts, equipped with both virtue and knowledge, so the people's hopes rest with you." The celestial being then handed him a golden ruler and told him to take it and set the nation right. Yi Seong-gye thus went on to found the Choson dynasty and became King Taejo, the first dynastic king.

The story of this oracle was put to verse by an advisor to King Taejo in 1393, the second year of his reign. Called the "Poem of the Golden Ruler" (*Geumchok-sa*), it reads as follows:

The care of heaven is great indeed,  
An auspicious dream and a golden ruler.  
The upright man [of Koryo] is too old,  
and the honest man [of Koryo] is foolish.  
The right man is the man of virtue.

Heaven knows our mind, the nation is ruled well.  
How bright was that omen, the mandate of heaven.

Pass it on to our descendants for millions of generations.  
A sage has risen amongst us.  
All beings will come to see, so many omens there are.

All good fortune comes to pass, and all words are not enough.  
We sing and we dance, we rejoice and hold rites  
and pray for the longevity of our King.

In the 10th month of 1402, the court office of music devised a dance for this poem and named it the “Dance of the Golden Ruler” (*Monggum-cheok-mu*). Honoring the achievements of Taejo in founding the Choson dynasty, it was performed at court banquets and has been handed down in this form to the present. It begins with 18 female dancers holding ceremonial implements and standing in two columns, left and right. In front stand a scroll bearer and two pole bearers, and behind them are two columns of six dancers each. In the middle stands a dancer holding a golden ruler and behind her four dancers with parasols. The scroll bearer and pole bearers come slightly forward and sing the following opening refrain: “Upholding the sacredness and wonder of the omen, the King is beautiful in his Virtuousness. / Pray grant generosity in forgiveness, and with this feast give us faith in what we extol.”

After this song the pole bearers move back to either side. The dancers then come forward to form two columns of six, one on either side of the scroll bearer. Then the dancer with the golden ruler and those with yellow parasols come forward and stand beside the two lines, and the bearer of the golden ruler sings the following song of praise: “To dream of the golden ruler is to receive the mandate of heaven. / In Taejo’s dream a celestial being descended from heaven and presented a golden ruler, saying / The Koryo ruler was moral but too old, honest but foolish. / But you, Taejo, are wise in literary and military arts, virtue and knowledge, / And in you the people trust.”

This song is followed by the “Poem of the Golden Ruler” (*Geumchok-sa*) set to music. Then the pole bearers enter and sing the closing refrain: “The music has been played nine times, and prayers offered for the longevity of the King. / Before the merriment reaches its height, minds must quickly be turned to caution. / We bow, say farewell, and return. / Pray rest in comfort.” The accompanying music is *Pohuja* and *Hyang Tang Kyo-ju* mentioned previously.

### **7. Dance of Offering Heavenly Peaches (*Heon seondoh-mu*)**

This dance originated from a classical poetic song of Sung dynasty China. Koryo musicians composed it as a piece intended to accompany dance, and used it for celebrations that were handed down intact to the Choson dynasty.

As it is performed today, the dance features a celestial maiden who descends from heaven carrying a heavenly peach which she presents to the king, and then performs a dance wishing for his longevity. It is performed by 18 female dancers carrying ceremonial properties, two pole bearers, a lead dancer, two attendant dancers, and three more female dancers carrying ceremonial parasols. First the pole bearers come forward slightly and sing the opening refrain: “We come to the palace from the five great mountains afar offering the beautiful fruit of a thousand years. / To present good fortune and auspicious omens we look upon the face of the King and present this song.”

Then the lead dancer comes forward slightly and another dancer enters from the east carrying the heavenly peach on a tray. She kneels and presents the peach to the lead dancer, who holds the tray up and sings: “Enjoying the wonderful feast and spring views of Wonso, enjoying this lovely event at Sang Hyang Palace. / The King faces north with happiness on his brow, Emperor Shun in long robes sits deep in the palace with arms folded.”

She then places the tray on a table, bows, rises and moves to the top of the column where the other dancers are standing in formation. She then dances, turns to the right, and, facing north and the king,

sings the previous song, after which two attendant dancers come forward and sing a song announcing the arrival of the warm east wind: “The east wind comes with a message of warmth, the beautiful energy all around gradually grows softer and happier.”

The two attendants then return to their places and the lead dancer sings about Korea: “Peace reigns over the eastern nation [Korea] today. In happiness, the King and his court look upon the banquet. / The fans are spread open and the King’s throne shines. Now the painted screen is rolled up, and auspicious energy fills the air.”

The lead dancer then moves back to her place, and the pole bearers sing the closing refrain: “Putting our clothes in order for a moment we step back intending to return following the path of the clouds. / We bow twice in front of the courtyard and, following each other, we take our leave.” The lead dancer and two attendant dancers come forward, bow twice, and then all dancers leave by the southern exit.

The accompanying music is *Pohuja* and *Hyang-Tang Kyoju* mentioned previously, along with an orchestral piece called *Yomillak*, meaning “the King shares his pleasures with the people,” which originated in 1447 with a long poem written in the Korean alphabet and set to Chinese style music, which is hexatonic (6-toned).

### **8. Dance for the Longevity of the King (*Suyonjang-mu*)**

Though the exact date of this dance is unknown, many *Uigwe*, other manuals, and musical documents state that Sung-dynasty China had a piece of music by this name which was performed on festive days to wish for the longevity of the king. In the Koryo and Choson dynasties, this music was used to accompany dance and was performed at court banquets. In Koryo, the dance was performed by 18 dancers holding ceremonial implements standing in two lines. There were two pole bearers and 16 dancers in four groups of four. In Choson, it was performed by eight dancers.

First, the pole bearers come forward and sing the opening refrain: “A beautiful rainbow envelops the palace sending a good omen, auspicious clouds shine on the light of dusk. / Envoys from all nations come to pay their respects as we play *Pohuja* at the pear blossom pavilion.” The pole bearers move back to the left and right, whereupon eight dancers come forward and sing: “Red clouds, shining colors, reflect upon each other, officials are crowded tightly around the throne, filling the courtyard like silken flowers of all colors, and the joyous sounds of a celebratory feast are heard. / Opening a thousand years of tradition and enjoying success, with one mind we offer our congratulations on the full moon. We offer wine in a jade cup. Gallant heroes, who often drink from jeweled cups, enjoy an era of peace for a million years.”

Upon completion, the dancers on the left face the west and those on the right face inward. Each side circles in a different direction, and two dancers each stand in the four directions, those in the east, west, and south kneeling down, while those in the north face each other then turn back, and then face north toward the king. Then the other dancers rise and, lifting their outstretched arms, move in a big circle. The pole bearers next come forward and sing the closing refrain: “A wonderful scene in a time of peace, the jade palace is wide and even the sun is long, / The scent of flowers mixes with the smell of incense and flows over the silken mat, / The beautiful blessings of heaven are brought and floated in a gold wine cup.”

The accompanying music is *Pohuja* and music taken from a court chamber music suite called *Chonggwang Ji Kok*.

### **9. Ball-Throwing Dance (*Pogurak-Mu*)**

Records indicate this dance dates to the time it was performed by 13 dancers in the 11th month of 1073, the 27th year of King Munjong of Koryo. It was performed on *Tano* (the fifth day of the fifth lunar month) and also at court banquets.

A gate-like structure with a hole in it is placed in the performing area and the dancers, divided into two columns, one to the left and one to the right, try to throw a ball through the hole. If successful, the dancer is given a flower: if not she is punished by having her cheek smeared with black ink. In Koryo, there were 18 dancers in two columns, but in Choson sometimes only with three or four on either side of the gate. The first dancer on the left comes forward to the gate, bows, and rises, and a

colored ball is placed in front of the gate. The dancer picks up the ball, moves forward, then backward, and tosses the ball. Each dancer does the same in turn. When all are finished, two pole bearers enter and sing the closing refrain. Then the dancers come forward, bow, step back, and leave by the southern entrance.

Here, again, the accompanying music is *Hyang Tang Kyoju*.

#### **10. Ivory Clapper Dance (*Abak-mu*)**

First introduced to the Paekje kingdom, this dance was accompanied by song and was transmitted to Koryo. Until the 10th month of 1449 (31st year of King Sejong) it was called the *Dong dong* dance, but according to the *Musical Canon of Choson* it was eventually renamed *Abak-mu* (“Ivory Clapper Dance”). Performed with a small gourd-shaped instrument made of ivory, this dance was likely introduced from regions west of China.

During the Koryo dynasty it was performed by two dancers. In Choson times it was performed by two or four dancers, who struck the instrument once or three times as they moved forward and backward and turned, a form handed down to the present. The accompanying music is an orchestral piece for wind instruments called “Long Life as Immeasurable as the Sky” (*Sujechon*).

#### **11. Dance of Beautiful Women Picking Peonies (*Kainjunmokdan-mu*)**

According to the *Encyclopedia of Subject Matter*, this dance, one of ten from Sung-dynasty China, was created by a scholar-official under the command of Emperor Taizong of the Sung period. In its original format, the performers wore red costumes and a gold-plaited headpiece decorated with a phoenix and peony design. Adopting the content and title of the Chinese dance, Crown Prince Hyomyong of Choson created a Korean version featuring 12 female dancers surrounding a large vase of peonies installed at the center of the performing area and picking the flowers from the vase. The dancers form two lines of six each behind the vase, move forward, kneel down, bow, and, standing up, sing the following song: “Tens of thousands of flowers in full bloom brighten the palace, so splendid are the red and yellow flowers in their envy. The Music of Perfect Peace on the jade flute resonates through the palace as butterflies flutter, the fragrance of flowers fills the air.”

The two groups of dancers join to make one large circle with their backs toward the vase. They turn to face the vase, then approach the vase and pluck flowers from it and turn outward, holding the flowers in their right hand. They then face each other in pairs, turn back to back, and approach the vase again. They next form a circle, return to their original position, come forward, bow, and exit. The accompanying music is, once again, *Hyang-Tang Kyoju*.

#### **12. Sword Dance (*Kumgi-mu* or *Kum-mu*)**

This dance originated from the story of a famous *Hwarang* (elite warrior or knight) of the Silla kingdom. As the original dance did not survive, Crown Prince Hyomyong created a new version in which two, four, six, or eight dancers performed.

Two records in *Diagrams and Records of Rituals*, compiled in 1901 in the 10th year of King Kojong, briefly mention this dance but give no detail. To the tune of royal processional music called *Tae-chwi-ta* (“Great Winds and Percussion”), musicians enter the performing area and place small swords on the stage. As they leave, four dancers enter. In two groups of two, they face each other with the swords between them. They pick up the swords, and, after dancing forward and backward, they bow and leave. The accompanying music is *Tae Chwi-ta*, followed by *Hyang-Tang Kyoju*.

#### **13. Dance of the Spring Nightingale (*Chunaengjon-mu*)**

According to a treatise of the court entertainment office of China, Tang-dynasty Emperor Kao-tsung (651–683 AD) was moved by the song of a bird that was carried to him on the wind one morning. When he was told it was a nightingale, he ordered a court musician to compose a piece of music inspired by the bird’s song. The composition was titled *Chunaengjon* and was later used as a dance accompaniment.

A record of court music lyrics from the Choson dynasty states that in 1829 (the 297th year of the reign of King Sunjo), Crown Prince Hyomyong created a dance based on Emperor Kao-tsung’s expe-

rience with the song of the nightingale. The dance is performed in a solo capacity by either a female or male dancer on a finely woven multicolored straw mat, during which the following song is sung: “Oh, walking under the moonlight, the wind rushes through the silken sleeves. / Proudly beautiful even before the flowers, to the youth we entrust affairs of the nation.” The musical accompaniment is *Hyang-Tang Kyoju* and music taken from a long lyric poem called *Kagok*.

#### 14. Hand Bell Dance (*Hyangryong-mu*)

Crown Prince Hyomyong recreated a Tang dynasty dance replacing the original hand cymbals with hand bells held in both hands and shaken while dancing. Two dancers stand at the front, one behind the other, and behind them stand two dancers on the west and two on the east. They ring the bells to the beat and sing the following song as they dance, first facing each other, then back to back, and then face north: “Music plays at the Jade Palace and immortals come to visit wearing phoenix pattern robes and mythical animal pattern belts. Leaving perfume behind as they lithely dance, our only wish is for the King’s longevity. / May your life be as long as heaven. / The spring breeze blows on the flowers in the yard, which lasts for tens of thousands of years.” The accompanying music is taken from a long lyric poem called *Kagok*.

#### 15. Crane Dance (*Hakmu*)

Two dancers appear dressed as enormous cranes and approach two large lotus flowers located on a specially designed platform at the far end of the performing area. With their long bills, they peck at the flowers, the petals unfold, and two child dancers emerge and ride on the cranes’ backs. The dance can be traced to the Koryo dynasty and is described in the *Cardinal Principles of Music*. The accompanying music originally was *Pohuja* but was later changed to *Hyang-Tang Kyoju*.

#### 16. Lotus Dance (*Yunhwadae-mu*)

Originating in India, this dance was introduced to Korea through Northern Wei in China. The *Compilation of Documents* describes the dance as performed by two dancers dressed in beautiful costumes with gold bells in their hats that rattled as they moved. The *Cardinal Principles of Music*, written during the Choson period, states that it was performed with the Crane Dance. On its own, it was performed at court rites held to expel evil spirits. It has been designated Intangible Cultural Property Number 40 by the Korean government to ensure its preservation and transmission to posterity.

The dance starts with two pole bearers coming slightly forward to sing the opening refrain: “What a wonderful day has been selected for this brilliant feast, auspicious events of all kinds come all at once. / Lovely girls emerging from lotus flowers present captivating dance and song with skill rare to see.”

After this, two dancers come forward and sing: “From the Isle of Eternal Youth we descend, born of the lotus. / Deeply moved by the virtue of the King, we come to this flower to present the joy of song and dance.”

The dancers place the hats with bells attached on their heads and sing the closing refrain: “The elegant music draws to an end, we bow before you and take leave of this brilliant place, we return to the carriage of the immortals, and head for the clouds far away.” The dancers then bow and leave through the southern entrance.

This dance, revised by Crown Prince Hyonmyong in 1829, is accompanied by *Pohuja* and music taken from a court chamber music suite.

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All these dances were performed again in January 1887 at the 80th birthday celebration of the Queen Mother, Queen Shinjong. On this occasion the following two additional dances were included.

#### Dance of the Fragrant Mountain (*Musanhyang-mu*)

According to the Royal Protocol of the Court Banquet of 1828 (*Muja Jinjak Uigwe*), this dance came from Tang-dynasty China. It is performed solo by a male dancer on a platform in the center of the performing area, who sings: “Of all the people, I alone gained the King’s favor by wearing a perfumed robe of silk with narrow sleeves. The song I joyfully offer is like the oriole chirping in the branches



above. / With dance movements as light as clouds, I drift away on the breeze.” After dancing, the performer bows and leaves through the south exit.

### **Dance of the Five Immortals (*Oyangsun-mu*)**

A Tang-dynasty poem describes the time Gaogu became the prime minister of the state of Chu in which five celestial maidens descended from heaven riding on rams with coats of different colors and handed to Master Anqi sheng, a hermit known for his great filial piety, a grain stalk with six ears of rice on it. Adapted from a dance originally performed in China, this dance symbolically represents Master Anqi sheng handing out the ears of rice to villagers to plant for food. Eighteen dancers hold ceremonial implements standing in two rows with two pole bearers standing in front of them. Behind the 18 dancers are four attendant dancers standing to the east and west with the lead dancer in the middle. At the very back are four dancers holding ceremonial parasols.

The pole bearers come forward and sing the opening refrain: “The clouds appear at Guling and the sun turns round at Aoshan, / Joyfully we greet the immortals riding on rams. / Meeting the sacred birds high in the heavens to the elegant music, the phoenix comes to dance. / More stirring than geese in flight is their beauty. / Graciously permit us to join the throng, and bestow on us your generous blessing.”

The lead dancer then comes forward and sings a song of praise to the emperor: “Oh, as we sing and dance expressing our congratulations, we are trying to help maintain the long, long blessings. / We the women of the court were so moved, we know not what to do.”

After this, the attendant dancers sing two verses of the following song:

The dawn air is thick with blue mist and the sea is calm.  
The two or three mountain peaks by the river are cold.  
Jade pendants inside the robes send out an intriguing human scent, red tags ride the rainbow  
of five color clouds.

A clear omen are the full ears of rice,  
a smile and a blush soften the face.  
Looking upon the nine roofs of the palace, looking up to the sky,  
we pray three times,  
May you face Mt. Nanshan  
and live for one hundred thousand years.

Then the lead and attendant dancers sing this refrain: “In the Three Spirit Mountain so far, far away, day and night are divided after a hundred thousand years. / In the spring breeze the legendary peach blossoms bloom casting a smile in the spring god of the east. / A lucky wind brings fleeting fragrant notes. / We pray you will live long and never grow old. / As the auspicious smoke scatters and blue clouds disappear, teasing the warm sunshine and whistling slowly.”

