Christian Culture and Military Rule: Assimilation and its Limits during the First Decade of Japan's Colonial Rule in Korea, 1910-19

by

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Abstract

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This is a study of the encounter between Japanese imperialism and Korean Protestantism during the the first decade of colonial rule in Korea (1910-19), typically referred to in historiography as the "military rule" period. By examining how Japanese and Korean Protestants adapted themselves to the demands of Japan's colonial rule, it attempts to reveal how the efforts made to subordinate Korean Christianity to Japanese imperial rule became a means of symbolically colonizing Korean history. The dissertation explores how this colonial project played out across Japanese metropole and Korean colony by focusing on the Japanese empire's attempts to subordinate a global evangelical institution, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to an education policy premised upon the selfless devotion of Koreans to Japan's imperial house. Ultimately, it is argued that the result of this encounter was to fashion a base of Japanese hegemony in colonial Korea that had not existed in 1910 by allowing Koreans to articulate an autonomous cultural identity within the confines of their political domination by the Japanese empire.

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INTRODUCTION

As the only non-Christian power amongst the modern empires, imperial Japan faced a unique challenge in colonizing Korea, a country undergoing a wave of Christianization at the end of the Chosŏn period (1392-1910). In particular, Protestant Christianity by 1910 had not only established itself as a permanent force on the Korea peninsula, but was also protected by its affiliation with a world-spanning network of Christian missions. Hence, imperial Japan could not openly proscribe Christianity in Korea without exposing itself to the ostracism of the other modern (Western) empires. No action toward limiting the influence of Christianity on the peninsula could be taken without taking into consideration the global context of missionary Protestantism. In addition to this global challenge, however, there was also an important historical context to imperial Japan's encounter with Korean Christianity. In colonizing Korea, Japan had presided over the demise of the Chosŏn dynasty and with it the dissolution of Korea's long history as a politically independent state. In contrast to earlier colonizing efforts directed toward the Ainu, Ryūkyū, or Taiwanese peoples, then, the colonization of Korea was made in the shadow of the inescapable awareness of Korean history. Indeed, the spread of Protestant Christianity across a broad cross-section of Korean society was in no small sense a response to the end of the Chosŏn monarchy. For many Korean converts, Christianity provided a spiritual substitute for the political vehicle of the nation-state as a means of transmuting Korea's historical identity in response to the challenges of the modern world. For Japan, then, the question of how to colonize Christianity in Korea thus simultaneously became a question of how to colonize Korean history itself.

This dissertation attempts to explain what the consequences of this encounter between Japanese imperialism and Korean Christianity were during the first decade of Japan' colonial rule in Korea (1910-19). It is not, however, primarily a study of colonial policy toward religion. Rather it is an examination of how Protestant Christians themselves—Japanese and Korean—adapted themselves to the demands of colonial rule. There is a historiographical subtext to my decision to focus on this issue. The "military rule" period (as this decade is often referred to in Japanese and Korean historiography) has correctly been seen as an unusually repressive period in which the Japanese empire relied overwhelmingly on brute force in installing its institutions of colonial rule in Korea. This view has led, however, to a tendency to discount the ideological significance of this early period of Korea's colonial history. Typically viewed either as a tragic endpoint for a failed "dynastic" modernity or a repressive backdrop against which to explain the emergence of "colonial" modernity in the 1920s, it is rarely treated as a subject worthy of study in and of itself. In examining the ideological encounter between the Japanese empire and Korean Christianity during military rule, then, I am attempting to bring out the covert significance of this period.

In a nutshell, the argument of this dissertation is that there were two ideological contexts crucial to understanding this encounter: one imperial, the other global. By imperial context, I mean the Japanese colonial ideology of assimilationism, which saw the identity of its colonial subjects rigidly as an extension of Japanese identity. The global context I refer to is the rise within Protestant Christianity of a lay evangelical culture at the turn of the twentieth century that allowed for evangelical work to be adapted to the local circumstances of the mission field. As I will attempt to explain, the tension between these two ideological forces allowed for multiple interpretations of the historical meaning of Korea's colonization. Let me unpack my argument below.

Like other empires, Japan imagined its colonial ideology in terms that were continuous with the language of political legitimacy at home. Japanese assimilationism was rooted in the quasi-religious notion, first disseminated in Japan, of a genealogical bond uniting the Japanese emperor with his subjects by virtue of the unbroken lineage of imperial rule. The clearest ideological expression of this attitude was in the Imperial Rescript on Education, promulgated in 1890, which tied the pursuit of learning to a sense of selfless devotion to the fortunes of Japan's imperial house. The Education Rescript allowed the imperial Japanese state not only to use education as a tool of inculcating loyalty to the state, but also to stigmatize any form of learning offering the possibility of critiquing the imperial state as harmful to Japanese identity. It was perhaps inevitable, then, that the Japanese empire attempted to conceive of its rule in Korea in much the same terms.

This is an important point because the ideological consequences that the Education Rescript had for Japanese Christianity at the end of the nineteenth century provide a crucial context for the understanding of how the government-general would later approach Korean Christianity during the military rule period. In Japan, the Education Rescript provided a means for the Meiji state to reinforce the popular animus already existing toward Christianity as a foreign religion without revealing itself as anti-Christian. Moreover, this unspoken sanction was magnified by the explicit anti-Christian position taken by Inoue Tetsujirō, an influential scholar at Tokyo Imperial University, who famously argued that the Christian valuation of individual conscience above the traditional value of filial piety was fundamentally incompatible with the Education Rescript's imperative to exhibit unconditional loyalty to Japan's imperial house. The argument that Christianity was incompatible with the Japanese education system was felt over several high-profile incidents occurring in the years following the Education Rescript's promulgation. One of the ironic consequences of this argument was that, for some Protestants, it promoted the development of an imperial consciousness that sought to define a specifically "Japanese" form of Christianity that would be fully compatible with the Meiji state's emperor-centric definition of Japanese identity. Hence, because the government academyof Tokyo Imperial performed the tasks of civil society by mediating

between political and religious authority, the imperial Japanese state was able to contain the influence of Christianity in Japan without acting directly to suppress it.

In many ways, the first decade of Japan's colonial rule in Korea resembles an attempt to artificially reproduce this key ideological moment from Japan's Meiji period (1868-1912). Historical circumstances, however, were naturally different in Korea from what they were in Japan. Beyond the obvious fact that the Korean people had little reason to identify themselves politically with Japan's imperial house, Christianity in Korea was no marginalized religion in 1910, but had achieved a base of believers that cut across a broad cross-section of society. Therefore, no feeling of popular animus could easily be mobilized to undermine the influence of Christianity in Korea. Moreover, unlike imperial Japan, there was no institutional presence in colonial Korea capable of mediating between Korean Christianity and the Japanese colonial state. As a result, the colonial state intervened directly in limiting the influence of Christianity through a dual-pronged approach that relied on the one hand upon the arrest and torture of hundreds of Christians and on the other upon the mobilization of Japanese Protestant missions, led by the Congregationalist Church, to co-opt a section of Korea's Protestant leadership into an effort to remove Korean Christianity from the perceived domination of the foreign missions. Hence, in colonial Korea, the Japanese state's effort to circumscribe the influence of Christianity did not attempt to mobilize anti-Christian elements of society, but instead relied on a highly repressive and manipulative treatment of Christianity itself.

What was it like for Korean Christians to adapt themselves to the ideological requirements of the Education Rescript? This seemingly straightforward question is, in fact, actually quite complex. At one level, it is a comparative question that juxtaposes the respective encounters of Japanese and Korean Protestantism with the imperial Japanese state. At a second level, however, it also links these encounters together by focusing on the missionary efforts of Japanese Congregationalists in cooperation with the Korean government-general. And there is a third level of analysis that must also be taken into consideration: That is, the encounter of Japanese and Korean Protestantism must in be understood within the contemporary context of Protestant missionary efforts. The impact of the Education Rescript on Japanese and Korean Christianity was mediated the emergence of a lay sphere of evangelical Protestantism, particularly in Britain and the United States, at the turn of the twentieth century. The distinguishing feature of this lay activism was its delineation of a sphere of Christian culture as distinct (but never wholly separate) from the Christianity of church institutions and whose uses were thus malleable according to social context. Christian culture openly acknowledged the use of worldly innovations and even entertainments to aid evangelical efforts. Indeed, the lay Christian culture that developed in the Anglo-American nineteenth century often insisted that the vitality of church life depended upon the mobilization of every available means of the integration of evangelical activities with secular life.

The key social institution in promoting this lay evangelism was unquestionably the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Founded in 1844 by the London draper George Williams, the YMCA was built upon the American evangelical James Finney's argument for revivalism as a man-made act of spiritual renewal rather than an act of divine intervention. Over the latter half of the nineteenth century, the transatlantic spread of the YMCA provided an institutional foundation for a broad nexus of lay evangelical connections formed outside the church and without the mediation of ecclesiastical institutions. "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation," one of the key slogans of the YMCA at the turn of the twentieth century, aptly summed up the social energies released by the emergence of lay evangelical networks during this period. It became a rallying cry that combined millennial passion with an optimistic confidence in the power of temporal progress to facilitate the spreading of the Christian gospel. By the end of the nineteenth century, the YMCA effectively became the institutional carrier of this lay evangelical credo.

During the first decade of Japan's colonial rule in Korea, the Imperial Rescript on Education and the YMCA represented rival ideological forces. Whereas one functioned as a means for the state to circumscribe the influence of religion as an autonomous force in society, the other represented a global effort to inscribe religious (Protestant) values into the very social tissue of everyday life. The question of what role Christian culture would play under military rule was thus one that cut to the heart of Japan's colonial rule in Korea. This dissertation attempts to narrate the unstable tension that unfolded between these two ideological forces during the 1910s and explaining its consequences for the character of Japan's colonial rule in Korea lies at the heart of this dissertation's concerns. To what extent could this ideological tension be resolved? Through what historical process did this resolution occur? And what were its consequences for Japan's colonial rule in Korea?

The argument I develop in response to these questions is that the Japanese empire's encounter with the YMCA in colonial Korea made possible a sophisticated and multi-faceted interpretation of the meaning of Korean history after colonization than what was allowed for by the cruder assimilationist attitude of the Education Rescript. As we shall see, this interpretation of the historical significance of Korea's colonization played out differently across Japanese metropole and Korean colony. Its ultimate contribution was to imagine the possibility of a Korean identity that would retain its autonomy culturally even as it remained under the political domination of the Japanese empire. In effect, the YMCA became the social institution capable of mediating between political and religious authority in colonial Korea.

Chapter One sets the stage for this narrative by examining how the YMCA's missionary leadership took advantage of Japan's establishment of a protectorate government in Korea by using it as a pretext to establish a Japanese YMCA for colonial

settlers in Seoul and a Korean branch of the Seoul YMCA in Tokyo for the Korean students studying abroad there. This criss-crossing of the YMCA's presence across Japan and Korea left in place an institutional framework that posed a difficult challenge both to the new Korean government-general and the missionary presence in Korea after formal colonization.

Chapter Two focuses on the decision of Japan's Congregationalist Church to send missions to Korea in 1910. According to their leader, Wataze Tsuneyoshi, the purpose of these missions was to claim the project of Korea spiritual development away from the "foreign" Christian missions. I argue that Wataze's main propaganda tract, The Urgent Task of Spirtualizing Korea (*chōsen kyōka no kyūmu)* is best read as an attempt to define "Japanese Christianity" as a form of Christianity meeting the ideological demands of the Imperial Rescript on Education. Wataze's missions to Korea, which were active for the entire military rule period (1910-19), were largely ineffective in developing a wide base of believers. Where they were most successful, however, was in tapping into a widespread sense of dissatisfaction amongst the Korean church leadership with what they saw as the domination of Korean Christianity by Anglo-American missions. I

The Congregationalist missions to Korea were not, however, motivated simply out of a sycophantic attitude towards the Japanese empire. Rather, we find the ideological impetus for this missionary effort in the pro-imperialist writings of Ebina Danjo, perhaps the most influential leader of the Congregationalist Church and a liberal Christian. Seeing the spread of Christianity in Korea colonization as an opportunity to Christianizing the Japanese empire, Ebina developed an historical explanation of the demise of Korea's political identity that made that Korea into what I refer to as a spiritual periphery of the Japanese empire. The Imperial Rescript on Education, Ebina's argument went, had instilled a powerful sense of national unity in the Japanese people, but that political development had exhausted the potential for spiritual transformation in Japan. It was now therefore necessary for Japan to seek spiritual rejuvenation in the religious energies of colonial Korea. By sacrificing their political identity, he argued, Koreans would thus be discovering a spiritual identity whose development in Japan had been truncated prematurely by the rise of the imperial state.

These first two chapters set the stage for the narrative that follows. On the one hand, the overlapping presence of the YMCA in both Japanese metropole and Korean colony allowed the Korean YMCA to maintain an important measure of autonomy from external domination, but on the other, it also exposed it to the possibility of its being co-opted by the Japanese empire. The Congregationalist Church took advantage of this latter possibility by providing, through Ebina's vision of Korea as a spiritual periphery of the Japanese empire, a form of historical consciousness that simultaneously acted as an rationale (albeit a self-serving one) both for their missions to Korea and for a Korean Christian insurgency against the foreign missions.

Chapters Three and Four examine how the encounter between Japanese Congregationalist Christianity and the YMCA took shape across metropole and colony. Here two figures emerge as being of central importance: Yun Ch'iho (1865-1945) and Yoshino Sakuzo (1878-1933). Yun was a former leader of the Independence Club in Korea, an important reform society with important ties (to be discussed in Chapter One) to the Yi dynastic government, who would beoome the first long-term Korean (i.e. non-missionary) director of the Seoul YMCA during the military rule period. Yoshino was a scholar of political science at Tokyo Imperial and an influential theorist of constitutional democracy during Japan's imperial period (1868-1945). He is of particular interest to the concerns of this dissertation because he is perhaps the only Japanese intellectual who developed as a liaison with the Korean students in Tokyo not just as individuals, but also as a group. Both men were lay Christians and lifelong members of the YMCA who saw Christianity as a necessary means of overcoming the predicament of historical backwardness in their respective countries. Under what circumstance did Yun become the first Korean to be appointed to the directorship of the YMCA? And why was Yoshino one of the only Japanese academics to form a critical liaison with the Korean students in Tokyo? Why did both of these developments occur during the military rule period? These questions bring us to the heart of the dissertation's concerns.

Yun's appointment to the directorship of the Seoul YMCA (the subject of Chapter Three) is particularly puzzling because it came after his having been convicted, based upon highly questionable evidence, of masterminding an alleged plot to assassinate the Korean Governor-General, Terauchi Masatake (1852-1919). Why was Yun tapped to undertake this important position less than a year after having been pardoned for such an unspeakable "crime" against the Japanese empire? Part of the answer is that by 1916 the struggle between the government-general and the Christian missions in Korea had come to an impasse. During the 1910s, Korean Christianity was rocked not only by the mass arrests of Christians in connection with the aforementioned incident, but also by an attempt by disgruntled Korean converts to Japanese Congregationalism to remove the Seoul YMCA from "foreign" domination and to fully subordinate it to the rule of the Japanese empire. In spite of these threats to the autonomy of the Seoul YMCA, however, the Association's status as an international organization kept him from being absorbed into colonial rule.

In Chapter Three, I argue that Yun's apolitical view of Christianity made him the ideal candidate to mediate between the Korean government-general and the missionary community. In many ways, Yun fit remarkably well Ebina's ideal of the Korean Christian who would forego politics in favor of securing Korea's spiritual transformation. Yet this attitude was not the product of an obsequious attitude toward Japanese empire, but of his reading of Korean history. As Yun's journals demonstrate, his fear that Korea would eventually be colonized was longstanding, predating his career as a political reformer in

the Independence Club. Christianity provided a means for him to serve the nation even after the loss of political independence. Yun's disposition also allowed to guide the Seoul YMCA away from its general education program of the precolonial era toward an industrial education policy that, because of its neutral ideological content, would allow the Association to claim to be following the Imperial Rescript on Education and still contribute to the spiritual development of the Korean people.

Chapter Four focuses on the liaison that developed between Yoshino and the Korean students in Tokyo. It poses the question of why Yoshino was the Japanese intellectual with whom Korean students from the closest connection when, despite Yoshino's important critique of the military rule government, he was not an anti-imperialist, but rather an advocate of a liberal imperialist policy. This chapter argues that the Korean student YMCA in Tokyo provided an institutional conduit through which these two parties could develop a connection and a mutual sense of trust. Because of Yoshino's status as an academic elite, however, he was also, able to act as a liaison between the Korean government-general and the Korean students in Tokyo. Like Yun, then, Yoshino was in a unique position to mediate between the worlds of Korean Christianity and Japanese colonialism.

But how may we characterize the intellectual encounter between Yoshino and these Korean students? I argue that the writings of Yoshino and the Korean students in Tokyo may be usefully compared through their respective use of the personal character (*jinkaku/ingyok*), a much discussed concept in late Meiji and Taisho-era Japan. My argument here is that the use of "personal character" in the writings of Yoshino and the Korean students differed according to the institutional circumstances of their respective countries. Yoshino's notion of personal character relativized the notion of national identity by asserting the ability of individuals to assert themselves within historical limits. Yoshino applied this understanding of personal character to his affirmation of the rise of mass politics in Japan, but it is also visible in his critique of assimilationist policy towards Korea. He urged the Japanese empire to end its policy of statist assimilation to embrace a broader view of spiritual development that would allow for cooperation with the foreign missions in Korea.

By contrast, for the Korean students in Tokyo, personal character became the means for a new intellectual elite to stabilize a Korean national identity that could maintain an independent existence from the Japanese empire even within the political limits of colonial rule. Their emphasis on cultivating the individual personality represents, I argue, a response to the new colonial context in which Korea found itself. Although the immediate purpose of this understanding was to provide the basis for a new Korean nationalism, it also made it possible for Koreans to cultivate a sense of cultural autonomy even within the context of political domination by the Japanese empire. Ironically, one of the consequences of this understanding of personal character was to promote a critical

attitude amongst some Korean students towards the foreign Christian missions in Korea. Hence, I conclude, these Korean students succeeded in accomplishing what the government-general had failed to achieve in the Korean colony.

In sum, then, the argument of Chapters Three and Four are is that Yun and Yoshino were pivotal figures in the political culture of military rule because of their respective roles in providing the basis for a Korean historical consciousness that could continue to exist within the limits of Japan's colonial rule. They did so, however, from opposite directions. Yun advocated industrial education at home as the best way of strengthening Korea's spiritual foundation. Yoshino and the Korean students in Tokyo both looked to those trained at Japanese institutions of higher learning to provide a spiritual elite for Korea.

Chapter Five focuses on the role of Tokutomi Sohō in managing *Maeil sinbo*, the official periodical of the government-general and the sole-Korean language newspaper allowed to print during the military rule period may be considered as a coda to the dissertation. Although Tokutomi had long since given up Christianity by the time he emerged as one of the most influential social critics of the Meiji period, I argue that the intellectual influence he absorbed from his Christian teacher, Niijima Jō—a figure who also had a formative influence on the Congregationalist Church—had a lasting impact on his thought, compelling him to insist on the individual's need to live for a spiritual purpose above the mundane reality of material existence. This influence is also salient to understanding Tokutomi's much-celebrated "apostasy" to imperialism after the Sino-Japanese War and is crucial to understanding his particular critique of the Japanese argument for assimilation. Tokutomi criticized the notion an assimilation premised upon the putative homogeneity of the Japanese and Korean peoples, a point which he felt was, even if true, superfluous because of the great difference dividing the two nation's histories. Instead, Tokutomi argued that assimilation could only be realized by promoting a sense of attachment to Japan's imperial house. In so doing, he posed an argument for recognizing the separation of political loyalty and cultural identity that did not depend on the mediation of a transnational institution such as the YMCA, but was articulated using the very voice of the Japanese empire itself.

CHAPTER ONE
IMPERIALISM, ANTI-COLONIALISM AND THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION IN JAPAN AND KOREA

To the present-day observer, the differences between the place of Christianity in Japan and South Korea could hardly be plainer. In Japan, Christian believers today make up a mere 1% of a predominantly Buddhist nation's overall population. By contrast, in South Korea, Christianity now makes up one of that nation's dominant religions. This contrast in the present endpoints of Christianity in these two countries, however, obscures an important similarity regarding the origins of the Christian movements in Japan and Korea. During the nineteenth century, Christianity's positive valuation of the individual conscience was linked in both countries with the emergence of a patriotic consciousness and seen by its believers to be an indispensable foundation of the modern nation-state. This similarity becomes all the more conspicuous when contrasted with the fate of Christianity in China. There, in spite and also because of the longer history of mission activities there and the missionary's deeper penetration into that country's interior, Christianity became identified with Western imperialism and thus provided a powerful impetus to intensify already existing attitudes of anti-foreignism there. In China, more often than not, nationalist sentiment defined itself against rather than with Christianity.

By contrast, the missionary played no key role in bringing down the premodern regimes of either Japan or Korea. In Japan, the "men of purpose" (*shishi*) that brought down the Tokugawa bakufu did so years before they would later lift the government proscription of Christianity in 1873. And in Korea, the foreign power that brought down the Yi monarchy was no Western power, but Japan, a fact that made Christianity a means for Koreans to maintain an independent spiritual identity even after the demolition of Korea as an autonomous political entity. As a consequence, in both of these countries, Christianity was spared the fate of being literally equated with imperialism.

In both Japan and Korea, however, spelling out the connection between Christianity and national strength required native Christians to search for an autonomous intellectual base beyond the foreign missions. And in both countries the circumstances that surrounded the fall of the preceding premodern regimes had a decisive influence on the shape this search ultimately took. In Japan, the rise of the Meiji monarchy contributed to the rise of an imperial consciousness amongst a narrow but influential Protestant elite. By contrast, after the Japanese protectorate in Korea (1905-10) forced King Kojong to abdicate the throne in 1907, the Christian movement there would increasingly become linked with anti-colonial consciousness. The ultimate expression of this link would come finally in the explosive March First Movement of 1919, in which Christian churches cooperated with believers of other religions in organizing a nationwide resistance movement to Japan's colonial rule. Both of these processes were intimately connected with Japan's defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 and the subsequent decline of Chinese dynastic fortunes.

In both Japan and Korea, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) played a key role in mediating the process by which native Christians sought to stake out an intellectual base for themselves that would be autonomous from the foreign missions. Although founded in Britain in 1844, the YMCA achieved its fullest development as a lay organization in the United States. There the YMCA became linked with a new international community of lay activists committed to systematically evangelizing the world in a single generation. At the turn of the twentieth

century, the YMCA's non-ecclesiastic approach to missionary work allowed it to marshal enormous evangelical energies from all over the world. The YMCA's rise thus signaled the emergence of a new internationalism in Christian missionary work. Yet in contrast to this internationalist development of the YMCA's lay character, in Japan and Korea, the YMCA's independence from the missionary churches took on an explicitly nationalist significance. In both countries, the YMCA became a non-ecclesiastical space beyond the foreign missions through which native Christians could seize the initiative in illustrating the necessity of Christianity to the cultivation of national strength. Narrating how this happened is the subject of this chapter.

The YMCA, however, did more than merely provide the space through which these two nationalist discourses on Christianity were first articulated; it also acted as the conduit through which they were brought into tension with one another. During the protectorate period in Korea, the YMCA's missionary leadership allowed for the establishment of a Japanese YMCA in Seoul for colonial settlers and, at the same time, also moved to set up a Korean YMCA for students studying abroad in Tokyo. In so doing, they unwittingly set the stage for a colonial contest over control of the YMCA that interpenetrated metropole and colony alike. That they did so was very much in line with their internationalist vision of a global YMCA movement strategically integrated to promote the evangelization of the world. This vision was in turn underwritten by the privileged place enjoyed by the YMCA under the Japanese protectorate, which, under the governance of Itō Hirobumi, was bound to recognize the extraterritorial rights of the foreign missions and thus acted to foster a cooperative relationship with them. Hence, as we shall see below, the brief years of the protectorate in Korea afforded the YMCA a freedom of movement it had not enjoyed under the Yi monarchy and would no longer have after Japan's formal colonization of Korea in 1910. The consequences that this legacy of the protectorate period would have for the first decade of Japan's colonial rule in Korea make up the heart of this dissertation's concerns.

The YMCA Movement in Japan

The YMCA movement in Japan began in 1880 when Kanda Nobutake brought the YMCA idea to Japan following a trip to the United States. A group of young Japanese ministers who had recently become acquainted with each other through their preaching activities in Tokyo decided to form a youth association there. Kozaki Hiromichi, a recent graduate of the missionary school Dōshisha and who would become one of Japanese Christianity's intellectual leaders during the 1880s, was elected president of the YMCA. Lecture series were provided on the relationship of Christianity to politics and society.[1]

What the YMCA idea provided for Japanese Christians was thus a means of spelling out for listeners the connection between Christianity and the development of patriotic consciousness. The formation of the YMCA's journal, *Rikugō Zasshi*, gave Christians a major voice in the intellectual criticism of this decade, read not only by Christians, but also by intellectuals concerned over the course of Japan's future. Japanese Christians certainly had need of such a voice during the 1880s. The newly formed universities in Japan generally took a hostile attitude toward Christianity and instead embraced social Darwinism as the root explanation behind Western modernity. The YMCA movement provided Japanese Protestants with a vehicle through which to rebut these arguments. Out of this movement, they formulated an intellectual position

[1] Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1970) 112

that claimed that Christianity was a necessary element in modern education. In his *Seikyō Shinron* ("A New Theory of Politics and Religion"), Kozaki argued that in Japan, as well as in China and Korea, Confucianism had linked all education with the exercise of rule. As a result, he continued, "all learning in our country has been biased towards politics; there has been no learning divorced from politics and religion, scholarship and industry have all been mere instruments of rule." It was thus, Kozaki explained, "no accident that learning [in Japan] has come to be reviled" by Japan's commoner classes. By contrast, Christianity contained within it the idea of the individual conscience and thus made it possible for Japanese to take an interest in the application of learning to social morality, not politics. It was thus only by embracing Christianity, Kozaki argued, that Japan would be able to produce an educated citizenry. Kozaki's argument represented the culmination of a half decade of lectures made and articles published through the vehicle of the YMCA. The YMCA idea thus provided a means of combating the anti-Christianity of Japan's emerging government school system and its tendencies a narrowly instrumental education.

In spite of these advances, however, Japanese Christians were aware that the YMCA movement was hamstrung by its attachment to the missionary churches. In 1888, Honma Shigeyoshi printed an article in *Rikugō Zasshi* arguing that YMCAs needed to be independent of any church or sect to be truly interdenominational in nature. To this end, Associations required secretaries specializing in spreading the YMCA's social influence throughout Japan. Honma found the large number of church ministers serving as YMCA secretaries worrisome. What was needed, he argued, was to establish the YMCA as a lay association so that it could exert its influence beyond the churches.[2] This awareness led naturally to a desire to bring the YMCA in Japan into alignment with the YMCA movements of other countries and especially that of the United States.

An opportunity to reorganize the YMCA movement along these lines would come with the arrival of Luther Wishard in Japan. In 1878, Wishard, the evangelical leader of a new intercampus college YMCA movement, had the opportunity to read a letter sent to Amherst College from Japanese Christian students at Sapporo Agricultural College. The letter expressed the hope that their efforts to spread Christianity in "the Eastern side of the world" would be met with comparable efforts "in the Western side." The evangelically-minded Wishard was deeply impressed with the letter and, although still preoccupied with strengthening the Christian student movement at home, began from this time to think about the possibilities of unifying the mission field through a worldwide organization of Christian students. In response to a student YMCA established in Ceylon, the first of its kind outside North America, Wishard circulated a pamphlet forecasting his belief that the YMCA student movement would eventually be spread worldwide. In 1889, Wishard decided that the timing was right for him to conduct a world tour of Christian student movements around the world. He would later relate in his autobiography how linked in his own mind the original letter from Sapporo Agricultural College was with his plan to tour the missions of the world in order to understand how to better integrate them with one another.

> The germ idea of the extension of the Student Movement to non-Christian lands which had been conceived as a result of reading the letter of greeting from students in Sapporo, Japan to the Agricultural College in Amherst had been real and we had seen fulfilled the forecast made in the little pamphlet written in the autumn of 1884.[3]

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[2] Nara Tsunegorō, *Nihon YMCA-Shi* (Tokyo: Nihon YMCA Dōmei, 1959) 32
[3] Charles Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America*, (New York: Association Press, 1951) 324

Not surprisingly, then, Wishard chose Japan as the first country to visit on his world tour of missions. Upon his arrival there, he made it his purpose to help the missions there open a pathway into Japan's government academies, which had consistently held a hostile attitude towards Christianity. Wishard's logic was simple: If missionaries could not reach the students studying in government schools, then those students would have to be brought to the missions. His idea was to introduce the student summer conference, which had been invented three years earlier at a bible study retreat in Northfield, Massachusetts, into Japan. In 1889, Wishard would hold Japan's first summer conference at Dōshisha, a Christian mission school. This student conference turned out to be a resounding success. 500 students, 100 of them women, gathered from all over Japan to attend.[4] Niijima Jō, Dōshisha's charismatic founder, said that the conference produced "the largest number of Christians ever baptized at one time in Japan."[5]

Wishard was elated. The experience at Dōshisha confirmed his conviction that North American methods of revivalism could be and needed to be translated into the missionary field. At home, the student conference had provided a mechanism for producing missionaries to evangelize the world. Conversely, in the mission field, the conference converted missionaries for self-propagation at home. Wishard felt he had not only gained a glimpse of the future that awaited the world's evangelization, but also a powerful message to Christian countries to cement their commitments to this fundamental task. From Kyoto, he telegraphed the conference's slogan, "Make Jesus King," around the world. This message, perhaps a gloss on John 6:15, suggests the confidence spreading among Christian nations that secular advances were making it possible to Christianize the world. More than its actual content, however, its adoption by students of a "heathen" country inspired evangelical groups across the Western world to form student volunteer organizations of their own. Japan's Christian students had unwittingly provided the justification for a worldwide Christian student movement. From the vantage point of 1889, Japan thus appeared to evangelical Christians as an extraordinary sign that the Christianization of the world was indeed at hand.

So why was the Dōshisha conference so successful? To answer, let us briefly review the origins of Protestant Christianity in Japan. Students had always made up the backbone of the Christian movement in Meiji Japan. After the Meiji proscription of Christianity was lifted in 1873, Christian "bands" of newly converted youth popped up in different corners of Japan where mission schools had been established. In Kumamoto, the former domainal leaders invited Captain Leroy Janes, an American Civil War officer turned missionary, to open a school there to instruct the area's brightest youngsters in Western learning. While studying there, many of these boys became increasingly curious about Christianity and, in a much celebrated incident, gathered together one evening atop Mt. Hanaoka, a small hill nearby their school, to sign an oath declaring their conversion to Christianity. In Yokohama, James Ballagh and Samuel Brown gave lectures on the West that attracted many Japanese and produced converts such as Uemura Masahisa (1858-1925), who would go onto to lead Japan's Presbyterian Church and Ibuka Kajinosuke (1854-1940), who would take a leading role in the YMCA movement in Japan. W.B. Clark, the former president of Amherst College, formed Sapporo Agricultural College.

The former samurai convert most commonly came from those domains that had either not participated in or had fought on the losing side of the Meiji Restoration. For these men, the fall

[4] Nara, 63
[5] Hopkins, 329

of the *han* (or domainal) system in Japan destroyed both their relationship with their lord and their path to advancement in the world. The mission school for these men was thus a means to gain access to the Western learning they needed to reclaim their elite status, but soon also became a place in which they could make sense of their sense of estrangement from Japanese society. The Christian valuation of the individual conscience provided for them a transcendent norm against which they could define a new social identity for themselves. In accepting Christianity, they simultaneously accepted a new role for themselves as social reformers. The Japanese Christian was thus tasked with the duty of reforming Japan's morality and placing it on the modern basis of Christian ethics.[6]

Japanese Christians thus came to identify deeply with the missionary claim that the Christian conscience was the foundation of Western strength. They also firmly believed, with the missionary, that establishing the individual conscience as the basis of a new Japanese morality required training a native clergy with a high degree of education. It thus makes sense that they would respond enthusiastically to Wishard's use of a summer conference through which to reach Japanese students who otherwise remained inaccessible to the foreign missions.

Dōshisha was the obvious choice for communicating Wishard's message of self-propagation. Dōshisha was formed in 1875 by the Congregationalist missionaries D.C. Green and J.B. Davis and the Japanese Congregationalist Niijima with the express purpose of gaining for Christianity a place within Japan's education system. Although a missionary school, funded and controlled by the American Board of Foreign Missions, Dōshisha was also clearly identified with Niijima, whose unwavering commitment to individual freedom symbolized for many Japanese Christians the possibility of a new morality for Japan.

As an American evangelist, Wishard's vision was to spread the revivalist techniques of his country throughout the world. But his American style of revivalism, which often relied on coercive techniques meant to confront the undecided Christian with his or her own conscience, fell flat with many of the Japanese Christians that attended this first summer conference. One student opposed Wishard's call for a show of hands of those who had decided for Christ by responding, "God does not control our actions by use of occasions or numbers of people. Those who would confront others in this way [attempt to] trip up the weak." This comment was apparently not interpreted into English for Wishard. Kimura Shunkichi, who had come from Tokyo Imperial University to attend the conference, was disappointed with how little the conference addressed the modern world. "I had come to hear about the nineteenth century," he later recalled, "but all I got to hear about was the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries."[7]

Coming in the midst of such enthusiasm for the student conference idea, the tepid response to what some Japanese Christians perceived to be Wishard's constrictive and antiquated revivalism deserves some explanation. Japanese Christians agreed with foreign missionaries that the Christian conscience was what made possible the scientific spirit inherent in Western learning. Conversely, however, they also saw Western learning as a necessary means of cultivating the conscience. Japanese Protestants took it as axiomatic that the individual conscience held up by Christianity was a fundamentally modern value opposed to any form of outmoded constrictions, religious or otherwise, and not at all undermined by other forms of modern learning.

Kozaki Hiromichi, who we have seen took the lead in arguing for the intrinsic connection between Christianity and modernity, used the student conference as an opportunity to present this

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[6] For the classic treatment of this conversion process, see Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan*

[7] Nara, 67

point of view. There he presented a lecture in which he argued against the Bible as an infallible source of religious authority and advocated instead the liberal view that its authors wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Kozaki thus embraced the point of view that the Bible represented an unrivaled example of religious inspiration, but not a source of literal truth. On the one hand, this lecture represented Kozaki's attempt to formulate an intellectual position that would not be dependent on the foreign missions. On the other hand, however, it also signified his commitment to keeping Japanese Christianity in step with Protestant theology's development in the world. In his autobiography, he notes that he derived his main influence for this lecture from George Trumbull Ladd (1842-1921), a Yale theologian who had in the previous year endorsed a liberal reading of the Bible.[8] Hence, with the proliferation of liberal theological views across American institutions of higher learning, Kozaki understandably felt compelled to recognize liberal theology's emphasis on religious inspiration as the best explanation of Christianity's inherent link with Western civilization.

Up until Kozaki's lecture, Japanese Christians had remained curiously silent on the subject of theology. Their faith was united in their belief that the strength of Western civilization lay in the fact that it was founded upon the universal truth of Christianity. Their common desire to use Christianity to strengthen the Japanese nation without becoming mired in dogma had encouraged an aversion to theological issues. In the mid-1880s, however, German and American Unitarian Churches began sending missionaries to Japan. Unitarianism's rational explanation of Christianity appealed to many Japanese intellectuals and began gaining surprising numbers of converts during this time. In his autobiography, Kozaki writes that these missionary activities on the part of the Unitarians made it necessary for him, who had been tasked with discussing the Bible at the Dōshisha summer conference, to state his own position on Biblical interpretation.[9] The idea that liberal theology better explained the connection between religion and modernity was thus not Kozaki's original insight but a view that was gaining increasing currency in Japan at the end of the 1880s.

Although Kozaki does not mention it, the need for Japanese Christians to reevaluate their theological views was also intimately related to a contemporary shift then taking place in Japan's politics and culture. At the end of the 1880s, a new "Japanist" critique of indiscriminate Westernization was gaining powerful momentum in public opinion. In 1888, Seikyōsha, an intellectual group dedicated to "preserving [Japan's] national essence" (*kokusui hozon*), began publishing its periodical *Nihon oyobi Nihonjin* (Japan and the Japanese). Seikyōsha differentiated itself from earlier attempts to critique Westernization by arguing for the role of Japanese identity in contributing to the nation's modern development. In 1889, opposition to Foreign Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu's attempt to revise the Unequal Treaties brought the question of national identity and its importance for Japan's standing in the world to the forefront of Japanese political consciousness. In this context, the interest in Christianity as the explanation of Western strength that took hold among non-Christian intellectuals during the 1870s and 1880s began to recede. Ironically, what had seemed to Wishard in 1889 to be the beginning of a wave of Christianization in Japan would turn out to be its high tide.

Perhaps for this reason, Kozaki's lecture caused an incredible stir at this first summer conference at Dōshisha. To missionaries and Japanese Christians alike, Kozaki's advocacy of higher Biblical criticism seemed to be a dangerous capitulation to the rise of conservative

[8] I have relied upon the printing of Kozaki Hiromichi's autobiography in *Kozaki Zenshū, vol.3* (Tokyo: Keiseisha, 1938) 61
[9] Ibid.

nationalism in Japan. The argument for Christianizing Japan was based on the belief that Christianity represented an incontrovertible truth and the bedrock of Western civilization. Once the veracity of the Bible, Christianity's foundational text, was called into question, or reduced to a matter of rational scrutiny, this view was placed in jeopardy. Kozaki's lecture was thus considered heretical and was excluded from the pamphlet printed of the other lectures given at the conference. But to many Japanese Christians it quickly became clear that liberal theology presented a means of reconciling their positive valuation of the individual conscience with their need to assimilate modern learning. It made it possible for the believer to recognize the religious possibilities in modern secular developments. Liberal theology thus made it possible for Japanese Christians to enter the competition with the other discourses on national identity then circulating in Japan.

Just as importantly, liberal theology made it possible to for Japanese Christians to take definitive control over the task of propagating Christianity in Japan away from the foreign missions. Tensions had existed between the missionaries in Japan and their young converts almost from the very inception of missionary efforts there. During the 1870s, Dōshisha had been the site of several conflicts between students and missionary teachers over the issue of including secular learning in the curriculum. Liberal theology merely provided a means of problematizing tensions that had appeared only incidental to the formation of a Christian culture for Japan during the 1880s. In pleading for the expansion of Dōshisha from a mission school into a university, Niijima had complained to the American Board of Foreign Missions that

> To my great disappointment some missionaries do not take pains enough to adapt themselves to our way in this important respect. Hence they are getting quite unpopular and cannot get along with the natives quite smoothly. A chief reason is that they are still Americans. Their habits, ideas, and imagination are all American. What Americans regard as good the natives may despise. Something honorable in America is regarded dishonorable here. Petty troubles arise now and then between them and our Christians.[10]

Niijima imagined the expansion of Dōshisha into a Christian university as a resolution for this dilemma by removing foreign missionaries from mission work entirely and dedicating themselves to the "high spiritual brain-work" of training a native clergy. Liberal theology, however, posed an altogether more radical solution: Japanese clergy would now be responsible not only for undertaking Japan's evangelization, but also for the "brain-work" of developing a Christian theology specifically suited to Japanese tradition and history. The intellectual conditions for a rebellion against missionary authority had thus fallen into place.

Kozaki's lecture is often seen as a first step in the turn among some Japanese Christians toward liberal theology as a new and more modern form of Christianity, free from its association with missionary rule. But historians rarely look at the fact that it was the YMCA student conference that provided the vehicle through which this shift became possible. The opportunity to remove students from their everyday surroundings and to demonstrate to them the truth of Christian teachings and their inherent connection to national strength constituted a major breakthrough for Japanese Protestants. The second Summer Conference, held this time in Tokyo, displayed the determination of Japanese Christians to do just this. John T. Swift, the first YMCA secretary dispatched from America to Japan, reported back that the initial program proposed was "of the wildest character, embracing all subjects all the way from Political Economy to the latest

[10] Arthur Sherburne Hardy, *Life and Letters of Joseph Neesima* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1892) 228

German materialistic Sociology." Only with much cajoling was Swift able to convince the conference planners to settle on a "safer programme."[11] Even so, this summer conference made clear the intent to broadly incorporate secular learning into its program. The principal of the conference, Christian educator Oshikawa Masayoshi, made clear in his opening remarks that this conference would be much different in orientation than Wishard's summer conference of last year. This year, Oshikawa explained, economists, politicians, journalists, theologists and philosophers had been invited to the conference. Student would thus have the opportunity to experience Christianity in terms of its coeval existence with other modern forms of learning.[12]

As Wishard had hoped in 1889, the YMCA finally did provide a pathway into Japan's government academies. It was a pathway, however, that also no longer took Dōshisha as its center. The YMCA thus provided a space for Japanese Christians beyond the missionary school, but in doing so, it also distanced them from the notion that Christian doctrine represented an unassailable truth protected from the criticisms of secular forms of knowledge. To properly understand the consequences of this shift, we must consider here the life of Dōshisha's founder, Niijima Jō, and the influence of his ideas on Japanese Christianity.

The Spirit of Niijima and Imperial Consciousness

The son of a high-serving family in Annaka domain (present-day Gunma Prefecture), Niijima grew up feeling that the world ruled by his *daimyō* (domainal lord) was both immense and inescapable. "All the events of my younger life," he later recalled, "took place within the square inclosure [*sic*] belonging to my prince. It was a mere little spot, but to me it was no small world…And above all, the prince seemed a regular terror to us. He could either behead us or expel us at his own pleasure, as disgraced servants."[13] Niijima was thus subject to the *daimyō*'s whim and had no choice but to serve in whatever capacity his lord saw fit. As Irwin Scheiner points out, this placed Niijima in a position where he "was unable to establish a private will and life distinct from the public demands of his domain leader."[14] To make matters worse, this lord died when Niijima was the age of fifteen and was succeeded by his brother, a man who he considered to be "far inferior to his deceased brother in every respect." This new *daimyō* blocked Niijima from the studies he had been pursuing in Dutch and Chinese learning, his only escape from the reality of his dependent situation, and forced him to take up service as a clerk in his lord's office. In this context, Niijima became increasingly tortured by self-doubt and with dissatisfaction with his state of servitude to a man whom he resented for his arbitrariness and ineptitude.

Niijima was fascinated with the Western learning that had begun to circulate through Japan after the 1853 appearance of United States Commodore Matthew Perry in Yokohama. Niijima felt a longing to know the source of the truth he found revealed in the Western books he was able to get his hands on. Then, at the age of 20, a friend of his gave him a number of books written in Chinese by American missionaries. In these books, Niijima could see God clearly spelled out as the explanation behind not only Western history, but also the creation of the world itself. In these books, Niijima recognized a transformational possibility that he had not seen before.

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[11] Hopkins, 334
[12] Nara, 76
[13] Hardy, 19
[14] Scheiner, 130

All these books helped me to behold a being somewhat dimly yet in my mental eye, who was so blindly concealed from me during the first two decades of my life…Having recognized God as my Heavenly Father, I felt I was no longer inseparably bound to my parents. I discovered for the first time that the doctrines of Confucius on the filial relation were too narrow and fallacious. I said then: 'I am no more my parents', but my God's.'[15]

The sense of liberation these books gave Niijima also filled him with a desire to learn more about Christianity. In Japan, however, Chrisitianity was a proscribed religion and there were no missionaries to whom Niijima could address his questions. "Not being able to seen any foreign missionaries then," he later recalled, "I could not obtain any explanations on many points, and I wished at once to visit a land where the gospel is freely taught, and from whence teachers of God's words were sent out."[16] This thought led logically to a decision to leave Japan. At the age of 21, he fled his native domain to become a stowaway to the United States. Traveling to Hokkaidō, he boarded an American ship there and left Japan, an act of self-exile that, had he been caught, would have been punishable by death. When the ship arrived in Boston, Niijima made the acquaintance of the ship's owner, Alpheus J. Hardy, a member of the Boston Mission Society who subsequently became Niijima's benefactor. With Hardy's assistance, Niijima was able to pursue studies in Massachusetts and eventually attended Amherst College, from where he graduated in 1872. His return to Japan in 1874 to establish a Christian school there was thus a consequence of his long personal quest for truth.

Niijima discovered the means to satisfy this thirst for truth at Amherst. Amherst was a denominational college of Congregationalist origin and was deeply rooted in the ante-bellum tradition of religious education. But during Niijima's period of study there, Amherst was entering a transitional period. After the end of the Civil War, the older denominational schools in the United States were being forced to adapt themselves to the expansion of higher learning and the freedom from religious dogma that that entailed. At Amherst, this process of adaptation tended to take shape in the nuances of its curriculum. There the notion that Christianity stood for truth and formed the foundation of the sciences was still very much alive. Under the leadership of President Julius H. Seelye (1824-1895), the college charted a careful course between maintaining its credibility in the sciences by respecting the disinterested methods of some disciplines and watchfully protecting the all-important link between science and faith in others. Biology was one area considered especially important as a link between the worlds of science and life. As late as 1894, the prospectus for a biology course taught by John Mason Tyler read

The course in Biology, as formerly, will comprise a study of the development of the animal kingdom form the lower forms up to man. Professor Tyler intends, however, to lay particular emphasis upon the development of man, and instead of making the course an end in itself he proposes to make the study and introduction to the study of History, Ethics and Political Economy.[17]

It seems likely that the overall effect of this approach to the teaching of the sciences must have been to give students the impression that the disinterested pursuit of scientific truth and Christian faith were, far from being mutually antagonistic, were mutually reinforcing forms of knowledge. The sciences, Tyler's curriculum suggests, imparted important object lessons to young men

[15] Hardy, 31
[16] Ibid.
[17] Thomas LeDuc, *Piety and Intellect at Amherst College*, 1865-1912 (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969) 86

struggling to attain maturity in a chaotic world; they were a means to the truth, but the truth was in turn also a means of cultivating the individual conscience and ultimately Christian faith.[18]

It was in this idea—that Christianity reconciled the individual conscience with universal truth—that Niijima found the resolution for his identity crisis. Unlike the later Meiji generation of Christians that he helped raise, Niijima's conversion to Christianity was neither a reaction to being declassed nor directly motivated by a desire to serve the Japanese nation, the modern form of which did not yet exist. Instead, he was driven purely by a need to escape the stultifying condition of vassalage to his *daimyō* and discover his own individuality. This perhaps explains why he received what we might call the Amherst idea so deeply; it formed the core kernel of his dream to establish a similar type of school in Japan.

As in the United States, in Japan, too the late nineteenth century saw the founding of many modern universities to train new talent for an industrializing nation. In the case of Japan, however, this spread of higher education was engineered mainly by the Meiji government rather than through private philanthropy. One of the consequences of this was that the nation's moral education was overlooked in favor of promoting the technical education necessary to creating an industrialized nation. Already by 1880, ideologues such as Itō Hirobumi who had earlier disdained Confucian learning as retrograde were beginning to acknowledge that Confucianism had provided a moral basis for the nation that no longer existed. Moreover, conservative moralists such as Motoda Eifu (1818-1891) urged the readopting of Confucian ethics as the foundation of the national education. It was against this background that Niijima led his campaign to expand Dōshisha from a mere missionary school into a Christian university. From the perspective of the missionary, Dōshisha existed to train a native clergy to undertake the task of proselytizing Japan. For Niijima, however, Dōshisha had a much broader mission to provide a spiritual foundation for the new Japanese nation. In making his case to the American Board of Missions for financial support in expanding Dōshisha into a university, Niijima wrote that

> As soon as it saw the importance of the university our government established one at Tokyo, and has also founded several academies. These will give us intellectual and material, but not material growth. There are many who are seeking to improve the public morality on the basis of Chinese philosophy. But we cannot rejoice in their efforts, for the moral code of China has no profound hold upon the minds of men. All Oriental states are almost wholly destitute of liberty and Christian morality, and cannot therefore advance rapidly in civilization. It is the spirit of liberty, the development of science, the Christian morality, which has given birth to European civilizations. Trace the effect to the cause and you will find science resting upon the foundation of Christianity. We cannot therefore believe that Japan can secure this civilization until education rests upon the same basis. With this foundation the state is builded upon a rock. No sword can conquer it, no tempest destroy it, no sea overcome it.[19]

For Niijima, then, Christianity had to form the basis of Japan's spiritual identity because it was the truth. This conviction meant that he would never see the state as a proper agent of the nation's spiritual development; for Niijima this task was chiefly the prerogative of the nonofficial sphere and specifically that of the nation's Christians. To serve the nation thus did not mean to serve the state.

Niijima's death in 1890 effectively marks the end of the mid-Meiji effort to establish an autonomous spiritual sphere that would remain separate from the state. From the mid-1880s, the

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[18] Ibid.
[19] Hardy, 242

framers of the Meiji education policy, Mori Arinori (1847-1889) and Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909), took from the model of German education the idea that the state had a role in the nation's spiritual development. "If we want to maintain the prestige of Japan among the powers and achieve everlasting greatness," Mori wrote, "we must cultivate and develop our national spirit and morale. This is possible only through education." Mori, who was an early advocate of the right to religious freedom, defined national spirit in secular terms as a selfless loyalty to Japan's monarch. In 1890, however, the Yamagata cabinet promulgated the Imperial Rescript on Education, a document that defined the emperor as the spiritual center of the nation by virtue of his imperial lineage. Using heavily Confucian-laden terms, the Rescript made ethnic unity a substitute for Japan's spiritual identity. In so doing, it also established the state, and not the morally autonomous individual, as the prime agent of the nation's spiritual development.

It is perhaps safe to say that the Education Rescript set Meiji Protestants back on their heels. Like other progressive intellectuals, they tended to see the Meiji Restoration as an essentially progressive event and as a necessary consequence of "opening the country" (*kaikoku*) to the outside world during the Bakumatsu period. The 1889 promulgation of the Meiji Constitution, which established for the first time the right to religious freedom in Japan, seemed to virtually all Japanese Protestants to fulfill the historical destiny heralded by this transformational event. As a consequence, many of them strained to square the Education Rescript with their own progressive view of Japan's history. As is well known, the Rescript also provided the occasion for a public reaction against Christianity as an anti-national religion. This backlash took shape over a number of high-profile incidents that will be covered in the next chapter. Here let it suffice to say that one of the main effects of the Education Rescript was that it made it exceedingly difficult for Japanese Christians not to affirm that the state had a necessary role to play in the nation's spiritual life.

The opportunity to reconcile the tension between the progressive view of history espoused by Meiji Protestants and the imperial Japanese state's claim to act as the arbiter of the nation's spiritual development would come with the Sino-Japanese War. Meiji Christians almost universally defended Japan's participation in this war over Korean sovereignty as a struggle for progress and against the historical stagnation of dynastic China. One of the most famous examples of this defense is Uchimura Kanzō's "Justification of the Corean War," an English-language article printed in the Japan Weekly Mail to appeal to pubic opinion in the West. In this article, Uchimura set out to demonstrate that Japan's war with China was not merely a legal one, but a morally righteous one as well. The materialism of the nineteenth century, Uchimura argued, had turned all conflicts into mere wars of lust. And yet there had undeniably been righteous wars in the past; "Greece versus Persia, Rome versus Carthage, the England of Queen Elizabeth versus the Spain of Phillip II." Such wars were not accidental occurrences, but moments of historical necessity. And such was also the case in the current war between Japan and China. In confident tones, Uchimura declared that, "The Corean War is to decide whether Progress shall be the law in the East, as it has long been in the West or whether Retrogression…shall possess the Orient for ever."[20]

Historical progress, then, fashioned the moral justification for Japan's war with China. But how was it possible that, in an age where Christian countries no longer fought moral wars, a non-Christian country was now embarking upon one? This is a question that Uchimura never poses in

[20] Uchimura Kanzō, "Justification of the Corean War," in *Uchimura Kanzō Zenshū vol. 16* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933) 26-36

the English-language version of "Justification of the Corean War." Interestingly, however, he does raise it in the Japanese translation of this article that was printed in *Kokumin no Tomo* (The Nation's Friend), the publication of the once-Christian and now pro-imperialist war advocate Tokutomi Sohō. There Uchimura writes, "But someone may doubt why, when today Christian nations have already forgotten the righteous war, a non-Christian nation like Japan can pursue [such a war]."[21] Despite the fact that this question never appears in the English translation of this article, the answer Uchimura provides to it nevertheless does. "'Heathenism'," he writes there,

> if dark is earnest, and it may yet retain enthusiasm which Christendom may have lost with superstitions. A sort of chivalric spirit is yet with us, a spirit akin to Spartan courage, and Roman valor to crush the proud; and a righteous *war is still possible with us* (emphasis added).

Without the question that precedes it, this passage's meaning arguably remains oblique and we may indeed wonder how many of Uchimura's Western readers simply passed over it. In the more overtly nationalist Japanese translation of this article, however, Uchimura's intent is unmistakable. "The West has already past out of this enthusiastic age," he writes there, "but the East is still in it. We have not yet forgotten the righteous war." Thus, while not yet a Christian nation, Japan finds a substitute for its missing Christian identity in the innocence of its premodern heritage. Interestingly, for Uchimura, it is the Japanese emperor who is the mover behind this pre-Christian identity. Uchimura invokes the Hungarian nationalist Louis Kossuth (1802-1894) in arguing that the Meiji emperor stood with the Prussian statesman Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) as one of the "two greatest men of the nineteenth century… because of the mighty work inaugurated by our worthy Sovereign, not only for his people, but for the millions of the benighted Asia as well."

It is important that we not mischaracterize Uchimura's argument here. He was not ascribing, in either English or Japanese, divine qualities to Japan's monarch in the manner of the Education Rescript. For Uchimura, the Meiji emperor was, like Bismarck, a secular leader. Nevertheless, there is an implicit suggestion in Uchimura's writing here—the implications of which he may not have been full aware of—that the state did indeed have a role to play in the nation's spiritual uplift and perhaps even its transformation. In Japan's war with China over Korean sovereignty, Uchimura had discovered the means to mobilize Christian patriotism in the service of Japan's monarchic state.

It is well known that Uchimura would soon recant this position. Japan's imperialist actions towards Korea following its quick victory in the Sino-Japanese War, he believed, belied any lip service made during the war of fighting to preserve Korean independence. Ultimately, Uchimura found himself directing the same warning to his own country that he had once leveled against China: obey the law of progress (which was at the same time the law of divine providence) or face national demise. It is telling, however, that having changed his position, Uchimura found no institution through which he could reconcile his Japanese identity with that of his identity as a Christian, a fact that partially explains his decision to found the anti-institutional *Mukyōkai* (Non-Church) movement of Japanese Christianity.

As an institution, the YMCA Student Conference facilitated the linking together of Christian identity with imperial consciousness during the Sino-Japanese War. In the summer of 1894, Ebina Danjō acted as the principal for the fourth summer conference of Japanese Christian students. There he announced to the gathered students that, "We must wage a war of the intellect.

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[21] Ibid., "Nisshin Sensō no Gi," in *Uchimura Kanzo Zenshu vol. 2*, 221-29

The Japanese soldiers are in Korea and we must do our utmost to wage our war of the intellect."[22] In Ebina's mind, the Japanese Christian task of formulating an intellectual position independent from the foreign missions was linked to Japan's war effort against China. From his point of view, then, the YMCA had thus become a vehicle for nurturing Japan's imperial consciousness. After the dissolution of Niijima's dream of establishing Dōshisha as a private university for Japan, and in the wake of the Education Rescript, the Sino-Japanese War provided an opportunity for Japanese Christians to put their own progressive historical consciousness at the service of the nation. Having thus sketched the YMCA's role in facilitating this transition at the end of the nineteenth century, let us now turn our attention to the introduction of the YMCA movement into Korea at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The YMCA Movement in Korea

In 1884, a Presbyterian medical missionary from Ohio, Horace N. Allen, was sent to work at the newly formed United States legation in Korea after a disappointing first year of missionary work in China. While there Allen had the good fortune to administer medical treatment to a member of the royal family critically wounded during the failed Kapsin Coup, an attempt by certain reform-minded yangban to take over the government and reorganize it into an institution centered around themselves as progressive reformers. This act quickly gained Allen favor with the royal court. As legation minister, Allen was able to pursue a policy of missionary work among Korea's yangban elite through the introduction of modern medicine and the construction of hospital buildings in the capital.

Allen's success led to the sending of two more missionaries from the United States: Horace Underwood, a Presbyterian and Henry Appenzeller, a Pennsylvania Methodist. At first Underwood and Appenzeller continued Allen's policy of missionizing through modernization projects by constructing a network of Christian hospitals, schools and churches throughout Korea with the purpose of establishing a foothold for spreading the influence throughout the Korean nation. During the late 1880s, they formed the mission schools Paejae Hakdang and Gusae Hakdang (renamed Kyŏngsin Hakkyo in 1895) in Seoul as a means of educating and evangelizing Korea's upper class. Such humanitarian efforts provided a vehicle for pursuing evangelical activities without provoking suspicion from the royal court.

The Sino-Japanese War greatly weakened the hold of Confucianism over the yangban class in Korea not only by demolishing Chinese influence on the peninsula, but also by exposing the throne's inability to manage its foreign affairs. Moreover, although the influence of conservative Confucianism remained strong, the government's introduction of a modernizing effort coupled with the existence of an important new pressure group, the Independence Club, created a new forum in which officials could vie for influence by promoting the country's Westernization. In this context, many officials began to seek out liaisons with Christian missions, thus making it easier for missionaries to proselytize in spite of the government's official proscription of Christianity. Between 1895-1905, the number of baptized Protestants increased from 528 to 12,500.[23]

In spite of these advances, missionaries found it difficult to attract yangban to their churches, which were quickly filling up with Korea's non-elite classes. Yangban identity, after all, was

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[22] Nara, 80

[23] Kenneth M. Wells, *New God, New Nation: Protestantism and Self-Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990) 29

premised upon a feeling of separation from and superiority to the other status groups of Korean society. As a result, though the Christian missions in Korea enjoyed many liaisons with the political elite, few of these became converts. Horace Underwood therefore proposed building a Christian club as a substitute for the church for these elite would-be converts. His wife and biographer, Lillias Underwood writes, "In the Korea of that day there were no places of evening amusement, and a club which would provide entertainment, instruction and a meeting-place would have many times the attractiveness of a similar institution in America. Where to go to find backing and support for a Christian club was easily answered." That answer, of course, was the YMCA. In 1899, Underwood and Appenzeller each wrote appeals to the Association for supporting in putting up a building.[24]

Underwood, however, appears to have been naïvely unaware that establishing a new YMCA meant first sending a secretary properly trained in Association methods. D. Willard Lyon, then the secretary of the YMCA in Shanghai, would later recall

> I asked Underwood why it was that in his letter to the International Committee he had asked for money for a building rather than for a secretary. He said that it had not dawned on him that the Committee would be willing to do so great a thing as send a secretary; he had only faith enough to ask for a small sum to put up a building. I assured him that the Committee would much rather send a secretary than send money for a building: In fact so far as I knew, the Committee had never even encouraged others to give money towards a building where there was not already an experienced secretary.[25]

This passage reveals that, in applying for funding to put up a YMCA, Underwood had no other intention than to establish a Christian club for Korea's yangban social elite. He therefore did not anticipate the need to dispatch a YMCA secretary to lay the necessary groundwork for the acquisition of a building. Although he undoubtedly understood the YMCA to be nondenominational, he apparently had little conception of the Association as a discrete social organization with an independent existence from church institutions.

