

JAPAN REVIEW

Vol.2 No.2

Fall 2018

ISSN 2433-4456

150th Anniversary of Meiji Restoration

**The World and Japan 150 Years from Meiji
- Looking Back on History -**

Kazuya Sakamoto

**The Building of the Meiji State and
Constitutional Government**

Sumio Hatano

**Colonial Development of Modern Industry in Korea,
1910-1939/40**

Mitsuhiko Kimura

Japan and the Modern World: Lessons from Meiji

Frederick R. Dickinson

**The Reality of the Mobilization of Koreans
During World War II**

- An analysis based on statistics and written records

Tsutomu Nishioka

**External and Internal Reconciliation:
War Memories and Views of History Regarding
Japan in Postwar Taiwan**

John Chuan-Tiong Lim

THE JAPAN
INSTITUTE OF
INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS

JIIA

The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), founded in 1959, is an independent nonpartisan policy thinktank specializing in foreign affairs and security policy. On top of a wide range of research programs, the institute promotes dialogues and joint studies with other institutions and experts at home and abroad, and makes foreign policy proposals to the government, and disseminates information on international relations to the public. The institute, together with a large network of affiliated scholars, aims to serve as an indispensable resource on international affairs in a complex world.

Publisher : Kenichiro Sasae, President, JIIA

Editor in Chief : Shu Nakagawa, Director of Research Coordination, JIIA

The opinions expressed in the articles in *Japan Review* do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of the Japan Institute of International Affairs. No article or any part thereof may be reproduced without the express permission of JIIA.

Annual subscription (four issues): ¥4,000 in Japan; US\$40.00 overseas.
Please note that delivery fee is not included.

For subscription and any other inquiries, please write to:
Japan Review, the Japan Institute of International Affairs,
3rd Floor Toranomon Mitsui Building, 3-8-1 Kasumigaseki Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Japan 100-0013

ISSN 2433-4456

Published by the Japan Institute of International Affairs
Designed and Printed in Japan by Taiheisha.Ltd

JAPAN REVIEW

Vol.2 No.2
Fall 2018

150th Anniversary of Meiji Restoration

1 The World and Japan 150 Years from Meiji – Looking Back on History – …03

Kazuya Sakamoto

Prof. Kazuya Sakamoto specializes in the history of Japan-U.S. relations. He received his Ph.D. at Kyoto University. He served as a member of Japan-China Joint History Research, the reviewing panel on the Japanese foreign policies organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and Advisory Panel on Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security set up by the Japanese cabinet. He was also a member of the expert committee on reviewing the secret deals between Japan and the US.

2 The Building of the Meiji State and Constitutional Government ……11

Sumio Hatano

Professor Emeritus Sumio Hatano is the chief editor of Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy published by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. He is also Director-General of Japan Center for Asian Historical Records. His major is diplomatic history of Japan, and he finished his PhD at Keio University. He was a visiting researcher at East Asian Institute in Columbia University and at Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies in Harvard University. He taught at University of Tsukuba as a professor for years and joined in Japan-China Joint History Research.

3 Colonial Development of Modern Industry in Korea, 1910-1939/40 ……23

Mitsuhiko Kimura

Mitsuhiko Kimura is Professor of Economics and Economic History at School of International Politics, Economics and Communication, Aoyama Gakuin University. Graduated from Hokkaido University and received Doctor of Economics from Osaka University. Wrote mainly on economic development in Korea under Japanese rule and North Korean economy after 1945. Major works in English are: “Financial Aspects of Korea’s Economic Growth under Japanese Rule,” *Modern Asian Studies* 20, 1986, “Public Finance in Korea under Japanese Rule: Deficit in the Colonial Account and Colonial Taxation,” *Explorations in Economic History* 26, 1989, “Standards of Living in Colonial Korea: Did the Masses Become Worse-off or Better-off under Japanese Rule?” *Journal of Economic History* LIII, 1993, and “From Fascism to Communism: Continuity and Development of Collectivist Economic Policy in North Korea,” *Economic History Review* LII, 1999.

4 Japan and the Modern World: Lessons from Meiji45
Frederick R. Dickinson

Frederick R. Dickinson is Professor of Japanese History, Co-Director of the Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies, and Deputy Director of the Penn Forum on Japan (PFJ) at the University of Pennsylvania. He received an MA and PhD in History from Yale University and holds an MA in International Politics from Kyoto University. He is the author of *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914 - 1919* (Harvard, 1999), *Taisho tenno* (Minerva, 2009) and *World War I and the Triumph of a New Japan, 1919-1930* (Cambridge, 2013). Currently, he is working on a global history of modern Japan.

5 The Reality of the Mobilization of Koreans During World War II
- An analysis based on statistics and written records53
Tsutomu Nishioka

Professor Tsutomu Nishioka has served as the head of the Section of History Studies at the Institute of Moralogy since 2017. He previously was a professor at Tokyo Christian University, where he began teaching in 1991. He is a scholar specializing in Korean peninsula studies, for which he developed a passion early in his education. He was an exchange student at Yonsei University in the International Division (1977-78) during his undergraduate studies at Tokyo International Christian University (BA, 1979). While completing his master's degree in Area Studies at Tsukuba University (MA, 1983), he was selected as a Foreign Ministry Research Fellow for which he was assigned to the Embassy of Japan in Seoul, South Korea, from 1982-84. He is known for his research and prolific writing on contemporary Korean issues and served as the Editor in Chief of the foreign affairs journal *Gendai Koria* (Today's Korea) from 1990-2000.

6 External and Internal Reconciliation:
War Memories and Views of History Regarding Japan in Postwar Taiwan ...61
John Chuan-Tiong Lim

John Chuan-Tiong Lim is an associate fellow at Academia Sinica in Taiwan. He received his PhD in International Relations from the Graduate School of Law and Politics at the University of Tokyo. His research interests are centered on the politics of cultural identity and nationalism in East Asia. He is the author of *Identity Politics in "Peripheral East Asia": Okinawa, Taiwan and Hong Kong* (「辺境東アジア」のアイデンティティ・ポリテイクス: 沖縄・台湾・香港) (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2005), *Who is Chinese?: The Identity Issue of Taiwanese and Hongkongese* (誰是中國人?: 透視臺灣人與香港人的身份認同) (Taipei: Readingtimes, 2017), *The Okinawan Studies in 21st Century* (21世紀視野下的琉球研究) (Taipei: The Cross-Strait Academic Publisher, 2017). He has also published numerous articles in Japanese and Chinese. His essays have appeared in Chinese and Japanese newspapers, including Ming Pao, United Daily News, Taipei Times, Asahi Shimbun, Okinawa Times, and Ryukyu Shimpo.

The World and Japan 150 Years from Meiji

– Looking Back on History –*

Kazuya Sakamoto**

Abstract

We stand at a historical milestone that marks 150 years from the Meiji Restoration of 1868, during which Japan radically changed its national polity in the face of the advance of Western powers and set itself on the path to *dokuritsu jison* (independence and self-respect). After its defeat in the Second World War, Japan joined forces with Western countries in the construction of a liberal world order based on such values as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. It is correct to say that an end to fighting signifies an end to war in that armed conflict between nations ceases, but a true end to war takes more than this. Peace must be established among the warring nations, and this requires the completion of certain processes of postwar settlement, without which the war is not over. Only now are we able to reflect on our past perception of history not for the purposes of self-criticism and apology, but to chart our future course. The phrase that comes to mind in describing Japan 150 years from the Meiji Restoration is “independence and self-respect,” the philosophy of the noted Meiji thinker Yukichi Fukuzawa. This slogan of Fukuzawa is as important to Japan 150 years from Meiji as it was to Meiji Japan. The critical difference with Meiji Japan is that this independence and self-respect is to be realized within the development of the liberal world order.

For a number of reasons, the year 2018 affords us an excellent opportunity to look back on the history of Japan’s diplomacy and national security. It also provides an appropriate vantage point for surveying the future.

I. Milestone in History

First and foremost, as the subject of this symposium notes, we stand at a historical milestone that marks 150 years from the Meiji Restoration of 1868, during which Japan radically changed its national polity in the face of the advance of Western powers and set itself on the path to *dokuritsu jison* (independence and self-respect). During these 150 years, Japan learned from the West to become a modern constitutional state, rebuilt itself as a modern industrialized nation, and eventually entered into war with the United States and Britain, the two leading powers of the West. After its defeat, Japan joined forces with Western countries in the construction of a liberal world order based on such values as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law.

You may object that this is far too general a presentation of history, but I would argue that it provides a meaningful platform for us to review the history of Japan’s diplomacy and national security and also to look forward to the future.

* This is an edited transcript of the keynote speech of a symposium “150 Years from the Meiji Restoration—Modernization and Japan in a Global Context—” held by JIIA and Kansai Association of Corporate Executives in March 2018.

** Prof. Kazuya Sakamoto is a Professor of Graduate School of Law and Politics at Osaka University specializing in International Politics and Diplomatic History.

As the framework of the Group of Seven (G7) clearly shows, Japan has today become one of the major proponents of the liberal world order. There is no question that its diplomatic and security policies are focused on contributing to maintaining and furthering this world order and working within it to preserve Japan's own security and prosperity and enhance Japan's political standing in the world.

Therefore, I believe that all examination of Japanese diplomacy and national security must be premised on these historical developments that have defined the history of Japan's relations with the West since the Meiji Restoration.

This year marks not only 150 years from the Meiji Restoration, but also the centenary of the end of the First World War in 1918. Exactly 50 years after the Meiji Restoration and seven years after the end of the Meiji period (1868 – 1912), Japan stood beside the United States and Britain as one of the war's victors. It became a permanent member in the postwar League of Nations and came to be known as one of the "Big Five" nations.

Japan adopted Western technologies, institutions, and thought in its effort to catch up with the Western powers and pursued its vision of a "*fukoku kyohei* (rich country and strong army)" by concentrating its energies on fostering modern industries and reinforcing its military. Japan fought two wars—the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars—and paid for them in blood, sweat, and tears. It then made herculean efforts to revise the unequal treaties entered into force at the close of the Edo period (1600 – 1868), and as a result of these endeavors achieved the major accomplishment of emerging from the First World War as a prosperous nation.

Although Japan stood with the United States and Britain among the victors at the end of the First World War, the situation changed thereafter as Japan increasingly came into conflict with these nations while working toward a new postwar world order. Eventually, this would develop into a world war with them (and China) over the establishment of a new order in the Asia-Pacific.

The question of why this happened has already been thoroughly examined and discussed. Still, it is worth revisiting it now, a century after those events. At the very least, such a re-examination would be extremely helpful in organizing our thoughts.

In addition to being 150 years from the Meiji Restoration and 100 years from the end of the First World War, this year also marks the 30th year of the Heisei period (the imperial era of Emperor Akihito's reign), and what is effectively its final year. We knew from a hundred years ago that the first two milestones would take place this year, but no one knew that these milestones would also coincide with the last year of the Heisei period. In Japan, where we use both the Western calendar and imperial eras, this coincidence adds profoundly to the significance of this milestone year.

The immense physical and mental shock that accompanied Japan's destruction and defeat in the Second World War against the United States, Britain, and China does not bear repeating here. Recovery from the physical shock was relatively quick, and Japan was able to recover during the Showa period. Indeed, it achieved more than mere recovery. Japan surprised the world with its emergence as a major economy, and its people came to enjoy a level of affluence that far exceeded anything experienced in the prewar years. What is more, Japan has become a country able to assist other countries in promoting their own economic development.

By contrast, recovery from the mental shock took much longer. Problems related to historical perception and contrition became enmeshed with diplomatic relations, and I believe it has taken the entire 30 years of the Heisei period to process that shock. In this context, the significance of the statement on the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War released by the government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2015 should not be underestimated.

Next year will mark the start of a new imperial era. At that point, the Showa period will no longer be the previous era in the minds of the Japanese people, but will instead recede two eras into the past. What this means is that our historical understanding of the Second World War will

become less and less a question of apology and remorse, and increasingly a point of reflection from which to consider the future. The passage of the 30 years of the Heisei period and the start of a new imperial era will have a very significant impact on how we mentally process the Second World War. I believe this will lead to a change in our mindset.

II. The Abe Statement

Let us consider what it takes to end a war. It is correct to say that an end to fighting signifies an end to war in that armed conflict between nations ceases. But a true end to war takes more than this. Peace must be established among the warring nations, and this requires the completion of certain processes of postwar settlement, without which the war is not over. This brings us to the question of how these processes can be completed.

Although there are no well-defined rules here, common sense informs us that in order to bring the war to a true end, national borders must be redrawn, war criminals must be punished, issues of claims and compensation must be settled, and a peace treaty or its equivalent must be concluded. In Japan's case, postwar settlement with the United States and Britain was completed with the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty six years after the war ended in the summer of 1945. Its settlements with China were achieved through the Japan-Taiwan Peace Treaty signed with the Nationalist government of Taiwan seven years after the war, and the Japan-China Joint Communiqué concluded with the Beijing government 27 years later. Setting aside the Soviet Union and the matter of the Northern Territories, Japan's postwar settlements have therefore been completed with all nations.

It should be noted, however, that these are legal processes of settlement between nations. So, do they signify full postwar settlement? Perhaps in theory, but the reality is more complicated. Nations are ultimately collections of people, which means that some process of moral settlement must also be considered. It is unrealistic to think that the completion of legal processes will allow us to forget the past and return to normal relations. Actions have human and material costs and consequences, and there is a moral and ethical need to come to terms with these consequences. Remorse must be expressed concretely both in words and deeds, and long-term efforts must be made to heal the rift and rebuild relations.

The difficulty with a moral settlement is that established rules and norms are lacking even more than for the legal settlements. It is therefore not something that can be dealt with by following a prescribed course of action, and it also cannot be dealt with by simply acceding to the requests of another nation. If it were that straightforward, moral settlements would be no different from legal settlements.

Beginning in the 1980s, problems concerning historical perception emerged with China and South Korea, and they pertain to this moral settlement for the Second World War. The issue became very serious because of the Japanese people's divided response to the criticism of Japan's perception of history leveled by the Chinese and South Korean governments. Some inside Japan agreed with the criticism and admitted that part of the public did indeed subscribe to a faulty understanding of history. This group argued that failure to correct these misconceptions was evidence that moral obligations to make amends for the war had not been met, and that therefore the war had not truly come to an end. They felt that this omission needed to be rectified as the primary task in Japan's diplomatic relations with China and South Korea, and that the government needed to clearly refute the faulty perception of history that remained in places. However, others strongly opposed this position, and the entire nation was soon embroiled in an angry debate.

An examination of the problem reveals that the government itself did not have a faulty perception of history. The point is that the government has never subscribed to any specific historical interpretation, for example concerning the causes of the Second World War.

In this case, therefore, Japan should have done what it always had, which was to say that the

interpretation of history should be left to historians and not made a subject of debate between governments. However, there were many in Japan who felt that this approach would damage diplomatic relations with China and South Korea. Ultimately, therefore, it was concluded that the government should present an understanding of history that would satisfy both those countries. This led to the statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in 1995 on the 50th anniversary of the end of the war.

Perhaps all would have been well if everyone had found the Murayama statement to be satisfactory. That would have put the question of historical perception to rest and ended the wrangling with China and South Korea. However, the problem with this short statement was that it made very facile use of such terms as “aggression” and “colonial rule” without giving any context. Japan had fought against many countries in the course of the Second World War and the war had many complex aspects to it. But the Murayama statement sounded as if Japan and Japan alone was in the wrong in all aspects of the war. This gave rise to a very strong reaction in Japan. Seeing this, China and South Korea redoubled their criticism and cited Japan’s domestic reaction as evidence that Japan was not adequately contrite. This further fed the debate that was raging in Japan—a debate that came to divide the nation on the question of whether to affirm or negate the Murayama statement.

The problem of historical perception is not about how we can close the gap in our mutual perceptions so that we can be friendly neighbors. The real question is how we can develop friendly relations notwithstanding the differences that may persist in our perceptions of history.

What distinguishes the Abe statement that was released twenty years after the Murayama statement is its recognition of this very point. Regardless of whether its historical perception would accord with those of the Chinese and South Korean governments, the Japanese government decided to indicate its historical understanding of the Second World War, limiting its statement to the bare minimum required. The Abe statement did not seek to refute the Murayama statement. Instead, it sought to “recast” the Murayama statement to provide historical context to such terms as aggression and colonial rule that had been used in the earlier statement. Having established the historical context, the Abe statement then proceeded to touch on apologies and expressions of remorse. It explained the path of peace that Japan has walked after the war and expressed gratitude to the countries that had worked to build peace with Japan in the postwar world. Finally, although no repeated apology was given for the damage done by Japan in the war, the document stated that Japan would continue to reflect upon its past actions.

The Abe statement was a success for a number of reasons. The first reason is the reaction of the great majority of Japanese people, who had no real objections to the statement. The other reason is that Shoichi Watanabe, the renowned conservative critic who died last year, praised the Abe statement highly and gave it a score of 120 points out of 100. If that is his appraisal, I would have to give the statement 100 points just for its efficacy. The most important thing about the Abe statement was that, unlike the Murayama statement, it did not ignite divisive debate at home. To achieve this outcome, the Abe statement had to satisfy both supporters of the Murayama statement and those who had criticized it. The solution was to avoid refuting the earlier statement and instead to simply recast it. This was very important in convincing those who, like Watanabe, had severely criticized the Murayama statement.

The governments of China and South Korea did not severely criticize the Abe statement. If they had done so, the government could have said, once the statement was released, that this was the Japanese government’s understanding of history and that it was widely supported by the people. Japanese government could have offered to explain further if there were any problems with this understanding and stated that, while it would not repeat the apologies that were made in the past, it was prepared to explain how it reflected on the past.

No other country in the world has issued a statement of its historical understanding of the

war like the one made by Prime Minister Abe. Should any country repeat the claim that Japan's perception of the war is unpardonable, we are now in a position to rebut that claim by asking which country Japan is being compared to.

Only now are we able to reflect on our past perception of history not for the purposes of self-criticism and apology, but to chart our future course. This brings to mind what E. H. Carr, the British historian, noted in his famous lecture entitled "What is History." To paraphrase his words, Carr said that history is an unending dialogue between the past and the present, and a dialogue between the present and the future. I believe we are now able to reflect on the Second World War in this context, and apart from any need to arrive at a moral settlement.

III. Three Points of Reflection

When we look back to the Second World War from within this framework, there are of course many reasons for reflection and remorse. But, standing at this milestone 150 years after the Meiji Restoration, I believe there are three points of reflection that deserve our special attention as we seek to contribute with renewed commitment to furthering the liberal world order that Japan worked with the West to build in the postwar period. These are the Manchurian Incident, the Tripartite Pact entered into by Japan, Germany, and Italy, and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Due to time considerations, I will limit myself to the main points of the argument.

The Manchurian Incident

Let us start with the Manchurian Incident of 1931. Japan resorted to the use of military force to protect its imperialistic interests in China, an action taken notwithstanding the promise made three years earlier in the Kellogg–Briand Pact not to use war to resolve international disputes. This marked the first step toward deteriorating relations with the United States and Britain over the matter of China. Ultimately, Japan would tread the path to war. Japan will never do this again.

Japan is now committed to its renunciation of war not only by observing international law, but also by writing a pledge to renounce war into the Constitution. This solemn pledge has been upheld for more than 70 years, and Japan is determined to abide by its pledge in the future. Perhaps it can be argued that this in itself is evidence of appropriate reflection. But in order to deepen this reflection, we need to consider certain questions. If war and military force cannot be used as a means to resolving international disputes, then what means are available? What are we to do when talks and negotiation fail?

Suppose an international dispute arises over economic interests. Because Japan is already a major economic power, it can make a concession in order to arrive at a resolution, or it may simply give up on resolving the dispute. But can the same apply to an international dispute that affects Japan's national security? Japan can of course use military force to defend itself. The right of self-defense is recognized in the Kellogg–Briand Pact and the United Nations Charter. Moreover, it is protected by the Constitution of Japan (at least according to the interpretation of the government).

But the problem is how to define self-defense. In fact, in the Manchurian Incident, Japan justified it as an act of self-defense. Putting that question aside and looking back on Japan's diplomatic and security policies over the past 150 years, the most significant difference made in the first and second halves of this period was the treatment of the Korean Peninsula. In the first half Japan included the security of the peninsula in its scope of self-defense, but in the second half it did not. Aritomo Yamagata, an elder statesman in the Meiji period, divided self-defense into two lines to be guarded: the line of sovereignty, which pertains to defending the security of national territory, and the line of interest, which pertains to defending the security of places closely related to the security of national territory. Yamagata went on to argue that the Korean Peninsula was within Japan's line of interest. Even the Sino-Japanese War over the Korean Peninsula was

claimed by Munemitsu Mutsu, the then minister of foreign affairs, to be a war of self-defense. This claim was made in the context of Yamagata's framework of the meaning of self-defense.

In postwar Japan, self-defense has applied solely to the line of sovereignty. The line of interest, on the other hand, has been defended in cooperation with the United States, and later through what has come to be called the Japan-US Alliance, ever since the Korean War that began in 1950. Given that Japan cannot employ military force for the security of the Korean Peninsula, this alliance has been maintained on the understanding that Japan will cooperate through other available means.

I have two points to make on this matter. We often hear people say that a nation must be prepared to defend itself. That is quite understandable. However, discussions of self-defense must extend to the question of ensuring the security of the line of interest as well. Otherwise, what results is a half-baked discussion. It is important to remember that collective self-defense constitutes the basic principle of self-defense in the contemporary world, and that Japan needs the Japan-US Alliance for maintaining peace and security in the Far East.

My second point is that the Japan-US Alliance, together with NATO, provides a foundation for the security of the free world. In this sense, the defense of Japan is very deeply related to the defense of the free world and the preservation of the liberal world order.

Japan-Germany-Italy Tripartite Pact

The second matter that requires our reflection is the Tripartite Pact signed by Japan, Germany, and Italy in 1940. By allying itself with Germany, the enemy of the United States and Britain, Japan also established itself as an anti-Anglo-American nation. For Japan, it was a complete miscalculation to think that the Tripartite Pact would act as deterrence in preventing war with the United States. The very opposite turned out to be true. The mistaken assessment of the power of Germany was a huge error on the part of Japan.

This is probably the most important point for reflection concerning the Tripartite Pact. But I personally focus on Japan's critical error in allying itself with Nazi Germany, the world's worst racist nation. Due to this choice, postwar Japan was made to bear the stigma of having allied itself with the nation that perpetrated the Holocaust. While that is itself regrettable, what Japan should truly regret is that it allied itself with a country whose creed and values were the exact opposite of its own.

When the Paris Peace Conference convened to determine the settlement of the First World War, Japan advocated the inclusion of the principle of racial equality in the Covenant of the newly founded League of Nations. Although the Japanese proposal failed due to the obstruction of US president Woodrow Wilson, it won the support of many countries including China. At the end of the First World War, the world was still standing on the side of racism and racial discrimination with full impunity. Japan's call to share the principle of racial equality as a universal value constitutes a brilliant achievement in Japan's diplomatic history and is something we should be proud of. All of this was blotted out by Japan's alliance with Nazi Germany.

After the Second World War, the world accepted the principle of racial equality as proclaimed in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If Japan had not allied itself with Germany, I believe Japan's contribution to the realization of this principle and value would have been more widely acknowledged.

As a member of the free world, Japan's diplomacy today is based squarely on espousing the principles and values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. In a sense, this is Japan's second attempt at the principle- and value-based diplomacy that became stalled halfway in the prewar years due to the alliance with Germany. As in the case of its advocacy for racial equality, I believe this also represents an important contribution by Japan to the world.