At the end of the song, the two pole bearers come forward and sing the following song: “How clear is the song of the departing crane, how intriguing the dance of the oriole, / They shake their tags and say goodbye. / Pointing to the Three Spirit Mountain as they go, the sun sets red filling the air with the warmth of spring. / From deep inside the white clouds comes the faraway sound of a crane. / In front of the courtyard we bow twice and, following each other, we take our leave.”

Then the lead dancer comes forward and sings this song of praise: “The rabble is gone and the world is clean, showing gratitude for the virtue that brings peace to all. / We suddenly depart this joyful scene, for the road to the ivory pavilion is far. / We dare not do as we please, so we bow and await your command.”

### **Conclusion**

In light of the precious cultural content of the *Uigwe*, neither the French invasion of 1866 nor the Japanese annexation of 1910–1945 in which the books were looted can be regarded as having any justification. The execution of French Catholic priests in Korea was admittedly a horrendous provocation,

but taking such important books was not an appropriate response. It is essential that the originals of these books now be returned to Korea permanently and in their entirety.

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2. *Official Record of Court Events*, January 9, 1877.
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# *Idolatry, Ideology and Nationalism: A Korean Millenarian Sect and the State*

James H. Grayson

## **The Empire of Mount Sion**

Each year when I lectured on Korean history to our department's students and students from other departments at the University of Sheffield, it was inevitable that at least one student would comment on the extreme nationalism of the English-language Korean history textbooks which formed part of the reading list for the module. The majority of Korean history textbooks in use or currently available today are written by Korean nationals and reflect the intellectual perspective of a certain generation of scholars.<sup>1</sup> Nationalism has been one of the key concepts for interpreting historical events and movements, particularly in the analysis of the twentieth-century history of Korea. I have commented in earlier articles that this focus on nationalism has skewed our understanding of what was happening in religious groups during the Japanese colonial period, particularly Christian groups which took a stand against participation in state rituals held at Shintō shrines.<sup>2</sup> The work of Kenneth Wells, on the other hand, should remind us that political movements even of a strongly nationalist slant may have strong religious biases or be based on the implementation of religious beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

One Christian group in particular has been subject to considerable misunderstanding, the *Sion-san cheguk* or the Empire of Mount Sion movement which emerged in the late 1930s.<sup>4</sup> Various seen as a Christian revolutionary group, a Christian nationalist movement, or the first of the Christian-based new religious movements which have come to typify new religions in post-Korean War Korea,<sup>5</sup> the Empire of Mount Sion has been seen to be principally a political movement, ignoring the essentially religious character of the group. In this paper, I will argue that groups such as the Empire of Mount Sion movement have to be understood primarily in terms of their religious beliefs and motivations. The fact that the activities of such groups have a political dimension or a political effect does not mean that their principal motivation for acting was a political or nationalist one.

## **Anthropological Views of Millenarian Groups**

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<sup>1</sup> Examples would be Woo-keun Han, *The History of Korea* (Seoul: Eul-yoo, 1970); Wanne J. Joe, *Traditional Korea, A Cultural History* (Seoul: Chung'ang UP, 1972); Djun Kil Kim, *A History of Korea* (Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood, 2005); Pow-key Sohn, et al, *The History of Korea* (Seoul: UNESCO, 1970); and Ki-baek Yi, *A New History of Korea* (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1984). Exceptions to this in English are William E. Henthorn, *A History of Korea* (New York and London: Free Press/Collier Macmillan, 1971) and Roger Tennant, *A History of Korea* (London: Kegan Paul, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> James H. Grayson, "The Shintō Shrine Conflict and Protestant Martyrs in Korea, 1938–1945," *Missiology: An International Review*, v. 29 (2001), no. 3, pp. 287-305.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth M. Wells, *New God, New Nation: Protestants and Self-Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea, 1896-1937* (Honolulu: Hawai'i UP, c.1990).

<sup>4</sup> I conducted field work and textual research on the Sion-san Presbyterian Church during the spring of 2010. I interviewed older members of the church, and extensively interviewed the current leader of the group, the Revd. Pak Kōnhan, as well as some of the members of his extended family.

<sup>5</sup> See for example Chōng Chungho et al, *Ilche malgi Yōngnam chiyōk Kidokkyo-in hang-Il undong* [The Christian Anti-Japanese Movement in the Yōngnam Region at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period] (Taegu: Taewōn kihoek ch'ulpan-sa, 2008) and Yi Manyōl, *Han'guk kidokkyo-wa minjok t'ongil undong* [Christianity and Movements for National Unification] (Seoul: Han'guk kidokkyo yōksa yōn'gu-so, 2001).

The Empire of Mount Sion movement, before its transformation into a Presbyterian denomination after the Pacific War, was a millenarian movement which proclaimed the imminent arrival of the arch-angels Michael and Gabriel, the defeat of Japan, and the creation of Christ's one-thousand year kingdom. It was essentially pacifistic, waiting for divine intervention, rather than conducting revolutionary activity which would usher in the millennial kingdom. During the last half of the twentieth century a rich literature on millenarian groups in non-Western societies developed. These groups were typically violent, revolutionary, anti-Western and anti-colonial in character and frequently had no clear association with Christianity. The *Sion-san cheguk* movement is significantly different from many of the movements discussed in the anthropological literature in that it was pacifistic, non-revolutionary and not anti-Western, although it was anti-colonial.

To understand what makes the Empire of Mount Sion different from the other groups described by anthropologists, ethnographers and sociologists, one needs to recall that church historians have referred to *pre-millennial* millenarian groups and *post-millennial* millenarian groups.<sup>6</sup> Pre-millennial groups, typical of the first three to four centuries of Christianity, anticipated divine intervention to create the millennial kingdom and were essentially pacifistic in outlook and activity. Post-millennial groups, characteristic of movements during the Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, believed that direct action was required by the followers of the movement to bring about the reign of Christ, and were essentially violent and revolutionary in outlook. Because non-Western, religiously based political movements described by twentieth century anthropologists were like the post-millennial movements of the Reformation, anthropological scholars have called them millenarian movements.<sup>7</sup> This not only ignores the difference between pre- and post-millennialism, but it also implies that millenarianism refers exclusively to movements which are essentially violent, revolutionary, and political.<sup>8</sup> The *Sion-san cheguk* movement has none of these characteristics because it is a modern-day example of a pre-millennial movement.

### **Shintō Shrine Worship and Colonial Policy**

As part of its policy in the mid to late 1930s to create uniformity within the Japanese empire, the Japanese colonial government of Korea, the Government-General of Chōsen, pursued a policy of enforcing attendance at state Shintō rituals as acts of national patriotism by imperial subjects. For nationalistic reasons, attendance at Shintō rites was offensive to Koreans, but doubly so for Korean Christians because the rites were seen not to be simply memorial rites, but religious ones, and therefore idolatrous because worship was being offered up to deities other than God Himself. Significant numbers of Christians refused to participate in these rites, and possibly as many 50 persons who refused to do so may have died as a result of incarceration and torture by the colonial authorities. In a previous study, I have shown that these martyrs did what they did primarily because of religious motives, even in those cases where the martyr may have been an active nationalist working for Korean independence.<sup>9</sup>

### **The *Sion-san cheguk* Movement and Japanese Nationalism**

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<sup>6</sup> F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church: Second Edition* (London: Oxford UP, 1974), p. 916.

<sup>7</sup> Typical works of this type are Michael Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion: Millenarian Protest Movements against the European Colonial Order* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Kenelm Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969); Bryan R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest Among Tribal and Third World Peoples* (London: Heinemann, 1973); and Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of 'Cargo' Cults in Melanesia* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1957). The interesting point about these works is the extent to which they use Christian theological terminology without being aware (seemingly) with the way in which these terms have been used by theologians and church historians.

<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Bryan Wilson bizarrely wants to detach the use of the term "millenarianism" from its historical association with Christianity and Judaism so that it can become a more general term. I prefer a term such as "crisis cult" to describe both the twentieth-century groups which anthropologists describe and the historic Jewish and Christian groups. See Wilson, *op.cit.*, pp. 4 and 28.

<sup>9</sup> Grayson, "The Shintō Shrine Conflict," *op.cit.*

The Empire of Mount Sion movement started with the charismatic experiences of Pak Tonggi (朴東基, 1907–1991), a Presbyterian evangelist working during the 1930s and 1940s in the remote rural areas to the east of Taegu. In 1926, Pak left his home village of Surak in Ch'ōngsong County (靑松郡) to attend the Bible training institute in Taegu, which was run by missionaries belonging to the Northern Presbyterian Mission, USA. American Protestantism, particularly the Presbyterian denominations, had been significantly influenced by Dispensationalism,<sup>10</sup> a form of pre-millenarianism, and many of the Presbyterian missionaries in Korea had been trained at Princeton Theological Seminary, which under John Gresham Machen (1881–1937) and others had been at the forefront of promoting pre-millenarian belief. In their theology, pre-millenarian expectations were linked with a literalistic interpretation of the Bible, and a belief in the inerrancy of the biblical text *in toto*,<sup>11</sup> beliefs which became characteristic of Pak Tonggi in his later work. In January 1928, Pak had the first of several charismatic experiences in which he saw a hand writing on the wall all the sins which he had committed up to that point, and then a vision of Christ on the Cross on another wall. He referred to this experience as the *sipcha yōnggwang* (十字榮光, 'Glory of the Cross'). The first part of this charismatic experience Pak associated with the record in the Book of Daniel (Daniel 5:5–28) in which the Babylonian king Belshazzar (died 539 BC) received an ominous warning given by a mysterious hand writing his fate on the wall of his palace.<sup>12</sup> Pak would have understood this two-fold vision to be both a warning and a sign of God's grace. It also provided the stimulus for his later evangelistic work and clearly coloured his understanding of the political events going on around him.

Pak Tonggi began working as a local evangelist in churches in the rural areas to the east and north of the city of Taegu in 1934, shortly afterwards moving to P'ohang where he was formally given the title of *chōndo-sa*, or evangelist, by the local Presbyterian church.<sup>13</sup> It was at this time that the Japanese authorities began to put pressure on Koreans to participate in Shintō rituals, and Pak, given his strong theological views, began to take part in the anti-Shrine worship movement which was developing at that time. The core issue for Pak and the others was idolatry, the violation of the first three of the Ten Commandments which forbid the worship of any gods but God Himself. Like many others who participated in this movement, Pak was interrogated by the police (for a period of 18 days) and was sent back to his home village. Once home, Pak Tonggi continued his local evangelistic activities and became well known both as a preacher, and as a leader of daybreak prayer services which attracted crowds of people from far and wide. In his work, he continued to denounce participation in or attendance at shrine rituals as being participation in idolatrous practices.<sup>14</sup>

His work changed dramatically when he had his second great charismatic experience on 29 November, 1940. At this point Japan had been engaged in war on the Chinese mainland for at least three years, and was expanding its military activities throughout Southeast Asia. Pak's vision, received in the study of the minister's manse in To-dong close to his home village of Surak, was a complex revelation of God's intervention in history, and the destruction of evil. Pak saw this vision as parallel to the second chapter of the Book of Joel in the Old Testament, and interpreted it to mean that Japan would be defeated through divine intervention. Later he spoke of the coming of the archangels Michael and Gabriel, but these became metaphors for the United States and the United Kingdom which were the agents for God in creating the millennial kingdom.<sup>15</sup>

For approximately two years, from January 1941 to December 1942, Pak worked as an evangelist in Ŭisōng, even more strongly opposing Shrine worship, for which he was again sent back to his home village. Then, in October, 1943, he created the *Sion-san cheguk kongdong-ch'e ponpu* (시온山共同體本部, Headquarters of the Community of the Empire of Mount Sion), commanding his followers to destroy any Shintō ritual objects which they had along with any images of the Japanese

<sup>10</sup> Keith Crim, ed., *Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1982), p. 224.

<sup>11</sup> For a history of millenarian thought in American Protestant theology, see Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1970), Chapter 2. For a discussion of the role of Princeton Theological Seminary in the promotion of these ideas, see Chapter 5.

<sup>12</sup> Chōng Chungho et al, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 36–38.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 38–40.

emperor Hirohito. He also announced the creation of a cabinet to govern the world under its new dispensation, including the creation of a governor-general to rule Japan. It is important to note that even though Pak went so far as to destroy Shintō objects and to set up a framework for the government of the millennial kingdom, neither he nor any of his followers participated in any violent or revolutionary activity in order to usher in the new age. That was to be the work of the divinely appointed agents of God.<sup>16</sup>

It is interesting to examine the name chosen for the group. *Sion-san* refers to Mount Zion, located in Jerusalem, the City of David viewed as the heart of the Promised Land, the fountainhead of belief in the one and only God. *Cheguk*, empire, is a clear comparative reference to the Japanese Empire. Thus the group formed as a result of Pak Tonggi's vision was a new empire, not formed by human politics as was Japan's empire, but founded on the Word and Law of God. It was also an explicit rejection of the alleged divine nature of the Japanese Empire, which to Pak and his followers in its very claims would have been seen to be idolatrous. Consequently, the name of this group succinctly encapsulates the key issue for Pak's followers: idolatry. The Empire of Mount Sion was not essentially a political or nationalist movement but a theological and religious one.

### **The Sion-san Presbyterian Church and Korean Nationalism**

On 20 June, 1945, Pak Tonggi and thirty-three of his followers were incarcerated and tortured by the Japanese police for apocalyptic talk tending to undermine belief in Japan's ultimate victory in the war with the allied forces. They were released on 17 August, two days after Japan's surrender.<sup>17</sup>

Shortly thereafter, on 20 August, 1945, Pak announced the creation of a new denomination, the *Sion-san Yesu-gyo changno-hoe* (Sion-san Presbyterian Church).<sup>18</sup> Examination of this name, which is the name by which the group still is known, reveals the continued emphasis on millenarian and eschatological beliefs. The Presbyterian Church which was re-established in Korea after the end of the Pacific War was styled *Han'guk Yesu-gyo changno-hoe* (literally, the Korean Christianity Presbyterian Church).<sup>19</sup> This title places the name of the state, *Han'guk*, forthrightly at the beginning of the formal name of the denomination, indicating an element of nationalism. The denomination formed by Pak Tonggi, however, uses the name of the millennial kingdom in its title, *Sion-san* or Mount Zion, indicating their expectation of the imminent coming of Christ's kingdom, and their religious and psychological separation from the powers of this world. Although this group held strong millenarian views, it had the moral support of the most senior Presbyterian missionary in North Kyōngsang Province, Edward Adams (1895–1965) who visited the group on 13 November, 1946 and continued to give them moral support.<sup>20</sup> Latterly, when they held a service of dedication for a new church building in Kyōngju in 1987, the bulletin stated ten characteristic features of the church, the first of which was that it was maintaining the orthodox Christian faith as it had been transmitted to them by the first generation of missionaries.<sup>21</sup> Thus, Sion-san Presbyterian Church was seen to be, and perceived themselves to be, orthodox Christians who had maintained “the true faith” in spite of suffering and hardship.

For religious reasons this group came to reject the establishment of the Republic of Korea. The new state was seen as an idolatrous political entity because the Yin-Yang (Kor. *Ŭmyang*), which was the symbol of the state and appeared prominently on the national flag was understood to be an idolatrous symbol. This view led the group to take four actions: 1) the refusal to place their names on the national register of citizens; 2) the printing of registration cards showing that instead they were citizens of Heaven; 3) the refusal to send their children to state schools; and 4) the refusal to allow their

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44–89.

<sup>17</sup> Chōng Unhun, *Sion-san Yesu-gyo changno kyohoe-sa* [History of the Sion-san Presbyterian Church], (Hayang: Sion-san Yesu-gyo changno-hoe sŏn'gyo-bu, 1997), p. 118.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> During the final years of the Japanese colonial administration, the various Korean Protestant denominations were formally merged with their Japanese equivalents, and then these denominations were all merged into a single Japanese Protestant church. See James H. Grayson, *Korea: A Religious History, Revised Edition* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 161–162.

<sup>20</sup> Chōng Unhun, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>21</sup> T'ak Ki'il, ed., *Saryo Han'gug-ŭi sinhŭng chonggyo* [Resources for Korean New Religions] (Seoul: Hyōndae chonggyo, 2009), p. 294.

sons to be conscripted into the ROK Army. In the Cold War climate of the latter half of the twentieth century, these actions led to suspicion by both the police and government authorities that the Sion-san Presbyterian Church was in fact some sort of crypto-communist movement. As a consequence, the leadership of the church was incarcerated, interrogated and tortured for the next twenty years.

Before the onset of the Korean War (1950–1953), three crucial events came to shape the history of the new denomination. First of all was the emergence of institutional structures showing a move away from the charismatic leadership typical of the early years of the *Sion-san cheguk* movement. Seventeen elders and one minister were ordained in 1947 and 1948 to lead the church, but Pak Tonggi was not ordained as a minister at this time because he lacked formal clerical theological training. His lieutenant Hwang Yuha, who had been trained at the Presbyterian seminary in P'yŏngyang, was ordained instead. The deep divisions between the charismatic and institutional features of the movement/church emerged at this time.