Phillip L. Gillett (1872-1938) was the man who would be dispatched to Korea as the first secretary of the YMCA in Seoul. A graduate of Colorado College, Gillett became an active member of his campus YMCA. Upon graduation, he spent a year and a half studying at Yale Divinity School to receive training in YMCA methods. Thus to have been given the opportunity to spearhead a new YMCA movement in a country with a burgeoning Christian movement thus must have come fairly close to being Gillett's dream job. His idea for developing a regular YMCA membership developed upon Underwood's notion of the YMCA as a club for Christian elites. In 1903, Gillett wrote to the International Committee that, "My present idea is that we can enlist the support of the Korean church but make the membership fees such that the poorer people, who are the ignorant and objectionable class, will not be able to join until they get a move on them. The old time rigid wall has been punctured with a good many breaches and a young fellow of low birth can push his way into the best society if he tries. There are many instances of this."[26] From the beginning, then, the YMCA was established in Korea with an eye towards building upon the emergent support for Christianity among the yangban class. At the same time, Gillett noted, the status system in Korea had already deteriorated enough so that non-

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[24] Lillias Underwood, *Underwood of Korea* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1918) 206
[25] D. Willard Lyon, "Twenty-five Years Ago (YMCA)," in *The Korean Mission Field* (December 1925), 272-75
[26] Report of P.L. Gillett to the International Committee for the Twelve Months Ending September 30, 1903

yangban members could enter the Association if they committed themselves to doing so. The YMCA would thus also acts as a means of disciplining the non-yangban classes in Korea.

As had earlier been the case in Japan, Korea's political elite was now looking towards Christianity as the underlying secret of modern Western civilization. In 1899 Underwood communicated to Lyon that the main reasons he wished to establish a YMCA was because "at present the officials are favorable to the missions and work done in behalf of their sons would not be resented," and because "a political change, which may take place at almost any time, may make the conditions unfavorable." In Gillett's annual report of 1905 he communicates that

> The inauguration of Association work in Seoul has occurred at a time when the young men of the city are particularly eager to learn the lessons which Western civilization has to offer and also because this movement has gained the favor of leading men, both Korean and Foreigners, a large number have joined the Association. During the year the membership has increased from forty to six hundred. This has occurred without special effort to secure members, rather in spite of its attempts to keep the membership part of the Secretaries to those who understand its ideals and purposes.[27]

Unlike in Japan, where Westernization became a widespread phenomenon in the 1880s, in Korea the YMCA was one of the few places in Korea where young men could get a glimpse of what Western civilization was like. In 1905, the Canadian missionary J.S. Gale stressed the importance of this advantage in a letter written to the YMCA International Committee.

> Let me say again that now seems the accepted time for Korea and the Y.M.C.A. has practically the whole field of club life, being the only rallying point for young men in the city. Superstitions are breaking down before the force of western ways and all phases of life are changing.[28]

If, as Gale suggested, the YMCA now held a dominant position over "club life" in Seoul, then it is not at all surprising that its membership soon began to demand the right to take part in running the club. Almost immediately, missionaries began to recognize a genuine desire amongst Korean YMCA members in assuming a role of active leadership. A letter from Gillette to the International Committee from 1906 reads

> Although its has at times put the foreign secretaries into embarrassing positions, it is a matter of the liveliest satisfaction that our membership and the various committees insist upon having responsibilities thrust upon them. During the past year a sub-committee of the educational committee insisted upon holding one important without the presence of a foreign secretary. They then very considerately submitted the results to the main committee at which they were present. The educational committee also requested the dismissal of a sub-committee of the Board of Directors to deal with a special problem of the educational work. At another time some of the members of the Advisory Committee refused to attend the sessions of the Committee because they felt that proper responsibility was not put upon them.[29]

Unlike the mission schools, the YMCA provided young men with an opportunity to take a leading role in the their country's modernization, a concept most of them associated with Christianization and, by extension, Westernization as well. A logical consequence of this was

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[27] Report of P.L. Gillett, Seoul Korea, for 1905
[28] J.S Gale to the International Committee, June 1905

[29] Brockman's report, 1906

that an organic link had been forged between Korean elite patriotic consciousness and the YMCA.

We have so far looked at the rise of the YMCA's leadership superficially, as a more or less opportunistic response to the decline of the Yi monarchy. But who were these new Korean Christians that emerged to lead the YMCA? And what circumstances led them to embrace Christianity? These are questions that beg an examination of the conversion experience in Korea.

The Origins of Korea's YMCA Leadership: The Decline of Monarchical Power and its Consequences for Korean Christianity

In considering the origins of elite Protestantism in Korea, it is necessary to bear in mind how difficult it was for a yangban to convert to Christianity under the Yi dynasty. As was the case in Tokugawa Japan and Ch'ing China, Christianity was viewed with great suspicion in Chosŏn Korea and remained illegal long after Protestant missionaries were first allowed to enter the country in 1884. As Kenneth Wells points out, Christianity was considered to be inherently subversive because of its implication that spiritual values lay beyond the purview of the state. It was thus only very gradually that missionaries cautiously eked out a modest degree of tolerance for Christianity by associating it with secular benefits such as education and medicine. One can well imagine, however, how powerful the disincentives to converting must have been for a yangban member of the Korea's political elite. In Chosŏn Korea, yangban status was essentially equated with expertise in Confucian learning and an adherence to the hierarchical order it prescribed. Loyalty to the throne was measured in Confucian terms. Conversion to Christianity thus carried with it the risk of denying one's own identity as a member of the political elite.

If, in Japan, the Meiji convert embraced Christianity partly as a means of reconciling himself to the disintegration of the *ancien regime* there, then, in Korea, what led some yangban to convert was, by contrast, an increasing feeling of political estrangement from an *ancien regime* that seemed impervious to reform. The former samurai's frustrated need to serve was a consequence of the sudden loss of his traditional status, but the yangban's ability to serve was gradually straitjacketed by a traditional political order increasingly incapable of adapting to a changed world situation.

If the transformational moment of the Meiji Restoration confirmed for Japanese Protestants the essentially progressive character of imperial Japan, then the event that tragically confirmed Korea's backwardness for many reformers there was the failed Kapsin Coup of 1884. The coup attempt itself was a botched affair. Led by Kim Okkyun, a reformist yangban who had traveled to Japan in 1882 to study the Meiji government's efforts at modernization, it failed after only three days due to its reliance upon Japanese support that never materialized and the fact that it enjoyed almost no popular support. The coup, however, was a truly earthshaking event in Korea's political history. It cemented in the mind of the royal court a permanent link between progressive reform and subversive intent. As a consequence, however, the failed coup forced reformist yangban to reexamine the question of how national transformation could be brought about in Korea. This question, coupled with their feeling of alienation from the Yi monarchy, led many leading yangban reformers to embrace Christianity.

The two most noteworthy Korean Christian converts of the 1880s, Sŏ Chaep'il (1864-1951) and Yun Ch'iho (1865-1945), were also both men who had been forced into exile after the Kapsin Coup. Both Sŏ and Yun were born of elite yangban families and had been sent to study in Japan as a part of the modernization effort and both belonged to the reformist party in Korea. Sŏ,

who had been a direct participant in the attempted coup, fled with the other surviving collaborators to Japan, but ultimately decided to go to America to learn how to better serve the Korean people. After spending a year in San Francisco, he eventually settled in Pennsylvania, where he There he Anglicized his name to read "Philip Jaisohn." Yun, although not a participant in the Kapsin coup, was forced to flee the country to China due to the affiliation of his father, Yun Ung'yŏl (1840-1911) with the pro-reform party in Korea. In Shanghai, Yun established close ties to the Christian missions there and ultimately converted to Protestant Christianity in 1886. In 1889, he took up studies in America, first attending Vanderbilt University and eventually transferring to Emory University, where he graduated from in 1892.

Exile must have provided both of these young men with a powerful opportunity to reexamine their identities as members of Korea's political elite. Neither Yun nor Sŏ knew when or if they would be able to return to their homeland. It was not until the Sino-Japanese War, however, that they would have an opportunity to translate their Christian ideas into reformist action. In 1896, after being invited to return to Korea by Kim Hongjip's reformist cabinet, Sŏ gained permission from the Yi court to form an Independence Club (*tongnip hyŏphoe*) made up of like-minded reformers and with the immediate purpose of constructing an "Independence Gate" to symbolize Korea's independence from China and the world. This apparently simple beginning is already indicative of a new way of thinking about political change. By premising this new organization on such a seemingly politically innocuous project, Sŏ avoided repeating the mistakes of the Kapsin Coup by placing his new reform movement well within the ideological parameters of the Yi monarchy.[30]

Also in 1896, Yun and Sŏ teamed up to print the club's newspaper *Tongnip sinmun* (printed in English as *The Independent*). Although not a Christian newspaper, *Tongnip sinmun* nevertheless provided Yun and Sŏ with a means of disseminating a critique of society that was drawn from their Christian beliefs. Implicit in *Tongnip sinmun*'s discourse was a ferocious critique of Confucianism and its stultifying effect on Korean society. Because of its willingness to freely criticize the government. *Tongnip sinmun* nevertheless represented a new development in Korea's public discourse because of its willingness to freely criticize the government. The paper also served the educational function of teaching the Korean people about conditions in foreign countries and urging the Korean nation to undertake reform in order to preserve its independence. *Tongnip sinmun* took the radical step of eschewing Chinese ideographs in favor of the easier to read indigenous *hangŭl* characters, thus extending its potential readership beyond the elite literati to include the entire nation. The significance of this move, which implicitly undercut the authority of the Confucian elite in Korea, can be suggested by the fact that, after *Tongnip sinmun*'s dissolution, no other newspaper printed in Korea attempted an all-*hangŭl* policy until the 1920s.

In terms of its actions too, the Independence Club provided an important vehicle through which Christianity could be linked with elite reformism. Club members cooperated closely with the Christian missions in Korea and frequently gave guest lectures at the Christian mission school Paejae Hakdang, where *Tongnip sinmun* was also printed. Most importantly, however, many of the Independence Club's younger recruits came out of the missionary schools that had been established in the 1880s. Moreover, Yun and Sŏ were undoubtedly influenced by their experience of Christian education in the United States and specifically of the YMCA. Both spent

[30] Se Eung Oh, *Dr. Philip Jaisohn's Reform Movement 1896-1898: A Critical Appraisal of the Independence Club* (New York: University Press of America, 1995) 129

several years attending YMCAs there and absorbed much of their ideas about reform there. Both men envisioned for the Independence Club an existence that was not merely political. The club's creation of debating societies among Korean students particularly suggests the influence of the YMCA. Yun records in his diary his own opinion that the club might be put to better us as a space for social betterment, not political pressure. "As the Independent Club, so called, is doing no good," he wrote in 1898, "I suggested that we might organize it into a sort of a General Knowledge Association, provided with a lecture room, a reading room and museum. Dr. Jaisohn [Sŏ Chaepil] said that he had suggested the same to the Club but that nobody seemed to care for it."[31] The type of association Yun was proposing here sounds strikingly similar to what he must have witnessed at American YMCAs during his period of study there.

Despite its emphasis on social reform, however, the Independence Club ultimately remained a political pressure group that remained dependent on the close relations it enjoyed with the throne. The Yi government subsidized *Tongnip sinmun*'s printing expenses and the throne's official patronage of the club very likely provided an incentive for political elites of all stripes to join. Thus the Independence Club's membership remained a broad array of what Yun referred to as the "indigestible elements" of Korean reformist politics.[32] Certainly part of the reason that the club could take such openly critical positions toward the state was due to the fact that its members were so careful to cultivate close ties with the throne. But the energy expended on trying to influence the Yi monarchy in the direction of political reform ultimately meant that the social implications of Independence Club principles were never given an opportunity to be fully spelled out.

The irony of this fact is that the Independence Club would eventually be undone by its very political successes it enjoyed. The more reform the club succeeded in introducing, the more it risked provoking the paranoia of a court for whom the memory of the Kapsin Coup was still fresh. Ultimately, this balance proved impossible to maintain. The reform party in Korea never extricated itself of the stain of its association with Kim Okkyun's 1884 attempt to overthrow the government. The Independence Club came to a premature conclusion in 1899, after Sŏ had been pressured into returning to the United States after successfully pressuring the court to dismiss its Russian advisors and Yun had been forced to go into hiding following an unsuccessful attempt to reform the court's privy council along the lines of a constitutional monarchy.

During the years 1896-1899, then, Yun and Sŏ attempted and ultimately failed to put Christian reformism at the service of the Yi monarchy. The Independence Club itself, however, was not a Christian organization. During this period, Korea's reformist elite saw Christianity more as a necessary supplement than as a substitute for Confucianism. Although most members wished to limit the influence of the most conservative forms of Confucianism over the court, the need for a clear alternative to the Confucian theory of political legitimacy was conceived of only hazily. For example, Yi Sŭngman (1875-1965), a young member of the Independence Club who would later become South Korea's first post-independence president, recalled that

> I was imbibing ideas of political equality and liberty…. I began to understand that political changes do not come by themselves and are not only a question of laws and regulations. There must also come deep and abiding changes within the heart and minds of the people—and particularly in the ruling class…. I [learned] that Jesus was more than a symbol of salvation in after-life. He was also a Great Teacher who brought a gospel of brotherly love and service. I began to have more respect for these foreign religious

[31] *Yun Ch'iho Ilgi* (August 5, 1897)
[32] Ibid., (July 25, 1897)

teachings and…I began to consider that maybe Jesus deserved to rank somewhere near Confucius. But further than this I could not or would not go.[33]

It was only after the Independence Club's demise that Yi Sŭngman would convert to Christianity. In so doing, he would soon be joined by many of the other reformists associated with the Independence Club. Ironically, the emergence of an elite Christian leadership occurred only after the collapse of the one public voice that offered an alternative to Confucianism as a political ideology. How did this happen? And what were its consequences for the development of Korean Christianity? Let us attempt to answer these questions below.

Unsurprisingly, Kojong's decision to suppress the nation's only nonofficial source of political opinion only served to heighten the court's paranoia over subversive activity. Between 1899-1902, the court carried out a string of arrests of former club members in an attempt to eliminate any possible source of political opposition to the Yi monarchy. Most of these political prisoners were incarcerated at a prison in the Chongno district of Seoul. Most of these men had only a few years ago occupied some of the most powerful offices in government. Now they had not only been stripped of their traditional privileges as yangban, but were also forced to endure grueling hardship and humiliation. None of these men had much reason to believe that they would ever be released from prison and execution was a very real possibility for all of them. One can hardly imagine any greater feeling of political estrangement from the Yi monarchy than this.

Taken alone, these conditions provided the motive but not the means for these men to undergo a conversion experience. In October 1902, however, something entirely unprecedented happened; with the help of Christian missionaries, these men set up a study room in the Chongno prison. Inmates of the prison were now able to borrow books on Christianity and were paid regular visits by the American missionary, A.D. Bunker. This condition provided an ideal environment for their conversion. By 1904, many of these men had made the decision to abandon Confucianism for Protestant Christianity. Conversion allowed them to reestablish their identities as Christians in the service of Christ, rather than as yangban in the service of the throne. Many of these men, among whom included Kim Chŏngsik, Yi Wongŭng, Yi Sangjae, Kim In, Yun Sŏngjun, Yi Sŭngman, Sin Hŭngu, and An Kuksŏn, would go on to form the YMCA's native Korean leadership.[34]

The YMCA thus substituted for the social function served by the Independence Club by unifying Korea's reformist elite around a common purpose. Unlike the Independence Club, however, the YMCA's purpose was spiritual, not political. The YMCA movement submerged political tensions within the broader cultural task of constructing a new spiritual foundation for Korea. In the process, however, it also arguably stripped Korean Christianity of its intellectual content. *Tongnip sinmun* had provided Sŏ and Yun with a platform through which to translate Christian ethics into a program for national transformation. With the Independence Club's demise, however, Korean Christians had little means of spelling out the connection they saw between Christianity and the cultivation of patriotism. This produced a situation in which many Korean Christians resented the missionary leadership for what they felt was contempt for their intellectual ability. During the protectorate period, the missionary enjoyed a moral prestige in Korea that he would never have in either Japan or Korea. Even so, a vast gap divided the native

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[33] Vipan Chandra, *Imperialism, Resistance and Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century Korea: Enlightenment and the Independence Club* (Berkeley: Center for Korean Studies, 1988) 67

[34] Yi Kwangin, "Kuhanmal okjung e sŏ ŭi kidokkyo sinang" in *Hanguk kaehwasa ŭi Chemunje* (Seoul: Daejong munhwasa, 1986)

Christian from the missionary, one that could easily be conceived of in racial terms. In a diary entry from 1903, Yun sums up this feeling of separation in tones that read as they were anticipating Frantz Fanon by a half-century.

Personally speaking, this "separateness" is as real to me as my existence. With all my unbounded admiration and even love for the white man; with all my more or less Americanized ideas and ideals; with all my anti-Japanese instinct and prejudices, I never feel in the company of European or an American friend—friend, mind you—that feeling of cameraderie (*sic*) which I enjoy in the society of a Japanese—say, Something—I know not what—keeps me from pouring my soul out to a whiteman; and I feel that he has, too, that something.[35]

Two years later, following Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Yun would record having mixed feelings over this victory.

I am glad Japan has beaten Russia. The islanders have gloriously vindicated the honors of the Yellow race. The white man has so long been the master of situation that he has kept the Oriental reces (*sic*) in over for (*sic*) centuries. For Japan to break this spell single handed, is grand in its very conception. Even if she had failed, the grandeur of her heroism would have been an eternal honor. Just think where would and could a Yellow man have lifted his face in this world had Japan been beaten!

I love and honor Japan as a member of the Yellow race; but hate her as a Korean from whom she is taking away everyting (*sic*) independence itself.[36]

It may be argued that Yun's tendency to identify with Japan's war effort against Russia in racial terms was intimately related to his feeling of intellectual alienation from the Western missionaries. While missionaries in Korea were typically loyal defenders of the sincerity of the Korean character, they also usually had a very low estimation of the Korean intellect. In an article on recreational amusements, J.S. Gale wrote that, "Though defective in mathematics, the Korean has other compensating excellencies. We have had a Parliament of Religions, at which we are glad he took no part; but when we shall have a Parliament of National Amusements, we hope to have there filing (*sic*) his New Year's kite, for it is the one form of recreation in which he especially excels." It is not difficult to imagine that belittling comments such as this would have been as galling to the Korean Christian leadership as they must have seemed innocuous to the missionaries there. And it is unthinkable that any missionary could have written the same thing about the Japanese at this time. The stigma of representing an "uneducated" nation thus affected the Korean Christian profoundly. Hence, the absence of a clearly defined intellectual leadership in Korea defined a constant tension between native convert and missionary there.

As had happened earlier in Japan, the intense period of Westernization that had helped the spread of Christianization had already begun to recede by the end of the protectorate period. Prominent Korean Christians were themselves beginning to look for a new and autonomous basis for Korean Christianity. Frank Brockman, the younger brother of Fletcher Brockman and one of the secretaries dispatched to the Seoul YMCA, reported in 1909 that

There has recently been formed in Tokyo by the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese what is known as an Eastern Christian Association. Their constitution states that the purpose of this Association is to forward Christianity in the East. Active membership is restricted to natives of China Korea and Japan, while the

[35] Yun Ch'iho Ilgi, (January 15, 1903)
[36] Ibid., (September 7, 1905)

following clause is observed: "We allow Westerners to be Associate Members." Every denomination in Seoul has felt this new anti-foreign spirit and it is growing more critical because of the growth of the Church. The Church leaders are not able now to be in such close contact with the missionaries as they were formerly. We are attempting to meet this by having the Korean members who are on our Board of Directors also on our Advisory Committee. The time undoubtedly is not far off when we must come nearer to the working basis that is used by the Japanese Movement.
The transition period through which we are now passing certainly points to the fact that Western influence will not be as powerful as it has been in the past.[37]

What Brockman's account inexplicably fails to mention is that the founder of this movement was Kim Chŏngsik, who involved himself with the YMCA movement almost immediately after being released from the Chongno prison in 1904. In 1906, he would be sent to Tokyo to found a YMCA for Korean students studying there. Very little biographical information is known about Kim and there would seem to be no way of knowing now what he might have intended in forming this "Eastern Christian Association" in Tokyo. It seems clear, however, that he was groping towards some form of Christianity that did not depend upon the foreign missions.

It was the rapid proliferation of private schools in Korea during the protectorate period, however, that opened the possibility of defining a role for the YMCA outside that defined for it by its foreign leadership. As we shall see below, this provided a means removing Christianity's critique of Korean society from its association with the Korean monarchy and associating it instead with anti-colonialism.

The Youth Movement in Korea and Anti-Colonialism: The YMCA and the Sinminhoe

The YMCA movement brought to the surface of Korean social consciousness something that had already been hinted at in Independence Club discourse: the role of the nation's youth in engendering cultural transformation. The debating societies of the Independence Club strongly suggested that Korea's future ultimately rested in the hands of its young men. Moreover, the Independence Club and *Tongnip sinmun* had a powerful impact on the Korean youth during the 1890s and directly influenced the leadership. Despite its call for popularly elected assemblies and social transformation, however, the Independence Club never identified a clear alternative to the state as the main agent of historical change. As long as political reform remained the key object of the Independence Club, the youth element remained submerged within its activities. By contrast, the YMCA's explicitly apolitical character meant that it was able to concentrate exclusively on the Korea's youth as the primary vehicle in bringing about national transformation. Former Independence Club members that had previously sought to influence national politics through the pursuit of government posts now acted as private citizens to see after the task of national education.

We may identify two factors in particular that helped facilitate this shift. First, the fact that a first generation of Korean students had already graduated from the mission school meant that there were now Koreans in a position to either serve as instructors in mission schools or to form their own schools. Second, the creation of a Japanese protectorate in Korea after the Russo-Japanese War also provided a powerful impetus to the emergence of a youth movement dedicated to the preservation of Korean independence.

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[37] Annual Report of Frank M. Brockman, Associate Secretary, Seoul, Korea, for the year ending September 30,1909

During the protectorate period, the YMCA formed part of the new boom occurring in private education. An article from the *Korean Mission Field* from reports that

> The YMCA in Seoul have (*sic*) a flourishing academy, with 220 students in addition to the ordinary mission schools. We have not mentioned any of the numberless native private schools which of late have been springing into existence everywhere, but nearly all are taught by graduates of Christian institutions, where it has been possible to get them.[38]

This overlap between the YMCA and the youth movement often carried dangerous political implications. 1905 was the year of "spurious YMCAs," various political groups that attempted to use the YMCA name to attract Korean youth to their cause of national independence. This development became an immediate cause for alarm amongst the YMCA leadership, who were firmly committed to keeping the Association out of politics. A 1905 report by Fletcher Brockman, one of the YMCA secretaries stationed in Shanghai, to the International Committee reads

> The Koreans are on the whole intensely anti-Japanese, as might be expected. The Association has become very popular in Seoul and a discussion has no doubt gone on in the building that probably could not have been prevented against the Japanese. I do not mean publicly, but private discussion. I am afraid that part of the popularity of the Association grew out of the fact that that it was considered pro-Korean. As to this, however, I have not definite information. At any rate, the Epworth League, in one of the churches has changed its name as the Young Men's Christian Association. It increased in numbers from a score or so to some seven hundred in a few weeks. Branches began to be organized in all parts of Korea under the same name as the Y.M.C.A. Gillett discovered the facts and finally induced the missionary in charge to disband this organization and forbid their using the same name as Y.M.C.A. When I saw him, he had already been to the Japanese minister. He had also arranged to have an edict sent out declaring that there was only one Association in Korea, which had the right to the name, that is the one in Seoul.[39]

Can such anti-Japanism be considered equivalent to anti-colonialism? Perhaps, insofar as the "spurious YMCAs" took Korean independence as their main object. But it is nevertheless significant that they never offered a vision of what Korea would look like after regaining its independence. To this extent, they remained dependent on supporting the Yi monarchy, which was now under the thumb of the Japanese protectorate. And, it may be argued, as long as the monarchy occupied the center of reformist efforts, no such vision could have been articulated. Anti-colonialism, as a transformational ideology, remained inhibited in Korea precisely to the degree that Korean nationalism remained fixated on the Yi monarchy as the focal point of attempts to transform Korean society. All of this changed, however, in 1907, when King Kojong surreptitiously helped organize a delegation to the Hague Peace Conference to make appeals on behalf of Korea's independence. When this event came to light, Resident-general Itō Hirobumi forced Kojong to abdicate the throne. Ironically, however, Itō's move to force Kojong's abdication unwittingly released nationalist energy from a sinister bind: it made it possible for nationalists to formulate an anti-colonial ideology without transgressing against the monarchy. In order to understand how this ideology came to be formulated, it is now necessary to examine the life of its principal author, An Ch'angho.

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[38] "Mission Education in Korea," *The Korean Mission Field* (April 1910)
[39] FS Brockman to Mott, November 4, 1905

An was born in 1878 into a family of poor landless yangban in Pyŏngyang. Although he grew up in impoverished circumstances, his father ran a school in Confucian teaching and thus An had a deep knowledge of the Chinese classics. He witnessed the Sino-Japanese War as it played out in his Pyŏngyang, an experience that made him question why Korea had been powerless to prevent itself from becoming the battlefield for neighboring powers. At the age of 18, An struck up a friendship with P'il Daeŭn, a slightly older young man well-versed in Western learning, who convinced An to go with to Seoul in search of a modern education. In Seoul, An attended the Presbyterian missionary school Gusae Hakdang (later to be renamed Kyŏngsin Hakkyo) where he would eventually convert to Christianity. As a young man, An's capacity for leadership was early recognized by his missionary educators. A mission report written by F.S. Miller and dated October 16, 1896 reads, "Our Pyeng Yang (Pyŏngyang) boy An Cheong Ho (An Ch'angho) was put in his place and proved a great improvement, in fact the school seemed like a new institution owing to the zeal and energy shown by the boy from Pyeng Yang."[40]

An came of age while the Independence Club was at the height of its influence. He was much impressed with Sŏ's editorials for *Tongnip sinmun* and eventually became an active member of the Independence Club. An participated actively in the club's debating societies and, perhaps as a result, took an early interest in the subject of education in determining his country's future. In 1898, he founded the Chŏmjin Academy in Pyŏngyang, a co-educational school dedicated to providing Korean men and women with a modern education. In 1902, however, An decided to close his academy to pursue higher learning in the United States. Eventually moving to Riverside, California, An took up work there as a domestic servant, later working as a field laborer. He made a name for himself by organizing *Kongnip hyŏphoe*, a cooperative association of Korean laborers. In addition to looking after the interests of Korean migrants, *Kongnip hyŏphoe* also enforced for standards of living for the entire Korean community in Riverside. Within a few years of this group's formation, *Kongnip hyŏphoe* had created branch organizations in Los Angeles and San Francisco. By 1908, *Kongnip hyŏphoe* had taken on the appearance of a self-governing Korean republic spanning the state of California. This group printed its own newspaper, *Kongnip sinbo*, which appealed to all Koreans to reform the nation through education and industry, to form a nationalist movement, and to resist Japanese colonialism by means of armed struggle.

After the 1905 establishment of a Japanese protectorate in Korea, An increasingly felt he had to return to his country to help organize the nationalist movement there. Upon returning to Korea in 1907, An opened a new private school in Pyŏngyang that he intended to serve as a base for maintaining Korean independence. Taesŏng Hakkyo's curriculum closely resembled that of the YMCA. Like the YMCA, Taesŏng's curriculum stressed the importance of "spiritual education" (*chŏngsin kyoyuk*) and educating the whole man. Also like the YMCA, Taesŏng also included physical education as a central part of its curriculum. In keeping with the school's aspirations to be a center of the independence movement, military training was included in its physical education program, but Western recreational sports such as baseball and soccer were taught as well. It would be thus not be going too far to say that An adopted the YMCA's approach to education and politicized it for Korea's national purposes.

Whereas in Japan, the YMCA offered a pathway into the government academies, in Korea, the YMCA provided a model with which to link together the numerous private schools that

[40] F.S. Miller, "Report of Boys School Mission, Korea, Seoul, Oct. 1895," in *Dosan An Ch'angho Chŏnjip vol. 5* (Seoul: Dosan An Ch'angho Sŏnsaeng Kinyŏm Sadanghoe, 2000)

sprang up during the protectorate period. Taesŏng may be seen as the institutional expression of the idea that Korea's youth had to be the primary agent in Korea's transformation. In 1908, An expanded upon this idea by organizing his own youth organization Ch'ŏngnyŏn hakuhoe (Young Men's Learning and Friendship Society) as well as its attendant magazine *Sonyŏn* (Youth). In so doing, An appears to have been influenced by the idea of national spirit promoted by Japan's education system. During the military rule period, while on trial for an alleged plot to assassinate Korea's Governor-general, Yun testified about the origins of the Ch'ŏngnyŏn hakuhoe that

> [The Youth Learning Society] had no direct relationship to Taesŏng Hakkyo, but was promoted mainly by An Ch'angho. That is, about a half-year after Taesŏng Hakkyo opened, An came to the Taekŭk bookshop and, in the midst of a talk he gave there, said that it was quite serious how Korea's youth were growing more decadent and weaker in spirit by the day and that it was necessary therefore to nurture a sound spirit amongst the youth. [He said that] just as the Japanese have Yamato [i.e. Japanese] spirit we must also strike up a Chosŏn [or Korean] spirit. There is the Youth Association [i.e. the YMCA], but only those who are affiliated with the [Christian] religion join it and those who are not do not join. Therefore [An said that] a broader organization is necessary to nurture the youth.[41]

This is a revealing passage. According to Yun's testimony here, An recognized the YMCA as the center of the youth movement in Korea, but considered it to be too narrowly focused around Christianity. What was needed, then, was to form a separate organization, one built explicitly upon the idea of ethnic unity rather than religious identity as the basis for nationalism. An was here consciously drawing upon a notion that had been engendered and disseminated through Japan's government school system. In applying it to the private school movement which was developing under the protectorate government in Korea, however, An discovered in this idea the basis of an anti-colonial ideology.

The opening of Taesŏng Hakkyo generated a huge response in Korea's northwestern regions. Later that year, Yi Sŭnghun was inspired by An's example to start Osan Hakkyo in Seoul. Kim Ku founded Yangsan Hakkyo in Hwanghae, Anak. Each of these schools was founded upon a nationalist creed and took the restoration of national independence to be their central purpose. But founding a new private school movement was only half of what An intended in returning to Korea. His broader purpose was to link together the different elements of this movement into a cohesive international organization that would eventually be capable of fighting a war for Korean independence. As an heir to the Independence Club's intellectual legacy, An believed the struggle for independence was a gradual goal; the immediate task was to transform the people into a capable citizenry. An dubbed this new organization Sinminhoe (literally "New People Society").

An was adamant in arguing that the Sinminhoe had to be kept a secret organization in order to avoid interference from the protectorate government Japan had established in Korea. To this extent, the Sinminhoe idea signified a major break with the public nature of the Independence Club. During its years of activity, the Independence Club exercised its political influence by maintaining a constant public presence. *Tongnip sinmun*, with its eschewal of Chinese characters, aimed precisely at cultivating an informed public opinion as the basis of national strength. By contrast, An's insistence on making Sinminhoe a secret group signified a retreat into the realm of private organization. In so doing, however, An also unhinged the Independence Club project from its dependence on the Yi monarchy. Yun and Sŏ had done their utmost to

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[41] Yun Kyŏngno, *105 In Sakŏn kwa sinminhoe yŏngu* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1990) 234

work within the ideological parameters set, however precariously, by the throne; Yun even attempted to stretch those parameters as far as transforming Korea into a constitutional monarchy. By contrast, in An's conception, Sinminhoe aimed at establishing a Korean republic after the recovery of national independence. This was an argument that was much easier to make now that King Kojong had been forced to abdicate the throne. By framing Sinminhoe as a secret group, An was able to take the people as a totality directly as his object of reform without the mediation of the monarchy. In the anti-colonial struggle against Japan, An had discovered a substitute for the state as the vehicle of national transformation.

In this sense, it can be argued that An transmuted the Independence Club's social critique of Korea.into a basis for anti-colonial resistance. An himself would call this process *chasin* (literally "self-transformation" or "self-renewal"). *Chasin* for An meant that all aspects of Korean society had to be completely transformed and placed on a modern foundation. In a statement released in 1909, he posed the question,

> For what purpose has the New People's Society come into existence? It is urgent that we bring new learning to the antiquation of popular custom; it is urgent that we bring new education to the superstition of popular custom; it is urgent that we bring new proposals where passion has grown cold;…it is urgent that we bring new ethics where morality has vanished. Among the myriad things, there is not one of them that does not await renewal.[42]

There is a key belief articulated here that the task of national transformation belonged squarely to popular society and not to the state, which was now under the thumb of the Japanese protectorate.

In this sense, An makes for an interesting contrast with Yun Ch'iho. Despite frequent exasperation with Kojong, Yun consistently saw it as necessary use the monarchy as an instrument through which to reform Korean society. To some extent, this position reflected Yun's yangban background; throughout his life, he remained resistant to the idea that the people could realize their own transformation without acting through the regulating medium of the state. He was often harshly critical of colonialism, but he could not embrace the notion that political transformation could either precede or coincide with a nation's spiritual transformation.

Such differences, however, did not preclude cooperation between the two men. To the contrary, Yun and An found common ground in their mutually held belief in the transformative potential of the individual conscience. An even tapped Yun Ch'iho to act as the principal of Taesŏng Hakkyo. Although Yun could not have been able to look after the school directly, as he had to remain in Songdo to look after his school, he likely contributed to the development of Taesŏng's curriculum. Yun was also a member of the Sinminhoe, although he was only nominally affiliated with the group. Just as the Sŏ-Yun alliance was cut short by the Yi monarchy's crackdown on the Independence Club, the beginnings of a Yun-An alliance also met a premature conclusion with Japan's colonization of Korea. The boundaries between anti-colonial Christianity mingled and what, for lack of a better term, we might call anti-anti-colonial Christianity thus remained extremely blurry during the protectorate period.

An's linking of Christianity with anti-colonialism had profound consequences for Korean history. As we shall see, it set the stage for the entire question of what the position of Christian culture would be under Japan's colonial rule that would play out over the course of the 1910s. It did not, however, address the question of how to create an autonomous intellectual class for

[42] "Daehan sinminhoe chwijimun," in *Dosan An Ch'angho Chŏnjip vol. 5*, 212-13

Korean Christianity that would be independent of the missions. The YMCA remained very much under the control of the foreign missionary leadership during this period. Under the circumstances, it is likely that no serious critique of missionary authority could have been carried out during the protectorate period. The Christian churches and the YMCA were, after all, some of the only spaces left in Korea that enjoyed protection from Japanese harassment. Ironically, it was not until after Japan's formal colonization of Korea in 1910, when the Christian missions no longer enjoyed the protected status they did under the protectorate, that the question of how to secure the Korean YMCA's autonomy from its foreign leadership would be posed.

Let us take a moment here to summarize the argument thus far. We have attempted above to show that, in Japan and Korea, the YMCA provided a space beyond the Christian missions through which native converts could develop the intellectual content of Christianity's critique of society beyond the parameters set by the foreign missions. In both countries, this project ultimately brought the YMCA into contact with political ideology. In Japan, the YMCA provided a vehicle for some prominent Protestant leaders to promote liberal theology as a means of enabling Japanese Christians to respond to the rise of the notion of Japanese identity as a necessary element in Japan's national development. After the Sino-Japanese War, the YMCA additionally provided a means of linking Christian patriotism with imperial consciousness. Likewise, in Korea, after the loss of national independence following the Russo-Japanese War, the YMCA provided a space where Koreans could link Christianity with patriotism. With the return of An Ch'angho to Korea in 1907, however, the patriotic consciousness fostered by the YMCA subsequently became embedded in a rapidly widening network of private schools that took on an anti-colonial position.

Both of these discourses on the YMCA each took shape within the larger historical process of Japan's colonial penetration of Korea. Left alone, they may have had little to opportunity to impinge upon one another. We have said above that it was the YMCA's missionary leadership that brought the two YMCAs into contact with each other throught the establishment of a Japanese YMCA in Seoul for colonial settlers and a Korean YMCA for students studying abroad in Tokyo. To understand how this happened, it is critical to briefly review here how missionaries in Korea viewed Japan's protectorate government there.

The Japanese Protectorate in Korea and the YMCA: Itō Hirobumi and the Missionaries

Korea's Resident-General from 1905-09, Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909), was a familiar face to Christian missionaries in Asia. After all, Itō had been the chief architect behind the Meiji constitution, Japan's inaugural moment as a modern nation-state. Moreover, he had the reputation of being a moderate, a non-militarist that sought diplomatic resolutions to international issues. Missionaries thus saw in Itō a potentially excellent partner with whom to share the responsibility of modernizing Korea. In fact, many of the missionaries in Korea saw Itō as a favorable alternative to the paranoid rule of King Kojong. Gillett himself wrote in 1905 that, "The incoming and dominance of the strong Japanese power is helping to solve the problem, which has been a big one, of how to do our work without arousing the suspicion of the Korean Government."[43] Missionaries also generally felt that Itō's protectorate provided a necessary counterbalance to the waves of Japanese immigrants that were entering Korea after the Russo-Japanese War, who missionaries typically saw as lawless and highly prejudiced against the

[43] Report of P.L. Gillett to the Int. Comm. For Year Ending Sept. 30, 1904

Korean people. Even as strong an advocate of the Korean plight as Homer Hulbert, a long-serving missionary to Korea and the editor of *The Korean Review*, wrote the following of Itō's rule there.

> When the Japanese landed in Korea in 1904, the missionaries welcomed them. They knew the tyrannies and abuses of the old Government, and believed that the Japanese would help to better things. The ill-treatment of helpless Koreans by Japanese soldiers and coolies caused a considerable reaction of feeling. When, however, Prince Ito became Resident-General the prevailing sentiment was that it would be better for the people to submit and to make the best of existing conditions, in the hope that the harshness and injustice of Japanese rule would pass.[44]

Hulbert would eventually turn against the Japanese protectorate in Korea and aided Kojong's attempt to send an emissary to make appeals the Hague Conference in 1907. Most missionaries in Korea, however, deemed Itō's presence there to be a stabilizing influence.

For his part, Itō certainly had reason to encourage a cordial relationship with the missionaries. The Japanese protectorate in Korea could not infringe upon the activities of the Westerners there; any conflict with the foreign missions would certainly have become a diplomatic issue. It seems likely, then, that Itō cultivated this relationship more out of expediency than pro-Christian sentiment. Whatever his true thoughts about this relationship may have been, it is undeniable that he too actively promoted the image of a reciprocal partnership between the protectorate and the Christian missions. The dedication ceremony of the YMCA building provided a golden opportunity to give symbolic expression to this perceived partnership. John Raleigh Mott, the charismatic leader of YMCA's international movement, wrote, "The Marquis Ito, who is probably one of the greatest statesmen of Asia, at the dedication of the Association building in Seoul delivered one of the strongest addresses in support of the Young Men's Christian Association. He has always been a friend of the work, and the backing of a man like that weighs tremendously, not only in itself, but in its influence upon leading Asiatics." In advance of this event, Itō pledged an annual contribution of ¥10,000 to the YMCA. Hence, with the completion of the YMCA building, it seemed as though a permanent cooperative relationship had been cemented between the protectorate government and the Christian missions. This fact is crucial to understanding how the complex relationship between the Japanese and Korean YMCAs evolved during this period.

The YMCA as a Transnational Presence in Japanese Metropole and Korean Colony

This chapter began by noting that, unlike Japan and Korea, in China, the missionary became associated in the official and popular imagination with Western imperialism. This does not mean, however, that China became less important in the mind of the missionary. To the contrary, precisely because of its conservatism and anti-Christian-ism, China took on a special significance within the missionary imagination. Progress in converting China, missionaries often surmised, would have broad ramifications for the spread of Christianity throughout the world. Moreover, the association of the Christian missions with Western imperial interests in China had its advantages as well. In many respects, China had a missionary tradition that went much further and deeper than either Japan or Korea and missionaries occupied a much sphere of activity there

[44] Editorial, *The Korean Review* (May 1906)

too. As we shall see below, this fact had significant ramifications for the formation of the YMCA movement in Korea.

Unlike in Japan, the YMCA in Korea did not begin as an autonomously governed entity. At the turn of the twentieth century, Korea had neither the pervasive missionary base that existed in China nor the native intellectual leadership that it had had in Japan. How, then, was a stable YMCA officials thus determined that it would be better to enter the Korean YMCA into an affiliation with the Chinese YMCA to facilitate the free movement of missionaries between the Chinese and Korean missions and thus give Korea the full benefit of the longer history and greater amount of resources. A General Committee of China, Korea, and Hong Kong YMCAs was founded in 1902 in advance of the YMCA's formal introduction into Korea.

This formal subordination of the Seoul YMCA to Shanghai had three major consequences that were often mutually contradictory. First, it meant a basis for avoiding entreaties from the Japanese YMCA for an affiliation with the Korean YMCA after the establishment of a Japanese protectorate in Korea. Second, it meant that the Korean YMCA was able to benefit from institutional innovations made in expanding the YMCA in China. Finally, the Korean YMCA's affiliation with the Chinese YMCA movement formed the institutional basis for the dominance of its foreign missionary leadership over its governance. All of these moments are apparent in the expansion of the YMCA during this period.

The Keijō YMCA in Korea was established in 1907 by Niwa Seijirō, a graduate of Dōshisha's school of theology who had previously served as secretary for the Tokyo YMCA. As we shall see in the next chapter, the establishment of the Keijō YMCA occurred in a context when, after the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese Protestants were increasingly debating the merits of sending missions to proselytize in Korea. Niwa's own motivation for founding this YMCA, however, appears to have been to provide Japanese settlers with a place of spiritual nourishment apart from the worldly temptations surrounding them in the protectorate. In fact, Niwa went out of his way to separate the establishment of a Japanese YMCA in Seoul from debates over whether to send Japanese Christian missions to Korea. To the question "Have we reached the time when we [Japanese] should proselytize to the Korean people?" he answered,

> From my point of view, we have not yet reached that time. Moreover, our responsibility lies first with our brethren. Now in Keijō (Seoul), [the Japanese population] has exceeded 20,000, and if you add to this the bureaucrats and soldiers here the number becomes truly large. In Heijō, (Pyŏngyang) the [number of Japanese] is 5,000 and in places such as Andong, Taegu, Inchŏn and Pusan the number of our brethren is increasing all the time. And it goes without saying that these people interact with the Koreans on a daily basis, whether through sales, trade or negotiating. Thus spiritually educating our brethren is the first step towards spiritually educating the Korean people.
>
> As I have said previously, [establishing] youth association programs in foreign lands is essential. With many temptations and no intellectual encouragement or social enjoyment, the [Japanese] youth [in Korea] are just like swimmers trying to swim against a violent current; they are in a situation where the slightest carelessness will quickly and inevitably bring them to dissipation. For their sakes, a youth association is even more necessary than a church. Let the youth associations produce churches or, where there is already a church, let it persuade the youth through the youth association.[45]

This passage reveals that Niwa's purpose in establishing a Keijō YMCA was not to form a relationship with the Seoul YMCA, but to provide a means of evangelizing the waves of

[45] Niwa Seijirō, in *Kirisutokyo Nikkan Kankei Shiryō*

Japanese colonial settlers that were pouring into Korea. Niwa's concern was fundamentally in agreement with those of foreign missionaries who worried about the tendency of these Japanese settlers to abuse and take advantage of Koreans. Despite the Japanese YMCA's strong desire for an affiliation to be drawn, Niwa's early efforts toward establishing a Japanese YMCA presence in Korea seem to be focused solely on administering Association services to the itinerant colonial settler.

Niwa did, however, broach the subject of the Korean YMCA's independence as a matter of concern with its foreign missionary leadership. In 1908, he had a conference with Frank Brockman, on this subject. Brockman wrote to Mott of this conference that

> [Niwa's] thought was that Korea should have a National movement of its own, and speaking for his committee he felt that this should be done at the earliest possible moment. I assured him that the same opinion was held by the representatives of the International Committee in Korea, but it was the combined judgement of the secretaries and our advisers that while the time had not yet come we should continue to look forward to that ideal.

Brockman further communicates that Niwa felt that "we [the foreign missionary leadership] should lead in this quest for independence and the most cordial relations should be fostered between the local Association and the Associations organized for the Japanese, that work similar to an International Club should be organized." Brockman, however, responded by saying that

> 1st, that we do not feel that the time as yet has come when a break can be made with China which would be satisfactory to the Koreans; 2nd, that we are looking forward as son a practicable to the organization of a national movement, but the initiative of this must come from the Koreans; 3rd, that any affiliation that comes must come from the Koreans, and should it come in any other way, it would be suicidal to the ends that we both have in mind; 4th, that we secretaries of the International Committee favor the work by the Japanese for the Japanese in Korea, and that we hold ourselves in readiness to aid in any way possible.[46]

This communication suggests that, during the protectorate period, the YMCA leadership saw Korean YMCA's affiliation with China as both viable and necessary to its future development. This arrangement kept the Japanese and Korean movements separated until such time as they could be affiliated harmoniously and allowed the Korean YMCA to further mature under the guidance of the Chinese YMCA.

Following colonization, however, both Niwa and the YMCA leadership began to recognize that Seoul YMCA would not be able to continue its affiliation with the Shanghai YMCA indefinitely. In a 1911 conference with Fletcher Brockman, Niwa and Judge Watanabe communicated their feeling that Terauchi Masatake, was not predisposed to favor Christianity, and that it had thus become imperative for an affiliation between the Japanese and Korean YMCAs to be set up quickly.

> The relationship of the Seoul Association to the Japanese was the one question which occupied more time than any other. It is probably more acute than it has ever been. The Koreans have a feeling that gentle but persistent pressure is being brought upon the American secretaries to turn the Association into the hands of the Japanese. Some of the foreigners feel that the policy of the Japanese is first to get a metropolitan Board which shall ultimately be in the hands of the Japanese, and thus run out all of the Koreans but those who for political reasons are pro-Japanese. Mr. Niwa said that Baron Terauchi, the Resident General, was

[46] Frank Brockman to J.R. Mott (June 8, 1908)

not pro-Christian, and was rather prejudiced against the Y.M.C.A., and that he had been enquiring why there should be two Associations. Mr. Niwa and Judge Watanabe both said that we must not move too rapidly in the matter, and they felt that always there must be two Associations; but that there ought as soon as feasible to be a metropolitan Board of Directors, composed of one third Americans, one third Koreans and one third Japanese. They felt that ultimately the work in Korea should be officially connected with that of Japan. Mr. Niwa said that he felt the time was ripe now for the placing of one Japanese on the Board of Directors of the Korean Association, and expressed the willingness to have a Korean Director on the Japanese Board. This seems a very reasonable proposition; all the more so when one remembers that in the early days there was a Japanese on the Board of Directors. On the face of it, it looks very bad to have a Board of Directors composed of Americans, Englishmen, Germans, and Koreans and decline to have even one Japanese when the Japanese Government is contributing yen 10,000 per year toward the current expenses of the work. On the other hand, after I had left my conference with Mr. Niwa and Judge Watanabe, I was approached by two of the most influential Koreans and urged not to let the Japanese get their nose in; otherwise they would capture the whole Association. The Koreans are most sensitive; they are swept by rumours.[47]

The government's 10,000 yen donation to the YMCA had thus been transformed from being a symbol of the cooperative relationship between the Association and the protectorate government to being a form of pressure towards an affiliation of the Japanese and Korean YMCAs. Gilette, who was also sent a copy of Brockman's letter, responded by demurring that, "the fact that our regular gift of Yen ten thousand per year from the Korean Government has this Spring (1911) been assumed by the Diet of Japan should have only a minor bearing on the matter of policy and (in my opinion) was never understood to have any such meaning by the broad-minded Japanese and Korean Statesmen who originally gave it or by us who received it." But this viewpoint was not necessarily shared by Mott, who wrote, "I am much impressed by your statement regarding the relation of the Japanese to the work in Seoul. I should not fear from the metropolitan plan if the Board were composed of one-third of Americans, one-third of Koreans, and one-third of Japanese, although probably the time has not arrived when it will be necessary to go even this far." Matters of timing notwithstanding, there is a clear awareness in Mott's response that, following colonization, eventually the integration of the Japanese and Korean movements would be inevitable.

Unlike Gillett, Mott and Brockman were thinking in broadly global terms about how to best integrate the international YMCA movement. From their perspective, the added circumstance of colonization meant that an eventual merging of the Japanese and Korean YMCAs made the most sense from this point of view. What they did not consider was what was of greatest concern to Gillett: If the Korean YMCA's affiliation with China were dissolved, thus leaving it vulnerable to a merger with the Japanese YMCA, what would happen to the link formed in popular consciousness between the YMCA and Korean patriotism? If this link were to be severed, Korean support for the YMCA would likely collapse, destroying the support base that had been built for it over the previous decade. This dilemma takes on another dimension when we consider the building of the student YMCA in Tokyo, which found its origins in the Korean YMCA's affiliation with the Association in Shanghai.

After the Russo-Japanese War, the number of Chinese students studying in Tokyo soared from a few thousand to around 13,000. By comparison, there were only about 500 Korean students in Tokyo at that time. Tokyo was overwhelmed by the arrival of these Chinese students. John Mott pointed out that many of these students were unable to make their way into "the

[47] FS Brockman to JR Mott (February 4, 1911)

higher Japanese institutions of learning. It became necessary either to establish institutions expressly for the Chinese or to add Chinese departments to existing institutions." Moreover, life in Tokyo uprooted Chinese students from the moral conventions that had protected them at home. "They are in the midst of influences tending to materialism, to extreme radicalism, and to gross immorality. The old anchors of Confucianism and Buddhism have been cast off…They are cut off largely from the good influences which might come from the Japanese because they have little knowledge of the Japanese language." The YMCA was quick to see in this dilemma an opportunity to reach many more Chinese students in Tokyo and bring them into the fold of Christianity. As long as these students remained at home, they were surrounded by the conservative traditions of their country. Reaching them outside of their native country was thus a golden opportunity to evangelize to them while they were temporarily relieved of the constraints of tradition. Seizing upon this opportunity, D. Willard Lyon, the secretary for the Chinese YMCA, made a survey of the conditions and a Chinese student YMCA in Tokyo was officially formed the next year.

Mott held high hopes for this YMCA. If the students of the world were more and more seeking their higher education in foreign countries, then it made sense that the YMCA movement had to adapt to this circumstance. Why shouldn't it be possible that a strategic point through which to plot the spread of Christian influence through a non-Christian country be found in a foreign city? Mott expressed his hope that this innovation could provide a new means for evangelizing students the world over in a conference report presented in Holland in 1905.

> Plans should be devised for helping students going from one country to study in another. It is said that over one of the third of the students in Switzerland have come from Russia and the Balkan States. Large numbers of Indian students are constantly in attendance at the British universities. The Rhodes Scholars at Oxford constitute a very important class in themselves, because of their representative character. Hundreds of Americans are to be found each year in the universities of Europe. Japanese attend the universities of America in large numbers and, to a considerable extent, also those of Germany and other European countries. Within the past three or four years, China has begun to send forth her students in large and increasing numbers to other countries. Scores of them are already in the American universities, but by far the largest number have gone to Japan, there being, it is estimated, fully, 1,000 in Tokyo alone. There should be a careful study of this problem made by the countries principally involved, and result in safeguarding the spiritual interests of these traveling students and also in awaking them a greater power for good wherever they may go.[48]

In the event, the idea of establishing YMCAs for students studying in foreign countries was not adopted outside of Japan. The only other student YMCA to be formed was the Korean one YMCA in Tokyo and this was created by virtue of its affiliation with the Chinese YMCA. In 1906, Kim Chŏngsik was sent to become this YMCA's first secretary and a space was set up for it in the Tokyo YMCA building in Kanda. The Association quickly became a rallying point for the Korean student movement there. In 1909, the Korean student YMCA was given its own space in the Nishikawa-Chō district of Tokyo.

The Korean YMCA was thus on the one hand protected, by virtue of its association with the Chinese YMCA, from solicitations from the Japanese YMCA for a strategic affiliation of the two movements. On the other hand, also due to its association with the YMCA in China, the Korean

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[48] J.R. Mott, "Report Presented at the Conference of the Federation at Zeist, Holland, 1905," in *Addresses and Papers of John R. Mott: Vol. II, The World's Christian Student Federation* (New York: Association Press, 1947) 75

YMCA was able to expand its presence into Tokyo. This institutional configuration was rather precariously secured by the foreign missionaries' cordial relationship with the protectorate government. Hence, the need to provide spiritual sustenance to the Japanese colonial settler and the need to take quick advantage of the influx of Chinese students into Tokyo affected the Seoul YMCA in ways that seemed relatively unproblematic during the protectorate period. But what would happen after Japan's colonization of Korea, when the rationale behind the Korean YMCA's inclusion in the Chinese YMCA movement began to crumble? As we have seen above, the YMCA's missionary leadership had already begun to confront these questions with Japan's colonization of Korea in 1910. They could not have foreseen, however, that this question of autonomy would soon be brought to a head by the decision of Japan's Congregationalist Church to send missions to Korea to appoint themselves to the task of spiritually developing Japan's newest colony. It is thus to this narrative that we now turn.

CHAPTER TWO
PERIPHERAL VISION: EMPIRE AND PROVIDENCE IN THE MEIJI PROTESTANT APPREHENSION OF KOREA

One of the main strands contributing to the construction of Christian culture under military rule is the Japanese Congregationalist Church's effort in Korea from 1910-21 to compete with the Western missionaries there and to convert Koreans to a Japanese form of Christianity. During these years, the Congregationalist Church enjoyed meager success in gaining converts in Korea, mostly concentrating its activities in rural areas away from where the Western missions were most active. As we shall see in the next chapter, however, they played an instrumental role in infiltrating the elite culture of Korean Christianity in Seoul and legitimating the government-general's interventions in the YMCA and the network of missionary schools on the peninsula.

But our interest in this chapter is not in narrating the course of the Congregationalist Church's missionary activities, for which there remains scant documentary evidence. Rather, for our purposes, it will be more useful to examine the origins of this decision to send missions in the late Meiji Protestant apprehension of Korea. As I hope to show, the Congregationalist Church's decision to send missions to Korea was itself deeply rooted in an preexisting discourse in Japanese Protestantism on the necessity of missionizing abroad in order to establish an authentic Christian culture at home.

As we have seen in the last chapter, many Japanese Protestants imagined Japan's colonization of Korea and the tensions it had engendered as a powerful disincentive against sending Japanese Christian missions there. So why was it the Congregationalist Church alone that opted to undertake this role? And what precisely did converting Koreans to a "Japanese" form of Christianity mean? The first of these questions I will leave to the body of this chapter to answer. As to the second question, I will anticipate this much of my argument here: in the context of colonial Korea, Japanese Christianity meant Christianity that "fit" the ideological parameters of Japan's Imperial Rescript on Education. But in the context of Korea, what did it mean to fit Christianity within the limits of the Education Rescript? Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most immediate answer to this question was to be found amongst Meiji Protestants themselves.

The Urgent Task of Korea's Spiritual Instruction and the Imperial Rescript on Education

Wataze Tsuneyoshi's propaganda tract advertising the Congregationalist Church's missionary activities in Korea, *The Urgent Task of Korea's Spiritual Instruction* (1913), provides us with a good point of departure. Wataze had spent the years 1898-1907 as director of Keijō Academy, a school founded by leading Japanese Christians in 1896. Writing now as leader of the Japanese Congregationalist Church's missionary activities in Korea, a position he had held since 1910, he described his church's efforts as a "national movement" (*kokuminteki undō*) to wrest Korea's moral leadership from the Western missionaries already active on the peninsula. Wataze summed up this new role in what he called the "two levels of spiritual instruction." On the one hand, he claimed, there was the universal task of spiritually instructing all humanity that the "foreign missionaries" were engaged in, but there was also Japan's national task to assimilate Koreans into "good loyal subjects" (*chūryō naru shinmin*) of the Japanese empire.[1]

In this sense, *The Urgent Task* may be read as an attempt to reconcile Christianity with the Education Rescript in the context of colonial Korea. But Wataze's argument also meant that the Education Rescript required the universal mediation of religion in order to communicate its meaning to the Korean people. For Wataze, the fact that "we have given [Koreans] the same Education Rescript as [is used] at home (*naichi*)" was for Wataze "the proof of Japan's sincerity [towards] Korea."[2] However, he stressed that Japan's own history had demonstrated that education alone without the mediation of religious affiliation was not an effective means of assimilation. Wataze therefore warned: "We have experienced all too well the dangers of intellectual education divorced from religious morality during the Meiji period; let us therefore be careful not to repeat them in Korea."[3] National allegiance, Wataze's formula seemed to imply, could only be produced through the universal medium of religion.

In the absence of such mediation, Wataze foresaw that the relationship between Japanese and Koreans would be undermined by constant misunderstanding.