Freedom, democracy, and the rule of law are values born in the West. The very fact that Japan

is proclaiming their universality constitutes its contribution to establishing these as universal principles and values in the world today. For example, consider the framework of the G7. This is a gathering of the developed countries that are leading the free world with these principles and values. As Japan is a country with a history and culture totally different from those of the West, I believe that its presence in the G7 is critically important in proving the universality of liberal principles and values to the world. If the remaining six countries had created a framework, such a gathering would have been nothing more than a gathering of the leaders of the free “West” rather than the free “world.”

Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

One more important point concerning the Second World War that demands our reflection is the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Japan withdrew from the League of Nations following its disputes with Europe and America over the Manchurian Incident and the founding of Manchukuo. Upon quitting the League of Nations, Japan issued an imperial rescript stating that the withdrawal from the League of Nations did not mean that Japan would henceforth stand aloof in Asia or isolate itself and neglect to maintain friendly ties with the nations of the West.

But this commitment began to change with the passage of time. First, it was argued that the importance of harmonious cooperation between Japan, Manchuria, and China was so great that the partial contravention of the interests of the West could not be helped. Next, once the Second World War had started, Japan took the position that Western imperialists had to be ejected from the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

It is true that the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere contained elements of sympathy for Asian masses suffering under Western colonial rule, as well as a reaction to Western racism. It also reflected Japan’s emotional response to the dissatisfaction it felt for Western attitudes toward it in several areas, notwithstanding the fact that Japan had been such an assiduous student of the West.

However, Japan basically began promoting the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere because it believed this concept would contribute to its own national security and economic prosperity, and believed it would raise Japan’s standing in the world. In other words, Japan concluded that the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere would serve its own national interests.

The truth was that Japan did not have the power to ensure the security of all the East Asian countries. Even supposing that the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere had succeeded, it would have been extremely difficult for Japan working within that bloc to become the major economic power that it did become after the war. In the postwar period, Japan achieved dramatic economic development within the framework of global economic development, or in other words, within a “global co-prosperity sphere.” The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was, I think, probably too narrow and restrictive in scope.

My problem with the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere would not be solved even if it had been accomplished through peaceful means. The fundamental problem that I find with this concept is that the very idea of creating an exclusive Asian region was deeply flawed.

The concept of a Greater East Asia underestimated the forces of globalization that were unleashed in the world in the latter half of the 19th century and continued unabated since around the Meiji Restoration. Globalization had reduced the size of the globe and transformed the world into a single entity. Not fully cognizant of these changes, Japan subscribed to a worldview oddly reminiscent of the three-cornered contest that prevailed during the Three States Period in Chinese history. Germany would triumph and lead Europe, the continents of North and South America would be led by the United States, and Japan would be the leader in Asia. However, regionalism is fundamentally unviable in a globalized world.

Therefore, if Japan wishes to be a leader—in many meanings of the word—among nations, it must not seek to become the leader of Asia. In an increasingly globalized world, Japan should make effective use of its unique characteristics and capabilities to help bring the world closer together, and to occupy an honored place in international society by standing as one leader among many leaders of the world.

IV. 150 Years from Meiji: Independence and Self-Respect

In light of all that I have said today, the phrase that comes to mind in describing Japan 150 years from the Meiji Restoration is “independence and self-respect,” the philosophy of the noted Meiji thinker Yukichi Fukuzawa. Meiji Japan sought to build a nation of independence and self-respect so that it could stand on a par with the West. I believe this slogan of Fukuzawa is as important to Japan 150 years from Meiji as it was to Meiji Japan. The critical difference with Meiji Japan is that this independence and self-respect is to be realized within the development of the liberal world order. The world is one, and Japan must cherish the values of the liberal world order and perfect the mechanisms of collective self-defense with its ally, the United States. Independence and self-respect is to be realized within this framework. And if Japan were to consider the path of a “rich country and strong army,” it must do so not solely for its own sake but for the sake of the entire free world.

The Building of the Meiji State and Constitutional Government

Sumio Hatano*

Abstract

Was the Meiji Restoration a “Revolution” in a modern world? If so, what kind of revolution was it? These questions have been debated to this day. Revolutions since the beginning of the nineteenth century have usually signified the abolition of monarchies, and monarchs have generally been unable to voluntarily implement fundamental social reforms. However, in the case of Japan, restored imperial rule (government by the imperial court) served as the axis for modern reforms when the new government opened up Japan, immediately implemented modern reforms, and built a centralized constitutional state. Such a turn of events is uncommon in world history. While the Japanese parliamentary system, which is at the core of the country’s constitutional system, risked collapse on several occasions, it has remained intact to this day. Instead of a discussion of whether the Meiji Restoration was a revolution, this paper focuses on why a constitutional system of government—parliamentarism—was adopted as one of the outcomes of that “revolution” and took hold in Japan, and discusses the operational features it had.

Was the Meiji Restoration a “Revolution?”

Was the Meiji Restoration a “Revolution” in a modern world? If so, what kind of revolution was it? These questions have been debated to this day. What we know for certain is that, even if we agreed that the Restoration was a revolution accompanied by civil wars, the number of victims it claimed was small. The Boshin War that preceded the Restoration claimed 8,200 lives and the Satsuma Rebellion that followed it claimed 12,000 victims. Including executions, the total number of deaths was still fewer than 30,000. By contrast, the victims of the French Revolution numbered more than 1 million if we include the Napoleonic Wars, and the Russian and Chinese Revolutions claimed even more lives.

Likewise, if we look at the change of political system, the birth of the new government through the overthrowing of the *Bakufu* (shogunate) system and the return to monarchical rule (the imperial court) was a coup d’état that restored imperial rule, but this process of creating a government cannot be termed a revolution. However, if we are to understand the *sonnō jōi* movement (“revere the emperor, expel the barbarians”) in the wake of Commodore Matthew Perry’s Expedition as a sustained movement calling for the establishment of an emperor-centered unified government and independence from foreign interference, then we may call the Restoration a “nationalist revolution” (Kitaoka 2011, 32–33).

At the same time, some years after the restoration of imperial rule, a social transformation appropriate to a modern revolution took place. The transformation entailed reforms beginning with the abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of prefectures in 1871, as well as the

* Sumio Hatano is the chief editor of Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy published by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. He is also Director-General of Japan Center for Asian Historical Records.

penetration of the effects felt throughout society. In particular, the introduction of conscription, which aimed to build military power on a broad popular base, came as a major shock. The government's order concerning conscription at the end of 1872 squarely rejected the *raison d'être* of the traditional samurai warrior class and extolled the "equality of all people." In early-modern Japan, all people belonged to a social group and it was almost impossible to move between groups. This framework was removed, individuals came to possess equal rights, and people were left to compete with each other. The exception was the peerage, consisting of former feudal lords and court nobility. In 1876, in the wake of a ban prohibiting samurai from carrying swords, hereditary pension bonds were issued and stipend payments were discontinued. This measure allowed the government to cut expenditures by a third. For the lower-class samurai, said to number 2.5 million when including their families, the discontinuation of stipends, the dismantling of the system that sustained their status, and the elimination of warrior privileges were major blows (Mitani 2012, 4–10; Sansom 1966, 77).

Reforms such as the dismantling of status systems and the redistribution of rights created many sources of capable personnel and imparted dynamism to the process of state formation in modern Japan. On the other hand, why were these far-reaching social changes in the form of large-scale social liberalization and removal of privileges accepted, especially by the dominant samurai class, without much resistance? It is true that some warrior clans rebelled, but the rebellions were not on a scale that caused massive casualties.

We cannot interpret the acceptance of change as the realization of the will of a conqueror who sought to impose democracy following defeat in a war against a foreign enemy, as was the case during the US occupation of Japan after the Second World War. The opening of Japan in the *bakumatsu* period during the final years of the Tokugawa shogunate was not the result of a war with a foreign power, but the result of treaty negotiations. If that is the case, we still do not have an adequate explanation for why major changes such as the collapse and reorganization of the status system happened (Mitani 2012, 1–20, 84–92).

This paper is not a discussion of whether the Meiji Restoration was a revolution. It focuses on why a constitutional system of government—parliamentarism—was adopted as one of the outcomes of that "revolution" and took hold in Japan, and discusses the operational features it had. The Ottoman Empire was the first non-Western country to introduce constitutional form of government, but the first Turkish constitution was short-lived. Yet, while the Japanese parliamentary system, which is at the core of the country's constitutional system, risked collapse on several occasions, it has remained intact to this day. Exploring the significance of the system's survival is a project that seeks to uncover the historical characteristics of Japan's state-building.

Revolutions since the beginning of the nineteenth century have usually signified the abolition of monarchies, and monarchs have generally been unable to voluntarily implement fundamental social reforms. However, in the case of Japan, restored imperial rule (government by the imperial court) served as the axis for modern reforms. To many, the "return to imperial rule" meant going back to Japan's Edo-period seclusion. Yet on the contrary, the new government opened up Japan, immediately implemented modern reforms, and built a centralized constitutional state.

Such a turn of events is uncommon in world history and is not easily understood, but I would like to focus on two historical factors. I first examine the characteristics of the early-modern political structure that preceded the Meiji Restoration. In other words, this is a search for conditions of modernization in the political structure of early-modern Japan. My second focus is the Western powers' demands for the opening of Japan, what we can call the "Western shock." As is well-known, China and Korea were likewise directly exposed to the Western shock in the nineteenth century. However, all three nations ended up walking their own path. This had to do with each country's early-modern political structure, so I will start by briefly discussing this topic using existing research.

Political Development in East Asia

In the 1960s, when the comparative study of modernization was popular, a theory of Japanese exceptionalism was proposed, arguing that Japan's modernization was possible because it was the only country in Asia to have experienced feudalism. Subsequently, this type of research receded, and researchers shifted their focus to looking for the conditions that enabled each East Asian country's political development during its early-modern history.

One study argues that Chinese dynasties since the Song absorbed the military strength of regional powers and transferred the governance of territories from landowners to bureaucrats who were recruited through imperial civil service examinations. In line with the conditions of China's economy, a simple state organization was formed where the emperor was in direct control of the land and people. Confucianism (Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism) later spread across East Asia as the preeminent doctrine for operating such a system (Miyajima 2004). Korea was the classic example of this kind of East Asian early-modern state.

The centralized systems of China and Korea, legitimized by Neo-Confucianism and supported by a civil service bureaucracy recruited through competitive exams, were difficult to destroy, both from within and from without. By contrast, the reception of Neo-Confucianism in Japan was incomplete and there was no Neo-Confucian civil service. Japan was governed by hereditary warriors rather than civil officials and so was passive in its reception of Neo-Confucianism, the opposite of Korea where it was wholeheartedly embraced (Miyajima 2004, Mitani 2012, 253–257).

Western civilization was imported into China and Korea as well, but in China's case, the bureaucrat class that made up the core of the political structure did not actively seek to study Western science. In Korea's case, there were bureaucrats who showed an interest in Western science, but they were eliminated during the political strife of the early nineteenth century. In Japan, Christianity was indeed considered taboo, but Japanese were tolerant of Western culture. In China and Korea, the intellectuals discouraged Western culture, but early-modern Japan actively studied the West and spread the acquired knowledge. Japanese intellectuals' interest in the natural sciences made them receptive to modernization and built the foundation for understanding industrial technology (Sato 1992, Mitani 2012).

This analysis focusing on the bureaucratic system based on Confucianism and civil service examinations was suggested by Sato (1979). Sato went further, saying that *Kokugaku* (National/Native Learning) and other innovative schools of thought rapidly rose to eminence because not even the type of Confucianism sponsored by the *Bakufu* ever became established as orthodoxy in Japan. Put differently, he argued that the country's intelligentsia enjoyed greater intellectual freedom and had a more open attitude toward Western civilization, compared with their counterparts in neighboring Asian countries.

Moreover, Sato argued that while the *Bakufu* was powerful in the governance structure of Edo-period Japan, its legitimacy depended on the imperial court, and governing was largely delegated to the domains. This multidimensional political system of more than 250 relatively independent rival domains made the swift mobilization of people on a national scale impossible, making it difficult to deal with foreign threats in the short term. However, the possibility of change is greater in a multidimensional system, which increases the ability to adapt to crises in the long term.

The leadership of each domain strongly identified with their domains, were keenly interested in the economic development of their own domain, and were free from the anti-commercialism of Confucianism. In some of the domains that experienced significant economic development, society was highly sophisticated and administrative needs grew, which promoted the development of bureaucratic organization and improved the people's literacy and numeracy (reading, writing, arithmetic). On the other hand, during the *bakumatsu* period, the formation of nationwide networks for goods and information fostered a sense of national unity (Sato 1992).

Summarizing the above, in terms of the initial conditions needed for commencing modernization, early-modern Japan was in a better position than China or Korea. It is difficult to connect each of these factors in causal relationships to the introduction of constitutional forms of government, which is the aim of this essay, but we can see that a favorable environment for the reception of Western constitutionalism had been formed.

Making one further addition, I would argue that an important condition for a functioning constitutional system is that people are trained in equal and free debate, with public opinion being formed on the basis of debate. Society in early-modern Japan was organized based on the social status of people, but at the same time, there was room for discussion that transcended the lines of social status (Mitani 2017). For example, the Shoheizaka Academy (founded 1797), which was under *Bakufu* protection, was opened up to teachers and students from domains across Japan, rather than just *Bakufu* retainers. The Academy taught not only Confucianism but the humanities, geography, and other subjects as well. Graduates went on to build a network that transcended social status and domanical affiliation (Makabe 2007). These activities supported the introduction of parliamentary politics.

Foreign Crisis and the Emergence of the Consultative System of Governing in Japan

It is too simplistic to say that the sudden exposure to the West laid down the initial conditions for political modernization in early-modern Japan, which in turn led to a constitutional system of government. It is true that the conditions for modernization were steadily developing in early-modern Japan, but reforms for enabling modern political systems were not making progress. This gap was allowed to be remained by the long peace sustained by a policy of seclusion.

The national seclusion policy served as a defense against foreign threats, but it also hindered the development of political society and social mobility. The *Bakufu*'s clever conciliatory measures vis-à-vis the Daimyo (feudal lords) nipped their opposition in the bud. Edo and Osaka merchants were gaining economic strength as commerce developed, but they did not seek independence from the *Bakufu*. In a context of national seclusion, trade partners were not to be found abroad, so the merchants had nowhere to turn but to the domestic warrior class. In this way, there existed no new political power that could replace the authority of the *Bakufu* until the *bakumatsu* period (Sato 1992, 72–73).

At the same time, early-modern Japan was a highly integrated society, so the appearance of powerful external enemies strengthened that society's identification with a shared destiny that transcended region and social status, and created an urge for solidarity to resist external enemies. The foreign crisis that tested the system was the arrival of Perry's fleet.

Satsuma, Choshu, and other influential domains known as *yūhan* strongly demanded the *Bakufu* relax measures including the *sankin kōtai* policy of forcing feudal lords to alternate where they lived between their domain and the capital of Edo. The *yūhan* further urged the *Bakufu* to pay closer attention to the opinions of all of the domains, so as to strengthen national unity. At the same time, the *Bakufu* not only instructed the domains to assist the strengthening of coastal defenses around the time of Perry's arrival; the *Bakufu* also asked the domains for their opinions about opening the country, despite their status as outsiders in the *Bakufu*'s policymaking process. This served to expand the *Bakufu*'s consultative tradition through the formation of public opinion by debate. The *Bakufu* used consultative mechanisms involving elders (*rōjū*) and other close associates to aid the shogun's decision-making, and this was selected as the political strategy for dealing with the foreign crisis (Mitani 2017, 61–62).

The consultative system had two aims. It aimed to reflect the opinions of feudal lords (daimyo) in *Bakufu* administration, as well as allowing political groups to check one another by preventing any particular group from accumulating too much power. Neither was in anticipation of a future

parliamentary system, but the latter aim of limiting power was regarded as especially important. In order to realize impartial politics, it is necessary to place restraints on the exercise of power. The idea that a constitution and a parliament can create checks on power was also adopted by Kato Hiroyuki and Fukuzawa Yukichi, who studied Western constitutionalism. They saw constitutionalism as characterized by the idea of placing limits on the person or persons who are sovereign—be they a monarch or the people as a whole. (Sugawara 2014)

The *Bakufu* repeatedly emphasized “national unity” in the face of foreign crisis and lent an ear to the domains’ opinions, but was wary of the political emergence of the *yūhan* and became extremely passive when it came to their participation in *Bakufu* administration. The fact that the *Bakufu* changed its seclusion policy yet was passive with regard to regime change for the sake of national unity caused the *yūhan* to distrust the *Bakufu*’s leadership and undermined the legitimacy of the *Bakufu* (Sato 1992, 84).

This was made strikingly obvious by the issue of the imperial approval of the treaties of commerce. In 1858, the *Bakufu* sought to prevent criticism from the *yūhan* and weather its crisis of legitimacy by trying to obtain imperial approval for five treaties of commerce. However, the imperial court refused to grant its approval out of fear of opening the country to foreigners—a move that further weakened the *Bakufu*’s leadership.

Despite the *Bakufu*’s loss of authority, there existed no powerful political group to take its place. The court had strengthened its authority to rival that of the *Bakufu* but was otherwise weak in power politics, while even the stronger domains were incapable of overwhelming others on their own. Furthermore, there were conflicting opinions among *yūhan* on issues such as expelling foreigners and opening the country to the world, making it difficult for the *yūhan* to form a federation of domains. In spite of such turmoil, Japan did not descend into a major civil war or domestic conflict. That is because the sense of foreign crisis served to suppress such developments.

The Centralization of Power and Political Participation

The sense of foreign crisis in the wake of Perry’s arrival was shared by both the *Bakufu*, which had no way of dealing with the foreign pressure without daimyo cooperation, and the daimyo, who suppressed their challenge to the *Bakufu* system in the face of foreign pressure. The civil war between the new government and the old *Bakufu* forces was gradually wound down by the two antagonists, thereby avoiding a lengthening of the conflict and foreign intervention. The objective of the anti-*Bakufu* movement had less to do with breaking down the old order and was more aimed toward overcoming political opposition to allow for a unified response to the foreign crisis. The anti-*Bakufu* movement moved to position the emperor as a figure with authority that surpassed that wielded by the *Bakufu*, consolidate various groups under that authority, and institute reforms. The result was the declaration of the restoration of imperial rule in January 1868.

The declaration of the restoration of imperial rule was a statement that the new government would take the *Bakufu*’s place and would govern the country in the emperor’s name. The new Meiji government quickly sought other countries’ approval of its legitimacy and simultaneously announced domestically that its first foreign policy would be to engage with other countries in accordance with international law (February 1868). When the new court-centered government was established with the declaration of the restoration of imperial rule, many people were astonished as they had believed the new government would return to a policy of expelling foreigners and national seclusion.

The declaration of the restoration of imperial rule followed the reform principle of *kōgi*, often translated as “public opinion.” The principle of *kōgi* signified that influential daimyo would take part in politics through debate. Both the pro-*Bakufu* camp (the Tokugawas) and the anti-*Bakufu*

forces that sought to make the imperial court the center of politics (Satsuma and Choshu) agreed that the court should not play an active role in conducting politics, but that there was a need for politics to be conducted through *kōgi* by including the participation of the daimyo (Suzuki 2002). The pro- and anti-*Bakufu* forces agreed that future political power, whatever its form, must be based on the principle of *kōgi* (Mitani 2017, 64–65).

Furthermore, as the new government required the support of many domains for the sake of domestic stability, the emperor summoned nobles and lords in March 1868 to announce the Charter Oath as the new state's basic policy for national administration. The first clause declared that "Deliberative assemblies shall be widely established and all matters decided by public opinion." The intention of the oath was to reject despotism in politics and expand political participation, to build a society in which individuals could exercise their talents, and to acquire knowledge by joining the ranks of the international community, especially developed countries, without adhering to old customs. The imperial notice promulgated at the same time as the Charter Oath explained the aim of the restoration with reference to the international situation, saying that a continuation of the *bakufu* regime would have incurred the disdain of foreign states and brought about disadvantages, making it necessary for the emperor to take control over politics in order to confront the Western powers. The oath was signed by roughly 500 nobles and chief retainers from various domains (Suzuki 2002, 12–22).

Next, a statement known as the Document of the Form of Government was promulgated in June. A political body called the Grand Council of State, modeled after the traditional political organization of the imperial court, was created. Basic governance mechanisms and procedures, including the centralization of power in the Grand Council, the separation of powers, and the election of officials, were established. The intent was to distribute authority within the Grand Council of State, even as power was being centralized there, in an effort to avoid giving too much power to any single figure. However, while decision-making authority was mainly vested in the legislative body (*Giseikan*), the authority and role of the organization corresponding to the lower house of parliament (*Kakyoku*) was severely limited. The *Kakyoku* was abolished after three months. Yet, the failure of the *Kakyoku* did not eliminate the need for the formation of public opinion. A body for conducting debate continued to be maintained, under different names such as *Kaigisho* and *Shūgi'in* (Mitani, 2012).

In the initial years of the Meiji period, what was called the parliament was nothing more than an assembly for lords where domain representatives gathered to discuss their views on the government. The assembly was transformed into a parliament that functioned as a core component of the constitutional system only after a series of reforms that followed the abolition of domains and establishment of prefectures in 1871, as well as through knowledge gained from the experience of leaders who visited the West—in particular the Iwakura Mission of 1871–1873.

In particular, the elimination of domains as independent administrative units transformed the domains into prefectures that were directly controlled by the new government. This not only facilitated rapid progress toward the creation of a centralized state, but also expanded the potential of the parliamentary system as a space for forming public opinion on a national scale.

Visions for a Constitutional System

The nineteenth century was a time when the concepts of the nation state and nationalism—the products of Western modernity—began circulating throughout the international community. The objectives of the Mission were to learn from Western civilization, decide on the state's policy for system reform, and lay down the groundwork for revising the treaties that Japan had been forced to sign. Kume Kunitake, who left a detailed record of the mission, visited Belgium and wrote, "A nation that lacks an autonomous populace will see its power wane, and it will be difficult to maintain that nation." The challenge of a civilized nation is to develop its people's patriotism and

nationalism, and Kume viewed the constitution as the tool for fostering such feelings. This focus on Western civilization was shared by all leaders in the mission (Takii 2003, 60–61).

In July 1873, Kido Takayoshi, who returned home ahead of the rest of the Iwakura Mission, submitted a memorandum to the emperor, arguing that it was imperative to expand the Charter Oath and establish a constitution. Securing the independence, wealth, and power of the state was possible only by mobilizing the people under the sovereign. He argued for the need of imperial rule and strong leadership by the emperor-led government through the establishment of a constitution. Kido opposed the “conquer Korea argument” (*seikanron*) by prioritizing domestic reform, and did so in line with his plan for constitutional reform. Kido initially advocated an autocracy, but his ideal was a constitutional monarchy coupled with a growth in national consciousness.

Kido’s vision of the constitutional system almost exactly matched Okubo Toshimichi’s idea of constitutional government. In the memorandum he wrote in 1873 after returning to Japan, Okubo presented three types of government that would allow for the centralization of power. These were 1) an autocracy with a constitution, 2) constitutional popular “co-governance” (democracy), and 3) “co-governance” by the monarch and the people (constitutional monarchy). He argued that of these, type 3) was the most suitable for Japan to stimulate the people’s political participation. Type 1) was not advisable for Japan as it was only possible when the people are ignorant and cannot be otherwise governed. Type 2) was ideal but was only possible in a country such as the United States where the people had freed themselves from tradition. The second choice also came with the risk of intensifying factional antagonism and political chaos, which could lead to tyranny. This made constitutional monarchy desirable, but the Japanese population was not enlightened enough to manage the workings of a constitution on their own. Thus, they had no choice but to create a political system using the emperor’s authority until political structures were developed enough to facilitate a constitutional monarchy (Sato 1992, 179–206). After suppressing the Satsuma Rebellion led by Saigo Takamori, Okubo attempted to create a regional administrators’ assembly (assembly consisting of governors) in preparation for the opening of the parliament (Mitani 2012, 160–161) before he was assassinated in 1878.