The new church was weakened by two incidents, the Nudity Incident of 1948 and the South Taegu Police Station Incident of 1950. In the first instance, on 5 December, 1948 a group of followers removed their clothing in the mistaken belief that when they would meet the returning Messiah they could not do so wearing the clothes of this world.<sup>22</sup> This led to the expulsion of 82 members of the movement and a lasting negative view of the group amongst the general public.<sup>23</sup> The second incident was the arrest and interrogation of Pak Tonggi and three of his lieutenants by the police at the South Taegu Police Station. They were held for a period of two weeks and were released on 17 January, 1950, just before the onset of the Korean War. The leaders of the church were released because under intense interrogation they had conceded that their view on the Yin-Yang symbols was wrong. Because Pak Tonggi was seen to have been “defeated,” the first formal split in the church occurred when one of Pak’s lieutenants and a group of his followers left the movement and began meeting on their own.<sup>24</sup> Thus in the period just before the Korean War, the Sion-san Church was suspected by the police and political authorities of being a secret communist group, had a negative image amongst the general populace for moral reasons, and had experienced a formal split in its leadership.

For twenty years after the end of hostilities on the Korean peninsula in 1953, Pak Tonggi and his associates continued to be suspected of having communist sympathies and were arrested and intensively interrogated by the police on numerous occasions. During the 1960s, some of the leaders of the church tried on several occasions to contact the President of the Republic of Korea, Pak Chŏnghŭi (朴正熙, 1917–1979), to explain their theological position. These actions were called *chŏndo* or evangelism, but had no positive effect.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, Pak Tonggi’s sons decided that they would keep their father out of jail by attending state schools and by being conscripted into the South Korean army. One son, Pak Kŏnhan (born 1947), went even further by joining the police force. He used his position in the police to examine the documents on his father’s arrests and interrogations, and subsequently to explain to the authorities why his father’s views were not communist or political, but essentially religious. When Pak Kŏnhan left the police in 1974 his father’s name had been cleared of any association with communism, and for the final two decades of his life Pak Tonggi was able to pursue his life’s work without any interference from the South Korean state.<sup>26</sup> However, his father’s strong religious views had a continued impact on the life of his family. One son initially was prevented from going to the United States for post-graduate study and as a result has ceased to be a Christian believer.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, Pak’s youngest daughter, now a committed Christian, said that for a long time she could not accept Christian belief if it meant the kind of continued suffering which her father had experienced.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The encounter of Christian believers with the returning Messiah is called the Rapture and is based upon the phrase in the Latin translation of St. Paul’s “First Letter to the Thessalonians” (Chapter 4, verse 17) *simul rapiemur* (“we shall be caught up together”). See Keith Crim, ed., *Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), p. 600.

<sup>23</sup> Chŏng Unhun, op. cit., pp. 150–152.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 158–162. Field notes of an interview with Pak Kŏnhan on 27 April 2010, items 3 and 4. Hereinafter, quotes from field notes will be identified as FN followed by the date and the item(s) indicated.

<sup>25</sup> Chŏng Unhun, op. cit., pp. 205–209. See especially p. 209.

<sup>26</sup> FN 27 April, 2010, item 5; FN 11 May, 2010, items 3 and 4.

<sup>27</sup> FN 11 May, 2010, item 2.

<sup>28</sup> FN, 25 June, 2010, items 1 and 2, interview with Pak Yuhŭi, Pak Tonggi’s youngest child and daughter.



The suffering and problems faced by Pak Tonggi's family is not unique but is mirrored by the histories of many of the families of the membership of the Sion-san Presbyterian Church.

### **Millenarianism as Politics and Religious Belief**

The *Sion-san Yesu-gyo changno-hoe* still exists as a separate denomination, with a single church in Kyōngju under the leadership of Pak Tonggi's fourth son, Pak Kōnhan. The history of the denomination since the 1960s has been one of a certain growth in numbers, the building of places of worship, followed by a series of splits in the leadership leading to the decamping of significant numbers of followers to other conservative Presbyterian groups.<sup>29</sup> I have discussed these developments in the institutional character of the church elsewhere, and they do not form our principal concern here.<sup>30</sup> Rather, our concern is with the issue of whether millenarian groups such as the Sion-san Presbyterian Church are essentially political movements or religious ones.

At the beginning of this article, I discussed the commonly held view amongst anthropologists, sociologists and ethnographers that non-Western, religiously-based political movements were essentially violent, revolutionary, anti-Western, and anti-colonial in character. Called variously millenarian movements, millenarian cults or other terms, such groups were seen to be typical of millenarianism as a whole, and to be essentially political movements with interesting religious aspects. This indiscriminate use of the term millenarianism to describe such movements ignores both the Judaeo-Christian roots of the term, and the fact that religious beliefs may be the chief motivation for actions which in turn may have a political effect. That is, some of the millenarian groups described by social scientists may be essentially religious and not political movements.

This is clearly the case of the Sion-san Presbyterian Church, which does not fit the general pattern described by anthropologists. The movement was neither violent nor revolutionary, although its actions during the Japanese colonial era were certainly anti-colonial in effect. However, the movement was not anti-Western in that its theology derived from the teachings of Western missionaries with whom Pak Tonggi and his followers kept in close contact. If the theological views of the *Sion-san cheguk* movement in the colonial era clashed with Japanese nationalism over the issue of Shintō shrines, these same views which were held by the members of the Sion-san Presbyterian Church clashed with Korean nationalism in the refusal to be associated with a state which used symbols seen to be idolatrous. Thus, the principal motivation for the followers of Pak Tonggi was not Korean nationalism in the colonial period, or anti-capitalism (i.e., communism) in the era of a liberated Korea. Rather, in both periods it was the strong desire to avoid any action which was idolatrous or which would appear to condone idolatry. The fact that the religious motivations of the members of the Sion-san movement/church had political ramifications does not mean that Pak's followers were involved in a political movement.

In the broader perspective of anthropological studies, when researching millenarian movements it is important first to determine the core values of the group in order to understand the motivations of the actors in a movement. Were these values religious, or political? Secondly, analysis of such millenarian groups should also consider the difference between pre- and post-millennial beliefs. Pre-millennial thought inclines believers towards a pacifist waiting for divine forces to usher in the new age, whereas post-millennial thought encourages the believer to be involved in violent activity which will bring in the millennial kingdom. The primary reason for the character, sufferings and problems of the Sion-san movement/church throughout its history was the expectation of the imminent arrival of Christ. The movement was essentially a conservative, pre-millenarian group which was quietly waiting for the Lord and his angels. Suffering was accepted as part of the waiting for the Lord.

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<sup>29</sup> FN 6 April, 2010, items 11 and 12; FN 27 April, 2010, items 12, 14, and 15.

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## *Ghosts, Spirits, and Saints: Ancestors and the Catholic Church in Korea*

Daniel J. Adams

There is perhaps no better place in Korea than the southwestern city of Jeonju for gaining an understanding of the importance of ancestors in Korean life. Yi Han, the progenitor of the Yi family which founded the Joseon dynasty, is buried here. The official painting of King Taejo, the first king of Joseon, is enshrined here in an elaborate complex of buildings. Memorial tablets of his family are enshrined nearby. And Yi Seok, the last remaining member of royalty in the Yi family, lives in Jeonju. In and around the city are numerous shrines, stelae and stone tablets memorializing the ancestors.

In the city of Jeonju, among the many shrines, are two important sites where ancestor veneration is carried out on a regular basis. The first is the Jeonju Confucian School, the official *Hyanggyo* for the city. Originally established in the late 1380s or early 1390s, the school was moved to its present site in 1603 and boasts a magnificent shrine complex consisting of three buildings. The main building contains the ancestor tablets of Confucius, Mencius, Hsun-tsu, Tung Chung-Shu, Chu Hsi, and members of Confucius' family. Two other buildings on either side of the main shrine contain the ancestor tablets of lesser known Chinese philosophers and numerous Korean philosophers, including Yi T'oegye and Yi Yulgok. Although I have visited this shrine over one hundred times, only once was it open for the *chesa* ritual. The sacrifices were being prepared for the ritual which was to be held on the following day. On the occasion of all other visits it was necessary to ask the caretaker to unlock the shrine buildings so that we could view the ancestor tablets.

Within sight of the Jeonju Confucian School is a mountain known locally as Martyrs' Mountain. On a clear day, from the courtyard in front of the main shrine building, one can see a stone cross high atop the mountain. It marks the site of the graves of seven members from the family of Yu Hang-Gom, including the virgin couple Yi Sun-I Lutgarda and Yu Chung-Chol John. Members of this Catholic family died in the 1801 persecution. Their remains were transferred here in 1920 and over the years the site has been turned into an outdoor chapel. It is now the second site where ancestor veneration takes place in the city of Jeonju. In 1987 construction was begun on an underground memorial church at the site and in 1995 the church was dedicated and opened to the public. I have also visited Martyrs' Mountain over one hundred times, and on every occasion I have seen people there praying, singing, and meditating in front of the graves or in the nearby underground church. Quite often there were groups accompanied by a priest who offered mass at an outdoor stone altar. The area has now become an important pilgrimage site for devout Catholics.

A site in another area of the city is where a Shinto shrine was located. From 1935 until 1945 ritual bows were held there in honor of the Japanese imperial family. However, on August 15, 1945 with the end of World War II and the liberation of Korea from Japanese occupation, the Shinto shrine was completely dismantled and destroyed. By the end of the day it was gone, and today it is the site of a university building. Ancestor veneration at this site ceased and all memory of the Shinto shrine has been erased. The Jeonju Confucian School and the Martyrs' Mountain are active sites of ancestor veneration and together they symbolize the dilemma faced by Korean Catholics concerning ancestral veneration.

For Korean Catholics, the question of what to do about one's ancestors first arose not in Korea, but in China through the work of the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and other Jesuits who were to follow. Ricci, an Italian, received a classical Jesuit education in theology, philosophy, and science in Rome. He was sent to Portugal for nine months to study Portuguese, studied theology in

Goa, India for four years, and then spent five years in Macau studying Chinese. Ricci founded the Catholic mission to China in 1583 in southern China in what is now Kwangtung Province. While there he translated the four classic books—*The Analects of Confucius*, *The Book of Mencius*, *The Great Learning*, and *The Doctrine of the Mean*—from Chinese into Latin. He temporarily moved to Beijing in 1595, and finally established himself in the city in 1601. By this time he had mastered both spoken and written Chinese, had composed the first European-style map of the world in Chinese, and had served as a co-compiler of two Chinese-Portuguese dictionaries. His scientific abilities, especially in the prediction of solar eclipses, won him the favor of the Emperor and he remained in Beijing serving under royal patronage until his death.<sup>1</sup>

### Jesuits and Koreans Meet in Beijing

Ricci's significance for the Catholic Church in Korea is twofold. First, he published a book of theology in Chinese which became an important text for the mission efforts in Korea. Second, his mission work became the subject of a controversy—the Chinese Rites Controversy—that had profound implications for the Catholic community in Korea. The former served to introduce Koreans to the basics of Christian doctrine, while the latter served to define the position of the Catholic Church within Korean society until the 1960s.

The book was *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, first published in Beijing in two volumes in 1604.<sup>2</sup> Ricci's work was based upon an earlier work, *The True Record of the Lord of Heaven* written by another Jesuit, Michele Ruggier in 1579–1591. Ricci completely rewrote Ruggier's work and the first draft was completed by the end of 1596. New material was added in 1601–1603 and the first edition was published using the woodblock print method. It was basically an apologetic work written in the form of an exchange between a European and a Chinese. The book was divided into five parts dealing with the proofs for the existence of God, demonstrating the existence of the human soul, criticizing Buddhism and explaining the existence of heaven and hell, clarifying the relationship between human nature and sin, and finally relating the Catholic priesthood to the process of self-cultivation. In the book Ricci “stressed self-cultivation, equated God with *Shang Ti*, and used Chinese classics to prove that some of the basic concepts of Catholicism were already to be found in the China of ancient times. The work thus provided Christian thought an entrance into Chinese culture.”<sup>3</sup> Since written Chinese was the language of the Korean intelligentsia, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* also provided Christian thought an entrance into Korean culture.

Between the years 1603 and 1783, 167 Korean envoys were dispatched to China on various diplomatic missions. They brought back to Korea some thirty-seven books on various topics of Western science, geography, and religion.<sup>4</sup> One of these envoys, Lee Su-Kwang (1563–1628) also known as Chi-Pong, visited Beijing in 1590, 1593, and 1611. While in China he read Ricci's book and introduced it to Korea by way of his encyclopedic work *Jibong yuseol*, a twenty-volume introduction to China, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, and the Western world.<sup>5</sup> This was the first documented introduction of Western books into Korea and Ricci's *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* soon attracted the attention of Neo-Confucian scholars.

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<sup>1</sup> There are several biographies of Matteo Ricci. A popular biography is Vincent Cronin, *The Wise Man from the West* (New York: Dutton, 1955), while a more scholarly work is Jonathan Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1984). See also Matteo Ricci, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci, 1583–1610*, trans. Louis Gallagher (New York: Random House, 1953).

<sup>2</sup> Matteo Ricci, SJ, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (Tien-chu Shih-i)* [Varites Sinologiques—New Series 72], trans. Douglas Lancashire & Peter Hu Kuo-chen, SJ, ed. Edward J. Malatesta, SJ (Taipei/Paris/Hong Kong: Ricci Institute, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 42-44, from the “Translators' Introduction.” *Shang Ti* means “Lord of Heaven” and Ricci used this name for God. This was the name used by the Confucian scholars in Beijing. See also Ignatius Suh, “The Confucian-Christian Dialogue: A Comparative Theology from the Yi Dynasty in Korea,” unpublished manuscript, 2007, 101-102.

<sup>4</sup> Choi Jai-Keun, *Early Catholicism in Korea* (Seoul: Handl Publishing House, 2005), 27 and 29.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 27; John S. Bowman, *Columbia Chronologies of Asian History and Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 212.

Among the many envoys who came into contact with the Jesuits in China were Suh Myong-Yong, Hong Yang-Ho, Hong Tae-Yong, Park Che-Ke, Lee Tok-Mu, Lee I-Myong, and Ryu Teuk-Kong. Crown Prince So-Hyeon visited Beijing in 1644 and brought back a number of books on Catholicism and other topics. These were given to him as gifts by one of the Jesuits in Beijing who had hoped to establish a closer relationship with Korea. Unfortunately, upon his return to Korea the Crown Prince fell ill and died and the books and other gifts were destroyed upon the advice of an unsympathetic shaman. In spite of this setback the ideas of Catholicism were attractive to many reform-minded scholars who “accepted monotheism as a refreshing alternative to the non-theistic concepts of Neo-Confucianism.”<sup>6</sup>

Two significant movements developed from this contact between Catholicism and Neo-Confucianism. The first was the emergence of the *Shilhak* or Practical Learning school of thought among Neo-Confucian scholars who wanted to reform Korean society by accepting selected Western ideas concerning philosophy, religion, and science. They studied the books brought from China, all of which were written in Chinese. A number of these books were written by the Jesuits and some were later translated into Korean. Ricci’s *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* was one such book. It was first read in Chinese and then later in the nineteenth century appeared in Korean translation.

The second movement was the *Kanghakhoe* academic seminars started in 1779. This was a smaller group within the *Shilhak* movement who tried to bring together the ideas of Neo-Confucianism, the idealism of the Chinese philosopher Wang Yang-Ming, and the teachings of Catholicism.<sup>7</sup> The group met at a Buddhist temple and its associated hermitage. Many members of the group came from one family and included the brothers Chung Yak-Chon (1754–1816), Chung Yak-Yong (1762–1836) better known as Tasan, and Chung Yak-Jong (1760–1861), who was later martyred. Also included in the group were two brothers-in-law of Chung Yak-Chon, Lee Pyok and Lee Sung-Heun. A cousin of Chung Yak-Chon also joined the group.<sup>8</sup>

From this small group came the first Korean book to be printed in the Korean script—*hangul*—a theology text by Chung Yak-Jong, the *Chu-gyo-yo-ji* (“The Essentials of the Lord’s Teaching”).<sup>9</sup> The book appeared in two volumes in 1795 and was a systematic exposition of Christian doctrine from the Confucian and Korean perspective. Chung Yak-Jong also collaborated with Kim Kon-Sun on another book, *Song-gyo-jon-so* (“The Complete Book of the Holy Teaching”), which was published in 1801. Lee Pyok wrote *Song-gyo-yo-ji* (“Essentials of the Holy Teaching”), which was published in 1784, and in 1786 his *Chou-ju-gong-ga* (“Hymn of the Lord’s Adoration”) was published. This latter work consisted of a catechism and hymns.