> To the present day, Koreans have held more than a few misunderstanding in their thinking about Japan. There is nothing so bothersome as a misunderstanding, and also nothing so perilous. They think that all Japanese are self-interested, that the Japanese are happy to insult them, that the Japanese will deceive them, that the Japanese view them as slaves, that the Japanese bring them misery. All of this is a grave misunderstanding. There may occasionally be those who do insult, deceive, or exploit them. But as these are sins that exist even within a single nation, they should not be seen as a basis of discrimination. It is a mistake, however, to doubt Japan's conscience, to

[1] Wataze Tsuneyoshi, *Chosen Kyōka no Kyūmu* (Tokyo: Keiseisha Shoten, 1913) 3
[2] Ibid., 45.
[3] Ibid., 63.

doubt her sincerity, to doubt her justice, to doubt her love and sympathy [for Korea]. We must correct this.[4]

For Wataze, then, the aspirations of imperialism resided not in the opportunism of colonial society, but in the colonial state's paternalist conscience. But this colonial state did not of itself have the resources to articulate this conscience beyond its own national boundaries; this required the cooperation of religionists who would act as "the cement unifying Japanese and Koreans."

The Urgent Task is written in an explicitly statist mode. Wataze's characterization of the Congregationalist Church's missions to Korea as a national movement meant that he considered them a selfless effort, as opposed to a narrow sectarian effort, to aid the Japanese empire. Wataze considered the Congregationalist Church particularly qualified to undertake this task because of the unique role they had played in securing Japan's spiritual autonomy by becoming the first church to completely take over missionary activities for Japan from their American counterparts in 1894. "If we had not completely declined funding from America nineteen years ago and pursued our own autonomous mission policy," he explains, "we might not have been able to act freely in forming Korean missions today."[5] Wataze outlines colonial Korea as a space in which the bureaucratic modernization projects of the government-general go hand in hand with its spiritual transformation.

The ideological content of *The Urgent Task* thus lies in its authorization of a by-no-means natural alliance between Japanese Protestants and the Korean government-general. This it does by defining the function of the Congregationalist Church's evangelical activities as bringing Koreans into contact with the universal significance of membership in the Japanese empire. Curiously, however, *The Urgent Task* is not a particularly evangelical text; it never discusses the evangelical value of Christian missionizing abroad *as an end in itself*. In this sense, it is unlikely to have been very persuasive to other Japanese Protestants. For it makes no attempt to address what relationship evangelical activities undertaken at the peripheries of the Japanese empire have with the task of building Christian culture at home. As we have seen already, American evangelicals considered the ecumenical movement to be a frontier of religious action necessary to avoiding spiritual atrophy. Wataze's text, on the other hand, is conspicuously silent on the question of what evangelical activities ought to mean for a country like Japan, where Christianity represented a minority religion.

It is this lacuna is that I am interested in investigating here. *The Urgent Task*, I hope to show, derived a statist definition of Christianity for colonial Korea by appropriating a

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[4] Ibid., 81-82.
[5] Ibid., 33-34.

preexisting Meiji Protestant discourse on the necessity of sending missionary activities abroad in order to construct a Christian culture at home. The transference of this discourse to a different setting, that of colonial Korea, gave it an ideological effect, that of uniting the interests of the Japanese state with those of Japanese Protestantism, that otherwise would have seemed implausible. Yet "in the interests of representing [this] merger as natural and self-evident,"[6] Wataze suppressed the original implications inherent in this original discourse that sending missionary activities abroad was integral to Christianizing Japan. This, in a nutshell, is my argument; it will take me the rest of this chapter to demonstrate it. Let me begin here by looking at the origins of the argument for sending Japanese Christian missions to Asia which, interestingly enough, are found not in the Congregationalist Church, but in its rival church organization, the Presbyterian Japanese Christian Church.

"Christianity and Colonization": The Origins of the Argument for Sending Japanese Christian Missions Abroad

Towards the end of 1890, Uemura Masahisa, a leader in the Presbyterian Japanese Christian Church (*nihon kirisuto kyōkai*) and the editor of its weekly newspaper *Fukuin Shūhō*, printed an editorial entitled "Christianity and Colonization." Uemura observed here that the vitality of present-day Japan very much resembled that of Europe as it was emerging from the "Dark Ages" in the fifteenth century. Although world opinion might see Japan's progress as being merely academic or political, this was "a grave mistake" (*hanahada ayamare nari*). It was true, he admitted, that Japan's youth tended to absorb themselves in "esoteric debates" (*kūron mogi*) concerning politics and society. Upon closer observation, however, one could see that these young men, whether in focusing narrowly on matters of business or in attacking sectarian politics, were merely casting off the centuries of archaic custom that had inhibited their activities. Uemura prophesied that the age of colonial emigration would soon be at hand. Already one could notice scholars who, in emulation of Orientalist scholarship (*tōyōgaku*) in Germany, had taken an interest in the South Pacific and there were farmers who had already begun to emigrate. It would not be long before the "Yamato people" would "shine their radiant (*tōtō taru*) national flag over South America and the South Pacific,"[7] which Uemura considered would become the "future second Japan" (*shōrai daini no nihonkoku*).

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[6] H.D. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988) 25 The preceding two paragraphs owe much to Harootunian's discussion of Weber's methodology

[7]Uemura Masahisa, "Kirisutokyō to Shokuminchi," *Fukuin Shuhō* (December 1890) 1-2

What role would Japanese Christians play in this move toward colonization? Should they "bravely travel abroad to give [others] sustenance for their souls?" Or would it be better to "entrust things to Western missionaries" and act only as observers would? Uemura warned that only superior races (*yūtō jinshu*) would be successful at colonization. To avoid decline overseas, those Japanese who emigrated would have to have a spiritual strength that only religion could provide. Hence, despite "the fact that the gospel has still not been spread widely" at home, Uemura claimed that, "Not only do I not [consider] colonial missionary work to be important in comparison with missionary work at home, I consider [the former] to be important because of the latter."

We get here from Uemura what is critically missing from Wataze's defense of his church's missionary efforts in Korea almost a quarter-century later. Notwithstanding the absence of a Christian tradition in Japan, Uemura shared with the Western missions in Asia the idea that evangelizing abroad was a necessary condition of developing authentic Christian culture at home. Far from entrusting missionary work to Buddhists, Uemura concluded, "we Japanese Christians must bravely appoint ourselves to the calling to proselytize all of Asia."

It is significant that this "Christianity and Colonization" appears in the first year of *Fukuin Shūhō*'s publication, 1890. This was a pivotal year for Uemura as a public intellectual, in which he began publishing, not only *Fukuin Shūhō*, but also the journal *Nihon Hyōron* (Japan Review). This editorial may therefore be read in terms of Uemura's intention, as one of the leading voices of Japanese Protestantism, to establish his intellectual position on Christianity's relationship to contemporary secular discourse on national expansion.

In fact, Uemura's argument bears a striking resemblance to the highly influential theory of imperialism put forth by the English historian J.R. Seeley in his *The Expansion of England* (1883), published only seven years earlier. Like Uemura, Seeley too saw in his own nation a myopic tendency to locate the meaning of history in the wrangling of domestic politics. The direction of English development, he argued, lay not in the conflict-ridden struggles over democracy and liberty at home, but instead in its most natural area of growth, national expansion, which he considered to be the real index of social evolution. Leaving aside here the question of whether Uemura derived his argument directly from Seeley, it is worth noting how deeply both associated national expansion with social progress. Both Uemura and Seeley extrapolated from the history of the West the lesson that a nation's internal development could be measured in terms of a spatial index. Unlike Seeley, however, Uemura also believed that national expansion represented a spiritual index as well. In the West, at least, expansion of the nation had always also meant the expansion of Christianity.

But what public role did Uemura envision for Japanese Protestants in advocating national expansion at home? Seeley's vision of empire was intimately linked to what he

considered the tremendous vitality of English public opinion. While he expressed frustration with the popular view of British empire as a merely transient phenomenon, he nevertheless marveled: "Never did so many vast questions in all parts of the globe, questions calling for all sorts of special knowledge and special training, depend upon the decision of a single public."[8] His task therefore lay in providing his country with the conceptual vocabulary necessary to integrate public opinion with the organic growth of the state, an entity he defined as a "corporate society, which acts through certain functionaries and assemblies." In short, Seeley's empire belonged to institutions, not individuals. By comparison, Uemura's vision of Christian missionary efforts in Asia is as a popular force for expansion acting independently of state and secular institutions at home.

In this sense, this editorial provides a convenient foreground for our discussion of the Meiji Protestant apprehension of Korea. For, as we shall see presently, the project of imagining a public role for Japanese Protestants in integrating popular opinion with Japan's imperial expansion would not be undertaken until the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Crucially, this project centered on the question, discussed amongst the three major church organizations in Japan (Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist), of whether to send Japanese missions abroad to Korea. As we shall see, this new discourse on Korea gradually displaced Uemura's original vision of Christian missionary efforts in Asia as an independent force for popular colonialism.

1890, the year in which the Imperial Rescript on Education was promulgated, is also of crucial importance from our perspective because it marks an abrupt end of a period of Christian influence. Scarcely a week after Uemura's editorial went to print, the first public backlash against Christianity broke out following the so-called the Lèse Majesté incident of 1891, in which the Christian educator Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930) famously refused to reverence the Education Rescript at the where he taught on the grounds that it would constitute worship of the emperor. This incident quickly earned Uchimura and Christianity in general the scrutiny of Japan's academic sphere. A firestorm of discourse between religionists and scholars over the proper relationship between religion, education and "national morality" (*kokumin dōtoku*) divides Uemura's editorial from the later Meiji Protestant apprehension of Korea. What changed during the interim? To answer, let us now turn our attention to the imprint left by imperial politics on Japanese Protestant culture.

Protestant Christianity and "National Morality": The Imprint of Imperial Politics on Christian Culture in Meiji Japan

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[8] J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1883), 177

Inoue Tetsujirō, an ethics professor at Tokyo Imperial University, effectively framed the terms for the national morality debate in *The Conflict of Religion and Education* (1893) when he claimed that the Christian values of individualism and universalism were fundamentally at odds with the filial loyalty and patriotism espoused by the Educational Rescript. According to Inoue, the ultimate meaning of the Education Rescript lay in its statism (*kokkashugi*), the idea that "one's self-cultivation is for the sake of the state, [that] to be filial to one's father and friendly with one's brother is for the sake of the state, and [that] one must give one's life to the state and die for one's lord."[9] Christianity, however, was fundamentally opposed to the Rescript's statism. What Uchimura did, Inoue explained, "was not done out of error, he faithfully upholds the teachings of Christianity and so is not a loyal subject of our country, but no doubt a loyal subject of Jesus."[10]

Criticism of Christianity, of course, was hardly novel in Meiji Japan. But the Education Rescript now made it possible for Inoue to use such criticism to assert the academic sphere's primacy as official interpreter of moral orthodoxy for the nation. Inoue repeatedly emphasized the importance of the "free spirit of inquiry" over the "obstinate faith" of Christianity to the nation's moral edification.[11] In an interview Inoue gave to the education journal *Kyōiku Jiron*, the interviewer introduced him as a disinterested scholar to be differentiated from the "fanatics" that had dominated the debate thus far.[12]

Inoue's entry into the national morality debate was thus certainly as much about distancing the Japanese academy from the indiscriminate Westernization (*ōkashugi*) of the preceding decade as it was about critiquing Christianity. His interest lay not in advocating the prohibition of Christian religion, which he acknowledged was protected under Japan's consitution, but in disqualifying it as a source of moral education for the nation. Inoue made extensive use of academic discourse, with liberal quotes from Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), to argue that Christianity was essentially an antinational religion and therefore, far from being the spiritual foundation of the West, posed an impediment to national strength and academic excellence in general. Observing that the great English thinkers of the nineteenth century had all done their greatest work outside the academy, Inoue claimed that the presence of Christian churches on English campuses evidenced their antiquated and conservative character.[13] Even in Europe, he concluded, scientific progress was quickly rendering Christian ethics obsolete.

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[9] Inoue Tetsuijrō, "Kyōiku to Shūkyō to no Shōtotsu," in Seki Kōsaku ed., *Inoue Hakase to Kirisuto Kyōto* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobō, 1988) 70
[10] Ibid., 54
[11] Ibid., 79
[12] "Shūkyō to Kyōiku ni tsuki Inoue Tetsujirō shi no Danwa," in *Inoue Hakase to Kirisuto Kyōto*, 2
[13] Inoue Tetsujirō, "Kyōiku to Shūkyō to no Shōtotsu," 86-87

For their part, Japanese Protestants were generally at pains to point out that Christianity had already made a tremendous contribution to modern Japan's education. But their acceptance of the Education Rescript was not merely passive. As Yosuke Nirei points out, Meiji intellectuals (including Meiji Protestants), "the Imperial Rescript, and precisely the ethos of absolute devotion to the Emperor and the imperial fortunes, was deemed possibly effective and especially necessary for mass education." The deliberately vague language of the Education Rescript provided an ideological foundation for Japan's "imagined community" that was limited neither spatially nor temporally, but by an ancestral lineage that imagined the lives of Japanese subjects as mutually commensurable regardless of social status in terms of their common duty to enhance the imperial prestige. Its attraction lay in its promise to *define and assimilate* Japanese identity for the purposes of strengthening the country.

Rather than treat the "national morality" debate simply as a polemic between religionists and scholars, then, I would prefer here to read it as an intellectual debate over how the Education Rescript ought to be interpreted. Inoue, for example, fixed the meaning of the Rescript's passages by situating them spatially within the context of Asian civilization. Although he defined Japan's "national essence" (*kokutai*) in state Shintoist terms as "the moral legacy of our imperial ancestors,"[14] Inoue clearly based most of his attack on Christianity upon its incongruity with what he broadly called "Oriental ethics" (*tōyō no rinri*), but more concretely meant China's Confucian-Mencian philosophical tradition (*kōmōshugi*). "China and Japan," Inoue explained, "have always supremely valued the two virtues [loyalty and filiality], but unfortunately Christianity preaches these virtues nowhere."[15] Thus, despite the Rescript's own reference to love of man, Inoue argued that this could not be considered to be the same as Christian love of man, which represented "indiscriminate love," and not the discriminate love for kin rooted in Confucianism. (This spatial interpretation of the Rescript we shall see would later be used during military rule to limit the autonomy of the Protestant missionary schools in Korea.)

By contrast, Japanese Protestants interpreted the Education Rescript, not in terms of its spatial embeddedness within Asia, but temporally in terms of its connection to Japan's historical experience of what was commonly referred to as *kaikoku ishin* ("opening the country and national renovation"). Indeed, the most common criticism Protestants leveled at Inoue's statist interpretation of the Education Rescript was that it amounted to a throwback to the *sakoku-shugi* (literally, "closed country-ism") of Japan's feudal period. For Meiji Protestants, as for Meiji progressives in general, *kaikoku* was more than a *fait accompli*; it marked the threshold of Japan's modernity. Their (somewhat

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[14] Ibid., 53

[15] "Shūkyō to Kyōiku ni tsuki Inoue Tetsujirō shi no Danwa," 3

strained) belief in the Education Rescript's non-conflict with the autonomy of the individual conscience was thus based less on the Rescript's actual content than on its perceived continuity with this irreversible event.

But neither conservative ideologues like Inoue nor Meiji Protestants questioned the assumption of ancestral unity that lay at the heart of the Education Rescript. It is thus of particular interest that Inoue left open the possibility that Christianity could assimilate (*dōka*) with Japanese culture. In his initial interview with *Kyōiku Jiron*, Inoue recommended that Christianity assimilate with the "Japanese nature" (*nihonjin no seishitsu*) and particularly nodded approval to those Christians "who have striven for progressive reform [of Christianity] some of whom have taken to reciting and interpreting the Rescript in their churches."[16] Although Inoue had apparently later changed his mind when he suggested in *The Conflict of Education and Religion* that the very fact that Japanese Christians had to "bend their principles" in order to assimilate with Japanese identity bespoke Christianity's fundamental incongruence with Japanese *kokutai*, Inoue frequently vacillated on this subject. In a letter sent to *Kyoiku Jiron*, he later qualified his argument with the claim to "greatly support the trend [in Japanese Christianity] to assimilate with our country and foster the teachings of filial loyalty."

This part of Inoue's argument attracted little attention from Japanese Protestants. Interestingly, however, it did provoke a response from the Unitarian journal *Shukyō* (Religion). One Unitarian educator, Tsuchiya Tadaharu, scoffed at Inoue's insinuation that Christianity had to be assimilated with Japan's national customs in order "to cover up [its] own defects," claiming he could hardly believe it to be the serious argument of a scholar.[17] It was thus not the case that Japanese Christianity was developing a nationalist spirit through its encounter with the recent arguments for preserving Japan's national essence (*kokusui hozonron*). Tsuchiya argued that, whereas the appearance of the "national essence" argument and xenophobia (*jōiron*) were themselves merely a reaction to the "westernization fever" (*ōkanetsu*) that held sway over the nation during the previous decade, Japanese Christianity was "the result of thirty years of development" based on "the particular culture of Japan." To the contrary, Tsuchiya argued, "Christianity has always assimilated [with different cultures], and so the cause of its assimilation lies not in its being influenced from without."[18] He concluded his argument by contending that Christianity and its valuation of philanthropy were, far from being anti-statist, statism seen from the global point of view (*sekaishugi*). He therefore claimed that filial loyalty found its logical conclusion in Christianity.

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[16] Ibid.
[17] Tsuchiya Tadaharu, "Kyōiku to Shūkyō (Inoue Hakase no Setsu o Hyō su)," in *Inoue Hakase to Kirisuto Kyōto*, 184
[18] Ibid., 186

Liberal theology shared Inoue's secular concern that Christianity had become atavistic and anti-scientific, incapable of responding to scholarly advances such as evolutionary theory. It provided a means of acknowledging the necessity of assimilating Christianity with Japanese identity without conceding its unfitness as a source of the nation's moral education. This is an important point because, as I shall argue below, the development in Japan of a Christian notion of assimilationism played a critical role in enabling the Congregationalist Church to participate in Japan's colonial rule in Korea during the period of military rule.

Christianity From Within: The Case of Ebina Danjō

The key figure in developing such a Christian theory of assimilationism for Japan (and, we shall later see, in applying it to Korea as well) was Ebina Danjō (1856-1937). An original member of the Kumamoto band and one of the first graduates from Niijima's *Dōshisha*, Ebina arguably became the foremost advocate of liberal theology among the Protestant Church leaders in Japan. During the 1890s, Ebina rose to prominence by leading the Congregationalist Church to independence from the American mission board in 1894, ahead of other Japanese church organizations. Ebina became an enthusiastic supporter of using liberal theology as a means of combatting the perception of Christianity as an "anti-national *and* antiquated"[19] religion by tracing the monotheistic tendencies immanently present in Japan's religious history. In the 1900s, Ebina's Hongō Church in Tokyo and his journal *Shinjin* (New Man) became sites of a new Christian theology integrated with Japan's academic culture. After Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Ebina set himself to the task of using liberal theology to produce a temporal interpretation of the Education Rescript, stressing the evolution of its meaning over time. Wataze, who was Ebina's disciple, we shall later see derived most of his argument in *The Urgent Task* from his theology. There is a fundamental irony, I shall later conclude, in the fact that Wataze's spatial presentation of the Congregationalist Church's missions to Korea was premised upon Ebina's temporal interpretation of Japan's colonization of Korea.

Let us briefly look, then, at Ebina's response to the "national morality" controversy. He begins, in an article, by fully acknowledging the argument made by Inoue and other conservative ideologues that Christianity is originally an anationalist (*mukokkashugi*) religion.

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[19] The phrase belongs to Yosuke Nirei. See Yosuke Nirei, "The Ethics of Empire: Protestant Thought, Moral Culture, and Imperialism in Meiji Japan," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2004

Although Paul commanded people to obey those who held power he certainly was not teaching them to revere the king, and while Jesus did teach religious patriotism, in other words to love the divine nation (*shinkoku*) and heaven, he almost never taught political patriotism…It can be indeed be said that in the eyes of Jesus and Paul there was neither monarch nor nation. In their eyes, there was only humanity. [They possessed] a philanthropic love that truly sought to make a single group of all humanity.[20]

But Ebina argues that Christianity's original lack of nationalism is due to the historical conditions under which it was born, i.e. the hegemony of the Roman Empire and the fall of ancient Israel, and not to any immutable inborn traits. This discovery pointed the way to an authentically Japanese Christian faith. There was therefore no reason Japanese Christians had to accept the foreign missionaries' narrow interpretation of "loyalty" as "loyalty to Christ" and philanthropy as "bringing as many people as possible into one's own beliefs." Ebina recognized here what he saw as the unique historical mission of Japanese Christians, who he observed were "filled with the sincerest [form of] loyalty and patriotism," in synthesizing loyalty and patriotism with philanthropy. In reference to Japan's spiritual autonomy, Ebina therefore concludes that, "while one may learn about the existence of God from the foreign missionaries, one cannot expect [from them] the passion of love for the Japanese nation" from them.[21] (It is worth noting here that Wataze's positing of two levels of spiritual instruction for Korea finds is origin here).

Like Tsuchiya, then, Ebina also saw Christian philanthropy, not as the negation of Japanese nationalism, but as it logical conclusion.

When one examines the private aspirations of the great men of the Restoration (*ishin daika*) [one finds that] all of them had aspirations to swallow the universe and take the realm by storm. At the dawn of their establishment of the unified nation of Great Japan and built the foundation upon which we stand among other nations, they had the great ambition to proceed one step further to settle the entire region. As they were truly men who revered the public ways of the world (*tenchi no kōdō)* who possessed divine spirit, and who had public morality, wisdom and ability…why should they be satisfied with the safety of the Japanese Empire; would they not proceed one step further to think of philanthropy?[22]

In Ebina's view, Christians were thus the "successors of the Restoration," (*ishin no keizokusha*) carrying on the mission of completing Japan's spiritual revolution and bringing to fruition a "divine nation" (*shinkoku*).

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[20] Ebina Danjō, "Chūkun Aikoku to Hakuai," *Rikugō Zasshi* (May 1894), quoted in Yoshinare Akiko, *Ebina Danjō no Seiji Shisō* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1982) 50
[21] Ibid., 51-52
[22] Ibid., 54

This reading of Japanese Christianity's historic role was heavily indebted to liberal theology and in particular to Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). In a 1903 essay, Ebina summed up Schleiermacher's theology as the belief that the essence of religion lay "not in doctrine, in articles of faith, or in ceremony," but in the passion of the individual believer. "As soon as this passion is translated into ceremony, doctrine, or text," Ebina explained, "religion has already been hollowed out." The Bible, therefore, ought not to confused with the essence of Christianity, but rather should be understood as a historical document recording the passion of that religion at its zenith.

The Bible announces its religious content and so is understood for the first time only after one has actually experienced that same content. It is not the case that this religious content manifested itself after the Bible. The Bible was written down only after this religious content had burst forth… As the Bible compiles the written works from this period, when the religious and in particular narrates the religious consciousness of Christ, it is natural that we respect it as the best expression of our own religious consciousness. (emphasis in original)

But it was also equally natural for Christian believers to "sympathize with the Bible's religious passion" and add, "whether in poetry or prose," their own "confessions of faith" to it, in the manner of Augustine and Luther.[23] Christianity for Ebina was thus a living historical religion whose content could not be reduced to the Bible's teachings.

Let us now compare this passage to Ebina's interpretation of the Imperial Rescript on Education. Here I have in mind a passage from an editorial printed after the Russo-Japanese War in which Ebina chided the nation's educators for doggedly attributing Japan's victory to the Education Rescript.

In the first place, the Rescript does not form the Japanese spirit (nihondamashii), the Japanese spirit announced the Rescript. Even if there were no Rescript there would be a Japanese spirit. And who can deny that, in the future, the Japanese spirit will display an even greater Rescript? Who doubts that, even if the Rescript had not been given fifteen years ago, we still would have won against China and Russia? Consider this: Is not the Ishin Revolution (*ishin no kakumei*) a great accomplishment from before the Rescript's promulgation?[24] (emphasis in original)

Just as the Bible was a record of the original passion of Christianity, then, the Education Rescript too merely documented the "Japanese spirit" behind the Meiji Restoration. Ebina had here applied Schleiermacher's theology to the Education Rescript in order to radically temporalize it, to make its meaning contingent upon its relationship to a given event. In 1911, Ebina would revisit this interpretation in order to claim that the ancestral

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[23] Ebina, "Schleiermacher no Kirisutokyō (2) (Kirisutokyō no Hongi 11)," *Shinjin* (May 1903)
[24] Ibid., "Aete Teikoku no Kyōikuka ni Kankoku su" *Shinjin* (July 1907), 1.

lineage extolled in the Rescript was itself the work of Providence.[25] Ebina therefore retained the notion that the unity of the Japanese people was derived from a common ancestral lineage, but, unlike Inoue, placed the meaning of this unity on a temporal basis.

Such arguments built upon Ebina's original theological insight that historical trends within Japan's religious development lent themselves logically to Christianization, but it is nonetheless significant that they emerged only after the Russo-Japanese War. Later, we shall see that Japan's victory over Russia, a Western power, provided Ebina with what he considered as secular evidence of Japan's imminent (and immanent) Christianization.

The Russo-Japanese War also saw Ebina working out a Christian theory of assimilation. During a period commonly perceived as an "age of agony" for a new generation increasingly alienated from the fierce competition and isolating effects of modern society, Ebina observed that the alienated individual could always choose to assimilate on "one's own initiative" (*watakushi no hō kara*) with someone of greater ability and "enjoy that person's growth and development as [one's own]."[26] The individual, like the nation, was not self-sufficient and could only find his or her true end by "assimilating" into the "evolutionary development" of "the spirit of humanity." This recommendation of assimilation was mainly addressed to Ebina's student readership, but the potential for applying this liberal definition of assimilationism to imperialism was already visible in this essay. A nationless people (*bōkokumin*), Ebina noted, always had the option of either "assimilating into a greater country," or following the example of Jesus and his apostle Paul, of dedicating itself to the spread of Christianity throughout the world, as Ebina suggested Poland and Armenia would. After Korea's colonization, we shall see that Ebina would encourage Korea to do both as a Christian periphery of the Japanese empire.

Ebina use of liberal theology to break the doctrinal hold of Western missions over Japanese Protestantism and to demand a place for Christianity within Japan's imperial education system was not unique. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, Japanese Protestants, unlike their counterparts in Korea, faced the lessons of social Darwinism less in the arena of international *realpolitik*, but increasingly at home from an emergent imperial Japanese state. Nirei argues that Meiji Protestants ultimately located themselves vis-à-vis the Japanese empire by producing a "Japanese" response to the relatively new concept of imperialism in the West. He identifies the emergence of a moral attitude of twentieth century Protestant intellectuals to empire in what he terms "ethical imperialism", a discourse on the question of how to morally reform the Japanese empire

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[25] Ebina, "Kyōiku Chokugo to Kirisutokyō," *Shinjin* (January 1911) 1-4

[26] Ebina, "Kibō no Seikatsu" *Shinjin* (May 1904) 17-24. I first became aware of this article and its importance for Ebina's understanding of assimilation in my reading of Yoshinare's work. See Yoshinare, 181-84

to enable it to develop in parallel with changing international (historical) developments. In fashioning, as Nirei argues, a providential narrative for Japanese imperialism, Protestants justified their own belief that progress had an indispensable ethical content and a view of history that, though mediated by academic discourse, was inseparable from personal faith.

The effort might be read as a sublimation of an earlier desire to establish Christianity as Japan's national religion. For example, Nirei writes that,

> For young Protestants, to "advocate" Christianity was after all connected with the reform (in the formulae of the West) of Japan and their general will to contribute to national development. Despite their rationalistic or intellectualistic and secular (national) reformist attitude, nonetheless, their early missionary work was genuine…They did attempt to propagate to the whole nation (and they always spoke to the nation); in the early Meiji period, some serious works were done in the countryside. And yet, due to numerous social obstacles and cultural prejudices in the countryside, and perhaps due to their intellectual and samurai character, Protestantism characteristically remained a religious discourse for the elite, particularly for the educated middle class in the late Meiji period. Despite the failure, Protestant leaders, nonetheless, were proud of their religion as a religion for the minority, but an influential and intelligent minority.[27]

I would argue, however, that Meiji Protestants were critically influenced by the exogenous circumstance of the rapid spread of Christianity through Korea, particularly after the Russo-Japanese War. This moment, although external, was understood in the context of their desire to "complete" Japan's spiritual revolution and to establish Protestant Christianity as the national religion and was often conceived of in apocalyptic terms. Their identification with the colonial "periphery" was only intensified by Japan's penetration of the Korean peninsula. One way to understand this moment better is to briefly compare it to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' famous reinterpretation of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) in the face of new revolutionary movements emerging in late developing Eastern Europe (and particularly Russia).

> The Communist Manifesto had as its object the proclamation of the inevitably impending dissolution of modern bourgeois property. But in Russia we find, face to face with the rapidly developing capitalist swindle and bourgeois property, just beginning to develop, more than half the land owned in common by the peasants. Now the question is: can the Russian *obshchina*, though greatly undermined, yet a form of the primeval common ownership of land, pass directly to the highest form of communist ownership? Or, on the contrary, must it first pass through the same process of dissolution as constitutes the historical evolution of the West?[28]

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[27] Nirei, 9

[28] Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto,* ed. David McClellan (Oxford: Oford University Press, 1992) 43

Marx and Engels here revised the notion of communist praxis that they had originally formulated for the Western European core to conform to their perception of the Eastern European periphery's revolutionary potential. Analogously, after the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese Protestant discourse readdressed the early Meiji commitment to Japan's spiritual revolution in order to project its source onto a soon-to-be colonized Korea. Could Korea advance directly to the historical stage of modern Christianity without first passing through the processes of political modernization that had frustrated spiritual evolution in Japan? If so, could a colonial Korea provide the necessary catalyst to Christianize imperial Japan? In posing these questions, I shall argue, the Meiji Protestant leadership constructed Korea as a spiritual periphery of Japan. In contrast to Marx and Engels, they saw in the periphery not the state's dissolution, but its salvation.

I will discuss Ebina's discourse on Korea as a spiritual periphery of Japan presently. Here, however, let me pick up the narrative thread of how the Meiji Protestant apprehension of Korea developed.

The Keijō Academy, 1897-1907: A False Start?

The tension between the two moments of elite reformism on the one hand and evangelical zeal on the other can be seen clearly in the decision to establish a Japanese Protestant-run school, Keijō Academy, in Seoul, following the Sino-Japanese War. Although primarily the brainchild of the Christian educators Honda Yōichi and Oshikawa Masayoshi, this school was also the result of a collaborative effort between a broad cross-section of Japanese Church leaders and political players such as Itō Hirobumi, Ōkuma Shigenobu and the financier Shibusawa Eiichi under the aegis of the newly formed Great Japanese Overseas Education Society. The decision to establish a school was made in lieu of sending a Christian mission, apparently in order to gain the cooperation of Japan's political sphere. An editorial in *Fukuin Shinpō* (a later incarnation of *Fukuin Shūhō*) suggests that, at least for the Japanese Christian Church, this decision was accepted begrudgingly. Uemura wrote sardonically that, "Just when we had heard that an Overseas Mission Society had been formed, they changed the name to the Great Japan Overseas Education Society." To make matters worse, Uemura continued, Oshikawa and Honda's plan to cooperate with "figures outside Christianity" inevitably meant that the school had to "state explicitly that [it] had no relationship to proselytizing." Uemura felt that it was the special task of Japanese Christians to proselytize (*dendō*) the Gospel to Korea *as part of* fulfilling the Japanese empire's responsibility to enlighten (*kaidō*) Korea. While he nodded approval at the Society's attempt to "harmonize breadth with depth," he ultimately concluded that, "where spiritual endeavors are concerned, it is

always better to go narrow and deep."[29] In sum, Uemura frowned upon the attempt to merge missionizing abroad with the institutional framework of the imperial Japanese state.

Unsurprisingly, Honda took a far different view of his project to "enlighten" Korea. He observed that missionary efforts had become too bound up with politics and he was skeptical as to whether the best method of missionizing for Japanese Protestants really lay in "sitting in the countryside and proselytizing like the British and American missionaries."[30] In his view, missionary efforts in Japan had demonstrated clearly that the "indirect proselytizing" (*kansetsu dendō*) of Christian education was a necessary concomitant of direct proselytizing activities. Later, during the Russo-Japanese War, Honda recalled the decision to start a Christian school in Seoul thusly: "Korea is a backward nation where education has not been spread, with a terribly low level of culture, a materialistic nation that is extremely irreligious; it was therefore said that they could not easily understand a spiritual religion like Christianity."[31]

The example of Keijō Academy illustrates well how Meiji Protestant praxis towards Korea was altered by its encounter of the imperial Japanese state during the 1890s. Uemura's vision of Japanese missionary efforts in Asia as an autonomous force serving national expansion but acting independently of secular and state institutions was being gradually eclipsed. In its place, the Japanese Methodist Church had substituted a model of elite religious education fully integrated with the imperial state. Following the Russo-Japanese War, we shall see that it was the Congregationalist Church that would adopt the most active role in proselytizing Japanese Christianity to Koreans *with* the cooperation of the imperial Japanese state. It was thus never the case that Japanese Protestants were disinterested in sending missions to Korea, but there were always competing models for how to do so.

The Keijō Academy lasted from 1897-1905, when it was donated to the government of the new Korean protectorate.[32] Still, this school represented more than a false start; it signified the beginning of a cooperative relationship between the academic and political spheres in managing empire.

The Russo-Japanese War and the Meiji Protestant Apprehension of Korea

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[29] Uemura, "Kaigai Kyōikukai" *Fukuin Shinpō* (February 14, 1894) reprinted in Ji Myŏnggwan and Ogawa Keiji, eds., *Nikkan Kirisutokyō Kankeishi Shiryō, 1876-1922* (Tokyo: Shinkyo Shuppansha, 1984) 46
[30] Honda Yōichi, "Chōsendan," *Kirisutokyō Shinbun* (September 16, 1898) reprinted in ibid., 132-134
[31] Editorial, "Chōsen Dendō ni Tsukite," *Gokyō* (June 4, 1904) reprinted in ibid., 82-83
[32] Iinuma Jirō and Han Ŭisŏk, *Nihon Teikokushugika no Chōsen Dendō* (Tokyo: Kirisutokyō Shuppankyoku, 1985) 73

Ultimately, it took the Russo-Japanese War to stimulate serious interest in sending missions to Korea. Anticipating war with Russia over control of Korea, Japanese Protestants began at the end of 1903 to send representatives from the Congregationalist and Japanese Christian Churches to the peninsula to investigate the possibilities of establishing missions there. Kiyama Kōjirō of the Japanese Christian Church, along lines roughly congruent with Uemura's original advocacy of sending Japanese missions abroad, envisioned a great exodus of Japanese Christians (*kurisuchan no daiijū*) to Korea for the sake of creating "a new world and a new Japan" (*shintenchi shinnihon*).[33] Miyakawa Tsuneteru, a leader of the Congregationalist Church, reported back from Korea that, unlike the middle-class (*chūryū*) makeup of Japanese Christianity, believers in Korea were mostly made up of the uneducated lower classes "satisfied with the most prosaic of missionary sermons."[34] Miyakawa surmised, however, that Japanese missionaries, being of "the same culture and race" (*dōbun dōshu*) as Koreans, would be able to succeed in areas where Western missionaries could not.

What drove this sudden interest amongst Japanese Protestants in establishing missions in Korea? One possible motive was to assist Japan's postwar colonization of Korea against the encroachment of western missionaries operative on the peninsula. The ex-Protestant intellectual and famous journalist Tokutomi Sohō, for example, argued that, "Strictly speaking, [Christianity in Korea] is a political force." This was, Tokutomi claimed, due to no fault of the missionaries themselves, but was inevitable considering that "it is nearly impossible for religious proselytizing in a backwards country to establish itself purely as proselytizing." In Hawaii, for example, Western missions had functioned as "forerunners of annexation" (*heigō no senpō*). Tokutomi thought it was only a matter of time before a conflict erupted between Christians and the "rulers of Korea" similar to the famous *Kulturkampf* between the emergent German nation-state and the Catholic Church during the 1880s. Tokutomi thus urged Japanese Christians of "every sect and every church" to begin missionary activities in Korea that would "take over" (*yuzuriukeru*) those of the Western missions. Only in this way, he claimed, could "the danger of a religious issue becoming a political issue be completely erased." Following this instrumentalist reasoning, Tokutomi argued that proselytizing the Koreans themselves was far more urgent than for Japanese colonials in Korea.[35] This was essentially an argument for containment. For Tokutomi, sending Japanese Protestant missions to Korea was not an end in itself but contingent upon the presence of the Western missionaries already there.

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[33] Kiyama Nankai, "Chōsen Kenbunroku," *Fukuin Shinpō* (December 17, 1903) reprinted in Ogawa and Ji., 47-48

[34] Miyakawa Tsuneteru, "Miyakawa shi no Nyūkandan," *Kirisutokyō Sekai* (December 10, 1903) reprinted in ibid., 136-138

[35] Tokutomi Iichirō, "Kankoku ni okeru Dendō," *Kaitakusha* (January 1, 1908) reprinted in ibid., 318-19

By and large, however, Meiji Protestants were skeptical of the popular view that the missionary presence on the peninsula represented, wittingly or otherwise, an anti-Japanese force. In 1907, for example, Honda Yōichi reported from Korea that while "we have often heard that Korean believers enter [the faith] for political reasons…having traveled to that country and witnessed the situation there, it seems to me that they are making relatively sound progress."[36] At the same time, however, Japanese Protestants actively critiqued what they considered to be the crude level of faith being produced by missionary activities. Here the elitist conceit in Meiji Protestantism was fully visible. Hiraiwa Senpo, whose affirmation of the compatibility of missionary activities with the policies of the protectorate we saw earlier in Chapter One, warned his readers not to make too much of the strict requirements Western missionaries used in allowing Korean communicants into their churches.

> But if you think that, because they undergo such strict treatment in order to become believers, Korean Christians are all fine people, you are still wrong. As I mentioned previously, Koreans are originally an obedient people who submit when oppressed and endure when coerced. If they want to enter the church, it is not difficult for them to abide by its rules and conditions. As their intellect is still unenlightened, they know no skepticism, swallow whatever the missionaries tell them about the Bible's teachings, and doubt nothing. It is a truly happy age. But however truly happy it may be, it is also an infantile age. Because it is infantile, their faith is simplistic and sincere, but easily subject to change, and not strong like a moral principle. There is still somewhere a gap between their faith and sense of right (*rigi*). This is the reason why the [Japanese] public (*sejin*) doubts the faith of many Korean believers.[37]

Hiraiwa's point was not to question the sincerity of Korean Christian faith, but to suggest that it was compromised by immaturity and dependence on missionary doctrine.

This critique of Korean Christianity transcended sectarian differences in Japan. The Congregationalist *Kirisutokyō Sekai* (Christian World), for example, announced in an editorial that, while it "could not easily believe" reports that American missionaries in Korea were anti-Japanese activists, it regretted "the tendency of missionary proselytizing policy to obstruct Korean believers' spirit of autonomy and independence" and that the Christianity they preached had "the ill effect of transplanting anachronistic and old-fashioned theology into Korea."[38] *Kirisutokyō Sekai* also spoke of its interest in helping produce Korean missionaries. In response to such criticism, *Fukuin Shinpō* introduced the viewpoints of the Methodist missionary M.C. Harris (discussed in Chapter 1) encouraging Japanese Protestants to engage in missionizing to Koreans, the education of

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[36] Honda, "Honda Kantoku no Chōsendan," *Gokyō* (July 13, 1907), reprinted in ibid., 84-85
[37] Hiraiwa Senpo, "Chōsen Dendō Shisatsu Ryokōki," *Gokyō* (May 16, 1908) reprinted in ibid., 89
[38] Editorial, "Kankoku Dendō to Senkyōshi," *Kirisutokyō Sekai* (August 29, 1907) reprinted in ibid., 395

Korean Christians at Japanese Christian schools and the amalgamation of the Japanese and Korean YMCAs as a possible corrective to missionary shortsightedness.[39]

During the period of the Japanese protectorate, Japanese Protestants thus generally imagined that sending missions to Korea more in terms of a division of labor with the Western missions than a project to establish overall hegemony over Christian missionary activities there. Few doubted the superior ability of Western missionaries to produce the raw material of Christian faith in Korea, but many saw the mission of Japanese missionaries to fashion out of this faith a mature and autonomous spirit just as they had earlier done for Japan.

And yet, despite the early postwar excitement over missionizing in Korea, the Methodist and Japanese Christian Churches ultimately limited their activities in Korea to proselytizing among the communities of Japanese colonial settlers who were emigrating in increasing numbers to Korea after the Russo-Japanese War. The reasons for this cannot be stated conclusively, but it is possible to isolate as a single contributing factor the fact that, just as Honda Yōichi had suggested in 1898, these churches were ultimately unable to imagine a role for themselves independent of the Western missionaries there. Despite Uemura's initial ambition to aid national expansion by proselytizing in Asia, the Japanese Christian Church declined to missionize amongst Koreans on the grounds that the success of the Presbyterian Church in Korea made this unnecessary. As I will discuss in the next section, this decision reflected Uemura's unwillingness to merge his vision of missionizing as the spread of Christian culture with the Japan's imperial education system.

The same cannot be said about the Japanese Methodist Church, newly formed by Honda in 1907, whose church periodical *Gokyō*, ran several editorials upon Japan's colonization of Korea enthusiastically endorsing the launch of missionary activities toward Koreans. Much in the manner of the recently dissolved Keijō Academy, *Gokyō* continued to imagine its role in Korea to be in Christian education. One editorial wrote:

> These days we see much church activity undertaken under the slogan "A Million Souls for Jesus," [discussed in Chapter One] but proselytizing cannot be suddenly solved by such methods. Proselytizing unaccompanied by education such as this is [always] a failure. Education is what must be made the foundation of proselytizing in Korea. It seems to be public opinion that the urgent task for Korean churches is in training and cultivating its missionaries and believers… We must not forget that raising Christianity in Korea requires regular education and theological education and we should recognize that this requires all the more effort when it comes to proselytizing among women.[40]

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[39] Editorial, "Kankoku Senkyōshi Mondai," *Kirisutokyō Shinpō* (September 5, 1907) reprinted in ibid., 374-75

[40] Editorial, "Kankoku Dendō no Kikai," *Gokyō* (August 27, 1910) reprinted in ibid., 102-103

In 1910, then, Methodists still defined their "proselytizing" in terms of training Korea's future elite Christian leadership rather than the work of inspiring Christian conversion. Just as had earlier been the case with Honda's Keijō Academy, the Methodist vision of their activities in Korea had little to do with reigniting the Japanese Protestant task of achieving a Christian culture for Japan. To this extent, Japanese Methodists saw no obstacle in conforming to the institutional realities of Japan's colonial rule in Korea. And yet the leader of the Methodist Church's missionary work among Japanese colonials in Korea, Kihara Hokashichi, argued in 1911 against proselytizing amongst Koreans until Japanese missionaries could differentiate themselves from the Western missions by speaking, eating and living like Koreans.[41]

The point is this: So long as the purpose of sending Japanese Protestant missions to Korea was conceived of extrinsically, in relation to the Western missionary presence already there, the impetus to undertake the difficult task of missionizing among Koreans was bound to be limited. What set the Congregationalist Church apart from the Methodist and Japanese Christian Churches was its rhetorical synthesis of the Protestant mission of attaining a Christian culture for Japan with Japan's historical mission to expand its sovereignty throughout Asia as intrinsically coterminous processes. As early as 1905, *Kirisutokyō Sekai* noted that the apostles Paul and Joseph "were not led astray by the crude argument that it is impossible to expand outwards before establishing the foundation [of the church] within, and resolutely built their church upon the cornerstone of God's providence."[42] In 1907, Wataze Tsuneyoshi stressed that Japan's colonization of Korea was the result of "world circumstances" (*sekai no taisei*) and was therefore the duty of Japanese Christians to "work hard for the amalgamation of Japan and the sake of Oriental civilization."[43]

Taken together, the tension between these two moments suggested that Korea's Christianization and it colonization were coterminous events. It is here that we get the first glimpse of the notion of Korea as a spiritual periphery with a dependent but distinct existence from the non-Christian Japanese core. In order to develop this argument further, I would like to discuss next in the next section the construction of Korea as a spiritual periphery of Japan as it appears in the writings of Uemura and Ebina. Here I am particularly interested in comparing their respective treatments of the supposed Korean characteristic of *jidai shugi*, (literally, "to serve the great-ism"), the notion of Korea's cultural and political dependence on stronger powers a basis for rendering Korea's contemporary circumstances. As we have seen in the last chapter, the concept of *jidai*

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[41] Kihara Hokashichi, "Heigōgo no Chōsen," *Gokyō* (April 15, 1911), reprinted in ibid., 388-389
[42] Editorial, "Kankoku Dendō," *Kirisutokyō Sekai* (June 23, 1905), reprinted in ibid., 143
[43] Wataze, "Kankoku Dendōron," *Kirisutokyō Sekai* (August 15, 1907) reprinted in ibid., 144-47

shugi/*sadae juǔi* was used by Japanese and Korean ideologues alike to both signify and criticize Korea's political and cultural dependence on stronger powers (usually China). By contrast, both Uemura and Ebina, while criticizing Korean backwardness, seized upon *jidai shugi* as being qualitatively equivalent to the widespread feeling of alienation among the samurai class that had provided the propulsive force behind Japan's *kaikoku ishin*, its moment of modern transformation. Both saw in the Korean periphery and its Christianization the possibility of incorporating a permanent source of institutionalized charisma into the Japanese empire. Uemura saw in *jidai shugi* an analogy to the early Meiji receptivity to foreign influence and hoped that Korea's colonization would reopen the possibility of Christianization-from-without for the Japanese empire through the efforts of the Western missionaries. This extrinsic perception of Korea as spiritual periphery, I will argue, amounted to a refusal to alter his vision of Christian missionizing to conform to the institutional reality of Japan's colonial rule in Korea. Ebina's reading of Korea as spiritual periphery was, on the other hand, far more intrinsic and thoroughgoing in its temporal grasp of Korea's colonization and saw Korean Christianity as a necessary supplement towards completing the immanent process of Christianization latent in Japan's rise as a modern power and embodied in its imperial education system.

Korea as a Spiritual Periphery of the Japanese Empire in Uemura and Ebina

During the 1890s, Uemura had been one of the foremost advocates of sending Japanese Protestant missions to proselytize Asia in aid of Japan's national expansion. As we have seen, however, after the Sino-Japanese War, Uemura's original ambition of pursuing missionary activities in Korea outside the framework of the state was gradually displaced first by the Methodist-sponsored Keijō Academy and finally by the Congregationalist turn toward cooperation with the colonial state. This perhaps explains why Uemura was relatively silent about Korean Christianity after the Russo-Japanese War. Uemura celebrated Japan's colonization of Korea as a revelation on par with God's gift to Joshua of Israel, the land "promised to his ancestors." He nevertheless had an acute sense of the difficulties the Japanese empire would likely face in Korea. He very astutely observed that:

> Great Japan's new territory, Korea, [means] not only that it will now share borders with Russia and China but, in a sense, also that Japan will have many occasions to deal with Christianity more directly than it has until now. Does Japan intend on approaching these foreign missionaries as a lone heretical force, as a *gohei* erecting, priestly white robe-flipping devotee of idol festivals? What sort of relationship does Japan intend on having with Korean Christianity? How will Japan's educational system and its institutions treat Korean Christianity? These are problems far

weightier than most of our people imagine and will have a serious influence on the future of the Japanese empire.[44]

As predictions go, this one was right on the money. During military rule, the Korean government-general was perplexed about how to deal with the Western missions and Korean Christianity. This is precisely the subject of the next chapter.

Uemura attempted to imagine Korean Christianity in terms that were commensurate with Protestantism in Japan. Explaining that, "[I] do not wish to be narrow minded (*yabusaka naru*) about how passionate Korean Christianity is," he repudiated the elitist tendency among Japanese Protestants to discount Korean Christianity as uneducated. He noted, for example, that Christianity in Korea was not strictly a religion of the lower classes, but notably included an educated middle-class element, a trait which he felt made it similar to the ex-samurai makeup of Japanese Christianity and superior to Christianity in China and Taiwan. He also found parallels between Korea's anti-Japanese patriotic sentiment and Japanese *bushidō* and noted that it was appropriate, after all, to Japan's warrior ethic to be moved by the bravery of one's enemy.[45] This particular type of commensurability was apparently not appreciated by Japan's Home Ministry, which moved quickly to censor this editorial.

Interestingly, Uemura saw parallels between the Korean *jidai shugi* (the propensity to "worship the foreign) and Japan's historical experience of Westernization after the opening of the country.

> In the first place, [Koreans] embrace *jidai shisō* and therefore venerate anything that Westerners say. Their feelings of respect for the missionaries therefore must certainly run deep. Japan too was like this in the early years of the Meiji period. Though it is a temporary ailment, it is this weakness that induced the narcissistic (*unuborezuyoi*) Japanese to meekly accept Western things and that likewise seems to have given a profound advantage to proselytizing in Korea.[46]

This was certainly an idiosyncratic use of *jidai shugi/sadae juui*, a concept that was usually used to signify Korea's obsequious emulation of China and, in Japan, also the inevitability of its national demise. Uemura, however, understood *jidai shugi* instead as an analogue to the Japan's experience of Westernization that marked the outset of Japan's modernization. Far from being a marker of historical stagnation, *jidai shugi* became a vital but temporary (and in Japan's case missed) window of opportunity to the possibility of spiritual transformation.

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[44] Uemura, "Dainihon no Chōsen," *Fukuin Shinpō* (September 1, 1910) reprinted in ibid., 377-379
[45] Uemura, "Chosen no Kirisutokyo (1)," Fukuin Shinpo (September 8, 1910) reprinted in ibid., 57-58
[46] Ibid., "Chōsen no Dendō," *Fukuin Shinpō* (September 22, 1910) reprinted in ibid., 59-60

How long would this window remain open? That is, what would become of such fortuitous circumstances after colonization? Uemura warned: "Just as it is difficult to learn at sixty what one did not in youth, proselytizing becomes difficult after the proper season has passed. I fear that missionary work in Japan may have already missed this season. Just as an individual cannot be saved at just any given time, a nation cannot convert all at once whenever it pleases."[47]

> A million people; exactly ten percent of Korea's population. If a million Christians sprang up in Korea, this would mean that, in a part of the Japanese empire, ten percent of the population would be Christian. And unlike [Christianity] at home (*naichi*), without the troublesome religious circumstances caught up in politics, if a Christian organization with one million members existed in Korea, it may prove remarkably easy to preach Christian custom, foster its particular way of life, and realize its educational ideals.[48]

The hope Uemura associated with Korean Christianity was not simply due to the number of Christians there but also to the pure (and therefore apolitical) spirituality it embodied. Freedom from politics in Korea might make it simpler than in Japan to integrate Christianity with everyday life there. "And naturally," Uemura continued,

> Japanese proselytizing would increase in fervor and, reaching full tide, [the missions in Korea] might provide the impetus to Christianize the entire Empire. Indeed, we do have reason to hope for this. Just as the Korean problem pushed the Empire's spread to unheard of limits, the Korean missions might spark off the progress of Christianity within the Empire. This so-called million-man conversion campaign might just be the moment that determines the Empire's spiritual destiny.[49]

Here we have a fairly clear example of what I mean by the Meiji Protestant conception of Korea as a spiritual periphery of Japan. Uemura imagines here Korea having a spiritual significance for the Japanese empire's Christianization commensurate with the political significance it had had for Japan's rise as an imperial power. Despite his reservations about the Japanese empire, then, Uemura nevertheless saw Korea's colonization and its Christianization as moments bearing providential meaning.

By 1910, however, the idea of Christianizing Japan through cooperation with the foreign missionaries in Korea likely seemed anachronistic even to his own church members, many of whom, as we have seen, thought of Christian faith in Korea as being crude and uneducated. Perhaps Uemura had come to terms with Japan's imperialism too late. Given his unwillingness to compromise with imperial Japan's historical

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[47] Ibid., 60.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.

development, it seems likely that his construction of colonial Korea as a Japanese spiritual periphery was pronounced dead on arrival. On the other hand, Ebina, to whom we turn next, we shall see fully exploited made every attempt to integrate Japan's institutional development with the possibilities of using Korea's colonization as an opportunity to Christianize the empire.

Empire and Logos

Ebina's interest in Korea dates back at least to 1901, when he argued in favor of recognizing Russia's interests in Manchuria, which he felt Japan lacked the ability to manage anyway, in turn for gaining Russia's recognition of Japanese interests in Korea, a country he considered of much greater strategic importance to Japan. With both countries' attentions fixed on developing their respective territorial acquisitions, there would be little energy left for military aggression. He therefore encouraged Japan to establish firmer control over Korea through softer tactics such as abandoning its hardline diplomacy towards that country, finishing the Keijō-Pusan railroad line and linking it to the Manchurian railroad system, establishing a Japanese-Korean bank, and encouraging Japanese emigration to Korea.[50]

During the Russo-Japanese War, however, Ebina went out of his way to place Christianity at the service of Japan's war effort. He asked his readers to consider

> not only the soldier who does not hesitate to offer his life to the nation, but also his bereaved family who, in sending a most beloved family member to the battlefield, gives him to the nation. What a beautiful display they make together of the spirit of sacrifice! Ah, this truly is the spirit of the martyrs, a display of spirituality so difficult to realize other than in wartime. Without [first] passing through [war], the nation cannot summon the great spirit (*dai genki*) of its people…Humanity comes at a high price and can only be bought with the blood and tears of those who sacrifice. Those who advocate pacifism because they detest the misery of war still do not comprehend the spirit of Christ.[51]

Whereas Ebina had previously encouraged Japan's statesmen to follow a pacifistic approach to national expansion, here he addressed the nation itself, affirming war as the very basis of Christianity's spirit of sacrifice and the nation's spiritual life.

Clearly, Ebina's thought during the Russo-Japanese War had swerved toward a more organic and holistic conception of imperialism. But what exactly had changed in his theology to facilitate this shift? Yoshinare Akiko pinpoints the answer to this question when she observes that, during the Russo-Japanese War, Ebina's conception of the divine

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[50] Ebina, "Manshū Mondai to Chōsen Keiei," *Shinjin* (May 1901) reprinted in ibid., 405-07
[51] Ibid., "Seisho no Sensōshugi," *Shinjin* (May 1904) 1-3

nation (*shinkoku)* becomes suffused with the idea of logos. Whereas Ebina had previously made *shinkoku* as the logical conclusion of the Meiji leadership's political goals, during the Russo-Japanese War, Yoshinare points out that Ebina decided that it was the Meiji leaders who were being moved by the "divine nation" immanent within the "Japanese spirit."[52] In 1905, for example, Ebina wrote:

I have not heard of any great man who leads the [Japanese] spirit by transcending it. Patriots, visionaries, great men and heroes become great men and heroes through the leadership of this spirit. From a certain point of view, these great men have certainly led the empire, but in actuality, they have led stubborn individuals and political factions while they themselves have been led by the Great Japanese Spirit.[53]

What had happened, Ebina explained, was that the Japanese spirit "had originally been state spirit," but was now making "a great advance toward becoming a world spirit." This same Japanese spirit, which, as we have seen, Ebina would later claim underpinned Japan's 2,500 year long ancestral lineage invoked in the Education Rescript, was actually "universal spirit," or "logos." Until now, Ebina explained, logos had operated at the individual level, producing the sage rulers in China, the Buddha in India, and the individual personality that had begun with the Jews and was now "spiritualizing humanity all over the world." In this fact, Ebina felt that he had uncovered Japan's unique historical destiny. For although Japan had never produced sage rulers, the Buddha, or children of God, it had produced, at the national level, a noble country (*kunshikoku*) in the Confucian sense, a Pure Land of Buddhism, and would now surely produce a "divine nation" under Christianity. "Although logos has never yet appeared as a great state spirit, why should it then limit itself to the individual?"

This equation of "Japanese spirit" with logos critically informed how Ebina viewed Korea's colonization. As we shall see, the metaphor of logos, he would in turns analogize Korea's historical predicament with Israel, contrast its history with that of the Roman empire, and finally suggest that it become the Scotland of the Japanese empire.

Ebina noted with great interest that the Israelite wars of the Old Testament were fought not merely out of self-defense, but also out of aggression.

The Israelites fought out of self-defense, but not only out of self-defense…[Their wars] clearly adopted the character of an invasion, and they defeated their enemies everywhere…, finally building a Jewish kingdom. In short, the Old Testament affirms not only wars of self-defense but

[52] Yoshinare, 190
[53] Ebina, "Nihondamashii no Shin'igi o Omohu," *Shinjin* (January 1905) 1-3

goes even further [to include] wars of aggression. And why should we say that it only affirms? The Old Testament in fact encourages and commends [this kind of war].[54]

These early wars, however, never went beyond the narrow assertion of Jewish identity and so, in Ebina's view, had to be distinguished from the universal task of constructing a divine nation (*shinkoku kensetsu*). Israel would learn the value of absolute reliance on God only after defeat in war reduced it to a nation of refugees. This Ebina considered a universal condition: "Peoples that can no longer appeal to combat…end up making their appeals to heaven; this is what history demonstrates."[55] Here the similarities between ancient Israel and contemporary Korea were not lost on Ebina.[56] "The Jews," he wrote, "were like Korea today. Just as Korea, now caught between the two empires of either Japan and Russia or Japan and the Ch'ing, has been always the battlefield for other countries, Palestine sadly became the battlefield of two great nations."

Loyalty to National Expansion

But how could the spread of Japanese sovereignty be associated with the task of building a nation of God in the absence of a Christian tradition? Hadn't the case of Israel demonstrated that national self-reliance had to be founded first upon absolute dedication to God? Ebina's recognition of this contradiction is suggested in an earlier editorial, "The Expansion of the Japanese Nation and Moral Suasion," in which he qualified his earlier support for war. "We are neither advocates nor opponents of war," he explained, "we simply wish that Japan's right to expansion not be violated." National expansion, Ebina continued, was as natural as the process of individual growth; it was also therefore the most inalienable of rights. "Thus, as long as this right is not violated, there is neither the necessity nor the right to [wage] war," Ebina claimed. Once this right had been violated, however, war was inevitable. The nation's expansion was its "vitality" (*genki*); without it, Ebina could "only prophesy [that nation's] demise."[57]

This normative condition was meant as a rebuke to those who would advocate war out of a desire for vengeance. There were those in Japan, Ebina argued, who viewed war with Russia merely as a form of retaliation, the settling of a grudge going back to Russia's role in the Triple Intervention of 1895, thus forcing Japan to relinquish the Liaotung Peninsula after the Sino-Japanese War. Of what use was it for Japan to resent the loss of the Liaotung Peninsula, when Japan had fundamentally lacked the capacity to develop its acquisition in the first place? Was this not placing the cart before the horse?