In this way, the leaders of the new government envisioned a constitutional monarchy that was based on the introduction of a parliamentary system as the political system best suited to Japan, and began working toward establishing a constitution. The biggest issue in the debates about a constitution was how much power the parliament should have. In other words, the question was about how they could secure the people’s participation, which was needed in a constitutional system of government.

Debates on Constitutional Government

Kato Hiroyuki (1867) was likely the first to introduce the Japanese term *rikken seitai* as a concept corresponding to constitutional government. In 1875, the proclamation of the Imperial Edict on Gradual Constitutional Government caused the concept to quickly take root, and the movement calling for the opening of a parliament gained momentum. However, the nature and power of the parliament at the heart of the constitutional government were subject to various interpretations.

Amid such developments, the memorandum submitted to the government by Okuma Shigenobu at the end of 1879 positioned political parties at the center of constitutional government. Until Okuma’s memorandum, political parties had not been considered in discussions about constitutional government, so this triggered debate. The memorandum was one of the causes of the 1881 Political Crisis, but it also created an irreversible momentum toward constitutional government in modern Japan (Suetsake 2011, 30–33).

Okuma’s concept of a constitutional government called for the leader of a party gaining a parliamentary majority to be given both legislative and executive power. If no majority is gained,

a leader or political leader from another party should be picked and the government replaced, according to Okuma. Inoue Kowashi criticized this practice adopted by British-style party cabinet systems of placing legislative and executive power in the parliament, noting that the cabinet in Prussia was the sovereign's cabinet and not the parties' cabinet. Inoue also argued that the government should be the sovereign's government and not the parliament's government, meaning that the government exists outside the influence of the political parties. Inoue emphasized that the Prussian king was not swayed by the parties but is a figure who governs within the scope of the constitution, and proposed to Iwakura Tomomi that a Prussian-like monarchy was the form of government Imperial Japan ought to choose.

Inoue was opposed by Okuma as well as by Fukuzawa Yukichi. Fukuzawa held that the evolution of civilization cultivates a "progressive spirit" yet also creates friction in society, and came to advocate the party cabinet system as a political system capable of absorbing such friction and antagonism. At the same time, Fukuzawa expected the emperor to fulfill a function of "capturing the spirit of the Japanese people" by withdrawing from governance and removing himself from political conflict (Suetake 2011, 34–38).

However, Inoue was vehemently opposed to placing the emperor in such a symbolic position of reigning without ruling. He argued that as Japan headed toward the adoption of a constitutional system, the country ought to maintain the distinctive feature of imperial governance—direct rule—that is, the emperor ruling the nation in person. Inoue repeatedly explained the benefits of the Prussian system to Ito Hirobumi and Inoue Kaoru. Japan thus began heading in the direction of a Prussian-style constitutional monarchy as a model for its political system. The opening of parliament was promised to take place in 1890, and both the government and the private sector started to prepare for the event. Many political parties were born in the 1880s, but they were all short-lived. The significance of the parties within the constitutional system was not understood until after the establishment of the Meiji Constitution (Suetake 2011, 40–62).

The Significance of the Separation of Powers

A Prussian-style constitution gave stronger authority to the executive than a British-style constitution, making the choice of who should be in charge of administration a significant question. It became important to establish an executive branch that could withstand criticism from the parliament, and which possessed greater legitimacy than parliament. Ito Hirobumi took on the role of creating such an executive.

In 1883, upon his return from Europe, where he had studied the continent's constitutions, Ito began working to create Japan's imperial house and peerage systems. The enactment of the Imperial Household Law sought to protect the imperial house from parliamentary influence. Work on a peerage system was a prerequisite for the establishment of the House of Peers. These steps were taken in pursuit of the national goal of creating a nation on par with European monarchies. In 1885, when Ito became prime minister, he created a cabinet system and strengthened its executive power. The cabinet system implemented a strict separation between the imperial house and the government. On the one hand, this system relieved the emperor of any political responsibility, but it also allowed the cabinet to administer the country regardless of the emperor's wishes.

However, opposition from Inoue Kowashi, who feared that the strengthening of the cabinet would threaten the emperor's sovereignty, prevented the Meiji Constitution from containing any references to the cabinet's position and authority or even its existence. There was another factor hindering the emergence of a strong cabinet. It was the introduction of an advanced separation of powers in the structure of the Meiji Constitution (Mitani 2017).

The separation of powers had been a central part of the Meiji government's constitutionalist vision since the declaration of the restoration of imperial rule. The restoration of imperial rule

meant recovering the emperor's authority and making imperial governance the cornerstone of the state. Imperial governance did not mean the revival of the *Bakufu*'s absolute power, and the imperial system needed a mechanism for eliminating absolute power. The separation of powers was thought to be an effective means of curbing power. The separation of power that was realized through the practices of the *Bakufu*'s consultative system was a political strategy that had been selected to deal with the foreign crisis of the mid-19th century. The consultative system of aggregating diverse opinions through discussions among the elders functioned to prevent power from being concentrated in any one political group. The system had sought to enable the Tokugawa shogunate to exercise leadership in an environment of greater administrative specialization that had been created with the establishment of national *Bakufu* rule (Mitani 2017, 42–44, 67–68).

The *Bakufu*'s consultative system was in a broad sense a way of forming “public opinion.” This evolved into the “public opinion government” at the core of the new Meiji government's vision of the constitutional state. The principle of “public opinion,” as embodied in the concept of *kōgi*, contained within it the seeds of two ideas: parliamentarism and the separation of powers. The notion of *kōgi* gave legitimacy to imperial governance, acted to effectively stimulate popular dynamism, and helped establish the first operational constitutional monarchy in Asia.

If we take the principle of constitutional government to mean placing checks on power using rules, and expanding popular political participation through parliament, then we can agree that the idea of public opinion had its origins in the concept of *kōgi*—used by the *Bakufu* in political management.

The Emperor System and Constitutionalism

There are two ways of understanding the Meiji Constitution. One is to interpret it as a set of basic governing principles in accordance with Western constitutionalism. This revolves around an interpretation of the Meiji Constitution as *lex scripta*, or written law. It acknowledges that the establishment of a constitution was a prerequisite to entering the West-centered international community of the nineteenth century on equal terms. The other way of interpreting the Meiji Constitution is to focus on the unwritten rules and customs that regulated the state system alongside the explicit text of the constitution, as well as their historical background. In fact, the Meiji Constitution was not unrelated to the basic rules of the past state system in Japan, including the *ritsuryō* legal system and the *Bakufu*-domain system, and its text alone was not sufficient to cope with various matters of statecraft.

With regard to the latter understanding, the view of the emperor as a superior being whose status did not have to be put in writing, or as transcending the constitution, had a major influence on how the constitution was managed and interpreted. As explained in the constitution's commentary (*kenpō gikai*), the emperor's position in the Meiji Constitution did not start with the establishment of the constitution, and was seen as originating in the “native national polity.” The concept of *kokutai*, often translated as the “national polity,” has been interpreted in various ways, but in the Meiji Constitution, Japan was seen as a state governed since antiquity by the emperor, whose continuity was emphasized. However, while the emperor's legitimacy was supported by all forms of authority and power throughout Japan's long history, it had been common practice for the emperor to entrust the actual exercise of power to the political system of the era. Unlike the West, the emperor had almost never ruled as an absolute monarch.

In the West, constitutional systems of government generally developed from absolute monarchies. The concept of an absolute monarchy did not exist in Japan, so it was not possible to introduce constitutional systems of government without first creating something resembling an absolute monarch. Thus, when establishing the Meiji Constitution, the document's drafters created a theoretical construct that assumed the existence of the emperor as an absolute

monarch and held that the emperor voluntarily limited his own absolute power. As such, the Meiji Constitution provided for the emperor's supreme authority, but it also limited the exercise of that authority in accordance with advice from supporting government institutions. In this way, the emperor's position in the Meiji Constitution was interpreted as possessing the dimensions of both a constitutional and absolute monarch (Kitaoka 2010, 76–77). If the aspects of an absolute monarch were emphasized, the emperor would literally rule as a sovereign and bear the responsibility of all decisions made (the imperial sovereignty doctrine). By contrast, emphasizing the aspects of a constitutional monarch would highlight the functions of parliament and cabinet as the emperor's advisory bodies.

In this way, the constitutional theory behind the Meiji Constitution combined the ideas of those who interpreted the constitution through the concept of imperial sovereignty, as expounded on by scholars such as Hozumi Yatsuka, and those who espoused a stance emphasizing the parliament. The doctrine of imperial sovereignty fundamentally rejected parliamentarism and party politics. In the 1930s, the doctrine received overwhelming support from government officials and military authorities who valued administrative expertise and consistency in policy. However, even when the military began to assert itself in politics, the parliament was far from powerless. As previously discussed, one factor that helped sustain parliamentarism was the fact that the ideology and customs of *kōgi*, which stressed the importance of free debate that went beyond the boundaries of social status during the *Bakufu* era, were never rejected.

Another factor goes back to Fukuzawa Yukichi's *On the Imperial Household* (1882), which separated the emperor from politics and made him the nation's spiritual and moral center (Suetake 2011, 38–40). This idea was adopted and carried forward by Minobe Tatsukichi and others, and the fact that it did not lose its legitimacy as one of many interpretations of *kokutai* can be said to have acted as a breakwater protecting constitutionalism from the doctrine of absolute imperial sovereignty. Moreover, the traditional idea that the emperor and the people had never been adversaries throughout history, but rather had worked together in the management of the state in a cooperative relationship, as well as concepts such as *wachū kyodō* (harmonious cooperation) and *kunmin kyōchi* (joint rule by the monarch and the people) provided support for the factors that helped sustain parliamentarism.

Japanese constitutionalism sought to come to terms with the limitations of the doctrine of separation of powers through struggle. The relationship between the emperor, the parliament, and the cabinet was shaped by the interaction between the political interpretation of the constitution held by the government of the day and the ideals of those who drew up the constitution. For example, Ito Hirobumi sought to limit the power of the parliament when drafting the constitution, but was not seeking to reject parliament or political parties. The constitutional politics envisioned by Ito consisted of harmonious interactions between the three agencies of the sovereign, the parliament, and the administration. In particular, he regarded as crucial the collaboration between the government and the parliament based on an independent executive branch (Takii 2003, 116–118).

The legislative and executive branches were theoretically able to exercise their own authority in accordance with the separation of powers, but a complete separation between the legislative and executive branches was never possible. Successive governments have continued to worry about how to regulate the branches and facilitate their cooperation. Modern-day systems of governance still face the exact same problem.

References

- Banno, Junji. 1996. *Kindai Nihon no kokka kōsō* [Political Blueprint of Modern Japan]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Enomoto, Hiroaki. 2015. *Kōgiyoron to bakumatsu ishin no seiji henka* [Public Opinion and Political Transformation in Restoration at the End of the Edo Period]. Ph.D. dissertation, Chuo University.
- Ito, Yukio. 1999. *Riken kokka no kakuritsu to Itō Hirobumi* [Establishment of a Constitutional Country and Hirobumi Ito]. Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press.
- Kitaoka, Shin'ichi. 2010. *Nihon seijishi* [Japanese Political History]. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.
- Kokaze, Hidemasa. 2004. *Ajia no teikoku kokka* [Asian Empire State]. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan.
- Makabe, Hitoshi. 2007. *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji* [Learning and Politics in the Late Tokugawa Period]. Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, ed. 1957. *Nihon gaikō bunsho* [Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy]. Book 1, Vol. 1.
- Mitani, Hiroshi. 1997. *Meiji ishin to nashonarizumu—bakumatsu no gaikō to seiji hendō* [Meiji Restoration and Nationalism—Diplomacy and Political Change at the End of the Edo Period]. Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha.
- _____. 2012. *Meiji ishin o kangaeru* [Thinking About the Meiji Restoration]. Tokyo: Iwanami Gendai Bunko.
- Mitani, Taichiro. 2017. *Nihon no kindai to wa nan de atta no ka* [What Was Modern Japan?]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho.
- Miyajima, Hiroshi. 2004. *Higashi Ajia ni okeru kindaika, shokuminchika o dō kangaeru ka* [How We Should Think About Modernization and Colonialization in East Asia]. In *Shokuminchi kindai no shiza—Chōsen to Nihon* [Viewpoint of Modern Colonies—Korea and Japan]. Edited by Miyajima, et al. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Ohishi, Makoto. 1995. *Nihon kenpōshi* [Japanese Constitutional History]. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.
- Sakamoto, Takao. 1995. *Shōchō tennōsei to Nihon no raireki* [Symbolic Monarchy and Japan's Historical Trail]. Tokyo: Toshi Shuppan.
- Sasaki, Takashi. 2002. *Meiji jin no rikiryō* [Human Ability in the Meiji Era, History of Japan 21]. Tokyo: Kodansha.
- Sansom, George B. 1966. *Seio sekai to Nihon, ge*. Translated by Madoka Kanai, et al. Tokyo: Chikumashobo. Originally published as 1949 *The Western World and Japan—A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Sato, Seizaburo. 1979. Response to the West: The Korean and Japanese Patterns. In *Japan: A Comparative View*. Edited by Albert M. Craig. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

_____. 1992. “*Shi no chōyaku*” o koete—*seiyō no shōgeki to Nihon* [Beyond the “Leap of Death”—The Impact of the West and Japan]. Tokyo: Toshi Shuppan.

Suetake, Yoshiya and Tomoki Takada, eds. 2011. *Nihon seitōshi* [Japanese Political Party History]. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan.

Sugawara, Hikaru. 2014. *Magikku wādo to shite no rikkenshugi* [Constitutionalism as a Magic Word]. In *Jiyūshugi no seijika to seiji shisō* [Liberal Politicians and Political Thought]. Edited by Koichiro Matsuda and Kaoru Iokibe. Tokyo: Chuokoron-Shinsha.

Suzuki, Jun. 2002. *Ishin no kōsō to tenkai* [Vision and process of the Meiji Restoration (History of Japan, vol. 20)]. Tokyo: Kodansha.

Takii, Kazuhiro. 2003. *Bunmeishi no naka no Meiji kenpō* [The Meiji Constitution from the Perspective of the History of Civilization]. Kodansha Sensho.

_____. 2010. *Itō Hirobumi* [Hirobumi Ito]. Tokyo: Chuokoron-Shinsha.

_____. 2014. *Itō Hirobumi to Yunaiteddo Sutētsu* [Hirobumi Ito and the United States]. In *Kindai Nihon no rīdāshipu* [Modern Japanese Leadership]. Edited by Ryoichi Tobe. Tokyo: Chikura Shobo.

Colonial Development of Modern Industry in Korea, 1910-1939/40*

Mitsuhiko Kimura**

Abstract

Under Japanese rule, the Korean economy underwent momentous change, so much so that, from a global perspective, it constituted an exceptional case in the first half of the 20th century. Between 1912 to 1939, traditional primary industry (mostly agriculture) shrank from about 70% to about 40% of GDP, meanwhile, the proportion of mining and manufacturing industries combined in the total economy grew significantly, from about 5% to about 20%. In short, it represented a rapid transition from a primarily agricultural economy to a primarily non-agricultural one. During this transition, the agricultural sector itself underwent change. The policies of the Government-General and the development of the money economy led to improved farming techniques and changes in crop selection. Overall agricultural production increased steadily. In the meantime, industrialization in Korea began with small and medium-sized plants that simply processed raw materials. Then, as early as the 1910s, modern industries arose, particularly ironmaking plants. From the 1920s until 1930s, a private-sector enterprise built a large-scale chemical industrial complex founded on development of power plants. What must be emphasized here is that the colonized people themselves contributed widely to industrialization in Korea. Koreans positively responded to external stimulus and took the initiative in following Japanese models and learning skills in business and industrial technologies, thereby demonstrating entrepreneurship of their own.

Korea lacked modern industry when it was annexed by Japan. How did the Korean economy change under Japanese rule?

Changes in Korea's industrial structure clearly indicate economic transformation. According to recent estimates, agriculture, forestry, and fishery (as calculated by the amount of value added) accounted for approximately 70% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 1912 (Table 1). This percentage declined decade by decade to about 40% in 1939. In less than 30 years, then, traditional primary industry (mostly agriculture) shrank to less than half the total economy in terms of value of products. Conversely, the proportion of mining and manufacturing industries combined in the total economy grew significantly, from about 5% to about 20% during the same period.

In this article I will examine changes in, first, the agricultural sector and, second, the mining and manufacturing sector over the period from annexation in 1910 until 1939/40.

* This article is an English version of Kimura, Mitsuhiko. "Kindai sangyo no hatten [Development of modern industry]." Chap. 2 in *Nihon tochika no chosen: tokei to jissho kenkyu wa nani wo kataruka*. [Korea under the rule of Japan: what statistics and empirical research tell us]. Tokyo: Chuokoron-Shinsha, 2018.

** Mitsuhiko Kimura is Professor of Economics and Economic History at School of International Politics, Economics and Communication, Aoyama Gakuin University.

Table 1 Proportion of Total GDP by Industry (based on nominal prices)

(%)

	Agriculture, forestry and fishery	Mining and manufacturing	Electricity, gas and construction	Services
1912	68.1	4.9	1.9	25.1
1920	61.8	7.4	2.7	28.1
1930	49.0	9.4	6.3	35.3
1939	41.1	18.6	9.1	31.3

Note: Figures show a three-year average centered on the indicated year.

Source: Kim Nak-Nyeon, ed., *Shokuminchi-ki chosen no kokumin keizai keisan* [Economic growth in Korea 1910-1945], 315.

1. Agriculture

Growth of Production

While the agriculture, forestry, and fishery sector shrank in relation to other sectors, its products grew. From 1912 until 1939, agricultural production (in terms of real value added) rose by an average of 1.9% annually (Kim Nak-Nyeon, *op.cit.*, 406, table I-6). During the same period, agricultural products in Japan grew at a much lower rate, 1.0% (Ohkawa *et al.*, *Choki keizai tokei 1: Kokumin shotoku* [Long-term economic statistics 1: National income], 228, table 26).

The coverage of the original statistics issued by the Government-General of Korea in the 1910s was limited. Therefore, estimates of the growth rate of Korean agricultural products from 1910 through 1919 are based on many assumptions that might result in overestimation. Even when we disregard this early period and limit our assessment to the years 1920 to 1939, however, we still find a high average annual growth rate of 1.5%. Such rapid growth is rarely found elsewhere unless a vast area of new land is being cleared or large labor surplus is available.

Rice accounted for the largest proportion of total agricultural output in value. Throughout the period of Japanese rule, rice accounted for more than 40% of it almost every year, with a peak of 54% occurring in 1934.

Rice Production

In the early 1910s, the annual amount of rice produced in Korea stood at around 12 million *koku* (1 *koku* = 180 liters). It subsequently grew rapidly, reaching 27 million *koku* by 1937. Since cultivated land area increased less than 15% during that period, the increase in production is mainly attributable to greater productivity per unit area. By 1937, production per *tan* (about 991.7 square meters) had reached 1.6 *koku*, an increase of over 80% compared with the beginning of the period.

Geographically, the largest gains in productivity accrued in northern Korea. Because of the added factor of expanded cultivated area, rice production in northern Korea grew more sharply.

Improved Varieties of Rice

Before annexation, the Resident-General of Korea in 1906 established the Research Station of Model Agriculture (which later became an Agricultural Experimental Farm) in Suwon, near Hanseong (present-day Seoul), where they initiated research on the selective breeding of rice. Satellite stations and seed nurseries were also established throughout Korea. After annexation, the Government-General selected superior varieties from these facilities, distributed them to farmers free of charge, and provided guidance on cultivation methods for them.

The main varieties selected at the time included *Wase-shinriki* (originally from Kumamoto Prefecture; features high yields even with little fertilizer; also known as *Sou-shinriki*); *Kokuryo-miyako* (originally from Yamaguchi Prefecture; high-quality rice well-suited to manufacture of

sake); and *Tama-nishiki* (originally from Tochigi Prefecture; high-quality rice featuring drought resistance).

At the time of annexation, the dissemination rate of these improved varieties of rice in Korea was virtually nil. Subsequent dissemination occurred quickly, however, exceeding 50% by 1920. In that year, improved varieties accounted for 62% of total output of rice.

It is said that the Government-General went so far as to mobilize police officers to disseminate the improved rice varieties. However, such rapid dissemination could not have been achieved solely through governmental guidance (or “coercion”). At the time, the governmental organization established was neither strong nor systematic enough to implement such a program throughout Korea. Therefore, the rapid dissemination that did occur can only be explained by a positive response on the part of local producers.

Compared with native ones, the improved varieties of rice from Japan afforded Korean farmers higher incomes. In addition to higher yields and more stable crops, the superior quality of the new varieties commanded higher prices in the rice market.

Active Participation of Korean Farmers

Tenant farming was already widespread in Korea before Japan came on the scene. In the 1910s, about 70% of all farming households were either combined owner/tenant farmers or pure tenant farmers, with about half of the arable land area cultivated by tenant farmers. Of all rice paddies, nearly 70% were cultivated by tenant farmers.

Many Korean landowners were reportedly absentee landlords who had no interest in managing their farm and even did not live in local villages. Before annexation, the actual work of running some of the farms fell to Japanese who lived in Korea. They bought Korean land and leased it to tenant farmers to cultivate crops with an emphasis on rice. In the rice belt of southern Korea, there were Japanese individuals and companies who owned anywhere from several hundred to several thousand hectares of rice fields. The largest company of this type was Toyo Takushoku Kabushiki Kaisha (the Oriental Development Company), a national enterprise of the Japanese Empire founded in 1908.

It was only natural that these Japanese landowners would be first to adopt the improved varieties of rice. Their main objective was to maximize their income by exporting the rice they collected as rent from tenants to the home market in Japan.

Even as late as 1920, however, Japanese living in Korea owned only about 10% of the total cultivated rice area in Korea. This fact suggests that Koreans also played a part in widely disseminating improved varieties of rice. Behind the scene was there a rapid growth of the money economy. Korean farmers gained a strong incentive to acquire cash as manufactured goods entered Korea from Japan, taxes and other governmental fees were levied, and commercial fertilizers came on the market. In Korea, rice was by far the most important cash crop. Therefore, it hardly comes as a surprise that once Korean farmers understood the advantages of improved varieties of rice as a means to earn cash, they would spontaneously make the transition to those improved varieties. Whether the impetus came from the landowners or the tenant farmers may have depended on particular circumstances. In either case, Koreans responded to market opportunities newly opened to them.

This response to market opportunities was not limited to Korea. The same phenomenon can be found in many parts of Asia and Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries. In Southeast Asian countries such as Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, and Indochina, rice production burgeoned with the expansion of the export market. In those cases, so-called peasants who were seeking to gain cash transitioned from traditional rice cultivation for self-support to expanded commercial rice production (Myint, *Kaihatsu tojokoku no keizaigaku* [The economics of the developing countries], 38–43).

There were, however, notable differences. These countries had large undeveloped areas, and the increase in rice production depended on the cultivation of newly cleared land. During that time, productivity per unit area declined.

One reason for this decline was that no changes occurred either in the varieties of rice being grown or in cultivation methods. Also, clearing operations started with fertile land with a good water supply and gradually expanded to land with less and less advantageous characteristics (Wickizer *et al.*, *Monsoon Asia no beikoku keizai* [The rice economy of monsoon Asia], 256; Watanabe, *Kaihatsu keizaigaku kenkyu* [Development economics], 37–43).

In short, Korea was a special case because the development of the money economy not only led to increased cash crop production but also triggered a change in cultivation methods (as was also the case in Taiwan under Japanese rule). As a result, Korean farmers showed a more active and innovative response to market opportunities than did farmers in Southeast Asian countries.