By far the most prolific of these early Catholic writers was Chung Yak-Yong, whose pen name was Tasan. He was a Korean renaissance man who served the government in a number of capacities, including deputy secretary of the cabinet, associate deputy of the Ministry of Justice, and director of the Ministry of Defense. He wrote on so many subjects that his collected works number an astounding 476 volumes covering the following topics: “astronomy, geography, mathematics, medical science, military science, ship building technique, farm land system, state examination, government administration, taxation regulations, transportation, and others.”<sup>10</sup> He was an essayist, philosopher, calligrapher, poet, artist, economist, political theorist, and lay theologian. His most important religious work was *Chu-kyo-yo-ji* (“The Essence of Catholicism”). It was first circulated in manuscript form in 1801 and appeared in print in 1864. The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was a highly creative period for Catholic theology both because of the works brought back from China and the works written in Korean by members of the *Shilhak* School and the *Kanghakhoe* academic seminar group.

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<sup>6</sup> James Huntley Grayson, “A Quarter-Millennium of Christianity in Korea,” in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Research Foundation of Korean Church History, *Inside the Catholic Church of Korea*, trans. Patrick McMullan (Seoul: Research Foundation of Korean Church History, 2010), 16-17.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia—Volume II: 1500-1900* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 318.

<sup>9</sup> Hector Diaz, trans., *A Korean Theology—Chu-Gyo Yo-Ji: Essentials of the Lord’s Teaching by Chong Yak-Jong Augustine (1760-1801)*, Immense, Switzerland: Neue Zeitschrift fur Missions Wissenschaft, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> Min Kyoung-Bae, *A History of Christian Churches in Korea* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2005), 36.

### **The Chinese Rites Controversy**

At first it appeared as if the Catholic faith would flourish in the late Joseon period, but events were taking place in Beijing and in Rome that radically altered the fortunes of the Catholic community in Korea. These events were centered in what has come to be known as the Chinese Rites Controversy. When Ricci and the other Jesuits established their mission in Beijing in 1601 they sought to adapt the Christian faith to Chinese cultural traditions. They wore the silk gowns of the Chinese literati, they used the vernacular Chinese in the liturgy, they refused to build huge gothic-style churches but rather worshipped in churches that blended in with the prevailing architecture, and they wrote all of their books and tracts in classical Chinese script. In addition, they were experts in various sciences, including astronomy, geography, and military science. In fact, the Jesuits were experts in gun manufacturing techniques, a point that was greatly appreciated by the Chinese emperor. They were also skilled diplomats and this worked to their advantage when they entered into negotiations with other countries on behalf of China. Most significantly, however, was that they permitted new converts to fully participate in the Confucian ancestral rites. From the Jesuit point of view, these rites were an essential part of the Chinese culture and they were nothing more than a way of venerating the ancestors. The Jesuits also displayed the *Jing Tian* (“Revere Heaven”) tablets on their churches. Although the original inscription was done with the imperial brush by the fifty-fourth Celestial Master Daoist priest Zhang Jizong, the Jesuits understood this to be the Chinese way of saying “revere God.”<sup>11</sup>

Central to Ricci’s missionary methodology was the Confucian concept of filial piety, which Ricci understood well through his acquaintance with the classic four books. Since he was fluent in both spoken and written Chinese and had translated these four books from Chinese into Latin, Ricci knew that there was an intimate connection between filial piety and the ancestral rites. In his discussion of filial piety, Confucius asserted “That parents when alive, should be served according to propriety; that, when dead, they should be buried according to propriety; and that they should be sacrificed to according to propriety.”<sup>12</sup> The sacrifices were not a form of worship of the spirits of the dead, but rather a form of veneration and respect for the ancestors. Participation in the ancestral rites was one element in following the moral virtue of filial piety.

However, there was more to the ancestral rites than filial piety alone, for all of the Confucian moral virtues were interrelated. It was not enough to simply perform the rites at the proper time; it was also important that filial piety—and by extension the ancestral rites—be carried out with a proper attitude. Confucius said that “The filial piety of now-a-days means the support of one’s parents. But dogs and horses likewise are able to do something in the way of support; without reverence, what is there to distinguish one support given from another?”<sup>13</sup> Here we can see the importance of another Confucian virtue, the rectification of names. The reality and what is spoken of must be the same. Rectification of names was a means whereby one’s thoughts and attitudes were given expression through social actions. The cultivation of the inner person necessarily resulted in the cultivation of society. This is why the concept of *jen* is so important in Confucian society. *Jen*, usually translated as “human heartedness” or “humaneness”, refers to the proper attitude that one should have toward others. Hence the equally important phrase “to be human is to be humane.”

Participation in the ancestral rites, therefore, was not simply a matter of ritual. It was an expression of an entire way of life, or worldview if you will. Behind the ritual was the concept of filial piety, and behind that was the practice of the rectification of names, and behind that was the understanding of “human heartedness” and the belief that a true human being was one who was humane—to one’s parents, to one’s family, to one’s society, to one’s nation, and indeed, toward the entire world. The ancestral rites were a visible sign that one was a participant in the Confucian worldview. Participation in the rites was a way of saying “I belong.” From the perspective of the Confucian intelligentsia in Beijing it was inconceivable that one would refuse to participate in the ancestral rites, for to do so would be to reject one’s parents, family, society, and nation.

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<sup>11</sup> Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579-1724* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 137.

<sup>12</sup> *Analects*, 2:4.

<sup>13</sup> *Analects*, 2:7.

Ricci and his Jesuit colleagues understood that the significance of the ancestral rites involved more than merely making offerings and bowing before the ancestral tablets. They also understood that the rites were veneration rather than worship. One worshipped in a Buddhist temple; one practiced veneration in a Confucian shrine.

Shortly after the Jesuits began their mission work among the upper class intelligentsia in Beijing, the Dominicans and the Franciscans also began mission work in China. However, these two orders worked primarily among the uneducated lower classes in the largely rural areas of the country. Within this context the majority of the people practiced a kind of folk religion which was a mixture of Confucian ethics, Buddhist doctrine, Daoist ritual, and belief in local gods coupled with shamanism. The lower classes also practiced ancestral rites. However, for them these rites were a way of insuring that the ghosts of the ancestors did not cause any harm in this present life. The sacrificial offerings made were a way of placating the ancestral spirits commonly referred to as ghosts. Thus for the Confucian intelligentsia the ancestors were passive. The rites were simply a way of remembering the ancestors. For the rural peasants the ancestors were active. The rites were a way of appeasing the ghosts of the ancestors. For the Confucians in Beijing the rites were a form of veneration; for the peasants in the countryside the rites were a form of worship. A similar disagreement arose concerning the display of the *Jing Tian* tablets on the churches. “How,” asked the Dominicans and the Franciscans, “can you Jesuits display an obviously Daoist inscription on your churches?”

It was not long until a theological debate ensued between the Jesuits on the one side and the Dominicans and Franciscans on the other. Both sides appealed to Rome for a positive verdict concerning their missionary practices. Further complicating the matter was the fact that most of the Jesuits were Portuguese or serving under the banner of the Portuguese, as in the case of Italians such as Ricci and Spaniards such as Diego de Pantoja. The Vatican was worried about the independence of the Portuguese Jesuits and soon the Vicars General in Rome decided to rein them in and put them firmly under the Church’s control. The Vicars General elicited the support of the French in this struggle. What was originally a difference of opinion concerning missionary methods developed into a theological debate and finally ended up a full-blown political conflict. Liam Matthew Brockey describes the Chinese Rites Controversy as follows:

The flashpoint for this jurisdictional battle was the Chinese Rites. The theological disputes over these practices were used as a wedge in the struggle for control of the mission church.... Innocent XII appointed a set of theologians to reconsider the issue in the 1690s.... In China the Vicars Apostolic had aligned themselves with Dominicans and some of the French Jesuits to condemn the rites, declaring the ceremonies to be superstitious and demanding that the men of the Vice-Province be censured for permitting idolatry. The Franciscans were divided on the issue, with some friars agreeing with the Jesuit position—though none too vociferously. The cardinals of the Propaganda Fide entered the lists, confirming the decision taken by the Sorbonne theologians in 1700 to prohibit the rites. After seven years of pondering the issue, the Roman Inquisition issued a negative verdict. In the face of so many condemnations, Clement XI sealed the issue on November 20, 1704, by publishing a brief that prohibited some of the Jesuits’ policies—including the tolerance of the rites and the display of the *Jing Tian* tablets on their churches.<sup>14</sup>

In 1705 a Papal legate was sent to the Chinese emperor to communicate the Church decision to ban the ancestral rites. This was reinforced on March 19, 1715 when Clement XI issued a papal bull which stated in part that “No Chinese Catholics are allowed to worship ancestors in their familial temples” and “Whether at home, in the cemetery, or during the time of a funeral, a Chinese Catholic is not allowed to perform the ritual of ancestor worship. He is not allowed to do so even if he is in the company with non-Christians. Such a ritual is heathen in nature regardless of the circumstances.”<sup>15</sup> As if

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 185. See also David Mungello, ed., *The Chinese Rites Controversy: Its History and Meaning* (Nettetal: Stoyler Verlag, 1994).

<sup>15</sup> *China in Transition, 1517-1911*, trans. and compiled by Li Den-Jen (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1969), 22-24.



this were not enough, in 1742 Benedict XIV issued another papal bull in which he reiterated Clement XI's decree and required that all missionaries to China take an oath promising not to even discuss the issue again. Clearly there was no place for the worship of ghosts within orthodox Catholic liturgy and practice. This also meant, however, that there was no place for the veneration of ancestors either.

The Chinese response was swift in coming. Following Clement XI's initial decree the Emperor issued an edict in 1721 expelling the missionaries and forbidding them to engage in any further missionary efforts in China. The Emperor wrote, "I have concluded that the Westerners are petty indeed. It is impossible to reason with them because they do not understand larger issues as we understand them in China. There is not a single Westerner versed in Chinese works, and their remarks are often incredible and ridiculous."<sup>16</sup> The Jesuits' bold missionary experiment in China had come to end.

Although the Chinese Rites Controversy did not involve Korea at that time, there were those within Korea who were opposed to the *Shilhak* School and to the study of Western books. Factionalism among the various movements had long been a problem in Korean society and the late Joseon period was no exception. There were those such as Hong Nak-An, a conservative who opposed all Western influences, who approached the royal family and urged them to reject Catholic ideas. Hong's influence was so strong that many in the royal household and among the upper classes began to turn against the Catholics and finally it was forbidden by official government order to read any Western books. Those who had such books were ordered to destroy them either by burning or by throwing them into the river. Hong was undoubtedly aware of what was taking place in China concerning the prohibition for Catholics to participate in the ancestral rites. Thus he wrote to the king, "This vicious doctrine teaches that there is no parent and King, thereby corrupting the serene ethics and order. These evil influences prevail rapidly and cause fanaticism among the ignorant folks. Your honor, you know those afflictions and witness the decay of humanity into dogs. It must be stopped now."<sup>17</sup>

Although we may tend to judge Hong Nak-An rather harshly by today's liberal democratic standards, in his own time he understood very well the significance of the ancestral rites in Korean society. Like Ricci and the Jesuits, he knew that to reject the ancestral rites was to reject the Confucian worldview and way of life. The veneration of ancestors was central to the entire Korean social and political system and it was reinforced through the Confucian academies. Each *hyanggyo* and *sowon* consisted of a lecture hall and associated buildings where the actual classes were held, and a shrine to the Confucian scholars where the rituals of veneration took place. Enshrined here were the ancestral tablets of Confucius, Chu Hsi, and various other Chinese and Korean scholars. Large wealthy families had ancestral halls, and smaller ancestral shrines were found throughout the countryside. The ritual veneration of ancestors served to legitimize and reinforce the social system. It was a way of saying "I belong," "I am a member of the family," and "I am a Korean."

It was not until some time between November 1790 and January 1791 that the Catholics in Korea heard about the papal prohibitions against participation in the ancestral rites. Upon receiving this news there was no doubt that they would have to comply with the official Church teaching. Devout Catholics either burned or buried the ancestral tablets and they refused to participate in the ancestral rites in any way. This was, of course, a direct affront to the state cult of ancestral veneration and by implication a challenge to the authority of the state itself. Hong Nak-An felt vindicated by the behavior of the Catholics, and the official suppression and persecution of Catholics began.

### **The Persecution of Catholics in Korea**

There were four major persecutions—the persecution of 1801, the persecution of 1839, the great persecution of 1846, and the great persecution of 1866.<sup>18</sup> In addition, there were also smaller persecutions in 1815 and 1827, and even though the persecutions officially ended in 1866, there were isolated

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>17</sup> Hong Nak-An in 1781 as quoted in Min Kyoung-Bae, *A History of Christian Churches in Korea*, 39. I have made slight editorial changes in the original quote.

<sup>18</sup> These persecutions are described in detail in Joseph Chang-mun Kim and John Tae-sun Chung, eds., *Catholic Korea: Yesterday and Today* (Seoul: Catholic Korea Publishing Co., 1964), 48-316, and in Choi Jai-Keun, *Early Catholicism in Korea*. It should be noted that there are slight differences in dates and in the Romanization of Korean names from one author to another.

incidents of violence against Catholics as late as 1908.<sup>19</sup> One of these on the island of Jeju in 1901 claimed the lives of some 300 Catholics. Although the number who died in these persecutions will probably never be accurately known, it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 Catholics lost their lives.

The persecutions were so intense that many Catholics recanted and were either released outright, given reasonably light prison sentences, or sent into exile. For those who stood fast in their faith the final outcome was torture and death by beheading or by other means such as starvation. The first persecution of 1801 virtually decimated the *Kanghakhoe* academic seminar group. The fates of the three Chong brothers serve to illustrate this. Chong Yak-Jong, in whose house a number of Catholic books were discovered, refused to recant his Catholic faith and was beheaded. Chong Yak-Chon recanted his faith and was sent into exile on the remote island of Huksan-do where he died. Chong Yak-Yong, Tansan, also recanted his faith and was sent into exile in Kangjin, a remote area in southern Korea. His period of exile was a fruitful one, however, for it was during these nineteen years that he did much of his most important writing. He later repented for recanting his faith, and, in the words of one historian “died peacefully.”<sup>20</sup> Other members of the group who recanted their faith included Lee Sung-Heun and Lee Pyok, both of whom were pillars of the early church and who even wrote theological books. That such early leaders of the Church would renounce their faith serves to illustrate the intensity of the persecutions.

The persecution of 1801 was especially severe due to two letters which were intercepted by government officials. The first by Yu Hang-Geom and others requested officials in Beijing to send Western naval forces to Korea to enforce the freedom of religion. The second by Hwang Sa-Yeong made the same request. What made the second letter unique is that it was written on silk and at the age of seventeen Hwang Sa-Yeong astonished the king by the high score he received on the government examination. That one destined for such a successful career in government service should request the intervention of foreign naval forces was unthinkable. These two letters served to reinforce the view that Catholics were not only disloyal to society in their refusal to observe the ancestral rituals, but that they were disloyal to the state itself and thus should be eliminated.

Theologically the persecutions were highly significant for the Catholic Church in Korea. The Church was robbed of its educated leadership and many of the books which they had written or which had come from China were confiscated and destroyed. This brought about an abrupt shift in the direction of the Catholic Church. Whereas the leadership of the early Church was from the upper *yangban* class, the leadership of the Church of the persecutions and in the following years was from the lower classes.<sup>21</sup>

As a result of the harsh persecutions, many Catholics retreated to remote areas in the mountains to live. Since they were marginalized by society they turned to trades which were considered to be extremely low class. One such trade was the making of traditional pots for storing kimchi, pepper paste, bean paste, and other food items. This type of pottery, known as *onggi*, was considered to be rough and unfit for use by members of the upper classes. By taking up this trade the Catholics had one advantage that their persecutors had not taken into consideration—freedom of movement. The potters who made *onggi* ware were also traders and salesmen and they had to move from village to village to sell their products. In this way Catholics were able to communicate with one another and also carry forbidden literature from one village to another. Another element in this freedom of movement was the spread of the faith from place to place so that “by 1894, 20 years after the end of the persecution, the numbers of believers had reached 20,000—approximately the same levels as before the persecution.”<sup>22</sup>

Catholics were guaranteed religious freedom by the 1899 “Treaty with Catholic Believers” and the “Missionary Treaty” of 1904. From that time onward the Church experienced a steady but slow growth. However, the damage had been done, and the Church, which now consisted of membership drawn largely from the lower classes, retreated to the sidelines of Korean society and culture. As a

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<sup>19</sup> Research Foundation of Korean Church History, *Inside the Catholic Church of Korea*, 201-203.

<sup>20</sup> Min Kyoung-Bae, *A History of Christian Churches in Korea*, 36.

<sup>21</sup> Cho Kwang, “Human Relations Expressed in Vernacular Catholic Writings of the Late Choson Dynasty,” in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. and Timothy S. Lee, 29-30.

<sup>22</sup> Research Foundation of Korean Church History, *Inside the Catholic Church of Korea*, 79.

marginalized group it became focused upon survival, maintenance of the institutional Church, and encouraging the devotional life of its members.