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[54] Ibid., "Seisho no Sensōshugi," *Shinjin* (April 1904) 5-11
[55] Ibid., 8
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., "Nihon Minzoku no Bocho to Kyokaryoku," *Shinjin* (January 1904), 1.

Since then, Russia had proved its own capacity to influence by developing ports and railroads in Manchuria. What had Japan accomplished in this time? "We have fed upon the empty glory of grand words such as 'protecting China' and 'Korean independence', and [meanwhile] could not even [finish] laying down the Keijō-Pusan line."[58]

In the end, Ebina concluded, only loyalty to "the expansion of the nation itself" provided the Japanese empire with an adequate standard of action. The false charity of "protecting China and Korea" did much more than conceal that these two countries, already far beyond being helped, were on the verge of collapse. Of much graver consequence was its obfuscation of the fact that, in the first place, Japan had no cultural aptitude for offering leadership or guidance to foreign countries. Charity made a poor substitute for autonomy.

But therein lay the rub. For a nation to expand assumed already that it had the spiritual resources to provide leadership to those lying beyond its own cultural boundaries. Here too, Ebina claimed that Japan compared unfavorably with Russia. He considered that whatever outrage Japan's Shintoists might feel at the sight of the imposing (and Russian Orthodox) Nikolai Church in Tokyo, they nevertheless "lack[ed] the fervor" to take this indignation to its logical conclusion: "to proceed into Russia's capital and propagate their teachings there. Indeed no, of this they have never even dreamed."[59] "The Japanese people's ability to enlighten abroad," Ebina gloomily concluded, "is next to nil" (*hotondo kaimu nari*).[60]

It is worth noting here that, like Uemura in 1890, Ebina's view of national expansion (and now also imperialism) was inextricably linked to the idea of Christian missionizing. Ebina's understanding of imperialism was critically influenced by J.R. Mott's slogan (discussed in Chapter 1) "Evangelization of the World in this Generation!", which he claimed gave expression to the fact that, in contrast with the politico-economic empires of the ancient period and the spiritual imperialism of the Catholic Church, modern imperialism was equally political, economic and spiritual. The new imperialism of the United States, which Ebina called "the highest form" of imperialism, was a case in point.

As we have seen, Ebina had earlier charted Japan's spiritual course towards Christianization off of the political trajectory set by the Meiji Restoration. Hence the conundrum: Politically speaking, the restoration of the emperor and the opening of the country (*sonnō kaikoku*) determined the direction imperial Japan should take. Ebina now noted, however, that the Western world was forcing Japan to realize that the true meaning of imperialism lay in its autonomous spiritual content.

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[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 3.
[60] Ibid., 4.

Geography is Destiny: Jidai Shugi as Spiritual Periphery

By the summer of 1904, however, Ebina felt he had found a solution, one that filled him with a confidence that is striking when compared to his earlier anxiety over the cultural backwardness he felt Japan's expansion exposed. But the audience he addressed was now not Japanese, but Korean.

> I know that Koreans will not be happy to hear my advice. And even amongst Japanese, there will be those skeptical about what I have to say. But I have contemplated upon this by putting myself in the place of a Korean. I wish to tell the Korean people this as a Korean. If I were to announce [what I have to say] in Keijo [Seoul], my head would surely be lopped off. Still I am not ashamed of being a loyalist to Korea. For, in the end, my plan will save the Korean people and their spirit.[61]

Ebina's title, "An Endorsement of Japanese-Korean Amalgamation in Consideration of the Korean People's Fate," gave away the content of his advice. But on what grounds did Ebina call himself "a loyalist to Korea"? How is it possible, for Ebina, who had earlier admonished Japan to dedicate itself first to "the expansion of the nation itself," to now address Koreans as a fellow loyalist?

Ebina's reasoning proceeded as follows. Korea, like Italy, was a peninsula. Being half-maritime and half continental, such nations were in a unique position to assert their sovereignty over the sea. Yet, whereas Italy had once been the seat of the Roman Empire, no such example of sovereignty could be cited from Korean history. More to the point, Korea's history was "exactly the opposite" of the Roman Empire. Whereas Italy was relatively large in comparison with the land and sea surrounding it, in the same respect, Korea was comparatively small, being hemmed in by the vastness of the Asian continent and the Pacific Ocean. This made its history much more similar to the scattered countries of ancient Palestine caught between the empires of the Euphrates and Nile rivers (i.e. the Assyrian and Egyptian empires), destined to be sandwiched between empires rather than ever becoming one itself.[62]

With this discovery, Ebina felt certain he had unlocked the key to understanding Korean history. Korea's geographical circumstances made its history the opposite of the narrative of endlessly unfolding sovereignty represented by the Roman empire. Korea's past, under the guise of feigned neutrality, was in fact nothing more than a perpetual series of shifting loyalties. It was this condition that had recently come to be known as *jidai shugi*. As Ebina's argument was that this condition was inscribed into Korea's

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[61] Ibid., "Chōsen Minzoku no Unmei o Kanjite Nikkan Gōdōsetsu o Shōsetsu su," *Shinjin* (July 1904), 1.
[62] Ibid., 1-2.

geographical circumstances, however, Korean patriots were now faced with a painful yet inexorable fact: *jidai shugi* could only be brought to its logical conclusion by offering Korea's political loyalties permanently to another country.[63]

In making this argument, of course, Ebina had also to argue against amalgamation with Russia, a country whom he had earlier recognized as having considerable cultural advantages over Japan. The decision of whether to merge with Japan or Russia, Ebina argued, only appeared difficult when viewed *from* within the obsolete paradigm of *jidai shugi*. Once, however, Koreans had committed themselves to the idea of amalgamation, the correct answer would appear clearly: "The Japanese and Korean peoples, Ebina explained, "are of the same ethnic type (*dōisshu no minzoku nari*), and it is the custom of the world that peoples of the same ethnic type should merge together."[64] This Ebina considered "a natural law" (*shizen no dōri*) the irreversibility of which could be gleaned from recent history: "It is clear [for instance] how much ill will the Slavs hold for foreign peoples from their treatment of the Jews. Look at the massacres in Kishinyov; they killed [the Jews there] for no reason other than simply because they were a foreign people."[65]

Having establishing the ethnic homogeneity of the Japanese and Korean peoples, Ebina turns next to Japan's modern education system, which he says had replaced the feudal status system (*shinōkōshō*) there with a spirit of egalitarianism. The popular energy released by this egalitarian spirit, Ebina predicted, would correct Koreans' pusillanimous character (*kyōda*) just as it had for Japan's non-samurai elements (*nōkōshō*), who had now proved themselves to be world-class soldiers (*sekai daiittō no kyōhei*). In contrast to Uemura, then, Ebina fully exploited the imperial education system's power to assimilate and define ethnic identity in imagining Korea's colonization.

We may read this strategy as a deliberate response to what Ebina saw as Japan's lack of spiritual development. Anticipating Japan's colonization of Korea, one month later, Ebina urged the Japanese people to define assimilation not as "stealing what belongs to [the Koreans]," but rather as "giving them our most precious object; in other words, we must give them our most precious Japanese spirit," which, as we have seen, Ebina would very soon equate with the universal value of logos. He therefore called upon "missionaries of the Japanese spirit" to impart to Koreans the same welfare enjoyed by the Japanese. Ebina noted, however, that Japan's power to assimilate (*dōkaryoku*) had been stunted by its "pride over the last few decades in being a religiously shallow country." However, he also observed "what has created the new Japan is not religion, but

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[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 3.
[65] Ibid., 3.

solely education. Therefore, [we have] few respectable religionists, but many people who [have received] a general education. If we can rely on evangelical education (*dendōteki kyōiku*) to assimilate Korea, Japan has the institutions [to do this]."[66] The implication of Ebina's argument ought to be clear: Japanese logos had developed from within it education system at the level of the nation-state; at the individual level of religious faith, however, the development of logos in Japan was still incomplete.

Ebina therefore encouraged Koreans to be the ones to take the initiative in pursuing amalgamation, observing that this would produce the same basis for modern loyalty that "opening the country" (*kaikoku*) had in Japan four decades ago.

> In my opinion, the case for amalgamation (*gōdōron*) has the same significance as the case for [our] opening of the country (*kaikokuron*) [had for us] forty years ago. At that time, if you argued for opening the country, you would either be imprisoned or beheaded. If Koreans make this argument [for amalgamation] they will inevitably be labeled traitors. But this [argument] will save the Korean people…On several occasions in the past Korea's royal house has followed *jidai shugi* and served the commands of great nations. Therefore, if the royal house now serves the Great Japanese Emperor (*dainihon kōtei*) in order to save Korea, why should this be an insult to their national spirit?[67]

To be sure, *jidai shugi* meant self-destruction, but such self-destruction was not so far from the self-sacrifice underpinning Japanese modernity. Ebina was here proposing that the source of Korea's political alienation (its backwardness) be transfigured into a form of political loyalty to Japan's emperor; this he considered an authentic political action on par with Japan's decision to open the country to the outside world.

This, let us recall, was precisely the same advice that Ebina had given only a few months earlier to the socially alienated individual to take the initiative in choosing assimilation in order to enjoy the development of someone of greater ability as one's own. Japanese education could release the individual "great men" (Ebina mentions in particular the Japanese warriors Saigō Takamori (1827-1877) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)) in Korea that had heretofore been suppressed by the ideology of *jidai shugi*. In Ebina's estimation, Japan's victory against Russia now made it, not a disgrace, but an honor for Korea to be "amalgamated" with Japan.

This argument also allowed Ebina to derive the spiritual content of Japan's empire not from the imperial core, but from the colonial periphery. Ebina admitted that from Japan's perspective "merging with Korea would be no honor, and I do not know whether they would rejoice at such a merger." He therefore concluded that "while the Japanese are still inactive, if [you Koreans] precede them and urge them for amalgamation based

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[66] Ibid., "Sengo no Saizen Keiei (Mankanjin no Nihonka)," *Shinjin* (August 1904), 4.
[67] Ebina, "Chōsen Minzoku no Unmei o Kanjite Nikkan Gōdōsetsu o Shōsetsu su," 3

on the great principle of peace in the Orient, the Japanese shall have no words to refuse [you]."[68] For Ebina, *jidai shugi*, as a form of political alienation, apparently contained a potential for spiritual conversion he now found absent from the Japanese empire.

Ebina's formulation made it possible to imagine a Korean choice to "amalgamate" with the Japanese empire historically commensurate with the Restorationist will to save the country by opening it to the outside world. This essay must be considered pivotal from our Japan's point of view insofar as it contains the germ of an argument for constructing Korea as spiritual periphery of Japan within the imperial education system's ideological parameters. But hadn't Ebina earlier claimed that Japanese Protestants were the Restoration's successors? What relationship did Korea's political alienation have with this core mission of completing Japan's spiritual revolution? Let us attempt to answer this question below by looking at Ebina's discourse on Korea after colonization.

After Korea's colonization, Ebina found himself captivated by what he saw as the total annihilation of Korean culture. "Korean civilization," he wrote, "has been utterly demolished. Indeed, it has been demolished from its roots to its leaves. Foreign countries abused the Korean government, the government abused the people, and the people abused nature, and so now Korean civilization has vanished without a trace" (*ato o tatsu made ni itatta*). [69] Ebina did not dissimulate about the tragedy of Korea's fate, but he still found much reason to be optimistic about its future. After all, he concluded, "The fact that Korea's old civilization has been utterly demolished is extremely convenient for spreading a new civilization today."[70]

The possibilities of laying the foundation of a new civilization in Korea and the contrast this made with Japan continued to fascinate Ebina throughout the period of military rule. As late as 1917, he still lamented that "when I look at the direction of their progress, I cannot help thinking enviously that Korea may truly be happier than Japan. It may be said that Japan has taken Japanese-style civilization to its limit. It is therefore nearly impossible to destroy it and it ought not be ruined." But Korea, as part of the Japanese empire, now had the chance to realize a world (*sekaiteki*) culture. Ebina noted that it would therefore be "a step backwards" (*taiho*) to Japanize Korean life when it would be easier to "globalize" (by which Ebina meant Westernize) it.

The specific mission of the Japanese empire in Korea, Ebina argued, was that of introducing modern civilization (*kinsei bunmei)* there. What divided the two countries, he explained, was not any narrow definition of Japanese identity, but the universal (but also Western) threshold of modernity. Japan, Ebina observed, had not only received continental Asian civilization and made progress within it, it also had "laid the

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., "Chōsen Shindōhō no Shōrai," in *Kokumin Dōtoku* (Tokyo: Hokubunkan, 1912) 102
[70] Ibid., 110

foundations of modern civilization" through its encounter with continental European civilization. Korea, on the other hand, had "merely passed through the former, while the latter's influence does not seem to have reached [Korea] at all." "This," Ebina explained, "is precisely why Japan and Korea are so different."[71]

Japan's imperial education system was for Ebina the messenger of universal logos to Korea. He noted approvingly that the Korean Government-general was already in the process of replacing Korea's Confucian education with Japan's "modern scientific education." Moreover, Ebina saw this Meiji-ization of Korea in idealized terms. He wrote, "because the education laws are not those of the Meiji period twenty years ago [i.e. when the imperial education system was first introduced], but based on recent actual experience, Koreans will fortunately reap the benefits of the Japanese experience."[72]

But Ebina celebrated equally the changes being wrought by the Western missionaries active in Korea. "Protestantism," he explained, "contains the spirit of modernism," which Ebina equated with "autonomy and self-government."[73] For Ebina, these were not political values but spiritual ones to be embraced by the individual conscience; spiritual autonomy, he seemed to imply, could exist and even prosper better in the absence of political autonomy. He therefore criticized, in stark contrast with Wataze's apologia for the Congregationalist Church missions to Korea, what Ebina called the "rash idea" of "taking over the mission of Korea's moral instruction from the foreign missionaries," while most Christian churches in Japan still remained dependent on funding from the missionary companies. "How," he asked, "can we help [Koreans] manifest an independent, self-governing faith if our attitude is continually one of dependence upon foreign missionaries [at home]?"[74]

Ebina's position here raises an obvious question: Why, then, did he support his church's missions to Korea? The answer is that, like Uemura, he saw in Korean Christianity a chance to Christianize the Japanese empire. Ebina explained:

> I truly want Korean Christians to appoint themselves to the spiritual instruction of the Japanese empire…They must be aware of themselves as the frontline in the Japanese empire's spiritual instruction…Soon, they must send their missionaries to Japan… We have taken the initiative in beginning missionary activities to Koreans because we have this hope. We wish to open a life-path for them that will make them aware that their faith requires them to contribute to the Japanese Empire.[75]

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[71] Ibid., "Chōsen Shindōhō no Shōrai," 102-3
[72] Ibid., 105-6
[73] Ibid., 110
[74] Ibid., "Chōsen no Kyōka," in *Kokumin Dōtoku to Kirisutokyō*, 112-13
[75] Ebina, "Chōsenjin no Shimei (2)," in ibid., 144-45

Ebina conceived of this role in evolutionary terms. Even after colonization, he argued, Koreans would still have to "compete for survival with the Japanese" as individuals.[76] Although Koreans had failed in political pursuits, Ebina emphasized that it was still possible for Koreans to compete with Japanese spiritually.

This role too made Korea's colonization commensurable with Meiji history. Ebina pointed out to Koreans that they were not alone in their alienation from the political sphere. After all, he pointed out: "The representatives of Japanese Christianity are not from Satsuma and Chōshū [i.e. the leading domains in the Meiji Restoration], many of them are from the older domains that lagged behind and failed in the political sphere. These are facts from the early years of Meiji that Koreans should be aware of."[77] In this sense, it may be argued that Ebina saw Korean Christians as the successors to the Meiji Protestant task of Christianizing Japan. "In the political sphere," Ebina continued, "Satsuma and Chōshū are the winners, but in the spiritual sphere, they are losers."

Only at this point does Korea fully emerge as Japan's spiritual periphery for Ebina. Echoing his earlier characterization of America as a composite empire, Ebina noted that the Japanese empire, being made up of "only military, political, and economic development" without the concomitant of spiritual growth, was closer in character to ancient Rome than the modern empires of Europe and America. With much vitriol, Ebina noted that, "the Japanese Empire's religious influence is barely even a legend and has yet to know any growth."[78] On the other hand, Korea, like ancient Israel, had not survived as a nation, but had historically contributed to the spiritual sphere by communicating to it the religious influence of the Asian continent to Japan. Ebina hoped that the spread of Christianity in Korea meant that the possibility that Korea "might become the base of Christianity in Japan."[79] Finally escaping the metaphor of ancient empire, Ebina here substituted a modern analogy for the metaphor of Israel and suggests that Korea become the Scotland of the Japanese empire. This required, Ebina explained, Korean Christians to commit themselves to spreading their religious authority (*kyōken*) through the metropole, thus avoiding the fate of Ireland, which Ebina observed, tragically derived its religious authority from outside the British empire in Catholicism.[80]

Like Uemura, Ebina had discovered the possibility of using Korea as a means to complete the spiritual revolution that had been frustrated in Japan by the rise of the imperial state and its academic sphere. "In our Japan," he lamented, "because [we] imported Euro-American scientific thought, and particularly anti-Christian arts and sciences, before Christianity entered [the country], Christianity had to repel not only

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[76] Ibid., "Chosen Shindōhō no Shōrai," 107
[77] Ibid., "Chōsenjin no Shimei (2)," 144
[78] Ibid., 137-38
[79] Ibid., 138
[80] Ibid., 147

attacks from Buddhism, but also from Euro-American science."[81] As Ebina had observed during the Russo-Japanese War, the problem was again that Japanese pride had become "an obstacle to great [spiritual] development." "But Koreans," he argued, "possess no such pride and therefore face no obstacles toward [making] great development."[82]

In Ebina's case, however, there was a fundamental irony in the fact that his conception of Korea as spiritual periphery was thoroughly mediated by the idea of Japan's imperial education system. Borrowing a phrase from the economist Takahashi Kamekichi, one might summarize Ebina's argument as it develops itself over these articles as a *spiritual* theory of petty imperialism. During the late 1920s, addressing a much changed geopolitical context, Takahashi Kamekichi coined the controversial term "petty imperialism" to differentiate Japan's continental expansion in Asia from V.I. Lenin's theory of imperialism as a form of monopoly capitalism. While acknowledging that capitalism in Japan had reached an impasse (*yukizumari*), Takahashi argued that this was due to a lack of access to raw materials not because Japan had entered the stage of monopoly capitalism. Similarly, the thrust of Ebina's argument as it emerges over the course of the articles discussed here is that Japan's spiritual development had reached an impasse in which the individual spirituality that fueled the Meiji Restoration had now become routinized within Japan's imperial education system. Japanese imperialism could therefore not be explained as the product of a fully autonomous spiritual life (as in the case of the evangelical United States). Instead, the "raw material" of individual spirituality now had to be derived from a Korean periphery in order to ensure the Japanese empire's further spiritual development. Ebina had here constructed a rationale for making Korea's contemporary circumstances commensurable both with Meiji Protestant history *and* the ideological framework of the imperial Japanese state.

Ebina's construction of Korea as a spiritual periphery of the Japanese empire remained a thoroughly temporal discourse. Echoing his earlier recommendation to Koreans to press Japan for "amalgamation," Ebina observed "Korean lagged considerably in [pursuing] the project of Japanese-Korean amalgamation and lost the initiative there, but it is not impossible for them to seize instead the initiative of Christianity."[83] "The one who achieves this great-spirit first," Ebina explained, "will be the victor in the spiritual sphere."[84] The post-colonization evolutionary competition Ebina outlined here was based on his understanding of Korea's colonization as the completion of Japanese spirit, a particular form of universal logos. As we have already seen, Ebina had derived this notion of logos informing Japan's spiritual growth from its

[81] Ibid., 141-42
[82] Ibid., 146
[83] Ibid., 143-44
[84] Ibid., 146

victory in the Russo-Japanese War. But how comfortably did the idea of logos fit the reality of Japanese colonial rule in Korea? To answer this question, I would like now to conclude this chapter by examining how Ebina's disciple Wataze mobilizes the Russo-Japanese War as a metaphor in *The Urgent Task* to make the case for the Congregationalist Church's missions to Korea as a national movement.

The Urgent Task of Korea's Spiritual Instruction and the Russo-Japanese War

Just as earlier Ebina had maintained that a popular spirit of sacrifice underlay the Russo-Japanese War as an event, Wataze argued in *The Urgent Task* that this same spirit defined the Korean colony as a space. In the passage below, Wataze uses Korea as a spatial metaphor for Japan's modern wars.

> If we Japanese entrust Korea's spiritual instruction to Europeans and Americans and merely observe, we would not do so without the risk of emptying the great meaning of our two great wars.
> Korea's annexation resulted from Japan's joining the general trend of the world. Along with the necessity of the Japanese Empire's existence to secure eternal peace in the Orient, it is the result of having considered the happiness of the masses of fifteen million Koreans. And though it has been an effort to adapt to the [world's] general state-of-affairs, it has not been achieved without sacrifice. It has been a costly sacrifice; this sacrifice has, in other words, been the two great wars against the Ch'ing and Russia, to which we gave over two billion [*sic*] in national debt and over 100,000 souls. And we are still fighting to exit the aftermath of war. It is the result of that great struggle we fought and in which we risked the pains of wartime and the comparable pains of the postwar period (Nay, in which we risked the nation) that brought about the fact of Korea's colonization.[85]

This passage may be read as a reworking of Ebina's earlier argument that Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War represented not the efforts of a handful of statesmen, but the working of logos within the Japanese nation. But what role does logos play in *The Urgent Task*? Wataze emphasized only that Japan's colonization of Korea was the result of the genuine sacrifice the Japanese people had made during the Russo-Japanese War and continued to make even into the postwar period. The end result is that colonial Korea appears in *The Urgent Task* as the spatial manifestation of the spirit of sacrifice which Japan's modern wars represented as events.[86]

The critical absence of logos in Wataze's text becomes more conspicuous when we look at his appropriation of the concept of *jidai shugi*. Like Ebina, Wataze used this

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[85] Wataze, 3-4
[86] Ibid., 4.

concept to argue that Korean backwardness could now, in the context of the Japanese empire, be transfigured into a form of political loyalty.

> While the center of authority shifted, *jidai shugi* was in its way a dangerous idea, but we have already entered an age that no longer permits authority to shift. Politically speaking, the age in which *jidai shugi* was dangerous has past…On the contrary, in this situation, this characteristic will provide a good unifying power.[87]

Unlike Ebina, however, Wataze used this argument not to address the Koreans themselves but to those Japanese who doubted that Japanese Protestants could convert Koreans as ably as the Western missions did. Wataze emphasized that this spiritual transfiguration could only be experienced as a religious conversion whereby "a person fundamentally changes their whole state of mind through the spiritual power of God." The purpose of the Congregationalist Church's mission in Korea was therefore to make Koreans spiritually autonomous from without by attaching their political loyalties to the Japanese empire. Here, Ebina's notion of a liberal assimilationism based on the initiative of the individual is entirely missing.

Ebina had seen in sending Japanese Congregationalist missions to Korea the possibility of bringing home from the peninsula a Christian content for the Japanese empire. Wataze, by contrast, entertained fantasies of eventually sending Japanese-Korean missions to Manchuria and Siberia to become "the frontline in the continental spread of Japanese civilization."[88] And what role did Christianity *as faith* play in Watase's civilizing mission to Korea? Here Wataze could only assert that, "We have no faith other than Christianity. It is impossible to convince people of something you do not believe.[89] Through Christianity, we are truly assisting [Japan's] imperial fortunes and contributing to our national morality." In *The Urgent Task*, then, the condition of possibility for sending missions to Korea imagined in Ebina's writings becomes in Wataze a condition of service. In this sense, Watase's derivative (and denatured) discourse accomplished something Ebina's original could not have: It placed the Meiji Protestant discourse of spiritual autonomy at the service of the Japanese empire.

In *The Urgent Task*, we therefore have what we might call a non-autonomous discourse on autonomy. The terms of this discourse were now explicit and available for appropriation by those wielding political authority. For example, in Ohara Shinzō, the Korean Government-general's Minister of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, echoed Wataze's formulation almost literally. In support of the Kumiai Church's missionary activities in Korea, he wrote:

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[87] Ibid., 86-87
[88] Ibid., iv
[89] Ibid., 94

They say that religion has no borders, but when it comes to nation-building, it cannot be said that the nation's religious projects may be entrusted to anyone without them becoming an obstacle. This is currently the case in Korea…In the first place, I think that there are two levels to the problem of spiritual instruction when it comes to Japanese proselytizing to Koreans. First is the problem of spiritual instruction for human beings and second is the spiritual instruction for the nation.[90]

Usami Katsuo, the Korean Government-general's Minister of Interior Affairs, went even further in elaborating upon the necessity of the Congregationalist Church's activities in Korea. The government's tensions with western missionaries, he said, stemmed from the fact that "during the days of the old Korean government, these missionaries all acted freely under the prestige of their home countries." It was therefore inevitable that, with the "promulgation of various legal stipulations" following Japan's colonization of Korea, missionaries felt constrained in their proselytizing methods and resent the Government-general's policies of rule.

Usami then makes an interesting comparison of this "resentment" with that experience by the United States in the process of colonizing the Philippines.

Generally, when national fortunes change and conditions are transformed, those who had authority fear losing that authority as a result of the reforms [that are made] and do not know how to adapt their attitudes to the new national circumstances. It is possible in any situation to dream in vain of bygone days and [therefore] resent the new regime. Recently, when America annexed the Philippines, the Catholics who had previously ruled over the religious sphere there resented America's assimilationist policy and [therefore] did not know how to move into the new age. It is a well-known fact and an excellent example that, as a result, there were eventually those in that land who called for the expulsion of Catholicism.[91]

Usami acknowledged, however, that moral religions like Christianity were "supremely necessary" (*kiwamete hitsuyō*) to the civilizing process of "advancing Korean welfare," "destroying superstition" and "establishing a healthy faith." "But," he concluded, "for Koreans to have Christianity proselytized to them by foreigners who do not know Japan's national circumstances and do not understand Japanese nationality may have harmful effects between the two of them." With this logic, Usami could cast the government-general as a paternalist figure protecting both Korean Christianity and the Western missions.

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[90] Ohara Shinzō, "Chōsen no Genjō to Kyōka Mondai," in Wataze Tsunekichi ed., *Hantō Dōhō no Tame ni* (Tokyo: Wataze Tsunekichi, 1917) 27-28

[91] Usami Katsuo, "Nihon Kumiai Kirisuto Kyōkai no Chōsen Dendō ni Tsukite," in ibid., 20

Ebina, as we have seen, produced the discursive precondition for the Congregationalist Church's missions to Korea through a highly original (if ultimately implausible) argument constructing Korea as a spiritual periphery completing the development of logos in the Japanese empire. Yet he was only able to maintain this argument insofar as he kept it strictly temporal and abstract, and remained uninterested in the actual praxis his church adopted in cooperating with the government-general. Wataze, on the other hand, is perhaps best described as a rank-and-file intellectual. But this is precisely why he fit the context of colonial Korea under military rule so well. Having no intellectual autonomy of his own to protect, Wataze ably adapted Ebina's theology to the ideological requirements of the colonial state in Korea.

In so doing, Wataze brought himself into remarkably close harmony with Tokutomi's position that the need for Japanese Protestant missions in Korea was to contain the spread of Western Christianity there. This is an important point because, as we shall see in a later chapter, Tokutomi played a key role in shaping the culture of military rule as owner and editor of *Maeil sinbo*, the only Korean language newspaper permitted to print during this period. It would be a mistake, therefore, to say that Wataze's argument was solely derived from Ebina's theology. At a deeper, less explicit level, I would argue that Wataze also tapped into the patrilineal (emperor-centric) terms through which the Korean Government-general envisioned the basis of their political legitimacy in Korea. This is a more difficult hypothesis to demonstrate and, as it is the subject of the next chapter, I will only attempt to suggest it here. Here I specifically have in mind Wataze's claim in *The Urgent Task* that Japan's political legitimacy in Korea was perpetually under threat by "misunderstandings." Let us compare this claim with that of an early editorial from *Maeil sinbo* below:

> Presently, as the annexation's moral suasion (*kyohwa*) spreads in due course, [we are still] faced with a time when the people's sentiments are still in disarray…Japan and Korea have been united and so the Japanese are the Emperor's people and the Koreans are the Emperor's people. When [his] heavenly virtuous influence rains down equally [upon the Japanese and Korean people], there is absolutely no reason for it to be thick there yet thin here. He who see himself as [one with] the Japanese people will grasp things correctly…
> Because the Japanese, as a people, received the imperial influence first, they have already entered the realm of wealth and power. On the day that Korea fully receives this moral instruction, [we] will also be as wealthy and powerful as the Japanese…
> There [exist] terrible misunderstandings [among the Korean people] …Speaking as a writer at a newspaper office, how can I silently observe my brethren's misunderstandings drive them over a pitfall?[92]

[92] Maeil sinbo (September 27, 1910)

The key difference separating this editorial from Wataze's argument is its explicit emphasis on the role of, not Japanese Christianity, but Japan's emperor in providing the basis for mutual understanding between the Japanese and Korean people.
As we shall see in the next chapter, complaints of misunderstandings that threatened to undermine Korea's governability were symptomatic of the kind of siege mentality through which the Korean government general's military bureaucrats viewed Christianity in Korea.

CHAPTER THREE
A COLONIAL STATE UNDER SIEGE?
YUN CH'IHO AND THE COLONIAL CONTEST OVER THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION UNDER MILITARY RULE

Introduction: The View from 1915

In February 1915, the Korean government-general declared an unexpected amnesty for six alleged authors of a plot to assassinate its Governor-General, Terauchi Masatake (1852-1919). In Korea's recent precolonial past, these "would-be" assassins had been some of the foremost figures from religion (Christianity), education and journalism. Their trial had lasted over a year and a half during which time they watched 116 other suspects tried and eventually acquitted. To what, then, did these prominent men now owe such merciful treatment? In a telegram wired to Foreign Minister Katō Takaaki (1860-1926), Terauchi attributed his decision to the fact that the crimes of the accused were, after all, motivated by "misunderstandings considering the purport of the annexation."[1]

"Misunderstandings" may seem like a bizarre and understated conclusion to draw concerning men once accused of perhaps the most serious political crime imaginable in colonial Korea. As I have suggested in the previous chapter, however, the constant invocation of "misunderstandings" threatening Korea's governability was symptomatic of the governor-general's perception that its political legitimacy depended upon Koreans' identification with the paternalistic benevolence associated with Japan's imperial house. For instance, Terauchi explained to Katō that the amnesty was granted to these men with the understanding that they committed their crimes having

> concluded that the people of Chosen would be suddenly plunged into misery by the annexation; they had concluded that the people of Chosen would suddenly be plunged into the misery by the annexation, and bursting with indignation at that turning-point in the fortunes of their country, the sought to incite their country to rebellion by creating disturbances and to obtain the sympathy of the world…and now that five years having elapsed since the annexation, the people are grateful for the Imperial benevolence and the aims of the new administration are fully carried out, it was deemed that the prisoners would not, if thew were released, again commit acts of insubordination.[2]

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[1] Kenneth M. Wells, *NewGod, New Nation: Protestants and Self-Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea, 1896-1937* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1990) 77

[2] Terauchi Masatake, Telegraph to Kato, Gaiko Shiryokan Archives, *Chosen ni okeru Kirisutokyotochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbosha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 4

To the Governor-General, then, that Koreans would resort to extreme measures because they had misunderstood Japan's imperial benevolence was conceivable, perhaps even commendable; that they could articulate a political position antithetical to such "benevolence" was apparently not. Terauchi seems to have felt that, five years into its administration, the government-general had now implemented the bureaucratic reforms necessary to communicate this benevolence to Koreans. In this sense, Terauchi's act of pardoning these men's political crimes also amounted to an elision of politics in Korea.

There were, of course, other motivations for granting the amnesty beyond this one. As Nagata Akifumi points out, Terauchi had taken notice of missionary campaigns to gain an amnesty for the preeminent Korean Protestant Yun Ch'iho—the lone Christian among the six "conspirators"—and thus recommended granting it hoping to preempt pressure from the newly elected Ōkuma cabinet.[3] What Terauchi's dissimulation perhaps suggests, then, is an awareness of military rule's inability to step beyond the bounds of its own political-cultural discourse. Intimate interaction with Christianity and an inability to cooperate with the Christian missions already embedded in Korean society brought the limitations of the Japanese empire into stark relief.

The timing of this amnesty, however, coincided with an important turning point in military rule. By 1915, the government-general could (and did) claim to have carried out most of its bureaucratic directives in Korea. This, after all, was the year in which the government-general commemorated the fifth year of its colonial rule in Korea with its Joint Advancement Exhibition (*kyōshinkai*/*kongchinhoe*), a three-month exhibition advertising to the world the material improvements the government-general had made there in just five years. These accomplishments arguably gave the government-general a sense of self-confidence that it now had the bureaucratic infrastructure in place to properly communicate Japan's imperial benevolence to the Korean colony. In this sense, Terauchi was not entirely disingenuous when he claimed that Korea had already advanced beyond the point of backsliding into misunderstanding.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the government-general also felt more capable of asserting itself ideologically. One month after Yun's amnesty had been granted, the government-general released a revised set of regulations for private schools in Korea. After five years of implementing a modern education system, the government-general announced that it had reached a turning point in its administration of Korea and would now extend to private schools the same government oversight applied to "government and public schools" in Korea. In the case of missionary schools, this primarily meant strictly enforcing the principle of exclusion of religion from "national education." But the government-general clearly intended by these regulations to absorb private education into

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[3] Nagata Akifumi, *Nihon no Chosen Tochi to Kokusai Kankei: Chosen Dokuritsu Undo to Amerika* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005) 63

its policy of assimilation in Korea; or, in its own words: "To cultivate national subjects who will inherit the state and thereby to plan for a sound and limitless state."[4] The government-general was here making good on a promise to apply Japan's Imperial Rescript on Education that it had made at the outset of its colonial rule in Korea. In its first Education Ordinance (1911), the government-general had announced its intention to "foster good and loyal national subjects based on the Education Rescript."[5] This now meant that the government-general would assume a direct role in reviewing and approving teachers engaged in general education at mission schools. The government-general was here asserting for the first time that it had a role to play in directing the affairs of private schools in the interests of insuring their conformity with "national education."

In order to give schools time to adjust, the government allowed for a grace period of ten years by which to bring all mission schools into conformity with the new regulations. But how realistic was it to expect foreign missionaries to submit to the norms of the Education Rescript? At the most, the government-general could demand the political obedience of these men, but not their political allegiance. The two acts discussed in this introduction, the amnesty granted Yun Ch'iho and the new regulation imposed on private schools, thus define succinctly the question that faced the government-general at the midpoint of military rule: How to extend its authority over the mission schools in Korea without provoking friction with the United States, the center of a globally integrated Christian evangelism during this period? Later in this chapter we shall see that Yun Ch'iho would play a key role as YMCA director in resolving this question. Here, however, let us turn our attention to the narrative thread that brought the government-general to this turning point in its attitude toward Korean Christianity.

A Colonial State Under Siege? An Overview of the Sinminhoe (Shinminkai) Incident, 1911-12

In introducing this chapter's premise, we have started at the conclusion of what was in fact a highly contentious and messy process. Let us now go back and outline the origins and development of this so-called assassination conspiracy. From late 1911 through the beginning of 1912, the government-general arrest and prosecution of hundreds of prominent Koreans, the majority of whom were Korean, for participation in an alleged plot to assassinate Korean Governor-General Terauchi Masatake by a secret nationalist society, the *Sinminhoe* (or New People's Society). The case made against these men may be summarized as follows: In December 1910, *Sinminhoe* members unsuccessfully

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[4] Ono Ken'ichi, *Chosen Kyoiku Mondai Kanken* (Keijo: Chosen Kyoikukai, 1936) 65
[5] ibid, 36

attempted to shoot the Governor-General upon his arrival at a railway station in Sŏnc'hŏn, North Pyŏngan to attend the opening ceremony of a rail bridge built over the Yalu River. This attempt was then allegedly followed up with another plot on Terauchi's life planned to take place in Ŭiju in October 1911, but was "discovered" by the police before it could be consummated. One of these men died under torture, 123 others were eventually arraigned and prosecuted. The accused were tried at the local court level in Seoul, which found 105 of them guilty and sentenced these men to prison terms ranging from five to ten years each. An appellate court in Taegu subsequently acquitted 99 of these men, sentencing only the aforementioned "masterminds" of the alleged plot. A retrial subsequently ordered by the Supreme Court again found these men guilty and sentenced them each to six years in prison. This decision was then appealed to the Supreme Court, which upheld the retrial verdict on October 9, 1913.

This was not the government-general's first allegation of an assassination plot against Terauchi. The origins of the *Sinminhoe* incident may be traced back to an earlier roundup of Korean Christians and nationalists in Anak, Hwanghae-do in November 1910 for conspiring to assassinate the Governor-General. But what was new about the *Sinminhoe* incident was that it made a secret nationalist organization responsible for all political violence in Korea. The *Sinminhoe* thesis provided the basis for a siege policy towards Korean Christianity. On this reading, Yun Ch'iho emerged as an evil genius responsible not only for the recent attempt on Terauchi's life, but also for the assassinations of Resident-General Itō Hirobumi and, even earlier, Durham Stevens, the American advisor to the Japanese protectorate in Korea.

Like most conspiracy theories, this one was based on a kernel of truth. During the protectorate period, there was in fact a *Sinminhoe* consisting of a loose affiliation of Korean private school educators and independence activists for the purposes of instilling the Korean people with the value of national autonomy existing roughly from 1908-10. Some of its members continued to advocate violent resistance to Japanese imperialism even after Korea's formal colonization in 1910. However, though Yun C'hiho was a member of this organization, its real leader was the nationalist An Ch'angho who, as discussed earlier, had returned to Korea from America in 1907 to help with the independence movement. *Sinminhoe* apparently dissolved after An opted to return to America after Korea's colonization.

In prosecuting this case, the government-general was not only prosecuting precolonial reminders of national autonomy, but also moving to replace the old cooperative relationship that had existed between the Western missionaries and the protectorate government (discussed in Chapter One) with one of clear political subordination. As the government-general would find out, however, interfering in missionary activities in colonial Korea was not a matter to be taken lightly; it was capable of generating much international tension (particularly with the United States) and raised

questions in the Anglo-American West as to Japan's qualifications as a modern empire. There were definite limits to how far the Christian missions could be subordinated under military rule.

These tensions were symptomatic of Japan's emergent position as the only non-Western, non-Christian imperial power among the modern empires, but were also a product of the dynamic spread of Protestantism in Korea following the Russo-Japanese War. To this extent, the dilemma of how to handle Christianity in Korea may be said to be the product of extrinsic factors. But the problem of how to reconcile Christianity with allegiance to a non-Christian nation (or empire) was, of course, hardly new; as we have just seen, the Imperial Rescript on Education, with it equation of patriotism with filial loyalty to Japan's emperor, played a key role in fixing the ideological boundaries within which Japanese Protestantism evolved. One might have expected, therefore, that the Japanese would have been past masters at bringing Korean Christianity into line with its definition of ideological orthodoxy. Instead, the government-general behaved as though it was a state under siege faced with a potentially ungovernable situation.

Kunitomo Naoyoshi: The Myth of Misunderstandings

To get a better understanding of the core motivations behind this siege mentality, there is no better place to start than with the police inspector responsible for making the suspects' arrests, Kunitomo Naoyoshi (1876-?). In a sense, Kunitomo was very literally the author of this "treasonous incident" (*futei jiken*). Over a lengthy 452-page police report, *Futei Jiken ni Yotte Mitaru Chōsenjin* ("The Koreans as Seen Through the Treason Incident"), Kunitomo expounded in great detail upon what he felt had been learned about the Korean "national psychology" (*minzoku shinri*) from what he called the latest assasination plot to surface amongst Korean nationalists. For Kunitomo, his "discovery" of the *Sinminhoe* (or *Shinminkai* in Japanese) came as something of a revelation. He had been arguing for the highly organized character of political violence since his role in a series of arrests of Korean nationalists and Christians made by the police in Anak, Hwanghae Province at the end of 1910. He therefore prefaced his report with a summary of the Anak incident by way of explaining that

> Although [these incidents] have occurred at different times and uncovered different perpetrators and therefore seem on the face of it to be unrelated, they belong to a common series. Not only are these two incidents interconnected, but in the future, although the place and people [involved be different, these incidents of treason will either be the same or similar in content. Although the perpetrators' methods differ, their source is the same.[6]

[6] Kunitomo Naoyoshi, "Futei Jiken ni yotte Mitaru Chosenjin," in Kang Cheon and Kita Hiroaki ed., *Hyakugonin Jiken no Shiryōshu, vol.4* (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1986), 14

What is most interesting about Kunitomo's text is that it is completely unconstrained by the norms of the Education Rescript. Unlike the Governor-General, Kunitomo held out no hope that the next generation in Korea could be assimilated through education. Instead, Kunitomo argued that what he called "civilization education" masked Koreans' fundamentally barbaric character, thus allowing declassed to masquerade as a nationalist movement. He thus concluded that "those who have received civilization education are more underdeveloped and cowardly than the hardheads raised on Confucianism."[7] Moreover, Kunitomo continued, "the conflict between civilization and barbarism in Korea should not be seen as the product of a transitional period that will pass easily, but rather it is correct to see the greater part of it as owing to the peculiar character of the Korean people."[8]

Predictably enough, Kunitomo's essentialization of the Korean character rested upon the idea of *jidai shugi* (the Japanese notion of Korea's cultural obsequiousness to stronger powers). But Kunitomo's conception of *jidai shugi* was antagonistic to that of a Congregationalist like Wataze, who saw *jidai shugi* as a condition of possibility for Koreans' assimilation with Japan. Kunitomo believed that the *Sinminhoe* interrogations had provided a far more concrete understanding of *jidai shugi* than had previously been available. Kunitomo tells his limited readership that, "Although it has been consistently public opinion that Koreans are [practitioners of] *jidai shugi,* it is yet to be known what the nature of *jidai shugi* is." The interrogations of Korean suspects in the *Sinminhoe* incident demonstrated that, while Japanese responded positively to kindness when being questioned, "in the case of Koreans, to the contrary, kind treatment posed an obstacle to [the interrogation's] progress, resulting from [their] position that those who give out kindness are easily overturned. This may be called *jidai shugi*."[9] In short, for Kunitomo, *jidai shugi* meant that Koreans only really understood power. It followed naturally from this premise that assimilation in Korea was impossible.

Evidently, then, Kunitomo could not have disagreed more with the government-general's position that education was the necessary means to secure the loyalties of Korea's next generation. Kunitomo could not have stated his thesis that educated Koreans were a mix of civilization and barbarism any more bluntly when he wrote that: "Giving education [to Koreans] is quite like putting a crown on [the head of] a monkey and will undoubtedly leave the nation with a great infirmity in later generations."[10] "The way to rule Koreans," Kunitomo insisted, "lies, in the beginning, first in subduing [them], then, having subdued [them], in overawing [them], and having overawed [them], in

[7] ibid., 179-80
[8] ibid., 179
[9] ibid., 187-88
[10] ibid., 180

consoling them…What is now called assimilation is a thing belonging to the future that ought to be spoken and not practiced."[11] When, then, would assimilationism finally have its time? According to Kunitomo, "assimilation" had to be postponed until Japanese colonial settlements had completely dismantled Korean society. "Now, he explained, " is solely the time of subduing Korea spiritually and of Japanese settlement. When the Japanese [population in Korea] exceeds one million, then for the first time will it be time to advocate assimilation based on overawing [power] and consolation."[12] For Kunitomo, then, "assimilation" became equivalent to annihilation.

Historians have typically attributed disingenuous motivations to Japan's prosecution of the *Sinminhoe* incident. Although this may well be true of the upper echelons of the government-general, there seems to be no dissimulation behind Kunitomo's thesis concerning Korean Christianity's role in the organized character of political violence in Korea. If Kunitomo's prosecution of Christianity had been cynical, he certainly would have had no reason to infer from his investigation as much as he did about the Korean character. And the fact that the impetus behind the *Sinminhoe* incident did not come from the top of the government-general hierachy is critical for understanding the siege mentality surrounding Korean Christianity during military rule. In an essay on Japanese militarism, Maruyama Masao has identified three political types that made up a "structure of irresponsibility" that characterized Japanese fascism.[13] These were the portable shrine (*mikoshi*), the official (*yakunin*) and the outlaw (*muhōsha* or *rōnin*). The portable shrine type, most definitively embodied by the figure of the Emperor, stood at the top of this hierarchy but was in fact an empty figurehead, or, to use Maruyama's words, "a mere robot." It was the officer who wielded the real power by claiming to "defend" the portable shrine's authority. At bottom, however, the outlaw, whose insubordinate activities always forced the other two types to action, consistently undermined this power. Maruyama allows that "these three types are not fixed and, concretely speaking, it is often the case that two or three are intermingled in one person." If we apply this typology of Japanese fascism to military rule, it should be clear that Kunitomo displays characteristics of both the official and the outlaw. As an official, Kunitomo prosecuted Korean Christianity in the name of defending the Governor-General (who might in this instance be thought of as a portable shrine type). But with respect to the *official ideology* of the government-general, Kunitomo behaved as an outlaw, sabotaging military rule's central conceit of assimilationism. Yet it was not the case, to paraphrase Maruyama, that Kunitomo had Terauchi "by the tail." Under the controlled circumstances of military

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[11] ibid., 194
[12] ibid., 195-96
[13] Maruyama Masao, "Gunkoku Shihaisha no Seishin Keitai," in *Gendai Seiji no Shisō to Kōdō* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1964), 129-30

rule, this relationship allowed the government-general to launch a frontal assault on the missions in Korea while still maintaining the appearance, however transparent, of a non-anti-Christian power.

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that Kunitomo would "disagree" with Terauchi's claim that political crimes in Korea were the result of "misunderstanding" Japan's benevolent intentions. In an earlier police report, written just after the Anak incident, *Futei Jiken ni Yotte Etaru Chosenjin no Sokumenkan* ("The Perspective Gained of the Koreans from the Treason Incident"), Kunitomo explained his skepticism about invoking misunderstandings to explain away political unrest in Korea:

> That there exist misunderstandings in the world is something that people encounter daily and is unworthy of suspicion. And if all Koreans were laboring under a misunderstanding, we would only to do our best at explaining ourselves and tirelessly provide them with guidance and it would naturally follow that these misunderstandings would dissolve over time. But can we leap to the conclusion that the usual so-called misunderstandings are really misunderstandings? To state my own view frankly, often in my impressions of interacting with Koreans and during the interrogations what has been viewed as these so-called misunderstandings [*gokai*] are merely a bit of rhetoric and in fact, must even be seen to be willful misconstructions [*kyokkai*].[14]

But what exactly makes the difference between a "misunderstanding" and a "misconstruction"? Kunitomo's answer has to do with class relations.

> In Korea, of course, there is a gap between the knowledge amongst much of the people. Amongst the lower class, most labor under misunderstanding. But what I am calling willful misconstructions refers to the words and actions of the middle class and above and not the lower classes… Amongst the Koreans today, the middle class and above those that have acquire a little of the new learning work at distorting the government-general's rule and thereby drive [the lower classes] into misunderstandings by dedicating themselves to spreading rumors.[15]

This invocation of class determinism effectively gave the lie to the idea of a benevolent bond uniting Koreans with Japan's imperial house. From this perspective, even pro-Japanese elements such as the Korean members of the Japan's Congregationalist Church appeared suspect. He notes, for example, that "actually there has been a flux of [Korean believers] pretending to secede from American-run Christianity in order to join Japanese-run Christianity hoping to be the bug in the lion's body" (i.e. hoping to undermine Japanese authority from within).[16] From Kunitomo's perspective, pro-Japanese

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[14] Kunitomo, *Futei Jiken ni yotte Etaru Chosenjin no Sokumenkan* (n.d.), Gaikō Shiryōkan Archive, *Futei Dantai-Chōsenjin no bu Zainaichi*, File number 4-3-2-2-1-4, 2

[15] ibid.

[16] Kunitomo Naoyoshi, *Futei Jiken ni yotte Mitaru Chosenjin*, 228

Congregationalism could only further undermine Japanese authority by furthering the argument for parity with the Japanese. Kunitomo was thus antagonistic not just to Korean Christianity, but also to Japanese Congregationalists, who he seems to have viewed as unwelcome outsiders. Kunitomo accused the Keijō YMCA's Congregationalist director, Niwa Seijirō, of naïvely advocating assimilation despite being unfamiliar with the Korean language and thus being unaware of the independence activities that occurred right under his nose.[17]

In making these assertions, Kunitomo was out likely of step with the overall position of military rule. The Congregationalist Church's presence in Korea was a key component of the government-general's assimilationist policy. But Kunitomo's most dangerous transgression was by far his open accusations that the foreign missionaries in Korea were complicit in the assassination plot against the Governor-general.

> The source of Korean anti-Japanese thought is the American missionaries and the cause of Christianity's prosperity in Korea also lies here…[so that] in the future, depending on the policy of the Government-general towards Americans and towards Christianity, Koreans will attempt to spread independence thought (*dokuritsu shiso*) with [the backing of] one hundred million Americans and increasingly promote the trend towards prosperity for Christianity until [the trend] can no longer be broken… There are 24 Americans involved in the current incident. Although during vacations while they were back in America so that perhaps they would have been unable to involve themselves. But even if they were unable to participate on these few occasions, it is no mistake to see that they have been in Korea and have been for a long time now plotting (*kimyaku o toshioritaru*) with the conspirators.[18]

These allegations, which were based on the "confessions" Kunitomo extracted from his suspects, could not be wished away so easily by the appellate court. The confessions, which were marred by a strong suspicion of torture, contained detailed allegations of missionary involvement in the attempt on Terauchi's life. When they came out in court, they placed the government-general in the awkward position of claiming that, while the allegations of missionary involvement were false, the confessions of an assassination plot were nevertheless true. As we shall see below, this response was not received well by the missionary community or by public opinion in the United States.

The Sinminhoe Incident in an International Context

The key result of the *Sinminhoe* incident was to expose the stark incompatibility of the government-general's interpretation of how the Education Rescript applied to Korea and

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[17] ibid., 372, 374
[18] ibid., 46

the missionaries' understanding of their role on the peninsula. The correspondence between Korea's missionary leadership and the Governor-General illustrates well the gulf dividing their expectations. The first letter sent by the missionary leadership, signed by Samuel A. Moffett, Norman C. Whittemore, O.R. Avison, George J. McCune and C.E. Sharp, requested an interview with the Governor-General to voice their concerns. These concerns consisted principally in addressing "the rumor that is current that the government believes that the Christian Chuch is honeycombed by sedition," the upstanding character of the accused, "many of…whom we have had reason to have the utmost confidence, and have had the reputation in their own communities of being upstanding and peaceful citizens," and their shock at the persistent rumors of torture.

What the signatories to this letter were hoping was to separate the Governor-General's position from that of anti-Christian police inspectors like Kunitomo. The letter suggests Terauchi's ignorance of the use of torture in police interrogations and takes the opportunity to remind the Governor-General of the cooperative interest between mission and government in modernizing Korea. They informed the Governor-General that they wrote

> not only as missionaries interested in the welfare of the Church but also as men interested in the maintenance of the most helpful and peaceful conditions in the economic and social development of the people of Chosen in their new relationship to the government of the Empire of Japan. We believe that our very close relationship to the people in general and our still more intimate knowledge of the people of the Church enables us to place before your Excellency a view of present conditions which it may not be possible for you to obtain from any other source, especially so as we believe that the suspicion of the church said to be entertained by many government officials referred to above is unfounded…We feel it is very important that Your Excellency should grasp this fact fully and be made aware of what we know to be true that the position taken by the Church leaders has been one of the influential factors which have contributed to the successful carrying out of the policy of Your Excellency for the pacification of the country.[19]

The missionaries were here raising a salient point: How could the government-general ensure peace and stability in Korea without maintaining a cooperative relationship with the Christian missions there?

Terauchi's response to this implied question was to argue the necessary separation of religion and politics. "The principle that the proper relationship between politics and religion should in no-wise be mixed up, and always kept separate from each other," he explained, "has been invariably maintained not only by myself but also by my

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[19] Avison letter to Komatsu, Gaikō Shiryōkan Archives, *Chōsen ni okeru Kirisutokyōtochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbōsha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 1

predecessors. The object of both is to promote the welfare of the people in Korea, but each has a different way from the other and must not go across." While Terauchi expressed his gratitude that the Christian missions were doing their utmost to caution obedience to the Korean people, he nevertheless observed:

> It is so much more surprising therefore that at the time when we believe that political agitation among non-Christian people has almost been pacified, an untoward plot has been found among the Koreans connected directly or indirectly with the Church. Of fifty persons who have already been transferred to the Public Prosecutor's Office by the police authorities, forty-three belong to the Presbyterian Church, four to other denominations, while only remaining three are non-Christians according to their own declaration. Principal plotters are teachers and students of Mission schools.

Unlike Kunitomo's police report, Terauchi's reply to Korea's missionary leadership fit neatly within the ideological limits of the Education Rescript. The implication here is not that, as in Kunitomo's account, Christianity had acted as a cover for subversive activities, but that its incorporation in education had had political consequences beyond the missionaries' control. Lest there be any misunderstanding, Terauchi continued to drive this point home: "In view of the many teachers and students of the schools established by the Christian Mission being involved in the most sinister plan, the responsible leaders of the Mission appear to have failed in this particular instance to duly exert their influence to bring them to senses [sic] in time." Although the language is veiled, one can recognize here a clear indictment of the Christian missions as a threat to maintaining the peace in the Korean colony.

Clearly, the missionaries and the Governor General were talking past each other and in terms of discourses that were mutually incompatible. It is not difficult to imagine the bewilderment that the missionary leadership, accustomed to freer communication with Ito Hirobumi's protectorate government, must have felt reading Terauchi's ideology-laden response. According to the Korean YMCA leadership, P.L. Gillette and R.L. Gerdine, "The Governor General's written reply was a distinct disappointment and shows that the effect of that communication was to accentuate the feeling of opposition and resentment which we believe is held by the officials toward the Christian movement."[20] For the time being, however, this dissonance remained self-contained. It took the *Sinminhoe* incident's emergence as a news story in the United States to fully expose that the relationship between the Christian mission and the government-general had been altered permanently.

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[20] R.L. Gerdine and P.L. Gillete, Letter to Union Theological Seminary (n.d.), Gaikō Shiryōkan Archives, *Chōsen ni okeru Kirisutokyōtochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbōsha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 2

The New York Herald and the Sinminhoe Trial

On February 12,1912, the New York Herald informed its readers of news that Rev. Dr. Arthur J. Brown, president of the Presbyterian Board of Missions in New York would respond to "charges from scores of American missionaries in Northern Corea that Japan is making efforts to stamp out Christianity by torturing and imprisoning converts," by going to Washington tomorrow and make an appeal to President Taft for this government's interference." The Herald got its sources for this story not from the Board of Foreign Missions, but mostly from the private letters of missionaries active in Korea. And unlike missionary leaders in either Korea or New York, the Herald was not shy about airing missionary suspicions either of anti-Christian attitudes or the practice of torture in Korea. The newspaper reported that "it is charged in the letters received in this city [that] the Japanese have determined to wipe out Christianity in the northern end of the Corean peninsula" and "that converts are burned with hot irons and hung up by the thumbs under the pretence that the authorities want to obtain confessions concerning this plot to kill the Governor General." [21]

Whatever humanitarian concern was being paid to Korean Christians under Japanese rule, this was significantly bolstered by concern for the welfare of the American missionaries in Korea. "There are," the Herald reminded its readers, "between three and four hundred missionaries in Corea, most of whom are under the boards of foreign missions of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches." And when it came to Japanese interference in the closing of missionary schools, the Herald suggested that there was a broader question of American sovereignty at stake.

Such unsolicited publicity was not necessarily received happily by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York, who feared damaging their relationship with the Government-general. In a statement issued to the press on February 16, Brown denied asking the White House to take action against the Japanese empire. "I regret," he wrote, "the construction that has been placed on my trip to Washington. I gave out no information regarding the Japanese arrests of Christians or my intention in going to Washington. Quite apart from the question whether our Government would likely to intervene between the Government of Japan and its Korean subjects, we do not deem it wise to ask our Government to act in a matter which at is present stage should be taken up with the Japanese themselves." Far from visiting the White House, then, "I made no attempt to visit President Taft but went directly to the Japanese Embassy and talked over the matter in the freedom of personal conversation with Mr. Masanao Hanihara, First Secretary and Charge D'Affaires who, in the absence of the Ambassador, is in charge." Brown also did his best to downplay the accusations of torture, explaining that, "as a

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[21] Cruelties in Corea Stir Churchmen, *New York Herald* (February 12, 1912)

friend and student of Japan for many years," he was unwilling to believe that the Japanese government had sanctioned the "atrocities [that] its gendarmes are reported to have committed in Korea."[22] As of February, then, mission leaders in New York were still making every effort to preserve their relationship with the Government-general by communicating only with the Japanese embassy in Washington.

Despite such caution, however, a report made that an American missionary by the name of George Erckmann (later revealed to be Sŏnch'ŏn missionary school director, George McCune) had been arrested refocused attention on the *Sinminhoe* incident. While other reportage may have struck Japan's Foreign Ministry as mere carping, this story apparently caught their attention. A report from Consulate Proxy Ōta Tamekichi to Foreign Minister Uchida Kōsai (1865-1936) reads:

> A telegram from Tokyo concerning the arrest of an American missionary George Erckmann has appeared in the February 21 edition of an evening edition newspaper. In light of the attention the Tokyo Daily News Herald is giving this incident, there is a danger that this telegram will produce regrettable results. We therefore request that considerations be made to allay the suspicions in public opinion.[23]

This in turned elicited a response from Terauchi who, also reporting to Uchida, claimed that "recently foreign newspapers such as the Kobe Chronicle and the Yokohama Herald have printed baseless and slanderous articles maliciously misrepresenting the steps taken by our colonial officials. Furthermore, one or two Japanese newspapers have [printed] baseless articles as telegrammed reports from New York. These are suspected of being based on reporting by missionaries who have an interested relationship [to this case]. Furthermore, matters such as the arrest of a missionary have no basis [in fact] whatsoever and are likely inconsistencies based on somebody's imagination."[24] Clearly, the Foreign Ministry and government-general both understood the need to avoid the perception that American missionaries had been implicated in the case.