Increased Input of Fertilizer and Sanmai Zoshoku Keikaku

Research on improved varieties of rice was pursued continuously. In the late 1930s, *Ginbozu* was the most commonly planted variety in southern Korea. This was a high-yielding variety introduced from the Hokuriku region in northern-centered Japan.

In northern Korea, a variety called *Rikuu no.132* that originated in Akita Prefecture was widely planted. It was not only high-yielding but resistant to cold-weather damage and blight. It is well known that Kenji Miyazawa, who as a famous farmer/poet, provided agricultural guidance in the Tohoku region in northeastern Japan where cold-weather damage was almost an annual event, worked diligently to disseminate this variety, which also was deemed delicious and highly prized in the marketplace (and is the forerunner of *Koshihikari* and *Sasanishiki* varieties today).

Most improved varieties of rice required large amounts of fertilizer, and the consumption of fertilizer in Korea increased significantly under Japanese rule. This included self-supplied fertilizer (green manure, compost, etc.) and commercial fertilizer (fishmeal, oil cake, chemical fertilizer, etc.). Consumption of ammonium sulfate (a type of nitrogenous fertilizer) in particular increased in the 1930s. This development was closely related to the construction of modern fertilizer factories in Korea, as will be discussed below.

Despite these advances, far less fertilizer was consumed by ordinary farmers in Korea than was consumed by farmers in Japan, even in the 1930s.

In 1920, the Government-General initiated Sanmai Zoshoku Keikaku (Rice Production Development Program), with the purported goals of meeting growing demand for rice in Korea, boosting the economies of farming families, and contributing to a solution to food shortage problems in the Japanese Empire.

The program set the ambitious goal of pursuing land improvement policies (improving irrigation, converting land use, and clearing new fields) and improvements in agricultural practices as a whole to increase annual rice production by 9.2 million *koku* (an increase of 60% compared with 1920) within 15 years.

Implementation did not proceed as planned, however, primarily for the following three reasons: rising prices inflated construction costs; interest rates on anticipated loans were higher than expected; and the special corporation slated to serve as the implementing agency was never formed.

The Government-General started over with a revised program implemented in 1926. Like its predecessor it was ambitious, with the goal of increasing annual rice production by 8.2 million *koku* in 14 years. The content of the revised program, however, was more refined, calling for direct government intervention to arrange large amounts of low-interest funding for land improvement and the purchase of fertilizer. Also, the program established two land reform agencies: Chosen Tochi Kairyō Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Land Improvement Company, a half-

public, half-private entity) and a land improvement division within Toyo Takushoku.

Starting in the 1930s, farmers in Japan who were suffering economically from a serious recession strengthened their opposition to the importation of Korean rice. This made it unavoidably necessary to reduce the goals of the revised program to increase Korean rice production and resulted in the dissolution of the land reform agencies above.

There is much debate concerning the political background, significance, results, and economic impact of Sanmai Zoshoku Keikaku. I will not explore it in detail here. I simply point out that rice production in Korea increased from about 14 million *koku* to 18 million to 19 million *koku* between the years 1920–21 and 1931–32.

Sanmai Zoshoku Keikaku is considered a first large-scale agricultural development plan in the Japanese Empire (Tohata and Ohkawa, *Chosen beikoku keizai ron* [Rice economy in Korea], 12). It was formulated and implemented by the Government-General, indicating that the latter was not simply an administrative organ, but also a large corporate entity that promoted the development of rice production as an industry.

Complementary Policies Pursued by the Government-General

Quality assurance is critically important if a cash crop is to be well-received by the market, and the Government-General made serious efforts in this area as well. In its unimproved state, Korean rice had many defects such as incomplete dryness and contamination by husks, straw, dirt, and *akamai* (a wild, old variety of rice colored red). For this reason, Japanese rice distributors were autonomously conducting grain inspections in open ports even before annexation.

In 1915, the Government-General promulgated regulations that placed rice inspection under provincial authority. In 1917, the regulations were revised so that inspections were paid out of provincial budgets. In 1932, the further step was taken of opening grain inspection centers and making the inspection of rice for export a national operation.

Concerning packaging, the Government-General in 1927 issued *kamasu* (straw bag) inspection regulations designed to improve bag quality and ensure uniformity. In 1932, specifications for standardized straw bags were established.

The Government-General also promoted rice storage operations. Rice sales tended to be concentrated in the fall and winter after harvest, during which time lower prices were unavoidable. Modern storage facilities were necessary both in rice-producing regions and at ports where rice was loaded, both to maintain rice quality and to adjust the selling period.

In 1930, the Government-General announced a plan to construct rice storage facilities in Korea, which formed the basis for the establishment of Chosen Beikoku Soko Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Rice Storehouse Company). The purpose of the company was to construct and operate “commercial” rice storehouses at ports and “agricultural” rice storehouses in rice-producing regions, as well as providing low-interest financing secured by stored rice. Under the plan, construction of the commercial rice storehouses proceeded rapidly; by 1933, they had a combined capacity of 1.6 million *koku*.

Before harvested rice reaches consumers, it must be husked and polished. This processing was done by private companies; the Government-General was not directly involved in it until the latter stages of World War II. I will explore the issue of rice processing in a later section discussing manufacturing industry.

Stagnation in the Production of Other Food Crops

Under Japanese rule, production of barley, millet, and soybeans, which were main dry-field food crops, stagnated, because of a low dissemination rate of improved varieties and a decline in productivity per unit area.

The Government-General did not show much interest in non-rice crops. It did not formulate

a field improvement plan until 1931, and even then it was much smaller in scale than the plan formulated for rice.

Soybeans were useful to farmers as a cash crop. The native soybeans cultivated in Korea were already of a high quality and were liked in Japan as raw material for *tofu*, *miso*, and soy sauce. They were the preferred market choice even over the well-known soybeans grown in Manchuria.

In the second half of the 1910s, the export of Korean soybeans increased dramatically (from 500,000 *koku* in 1914 to 1.3 million *koku* in 1919). This reflects the influence of World War I, when the soybean market exploded. Exports remained at a high level in subsequent years, to the point where exports represented 20–30% of total Korean soybean output by the 1930s.

If soybeans were a good cash crop, why did production not increase when the money economy developed in Korea?

Regional observation reveals that, while soybean production declined in southern Korea in the 1920s and 1930s, it increased slightly in northern Korea. It is not easy to ascertain the reasons for this relative waxing and waning between regions, but it may be due to farmers in northern Korea responding to market opportunities, thus planting more soybeans. On the contrary, farmers in the south turned to another cash crop, cotton, which promised greater profits than soybeans, as I will discuss below.

One food crop off the general trend above was potatoes, the production of which rose substantially beginning in the 1910s. The center of potato production was in the eastern part of northern Korea. Compared with other crops, potatoes were highly productive per unit area, serving as an important food crop for poor farmers.

Finally, maize production also increased in the 1930s, mainly in the western part of northern Korea. One reason for this, which I will discuss in more detail later, is that a modern cornstarch factory was built in Pyongyang that used maize as a raw material, thereby raising the market price for it.

Dissemination of Upland Cotton and Growth of Sericulture

Cotton was first cultivated as a summer crop on the Korean peninsula in the 14th and 15th centuries, prior to its introduction to Japan. Cotton cultivation grew during the Edo Period (1603–1867) in Japan, but quickly declined after the Meiji Restoration (1868) in the face of cheap imports. The Japanese government formulated policies designed to bolster, if only by a little, the production of raw cotton in regions under its control for use in Japan's rapidly growing cotton textile industry.

In 1905, Menka Saibai Kyokai (the Cotton Cultivation Association) was founded in Tokyo, which established a seed orchard for upland cotton and a ginning mill in Korea. Upland cotton, which originated in South America and was improved in the United States, accounted for most of the raw cotton being cultivated globally at the time. The value of yarn spun from upland cotton was higher than that of yarn made from Korean native cotton.

After annexation, in 1911, the Government-General initiated its first six-year plan for the promotion of cotton production, which focused on replacing native cotton by upland cotton in southern Korea. This plan was extended one year and completed in 1918. By that year, the area of land planted with upland cotton had increased to about 94,000 *chobu* (1*chobu* = 0.992 hectares) close to the 100,000 *chobu* anticipated by the plan. During the same period, the area under native cotton cultivation declined from about 60,000 to about 36,000 *chobu*.

The second ten-year plan for the promotion of cotton production began in 1919. Major goals of this plan were to grow cotton by clearing new land for cultivation and converting existing fields to cotton and to increase yield per unit area by improving cultivation methods, with a focus on upland cotton in southern Korea and also native cotton in the western part of northern Korea. In 1928, the final year of the plan, the cultivated area for upland and native cotton reached

approximately 140,000 and 70,000 *chobu*, respectively.

During the period implementing the plan, however, the price of raw cotton declined, preventing the anticipated targets from being achieved. The price continued to decline after the term of the plan, prompting the Government-General to suspend further efforts to expand cultivated area and concentrate instead on increasing production entirely through improvements in yield per unit area.

After the Manchurian Incident in 1931, a stable supply of raw cotton became even more important for the Japanese Empire. The Government-General accordingly formulated a new plan designed to increase both the amount of cultivated land devoted to cotton and the yield per unit area. In the 1930s, yield per unit area did not improve substantially, but the cultivation of upland cotton did expand, particularly in the western part of northern Korea.

Overall, upland cotton had a higher yield in terms of monetary value per unit area than native cotton. Its yield was even higher than that of the competing crop of soybeans, with some exceptional years. Upland cotton offered Korean farmers the long-term prospect of higher income, which explains why they converted their fields from native cotton and soybeans to upland cotton.

Thus, the development of Korean cotton crop under Japanese rule resulted in more than a six-fold increase in total production by the end of the 1930s as compared with the early 1910s.

Agricultural statistics for Korea show large increases in cultivated area and production amounts for many crops in the 1910s. It is difficult, however, to judge whether these increases actually occurred or whether, in those early years, insufficient surveys created apparent gains. Two crops that showed relatively high production values were *daikon* (horse radish) and *hakusai* (Chinese cabbage). In both cases, however, production leveled off from the 1920s on.

Sericulture grew steadily throughout the period of Japanese rule. After annexation, the Government-General promoted sericulture by spreading improved breeds of silkworm and promoting mulberry cultivation and silkworm breeding techniques. In 1925, it formulated a 15-year plan to increase cocoon production by one million *koku*. Under a series of policies, there was a substantial increase in the number of cocooneries, the area of mulberry orchards, and the total output of cocoons. Farmers were engaged in sericulture as a rare side business for earning cash income.

2. Mining and Manufacturing: A Sudden Rise from an Undeveloped State

Growth Rates and the Policies of the Government-General

From 1911 until 1940, Korean mining and manufacturing industries grew sharply. In terms of real value added, the annual growth rate averaged about 12% for mining and 9% for manufacturing. Expansion was especially rapid in the 1930s, with annual growth rates approaching 20% and 10%, respectively.

It is generally said that the Government-General adopted toward the manufacturing industry in Korea suppressive policies in the 1910s, passive in the 1920s, and active in the 1930s. It is certainly true that, compared with the agricultural sector, the Government-General did not have much interest in industrialization in Korea in the 1910s and 1920s.

However, it cannot be said that the 1910s were an era of suppression. Many researchers mention the Company Ordinance as the main basis for suppressive policies. Promulgated by the Government-General in 1910, it required official permission for a company to be established. According to the “suppressionist,” the purpose of this Ordinance was to prevent the development of commerce and industry in Korea, particularly Korean-owned capital. They stress that many applications to establish companies submitted by Koreans were rejected. But this view is simply the result of a misreading of the data. In fact, a high percentage of applications for company

formation submitted by Koreans were approved.

Rice Husking and Polishing Plants Distinctive to Korea

Small and medium-sized businesses typically start up not as fully formed companies but instead under individual management. The first businesses to form in this manner in Korea were rice husking and polishing plants.

Traditionally, Korean rice farmers did not husk their own rice. They either sold their unhusked rice to huskers or polished their rice directly from the husked state (producing half-polished rice known as *kanpaku*, “Korean white”) and sold it. After husking, the huskers either sold the unpolished brown rice to polishers or polished the rice themselves.

The husking and polishing industry in Korea rose before annexation when Japanese nationals established small-scale plants in rice distribution areas and at ports. Unhusked rice was more expensive to transport, and insufficient dryness of half-polished rice made it prone to rot. This made it important to husk and polish the rice before it was exported, a task that Japanese rice traders took upon themselves.

Koreans emulated the Japanese, entering the field. In 1912, there were 67 husking/polishing plants (with either ten or more employees, or motorized operations) run by Japanese nationals, and 23 run by Koreans in all of Korea. Japanese-owned plants had an average of 30 employees and Korean-owned plants had an average of 11. The plants were mostly of small-scale, but among Japanese-owned plants there were some that employed more than 200 workers.

In Japan, the usual practice was for farmers to husk their own rice using their own equipment and sell the resulting brown rice to retailers. The retailers polished the rice and sold it to consumers. Thus Japan and Korea were different in this regard. The Korean practice of husking and polishing rice in factories was distinctive and contributed to reduced processing costs and more uniform quality of the product, which increased market value of Korean rice. However, because Korean farmers entrusted husking operations to independent plants, they were forced to accept lower prices for the rice they harvested.

Husking and polishing operations grew in tandem with increased rice production and export. In 1932, there were 1,156 husking/polishing plants operating in Korea that employed five or more workers: 373 of them were operated by Japanese nationals, and 783 of them by Koreans. Although the average size of the Korean-owned plants was smaller than that of the Japanese-owned plants, their total number was higher than that of the Japanese-owned plants.

Among Japanese-owned plants, some large plants emerged with a rice polishing capacity that exceeded one million *koku* per year. The largest of these was Chosen Seimai Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Rice Polishing Company) operated by Heitaro Kato, a native of Yamaguchi Prefecture born in 1881. Kato was called the “king of rice polishing in Korea.” (Kato was also the founder of Kanemi Soko (Kanemi Storehouse), which precipitated a mass poisoning known as the “rice oil disease incident” in Japan in the 1960s.)

In 1935, more than 30,000 workers were employed in rice husking and polishing plants in Korea.

Large-Scale Coal Development Anthracite

In 1907, the Resident-General of Korea established Heijo Kogyosho, a mining office in Pyongyang, for the purpose of development of anthracite. After annexation, the Government-General took over operation of the enterprise and installed more equipment for coal extraction. Because most of anthracite in Pyongyang took the form of coal dust, much of it was transported after extraction to the Briquette Manufactory of the Japanese Navy in Tokuyama, where it was processed into briquettes.

In 1922, management of Heijo Kogyosho was transferred from the Government-General to the Japanese Navy in response to the latter's request to emphasize the mining of Pyongyang anthracite. When the transfer was made, the Navy renamed Heijo Kogyosho as the Pyongyang Mining Division of the Naval Fuel Arsenal. In the 1920s, the Navy relocated part of briquette manufacturing equipment from Tokuyama to Pyongyang, thus increasing the production capacity there.

In 1928, the Pyongyang Mining Division achieved a coal output capacity of 140,000 tons per year, the highest output of any coal mining operation in Korea. In the same year, the Division manufactured 45,000 tons of briquettes, representing nearly half of all briquette production in Korea. During this period, nearly all of the briquettes came to be consumed in Korea to heat homes and power railway boilers.

In 1936, administrative reforms resulted in yet another change in the name of the mining office, Mining Division of the Naval Fuel Arsenal.

At the time, anthracite reserves in Pyongyang were estimated at between 500 and 600 million tons, an amount considered to be virtually limitless. Some might wonder about the link between the ancient capital of Pyongyang and coal production, but in fact the city had the nickname "Coal Capital" because of its location over a vast coal field.

In the private sector, Chosen Muentan Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Anthracite Company) was founded in 1927, in which Mitsubishi Seitetsu (Mitsubishi Iron and Steel Company) was the main investor. The company always maintained close ties with the Government-General as it mined anthracite in and around Pyongyang and manufactured briquettes.

Some of the highest quality anthracite in Korea was found at Ryuto Kogyosho (a mining office in Ryongdung) in Pyeonganbuk-do in the northwestern part of northern Korea. This mine was developed by Katakura Shokusan (Katakura Industrial), affiliated with Katakura Seishi Boseki (Katakura Silk Reeling and Weaving Company). The unlikely connection between silk and coal can be explained by the suitability of anthracite as a means of heating cocooneries. Thus, anthracite contributed to the development of Korean sericulture. In 1935, Ryuto Kogyosho was producing about 60,000 tons of coal per year.

Anthracite was mined in southern Korea as well. Two mines in particular, located in the eastern part of southern Korea (the southern part of Gangwon-do), were well-known producers: Sanchoku Tanko (a coal mine in Samcheok) and Neietsu Tanko (a coal mine in Yeongwol). The former was operated by Sanchoku Kaihatsu (Sanchoku Development), a subsidiary of Nichiden Kogyo (a power company in Japan) established in 1936; the latter was operated by Chosen Denryoku (Korea Electric Power Company), a member of the Toyo Takushoku group. Coal reserves at Sanchoku Tanko were said to be enormous, totaling several hundred million tons; it was also the only mine in Korea that produced anthracite in non-dust form. For this reason, the coal from Sanchoku Tanko was mainly used in the production of carbide and castings.

Soft (Smoky) Coal

Most soft coal in Korea was low-grade (low-carbonization) lignite, not the kind of high-quality coking coal found in Hokkaido and Kyushu. The soft coal produced in Korea was primarily used to power locomotives, but some was also sold for home heating. Compared with Japanese coal, Korean coal had a high chemical content that resulted in high reactivity with hydrogen. Therefore, it drew attention in the 1930s as a raw material for the manufacture of synthetic oil (liquid fuel made by crushing coal and adding hydrogen).

Production of soft coal in Korea was almost entirely limited to the north. Its development was undertaken by several big companies and sole proprietorships, including Meiji Kogyo (Meiji Mining) and Chosen Yuentan Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Soft Coal Company).

Meiji Kogyo began developing coal and gold mines in Korea around the time of annexation. It

obtained mining rights in Anju, Pyeongannam-do (in the southwestern part of northern Korea) and began developing a coal mine there in 1912, with reserves estimated at 50 million tons. The Anju coal mine was the first in Korea to pursue mechanization with the introduction of electric drills and drainage pumps manufactured by the German company Siemens in 1928. It produced lignite for home and railway applications.

Another successful mine operated by Meiji Kogyo was the Sariwon coal mine, which was also located in the southwestern part of northern Korea, in Hwanghae-do. The company obtained mining rights in 1914 and opened the mine in 1931. The coal produced there was of nearly the same quality as coking coal, featuring good combustibility, strong thermal power, and clean burning that made it suitable for use in furnaces and boilers.

Chosen Yuentan Kabushiki Kaisha was established in 1939, when small and medium-sized soft coal mines formed a consortium capitalized at ¥15 million through mediation efforts by the Government-General aimed at increasing coal production. The participating companies were: Hokusen Tanko, Toyo Takushoku, Totaku Kogyo, and Aso Kosan, all of which contributed their mines as in-kind investments. Operations centered on the Kogonwon coal mine in Hamgyeongbuk-do in the northeast. This, along with the Sariwon coal mine and the Yuseon coal mine (discussed in more detail below), was one of the main soft coal mines in Korea. In 1935, it had 3,000 employees and produced 30,000 tons of lignite annually. The quality of the coal was high, with a high calorific value of 6,000 to 7,000 calories per gram and low ash and sulfur content, making it a popular choice for railway and home heating use.

Among sole proprietorships, Iwamura Kogyo was particularly successful. It was founded by Choichi Iwamura, a native of Kumamoto Prefecture (1881–1948) who resided in Korea. In 1938, Yamaichi Shoken (Yamaichi Securities) bought a 40% stake to create a stock company capitalized at ¥10 million. Iwamura Kogyo operated several mines in northern Korea, including the Yuseon mine in Hamgyeongbuk-do. The Yuseon mine was one of the best in Korea in terms of both quality and quantity of the coal, which was sold for use in home heating and railway (express locomotives) applications.

Early Development of Iron Mines and Establishment of Steelworks

Dating to the 1910s, iron mine development got an early start in Korea and formed the basis for the construction of several steelworks. Immediately after annexation, the company Mitsubishi Goshi Kaisha (Mitsubishi Joint Company) purchased an iron mine in Kyomipo, Pyeongannam-do (near the Taedong River) in the southwestern part of northern Korea. It subsequently continued to purchase nearby iron mines as well as anthracite coal mines in the same province and planned the construction of a steelworks.

Masatake Terauchi, the Japanese Army general who served as the first Governor-General of Korea, played a leading role in this process. Through the mining bureau of the Government-General, Terauchi helped Mitsubishi conduct mine surveys and smoothed the way for the disposal of large tracts of land owned by the Japanese Army in Kyomipo. He also encouraged development by leasing to the company 400,000 *tsubo* (1 *tsubo* = 3.3 square meters) of property that had been earmarked for railway use, and by waiving tariffs on imported construction supplies.

The construction of the ironworks in Kyomipo (Kenjiho Seitetsujo) began in 1914, but work was substantially delayed by the outbreak of World War I. The facility was finally completed in 1918, and two blast furnaces with an annual production capacity of 50,000 tons each were activated. In the previous year, Mitsubishi had established Mitsubishi Seitetsu (headquartered in Tokyo), which was capitalized at ¥30 million. The operation of Kenjiho Seitetsujo was entrusted to Mitsubishi Seitetsu.

Kenjiho Seitetsujo introduced the most advanced technologies available at the time,

including byproduct recovery furnaces. In 1919, an open-hearth furnace and rolling equipment manufactured by Mitsubishi Shipyards in Nagasaki and Kobe were added to create a fully integrated production system ranging from pig iron to finished steel. A major purpose of production of the steel material was to supply Mitsubishi shipyards with steel plate and large-scale section steel for naval vessels. In 1921, the facility began producing high tensile-strength steel plate for naval applications. In the same year, it raised pig iron production to 83,000 tons, steel production to 51,000 tons, and steel material production to 30,000 tons.

Subsequently, an economic downturn and a reduction in Japanese Navy forces resulted in a considerable decline in the steel market. In response, the company suspended operations at the steelmaking division of Kenjiho Seitetsujo until 1933. Even during that time, however, the production capacity of its pig iron division increased, reaching 150,000 tons in 1931. This was more than that of Kamaishi Seitetsujo in Japan, and slightly more than 20% of the production capacity of the largest steelmaking facility in the Japanese Empire, Yawata Seitetsujo.

In 1934, Nihon Seitetsu (Japan Iron and Steel Company) was created when Mitsubishi Seitetsu joined a large consortium of steel companies. The operation of Kenjiho Seitetsujo was entrusted to the new company at that time. Immediately after Nihon Seitetsu was formed, a plan was formulated to expand the production facilities of all the companies under the consortium's umbrella. The blast furnaces at Kenjiho Seitetsujo were renovated (Furnace No. 1 was removed and replaced by a newly constructed 120,000-ton furnace), and a new coke oven and a byproduct plant were constructed. In 1934–35, open-hearth furnaces Nos. 2 and 3 started their operations.

In the eastern part of northern Korea, the Riwon iron mine began operating in the mid-1910s for the purpose of supplying Yawata Seitetsujo with iron ore. The ore mined at Riwon was of relatively high quality, with an average iron content of 50–55%, and reserves were estimated at several tens of millions of tons. In 1927, the planned extraction amount was 80,000 tons.

The Riwon iron mine had large amounts of fine ore that could not be processed with a blast furnace. To utilize it, Nippon Koshuha Jukogyo (Japan High-Frequency Heavy Industries) was founded in 1935. The new company built a factory in Songjin, not far from Riwon, and began making steel (special steel in particular) from fine ore using its electrical furnace technology.