### **The Shinto Shrine Controversy of the 1930s**

In 1935 the question of what to do about the ancestors arose again when the Japanese occupation authorities mandated that all Koreans must bow before the Shinto shrines. Several things were different from the earlier controversy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. First, the Catholics had now been joined by the Protestants, and it was now the Protestants who were in the numerical majority and were increasingly occupying significant positions in Korean society and culture. Second, the Protestants were divided on the issue: some—such as the Methodists—accepted the Japanese argument that the rituals were a state ceremony and were in no way the worship of spirits; others—such as the Presbyterians—staunchly resisted the Japanese on the issue and many suffered imprisonment and even death. Third, the spirits enshrined in the Shinto shrines—if indeed there were any spirits there at all—were foreign spirits. They were outside the familial and national bonds. Fourth, as the Catholics faced this issue from 1935 through 1939, they were still under the Vatican ban to participate in the Confucian ancestral rites, and although the persecutions had now ceased, they were marginalized within Korean society for their refusal to properly venerate their ancestors.

The Methodists were more prone to accept the Japanese position on the issue for two reasons. First, most of the theologians in the Korean Methodist Church at that time had studied in Japan and were thus familiar with Japanese culture and the distinction between religious Shinto and state Shinto. Second, they were also progressive in their interpretation of the Bible, having been influenced by theological ideas from continental Europe, especially Germany and Switzerland. They did not feel bound to a conservative literalistic interpretation of the Bible concerning the prohibition of the worship of idols. The Presbyterians, on the other hand, were influenced by the missionaries, most of whom strongly opposed bowing at the Shinto shrines. Most of the theologians in the Presbyterian churches at the time had also studied in the United States under conservative professors who took a literalistic view of the Bible on the issue. However, there was also another reason for the Presbyterian resistance: they made a clear distinction between the Confucian ancestral rites and the rites at the Shinto shrines. From the Presbyterian perspective “Shinto shrine worship is not so much a reverence for the ancestor (as in the Korean rite), but rather a reverence for the god and prayer to him. That is why Shinto shrine worship is called the reappearance of the ancient Korean gods.”<sup>23</sup> Thus the Presbyterians interpreted the Shinto shrine rites to be a violation of the commandment concerning the worship of the Lord God. The *kami*, or spirits, of the deceased were understood to be spiritual beings who were worshipped rather than merely venerated. In terms of the original Chinese Rites Controversy, the Presbyterians were siding with the Franciscans and the Dominicans rather than with the Jesuits. In the Shinto shrine controversy, which lasted from 1935 until the end of World War II in 1945, it was not the Catholics who faced persecution, but rather the Protestants, especially the Presbyterians.

One of the Presbyterians who strongly resisted the Japanese on this issue was the Rev. Chu Ki-Chul, who served as the minister of a conservative Presbyterian church in Pyongyang. He was arrested on a number of occasions for refusing to bow at the Shinto shrines. Prior to his final arrest in 1940 he preached his famous sermon “My Five-Fold Prayer” in which he said, “Ah! The name of Jesus cast to the ground! Pyongyang! Pyongyang! Jerusalem of the cultured East! Glory has left you. . . . Dear Christian friends, die righteously and live righteously. To throw away righteousness, the righteousness that comes from Jesus, is to live not even up to the level of a dog or beast.”<sup>24</sup> Following four years of torture and deprivation in prison, Chu Ki-Chul died as a martyr on April 21, 1944. Chu’s argument against bowing at the Shinto shrines was based upon a rejection of idolatry which in turn, in his view, was also a rejection of Jesus and Christian righteousness.

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<sup>23</sup> Kim Yang-Son, “Compulsory Shinto Shrine Worship and Persecution,” in *Korea and Christianity*, ed. Yu Chai-Shin (Seoul/Berkeley/Toronto: Korean Scholar Press, 1996), 91.

<sup>24</sup> Chu Ki-Chul, “‘My Five-Fold Prayer’—The Last Testament of the Rev. Chu Ki-Chul, Martyr During the Japanese Occupation of Korea,” in *Testimonies of Faith in Korea*, ed. Chang Sang, Suh Kwang-Sun, Park Keun-Won and Kim Yong-Bock (Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1989), 94-98.

From the Japanese perspective, however, bowing at the Shinto shrines was an expression of filial piety toward the Emperor and his family, who were in effect the parents of the entire Japanese family. The Japanese reasoned that since Korea “was now part of the Japanese empire” all Koreans should show filial piety by participating in the rituals at the Shinto shrines. From the Japanese viewpoint the rituals at the Shinto shrines were similar to the veneration of ancestors which took place at the Confucian shrines. These rituals were a way of saying “I belong” and “I am a member of the family.”<sup>25</sup>

While the Methodists and the Presbyterians worked out different “solutions” to the Shinto shrine problem, the Catholics in Korea took their cues from Rome. The Vatican’s Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith studied the issue and made their decision on the basis of two main points. First, Catholics in Korea had suffered terribly during the persecutions of the 1800s and the Vatican was not inclined to have an already weakened and socially marginalized Church go through another round of persecutions. Second, the Church authorities in Rome declared that the Shinto rites were a state ritual rather than a religious ritual. Therefore the Church decided that “It would permit the worship of Shinto gods as long as it was an expression of patriotic respect to the Japanese imperial family and not religious.”<sup>26</sup> This decision was not made hastily, however. In 1932 the Catholic Church in Japan consulted with the Japanese government on the issue and was told that the state Shinto was purely a sign of allegiance to the nation; it was not the worship of spirits or gods. The Vatican took this statement at face value. The Vicars Apostolic then withdrew their objections to the Shinto rites and the Papal Nuncio gave his approval. Finally, in 1936 “the Japanese dispensation was extended to the Church in colonialized Joseon.”<sup>27</sup>

But how was this received in Korea? To begin with, “This decision was ironic given the history of the Rites Controversy and the fact that the papal ban on the Rites was still in force.”<sup>28</sup> Many understood the decision as an insult to the Korean national spirit. At least one missionary—Monsignor J. E. Morris M.M.—was forced to resign his position as Prefect Apostolic of Pyongyang and leave Korea because of his refusal to bow at the Shinto shrines.<sup>29</sup> A number of sisters resigned their positions in church-operated institutions such as schools and hospitals and there were isolated instances of clergy who also resisted the Japanese order. However, most Catholics in Korea complied with the Vatican decision and were spared from persecution.

The issue was finally resolved for Catholics on December 8, 1939 when Pope Pius XII rescinded the earlier papal decisions against the ancestral rites. The key phrase in the Pope’s decree was that “The oath on the Chinese rites, which was prescribed by Benedict XIV, is not fully in accord with recent regulations and is superfluous.”<sup>30</sup> Not only was the original ban on participation in the Confucian ancestral rites now lifted, but any ambiguity concerning bowing before the Shinto shrines was also removed. Korean Catholics were now free to venerate the ancestors without any fear of being accused of placating ghosts. Korean Catholics were also free to show respect to the Japanese imperial family and not be unduly concerned about any *kami* or spirits that might be lurking somewhere in the vicinity. It appeared that the issue of ancestor veneration was now settled once and for all.

### **Remembering the Martyr Saints**

In East Asia, however, the issue of ancestor veneration is never settled once and for all, for the ancestors have a way of coming back. This they have done for Korean Catholics in their remembrance of the martyr saints.<sup>31</sup> There are some forty major locations throughout Korea where these saints are remembered.<sup>32</sup> Some, such as Choldusan and Saenamto in Seoul, are elaborate structures or complexes

<sup>25</sup> The Japanese failed to understand that Koreans did not want to belong to their family.

<sup>26</sup> Yun Sung-Bum, “Korean Christianity and Ancestor Worship,” *Korea Journal*, vol. 5, no. 13 (February 1973), 19.

<sup>27</sup> Research Foundation of Korean Church History, *Inside the Catholic Church of Korea*, 125.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, “Plane Compertum,” *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (Romae: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1939), 32-34.

<sup>31</sup> Not all the martyrs have been canonized. However, in this study the term “saints” includes the non-canonized martyrs as well.

<sup>32</sup> Chang Young-Tun, *Hankuk ch'o-ki ch'on-ju-kyo-hwei-ui yeo-chong* (“Journey of the Early Korean Catholic

which include memorials, a chapel and, in the case of Choldusan, a museum. Others are less elaborate, with only a memorial stone, an outdoor altar for mass, and perhaps a small chapel. Still others, especially in the rural areas, are simple graves nestled among the trees. What they all have in common is that they are sites of intense devotional practice for Korean Catholics.

What has happened is that the Catholic Church in Korea has transferred its filial piety from both the ancestors of Confucianism and spirits of the deceased (or the imperial family as the case may be) in Japanese Shinto, to the martyrs of the Church. Contemporary Catholics in Korea are among the most devout in the world when it comes to honoring the martyrs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This devotion reached a highpoint on May 6, 1984 when approximately one million people gathered in Yoido Plaza in Seoul to celebrate the bicentennial of the Church in Korea. Pope John Paul II presided over the canonization of 103 of these martyrs.<sup>33</sup> The significance of this event becomes clear when it is realized that “this canonization was the first to take place outside of St. Peter’s Basilica since the time of the Avignon Papacy.”<sup>34</sup>

Although largely unknown outside Korea, these saints and other martyrs are venerated as the ancestors of the Church in Korea. While the ancestral rites at the Confucian shrines are usually held only twice a year, in the spring and autumn, or on the birth dates and death dates of the deceased, masses are celebrated at these martyrs’ shrines on a weekly or even daily basis. As for the Shinto rites which ceased in 1945, one thing was certain—the ancestral spirits being worshipped or venerated were foreign ancestors; they were outside the Korean familial bonds. The ancestors who are venerated today by the Catholics of Korea are members of the family.

What does it mean to be a member of the family? The book *Lives of 103 Martyr Saints of Korea* provides a revealing answer. Following the table of contents and a second title page adorned with the Rose of Sharon, the national flower of Korea, is a two-page reproduction of a painting of “Mount Paektu and Lake Ch-onji” with the following description in italics:

*On this mountain, tradition has it that King Tan-gun founded Korea in the year 2333 B.C. He was not only a man of political acumen but also a religious leader of his people. Thus this mountain and lake have been held sacred in the eyes of the Korean people. For 5,000 years generations of Koreans have gazed steadily into the heavens to adore the Supreme Being whom they inherently believed in. This Mount was believed to be the holy intermediary place connecting earth with heaven. The name of the mountain means “white head,” derived from the ever-present snow which covers its summit. Ancient Koreans were fond of wearing white clothing and called themselves Paedalkyore, that is, ‘Sons of Light.’ They were peace-loving people and built small villages along the clear streams flowing from the mountain, where they continually worshipped the all-seeing God.*<sup>35</sup>

Immediately following is another two-page photo, this one of “Mount Ch’onjin and the Ch’onjinam Valley.” It also carries a description, partially in italics and partially in regular print:

*Ch’onjin means “the heavenly truth.” In this mountain Korean scholars began to look for the eternal truth themselves. With neither missionaries nor priests, the pagan scholars studied the Christian doctrine in 1779, and they eventually founded the Catholic Church in Korea.*

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Church”). (Wonju: Han-Kyul Press, 2000). A number of these forty locations include multiple sites in the immediate vicinity. Therefore the total number of sites is considerably higher than forty. See also Kim Chang-Seok and Lee Choong-Woo, *Holy Places of the Korean Martyrs* (Seoul: Lay Apostolate Council of Korea, 1986) and Bicentennial Episcopal Commission, *The Catholic Church in Korea* (Seoul: Bicentennial Episcopal Commission, 1984), 11, and Kim Jin-Soo and Baik Nam-Sik, *Home of Korean Catholic Martyrs: Chonju* (Jeonju: Diocese of Chonju, n.d.).

<sup>33</sup> See Kim Chang-Seok Thaddeus, *Lives of 103 Martyr Saints of Korea* (Seoul: Catholic Publishing House, 1984).

<sup>34</sup> Research Foundation of Korean Church History, *Inside the Catholic Church of Korea*, 156-157. The Avignon Papacy lasted from 1309 to 1378.

<sup>35</sup> Kim Chang-Seok Thaddeus, *Lives of 103 Martyr Saints of Korea*, ix-x.

This mountain is the birthplace of the Catholic Church in Korea, where the tombs of the 5 Founding Fathers are located.<sup>36</sup>

The ancestors of the Catholic Church in Korea are clearly identified as being ethnically and culturally Korean through their being descendants of the mythical Tangun and through their relationship to Paektu Mountain. These ancestors are further identified through the relationship to Ch'onjin Mountain and their tombs located on the slopes of this mountain. All Korean Catholics are descended from these Five Founding Fathers of the Church. Significantly, Paektu Mountain is associated with Shamanism and Ch'onjin Mountain with Buddhism as it was the site of an unknown Buddhist hermitage named Ch'onjin-am. The strong Confucian emphasis upon ancestors firmly places the Catholic Church of Korea in that line of religious and ethical traditions which have influenced Korea—Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism in its Neo-Confucian form, with Christianity being the most recent tradition in that line.

There can be little doubt that the devotion shown at the martyrs' shrines scattered throughout the country is an expression of filial piety to the original ancestors of the Church as well as the martyrs and saints who have so faithfully carried on the family line. To pray or to participate in a mass at one of the sites of martyrdom is, for Korean Catholics, also a way of saying "I belong" and "I am a member of the family."

The words of Julia Ching ring true when she asserts that "Filial piety is the first of all Confucian virtues.... The ancestral cult has continued throughout the centuries, from time immemorial, to strengthen these sentiments of filial piety and familial loyalty."<sup>37</sup> The Catholic Church in Korea has moved the ancestral cult from outside the church door and brought it inside the church door and transformed it into a form of Christian practice and devotion. This would seem to imply that no matter what happens, the ancestral rites will continue.

Unlike the Chinese Rites Controversy and the later Shinto shrine controversy, this transformation has served, not to oppose the Church, but rather to strengthen it.

As Choe Suk-U states, the persecutions of Korean Catholics "meant the victory of the church."<sup>38</sup> This would seem to imply that no matter what happens, the Church will continue as well. Therefore in the present-day devotion to the martyrs and saints, the Catholic Church of Korea has, for now at least, resolved the tension between ancestor veneration and Christian faith and practice.

Protestants, in their more cynical moments, may utter criticism concerning the Catholic solution to the question of ancestor veneration, citing that the Bible nowhere sanctions such practices within the churches. Indeed, these words from Holy Writ would seem to support such a view: "Get rid of the foreign gods that you have; purify yourselves and put on clean clothes. We are going to leave here and go to Bethel" (Genesis 35:2-3). However, these words from the same chapter of Genesis suggest otherwise:

And God said to him, "I am Almighty God. Have many children. Nations will be descended from you, and you will be the ancestor of kings. I will give you the land which I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, and I will also give it to your descendants after you." Then God left him. Jacob set up a memorial stone and consecrated it by pouring wine and olive oil on it. He named the place Bethel. (Genesis 35:11-15)

Although this incident took place in a non-Confucian society, it serves to illustrate the intertwining of prohibitions against idolatry, the importance of filial piety, and the human need to remember the ancestors through visible memorials and rituals. It also serves to demonstrate that the worship of idols and the practice of filial piety and ancestor veneration are not the same. Unfortunately, this distinction was not always obvious, with tragic consequences for Catholics during their first century in Korea.

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, xi-xii.

<sup>37</sup> Julia Ching, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study* (Tokyo: Kodansha International and Institute of Oriental Religions, Sophia University, 1977), 97-98.

<sup>38</sup> Choe Sok-U, "Korean Catholicism Yesterday and Today," in *The Founding of Catholic Tradition in Korea*, ed. Yu Chai-Shin (Mississauga, ON: Korean and Related Studies Press, 1996), 51.

At the very least, it seems safe to say that ancestor veneration will *always* be an issue in one way or another for Christian practice in the Confucian societies of East Asia. The experience of the Catholic Church in Korea can prove instructive in terms of what not to do (the Chinese Rites Controversy and its application to Korea), what one might possibly do (the differing Catholic and Protestant responses to the Shinto shrine question), and what one can successfully do (the memorials to the martyrs and saints).

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# *The Early Years of the RASKB : 1900 - 1920*

Brother Anthony of Taizé

## **1. The First Beginnings**

The Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch was born at 4:30 pm on June 16, 1900, when a founding meeting attended by seventeen men (all but four of them missionaries) was held in the Reading Room of the Seoul Union Club. On that day officers were elected and a constitution (based on that of the London RAS) was adopted. Among those present were the acting British Chargé d'affaires, J. H. Gubbins, and the missionaries James S. Gale, Homer B. Hulbert, George Heber Jones, Horace G. Underwood, H. G. Appenzeller, D. A. Bunker and William B. Scranton. Other missionaries who were members of the RASKB from the very start included H. N. Allen, O. R. Avison and M. N. Trollope.

The first paper presented to the Society, on "The Influence of China upon Korea," was given by James Scarth Gale on October 24, 1900 and it was the first paper published in Volume One of *Transactions* a few months later. It stressed the overwhelming influence of Chinese culture on Korea. The second paper, by Homer B. Hulbert, on "Korean Survivals," sought to contradict it and stress the role of native Korean traditions and values. In the two years that followed, seven more lectures were given and 2 more volumes of *Transactions* were published. But, after a final lecture about Ginseng at the end of 1902 and the publication of Volume 3 of *Transactions* soon after, everything stopped. The RASKB seemed to be dead.

The foundation of the RASKB in 1900 came at the end of two decades in which Korea had experienced almost unimaginable changes, in the course of traumatic events of which the most dramatic included the Gapsin Coup, the 1894 Donghak Rebellion and the resulting Sino-Japanese War, the Gapo Reforms with the royal decree ordering the cutting off of men's topknots and the abolition of the Gwageo exam in 1895, the assassination of the Queen in 1895, and the proclamation of the Daehan Empire in 1897.

Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, a series of remarkable Protestant missionaries, mostly from North America, came to settle in Korea. They founded schools and hospitals, set up a printing press, studied Korean, set about translating the Bible, and began to explore the very unfamiliar culture in which they were plunged. They began to publish books, reviews, even newspapers. Their activity went far beyond founding churches, it was essentially designed to transform Korea by contact with the modern world-at-large into something very different from what it had been hitherto. Outwardly, at least, their program of modernization linked in with the long-standing wish of the Korean intellectuals of the the reformist *Silhak* (practical learning) and *Gaehwapa* (enlightenment) schools. Equally importantly, it echoed many of the most positive aspects of Japan's Meiji reforms.

## **2. Korean Transformations 1882-1900**

The choice facing Korea at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, between the old and the new, was vividly reflected in the events that shook Seoul late in 1884, the Gapsin coup. Following the opening of Japan to western trade and modernization, the *Gaehwapa* (Enlightenment Party) group of reformers led by Kim Ok-gyun and Pak Yong-hyo sought to initiate rapid changes within Korea along similar lines. Thwarted by conservative factions within the court, particularly the pro-Chinese *Sugupa*, they launched a *coup d'état* with Japanese support on 4 December, 1884. On the evening of that day, a banquet was held at the new post office in Seoul to celebrate the successful inauguration of Korea's postal system. Members of the diplomatic community and Korean government officials were in attendance. This party was part of a plot to overthrow the pro-Chinese Korean clique, dominated by the Min clan, and establish a new government that would be more progressive and pro-Japanese. Chief amongst the conspirators in attendance were Hong Yong-sik, the host of the party and leader of the conspiracy; Pak



Yong-hyo, the conspiracy's director of operations; and Kim Ok-gyun who was responsible for contact between the conspirators and the Japanese legation and planning the coup. In addition to the conspirators were their foes, three conservative Korean ministers: Min Yeong-ik, head of the pro-Chinese Min clan, Yi Ja-yeon and General Han Kyu-sik. Just before 10 p.m., a small building near the post office was set afire, luring Min Yeong-ik out into an ambush. An assassin severely wounded him but he managed to stagger back into the building, bleeding profusely. By the end of the night the conspirators had gained control of the Korean government.

Faced with this threat to royal authority, Chinese military intervened, and after three days the revolt was suppressed by 1500 troops of the Chinese garrison based in Seoul. During the ensuing battle, the Japanese legation building was burned down, and forty Japanese were killed. The surviving *Gaehwapa* activists escaped to the port city of Chemulpo under escort of the Japanese minister to Korea, Takejo, and there boarded a Japanese ship for exile in Japan. Under intense international pressure, the Chinese and Japanese agreed to withdraw their troops, which had been stationed in Seoul since the food riots of 1882, but the underlying tension between the two countries remained alive and ultimately led to the Sino-Japanese War in 1894. Kim Ok-gyun and his companions had already understood in 1884 that Japan held the key to the modernization which Korean society urgently needed, particularly if it was to resist the territorial ambitions that Japan was already manifesting. China was in decline and its policies toward Korea strongly favored the status quo. In particular, Japan's army and navy were already far better equipped and trained.

From February until November 1894, the Donghak Rebellion raged through Korea; China and Japan both sent in troops, still competing for control over Korea. The First Sino-Japanese War began late in July, 1894, and led to the invasion by Japan of western Manchuria and northern China. The war ended with a virtual Chinese surrender. The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on April 17, 1895. It gave Japan control over the Liaodong Peninsula, ended the tributary relationship between Korea and the Qing Dynasty, and gave Japan control over Taiwan. However, Russia brought France and Germany to its side and they forced Japan to return the Liaodong Peninsula to China. This only made Japan more determined to take full control of Korea, where Russia by now too had ambitions.

On October 8, 1895, the Queen was assassinated by a band of Japanese, because of her ongoing opposition to Japan's plans, and during the following months the terrified King, fearing for his life, insisted that a group of western missionaries should sleep close to him in the palace each night. The core members of this group were James S. Gale, Homer B. Hulbert, George Heber Jones, Horace G. Underwood, H. G. Appenzeller. All of these men were involved a few years later in the foundation of the RASKB. Mrs. Underwood had acted as the Queen's doctor and after the assassination she prepared meals for the King, who thought people were trying to poison him. They could hardly be closer to the making of Korean history.

### **3. The Founders of the RASKB**

Henry Gerhard Appenzeller (1858 – 1902) was the first Methodist missionary to reach Korea. He and the American Presbyterian Horace Underwood arrived together in Korea on Easter Day, 1885. Appenzeller was a dynamic man with little interest in old Korean culture or traditions. He came as an agent of change, convinced that Koreans needed above all to become Christian, receive a western-style education, and adopt American-style democracy. He opened the first western-style school in the country in 1885, Pai Chai Hakdang (Hall for the Rearing of Useful Men). A brick school building was erected in 1887. In January 1890, Appenzeller founded the Trilingual Press (producing books in English, Hangul, and Chinese) on the school grounds. This later became the Methodist Printing and Publishing House. In 1892, the publishing house, under the direction of Rev. F. Ohlinger began to produce *The Korean Repository*, a monthly magazine about Korean life. Appenzeller was a born leader. He founded the Bible Society, the Literature Society and the Seoul Union Club, a social center for foreign residents, where the RASKB was born. He was on the Board of Official Translators of the Korean Bible, working with James Gale, Horace G. Underwood, William B. Scranton, and William D. Reynolds. But alas, still young, he was drowned in June 1902 when the boat he was on sank after colliding with another near Mokpo.

The first Vice-President of the RASKB was the Rev. Dr. George Heber Jones, a scholarly Meth-

odist missionary born in Mohawk, NY on Aug 14, 1867. In 1887 the Methodist Episcopal Mission Board appointed him to Korea, where he was at first connected with Pai Chai High School and College in Seoul. In 1892 he moved to Chemulpo (Incheon), where he was stationed for the next ten years. Proficient in Korean and a member of the Board of Translators of the Bible, he was one of the founding editors of and a regular contributor to the *Korean Repository*, and later wrote for Hulbert's monthly *Korea Review*, as well as being the founder and editor of the *Sin-hak Wol-po*, a Korean-language theological review. One of his main interests seems to have been the comparative study of religions and this is reflected in his three contributions to *Transactions*. After returning to the U.S. in 1903, in 1907 Jones came back to Korea and became president of the Bible Institute of Korea and Theological Seminary of the Methodist Church. He returned permanently to the U.S. in 1911 to care for his elderly parents and died in 1919. His published works in English include: *Korea, the Land, People and Customs* (1907), *The Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1910), and *Christian medical work in Korea* (1910?). He is remembered in Korea as one of the editors of the first Korean hymn book.

Probably the most admired by later generations of Koreans, for his support of Korean autonomy, Homer Bezaleel Hulbert was born on January 26, 1863 in New Haven, Vermont, graduated from Dartmouth College in 1884, then entered Union Theological College. While he was studying there, the Korean government announced plans to establish a school in Seoul teaching English and asked the American government to send teachers. As a result, Homer B. Hulbert arrived in Korea in 1886 with a few others to act as "professor" in the Royal English School, where the sons of high officials were to learn English. However, seeing no future in his role as teacher of a narrow-minded elite with no interest in English, he left Korea at the end of 1891.

Appenzeller encouraged Hulbert to return as a member of the Methodist mission. The Methodists had established the Trilingual Press in Seoul, at the time in question under the management of the Rev. Franklin Ohlinger. In the summer of 1893, Ohlinger left for Singapore and Hulbert was invited to replace him at the press. He felt that his knowledge of Hangul would enable the Press to produce the general educational materials the country urgently needed. So he returned to Korea in 1894 to take charge of what was already a major printing house and in the years that followed he worked hard to improve its equipment. Early in 1892, encouraged by George Heber Jones, the Ohlingers had begun to produce the monthly *Korean Repository*, and although it was not published for one year after their departure, it was published again from 1895-8, with Appenzeller and George Heber Jones as co-editors. Hulbert became its editorial manager by virtue of his position at the Press and began to contribute articles about aspects of Korean culture and life.

In 1897, the King decided that Korea needed to train teachers who would teach in the western-style schools that were to be established across the country. He asked Hulbert to serve as the Principal of the Royal Normal School and prepare the necessary textbooks. Hulbert therefore passed management of the Trilingual Press (and the *Repository*) to another Methodist missionary, D. A. Bunker, who had formerly taught at the English School and was now head of the English Department at Pai Chai. Soon after the Royal Normal School was founded, its name changed to the Imperial Normal School with the proclamation of the Daehan Empire in the autumn of 1897. Later it became known as the Imperial Middle School.

James Scarth Gale was born on February 19, 1863, in Pilkington, Wellington County, Ontario (Canada), and graduated from University College at the University of Toronto with a B.A. in foreign languages in 1888. He had planned to study theology but instead left for Korea as a missionary volunteer with the YMCA the same year. He arrived in December 1888, and spent 1889 and 1890 preaching and teaching English in a number of places, in northern Korea and in Busan, before visiting Manchuria. In 1894 he published *Korean Grammatical Forms* at the Trilingual Press and in 1895 he produced a Korean translation prepared by himself and his wife of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* at the same press, the first translation of a work of English literature into Korean. In 1897 he published his *Korean-English Dictionary* at Yokohama as well as *Korean Sketches* in Chicago. Gale was the leading scholar of the Korean language at this time, and he clearly enjoyed writing works of a literary kind, too. He later served as President of the RASKB in 1915, then as Vice-President 1923-7.

Another of the founders of the RASKB was Dr. Horace N. Allen (1858-1932). Allen had first

come to Korea in 1884 as a Presbyterian missionary doctor stationed in the American legation. Soon after his arrival, he saved the life of Min Yeong-ik, the Queen's favorite nephew, when he had been seriously injured during the Gapsin Coup in 1884, demonstrating the value of Western medicine. In 1887 he accompanied the first Korean legation to Washington, D.C.. This led him to move from missionary, medical activities to diplomacy. In 1890, he became secretary to the American legation in Seoul. By 1897 he was US Minister and consul general in Seoul.

The first hospital in Korea was founded in 1885 by Allen as the Royal Hospital Gwanhyewon (House of Extended Grace) where the Constitutional Court stands today. Soon after its creation, the hospital was renamed Jejungwon (House of Universal Helpfulness), and in 1886, Jejungwon Medical School, Korea's first modern medical school, was founded. At the same time Dr. John Heron, a Presbyterian missionary, arrived in Seoul and began work alongside Dr. Allen, later succeeding him as superintendent of the hospital. In 1888 Presbyterian Dr. Lillias S. Horton took the responsibility of the women's department in the hospital and became the trusted physician of the Queen. Horton married Rev. H. G. Underwood in 1889 and continued working in Korea for many years, opening a women's and children's dispensary in 1895. Jejungwon grew, and by 1899 it was determined that a new facility had to be erected. In 1900, Louis H. Severance, an American philanthropist, heard from O. R. Avison of the need for a modern hospital in Seoul. He had been hoping to fund a project of the sort and decided that Seoul would be an ideal place for his donation. The hospital was completed in September of 1904 and was named Severance Memorial Hospital.

Dr. William B. Scranton (1856-1922) came to Korea in June 1885 to begin medical work and soon opened Sibyeongwon (Universal Relief House), in Jeong-dong where Jeil Church now stands, and other clinics, including Boguyeogwan (in Jeong-dong) for women with the support of his mother, Mary F. B. Scranton, in the same area. His mother established Ewha Hakdang as the first school for girls, also in Jeong-dong, in 1886.

Oliver R. Avison (1860-1956) was born in England, his family moving to Canada when he was six. He became a doctor there and arrived in Korea in 1893 as part of the Presbyterian mission after meeting Horace G. Underwood. He became the head of Jejungwon Medical School in 1894 and his appeal for funds at a conference in New York decided Louis Severance to make his donation. The names were changed to Severance Hospital and Severance Medical School. The first seven graduates in 1908 received the first doctors' licenses issued by the Korean government. In 1913, the name changed to Severance Union Medical College. In 1916, on the death of H. G. Underwood, Avison also became president of Chosun Christian College. He was forced out of Korea by the Japanese in 1935, and L. George Paik (Paik Nakjun) was his successor as President of the Severance Union Medical College. In 1945, Paik became president of the newly named Chosen Christian University, that was to become Yonsei University in 1957.

One of the leading missionary families through several generations were the Underwoods. Horace Grant Underwood was born in London, England, on July 19, 1859, then immigrated to the US when he was thirteen. He arrived in Korea on the same boat as Henry G. Appenzeller on Easter Sunday (April 5), 1885. Underwood worked with the other scholars mentioned above on the Korean Bible, producing the New Testament in 1900, the Old Testament in 1910. Underwood founded the Gyeongsin School in 1886, then Chosun Christian College, which first opened in March 1915 at the Seoul YMCA. It was renamed "Yonhi College" two years later in 1917. The current location of the main campus of Yonsei University was purchased in 1917 through a donation from Mr. John T. Underwood, the typewriter maker. Horace Grant Underwood's son, Horace Horton Underwood, who returned to Korea from studies in 1917, was to play a leading role in denouncing the Japanese repression of the March 1 1919 Movement. He served as president of Chosun Christian College from 1924 until 1941. He was active in the RASKB, especially after the death of Bishop Trollope in 1930.

One of the rare British, Anglican missionaries, Mark Napier Trollope was born in London on March 28, 1862, studied at New College, Oxford, then at Cuddesdon College and he was ordained deacon in 1887 and priest in 1888. Until 1890 he was Curate at Great Yarmouth and while there he responded to an appeal from Bishop Corfe in Korea for volunteers. He came to Korea in the same year. From 1890 to 1902 he was Chaplain to the Bishop and Senior S.P.G. Missionary, and from 1896-1902 he was Vicar General. In 1902 he returned to England for a time on account of the ill health of his fa-

ther. He returned to Korea as the new Bishop in later 1911 and continued to serve there until his sudden death in 1930. Bishop Trollope served as President of the RASKB 1917-19, 1922-25, 1928-30.

The first President of the RASKB was J. H. Gubbins, at the time acting as her Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Seoul. The first Vice-President was George Heber Jones; the Honorary Secretaries were James S. Gale and Homer B. Hulbert. J. H. Gubbins had long lived in Japan but only spent comparatively little time in Korea. He was well acquainted with the Asiatic Society of Japan, of which he spoke at the inaugural meeting of the RASKB. John Harington Gubbins (1852-1929) attended Harrow School then became a student interpreter in the British Japan Consular Service in 1871. On June 1, 1889, he became Japanese Secretary at Tokyo, and was appointed Second Secretary at the Tokyo legation on February 13, 1890. He briefly served as acting Chargé d'Affaires in Korea from May 18, 1900 until November 4, 1901. Later he was appointed lecturer in Japanese language at Oxford University (1909-1912) but the position was soon terminated for lack of pupils. He published two books, *The Progress of Japan, 1853-1871* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911) and *The Making of Modern Japan* (London: Seeley, Service & Co, 1922).

The second President, in 1901-2, Sir John Newell Jordan GCMG GCIE KCB PC (1852 – 1925), as he later became during an illustrious diplomatic career, was the official British Chargé d'affaires whom J. H. Gubbins had been replacing during an absence the previous year. Born in Balloo, County Down, Ireland, he was educated in Ireland, then in 1876 he joined the Chinese Consular Service as a student interpreter. He held various posts in South China before being appointed Chinese Secretary at the British Legation in Peking in 1891. In 1896 he was appointed Consul-General at Seoul, becoming Chargé d'affaires in 1898 and Minister-Resident in 1901. He remained there until November 1905. In 1906 he was appointed HM Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China as the successor to Sir Ernest Satow and remained in the post until his retirement in 1920. He was also appointed to the Privy Council in 1915.

#### **4. Steps to Annexation: 1903-1910**

There is no way of knowing exactly why the RASKB stopped meeting after the end of 1902. Clearly, the drowning of H. G. Appenzeller in June 1902, the departure from Korea for a time of George Heber Jones in 1903, the increasing involvement of Hulbert in the Emperor's affairs, the return to England of Mark N. Trollope in 1902, the various absences of Gale in 1903 and the years following on account of his wife's ill-health, as well as the Russo-Japanese War (February 1904 - September 1905) and the departure of many diplomats with the closing of the legations late in 1905, all might help explain it.

In 1901 Homer Hulbert founded *The Korea Review*, which was very similar in format and scope to the *Korean Repository*. However, the editorial policy of the *Review* was perhaps more strongly oriented by its editor's vision than the *Repository* had been. His main ideas included the affirmation that Koreans were capable of the highest achievements but oppressed by ignorance; therefore widespread education conducted in Hangul was essential. The most controversial idea, one that he nourished almost to the end, was an idealistic view of Japan as a source and model of enlightenment and social progress, to which he opposed the Russian model of autocracy and stagnation.

Hulbert's positive vision of Japan and some other of his ideas, as well his relatively outspoken manner of writing, were strongly opposed by another of the founders of the RASKB, the American diplomat Dr. Horace N. Allen. Allen was increasingly convinced that Russian domination in Korea would be better than a Japanese takeover, and his conflict with Hulbert reached a peak during the Russo-Japanese War (February 1904 - September 1905), during which Hulbert continued to maintain an idealistically pro-Japanese position in the *Review*, only criticizing the negative activities and attitudes toward Korea of individual Japanese. Allen's support for Russia displeased the State Department in Washington, who strongly supported Japan, and perhaps led to his being recalled in 1905.

Throughout the same period, Korean ministers acting without the King's permission were signing a series of treaties with Japan, a process that would culminate in the notorious Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905, also known as the Eulsa Treaty, signed by just five ministers on November 17, 1905. This gave Japan complete responsibility for Korea's foreign affairs, and placed all trade through Korean ports under Japanese supervision, in effect making Korea a protectorate of Japan.

It was not until the September 1905 issue of the *Korea Review* that Hulbert finally denounced plainly the Japanese plans for reducing Korea to a protectorate. Then, early in October, he left for the United States, secretly carrying a letter for the American President signed by the Emperor, asking the United States to prevent Japan from taking control of Korea. At the time, nobody in Korea knew of the conversations that had been held late in July 1905 between the Japanese prime-minister Katsura Taro and the United States Secretary of War William Howard Taft, during which the American encouraged the Japanese plans to take full control of Korea.

Hulbert arrived in Washington at almost exactly the same moment as the Korean foreign minister signed the Eulsa Treaty in Seoul, which the Japanese claimed was sufficient to ratify it. The pro-Japanese American government therefore refused to accept the Emperor's letter, claiming that the ratification of the Treaty was a matter of fact, even though the Emperor himself had not signed it. After trying in vain to alert American public opinion through the press, which was also largely sympathetic to the Japanese, Hulbert returned to Korea in the summer of 1906. By the time he returned, all the foreign legations in Seoul had been reduced to the level of consulates.

When Hulbert returned to Korea in 1906, the Emperor immediately asked him to prepare to go as his ambassador to the nations due to attend the Second International Peace Conference to be held in The Hague in June 1907. His task was to contact the major powers, asking them to support the independence of Korea. His role was to be secret, behind the scenes, and in April 1907 the Emperor secretly appointed three Korean representatives. They were all unable to gain access to the conference and Hulbert left The Hague only a day or so before the Emperor was forced to abdicate on July 19, 1907. He was succeeded by his feeble fourth son, who became known as the Yunghui Emperor, or Sunjong. On July 24 1907 the new ruler signed over control of the country's internal administration to Japan. On 22 August, 1910, the Empire of Daehan was annexed by Japan under the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, a final formality.

Hulbert knew that he could never again live in Korea. He made a final visit to Seoul in the autumn of 1909. He was there when the Korean patriot An Jung-geun assassinated the former Japanese premier Ito Hirobumi in Harbin in October. A year before, in March 1908, Korean nationalist patriots had assassinated Durham White Stevens in San Francisco. Stevens had been an American diplomat stationed in Japan since 1873 then became a Japanese diplomat in 1883. In November 1904, Stevens was appointed as adviser to the Korean Foreign Office. He was intensely pro-Japanese and advocated the annexation. Previously, in July 1907, an attempt had been made by some Koreans to murder George Heber Jones for having praised the Japanese police for putting down a nationalistic demonstration. All these violent expressions of Korean resistance only served to drive the foreign community in Korea, whether missionaries or diplomats, towards stronger support for Japan, since they reinforced the feeling that Koreans were a violent, anarchic people incapable of governing themselves.

## **5. The RASKB Returns to Life: 1911**

This was the context in which, on January 23, 1911, the RASKB was reborn, at a meeting attended by eight men and one woman. Only two of the original founders of the RASKB were present at the January 1911 meeting, James Gale and the Methodist missionary doctor William Benton Scranton (1856-1922). The meeting was held in Scranton's Sanitarium.

When the RASKB was revived, the first President elected was the British consul at Chemulpo, Arthur Hyde Lay (1865 - 1934). Lay was born in China, educated in Britain and arrived in Japan in 1887 as an interpreter trainee. From 1899 until 1902 he worked in Japan as an interpreter but seems to have mastered Korean by 1904. He published *Chinese Characters for the Use of Students of the Japanese Language* in 1898. He served as British Consul at Chemulpo (Incheon) in 1911, then went to be consul in Hawai'i (1912) and Shimonoseki (1913). From 1914 until 1927 he was British consul-general in Seoul and seems to have developed a great affection for Korea. However, Ku Daeyeol notes that "Lay had a stereotyped view of Korea, commonly shared by almost all Western diplomats. In a report he wrote following his retirement, he recalled that the Korean political situation had been dismal before the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, and concluded that the country still lacked the ability to maintain an autonomous government." In October 1911, Lay was obliged to resign as President of the RASKB since he was leaving Korea for Hawai'i. His son has written that he had grown so attached to

Korea that he did everything to have his posting to Hawai'i cancelled. He was replaced as President by James S. Gale, who resigned in February 1916, allowing Lay, now back as British Consul-General in Seoul, to be re-elected President for another year before he was replaced by Bishop Trollope.

One other diplomat who clearly played a vital role in the 1911 RASKB revival was the American consul-general George Hawthorne Scidmore (1854-1922). A career diplomat, he first came to Yokohama (Japan) in 1881 after several years in Europe, served in Oceania 1891-4, returned to Japan, then served as consul-general in Seoul 1909-13 during the annexation, before becoming consul-general in Yokohama, where he died. Several RASKB meetings were held at his invitation in the US Consulate General. Ku Daeyeol writes: "George Scidmore, the American consul general at the time of annexation, supported Japanese policy, as he had been impressed by Japan's efficient reform drive in his previous appointments in many Japanese ports, which he deemed to contrast the corrupt Korea that lacked any reform drive."

The first lecture given to the resurrected Society, at a meeting held on March 4, 1911, in the U.S. Consulate on the invitation of Scidmore, was titled "The Old People and the New Government." It was given by Midori Komatsu, the Japanese Director of Foreign Affairs of the Government General of Chosen. It was the first paper published in Volume Four of *Transactions* a few months later. Komatsu's paper was a formal justification for the annexation of Chosen, based on claims that Korea had "originally" been a state founded from Japan, that the two peoples were "really" one "race", and as such it was natural and desirable for them to be reunited.

It is sometimes claimed that the Japanese imposed the paper on an unwilling Society but this is fairly clearly not the case. First of all, it must be said that in early 1911 a large majority of the foreigners living in Korea still considered the annexation in a positive light. Besides, the accounts of the Council's meetings published in *Transactions* Volume IV Part 2 make it clear that it was the president, Mr. Lay, and James Gale who decided on February 8, 1911, that this should be the first paper. Then, on March 4<sup>th</sup>, the paper was given in the US Consulate on the invitation of George Scidmore with nine RASKB members present, as well as "many guests," "including members of the local diplomatic corps and ladies." At the end, the Chairman (Lay) proposed a "hearty vote of thanks." Later, on April 12, the Council met and "directed" the Recording Secretary (James Gale) to ask Mr. Komatsu for a copy of his paper for publication.

Two other papers were given by Japanese speakers that same year and were published in other parts of the same volume of *Transactions*, after which no papers by Japanese were ever given or published. One, that by Isoh Yamagata, the editor of the *Seoul Press*, evokes in cheerful tones the restoration of cordial relations between Japan and Korea after the Imjin War. The *Seoul Press* was the only English-language newspaper allowed in Korea and its role was to express the official Japanese version of events. The other, on "Coinage of Old Korea" by Morihiro Ichihara, who had earned a Ph.D. in finance from Yale and was first governor of the Bank of Chosen (1909-1915), begins: "To find and destroy the venerable old coins of Korea and replace them with new ones . . . has been my duty for many years." It ends: "New Chosen begins its career with new vigor and strength as a part of the Empire of Japan."

It is hard to know what was in the minds of Lay, Scidmore and Gale in deciding to invite these very highly placed, official Japanese speakers, or to sense what considerations, if any, led to the invitations. That the Western diplomats and missionaries were still trying to be positive about Japan's ways of dealing with Korea and optimistic about the future seems clear. Within ten years, by the time of the March 1 1919 uprising, much had changed but it is easy to imagine that the RASKB Council of early 1911 felt that they could deal with the top members of the Japanese administration as reasonable, educated gentlemen like themselves. They might even have hoped that by bringing them into the Society they would help them better understand the concerns of the western community in Seoul, and the demands of the civilized world. They very quickly learned that they were wrong.

## **6. From the Annexation to March 1, 1919**

Ku Daeyeol has stressed that as soon as Japan had annexed Korea, or even before, the British government began to be anxious that it would soon be moving to take control of Manchuria and then China, which Britain considered a threat to its interests. However, he continues:

Establishing a Government-General invested with “supreme authority” by the emperor and therefore unhindered by the Japanese constitution, the Japanese pursued, on the one hand, a modernization policy based on “efficiency” and “conciseness” and, on the other hand, an assimilation policy bent upon eradicating the national identity of the Korean people. While the powers did not agree with this program in its entirety, they expressed a supportive attitude, especially when they compared the Japanese policies with the corruption and inefficiency of the former Korean government. While the United States and Great Britain characterized the projects pursued by Japan as “costly and burdensome,” and Japan as “having bitten off more than she can chew,” they also portrayed them as “decidedly progressive” and as programs that would result in an increase of material wealth for Koreans. They, therefore, emphasized that “it is patience and help, not criticism, that are required.” At the same time, Korean resistance against the Terauchi administration was roundly condemned: “still the voice of calumny is raised against the authorities by good-for-nothing fellows whose ambitions are thwarted.” In other words, as long as Japanese policies were viewed positively, the Korean independence movement was seen as nothing more than the expression of a “rancorous hatred of the Japanese” occasioned by a “distorted idea of patriotism.”

Now the first set of quotations in this text are from dispatches written by Arthur Hyde Lay in February 1911, the later quotations were written by Lay in July 1911, at the very moment that the RASKB was engaged with these high-ranking Japanese speakers. We know that Lay was essentially supportive of Japan.

Lay and Gale soon began to hear reports of what was to become known as the “Christian Conspiracy case” or the “Case of the One Hundred Five.” Early in 1911, the Japanese began to claim that there had been an attempt to assassinate the Japanese Governor-General Terauchi Masatake during a meeting between him and the American missionary George Shannon McCune in Seoncheon, North Pyeongan Province, on December 28, 1910. From October 1911, especially, hundreds of Koreans were arrested, including Kim Ku and other leaders of the *Sinminhoe*, and, most important, a great majority of them were Christians. Nagata Akifumi points out that Gale, far from being indignant at the arrests, “demonstrated his sympathy for Terauchi with the statement that he had ‘succeeded to the difficult task of governing an alien people of Korea after the Japanese annexation of Korea.’ He further wrote that Korea had prospered or been improved by the Japanese intervention, and would continue to do so under the rule of Terauchi, a ‘Governor of good manners and so kindly disposed to every one.’ He argued that Korea was under military rule at the time when the Case occurred, and that it had happened during ‘the period of change,’ thereby implying the necessity of overlooking faults in Japan’s governing of Korea. [Gale, “Count Terauchi, Governor of Chosen,” *New York Independent*, 29 February 1912, and *The Christian Question in Korea*, 2 March 1912.]”

By the time 123 of those arrested came to trial on June 28, 1912, world opinion had been alerted that the Japanese were persecuting Korean Christians. The trial was a farce, the accused had been tortured to produce confessions, there was no evidence and the accused were not allowed to defend themselves; foreign missionaries were not allowed to testify in support of them. 105 were found guilty of treason and sentenced to prison with hard labor. The leaders of American churches with missions in Korea held a meeting with the American President Taft in July 1912 to express their dismay. They pointed out that the Korean Protestant mission included “330 foreign missionaries, 962 schools, a medical college, a nurses’ training school, thirteen hospitals, eighteen dispensaries . . . 600 churches, a Christian community of 250,000.”

A lengthy appeals process brought little satisfaction but finally, by February 1915, all those convicted had been released; it was probably less that the Japanese realized that a mistake had been made, more a matter of their feeling they had made their point. American legal experts condemned the Japanese criminal code and court system as “archaic, barbaric and uncivilized.” Ku Daeyeol writes: “Japanese colonial rule was viewed as having failed its moral obligations to provide legal protection to Koreans and to treat them in an equitable manner.” The British Ambassador to Japan, Sir Claude MacDonald, told the Japanese Foreign Minister, Uchida Yasuya, that the trial was a “travesty of justice.” Everyone understood that the case had revealed Japan’s deep distrust of and hostility to Christianity and the presence of western missionaries in Korea.

The other way in which the Japanese quickly lost the sympathy and support of the western community was by legislation limiting the right of foreigners to be active in education, medical work and

business in Korea. Ku Daeyeol writes: "The first of these laws was the Company Law, put into effect in early 1911. The Company Law made it necessary to obtain Government-General's approval to set up new companies in Korea, to locate branch offices in Korea, and to conduct business in Korea. In its practical application, this law was used in a variety of ways to discourage and prevent foreign firms from establishing a base of operations in Korea. As a result, the powers had lost nearly all of their rights and privileges on the peninsula within a few years of the Annexation." In November 1913, ordinance 100 was issued that made it almost impossible for non-Japanese to practice medicine. In August 1914, ordinance 83 made it necessary to obtain government permission to open a new church or pay church workers; in March 1915 the Bible was excluded from school curricula at the same time as the Japanese language was made the sole language of instruction within the next five years . . . The ultimate result within Korea was the 1919 March 1 Independence Uprising.

This led to a violent crackdown culminating in the burning of the church in Cheam-ri, near Suwon, with thirty or so Koreans locked inside, on April 15, 1919, and the destruction of many villages in the surrounding region. Raymond Scofield (US Vice-Consul 1913-18; Consul, 1918-19), Horace H. Underwood, and A. W. Taylor, a gold miner and photographer serving as correspondent of the A.P. News Agency in Seoul, traveled to the region and Underwood wrote a report for the State Department. Another American missionary, W. A. Noble, went to Cheam-ri a few days later with William M. Royds, the acting British Consul General in Seoul.

Nagata summarizes what followed:

After this, a delegation of Christian missionaries including Noble met with Governor-General Hasegawa, and Noble informed Hasegawa of the things he had seen and heard at Cheamri. Hasegawa expressed his regret and told the delegation that not only would the persons in charge of the incident be punished, but also that such an atrocity would never happen again. He insisted that no order to massacre the inhabitants of Cheam-ri and destroy the village had been given to the military police. But the delegation was not greatly persuaded by Hasegawa's explanation, because by that point a further eighteen villages besides Cheam-ri had been destroyed. (. . .)

Under these circumstances, the American missionaries in Korea could not ignore the brutality of the Japanese authorities evident in their suppression of the March First Movement, and "No Neutrality for Brutality" became a common slogan among them. [The Japanese Prime Minister] Hara's wish to transform the "Rule by Bayonet" into "Cultural Administration (Bunka Seiji)" was realized by naming the former Naval Minister Makoto Saito to the post of Governor-General. (. . .) Saito met several times with American missionaries over dinner in 1919. So the American missionaries in Korea had to change their views. Originally they had had no intention of intervening in political issues in Korea (especially the issue of Korean independence). Knowing that measures were being taken to reform the rule of Korea by Japan (especially regarding the issue of religion) and the new Government-General of Korea was reacting severely against the participation of Christian groups with Korean nationalist movements, the American missionaries in Korea sought a way to cooperate with the new Governor-General. Some missionaries warned Korean church leaders not to take part in Korean nationalist movements and to keep aloof from Korean politics.

In trying to imagine the context in which the RASKB came into being and was revived, one important fact has become clear. Whereas missionaries usually came directly to Korea from their home countries, learned Korean language and first experienced life in Asia in the Korean cultural context, the same was not true for diplomats. With the exception of John Newell Jordan, who came from and soon went back to China, and Horace Allen, who began his life in Korea as a missionary doctor, the diplomats mentioned previously had without exception spent long years in Japan before being assigned to Korea. They had mostly mastered Japanese language and culture and were familiar with some of the most refined and talented figures in Meiji Japan. What united both groups was a conviction that Korea needed to be rescued from its old self and re-made in a modern form; Japan was seen on both sides as working for such change.

It would be interesting to have greater access to personal expressions of the ways in which missionaries and diplomats viewed Koreans and Japanese. It is too easy for us to see things with hindsight and to assume that the rightness of the Korean demand for independence from Japan was always widely supported by the missionaries, at least. Clearly this was not the case until events following the Annexation forced the Western powers to realize that many of the Japanese viewed the missionaries as



enemy agents of foreign powers and the Korean Christians as a threat. Even after the suppression of the 1919 March 1 Movement, there were some missionaries who continued to support Japan unconditionally, but they were certainly a minority, although many probably tried to avoid direct confrontations.

One other American diplomat with very strong Japanese connections had been active in the RASKB from 1914. Ransford Stevens Miller Jr. (1867-1932) was born in Ithaca, New York on October 3, 1867. He entered Ithaca High School from Ithaca Grammar School in September, 1880, graduated in 1884, and entered Cornell University the same year. He graduated A.B. in 1888. He went to Japan in about 1890 to serve as secretary to the International Committee of the YMCA in Tokyo. He quickly mastered Japanese and from 1895 was acting as interpreter to US Legation, Tokyo. By 1898 he was acting as "Japanese secretary" in the American Legation in Tokyo, having become part of the diplomatic corps by an indirect route. He served for a time as a member of the Council of the Asiatic Society of Japan. In 1909 he was called to Washington to become chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs at the State Department. There he drafted, in negotiation with Japan, the U.S. policy memorandum supporting Japan's 1910 annexation of Korea. He was present at the meeting of the Protestant leaders with President Taft in 1912. He was appointed as the consul general to Seoul in 1914 and remained in that post, with an unexplained interruption 1917-1920, until 1930.

Miller was absent from Korea at the time of the March 1, 1919, demonstrations, returning soon after. He was first elected to be a Councillor of the RASKB on February 5, 1915, and served as President of the RASKB for a year in 1920, replacing Bishop Trollope. This was probably because at that critical juncture the missionaries felt that an association with the American consul-general at its head was more likely to be left in peace. Once they had gained a positive impression of the new attitude espoused by Saito, they felt able to bring Trollope back as President the following year. The RASKB continued to be active until the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, when its president, Horace H. Underwood, and the other remaining foreigners from non-Axis countries were detained then repatriated.

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*Brother Anthony is the current President of the RASKB. He is an Emeritus Professor at Sogang University and a Chair Professor at Dankook University. He has lived in Korea since 1980 and has translated many collections of modern Korean poetry and fiction. His Korean name is An Sonjae.*

**2010 ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY**  
**KOREA BRANCH**

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President's Report for 2010

I am pleased to report to the members of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch that 2010 was an excellent year in many ways. Increasing numbers of non-members who attending a lecture are joining our Society at the end of the lecture, thus adding to our membership and its diversity. Most encouraging is the growth in Korean members, now exceeding 30% of total membership, more than at any time in RASKB's history. We are making an effort to invite Koreans to participate more in our activities, attending our lectures, participating in our cultural field trips. We heartily welcome increased participation in all of these areas by Koreans from all walks of life.

RASKB's lectures remain the most well attended events among our activities. We are also continually adding new field trips led by people with profound knowledge and interest in the areas that we visit.

This volume of *Transactions* dated 2010, the 85th Volume since our founding in 1900, has been published thanks to the tireless efforts of our Publications Committee and contributors. *Transactions* is now a fully peer-reviewed journal and we are grateful to the Korean Studies academicians in the United States and Europe who have consented to serve on our Editorial Committee.

We are proud to announce that we have a new internet web site. The address remains the same ([www.raskb.com](http://www.raskb.com)), but the site provides significantly broader information and functions to users, members and non-members alike. Following suggestions from many members and other visitors we have set up an on-line payment procedure for all payments to the RASKB from overseas.

I am particularly grateful to the members of our Council who have so generously given their time and considerable abilities to prepare our programs. All the Council members have very demanding lives in professional and other activities; their contributions are invaluable.

The annual RASKB garden party in 2010 was hosted by Ambassador Catherine Stevens at the official residence of the American Ambassador. With nearly 200 members attending, we were treated to an exceptional performance of traditional music; there was a large display and sale of books on Korea and of course food, drink and camaraderie! On behalf of the Council of RASKB I extend our expressions of most sincere gratitude to both the US and British ambassadors for their continuation of this decades old tradition of hosting the RASKB garden party at their official residences on alternate years.

In summary, the RASKB continues its tradition of studying, lecturing on and writing about Korea's remarkable culture, past and present, in all imaginable disciplines. We continually seek to expand the scope of our activities and keep up with the dynamically evolving Ko-

rea of today.

Our most serious challenge remains funding for the continued operation and administration of our Society. During the past 20 years of Korea's development, the costs of all goods and services essential to our operations have increased exponentially; this is no longer the "low-cost country" that it once was and the rising costs have magnified the urgency of finding funding for continuing RASKB operations.

I would like to extend the most sincere gratitude of the Council for the generosity of the Somerset Palace management who provide our lecture hall free of charge. We ask for the kind consideration of our members worldwide to assist us in our efforts to secure the funding that we need to continue and expand our truly unique study and promulgation of Korea and her culture.

Finally, I wish to thank the members of the RASKB for your continued support, for without you there is no Society. We look forward to another year in 2011 of growth and enjoyment together in the RASKB!

Respectfully submitted,

Peter E. Bartholomew, President, Royal Asiatic Society-Korea Branch 2008-10.

PS. We are most grateful to a member of our Council, Francis X. O'Donoghue, First Secretary at the Embassy of Ireland, Seoul, for a very generous contribution toward the cost of publishing this issue of Transactions

## ***2010 RAS-KB Lectures***

Jan. 12 Dr. Byeon Gyewon  
Traditional Korean Music in Contemporary Society  
Jan. 26 Amb. Martin Uden  
The latter days of the Chosun Dynasty seen by foreign observers  
Feb. 9 Dr. Daniel Adams  
Won Buddhism in Korea: A New Religious Movement Comes of Age  
Feb. 23 Amb. Hans-Ulrich Seidt  
On the Way to Korea: Afghanistan, Bamyán and the Buddhist Tradition  
March 9 Mrs. Sonia Strawn  
What Can I Do? Women and the Law in Korea  
March 23 Prof. David A. Mason  
The Sacred Sites of Korea: Criteria, Listings and Tourism  
April 13 Prof. Kim, Sung Hong  
Contradiction of Seoul's Urban Architecture  
April 19 Amb. Jaroslav Olsa Jr  
RAS Special Event - Story of Czech-Korean Contact  
April 27 Dr. Hilary Finchum-Sung  
Accentuating the Visual: Re-imaging Korean Traditional Music  
May 11 Prof. Chaeki Synn  
Contesting Identities: Modern Art in Korea  
May 25 Mr. Robert Neff  
Superstitions and Perceptions of Early Korean-Western Relations  
June 7 Prof. In-Souk Cho  
Appreciating Korean Traditional Architecture  
Aug. 24 Mr. Tim Peters  
Adrift and Stateless: Korea's Forgotten Children  
Sept. 8 Prof. John Seales  
Korean Sounds in the World Imagination: Overseas Art Music Engaging with Korean Musical Heritage.  
Sept. 14 Dr. Sylvia Braesel  
Johann Bolljahn: A multicultural career of a Pomeranian teacher between Europe and East Asia  
Sept. 28 Mr. Andrew Salmon  
The Armageddon North of Seoul: The Battle of the Imjin River  
Oct. 12 Brother Anthony  
Scholars in Exile or Dead, Monks and Tea : Stories from Old Korea  
Oct. 26 Mr. Robert Neff  
Ghosts, demons and the haunting of Korea  
Nov. 9 Dr. Karl Moskowitz  
Indicators of Social Change in Korea - Under Japanese Rule 1910-1945  
Nov. 23 Dr. James Lewis  
Adam Smith in Korea  
Dec. 7 Dr. Andrei Lankov  
The forgotten exiles: a strange story of the Sakhalin island Koreans

A total of 21 lectures

*The RAS gratefully acknowledges the support of the Somerset Palace, Seoul, which beginning in February 2006 granted free use of its residents' lounge as the Society's lecture venue.*



## **2010 RAS-KB Tours**

Jan. 24	Pyeongchang Tour	16	M. Spavor
Jan. 31	Snow Country Tour	31	A. Ladouceur/A. Choi
Feb. 20	Furniture Museum Tour	15	S. Jang / M. Spavor
Feb. 27	Jeonju City Tour	20	D. Adams/ A. Choi
Feb. 28-Mar. 1	Seorak-san Tour	12	M. Spavor
March 1	Independence day Tour	7	A. Ladouceur
March 6	Kite Making / Bukchon Museum	8	M. Spavor
March 7	KTX Train tour to Busan	17	A. Ladouceur/ A. Choi
March 13	Sanjung Lake Tour	10	A. Ladouceur
March 20	Kiln Tour	11	S. Bae
March 21	Bugak-san Tour	12	S. Bae / V. Choi
March 28	Walking tour of Choseon Seoul	12	P. Bartholomew
April 3-4	Namhae & Jinhae Tour	20	A. Choi
April 9-12	Japan Tour	18	Suzanne Han
April 11	Suwon Tour	23	P.Bartholomew/M.Spavor
April 17	Gyeonggi Cherry Blossom Tour	17	S. Bae
April 18	Chollipo Magnolia Tour	14	S. Bae
April 20	Gyeonggi Cherry Blossom(SIWA)	23	S. Bae
April 24-25	Andong Tour	15	J. Flynn / A. Choi
May 9	Bukchon Tour	9	D. Mason
May 15	Doseonsa Tour	16	D. Mason/ A. Choi
May 16	Ganghwa-do Tour	13	Y.D. Kim / S.H. Jang
May 21	Buddha's Birthday Tour	35	S. Bae / A. Choi
May 22-23	Gyeongju Tour	17	J. Flinn
May 29-30	Tea Making Tour to Jiri-san	13	Br. Anthony
June 5	RAS Garden Party	210	
June 6	Danyang Tour	14	A. Choi
June 13	Naejang-san Tour	14	A. Choi
July 8-13	Mongolia Tour	16	A. Ladouceur
July 25	Anmyun-do Tour	9	A. Choi
Aug. 13-14	Train tour to Kangjin	8	A. Ladouceur
Aug. 21	Cheongpyong Boat Tour	15	A. Choi
Aug. 22	Buga-ksan Tour	9	W. Cha
Sept. 4	Bukchon Tour	6	A. Choi
Sept. 16-26	Nepal & Tibet Tour	11	A. Ladouceur
Sept. 18-19	Gyeongju Tour	24	D. Adams / S. Bae
Sept. 23	Bugak-san Tour	15	W. Cha
Oct. 1-4	Japan Tour	39	S. Han
Oct. 2-3	Andong Hahoe Village Tour	9	J. Flinn
Oct. 2	Kiln Tour	8	S. Bae
Oct. 9	Jeonju Tour	9	D. Adams
Oct. 10	Walking Tour of Chosun	10	P. Bartholomew
Oct. 16-17	Seorak-san Tour	12	S. Bae
Oct. 23	Ganghwa-do Tour	20	Y.D.Kim/ S. Bae
Oct. 24	Danyang Tour	13	A. Choi
Oct. 30-31	Jiri-san Tour	14	D. Adams / S. Bae
Oct. 30	Bugak Fortress Tour	9	W. Cha
Nov. 1-2	Seorak-san Tour (SIWA)	15	S. Bae
Nov. 20	Bugak Fortress Tour	4	W. Cha

Dec. 4 Shopping Spree Tour	8	S. Bae
Dec. 11 Churches in Seoul Tour	16	D. Adams

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A concise work rich in new information collected from unedited documents found in five European libraries, about the history of the Korean Catholic Church before the time of its officially recognized foundation in 1784. \$35 / KW42,000

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A fascinating look into the lives of the first Protestant missionaries to Korea: the challenges they faced in their lives, from overcoming culture shock and learning the language to raising a family and building a house; and the challenges they faced in the Christian work that they did, challenges that shaped their identities, their policies, and indeed their beliefs in the land of Korea more than a century ago. \$45 / KW54,000

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The only thoroughgoing study of the opening of Korea after centuries as the "Hermit Kingdom": discusses the rivalries among China, Japan, and Russia and the problems of the traditional Confucian scholar-bureaucrats trying to cope with their rapidly changing world. \$35 / KW42,000

*Discovering Seoul: An Historical Guide.* Donald N. Clark & James H. Grayson. RAS-KB, 1986. Softbound. illustrated, with maps. 358 pp. ISBN 978-89-93699-04-3

This detailed guidebook written by two authors who have had long experience living in the city, describes the historical monuments and sites in Seoul, grouped by neighborhoods for easy location. It includes maps, references to the subway system, diagrams and color photographs, with explanations of the history and significance of each site. There is also a Chinese-character glossary and index. \$8 KW9,000

*Early Encounters with the United States and Japan: Six Essays on Late Nineteenth-Century Korea.* Lew, Young-Ick, RAS-KB, 2007. Hardback and Softbound. 249 pp. ISBN 978-89-954424-8-7

The book consists of six essays on late 19th century Korean history. All of them were originally prepared and presented as conference papers or keynote speeches at major conferences held in Korea and the US. They deal with Korea's relations with the US and Japan mainly between 1882, when the Jeoson Kingdom signed its first modern treaty with the United States, and 1905 when the same kingdom called the Daehan (Great Han) Empire from 1897, degenerated into a protectorate of Japan. \$40 / KW48,000

*Encounters: The New Religions of Korea and Christianity.* General editors: Kim Sung-hae and James Heisig. RAS-KB, 2008. Softbound. 191 pp. ISBN 978-89-954424-9-4

This book has chapters describing the origins, faith and practice of the three main 'new' religions of Korea, Cheondo-gyo, Daejong-gyo and Won-Buddhism, written by members of each, as well as general chapters considering them from a sociological viewpoint, and a Christian perspective. The book ends with a transcript of an open exchange between senior members of the religions. \$35 / KW42,000

*Essays on Korean Traditional Music.* Lee Hye-ku, trans. by Robert C. Provine, RAS-KB, 1980. Soft-



bound. 278 pp. ISBN 978-89-93699-03-6

The only Korean musicologist of international repute. Dr. Lee Hye-Ku has struggled over the past few decades to keep Korean traditional music from being swallowed up in the tide of Westernization. Until now, apart from a few translated articles, his work has been accessible only to Korean speakers. A definitive text on Korean traditional music in English. \$25 / KW30,000

*Hamel's Journal and a Description of the Kingdom of Korea, 1653-1666.* Hendrik Hamel, English translation by Jean-Paul Buys, RAS-KB, 1998. Softbound. 107 pp. ISBN 89-7225-086-4

The first Western account of Korea is the glory of a group of sailors shipwrecked on Cheju-do. Some thirteen years later, after escaping to Japan, Hamel gave the outside world a firsthand description of Korea, an almost unknown country until then. Mr. Buys, who is Dutch, has made the first translation based on the original manuscript. \$15 / KW18,000

*Imjin War, The.* Sam Hawley. RAS-KB and the Institute of East Asian Studies, UC Berkeley, 2005. Hardbound, xvi pp. + 664 pp. + 20 pp. illustrations. ISBN 978-89-954424-2-5

The most comprehensive account ever published in English of this cataclysmic event, so little known in the West. It begins with the political and cultural background of Korea, Japan, and China, discusses the diplomatic breakdown that led to the war, describes every major incident and battle from 1592 to 1598, and introduces a fascinating cast of characters along the way. \$55 / KW66,000

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A collection of 50 vignettes of commonplace Korean life allowing the reader to draw from the daily habits, customs and events his own picture of Korean society. The author often contrasts aspects of Korean culture with that of foreign nations and draws a variety of conclusions about Korean society from these contrasts. \$10 / KW12,000

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A general discussion for non-specialist Western reader. \$8 / KW10,000

*James Scarth Gale's History of the Korean People,* edited by Richard Rutt, RAS-KB, 1967. Hardbound. 174 pp. ISBN 978-89-954424-1-8

A reprint of the classic English-language history of Korea first published in 1927. It has been extensively annotated by Bishop Rutt with reference to sources and including commentary. It is introduced by an extensive and, to date, the only biography of Dr. Gale. a towering scholar in the early days of Western residence in Korea. \$40 / KW48,000

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An early study of the success of Christianity in Korea, especially in contrast to China. \$12 / KW15,000

*Korean Shamanism: Revivals, Survivals and Change.* Keith Howard, ed., RAS-KB, 1998, Softbound, 258 pp.

A thoroughly readable collection of critical research from prominent scholars in the fields of anthropology, religion, history, and the arts. Koreans, virtually alone in the world, have kept the ancient traditional religion of shamanism alive at a time of massive industrialization, modernization and Westernization. \$35 / KW42,000

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A thorough study on March First Movement, a Korean uprising against Japanese colonial rule in 1919, with special emphasis on its international implications and Britain's role in the uprising. \$35 / KW42,000

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