What likely prevented the *Sinminhoe* incident from becoming a full-blown news story in the American press was the reluctance of the Presbyterian Mission Board to make their correspondence with the government-general public. At the end of May,

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[22] Arthur J. Brown, "Statement Given Newspapers: The Japanese Arrest of Koreans, Gaiko Shiryokan Archives, *Chosen ni okeru Kirisutokyotochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbosha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 1

[23] Ota to Uchida, February 22, 1912, Gaiko Shiryokan Archives, *Chosen ni okeru Kirisutokyotochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbosha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 1

[24] Terauchi to Uchida, February 25, 1912, Gaiko Shiryokan Archives, *Chosen ni okeru Kirisutokyotochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbosha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 1

however, in apparent frustration with the government-general, the Board took this final step. On June 6, the New York Times reported:

The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions accuses the Japanese authorities in Korea of arresting and torturing native converts to Christianity on false charges of conspiring to murder Governor General Terauchi. Nolan R. Best, editor of The Continent, a Presbyterian newspaper, said yesterday that these outrages have been going on for more than a year, but that the Board of Missions kept quiet in the belief that it could adjust the trouble and get justice for the prisoners. Efforts in this direction having failed, it was determined to make the story public.[25]

This significant act of publicizing its correspondence with the government-general may be read as the symbolic acknowledgement that the *Sinminhoe* incident had effectively demolished the old relationship between the Christian missions in Korea and the protectorate government run by Itō Hirobumi. Let us now turn our attention to how the *Sinminhoe* trial played out as a news story in the United States.

The Sinminhoe Trial in the United States

Yun Ch'iho's fame within the missionary community and connections to the United States attracted much attention to the trial. Just before the Keijō trial began in June, 1912, two senators from Georgia, Augustus O. Bacon and Hoke Smith, representing a state where Yun held many connections in religious and educational circles, and one senator from Florida, Nathan P. Bryan, a classmate of Yun's from his student days at Vanderbilt University, called upon the Japanese ambassador to the United States, Chinda Sutemi, to explain their opinion that a man like Yun Ch'iho could not possibly be involved in an assassination conspiracy.[26] Both inside and outside the court, then, Yun had become a sign of the *Sinminhoe* trial's anti-Christian character. As Gillette and Gerdine wrote:

The case taken in itself irresistibly suggests that the prosecution is really against the Christian movement. Mr. Yun is the most distinguished Christian in Korea. Not only his prominence but his excellent Christian character and active Christian service make him a man of powerful influence. To discredit him would be worth much to the cause of those who oppose the Christian movement. To dispose of him would be a demonstration that the police bureau can with impunity handle the man with greatest influence among the Christians.[27]

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[25] "Japanese Torture Korean Christians," *New York Times* (6 June 1912)
[26] Sutemi to Uchida, June 5, 1912, Gaiko Shiryokan Archives, *Chosen ni okeru Kirisutokyotochu yori Shikaku oyobi Inbosha Zokushutsu Ikken,* File number 4-3-2-9, 1
[27] J.L. Gerdine and P.L. Gillette, Letter to Union Theological Seminary

It was, of course, the confessions of the accused, which implicated American missionaries in the conspiracy, that really drew attention to the trial. A July 22 article from the Washington Post cites concern from several senators and representatives and suggesting that "it would not be considered an unfriendly act" for the State Department "to direct the attention of the Japanese government to the reports that American citizens under the jurisdiction of that country were being denied equal protection of the laws."[28] By the end of July the *Sinminhoe* incident competed with the Meiji emperor's passing for national attention on the front and second pages of the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Throughout all of this, many missionaries within the colony attempted to play down the tensions surrounding the court trial. The pro-Japanese M.C. Harris stated in interview that: "If the name of the American missionaries have been mentioned in such confessions as those described, I am confident that the court before which the entire affair is now being adjudicated will attach little or no importance to such evidence… If it will reassure the people of America, I am glad to say that I feel an absolute confidence in the fairmindedness and judicial integrity of the members of that Japanese court as I should feel in the equity of the Supreme Court of the State of New York of that of the United States." Horace Underwood took the more neutral position of attributing the arrests not to any official anti-Christian policy, but to police paranoia.

My own belief is that the Central Government in Japan has not started with the idea of instituting persecution of Christians, local officials in different parts of the land being jealous of the influence of the missionaries and the strength of the Christian Church, being suspicious of every move that was made by church or by the Missionaries, being absolutely unable to conceive of any reason who natives should join a foreign church, as the call it, unless there were some other ulterior motive, have in part concocted and have in part been misled by their suspicions and have reported to the Central Government that such a plot existed. I feel absolutely convinced that if a fair public trial is given the truth will come out and the missionaries and the leading Christians will be vindicated.

But the gulf dividing the expectations of the Christian missions and the government-general had clearly been exposed. This is perhaps best reflected in Gillette and Gerdine's letter which offered scathing criticisms not only of the trial, but the government-general's attempts to absorb the Korean Christian movement altogether.

The Japanese and Koreans, though now under one government, absolutely differ in all these particulars. An (*sic*) union of the Korean Christian movement with that of Japan would be

[28] "U.S. Eyes on Korea," *Washington Post* (22 July 1912)

artificial. Its motive so far as Korean Christians and missionaries can see, could only be political and hence its influence would only be harmful. We confidently affirm that the Korean church can only do its work by maintaining the separate identity of the Korean Christian movement.[29]

Ironically, Gillette and Gerdine would soon be transferred out of Korea as a result of a new movement, the *Yusinhoe* (*Ishinkai* or "Restoration Society") amongst Korean Congregationalists to force an amalgamation of the Korean and Japanese YMCAs. In a later communication, Gillette makes clear his feeling that demands for their transfer represented retaliation for their initial letter criticizing the government-general.

In conjunction with the president of the Seoul Association the Rev. J.L. Gerdine, I wrote a letter which was intended to inform leading men in Europe and America with the status of affairs. This letter was not written until after the guilt of the accused was publicly announced by the Government newspapers although the Court had not as yet convened. Our letter was supposed to be a private communication but it was published during the trial by a well meaning but ill advised friend. After its publication this letter was translated into Japanese and scattered among the Government officials in Korea and Japan. It aroused their antagonism even though the Government practically endorsed it by releasing the prisoners.[30]

As we have seen, during the *Sinminhoe* incident, Korean Congregationalists were one of the objects of the siege on Korean Christianity. During the *Yusinhoe* incident, however, we shall see that they became the protagonists of this siege mentality.

The Yusinhoe Incident, 1913; or Kim In's Revolt

On January 28, 1913, *Maeil sinbo* introduced its readers to a "reform" association within the YMCA called the *Yusinhoe* (or *Ishinkai*/Restoration Society). The article tells us that the *Yusinhoe* is made up of three movements currently being discussed among YMCA members. First was the movement to "correct" the YMCA's "subordinate position" to the Chinese YMCA in Shanghai. Second was the movement to make the YMCA autonomous from American missionaries by "organizing a leadership entirely made up entirely of Koreans and placing American officers in advisory positions." Finally, the article references a third movement to enter in association with the Japanese YMCA in Tokyo and, through contact and mutual cooperation with the mainland's YMCAs to

[29] R.L Gerdine and P.L Gillette
[30] Philip L. Gillette, "Japan-Korean: Gillett's Resignation," July 24, 1913, National Councils of YMCAs in Japan Archive

strive towards the enlightenment of Korea's youth.[31] These, then, were the avowed purposes of the *Yusinhoe*. Let us now look at the origins of this group's formation.

The *Yusinhoe* was formed sometime towards the end of 1912 by the Hwangsŏng YMCA's Vice-General Secretary Kim In, an influential if shadowy figure who was also a member of the visitation party of Korean Christians sent to Tokyo in 1911. Little is known about Kim's background, but he appears to have studied abroad in Japan and was one of the members of the Independence Club (discussed in Chapter One) to have converted in prison after the political suppression of that group in 1899. In addition to cultivating good relationships between the YMCA and Itō Hirobumi, he was also responsible for securing financial contrbutions to the YMCA, including, in 1907, an annual contribution of 10,000 yen that was to become an object of much controversy during the *Yusinhoe* incident.[32] Lack of biographical documentation of Kim's life makes it easy to paint him into the stereotypical role of the co-opted collaborator with colonial authority. Although in Kim In's case this characterization does not seem entirely unjustified, as I will attempt to argue below, it is important to observe that his actions were also an organic expression of palpable discontent among Korean Christians with the governance of the Western missions.

The Korean YMCA's first act of defense against the *Yusinhoe* came on February 21 when its board of directors moved immediately to relieve Kim of his duties Vice-General Secretary. In his letter to the Board of YMCAs, Gillett suggests that discontentment with Kim had taken on a longstanding and personal character. Gillett explained the decision to dismiss Kim In thusly: "An Association employee who was known to be receiving funds from Government officials for forwarding projects which were contrary to the legitimate plans of the Ass'n management, and who was entirely out of harmony with the Association, was discharged at my suggestion by the Board of Directors."[33] The irony of this rationale for dismissing Kim In was, of course, that it was likely because of his close relationships to colonial authority that he rose so quickly during the protectorate period in the ranks of the YMCA's governance. Kim's close connection to high-ranking officials under the Korean protectorate such as Yi Wanyong were clearly seen at the time as a plus by the YMCA leadership. Gillette suggests as much in his discussion of the controversial government-general loan to the YMCA.

One of the reasons the Japanese officials have demanded my resignation is that I have not been subservient to them in the way they think a man should be who has been receiving ten thousand yen a year from Government funds. This was granted <u>six years ago</u> at our solicitation and under

[31] Maeil sinbo (28 January 1913)
[32] Kim Yonghui, *Chwaong Yun Ch'iho Sonsaeng Yakchon*, (Seoul: Chwaong Yun Ch'iho Munhwa Saop Wiwonhoe, 1999) 272-74
[33] P.L. Gillette

the modern and broad minded administration of Prince Ito there was no trouble. We followed our own will in the conduct of the organization. Since Ito's death, however, there has been a pronounced change in the type of government that prevails in Korea and to a lesser extent in Japan itself. The military party is in control, partially in Japan, and absolutely in Korea.[34]

We need not share Gillet's sympathetic view of Itō as an enlightened ally of Christianity in Korea in order to acknowledge the near-180° turnaround in the orientation of mission-government relations since Korea's protectorate period. Rather than symbolizing the partnership between the missionaries and Japan in modernizing Korea, the Government-general's annual contribution of 10,000 yen to the YMCA now represented the Association's subservience to the colonial government in that same project.

Given Kim's close ties to colonial authority, it is plausible that he may have viewed the *Yusinhoe* as a means to replace Gillette as YMCA director. It is also quite possible that other *Yusinhoe* members had similarly self-interested motives in a Japanese-Korean YMCA amalgamation. Kim In's nearly full-page submission to *Maeil sinbo* printed on its front page on March 14, 1913. Kim explains here that, although the *Yusinhoe* had been formed at the end of last year to take advantage of meetings in Peking to end the affiliation between the Chinese and Korean YMCAs, discontent with missionary governance went back much further. For this reason, Kim explains, "*Yusinhoe* was not established on any particular day, but its origins go far back" to the establishment of the Hwangsŏng YMCA in 1903. Kim complains that Gillette and other missionaries consistently used the Hwangsŏng YMCA's membership in the International Committee of YMCAs as a means of excluding Koreans from participating in the Association's governance. In particular, Kim cites three instances in 1906, 1909 and 1911 in which Korean YMCA members attempted to gain more transparency from the Christian mission concerning the YMCA's constitution and budget. Kim notes that it was his participation in the visitation party to the YMCAs in Japan and the "completeness of their institutions" (*chedo ŭi wanbi*) that inspired him to form the *Yusinhoe* to assert the Korean YMCA's autonomy from the western missions.[35]

It is, of course, dangerous here to accept Kim's account uncritically, coming as it does as an apologia for the *Yusinhoe*. We may find a somewhat more reflective (if not disinterested) formulation of this viewpoint in Ebina Danjō's writings for *Shinjin* at the time of the *Yusinhoe* incident.

The Korean YMCA has long been in the practice of not accepting funds from foreign countries and has entirely maintained its self-sufficiency. Its membership has reached the large number of 1,500. And they say that their dues-paying membership reaches the also large number of 300.

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[34] ibid.
[35] Kim In, "Ch'ŏngnyŏnhoe ŭi Hwaksin e dae hae sŏ," *Maeil sinbo* (14 March 1913)

And as these [members] provide an annual 30,000 won to supplement [the YMCA], they must not be underestimated. But if you ask who holds the YMCA's governance (*shihaiken*) in their hands, needless to say, it is the foreign missionaries. There is one general director on the Korean side, but sovereignty lies entirely in the hands of the foreign missionaries. This is why its character is so different from that of the Japanese YMCA. The Japanese YMCA has brought its politics into Japanese hands while still receiving funding from foreign countries. By contrast, the Korean YMCA has supplied its own funding from its own people while entrusting its politics to foreign missionaries and board members of foreign YMCAs. At first glance, this is a difficult fact to comprehend, but fundamentally it indicates a lack of knowledge and ability. But since last year's visitation party, the spirit and action of the Japanese have inspired Koreans.[36]

In this passage, Ebina more or less echoes Kim's opinion that the conflict within the YMCA stemmed from the contrast between its economic autonomy and its lack of political autonomy from the Western missions. But he also acknowledges that the preponderance of missionary influence over the YMCA's affairs in Korea was not due to missionary highhandedness but to "a lack of knowledge and ability" on the part of Korean Christians. Ebina felt, however, that amalgamation with the Japanese YMCA would complete the Korean YMCA's struggle for autonomy. But as we have seen in the previous chapter, Ebina also saw Korea as a spiritual periphery completing the Japanese empire's Christianization and thus was also careful to emphasize that that the Korean YMCA had to cultivate its own autonomy become a genuinely autonomous institution in its own right. He thus added:

There is also, I think, no necessity to substitute Japanese for foreign missionaries in the role of guardians [over the Korean YMCA]. This is what the Japanese must be most careful of. Because the missionaries have felt protective (*rōbashin o idaki)* [of Koreans] and for so long played the role of guardian, they are now suddenly surprised and painfully chagrined to see Korean ambition. This is a point the Japanese must learn a lot from. What we wish for is that every director seat and the chairmanship will be returned to the Koreans and that, for the time being, Japanese and foreign missionaries serve as advisers. Because they are a self-sufficient group, before long the [Korean YMCA] will no longer need advisers and grandly maintain an independent and self-governing infrastructure.[37]

Note here that this critical perspective is entirely absent from Kim's submission to *Maeil sinbo*. Kim speaks here neither of contributing to Japan's Christianization nor of preserving Korean Christianity's spiritual autonomy from Japan. In this sense, Kim's defense of the *Yusinhoe* resembles much more closely Wataze's subaltern discourse on

[36] Ebina Danjō, "Chōsen Chūo Kirisutokyō Seinenkai," in Shinjin (May 1913) 5-6
[37] ibid.

autonomy, emphasizing self-rule for the YMCA only with respect to the Western missions in Korea and thus in terms fully appropriable by the government-general. This is an important point because, as we shall see below, the resolution of the *Yusinhoe* incident revealed the limits to how far such a subaltern discourse could be imposed on Korean Christianity and the Western missions.

Resolving the Yusinhoe Incident: J.R. Mott and the Limits of YMCA Intervention

The timing of the *Yusinhoe* was not politically innocent. It coincided with the arrival of J.R. Mott in Korea as part of the Continuation Committee of 1912-13, series of regional conferences held in twenty-one Asian countries with the purpose of continuing the work of the Edinburgh Conference. The Continuation Committee traveled east across Asia, arriving last in Korea and Japan. In both countries, the arrival of J.R. Mott raised hopes that the Committee would give Japanese and Koreans greater autonomy in determining the YMCA's governance. The *Yusinhoe* was part of this reaction. A January 9 article printed in the Japanese Congregationalist Church newspaper, *Kirisutokyō Sekai*, conspicuous in providing the first reporting (in advance even of *Maeil sinbo*) on the *Yusinhoe*'s activities, observed that the final resolution of the conflict "may have to await Dr. Mott's arrival in Korea."[38] When Mott finally did arrive in Korea in March, the *Yusinhoe*'s president, Sa Ilhwan, wrote a letter to Mott entreating his intervention in the drafting of a new constitution for the Korean YMCA. Sa's specific requests to Mott were fourfold: 1) That the International Committee of YMCAs take no role in either approving or, "in case of disagreement between the Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors," interpreting this new constitution; 2) that the Korean YMCA be permitted to join the Japanese YMCA; 3) that a new board of directors be elected immediately after the new constitution is adopted; 4) and finally, that Kim In be reinstated to his former position at the YMCA.[39]

But Sa's letter was likely superfluous with respect to actually resolving the *Yusinhoe* conflict. At least as early as 1911, Mott had already noted that following Korea's colonization it would now be necessary to remove the Korean YMCA from its association with the Chinese and Hong Kong YMCAs and suggested establishing an independent board of directors made up in thirds of Western, Korean and Japanese members. As the equally charismatic and pragmatic founder of the ecumenical movement, J.R. Mott was uniquely positioned to use the YMCA's global authority to transcend the local interests of the Japanese and Korean YMCAs. The revised

[38] "Chōsen Seinenkai Mondai," *Kirisutokyō Sekai* (9 January 1913) in Ji Myŏnggwan and Ogawa Keiji eds., Nikkan Kirisutokyō Kankeishi Shiryō (Tokyo: Shinkyo Shuppansha, 1984) 193-94

[39] Sa to Mott, March 25, 1913, Kautz Family YMCA Archives

constitution, which was ratified in Tokyo on April 12, 1912, struck a compromise by defining the Korean YMCA as an "autonomous" institution with dual affiliations to the Japanese National YMCA Committee and the International Committee of YMCAs. On the same day, "Terms of Affiliation" between the Japanese and Korean YMCAs were agreed upon and signed by Ibuka Kajinosuke, Nitobe Inazō, Sasao Kumetaro, Motoda Sakunosuke, H.H. Underwood, O.R. Avison, Yi Sangche, Nam Kungŏk and Shin Hŭngu with J.R. Mott acting as witness.[40]

This was clearly an ambiguous resolution to the *Yusinhoe* conflict. How much would "autonomy" be worth for the Korean YMCA in the event of another conflict? Once "freed" from the governance of the General Committee of China, Korea and Hong Kong, what protections could be guaranteed to the Korean YMCA against further interference from colonial authority? The Korean YMCA and its missionary leadership would be faced with these questions almost immediately at an upcoming board of directors' election scheduled at their annual Association meeting. This was not a situation they had expected to face and there was much uncertainty as to whether their Korean membership could give them the votes necessary to counter those of the *Yusinhoe*. A letter from FM Brockman to Mott explains in worried tones:

> The situation is even more grave (*sic*) than I realized when I had the talk with you on the train. A study of the active membership revealed that in addition to the foreign membership we had only fifty-six Koreans whose membership was less than six months in arrears; on the other hand, the so called Reform Society had paid the membership fees of forty church members who would have had the power of voting in the Association Annual Meeting had it not been for the fact that among their number were some of immoral character which in fact enabled us to return the entire list of candidates to the memberships Committee for revision. We are now hoping that we shall be able to hold out this list until after the Annual meeting of June 3. This, however, is very doubtful, since a number of these men paid their membership fee as far back as January.[41]

Yet the election results turned out far better than Brockman had imagined. "You will be interested to know," he reported to Mott, "that [our annual election] passed over very quietly. The election resulted in a sweeping confirmation of the Board of Directors. Dr. Avison received the largest number of votes cast. Mr. Nam Kung Euh, you remember went to Tokyo as a member of the Committee of Fifteen, received the second largest number of votes. Mr. Hugh Miller, also a member of the Committee of Fifteen, was elected to the Board."[42] In the end, the missionary leadership had survived

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[40] Terms of Affiliation, April 12, 1912, National Councils of YMCAs in Japan Archive
[41] Brockman to Mott, May 25, 1913, Kautz Family YMCA Archives
[42] Brockman to Mott, June 7, 1913, Kautz Family YMCA Archives

the *Yusinhoe* ordeal without bringing any Japanese or pro-Japanese Koreans onto its board of directors.

Still, the writing was on the wall and ought to have been readable to colonial bureaucrat and missionary alike. If the *Yusinhoe* incident demonstrated the limits to which a subaltern discourse on spiritual autonomy could be imposed on Korean Christianity and the western missions, it also established that the global interventions of the International Committee of YMCAs could not be relied upon indefinitely in resolving conflicts between the missionary leadership in Korea and the government-general. The next conflict between the government-general and the Christians missions would have to be resolved by a source within the colony.

In the preceding chapter, we have seen how Wataze Tsuneyoshi, as leader of the Japanese Congregationalist Church missions to Korea, provided a subaltern discourse on spiritual autonomy whose terms were accessible to the government-general, thus making it possible for a non-Christian empire to claim to defending Korean Christianity's autonomy. In this chapter's remainder, I would like to explore the possibility that military rule ultimately required as a counterfoil to Wataze's discourse a separate discourse that could be called "autonomous" insofar as its terms were *inaccessible* to the government-general but still fit within the ideological limits of military rule. Here I have in mind the diary of the preeminent Korean Protestant Yun Ch'iho and its implicit argument that spiritual autonomy could exist within the limits of the private conscience in the absence of political autonomy. In developing this argument, I focus on Yun's seemingly paradoxical appointment to the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) at the behest of both the government-general and the missionary leadership from 1916-20 despite having been a political prisoner from 1912-1915 for allegedly masterminding a plot to assassinate the Korea's Governor-General, Terauchi Masatake.

An Unexpected Offer?

In a very brief diary entry for February 23 1916, Yun Ch'iho records that he was visited this day once in the morning by F.S. Brockman and in the afternoon by Niwa Seijirō, both asking him "to accept the position of the Y.M.C.A. Secretaryship."[43] What circumstances compelled such different representatives of the YMCA to approach Yun on the same day with this same proposition? Were these unexpected visits? Unfortunately, Yun does not record any further than this, but the brevity of this entry suggests that Niwa and Brockman's solicitation hardly took Yun by surprise. By 1916, there was a general consensus that the YMCA's position in Korea had come to an impasse.

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[43] *Yun Ch'iho Ilgi* , 23 February 1916

Indeed, Niwa and Brockman were not the only ones eager to see Yun accept leadership of the Central YMCA. J.S. Gale also asked Yun to "accept the Y.M.C.A offer—as he thinks I am the only person in Korea who can get the Y.M.C.A. out of its present immovability."[44] Gale was not the only one who thought so. The government-general was perhaps even more eager to see Yun take over the YMCA's leadership. A bemused Yun records that, in a conversation with a high-ranking police officer Sin Sŭnghŭi, "[Sin] hinted that the authorities desire to see me take up work with the Y.M.C.A. and that if I succeed to bring about good relations between the Y.M.C.A. and the Powers that be, I may be restored to the honors of the peerage!"[45] In the weeks that follow, Yun receives similar intimations from "military rule" notables such as Usami Katsuo and Seoul Press editor Yamagata Isō. Even Kunitomo, who had previously pegged Yun as the grand mastermind behind all anti-Japanese political crime in Korea, told him "that he could not tell me to take [leadership of the YMCA] or not to take it but that he and the police would be glad to see me work in the Y.M.C.A. for the best interest of the Korean youths."[46]

These encounters may already seem to the outside observer to be bizarre enough, but Yun's meeting with Governor-General Terauchi can only be called one of the great ironies of the military rule period. Yun records:

> At 10 a.m. called on the Governor. He received me very kindly and said "sorry to trouble you" (*meiwaku de attarō*). Then he told me that he hoped that I would exert myself to the establishment of good understanding between the Koreans and foreigners on one side and the Japanese on the other.[47]

The Governor-general, Terauchi Masatake, seen here apologizing for inconveniencing a man he had once accused of plotting his assassination for misunderstanding Japanese intentions, was now urging him to promote greater understanding between Korea, the West, and Japan. Clearly, the government-general felt sure that military rule in Korea had reached a turning point.

Yet not everyone Yun spoke with was as hopeful as the Governor-General. Watanabe Noboru, an influential Presbyterian judge in Korea, told Yun that "he would certainly like to see me in the Y.M.C.A. but the situation is so hard and delicate that he would not ask me to run the risk."[48] On a separate occasion, Yun records that, "[Canadian

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[44] ibid., 12 March 1916
[45] ibid., 11 March 1916
[46] ibid., 7 April 1916
[47] ibid., 4 March 1916
[48] ibid., 20 March 1916

missionary R.A.] Hardie thinks the position to hard a one for me to accept."[49] Did Watanabe and Hardie mean that there were others better qualified than Yun for the job? More likely their reservations reflected an awareness that what was being attempted was untried and risky: for the first time a Korean YMCA director was being made responsible for standing between the Christian missions and the government-general.

Yun Ch'iho's Diary and Anti-Anti-Japanist Discourse

So what was it about Yun C'hiho that made both missionary and colonial bureaucrat seek him out to lead the YMCA in Korea? To put this question another way, what did Yun have to offer in terms of a resolution to the state of siege surrounding Korean Christianity? In what ways did this "resolution" converge with or diverge from that worked out by Japanese Protestants during the Meiji period? To answer these questions, let us trace the development of Yun's religious views.

We get a clue from a particularly long conversation Yun has with Tokutomi Sohō about accepting the YMCA directorship. In the passage below, Yun records the following advice given to him by Tokutomi:

I was baptized at the age of 15. But at 18 I went to my Pillaptor [*sic*], Niijima and returned my church-membership paper as I couldn't conscientiously believe some of the Doctrines of Christianity. However I promised that I would keep the Christian morality and I have never tasted a cup of sake or a cigarette, have been a politician 30 years, but I have never visited a *machiaiya* or bought a geisha. I did not want any body say that I quit the church because I wanted to enjoy sensual pleasure. I was a wealthy boy but my health began to improve as a soon as I got into the thick of the battle of life. I want you to join and work for the Y.M.C.A. not because it will be good for you but because it will be hard work.[50]

It is not difficult to imagine why the Protestant ethic of an autonomous individual conscience that Tokutomi retained from his encounter with Niijima Jō here would have resonated with Yun. As a young man, Yun, like Tokutomi, also embraced the prepolitical value of Protestant morality as an indispensable foundation for the modern nation-state. In 1889, he recorded his conviction that

The rise and decline of a nation depends on the wisdom and nature of its people. Our people have for several hundred years been slaves of others, possessing no wisdom or manly character and, suffering for 500 years the oppression of an incomparably bad government, high and low, official and commoner, all seek miserably to preserve their lives through bondage to others. How then, given the present state of our country can we hope for ourselves against subsequent evils and

[49] ibid., 26 March 1916
[50] ibid., 15 March 1916

preserve our land thus the pressing need at present is to increase knowledge and experience, teach morality and cultivate patriotism… There is no other instrument able to educate and renew the people outside the Church of Christ.[51]

From our perspective, what is striking about this passage is that, excepting Yun's historical remarks about the Chosŏn dynasty, it could easily have been authored by a young Meiji Protestant. The conception of the Christian conscience as a necessary break with the past and the basis of authentic patriotism is entirely identical.

The critical difference in Yun's religious views and those of Meiji Protestants must be derived from the difference in the historical circumstances they faced. Whereas Meiji Protestants were confronted with a state determined to colonize the individual conscience, Yun had to come to terms with a state he felt was determined to be colonized by a foreign power. During the 1890s, the same period in which Meiji Protestants were at pains to demonstrate Japanese Christianity's fundamentally patriotic content, Yun confronted the gloomy conclusion that his country's spiritual-cultural transformation may not coincide with its political survival. Although he hoped for a political revolution that would make a clean break with Korea's outmoded dynastic heritage, he realized that "the interference of foreign powers, however, will either prevent such a revolution or take this as a fit occasion for Polandizing the peninsula." This prospect was troubling to Yun not only because of its implications for Korean independence, but also because of the insight it gave him into his own spiritual commitments.

Yet, everything considered, such Polandization may be better…I am desperate in making such remarks! Who can even faintly realize my indignation at the insult offered to, and my despair of any regeneration of, my nation. The sourness and bitterness of my feeling to which this indignation and despair give rise, are simply insufferable. But be patient! What I can not help I must bear. Let my life, then, O God, be of some help to the nation.[52]

This same fear of "Polandization" (or colonization) surely occupied the back of many Meiji Protestants' minds, and was arguably a critical impulse behind the 1890s "national morality" controversy (discussed in Chapter 2), but it is unlikely that they ever faced this painful eventuality as head-on as Yun does here. The shadow this thought cast over Yun's private reflections is all too apparent in his diary between the years 1889-92. During his study in the United States, Yun made clear his own judgement that, given conflict between the two values, spiritual sphere was more fundamental than the political: "It has often chilled my most sanguine aspirations the thought that Corea might not be the "fittest" to "survive". Then what? My business and duty are to contribute my best to

[51] ibid., 30 March 1889,translation from Kenneth M. Wells, *New God, New Nation*, 90
[52] ibid., 14 December 1890

make them fit to live. If they can not be made so after a fair trial, then they are not fit to survive."[53] It is difficult to imagine a prominent Meiji Protestant pronouncing this same judgement upon Japan, even within the private confines of a diary. Yun's conclusion that an attitude of service to nation was not contingent upon that nation's independence was critical in allowing Yun to serve as YMCA director under military rule.

Like many Meiji Protestants, Yun also held a providential view of imperialism. "England," he wrote in 1891, "is the school master of India and all her subject countries. So is America, of the Negro and the Indian. The ultimate betterment of the whole race is end of Providence. The follies and crimes committed by the strong against the weak in training the latter for self government ought to be looked at as necessary evils unavoidable in such a gigantic work, considering the human nature as it is."[54] But unlike Meiji Protestants, Yun did not come to his belief in the providential character of imperialism via academic discourse or liberal theology. His fundamental problem had nothing to do with helping Christianity integrate with an encroaching political and academic sphere, as was the case for Protestants in Japan after 1890. Instead, Yun was solely concerned with building a spiritual foundation for Korea that would free it from the Confucian preoccupations with academics and politics that seemed to lead inexorably toward colonization by a foreign power. In this sense, Yun's theological views resonated most strongly with 1880s Japanese Protestantism, which he experienced first-hand as a government-sponsored student.

Later, as an outside observer, he was very suspicious of the move towards liberal theology in Japan during the 1890s. While in the United States, Yun met a Japanese friend who explained to him that

> The Japanese like Unitarianism better than any form of Christianity. This fact is easily counted for: Unitarianism is rational and comes nearer to the teachings of Confucius than other Christianisms. Well, as for me, shall join Unitarianism if it can explain all the mysteries of Christianisms. But as long as there are mysteries and intangible or spiritual truths that Unitarian itself must accept by faith alone-so long I shall continue in my Trinitarianism. Besides what we, Coreans or Japanese or Chinese, want is not positive philosophy or altogether **knowable** religion. We have this in Confucianism. In fact we do not want-we are tired of- doctrines, philosophies and religions. We want a living moral or rather spiritual power to enable us to do what we know to be right and true.[55]

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[53] ibid., 14 October 1892
[54] ibid., 12 May 1891
[55] ibid., 18 May 1890

On another occasion, Yun records his disgust with Kozaki Nariaki, younger brother of the prominent Japanese Protestant Kozaki Hiromichi (1856-1938), for his free espousal of liberal theology.

Mr. Kozaki is a brother of President Kozaki, the head of Doshisha College. The former was coming home from America after 7 years stay. He took special pains to tell everybody and on every occasion that he had graduated in Harvard University. He told Mr. Shina that an enlightened man in America doesn't believe in the miracles of Jesus, that he didn't believe in the existence of spirit or soul independently of matter. Yet this man is going to be the teacher of philosophy in the school built on Christian foundation. I was disgusted to hear this Harvard philosopher say to an unbeliever that he would have to curry favor with the missionaries in order to get and keep a good position.[56]

Yun clearly found it upsetting that a school like Dōshisha could be corrupted from its primary mission to strengthen the nation's spiritual foundation. In contrast to Meiji Protestants who saw Japan's secular development (and later imperial expansion) the possibility of its future Christianization, Yun was firmly committed to his belief that secular progress could only evolve from a solid spiritual foundation. Even compared to other Korean Christians, including nationalists such as Kim Ku and An Ch'angho, Yun was singular in his belief that the project of achieving spiritual independence could not be mixed up with political nationalism.[57]

We can develop this argument further by comparing Yun to Ebina. Almost to a tee, Yun fit Ebina's ideal type of Korean Christian that would eschew politics in order to dedicate themselves to the spiritual sphere. But the parallels between Yun's personal philosophy and Ebina's discourse on Korea as a spiritual periphery of the Japanese empire may be traced further than this. Although no student of Ebina's theology, Yun appreciated one point that Ebina made during a talk given in Seoul: "The Christian life is not a life of pilgrimage, wandering from one place to another, but it is a life of conquest."[58] After World War I, and just a few months before the March First movement erupted in Korea, Yun wrote down the following reflections on war's relationship to religion.

1. War seems to be the basic principle on which the universe is founded 2. War is the means and ways—through which and by which perfection is attained in physical intellectual and spiritual lives. 3. Light against darkness, cleanliness against filth, diligence against laziness, virtue against virtue—constant warfare. 4. No race or nation has made any progress except through warfare. Hence the war-like race is the only race that well survive. 5. Spirit of fight in right direction is the

[56] ibid., 29 October 1893
[57] Wells, 84
[58] *Yun Diary*, 4 June 1917

Holy Spirit—for no holiness possible without determined fight against sin. 6. Men have abused the war-like spirit; but then they have abused everything else. 7. War-likeness awakens, developes and matures the qualities making for success, viz: discipline, fortitude, fearlessness, watchfulness, thoroughness of planning and courage in action, love adventure, sense of honor. 8. Why has God so ordered it that the path of perfection lies through strength, conflict and war?[59]

These reflections resonate to a striking degree with Ebina's argument during Russo-Japanese War that war represented the spiritual foundation of the nation and the expression of logos. Like Ebina, then, Yun also believed that Japanese imperialism was the outward expression of that country's spiritual development. As we have seen, Ebina equated this development with the idea of logos (which Ebina further equated with Japan's immanent Christianization). Yun is less concrete (and less concerned) with respect to the specific content of Japanese spirituality and, in fact, shared with Ebina and many other Japanese Protestants the concern that Japan lacked a spirituality palpable enough to persuade, let alone assimilate, peoples lying beyond its cultural boundaries. Here Yun seems to have derived some of his critique of Japanese imperialism from his contact with Japanese Protestants. During the March First movement, Yun reflected upon the bureaucratic haste that had been the undoing of military rule.

Three years ago Bish. Hiraiwa [Senpo] said to me in Tokyo that he had told Mr. Usami [Katsuo] not to be in too great a hurry to succeed. *Seikō o isogu nasaru na*. If the failure of the Japanese regime during the last ten years could be expressed in a single sentence, I believe it could be put in Bish. Hiraiwa's phrase: viz: the chief actors in the Government Genl, all have been in too great a hurry to succeed. The Japanese are so impatient that they can't wait. *All right among themselves. But when they come in contact with continental peoples like the Chinese and Koreans impatience ruins Japanese plans and defeats their purposes.* (emphasis mine)[60]

For Yun, as for Ebina, the United States' imperialism, with its evangelical Christian content, was the template model. He scoffed at the Japanese comparison of its rule in Taiwan and Korea to that of the United States in the Philippines. And upon hearing that President Woodrow Wilson had "forbidden any saloon or an ill famed woman to reside within 10 miles of a training camp," he wryly observed: "Compare this with the Japanese theory and practice of establishing *senro* or prostitution quarters wherever a camp or a town is to be built."[61]

Despite these similarities with Ebina, however, Yun's critique of Japanese imperialism did not lead him to see Japanese and Korean Christianity in complementary

[59] ibid., 31 January 1919
[60] ibid., 28 August 1919
[61] Ibid., 1 October 1918

terms. He certainly did not see, as Ebina did, any vision of Korean Protestants as the new spiritual leaders of Japan's empire. Korea's colonization had providential meaning for Yun, but he gave no credence to notions of Japanese-Korean homogeneity or assimilation. If he had, he would arguably have been of no use in reconciling the YMCA's missionary leadership and Korean membership with the government-general. Instead, his view of Korea's circumstances led him to produce what we might call an anti-anti-Japanist discourse. His philosophy was one of obedience "to the powers that be" in the broader sense of that term, and not an obsequious attitude toward Japan. While he considered saluting the Japanese Emperor's portrait to be "no more objectionable than to lift you hand to the statue of Washington,"[62] he could not have been more different than Kim In, who openly invited Japanese interference in the interests of breaking the Western mission's hegemony over Korean Christianity. Consider, for example, the passage below from June 8, 1916:

> This morning Kim Im phoned me saying that Cho Jung Ung had recently become Vice-director of the Meiji Shrine (*Meiji Jingū Fukukaichō*) and that Cho suggested that the Y.M.C.A. make a contribution toward it. Consulted with Choi Sang Ho and Kim Il Sun. They all agreed that such a thing would set missionaries and the Korean church solidly against the Y.M.C.A. The fact would place the Y.M.C.A. in very bad light. Of course so. I told Kim Im that if it was Meiji Memorial or simple memorial building, we could contribute in it, but to a shrine we couldn't.[63]

The incident apparently left Yun with a bad taste in his mouth. He concludes this entry by noting, "K. is a rot."

In adopting this position toward Japan's empire, Yun was not far at all from the conciliatory attitude of the remaining missionary leadership in Korea after the *Yusinhoe* incident. Cultivating good relations with "the powers that be" had, after all, been the goal of the Christian missions in Korea all along. Yun's journal also suggests, however, Korean Christians' genuine feeling of cultural resentment towards Western missionaries. His observations often present missionaries as deeply out of touch with Korean cultural sentiment and even highhanded and condescending in their decision making. Some of his observations refer to boorish slights such as on one occasion in which the Salvation Army's neglect to include any Koreans at a reception program and "very much offended many Koreans. The Salvation Army made a big blunder in that."[64] The majority of his observations, however, reveal an increasing sense of alienation of Korean Christians from the missions. In 1918, he observed that: "By the way the arrogance and thoughtlessness of missionaries are alienating the Koreans in schools and churches where foreigners rule-

[62] ibid., 29 February 1916
[63] ibid., 8 June 1916
[64] ibid.,

There will be a great revolt some day in the future on the part of the Koreans unless the missionaries change their attitude."[65] Such expressions of anxiety over a coming revolt in the Korean Christian Church are not at all a rare occurrence in Yun's diary. Indeed, Yun would have had little reason to doubt such an eventuality given that only a few years ago the *Yusinhoe* had attempted, with the assistance of the government-general, to launch a revolt against the YMCA.

But Yun also clearly realized that Korean Christianity could not return to its period of missionary tutelage. His understanding of this reality is suggested on an occasion when he was asked to assume the principalship of Songdo, a school that he had helped form in 1906 with the Christian missions.

Mr. Kim Hyun Yol and Yang asked me if I wouldn't accept the principalship of the Song Do Normal High School. I said I couldn't for 3 reasons!

1. I can't leave my aged mother.
2. The authorities would not like the step
3. I want to do something independently of the foreigners.[66]

Yun's latter two reasons for refusing to return to Songdo perhaps sum up why he was so effective at navigating the Korean YMCA through the period of military rule: He combined the need to comply with political orthodoxy with a real desire on the part of Korean Christians for greater autonomy from the missions. In so doing, Yun made it possible to dissociate spiritual allegiance from political allegiance within the limits of military rule. This was something that arguably could not have been accomplished by a "foreign" director of the YMCA who could teach obedience to political authority but could not declare his political allegiance to Japan. It was important to the government-general that the director of the YMCA himself be an object of assimilation. Neither, however, could someone as uncritically pro-Japanese as Kim In have resolved the situation. Yun made the Korean argument for spiritual autonomy from the West for the first time more than mere sycophancy towards the Japanese empire.

A strong argument can therefore be made that, ultimately, the government-general needed Yun's anti-anti- Japanist discourse as a necessary counterweight to Wataze's subaltern discourse on spiritual autonomy. Let us note here, however, that Yun's attitude towards military rule is now only accessible to us in the form of his diary. In contrast to Wataze's "public" discourse on the necessity of assimilating Koreans via Christianity, Yun's separation of spiritual and political autonomy was useful to the government precisely because it remained a private discourse, where it did not conflict with the

[65] ibid., 3 July 1918
[66] ibid., 30 July 1918

Education Rescript's conceit that spiritual and political allegiance had to be coterminous. Yun's discourse, although autonomous in content, was also subaltern insofar as its incorporation into military rule was contingent upon it never being articulated publicly.

By the 1920s, Yun's separation of spiritual and political autonomy had become so much a matter of course that, in 1922, Sin Hŭngu, then director of the Korean YMCA and Ibuka Kajinosuke of the National Committee of Japanese YMCAs could refer to it openly during renegotiations over the terms of affiliation between the two YMCAs. The following passage from the minutes of that meeting illustrates this.

Mr. Cynn: "The young men think that we have signed away the spiritual independence of Korea."
Mr Ibuka: "Do they look upon it (that is spiritual independence) as the first step toward political independence?"
Mr. Cynn: "No, because Mr. Yun established that principle and he has suffered for it."[67]

Let us now see how Yun's personal philosophy enabled him to steer the YMCA within the ideological limits of military rule.

Toward Industrial Education: The YMCA in Crisis

The writings of Keijō YMCA director Niwa Seijirō suggest with what open arms the Keijō YMCA welcomed Yun's arrival as director of the Central YMCA. For Niwa, it was as though a new season had arrived in the colony. "The arrival of spring in Korea," he proclaimed in 1916, "unlike in Japan, comes all at once…and recent events [involving] the Chosen Central YMCA are truly comparable."[68] "He holds that the key to Koreans' future happiness and the peninsula's progress is in cooperating with the Japanese (*naichijin*) under Government-general rule, and so has entered and seeks to lead the YMCA, which for a time was reputed to be the nest of all manner of misunderstanding and misguided thinking and thus blocked such progress."[69] Niwa praised Yun for the "clarity of his opinions" and opined that these would be a great source of leadership for the YMCA.

Niwa also celebrated the news that, on the occasion of a newly expanded Korean YMCA gymnasium's opening, a council would be formed with the Keijo YMCA made up of three nominated representative from "both Associations." Each of the representatives, Niwa explained "will sit as honorary directors on the board of directors at

[67] Minutes of a Joint Conference of Representatives of the Korean Union Committee of Young Men's Christian Association and of the National Committee of Young Men's Christian Association, 16 May 1922, National Councils of YMCAs in Japan Archive
[68] Niwa Seijirō, *Seionroku* (Keijo: Niwa Seijirō, 1943) 113
[69] ibid., 114

each association, and "although they will not vote, they will be asked to give their opinions freely." Niwa was very optimistic about the benefits of this change. "As a result, there will be a crucial link between both Associations that will build the basis for complete cooperation between them, and this is not only to be celebrated for the sake of both Associations, but for Japan and Korea."[70]

As Niwa suggests, Yun's appointment to the YMCA directorship went hand in hand with implementing the cooperative relationship with the Keijo YMCA and, by extension, with the government general and the appointment of three honorary Japanese directors (Watanabe Noboru, Niwa Seijirō, and Matsumoto Masahiro) was, in Yun's own words, "a distinct step towards a Pro-Japanese policy,"[71] but one that likely ensured protection against outside interference from the government-general as well as insurgents within the YMCA such as Kim In. Yun, however, shared little of Niwa's rosy optimism about the future of the YMCA in Korea. The rush to adapt the YMCA's education program to meet the governor-general's regulations and still retain its social relevance within the Korean Christian community and in Korean society. At the end of 1916, he reflected: "This is perhaps one of the darkest crises in the Central Y.M.C.A. has passed in its history. Enemies outside, traitors inside, indifferent friends and unbalancing finance."[72]

The crux of the problem that Yun faced was how to remove the YMCA entirely from general education, where its teachers would be subject to the supervision and approval of the government-general, and into industrial education, where it would not conflict with Japan's Education Rescript. Concretely, this meant shutting down the middle school that had formed part of the YMCA's education program since its establishment in 1903. Yu Sŏngchun, an original member of the YMCA's educational department and the younger brother of the nationalist Yu Kilchun, summed up the danger involved with this move well when he told Yun that "he would resign rather than sanction such an act. He said that would offend the Koreans so much that nobody would come to the YMCA if we abolishes the Middle School!"[73] Indeed, this decision seems to have divided the YMCA's missionary and Korean leadership, with Yun providing critical support to the former group. As early as January 1916, before Yun was tapped for the YMCA's directorship, he attended a Board of Directors meeting where "Dr. Arison [Avison], Mr. Miller and I spoke for the discontinuance of the Middle School but Sin, Song, Yuk, [and] Yi against it. Committed for proposing something that may take the place of the Middle School."[74] During this same month, FM Brockman reported to Yun that Sin Hŭngu, a prominent leader in the YMCA, "seems to have decided to retire from the Y.M.C.A. B.

[70] ibid., 113
[71] *Yun Diary*, 8 April 1916
[72] ibid., 4 December 1916
[73] ibid., 11 November 1916
[74] ibid., 20 January 1916

of D. [Board of Directors] On the question of Middle-School 1st to win the popularity among K. and 2nd to avoid the more delicate task of voting on the question of electing Japanese adv. Comm.[75] Clearly, the YMCA leadership understood that changes were being introduced that were capable of splitting its membership, albeit along different lines than during the *Yusinhoe* incident.

The decision to close the school was made more contentious by the fact that Koreans themselves were now playing a greater role in the school's running. As Min Kyŏngbae points out, the school had already produced a batch of graduates among whom many were either now working as instructors there or studying in Tokyo.[76] Within the school, three such instructors, Yi Yongkŭn, Yi Myŏngwon and Sŏ Byŏngcho, were particularly vocal in opposing its closing. On one occasion, Yun expressed his exasperation with this group's heated disagreement over the appointment of the three honorary Japanese directors to the Korean YMCA. "I tried to explain," Yun writes, "but my explanations seemed to fan the flame of the opposers. Their ostentatious [ostensible] reason was it was unconstitutional but after all, it was anti-Japanese sentiment."[77]

Such "anti-Japanese sentiment" proved ultimately to be incompatible with Yun's anti-anti-Japanism. A few months before closing the middle school, Yun had "a long talk" with Brockman in which they decided Yi Myŏngwon "should [be dismissed from the YMCA] since no reorganization can be effeciated [effected] with his opposition to me."[78] Yi's (and later Sŏ's) dismissal caused much alarm and apparently led some YMCA members to charge Yun "with having violated the constitution."[79] Hence, any action perceived as an affront to the YMCA's autonomy was capable of having rippling effects. When the middle school was finally closed in November, Yun received an angry letter from those graduates now belonging to the Korean student YMCA in Tokyo. Yun summarized "the gist of [this] long and elaborate letter" with the following words: "First you hire and fire faculty at will and now you are planning to close the school? Are these not abuses of authority?"[80]

In short, Yun's popularity in the Korean Christian community was at an all-time low. Given the volatile relationship between the missionary leadership and Korean Christians, however, closing the middle school under a non-Korean director may well have proved debilitating to the YMCA and invited intervention from the government-general. It can be argued that the YMCA was here facing a more delicate issue of how to devolve autonomy to its Korean membership than it did during the *Yusinhoe* incident.

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[75] ibid., 24 January 1916
[76] Min Kyŏngbae, *Seoul YMCA Undong, Baeknyŏnsa,1903-2003* (Seoul: Seoul YMCA, 2004) 177
[77] *Yun Diary*, 26 June 1916
[78] ibid., 26 August 1916
[79] ibid., 6 November 1916
[80] ibid., 27 November 1916

By 1918, however, Yun could be reasonably sure that he had secured the future development of the YMCA within the limits of military rule. He enjoyed close relations with the government-general and the Keijo YMCA as with the missionary and Korean Christian communities. Even the Korean students in Tokyo seem to have taken a kinder view of Yun's philosophy. He records that one young man returned from Tokyo "is reported to have said that the Korean[s] in Tokio who used to say all murmur of bad things about me on acc't of my pro-P.T.B. [Powers That Be] policy are gradually softening and that they are appreciating the trying circumstances under which a Kor. Y. Sec. [Korean YMCA Secretary] must work and that some of them go to the extent of stating that a man who can manage the Kor. YMCA in Seoul show a much ability a as he who manages the affairs of YMCA at present."[81] More importantly, the Central YMCA had found a new basis of institutional autonomy within the limits of military rule by focusing on industrial education. Unlike Meiji Protestants, Yun did not seek an autonomous space for Korean Christianity in academic learning (something that would have been an impossibility) but in the practicality of industrial education. He was thus ideally situated to succeed in Korea under military rule. The YMCA leadership could once again claim to be cooperating with the education policy of the government-general to modernize Korea *and also* to be contributing to the spiritual autonomy of the Korean people. It was in this sense that Yun could write in 1918 that

> Like all things Korean, the Y.M.C.A. has been passing through a transition period. The year 1916 and part of 1917 were among the darkest periods in the history of the Korean Y.M.C.A. Out of the somewhat chaotic condition, the institution has apparently emerged none the worse for it. There are difficulties in abundance yet, but no reasonable person would expect to see a Korean Y.M.C.A. run without its share of troubles in this world of war and rumors of war.[82]

Coda: A Siege Averted?

But how successful was Yun in resolving what I have been calling the state of siege over Korean Christianity under military rule? So far we have focused on Yun's personal philosophy and his leadership as head of the Korean YMCA. But much of his success during this critical period must be attributed to his adeptness at negotiating the peculiar culture of military rule. His daily activities between the years 1916-20 reveal a perpetual series of mundane encounters with colonial authority suggesting a constant need to reaffirm obedience to the Japanese colonial order. Yun's diary is littered with references to countless "sukiyaki suppers" with colonial bureaucrats, Japanese YMCA leaders and Kumiai Church members held at the new hotels and social clubs opened by the Japanese

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[81] ibid., 15 June 1918

[82] T. H. Ho, "Central YMCA Seoul," *The Christian Movement in the Japanese Empire* (December 1918)

in Seoul after colonization. His visits to the colonial police constitute a constant recurring factor in his journal. Yun typically records these encounters casually, adding very little detail, but it is clear that breaks in routine made him nervous. In an entry from April 1918, he tells us, "Called on Inspector Moriwaki. Missed him. The evident surveillance of the police everywhere I go makes me so nervous."[83]

If the treatment of pro-Japanese Congregationalist Koreans may be used as a barometer for how comfortably Christianity coexisted with military rule, we can only conclude that the paranoia that characterized the government-general's attitude towards Korean Christianity was at best thinly suppressed. Ironically, by the end of military rule, even Kim In found himself commiserating with Yun. On September 13, 1918, Yun records that: "Kim In came and said that in spite of all our (his and mine) efforts to prove ourselves pro-Japanese, the Japanese, the Japanese authorities look on us as, in heart, anti-J's. He strongly advised me to quit this connection with the Y.M.C.A."[84] On August 28, 1918 Yun was visited by Kim Chŏngsik, a Congregationalist whose directorship of the Korean student YMCA we shall treat in the next chapter, who

said that on his way he saw an old woman kicked down by the Japanese policeman who had [been] in charge of the relief rice selling (*renbaisho*) that no one seemed to take any notice of the poor woman that he, Kim, suggested the policeman the necessity of sending her to the nearest hospital. Quite a row in the *renbaisho* between the people and police on acc't of the woman supposed to be dead.[85]

The police violence recorded in this entry perhaps represent a reaction to the famous "rice riots" that spread through rural and urban Japan during August 1918 in response to intolerably high rice prices. That rice relief measures were taken during this month in both Japan and Korea is perhaps indicative of the concern that rioting might spread beyond the Japanese metropole to the Korean colony. Perhaps even more telling, however, is the fact that Kim Chŏngsik's mere presence at this incident seems to have been sufficient evidence to Korea's colonial police to suspect Korean Congregationalists of attempting to incite a riot. For Yun records the next day that:

This morning the *keimu bucho* (police chief) summoned me and told me that the *Keijo Nippo* printed an item to the effect that yesterday the members of the Central YMCA incited the crowd to riotous actions. The *bucho* said he knew it was a misreport which arose from the fact that Kim Jong Sik was once the Genl. Secretary of the Y.M.C.A.

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[83] *Yun Diary,* 14 April 1918
[84] ibid., 13 September 1918
[85] ibid., 28 August 1918

Kim Jong Sik, Yu Il Sun, Kim Yonji, all Kumiai [Congregationalist] Church members, are arrest on the charge of having urged the crowd to attack the police.[86]

The out-of-context quality of this entry, in which, as late as 1918, Congregationalist Koreans are arrested on suspicion of instigating a riot, recalls powerfully Kunitomo's paranoia about pro-Japanese Christianity undermining colonial authority. Yun may have laid the basis for a new relationship between the Christian missions and the government-general but this was at best unstable protection from the siege mentality that was part and parcel of military rule.

[86] ibid., 29 August 1918

CHAPTER FOUR
CULTURAL AUTONOMY WITHIN MILITARY RULE: YOSHINO SAKUZŌ AND THE KOREAN STUDENTS IN IMPERIAL TOKYO

In the previous chapter we have seen that, under the leadership of Yun Ch'iho, the Seoul YMCA's move toward industrial education provided a means of circumventing the ideological constraints of the Imperial Rescript on Education by allowing the Association to assert political loyalty to the Japanese empire without subordinating itself spiritually to it. In this chapter, I will argue that the Korean student YMCA in Tokyo (discussed in Chapter One) played a similar role in allowing academic learning to define a Korean identity that would remain culturally autonomous within the constraints of political domination. In examining this issue, I will focus on the liaison formed between the Korean students studying in Tokyo and Yoshino Sakuzō, a lay Christian and perhaps the most influential proponent of liberal democracy during Japan's imperial period.

This relationship between Yoshino and the Korean students is particularly interesting because it draws our attention to how these students interacted with the Japanese metropole during the first decade of colonial rule. Although these students inevitably made acquaintances and even formed friendships with the scholars and students where they studied, there was also a strong feeling of stigma against developing too close connections to Japanese intellectuals. In this context, one might well expect to see Korean students develop closer relationships to the "radical" liberals, men such as Ishibashi Tanzan and Tanaka Ōdō, who argued plainly that Japan's colonies were little more than economic burdens that stood in the way of a genuinely cooperative relationship with Asia. Koreans did indeed form links with intellectuals of this strand of liberalism, but it was with Yoshino that the broadest connection with Korean students as a group developed. Yet Yoshino, despite developing a powerful critique of the Japanese colonial in Korea, was hardly an anti-imperialist, but an advocate of a liberal empire that would develop its colonies while at the same time advancing Japanese interests in world politics. So why Yoshino? Under what circumstances did he become acquainted with the Korean students studying in Tokyo during the 1910s? Answering this question requires us to examine the particular institutional and ideological background against which this relationship developed.

The institutional side of this question brings us back to the origins of the Korean student YMCA in Tokyo. As we saw in Chapter One, this YMCA was the product of the period prior to Korea's formal colonization in Japan in which the Korean and Chinese YMCAs were governed under a single federation. Thus, the Association decision in 1907 to establish a Chinese student YMCA in Tokyo to take advantage of the large Chinese student population there also resulted in the establishment of a Korean student YMCA. During the 1910s, this YMCA became for Korean students a unique institution where

they could assemble with relative security from the surveillance of the Japanese empire. Many of the Korean students who frequented the student YMCA in Tokyo were lay Christians, young men who had converted to Christianity, but whose core commitments lay with the project of Korean nationalism. Unsurprisingly, some students were not Christians at all, but were nevertheless fascinated with the possibilities that Christian faith suggested for Korea's cultural transformation.

Yoshino was also a lay Christian who converted as a youth and whose relationship with the YMCA went back as far as his arrival in Tokyo as a student. In the fall of 1900, Yoshino took up residence in Tokyo Imperial University's YMCA dormitory. Reminiscing several decades later, Yoshino would wax nostalgic, "Life at the YMCA at that time remains to this day one of my fondest memories."[1] In the fall of 1901, Yoshino took a central role in running the YMCA in Tokyo. In 1917, As general secretary, Yoshino led the Tokyo Imperial YMCA into a new phase of increased social activity.[2] It was thus partly this involvement in YMCA affairs that allowed Yoshino to develop such a familiar relationship with the Korean student community in Tokyo.

Yoshino's status as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University adds another dimension to this story. Tokyo Imperial served as the primary training ground for bureaucratic office and it was partly Yoshino's academic position that allowed him to act as the foremost interpreter of liberalism and democracy in imperial Japan. This is an important point because few Korean students were able to pass the difficult entrance examinations for the imperial universities in Japan. It is possible, therefore, to look at Yoshino's relationship with these Korean students in Tokyo as a point of mediation between the nationalist concerns of the Korean student community and the imperial interests of the Korean government-general. Developing this point, however, requires that we first take a closer look at the actual relationship that developed between Yoshino and the Korean students present in Tokyo during the 1910s. Only then will we be able to consider the ideological significance of this relationship may have had for Japan's colonial rule over Korea.