The Musan iron mine was said to be one of the largest iron mines not only in Korea but all of East Asia, with estimated reserves of 1.5 billion tons. Located deep in the northeastern part of northern Korea, it was hard to access and full development did not begin until the second half of the 1930s.

Large-scale Nonferrous Metal Refinery

During the rule of the Resident-General, Kuhara Kogyo (Kuhara Mining Company) began a geological survey of Korea. Kuhara Kogyo was the precursor of Nippon Kogyo, a leading mining company in Japan before World War II. It is one of the predecessors of today's JXTG Holdings Inc.

Beginning in 1915, Kuhara Kogyo aggressively pursued the development of gold, silver, copper, lead, and zinc mines in northern Korea. It also planned the construction of a refinery for processing gold, silver, and copper ore. The new plant was sited at Chinnampo (on the outskirts of Pyongyang), which was convenient for shipment by sea. Construction began in May 1915 and operations began in October of that year. Initially, the plant had a production capacity of crude copper at 216 tons per month and employed 1,400 workers.

Facilities at the refinery were subsequently expanded, including the completion in 1936 of a 600-foot (183-meter) chimney, the tallest in the world at the time. In locations such as Ashio and Besshi in Japan, smoke from metal refineries had caused serious damage to forests and farms. The tall chimney was intended to prevent the same kinds of problems from occurring in and around Chinnampo.

The Forgotten Munitions Plant

There was a munitions plant in Pyongyang when Korea was under Japanese rule. After World War II, this fact was forgotten not only by the general public but also by most scholars of modern Korean history. Because the plant was under the direct control of the Japanese Army, no records of it were included in materials that would ordinarily be viewed by those scholars, particularly the publications of the Government-General. *The annual administration report of the Government-General of Korea* does not mention the plant at all, and industrial statistics announced by the Government-General do not include the outputs at the plant.

The Pyongyang munitions plant, however, was not a secret facility. Located near the center of Pyongyang, it was familiar to city residents before WWII. Built in 1917, the plant was originally called Chosen Heiki Seizosho and was attached to the Tokyo artillery arsenal. Subsequently, it underwent two transformations before becoming Heijo Heiki Seizosho under the jurisdiction of the Kokura arsenal of the Japanese Army armory in 1936.

The main products of the plant included artillery shells, aircraft bombs, rolling stock, leather goods, hemp-made weapons, and materials for the manufacture of instruments. Nearly 200 workers were employed at the plant in 1923, but this number subsequently increased, reaching about 450 by 1936. In that year, armories in Japan employed thousands (one in Osaka had more than 8,000 workers). Compared with them, the workforce at Heijo Heiki Seizosho was quite small. Also, compared with the standard size of ordinary factories in Japan, the plant was only of medium size, without particular distinction. In the Korean context, however, it was counted as a large factory.

The Growth of Onoda Cement

Immediately after annexation, a primary cement maker in Japan, Onoda Cement, set about establishing operations in Korea to meet anticipated growth in demand for cement for railway, road, harbor, and other construction projects. Limestone, an ingredient in cement, could be found in vast quantities in various regions of Korea, particularly in the north.

Completed in the suburbs of Pyongyang in 1919, the new Onoda Cement plant had cutting-edge equipment for the time, with an annual production capacity of 34,000 tons. In later years Onoda Cement expanded its Pyongyang plant and built two more in the eastern part of northern Korea: the Wonsan plant in 1928 and the Komusan plant in 1936.

In the second half of the 1920s, the combined supply capacity of the Pyongyang and Wonsan plants exceeded Korea's total demand for cement. Onoda Cement therefore restricted production at these plants and set its sights on selling its products in Japan and Manchuria.

The competitors of Onoda Cement, Ube Cement and Asano Cement, countered Onoda's business strategy by constructing large plants in Korea in the second half of the 1930s (Ube in 1936, and Asano in 1937, both in the western part of northern Korea).

The Development of the Silk Industry and the Cotton Spinning and Weaving Industry

Katakura Seishi Boseki was founded in 1920. Its predecessor, Katakura Gumi, made plans to enter the Korean market after the Sino-Japanese War and initiated a survey of Korean sericulture and silk industries. After annexation, Katakura Gumi established forestry divisions in several locations in northern Korea. In 1913, it opened a cocoon purchasing office in the southern Korean town of Daegu, and went on to build a silk-reeling factory there in 1918.

In 1919, the silk company Yamaju Gumi, which was based in Shinshu, Japan, also built a factory in Daegu. In the same year, Jotaro Yamamoto, who began his career at Mitsui Bussan (Mitsui & Co.) (and later served as the president of the South Manchuria Railway Company), teamed up with Ozawa Gumi and other companies in Shinshu to establish Chosen Kiito Kabushiki

Kaisha (Korea Raw Silk Company) which, like the others, set up operations in Daegu. Thus, Daegu became the center of mechanized silk reeling in Korea.

In 1927–28, Katakura Seishi Boseki established more factories in Seoul, Hamhung (in the eastern part of northern Korea), and Jeonju (in the western part of southern Korea) (In Seoul, the company purchased an existing small factory and expanded it). At about the same time, Gunze Seishi, Toyo Seishi, and Zenhoku Seishi (the latter two affiliated with Mitsui Bussan) also built factories in Korea.

Koreans also established silk-reeling companies and built factories. Two of the more prominent Korean-owned companies were Chosen Seishi and Chunan Seishi. The former was founded in 1919 by a nobleman who belonged to the Korean aristocracy prior to the Japanese colonial period; its factory was located in Seoul. The latter was founded in 1926 with a factory located in the central part of southern Korea.

Many other small-scale factories were set up throughout Korea under both Japanese and Korean ownership and management. At the end of 1934, there were 84 mechanized silk-reeling factories operating in Korea with workforce of five or more employees. Forty percent of them, that is, 34 factories, were operated by Koreans and 19 of those were located in Daegu.

In the area of cotton spinning and weaving, Chosen Boshoku Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Spinning and Weaving Company) was established in 1917 by Utaro Noda (who participated in the founding of Miike Boseki), Kyohei Magoshi (who used to work at Mitsui Bussan), Jotaro Yamamoto, and others. The company set up operations in Pusan and built a large spinning and weaving factory there in 1922.

In 1919, the Kim family, who had vast landholdings in the western part of southern Korea, established Keijo Boshoku Kabushiki Kaisha (Keijo Spinning and Weaving Company). The company bought and operated a small factory that previously belonged to Keijo Orihimo Kaisha, which was set up in 1910. The factory subsequently achieved remarkable growth. Keijo Boshoku also built cotton ginning plants and dyeing plants all over Korea and became one of the preeminent Korean-owned companies. Underlying this growth was generous financial support provided by Chosen Shokusan Ginko (Korea Industrial Bank), a half-public, half-private financial institution founded by the Government-General (Eckert, *Nihon teikoku no moshigo* [Offspring of Empire], 123–140).

In the 1930s, two of Japan's major cotton spinning and weaving companies, Toyobo and Kanebo, built factories in Korea.

One example of a Korean-initiated small to medium-sized business in the cotton weaving field was a factory in Pyongyang that made knitted socks. It was founded by a Korean resident in Pyongyang in 1906, who introduced machinery from Japan. The sock-knitting industry grew sharply in the 1920s and had 33 cotton sock plants operating in Pyongyang by 1934. Nearly all of them were small plants that employed fewer than 50 workers, but three of them grew in scale having 100–200 workers.

Pulp and Paper Industry Led by Oji Seishi

Oji Seishi (Oji Paper Company) became the driving force of the pulp and paper industry in Korea. The ample conifer forests on the banks of the Yalu River enticed Oji Seishi to set up operations in Korea at an early date. In 1917, the company founded a subsidiary called Chosen Seishi, which constructed a pulp mill in the following year in Sinuiju, located on the border between the northwestern part of northern Korea and Manchuria. The mill produced sulfite pulp and ground pulp from raw wood, and supplied its products to paper mills operated by Oji Seishi in Japan.

The Government-General supported Chosen Seishi and preferentially sold government-owned lumber grown and harvested in the Yalu River basin to the company. The Sinuiju pulp mill had a site area of 210,000 *tsubo* and an annual production capacity of 10,000 tons, making it one of

the largest factories in Korea. After experiencing a downturn following World War I, the mill in Sinuiju was further expanded in 1925 and began to produce rolled paper.

Furthermore, Oji Seishi undertook to develop virgin forest in Hamgyeong-do in the eastern part of northern Korea. In 1935, it established a subsidiary called Hokusen Seishi Kagaku Kogyo (Hokusen Paper and Chemical Industry), which constructed a mill in Kilju in the eastern part of northern Korea. This was the first mill in the world to produce rayon pulp (an intermediate material for chemical fiber) using larch wood as raw material.

The Kilju mill had an annual production capacity of 25,000 tons, which was more than that of competitive pulp mills operating in Japan. In 1937, the Kilju mill accounted for 36% of all rayon pulp produced in the Japanese Empire. Rayon textiles were one of Japan's main export products at the time, and the Kilju mill served an important function as an intermediate material processor.

Shitagau Noguchi and the Development of Large-Scale Electric Power and Chemical Plants

After annexation, the Government-General actively conducted surveys on hydroelectric power sources in Korea. The first round of surveys was implemented from 1911 until 1914; the second from 1922 until 1929; and the third was initiated in 1936. Each round resulted in an expansion in the number of hydroelectric power sources amenable to development. Most of them were on the Yalu and Tumen rivers and their tributaries in northern Korea.

In 1926, Shitagau Noguchi (1873–1944) founded Chosen Suiryoku Hatsuden Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Hydroelectric Power Company) with a capitalization of ¥20 million and began hydraulic development on the Pujon River, a tributary of the Yalu River. Noguchi was originally an engineer from the electrical engineering department of Tokyo Imperial University, but became an entrepreneur in 1908 with the establishment of Nippon Chisso Hiryo (Japan Nitrogen Fertilizer Company), which manufactured chemical fertilizer.

The Pujon River flowed to the north of the Kaema Plateau and converged with the Yalu River. Noguchi planned to change its course through watershed modification to achieve large-scale power generation. The first step was to build a dam to flood valleys and create an artificial lake along the river. The next task was to dig water transmission tunnels through the mountains to drop water from the reservoir into the Japan Sea. Noguchi's inventive idea was to utilize the difference in elevation between the reservoir and the ocean to generate electricity. He further planned to construct power plants in four locations.

The huge scale of electric power development on the Pujon River was unprecedented in the Japanese Empire. To initiate it, it was necessary to construct a railroad for material transport. The first power plant was finally completed in 1929.

Using the same methodology, Noguchi was also engaged in development of power sources on the Changjin and Hochon rivers, two other tributaries of the Yalu River. Construction of power plants on these rivers began in 1933 and 1937, respectively. The scale of both of these projects surpassed that of the Pujon project.

Noguchi's ultimate goal was to build a chemical fertilizer plant in northern Korea that would have access to ample and inexpensive electrical power. He invested ¥10 million to establish Chosen Chisso Hiryo Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Nitrogen Fertilizer Company) in 1927 (which merged with its parent company, Nippon Chisso Hiryo, in 1941), and began the construction of a plant in Hungnam (in the eastern part of northern Korea), which was completed in 1929.

The Hungnam plant was comprised of facilities engaged in ammonia synthesis, electrolysis, ammonium sulfate manufacture, machinery manufacture, and catalysis. It had an initial production capacity of ammonium sulfate of 400,000 tons annually, which far exceeded that of Nippon Chisso Hiryo's plants in Japan (in Nobeoka and Minamata). Unlike the equipment in the plants in Japan, which had mostly been imported from Europe and North America, all of

the equipment in the Hungnam plant (except the nitrogen separator) had been manufactured by Japanese companies (including Yasukawa Denki, Fuji Denki, Shibaura Seisakusho, Kobe Seikosho, and Hitachi Seisakusho). Thus, the construction of the Hungnam plant provided a strong stimulus for the development of machinery industry in Japan.

Pyrites are essential for the manufacture of sulfuric acid, and these were procured from mines in Japan and throughout Korea. The main source in Japan was the Yanahara mine in Okayama Prefecture; in Korea in the 1930s, pyrites were mainly mined in the northeastern part. To promote the development of pyrites mines in Korea, Noguchi invested ¥1 million to establish Chosen Kogyo Kaihatsu Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Mining Development Company) in 1929.

After its founding, the Hungnam fertilizer plant continued to expand. In addition to ammonium sulfate, its output was diversified to include ammonium sulfate-phosphate, superphosphate of lime, lime nitrogen, and other products, which it shipped in large quantities within Korea and to Japan.

A World-Class Chemical Industrial Complex

Noguchi constructed another chemical plant, in Pongung, about 4 kilometers away from the Hungnam fertilizer plant. It began processing soybeans in 1936. Construction was completed on a lime nitrogen facility in July of that year, enabling the mass manufacture of caustic soda (sodium hydroxide), ammonium chloride, carbide, lime nitrogen, and other products.

The manufacturing method for caustic soda was perfected at the Nobeoka plant in Japan and involved the electrolysis of salt using the mercury process. The caustic soda was shipped to affiliated chemical plants.

The manufacturing of ammonium chloride was initiated with the intention of making effective use of the chlorine that was produced through the electrolysis of salt. In Korea, ammonium chloride was either sold as fertilizer or purified and sold to manufacturers of batteries. Chlorine was also used as a raw material in the manufacture of hydrochloric acid, bleaching powder, and liquid chlorine. It was rare even in Japan for a single plant to manufacture multiple chemical products simultaneously through the rationalized use of salt.

Limestone, a raw material used to make carbide, was transported by freight cars to the plant from a limestone quarry owned by the company located north of Pongung. When there was a shortage, the rest was procured from Onoda Cement's Wonsan plant.

At the Pongung plant, the large amounts of powdered carbide generated as a byproduct of the carbide manufacturing process were simply thrown away. To avoid such waste, technology was developed that enabled the utilization of powdered carbide, which provided the basis for the construction of branch facilities dedicated to the production of acetylene, acetylene black, and glycol. Acetylene black was sold primarily as a material for making printing ink and rubber filler. The branch facility for glycol added hydrogen to acetylene to produce ethylene, the base material for manufacturing glycol. Other products made from acetylene included butanol and acetone. Glycol, butanol, and acetone are basic chemical products used to make solvents, synthetic resins, pharmaceuticals, and other products.

Noguchi built one related factory after another to create a huge chemical industrial complex in Hungnam. This complex was counted as one of the greatest in the world.

Noguchi also pursued urban development in Hungnam, including the construction of a harbor and housing. This was a unique feature of industrial development in Hungnam: a private-sector entrepreneur was engaged in development of infrastructure and factory construction at the same time.

Noguchi's Other Projects

Noguchi's projects extended beyond Hungnam. In 1932, he built a coal carbonization plant in the

town of Yongan in Hamgyeongbuk-do in the northeastern part of northern Korea. Using lignite available nearby, the plant manufactured gasoline from tar and produced methanol and formalin from water gas. Formalin is a base material used to make explosives and carbolic resin (Bakelite). The plant in Yongan included chemical facilities, machinery manufacturing facilities, and an inhouse thermal power plant. The power plant burned semicoke and supplied power not just to the plant but, through an electric power company (Chosen Denki), to surrounding cities.

In 1935, on the basis of technological development in Yongan, Noguchi founded Chosen Sekitan Kogyo (Korea Coal Industry Company), a new firm capitalized at ¥10 million that engaged in direct coal liquefaction. While operating the plant in Yongan, the company built in 1936 another plant in Aoji, in the extreme northeastern corner of northern Korea, near the borders of Manchuria and the U.S.S.R.

The plant in Aoji featured such cutting-edge equipment as high-efficiency gas generators and Japan's first 5,000 hp gas compressors capable of generating 240 atm of pressure each. All of the important equipment at the plant was manufactured by Japanese companies, including Kobe Seikoshu, Hitachi Seisakusho, and the Kure naval arsenal. For raw material, it used lignite obtained from a nearby company-owned mine. Technological development was avidly pursued by engineers from the naval fuel arsenal in Tokuyama. They were joined by Professor Yoshikiyo Oshima of Tokyo Imperial University, an authority on fuel science. At its peak, the plant had a production capacity of 50,000 tons of liquefied coal per year.

Research and commercialization of liquid fuel made from coal had already been undertaken by the Germans, British, and Americans. In Japan, it was the Navy that first showed an interest, with the Japanese government formulating "the summary plan for the promotion of artificial petroleum" in 1936 and implementing the "national liquid fuel policy" from the following year. In this context Noguchi pursued the commercialization of liquefied coal in Korea.

Noguchi gathered many talented engineers and guided them as they introduced and developed advanced technologies. Funding was initially provided by Mitsubishi Ginko (Mitsubishi Bank), with later financing provided by Nippon Kogyo Ginko (The Industrial Bank of Japan) and two of Korea's main financial institutions: Chosen Ginko and Chosen Shokusan Ginko.

Noguchi was intimately connected to the Government-General, particularly close to Kazushige Ugaki, the sixth Governor-General. Ugaki had a strong interest in Noguchi's enterprises and assisted in their development.

The Overlooked Machine Industry

It is widely said that the machine industry languished in Korea under Japanese rule, but this is not true. It did grow during the colonial period, although not as flamboyantly as the other sectors, particularly the chemical industry (as described above).

Many of the Japanese companies that built metal and chemical plants in Korea added machinery manufacturing facilities where they produced and repaired the machinery they used. Because these machine shops did not take the form of independent companies or factories, they hardly ever appear in the statistics and data of the time. Nevertheless, they played an important role in Korea's industry.

The machine plant in Hungnam was the largest machine manufacturing facility in Korea. It was constructed in 1928, at the same time that the Hungnam fertilizer plant was built. It expanded as the chemical industrial complex in Hungnam developed, and manufactured, renovated, and repaired the chemical machinery needed by the industrial complex. Nearly all of the newly designed machines were manufactured at this plant. It possessed a full complement of equipment comparable to that of an independent machine manufacturing company, including electric furnaces for casting, large hammers for forging, various lathes, and presses for manufacturing cans.

The Railway Bureau of the Government-General also operated machine manufacturing facilities throughout Korea. The largest of these was the Gyeongseong plant, founded in 1905. This plant started out as a small railway repair facility but gradually expanded. In 1927, it started producing steam locomotives. By 1939, it had 854 machine tools and a workforce of 1,700 skilled laborers (of which 595 were Japanese).

Two powerful independent machine manufacturing companies should also be mentioned: Chosen Shoko and Ryuzan Kosaku.

Chosen Shoko Kabushiki Kaisha (Korea Industrial and Commerce Company) was established in 1919 by Seishichiro Nakamura, a Japanese national living in Korea. Born in 1872 in Nagasaki Prefecture, Nakamura founded Nakamura Gumi, a sea transport company. Active in many commercial and industrial fields, including civil engineering, oil, fertilizer, machinery, ironworking, shipbuilding, and transport, Chosen Shoko was known as the “Mitsui Bussan of the Peninsula” and was the predecessor of Sankyu Inc., a modern-day general distribution company based in Kyushu. Its first plant was built in Chinnampo in 1910, and engaged in the manufacture and repair of mining and refining machinery.

Ryuzan Kosaku Kabushiki Kaisha (Ryuzan Manufacturing Company) was an ironworks founded in 1919 by Tsunejiro Tagawa, a native of Shimane Prefecture who was born in 1884. Affiliated with the Railway Bureau, it grew quite large by the 1930s, operating plants in Gyeongseong and Incheon that manufactured locomotives, rolling stock for passenger and freight trains, and various other railway equipment.

Rubber Processing, Fish Oil Manufacture, and Agricultural Product Processing

Starting in the 1920s, rubber processing plants (mainly for rubber boots) flourished in Pyongyang. Nearly all of them were small-scale enterprises owned by Koreans, although several of them developed workforces to 100 people or more. In 1939, there were 13 rubber processing plants in Pyongyang, only one of which was Japanese-owned. Two of them had workforces in excess of 200 people.

The fish oil business prospered with the growth of the sardine fishing industry. In 1923, large schools of migrating sardines suddenly appeared off the eastern coast of Korea. In response, Japanese nationals introduced Japanese-style purse seine fishing using motorized boats, giving birth to a burgeoning sardine fishing industry. In the first half of the 1930s, Japanese companies founded modern fish processing plants near fishing harbors: Chosen Chisso's oil plant in Hungnam and a plant of Chosen Yushi (Korea Oil and Fat Company) in Chongjin. These plants produced large volumes of sardine oil (used in the manufacture of soap, foodstuffs, and pharmaceuticals) and fish meal (for fertilizer).

Meanwhile, many Korean-owned small-scale plants for fish-oil processing sprang up, numbering more than a thousand by the late 1930s. At that time, Korean sardine oil accounted for three-quarters of all sardine oil produced in the Japanese Empire and was an important resource for the oil industry both in Japan and Korea.

Reaching its peak in about 1940, the Korean sardine fishing industry was said to be on a global scale. Subsequently, the sardines stopped migrating near Korea and the industry rapidly declined, bringing an end to the fish-oil processing.

A noteworthy development in the field of agricultural product processing in Korea occurred in 1931, when Nippon Corn Products built a corn processing plant in Pyongyang. The company was a subsidiary of an American company (with some investment by Mitsubishi). Introducing American-style machine technology, it processed corn grown in Korea and Manchuria to make such products as cornstarch and dextrose. The cornstarch was important both as food (mixed with rice, wheat, and barley) and for industrial applications, including newly developed ones such as pigment and gunpowder manufacture. The Pyongyang plant won reputation to be the largest

agricultural processing plant in Asia.

An Overview: Mining Output, Total Number of Plants, Proportion of Heavy and Chemical Industries

From annexation in 1910 until 1935, coal production increased dramatically from 80,000 tons to 2 million tons per year (Table 2). Iron ore production increased from 140,000 tons to 230,000 tons. Production of graphite (used to make desiccants, steelmaking crucibles, and electrodes), barite (the source ore of barium sulfate, a chemical additive), tungsten (for making metal alloys), and various other minerals also increased. The district of Kanggye in Pyeonganbuk-do in the northwestern part of northern Korea was known worldwide as a source of vein graphite.

Other products that do not appear in the same table include rare minerals such as antimony and mica, which were mined in the 1920s. In the 1930s, extraction began at a magnesite mine in Tanchon in Hamgyeongnam-do in the eastern part of northern Korea. It had one of the largest magnesite reserves in the world, estimated at several hundred million tons of high-grade ore.

The total number of industrial plants in Korea increased approximately from 300 to 6,500 between 1912 and 1939 (Table 3). This increase was particularly evident among Korean-owned plants, which first surpassed the number of Japanese-owned plants in 1932. Although most Korean-owned plants were quite modest in size with fewer than 50 employees, some relatively large plants also developed, with 15 plants employing 200 or more workers by 1939. A large part of the Japanese-owned plants were also small and medium-sized, but their average size was larger than that of their Korean-owned counterparts. Japanese-owned plants accounted for 90% of all large-scale plants, far outnumbering those owned by Koreans.

Not only did industry as a whole experience growth, but the proportion of total industrial output accounted for by heavy and chemical industries (machinery, metals, and chemicals) increased largely from only 6% in 1911 to 12% in 1920, 17% in 1930, and 40% in 1939.

Table 2 Outputs of Main Ores

(1,000 tons)

	Gold and silver	Copper	Zinc	Iron (pig iron)	Pyrite	Graphite	Coal	Barite	Fluorite	Tungsten	Quartz	Alunite
1910	10.3	0.4	—	140.4 (—)	—	0.8	78.5	—	—	—	—	—
1915	8.8	0.0	8.1	259.2 (—)	—	0.5	229.1	—	—	—	—	—
1920	21.5	—	3.4	447.2 (85.2)	—	11.2	289.0	—	—	—	28.8	—
1925	17.0	1.0	3.5	351.4 (101.9)	—	14.1	622.3	—	—	—	75.9	—
1930	13.4	5.6	3.8	532.5 (151.4)	—	20.1	884.1	6.1	2.3	0.0	47.3	11.7
1935	58.1	1.6	2.2	228.2 (147.8)	55.6	45.1	1,991.2	11.0	9.7	0.9	38.7	81.5

Source: *Chosen sotokufu tokei nenpo: Showa 6 nen* [Statistical yearbook of the Government-General of Korea: 1931], 182–185; *Chosen sotokufu tokei nenpo: Showa 10 nen* [Statistical yearbook of the Government-General of Korea: 1935], 149–151.