The Representation of Yoshino Sakuzō in Three Korean Autobiographies

Reconstructing Yoshino's relationship with the Korean students studying in Tokyo is very difficult. Primary sources describing their interactions with each other are scarce. Indeed, to my knowledge there are only three autobiographies (those of Kim Junyŏn, Kim Uyŏng, Ch'oe Sŭngman) that provide any detail at all about Yoshino's interaction with Korean students. These autobiographies, brief and fragmentary as they are, must therefore suffice as this chapter's *mise en scène*. Taken together, I believe that these

[1] Yoshino Sakuzō, "Teidai Seinenkai no Kishukusha ni hajimete haitta koro no kotodomo," in *Yoshino Sakuzō Senshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995) 69-72

[2] Tazawa Haruko, *Yoshino Sakuzō: Jinsei ni wa gyakkō wa nai* (Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 2006) 165

autobiographies help us to suggest something of the role played by the YMCA in bridging the worlds of the Korean students in Tokyo and—through the figure of Yoshino Sakuzō—Tokyo Imperial University.[3]

Let us begin with Kim Junyŏn's autobiography. Growing up in Seoul during the protectorate period, Kim attended a Japanese-run academy and passed the entrance exam for Tokyo Imperial where he began attending in 1914. As the sole Korean member of the Japanese student organization *Shinjinkai*, Kim's early life would make a fascinating subject for historians of Japanese imperialism. Unfortunately, the briefness of his autobiography (it is only 58 pages long!) means that these years receive only the most cursory treatment. Despite such brevity, however, Kim manages to provide us with a very interesting anecdote concerning how his mentor Yoshino helped arrange for a passport for him for a three-year period of study in Germany. Kim relates here that after hearing from some of his Chinese classmates that many of them were headed for study in Germany, he consulted with Yoshino about his own desire to study in Europe. Yoshino agreed that "Germany was the sort of place where one could either live the high life or a simple life and he said that it was a good place to study abroad on just a little money." The only problem was how to get Kim a passport. And so, Kim's autobiography continues,

> Professor Yoshino wrote and sent a letter of introduction to Governor-General Saitō [Makoto]'s secretary Moriya and finally it turned out that Professor Hatoyama Hideo, my benefactor at Tokyo Imperial, would be attending an international conference in Europe and said he would try to get me a passport to accompany him. Things proceeded smoothly and Professor Hatoyama sent a letter of introduction to the Ministry of the Interior in Tokyo. And so, two days after conferring with the Tokyo District Office, I received a notice telling me to bring two yen with which to pick up my passport.[4]

It is difficult to imagine Kim's relatively unproblematic acquisition of a passport happening for any of the far more numerous Korean students attending private universities in Tokyo. And, although one can plausibly imagine other imperial universities performing such a function, the particular prestige associated with Tokyo Imperial certainly must have helped Kim in his attempt to gain a passport. Yet, even with the advantage of such an illustrious affiliation, there were still difficulties. Following this passage, Kim records that soon afterwards he received a notice from Onozuka Kiheiji (1870-1944), another preeminent scholar of political science at Tokyo Imperial (to be discussed later in this chapter), instructing him to return the passport immediately. It so

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[3] Matsuo Takayoshi, "Yoshino Sakuzō no Chōsenron," in *Minponshugi to Teikokushugi* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobō, 1998) 221-26

[4] Kim Junyŏn, *Na ŭi kil* (Seoul: Tonga ch'ulpansa kongmubu, 1966) 9

happened that Kim's scheduled departure for Germany happened to overlap with the Japanese Crown Prince's (the later Emperor Hirohito) scheduled tour of Europe. Thus, Onozuka informed Kim, Japan's parliamentary cabinet had decided that having a Korean in Germany at such a time posed too much of a security risk (!) and demanded that his passport be returned. As a result, Kim's study abroad in Germany had to be postponed until autumn of that year.

This anecdote from Kim Junyŏn's autobiography suggests how an elite institution such as Tokyo Imperial could play a key role in mediating the relationship between the Japanese government and Koreans active outside the empire. We may develop this point further by turning to the autobiography of Kim Uyŏng, who spent many years attending both Kyoto and Tokyo Imperial Universities. Having graduated from Tokyo Imperial's Law Department in 1918, Kim returned to Korea to practice law just in time to witness the March First Movement. Interestingly, he offers the following explanation of his ability to offer legal defense to the independence activists arrested in the anti-colonial uprising.

> Just at the time that the Independence Movement [i.e. the March First Movement] ended, I had finished my studies and returned to our country to be a lawyer and so I defended many independence activists…At first, there were none among our country's people to defend the Independence Movement Incident. At that time, I had not only finished at the Imperial University's law department, but I had a special connection to Saitō [Makoto] and Mizuno [Rentarō]'s "Cultural Rule" policy. Of the professors [I knew] at the Imperial universities during my ten-odd years studying abroad, this relationship had the particular support of the liberals…At Tokyo Imperial, this was Yoshino Sakuzō. At Kyoto Imperial, it was Sasaki [Sōichi] and Suehiro Shigeo…[5]

In Kim's mind, then, the liberal academics (including Yoshino) teaching at the Imperial universities were associated with Japan's new policy of "cultural rule" towards Korea and, by extension, also with his ability to provide legal defense to some March First Movement activists. Kim also writes that his closest relationship at the Imperial universities was with Suehiro, who was a advocate of a "little Japan" foreign policy. Sasaki was also a liberal critic. Yet Kim, who was a Christian, was also personally close to Yoshino and together the two organized talks at the Tokyo Imperial YMCA on the "Korea problem" that included both Japanese and Korean speakers. This connection to Yoshino also brought him into greater proximity to the Korean government-general. In a fascinating sentence that virtually conflates Yoshino with the "cultural rule" policy of the 1920s, Kim says of a working relationship with police commissioner Maruyama Tsurukichi that, "I naturally became close to Maruyama through my connections to

[5] Kim Uyŏng, *Hoego* (Pusan: Shinsaeng kongron, 1954) 33

Mizuno and Yoshino."[6] While we may hesitate before associating Yoshino directly with Japan's colonial government, Kim's claim seems especially plausible when one considers that, like Kim, both Mizuno and Maruyama were graduates of Tokyo Imperial's Law Department. Such a common academic pedigree would have likely made it relatively easy for Yoshino to act as a liaison between Kim and the new colonial government in Korea. If so, what was the result of the relationship that Kim enjoyed with Maruyama?

> We [Kim and Maruyama] had an oral agreement [that ran]: "It is reasonable and not at all a bad thing for the Korean people (*chosŏn kyŏreh*) to hold thoughts of independence (*tongnip sasang*); Japanese efforts to suppress this [desire for independence] are in no way different from the Terauchi rule of the past. Therefore, as long as [Koreans] have not engaged in directly destructive acts, they have not endangered order and so the police ought not involve themselves [in such instances]. Those who are involved in independence activities ought not be arrested for returning to this country and engaging in cultural activities."

In other words, according to Kim, the agreement between Maruyama and himself was premised on the mutual understanding that Japan's colonial rule in Korea had to be distinguished from the military rule period ("Terauchi rule") by recognizing the Korean desire for independence. In the above passage, this recognition takes the form of a willingness to allow independence activities undertaken by those Koreans living abroad to be sublimated into efforts toward cultural development inside the colony; thus safeguarding, we may infer, against the possibility that their activities would lead to "directly destructive acts" to public order such as the March First Movement. This principle, by discriminating between activists engaged in "destructive" behavior and those who could possibly be incorporated into a project of furthering Korea's cultural development made it possible for the government-general to cope with the transnational context of Japan's colonial rule in Korea.

Both Kim Junyŏn and Kim Uyŏng were students at Tokyo Imperial, meaning that Yoshino did not have to venture beyond his own campus in order to interact with them. Moreover, both developed relations with other academics at the imperial universities where they studied. Theirs was thus a rare situation not shared by most of their fellow Korean students who, as I have already indicated, were more likely to attend private academies apart from government influence. That Yoshino's connection to the Korean students in Tokyo was able to extend beyond the network of imperial universities, then, must be attributed to his involvement in the lay Christian organization of the YMCA. We can suggest this here by introducing Yoshino's first meeting with the Christian Ch'oe Sŭngman, who would graduate from Waseda University and director of the Korean student YMCA in Tokyo. While growing up in Seoul, Ch'oe became involved in the

[6] ibid, 36

YMCA where he was eventually baptized into Christianity. Through his involvement with the YMCA, Ch'oe gradually became acquainted with many of the Korean students who were studying in Tokyo. Eventually, he decided that he too would seek higher education there. Ch'oe arrived in Tokyo towards the end of 1916, nearly penniless. Unable to afford any of the expensive private academies in Tokyo and possessing only rudimentary knowledge of Japanese and English, Ch'oe ultimately decided to attend one of the government's foreign language academies. This he was barely able to afford with some financial assistance and part-time employment both gained through connections he had made with other Korean students through the YMCA in Tokyo. In particular, Chang Dŏkjun, the elder brother of the famous Korean nationalist Chang Dŏksu (also studying in Tokyo at this time, to be discussed below) and who was then working as one of the Korean student YMCA directors, took Ch'oe under his wing. In his autobiography, Ch'oe recalls that Chang telephoned his dormitory one day instructing him to pay a visit to Yoshino Sakuzō.

I searched out Professor Yoshino's residence. As soon as I met him, he told me he had heard my story from Chang [Dŏkjun] and offered me forty yen a semester for my tuition. That was a lot of money for tuition at that time and more than enough [for my needs]. But I refused it. "I am grateful for your kindness, but I will not accept," I said and then sat there awhile. The professor said that [the money] was "absolutely unconditional" and explained that "a businessman has granted some money to you and has asked that you use it as you wish with your Japanese or foreign student friends, so there is nothing to worry about." I felt as though it would be rude not to say something, so I simply said, "The person giving this money is Japanese, and I, who would receive it, am a Korean. To study while receiving money from someone Japanese would become a lifelong burden for me psychologically. So, really, what would make me most comfortable is to refuse the money." The professor repeated that "[the money] is absolutely unconditional, so you needn't worry so much," but I made no reply and merely excused myself. I had no intention of studying while receiving money from anyone Japanese.[7]

Ch'oe's refusal of Yoshino's support reflects the aversion felt by many Korean students to accepting support from even well-meaning Japanese sponsors. Despite his resolve not to take money from Japanese sponsors, Ch'oe records later in his autobiography that he did later accept scholarly funding on behalf of his wife.

I went to visit Professor Yoshino. When I told him that there was a Korean woman who wished to study [in Japan] and asked him if he might assist with her tuition, the professor replied without delay that since this person was introduced by me, he would provide [her with] a scholarship without further question. I wondered what he meant by saying that he would [help out] solely on

[7] Ch'oe Sŭngman, *Na ŭi hoegorok* (Seoul: Na ŭi hoegorok ch'ulp'an dongjihoe, 1985) 95-96

my recommendation. When I first met Professor Yoshino through Chang [Dŏkjun's] introduction, I had refused [his help], saying that I would not accept money from any Japanese person. What did the professor think about that? And with what words had Chang Dŏkjun introduced me to the professor? [I thought this way] because it seemed rather excessive to me that [someone] should say to a young student "if you say so, I will help without any further question." I felt that only if someone should speak and act as though their words carried weight should they be treated well by others. At any rate, I gave my thanks to Professor Yoshino and left thinking that things had gone well.

One is inclined to agree with Ch'oe's instinct that it was implausible for Yoshino to agree to take Ch'oe, a student whom he barely knew, at his word as sufficient premise for extending financial assistance to his wife. And what allowed Ch'oe to overcome his own reluctance to accept Japanese aid that Chang Dŏkjun had encouraged him to seek? It seems likely that in both cases the institutional setting of the YMCA allowed both Japanese scholar and Korean student to make a judgment of each other's personal character. One may imagine that the YMCA played a similar role in mediating the general relationship between Yoshino and the Korean students in Tokyo.

Building upon this point, we may hypothesize that the ability to judge "personal character" would also have provided an important criterion in distinguishing which Korean independence activists after the March First Movement could become contribute to a project in furthering the cultural development of the Korean colony. To develop this hypothesis, we will have to move beyond the institutional confines of the YMCA to consider what the broader intellectual encounter between Yoshino and the Korean students in Tokyo might have been like. This is a difficult question to address because, despite the demonstrably close relationship shared between Yoshino and the Korean students during this decade, one finds no references in to Yoshino's intellectual work in Korean student writing. To attempt an answer, then, we need to identify some concept that draws their two intellectual worlds together, if only heuristically. In reading the writings of Yoshino in tandem with the Korean student journal *Hak ji kwang* (Light of Knowledge), we discover such a concept in the notion of *jinkaku* (transliterated as *ingyŏk* in Korean), which I will translate in this chapter as "personal character." For both Yoshino and the Korean students in Tokyo, I shall argue, personal character, as a theory of private sphere of morality autonomous from society, provided the means to imagine the possibility of a broad cultural (which was also understood as spiritual) transformation that could be realized within the constraints of discouraging political realities. Personal character was understood by both as a necessary means of remedying what each perceived to be the backwardness of their respective countries. Their understandings of what "backwardness" signified, however, diverged according to the different historical contexts they sought to address.

The aim of this chapter is to explore how these parallel projects of overcoming backwardness could be seen as metaphorically linked. I will develop this inquiry below by first examining the development of Yoshino's thought, concluding with a consideration of how his view of Japanese politics shaped his critique of military rule in Korea. In the final section of this chapter, I will turn my attention to the writings of Korean students and their contributions to the formulation of cultural nationalism.

Personal Character and "Backwardness" in Imperial Japan

References to *jinkaku* were ubiquitous in late Meiji Japan. The proliferation of this neologism needs to be situated within the context of moral discourse as it unfolded during the late Meiji period. Having witnessed the achievement of a constitutional and institutional framework for Japan, Meiji ideologues understandably shifted their concerns towards the question of what the moral function of the nation ought to be. Unlike the value of individual conscience, which was held by early Meiji Christians to be the basis of modern nationalism, personal character was not a transcendent value, it was rather seen to be a source of creative moral strength in the individual's engagement with society.[8] As a concept, then, "personal character" may be seen both as a sublimation of an earlier transformative impulse as well as a genuine attempt to cope with the emerging social complexities of the late Meiji period.

We shall see below that Yoshino's political philosophy was profoundly influenced by the concept of personal character. First, however, we need to examine from what sources Yoshino gained his understanding of this concept. Here there are two figures that stand out as notably influential. The first is Yoshino's spiritual mentor Ebina Danjō (discussed in detail in Chapter Two) and the second is his teacher at Tokyo Imperial University, Onozuka Kiheiji.

Let us begin with Ebina. As a liberal Christian, Ebina used the notion of personal character to identify a Christian theology that would substitute for the supernatural doctrine of the trinity. For Ebina, the essence of Christ's religious consciousness lay in the fact that his relationship with God was not simply one of duty and loyalty shared between lord and servant, as it had been for the Jews of Israel, but also as a *personal* one shared between father and son (*fushi yūshin no ishiki*). Thus, Ebina explained that, for Christ, the relationship to God was a totalizing one that formed the whole of his personality. It was precisely because Christ was conscious of himself as a child of God (*shinshi*) that he was able to triumph completely over the egoism of sin.

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[8] Kyoko Inoue, *Individual Dignity in Modern Japanese Thought: The Evolution of the Concept of Jinkaku in Moral and Educational Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Japanese Studies, 2001)

I cannot doubt at all that Christ was conscious of having God as a Father. In him there was the noblest and most profound knowledge that only the father can know the child and only the child can know the father…I cannot but believe that Jesus Christ, with this lucid knowledge and this life of harmonious devotion to his Father, was truly without the slightest sin. Christ's knowledge is not like the reflections of shadows off an unclouded mirror, it is a self-evident and self-illuminating knowledge like that of the light of the sun and moon. In the consciousness that one is the true child [of God] lies the power to summon the true Father.[9]

It was the genius of Christ's personality, and not the mystical union of Trinitarian theology, that connected him with God. According to Ebina, Christ was thus a man before God, and a God before man.

When Ebina extended this theological view of personal character to the Holy Spirit, he revealed its essentially assimilative character. Christ's personality represented the "living ideal" (*ikeru risō*) of the unity of god with man (*shinjin gōitsu*),[10] but this ideal was completed only by converting the entire world to Christianity. In conceiving of God as the Father, Christ transformed humanity into a single family.

The phrase "spirit of God" existed before Christ. It was precisely this spirit of God that inspired the ancient prophets. But this spirit had not yet become the spirit of these prophets, it did not form their personalities (*jinkaku*). This spirit was thus transitory; it did not make them call upon God as the Father in Heaven. It was thus not a spirit of fraternity that looked upon all people equally. But Christ's spirit made him call God as the Father and to look upon all people with equal compassion. Nay, it made him gladly accept sacrificing himself for all humanity. That spirit thus completes the personality (*jinkaku*) of Christ and therefore cannot be called anything other than the spirit of Christ.

The spirit of Christ—in other words, the spread of Christianity throughout the world—was thus a necessary corollary to the completion of Christ's personal character. When in interpreting the thought of Martin Luther, Ebina wrote that, "*Faith is assimilation* [emphasis in original]. Faith assimilates people into Christ and Christ into people,"[11] he was also effectively summing up his own interpretation of Christianity as a religion founded by Christ, but completed by his believers.

In making Christ out to be an avatar (*bunshin*) of God, Ebina felt that Trinitarian doctrine undermined the fundamental insight of personal character by turning this unity

[9] Ebina Danjō, "Sanmi Ittai no Kyōgi to Yo ga Shukyōteki Ishiki," reprinted in *Kindai Nihon Kirisutokyō Meicho Senshū, Vol. 4* (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Senta, 2002) 40
[10] Ebina, ""Sanmi Ittai no Kyōgi to Yo ga Shukyōteki Ishiki," 42
[11] Ibid., 152

into an arbitrary and one-time occurrence, or "a mere play in which God imitated man."[12] For Ebina, it was precisely the historical Christ who opened up the possibility of man's unity with God. Early Christians, he explained, thought of humanity as being in a fallen condition and thus easily imagined that Christ's model personality was that of a "second Adam," harkening back to before man's fall from grace. However, Ebina continued, "being born in an age that has discovered the law of human evolution, we understand that [such a] model man would not exist in the beginning, but rather would manifest [himself] within history."[13] Ebina remained sure that the original intent of the apostles was to illuminate the Christian principle of man's unity with God. Like all religious doctrine, the trinity represented the historical crystallization of a certain period of religious thought. it was thus not to be confused with the life of Christ himself. Its chief failing was that it blocked the Christian church's path to further evolution.

Ebina's conception of personal character revealed that there was a social dimension to the individual conscience. "I hold," Ebina summed up his theology, "that the fundamental principle of Christianity is none other than the public spirit of justice and the spirit of fraternity and compassion; it is the spirit of the victorious who courageously struggle to conquer the natural world and destroy the power of sin."[14] At the same time, however, Ebina's notion of personal character was essentially apolitical. The ideal of unity with God, while calling for relentless engagement with society, offered no basis upon which to critique the political order of things.

If Christianity in late Meiji Japan no longer offered the possibility of grounding political critique in a transcendent ideal, at Tokyo Imperial, political science was finding an institutional foundation through seminars taught there by Onozuka Kiheiji. Like Ebina, Onozuka also used personal character as a central concept. However, Onozuka sought the significance of personal character not in its assimilative potential in society, but as a justification for the coercive character of the state.

In his maiden work, *Outline of Political Science* (*seijigaku taikō,* 1903), Onozuka provided an important theoretical foundation for establishing the independence of political science (*seijigaku*) from the "state science" (*kokkagaku* or Staatslehre) that had been selectively imported from Germany and that held predominant sway over Tokyo Imperial's Law Department. Onozuka's reasoning for distinguishing between these two categories of learning is instructive.

For example, if we consider the legal science (*hōritsugaku*) of constitutional studies to be like an explanation of the structure of a steam engine, then the view of the constitution in political science would be like an explanation of the foundations of [that steam engine's] function and

[12] Ibid., 42
[13] Ibid., 44
[14] Ebina, *Kirisutokyō no Hongi* (Tokyo: Hidaka Yurindō,1903) 234

motive power. The constitutions of each country are absolutely not systematic units made according to the arbitrary wills of legal scholars. They are the product of particular political circumstances; they are the result of struggle between different kinds of political forces; they are the historical crystallization of the political lives of the people. If one wishes to know the true meaning of a constitution then one must know not to be satisfied with juridical research alone.

Paraphrasing Marx, one might say here that Onozuka's insight was that men make their own constitutions, only not as they please, but according to circumstances transmitted from the past. Constitutions, like history itself, were constantly evolving according to the "trend of the times" (*jisei*). "Pure" theoretical studies of government institutions told scholars what the state had been in the past, but "applied" political science was necessary to explain what the state ought to become in the future. Hence, constitutional governments could not be understood only as an abstract set of institutions but had to be studied empirically in terms of their concrete functioning in society.

Inherent in Onozuka's political science was a critique of the organic theory of state that had become hegemonic at Tokyo Imperial. By effectively making the state the brain of the social organism, Onozuka argued, organic theories reduced society and its constituent individuals to a state of passivity whose only function was to obey, hence illegitimately promoting an "extreme ideology of state omnipotence" (*kyokutan naru kokka bannōshugi*) at the expense of obfuscating the intrinsic connection between political education and national strength.[15] Instead, he argued that the state needed to be understood in terms of it social function, which lay in the coercive authority of the law.[16] Allowing the law to become its own justification meant ascribing to the state an *a priori* character that by definition it could not possess. Rather it was the law's power to compel that stood in need of justification. To quote Onozuka, "In any society, the state finds its defining characteristic in its existence as a ruling organization and hence the state's *raison d'etre* is ultimately a defense of it existence as a coercive organization. Or, conversely, it is an interpretation of the fact that each individual has a duty to obey the compulsion of the state."[17]

What, then, was the justification for the state's existence? Onozuka's answer lay in the competition for survival. Societies, he explained, needed the coercive power of the state to develop it power to compete alongside other nations. The object of the state (*kokka no mokuteki*) was originally to secure the power and legal authority necessary to ensure the nation's survival and ultimately to promote the development of society. And because society needed the state, so too did the individual, who depended, after all, upon membership in society for survival. Here, however, Onozuka noted that any justification

[15] Ibid., 95
[16] Ibid., 89
[17] Onozuka, *SeijigakuTaikō, Vol. 2*, 7

of the state to the individual necessarily presumed society as a universal premise of concern. Of those who would nihilistically reject membership in society, Onozuka concluded that "all one can do is to lament that we lack any premise upon which to discuss things together." The individual's need for the state was thus premised not only upon the need to survive but also a responsibility to develop oneself. "The individual," Onozuka observed, "has a duty to himself to develop his worth and evolve his individual character (*jinkaku o shinka seshimeru*)."[18]

For Onozuka, the recognition of individual personality (*jinkaku*) was thus an important premise of politics. "Nations," Onozuka explained, "that recognize a certain degree of individual personality (*jinkaku*) in its people and allow them a voice in the political application of the law are called civilized and enlightened."[19] And the political form that such "civilized and enlightened" nations took was that of constitutional government. "The spirit common to all constitutional governments," he writes, "is that, unlike the intolerance of state institutions in despotic nations, they are more concessional and compromising. [Constitutional governments] recognize the political personality (*seijiteki jinkaku*) of each of its country's individuals and respect their will."[20] Although each nation's constitution reflected the traits of the nation it represented, all constitutions were bound together by their common respect for the individualities of their people.

This did not mean, however, that constitutional government represented a recognition of popular sovereignty. Constitutions, Onozuka explained, imposed no limit on the state's prerogative to coerce, but instead provided a framework in which the role of coercion within society could be clarified and increasingly specialized, thus protecting individuals from arbitrary and despotic uses of state authority. Onozuka thus considered the individual to be the subject not of national sovereignty, but of state policy (*seisaku*), which he defined as the sum total of actions taken on the part of government and people to achieve the objects of state. It was in the interaction between these two parties, and not in an abstract theory of state, that the ideals of politics to be sought. Policies were ideal insofar as they were oriented toward the future achievement of state objectives, but realistic insofar as they were premised in the facts of the present. "The true statesman," Onozuka writes, "will neither be simply an intellectual nor a strongman, but will harmonize ideal with reality."

The people's political education, far from being a threat to the nation's survival, was absolutely essential to the development of national strength. Onozuka's methodology counters the assumption that higher learning by stressing the relative character of learning. "*Learning*," Onozuka emphasized, "*refers to the systemic whole of knowledge*

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[18] Ibid., 13-24
[19] Ibid., 24
[20] Ibid., 132

that is precise (emphasis in original). Because the meaning of precise is always relative, the boundaries of learning are not absolute. There is no constant, unchanging dividing line between learning and knowledge that is not yet learning. We simply include knowledge that we consider relatively developed in learning as a matter of convenience." Far from being separated from the affairs of everyday life, academic knowledge was rather deeply embedded in the institutional evolution of society. "Put simply, although constitutional polities are highly beneficial for the people's development, a condition of their normal functioning normal is the existence of a people with an already high level of knowledge."[21]

Both Ebina's and Onozuka's views of personal character may be read as relativist narratives of social evolution. For both, personal character provided a means to formulate a view of history that posited an autonomous role (whether spiritual or political) for the individual within a changing order of things. However, whereas Ebina located the significance of personal character within the assimilative (i.e. spiritual) character of society, for Onozuka, personal character took on its importance with respect the coercive nature of the state.

To get a sense of how Yoshino combined these two influences in his own scholarship, let us now turn our attention to his doctoral dissertation, "The Foundations of Hegelian Legal Philosophy," (*Hegeru no Hōritsu Tetsugaku no Kiso*) written in 1904 under the direction of the conservative legal scholar, Hozumi Nobushige (1855-1926). We shall see that, Yoshino used Hegelian dialectic as a vehicle through which to synthesize Ebina's and Onozuka's respective views of personal character, while at the same time tempering their views of social evolution with a more complex view of historical identity.

Dialectic and Political Backwardness: The Intellectual Origins of Yoshino Sakuzo

In his dissertation, Yoshino identifies Hegelian dialectic's revelation of the immanent unity shared between subjective consciousness (spirit) on the one hand and the existence of concrete phenomena on the other as an advance over the abstraction of Kantian idealism. Hegel's philosophy is monistic, Yoshino observes, but it is not a monism that posits a transcendent principle standing neutral above the worlds of consciousness and phenomenon. Rather, dialectic subsists as the tension between these two worlds, providing a unity within difference (*sabetsu*) which Hegel recognizes as an "undeveloped principle of unity (*mihatten no tōitsu genri*)." Hence, all objects (*mono*) were a contradictory synthesis of their static and dynamic states, simultaneously in a state of being as well as becoming something else (*hoka no mono*). In illuminating this point, it

[21] Ibid., 136

will be useful here to present Yoshino's summary of Hegelian philosophy in his own words.

If we look broadly at the universe, it is itself one big idea. The individual things in the universe are each elements of this great idea and thus nothing more than abstract concepts. Therefore there can be no true ideas that exist outside of the universe. But though these individual things that are parts of the universe are nothing more than abstract concepts, if we observe each of these parts apart from the whole universe, because each of them is also a synthetic idea made up of a thesis and antithesis, we ought not see any impossibility in contrasting them with that big idea *as little provisional ideas.* Hegel's use of the word "idea" carries both of these meanings. Therefore, his use of the word "philosophy" also correspondingly carries two meanings. When philosophy is considered as the study of ideas, then because there are no *true ideas* outside of the universal whole, there can be no *true philosophy* other than the fundamental investigation of the entire universe. But just as each part of the entire universe is called an idea, so is the investigation of the little idea that is the part [of the universe] also called philosophy. Thus legal philosophy, philosophy of history and philosophy of religion are all nothing other than little ideas.[22]

Applied to legal philosophy—the subject of Yoshino's dissertation—this insight meant that the idea of "law" included both the natural law of human desire, by itself undifferentiated from animal desire, and the statutory law of the nation-state. For Hegel, Yoshino explained, both "laws" were dialectically connected as necessary moments in the development of free will. The will to satisfy the multiple arbitrary desires arising out of nature inevitably required suppressing certain desires in favor of fulfilling others, ultimately resulting in a self-discipline that ultimately amounted to a willing of self-consciousness into existence and hence also of a will free from the rule of desire. The state, then, became the externalized form (what Hegel and Yoshino refer to as the "objective spirit") of this disciplined will.

For Yoshino, Hegelian dialectic thus revealed the organic unity of coercion and freedom that was inherent in the law. Echoing Ebina's explanation of the dual character of Christ "as a man before God and God before man," Yoshino explained that, when seen from the point of view of the "greater self" (*taiga*), the state was "a right and a freedom," but meant "duty and obedience" when viewed from the "lesser self" (*shōga*) of the individual will. Hence, Yoshino concludes, the essence of the state's coercive character lies precisely in its assimilation of the individual.

True freedom exists in the assimilation of the smaller self into the greater self. Because the state is, in other words, the state is where true freedom is realized and the essence of the individual is completed.[23]

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[22] Yoshino, "Hegeru no Hōritsu Tetsugaku no Kiso," in *Yoshino Sakuzo Senshu* (hereafter YSS), Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995) 39

[23] Ibid., 74

For Yoshino, the payoff in this reading of Hegel lay in its application to the study of politics. Utilitarian philosophers such as Bentham and J.S. Mill could only conceive of the state as a necessary evil. For them, politics thus became a mere instrument of the individual in choosing among the least of these evils. Yoshino noted that political philosophy took a major step forward with Rousseau, who revealed that in entering into a social contract each individual exchanged natural freedom in order to gain political freedom. Yet for Rousseau too politics ultimately remained a mere tool for the individual to gain freedom; Kant and Fichte too remained essentially indebted to this view of the social contract. Hegel alone had recognized politics *qua* politics, as an essential process through which free will was consummated as nationalism.

Historians have sometimes disagreed over whether Yoshino may be considered a Hegelian thinker. Although Yoshino's dissertation is an indispensable starting point for understanding his thought, his later analyses of Japanese politics seem to owe more to his unusual powers of pragmatic observation than to any overarching philosophical commitment. The crucial question would thus seem to be what Yoshino took away from Hegel in coming to terms with the intellectual environment of late Meiji Japan. One way of answering this question is to suggest that Yoshino discovered in Hegel an ideal means of synthesizing his two most important influences, Ebina and Onozuka. Consider, for example, the passage below.

> [I]s the assimilation of objective [i.e. national] spirit with individual spirit accomplished without the slightest difficulty? ...People have bodies that are natural and material and so they are constantly driven by animalistic desires that make them prone to injure their originally free existence. Thus if people are to complete their character they must be led by the light of reason, control their natural desires (in other words, their individual wills) and thus produce a truly free will. Therefore the assimilation of objective spirit with individual spirit seems easy, but is in fact seen only after several struggles between the two have been fought. Our objective spirit is actually the war record of this struggle.[24]

The assimilation of individual wills into a greater national will was something that required ceaseless effort and struggle to overcome petty egoism. The coercive nature of the state thus had a fundamentally assimilative function to play. The state was the aspect of national life that forced people to be free; conversely, it was also what gave the individual the freedom to be himself.

However, there is also apparent in Yoshino's use of dialectic a foundational commitment to conceiving of the nation organically— a reflection perhaps of his Christian faith, but more certainly a consequence of his studies at Tokyo Imperial —that

[24] Ibid., 68

differentiates him from Onozuka's anti-organic use of social evolution. As Yoshino points out in his dissertation, dialectic did not explain how entities evolved from the simple to the complex, it recognized the organic identity shared between simple and complex. The fundamental movement of dialectic was thus not a temporal one but that of a perpetual "returning into self" (*jiko fukki*). When Yoshino writes in his dissertation that "freedom is the freedom to be oneself," he is paraphrasing Hegel, but also stating an article of spiritual faith that would profoundly shape his view of politics. Conceived of as dialectic, national organicism recognized both the individual and the state as necessary moments of a single spiritual unity.

> The individual life does not exist apart from society or the state. We cannot imagine an individual's freedom or independence entirely transcending all social interaction. Individual freedom and individual independence can thus be understood in a relative sense, but if we hold that they should be understood in an absolute sense, we cannot but doubt whether this would convey the whole truth…The various theories that take the absolute freedom of the individual as their premise not only risk mistaking the essence of what the individual is but also tend to be merely mechanistic in their explanations of the state.[25]

Hence, neither the state nor the individual could be understood in isolation from one another. Any view of society that did not take this axiomatic principle into account risked devolving into a narrowly mechanical explanation of society. If Onozuka attempted to free social evolution from the false holism of national organicism, Yoshino, consciously or not, divorced national organicism from social evolution's spiritless determinism. What Yoshino ultimately discovered in Hegelian dialectic, then, was a means through which to translate his Christian individualism into political science. The national community, his logic suggested, completed but did not determine individual morality. The result was a unique relativism that was rooted in the influences of Ebina and Onozuka but also went beyond them by providing a means of understanding historical identity in terms that were not unilinear. This led him to emphasize the importance of gradual transformation and to characterize historical identity as an external form stressing the individual's capacity to exercise critical faculties within the bounds of that identity.[26] This is a view that, we shall see below, is crucial for understanding not only Yoshino's interpretation of democracy in Japan, but also of his critique of Japan's colonial rule in Korea.

So how did Yoshino envision his academic breakthrough translated into political practice? His answer to this question, published in a separate essay, "The Current Circumstances of Constitutional Government in our Country" (*Honpō Rikken Seiji no Genjō*), required the institution of constitutional government. And, as with Onozuka,

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[25] Ibid., 73
[26] Ibid., 74

Yoshino also made his argument for constitutional government not from the viewpoint of limiting government powers—i.e., through the recognition of popular sovereignty—but rather from that of achieving the state objectives (*kokka no mokuteki*) of securing the nation's survival and development (*seizon hattatsu*). What Yoshino added to Onozuka's views, however, was an important historical question: How had constitutional governments come about in the first place? Onozuka had already hinted at this line of inquiry when he stressed the importance of studying empirical conditions for political science, but Yoshino particularly made the historical genesis of constitutions into a critical key in understanding their contemporary function. Constitutional governments, Yoshino explained, were the result of democratic movements formed to oppose despotic government. Yet each constitutional government assumed a different form based on the respective history of its nation. "True," Yoshino explained,

> constitutional systems are born as the result of democratic movements. But the forms of constitutional systems that result from democratic movements are not all the same. In a country such as France, where democracy was advocated radically, a democratic republic that entirely overturned monarchic authority was established, but in the various monarchical countries where arguments for democracy were satisfied to impose certain limits on monarchical authority, political power has not been given over entirely to the people, and there is still room between the monarch and the people to struggle over political power. As a result, clever politicians skillfully deceive the people and keep political power in their own hands, leaving to the people below only the passive right to consent." Isn't recent political history in Germany an excellent example of this [pattern]? [27] Recent events in our own country strikingly resemble [this pattern] too.

This latter form of government was known as transcendental government. By itself, Yoshino explained, transcendentalism was not a cause of concern, as it could be permitted as a temporary measure in circumstances where the people and Diet were incapable of governing responsibly. In Japan's case, Yoshino felt that fifteen years of constitutional government had amply demonstrated that the people were not yet capable of understanding politics as anything other than the narrow pursuit of private interest, a defect which he considered to be disqualifying. But how was Japan to transition out of the stage of transcendental consitutional government? The form of constitutional government in Japan, like that of other countries, had been shaped by its history. The Meiji Restoration, which Yoshino called "the construction of the New Japan," had been, carried out without the "the slightest iota of private interest," by the domains of Satsuma and Chōshū, a fact evidenced by the Five Article Charter Oath's commitment to public discussion. The Meiji state, however, had quickly devolved into the private possession of this factional group. There had been a democratic movement in Japan, but because many

[27] Yoshino, "Honpō Rikken Seiji no Genjō," in *YSS*, 13-14

of its leaders were former Bakufu loyalists, the struggle for constitutional government was never purely a movement against despotism, but also a power struggle between competing factions. Moreover, what had led to the promulgation of the Meiji constitution was not this democratic movement but the inevitable "trend of world circumstances" (*sekai no taisei*).[28] The "trend of the world" had thus problematically substituted for a genuine democratic movement in Japan. The fact that constitutional government had been realized in Japan through external circumstances rather than through a homegrown democratic movement was critical for Yoshino's diagnosis of the dysfunctionality of Japanese politics. The result was a seemingly interminable cul-de-sac in which constitutional government was used perversely to further the interests of class politics.

> Right now our country is in the hands of factional cliques. Although this [condition] does not merit deep concern as transcendental government may be recognized as a temporary and transitional system, in fact, as a matter of principle, the factional government wielding political authority does not wish political power to return broadly to the people and expends every effort to block the development of democratic movements in the name of constitutionalism, while in fact they regress into class politics. Is this not truly a great crisis of constitutionalism? Moreover, they use the ignorance of the so-called nobility (*kazoku*) to inculcate them with anti-democratic thought and make them feel as though they are special class above the common people. [29]

Yet, in spite of this penetrating critique, Yoshino could not bring himself to argue for an expansion of the voting franchise to bring an end of transcendentalism. His only answer was to lamely exhort Japan's cabinet and the diet to each do their utmost to prepare the way for an eventual end to transcendental politics. In short, Yoshino was stumped.

To leave the matter there, however, would be to miss an important point. The organic state that Yoshino described in his dissertation was not, as much scholarship at Tokyo Imperial tended to see it, a metaphysical a priori, but a realizable ideal that had to be constantly struggled for. In reading Yoshino's first published essay, one gets a keen sense of the enormous burden of responsibility he felt to help achieve this ideal in Japan.

The Idealism of Praxis: Yoshino Sakuzo and Minponshugi

The burden Yoshino felt was hardly one that he shared alone. Indeed, it may be argued that the nationalism of the Meiji period was broadly premised on the notion of a shared commitment between state and public to work to overcome the perceived condition of Japan's backwardness with respect to the "advanced" West. One of the results of this

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., 15-16

common perception was that, by the middle of the Meiji period, the nation (*minzoku*) was increasingly conceived of in holistic terms that stressed—in form, if not in substance—the prerogative of ethnic solidarity over self interest. Such national holism was given state sanction through the notion of a national polity (*kokutai*) based on an unbroken imperial lineage thought to be coeval with the Japanese nation itself. *Kokutai* could be defined narrowly to signify a legacy of political stability founded on Japan's imperial house, but could also be used far more broadly to signify that the Japanese emperor represented the sum expression of his people's national identity. Hence, we might say that the common conundrum that Yoshino and other liberals faced was that of how to formulate an autonomous popular role in the national project of overcoming backwardness without in the process upsetting the state-sanctioned equation of individual with national interest.

It was only with the Russo-Japanese War and the emergence of Japan as a world power that this formula showed signs of disintegrating. Until the late Meiji period, Japan had been held together by the common goal of achieving parity with the West; after 1905, no such goal could be identified. As Oka Yoshitake points out, because the sense of crisis that had dominated Japan was "deeply rooted and pervasive," "the reaction against it," which took the form of an unprecedented assertion of individualism, "also harbored a certain passionate intensity." But it was not only that the external threat of Western imperialism had subsided. There was also an internal logic to the fragmenting of Meiji nationalism. Social life in Japan was becoming increasingly socialized. Success and individualism, although they had earlier been advocated as necessary elements of nationalism, were now becoming conspicuous as values in and of themselves.

For government officials and conservative ideologues these were indeed trends to be viewed with alarm. The government issued the Boshin Rescript to remind the Japanese people of their duty as subjects to advance the glory of the imperial house. Tokutomi Sohō ,in his "Taishō Youth and the Future of the [Japanese] Empire" (*Taishō Seinen to Teikoku no Zento*), traced the rise and decline of what he saw as the great spiritual unity that had defined the Meiji period. Both parties equated the decline of statist ideology with the corruption of national morality.

By contrast, Japanese liberals (many of them also Christian) not only found much to celebrate in the new culture of individualism, but could also see in it the completion of the ideal of constructing a new morality for Japan that would replace the outmoded warrior ethic (*bushidō*). Such liberals reasoned that now that the Japan's period of crisis had abated, it was normal for the previous ideal of self-sacrifice for the nation to give way to more naturalistic feelings of self-interest; private interest, it thus turned out, was not so far removed from the individual conscience. For example, Ukita Kazutami, the Waseda University professor and a Christian, specifically argued that constitutional government could only succeed in Japan by basing itself upon the "absolute value"

(*zettaiteki kachi*) of personal character (*jinkaku*). For Japanese liberals, the emergence of the private individual could be seen as the fulfillment, not the contradiction, of the ideal of national morality.[30]

However, the receding fortunes of statist ideology were visible not only in the heightened sense of individualism amongst an emergent middle class, but also in the eruption of mass political protests. The anti-treaty protests following the Russo-Japanese War as well as the constitutional protection and anti-corruption protests at the beginning of the Taisho period each erupted in the streets of Tokyo and all turned violent. Such incidents revealed that, when it came to political conflict, Japanese liberals were less willing to separate themselves from the broad spirit of consensus that they associated with the Meiji period.[31] For example, Ukita, despite his belief in the need for the further development of constitutional government in Japan, could not approve of the use of "irrational" demonstrations to influence the operations of politics. A liberal such as Hayashi Kiroku, on the other hand could embrace the demonstrations as an auspicious sign that the masses of Japanese people had awakened to see the connection between politics and their own lives. Here too, however, liberal intellectuals had to walk a fine line between advocating an expansion of the franchise and claiming popular sovereignty, a view seen to violate Japan's emperor-centered *kokutai*. Hence, to advocate the inclusion of mass politics in Japan was not only to question political orthodoxy, but also to risk heresy. Such heresy in imperial Japan was commonly referred to as "harmful thought" (*kiken shisō*), a term which, like *kokutai*, could be defined narrowly to refer to radical ideologies (e.g., socialism or anarchism, later also communism) calling for the abolition of private property or far more broadly (and tautologically) to include any intellectual activity seen to go against the grain of Japan's *kokutai*. Let us observe here that following the execution of the anarchist Kōtoku Shūsui in the so-called "Treason Incident," the boundaries of "harmful thought" were blurrier than ever.

Hence, between the perception of the uncouthness of mass politics on the one hand and the reality of state suppression on the other, liberals faced a substantial challenge in imagining a viable framework in which their own ideals could be made consistent with the practice of mass politics. It is in this context that I would like to discuss Yoshino's role in imagining the role of constitutional government in Japan. As we shall see, one of Yoshino's most important contributions to Japanese liberal discourse on mass politics in

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[30] Oka Yoshitake, "Generational Conflict after the Russo-Japanese War," in *Conflict in Modern Japanese History*, ed. Tetsuo Najita and Victor Koschmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982) and Harry Harootunian, "The Sense of an Ending and the Problem of Taishō," in *Japan in Crisis*, ed. Harootunian and Bernard Silberman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974) 3-28

[31] Peter Duus, "Liberal Intellectuals and Social Conflict in Taishō Japan," in *Conflict in Modern Japanese History*, 412-440

Japan was to use the concept of personal character as a means to imagine how the Taishō ideal of individual morality could act as a means of disciplining mass politics.

In a sense, Yoshino's response to the mass demonstrations in Tokyo was of a piece with much of Japanese liberal discourse. Like other Japanese liberals, he characterized the demonstrations as symptomatic of the failure of constitutional government in Japan and castigated the absence of transparency in Japanese politics. The wrinkle in his approach, however, lay in his highlighting of the spiritual dimension hidden behind these seemingly institutional matters. In the absence of popular participation in politics, government lacked transparency (*kōmei seidai*) and thus remained unable to hold itself to the highest moral standard. "No matter what," Yoshino concluded, "this kind of back room politics (*anshitsu seiji*) must be destroyed. And in order to destroy it, there is no other choice other than to borrow the power of the masses." Although it may have vexed Yoshino that the Japanese people were still politically immature, he no longer saw this as an obstacle to their participation in government. It was unreasonable, he explained, to rely upon the people to exercise sound political judgment in their election of public officials. Political opinion (*seiken*) was, after all, a relative matter, something constantly fluctuating according to changing circumstances.
If so, Yoshino queried,

> what is the minimum that maybe expected of [the people]? It is their judgment of personal character. In other words, the people must judge who amongst the competing candidates is the most admirable, most trustworthy, and the most worthy of trusting national affairs to. Thus, no matter what the people's [ability] to judge political nuance may be, if they can judge the authenticity of character and detest the false and join sides with what is honorable and understand and sympathize with all that is right, then this more than sufficient for the practice of mass politics. When seen from this point of view, although there is, of course, still some cause for regret, we cannot say that the Japanese people are unqualified to practice mass politics.[32]

Personal character, then, constituted the spiritual undercurrent of modern politics. This was an argument that was also deeply rooted in his belief—first articulated, as we have seen, in his doctoral dissertation—in the assimilative function of politics. Yoshino saw in the ability of American politicians to appeal to the laboring classes an extension of the Puritan will to maintain their way of life and to assimilate into it the waves of immigrants that followed them. Against this ideal type of American politician, Yoshino compared unfavorably neighboring Mexico, where he argued that, because assimilation had failed, the nation's politicians had always come from among the lower immigrant classes.[33] Thus, while it might seem to Japanese observers that American politicians pandered to

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[32] Yoshino, "Minshūteki Jii Undō o Ronzu," in *YSS, Vol. 3*, 26
[33] Yoshino, "Kensei no Hongi o Toite Sono Yushu no Bi o Sumasu no Michi o Ronzu," in *YSS,Vol.2*, 7-10

the narrow interests of lower class voters, what was really happening was that voters were selecting their political leaders by identifying with their personal character. Hence, it was precisely the element of transparency in electoral politics that had produced such "one-of-a-kind heroes" (*kōsei eiyu*) as Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson.

It was on this basis that Yoshino rejected the argument that mass politics represented a violation of Japan's national identity (*kokutai*) as an archaic notion that cast the relationship between state and people in conflictual terms. "To make the argument," he wrote, "that mass politics does not fit Japan's *kokutai* is a specious reasoning held over from the past that divides monarch and people into enemies and allies and that places an aristocracy between them as [the emperor's] line of defense against the people."[34] In place of this conflict-ridden definition of politics Yoshino substituted one in which the middle and upper classes provided moral-spiritual leadership to its lower class constituencies. "It is my thought," Yoshino wrote, "that the best politics is an aristocratic politics that takes mass politics as its base."[35] In other words, it was the role of a social elite to both discipline and assimilate the moral energies of mass politics.

Yoshino's argument for mass politics, however, represented more than a belated development of his dissertation thesis. It was also an active engagement with the new view of personal character as a private value forming a necessary basis for modern politics. Indeed, despite the numerous references to personal character in the writings of Ebina and Onozuka, one sees only sporadic references to this keyword during Yoshino's early years as an intellectual. It took the Taisho atmosphere of individualism to unlock the potential for political criticism implicit in Yoshino's reading of Hegelian dialectic. At the same time, however it was arguably Yoshino's particular academic background that set him apart as an interpreter of mass politics in Japan.

Thus, personal character (*jinkaku*) relativized without displacing the place of national identity (*minzoku*) within the state-defined ideal of *kokutai*. Yoshino thus agreed with conservatives that the nation's historical identity did provide a normative foundation to its political life, but he did not accept that that identity determined politics absolutely. To the contrary, politics for Yoshino represented the essential means to activate and further develop upon this cultural identity. From Yoshino's point of view, then, the practice of mass politics became a means of furthering, rather than undermining, the organic unity of the nation. Yoshino justified this vision of politics by raising the example of England. "In England," Yoshino noted, "those engaged in politics all come from the aristocratic classes socially, morally and intellectually. They lead the nation with their character and knowledge and engage in politics by absolutely not ignoring the people's feelings and by

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[34] Yoshino, "Minshūteki Jii Undō o Ronzu," 23
[35] Ibid., 33

observing the demand that lies at the bottom of them."[36] The practice of politics was thus the crucial means to realizing the ideal of national unity.

But who, then, were the "men of character" (*jinkakusha*) who would lead politics in Japan? And where would they come from? Yoshino's answer was to look to the emerging middle class in Japan.

> So to which class among the nation should we make our appeal to? It goes without saying that this must be the middle class. The upper and middle classes are not in actuality producers of transparent thought. What is called democratic politics seems to take the common people as its political center, but while it is based formally on the pretense that the general masses rule, in fact, the public opinion of a healthy middle class that on the one hand leads those charged with politics and, on the other, lead the lower classes spiritually… Fortunately, our country is a nation with a comparatively healthy middle class society.[37]

Yet where Japan unquestionably compared unfavorably with the West was in its irreligious character. Religious influence, Yoshino believed, provided the political ideals that made possible a The ability to judge personal character had to have a religious foundation. The lack of religious influence in Japan undercut the possibility of interclass sympathy. Yoshino noted that And lest there be any misunderstanding what religion Yoshino intended, he concluded by writing, "Let me add here that it [ought to be] clear from the many examples from Europe and America I have raised plus the fact that I myself am a Christian that what I have obliquely been calling religion here is [meant to refer to] Christianity. I cannot think that Shinto or Buddhism can contribute to politics the capabilities which I have been speaking of."[38]

Such, then, was Yoshino's immediate reaction to the emergence of mass politics in Japan. He had yet, however, to spell out this view as a theory of constitutional government. This was crucial for him to do, particularly in light of the Meiji Constitution's very explicit assignment of political sovereignty to the Japanese emperor. Two years later, in his landmark article, "An Explanation of the Principle of Constitutional Government and an Argument for How to Perfect It" (*kensei no hongi o toite sono yūshū no bi o sumasu no michi o ronzu*), Yoshino introduced his trademark notion of *minponshugi* (commonly translated as the people-as-the-base-ism) as an interpretation of constitutional democracy in Japan. "Democracy," Yoshino explained, was often used in Europe and America to mean either that "state sovereignty lies legally with the people" or, alternatively, that "the object of sovereign acts of state lies politically with the people." Yoshino observed that while the latter interpretation, which he dubbed

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Yoshino, "Kokusai Kyōsō Bari ni okeru Saigo no Shōri," in *YSS*, Vol. 4, 92
[38] Yoshino, "Seiji ni tai suru Shūkyō no Shimei," in *YSS*, Vol. 3, 45-58

minponshugi, was consistent with Japan's constitutional framework, the former clearly violated the principle of imperial rule, and thus in the context of Japan "harmful thought," and thus rightly suppressed as such. Yoshino used the example of socialism to illustrate this point.

> On this point, I think that, although we regret somewhat that our country's institutions interfere recklessly with academic research into socialism, which carries with it not the least bit of danger, we must assent more or less to the considerably severe restrictions placed on the actual socialist movement. This is because it is clear from examples from various countries that the socialist movement is usually accompanied by the harmful thought (*kiken shisō*) of the democratic republic. Is it not a fact that the Kōtoku faction behind the Treason Incident came from out of the socialist movement? This is a point that requires the deep caution of those who would seriously study socialism. In sum, when the essence of the state is thought of in philosophical terms and it is abstractly concluded that national sovereignty belongs to the people, it is inevitable that democracy will be viewed as harmful and excluded from a country like our own. [39]

Thus, socialism was harmful not because of its specific tenets (these could be studied to beneficial effect), but because it advocated in absolute terms the identification of political sovereignty with the people, thus leading to radical behavior going against the historical grain of the Japanese nation. Hence, by accepting the category of "harmful thought," Yoshino was able to delimit its application so as to rule out the possibility of its being confused with *minponshugi*. As Yoshino himself acknowledged, the vocabulary of *minponshugi* was by no means original to himself; it had already been used by conservative legal scholars such as Uesugi Shinkichi. However, whereas Uesugi used *minponshugi* as a means to set Japan's constitution apart as unique from those of other nations, Yoshino used it to signify that Japan's constitution, while summing up what was unique to Japan's identity, belonged to the broader stream of modern political thought. The argument that Japan's *kokutai* exempted it from the political norms of constitutional government thus did not apply.

At another level, however, the concept of *minponshugi* also allowed Yoshino to point out that the quality of constitutional government was not only a question of its institutions (*seido*) but also of its operation (*unyō*) in the life of a people. In Japan, Yoshino pointed out, the narrow identification of constitutional government with its institutions had led to an unreasonable expectation that the constitution itself represented a glorious endpoint, soon to be followed by the arrival of a golden age. Here Yoshino uses the language of backwardness more clearly than in his earlier essay on constitutional government in Japan. The weak moral foundation underlying constitutional government was, he observes, a characteristic common to "late-developing" or "backwards" nations

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[39] Yoshino, "Kensei no Hongi o Toite Sono Yushu no Bi o Sumasu no Michi o Ronzu," in YSS, Vol.3, 23

(*kōshinkoku*). Here again, Yoshino notes that late-developing nations had introduced constitutional government not in response to the evolution of the consciousness of popular rights (*minken shisō*) at home, but to the equally pressing impetus of "trend of the world" (*sekai no taisei*). But the establishment of constitutional government represented not an endpoint, but rather a point of departure. the "completion of constitutional government (*kensei no yūshū o nasu)* "What is called constitutional government," Yoshino explained, "begins by enacting a constitution, but…to bring it to completion in fact requires the greatest efforts and struggle on the part of the nation. That a constitution cannot be brought to completion all at once may well be the crucial value (*arigatami*) of constitutional government."[40] In other words, the framework of constitutional government provided a means to discipline and develop the nation's spiritual energies. A constitution was thus not a destination in of itself, but a compass by which the nation could direct its moral energies in accordance with its spiritual identity.

It will be useful here to put Yoshino's argument in the context of his intellectual origins. The notion that constitutional government had to be understood both in terms of its institutions and its operation may be traced back to Onozuka's political science. But the spiritual interpretation Yoshino gave this notion by pointing out making the operation of constitutional politics was itself the means of perfecting constitutional government owes much to Ebina's theology. In this sense, constitutional government acted as a substitute for Christianity in providing a spiritual foundation to national politics. Hence, the operation of constitutional government made the difference between advanced and backwards countries a relative rather than absolute one. From this point of view, the particular historical genesis of a country's constitutional government need not be considered determinative of its character.

As a political critic, Yoshino has been both admired as a canny pragmatist as well as criticized as a naïve idealist. One might split the difference between these two views here by seeing Yoshino's view of Japanese politics as essentially academic. At a time when mass politics seemed capable of destabilizing Japan's national unity, Yoshino interpreted Japan's constitution along lines consistent with what its Meiji-era framers had intended: as a spiritual axis turning political practice into an alchemic means of realizing the ideal of national organic unity. In so doing, he made constitutional government the critical fulcrum through which Japan might escape from the dilemma of late development. From our perspective, this suggests an interesting question: How, then, did Yoshino view Japan's colonial rule over Korea, for which there was no constitutional basis? It is to this question that we shall turn our attention below.

Jinkaku and Assimilation

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[40] Ibid., 21

We have argued above that Yoshino's interpretation of Japanese politics owes much to the assimilationism of his spiritual mentor Ebina. In spite of this intellectual debt, however, Yoshino became well known during the first decade of Japan's colonial rule in Korea as a critic of assimilationist policy. As far as I am aware, Yoshino first makes this critique in 1914, in a review of the writings of the pro-imperialist journalist Tokutomi Soho (the subject of Chapter Five). The passage below will suffice to summarize Yoshino's critique.

> You…say that our country is a nationalistic nation (*minzokuteki kokka*), and that this is a characteristic in which [we are] superior to other countries. That our Japanese empire stands upon the firmest of national bonds (*mottomo kakko naru minzokuteki kessoku*) is a characteristic to be proud of, one in which we surpass other nations. Thus as the Japanese empire advances toward the four corners [of the world] and absorbs the foreign peoples of China and Korea, not only are the core bonds of the empire undisturbed, but [we exercise] a highly potent assimilative force upon these nations (*sono minzoku*). Yet what I should like to add here is [the question of] how we the Yamato people (*warera yamato minzoku*) should take advantage of these felicitous circumstances and what policy we should take toward a newly added people (*shinpu no mono*) such as the Korean nation (*chosen minzoku*). On this point, although you do not state it clearly, it seems to me that you do indeed adopt an assimilationist position. My own thinking is that assimilation is certainly desirable if possible, but it is not reasonable to employ assimilationism where, as a matter of actual fact, a nation has made progress as an independent civilization. Furthermore, I should like to add that other countries that have tried this policy have each experienced failure.[41]

What is interesting about Yoshino's skepticism of assimilationism here is that he disagrees neither with the argument that Japan's "national bonds" were unparalleled amongst the world, nor that such national unity naturally enhanced the Japanese empire's abilities to have an assimilative effect on its colonies. Rather his point was that these were conditions immaterial in comparison to the fact that Korea had already "made progress as an independent civilization." The fact of political colonization thus did not negate the historical identity of Korea as a nation. It is worthwhile here to pause to consider what drew Yoshino to this conclusion, especially as it was not one embraced by his most important influences. As we have seen in Chapter Two, Ebina saw in Korea's colonization the obliteration of Korean identity; all he could do was to urge the Korean people to discover a new identity for themselves as the spiritual leadership of the Japanese empire. Although Onozuka was not as enthusiastic an assimilationist as Ebina, he ended his *Seijigaku Taikō* by asserting that one of the key roles of policy was to facilitate the expansion (*bōchō*) of the state. The result of such expansion, Onozuka

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[41] Yoshino, Sohō Sensei cho "Jimu Ikkagen" o yomu, in *YSS, Vol. 4*, 50

concludes, was typically the assimilation of the metropolitan and colonial civilizations. One thus sees very little room in either Ebina's or Onozuka's writings for the idea that nations had historical identities that existed outside the evolutionary struggle for survival. For Yoshino, however, Korea's political colonization did not erase its cultural autonomy because this was constituted by a common historical identity that could only change organically. The Korean desire for independence was thus an empirical fact that had to be accounted for.

In the spring of 1916, Yoshino left on a three-week tour of Korea and Manchuria. The experience has been seen as an important turning point in his intellectual career, marking the emergence of his critique of assimilationism as a colonial policy of the Japanese empire. Given, however, that Yoshino had already adopted a skeptical attitude toward colonial assimilation at least as early as 1914, I would like to interpret Yoshino's visit to colonial Korea here along somewhat different lines: as a critique of the bureaucratic spiritlessness of the political culture of military rule.

We have seen that in writing on constitutional government Yoshino had suggested it had been inevitable that the institutional form of constitutional government had been imported before Japan had matured spiritually enough to receive it. Interestingly, he argued much the same about the bureaucratic culture of Japan's colonial rule in Korea. "That [the government-general] has spent this much effort maintaining the prestige of the bureaucratic official," Yoshino wrote, "was necessary and inevitable in a newly attached colony [like Korea]."[42] Just as there were allowances that had had to be made for the constitutional governments of late-developing nations, so it seemed were there allowances to be made for late-emerging empires. To Yoshino's eyes, the government-general was characterized by a policy of fairness and a commitment to even-handed justice. Governor-General Terauchi Masatake was, he observed, a "man with an extremely powerful sense of justice who will not tolerate even the slightest degree of malfeasance."[43] This assessment of Japan's colonial rule in Korea represents much more than an obligatory gesture to the government-general. As we have seen, Yoshino did believe that the state had a necessary role to play in a nation's spiritual development. He was thus not opposed to the government-general's maintaining an imposing presence in the Korean colony. To the contrary, he was able to see it as necessary to promoting the welfare of Koreans. As he earlier held for Japan, Yoshino's criterion for colonial rule in Korea was that the government promote both the material and spiritual welfare of the Korean people. "Fortunately," he wrote, "the Korean government, while maintaining the prestige of the state (*kokka no igen*), has also given the native people the opportunity to receive the blessings of modern civilization. Industry has gradually taken off. Lines of

[42] Ibid., 24
[43] Ibid., 5

transportation have been opened. In particular, there are now roads built in every country area you go."

Yoshino's reservations about Japan's colonial rule in Korea were thus not with the administrative objectives of the government-general. Rather, just as his object of critique in the case of Japanese politics was the absence of transparency that had resulted from the exclusion of the masses, so too Yoshino's critique of Japan's colonial rule in Korea were centered on the government-general's tight suppression of speech in the colony. Koreans were, Yoshino observed, allowed no forum in which they could make their needs and desires known. This had led to the preponderance of bureaucratic objectives over and above the needs of the people. "Depending on the approach," he argued, "the provision of material benefits to the natives and the encouragement of their development may be thought of as an unwanted kindness (*arigata meiwaku*)."[44] In terms of the Korean colony's spiritual development too, Yoshino found that the government-general was hampered by its own bureaucracy. Although the government-general, according to Yoshino, gave equal protection to the rights of Japanese and Koreans, it did not recognize the rights themselves that Japanese and Koreans enjoyed as equal. As a result, the government-general did virtually nothing to restrain the abusive attitudes of Japanese colonial settlers. Official and civilian alike, Yoshino noted, looked down upon the colonized Koreans.

Yoshino admitted that the repressive mechanism of the military police (*kempeitai*) had achieved a virtual resolution to the political unrest in the colony. This tight net of police repression, which spread into the remotest corners of the peninsula, had had the desired effect of convincing Koreans of the futility of opposing the Japanese empire. Interestingly, Yoshino referred to Yun Ch'iho's recent appointment as secretary of the Seoul YMCA as an example of this trend. "For example," he explained, "even Yun Ch'iho, who plotted the Terauchi assassination plot, has recently entered the government-general to ask for official guidance and has announced that he will give the rest of his life to religious projects as head of the Young Men's Christian Association."[45] Here we might say that Yoshino had everything right but the facts. Yun had not been involved in any assassination plot, but, as we have seen, his appointment as YMCA secretary did signify for the government-general the achievement of dominance over the Korean colony.

From Yoshino's point of view, the problem with this situation was that Korea was not sealed off from the outside world. "The Koreans in Korea are not the only Koreans," Yoshino warned, and it was, according to him, those Koreans living abroad that were the most prone to embrace "harmful thought." We have seen that, in Japan, Yoshino defined "harmful thought" as thought going against the grain of the nation's historical identity.

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[44] Ibid., 13
[45] Ibid., 16

Interestingly, in Korea, he defines "harmful thought" as thought that denied historical reality. In Korea, *kiken shisō* was thus not to be mistaken for the desire for independence, but rather was represented precisely by those who, according to Yoshino, had grown apathetic with the cause of independence and now sought only to undermine Japanese rule. Yoshino claimed that there were many activists abroad who, rather than debate how to rehabilitate the Korean nation, spoke openly of encouraging other foreign countries to expel Japan from Korea. The only way to defend against such self-destructive tendencies, Yoshino argued, was to actively cultivate the consent of those Koreans on the peninsula.

But how was this to be accomplished? It is in the context of this question that Yoshino's critique of assimilationism took on significance. Assimilation, Yoshino observed, ignored the fact of national psychology (*minzoku shinri*). Once a people had reached the historical status of independence, it was virtually impossible for it to meekly accept foreign government. "No matter how powerless they are now," Yoshino wrote of the Koreans, "they were at any rate independent for a long period of time. Moreover, they were an independent nation (*dokuritsu minzoku*) with a truly independent civilization."[46] Yet it was precisely this desire for independence that the government-general, due to its policy of assimilation, could not incorporate into its structure of rule. Hence, the more the government-general insisted on an assimilationist position, the more it had to suppress politics in Korea. "Therefore," Yoshino concluded, "my personal thought is that the ideal for ruling over a foreign people should be to respect that people's independence and, with the completion of that independence, to finally grant them political self-rule."[47]

Yoshino admitted, however, that, as an ideal, the recognition of self-rule was a mere abstraction. In reality, it was always possible that diplomatic concerns would make the recognition of a colony's political autonomy impracticable. Nevertheless, colonial rule had to take the national consciousness of the colonized as its base. In order to do this, it was necessary for the Japanese empire to associate itself with the learned classes in Korea. When it came to higher learning, however, colonial officials actively guided Koreans away from all forms of education. And when it came to the study of politics, Yoshino remarked that he had heard that "the government is comically nervous and sensitive." "As long as Koreans are individuals," Yoshino writes, "then as education advances, it is inevitable that they will develop research interests in various directions. We are gravely mistaken if we think that we can satisfy them forever with highly deficient sericulture training schools or mechanical industry institutes that teach them only the slightest bit of technical training."[48]

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[46] Ibid., 13
[47] Ibid., 15
[48] Ibid., 31

Although Yoshino does not say so explicitly, we may plausibly read his argument for the extension of higher education to Koreans as an attempt to cultivate "men of character" capable of mediating the colonial relationship between Japan and Korea. Here one discovers an important link between Yoshino's prescriptions for colonial rule in Korea and the notion of political practice as assimilative process that he had developed in the context of imperial Japan. Although Yoshino was skeptical of Japan's assimilationist policy, he stops short of opposing assimilation in principle; as we have observed earlier, he denied neither that the Japanese and Korean peoples were ethnically similar nor that this posed an advantageous circumstance to Japan's colonial rule in Korea. "Of course, I am not," he clarified, "one who lightly concludes that it is impossible for the Korean people to assimilate and become absolutely one with the Japanese people."[49] Rather, Yoshino's argument was that Japan's statist assimilation, which relied on empty appeals to Japanese-Korean ethnic homogeneity and a doctrinaire education policy and not only did not encourage the development of social ties between Japanese and Koreans but actively repressed them, was doomed to fail.

> At the very least, under the current conditions, no matter how much one superficially proclaims the necessity of assimilation or emphasizes the racial proximity of the Japanese and Korean peoples in the light of 2,000 years of history, and no matter how the government inculcates Japanist education in public and private schools, there is no reason that assimilation would be realized, is there?[50]

It is possible to read this critique of Japanese assimilationist policy as an argument for a alternative definition of assimilation, one that allowed for the free spiritual development of the Korean colony. Indeed, when Yoshino writes, "Assimilation is certainly not only a government project. It is a national project. It is a project that will be accomplished for the first time only after incredible cooperative efforts are made on the part of both bureaucracy and the public,"[51] it is difficult not to get the impression that he does prefer some degree of transferential relationship between the Japanese and Korean peoples similar to the one he prescribes for Japanese politics at home. In both cases, constant efforts toward achieving state objectives had to be effectively mobilized.

It is thus tempting to characterize Yoshino's position not as anti-assimilationist, but rather as a soft assimilationism, tempered by the recognition of the powerful role of history in shaping national identities that were organically bound together, and in contrast to the hard assimilationist tack taken by the government-general. This position might alternatively be seen as an assimilation via association with the "learned classes" in colonial Korea. Ultimately, there is bound to be some distortion in any attempt to impute

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[49] Ibid., 28
[50] Ibid., 30
[51] Ibid., 29

a crypto-assimilationist position to an intellectual who went so far in insisting that the empirical fact of Korean nationalism be made the cornerstone of Japan's colonial policy. The essential point, however, is that if for Yoshino the general form of constitutional government was spiritual, so too was imperialism also fundamentally a spiritual undertaking. In both cases, Yoshino's answer to the problem of late-development was to strengthen the moral foundation of political rule.

What Yoshino desired, then, was for Japan to commit itself to Korea's spiritual development. This was not a task that the Japanese shared alone; Yoshino noted that the American Christian missions in Korea had a much longer track record in this area. Yoshino observed that American missionaries, more than being indignant at Japanese rule, were rather shocked at how little understanding the government-general displayed of the aims of religious activity. "In [a colony] like Korea," he wrote, "where the bureaucracy and military police see it to be of the utmost importance to establish the prestige of the state, to give bureaucrats the first and last say, and to handle things in the manner of bureaucracy almighty, it is inevitable that those who give even the slightest protection to resisters, rightly or wrongly, will be seen as an obstruction to Japanese rule."[52] Like Ebina and Yun, Yoshino too identified America as the template of a moral imperialism that transcended the nation. And at the end of his discussion of journey to Korea, Yoshino includes a fascinating statement suggesting that the ideals of assimilationism could be rediscovered in the higher register of internationalism.

> That the object of the state is fulfilled by a supra-state organization [i.e. Christian missions] appears odd at first glance, but actually contains a deep meaning. This is because under national organizations the opposition between self and other is too clear and so these are inappropriate means of integrating self with other.

Hence, just as constitutionalism substituted for Christianity in imperial Japan, so internationalism (mediated through Christianity) would substitute for constitutional government in colonial Korea.

What thus pained Yoshino far more than the government-general's lack of understanding of religious matters was to see the total absence of spiritual projects undertaken by the Japanese people in the Korean colony. Despite counting himself as a follower of Ebina's Hongō Chuch, the Congregationalist missions to Korea for Yoshino could only be a perversion of the need for spiritual development. He concludes his discussion of Korea with the regretful observation that, "No truly humanitarian project may be hoped for where the operators of spiritual projects accept subsidies from the bureaucracy and military police and take from them both direct and indirect direction."[53]

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[52] Ibid., 34
[53] Ibid., 39-40

Yoshino's critique of military rule in Korea articulated a framework through which Japan could incorporate the Korean desire for independence into a basis of colonial rule. Could Japan's colonial rule in Korea, however, base itself in the internationalism that Yoshino prescribed? One suspects not. What, then, was the substance of the relationship between Korean cultural nationalism and Japanese cultural rule. To suggest an answer to this question, let us conclude here by examining the discourse of the Korean students in Tokyo.

The Praxis of Idealism: Hak ji kwang and Korean Cultural Nationalism

In reading the writings of the Korean students in Japan during the 1910s, one is struck by how few references there are to the intellectual milieu there. In *Hak ji kwang*, for instance, students made abundant references to their lives in Tokyo, yet they provide virtually no indications of how the intellectual life of Taisho Japan may have influenced their thought. This absence is all the more striking when compared to the spontaneous references one sees in *Sonyŏn*, the previous youth journal edited by Ch'oe Namsŏn, to Japanese intellectuals such as Fukuzawa Yukichi and Ninomiya Sontoku. We may read this absence as a consequence of the colonial context in which Korean students in Japan now operated. The Korean students studying in Tokyo during the 1910s were heirs to an intellectual legacy that, starting with the Independence Club (discussed in Chapter One) aimed broadly at the moral reconstruction of the Korean people. They were now faced, however, with the task of reconfiguring this legacy to respond to a situation in which Korea no longer possessed an independent state. Thus, whereas, during the 1900s, Koreans could imagine their country as efforts at modernization as being akin to those of Japan, after colonization, this assumption had to be significantly revised.

To illuminate this point, let us focus on the concept of personal character (*ingyŏk*) as it appears in *Hak ji kwang*. "Personal character" will be a particularly useful vehicle because it becomes a prominent concept in student discourse for the first time during the 1910s. Although there had been earlier arguments for the importance of character in shaping the nation, the word "personal character" was virtually absent from Korean student discourse before the publication of *Hak ji kwang*. Thus, in spite of the disappearance of references to Japanese authors during the 1910s, the specific use of the keyword "personal character" may be read as evidence of a deepened understanding of the intellectual world of Taishō Japan. If so, then how did the Korean students understand the concept of personal character? Was it the same as the way it was understood in Japan? If not, in what ways was it different?

Chang Tŏksu, the editor of *Hak ji kwang* (later the founder of the newspaper *Tonga ilbo* and Koryŏ University), was most responsible for introducing the concept of personal character into Korean student discourse. In several editorials, he related personal character to the task of the Korean students in Tokyo to develop a new morality for Korea . For Chang personal character occupied an essential mediating point between the

individual and society. "In the first place," he wrote, "there is no person without personal character. One of the elements of [having] personal character is possessing one's worth and purpose within oneself. One whose worth and purpose lie outside oneself would not be an autonomous man of character, but a mere object."[54] Chang thus criticized the privileging society over the individual as ruinous to the dignity of personal character. At the same time, however, developing personal character presumed the individual's engagement with society. Society, Chang concludes, is where the individual experiences his own completion.

Society has the power to assimilate the individuals that live within it. Any number of facts demonstrate that society has the power to assimilate the opinions and emotions of individuals. Thus, society may be called an assimilative body (*donghwach'e*) but at the same time society is originally the objective manifestation of the individual's universal nature or sociality.

In the passage quoted above, Chang's language reflects a striking proximity to Yoshino's. What differentiates Chang from Yoshino, however, is that he never develops the idea of personal character as a theory of the individual's autonomy from the nation. This is partly because the colonial context obviated the need (and also blocked the possibility) of clearly differentiating between nation and society, but also reflects the fact that the differences in the institutional environments of Japan and Korea, clearly made necessary different uses of the concept of personal character. Korean student consciousness of how different colonial Korea's circumstances were from that of imperial Japan is illustrated well in the *Hak ji kwang* editorial quoted below.

In our view…, the future of the Japanese people [*ilbon minjok*] seems beset with great problems. If we look at politics, the problems of political parties, the election franchise, the political factions, and representative government are all in the state of experimentation. If we look at diplomacy, there is the problem of the continent, the problem of the Japanese-American [relations], the problem of the Pacific Ocean, the problem of Japanese-Chinese [relations]. If we look at society, the labor problem, the education problem, the problem of gender [relations], and the religion problems are countless.
Our circumstances are different from those of our classmates among the Japanese youth. They will enter into an organized society, a prepared society. They too will destroy and create, but they will have greater occasion to preserve. But what about us? *We must create everything. We must create all the things that our descendents will preserve.* Thus while Japanese youth become scholars or administrators, we must become prophets and priests. *We are not like the Japanese youth of today, rather we are like the Japanese youth of forty or fifty years ago. This is where our pain lies. This is where our pride and joy lie too* (emphasis in original).[55]

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[54] Chang, "Sahoe kwa kaein" in *Hak ji kwang*, (July, 1917) 425-432
[55] Editorial, "Ne ch'egim," *Hak ji kwang* (March, 1918) 1-6

That Korean students would identify their role more closely with the Meiji generation than with the youth of Taishō is scarcely surprising. After all, the terms of the discourse that they inherited from their Korean Enlightenment (*kaehwa*) forbears were often borrowed directly from the language of Meiji nationalism. During a period in which, as Harry Harootunian notes, Japanese youth increasingly spoke of "culture" (*bunka*) as a private sphere of self-cultivation, Korean students still peppered their writings with references to a public mission in pursuit of "civilization" (*munmyŏng*) for Korea.

It thus seems fitting that Chang's primary influence for his discussion of personal character is not a Japanese author, but instead the American Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) whose writing was much discussed during this period of Japanese history. This influence often takes the form of arguments autonomy. Several covers of *Hak ji kwang* feature Emerson's famous dictum "It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who, in the midst of the crowd, keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude." Chang himself frequently refers to the dignity of personal character as the key to breaking the double bind of natural desire and social custom over the individual. "Where," he chided his fellow students, "are the dignity of personal character and the free progress of life? If internally one is the slave of animalistic needs and materialistic desires and externally one is subordinate to the authority of social custom, there is no illumination…and life is pitch darkness."[56]

Beyond the question of social autonomy, however, Chang used Emerson as a vehicle through which to impress upon his fellow students a philosophy that the American thinker once summed up as the "infinitude of the private man." For Chang, as for Emerson, the individual was a microcosm of the infinite resources of the universe. All great man cultivated within themselves the creative potential inherent in the cosmos. "Are self-realization and self-expression," he wrote, "not the fundamental facts of the universe?...If there were no self-expression of the spirit there would be no Confucius, no Buddha, no Christ, no unlearned or wise, and the earth would be dark and inchoate." The completion of the whole man thus depended on the perfection of the inner man. Men had in them the capacity to perfect themselves as "free and independent sons of God."[57]

Personal character was thus the source of individual will, and for Chang, it was above all will that Korea was lacking. "Youth," Chang writes, "have the vigor, the courage and the passionate spirit to become what they will." In this context, the higher education that Korean students received in Tokyo was now seen not only as a necessary source of administrative knowledge but also as a source of idealism. This is an attitude that

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[56] Chang Tŏksu, "Hak ji kwang chesamho palkan e im ha yŏ," in *Hak ji kwang* (December, 1914) 3-5
[57] Chang, "Ŭiji ŭi yakdong, in *Hak ji kwang* (May, 1915) 39-46

differentiates them from their predecessors from the precolonial period. It is difficult to imagine, for example, the following passage being written by any student attending a Japanese university prior to Korea's colonization.

> [T]hat peninsular society [Korea] is rotten and our fellow brethren have fallen into dissipation. The one gain out of ten losses, the one hope out of one hundred difficulties, is the half thousand of you who have come to Tokyo. Whatever may be your past history, whatever may have been your failures from former days, you have learned relatively new knowledge here and you are an asset and so, in Korea, you belong to the first rank[58]

Korean students in Tokyo "belonged to the first rank" of Korean society not merely because of their technical learning, but because of the broadened cultural vision that they brought back with them. Translating the Korean word for "ideal" (*isang*) into English as "vision," Chang quoted Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Indeed, for Chang, personal character was a necessary element in what he called "the production of ideals" (*isang ŭi ch'ulseng*). For him, the vision of idealism was only made possible by the dignity of personal character. Idealism was thus equated with what Chang called the "philosophy of actualized personal character" (*ingyŏk silhyŏnchui*).

The theme of moral reconstruction had been a key element in Korean nationalist discourse since the Independence Club. Yet we may argue that they attempt to link such moral reconstruction with a particular mode of individuation—that of the private individual—was new. Indeed, such an argument for personalism would have made little sense prior to colonization while the Korean nation attempted to modernize within the limits of existing political institutions. It was thus precisely in response to the colonial context that cultural nationalism took on its particular urgency. Formulated as *ingyŏk*, the Japanese notion of *jinkaku* provided a means to modify the discourse on Korean nationalism to suit the new context of Japanese colonial rule.

To develop this point further, let us here switch our focus from Chang to a no less celebrated figure in the history of Korean nationalism, Yi Kwangsu (who was making his name during these years as the author of *Mujŏng*, often considered to be the founding work of modern Korean literature). In an article entitled, "Our Ideals," Yi boldly announced his view that the value of a nation's existence was determined not by its politics, but by its culture. For a nation to have both political and cultural prosperity was ideal, "but given the choice between the two," Yi explained, "I would rather take culture. Though political superiority may be mighty for a time, its glory disappears like morning dew as soon as its power declines. Culture, to the contrary, acts as a permanent benefactor to humanity and receives undying glory and gratitude even if it is not glorious in its own time." Rather than speak of political history, then, Yi turned to his country's

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[58] Pak Jikwan, "Yŏ ŭi chikgwanjŏk sogam," in *Hak ji kwang* (July 1915) 17-23

cultural history to provide a compass for the future. Viewed from this perspective, it was clear to Yi that Korea had made no cultural contribution to the world. Although Korea had had a great cultural influence on Japan, its function was more as a conduit for Chinese culture than as a genuine creator of cultural ideals.

> No matter where we look, we have made no contributions to world cultural history. This goes without saying for the present, but also is the most correct [view] when we look at the past. Therefore, if there is any hope left of there being a value in Korea's existence, it will be in gaining a glorious place in the world cultural history of the future. [59]

There was, Yi insisted, still much room for further cultural development in world history. The Great War in Europe, had revealed that Western civilization had exhausted its possibilities for cultural development and now, unable to overcome its own "prejudices and superstitions," had entered a severely weakened state. Therefore, he asserted, that this task had fallen to "Oriental civilization" (*tongyang munmyŏng*) to further the cause of modern culture. Here, then, was an opportunity par excellence for Koreans to contribute to world culture. If Koreans could not respond to this need, then in Yi's estimation they were unfit for survival as a nation.

Koreans had, Yi stressed, the ability to develop culturally. What Korea lacked was ideals. "Truly Korea," he wrote, "is now without ideals. Though each individual may have his own ideals of becoming rich or becoming a scholar, we have nothing that we may call an ideal for the entire nation (*minjok*)." It was the putative absence of the collective we—the missing "*uri*"—that was bothering Yi here. The project of making a cultural contribution to the world was thus a useful pretext for the production of national ideals.

Interestingly, Yi's insight provoked a response by another *Hak ji kwang* contributor, Hyŏn Sangyun. Hyŏn found himself particularly in agreement with two points raised in Yi's essay. First, Hyŏn stated thatYi was correct in asserting that Korea had been heretofore without ideals. Second, Hyŏn agreed that with Yi that the cultivation of a national culture was fundamentally linked to the notion of a world mission for the Korean people. Where Hyŏn differed with Yi, however, was in his omission of political ideals. Ideals, Hyŏn argued, corresponded to the national people's hopes for the future. Ultimately, culture referred to life and to the art of living well; it thus could not be artificially separated from other spheres of life. We can see in this exchange between Yi and Hyŏn the emergence of the question of what the role of political values would be for Korean cultural nationalism.

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[59] Yi Kwangsu, "Uri ŭi isang," *Hak ji kwang* (November, 1917)

Nevertheless, Hyŏn's strong endorsement of Yi's position derived not from its particulars, but from its broad *attitude*. Hyŏn recognized that successfully summed up many of the concerns of the Korean students in Tokyo. "I do not know how others saw it, he wrote, "but to me your attitude in this essay is comparable to Fichte's attitude in his famous *Addresses to the German Nation* of 1808. Leaving aside the merits and demerits of your arguments, we cannot but be moved by this attitude—this sincerity."[60] What was the "attitude" which Hyŏn found so striking in Yi's essay? We may begin to answer this question by noting that it was no accident that Hyŏn found himself recalling Fichte while reading Yi; Yi himself references Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* alongside Japan's Meiji Restoration as key moments that had ushered new nationalisms onto the world stage. It will thus be worthwhile here to briefly consider this text and what its significance may have been for Korean student discourse

Writing after the Napoleonic invasion of Prussia, Fichte intended for *Addresses to the German Nation* to become the blueprint for the revival of German nationalism within the constraints of alien (French) rule. According to Fichte, Germany had fallen victim to the world-historical rise of an age of "self-seeking," based on wanton self-interest and calculation, Fichte claimed, finally reaches its height when it corrupts not only the nation, but its leadership itself.[61] In such a situation—the very situation in which Prussia found itself—the manipulation of the hopes and fears of a people no longer posed a viable means of unifying the nation, for these prerogatives now lay in the control of a foreign power. Hence, Germany's only hope for national revitalization lay in the willing of a new moral order of things. Indeed, nothing short of a wholesale transformation of the nation within the limits of foreign rule would be necessary to revitalize it. In this context, Fichte's prescription was to introduce a new national system of education, one that would separate German children from the adult community and instruct them not in the techniques of "mechanical rote-learning," which were based on sense observation, but teach them to conceive of a super-sensuous moral order (derived from Kantian transcendental philosophy) that would give direction to their mental activity. What Fichte had in mind, thus, was more than moral training, but an education of the will itself.

The subtext of *Addresses*, however, was Fichte's belief that the German people, by virtue of a primitive language that preserved the original unity of life and learning, had a unique world mission to complete the development of modern civilization in Europe. By differentiating "popular education," which mechanically transmitted knowledge without articulating its purpose, from "national education, which would establish the nation has the highest object of free will, Fichte formulated a creative response to the challenge of

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[60] Hyŏn Sangyun, "Yi Kwangsu ŭi 'Uri ŭi isang' ŭl dok ham," *Hak ji kwang* (March 1918) 54-58

[61] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation* (1807-08), introduction by George Armstrong Kelly (New York: Harper & Row, 1968)

the French Revolution's project of establishing the perfect state. The French, Fichte implied, had attempted via revolution what the Germans would perfect through education. "Only the nation," Fichte writes, "which has first solved in actual practice the problem of educating perfect men will then solve also the problem of the perfect state."[62] Fichte's vision, then, is one in which pedagogy substitutes for politics.

It is not difficult to imagine why this vision would have resonated powerfully with the Korean students in Tokyo. After all, like Prussia at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Korea in the early twentieth century was a subject nation. At a deeper level, however, the identification of life with learning in Fichtean voluntarism must have also resonated Korean student discourse and its e. For Fichte, Germany was fulfilling a national mission. What a reading of *Addresses to the German Nation* highlights about Korean student discourse, then, is its characteristically *protean* character. The glossing over the dichotomies of elite versus common and individual versus collective in favor of an organic national unity allowed Korean students to look to the idealism of the higher education they received in Japan to provide the basic stuff of a national will capable of capturing the entire Korean nation. Like Fichte, they used the circumstances of colonization as a pretext to sublimate the divisiveness of politics into the ideological purity of pedagogy.

In this sense, the distinction that Fichte draws between popular and national education would likely not have been lost upon the Korean students in Tokyo. Their vision of education for Korea was quite at odds with the industrial education policy that Yun Ch'iho as head of the Seoul YMCA. Nowhere was this view clearer than in the Korean student attitude toward the need to industrialize the peninsula. Virtually all contributors to *Hak ji kwang* believed that industrialization was not merely an institutional matter, but an intellectual one involving a national transformation of values. Consider, for example, the three passages quoted below from articles printed in *Hak ji kwang* between 1915-16.

> In the twentieth century of today, every people and every nation must have an autonomous life and original thought. Indeed, if this kind of life and this kind of thought is not present, [a nation] cannot live well in this world and will find no path for its existence. Thus, in today's religion, today's morals and today's science there are none that are not defined one the one hand by self-preservation and self-protection and by national progress and national autonomy on the other. There is violent competition and there are violent conflicts. …The fires of the competition for survival rage everywhere and clearly reveal the adapted and maladapted before the eyes of all. How sad that now that the cruel theater of the competition for survival has opened everywhere on the Korean peninsula as well,

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[62] Ibid., 87

Competition is based in life and life is founded upon enterprise. We are neither sticks and stones nor phantom spirits. If we do not eat and drink, we feel hunger and thirst. If we do not wear clothes, we feel cold. Because our finances are unbalanced we have no institutions of supply and demand, our natural resources flow out to foreign lands, and thus we discover that foreign man-made products are everywhere [in our country]. What would this be if not a crisis of life?[63]

The Anglo-Saxon and German people have flourished by the enterprising spirit; those peoples that have not have perished. So the enterprise uses clear judgment to organize the various forms of already existing social forces and to apply them to the appropriate areas of economic activity. In the twentieth century of today, the competition for survival among humanity is fierce in its degree and broad in its scope. The object of competition is economic profit and the means of competition is intellect.[64]

Each of these passages identifies industrialization on the one hand with a national struggle for survival and, on the other, with the intellectual life of the nation. we are spiritual animals we need the light of both the material and spiritual worlds.[65] In this sense, they represent a development upon Korean discourse on social Darwinism that had been earlier adopted from the intellectual context of Japan. For the Korean students in Tokyo, the idea of social evolution did not mean that Korea's cultural identity had proven unfit for survival in the modern world. If Korea did not possess the conditions necessary for survival, then it was simply a matter of creating those conditions. The individual was important as the agent in creating these new ideals, but could never embody them, for this role was reserved for the nation (*minjok*) itself. who After all, as Yi wrote, "before their rise as nations, Japan, Germany, and Italy each held a kind of fatalistic view of humanity." It was thus the ideal of "self-empowerment" that provided the foundation for the rise of nationalism in these countries. This ideal was also thus a necessary condition for a nation's continued existence; countries that became "accustomed to hardship" were "inferior [nations] that had no capacity for survival."[66] For the Korean students in Tokyo, the ideal of individual morality had become fused with an anti-teleological view of evolution in which the role of intellectual competition was made key.

It is perhaps for this reason that, despite their concern with Korea's economic independence, there is virtually no mention of a middle class in *Hak ji kwang*. Instead, the task of plotting Korea's economic strength is typically assigned to an intellectual class (*chisik kyegup*). Yi assigned the task of fashioning national ideals to an intellectual elite (a group of "geniuses," as he called them) that would be made up of his fellow

[63] Song Chinu, "Sasang kaehwangnon," in Hak ji kwang (May 1915) 2-8
[64] Kim Hyosŏk, "Na ŭi kyŏngae han yuhaksaeng yŏrŏbun ŭi ge" (September 1916)
[65] Chang, "Sinch'un ŭl hwan ha yŏ," *Hak ji kwang* (February 1915) 1-6
[66] Yi, "Sukmyŏngnonjŏk insaegwan e sŏ jaryŏkjŏk insaegwan e"

students.[67] Unlike for Yoshino, then, classes were not carriers of values for the Korean students in Tokyo. And although the relationship they developed with Yoshino was enabled by his use of dialectic as a means of understanding historical identity, ironically, the discourse of social evolution was far better suited to the cultural tasks that lay ahead of these students as Korea's newest intelligentsia. Social evolution, now interpreted as a spiritual phenomenon, thus signified a practical means of identifying solutions to Korea's problems and thus of achieving empowerment as well. For Yi, and many other Korean students, political practice did not become a means of approaching idealism, but rather idealism became the instrument of a colonial politics.

For the Korean students in Tokyo, then, the individual morality of personal character functioned as a means of stabilizing rather than relativizing national identity. On this basis of this concept, they assigned themselves to the task of acting as the custodians of a Korean cultural identity. The ultimate end of this task was, to be sure, the achievement of national independence. It was also possible and necessary, however, for Korea to assert its cultural autonomy even within the limits of political domination.

Interestingly, this position brought with it the attendant consequence of stirring many of these students to call for an end to the foreign domination of the Christian church in Korea. Noh Ikkŭn, for example, identified Christianity's "spirit of dependence" as one of three factors, along with Confucianism's denial of human acquisitiveness and the vanity of what he called the "new Korean youth," that were contributing to the sluggishness of the Korean economy.

> In recent times, simultaneous with the importation of foreign civilization and thought, it goes without saying that Christianity makes up a large force in the worlds of intellect, opinion and education and it is no exaggeration to say that those among the intellectual classes are all believers…
> But by confusing a part of the truth for the whole of the truth, our [country's Christian] believers forget about individuality, the subject of all human actions. Thus they are entirely like the old [Catholic] believers from before the religious [Protestant] reformation and because all their actions are absolutely guided by the leadership of foreigners, their attitude of dependence gradually intensifies so that their desire for the distribution of charity reaches higher levels. There is no autonomy in anything…The reason that the wealth of the various countries of Europe far exceeds that of the various countries of the Orient is because [Europeans] have strong conceptions of individual responsibility and freedom of personal character and so the intensity of their economic activity is rooted in these [two values]. These are the gifts of the new [Protestant] believers. [68]

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[67] Yi, "Ch'ŏnjae ya! Ch'ŏnjae ya!" in *Hak ji kwang* (April 1917) 6-12
[68] Noh Ikkŭn, "Kyŏngjaekye lŭl pulsing k'e ha nŭn samdae wonin," in *Hak ji kwang* (July 1917) 19-25

Here Noh leverages the notion of personal character (*ingyŏk*) as a means of critiquing what he supposed to be "unreformed" Christianity's negative impact on the Korean economy. However, student critiques of Christianity could also find fault generally with that religion's hampering of Korean cultural growth. For example, Chŏn Yŏngtaek wrote that,

In Korea ,…conscience was revived in the midst of darkness through the blessing of Christianity. But when one looks closely at the present circumstances of the Korean church, it is as though it were in a pre-Renaissance, pre-religious reform condition.
The church blocks religious faith and the Bible, ignores natural human feelings, excludes knowledge, and disdains and suppresses material science and progressive thought. There is nothing like the church in terms of its obfuscation of human knowledge. And that is not all. The church knows nothing of respect for spirituality or freedom of conscience and is in the habit of blocking the free development of spirituality with [its intonations of] "church, "doctrine," and "church law," and blocks the path of intimate intercourse with God. Thus, life disappears from the church and the church gradually falls into dissipation. We must therefore declare the urgent need of religious reform in Korea too.[69]

Chŏn, who was a Christian, would eventually study at a theological seminary in Berkeley, California and return to Korea as a Protestant minister in the 1930s. It is important to note here, however, that he writes here as a lay Christian concerned for Korea's healthy cultural development. His experience in Japan thus cannot be discounted in understanding his call to reform the Christian church as it existed in colonial Korea.

No one, however, contributed to this call for church reform more fervently than Yi Kwangsu. Yi published critiques not only in *Hak ji kwang*, but also in the Korean youth journal *Chŏngch'un* (the successor to the earlier *Sonyŏn*) and even in the government-general's newspaper, *Maeil sinbo*. For Yi, Christianity had become over-adapted to the environment of Korea, thus contributing to the pervasive attitude of fatalism that the Korean youth sought to overturn.

Koreans, who have inherited a fatalistic view of human life, have taken the fatalistic elements of the newly arrived Christianity and [used it to] enhance their own fatalism all the more. Our [nation's] Christians are soon inclined to give up on all things as "the will of God." Even if a son or daughter passes away, they say that it is "the will of God." Though there are many problems when it comes to [judging] the true intent of Jesus, in my view [his] argument was certainly not one of fatalism. Whomsoever wishes to enter heaven may do so provided they make the effort. If they do not make the effort, they may not enter. Without a doubt, this is an argument for self-reliance. The ministers of the Christian church must pay careful attention to this point.[70]

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[69] Chŏn Yŏngtaek, "Chonggyo kaehwak ŭi kŭnpon chŏngsin," in *Hak ji kwang* (November 1917) 9-15
[70] Yi, "Sukmyŏngnonjŏk insaegwan e sŏ jaryŏkjŏk insaegwan e"

In contrast to Japan, then, where Protestant church leaders took the lead in demanding autonomy, in Korea, it was the lay Christians—men who believed in Christianity for the possibilities it suggested for national transformation—who took the lead in demanding that Korean Christianity be reformed. That such should be the case is scarcely surprising. In Japan, the turn to liberal theology was all that some Japanese Christians could do to assert the compatibility of Christianity, which never expanded beyond a minority faith, with Japanese national identity. By contrast, for the Korean students in Tokyo during the first decade of colonial rule, Christianity had become a powerful social force that any vision of Korean nationalism would have to reckon with. It was therefore crucial for them to demand that Korean Christianity be modified to suit the demands of the nation.

Ironically, this was a position that was arguably more favorable to the Japanese empire aYoshino's call for a spirit of cooperation with the Christian missions in Korea. On February 8, 1919, when these students stormed the Korean YMCA in Tokyo to announce Korea's declaration of independence from Japan, their intent was political, but carried an important cultural subtext: that of removing the YMCA from foreign domination. Thus, it might be concluded here that the Korean students in the Japanese metropole succeeding in accomplishing precisely what the Japanese empire had failed to do in the Korean colony.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE LIMITS OF ASSIMILATION: TOKUTOMI SOHŌ AND MAEIL SINBO, 1910-1918

One of the more interesting ideological statements from the government-general in Korea is its early 1920s assertion that its new and more tolerant policy of "cultural rule" was "a change in their administration" long planned for, but regrettably not "effect[ed] early enough" to prevent the "disturbances of a rather serious nature" against the colonial government on March 1, 1919.[1] What is startling about this claim is the ease with which it reappropriates for the colonial state the prerogative to govern that had been symbolically arrogated to Korean nationalism by 1919's explosive March First Movement. Although this ideological assertion cannot be taken at face value, it is worth seriously considering to what extent Korea's colonial government could still make sense of post-1919 Korea in terms of conceptual categories that were continuous with the first decade of colonial rule there. With this purpose in mind, this chapter looks at the government-controlled newspaper *Maeil sinbo* as an index of how Japan imagined its rule over Korea during the 1910s.

As the only Korean-language newspaper allowed to print during the military rule period, *Maeil sinbo* provides a powerful metaphor for the abrupt closure imposed on Korean society by Japanese colonial rule after 1910. In its original form, this newspaper had been the *Taehan maeil sinbo*, formed in 1904 by an Englishman, Ernest Thomas Bethell, who arrived in Korea in that year to cover the Russo-Japanese War and quickly developed sympathies for the cause of Korean independence. Using his extraterritorial immunity from the Japanese censors, Bethell shaped his newspaper into a platform from which to launch criticisms of the Japanese protectorate in Korea. This made *Taehan maeil sinbo* a unique critical presence in Korea and consequently this newspaper quickly developed a loyal Korean readership. As Yi Kwangnin points out, however, *Taehan maeil sinbo*'s popularity must be understood not only in terms of its anti-Japanese stance, but also in terms of its commitment to keeping the Korean people informed of incidents of national relevance occurring inside and outside Korea.[2] After Japan's colonization of Korea in 1910, the government-general bought *Taehan maeil sinbo*. This act was of a piece with Resident-General Itō Hirobumi's attempt to consolidate colonial Japanese opinion by buying up rival newspapers of the government-run Japanese language newspaper *Keijō Nippō*. Yet the significance of Japan's having totally subordinated one of the symbols of Korea's internationally mediated autonomy could hardly have been lost on anyone. In this sense, we might say that the government-general succeeded very early in doing to *Taehan maeil sinbo* what it would ultimately fail to do with respect to the YMCA in Korea.

So far in this study we have treated *Maeil sinbo* as though it represented a more or less transparent reflection of the government-general's perception of colonial Korea, as though it were purely a mouthpiece of colonial rule. This is also how it is typically described in much of the existing historiography. Given the very intimate relationship shared between *Maeil sinbo* and the government-general, there is clearly justification for this view and it is understandable why historians would want to read *Maeil sinbo* in these terms. Particularly for the period of military rule, paucity of sources leaves the historian with a very fragmented field of vision. It may well

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[1] *Pictorial Chosen and Manchuria: Compiled in Commemoration of the Decennial of the Bank of Chosen* (Seoul: Bank of Chosen, 1919) 28

[2] Yi Kwangnin, "'Taehan maeil sinbo' Kanheng e dae han Koc'hal," in *Taehan Maeil Sinbo Yŏngu* (Seoul: Sŏgang Daehakkyo, 1986) 2

be, therefore, that there is no better place than *Maeil sinbo* to search for the colonial "mind" behind military rule in Korea. But the perception that *Maeil sinbo* provides an immediate source of access into the government-general's thinking likely also arises from the fact that *Maeil sinbo*, through its omission of the authorship of its articles, deliberately creates the impression that it speaks with the government-general's voice. With the exception of outside contributors (usually government-general bureaucrats), *Maeil sinbo* almost always leaves its articles anonymous. The resulting impression one gets is that of the government-general communicating directly to its Korean subjects without the mediation of individual journalists. This makes it difficult to tease out the individual perspectives that must have been involved in determining this newspaper's content.

Thus, if we are looking for evidence of some intentionality at work beneath the opaque surface of *Maeil sinbo* discourse, we will likely have to seek it beyond this newspaper's pages. There are at least three ways in which we might search for such evidence. First, we might look for its correspondence with government-general policy, asking what *Maeil sinbo* can tell us about the colonial projects the government-general undertook during military rule. Alternatively, we might read *Maeil sinbo* for possible continuities with *Taehan maeil sinbo*. This would make for an especially interesting exercise considering that many of *Taehan maeil sinbo*'s Korean staff stayed on after colonization. But *Maeil sinbo* was not the product of Japanese bureaucrats working with Korean journalists. We would still have to take into consideration the Japanese journalists who were dispatched from Tokutomi Sohō's pro-government newspaper *Kokumin Shimbun* to direct *Maeil sinbo*. This is the approach I intend to take in this chapter. In particular, I will attempt to answer the question of what influence Tokutomi's thought may have in shaping *Maeil sinbo* discourse.

From the perspective of this study, Tokutomi makes a particularly fascinating subject because of his deeply ambiguous relationship to Japanese Protestantism. As is well known, Tokutomi was an original member of the Kumamoto band and became a favorite student of Niijima Jō's during his study at Dōshisha. Unlike many of his fellow students at Dōshisha, Tokutomi was ultimately unable to sustain his Christian faith, but he became one of the leading social voices of his generation during the 1880s through his impassioned argument for educating the individual conscience as the foundation of modern patriotism. His central contribution to mid-Meiji criticism may be said to have been to secularize Niijima's message so that it could be popularly disseminated and then critically applied to Japan's politics and culture. Like many of the Korean students who frequented the YMCA in Tokyo, Tokutomi passed through Christianity, absorbing many of its ethical teachings, without retaining it as a religious faith.

What influence did Tokutomi's relationship to Christianity have on his view of Korea? How did this view, in turn, influence the editorial direction taken by *Maeil sinbo*? And did Christian culture contribute anything to *Maeil sinbo*'s worldview? These are broad questions. Answering them requires us to begin some evidence of how Tokutomi saw Korea. Fortunately, such evidence exists, none better than an essay written by Tokutomi Sohō in 1910, and later reprinted in 1915: *Chōsen Tōchi no Yōgi* ("Basic Principles of Rule in Korea").

Basic Principles of Rule in Korea

At the heart of *Basic Principles of Rule in Korea* is an insistence that Japan's colonial rule be measured against the dictates of history. In becoming the first island nation to establish a continental empire, Tokutomi argued, Japan now faced a challenge he worried too many

Japanese remained unconscious of: "If it is not impossible for an island empire to engage in continental rule, one must say that the general course of the world [shows it to be] an extremely difficult enterprise."[3] According to Tokutomi, Japan's colonization of Korea had been a matter of historical necessity and he surmised that this was the reason that the Western powers had unanimously " bowed their heads before the necessity of our Empire," regardless of what they might think of Japan's rise as a world power. But this also meant that these same powers would "reserve the right to criticize and judge" Japan's colonial rule in Korea.[4] Ultimately, then the Japanese empire would be judged according to its ability to respond to the demands of history.

This emphasis on history made Tokutomi deeply skeptical about the possibility of assimilating Koreans under a Japanese cultural identity. To Tokutomi, assimilationism, far from being unique to the Japanese empire, represented an ahistorical and uncritical emulation of Western imperialism. "Those who compare [our] rule in Korea to the European countries' colonial rule in Africa," Tokutomi explained, failed to observe that Korea no less than Japan was determined by its historical circumstances and was well past the point where it could be remade in another country's image. "Korea," Tokutomi adamantly maintained, "is not a barbarous country and the Koreans are not barbarians."

At a superficial level, Tokutomi's argument in *Basic Principles of Rule in Korea* resembles Kunitomo's claim that Koreans only understood the exercise of power. Tokutomi agreed with Kunitomo that it was necessary to subjugate Koreans first—to persuade them of the futility of resistance—before endeavoring to please them with Japanese rule. "This is particularly true," Tokutomi argued, here referencing the notion of *jidai shugi*, "in the case of the Korean people, who, as a matter of custom, have it as second nature to be a diplomatic race (*gaikōteki jinshu*) [i.e. to naturally revere the stronger power]."[5] In all cases, then, might had to be given priority over virtue. Quite unlike Kunitomo, however, Tokutomi's critique of assimilationism was rooted not in anti-Korean bigotry, but in his political realism. It is telling, for instance, that Tokutomi refers to *jidai shugi* here not as an indelible stamp on the Korean character, but as a product of *custom*. In fact, Tokutomi's critique of assimilation stemmed from his recognition of the continuing vitality of custom in Korean life. This is a view he expressed in no uncertain terms.

> To try to turn Koreans into Japanese today would be like trying to turn Japanese into Koreans. Even if, as one or two historians demonstrate, the Japanese and Korean races spring from the same root, it has already been two thousand years since we have been planted separately; our natures are close, our customs far.[6]

Here it is important to note that Tokutomi did not refute the putative homogeneity of the Japanese and Korean peoples. In fact, he does suggest that this "common ancestry" will make Japan's rule in Korea easier. The point, however, is that the emphasis on custom was decisive to Tokutomi's anti-assimilationist position concerning Japan's colonial rule in Korea. Unlike Ebina, who had seen in Korea's colonization its total cultural annihilation, and thus also the possibility of its rebirth as a colony paradoxically more modern than the metropole, Tokutomi saw plainly that custom remained a vital force in Korea even after colonization. In this sense, Tokutomi saw

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[3] Tokutomi Iichirō, "Chosen Tochi no Yōgi" in *Ryōkyō Kyoryūshi* (Tokyo: Minyūsha, 1915) 224
[4] ibid., 227
[5] ibid., 234
[6] ibid., 229

himself as a realist whose vision for Korea remained unclouded by any utopian schemes for modernization; "Korea," he wrote, "is no laboratory for political science."[7]

Instead, Tokutomi suggested that the proper model of imperialism could already be found in Japanese history. The British and Roman empires, he argued, were successful because they left the customs of their territories alone and imposed reforms only where necessary. Tokutomi saw parallels in this policy with the state-building practices of the Shōguns Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147-1199) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616) each of whom, he observed, had revered local law and custom in setting up their respective *bakufu* governments. The true character of Japanese imperialism—its historical nature—thus lay along lines similar to those of other historical empires; not in forcing its colonies to amalgamate with metropolitan culture but in its judicious and impartial administration of government. Thus, Tokutomi concludes:

> Let us leave the Koreans to be what they will make of themselves. We shall rule them only as a part of our Empire. What we shall give them is peace, organization, good laws and benevolent government. Besides these matters, we must let them do as they wish…
> As I encounter the numerous yet hushed arguments for assimilation, I can not help lamenting how truly crude the political judgement of today's civilizationists (*bunmeironsha*) is when compared with that of Yoritomo and Ieyasu.[8]

In making this argument, Tokutomi comes remarkably close to Yoshino Sakuzō's position that a country with its own civilization like Korea would be nearly impossible to assimilate into Japanese culture. The salient point for both was the inescapable fact that Korea *had* history; in fact, Tokutomi went as far as to say that Japan's colonial rule in Korea fundamentally came down to compromise with Korean history. Yet what Tokutomi outlines here is no liberal empire that might free its colonies after a necessary period of tutelage, but a frankly conservative empire that ruled over it colonies fairly but firmly, without leaving its subjects any room to dream of future independence. In this sense, the British empire could not to be taken as an object of indiscriminate emulation. In India, for example, Tokutomi claimed that the free importation of English literature had incited the Indian youth to thoughts of independence: "Lord [Evelyn Baring] Cromer has said that in India there are those who advocate absolute independence and those who advocate self-government under English rule. Contrary to what one might expect, today it appears to be the educated classes in India who are leaning toward the former."[9] Ultimately, then, even the British empire turned out to be too assimilationist for Tokutomi's tastes.

Despite his strong support for sending Japanese Protestant missions to Korea, then, Tokutomi's attitude toward Korea thus could not have been further removed from Wataze Tsuneyoshi's evangelism. Wataze, it will be recalled from Chapter Two, insisted on the need to supplement secular education with the spiritual education of Christianity in order to insure the "voluntary obedience" (*eppuku*) of the Korean people. To the contrary, Tokutomi argued, "It is no impediment [to our rule] if they are not happy to obey [us] (*eppuku sezaru mo mata samatage nashi*)."[10]

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[7] ibid., 232
[8] ibid, 246
[9] ibid., 260
[10] ibid., 242

There is another way in which Tokutomi may be contrasted with Wataze. I have argued above that in *The Urgent Task of Korea's Spiritual Education* Wataze defines Japanese Christianity to fit the ideological parameters of Japan's Imperial Rescript on Education. By contrast, in *Fundamental Principles of Rule in Korea*, Tokutomi is conspicuously silent with regard to the Education Rescript and he certainly does not see education as a viable instrument of assimilation. Far from using education as a means of inculcating in Koreans a spirit of loyalty to the Japanese empire, Tokutomi wanted education in Korea to be strictly practical in nature. "The conclusion of radical assimilationism is an out of control argument for education."[11] Coming from the director of Korea's colonial press, this is a notable statement. Tokutomi intended, of course, to be attacking idealistic "civilizationists" like Ebina who would fully integrate Korean colony with Japanese metropole. Wittingly or not, however, in so doing, he was also contradicting the very premise of Japan's professed aim in Korea: to cultivate Korean subjects loyal to Japan's imperial house.

Or was he? In fact, Tokutomi does suggest an alternative means of assimilating Koreans into an imperial Japanese identity outside the institutional prescriptions of the Education Rescript: This means, Tokutomi tells us, lies in fostering the "bureaucratic temperament" (*kanryō no kishitsu*) in Korea. "It seems to me," Tokutomi writes, "that our bureaucrats truly are the ones with the responsibility of spreading the Emperor's virtuous influence (*tokuiku*) to millions of Korean people."[12] By this, he not only meant "that Japan's bureaucrats should be worthy of the Korean people's trust and admiration, [but that] they should be a model of behavior for them." This, Tokutomi argues, was far more consistent with the historical character of imperialism. Despite its blunders, the reason the British empire had "not lost touch with the public sentiment of its territories," Tokutomi explained, "really lies in its bureaucratic temperament."

It was therefore not the case that Tokutomi was opposed to assimilation on principle. He simply considered it to be primarily a matter to be left up to the Koreans themselves: "If the Koreans appreciate that the Japanese way of things (*nihon ryūgi*) is advantageous, they will assimilate of their own accord without any outside coercion."[13] The key to assimilation thus lay not in inculcating loyalty to the Japanese empire in Koreans but in persuading them from without. This position formed the logical conclusion Tokutomi's view that persuasion had to evolve logically from a position of compelling dominance. "At no time," Tokutomi wrote, "should we allow them to indulge in the delusion that they will ever be able to separate from the Japanese Empire. We must simply make them assent that they have no other fate than to be Japanese nationals and no other alternative than to assimilate into Japanese nationals."[14]

Tokutomi's attitude toward assimilation makes for a fascinating contrast with Ebina's. Ebina was an advocate of using Japanese education to assimilate Koreans because he wanted to believe that the institutional integration of Japan and Korea could pave the way for Korean Christians to become the new spiritual leaders of the Japanese empire. He rationalized his belief in Korea as a new spiritual periphery of Japan by substituting for Japan's imperial house an ethnically Japanese expression of universal logos as the true source of Japan's Education Rescript. Ebina had therefore avoided invoking Japan's emperor in discussing the colonization of Korea. As a consequence, the justification of assimilation had to be predicated upon the ethnic homogeneity of the Japanese and Korean peoples. Conversely, Tokutomi denied the centrality of Japanese-Korean

[11] ibid., 267
[12] ibid., 270
[13] ibid., 267
[14] ibid., 238

homogeneity to assimilationism precisely by making political loyalty to the imperial house the sole condition of assimilation. He made Japan's bureaucrats, and not its education system, into the proselytizers of this new belief. This, of course, was just as much an absolutist rationalization. Tokutomi had to first *believe* that the imperial house actually was the spiritual center of Japan's empire before he could argue that Koreans would identify with it as such. Where did this belief come from? And what did it contribute to the culture of military rule? The first of these questions we shall begin answering straightaway by looking at the broad arc of Tokutomi's intellectual trajectory, starting with his origins as a young Protestant to his embrace of what he called "Imperial House-centrism" during the Taishō period. The second question we will answer in the final section of this chapter by examining the influence of Tokutomi's thought on *Maeil sinbo* discourse.

From Protestantism to "Imperial House-centrism"

We have already seen in Chapter Two that Tokutomi saw the Christian missions in Korea as a primarily political force and was therefore an advocate of sending Japanese Protestants to Korea as a means of containing their influence. It remains to point out that the origins of this view may be traced back to Tokutomi's intellectual debut as a social critic during the mid-Meiji period. In an editorial written for his publication *Kokumin no Tomo* (The Nation's Friend) in 1887, Tokutomi confidently announced to his readership that, in Japan, "Christians Are Certain to Become a Political Force." During this early phase of his career, Tokutomi still viewed this is as an unqualified good thing. Indeed, Tokutomi was confident that he had found in Japan's Christians an undiscovered cultural foundation for Japan's emerging parliamentary politics: "Just as [it is said that] the cherry blossoms last hardly three days, now, right under the noses of our complacent politicians (*ukiyo no seijika*), a totally unexpected class has appeared with great suddenness in our society… I speak of the Christians. Truly, following the second decade of Meiji, this class will without fail become a political force in our society."[15]

Just as Wataze would later argue for Korea, Tokutomi argued that, although Christians were a minority in Japan, they were nevertheless a national movement. Tokutomi noted that the Christians were bound together by the "organized bodies" of churches, which gave them strength in numbers. Moreover, Christianity had made allies of previously untapped sources: women ("the emperors of the reverse side of society") and youth ("our future, nation, state, and society"). Perhaps most importantly, Tokutomi saw Christianity as inextricably bound up with Western culture and therefore as Japanese Christians were the carriers of Western civilization; and, as Tokutomi reminded his audience, "it is our country's fate that we must import Western civilization."

Tokutomi understood that Christians, rendering unto Caesar what belonged to Caesar, did not see themselves as a political force and would not form a political party. He nevertheless saw their role as being equivalent to that of the middle class in England, which started out as an economic class at the start of the nineteenth century, but unwittingly became the driving force behind the political reforms made by mid-century. Likewise, Tokutomi predicted, the spreading cultural influence of Japanese Christians would force politicians to depend on their support.

What is of interest to us here is the fact that in designating Christians to act as the cultural force behind Japan's new middle class politics, Tokutomi pointed out that Japanese Christianity

[15] Tokutomi, "Kirisuto Kyōto Masa ni Seijiteki Seiryoku Taran to Su," in *Kokumin no Tomo* (November 18, 1887)

had the advantage of its affiliation with the foreign missions. This, he noted, would provide Japanese Christians "with many foreign allies, foreign funding, and missionaries thoroughly versed in Western thought." No longer a Christian himself, Tokutomi stressed that he did not consider the missionaries to be any wiser or more moral than the laymen of their native countries; "There," Tokutomi wrote, "they are among the most average of the average." Nevertheless, in the context of Japan, foreign missionaries provided a moral authority lacking in "Japan's current middle class," to say nothing of Japanese Buddhism, which Tokutomi saw as a morally bankrupt force. Moreover, Tokutomi stressed that missionary funds provided a financial power that, although it carried stigma of being under the control of foreigners, was nevertheless vital to disseminating a new form of culture.

Tokutomi's later argument that the missionary presence in Korea would inevitably be used politically may therefore be read as an inversion of his earlier advocacy of using the foreign missions in Japan as a lever for politicizing Christianity in Japan. Below, I shall argue that the *Basic Principles of Korean Rule* too can in many important respects be read as an inversion of a set of arguments Tokutomi originally derived from his early exposure to Christian culture in Meiji Japan. Thus, despite Tokutomi's antipathetic attitude towards "foreign" Christianity in Korea, his view of Japan's colonial rule in Korea ultimately stemmed from a different ideological source than that of the government-general.

Tokutomi's first exposure to Christianity came as a teenager in Kumamoto. The first-born son of a well-to-do family of both samurai and merchant background, Tokutomi was sent at the age of ten to the newly established Kumamoto Yōgakkō to receive a western education. There he experienced first-hand the wave of enthusiasm for Christianity that overtook many of his upperclassmen during 1875. Intrigued by the Bible's teachings and finding them to be more interesting than the Confucian lectures of the *jitsugaku* school then predominant in Kumamoto, Tokutomi became one of the signatories to the famous Hanaoka Oath. As is well known, Tokutomi would later disassociate himself from this significant event, explaining in his autobiography that he had merely been following the lead of his seniors. His Christian faith, he claims there, had been little more than a youthful rebellion against the Confucian teachings of the *jitsugaku* school predominant in Kumamoto.

The full influence of Christianity on Tokutomi, however, can hardly be understood apart from his relationship with Niijima Jō, who became his teacher upon Tokutomi's arrival at Dōshisha in 1877. Unlike his seniors in the Kumamoto band, Tokutomi attributed his "real" conversion to Christianity to the personal example set by Niijima. In his autobiography he would later recall that, "Rather than believing in Christ, I came closer to God through Christ by believing in Niijima." Perhaps because of this, Tokutomi also found that he was concerned less than his seniors with Niijima's limitations as a scholar. In his autobiography, he writes that, "Among my seniors in the Kumamoto band, there were those who treated [Niijima] *sensei* (i.e. master) as dull, as too soft, as a man of shallow learning and prided themselves on catching him up short in the classroom. From that time, however, I believe I had already bought into Niijima *sensei*['s personality] even further than my seniors had. There were not a few points that I found to be unfortunate about him, but I realized he was enough a noble man to be my *sensei*.[16] Unlike other members of the Kumamoto band (Ebina, for example), Tokutomi was ultimately unable to sustain his faith in Christianity and thus was never concerned to demonstrate Christianity's intellectual validity. Rather Tokutomi's fascination with the Christian religion was bound up

[16] Tokutomi, *Sohō Jiden* (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Senta, 1997) 74

with admiration for the depth of Niijima's commitment as a spiritual leader. Niijima apparently fulfilled Tokutomi's expectations of the ideal Christian man in ways that the American missionaries at Dōshisha could not. In his autobiography, Tokutomi recalls that, "I was never disappointed with Niijima *sensei* while I was at Dōshisha. The truth is that, in Niijima *sensei*, I had discovered a true *sensei*. He was more adept at science, mathematics and geometry than politics and economics. But he was not a man of the head, but of the heart. He had the faith to move mountains and the passion to make even rocks weep."[17]

In this assessment of Niijima, we find an ideal that Tokutomi held himself to and which shaped the trajectory of his intellectual career. As we shall see, as a social critic and journalist, Tokutomi was less concerned with intellectual purity than with what we might think of as a kind of volitional purity, or a purity of the will. In retrospect, his most fundamental commitment turned not to be any particular cause or set of ideas but to giving his absolute commitment to whatever cause seemed to serve the Japanese nation best; a trait most visible in his abrupt desertion of liberal principles for imperialism after the Sino-Japanese War.

Niijima's influence on Tokutomi may be boiled down to a single thesis, one that Tokutomi himself aptly sums up in his autobiography. There he writes that, "Niijima *sensei* taught me that people do not merely live, but live for the sake of a larger purpose and that human life is ultimately for the sake of noble service so that a person's worth is determined by the purity of his heart and the sincerity of his passion."[18] This insight, that human life required a purpose that went beyond the satisfaction of material needs, may be identified as the central problematic of Tokutomi's entire career—from his beginnings as a liberal social critic to his later "apostasy" to statist imperialism.

As we have seen, Tokutomi would later identify this purity and sincerity with Japan's "bureaucratic temperament" and its devotion to the imperial house. In his early career as a social critic, however, Tokutomi singled out youth as the social group with the greatest potential to devote itself to a higher spiritual purpose. Tokutomi famously called upon the Meiji youth to replace the "old men of Tenpō" (the previous generation responsible for ushering in the Meiji era, typically born during the Tenpō period, 1830-44) as the new spiritual leaders of Japan. Indeed, for Tokutomi, the Meiji youth were a microcosm of contemporary Japanese society. This naturally led him to the problem of the role of education in Meiji Japan. "For school," he observed, "is the society of youth."[19] It followed logically from this observation that all social reform had to take education as its starting point.