Table 3 Number of Plants by Size and Nationality

No. of Employees (Factory Workers)	1912		1932		1939	
	Japanese-owned	Korean-owned	Japanese-owned	Korean-owned	Japanese-owned	Korean-owned
5-49	159 (77.9)	87 (92.6)	1,887 (92.5)	2,445 (97.7)	2,040 (80.1)	3,731 (95.2)
50-99	27 (13.2)	3 (3.2)	82 (4.0)	40 (1.6)	231 (9.1)	135 (3.4)
100-199	11 (5.4)	2 (2.1)	33 (1.6)	12 (0.5)	150 (5.9)	38 (1.0)
200-	7 (3.4)	2 (2.1)	39 (1.6)	5 (0.2)	125 (4.9)	15 (0.4)
Total	204 (100)	94 (100)	2,041 (100)	2,502 (100)	2,546 (100)	3,919 (100)

Note: Figures for 1912 indicate plants that employed 10 or more people or that utilized motors. Figures for 1932 and 1939 indicate plants with facilities that employed five or more factory workers or plants that employed five or more factory workers at all times. Figures in parentheses indicate the proportion (as a percentage) of the total number of plants accounted for by plants of the indicated size.

Source: Umemura and Mizoguchi, eds., *Kyu Nihon shokuminchi keizai tokei* [Economic statistics of former Japanese colonies], 52.

3. Participation of Koreans in the Remarkable Development

Transition to Non-agricultural Economy

Under Japanese rule, the Korean economy underwent momentous change, so much so that, from a global perspective, it constituted an exceptional case in the first half of the 20th century. In short, it represented a rapid transition from a primarily agricultural economy to a primarily non-agricultural one.

During this transition, the agricultural sector itself underwent change. The policies of the Government-General and the development of the money economy led to improved farming techniques and changes in crop selection. Overall agricultural production increased steadily.

Industrialization in Korea began with small and medium-sized plants that simply processed raw materials. Then, as early as the 1910s, modern industries arose, particularly ironmaking plants. From the 1920s until 1930s, a private-sector enterprise built a large-scale chemical industrial complex founded on development of power plants.

The Government-General pushed construction of infrastructure such as transportation and communication networks and simultaneously supported industrial development in several sectors from the earliest days after annexation. The scope of those activities was expanded in the late 1920s and thereafter.

From the perspective of comparative economic history, such industrialization as seen in Korea never occurred in Western colonies. This contrast between Japanese rule over Korea and Western colonization is particularly evident with regard to the construction of hydroelectric power plants on a scale beyond those in the home country, as well as the giant industrial complex based on them.

What must be emphasized here is that the colonized people themselves contributed widely to industrialization in Korea. It is true that the Government-General and Japanese nationals (both companies and individuals) led the way and official policy coupled with Japanese financing, technology, and know-how played central roles. But at the same time, Koreans positively responded to external stimulus and took the initiative in following Japanese models and learning

skills in business and industrial technologies, thereby demonstrating entrepreneurship of their own. The remarkable development achieved was thus the result of the combined efforts of the colonizer and the colonized.

From this point of view, the shortcomings of the so-called “colonial dependence theory” become apparent. On the basis of Marxian economics, the dependence theory has had a strong impact on researchers and other intellectuals interested in colonial history. It focuses attention on the relationships of dominance/subordination and exploiter/exploited that play out between a colonizing country and its colony. Such a view reduces the colonized to a group of totally powerless people, ignoring the positive contributions they make to economic growth.

Today, Marxism is in decline, but the emotionally charged issues of inflicting/suffering harm and atonement have gained currency, and the deeply rooted dependence theory has been maintained. This perspective, however, cannot ultimately explain the changes in the Korean economy from the 1910s through the 1930s.

The Small Presence of Chinese

Finally, what merits consideration is that Chinese nationals (ethnic Chinese born in Qing China or the Republic of China) made up less than 0.5% of the total population in colonial Korea. This distinguishes Korea from the colonies in Southeast Asia, which all had a relatively large presence of Chinese.

In Southeast Asia, the western colonizers lived in limited districts, especially urban locations, and tended to work either in administration and international trade or on plantations. In these countries, Chinese tended to work as laborers in agriculture or civil engineering projects, or in enterprises operating in such fields as commerce and transportation or small to medium enterprises in food-processing fields like rice polishing, or in marginal administrative positions. In these capacities the Chinese supplemented the economic activity and reign of the Western colonizers. Thus, new economic opportunities were monopolized by the hard-working and adaptive Chinese, and, as a result, the colonized population was unable to free itself from work centered on traditional agriculture.

This phenomenon did not occur in Korea, where the economic activity of Chinese nationals was limited to such small areas as vegetable farming and China-related trade. Had there been a larger Chinese population in Korea, it would probably have been much more difficult for Koreans to participate in new business ventures. Indeed, they may well have been placed below the Chinese in the economic pecking order. The lack of Chinese influence, then, should not be dismissed, as the past literature did, in the issue of industrialization of Korea under Japanese rule.

References

Chosen Nokai. 1944. *Chosen nogyo hattatsu shi: hattatsu hen*. [The history of the development of Korean agriculture: Development]. Seoul: Chosen Nokai.

Chosen Nokai. 1944. *Chosen nogyo hattatsu shi: seisaku hen*. [The history of the development of Korean agriculture: Policies]. Seoul: Chosen Nokai.

Eckert, Carter J. 2004. *Nihon teikoku no moshigo: Kochan no Kimu ichizoku to Kankoku shihonshugi no shokuminchi kigen 1876-1945*. Translated by Masayo Kotani. Tokyo: Soshisha. Originally published as 1991. *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the colonial origins of Korean capitalism, 1876-1945*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press.

Government-General of Korea. 1911-1944. *Chosen sotokufu tokei nempo, meiji 43 nen - showa 17 nen*. [Statistical yearbook of the Government-General of Korea, 1910-1942]. Seoul: Government-

General of Korea.

- _____. 1944. *Nogyo tokei hyo: showa15 nen*. [Table of agricultural statistics: 1940]. Seoul: Government-General of Korea.
- Hirai, Koichi. 1997. *Nihon shokuminchi zaiseishi kenkyu*. [Study of public finance in the Japanese colonies]. Kyoto: Minerva Shobo.
- Iinuma, Jiro. 1982. *Nitteika Chosen ni okeru nogyo kakumei*. [The agricultural revolution in Korea under Japanese imperialism]. In *Shokuminchi-ki Chosen no shakai to teiko*. [Society and resistance in colonial Korea]. Edited by Jiro Iinuma and Kang Jae-eun. Tokyo: Miraisha.
- Kang, Jae-eun, ed. 1985. *Chosen ni okeru Nitchitsu Kontserun*. [The Nitchitsu industrial complex in Korea]. Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan.
- Kawai, Kazuo. 1986. *Chosen ni okeru sanmai zoshoku keikaku*. [Rice production development program in Korea]. Tokyo: Miraisha.
- Kim, Nak-nyon, ed. 2008. *Shokuminchi-ki Chosen no kokumin keizai keisan 1910-1945*. [Economic growth in Korea 1910-1945]. Translated by Moon Ho-il and Kim Seung-mi. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.
- Kimura, Mitsuhiko. 1983. "Shokuminchi-ka Chosen no mensaku ni tsuite." [On the production of cotton in colonial Korea]. *Azia kenkyu* 30, no.1.
- _____. 2016. *Kitachosen keizaishi: 1910-1960*. [Economic history of North Korea: 1910-1960]. Tokyo: Chisen Shokan.
- Kimura, Mitsuhiko and Keiji Abe. 2003. *Kitachosen no gunji kogyoka: Teikoku no senso kara Kin Nissei no senso e*. [Military industrialization in North Korea: From the Empire's war to Kim Il Sung's war]. Tokyo: Chisen Shokan.
- Myint, Hla. 1981. *Kaihatsu tojokoku no keizaigaku*. Translated by Shuzo Kimura and Toshio Watanabe. Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shimposha. Originally published as 1965. *The Economics of the Developing Countries*. New York: Praeger.
- Norinsho Nettai Nogyo Kenkyu Senta, ed. 1976. *Kyu Chosen ni okeru Nihon no nogyo shiken kenkyu no seika*. [The results of Japanese agricultural research tests in Korea]. Tokyo: Norin Tokei Kyokai.
- Ohkawa, Kazushi, Nobukiyo Takamatsu, and Yuzo Yamamoto. 1987. *Choki keizai tokei 1, kokumin shotoku* [Long-term economic statistics 1, national income]. Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shimposha.
- Tohata, Seiichi, and Kazushi Ohkawa. 1935. *Chosen beikoku keizai ron*. [Rice economy in Korea]. Tokyo: Nihon Gakujitsu Shinko Kai.
- Umemura, Mataji, and Toshiyuki Mizoguchi, eds. 1988. *Kyu Nihon shokuminchi keizai tokei, suikei to bunseki*. [Economic statistics of the former Japanese colonies: estimates and analysis]. Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shimposha.

Watanabe, Toshio. 1978. *Kaihatsu keizaigaku kenkyu*. [Development economics]. Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shimposha.

Wickizer, V. D. and M.K. Bennett. 1958. *Monsoon Ajia no beikoku keizai*. Translated by Torao Tamai and Yoshio Hirota. Tokyo: Nihon Hyoron Shinsha. Originally published as 1941 *The Rice Economy of Monsoon Asia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Yi, Hyong-nang. 2015. *Shokuminchi Chosen no kome to Nihon: Beikoku kensa seido no tenkai katei*. [Rice in colonial Korea and Japan: The development process of the rice-inspection system]. Tokyo: Chuo University Press.

Yoshida, Keiichi. 1954. *Chosen suisan kaihatsu shi*. [The history of the development of the Korean marine products industry]. Shimonoseki: Chosuikai.

Japan and the Modern World: Lessons from Meiji Frederick R. Dickinson*

Abstract

From the “Japan bashing” era of the 1980s, we have entered another era of “Japan passing,” this time even more serious than during the Clinton administration. Selling Japan was easy when the Japanese economy was the envy of the world. In 2018, however, academics and pundits need an extra incentive to talk about Japan. How might we restore international attention to Japan? We might do so by looking at Japan through a global prism. The history of Meiji and modern Japan have limited relevance for those outside Japan unless we change the fundamental focus of our examination. Investigations should aspire not simply to explain the when, where, what, and how of modern Japan. Rather, a history of Meiji and modern Japan should, most fundamentally, be fashioned as a history of the modern world. A global history of modern Japan recognizes the power of Edo era Japan; talks about Meiji as critical to the rise of modern economics, politics and empire; and understands Japan’s vital contribution to an internationalist and integrated twentieth- and twenty-first century. A global history of modern Japan is, in essence, a history of the modern world through the prism of Japan, and it indicates that continued Japanese leadership in the twenty-first century may help sustain a world political and economic order that lacks full American support.

I have been thinking and teaching about Japanese history for thirty-five years. When I began my academic career, Japan was a very different place. In 1980, while I was an exchange student at Sophia University in Tokyo, the Japanese economy boomed, and Japan was the envy of the world. Like everyone else, I eagerly purchased the latest in audio gadgets, a Sony Walkman, and marveled at the fax machines that had begun to revolutionize communications among Japanese firms. A year earlier, American sociologist Ezra Vogel had published a sensational book titled, *Japan as Number One*. Vogel hailed not only Japanese economic and technological superiority, but real organizational strength, as well.¹

Although intended originally for an American audience, *Japan as Number One* sold many more copies in Japan. While good for the world economy, after all, Japanese economic might raised significant anxiety in the U.S. Proud of their country as the industrial engine of the world since World War I, many Americans saw in Japan’s new economic power visions of a darker national future. At the same time that Japan became the envy of the world, in other words, she became the source of growing fear. By 1985, the U.S. trade deficit with Japan had ballooned to \$50 billion. In 1987, a group of Republican Congressmen judged it politically advantageous to smash a Toshiba boombox to pieces with sledgehammers on Capitol Hill.

Clearly, Japan in the 1980s and 90s did not receive the kind of publicity that Japanese statesmen and citizens desired. But it did, at least, make the headlines. This is the great

* Frederick R. Dickinson is Professor of Japanese History, Co-Director of the Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies, and Deputy Director of the Penn Forum on Japan (PFJ) at the University of Pennsylvania.

¹ Ezra Vogel, *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1979).

difference between teaching Americans about Japan in the 1990s and doing so today. Despite its continuing centrality to world politics, economy, and culture, Japan today is largely invisible outside the Asia-Pacific region. That is not entirely the fault of Japanese statesmen and citizens. Geopolitical shifts have drawn the attention of policy-makers, pundits, and students elsewhere. From a time of “Japan bashing” in the 1980s, we have entered an era of “Japan passing” more sustained than during the Clinton administration in the 1990s.

A perfect recent example was the Trump administration’s January 2017 decision to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership. The announcement was, of course, a reflection of a distinctly impetuous negotiating style by the American president. But it also reflected significant changes in American foreign policy posture under the Obama administration. Despite the powerful show of support for Japan and Asia in Obama’s declaration of an “Asia pivot” in November 2011, Japanese policy-makers spent much of the Obama years lobbying Washington to actually live up to the grand promises of the “pivot.”

Toward a Global History of Modern Japan

Selling Japan was easy when the Japanese economy was the envy of the world. In 2018, however, academics and pundits need extra justification to talk about Japan. What can be done? Let us begin with the Meiji era. There are two common narratives of Meiji Japan. One was popular in the immediate postwar era. The other was a product of Japan’s subsequent high economic growth.

The devastation of World War II moved many in Japan to ask pointed questions about the causes of the calamity. The most influential narrative for at least three decades was the scathing critique of the Japanese state promoted by the Historical Science Society of Japan (*Rekishigaku kenkyūkai*). According to the *Rekishigaku kenkyūkai*, the war stemmed from the pathology of the Meiji state. The product of an “incomplete” revolution in 1868, the state suffered from “feudal remnants,” particularly, a triumvirate of power between the emperor, military, and bureaucracy (described as an “emperor system,” or *tennōsei*), which made for an oppressive, authoritarian polity bent upon foreign conquest.²

The economic boom of the 1960s helped generate a more positive vision of nineteenth-century Japan. In the hands of a group of conservative American scholars inspired by a new focus on “modernization” among American political scientists, the Meiji era became associated primarily with the rise of a modern Japan.³ In a series of six edited volumes published in the 1960s, this so-called “modernization school” gradually replaced the dark vision of Japanese militarism and imperialism with a tale of surprisingly modern Japanese political and economic development.⁴

As Japan became the first Asian country to host an Olympic Games in 1964, this more positive vision of Meiji and modern Japan certainly made sense. After the 1990’s economic crash, however, the vision of Meiji “modernization” is no longer any more useful in luring non-Japanese audiences than the earlier tale of a militarist/imperialist Japan.

How may we look at Meiji, therefore, in a way that makes sense for the twenty-first century? What kind of history of Meiji is serviceable for our present circumstances and for the future? The

² *Rekishigaku kenkyūkai*, ed., *Kindai Nihon no Keisei* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1953).

³ For a convenient introduction to and critique of this modernization school of American Japan specialists, see John W. Dower, “E. H. Norman, Japan, and the Uses of History,” in John W. Dower, ed., *Origins of the Modern Japanese State: Selected Writings of E. H. Norman* (New York: Pantheon, 1975), pp. 3–108.

⁴ Included in this “modernization series” were Marius B. Jansen, ed., *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (1965), William W. Lockwood, ed., *The State and Economic Enterprise in Japan* (1965), R. P. Dore, ed., *Aspects of Social Change in Modern Japan* (1967), Robert E. Ward, ed., *Political Development in Modern Japan* (1968), Donald H. Shively, ed., *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture* (1971), James William Morley, ed., *The Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan* (1972), all published by Princeton University Press.

obvious answer is embodied in a term that has recently become very popular: global. Why not produce a global history of modern Japan?

The term “global” can mean many things. It might be most useful, however, as an indication of the principle focus of historical analysis. The history of Meiji and modern Japan have limited relevance for those outside Japan unless we change the fundamental focus of our examination. Investigations should aspire not simply to explain the when, where, what, and how of modern Japan. Rather, a history of Meiji and modern Japan should, most fundamentally, be fashioned as a history of the modern world. A global history of modern Japan is, in essence, a history of the modern world through the prism of Japan.

A Global History of Tokugawa

To get a sense of a global history of Meiji first requires analysis of its antecedent. A critical foundation for the narrative of a dynamic, modernizing Meiji has long been the contrasting vision of a dark, “closed” Tokugawa. The idea of a “closed” Tokugawa has, of course, been around much longer than Japan’s high growth era. It derives, in fact, from German naturalist and physician, Englebert Kaempfer, who spent two years in Japan as chief surgeon with the Dutch East India Company between 1690 and 1692. Kaempfer published an account of his travels when Japan had begun to scale back trade, a development that spelled disaster for the Dutch East India Company. According to Kaempfer, this “closing” of Japan was counter to the will of God.⁵ The Japanese translation of Kaempfer’s idea—the term “sakoku”—came to circulate among shogunal counsels in the early nineteenth century as the bakufu debated whether to allow greater trade with the outside world.⁶

The idea of a “closed” Japan, in other words, had political utility for the Dutch in the early eighteenth century, the Japanese in the early nineteenth century, and for American modernization scholars in the mid-twentieth century. However, most historians today reject the idea of “sakoku” as a gross misrepresentation of reality. Tokugawa Japan systematically managed foreign trade and its borders. But it continued a vibrant trade with China, Korea, the Ainu, Southeast Asia and the West throughout the era. The trade was mediated by a substantial Chinese merchant community in Nagasaki, the Dutch factory in Deshima (Nagasaki), the Shimazu family of Satsuma, the Sō family of Tsushima, and the Matsumae domain in Hokkaido.

If we abandon our singular focus on the tale of a “modern Japan” in the nineteenth century, we may not only avoid the ahistorical claim of “closure” in the early modern period. We may also discover ways that Tokugawa Japan actually helped define the contours of the early modern world. Historians typically associate the early modern era with the rise of a Western world. There is, of course, no denying the impressive new power of the West from the fifteenth century. But the ability of the Tokugawa polity to define the terms of trade with the West until 1854 raises serious questions about the usual tale of a “rise of the West.”

Western historians have fashioned a formidable legend of Western power by forefronting stories of Western success and concealing evidence of dependence and failure. Thus, early modern history is dominated by tales of the Age of Exploration in the Americas. Modern history, in turn, focuses on European industrialization and colonization in Africa and South Asia.

A critical component of the Age of Exploration is, of course, the overwhelming allure of riches in East and Southeast Asia. The preeminent hero of the Age of Exploration, Christopher Columbus, was inspired by the great tale of riches in China found in the classic travelogue by

⁵ Englebert Kaempfer, *Amoenitatum exoticarum politico-physico-mediciarum* (Henrici Wilhelmi Meyeri, 1712).

⁶ Beatrice M. Bodart-Bailey, ed. & trans., *Kaempfer’s Japan: Tokugawa Culture Observed* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), p. 19.

Marco Polo.⁷ And we know that the Jesuit missionaries who arrived in fifteenth-century Japan found the Japanese to be “the best heathen who have yet been discovered.”⁸ From the perspective of East Asia, in other words, the Age of Exploration is less a story about the “rise of the West,” more a tale of the great allure of Asia.

More importantly, the experience of Western states in East Asia pales by comparison with their activities in the early modern Americas and in modern Africa and South Asia. While sixteenth-century Spanish conquistadors gobbled up Central and South America, Britain colonized India in the nineteenth century and European states carved up Africa after the 1884 Berlin Conference, no Western state ever succeeded in colonizing China, Japan, or Korea. Western scholars have long described Chinese, Japanese, and Korean resistance to Western approaches as East Asian failure to adopt the norms of modern political and economic intercourse. From the perspective of East Asia, however, this resistance represents enduring East Asian strength and a distinct limit on the ability of Western states to control events in the Age of Imperialism. Like early modern China and Korea, Tokugawa Japan continued to control its own terms of trade and diplomacy through the early nineteenth century. In global terms, Edo Japan represents not Japanese failure in the face of overwhelming European strength but formidable Japanese strength in the context of enduring European weakness.

A Global History of Meiji

If Edo Japan was an era of formidable Japanese strength, we can assume that there is some remnant of that strength in Meiji, as well. Meiji, of course, typically begins with a dramatic scene of Japanese capitulation. Commodore Matthew Perry arrives in Uraga Bay in 1853 with the latest in naval technology—steam power—and compels Japan at gunpoint to begin a new relationship with the United States. It is the beginning, moreover, of an “unequal treaty” system in Japan, which deprives Japan until the early twentieth century of its sovereign right to set its own tariffs and to try foreign nationals in its own courts.

Despite the indignity, however, recent scholarship emphasizes the degree to which bakufu officials were able to significantly shape their new relationship with the intruding Western states. While the U.S. sought to open Shinagawa to American trade and residence, Japanese negotiators skillfully changed this to Yokohama, farther from Edo and off the main Tokugawa era thoroughfare, the *Tōkaidō*. Although the 1858 commercial treaty between the U.S. and Japan originally called for eight ports to be opened by 1863, the bakufu pared this to six, and Edo, Osaka, and Hyōgo remained closed through the fall of the dynasty in 1868.⁹

Western historians like to accentuate the idea of Japanese “capitulation” by describing Japanese development in the latter nineteenth century as “Westernization.” By contrast, understanding the formidable power of Edo Japan and recognizing the significant ways in which bakumatsu and Meiji leaders fashioned their own fate enables us to see the much broader global significance of nineteenth-century Japan. The most interesting history of Meiji is not the tale of “Westernization” but of how much Meiji, in fact, contributed to the contours of the nineteenth-century world.

Western historians commonly describe nineteenth-century Japan as a “late-developing” state. But Japan was the first Asian state to industrialize. More importantly, like France, the U.S.,

⁷ For the latest analysis of Marco Polo’s travels and influence, see Hans Ulrich Vogel, *Marco Polo Was in China: New Evidence from Currencies, Salts and Revenues* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

⁸ To quote founder of the Jesuit order, Francis Xavier, who arrived in Kagoshima in 1543. Quoted in John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer & Albert M. Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), p. 31.

⁹ Michael Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and The Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 86.

Germany and other Western states that followed eighteenth-century British precedent, Japanese development was central to and helped define the story of nineteenth-century industrialization.

Japan introduced the infrastructure of a modern state at roughly the same time that new conventions swept Western Europe and the United States. Even before the advent of Meiji, Japan boasted four modern shipyards. Telegraph service opened between Tokyo and Yokohama in 1870, just twenty years after a telecommunications boom in the U.S. and Europe. Just as the creation of a US postal service followed upon the heels of the American revolution, the new Meiji leaders mobilized three years after the Meiji Restoration to establish a government-operated national postal network. Japan's first rail link tied Tokyo and Yokohama in 1872, just three years after the completion of America's transcontinental railroad. Authorities adopted the Gregorian calendar on New Year's Day, 1873, several years after most of Catholic Europe and the United States, but well before eastern Europe, Russia, and the Middle East. Japan's first public electric utility, the Tokyo Electric Light Company, began operations in 1887, just five years after New York's Edison Electric Company launched the world's first public power station. Electric streetcars and hydroelectric power arrived in Japan in 1895 and 1897, eight and nine years, respectively, after the same in the U.S.¹⁰ Tokyo legislated compulsory education in 1872, eight years before the same in Britain.