The mission of education for Tokutomi lay in the reformation of social custom. Tokutomi asked his readers to consider: "Who is sovereign in feudal society?" For three centuries, the Tokugawa bakufu had protected custom by closing Japan off from the outside world. Tokutomi thus observed that "the tyranny of custom subsists only in the environment of a closed country." It thus followed logically that education under Tokugawa society had also revolved around the preservation of custom. "The spirit of education [under feudal society] stops at the two words "filial loyalty" and for three hundred years these two words have ruled the minds of [Japan's] warrior society." Tokutomi's first major work, *Youth of the New Japan* (1885), begins by noting that the Meiji period had brought about a total collapse of values in Japan. "Today, when our Meiji society is observed from the viewpoint of morality," Tokutomi argued, "it must be said

[17] ibid., 99
[18] ibid., 89-90
[19] ibid., 123

that it is at base a naked society."[20] Since the collapse of the "feudal" value system Tokugawa *bakufu*, Tokutomi announced, Japan had been existing in a moral vacuum of skepticism and cynicism. But the life of a nation, Tokutomi noted, could not rest upon cynicism. It therefore now fell to education to replace filial loyalty with a new spiritual purpose, one dedicated to the overturning of custom.

In *Youth of the New Japan*, we thus hit upon the original, pre-inverted form of one of the foundational motifs of Tokutomi's intellectual career: education as the primary social lever of national transformation. *Youth of the New Japan* was essentially an argument in favor of placing the new practical, technical education that had been introduced into Japan since the Meiji Restoration onto a modern spiritual basis. Much as Wataze would do decades later in Korea, Tokutomi argued that the material and spiritual aspects of modern (in Tokutomi's words, Western) civilization formed an indivisible organic whole. The key to understanding Western society thus lay in its dual orientation towards both worldly *and* spiritual needs. "If you would hope for material civilization," Tokutomi told his readers, "raise your eyes still farther and hope too for spiritual civilization."[21] Let us note that this is precisely the opposite of what Tokutomi would later recommend for Japan's colonial rule in Korea.

Tokutomi made this argument amidst much public discussion regarding the future of education in Japan. In particular, he contrasted his own argument for a Western-style moral education with three rival viewpoints: restorationism (*fukkoshugi*), one-sided rationalism (*henchishugi*), and syncretism (*setchūshugi*). First was "restorationism," which sought to apply the moral values of "feudal education" to the present, in Tokutomi's words, "*to substitute only the doctrine of filial loyalty for the lessons of profession, liberty, autonomy, independence, labor and strength*."[22] In short order, Tokutomi dismissed this trend as totally unsuited to producing men fit to survive the modern world; "restorationism," he argued, was an empty formalism that ignored and even denied the reality of actual life.

"One-sided rationalism," on the other hand, eschewed moral education altogether in favor of a practical education premised upon satisfying life's needs. Most famously, the liberal intellectual Fukuzawa Yukichi had held that morality belonged to the sphere of public opinion (*kōgi yoron*) and that Japan's youth therefore ought to receive their moral education in the "larger classroom of society."[23] Arguing against Fukuzawa's position brought Tokutomi much closer to his core argument. Social morality, he argued, was not a monolithic bloc but depended upon the moralities of each of its individual members. The task of moral education thus could not be relegated to an abstract society, but required a concrete institutional setting. It then necessarily followed that education had to include a spiritual purpose that went beyond the basic needs of life.

This brought Tokutomi to the "syncretist" argument, which advocated the fusing of Western practical learning with "Oriental" morality. Tokutomi pointed out that this position did not take into account the stark opposition that existed between European and Asian values. Europe, in Tokutomi's mind, was associated with progress (*shinpo*) while Asia was associated with order or stasis (*chitsujo*). Far from satisfying the doubts wrought by the collapse of values in Meiji Japan, then, syncretism would compound them. In heavy religious overtones, Tokutomi wrote that,

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[20] I have referred to the version of *Shinnihon no Seinen* included in Uete Michiari ed., *Tokutomi Sohō Shū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1974) 121
[21] ibid., 121
[22] ibid., 134
[23] ibid., 136-37

"The Creator has given man the dual faculties of intellect and morality, but the syncretists demand that man turn intellect and morality against each other. The Creator has bestowed on man the character to realize his own completion, but the syncretists would rob man of this and leave him a cripple."[24] In the end, then, syncretism was a halfway measure that could not be substantially differentiated from one-sided rationalism.

Having rejected syncretism, Tokutomi could now assert that the education problem could only be resolved through a total reformation of Japan's school system. How was such a reform to be realized? Spiritual education, Tokutomi argued, could not be left up to the government. Tokutomi's answer was therefore to call for an institutional movement of private schools to undertake the task of disseminating spiritual education throughout the nation. Here Tokutomi envisioned a division of labor between government and private schools that would lead the way to national transformation. "The government schools will produce of Western learning and skill and the private schools will produce men of Western spirit and temperament."[25] Only in this way, Tokutomi suggested, could Japan truly digest the dual orientation inherent in Western culture.

Unlike Niijima, however, Tokutomi expressed the insight that social activity aspired to a higher purpose than mere subsistence not through personal devotion to Christ, but through an explication of the impersonal forces of history. In particular, Tokutomi discovered in Herbert Spencer's (1820-1903) theory of social evolution an apposite means of secularizing the spiritual lessons he had absorbed from Christianity. In his next major work, *The Future of Japan* (1887), Tokutomi attempted to use social evolution as a means of outlining the future trajectory Japanese development necessarily had to take. Tokutomi's argument began from the Spencerian premise that nations are social units existing in order to satisfy the conditions necessary for human life. Tokutomi followed Spencer in arguing that nations could fulfill this purpose through the use of either military or industrial institutions. These two types of institutions existed everywhere in unstable tension with each another and in any society one type tended not only to hold relative sway but also to determine that society's overall character. Militant societies were based on inequality and hence were considered equivalent to aristocratic societies; conversely, industrial societies were based on equality and thus represented what Tokutomi called "popular societies." From this simple set of categories, Tokutomi proceeded to deduce a universal historical law in which all societies inevitably evolved in linear fashion from aristocratic to egalitarian nations. In Tokutomi's hands, sociological typology was transmuted into historical teleology.[26]

Tokutomi dubbed this historical phenomenon *heiminshugi*; a term that may be roughly translated as "egalitarian democracy," but that carries enough ambiguity to require some unpacking here. Although Tokutomi drew upon examples from America, France and Britain in defining *heiminshugi*, he was a committed Anglophile at this stage of his career and in many ways made English liberalism the template case for *heiminshugi*. Tokutomi accepted the Whig claim that imperialism was a regrettable atavism destined to give way to peaceful free trade, the real source of Western strength. It is thus possible to read *The Future Japan* as a universal theory of history derived from the anti-imperialism and free trade arguments of British liberals such as Richard Cobden (1804-1865) and John Bright (1811-1889). It is also possible, however, to argue that Tokutomi's use of *heiminshugi* implied a moral content not present in more neutral terms

[24] ibid., 140
[25] ibid., 150
[26] Peter Duus makes this point in Duus, "Whig History, Japanese Style: The Min'yusha Historians and the Meiji Restoration" in *Journal of Asian Studies* (May 1974), 422

such as "liberalism" or "democracy." In this sense, Tokutomi's "subtle transformation"—to use Peter Duus's phrase—of Spencerian categories into *heiminshugi* may also be read as an attempt to uncover a moral imperative hidden beneath the surface of national history. *Heiminshugi* for Tokutomi was not just a sociological trend but also a moral obligation to social progress. The consequence for failing to meet this obligation was the certainty of colonization.

In this sense, Tokutomi makes for an interesting contrast with Yun Ch'iho. Tokutomi's provocative conclusion to *The Future Japan*— "If we are unable to achieve what the westerners have, the westerners will gladly take our place in achieving it [for us]"[27]—resonates with Yun's anguished admission that Korea might very well be better off in the hands of foreign powers. Yet where Yun was quietly assenting to what he saw as inevitable, Tokutomi's rhetoric was boldly empowering. *The Future Japan* suggested that the key achievement of Japan's former "aristocracy"—viz., the Meiji Restoration—had merely been a response to historical necessity and did not determine Japan's future. The prerogative to fundamentally remake Japanese society thus belonged squarely to popular society. Just as Korean students would later do in Tokyo during the military rule period, Tokutomi "discovered" during these mid-Meiji years that social evolution could be mobilized as an intellectual weapon in the service of social reform. This is an insight arguably missing in Yun's thought even during his period as a nationalist reformer in the short-lived Independence Club. For Yun, social evolution was simply the outward manifestation of divine providence; it did not suggest a substitute to the spiritual conversion that was a necessary precondition of national transformation. Tokutomi, on the other hand, derived the consolation that he could not recognize in Christianity precisely from the thought that Japan, despite its idiosyncratic history, was nevertheless developing within a framework of universal progress in parallel with Western nations.

So who were the principal actors in this transition from an aristocratic society to a popular one? That is, who would represent the interests of the *heimin* ("common men")? Tokutomi did not explain in *The Future Japan* how his use of evolutionary theory applied to the world of politics. This task was left to the editorials he wrote for *Kokumin no Tomo*, where he consistently tied the fortunes of *heiminshugi* in Japan to emergence of a middle class. In 1888, he wrote that:

> Our country has never had a middle class, and this class is only truly beginning to exist now. Seeing this class trying to be born into society, I cannot help celebrating for our country. After all, the birth of this class is the sign that our country is gradually becoming a popular society and the fact that this class is finally gaining power is the sign that in our country *heiminshugi* is finally becoming dominant. What is a middle class? It is an independent and self-governing people. Therefore this class can only grow in a self-governing and self-supporting society. Where society is organized into solely the two classes of masters and slaves, a middle class cannot exist.[28]

So who were the middle class in Japan? These, Tokutomi explained, were the wealthy peasants living in the countryside. Much as he had done a year earlier for Japanese Christians, Tokutomi prophesied that, despite their unpolitical appearance, these "country gentlemen" (*inaka shinshi*) would nevertheless would take the political stage in the near future. The wealthy peasants, Tokutomi explained, were the sole group capable of the independence and self-government

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[27] I have referred to the version of *The Future Japan* included in Sumiya Mikio ed., *Nihon no Meicho: Tokutomi Soho, Yamaji Aizan* (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1971) 182-83

[28] Tokutomi, "Inmitsu naru Seijijō no Hensen (5): Chutō Minzoku Masa ni Seichō Sen to Su," in *Kokumin no Tomo* (March 12, 1888)

associated with a Western-style middle class. On the one hand, the former samurai were concerned only with public affairs—the interests of their domain, their fellow samurai, and their ancestors—and thus could not break apart from feudal society. On the other, the merchant and artisan classes were devoid of public concern, caring only for their own personal profit.[29] But Japan's landowners were, in Tokutomi's words "half-samurai, half-merchant" in social character, they rolled into one the roles of producer and consumer, ruler and ruled. Tokutomi thus felt certain that they would of necessity be forced into politics.

These country gentlemen thus provided Tokutomi with an analog to England's middle class that would act as the backbone of Japan's parliamentary politics. But the cultural ramifications of Tokutomi's argument for a middle class went far beyond the politics of the day. Fukuzawa had already set the terms for middle class discourse when he had suggested a decade earlier suggested that the bushidō ethic of the former samurai class would have to substitute as a virtual middle class ethic. In stark contrast with Fukuzawa, Tokutomi argued that it was precisely the task of the middle class to take the place of the "samurai spirit" (*shizoku konjo*) that still dominated Japanese politics. By shifting the middle class's identity from the former samurai to the wealthy peasants, Tokutomi was not only redefining its socioeconomic character, but also giving it a radically new sociocultural purpose. Historians rarely point out that Tokutomi's interest in Japan's landowning class was not only in their "half-samurai, half-merchant" makeup, but also in the fact that they linked the lofty aims of education (and especially private education) to the needs of actual life. Unlike the former samurai, who had the need for education in order to rise socially, but no longer the means to acquire it, and the merchant class, who had the means to attain higher education but neither the need nor the interest in attaining it for their children, "only the country gentlemen feel the need for education and have the financial means to provide for that education, and therefore in the world of Meiji today…it is the sons of country gentlemen that are getting a Western-style higher education."[30] These sons, Tokutomi speculated, would likely seek employment in the city, but as long as their influence and financial base remained in the country, they would eventually return home and when they did they would liberate these localities from the reign of custom.

> Their fathers and elder brothers, the old men of Tenpo, are no doubt taken aback by their tenant's grievances, but [these returning sons] will not fear their tenant's grievances once they consider them using the economics they have learned. Their fathers and elder brothers are no doubt troubled by the fearsomeness of lawyers, but with their knowledge of the law, they will see no need to fear lawyers. In the eyes of their fathers and elder brothers, the district and county officials must be venerable figures, but with their knowledge of politics, they will not feel afraid of these district and county officials.

The new political role of this nascent middle class would thus not merely be an instinctive reaction to self-interest, but an educated will to bring the task of national transformation home with them. The importance of having a middle class for Japan was thus thoroughly continuous with Tokutomi's insistence that the Japanese nation had to be given a proper spiritual foundation. In Japan's country gentlemen, Tokutomi had found the social counterparts to the middle class ethic he saw embodied in Japanese Protestantism.

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[29] ibid., "Inmitsu naru Seijijō no Hensen (2): Inaka Shinshi," in *Kokumin no Tomo* (February 17, 1888)
[30] ibid., "Inmitsu naru Seijijō no Hensen (3): Seikatsu to Kyōiku to no Shigeki, in *Kokumin no Tomo* (March 2, 1888)

As is well known, Tokutomi's period as an unabashed liberal reformer ends abruptly with his shift to an aggressively statist and imperialist position following Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War. Although Tokutomi's move away from liberalism is already visible from the early 1890s, it is nevertheless striking how personally Tokutomi identified the Sino-Japanese War as *the* turning point of his intellectual career. "Previously," he later wrote, "I had learned from books, but during the 1894-95 war I learned for the first time from reality…The influence of this war completely transcended the influence of Spencer, Cobden, and Bright."[31] The opportunity to learn from "reality"—an historical event unfolding in real time—gave Tokutomi cause to reformulate many of his positions. Nations, he now conceded, did not evolve gradually from militant states to pacifist ones and Western civilization was not an object to be emulated indiscriminately. These were empty formulas and thus not good predictors of the direction of national development. Instead, Tokutomi now argued for the first time that fostering selfless devotion to a higher power—the Japanese nation—was the real path to Japan's future.

Dissolving the binary opposition he had previously drawn between militant and industrial societies allowed Tokutomi to transfer his intellectual commitments from Westernism to imperialism. In an 1899 article, "The True Meaning of Imperialism," Tokutomi noted that in recent decades imperialism had swept across the West, "beginning in England, reaching America, and now in our own country seems to be becoming part of the political vocabulary."[32] But Tokutomi no longer saw imperialism as a social atavism that would pass away of its own accord. Instead, he now argued that the ultimate aim of imperialism lay in peaceful expansion. Military buildup was merely a means toward achieving that purpose. In short, "liberal empire" ceased to be an oxymoron for Tokutomi. In this sense, "The True Meaning of Imperialism" was still a far cry from the vision of conservative empire Tokutomi would outline in Korea a decade later. Nevertheless, this article marks the emergence of a problematic that would shape the rest of Tokutomi's career: That of how to link social reform at home with imperialist expansion abroad.

Up to this point in his career, Tokutomi had consistently cast himself as an independent voice of the people, autonomous from and quite often antagonistic to the bureaucratic Meiji government. After the Sino-Japanese War, however, he found himself increasingly entering cooperative relationships with the Meiji oligarchy. In 1896, Tokutomi shocked his readers by joining the Matsukata cabinet in the interests of harmonizing the coalition between Prime Minister Matsukata Masayoshi and Kaishintō (Progressive Party) leader Ōkuma Shigenobu. This ideological realignment did not come without consequences. Tokutomi's readership accused him of being an opportunist and sales for his newspaper *Kokumin Shimbun* plummeted. Still, Tokutomi's course was set. From then until the end of the Meiji period, he consistently maintained a cooperative relationship with the government and gave its efforts toward military development his full support.

In Katsura Tarō (1848-1913), Japan's second governor-general of Taiwan and prime minister during the Russo-Japanese War, Tokutomi recognized a particularly ideal vehicle for his own desire to promote imperialism abroad and social reform at home. During the Russo-Japanese War, Tokutomi played used *Kokumin Shimbun* as a propaganda instrument to rally support for the government. Thereafter, Tokutomi consistently involved himself deeply in

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[31] Tokutomi, quoted in Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969) 180-181

[32] Tokutomi, Teikokushugi no Shin'i," in Kusano Shigematsu, Namiki Sentaro eds., *Sohō Bunsen*, (Tokyo: Minyusha, 1915) 479

Katsura's efforts at military expansion, providing the ideological language necessary to communicate Katsura's policies to the public.

Tokutomi would later explain away the apparent contradiction between his loyal support for Katsura's policies and *Kokumin Shimbun*'s status as an independent newspaper by saying, "Let it suffice to say that if it is possible for [two] different people with the same opinion to exist in the world, Katsura and I must belong to that type."[33] As Ariyama Teruo points out, however, Tokutomi's support for Katsura, while outwardly maintaining the (albeit transparent) appearance of an independent editorial position, was in reality based on a personal liaison that remained undisclosed to the public.[34] This was indeed a contradiction, one that Tokutomi would live through for over a decade. In his autobiography, Tokutomi explains that, during these years, his attitude toward the compromises he made with the Katsura cabinet was that it was a matter of putting "country first, newspaper second."[35] At the same time, however, he was often reluctant to involve himself to accept political appointments for fear of compromising his position as an independent journalist and publicist. That Tokutomi believed he could successfully merge these two roles in the name of national service is similar to Ebina's absolutist position that loyalty to the state was a direction extension of the individual's loyalty to his or her conscience. In any case, performing this dual role undoubtedly prepared Tokutomi for directing Korea's colonial press, a task he also undertook during this period of cooperation with Katsura.

After Katsura's death in 1913, however, Tokutomi felt the need to separate himself from politics and write once again solely for the nation. This decision ultimately had consequences for his position as director of colonial Korea's press. When, in 1916, Terauchi Masatake was appointed prime minister, Tokutomi was unwilling to ally himself with another bureaucratic government. Tokutomi communicated to Terauchi his intention to "defend [him] from without" without directly involving himself in the Terauchi cabinet or aligning himself with the government on every single issue. This *de facto* declaration of neutrality quickly became a sore point with Terauchi's government and Tokutomi, likely with a sense of relief, resigned the directorship of *Keijō Nippō* and *Maeil sinbo* on June 20, 1918.

This move to disentangle himself from his political liabilities was part and parcel of Tokutomi's increasing awareness that his newspaper had fallen out of step with the key trend of the times: the emergence of mass politics. Tokutomi had experienced firsthand the arrival of mass politics in Japan when *Kokumin Shimbun*'s offices were attacked during the Hibiya Riots in protest of what many saw as a disadvantageous conclusion to the Russo-Japanese War. Tokutomi dismissed this popular outburst as the result of ignorance, but it must have reinforced his awareness that no single class provided an adequate social basis for imperialism. Under these circumstances, mass replaced class as *heiminshugi's* central mediating concept. In 1908, Tokutomi announced that, "Imperialism must set its foundations upon the nation. A nation is not a class, but a mass."[36] Distancing himself from class in this way allowed Tokutomi to retell the story of Japan's emergence as a world power not as the result of social evolution, but as the result of national spiritual unity. In 1913, he wrote that,

The works of forty years of Meiji, were all the result of a united spirit of self-sacrifice having been aroused…The abolition of fiefs and creation of prefectures and the establishment of the Russo-Japanese

[33] Ariyama Teruo, *Tokutomi Soho to Kokumin Shimbun* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1992) 179
[34] ibid. 200
[35] Tokutomi, *SohoJiden*,
[36] Tokutomi, quoted in Ariyama, 185

War were all accomplished by the spirit…. This spirit makes a nation great, makes a poor nation rich…and makes a strong nation superior…And how do we achieve this united spirit? Only by taking the Imperial House as our standard for everything… and by uniting the devotion of the people to the Imperial House.[37]

But for the final line invoking Japan's imperial house, this passage almost could have been written by Ebina. The absolute identification of Japan's worldly achievements with its national spirit of self-sacrifice is common to both Ebina's and Tokutomi's view of the Russo-Japanese War. The key difference, however, lies in the fact that, whereas Ebina saw Japan's imperial house as the outward expression of this spiritual unity, Tokutomi credited the imperial house with having created this spiritual unity among the Japanese people. Tokutomi dubbed this not exactly new political viewpoint, "Imperial House-Centrism" (*kōshitsu chūshinshugi*).

During the Taishō period, Tokutomi confronted head on this question of how to channel the emergence of mass party politics into a support base for imperialism. In much the same way that he did during his intellectual debut during the mid-Meiji years, Tokutomi suggested that Japan found itself in the middle of a spiritual crisis. The problem, Tokutomi noted, was the Japanese people in the Taishō period had grown disaffected and "apathetic" toward national affairs. Tokutomi argued that the formalistic emphasis on *chūkun aikoku* in Japanese education had had the opposite of its intended effect: viz., it had alienated Japanese youth from the nation. The remedy to this predicament was to replace formally empty lectures on morality with a properly historicized explication of the Japanese spirit of self-sacrifice premised on devotion to the Emperor. What was necessary was to reeducate the Japanese people in Japan's history from the point of view of devotion to the imperial house. "The Japanese people," Tokutomi wrote in 1918, "simply have no use for lectures on patriotism. Just give them historical education. Just tell them the record of the Yamato people."[38] In this sense, Tokutomi's primary preoccupation was no longer with the education of Japan's youth but with the reeducation of Japanese adults. Only in this way, he argued, could mass politics be incorporated as an active part of Japan's imperialism.

Tokutomi discovered in emperor-centrism a means of adapting his Meiji idealism to the realities of Taishō politics. He had successfully rehabilitated *Kokumin Shimbun*'s image as a voice (albeit a far more conservative voice) for the people by arguing that *heiminshugi* found its logical conclusion in *kōshitsu chūshinshugi*. We may also read this move however, as a return to Tokutomi's earlier project of placing Niijima's Christian ethics upon a secular foundation. Perhaps not accidentally, Tokutomi's own description of imperial house-centrism was replete with Christian symbolism. In explaining *kōshitsu chūshinshugi*, he wrote, "Imperialism abroad, *heiminshugi* at home, these are the two great charters of our Empire; *kōshitsu chūshinshugi* is what runs through both. It is the Trinity of our imperial policy."[39] For Tokutomi, Japan's imperial house became a kind of secular substitute for Christ, an object of spiritual devotion that transcended everyday life to form the core principle behind Japan's history. In this sense, Tokutomi was not being entirely disingenuous when, during Japan's militarist 1930s, he

[37] Tokutomi, quoted in John Pierson, *Tokutomi Sohō, 1863-1957: A Journalist for Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980) 294
[38] Tokutomi, quoted in ibid., 200
[39] Tokutomi, quoted in ibid., 205

dubiously claimed that "were Niijima alive today, he would undoubtedly be an imperial house-centrist."[40]

Kōshitsu chūshinshugi was hardly an original argument. Tokutomi had merely merged his own position with the imperial myth of the Meiji state. Compared to Tokutomi's 1880s call to the Meiji youth to remake Japan in their own image, "imperial house-centrism" was a rather banal argument that could not have been particularly persuasive to the progressive elements in Taishō Japan. But Tokutomi's decision to banalize his own discourse in support of a statist-imperialist ideology is of key interest to us, particularly given the contrast it makes with Ebina. Despite Ebina's enthusiastic support for sending Japanese Protestant missions to Korea, he never (and arguably could not have) adjusted his discourse to suit the ideological demands of military rule there. It required a figure such as Wataze to translate (and, in so doing, also subordinate) Ebina's discourse on Korea into an argument for the Congregationalist Church's efforts in Korea. Tokutomi, by contrast, had been proactively subordinating *Kokumin Shimbun* discourse to the needs of politics since the end of the Sino-Japanese War. This perhaps explains why Tokutomi was able to directly influence discourse in colonial Korea during the military rule period in a way that Ebina could not.

It is this possibility that I wish to investigate in my discussion of *Maeil sinbo* below. In discussing *Maeil sinbo*'s editorials, I would like to make clear that I am not imputing any of them directly to Tokutomi's authorship. Nor am I suggesting that Tokutomi singlehandedly determined *Maeil sinbo*'s editorial policy. Instead, what I would like to suggest is that Tokutomi's influence on *Maeil sinbo*'s editorial content takes the form of a subaltern discourse. Tokutomi's discourse on Korea, I shall argue, contributed directly to the government-general's hegemony over Korea precisely by negating its central conceit of an assimilationism based on cultural homogeneity and replacing it instead with one based on political loyalty to Japan's imperial house.

Tokutomi Soho and Maeil sinbo

Maeil sinbo's very first editorial, printed on August 28, 1910, explains that Japanese rule in Korea is based on "The Principle of Assimilation." *Maeil sinbo* explains here that the principle of assimilation was a natural response to the many similarities Japanese and Koreans shared.

> Our region of the world is the same; our races are the same; our natures are the same; our land is the same; our industry is the same…What sort of thought, then, should our brethren embrace? As the sincere intent of the monarch of both countries is no different for either of us, let us advance together into assimilation under the new government of Japanese civilization and establish the principle of everlasting peace in the Far East.[41]

What does it mean that this enthusiastically assimilationist statement was chosen as *Maeil sinbo*'s first editorial? We have seen above that Tokutomi viewed the notion of assimilating Korea into Japanese culture with a great deal of skepticism. Does this mean, then, that Tokutomi's influence over *Maeil sinbo*'s editorial policy was ultimately negligible? Or does explaining assimilation in principle pave the way for a more nuanced discussion of the actual practice of assimilation?

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[40] Tokutomi, *Niijima Jo Sensei* (Kyoto: Doshisha, 1955) 34
[41] "Donghwa ŭi chuŭi," *Maeil sinbo* (28 August,1910)

We can begin answering these questions by introducing a second editorial, "The Method of Assimilation," which reads almost as though it was intended as a phrase-by-phrase reversal of the evangelical excess of "The Principle of Assimilation" a few days earlier.

> When two countries that are close together have had different foundations for several millennia, their governments are different; their laws are different; their clothes are different; their diets are different; their domiciles are different. It is only natural, then, for their character and thought to be dissimilar too… Russia in Finland and Germany in Poland each forcefully attempted abrupt changes in the [local] language…but this can easily provoke unexpected resistance and thus become an impediment to rule.[42]

In other words, Korea's assimilation would be one tempered by the lessons of history, taking into consideration the "different foundations upon which Korea and Japan rested. "The Method of Assimilation" thus makes clear that the process of assimilation had to be gradual and could not be a matter of "overnight transformation."

Between these two editorials, we can see a schism at work in how *Maeil sinbo* discusses assimilation during the military rule period. At the most general level, *Maeil sinbo* champions Japanese-Korean assimilation as a natural response to the ethnic and historical similarities between the two countries. When it comes to the particulars, however, *Maeil sinbo* not only cautions against a radical assimilation policy, it quite often goes out of its way to suggest that similarities between the Japanese and Korean peoples are an insufficient and perhaps even superfluous condition for achieving assimilation.

In its next editorial on assimilationism, *Maeil sinbo* goes as far as to acknowledge that "[when two countries] that each have different histories several millennia long and dissimilar customs that are several millennia long are suddenly united, it is natural for [people] to have doubts."[43] Ironically, then, here it is by emphasizing the civilizational differences dividing Japan and Korea that *Maeil Sinbo* argues for the necessity of assimilation. *Maeil sinbo*'s idea of assimilation here is thus not defined simply as the unification of two ethnically homogenous cultures. Instead, assimilation is defined as a universal process underpinning, for example, the formation of the multi-ethnic Ch'ing dynasty in China, the "warring states of Korea to form a Korean peninsula," and "the transformation of numberless domainal lords engaged in ceaseless competition eventually into the Great Japan County and Prefectural System."

But wait: Isn't this perhaps "assimilationism" in name only, an assimilationism without the assimilation? In other words, in what specific sense can the kind of political amalgamation advocated here even be considered assimilationist? *Maeil sinbo*'s answer to this question is that assimilation is premised not on the idea of Japanese-Korean cultural homogeneity (a possibility which it nevertheless does not rule out for the future), but on the value of political loyalty to Japan's imperial house. "Korea," *Maeil sinbo* concludes,

> is a civil nation of several millennia standing, and though today its civilization has declined, it is not impossible for it once again to attain the supreme way if its brethren observe the changing situation, follow the trend of the times, and plan for the eternal peace and security of Japan and Korea. The previous Emperor understood the agonized position of our people and now that our eminently compassionate and merciful Emperor too has newly taken the throne and looks upon Japanese and Koreans with equal compassion, Japanese-Korean assimilation may not be far off.

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[42] "Donghwa ŭi bangbŏp, *Maeil sinbo* (14 September 1910)
[43] "Ilsŏn ŭi donghwa,"*Maeil Sinbo* (12 September 1912)

This argument makes the "universal" trend of social evolution dependent on the particular political identification of Korea with Japan's emperor. This suggests that assimilation in *Maeil sinbo* consisted less in Japanizing Korean culture than in modifying Korean civilization to fit an emperor-centered ideology.

Other examples could be cited of what we might call *Maeil sinbo*'s emperor-centric view of assimilationism. Here, however, I would like to focus on a single editorial that suggests, powerfully I think, the exact influence Tokutomi's thought played in shaping *Maeil sinbo* discourse, "On Japanese-Korean Integration" (*ilsŏn yunghwaron*). The object of this editorial may be said to lie in firmly differentiating Japan's "annexation" of Korea from the policies of Western imperialism. "On Japanese-Korean Integration" notes that whereas Western imperialism rested upon the notion of the strong conquering the weak, Japan had been forced to "annex" Korea by a historical situation in which the world was being divided into strong and weak powers. Japan's "annexation" of Korea was thus clearly distinguished from the "colonial idea" of Western expansion.

One way of demonstrating the inapplicability of the Western idea of colonialism to Japan's relationship with Korea was to point out the common history shared between Japanese and Koreans. On this point, "On Japanese-Korean Integration" rattles off a series of observations: that the Japanese, Korean and Chinese peoples all derive from the same Mongolian race; that Japan imported many institutions from Korea during the Paekche and Silla periods; that Japanese and Korean customs differ in the particulars but are broadly similar (*daedong souwi*); that there are striking similarities in the architectural styles of Nara and Suwŏn, etc.

But do so many common cultural traits really suffice to make the necessity of Japanese-Korean assimilation self-evident? Interestingly, *Maeil sinbo* tells us that the answer is no. For if this were the case, this editorial argues, the question would still remain as to where the locus of sovereignty resided in the Japanese empire. Or, to put in another way,

> …did Japan annex Korea, or did Korea annex Japan? There can be no two suns in the sky and no two masters of any house. The people are easily confused when there are too many organs issuing government ordinances. It is thus natural reason that the people could only be put under the rule of a single person [i.e. Japan's emperor]. There is a minority of those [Japanese] who hold contempt [for Koreans] and misunderstand the general situation…and thus view [Korea] as the same as any Western colony, where a stronger power has conquered a weaker power, a civilized nation has conquered a barbaric nation, and in which a division between two races has been established… We therefore believe that the thesis that the Japanese and Korean peoples are of a single civilization and race is an archaic argument held over from before the current century.
>
> If one has two children and one of them dedicates himself to his studies and becomes rich in knowledge while the other is lazy and neglects his studies, we might say that these two children are divided into civilization and barbarism. But their father, if he is a wise man, will say they are [both] his children, and if he is unwise, he will say that [one] is not his child. The present situation between Japan and Korea is no different. Even if there are differences in the cultural levels of Japan and Korea, beneath a single father, they are not different races. Thus, the "one civilization, one race" thesis already belongs to the realm of antiquated argument.[44]

"On Japanese-Korean Integration" thus accepts the notion of Japanese-Korean homogeneity, but ultimately declares it to be a mundane and superfluous circumstance. It was thus always possible

[44] "Ilsŏn yunghwaron," *Maeil sinbo* (18 February 1915)

that this "reality" would be "misunderstood" and thus would dissolve into a colonial relationship based on racial discrimination. Even if true, then, the argument that the Japanese and Korean peoples shared a common ethnic lineage did not substantially differentiate Japanese rule from Western imperialism. Therefore, the problem with such theories of ethnic homogeneity was not that they were untrue, but that they were outdated and inapplicable to the current situation. But this editorial does not consider such theories to be outdated vis-à-vis the impersonal laws of universal history, but specifically with regard to the personal authority of Japan's emperor. It was the imperial house, and not universal laws of history, that rendered the supposed reality of Japanese-Korean homogeneity anachronistic by providing both Japanese and Koreans alike with a higher spiritual purpose.

This, I submit, is a uniquely Tokutomian argument. Indeed, the logic of this editorial is pretty difficult to follow without familiarity with Tokutomi's personalized vision of Japan's colonial rule in Korea. In it we find the same absolutist critique of incomplete, halfway remedies that we see in Tokutomi's early writings. Although we cannot know who wrote this editorial, it seems unlikely that a government-general bureaucrat would have gone out of his way to declare the ethnic unity of the Japanese-Korean people to be an anachronism. More difficult still is it to imagine that one of *Maeil sinbo*'s Korean staff could have made such a bold statement without the sanction of the newspaper's Japanese editors. This suggests the existence of an editorial policy already in place that lent itself to a view of assimilation premised upon devotion to Japan's imperial house rather than the putative cultural homogeneity of Japan and Korea.

In other editorials, *Maeil sinbo* attempts to illustrate the relevance of Japan's imperial house to Korean history. For example, on the occasion of the Taishō emperor's accession, *Maeil sinbo* recalled that, prior to colonization, "[the Korean people], under several centuries of political subjection, had scarcely any life left, but fortunately the previous Emperor perceived the trend of the country and, pitying those suffering, carried out the amalgamation of Japan and Korea, thus giving life to the sick and relief to the anguished."[45] Upon this reading, the significance of Korea's colonization is that it substituted the callous oppression of the previous dynastic government for the paternal compassion of the Japanese emperor. *Maeil sinbo* recognizes within this substitution the emperor's ability to identify himself with "the entire Korean nation," thus making him the premise of national unity that had been previously absent in Korea. This association is drawn in this editorial through an analogy identifying the Meiji emperor's paternal affection for the Yi crown prince with that which he felt for all of Korea. This relationship, *Maeil sinbo* explained "manifested only a part of how much he loves Korea and will console Korea and the [Taishō] Emperor's affection for the Yi crown prince stems from his heavenly will to care for the entire Korean nation." Naturally, then, *Maeil sinbo* assumed the sentiment to be reciprocal. "Surely," it surmised, "the entire Korean nation will not be able to help weeping" for the departed Meiji emperor.

But *Maeil sinbo* does not always find opportunity to dress its discourse up in imperial robes like this. In fact, what perhaps strikes one most upon reading through *Maeil Sinbo* is how overwhelmingly bureaucratic its civilizing discourse is. A good example of this may be found in an editorial of October 22, 1912, about a Kyŏnggi-do councilor, Kim Chŏngsik, and his tour through Suwŏn -gun to advertise the achievements of the colonial government.

[45] "Kŭmsang kwa chŏnhwang pyeha chosŏn," *Maeil sinbo* (2 November 1912)

A councilor from Kyŏnggi-do toured Suwŏn-gun with the purpose of communicating Governor-general Terauchi and Governor Kusuhara's policy of love for the people (*aemin ui juji*) by explaining one by one [policies such as] the ordering of popular custom, industry transport, education and religion, sanitary practices, miscellaneous taxes, public levies, nationalized tenant farming, selecting breeds for rice production, harvest drying, laziness reform, harvesting rice, making fertilizer, forestation projects and frugality savings and made them understand the interests of the new government. The people were won over and said that their hopes for future regeneration had been answered.[46]

What is remarkable about the rhetorical sweep of this passage is that it encompasses not only imperial Japan's identity as a bureaucratic reformer, but also as a charismatic ruler. The sheer litany of government projects squeezed onto a single sentence here as examples of imperial benevolence suggests a model of how to "win over" the Korean people to the cause of the Japanese empire. Governor-general Terauchi and Governor Kusuhara can be thus read here as bureaucratic representatives for the Japanese emperor's benevolent will.

No doubt these are the same bureaucrats whose task it is to communicate the Japanese emperor's benevolent will to the Korean people that Tokutomi discusses in *The Basic Principles of Rule in Korea*. Editorials like this one, however, probably have less to do with Tokutomi's particular vision of Korea than with the general theory of the state that the government-general brought with it to Korea. The Japanese empire, of course, was all too familiar with the practice of using its emperor to place "tradition" at the service of bureaucratic modernization. This habit was perhaps most visible in the debates that took place amongst the Meiji oligarchy leading up to the drafting of Japan's constitution. The writings of Itō Hirobumi, one of the Meiji Constitution's principal authors, are of interest here:

What is the cornerstone of our country? This is the problem we have to solve. If there is no cornerstone, politics will fall into the hands of the uncontrollable masses; and then the government will become powerless; and the country will be ruined. To preserve its existence and to govern the people, the state must not lose the use of the administrative power. Constitutionalism in Europe has more than a thousand years of life. The people have been nurtured in this system. Moreover, religion has been the foundation of this form of government and has penetrated deeply into the hearts of the people. The people thus have a fundamental consensus.

In Japan, however, religion does not play such an important role and cannot become the foundation of constitutional government. Though Buddhism once flourished and was the bond of union between all classes, high and low, today its influence has declined. Though Shintoism is based on the traditions of our ancestors, as a religion it is not powerful enough to become the center of union of the country. Thus in our country the one institution which can become the cornerstone of our constitution is the Imperial House.[47]

This passage, with its allusions to "uncontrollable masses" and the prospect of a ruined nation, evokes well the kind of siege mentality through which the mid-Meiji oligarchy viewed their own country. In this tumultuous context, Itō argued that Japan's constitution required a religious (or quasi-religious) basis and that the imperial house provided the only available source of such spiritual consensus. Historians, of course, continue to debate how and to what extent an "emperor system" (*tennōsei*) came to exercise its hegemony over Japanese society during the Meiji period. Leaving this debate aside here, let us ask: How successful could such a

[46] "Sinchŏng ŭi pogŭp," *Maeil sinbo* (22 October 1912)

[47] Joseph Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan: 1868-1889* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967) pp. 177-8

hegemonizing project have been in Korea, where Japan's imperial house, far from being a traditional "cornerstone," was a foreign presence? Compared to Itō Hirobumi's political realism in 1888, there is clearly something utopian and even unreal about *Maeil sinbo*'s idea of uniting Korean colony with Japanese metropole through their mutual connection to Japan's emperor.

There is evidence to suggest that *Maeil sinbo* was not entirely unaware of this contradiction. One editorial, calling for the "Preservation of Particular Values," makes a particularly interesting parallel to Itō's concern that Japan's constitution had to be premised upon some form of spiritual consensus:

> It is no exaggeration to say that, in our Korea, not only has there been no freedom of religion, but there has also been no religion to believe in. It has been ages since Buddhism entered our Korea and during the Koryŏ Dynasty, Buddhism reached the peak of its influence so that, starting with the King, there was no one who did not believe. But after the Yi Dynasty took the throne…it forbade monks to enter the capital, persecuted Buddhists and drove them in all directions…so that Buddhism declined and lost all of its followers. Naturally, once you cast out Korea's sole religion, you must have a substitute religion that can nurture the masses' virtue and cultivate their moral consciousness. Because there was no [such] religion, Confucianism served as the substitute. Ordinarily, Confucianism does not have the ineffable moral principles and esoteric religious teachings required to be considered a religion; it is merely the study of ethics and a theory of life… [But] during the five centuries of the Yi Dynasty, Confucianism reached the peak of its influence and village schools were established in every county… And thus it is no surprise that, in an age with no separation between politics and religion, the Three Bonds and Five Relationships to no small degree came to shape the people's hearts and minds…
> As the tides of civilization urge the world's progress, Korea has now come to have freedom of religion. But, being thin in religious thought, even with freedom of religion, there is no religion for Koreans to believe in and so naturally what they enter in the morning they abandon by evening.
> On this occasion of great reform where new mixes with old, it is of the utmost importance that we preserve the Three Bonds and Five Relationships…[48]

Although this editorial is obviously not concerned with consitutionalism but more broadly with Korea's modernization, it nevertheless echoes Itō's anxiety that, in the absence of a hegemonic religion, in Korea, as in Japan, some surrogate basis of spiritual consensus had to be sought out. Here, however, the sole source of Korean spiritual unity obviously could not be Japan's imperial house, but must be Confucianism. This suggests that the real locus of spiritual learning lies not in institutional education, but in traditional Korean society.

During the 1880s, Tokutomi had opposed to this viewpoint the argument that the people, far from being "uncontrollable," were well capable of being educated in the spiritual values of independence and self-government, of *heiminshugi*. As we have seen above, Tokutomi had linked the fortunes of *heiminshugi*, a trend which he had intended to result in the total Westernization of Japanese society, to the emergence of a landholding middle class. At the risk of drawing an artificial comparison, let us follow the parallels that may exist between the treatment of class in Tokutomi's editorials for *Kokumin no Tomo* and *Maeil sinbo*. For example, do we find anything in *Maeil sinbo* that approximates *Kokumin no Tomo*'s conception of the role of the middle class? Interestingly enough, we do. In 1911, we discover a *Maeil sinbo* editorial that specifically calls for the creation of a Korean middle class.

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[48] "Koyu han dotŏk ŭi pochŏn," *Maeil sinbo* (April 21, 1915)

Where the middle class has been healthy, that country has inevitably prospered and where the middle class has been sickly, that country has inevitably sunk. It is thus said that the middle class is truly the center of the country…
Although Korea has had many breeds of classes over the last few centuries, in reality these have only [belonged] to the upper and lower classes and because we have been unable to foster a middle class, the wealthy have occupied a position of extreme wealth and the poor have been in a position of extreme poverty and the gap between them has been like that between heaven and earth, how could their wills be communicated to each other?[49]

Substitute "Japan" for "Korea" here and this passage fits neatly into Tokutomi's mid-Meiji argument for a middle class to provide the Japanese nation with a self-sustaining center that would mediate between the upper and lower strata of society. This passage thus lays out the need for a middle class that will be autonomous, if not vis-à-vis the state, than at least vis-à-vis Korean society. This, of course, differentiates it from Tokutomi's notion of *heiminshugi*, which as we have seen, had to mean not only social autonomy but political autonomy as well. This becomes increasingly clear as the editorial proceeds.

Today, having been annexed by an advanced nation, and each class being blessed by the heavenly prince [i.e. Japan's emperor], our brethren should exhaust the people's duties, preserve the people's rights, and enjoy a common civilization with the Japanese. And thus we say that fostering a middle class is of the greatest urgency.
People without a constant livelihood generally have no constant mind, and how can people without constant mind gain the value of a middle class? This is the reason for the government-general's policies towards promoting enterprise and providing our people with constant mind. If our people should respect the programs of our rulers and work towards industrial development and sincere about normal education and if the middle class becomes healthy we shall enjoy the everlasting peace and happiness of sagely times with a national center generated by good people acting of their own accord.

Any student of Confucianism reading this editorial (and there were undoubtedly many) would have instantly recognized the reference made here to Mencius' argument that it was the task of benevolent government to give its people the constancy of mind that they could not provide for themselves. This establishes a clear difference from Tokutomi's mid-Meiji argument that the middle class's role was in fostering a self-governing nation by specifying that Korean middle class's social autonomy is for the purposes of bringing the Korean people under the moral influence of Japan's emperor. The imperial house thus became (at least in *Maeil sinbo* discourse) a spiritual "cornerstone" of Japan's colonial rule in Korea by attaching itself to the Confucianism of traditional society, but only through the mediation of a middle class that will make up Korea's "national center."

This desire for national centeredness pops up elsewhere in *Maeil sinbo* too.
An editorial from 1918, for example, complains that "there are no central figures in our Korea."

Those who discuss education or who plan to vitalize industry all speak of surveys, resources, organization and rules. We do not at all intend to say that these things are useless. But if there is no central figure to lead, then all of these things are bound to wind up useless. Why, then, have we neglected to prioritize these central figures that act as our country's axis? In any single industrial company or union there is always certain to be a central figure holding the reigns and who is the living spirit of that organization….

[49] "Kyegŭpron," *Maeil sinbo* (30 August 1911)

To those who see legal administration as a panacea, central figures will not be of the least value. Yet no matter how perfect legal administration is, law cannot be implemented without people. Legal administration is thus not a self-moving force…Let us therefore keep in mind that, when we consider how to foster our Korea's popular strength, there is nothing that does not wait upon the efforts of central figures.[50]

This passage reflects a canny awareness that the government-general required an independent social counterpart to provide the momentum and inertia behind its bureaucratic projects. This awareness suggests an implicit understanding of history in which the middle class makes up the driving force, although not the sovereign force. In contrast to static elements like bureaucratic benevolence and imperial identity, then, class is the area where *Maeil sinbo* imagined a future that was not merely a utopian extension of the perceived present.

But the role the middle class plays in *Maeil sinbo* is by no means as clear-cut as it is in *Kokumin no Tomo*. As we have seen, in *Kokumin no Tomo*, the task of the middle class lay in social transformation, in replacing Japan's "aristocratic society" with a popular, egalitarian society. *Maeil sinbo*, on the other hand, far from doing away with aristocratic society, was preoccupied with helping the government-general invent a new aristocracy for colonial Korea. The creation of an aristocracy thoroughly integrated with Japan's imperial house began almost immediately after colonization, starting with the first appointment ceremony of Korean nobles in October, 1910. This new nobility brought together the Yi royal family with the members of formerly influential political faction and those Koreans who had contributed to Japan's colonization effort. A *Maeil sinbo* editorial from 1912 suggests the government-general's desire to associate itself with the traditional authority represented by these elements.

During the previous Han period too, when you Lords held the positions of both general and governor, the people all trembled before your anger and rejoiced at your pleasure and you led the fortunes of the general populace well. At that time, the people perceived that you loved and trusted them and so they loved and trusted you.
Now, with the amalgamation of Japan and Korea, you Lords have carried out a great accomplishment to advance the people's happiness. The Emperor therefore treasures your past virtue and wishes to reward your efforts by giving you nobility and prosperity.

At the same time, however, *Maeil sinbo* makes very clear that the new aristocracy no longer derived their status from traditional sources, but now solely from the emperor. Above all, *Maeil sinbo* stresses, Korea's new aristocracy was not to be confused with the class of yangban literati that had made up the ruling class under the Yi dynasty. The yangban, *Maeil sinbo* argues, had not acted as a "model to the people," but had instead incurred the wrath of the Korean people by using their status to lead a decadent lifestyle. *Maeil sinbo* thus admonishes the newly fashioned nobility to remember that "you are not a natural aristocracy, but a temporary class that receives its privileges from the Emperor…" It was therefore the aristocracy's responsibility to provide a model of behavior for the rest of the Korean nation: "For the Emperor has not arranged you Lords into a fixed aristocratic hierarchy, but rather you Lords of the aristocracy must have an acutely felt determination to repay the imperial blessing." The aristocracy, like the middle class, had to "repay" the emperor's benevolence through the projects they undertook on behalf of the Korean people.

[50] "Asŏn e nŭn chungsinchŏk inmul i ŏpda," *Maeil sinbo* (14 June 1918)

So what, in *Maeil sinbo*'s view, differentiated the aristocracy from the middle class? And what would the relationship between the two classes be like? *Maeil sinbo* never gives a straight answer to these questions. Yet the differing social contexts in which *Kokumin no Tomo* and *Maeil sinbo* developed their respective views of class almost suggest an answer by themselves. During the 1880s, Tokutomi exploited the separation of the ruling warrior classes from the land under the pre-Meiji political system to argue that it was the wealthy peasants, who had been excluded from political power, that possessed the cultural credentials necessary to undertake the project of Japan's national transformation. In Korea, however, the landowning yangban had been fully incorporated into the Yi dynasty's ruling structure. Thus, whereas *Kokumin no Tomo* had relied on the clear-cut distinction between the status groups of samurai and wealthy peasant, *Maeil sinbo* during the 1910s depends on a extremely blurry distinction between "aristocratic" and "middle" classes that are actually both derived from the single status group of landowners. *Maeil sinbo*'s class categories thus turn out not only to be virtual ones, but virtually undifferentiated as well. This may be called self-contradictory, but it is also ambiguous enough to allow *Maeil sinbo* to envision Japanese hegemony as encompassing both those landlords who were directly affiliated with the government-general and those who were not.

Despite its call for a Korean "middle class," then, *Maeil sinbo*'s conception of class is nevertheless diametrically opposed to Tokutomi's 1880s call for *heiminshugi* in Japan and, indeed, may even be read as an inversion of *heiminshugi*. An editorial from 1914, "The Nation's Classes," tells us that the division of society into high and low is a natural condition of all nations. "When the popular mind has veered from what it was in ancient times," this editorial explains, "people are always sure to say that enlightenment is classless."[51] Popular attempts to subvert class society through superficial appeals to universal values such as enlightenment are therefore to be taken as a sign of social decline. This complaint that the false promise of a classless enlightenment presented a threat to Korean society is a recurring element in the pages of *Maeil sinbo*. A later editorial extends this concern to include Korea's cultural identity.

> While our Korea asks itself "Are we civilized or not?" have we not become addicted to civilization? Had Korea developed and nurtured its own civilization, there would now be no shortage of people adapted to modern civilization. But Korea over the last fifty years has imported much foreign civilization from Japan and China.
> In the first place, civilization draws no difference between new and old, east and west, classics and literature, or near and far. So let us adopt what is useful and dispense with what is not…If we build our own separate, pure civilization and then view that as our personal possession, why should we have to wait for leadership from without?…
> Since the recent entry of new civilization into Korea, the true essence [of civilization] has flown away so that only its name rings in our minds and mouths, forming a new vocabulary. And from this single new vocabulary have sprung other new vocabulary such as freedom, equality, independence, non-discrimination and classlessness that have trampled upon and toppled our particular morality and ethics. [52]

This "new civilization" that threatens Korea's "particular morality" with its superficially universal values of freedom and equality here is, of course, Western civilization. This editorial's argument is that Korea ought to cautiously assimilate elements of Western civilization in accordance with the needs of its own culture. Here, then, class society is imagined as a

[51] "Minjok ŭi kyekŭp," *Maeil sinbo* (30 May 1914)
[52] "Kyŏngsŏng hwengsusŏl: myŏngbun e chungdok," *Maeil sinbo* (28 May 1918)

prophylactic *against* radical Westernization, precisely the reverse of the role class plays in Tokutomi's mid-Meiji concept of *heiminshugi*.

In "The Nation's Classes," the need to preserve Korea's class structure is presented in the form of a traditional Confucian argument. Elsewhere, however, it is revealed to be a realistic response to Korea's historical circumstances. For example, an editorial from 1917 explains that,

> We do not wish to reinstall today the classes of high and low, noble and humble, yangban and commoner. But seeing that general levels of knowledge naturally produce classes, we advocate the adoption of classes that are adapted to the current situation and the revival of the customs of the previous period's classes that are advantageous. If you favor freedom, then acquire the capacity for freedom. If you have the capacity for freedom, then who will dare to oppress the right to freedom God (*sangche*) has given to you? …All that we wish is that the classes of high and low, noble and humble will naturally cease to be produced once the people's levels of knowledge are equal.[53]

The justification for preserving Confucianism in Korea is thus ultimately not a Confucian one, but an historical argument concerning the current state of Korea's cultural development. This historical determinism perhaps explains why, at a time when *Kokumin Shimbun* was concerned transforming Japan's mass politics into a support base for imperialism, *Maeil sinbo* continued to espouse a class-based notion of Japan's colonial hegemony in Korea.

It is possible to argue that this anti-*heiminshugi* position, if we may name it that here, resembles the colonial ideology of associationism much more closely than it does assimilationism. *Maeil sinbo* was proposing to its landowning readership that they retain their traditional authority by virtue of their political association with Japan's imperial house. Recent studies have demonstrated that the British empire also draped their associations with colonial elites in monarchic symbolism. It seems fitting, then, that a former Anglophile like Tokutomi would pattern *Maeil sinbo*'s editorial policy after the more conservative elements of British imperialism. But *Maeil sinbo*'s encouragement of political loyalty to Japan's imperial house can be considered assimilationist precisely insofar as it presented the Japanese emperor as a quasi-religious figure whose moral influence could be used to assimilate Koreans into an imperial identity. This is arguably a characteristic that fundamentally differentiates it from the rhetoric of British imperialism.

The religious presentation of Japan's emperor, of course, went hand-in-hand with the Meiji state's idea of political legitimacy that the government-general's bureaucrats brought with them to Korea. It also, however, derived from the intellectual trajectory followed by Tokutomi whereby he transfigured Niijima's Protestant valuation of the individual conscience into a form of spiritual devotion to Japan's imperial house. In this sense, the associationism-within-assimilationism that we see at play in *Maeil sinbo* ought to be understood as unique to Tokutomi's highly personalized vision of Japanese rule in Korea. By denying assimilationism's basis in ethnic homogeneity, Tokutomi made it possible for Korean landowners to assert their cultural autonomy from Japan and still be (or at least claim to be) spiritually loyal to Japan's imperial house. Thus, Tokutomi used his origins in Christian culture to provide an associationist foundation for Japan's colonial hegemony while still satisfying the ideological demand for assimilation into a Japanese imperial identity. Like the Korean students in the Tokyo YMCA, then, Tokutomi made the argument that cultural autonomy could coexist alongside political domination. Unlike these students, however, Tokutomi did not make this argument through the

[53] "Minjok Kaejōn (6): Korae ŭi mipung tŭkchang," *Maeil sinbo* (3 July 1917)

mediation of a global institution, but through an immediate relationship to colonial authority, in the pages of the only Korean-language newspaper permitted to print during the military rule period. From the very outset, then, Tokutomi's discourse was premised upon its subordination to political authority.

So where does that bring us in our evaluation of the claim that colonial government had anticipated the post-1919 colonial order? This, of course, is a prevarication insofar as it effaces the popular forces that the March First movement unleashed and which, as we have seen, *Maeil Sinbo* had suppressed in its vision of colonial Korea. The larger point, I think, is that, despite such built-in blindness, *Maeil sinbo* did correctly posit that a colonial future for Korea lying beyond military rule would depend upon fostering a middle class operating within parameters set by the state. And one could argue that the conceptual categories of benevolent government, colonial assimilation, and class relations remained very much in place during cultural rule. When independent Korean journalism reemerged during the 1920s, it would have to outline a middle class that would reclaim the role of modernizer *and* carve out a sphere of cultural autonomy for Korea.

Epilogue:

Perhaps the greatest irony of the role played by Christian culture during the military rule period in Korea is that its Japanese protagonists so actively engaged, whether cooperatively or critically, with a colonial regime that was manifestly hostile to Christianity. This fact is more puzzling still when one considers that each of the central Japanese figures of this narrative showed relatively little interest in the following "cultural rule" period (1920-31), which allowed a much greater degree of religious freedom. The Congregationalist Church ended its missions to Korea in 1921, after the rapid decline in its membership following the March First movement. After 1919, Ebina no longer looked to Korean Christians to Christianize the Japanese empire. Yoshino Sakuzō, despite his continued interest in the Japanese empire, increasing focused not on colonial Korea, but on the problem of Sino-Japanese relations. Even Tokutomi Sohō, the ardent imperialist, ended his directorship over *Maeil sinbo* in 1918, a full year before military rule period.

Nevertheless, amongst Koreans, the notion of the YMCA as an arbiter of Korea's cultural autonomy under colonial rule persisted. The editors and journalists of the Korean newspapers that emerged in the 1920s presented themselves as guardians of Korean culture. For instance, in an editorial entitled "The Problem of the Christian Church's Independence," from 1922, the *Tonga Ilbo* announced,

> Up to the present day, Japanese newspapers have printed many stories reporting that Korean Christians wish to free themselves from foreign rule and that they have started various movements to this effect. Whether it be a school that takes leave of the alliance [of YMCAs?], or some church that begins a reform movement, or anything else that is not entirely unrelated to anti-foreignism, [Japanese newspapers] interpret it as an argument for freedom from foreign rule. On the other hand, it is also the case that these types of movements have been occurring. Our call for Korean Christians to give sincere thought to this issue of Korean independence is therefore not only necessary to the church, but an urgent matter for the general advancement of our culture and Korean-foreigner relations.[1]

This editorial clearly suggests a representational contest between Japan's colonial newspapers and the emergent forms of Korean media over the meaning of Korean Christianity. During the 1910s, Japan unilaterally set the terms under which Christian discourse could be expressed. The sense we get here, however, is that the editors of *Tonga Ilbo* are reclaiming custodianship over Korea's cultural autonomy. The editorial is not an openhanded defense of Western missionaries. Instead, it argues that the need for Korean Christians to claim a position of their own on the issue of church independence

[1] *Tonga Ilbo* 24 February 1922, editorial

was not a narrowly religious matter, but belonged to the broader province of national culture.

But an institution like the YMCA could stake its own claim to representing Korea's cultural autonomy through these new newspapers too. In 1925, the *Tonga Ilbo* printed across its first page extended quotations from a speech given in Hawaii by the Korean YMCA's director, Shin Hŭngu.

> Japan's assimilationist policy and its educational institutions' policy of inserting the Japanese language into [our society] is a fatal shackle around us. Policies toward prosperity pursued under an unrestrained assimilationist policy only nullify the consciousness of Koreans. Material happiness is absolutely meaningless.[2]

Such scathing criticism of colonial rule clearly signaled that the YMCA, while not a political force, would now confront Japan openly over matters concerning Korea's cultural values. By the 1920s, Japanese Protestantism had moved away from its earlier interest in encouraging the autonomy of the Korean YMCA against the foreign missionaries, but Korean ideologues—whether Christian or not—would not (and arguably could not) renounce their claim to represent the YMCA as autonomous both from the Anglo-American missions and the Japanese empire. Investigating how the YMCA's role as an arbiter of Korean culture under Japanese rule during the 1920s thus poses an interesting research theme for the future.

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[2] ibid. 31 July 1925

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