Most importantly, Japan played a key role in defining the modern state. Appearing over a century after the world's first modern constitutions, the Meiji Constitution, nonetheless, joined a vibrant ongoing global discussion over economic, legal, and political development. Distressed over the increasingly destructive human and environmental consequences of industrialization, theorists such as English philosopher T. H. Green began calling in the mid-nineteenth century for tighter state regulation.¹¹ In constitutional theory, Rudolf von Gneist and Lorenz von Stein, with whom Itō Hirobumi had consulted during a tour in Germany in 1883, both stressed the importance of a state structure designed to moderate the excesses of class conflict.

The Meiji Constitution thus symbolized a growing international departure from the classic liberal faith in individualism, and laissez-faire and distrust of state power. As Itō declared in February 1889, "in the medieval period Montesquieu advanced the theory of the separation of powers." But, "according to a theory based on careful study and on actual experience and advanced by recent scholars, sovereignty is one and indivisible."¹² Drafters of the Meiji Constitution viewed their project as the latest, most advanced experiment in constitutional government, designed to moderate the excesses of classic liberalism. Western observers, in fact, hailed the Meiji Constitution as a novel combination of internationally accepted constitutional principles and indigenous cultural preferences. The *London Times* celebrated it for its "broad and catholic eclecticism, tempered by a purely native respect for the inalienable rights of the EMPEROR." That the emperor required ministerial consent, declared American Secretary of State James G. Blaine, marked an improvement over the Constitutions of Europe and the United States.¹³

Diplomatically speaking, the "unequal treaties" marked a capitulation for Japan. But this "capitulation" was not only a great victory for the U.S. It marked a critical foundation for the rise of American power. American historians tend to highlight this rise as a natural process of

¹⁰ Susan Hanley, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan: The Hidden Legacy of Material Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), p. 191.

¹¹ Germaine A. Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 289.

¹² Quotation in Ryūsaku Tsunoda, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 2 vols. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1964), vol. 2, p. 160.

¹³ Hidemasa Kokaze, "The Political Space of Meiji 22 (1889): The Promulgation of the Constitution and the Birth of the Nation," *Japan Review*, no. 23 (2011), p. 127.

marshaling the impressive resources of the vast American continent (“manifest destiny”). But without the distinction of vanquishing the well-established premodern Tokugawa state, American power could have easily gone nowhere.

Japan’s military defeat of Qing China in 1895 and Russia in 1905 had an even more decisive effect on global history. The Sino-Japanese war turned the attention of the world toward Asia. According to the grandson of American president John Quincy Adams, “Eastern Asia is the prize for which all the energetic nations are grasping.”¹⁴ Intently searching for opportunities in the Asia/Pacific after 1895, Washington leapt at the opportunity in 1898 to vanquish the Spanish Empire and assume control of the Philippines. The power of the Meiji state, in other words, was partially responsible for America’s transformation into a Pacific empire.

Japan’s defeat of Imperial Russia in 1905 marked an even greater global watershed. The first instance in the modern era of the defeat of a Western empire by an Asian state, the Russo-Japanese War forecast the rise of an Asia/Pacific Century. Asian revolutionaries such as Sun Yat-Sen, Phan Bội Châu and Ho Chi Minh widely hailed the defeat of Russia as the dawn of a new age.

The most powerful significance of Meiji, in other words, is that it represents many larger nineteenth-century global trends. Most importantly, Meiji Japan plays a critical role in actually fashioning global economic and political trends in the nineteenth-century. Meiji demonstrates that both nineteenth-century industrialization and nineteenth-century state-building were global, not just Western enterprises. The American empire would not have emerged so dramatically in the latter nineteenth century without the Meiji state. And Japan’s defeat of Russia in 1905 forecast the Asia/Pacific world in which we currently live.

A Global History of Taishō

If our image of Meiji is strongly swayed by our understanding of Edo, discussions of Taishō likewise have an enormous effect on our vision of Meiji. The Meiji-Taishō contrast is most graphically demonstrated by a comparison of the Meiji and Taishō emperors. As highlighted by Donald Keene’s magisterial 900-page biography, the Meiji emperor remains enveloped in luminosity.¹⁵ By contrast, most scholars would echo Marius Jansen’s complaint that the Taishō emperor “was unimportant in life and his death was irrelevant.”¹⁶ Of course, the more we decry the Taishō emperor and his era, the more important the Meiji period becomes.

One could argue that a reevaluation of Taishō is even more critical than rethinking Edo in transforming our understanding of the importance of Meiji. After all, we see a full flowering in Taishō of what we only get a brief hint of in Meiji—Japanese globalization. Taishō is global in at least three important senses. First, Japan transforms from an agricultural to largely industrial power during the Taishō era, particularly during the First World War. Second, the First World War creates an incredible new U.S.-Japan economic interdependence. Between 1914 and 1939, the U.S. becomes the greatest source of machinery and consumer goods in Japan.¹⁷ By 1924, Japan, in turn, becomes America’s third largest trading partner, behind only Britain and Canada.¹⁸ After the First World War, trans-Pacific trade becomes critical not only for the Pacific. It is essential for

¹⁴ Rupert Eric Davies, Richard J. Jensen, Jon Thares Davidan, eds., *Trans-Pacific Relations: America, Europe, and Asia in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), p. 3.

¹⁵ Donald Keene, *Emperor of Japan: Meiji and His World, 1852-1912* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

¹⁶ Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2000), p. 495.

¹⁷ W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism 1894–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 127, 211, Tables 3, 9, respectively.

¹⁸ Tsuneo Matsudaira, “Some Principles of Japanese Foreign Policy,” *Advocate of Peace through Justice*, vol. 87, no. 7 (July 1925), p. 408.

the world economy, setting the stage for a global world after 1945.

Taishō is global in a third sense in the establishment of the foundations of twentieth-century internationalism. The best glimpse of this is Japan's participation at the Paris Peace Conference. Despite their relative detachment from most discussions over European security, two Japanese plenipotentiaries participated in the leadership council of the conference, the Council of Ten, as representatives of one of the five victor powers. Historians frequently highlight US-Japan tensions at Paris over Japan's proposal of a "racial equality" clause in the covenant of the new League of Nations and over Japanese presence in the Chinese province of Shandong.¹⁹ But Japan at Paris obtained its two most cherished demands: great power recognition of its new presence in China (Shandong) and in the South Pacific (the Marshall, Caroline and Mariana Islands).

More significant, however, was Japan's dramatic transformation from an initial victim of great power imperialism in the latter nineteenth century to one of the world's five great powers in 1919. This spectacular metamorphosis was possible only through Japan's remarkable geopolitical advance from the Sino-Japanese through the Russo-Japanese War and, most importantly, its critical contribution to the allies between 1914 and 1918. Tokyo declared war in August 1914, several weeks after initial declarations by the principal belligerents (Austria-Hungary, Germany, Britain, Montenegro, Serbia, France, Russia) but many months prior to such important players as the Ottoman Empire, Italy, and the United States. Between 1914 and 1918, Japan eliminated German power in China and the Pacific; helped patrol Pacific sea lanes; helped escort British imperial troops from Australia and New Zealand to the Indian Ocean; sent destroyers to help hunt German U-boats in the Mediterranean; and supplied the allies with sorely needed arms, shipping, and loans.²⁰

Japan's intimate involvement in the First World War and the Paris Peace Conference became the foundation for an indispensable Japanese role in the international construction of a postwar culture of peace after 1918. Japan was intimately involved in every major postwar peace initiative—the Peace Conference; League of Nations and its many affiliated organizations such as the International Labor Organization and the International Court of Justice; the Washington Naval Conference; the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and the London Naval Conference.²¹ By contrast, the U.S. failed to ratify the Versailles Treaty and refused membership in the League of Nations. And France and Italy refused to abide by the terms of the London Naval Treaty.

In the 1930s, Japan would, of course, deal a serious blow to this interwar peace infrastructure that it had so painstakingly helped to construct. But without Japan's pivotal contributions throughout the 1920s, liberal internationalism would have imploded long before the 1931 Manchurian Incident. It most certainly would have had much greater difficulty re-emerging after 1945. Even after the Manchurian Incident, renowned Asianist Owen Lattimore recognized the pivotal role Japan had played in constructing a twentieth-century world. Japan, he wrote in 1932, is the "chief protagonist of Western civilization" in Northeast Asia.²² Japanese participation at the Paris Peace Conference and in the construction of an interwar infrastructure for peace would become a pivotal foundation for the multi-lateral and global age in which we live today.

¹⁹ See Naoko Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London: Routledge, 1998) and Russell H. Fifield, *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East: The Diplomacy of the Shantung Question*, Hamden: Archon Books, 1965), respectively.

²⁰ For details, see Frederick R. Dickinson, "More than a 'Moment': Woodrow Wilson and the Foundations of Twentieth Century Japan," *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, no. 19 (Dec. 2018), pp.688-700 doi:10.1017/S146810991800035X

²¹ For details, see Frederick R. Dickinson, *World War I and the Triumph of a New Japan* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2013).

²² Owen Lattimore, *Manchuria, Cradle of Conflict* (1932).

Conclusion

How, in the twenty-first century, might we restore international attention to Japan? We might do so by championing a global history. A global history of modern Japan recognizes the power of Edo; talks about Meiji as vital to the global project for economic, political, and imperial development; and understands Japan's critical contribution in the Taishō era to an internationalist, integrated, globalist twentieth- and twenty-first century. It also raises the very interesting prospect that if Donald Trump had known this history, he might not have abandoned the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Rather, he would have understood Japan as an important economic and political partner for the future of Japan, the U.S., and the world.

Luckily for President Trump, the Japanese have extensive experience during the Taishō era stepping into the leadership vacuum left by others. Japanese participation in the new liberal internationalist order after World War I helped assuage the complications of a lack of full American participation in that order. Likewise, Japanese leadership in the twenty-first century may very well help rescue a world political and economic order that lacks full American support.

The Reality of the Mobilization of Koreans During World War II

– An analysis based on statistics and written records

Tsutomu Nishioka*

Abstract

In 1965, Japan and South Korea normalized their diplomatic relations and Japan paid South Korea 300 million dollars with no strings attached in accordance with the Agreement Concerning the Settlement of Problems in Regard to Property and Claims and Economic Cooperation. With this payment, both countries confirmed that all post-war claims, including for Koreans who participated in wartime mobilization, had been settled “completely and finally.” Some refer to the wartime mobilization of people based on the laws of the time as an inhumane form of “slave labor.” This paper sheds light on the reality of the wartime mobilization of Korean workers by analyzing official statistics and written records, showing that there are layers of untruth to descriptions of young men forcibly being taken from peaceful farm villages to work as slaves.

Japan governed Korea for nearly 35 years, from September 1910 to August 1945. In 1965, 20 years after Japan’s defeat in the Second World War and the end of Japanese rule over Korea, Japan and South Korea normalized their diplomatic relations by concluding a number of agreements, including the Treaty on Basic Relations and the Agreement Concerning the Settlement of Problems in Regard to Property and Claims and Economic Cooperation. At that time, Japan paid South Korea 300 million dollars with no strings attached in accordance with the agreement. With this payment, both countries confirmed that all post-war claims, including for Koreans who participated in wartime mobilization, had been settled “completely and finally.”

Fifty-three years have passed since the signing of the treaties. Since the end of Japanese rule in Korea, 73 years have elapsed—a period that is more than twice the duration of that rule. Nonetheless, a South Korean court is currently handling a compensation lawsuit filed by “former conscripted workers,” who worked for Japanese firms in Japan as wartime-mobilized workers during the colonial period, and their descendants.

Some refer to the wartime mobilization of people based on the laws of the time as an inhumane form of “slave labor.” Yet this is not the truth. In this paper, I will shed light on the reality of the wartime mobilization of workers, by analyzing official statistics and written records.

The Wartime Mobilization of Koreans As Recounted by Statistics

The expression “wartime mobilization of Koreans” refers to the sending of Korean laborers from Korea to Japan (and Sakhalin, then called Karafuto, as well as islands in the Southern Pacific) in accordance with the Plan for Sending Koreans to Japan, which was created in 1939 based on the National Mobilization Law. The mobilization of soldiers and people working for the military is sometimes added to this definition. The people who were mobilized were sent to work at private-sector companies, where they were paid relatively high wages usually based on the

* Tsutomu Nishioka is Professor and Head of the History Laboratory at the Institute of Morality and Visiting Professor at Reitaku University.

terms of their time-limited contracts of employment.

At the end of 1938, which was the 29th year since Japan's annexation of Korea, the Korean population in Japan was 800,000 (according to Ministry of Home Affairs statistics; all figures until 1944 are from this source). We should realize that a great number of Koreans were already living in Japan before the start of wartime mobilization. The population of Koreans in Japan before the start of mobilization was almost 50 percent greater than the 550,000 who remained in Japan after World War II.

Incidentally, the Korean population in Japan in 1911, the year after the annexation, was no more than some 2,500, but it rapidly increased to about 30,000 in 1920, ten years after the annexation, and about 300,000 in 1930, another decade on.

Now, what was the Korean population in Japan in August 1945? No accurate statistics exist, but Yoshio Morita, who was an authority on this issue, estimated that there were about 2 million Koreans in the following way. (The data is from Ministry of Home Affairs statistics.) "The general Korean population at the end of 1944 was 1,911,409 (excluding Sakhalin), with many evacuating to Korea when the air-raids on Japan started in 1945. The statistics until May show that the number of Koreans going back to Korea outnumbered those going to Japan by more than 10,000. After that, ferry services were more or less suspended, so the number of Koreans in Japan at the end of the war was about 2 million, taking into consideration the natural increase in population, and adding soldiers." (Yoshio Morita, *Sūji ga kataru zai-Nichi Kankoku-Chōsenjin no rekishi* [The History of Koreans in Japan in Numbers]).

By the end of 1938, a year before the start of the wartime mobilization of Koreans, 800,000 Koreans were living in Japan. This number increased to around 2 million by August 1945. Does this mean that the difference of 1.2 million Koreans were brought to Japan as part of wartime mobilization? Nothing could be further from the truth.

Eighty Percent of the Koreans Came to Work in Japan Voluntarily

When the war ended, there were 322,890 Koreans employed at locations designated for mobilized workers, according to a survey by the Demobilization Bureau. At the end of the war, there were 112,718 Korean soldiers and other military personnel in Japan, who were not included in the statistics for mobilized workers. This gives a total of 435,608 Koreans, which corresponds to about 22% of the 2 million Koreans in Japan at the end of the war. That figure is equal to about 36% of the 1.2 million increase in the Korean population in Japan that happened during the wartime mobilization.

At the end of the war, only about 20% of the Koreans in Japan were working at locations for mobilized workers. What does this mean?

It means that about 80% of the 2 million Koreans who were in Japan at the end of the war had emigrated of their own volition. More precisely, 80% of the Korean population in Japan at the end of the war had either emigrated voluntarily or were the children of those who had remained in Japan voluntarily. In other words, the overwhelming majority of Koreans who traveled to Japan during the wartime mobilization period from 1939 to August 1945 did so outside the framework of the mobilization plan or chose to live in Japan of their own volition after ending their employment at private-sector companies that had been designated for mobilized workers.

In order to understand the significance of these figures, and to get at the truth, we must first understand the reality of the Koreans who moved to Japan before wartime mobilization.

Many people moved from the Korean peninsula to Japan during the 35 years of colonial rule and especially during the years between 1921 and the end of World War II. In September 1923, groundless rumors that spread in the aftermath of the Great Kantō Earthquake led to the tragic killing of Koreans in quake-stricken areas at the hands of vigilantes. However, the Korean population in Japan, which had been 60,000 in 1922, continued to rapidly increase to 80,000 in

1923, when the earthquake occurred, and to 120,000 in 1924, indicating that the flow of people from Korea did not stop.

Most of the people moving to Japan from Korea were migrant workers and their families.

In fact, this movement of migrant workers did not end during wartime mobilization, but rather surged. In order to understand this, we must first acknowledge that there were many workers who migrated from Korea to Japan many years before the start of wartime mobilization.

Explosive Population Growth in Korea under Japanese Rule

What was the reason for this gigantic flow of migrant workers? There were three causes. First, the number of Korean people grew explosively under Japanese rule. The Korean population was 13 million in 1910 when Japanese rule commenced, and it had grown to more than 29 million by the end of World War II. There were 25 million Koreans in Korea, 2 million in Japan, 2 million in Manchuria and North China, and 1 million in the Soviet Union.

Second, life was harsh in the Korean farm villages where most of the population growth happened.

Third, at the time, Japan had a demand for labor that could accommodate numerous migrant workers. Labor was needed in the cities, mines, and factories of Japan, so anyone who could pay the travel expenses could make a living in the country. Due to the short distance, it was possible to frequently go back and forth between Korea and Japan. The number of people making the journey every year was more than 100,000 from 1925.

The Endless Stream of Illegal Immigrants

The arrival of a large number of undereducated Korean farmers with insufficient Japanese language skills caused various forms of friction with Japanese society. Moreover, when Japan entered a recession, some Japanese workers lost their jobs to Koreans. As will be discussed more in detail in the next section, there were Koreans who escaped wartime mobilization when it started and hindered the execution of the mobilization plan by finding employment in Japanese non-military industries. As such, the Japanese government implemented administrative measures to severely restrict the movement of people from Korea.

Statistics from the Government-General of Korea show that 163,760 workers and their families were stopped from traveling to Japan at Busan and other departure points between 1925 and 1937 because they did not have the required certificates or otherwise failed to meet the prescribed conditions. Furthermore, between 1933 and 1938, as many as 727,094 were stopped in their hometowns, that is, their areas of residence in Korea. Between 1933 and 1937, for which we have statistics, 1,087,563 applications to go to Japan were submitted (including re-submissions), of which roughly 60%, or 651,878, were rejected. The acceptance rate was about 40%, or less than half.

There was also a constant flow of persons who entered illegally without completing the formal procedures. Measures to send back illegal immigrants to Korea were enforced in Japan. Statistics from the Ministry of Home Affairs show that as many as 39,482 illegal border crossers were found in Japan between 1930 and 1942; 33,535 of them were deported.

Of special relevance is that 22,800 illegal immigrants (equal to 58% of all illegal border crossers who were discovered between 1930 and 1942) were discovered and 19,250 (equal to 57% of all those who were deported between 1930 and 1942) were sent home from 1939 to 1942, which indicates that the number of illegal border crossers actually surged during wartime mobilization. The Japanese government forcibly sent home about 20,000 Korean illegal border crossers in the 4-year period for which we have statistics. The mobilization of Koreans for work in Japan was conducted based on procedures established by law, and illegal immigrants who attempted to find work outside of the established legal frameworks were deported. This fact was common

knowledge back then, but it is all but forgotten today. This is the key to understanding wartime mobilization.

Illegal Immigrants Were Deported

I have pointed out that measures were implemented against illegal immigrants during the same period that Korean workers were mobilized to work in Japan, with about 20,000 being sent back to Korea during the period from 1939 to 1942, for which we have statistics.

Looking at records of these illegal border crossings, those wanting to go to Japan paid brokers to be stowaways on small boats, forged travel certificates, pretended to be Japanese, or crossed over as sailors or fishermen and then escaped.

Note that there were many illegal immigrants who pretended to be mobilized workers as soon as wartime mobilization started. Illegal immigrants trying to pass themselves off as mobilized workers were typically 1) those who struck deals with others who were actually supposed to be mobilized and were given copies of their family registry, 2) those who answered the call to mobilization by taking the place of somebody absent, and 3) those who sneaked in with groups of mobilized workers when the persons in charge were not looking. They would then escape as soon as the group arrived in Japan.

The Early Phase of Mobilization and Recruitment: Four Times as Many Migrant Workers as Recruited Workers

We have so far looked at the situation before wartime mobilization. Based on that, I would now like to examine the reality of the wartime mobilization of workers. We can divide this period into the early “mobilization” phase from 1939 to January 1942 and the later “government-mediated recruitment” and “conscription” phases from February 1942 to August 1945. Let us first have an overview of the early period.

The National Mobilization Law was promulgated in April 1938, ramping up the systematic mobilization of materials and labor needed for the war effort. In 1939, the following year, a major labor mobilization under the National Conscription Order began in Japan, but this order did not apply to Korea. Instead, Korean workers were mobilized through a recruitment process that started in September 1939.

This was a recruitment of workers in areas designated by the Government-General, carried out by businesses producing coal and operating mines in support of the war effort with the approval of the Ministry of Health and Welfare as well as the Government-General. The recruited workers traveled to Japan in groups led by their new employers or their representatives. As they were traveling in groups, the difficulties of individual travel, including the need for individual travel certificates and individual inspections at the points of departure, were greatly reduced.

This mobilization through recruitment continued until January 1942. Let us ignore the numbers for January 1942 and get an overview of the situation during the recruitment phase. I want to examine the statistics for the years from 1939 to 1941.

The Korean population in Japan increased rapidly during this period. It was 799,878 at the end of 1938, but it had increased by 80% to 1,469,230 by the end of 1941. This was an increase of 669,352, or almost 670,000 people. Since the natural increase in the population was 81,105, the number of Koreans migrating must have been 588,247 or about 590,000. Of these, the number of recruited workers were 147,136, or about 150,000, according to Ministry of Health and Welfare statistics, which is 25% of the total.

This means that about 440,000, or 75% of the migrant increase, consisted of people who voluntarily traveled to Japan outside the framework of wartime mobilization. In other words, the number of migrant workers who went to Japan by themselves was three times larger than the number of wartime-mobilized workers. It was possible for individuals to make applications to

migrate even after the start of the recruitment phase. Note that 15,549 illegal immigrants were discovered and deported in this same period.

It is understandable that a large number of Koreans went to Japan in search of high-wage jobs as the labor shortage grew more serious in the wartime economy of Japan. There was a huge outflow of people from Korea. Of those people, only 1 in 4 came within the regulatory framework of wartime mobilization.

There was a shortage of young men in Japan due to military conscription, which was aggravated by the labor mobilization that started in Japan in 1939. This created a considerable labor shortage that caused the wages of young male workers to soar.

Neither military conscription nor labor conscription initially applied to Korea, so there remained quite a surplus of young male Korean workers. These young men headed for Japan in search of high wages, just like water flows from high to low. This is what generated the flow of 600,000 migrant workers over a 3-year period.

The Japanese government tried to direct that flow of workers to the coal and metal mines that were indispensable for the war effort, but were only able to obtain a little more than 50% of the workers stipulated in the mobilization plan and only 1/4, or 150,000, of the Koreans who emigrated. The remaining 440,000 constituted a huge outflow of people to Japan that occurred outside the framework of the mobilization plan. Among these people were those summoned by family members who had already established themselves in Japan.

One reason why many Korean workers rejected being recruited is that they did not want to work in the underground shafts of coal and metal mines. The majority were farmers and were likely averse to working underground in coal and metal mines where discipline was strict.

Moreover, jobs for day laborers could be found throughout Japan at construction sites managed by Korean foremen.

The Later Phase of Mobilization: 40% Escaping Despite “Government-Mediated Recruitment”

With the start of the later period of mobilization in February 1942, the administrative body of the Government-General became directly involved in the process for mobilizing workers, which came to be conducted through what was known as “government-mediated recruitment.” This was likely a measure to change the situation whereby numerous workers were going to Japan outside the framework of wartime mobilization.

Coal mines, metal mines, construction companies, arms factories, and other businesses requested the Government-General to provide the number of workers they needed. In response, the Government-General assigned mobilization quotas to the provinces (corresponding to Japanese prefectures), which in turn assigned quotas to lower administrative levels such as districts and townships. Recruitment posters soliciting applications were placed at provincial and town offices, while government officials, the police, and persons of local influence were actively involved in mobilization activities.

Legally binding conscription began in Korea in September 1944. By the end of March 1945, there were almost no ferries traveling between Korea and Japan, effectively putting an end to the wartime mobilization of Koreans. As such, it can be said that labor conscription and its penal provisions were in effect for no more than seven months. Yet, this does not change the fact that the wartime mobilization was legal as Korea was under Japanese rule at the time.

The Korean population in Japan also grew during this period. There were 1,469,230 Koreans at the end of 1942, but this increased to about 2 million by August 1945. This was an increase of about 530,000.

The number of workers mobilized from 1942 to August 1945 was 520,548, or roughly 520,000. That is about the same size as the 530,000 increase in the Korean population in Japan. Looking at

the completion rate of the mobilization plan (defined as the percentage of the manpower targets that were met), it was 88% for this overall period. It was 93% for 1942, 81% for 1943, 97% for 1944, and 12% until August 1945. The completion rate for 1942-1944 was a comparatively high 95%.

We only have the 1942 figures for the natural increase in population, defined as population growth not caused by immigration. If we take the natural increase of 1942, which was 33,000, and use that as our standard for guessing the natural increase for the 2.5-year period from 1943 to August 1945, we get $33,000 \times 2.5 = 82,500$. This estimate suggests that the natural population increase from 1942 to August 1945 was 115,500, or roughly 120,000. Since the total increase in the Korean population in Japan and the number of people mobilized from 1942 to August 1945 were about the same, the natural increase in population of 120,000 should be equal to the difference between the number of immigrants and the number of people who returned to Korea. The immigrant workers and their families who had come to Japan outside the formal framework of the mobilization process and who ended up going back home—thus counterbalancing the natural increase in population of 120,000—probably returned to Korea to flee the war. In this period, the number of migrants who came as individuals (as opposed to coming as part of a group) fell drastically, and the number of people going back to Korea came to outnumber them as the war situation deteriorated.

With almost no Koreans heading to Japan as individuals outside the framework of wartime mobilization, it would seem that the regulated mobilization of workers was realized during this 4-year period and the situation was favorable compared to the previous three years during which people were recruited.

The reality is that the wartime mobilization was not going according to plan in this period either. Most of those employed through “government-mediated recruitment” escaped during their contract period, instead becoming “free workers” hired as day laborers at construction sites. On top of this, the majority of those who fulfilled their 2-year contracts disappointed their employers by not renewing their contracts, opting to become “free workers” as well.

Statistics from the Ministry of Health and Welfare show that the percentage of mobilized workers escaping since 1939 had gone as high as 37%, equivalent to 222,225 workers, by the end of March 1945. Besides this, there were 52,108 workers who returned to Korea after fulfilling their contracts, 15,801 who were sent back for misconduct, and 8,904 others. Incidentally, there were 288,488 people working at the locations designated for those mobilized during wartime, making for a total of 587,526 people who had been initially subject to the provisions of wartime mobilization.

One popular explanation for the fact that about 40% of the workers escaped is that the workers were treated badly and made to work under harsh conditions as if in a labor camp. Yet most workers did not return to Korea but started working elsewhere in Japan. As discussed above, there were even those who pretended to be wartime-mobilized workers in order to travel to Japan and then immediately escaped to some other workplace that had been introduced to them beforehand by brokers.

As a way to prevent escapes, the workers who were mobilized were organized in teams of 50–200 people with appointed leaders. They then traveled to Japan in groups. These teams were also maintained after work started at the coal mines and other workplaces, and worker training was conducted in teams.

Yet one survey showed that an astonishing 60% of the workers had no intention of working at the coal mines for mobilized workers, but used the government-mediated recruitment process to travel to Japan and were thinking about escaping once in Japan. This survey was conducted by the Institute for Science of Labour at the Chikuhō coalfield in Fukuoka over a period of two weeks starting in early January 1942. Let us look at the entry on the workers’ reasons for quitting their jobs. Note that the citation contains the words “migrating Koreans were granted travel permits

in October 1939.” This shows that “free recruitment” was understood as a measure that loosened restrictions and permitted Koreans to travel to Japan to work. This hints at just how many Koreans wanted to migrate for work:

Ever since migrating Koreans [literally “peninsular people”] were granted travel permits in October 1939, about 3,000 Koreans have migrated to coal mine E [1 of 6 coal mines in the survey. Operated by a local *zaibatsu*. The mine was already taking in Korean workers.] as of the end of 1941. Yet of these, only 1,222 remained as of the end of 1941, while 1,778, or 59.26%, have quit. Of the first group of 96 workers, only 36 remained to fulfill their 2-year contracts, while the other 60 quit. That is a resignation rate of 62.5%.

According to comments from labor officials at the relevant coal mines, the following are the likely causes.

(1) There are many taking advantage of the mobilization process (estimated to be about 60%) who come to the coal mines in order to enter Japan and then quit. That is, they apply for this “migration” process in order to find employment in Japan. As a result, there are many people without any intention of working in the coal mines who make use of “officially funded and officially sanctioned travel,” with expenses paid by the companies. This is identified as the primary cause of the high resignation rate. This was confirmed by all coal mine offices in the survey.

(2) Many are being enticed to work for others. There is intense scouting by individuals whose job is to recruit people. This has to do with the employers’ lack of preparation with regard to the workers, who end up being enticed to leave, as well as the old hiring methods of the coal mines. In particular, despite the fact that the demand for migration permits is great not only among coal mines and construction companies, but in all industries in Japan, the permits that are issued go primarily to prioritized businesses. As a result of this big gap between the permits issued and the demand among the many businesses that receive no permits, the businesses with such dramatic demand for labor saw the working force already in Japan as a potential “source of manpower.” Their efforts to recruit such workers is what explains the “enticement” of workers.

This survey is from when “government-mediated recruitment” had just started, but a report with similar findings was published in the specialized journal *Shakai seisaku jihō* (Social Reform) No. 280, in January 1944, during the third year when “government-mediated recruitment” was in effect. In the journal, Tetsushirō Onodera, likely an expert on Korean labor issues, gives seven factors prompting the escapes of workers: 1) enticement from the outside, 2) intention to escape from the outset, 3) aversion to working in a mine, 4) dissatisfaction with wages, 5) food shortages, 6) aversion to a disciplined lifestyle, and 7) excesses in the recruitment process. Of these, Onodera identified factor 1) (enticement from the outside) as “accounting for the majority of escapes.” He wrote that “The market price of one Korean worker on the labor market is generally known to be 30 to 50 yen.” This means that brokers looked for mobilized workers in exchange for 30 to 50 yen per person. That is how big the demand for workers was.

In September 1944, as the number of Koreans wanting to travel to Japan was shrinking due to a deteriorating war situation and the risks of air-raids, the conscription order, which had applied only to civilian staff of the military in 1941, was proclaimed for all of Korea. Koreans already at locations for mobilized workers in Japan were also subject to the order, as the authorities tried to prevent workers from escaping. Yet, as described in the previous section, the number of people at locations for mobilized workers at the end of the war was reported as only 322,890, or less than half of the number of mobilized workers, according to statistics from the Ministry of Health and Welfare, so we can doubt the effectiveness of the legally binding conscription order.

In other words, even in this period when mobilization was carried out using rather forcible means such as government-mediated recruitment and conscription, about 40% of the workers escaped after arrival, meaning that the mobilization plan, which aimed to secure a large number of migrant workers for coal mines and other locations, was effectively a failure.

The Failure of the Mobilization Plan

Until this point, we have looked at a variety of statistical data and have shed light on the reality of the mobilization plan for Koreans to Japan during the period from 1939 to August 1945. I would like to conclude by examining what the situation was like by August 1945.

For the duration of the plan, the Korean population in Japan grew by 1.2 million, from 800,000 to 2 million. Of these, 320,000 were wartime-mobilized workers at the end of the war. In addition, there were 110,000 Koreans mobilized as soldiers or other military staff. Besides them, there were 770,000 Koreans not part of the mobilization plan, that is, Koreans and their families who chose to live in Japan of their own volition. This group also included a large number of people who came to Japan through recruitment, “government-mediated recruitment,” or “labor conscription” and then either escaped before the end of their contracts or opted not to renew their contracts after their expiration, after which they chose not to return Korea but remained in Japan.

Conclusion

The following are my conclusions from the statistical analysis of the wartime mobilization of Korean workers.

The wartime mobilization of Korean workers that was implemented based on the National Mobilization Law from 1939 to 1945 was a policy that sought to control the avalanche of migrant workers who were seeking employment at construction sites by mobilizing them for the relatively unpopular coal and metal mines that were necessary for the war effort. This attempt at control did not go well.

The Plan for Sending Koreans to Korea, created based on the National Mobilization Law, was a policy that tried to efficiently redirect Korean manpower to industries necessary for the war effort while numerous people were moving from Korea to Japan.

1. In the early period of recruitment from 1939 to 1941, there were 140,000 mobilized migrants who came to Japan in groups and 440,000 migrants who came as individuals. That is, the number of Koreans who migrated outside the framework of the mobilization plan was about three times greater than the number of those who migrated after being mobilized, meaning that the plan failed. In the same period, 16,000 persons, corresponding to slightly more than 10% of the number of mobilized workers, were sent back to Korea from Japan as illegal immigrants.
2. In the later period of government-mediated recruitment and labor conscription from 1942 to 1945, the stream of migrants coming to Japan on an individual basis all but disappeared. However, 220,000, or 37%, of the 520,000 mobilized workers escaped from the locations for mobilized workers so that they could work elsewhere, outside the framework of the mobilization plan. Again, things were not going according to plan.
3. The wartime mobilization plan, which sought to efficiently redirect Korean manpower to industries necessary for the war effort, was unsuccessful due to the large number of Korean workers who wanted to work at locations unrelated to the plan..
4. There are two layers of untruth to descriptions of young men forcibly being taken from peaceful farm villages to work as slaves. Firstly, Korean workers wanted to work in Japan. They were not forcibly taken. Secondly, the majority found their own jobs and did not subject themselves to the control of the Japanese government as it sought to support the war effort.

External and Internal Reconciliation: War Memories and Views of History Regarding Japan in Postwar Taiwan

John Chuan-Tiong Lim*

Abstract

Taiwanese society today is often characterized as a Japan-friendly society. Yet things are not quite so simple. The formation of differing war memories and views of history is caused partly by the blending of selective elements of remembering and forgetting. Postwar reconciliation between Taiwan and Japan can be seen at two levels—external reconciliation with Japan and internal reconciliation within Taiwanese society. Taiwan's postwar external reconciliation with Japan seems to have proceeded relatively well. Taiwan has recognized the contributions made by Japan during the colonial period. Of course, there exist a number of historical issues between Japan and Taiwan. At the same time, Taiwan has shown little inclination to use these issues with Japan for political purposes. In contrast, internal reconciliation, that is, the work for promoting reconciliation within Taiwanese society, appears complex and unfinished even today. Two Taiwan-related controversies erupted in 2015 in connection with the 70th anniversary of the end of the war. One of them was a dispute concerning the views of wartime history held by Taiwan and Mainland China. Another revealed the existence of different views of history within Taiwanese society. Taiwan is left with the major challenge of how to share memories of different wartime experiences to achieve reconciliation. The issue of postwar reconciliation affects the formation of war memories and views of history in postwar society in numerous ways. As such, when debating reconciliation, we ought to avoid simplifying relationships to those between the perpetrator and the victim.

More than seventy years after the end of the Second World War, reconciliation between Japan and neighboring countries over the conflict and colonial rule remains a major challenge. It goes without saying that progress in the reconciliation process is important for strengthening mutual relations and achieving true peace.

The debate on reconciliation has frequently tended to simplify relationships to those between the perpetrator and the victim. War and colonial rule can in no way be justified. Yet the issue of postwar reconciliation is not merely an issue of wartime and colonial experiences or postwar settlement, and affects the formation of war memories and views of history in postwar society in numerous ways. As such, I want to argue that reconciliation research needs to be conducted with more diverse perspectives and greater attention to specifics.

Taiwanese society today is often characterized as a Japan-friendly society. Yet things are not quite so simple. The ways in which memories of the war resurfaced and the differing narratives that were recounted in Taiwan in 2015, on the 70th anniversary of the end of the War of Resistance Against Japan, demonstrated the complexity of the reconciliation process in Taiwan.

* John Chuan-Tiong Lim is an associate fellow at Academia Sinica in Taiwan. Email: johnlim@gate.sinica.edu.tw

In this essay, I look at some of the controversies surrounding the reconciliation process between postwar Taiwanese society and Japan—Taiwan’s past colonizer and ruler—as well as the differences in war memories and views of history between *waishengren* (外省人) and *benshengren* (本省人) that came to light in 2015. I will attempt to clarify the two-sided nature of external and internal reconciliation that can be found in Taiwanese society. The formation of differing war memories and views of history is caused partly by the blending of selective elements of remembering and forgetting that I will identify.

I. External Reconciliation: Postwar Reconciliation between Taiwan and Japan

Reconciliation Attempts by the Taiwanese Government

Postwar reconciliation between Taiwan and Japan can be seen at two levels. One of them is at the governmental level. The other is at the level of society.

With regard to the Taiwanese government’s attempts at reconciliation, we can note the magnanimous attitude to postwar settlement displayed by President Chiang Kai-shek, which has also been often acknowledged in postwar Japan society. The Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty was concluded between Taiwan (Republic of China) and Japan in 1952, and people in Japan long felt gratitude to Taiwan for gestures such as relinquishing the right to compensation.

Taiwanese society has recognized the contributions made by Japan during the colonial period. Especially in comparison to China and South Korea, Taiwan stands out in the way in which it remembers Japan’s contributions. For example, Taiwan has recognized the contributions of Yoichi Hatta¹ to pre-war Taiwanese agricultural irrigation projects, especially the Chianan Canal. In 2011, the Taiwanese government opened a museum dedicated to Yoichi Hatta, with President Ma Ying-jeou attending and speaking at the opening ceremony. The ceremony was one manifestation of how Taiwanese accept and honor the contributions and positive aspects of Japanese colonial rule.

As is widely known, so-called historical issues have long existed between Japan and its neighbors in postwar East Asia. Of course, there exist a number of historical issues between Japan and Taiwan, starting with the issue of comfort women. At the same time, Taiwan has shown little inclination to use these issues with Japan for political purposes. Every time there is a major incident related to historical issues between Japan and neighboring countries, Taiwan naturally asserts its viewpoints, but generally avoids using historical issues to influence relations with Japan. Taiwan has been especially careful not to incite nationalism.

The Reconciliation Process at the Level of Taiwanese Society

Taiwan is known as one of the most Japan-friendly societies in the world, but this friendship with Japan gradually developed during the 1990s. One reason is that the older generation of people in Taiwan who spoke Japanese started expressing their feelings for Japan in the 1990s. With the advent of democratization in Taiwan, they became able to express their sentiment for Japan. In most households, although many elderly people who experienced Japanese colonial rule could speak Japanese, they refrained from doing so at home during the long postwar authoritarian era.² It was common for grandchildren to not know that their grandparents spoke Japanese.

Another reason was the so-called “Japanophilia” phenomenon³ among young people in the

¹ Yoichi Hatta (1886-1942) was a Japanese hydraulic engineer. After graduating from Tokyo Imperial University in 1910, he was employed by the Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan and was put in charge of waterworks as well as power generation and irrigation projects.

² Taiwan’s authoritarian era refers to the administrations of Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo, from the end of World War II to the lifting of martial law and the start of democratization in 1987.

³ “Japanophilia” (哈日, *hari*) refers to those who are avid followers of Japanese culture.

1990s, which is when Japanese pop culture really started attracting Taiwanese youth.⁴ Since then, Japanese comics and animated films, movies and pop music, as well as public baths, *matcha*, and other forms of Japanese traditional culture, have gained a strong following among the Taiwanese. In short, there were circumstances that caused two generations to get a better impression of Japan.

Yet there is one thing that we must not forget. The generation in-between, which was exposed to the Kuomintang government's "anti-Japanese" education, does not necessarily have the same feelings for Japan as do the generations that preceded and followed it. We can now see that this generation is catching up with the rest of Taiwanese society in its degree of openness to Japan. For example, even among second-generation *waishengren* in their 50s and early 60s at my research institute, it is not uncommon for people in these age groups to say they understand Japan and to express their sense of closeness to the country. It can be claimed that a Japan-friendly structure that spans several generations now exists in Taiwanese society.⁵

Building Friendship between Taiwan and Japan

Looking at developments in recent years, we can discern the closeness of the two societies by looking at the number of travelers and school trips between Japan and Taiwan. The number of people traveling from Taiwan to Japan in 2017 was 4.56 million.⁶ As Taiwan's population is 23 million, this is quite a large number. The number of Japanese travelers to Taiwan rose to 1.9 million⁷ that year and continues to climb.

According to 2015 data, the number one foreign destination for Taiwanese high-school field trips was Japan. The top overseas destinations for Japanese students until 2015 were the United States and then Singapore, but Taiwan overtook the United States as the most popular destination in 2016. This is clearly an expression of the mutual trust that exists between Japan and Taiwan.

The affinity between Japan and Taiwan was also seen after the earthquake in 2011 that struck northeastern Japan. As has also been reported in Japan, Taiwan strongly sympathized with Japan after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 and provided donations of more than 20 billion yen, which is more than the sum of donations received from other countries. Japanese people are still expressing their gratitude for the assistance. Japan likewise provided relief after later earthquakes in Taiwan, allowing feelings of mutual affinity to spread to citizens, as suggested by the idea of a "Japanese-Taiwanese earthquake community."

II. Internal Reconciliation: Lessons from the 2015 Controversies

The Historical Context: 70th Anniversary of Victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan

As discussed above, Taiwan's postwar external reconciliation with Japan seems to have proceeded relatively well. In contrast, internal reconciliation, that is, the work for promoting reconciliation within Taiwanese society, appears complex and unfinished even today. Here I would like to discuss a series of controversies that came about in connection with the 70th anniversary of

⁴ It could be said that the Japanese pop culture boom in Taiwan started before the 1990s, but postwar restrictions on the dissemination of Japanese culture prevented the broadcasting of Japanese songs and TV dramas. These restrictions were lifted in 1993.

⁵ One demonstration of this inter-generational Japan-friendly structure in Taiwanese society is the craze caused by the Japan-friendly movie *Cape No. 7* that premiered in August 2008. It was common to see three generations of people going together to the cinema to watch the movie.

⁶ According to data from Taiwan's Tourism Bureau.

⁷ According to data from Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO).

victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan.

In 2015, the Kuomintang was in power under the administration of Ma Ying-jeou. That year, the government was involved in a number of anniversary events. Media organizations from Japan and all over the world were eager to cover the military parade in Beijing that was held to commemorate China's victory in World War II, while the activities of the Ma administration did not receive so much attention. One such activity was the publication of a pamphlet summarizing the Republic of China's position on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the end of the war. I was invited by Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss what would go into the document and to put it together.⁸ Attention was paid to what kind of statement Prime Minister Shinzo Abe would give in Japan on the 70th anniversary of the end of the war, but similar activities were unfolding in Taiwan. Besides the pamphlet, a small-scale military parade was held in Taiwan.

One of the aims of these events by the Ma administration was perhaps to keep alive the Republic of China's view of history. Amid growing fears that the "naturally independent generation"⁹ was losing their sense of pre-1949 Chinese history, the Ma administration had the aim of continuing a vision of the Republic of China's history that extended more than 100 years into the past, going all the way back to the Xinhai Revolution. Another aim was to emphasize that without the victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan, the postwar Taiwan of today would not exist, thus stressing the intimate relationship between the Republic of China and Taiwan.

Controversy I: Taiwan and Mainland China

Two Taiwan-related controversies erupted in 2015 in connection with the 70th anniversary of the end of the war.

One of them was a dispute between Taiwan and Mainland China. The focal point was the Ma administration's fierce opposition to the Communist Party of China presenting itself as the "key pillar" (中流砥柱) in the War of Resistance Against Japan. The Ma administration refuted this claim by saying that it was the Nationalist government that had contributed the most to the victory and had suffered the most casualties. At the heart of this issue were the tensions and contradictions between the view of history held by the Republic of China and that of the People's Republic of China. We can say that reconciliation has yet to be achieved on this issue between Mainland China and Taiwan. We can also note that former Vice President and former Kuomintang Chairman Lien Chan made a symbolic gesture by attending the Beijing military parade on September 3, 2015. The Ma administration was opposed to Lien's attendance and mobilized public opinion to step up criticism of Lien.¹⁰

Controversy II: Another View of History inside Taiwan

There was another controversy in 2015 that revealed the existence of different views of history within Taiwanese society. It started with an interview given by former President Lee Teng-hui that was carried in the Japanese magazine *Voice*. What gained attention was his remark that "When I was young, I regarded Japan as my fatherland and I fought for Japan."

In response to this, the Ma administration once again expressed its displeasure and started criticizing Lee Teng-hui. At the heart of the issue were the contradictions between the Republic of China's view of history and the view of history held by people in Taiwan. As the controversy

⁸ The pamphlet emphasized how under the leadership of Chairman Chiang Kai-shek, the Kuomintang government, as well as soldiers and the people, fought bravely in the War of Resistance Against Japan, made tremendous sacrifices, and emerged victorious.

⁹ The "naturally independent generation" (天然独世代、*tianran du shidai*) refers to young people in Taiwan with a strong awareness of Taiwan as an independent state.

¹⁰ Ma Ying-jeou also instructed people to leave messages on the Kuomintang website and Facebook page criticizing the actions of Lien Chan.

grew, there was opposition from those advocating the Taiwanese view of history as well. For example, the mother of Taipei mayor Ko Wen-je said that she agreed with Lee Teng-hui based on her own experiences. In this way, historical controversies were communicated and discussed by the Taiwanese media.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, I first want to say that we can see considerable progress when it comes to external reconciliation in Taiwanese society, meaning reconciliation with Japan. The building of inter-generational friendship with Japan has gone relatively smoothly. This also demonstrates one aspect of the flexibility of Taiwanese society's views of history and identity. Yet this does not necessarily mean that the internal reconciliation of Taiwanese society is going well. It would seem that reconciliation has yet to happen between two views of history.

Another point is worth making about the issue of selective remembering and selective forgetting. This does not come up so often in debates within Taiwanese society, but the Kuomintang does not necessarily have positive feelings for Japan because it fought Japan for eight years and made countless sacrifices. In contrast, fighting Japan for eight years is an experience that is not present in the Taiwanese view of history. At the time, Taiwan was under Japanese colonial rule, meaning that Taiwan was on the frontline as part of the Imperial Japanese Army and was bombed by American aircraft flying over from China. In this sense, we can tell that a large gap has existed between the Kuomintang's view of history and the indigenous Taiwanese view of history. Perhaps this can be explained using the concepts of selective remembering and selective forgetting? We are left with the major challenge of how to share our memories of different wartime experiences to achieve reconciliation.

Finally, I want to say that when debating reconciliation, we ought to avoid simplifying relationships to those between the perpetrator and the victim. The issue of postwar reconciliation is not merely an issue of wartime and colonial experiences or postwar settlement, and affects the formation of war memories and views of history in postwar society in numerous ways. As such, I want to argue that more diverse perspectives and specificity are needed when conducting research into reconciliation.

Upcoming Issues of the

JAPAN REVIEW

Volume 2, Number 3 (Winter 2019)

Territory and Maritime Issues in East Asia

Published by the Japan Institute of International Affairs

3rd Floor Toranomon Mitsui Building, 3-8-1 Kasumigaseki Chiyoda-ku,
Tokyo Japan 100-0013

Tel: +81-3-3503-7261 (from outside Japan)

Fax: +81-3-3503-7292 (from outside Japan)

More information about Institute's activities and publications available at: <https://www.jia-jic/en/>

THE JAPAN
INSTITUTE OF
INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS

