

## **Design of Remembrance**

About art constructing Japanese history and its representations

Manuel Schilcher Phd Thesis, draft 03 2018, Part 7

## **Korea**

### **Content**

Korean Enlightenment.....	2
Japanese Cultural Policy of Korea.....	10
Colonial Research as a Key to Rule.....	18
Exposing the Power of Art.....	28
A Change of policy.....	32
The Invention of Korean Modern Art.....	35
Japanese Methods of Art Education.....	36
Eastern Lines and Western Colours .....	42
Mobilization due Art.....	47
War Artists - Nanŭn, as far as I am concerned .....	52
Korean Relations to NS Germany.....	55

## Korean Enlightenment

Eager to establish a mission in the region, Jesuit Vice-Provincial Gasper Coelho agreed to daimyō Toyotomi Hideyoshi's (1537-1598) request for two battleships to support the Japanese invasion of Korea. The conflict which started in 1592 provided Westerners with their first opportunity to visit the peninsula.<sup>1</sup> At 27 December 1593 Jesuit Gregorio de Céspedes (1550-1611) was the first European missionary to visit the south tip of the kingdom under the guidance of roman-catholic daimyō and one of the three invading generals, Konishi Yukinaga (1555-1600).<sup>2</sup> Bringing the first Christian motifs and paintings with him to overcome language barriers his visit had no sustainable impact as he only stayed for less than four month. In Europe the Jesuit letters referencing to first hand observation provided a first substantial introduction of Korea to the West. Excerpts from these letters were translated into Italian and French and widely distributed among Catholic monasteries during the sixteenth century. Due its politics of self isolation Korea was mainly seen by Westerners necessarily via the windows of the Jesuit missionaries in China and Japan. Intellectuals of the time learned about Korea's geography, culture, and political system in a reference to the tributary relationship between China and its neighbouring countries. The Japanese-Korean war which should provide the Jesuits with a foothold in the region challenged the existing Chinese world order on the military and the political level. Japan's first attempt to become a global power also affirmed Chinese willingness to aid in the protection of its tributary states. The conflict turned out a financial burden for China, Korea had numerous cultural heritage sites damaged or destroyed and lost a large portion of its military strength and civilian population. In Japan Toyotomi's clan was weakened as he died three month before the conflict ended with the withdrawal of his forces in December 1598.

In the long run the temporarily occupation of parts of Korea in the sixteenth century developed the Japanese concept of Korea within Japan's sphere of influence. Recurring attempts of the annexation of Korea by Japanese leaders in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries reinforced the justification of this invasion.<sup>3</sup>

Since the seventeenth century Korea was a vassal state of Manchu China and more secluded than Japan with its only diplomatic relation to Beijing. At the time Pusan was the only port open for merchants from Tsushima with a Japanese settlement called Tongnae guarded by Koreans.<sup>4</sup> Therefore

---

1 King Philip II of Spain refused the request. Turnbull, Stephen *The Samurai Invasion of Korea, 1592–98*, London: Opsrey, 2008 p. 6  
In 3 November 1571 a first letter provided a most comprehensive reference to Korea to date. Published in the Jesuit Carta in 1598 it made a substantial contribution to the introduction of Korea in Europe. In 1580 the Jesuits in Japan began to chronicle the ongoing war between Japan and Korea. According to their writing Nobunaga was planning to build then a great armada to go and conquer China and after Nobunaga's assassination in 1582, the Jesuit missionaries were able to hear at an audience in Osaka with Hideyoshi of Japan's plans for the invasion of Korea. Their military assistance for Japan's war effort was motivated by the aspiration to procure Hideyoshi's support for the Catholic mission in the region.

See: Cheong Sung-hwa & Lee Kihan: A Study of 16th-Century Western Books on Korea: The Birth of an Image, Korean Historical Review in June 1999, p.255-283

Although Marco Polo (ca 1254-1324) mentioned the existence of the peninsula and a first draft was sketched in 1554 by Portuguese cartographer Lopo Homem (16th century), it was Austrian Jesuit Martino Martini (1614-1661) who first would produce an understanding of Korea in his *Novus Atlas Sinensis*, published as part of Joan Blaeu's *Atlas Maior* (Amsterdam 1655), as known today.

Shannon McCune, *The Korean Cartographic Tradition: Its Cross-Culture Relations*, Papers of the 1st International Studies, Sōngnam 1980, pp. 727f

2 He was ordered to support the troops of 15.000 converted catholics among the Japanese army.

Laures, Johannes: Koreas erste Berührung mit dem Christentum in, *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 3, 1956, p.177-189 and #4, 1956, p.282-287

3 See: Conroy Hilary: *The Japanese Seizure of Korea: 1868–1910. A Study of Realism and Idealism in International Relations*, Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960

4 The colony was similar to Dejima in Nagasaki during Tokugawa reign.

the main influence of Western science, art and religion was through Korean emissaries to the Ming dynasty as Yi Su-gwang (1563–1628, pen-name Jibong) who acquired several books by Matteo Ricci during his three missions to China. Using these books as research his encyclopedia *Jibong Yuseol*, published in 1614 contained not only information on Catholicism and China, but also on Japan, basic information on the Western world, including geography, weather, Western food, weapons and astronomy. Yi took a critical stance on the Korean seclusion policy and compared in his influential book Western knowledge to Korean and Chinese counterparts and related to Confucian ethics.<sup>5</sup>

However, the neo-Confucianism of the Chu Hsi School which was the religious ideology of the Yi Dynasty ruling class effectively prevented widespread acceptance of the new ideas. The real impact of Western ideas upon Korean society did not begin to be felt until the closing years of the nineteenth century, following the 1876 treaty with Japan and subsequent treaties with Western nations.<sup>6</sup>

By the opening of Japan in the end of the nineteenth century, Korea remained extremely traditional, opposed to any change. Japanese were considered as traitors of Eastern Asian heritage and not to be trusted despite the chance to modernize the country. Occasional Western attempts failed to end the Korean seclusion and while part of the Japanese government was joining the Iwakura mission (1871-1873) in the West, some belligerent Japanese leaders led by Takamori Seigō supported an invasion of Korea.<sup>7</sup> After hefty arguments, suicides and negotiations in October 1873 any expedition was postponed and many proponents of an invasion resigned and left governmental service.<sup>8</sup> After Japan employed gunboat diplomacy to press Korea the seclusion ended in 1876 with an unequal Treaty similar to what happened to Japan over twenty years ago. Japan was given extraterritorial rights to its citizens in Korea, and the Korean government was forced to open three ports to Japan. So far the Japanese succeeded in a politically specific way for further expansion of the empire. For Japan this treaty was a first step to open up a 'route' for moving outside the islands heading the north-eastern part of China. On the other hand it provided a good opportunity to learn about Western culture, but it also paved the way for imperialist aggression.

In the European interest on Asian or Oriental art in the late nineteenth century, promoted by art critics as Julius Meier-Graefe (1867-1935), Conrad Fiedler (1841-1895) or Jules (1830-1870) and Edmond (1822-1896) de Goncourt, Korean art and culture was due to its seclusion policy not recognized for a long time.<sup>9</sup> Archeology and ceramics of the peninsula became soon to be focused by Western as Japanese observer and collectors when Korean art history was first described in 1895 by Ernst Zimmermann after seeing the collection of Imperial Korean Consul Eduard Meyer (1856-1926) at the

---

5 Yang-mo Chōng: Arts of Korea, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998, p.341

Frank Hoffmann: Koreanische Malerei und Grafik "westlichen Stils" von den Anfängen bis zum Ende der japanischen Besatzungszeit, Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen, 1992, p.94

Gari Ledyard: Korean Travelers in China over Four Hundred Years, 1488-1887, Occasional Papers on Korea, No. 2 (March 1974), pp. 1-42

6 Christianity did not become a part of Korean culture until it was finally established in the 18th century. Therefore it began as an indigenous lay movement rather than being imposed by a foreign missionaries. Founded on a substantial body of educated opinion sympathetic to it, the Catholic faith spread more quickly through the population in the 1790s. The Catholic Church became the first Korean organization to officially adopt Hangul, the phonemic Korean alphabet which was more easily to learn than Chinese, as its primary script. Thought in schools it enabled Christian teachings to spread beyond the elite, and helped to publish doctrinal books of Christian literature. The bible was translated to Korean and published in 1887 by John Ross, a Scottish Presbyterian. Grayson, James H.: John Ross: First Missionary to Korea, Kyemyong Univ. Press, 1982

7 C.W. LeGendre, advisor to the foreign ministry supported such decision.

8 See: Peter Duus: The Abacus and the Sword, The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910, University of California Press, 1998

9 Horace H. Underwood: A Partial Bibliography of Occidental Literature on Korea from Earliest Times to 1930, Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XX (1931), pp. 17-185

Hamburger Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe. Referring to writings of Jesuit Jean-Baptiste du Halde (1674-1743), Julius Klaproth (1793-1835) and Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796-1866), only two years later in 1897 a catalog with a brief description of objects and over 300 sketches of the Korean collection of the Museum Umlauff, Hamburg was published.<sup>10</sup> The catalog, which gave hardly any background information on the history or art history of Korea, instead served the interest of that time on exotic and ethnographic preoccupation, less than art-historical aspects.<sup>11</sup> In 1929, André Eckardt (1884-1974) German Benedictine monk, who studied art history in Munich, published after staying nineteen years in Korea his book in German "Geschichte der koreanischen Kunst" and English "A History of Korean Art".<sup>12</sup> In his re-contextualization of Korean art history he did not follow the Chinese dynastic system and but described his work as a product of German and Japanese universities' efforts to fill the void in Korean art-related literature that exists in Western languages. As far as he attempted to make a balanced argument, not defaming or praising in any way, he positioned himself in an imperialistic order when he moaned that Korean people had lost their artistic abilities, but can regain their previous stature under Japanese and European-American influence. However, together with the article by Charles Hunt about Korean visual arts in 1930, it was the first serious attempt to generate an overview of Korean art history of the eighteenth century for Western readers and provides a good contrast with contemporary Japanese writings.<sup>13</sup> Maurice Courant (1865-1935) came to Korea in 1890 as an interpreter and secretary for the French legation. During his two-year stay, Courant wrote "Bibliographie Coreenne" from 1894 until 1901, three volumes documenting some 3,821 Korean books. The publication paved the way for Korean studies abroad and earned Courant a place in history as the father of Korean studies in Europe.

Short after the opening of Korea young Korean reformers had been pushing for such a social, political and economic transformation of Korea as it had begun in Japan. Even King Kojong (1852-1919, reigned 1863-1907) had consulted with foreign advisers such as the German Paul Georg Moellendorff (1847-1901), who had advised the king on foreign affairs from 1883 to 1885 and held the office of Vice-President of the newly created Foreign Ministry, as well as various others American, French and Russian advisors brought into the country. Many intellectuals saw the only chance not to be colonized by the imperialist powers in the modernization of the country.<sup>14</sup> But their ideas about the nature of the

---

10 Ernst Zimmermann, *Koreanische Kunst*, Hamburg: Carl Giese, 1895

11 The company Umlauff, experts in ethnographica as well as materials for exhibition design, produced entire dioramas as the embodiment of cultural stereotypes that were shown, at colonial exhibitions until the interwar period. The depiction of foreign living worlds for ethnological museums was a significant source of income until the First World War. Britta Lange: *Die Kolonialausstellung von 1928*, Ulrich van der Heyden, Joachim Zeller (Hrsg.): *Kolonialismus hierzulande – Eine Spurensuche in Deutschland*, Stuttgart Sutton Verlag, Erfurt 2007, p. 343–347.

12 André Eckardt: *Geschichte der koreanischen Kunst*, Leipzig: Verlag Karl W. Hiersemann 1929; *A History of Korean Art*, translated by J.M. Kindersley, London: E. Goldston 1929.

13 S. Charles Hunt: *Some Pictures and Painters of Corea*, Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XIX (1930), pp. 1-34

The two-volume publication on East Asian art by Fenollosa, published in 1912 posthumously compiled and edited by his widow, also incorporates the early art of Korea. But the texts inherit a lot of mistakes and quite obscure conclusions, which were partly corrected in the first German translation. F. Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art: An Outline History of East Asiatic Design*, Vol. 1, ed. Mary Fenollosa, London, William Heinemann 1912, pp. 45-71

Otto Kümmel devoted in his general history of East Asian art, which for a long time was considered the standard work on the subject, five pages to Korean art. Otto Kümmel: *Die Kunst Chinas, Japans und Koreas*, Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft, Wildpark-Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion 1929, pp. 187-191.

14 One of them was Yu Kil-chun (1856-1914), who had already visited Japan in 1881 and was extremely impressed by the modernization process there. After Korea received diplomatic contacts, he accompanied in 1883 along with eight other Yongban diplomats the young Korean Special Envoy Min Yong-ik (1860-1914) in the United States and in 1885 he traveled with the group through Europe. In 1895, his book *Sōyu kyōnmun*, printed in Japan, appears, which also gives an outline of Western art history.

modernization diverged and led to a situation of political instability. While some Koreans promoted Pan-Asia as an alliance between Korea, China, and Japan, Nationalists, in contrast, advocated the distinctiveness of a Korean nation and regarded Japan as a greater threat than the West.<sup>15</sup> For some Koreans the traditional culture was in danger of being destroyed and they sought to deal with the threat posed by the intruding ideas was to refute them and hold fast to the orthodox Confucian view. The group around Yi Hang-no (1792-1868) positioned religion as the central element because it provided the very foundation for the existence of Korean culture and the structure of the value system as well. During the period of Japanese colonialism they played a fundamental role in shaping the ideology of the resistance movement.<sup>16</sup>

The fraction around Min Yong-ik (1860-1914), nephew of Queen Min and head of First Korean Diplomatic Mission to U.S, and the Min clan who were directly involved in the exercise of state power, were only interested in taking over Western technology while retaining traditional power and administrative structures.<sup>17</sup>

One of the pro Japanese reformer, Kim Ok-kyun (1851-1894), who was educated in the United States, tried with his group and with the knowledge and support of the Japanese legation in December 1884 a coup d'état. They murdered some conservative pro-Chinese ministers and installed a new cabinet for a short time. As Chinese troops intervened, the reformers were beaten.<sup>18</sup> The reformers, who hoped to remake the entire political and social system of Korea on the Japanese model, were in close contact with Japanese and Westerners, learned Japanese and English, and were educated in Christianity because they linked it directly to the success of Western countries. In a similar way the Eastern Learning *Tonghak* movement led by Choi Che-woo (1824-1860), spread as a religious movement for national culture to Western Roman Catholic learning. Followers of the *Tonghak* movement claimed the authority of divine revelation, to save the nation and bring peace to the people by getting rid of government tyranny and keeping out Western and Japanese influence. Despite their leader was executed by the government, the movement continued its missionary efforts and became the largest religious group in Korea in the next thirty-six years.

In the 1890's Russian eastward expansion took the form of a concerted "push" toward the Pacific to unite central Russia direct with the Far East by the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, crossing a total distance of some 6,000 miles. Russia plunged into the gigantic task of Westernisation approximately at the same time that Japan reversed her two-and-a half centuries policy of isolation. The stupendous conception of a Russian-Pacific railway was not from the beginning grasped in its entirety until news came in 1890 of China's projected Manchurian line constituting a formidable threat to Russia's territories on the Amur and Ussuri. Finally, on March 17, 1891, the decision was taken to

---

Donald N. Clark: Yun Chi-ho (1864- 1945)[sic!]: Portrait of a Korean Intellectual in an Era of Transition", Occasional Papers on Korea, No. 4, 1977, pp.36-76

15 Gi-wook Shin: Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics and Legacy, Stanford University Press, 2006, p. 30

16 A movement for reform of Confucian ideas was advocated by Pak Un-shik (1859-1925). Compared to the Protestant reformers of sixteenth century Europe, they believed it would be possible to preserve the national culture through accepting Western thought but in the framework of a reformed Confucianism, property of the whole people, not just of the elite ruling class.

17 They had severely limited the authority of King Kojong with Chinese support since a military uprising in 1882.

18 Supported by the Enlightenment Party *Kaehwadang*, The Independence Party *Tongnipdang* and the Progressive Party *Chinbodang* the Kapsin Incident, which started on 4 December 1884 failed three days later. The pro-Japanese leaders of the coup were suppressed by a Chinese garrison in Korea. This led to Chinese domination of Korea from 1885–1894. Yŏng-ho Ch'oe: The Kapsin Coup of 1884: A Reassessment, Korean Studies Vol. 6 (1982), pp. 105-124

construct the line also in view of the greatest benefits in the field of economic, cultural, and political interests, for European Russia as well as for the need of opening up for exploitation the vast wealth of Siberia.<sup>19</sup> Strategically, the Trans-Siberian was of the utmost immediate consequence and establish an uninterrupted rail communication of Europe with the Pacific and East Asia. Despite its economic advantages it would also secure for the Russian Navy a firm base of support in the eastern ports.

Both Japan and China viewed with a sense of apprehension the progress of the Russian plan. The government in Tokyo feared that once Russia completed this cord of communication and supply it would be impossible to resist any hostile advances in the Far East. Therefore the independence of Korea as a fully independent "buffer" was viewed as necessary to the continued security of the empire. An uprising in 1894 by a syncretic, nationalistic religion that opposed Western culture, the Tong-Hak or Oriental Learning Society, worked to Japan's advantage. The Korean government called on China for aid and used this unique opportunity for direct intervention in the peninsula.

During the course of the Sino-Japanese war the Japanese destroyed or captured the greater part of the Chinese navy, drove the Chinese forces out of Korea, and occupied southern Manchuria. The campaign revealed, much to the surprise of all concerned, the complete military impotence of China, which was compelled to sue for peace. By concluding the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, Korea was released from the tributary system of the Qing China in the following years. Under the rising influence of Japan, the Korean Imperial Household took precautions and greatly gravitated closer to Russia.<sup>20</sup> Throughout the course of the Sino-Japanese War and the subsequent peace negotiations at Shimonoseki, Russia had continued to manifest a vital interest in the affairs of the Korean government. But first and foremost among Russia's Far Eastern policy was a desire for an ice-free port on the Pacific. From 1897 onwards, Manchuria started to resemble more and more a Russian province, as Russia obtained not only the right to construct railways across but also full extraterritorial rights to police the land which the lines traversed. Having been one of the major considerations in view of the vast Trans-Siberian Railway project, in 1898 Russia negotiated a convention by which China leased to Russia Port Arthur, Talienwan and the surrounding waters. In the same year Russians also began to make inroads into Korea as they had acquired mining and forestry concessions near the Yalu and Tumen rivers. One year later in 1899 the Russian Ministry of Marine, jeopardized relations with Japan even more when they turned toward the Korean port of Chemulpo (Incheon), as a base for their Pacific fleet. To quell the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 both Japan and Russia, beside others of the Eight-Nation Alliance sent troops to the region.<sup>21</sup> When by 8 April 1903, Russia would not withdrawal its forces from Manchuria that it had dispatched, Japan began to negotiate by offering to recognize Russian dominance in Manchuria in exchange for recognition of Korea as being within the Japanese sphere of influence. After negotiations broke down in 1904, the Japanese Navy, backed by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, signed in 1902 with Britain, opened the war with a surprise attack on the Russian ships at Port Arthur. After Russia suffered multiple defeats by Japan, a complete victory of the Japanese

---

19 Count Sergei Yulyevich Witte (1849-1915) served as Russian Director of Railway Affairs within the Finance Ministry from 1889 to 1891 and oversaw the ambitious program of railway construction. Wcislo, Francis W. (2011). *Tales of Imperial Russia: The Life and Times of Sergei Witte, 1849-1915*. New York: Oxford University Press.

20 Previous to the outbreak of the war between China and Japan, the Japanese had invaded the royal palace and seized King Kojong, assuming control over the administration of the country by a cabinet of pro-Japanese Koreans. Empress Myeongseong, first official wife of Kojong, was assassinated in October 1895 by Japanese as she advocated stronger ties between Korea and Russia in an attempt to block Japanese influence in Korea. Bruce Cumings: *Korea's Place in the Sun*, W. W. Norton 1997, p.123

21 The Eight-Nation Alliance was an international military coalition consisting of Japan, Russia, Britain, France, the United States, Germany, Italy and Austro-Hungary.

military surprised world observers, and resulted in a reassessment of Japan's recent entry onto the world stage.

As a result of the Russo-Japanese War, Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905 and the according treaty was signed under duress, as well as its never having been ratified by Emperor Gwangmu (1852-1919), the twenty-sixth king of the Joseon dynasty and the first Emperor of Korea. Under the supervision of a group of Japanese advisers to secure Korea's "independence" the government was reorganized the better to subserve Japanese interests in the peninsula, as well as to eliminate all traces of Korea's Confucian dependence upon China.

To protest against the Japanese protectorate agreement, the emperor sent three representatives to the Second International Conference on Peace at The Hague in 1907, demanding international condemnation of Japan. But they were unable to represent the interests of Korea or conduct their own foreign relations, as this privilege was granted to Japan by the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905.<sup>22</sup> Instead to recover Korea's diplomatic sovereignty, the delegates from forty-three countries declared Korea illegal, not existing without Japan.<sup>23</sup> This definition of peace meant that control and colonisation of Korea by Japan was legal under international law. Enabled by the affair in "The Hague" the Japanese colonial regime in Seoul caused the last ruling monarch, King Kojong, to abdicate the throne in 1907 in favour of his feeble son.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile Resident General Itô Hirobumi signed papers with Korean Prime Minister Yi Wanyong transferring all judicial power to Japanese command. Formally annexed in 1910 the Japanese empire eviscerated Korea under a residency general and subsequently under a governor general directly subordinate to Japanese prime ministers. Marked as semi-developed countries, the takeover of Taiwan after the Sino-Japanese war and the protectorate status imposed on Korea after the Russo-Japanese War represented the initial steps in building a colonial empire with the normative support of the international law. The possession of Korea and Taiwan now entailed administering a vastly expanded stretch of territory and mobilizing the ideological resources of both public and private Japanese institutions. Merchants and diplomats moved into the new settlements and were followed by troops to protect these compounds and interests. But this greatly increased the size of the empire did not give Japan any quick economic stimulus since no war indemnities were included in the treaty.

Itô Hirobumi (1848-1909), a London-educated samurai who 1885 became Japan's first Prime Minister and the first Japanese Resident-General of Korea (1905-1909), enforced a policy of building Korea into an independent and reliable ally under Japanese guidance as a more cost-effective policy than putting it directly under Japanese colonial rule.<sup>25</sup> While there may have been compelling reasons to dominate Korea, there were also good reasons for not annexing it. The war had drained the Japanese economy and Korea was itself undergoing a difficult transition from an increasingly corrupt and inefficient Confucian system to a more capitalistic economy. The Korean peninsula proved to be a difficult area for Japan to control as a protectorate, and as a colony. For the proponents, possession of Korea and Taiwan, initial steps in building a colonial empire, now entailed administering a vastly expanded stretch

---

<sup>22</sup> Theodor Roosevelt, who orchestrated the negotiations was therefor garnered with the Nobel Peace Price in 1906.

<sup>23</sup> Although the Russian delegation would support the rectification entry was literally denied to Korean delegates by Japanese and British forces.

<sup>24</sup> The imperial crown prince Sunjong (1874-1926) was proclaimed emperor of Korea and given a Japanese peerage. He became essentially powerless within three years of ruling.

<sup>25</sup> On June 14, 1909 Itô was forced to resign by a political faction that was advocating annexation of Korea against his original stance of keeping Korea as a "protectorate". On October 26 he was assassinated by the Korean nationalist An Chunggiu.

of territory, resources and mobilizing a new population.

Other than now, Taiwan was acquired in 1895 for reasons that in fact had more to do with opportunism, diplomatic pressures, and matters of international prestige than resembling a doctrine of Japanese imperial expansion concerning the Western value of colonies. Korean colonialism was more about politics than economic resources. The Japanese not only attempted to obliterate the cultural identity of Korea, but also intended to open up a 'route' for expanding the Japanese empire and to dominate the north-eastern part of China as well as the whole mainland. By 1910, however, the colonies Taiwan and Korea became a symbol of the Japanese equality with the West and of its participation in the dissemination of modern civilization. Other than European nations, who could easily set up binary relationships by using race as a primary tool to create an opposing uncivilised other, this strategy was not applicable to Japan. In the context of similar ethnicity and cultural background Japan portrayed itself as a protector of the East on a civilizing mission and also promoted an internal hierarchy at the same time. Asian nations were encouraged to regard morality and spirituality to resist a Western style of imperialism, industrialization and materialism. This approach of "Asia as one" that is now referred to as pan-Asianism, became a political strategy that was never about equality but defined leadership and national strength from one perspective of modernisation.<sup>26</sup>

In the meaning of "reform and progress", the intervention in Korea was justified to improve "backward" Koreans, uniting the Meiji leaders, encouraged by a chorus of journalists, businessmen, and military leaders together with a collaborating community in Korea".<sup>27</sup>

On the peninsula a wide variety of strategies was undertaken by Korean reformist elites, including leaders of pro-Japanese organizations, such as the Advancement Society *Ilchinhoe*, and national movements of the enlightenment and self-strengthening faction, such as the Enlightenment School, the Independence Club, the Self Strengthening Movement and others to overcome the derogatory and racist culture-representations of Koreans. Representative groups of national scale that led the patriotic enlightenment movement at the time were the Korea Self-Strengthening Society (Taehan Chaganghoe or Daehan Chaganghoe), the Korea Association (Taehan Hyophoe), and the New People's Association Sinminhoe). The Associations ultimate goal was to restore Korea's national sovereignty and establish a republican people's state. Publicly they claimed to foster movements for cultivating cultural and economic capabilities, but secretly they were trying to raise military power by building bases for the independence army.

Opposing the national movements, pro-Japanese organisations faced hostile feelings as some of them cooperated with imperialist Japan to force Korea to sign the Protectorate Treaty of 1905 and the Korean emperor Gojong to abdicate in mid-1907. Advancement Society *Ilchinhoe* also organized voluntary guards to quell the activities of anti-Japanese Korean guerrillas in the months that followed, and issued a statement in 1909 urging Japan to annex Korea.<sup>28</sup> As a front organization for Japan,

---

26 Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann: Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p.141

27 The creation of ideology in the late Meiji period was not merely a top-down creation of ambitious oligarchs eager to engineer society according to a prescribed vision, it was instead a "fitful and inconsistent process."

On Japan's discourse of the "civilizing mission," see Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895–1910* (Berkeley, Calif., 1995); Andre Schmid, *Korea between Empires, 1895–1919* (New York, 2002); Robert Eskildsen, "Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan," *American Historical Review* 107, no. 2 (April 2002): 388–418; Alexis Dudden, *Japan's Colonization of Korea: Discourse and Power* (Honolulu, 2005); Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876–1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 2011)

28 The independence movement organizations included the Korean Provisional Government (KPG) which led nationalist movements toward rebuilding of the nation, the Righteous Brotherhood (Uiyeoldan), the National Revolutionary Party (Minjok Hyeongmyeongdang),



*Ilchinhoe* promoted the impression that the protectorate treaty was signed in response to the “wishes” of the Korean people. But most Koreans had historical motivated resentment against Japan, as their peninsula has been invaded by Japanese for generations such as Hideyoshi in 1592, which nurtured this distrust, caution. Therefore the practice of collaboration with imperial Japan under the name of civilization, enlightenment, and modernization were never easily accepted and justified in Korean society. The anger at the pro-Japanese Advancement Society *Ilchinhoe* was as fierce as that toward those ministers who collaborated with Japan.<sup>29</sup> Despite its members' pro-Japanese collaboration, the colonial authority considered the *Ilchinhoe* a security concern and it was dissolved by the first Japanese governor-general of Korea, Terauchi Masadake, on September 26, 1910, a month after Japan formally declared Korea a colony.<sup>30</sup> The *Ilchinhoe* movement, with roots in the Tonghak religion, started out as a formidable political force in Korea during the Russo-Japanese War. Founded by an association of political figures it resembled the “redemptive societies” of the early twentieth century that had an interest in preserving the cultural “essence” of East Asia. Populist in character, they claimed to represent “the people” and mobilized their resentment against the monarchical establishment.<sup>31</sup> With perhaps as many as half a million members by 1905, they called for a parliamentary system and manifested to their base to reform government administration, finances and equal rights for the people.<sup>32</sup> Preoccupied with their antagonism toward the Korean monarchy, they were soon trapped between their original motives and their actual performance, compromised by their own objectives under the commitment to support the Japanese Empire. Repeating Japan's propaganda the *Ilchinhoe* announcement rendered the history between 1894 and 1909 in terms of Japan's “attempts to save” Korea and presented the idea of a “political union” in which sovereignty would be shared between Korea and Japan and the equality and rights of the Korean people would be guaranteed. In this logic of “independence through dependence,” a “freedom without national sovereignty,” Korea would entrust its diplomacy to the guidance of a friendly ally, to make progress toward a civilized status, and maintain its sovereignty *kukkwŏn*. Instead of putting them in the Korean monarch's own display of sovereignty, recruited advisers from Japan's “advanced” government could “cleanse” the Korean government of its problems for the benefit of the “people's welfare” *minbok*.

---

the League of Korean Independence (Joseon Dongnip Dongmaeng), the Society for the Restoration of the Nation (Daehan Gwangbokhoe), League of National Restoration (Geon-guk Dongmaeng), the Society for Korea Restoration Joguk Gwangbokhoe, who in the 1910s, considered collaborators as traitors and reactionaries who had sold out their own country.

29 Members of organizations for the Self-Strengthening Movement and some residents attacked the publishing house of the Advancement Society, who were placed under the same umbrella as the Japanese Righteous Army, and damaged the building and the press machines.

Suppressed under the time of Japanese rule a social disorder and lack of public security immediately followed liberation, from 16 August 1945, the day after official liberation, to 25 August, when 914 such incidents were investigated around the peninsula. In an explosion of anger directed toward the collaborators, police stations, administrative offices of towns, Japanese Shinto shrines, were in the focus of spontaneous individual and group attacks.

Kang, Dong-jin. 1980. *Ilje-ui hanguk chimnyak jeongchaeksa* (The History of the Japanese Invasion of Korea). Seoul: Hangilsa Publishing Co., Ltd. 1980, p.142, cit. in Chung Youn-tae: Refracted Modernity and the Issue of Pro-Japanese Collaborators in Korea, Korea Journal Vol.42. No.3 Autumn, 2002 pp.18~59

30 In 2004, an investigation, launched by the South Korean government declared the *Ilchinhoe*'s acts as “treason,” “voluntary aid to Japan's colonization of Korea,” and “the active destruction of Korean resistance for independence. Yumi Moon: Immoral Rights: Korean Populist Collaborators and the Japanese Colonization of Korea, 1904–1910, The American Historical Review, Volume 118, Issue 1, 1 February 2013, p. 20–44

31 After its inaugural assembly in August and before December 1904, the *Ilchinhoe* and the *Chinbohoe*, with whom they consolidated, began opening their rallies with dramatic collective haircutting ceremonies. Cutting one's hair violated the Confucian taboo against altering the body, which was regarded as having been received from one's parents. Thus these ceremonies created a visually arresting spectacle for the Korean people and attracted attention to the *Ilchinhoe*'s rise. They made a sensational statement aimed at refashioning the organization's members as the harbingers of a new civilization. Yumi Moon: Immoral Rights: Korean Populist Collaborators and the Japanese Colonization of Korea, 1904–1910, The American Historical Review, Volume 118, Issue 1, 1 February 2013, p. 20–44

32 In July 1904, the *Ilchinhoe* had published a political manifesto *ilchinhoe ch'wijiŏ* in which it introduced a rudimentary democratic idea.

Despite all the similarities in their agenda, Japanese government condemned any popular intervention in their reform politics. *Ilchinhoe's* strong presence, organizing parties, mass assemblies and even dispatching representatives to Seoul and other places to deliver petitions, gave Japan an excellent excuse to insert itself into Korea's domestic affairs, such as replacing domestic security forces with the Japanese police. To take control over those commotions, the Japanese army proclaimed martial law in January 1905, prohibiting free assembly and censoring all publications by Korean political associations.

While the protectorate suppressed the *Ilchinhoe's* populist mobilization as they gained more difficulty holding on to a ideological and political coherence, Korean nationalist media as the *Korea Daily News* began denouncing the organization's members as enemies who destroy and sold out the country. The newspaper valorised the Righteous Army's violence who fought for the right nationalist cause even though they had killed local *Ilchinhoe* members. In their angry criticism and prayer of their own patriotic agenda the *Korea Daily News* had an enduring effect on how Koreans remember the *Ilchinhoe*. In the early collaboration with local elites and abrogating popular movements, Japan shifted in 1907 to the pattern of annexation in a lack of "reliable Korean allies." To the prospect of Korean reform, Meiji leaders replaced the corrupt Korean government with a "rationally organized modern bureaucratic structure" analogous to their own.<sup>33</sup> In this anachronistic binary of collaboration and resistance facing Japan's colonial agenda, *Ilchinhoe's* populist activism and Korean nationalism reshaped that society into a political community that shifted an earlier desire for a constitutional monarchy to a future nation as a republic, manifested in the 1919 March First Declaration of Korea's independence.

In other words, the debates amongst Korean intellectuals revealed the difficulties they revived with different ideologies, including pan-Asianism and nationalism. Korea struggled to position itself as a modern country, largely because local authorities could not come to terms with the challenges that resulted from the new changes and were unable to determine their sense of self.

### Japanese Cultural Policy of Korea

Other than in Meiji Japan and Republican China, where the autonomous process of nation-state building, modern knowledge, and reform ideas grew in close association with the academic world, in Korea due lack of such institutions magazines and modern journalism became the source of the democratic movement.

From the autumn of 1883, the *Hansong sunbo* (Ten-day Gazette of the capital) was published by a Japan-friendly group. But the venture of the reformers, who pleaded for a further opening and Westernisation of Korea on the model of Meiji-Japan, were fought by the conservative majority. But as early as January 1886, with the increasing influence of Japan, the *Hansong chubo* (Weekly of the capital) was published on the model of modern Japanese daily newspapers. Published until 1888 the weekly added to reports on domestic politics, news on culture and the arts of foreign countries. Both papers had been primarily for enlightenment, progress and the independence of their country and

---

<sup>33</sup> They were backed by the subsequent treaties of August 1904 and November 1905 which abrogated Korea's autonomy in diplomacy and forced the local government to appoint Japanese financial advisers. With further rights, given in July 1907, Japan could now issue government regulations, recruit higher civil officials, and appoint Japanese officials to the Korean government. By 1910, Japan had put a direct colonial administration in place, calling this overall process the "improvement of governance."

argued in the sense of an imitation of modern Europe. Encouraged by this reformatory successful newspaper, whose Korean-language edition was printed exclusively in *hangul* and was therefore accessible to the mass of the people. In the first decade of the twentieth century, national enlightenment movements rapidly gained popularity, and nationalist newspapers and private academies emerged. Between 1899 and the protectorate treaty of 1905 various papers appeared, all of which propagated reformist ideology combined with Christianity. In order to develop a nation-oriented identity, nationalists became more attached to developing their distinctive history and promoting *hangul* as national language.<sup>34</sup>

From 1904 until the annexation in 1910, there were a total of 35 daily newspapers with the motto of national independence through Western modernization. Korean magazines developed on their own as an agency for creating Korean-style modern knowledge. Consequently the modern knowledge system in colonial Korea bifurcated between the officially institutionalized learning *gwanhak* in the framework of the Japanese colonial policies, and the civilian or privately-led learning *minganihak*. Consumed by the struggle of the “ruling state” and the “imagined state” cultural reforms could not be transferred to the increasingly corrupting government and the Yangban aristocracy. Modernization and Westernisation, which had been a resounding success in the Meiji-Japan after only a decade, had stopped halfway in Korea, confining themselves to peripheral phenomena.<sup>35</sup> Korean opposition remained strong and nationalist supporters like Sin Chae-ho (1880-1936) harshly criticized Pan-Asianist thought. They tended to narrate their own distinct ethnic genealogy of a Korean nation, set in a mythical past, not framed as dynastic history structured by Chinese history and separated from Japanese, or any other Asian race.

In countries around the world newspapers were identified as most important for the formulation of public opinion and as chief impetus to the spread of nationalism. To oppose this trend of the early years of the Protectorate *Chōsen tōkanfu* (1905-1910), the Japanese administration imposed systematic control on communication through the promulgation of the Newspaper Law (1907) and the Publication Law (1909).

With the formal annexation of Korea in 1910, a special department of the Japanese Governor General controlled all publications and media communication and most Korean newspapers and political organisations, except those owned by the Japanese. Most were banned and only a few magazines were allowed to appear in their native language.<sup>36</sup> Japan's attempt was not merely to colonize but to Japanize Korea under a policy designed to eradicate its culture by gradually replacing it

---

<sup>34</sup> Hangul was first promoted in 1443 to allow every Korean to easily write and communicate. Adopted in official documents as a “national writing” and not as a language for lower-class people in 1894, hangul emphasized the growing need for new learning. Elementary school texts began using Hangul in 1895, and the Tongnip Sinmun, established in 1896, was the first newspaper printed in both Hangul and English. Still, the literary elites continued to use Chinese characters, believing that the replacement of the characters would cause a loss of access to classical knowledge.

Andre Schmid: *Korea Between Empires: 1895-1919*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. ndre Schmid: *Korea Between Empires: 1895-1919*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p.65, Ki-Moon Lee, S. Robert Ramsey: *A History of the Korean Language*, Cambridge University Press, 2011

<sup>35</sup> Like such as the construction of a tram network for Seoul and police uniforms modelled after the Prussian military.

<sup>36</sup> Until in the 1920s the special police Kōtō Keisatsu and publication police Shuppan Keisatsu were founded. In 1913 the number of licenses for Korean journals was increased due to foreign criticism of the repressive measures. Terauchi Masatake (1852-1919, 1910-1916), Hasegawa Yoshimichi (1850-1924, 1916-1919)

Michael E. Robinson: *Colonial Publication Policy and the Korean Nationalist Movement, The Japanese Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984, pp. 312-343

Jong-Soo Rhee, *Presse und Politik in Korea: Der Kampf der koreanischen Presse um nationale Pressefreiheit bis 1945*, Sozialwissenschaftliche Studien 41, Bochum: Studienverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer 1987, pp.107-356.

with Japanese culture. What began with language and history, by prohibiting education and research, reached as far as religion in the 1930s when people were forced to worship at Japanese Shinto shrines, adopt Japanese names and were forbidden to speak Korean or wear traditional clothes.<sup>37</sup>

Since the Governor General ruled by decree and the capricious will of high-level bureaucrats could be devised, Japanese repression on the Korean media landscape, was meant to bring rapid assimilation of the Koreans, who had been seen as willing subjects of the Emperor to bring their country into modernity.

When in the spring of 1919, the March First incident broke out it was in many respects a turning point in Japanese-Korean relations. The protests for independence began as peaceful mass demonstrations in Seoul and other large, northern cities when the Korean people demonstrated their capacity and will to resist Japanese colonialism. Despite brutal suppression by the colonial government, the uprising spread rapidly throughout the Korean peninsula and lasted for several weeks until May.<sup>38</sup>

With the third governor-general, Saito Makoto (1919-1927 and 1929 to 1931), who came into power in August of the same year, a new policy of *bunka seiji* (1919-1931) was promulgated to cope with the fervent reactions of Koreans against Japan following the March First Independence Movement.<sup>39</sup> His agenda characterized the integration of colonial Korea into Japan's nation-state and empire, and even some Korean intellectuals saw the possibility of modernizing colonial Korea through this colonial logic.<sup>40</sup> His cultural politics to resolve the tensions after 1919 March First movement promoted a limited acceptance of freedom of speech, assembly, and publication; employment of Koreans as civil servants and their improved treatment; stabilization and promotion of public life through improved education, industry, transportation and health care; launching of research and surveys for the enforcement of local autonomy; and respect for Korean culture and customs. His cultural rule announced significant administrative changes in early 1920 to earn the favour of the Korean population while continuing to maintain a firm grip on Korea.<sup>41</sup> The notorious *kenpeitai* were replaced with regular police, and Japanese officials and school teachers no longer carried swords as a symbol of their domination. The Japanese intellectual world took great notice of him, primarily as a socialist thinker, with most of his publications translated upon his arrival. He permitted the rebirth of

---

37 By the mid-1930s, Japanese officials began to criticize Koreans' preference for their traditional white clothing as an "evil practice. From Japan's perspective, white clothes were a symbol of Korean culture and tradition, and represented a potential obstacle to Japan's cultural authority in Korea and its attempts at cultural assimilation.

Rebecca Ann Nickerson: *Imperial Designs: Fashion, Cosmetics, and Cultural Identity in Japan, 1931-1943*, University of Illinois, 2011, p.62

38 From March 1st to April 11th, there were an estimated 7,509 people killed and 15,849 more wounded by the Japanese police and army. During these two months, approximately 2,000,000 people participated in more than 1,500 demonstrations, before being suppressed by the Japanese government. Park Eun-shik: *Hanguk doklip undong jihyeolsa, Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement*, updated and retranslated by Kim Do-hyung, Seoul Somyung, 2008, p. 35.

39 Saito, Makoto: "A Message from the Imperial Japanese Government to the American People - A Home Rule in Korea?" *The Independent*, 31 January 1920, p.167-169

40 Saito was reflecting the publication of the Kaizo (Reconstruction) special issue with Bertrand Russell, interviewed by Nishida Kitaro and others in September 1921, two months after Russell, then a visiting professor at China's Beijing University, visited Japan at the invitation of the magazine. Bertrand Russell came to Japan in July 1921 as a guest of Kaizosha, a publishing company founded in April 1919 with an opinion-leading monthly magazine *Kaizo* "The Reconstruction" to which he contributed fifteen essays upon request, which appeared in English-Japanese bilingual editions between 1921 and 1923. Encouraged by the success of Russell's invitation, Kaizosha continued inviting Western prominent persons; Margaret Sanger (March 1922), Albert Einstein (November 1922) and George Bernard Shaw (February 1933).

Miura, Toshihiko: *Bertrand Russell, China and Japan*, Comparative Literature 29, Tokyo Japan Society of Comparative Literature, 1986 and *Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits Vol VII* (compiled & edited by Hugh Cortazzi, Global Oriental), pp.255-267

41 As Japanese policymakers recognized the need for change in their policies, there were different efforts to improve interactions between Japan and Korea. In the spring of 1920, following the March First Movement in 1919, Korean Prince Un (1897-1970) and Japanese princess Nashimoto Masako (1901-1989) were married in Tokyo. Despite the fact that the marriage was unpopular in Japan, the image of this marriage was reproduced on the front pages of newspapers on New Year's Day, showcasing unity at the highest level.

Korean newspapers and political magazines, among other new rights, as permitting the people to assemble, in order to settle the rebellious Korean situation and not to aggravate the elevated feelings of popular animosity toward colonial rule. The Japanese further made some effort to respect Korean tradition and religious freedom, but on the other hand, they destroyed a traditional royal palace and constructed on that site an immense government building in Western style, to demonstrate Japan's colonial authority.<sup>42</sup>

The appeasing policies were only superficially conciliatory as the objectives of assimilation through de-nationalization remained the same as those of his preceding administrators. There was no reform concerning the content and objectives by the Japanese government, only a reform of the means enforcing British and French models of colonialism moving toward a stage of civilized rule, instead of pure military methods of oppression. His tentative liberal policy gradually turned more and more into a sophisticated system of manipulation and control by the end of the decade. Following the motto *divide et impere*, "divide and rule," he involved conservative Korean nationalists for implementing the assimilation policy and expanding the educational and economical infrastructure.<sup>43</sup> His policy for the development of the country and exploitation of resources in the colony appealed to many Korean intellectuals and property owners alike, hoping to prosper under Japanese colonial rule. Proclaiming equal treatment of Koreans and Japanese as a doctrine of cultural politics on one hand, the new governor-general was consciously building hegemony and co-opting Korean elites through a policy of "appeasement and manipulation". In a strategy aimed at ruling Korea without the use of force, finding reliable Korean collaborators was vital. With the kingdom having lost its sovereignty, the reformed government became a good opportunity for those who eagerly wanted to upgrade their social status.

To create pro-Japanese public opinion the colonial authorities mobilized pro-Japanese organisations systematically to promote the ideology of assimilation.<sup>44</sup> Those representatives, mainly formed by progressively oriented intellectuals, whose social status and orientations were typically those of the bourgeois upper class, as landlords, literati, and former government officials, collaborated as unofficial Korean spokesmen and therefore acquired important influence in the colonial society.<sup>45</sup> Instead to perform a critical voice, they promoted the ruling ideology of assimilation of a Korean nation that could only strengthen itself under colonialism. Together with the Japanese imperialists propaganda policy they promoted an image of a powerful empire that would bring a process of modernization to Korea and used the logic of common destiny, ancestry and fate to persuade Koreans of *naisen ittai*, (Japan and Korea are One Entity).<sup>46</sup> Japanese actively highlighted their similarity of origin, which they claimed

---

42 Though it was destroyed in 1995 as a psychological catharsis of Korean nationalism, this was the largest building in the entire Japanese empire.

43 Radical nationalists and socialists who used their forces for a short-term liberation of Korea were ostracized and from 1926/27 on increasingly persecuted and arrested.

44 The Iljinhoe (一進會; 일진회) was a nationwide pro-Japan organization in Korea formed in 1904, that actively pushed ahead the annexation and was instrumental in bringing about the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1910. Song Byeong-jun (1857-1925), a Korean Joseon dynasty politician was awarded the Japanese kazoku peerage title of viscount (shishaku) and a seat in the House of Peers of the Diet of Japan.

45 In August 2004 Republic of South Korea President Roh Moo Hyun called for the creation of a parliamentary commission to identify Koreans who had collaborated with Japan during its thirty-six years of colonial occupation of the Korean peninsula. The crimes of these collaborators, Roh explained, constituted "acts of betrayal in support of imperialist Japan and colonial rule at the time our patriotic forefathers were staking their lives in the fight for the nation [and remain] hidden in the shade of history." One year later the Institute for Research in Collaborationist Activities compiled a list of 3,090 collaborators, and promised to add more names in the near future. Mark E. Caprio: Loyal Patriot? Traitorous Collaborator? The Yun Chiho Diaries and the Question of National Loyalty, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, Volume 7, Number 3, Winter 2006

46 *naisen ittai naeseon ilche*, Japan and Korea are One Entity, a propaganda policy disseminated by Japanese imperialists in the late 1930s. Chung Youn-tae: Refracted Modernity and the Issue of Pro-Japanese Collaborators in Korea, *Korea Journal* Vol.42. No.3 Autumn, 2002 pp.18

failed to develop and mature in Korea, thus emphasizing Korea's lack of progress as a civilization.

There were many caught up in civilization and enlightenment supremacy ideas, based on Social Darwinism which was influential in the West and Japan at the time, who considered the "protectorate" of Japan over Korea as "the guidance of an advanced civilized nation," rather than as a violation of Korea's right to national sovereignty, accepting the annexation of Korea by Japan as a necessary stage in a process of modernization. In Japan the animosity against the Korean minority in Tokyo cumulated in the earthquake on Saturday, 1 September 1923, killing over 100,000 people. In the aftermath as fires burned throughout the city Koreans were accused of arson, poisoning the wells and attempting to sabotage bridges. Soon vigilante groups were out attacking and killing Koreans.<sup>47</sup>

The primary goal of the propaganda activities was to contradict nationalist newspapers as the two newspapers, founded in 1920, the *Dong-A Ilbo* and the *Chosun Ilbo* became the two largest dailies in modern Korea. The vernacular papers contributed not only in disseminating the Korean alphabet, hangul, but also awakened national consciousness among readers during the colonial period.<sup>48</sup> In the first years of cultural rule, Koreans organized political, intellectual groups and a widespread readership subscribed to critical tones and arguments on the colonial government. While a critical discourse did open up for a time, an autonomous public opinion could emerge only by overcoming Japanese colonial discourse struggling between the colonizers and indigenous nationalists. In a unique form of hegemonic aspiration the Korean press media in the 1920s proclaimed itself as an agency to "govern jointly" *gongchi* the colonial Korean society, alternative to the knowledge offered by the official institutionalized academia of the Japanese empire.

The relatively open period between 1920 and 1924 reflected a discussion on reform proposals, historical and cultural introspection, discourses on Western political philosophy and social organization, and about the nature of Korean national identity, which since two decades had neither maintained nor regained Korean independence. In 1920, the Korean nationalist movement stood at a crossroad, divided by personal and ideological disputes between moderate nationalist leaders who advocated gradualist reformist solutions to the problem of independence and a younger, more radical group who advocated social revolution and overt resistance to Japanese imperialism. Domestically, the March First movement had demonstrated the potential for practical political programs and action, but it had failed to attract foreign intervention for Korean independence.

The moderate nationalist group, known collectively as the cultural movement *Munhwa undong* was based on the assumption that a gradual program of education and economic development was necessary to maintain political independence as a modern nation-state.

On the other hand, like their Chinese and Japanese counterparts in the post-World War I era, Korean students abroad were shaped by the widespread fascination with social revolutionary thought after the Russian revolution and searched amidst the whirl of ideas of political democracy, bolshevism, social democracy, anarchism, and national socialism.<sup>49</sup> Returning to Korea, these young intellectuals, some

---

47 No authoritative statistics are available on the number of dead, which ranges from the very low tally of 243 by the Ministry of Justice, to the 6,415 deaths attributed by Sunghak Kim.

See Michael Allen: *The Price of Identity: The 1923 Kantō Earthquake and Its Aftermath*, Korean Studies Volume 20, 1996, pp. 64-93

48 The *Dong-A Ilbo* printed a modified picture of the Korean marathoner, Son Kijong (Kitei Son in Japanese, 1912-2002), who participated as a Japanese athlete in the Berlin Olympics in 1936, winning a gold medal. However, the *Dong-A Ilbo* manipulated his picture by erasing the Japanese flag on his breast. For this incident, the paper was suspended for a time.

49 The March First movement had stimulated the creation of a government in exile, which was formed on April 13, 1919. The Shanghai

of whom established contact with the Korean Communist movement in exile, injected these ideas into the controversy offering instead more radical solutions for the dual problem of Japanese imperialism and Korean independence.

The new vernacular press reflected this split and strained the flexibility of the colonial authorities to the limit who now faced the problem of controlling oversee colonial publications. This responsibility fell on a new office within the colonial police system, the High Police *Kato keisatsu*, whose task it was to design an elaborate system of prepublication censor-ship to eliminate dangerous thought or overtly subversive articles. In the early years of cultural rule a clear policy of what was acceptable and what was unacceptable had not yet emerged, and as a consequence, the period between 1920 and 1924 represented a relatively open period for Korean intellectuals. Public opinion was shaped by the influence of prominent indigenous cultural nationalists who fought some discursive battles with the the ruling authorities and colonial cultural elite. In this zone the impact of radical demands and harsh measures were negotiated and as a reaction repressions on socialist ideas became a common phenomenon in Korea. After the *Sim saenghwal* "New life" incident of 1922, when six writers from New Life magazine were imprisoned, the colonial authorities regarded left-wing intellectuals more and more as a threat to colonial security, and socialist and communist discourses were denied access to the colonial public discourse. By 1924, due to the harsh repressive control conflicts increased as the colonial censor moved to expunge dangerous ideas from the press in the name of public order and security. However, the colonial rule returned with systematic censorship to an autocratic era and the native press became truly "colonized" by 1926.

In the public discourse of the Korean news media in the 1920s, the concept of "culture" *munhwa* became a major principle of nationalism and a new epistemological aspect of Korean society to distance from the cultural rule of the colonial government.<sup>50</sup> Adopted as the translation of the Japanese *bunka* in the 1910s, the term was itself a translation of the German term "Kultur", which promoted the Japanese national character when the Meiji government's goal of "enriching the country, strengthening the military" had been achieved to a certain extent.<sup>51</sup> Emphasizing the German nationalist stance of culture, attempted to prove their spiritual superiority, *bunka* was aimed at unifying Japan's modern nation-state and perceived as the core of an empire-building ideology.

The Korean term "culture" *munhwa*, appeared for the first time when Saito Makoto, issued an edict in September and a directive in October 1919, each calling for "promoting Korean culture and establishing the foundation of cultural politics."<sup>52</sup> Saito's colonial communication policy was not only

---

Provisional Government did not gain formal recognition from world powers, and they were not approved by other governments as a member of allied nations, who signed peace treaty with Japan in San Francisco.

50 New intellectuals assembled under the Korean news media and formed the cultural nationalist mainstream, as a revival of the progressive "patriotic enlightenment movement" of the first decade of the twentieth century. In November 1921, the *Tonga ilbo* criticized cultural rule by referring to it as "gray politics." The colonial authorities confiscated the article, which the *Tonga ilbo* attempted to publish again after two months.

Hong Yung Lee, Yong-Chool Ha, Clark W. Sorensen: *Colonial Rule and Social Change in Korea, 1910-1945*, University of Washington Press, 2013, p.93

51 Used first by Nishi Amane in his book *Hyakugaku renkan* (Links of All Sciences), the oldest encyclopedia in Japan, and by Nakamura Masanao in his book *Saikoku risshi hen* (Stories of Self-Made Men in the West) (1871). From the late Meiji era (1867-1912) to the early years of Taisho era (1912-1925), philosophers of the Neo-Kantian school at the University of Tokyo, including Kuwaki Kenyoku and Nitobe Inazo, as well as political scientists who included Oyama Ikuo, developed the term "culture," meaning "self-development" and "self-cultivation" in reaction to enlightenment thought centered around "civilization."

Ku In Mo: "Culture" as an Imported Concept and "Korea" as a Nation-State, *KOREA JOURNAL* / SPRING 2007, p.155

52 Saito's "cultural politics," can be signified by the inauguration of the *Dong-A Ilbo* daily newspaper on April 1, 1920 and the *Gaebyeok*

executed by key officials of the colonial government, but also by civilians who had been well known as experts in colonial internal affairs for many years. The committee was in charge of collecting and analysing vast quantities of information on nationalist activities as well as spreading political propaganda both inside and outside the Korean peninsula. Their research into Korean culture, was not to preserve or to foster the development of Korean culture but to provide justification for their colonial policy. As the debate regarding cultural and racial differences was always ambivalent, the *yangban*, the traditional Korean elite from the *Joseon* dynasty were portrayed such as lazy, corrupt, representing old-fashioned knowledge, wearing outdated white robes, black horsehair hats and traditional shoes.<sup>53</sup>

As Korean scholars were separated from the institutionalized academism, they began their own research in order to discover in the traditional culture the spiritual basis for the independence movement against Japan. In contrast to the Japanese, who held what could be called a colonialist view of history, these scholars held a nationalistic view. An important part on the public discourses on culture and reconstruction was exercised by the intellectual journal *Gaebyeok* "Genesis", which was published from June 1920 to August 1926 by the "Religion of Heavenly Way" *Cheondogyo*, originated from the *Donghak* "Eastern Learning".<sup>54</sup> The magazine gained great influence in forming the intellectual landscape and leading the New Culture Movement of Korea in early 1920s.<sup>55</sup>

Frustrated with the Japanese construction of a nation-state through "civilization and enlightenment" in the 1910s, Korean intellectuals at that time, centred around *Gaebyeok*, saw the values of *munhwa* "culture" as a means of reconstructing the national character of the Korean people.<sup>56</sup> Seeking to solve such diverse tasks as improvement of agriculture, educational dissemination and spiritual unification they believed in a new group mind through individual self-cultivation. They rooted the fundamental defects of Western civilization in capitalism, nationalism, and imperialism, which affected them adversely by way of Japan. To overcome an ethical corrupt society, Korea had to develop basic common principles, educate society and establish a national character due creative urges, namely knowledge, arts, and reform the individual lives.<sup>57</sup> This moral reconstruction discourse, in considerable resemblance to Kantian concept of "enlightenment" (*Aufklärung*), gave birth to the ideas of the *Heungsadan* "Society for the Fostering of Activists" through the magazine *Gaebyeok*, and the inauguration of the *Suyang Dongmaeng-hoe* "Society for Promoting Self-Improvement" in December

---

(New Beginnings), an intellectual journal backed by the Cheondogyo, on June 20, 1920.

53 Nationalists also mocked *yangban*, but for different reasons. In Japanese media Koreans were de-humanized and portrayed as a dull and slack people who failed to meet the standards of civilization. Through caricatures, which showed constructed stereotypes of racially and culturally distinctive physical and mental characteristics, discrimination against Koreans could be justified.

These visual elements of less-than-human and rat-like representations can be compared to the European technique in representing Japanese men in the late nineteenth century. By applying the newly adopted Western concept of race and its correlating hierarchical relations Japanese were also stereotyping the biological features of Koreans to depict a racial Other. 1909, *Chosen Manga* "Korean Caricatures," Torigoe Seiki and Usuda Zanun (1877-1956) coauthored.

Andre Schmid: *Korea Between Empires: 1895-1919*, New York Columbia University Press, 2002, pp.122, Todd A. Henry: Sanitizing Empire: Japanese Articulations of Korean Otherness and the Construction of Early Colonial Seoul, 1905-1919, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 64, no. 3, 2005, pp. 639-675

54 Other magazines which received the coveted permission that allowed them to discuss political realities were, *Sin saenghwal* "New Life", *Sin cheonji* "New World", *Joseonji gwang*, *Dongmyeong* "Brightness of the East", and *Hyeondae pyeongnon* "Modern Criticism".

55 *Gaebyeok* published an article titled "Introducing Bertrand Russell - A Leading Figure in the World of Philosophy" in May 1921, two months prior to his Japan visit, and portrayed his principles of social reconstruction that called for unifying individuals' lives through their creativity and helping individuals achieve community objectives as the core of reconstruction ideology.

Myohyangsanin: "Introducing Bertrand Russell, a Leading Figure in the World of Thought" (in Korean). *Gaebyeok* 11 May 1921, in Ku In Mo: "Culture" as an Imported Concept and "Korea" as a Nation-State, *KOREA JOURNAL* / Spring 2007

56 Intellectuals were mimicking the culture of their colonizer, rendering the colonial term *munhwa* on *bunka*, the Japanese rendition of culture, which itself was re-defined from the German term "Kultur," as well as the English word "enlightenment," meaning "education," "refinement," and "moral cultivation."

57 Myohyangsanin (1921, 34-35)



1922. Advocating a reconstruction of Korean national character, Korean intellectuals witnessed a sense of crisis comparable to that of Western civilization and the world in general.<sup>58</sup> Despite that Korea had developed positively as a nation from ancient times through the medieval period, they blamed the hidebound ideology and culture of the ethically corrupt Joseon aristocracy which could not advance to the rank of a civilized state, without reform of Korean national character. On the perception that education and arts would be the roots of reform, the intellectuals around *Gaebyeok* stemmed their reconstruction theory on Bertrand Russell, and the cultural research group of Waseda University, led by Tsubouchi Shoyo, which influenced the people's arts in Japan during the Taisho era.<sup>59</sup> Similar to Japan's ideological trends from the Meiji era which repeated in a 20-year cycle of Westernisation to a return to Japaneseness, the culture discourse in colonial Korea and its "return to Koreanness" arose in the 1920.

In an attempt to devise and revive Korea's cultural identity and nation-state status, the first modern ethnological account done by Koreans was revealed in "Joseon munhwa gibon josa" (A Basic Survey of Korean Culture) and published in the magazine *Gaebyeok* from January 1923 to September 1924.<sup>60</sup> The survey was an attempt by Koreans themselves to understand the essence of their own cultural identity and to reveal the essence and historical nature of a national character by exploring oral genres, collecting, and studying folk songs and tales.<sup>61</sup> Considerably similar to that method of German intellectuals and scholars of Japan before, the concept of "culture" in colonial Korea assumed the tasks of pursuing as well as denying and transcending modernity that was born in the Western context.

The magazine's endeavours to reform the imperial subjects in a nationalist way resulted in its forced closing in August 1926. However, colonial media such as *Gaebyeok* were in a way effective in embedding and spreading anti establishment resistant discourse, but from the beginning on excluded from the process of nation-building.<sup>62</sup> Producing some nationalist and socialist knowledge, their agenda was considered just a local text suppressed most severely by Japanese authorities, comparable to nothing more than the language of colonized natives, unable to be current in the Japanese empire.

---

58 Koreans have constructed a solid national identity based on a cultural tradition of a nation centralized and unified for at least 1,300 years since the Unified Silla period. Although this pride were much damaged after the Japanese invasion and occupation, it was renewed and transformed into a modern national consciousness and became the source of a powerful anti-Japanese nationalist movement.

59 Similar theories were coined by Simamura Hogetzu (1871-1918), Osugi Sakae (1885-1923) and Kawaji Ryuko (1888-1959)

60 The survey covered a broad range of topics, touching on (1) the causes and trends of social problems, (2) introduction and criticism of central figures and major institutions, (3) true or false human sentiments and customs, (4) the status of industry, education, and religion, (5) an exploration of historical sites and legends, (6) observation and criticism of other general situations.

"A Basic Survey of Korean Culture—Publication of Provincial Editions," *Gaebyeok* 31 (January 1931) and "A Basic Survey of Korean Culture," *Gaebyeok* 33-36 (March-June 1923).

61 Shinada (2001, 190-200).

62 Other than that the nationalist movement proposed two agendas for: the Korean Products Promotion movement (Choson Mulsan Hangnyo Undong), designed to promote the purchase of Korean-made products and the Movement to Establish a People's University (Millip Taehak Söllip Undong). The failure of these two movements in the summer of 1923 proofed internal disunity, as well as the arbitrary interference of colonial authorities.

## Colonial Research as a Key to Rule

The inauguration of Nitobe Inazo (1862-1933), alumnus of Sapporo Agricultural College, Halle University in Germany, and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, as professor of a colonialism chair newly established in the Law College of Kyoto Imperial University in 1903, marked the first step of the academic study of colonialism in Japan.<sup>63</sup> On October 9, 1906 Nitobe, founder and the pioneer of the study of colonialism as well as one of the constructors of agricultural economics, was dispatched to Korea where he “found the country to be static, having not changed over the past three thousand years; its people, he added, were “so bland, unsophisticated and primitive....[t]hey belong to a prehistoric era.”<sup>64</sup> To investigate the agriculture and the colonial problem of Korea, Nitobe collected research data at his visit into the pursuit of Japanese policy of colonizing Korea. In Seoul he gave Duke Ito Hirobumi an account of the inspection and discussed the matter of emigration of Japanese to Korea. In meeting with his intimate friend, Kiuchi Jūshirō (1866-1925), the Secretary-General of the Agriculture, Commerce, and Construction Section at the Residency-General he appreciated the establishment of Toyo Takushoku Kaisha (Totaku Company in short) Oriental Colonization Company in Korea. Against strong suggestion by Ito Hirobumi an equivalent bill passed the National Diet in March 1908.<sup>65</sup> The Oriental Colonization Company turned out the most successful entrepreneurial venture in Japanese-controlled Korea, and helped to advertise the attractive investment opportunities in Korea to the expectations and tastes of Japanese businessmen. For colonial entrepreneurs, the governmental study of the Chōsen people became an urgent task for a peaceful rule over Koreans, to gain wealth by means of government and private land expropriation.<sup>66</sup> The economic development taking place under Japanese rule, however, brought little benefit to the Koreans. Virtually all industries were owned either by Japan-based corporations or by Japanese corporations in Korea.

Japan's initial colonial policy was to increase agricultural production in Korea, like in Taiwan to enabled the import into Japan of massive quantities of cheap rice. In Japan, this strategy encouraged migration from rural areas into urban factories in Japan. But economic advantage was not the primary concern of the authorities, as the primary goal of the advance into Korea was to strengthen Japan's own strategic position in the region. In the 1930s Japan had begun to build large-scale industries in Korea as part of the empire-wide program of economic self-sufficiency and war preparation.<sup>67</sup>

Even before the annexation Japan began to investigate the industry, regional specialties and historical remains of various parts of Chōsen. First preliminary surveys on relics by Japan were

---

63 In 1901, Nitobe was appointed technical advisor to the Japanese colonial government in Taiwan, where he headed the Sugar Bureau. Nitobe, became the first Professor in charge of Colonial Policy Chair established in April, 1910 at Law College of Tokyo Imperial University. The first lecture meeting being open with 1500-odd audience in December of the same year, whereupon he made a speech entitled “the Meaning of Colonization Learned Society.” Tanaka, Shin'ichi: Nitobe Inazo and Korea, Hokudai Economic Papers 10, 1980, p.56

64 Nitobe Inazō (1905): Assimilation of the Chosenese. In Nitobe Inazō zenshū [The collected works of Nitobe Inazō] 24 vols., edited by Yanaihara Tadao, 1983–1987. Tokyo, Kyōbunkan. In Mark Caprio: Abuse of Modernity: Japanese Biological Determinism and Identity Management in Colonial Korea, Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review, E-Journal No. 10, March 2014, p.9

65 Toyo Takushoku Kaisha was established by Duke Katsura Tarō (1848-1913), 2nd Governor-General of Taiwan from June 2, 1896 to October 1896, Prime Minister from June 2, 1901 to January 7, 1906, from July 14, 1908 to August 30, 1911, and again from December 21, 1912 to February 20, 1913.

66 Due to a decrease in arable land in Japan, Imperial Japan decided to establish migration policies that would help people move to the Korean Peninsula to farm. It has been estimated that about 500,000 had migrated there by 1908.

Yamato Ichihashi: International Migration of the Japanese, in Walter F. Willcox: International Migrations, Volume II: Interpretations, National Bureau of Economic Research, 1931, p. 617 - 636

67 P.Duus: Economic Dimensions of Meiji Imperialism, in Ramon Hawley Myers, Mark R. Peattie: The Japanese Colonial Empire 1895-1945, Princeton University Press, 1984, p.130

performed from 1888 to 1893 by Yagi Shozaburo based on the experience and confidence to execute a national survey short afterwards. In 1895, the Tokyo Anthropological Society *Tokyo Jinrui Gakkai*, founded by Tsuboi Shôgorô (1863–1913) in 1884 at the Tokyo University, had given permission by the Meiji government and colonial army officials to conduct cultural surveys and ethnographic expeditions outside Japan.<sup>68</sup> Torii Ryûzô (1870–1953) was sent to the newly occupied Liaodong peninsula in Manchuria, and later to Mongolia, and Siberia, and Chosen where he encountered on his second ethnographic and anthropological research a village of Koreans and, guided by the hypothetical common ancestral origins of Koreans and Japanese, eagerly measured their skulls.<sup>69</sup> Being the first Japanese anthropologist to take a camera into the field in 1896, he recorded thousands of glass plate images of archeological findings and racial portraits of Indigenous peoples. Torii's surveys were published first in 1904 in an article entitled *Chosen-jin no taishitsu* "On the Physical characteristics of the Chosen People."<sup>70</sup> His analysis claimed among other things proof of ancient racial connections of Koreans and Japanese in physical aspects, as well similarities in prehistoric subsistence patterns, dwellings, and lifestyles.<sup>71</sup>

In 1901, Yagi Sôzaburô (1866–1942) headed to Korea to conduct a first national survey of the peninsula where he identified dolmens and Three Kingdoms era mounds but no Stone Age remains. One year later Sekino Tadashi (1867-1935) accomplished engineer, historian, artist, and graduate of the Tokyo University Department of Architecture, was sent to survey the art and the temples, palaces, gates, and shrines of the historical capital cities of Kyongju, Seoul, and Kaesong.<sup>72</sup> Being considered

68 Inspired by American zoologist Edward Morse's example, who had been invited by Tokyo University to set up its first specimens' laboratory, in the early 1880s, a group of student scientists became imbued with the exciting possibilities of excavating their own prehistoric sites. Out of this student groups emerged Tsuboi Shôgorô (1863–1913), a medical student and the son of a prominent doctor. In 1884, at the tender age of twenty-two, Tsuboi founded the Tokyo Anthropological Society with four classmates in the biological sciences and history. In 1893, the Tokyo Imperial University Anthropological Society established the specimens laboratory under Torii Ryûzô.

69 For Torii, his measurements represented the irrefutable scientific evidence for the inclusion of Koreans as related to Japanese, citizens. Erwin Baelz, who spent the better part of thirty years (1876–1905) in Tokyo as an educator and physician, measured more than one thousand Japanese. In addition, he made two trips to Korea, in 1902 and 1903, in which he "investigated the graves of ancient kings" and examined the bones of the population to get an accurate picture of the Korean race.

By the end of the 1930s, spurred on by Torii's enthusiasm, Japanese anthropologists had measured and compared thousands of Korean adults, schoolchildren, and prison inmates.

70 These field photographs originated with in-house publications produced by the Chôsen Sôtokufu Museum and edited by the members of the Committee on Korean Antiquities (CKKK) including the fifteen volume series entitled Album of Ancient Korean Sites and Relics (Chôsen koseki zufu) published between 1915–1935, the eighteen volume series (Koseki chôsa hôkoku) annual archaeological reports, and seven volume special series of Special Archaeological Reports (Koseki tokubetsu hôkoku).

71 While the Japanese Government-General established an editorial committee for research on Korean history, Korean scholars on the other hand began their own research in order to discover in the traditional culture the spiritual basis for the independence movement against Japan. In contrast to the Japanese, who held what could be called a colonialist view of history, these scholars held a nationalistic view. For the most part they were traditional Korean scholars of the old school who were also independence fighters and had been living in exile in China since the fall of Korea to Japan in 1910. Some of their representative works are as follows: Pak Un-shik (1859-1925): *The Painful History of Korea*, *The Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement*, *A Study of Old Korea*; Shin Chai-ho (1880-1936): *History of Ancient Korea*, *A Study of Korean History*, *Life and Thought of Yi Sun-shin*; Chung In-bo (1893-1936): *A Study of Korean History*, *A Selection of Korean Studies*; Choi Nam-sun (1890-1957): *Early Korea*, *A Study of Tangun*, *The Korean Independence Movement*.

Along with such works as these which were produced in the traditional Korean pattern of scholarship, from the 1930s there were also works on Korean culture by scholars who followed Western methods of research. For example, the Korean Language Society was established in 1931 and began publishing a journal called *Hangul* that carried scholarly articles on the Korean language. This society also undertook the compilation of a Korean dictionary. Likewise, the Chindan Society founded in 1934 engaged in historical research on scientific principles. Their journal, the *Children Hakbo*, carried articles dealing with such areas as politics, art, the history of Korean thought, folk traditions and so on. Some of the representative works based on Western methods of scholarship produced during the period are as follows: Paik Nam-un, *Socioeconomic History of Korea* (1933); Kim Tae-jun, *History of Korean Novels* (1933); Kim Jai-chol, *History of Korean Drama* (1933); Cho Yun-jai, *Thought of Korean Poetry* (1937); Yang Ju-dong, *Ancient Songs of Korea* (1943).

Ayugai Huanosin of the Society for Researching Korea further supplemented this endeavor by publishing, beginning in 1911, several introductory articles in catalogues such as *Iwangga pangmulgwan sajinch'ôp* Photo album of Royal Yi Family Museum. An Hwak (1886–1946) became the first scholar to undertake research from a nationalistic Korean perspective and published the essay "Chosôn üi misul (Chosôn art)" in *Hakchigwang* 5, May 1915.

72 Their archaeological activities in northern China, Mongolia, and Taiwan during the 1900s–1930s were not as systematically organized or sustained over 40 years, as was the case with the Korean Peninsula.

In his 1904 report published in the Tokyo University Engineering Department Research Report Series, Sekino praised the magnificent wood architecture and artistic features of Yi dynastic craftsmanship. He also noted that the remarkable preservation state of some

the first modern historian of Korean art, his reports played a major role in constructing the Japanese discourse on Korean material culture. From 1902 until the annexation, various other alumni from Anthropology Society of the University of Tokyo carried out surveys. The group around Tsuboi Shôgorô, such as Yagi Sôzaburô, Imanishi Ryû (1875–1932), Torii Ryûzô, Sekino Tadashi, Ikeuchi Hiroshi (1879-1952), Hamada Kôzaku (1881-1938), Fujita Ryôsaku (1892 -1960) and Yanagi Muneyoshi (1889-1961), represented an entirely new era of field scholars, trained in the Western disciplines of archaeology and ethnography on behalf of governmental institutions. Using modern methods for documentation, the excavations, inventory catalogues, and preservation activities appealed to a wide range of bureaucrats, curio collectors, commercial photographers, postcard manufacturers and tourists.<sup>73</sup> Even for later generations of Korean scientists and archaeologists these studies played an important role, despite they emulated the precedents set by British and French imperialists from a Japanese perspective and determined a narrative in a particular national and colonial imaginary, preserved and restored for historical edification. Permanently in control of the history to be drawn. Koreans were excluded from all conducting activities in excavations and museum work and all publications had to conform the censorship of the nationalist ideologues of Japanese art historians and politicians.<sup>74</sup> By 1900, all reported archaeological materials had to be deposited at three state sanctioned imperial institutions, the Tôkyô University Anthropological Laboratory, three Imperial Museums (Tôkyô, Kyotô and Nara), and, later on Kyoto Imperial University Museum.<sup>75</sup>

For a Western audience many of the publications, not only striking in the technical quality of photographs, coloured maps, and artefact drawings, had given an English or German summary which exposed unmistakable a strong influence among the European and American East Asian scholars, archaeologists, art historians and collectors, even if they did not belong to the followers of the Japanese imperialist ideas of those days.<sup>76</sup> Surpassing any other contemporary publications available for Japan's remains, the periodic survey reports published by the Colonial Government General Office played an indispensable role in shaping public conceptions and views as tangible symbols of a shared body of Japanese Korean patrimony, and became an integral component of the civilizing and assimilation mission in the colony. The research on historical places in Korea promoted an attempt to fundamentally recast traditional culture as a colonial culture and consolidate imperial Japanese rule.

In 1909, five years after Sekino Tadashi published a first report with hundreds of photographs

---

architecture compared to the situation in Japan where with the arrival of modern warfare and the rush to modernize had resulted in the mass destruction of castles and gates which had once symbolized domain, power, and prestige.

After Sekino filed his report, published by the Tokyo University Engineering College Research Reports in 1904, entitled *Kangoku Chosa Hokoku*, consisted of 250 pages filled with descriptions, sketches, and photographs of Korean art and architecture, including hundreds of tombs, sculpture, temples, gates, palace buildings, and royal burials, the newly appointed Colonial Resident General of Korea, Ito Hirobumi, commissioned him and his three assistants to rank 569 heritage remains, sites or artifacts (Sekino 1919), following the same criteria devised for the 1897 preservation laws for Japan's National Treasures (*Kokuho*) worthy of preservation and protection: (1) *ko*: art- work designated as possessing "superior workmanship" (*saisaku yûshû*); (2) *otsu*: objects reflecting historical origins and legendary accounts (*yûisho*); and (3) *hei*: remains that can serve as historical evidence.

See Hyung Il Pai: Gateway to Korea: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Reconstructing Ruins as Tourist Landmarks, *Journal of Indo-Pacific Archaeology* 35, 2015, p.15-25

73 Torii Ryuzo was also the first Japanese anthropologist to take a camera into the field in 1896.

74 With the exception of the works published in Shanghai by exile Koreans such as the historians Pak Un-sik (1859-1925) and until 1945, no alternative Korean research could be published.

75 Hyung Il Pai: Resurrecting the Ruins of Japan's Mythical Homelands: Colonial Archaeological Surveys in The Korean Peninsula and Heritage Tourism, *The Handbook of Post-colonialism and Archaeology*, World Archaeological Congress Research Handbook Series, Volume Editors Jane Lydon and Uzma Rizvi, Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, 2010, p.96

76 The first volume of the Album of Korean Antiquities *Chosen Koseki Zufu*, promoting architectural surveys and touting Korea's ancient discoveries to a world audience was published in 1915.

depicting ruins of Korea's oldest temples, pagodas, and ancient tombs for the first time, he was appointed by the Ministry of Interior to head a concerted survey of all Chosen provinces.<sup>77</sup> In coincidence with the Sôtokofu's cadastral survey of all regions for the land use that Japanese engineers were carrying out, over a period of seven years, Sekino, Yatsui Sei-ichi (1880–1959), and Kuriyama Shunichi photographed, recorded, and classified all the prehistoric and ancient remains, artefacts, and ancient architectural monuments in all provinces throughout the Korean peninsula in the first systematic archaeological survey. In the first survey report in 1910, “Study of the Art of Korea” *Chōsen geijutsu no kenkyū* for *Takjibu* Ministry of Finance, he sorted the findings by rank, province, name, type, and estimated period and dates, and recommended some as “must be preserved *hozon subeki*, or “to be considered for protection.” Sekino's catalogue convinced the *Sôtokufu* to initiate more long range plans to protect the colony's valuable treasures and invited in the year following Imanishi Ryū and Torii Ryūzō from Tokyo University, Department of History and the Tokyo Anthropological Society to launch more comprehensive surveys encompassing a wide range of data from prehistoric remains, Buddhist temple estates, historical documents, and ethnographic custom.

For imperialistic justification, by the 1910s, these field collections from the colonies constituted the primary scientific evidence for understanding the much concerned “ethno-genesis” of the Japanese race *Jinshūron* and civilization. (Hudson 1999; Kudo 1979). The ethnographic collections of sherds, stone tools, and weapons, which were required by Meiji buried properties laws, would serve as not only “scientific evidence,” but developed as cultural assets, museum treasures to be catalogued at the Tokyo University anthropological laboratory, and the physical sites shaped the cultural landscape of scenic tourist destinations.<sup>78</sup> The vast investment in archaeological research and heritage preservation efforts, as their reproductions such as art illustrations, photographic images, and advertisements as imperial destinations in Korea and other colonies were embraced as most important body of tangible evidence of a historiography of an ancient Japanese conquest and national memory.<sup>79</sup> The Korean Peninsula became the field of choice in the search for archaeological evidence for the origins of Japanese civilization. Archaeological discoveries were misused for multiple reasons to justify the annexation of Korea as reunion between the two races of Japanese and Koreans. One was the theory of *Nissen dôsoron*, that is, the common ancestral origins of the Korean and Japanese races, another one was the selectively use of documentary studies and archaeological data to reconstruct a unilinear evolution scheme emphasizing Korea's racial and cultural inferiority to Japan.<sup>80</sup> The assertion that

---

77 The Yi Royal Museum opened in the same year, 1909.

78 Kuroita Katsumi (1874–1946), the father of modern Japanese historiography and head of the Meiji Education Ministry historical textbooks compilation committee, proposed his classification and inventory system which had been inspired by studying the antiquities laws and national preservation efforts he witnessed during his “fact-finding” trips to France, Germany, and England between 1909 and 1911. He sent his first recommendations in 1912 to the ministry and adapted them in 1916 for Korea.

The field survey records which include the original address, owner, historical documents, measurements, and excavated data, are still being consulted as the oldest «authentication records» by the Cultural Heritage Administration Bureau of the Republic of Korea (1998-present) for preservation and reconstruction purposes.

79 Pai, Hyhung Il: *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013, p.114-163

80 The concept of shared ancestral origins can be traced to the late 1800s in historical journals and becomes common in the early twentieth-century writings of Torii, Shiratori, and Imanishi who agreed that the common descent of the Japanese (Nihonjin) and Koreans (Chōsenjin) from one race was indicated by shared blood, culture, and language since ancient times.

Imanishi called for the separation of Korea from China so as to incorporate Chōsen history into Japanese history not only because “the Korean peninsula is now part of the empire” but also because of the common ancestry of the Korean and Japanese races.

The stele of King Kwanggaet'o in Tonggou, in present-day Ji'an in Jilin province became known for the first time when in 1883 Sakawa Kageaki, a lieutenant in the army, took the first complete rubbings back to Japan. The inscribed remains of King Kwanggaet'o's stele (dated to 414 A.D.) which predated the eighth-century *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan) by four centuries caused a national sensation and came to be regarded as the earliest monument commemorating Japanese colonization on the continent 1,500 years earlier.

Japanese emperors ruled Korea between the fourth and the seventh centuries and the overwhelming impact of Chinese civilization on Korea which led to the consequent lack of unique Korean origins, was another theory which legitimized authorities for preconceived nationalistic ends. The proper identification of relics and remains would not solely support a future colonial government operated museum, and feed the preservation laws governing temples and shrines, but also compile data for future textbook publication and propaganda issues.<sup>81</sup>

The problem in this context was that Koreans' national consciousness was a tough obstacle to this policy as they did not think of their culture as inferior to that of Japanese. Rather, they were quite fondly of their past prosperity, believing that in the past they taught the Japanese. These difficulties reaffirmed the necessity of studying the history and culture of the colony by Japanese scholars, as one of the most important demands from the colonial officials. Emphasizing Korea's racial and cultural inferiority, the colonial government systematically utilized their reports to incorporate the history of the colony into their discourse on Japanese origins and for the political objective of assimilating Koreans as the emperor's subjects *tenno-ka*.<sup>82</sup> Focusing on assimilation as the main purpose of colonial rule the imperial government believed that ideological and cultural control could be acquired by educating Chôson people about their own culture.<sup>83</sup> The vast body of field data made up of historical documents, ethnographies, survey maps, photographs, and statistical data proved to be quite useful in the preparation of educational resources and propaganda materials for advertising the progress of Imperial Japan's civilizing mission on different levels.

Fulfilling the task to train Koreans through education, the colonial authorities entrusted Japanese scholars of compiling such manuals. Torii was a key figure to prove the colonial view of history, when he visited Korea from 1911 to 1915 every three to six months to conduct anthropological and prehistorical research. Enforcing his academic interests and ambitions the government utilised the outcoming archaeological investigations to launch the "Compilation of Chôson History" *Chôsenshi hensankai* in July 1916.

The Governor General Museum in the centre of the project to assimilate Koreans psychologically, published also fifteen volumes of the "Album of Ancient Korean Sites and Relics" *Chosen Koseki Zufu* between 1915 and 1935.<sup>84</sup> Based on the substantial fundamental survey by Sekino Tadashi, which was

---

These Japanese colonial reports also defined such racial features as a lack of creativity, a lack of appreciation of the fine arts, a failure to preserve monuments, factional strife, authoritarianism, individualism, optimism, and an inability to distinguish private possessions from public property.

Pai, Hyung Il: Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013, p.114-163

81 Accordingly to the establishment of compulsory public elementary schools *futsu gakkô* in Korea and Taiwan in 1907, the colonial administrative branches of the Education department and Interior Ministries were in control of all media publications.

Imperial Japan already interfered with Joseon's textbooks since the period of the Residency-General, and they executed full-scale educational policies by issuing "Edicts on Joseon's education", "Regulations for General Schools", "Regulations for high-general school" in 1911. Based on these laws, they managed all things related to the establishment of the textbooks of Joseon and its development and distribution.

Heo, J.: Textbook policy and Korean Language Textbook in Japan's Colonial Rule of Korea, Seoul Gyeongjin, 2009, pp.19-21

82 Yongho Ch'oe: Sources of Korean Tradition, Columbia University Press, 2000

Chon Hae-jong: How to view Korean History, Seoul 1973, pp.8-9, in Pai Hyung Il: Constructing "Korean" Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-formation Theories, Harvard Univ Asia Center, 2000

83 Talk with Governor General Terauchi: Educational Policy, Maeil sinbo (22nd July, 1913), cited in Lee Ji-won, The History of Korean Modern Cultural Thought, Seoul, Hyeon, 2007, p.92.

In 1913, the sites Seokgulam and the Paldal Gate in Suwon were repaired by the Bureau of Construction Department of Building and Repairing under the Imperial governmental policy. While the repair of cultural properties during the 1910s was for the promotion of imperialism, restoration after the 1920s was to legitimize cultural policies. Lee, J.: A Study on the Japanese Policy of Korean Traditional Culture in the Japanese Imperialism in the 1920~30s. The Korean History Education Review, 75, 2000, pp.55-94

84 Chosen Koseki Zufu (Illustrated record of Korean relics); 15 vols., Tokyo: Chosen sotokufu zohan, vol. 1 (1915), 2 (1915), 3 (1916), 4

completed in 1913, the fifteen volumes covered different topics in the history of colonial art, archaeology, and architectural photography of the arts of East Asia, classified by genres and time periods.<sup>85</sup> Valued as a publication which set a standard in the study of cultural legacy of Korea it showed pictures of before and after the restoration side by side for comparison. In this layout it visualized how much Japan was engaged to represent their restoration of Chōson's past. Chief illustrator Ōba Tsunekichi (1878–1958), a graduate of Tokyo School of Fine Arts, contributed artefact drawings and fine oil colour paintings of tomb art, and Ōgawa Kazumasa (1860–1929), first Meiji commercial photographer and educated in Boston, photographed and printed this collection of Korean remains.<sup>86</sup>

In the way that the book brought the popularization of the cultural properties through a new media called photographs it was a true symbolic product of modernity, displaying Japan's advanced civilization. Photographs, duplicated in mass and distributed to the public, became a well concerted method of extensive propaganda to inject ideologies and values far more effectively. Other than that, the Governor General Museum launched the eighteen volumes of the "Report of the Research of Antiquities between 1916 and 1934, the seven volumes of the "Special Report of the Service of Antiquities" from 1919 to 1929, the two volumes of the "Catalogue of Historical Remains and Treasures of Korea" and the seventeen volumes of the "Museum Exhibits Illustrated" between 1926 and 1943.<sup>87</sup>

Not only for scholars but also for the people of the empire at large, this publications documented the successes of scientific endeavours and also their civilizing mission in the colony. They reproduced the main narratives that both the Korean and Japanese nations had the same ancestry but due the influence of Chinese civilisation and their dependant on the Chinese culture, its own culture had stagnated, especially in the Chōson Period. In the Japanese academic world the annexation and colonial rule was utilized as medium for understanding Japanese culture by its relativeness to Korean and Chinese culture. Showing Japanese archaeologists, all dressed in Western clothes, framed amongst a picturesque landscape versus the bevy of under-class local workers they produced themselves as sophisticated men of the world and the main keeper for Korea's rapidly disappearing ancient past. Published by the Colonial Government the books and postcards envisioned the exciting possibilities waiting for great adventurers, artists, and photographers as ripe for exploration and study the colony.<sup>88</sup> The concerted approach of excavation technique, documented by state-of-the-art equipment was recognized, even among nonspecialists, as superior in methodology and achieved international acclaim.<sup>89</sup> As Japan aspired to strive for ideological leadership in Asia they also kept a sense of rivalry over Western scholars in the discovery and interpretation of the art of the East. In this

---

(1916), 5 (1917), 6 (1918), 7 (1920), 8 (1928), 9 (1929), 10 (1930), 11 (1931), 12 (1932), 13 (1933), 14 (1934), 15 (1935) (15)

85 In regard of this accomplishment, the French government conferred a decoration, Stanilas Julian, upon him in 1917.

86 Sekino's magnum opus was entitled, "The Art History of Korea," Chōsen Bijutsu-shi and published in 1932. This work represents a comprehensive overview of the history of Korean art and architecture reflecting thirty years worth of scholarship and fieldwork conducted in the peninsula.

87 Due to the political conditions of the times about 1930, government funds for the investigation of ancient sites in Korea were curtailed, and research efforts were greatly hindered. To continue the excavation and study of archaeological sites funds were gathered from various public and private groups and the Chosen Koseki Kenkyu Kai "Society for Study of Korean Antiquities" was formed. All archaeological work in Korea was discontinued with Japan's entry into World War II in 1941.

88 In order to fund the expensive expeditions as well as publications and to advance their academic careers they had to impress their donors, such as the Imperial Household Agency, the Governor General Museum, and the Yi Royal Museum whom they were dependent on for monetary support.

Mary Louis Pratt: *Imperial Eyes*, Routledge, 1992, p.51

89 Erwin O. Reischauer: Japanese archaeological work on the Asiatic continent. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 4, 1939, pp.87–98

unique coalition with Japanese politicians who supported this academic accomplishments they dominated the interpretive framework in depriving Koreans of their cultural patrimony.

In their efforts into investigating the fields of archaeology and art history Preservation Laws governing Temples and Shrines were promulgated by the government general in 1911. These regulations on the “Preservation of Ancient Sites and Relics of Chōsen” *Koseki oyobi ibutsu hozon kitei* were the first detailed and organized list of preservation guidelines issued by the Ministry of Interior, even three years before they were reenacted in Japan. According to this first comprehensive archaeological heritage management laws to be promulgated in the empire, the Japanese colonial government encompassed everything from daily temple administration to documentation of ancient Buddhists ruins and registered hundreds of archaeological and historical sites as well as monuments and Korea’s archaeological finds. As Japanese surveyors in the peninsula had the power to excavate where they wished grave robbing and illicit sales to museums and private collectors were commonplace.

To fight looting and illegal trade, a Regulation for Conserving Antiquities of Ancient Tomb Level was issued in 1916. The regulations also prohibited the export of materials and antiquities outside Chōsen which were from now on officially registered as Japan’s imperial possessions, but the law also kept Koreans from employment on archeological survey teams.<sup>90</sup>

Accompanied by the establishment of the Governor General Museum in December 1915, the appointment of the Museum Commission in April 1916 and the proclamation of the “Regulation for the Preservation of Historic Remains and Relics” in July 1916, the “Committee on the Investigation of Korean Antiquities” *Chosen Koseki Chosa Kenkai*, the “Society for Studies of Ancient Remains” were established to support the survey project. All of the administration concerning the conservation and management were executed by the Museum of the Government-General of Korea under the Bureau of Secretary of the Government General Terauchi Masatake and Kuroita Katsumi (1874-1946).<sup>91</sup> The registration, preservation and restoration of Korean remains, the planning of exhibitions, the preservation and reconstruction of monuments, and the publications of their research activities represented a high point for the Japanese administration in Korea. In 1917, the preservation laws were extended to govern the ruins of former dynastic capitals, burials, palaces, and fortresses and in 1919 *Shiseki Meishō Tennen Kinnenbutsu*, the protection of historic remains, famous places, and natural monuments, including geological formations and fauna and flora was promulgated.<sup>92</sup>

In general the characteristics of the preservation laws were narrowly focused on Korean antiquities, such as the relics of the Three Kingdoms, to be identified as the artistic inspirations for the origins of Buddhist art and architecture in Nara. The particular fondness for excavating ancestral remains that

---

90 Pai, Hyhung Il: *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013, p.175

91 Lee, S.: *Colony and Study of History seen through Kuroita Katsumi*, *Hanguk munhwa* 23, 1999, pp.243-262. Cit in Kang, Heejung: *Reinvented and Re-Contextualized: Cultural Property in Korea during Japanese Occupation*, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 4, No. 7, May 2014

Kuroita Katsumi (1874--1946), Professor of National History at Tokyo Imperial University continually revised and reshaped his National History, 1896-1937, by adroitly accentuating or avoiding key issues of the imperial past and present. By so doing, he refuted all critics of both Japan’s pursuit of colonial empire in Asia and the legitimizing concept of an authoritarian and imperial-centric national polity (*kokutai*) based on the eternal, inviolable, unilinear, and sacred imperial household.

92 From 1933 on, also private institutions and individuals who possessed national treasures, in addition to public institution were monitored. Hyung Il Pai: *The Creation of National Treasures and Monuments*, *Korean Studies*, Volume 25, No. 1, University of Hawai’i Press, 2001, p.79



could illuminate Japan's imperial origins, as Koguryô, Paekche, and Silla royal tombs at the expense and neglect of other prehistoric remains went through the process of "technical modernization" which were, "restoration and repair."<sup>93</sup> A series of processes in which conservation was promoted through restoration became part of the "technological modernization of cultural properties" and Korea was quite a laboratory due to the fact for the scholars were barred from most imperial tomb excavations in Japan, hampered by the many restrictions imposed by the Imperial Office in Tokyo.

Despite the effort to prove the stagnation theory *teitairon* of Korean civilization, which asserted that Chinese cultural intervention had been required to enable Korean civilisation to evolve, it is to be acknowledged that the doubtful methods practiced on the part of Japanese bureaucrats and scholars has left an indelible legacy in the kinds of art and archaeological remains such as the establishment of the museum collections and preservation of temple monuments that would otherwise have been looted or taken apart piece by piece to be sold to the highest bidder. However, to produce, publish and distribute the Japanese- and English-language catalogues for sculpture, artefacts and painting, by the Governor General's office, was not only intended to promote Japan as a growing empire in possession of cultural heights and destinations well worth the attention of academics and tourists. The editions of such catalogues, which ran from 1912 to 1943 were often utilized to arrange sales to foreign museums at international exhibitions.<sup>94</sup>

Similar to Western examples around the new discovered world the transformation of relics to objects of exhibition cultural properties were adapted through a process of re-contextualization. Other than that they were advertised as "discovery" as if they never existed before. In this physical modernization religious art was no more a subject of holy worship former holy sites turned into a tourist spot for sightseeing tours as a must-see symbol of Japan's successful colonization with the technology of civilization. Exhibited in the museum as the objects of public appreciation they were re-contextualized as objects of taste, which were included in the sphere of modern culture. An emblem of colonial Korea transformed by Imperial Japan, survey, discovery, and excavation of historic sites and relics became the basis of the modern scholarship known as Chôson art history.

## Railway, Tourism and Propagan

Another impetus behind archaeological surveys, excavations, and ethnographic research into remote regions of northern Korea, Manchuria, and northern China, was the building of the South Manchurian Railway. In 1908, Shiratori Kurakichi, founder of East Asian studies in Japan, persuaded Goto Shimpei (1857–1929), the railroad's first general manager, to set up the *Mantetsu Chôsabu* South Manchurian Railway Research Division in its Tokyo headquarters.<sup>95</sup> Henceforth, academic research was

---

93 Hamada Kosaku and J. G. Andersson: *The Far East, Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 4, 1932, p.9–14

Mark R. Peattie: *Japanese Attitudes towards Colonialism*, in *The Japanese Colonial Empire*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, Princeton University Press, 1984, pp.8–127.

Imperial Japan restored Chosôn's cultural properties with their new techniques like cement. For the stone pagoda of Mireuksa, they used cement to prevent the pagoda from collapsing, and to raise the levels of the pagoda. Concrete pavement was regarded as the most sophisticated and new building material back then. Since it was decided to de-construct and restore the stone stupa of Mireuksa, 150 tons of cement were separated from the pagoda since October 31st, 2001. Furthermore, numerous stone fragments with inscriptions which dated 4th year of Taisho reign (1915) were discovered.

94 Pai, Hyhung Il: *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013, p.91

95 In the late nineteenth century the newly founded Tokyo University Department of History (1885) produced the first generation of graduates to dedicate their academic careers to modern Tôyô gaku, or East Asian studies. Under the tutelage of Shiratori Kurakichi the

conducted as an integral part and guide of Japan's administration of Manchuria and Korea through the Research Division facilities. As with the South Manchuria Railroad Company's sponsored research into Manchurian geography, peoples, and customs, leading East Asian experts, such as Tsuda Sokichi, Ikeuchi Hiroshi, Torii Ryuzo, Mikami Tsugio, Hamada Kosaku, and Harada Yoshito were dispatched to the colonies to fulfil the Japanese colonial government Chōsen Sōtoku-fu main agenda, to provide their bureaucrats and soldiers with key information about the colony and justify their occupation. Hiring the best minds of the day such as Tokyo University history department graduates such as Naitō Kōnan (1866–1934), Shiratori Kurakichi (1865–1942), Inaba Iwakichi (1938) and Ikeuchi Hirōshi (1878–1952) they were instrumental in incorporating investigations of the language, geography, ethnography, religions, and history of the new colonies of Manchuria and Korea as to be published in the series titled *Mantetsu chōsa hōkoku* "The South Manchuria Railway Research Department reports" (1915–41). Only through the South Manchurian Railway Research Division's funding, as well as the support and protection of the *Kempeitai*, the anthropological, archaeological, and historical field research into the far corners of Manchuria, Korea, and the present Russian Maritime provinces, was feasible to these pioneers. In return they would collect reliable information on the local populations by locating the best resources as well as exploit the cheap labor conditions so as to facilitate new real estate and Japanese government backed colonial industries.

With the founding of the *Keijō* Seoul branch of the Japan Tourist Bureau JTB in 1912, the marketing of Korea's ancient sites as tourist attractions began together with Colonial Government Railways of Chōsen CGR and South Manchuria Railroad SMR.<sup>96</sup> The South Manchuria Railway Company, not only built railway tracks but also constructed a chain of accommodations and other tourist infrastructure facilities. By the time Korea was no longer the 'hermit' kingdom, since thousands of bureaucrats, soldiers, businessmen, labourers and settlers were using the main line en route to Manchuria, Russia and China, to travel to remote archaeological sites, famous places, natural monuments, summer resorts, and hot springs. Publisher hired leading specialists, journalists, writers, professional travellers to write travelogues and guidebooks, where they featured Korea's ancient remains *koseki* and customs *fūzoku* as the most "historically scenic" destinations. Their articles and photos transformed the colony into the most popular Japanese tourist destination in the 1920s and 1930s. Trapped by the imperialist nostalgia for millions of ordinary Japanese tourists who visited Korea's customs and ancient destinations this became part of their search for their own national identity as citizens of a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural empire.<sup>97</sup>

When newspapers as *Asahi shinbun* advertised in 1906 cruises to the victorious 'battle-sites', featured in their news reports on the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) it signalled the official debut of Japan as an imperial power on the world stage. Visiting cultural sites rapidly increased to become an almost common experience after Imperial Japan executed its cultural policy. For the greater public, the

---

founder of East Asian studies in Japan. Ikeuchi Hiroshi, Torii Ryūzō, and Imanishi Ryū represented the new sort of scholars, who were versed not only in classical Chinese historical literature but also in the imported Western disciplines of geography, geology, paleontology, archaeology, art history physical anthropology, and ethnography. The science of history, as opposed to premodern Japanese and sinological approaches, was established with the help of German scholars Ludwig Riess (1861-1928) and to a high esteem Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886). Shiratori's interpretation of the past for the sake of enhancing the present was influenced but not preordained by Western teachers or sources.

<sup>96</sup> Japan's first travel agency the JTB founded in 1912 is still operating today.

<sup>97</sup> G. Weisenfeld: Touring Japan- as Museums: Nippon and Other Japanese Imperialist Travelogues, *Positions* 8 (3), 2000, pp. 747–793

survey reports and accompanying newspaper articles about the long neglected ancient ruins and relics as tangible symbols of a shared body of Japanese and Korean patrimony, served as scenic tourist destinations. Convinced by this scientific evidence, the first packaged group tours headed to the new world *shintenchi* where one could see for oneself the farthest edge of the Emperor's authority and domain. For those who could not afford such a journey, globalized forms of artistic expression as landscape paintings of colonies and attractive commemorative postcard sets, designed by Japanese artists and graphic designers, issued by the Japanese Ministry of Communications as well as private entrepreneurs, inspired the national pride in Japan.<sup>98</sup> Since production was dominated mostly by Japanese photographers, the representation of Korea in postcards reflected early twentieth century Japanese expectations of Korea, commodified to satisfy tourist demand. Starting off with two Japanese photographer, Fujita Shôzaburô and Murakami Kôjirô. by the 1900s these two studios monopolized the market and also counted prominent clients from the international diplomatic community. In the 1920s the local manufacturer Hinode Shôkô with an archive of seven hundred views of famous places *meishô* and six hundred 'manners and customs' photographs of Chôsen, is reported to have sold ten thousand postcards daily at its height.<sup>99</sup> In the 1930s, the Taishô Publishing Company *Taishô shashin kôgeisho* dominated the postcard trade and distributed their merchandise via hundreds of retail outlets at major traffic junctions, ports and famous sites in Korea. The most prominent postcards representing "local color" *fûzoku* were images of peasant women, cute children, and professional dancers *kisaeng*, introducing an exoticized culture and tradition.<sup>100</sup> Arranged as "native cultural markers" with amid scenic ruins in exotic landscapes, these visually striking images widely published in all Asia, offered an easily affordable and eye-catching type of souvenir that depicted foremost the "quaint" customs and "backward" images of Koreans. The propagated nostalgic image of Korea's decaying sites and beautiful customs, was to lure rich businessmen, as well as foreign and domestic visitors, to invest and settle in the colonies.

---

98 The advertising of the victorious Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) boosted the production and sale of postcard sets of the newly incorporated colonies of Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria to a total of four hundred to seven hundred thousand sets. The same postcard sets were also displayed prominently at the St Louis World's Fair in 1904.

A.N. Morse, T. Rimer and K. Brown: *Art of the Japanese Postcard*, Lund Humphries Publishers, 2005, p.18

99 Hyung Il Pai: *Staging 'Koreana' for the Tourist Gaze: Imperialist Nostalgia and the Circulation of Picture Postcards*, *History of Photography*, 2013, pp.301-311

100 Kisaeng: professional girls trained in special skills of music, dance, poetry and conversation, with which they entertained upper-class men at banquets. Keith L. Pratt and Richard Rutt: *Korea: A Historical and Cultural Dictionary*, Routledge, 2013, pp.223-224

## Exposing the Power of Art

When the idea of museums and exhibitions was introduced to Koreans in the early 1880s the interest was limited to a small reformist elite.<sup>101</sup> Engaged by Korean royalty King Gojong, known for his keen interest in all things modern the government directed the Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry to participate in both the World Colombian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago and the Exposition Universelle of 1900 in Paris.<sup>102</sup> At this venues the new empire began to understand the importance of exhibitions in terms of the development of its industry and commerce and in 1902 the Provisional Exposition Department was established, which became the Division of Industry Encouragement in 1904. In Osaka at the fifth Japanese Domestic Exposition in 1903, Korea was being reframed twice through the lens of a particular chronological structure. Once the Korean government opened a display room for a temporary exhibition to promote its potential, on the other hand the Japanese empire employed the European colonialist exhibition strategy of showing native people such as Ainu, Taiwanese aborigines, Okinawans, Chinese and Koreans, staged as living “in a different temporality.”

In the exhibition the Koreans were shown in traditional dress, displayed with their traditional housing and the Taiwanese in their native fashion, displayed against the rural landscape. Hardly touched by the turmoil of modernity these groups represented the Japanese past or even prehistoric times. The exposition, was one of the first examples of Japan's inclusion of anthropological others, followed by expositions 1910 in London or the 1914 Tokyo Taisho Exposition and the 1922 Peace Commemorating Exposition, where living humans in native villages and showcases became an expected part of the exposition culture.<sup>103</sup>

However, exhibitions and museums, not considered relevant to building national identity at that time in Korean society, could not provoke an echo and the government did not manage to accomplish the goal, in terms of making the country rich and powerful as Japan succeeded in depriving Korea of her diplomatic sovereignty in 1905.<sup>104</sup> In February 1906, the Japanese empire established the Residency-General, which paved a decisive way for the colonisation of Korea.

After Emperor Gojong (1864-1907) sent in June 1907 unsuccessfully his secret envoys to the 2nd Hague Peace Conference, retributively, Japan forced the emperor to abdicate the throne and

---

101 After the enforced opening of Korea in 1876, Kim Gi-su (1832-?), was sent as an envoy to Japan and, visited a Japanese museum in the same year. Kim Gi-su, *Record of a Journey to Japan, 1877*, cited in Cha Mun-seong, *Modern Museum: Its Formation and Transition*, Paju: Korean Academic Information, 2008, pp.154-161

The terms, *misul* (fine art), *misulgwan* (fine art museum), and *pangmulgwan* (Museum) were firstly introduced into Korea in the process of the modernizing project. The terms first appeared in the report of Chosŏn official group for inspection of Japanese modernization projects written by a reformist official, Pak Chŏngyang in 1881.

Park Jeong-yang (1841-1904), member of the Korean delegation to Japan, reported on modern institutions such as museums, in 1881, and the first modern newspaper in Korea, *Hanseong sunbo*. *Hanseong Ten-daily* introduced in October 1883 both museums and exhibitions to Koreans. The introduction of the concepts, fine art and fine art museum, was, therefore, conjunct not only with the notion of international expositions, but also with conception of modernization, civilization, and cultural enlightenment.

102 He sponsored the introduction of electric street lights and streetcar services, had Korea's first telephone exchange installed in his palace, ordered the first theater to be built and the first Korean public park to be created. came to Korea from the West.

Pak Yŏnghyo, in 1888 suggested the establishment of a museum system in a reformation and modernization process as a unique opportunity to position the Korean nation as a highly civilized country equivalent to Western power as well as to Japan.

Kim Youngna: 'Universal Exposition' as an Exhibitionary Space: Korean Exhibition at the 1893 World Columbian Exposition, Chicago, *Journal of History of Western Art* 13, 2000, pp.86-96

103 Japan's effort to demonstrate its colonial power was clearly shown at the Japan-British Exhibition, Shepherd's Bush, London, 1910 in the section called "The Palace of the Orient." Korea only became Japan's official colony during the exhibition and Manchuria at the time was merely within Japan's sphere of influence. In the Japanese version of the report, the pavilion was merely called the 23rd pavilion (23 gōkan), not 'the Palace of the Orient'.

104 Smaller industrial expositions had been staged in Korea itself with the Museum for Encouraging Industry in 1906 and the display room by the Seoul Commerce Counsel in 1907. Sang Hoon Jang: *A representation of nationhood: The National Museum of Korea*, University of Leicester, 2015, p.21

appointed a Japanese vice minister to every ministry of the Korean government in August 1907. From November that year, all the laws and regulations had to be screened by the Japanese Residency-General. Isolating the new emperor Sunjong of any political influence he was moved to Changdeok-gung Palace on 13th November, 1907, where the Imperial Dynasty Museum, Zoo and Botanical Garden was established. It opened to the public in November 1909, not just for Koreans but for Japanese and foreign visitors also. With the chronicle display of a selection of the 8,600 items of artwork collected from January to August 1908.<sup>105</sup> Itō Hirobumi the then Residency-General, came up with the idea of a museum as symbolic popular institution to proof that Korea was experiencing a new stage in its civilisation and in order to stabilise the Korean society.<sup>106</sup> When Korea became a Japanese colony in 1910 the Imperial Dynasty Museum had to change its official name as the Joseon Kingdom lost its imperial standing and was renamed the “Yi Royal Household Museum.”<sup>107</sup> Right after the annexation in 1910, the Government-General encouraged Korean local officials and elites to organise tourist parties to visit modern institutions such as the museum and zoo, hospitals and industrial facilities to show off the accomplishments and prospects of colonial rule. Intended as a ritual to experience the opening of a new civilisation, the Japanese colonialists were also constructing their own new identity as an dominating empire and the museum was a component of this spectacle. Despite that the Yi Royal Household Museum could not be the official museum of Korea, which was established in 1915 as the Government-General Museum, the colonial authorities needed to utilise the museum like the Yi Royal Household as a medium to attract Koreans’ cooperation for their colonial rule. The museum existed throughout until 1945 a symbol of peace and co-prosperity of the two nations.

In the Korean neo-Confucianist perspective of the world, paintings and calligraphy had been respected as a means of cultivating the minds of the literati class, but architecture, sculpture and craft works were not considered as anything more than practical skills. It was not until the opening of Korean ports to Japan in 1876 that Koreans began to recognise the new epistemological category of national material culture. What was demanded by foreigners as rare objects with a peculiar cash value began to be considered as national treasures that the Japanese were keen to steal from Korea.<sup>108</sup> With the first major reform attempts in 1894 by emperor Gojong to restructure the government and introduce social change, also Japan’s political ambition in the peninsula became more evident. With the proclaimed Kabo Reform, a new cultural understanding and art techniques came along a new education curriculum, consisting of subjects similar to those taught in Japanese schools. Japanese advisors were appointed to help formulate the Education Act of 1895, which required schools in Korea to use

---

105 When the Yi Royal Household Museum published the catalogue of the collection in 1912, it contained 12,230 items and by 1938 the number had reached 18,800. Other than Emperor Sunjong and his court expected the Royal Garden opened to the public, mentioning that the emperor should enjoy them together with his subjects.

106 Both Park So-hyeon and Park Gwang-hyeon argued that the museum, zoo and botanical garden in Changgyeong-gung Palace were presented as modern hobbies for the public, propagandised as accomplishments resulting from the modernisation of Korea by Japan. See Park So-hyeon, “Hobby of Empire: the YHM and Museum policy of the Empire of Japan Art History Forum 18, 2004, p.157; Park Gwang-hyeon, “The Colony Joseon and the Politics of the Museum” in *Politics of Museum*, edited by Park Gwang-hyeon, Seoul: Nonhyeong, 2009, p.194.

107 Nearly 1,200 ancient documents including some 150 copies of Uigwe, Joseon’s royal texts which chronicled the royal rituals of King Gojong and King Sunjong, were looted in 1922, under the supervision of then Resident-General of Korea Itō Hirobumi. The books had been stored at the Imperial Household Agency ever since and were repatriated in December 2011. A special exhibition was held from 27 December 2011 to 5 February 2012 at the National Palace Museum of Korea. Korea Herald. 6 December 2011

108 From 1897 to 1909, 33 cases relating to the robbery of cultural objects were reported. 27 of them were by Japanese immigrants. See Lee Sun-ja, *Investigation Projects of Historic Remains in the Japanese Colonial Period*, Seoul Gyeongin munhwasa, 2009), pp.22-24.

Japanese schoolbooks with approval from the Ministry of Education in Korea until the ministry published its own textbooks for the new curriculum. The first drawing books used in Korean schools were imported from Japan until the Korean Ministry of Education published its own drawing and painting book in 1907, which also used some of the images directly from *Mohitsu Dehon* "Brush Drawing Handbook" for Japanese schools. It became the most widely used drawing books in schools of the country for next fifteen years.<sup>109</sup> In this time of transition the Korean term *misul*, a translation of the Japanese expression *bijutsu*, meaning fine art was coined for the first time.<sup>110</sup>

Despite the Japanese-biased perspective on Korean culture, communicated through exhibitions and catalogues some Korean intellectuals began to worry about the Japanese interpretation of Korean material culture.<sup>111</sup> In return colonial authorities forced all the Korean newspapers to discontinue nationalist interpretations of Korean material culture, classes on Korean history were also abolished at public primary schools and private schools. Under colonial rule, Japan monopolised national history.<sup>112</sup>

Enlarging their identity as imperial power, Japanese colonialists were eager to position themselves as the discoverers and interpreters of Korean material culture. It was in this context that a separate museum was established by the Governor General Office five years after the annexation.

Over fifty days, from 11 September 1915 until 31 October 1915, the Chosŏn Industrial Exposition, commemorating the fifth year of colonial rule, took place in Gyeongbok palace complex. Turning the symbolic ground into a commercial compound, the colonial government literally dislodged the authority of the five hundred year old Chosŏn dynasty and reconfigured the function of the palace, which was originally inaccessible to the public.<sup>113</sup> Under the auspices of modernity, the intrinsic space of the former ultimate authority of the king was replaced by a spectacle based configuration to assimilate and incorporate colonized subjects.<sup>114</sup> In this sense, Terauchi Masatake, the first Japanese Governor-General of Korea, believed that the exposition would spectacularly display an attractive picture of industrial development and progress by colonial rule, not only to the Korean people but also to those Japanese officials who remained skeptical about the annexation. Modelled after international

109 Huirak Park: The Study of Art Education in Korea: 100 Years of Art Education 1895-1995, Seoul: Yekyung, 1997, p.347

110 In Taiwan, Yamashita Kōtō (a graduate of Tokyo School of Fine Arts) opened his Taiwan *Zaohua Guan* "Taiwan Painting School" in 1903 and Ishikawa Kin'ichirō (1871-1945, member, *Meiji Bijutsukai* "Meiji Art Society" became and arts instructor at Taipei Junior High School and the School in Japanese in 1907. In Korea, the *Hansung-sungbo* (a Seoul newspaper published every 10 days) was already using the newly created word "misul/bijutsu" by 1884 as the country was moving toward annexation by Japan, and in 1907 Lee Wangjig *Misulpum-jejakso* "King Yi Studio of Fine Arts" was established.

Yan Juanying: *Taiwan Jindai Meishu Dashi Nianbiao* "Chronological Table of Major Issues in Taiwanese Modern Fine Arts", Xiongshi Tushu, 1998, pp. 7, 13

Center for Art Studies, Seoul, Korea, *Doung-Asia Hwehwasa-yunpyo* The Painting Chronology of East Asia: From the Prehistoric Age to 1950, *Misulsa Rondan* "Art History Forum", vol. 5 Appendix, Center for Art Studies, Seoul, Korea, 1997, pp. 442, 461

111 *Hansŏngsunbo* (Seoul News) published the first seminal article on international expositions, "The Exposition Theory," in 1884, *Chegukshinmun* (Empire News, 1898-1910), *Hwangsŏngshinmun* (Hwangsŏng News, 1898-1910), *Mansebo* (Manse News, 1906-1907), *Gonglip Shinbo* (Public News, 1905-1909), *Shinhan Minbo* (New Korean News, 1909-1916), *Daehan Maeil Shinbo* (Great Korean Daily News, 1904-1910) had discussed the discursive space of international expositions.

112 Michael Robinson: The First Phase of Japanese Rule, 1910-1919, in Korea, Old and New: A History, p.260

Under this situation, only Korean newspapers in exile in San Francisco and Vladivostok could criticise the transfer of cultural objects to Japan in the early 1910s.

113 Over 20,000 visitors a day became part of the spectacle as an object and as a subject. The exposition was quite successful, attracting about 1.2 million people in only fifty days. See Hong Kal: *Aesthetic Constructions of Korean Nationalism: Spectacle, Politics and History*, Routledge, 12 May 2011

Extensive newspaper coverage of international expositions built momentum for the exposition in 1915. Since *Hansŏngsunbo* (Seoul News) published the first seminal article on international expositions, "The Exposition Theory," in 1884, *Chegukshinmun* (Empire News, 1898-1910), *Hwangsŏngshinmun* (Hwangsŏng News, 1898-1910), *Mansebo* (Manse News, 1906-1907), *Gonglip Shinbo* (Public News, 1905-1909), *Shinhan Minbo* (New Korean News, 1909-1916), *Daehan Maeil Shinbo* (Great Korean Daily News, 1904-1910)

114 At the time, international expositions were seen as one of greatest embodiments and central symbols of the Western model of modernization and civilization, producing knowledge and shaping its subjects as the citizens of a modern state.

expositions the event was an opportunity to help establish a modern state based and as the justification for colonial annexation. As elsewhere with a majority of illiterate viewers the effects of the event was disseminated through new monumental buildings, commodities, industrial products, entertainment, posters, postcards, and stories, beyond its spatial and temporal boundaries.

The promotion of Japan's superiority over Korea remained a political and cultural battlefield between the Japanese colonial government officials and local Korean merchants, and vendor groups across which visions of the proper relationship between Japan, Korea and the world should shape national identity for Korea. At seventeen pavilions not only industrial products, handcrafts and other modern achievements were on display but also specific forms of colonial knowledge, such as anthropology and folklore were produced. The festivity promoted colonialism as civilising mission of enlightenment and the Japanese version of Orientalism, visualized in the exposition rhetoric, provoked intense dispute over the imaging of Korea. In the critical local eye, antiques and artworks on display in the Exposition Art Museum lacked competing attitudes toward tradition and modernity and a national identity as a modern nation with its own culture and heritage. In different visual advertisements throughout spatial and architectural arrangements a comparative moment was highlighted opposing a supposedly new colonial Korea under Japanese rule versus the old Korea of Chôsun.<sup>115</sup>

Okakura Tenshin, who exercised a decisive influence, argued that art museums and the documentation of Korean traditional culture can play a significant role in the successful colonization of Korea. On his suggestion the formation of the Exposition Art Museum as a permanent art museum building was established in 1912, and after the exposition ended, this became the first major public art museum.<sup>116</sup> It opened on December 1, 1915 as the Government General Museum, predecessor of the National Museum of Korea.<sup>117</sup> Erected on the grounds of the former Yi Dynasty's (1392– 1910) royal palace of Gyeongbokgung, the Western-style building changed the concept of art and exhibition, from the exclusive private appreciation of the privileged class to the popular spectacle and visual attraction open to everyone.<sup>118</sup> The museum was comprised of six exhibition rooms: Buddhist artworks, Nangnang (the ancient Korean kingdom), Three Kingdom (57 B.C.–668 A.D.) and Unified Silla (668– 935), Koryô (918–1392) and Chosôn dynasty (1392–1910), were displayed in the Art Museum building, contemporary artworks by Korean and Japanese artists were put separately in the annexe, the Reference Museum. A total of 1,190 antiques and art objects, submitted by private collectors and Buddhist temples represented Korea's national culture and civilization through the ages.<sup>119</sup>

Despite the Yi Household Museum was already under their control, the colonial government needed this museum to be utilised as a medium to justify the Japanese occupation.<sup>120</sup> In opposition to the royal

---

115 For example the new Western-style museum was positioned against the 14th century traditional Gwanghwamun gate of the palace.

116 Hiroki Nagashima, Yachio Wada, and Kizô Fujiwara: Chôsen no kaiko Memoirs on Korea, Keijô-fu: Chikazawa Shoten, 1945, Reprint Tôkyô: Yumani Shobô, 2010, pp.262-280 in Young-Sin Park: Experiencing and Constructing New Modern Subjectivities :the Chosôn Industrial Exposition of 1915 and the Government General Museum, State University of New York, 2013, p.7

117 The Yi Royal Family Museum Iwangga pangmulgwan, which began as the Emperor's Museum in Changgyeong Palace, opened in May of 1909. The "Imperial Dynasty Museum" at Changdeok Palace was opened to the public on November 1, 1909 as the first modern museum in Korean history. It still exists nowadays, being known as the National Museum of Korea. In 1910, the Imperial Dynasty Museum had to change its official name to the "Royal Yi Family Museum", this is how it remained until 1945.

118 The museum, along with other research institutions, did not hire or train Koreans. Discriminatory hiring policies were practised across higher official levels in all institutions of colonial administration and education and was the cause of much resentment among educated Koreans.

119 The earliest exhibitions displayed artwork belonging to the Yi Royal Family Museum, founded in 1908 with donated and purchased artifacts, as well as excavated materials.

120 In 1923, the government inquired a merger of the two museums, but refused to do so, afraid to arouse the antipathy of Koreans with

art collection at the Yi Royal Household Museum which identified the Korean nation as the king's realm, the Government General Museum identified Korea as an abstract nation-state collective identity negating distinctions of class, gender, age, or religion, even though it was under Japanese colonial rule. The intention of the exhibition was to keep the narrative persistent by praising a decent Korean tradition of art and culture, and that their present was inferior to their past so their future could only prosper under colonial rule.

The process of transformation, development, and governance of Korea was part of a distinct process of cultural translation internal to East Asia at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Influenced by the Western ideological atmosphere which considered Greek and Roman culture as Classic, Japan tried to position their art in the art history of the world. Therefore, Japanese scholars were giving much weight in antiquity and treated the Three Kingdoms period and the late Silla period seriously in order to track the relation with the ancient Japan. Japanese art history insisted that Japan was "the museum of Asia" and Chôson art was meaningful as the element which linked them to Gandharan art and furthermore to Greek art. Following this indication Japan could occupy a certain position in the art history world.<sup>121</sup>

## A Change of policy

Violent repression and unwanted international attention after the March First Independence Movement in 1919, brought a drastic change of policy by the colonial authorities.<sup>122</sup> Under the slogan *bunka seiji* or "Cultural Rule" the Japanese perspective on Korean culture was being diversified. The critical question if Koreans should be assimilated fully as Japanese or allowed to become associate members of the Japanese Empire and maintain a separate cultural identity rose to prominence in the debates over the future of colonial policy<sup>123</sup>.

Immediately after these violent incidents, Art critic Yanagi Muneyoshi (1889-1961) published several essays explaining his sympathy and compassion toward the Koreans.<sup>124</sup> Yanagi who studied Korea's art in more detail began collecting pottery when he visited the peninsula in 1916 for the first time and returned many times thereafter.<sup>125</sup> From 1919 on, when Korean nationalists changed the colonial context, Yanagi became very active and his definition of art, Japanese and Korean in particular, gained unprecedented publicity. In his thesis he took a different stance towards the aesthetics of Korean art,

---

the planned policy as nationalist newspapers strongly objected the plan.

121 Gandhara art, is a style of Buddhist visual art that developed in what is now northwestern Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan between the 1st century bce and the 7th century. It was highly influenced by Greek and Roman art and sculpture, which flourished 500 years earlier. In fact, Gandharan art is often referred to as the Graeco- or Roman-Buddhist school.

122 The cultural nationalists occasionally expressed vociferous critiques of colonial policy while working secretly underground to undermine Japanese colonial rule, yet they never openly questioned Japanese legitimacy.

123 The inequalities of the colonial system can be understood by tracing the trajectory of the term *mindô*, which had been used to exclude Koreans from the welfare and educational policies instituted in Japan proper. It translates loosely as the 'standard of living and cultural level of the people' and persisted throughout most of the period of Japanese rule, until the outbreak of the Great East Asia War in 1937 when it was reformulated to mobilise the entire population for total war.

See Mark E. Caprio: Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945, University of Washington Press, 2011

124 My Sympathy toward (and Compassion on) the Koreans (Yomiuri Shinbun Journal, May 20-24, 1919; Complete Works (C.W.), vol. 6:23-32) and Letter to My Korean Friends (Kaizô, May 1920; C.W., vol. 6:33-51), the latter being heavily censored with many phrases crossed out by Japanese authorities on charge of "toppling-down the imperial rule" and "destroying the public peace." See Inaga Shigemi: Reconsidering the Mingei Undo as a Colonial Discourse: The Politics of Visualizing Asian "Folk Craft", Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft 53, 1999, pp.219-230

125 Yanagi in his youth, became passionate about Christian mysticism, then discovered Post-Impressionism and Impressionism, slowly working his way back to European renaissance art and eventually attaining the art of primitive peoples, eventually leading him to the folk art of his East Asian homeland.



based on the concept of “beauty of pathos.” Published in 1922, his book *Chôsen to sono geijutsu* “Korea and her Art” is known to have been well received by Japanese, Koreans and Westerners alike. The book includes one chapter on historical architecture, the Gwanghwa-mun Gate, the main gate of the Gyeongbok-gung Palace which faced destruction. Yanagi became involved in the controversy and opposed the plans by the government to tear the gate down to make way for a new Renaissance style Government Central Office building. In his article “For a Chosôn Building on the Verge of Demolition in Kaizô” (July 1922) he praised the gate as pure oriental example of art, threatened by westernised Japanese civilisation.<sup>126</sup> Yanagi's passionate protest is believed to have influenced the policy of the Government General, and finally they choose to preserve the gate by relocating it.<sup>127</sup> Despite he dared to protest repeatedly the policy toward Koreans in multiple essays and articles, he shared the believe of the authorities that Korean art proved very efficacy to define the colonial system. The new Governor General Seitô Makoto was highly receptive to Yanagi's understanding, by manoeuvring his cultural policy to expand the legally permissible political and cultural field. The promised reforms quite precisely matched Yanagi's and the nationalists concerns, but many of them were only half-kept. Police force was not abolished but replaced, education was expanded but not for the sake of Koreans, and censorship was relaxed but critical opinion was still suppressed.

When Korean newspapers supported Yanagi's idea to establish a museum, Seitô proofed his new cultural policy and offered Yanagi's campaign a governmental building to implement the project. Not only Saito but also the official government newspaper, the *Keijo nippô*, as well as other government organizations endorsed the “Museum of Korean Ethnic National Art”, which opened in April 1924.<sup>128</sup>

After the opening of the museum, which closed a five-year period of public engagement in the politics of colonial Korean culture, Yanagi's real interest had moved to Japan, where he formulated with friends the ideas for a Japanese Folk Art movement *mingei* and strove to set up a museum like that in Seoul, which they eventually achieved in 1936.<sup>129</sup>

Over the years Yanagi influenced the Japanese discourse on Korean material culture sustainably, as he prolonged an upsurge in the study of Chosôn antiquities, which stimulated the Korean nationalist interest in traditional art with the intention of reviving research into indigenous culture. Due his engagement the project of constructing “art” and “beauty” was instigated at a national level, and the art of the past gained historical significance. Despite his noble intentions to bring awareness to Korean art history, he certainly patronized Korean art with his definitions and generalisations as a sentimental beauty of pathos and its history as one of hardship. He felt that Korea's natural environment and history gave its art the special characteristics of “the beauty of sorrow and grief” and contained the unrest and hardship of its history. When influential Korean scholar Ko Yu-sop (1905-1944) perceived

---

126 Yanagi's view on Korean art was based on a fatalistic view of Korea. See Yu Hong-jun and Lee Tae-ho: 100 Years of Research in Art History, Searching for New Horizons of Korean Art History, Seoul Hakgojae, 1997, pp.19-22

127 After 1945, the gate was replaced only to be destroyed definitively during the Korean War, and has now been rebuilt with reinforced concrete.

In 1993, the Ministry of Culture, following more anti-Japanese protests and arguments, made a final ruling that the Chosen Sôtokufu building (Government General's Museum) which replaced Kwanghwa-mun and served after 1945 as the Korean Central National Museum would be “torn down so that Kyôngbok Palace will regain its original form, thereby reviving the spirit of the Korean race”. The order was executed in 1996 by presidential initiative to erase a symbolic relic of Japan's infamous rule on Korea. Museum News, no.266, 1993

128 It may have helped that Yanagi's father had been an admiral in the Japanese navy, therefore once Saito's superior, and that Yanagi's sister was married to a well-regarded bureaucrat in the Korean government.

129 *Mingei*, defined, and promoted by group of urban, middle-class, male intellectuals became a campaign against the assimilationist threat posed by Western-style modernization that brought rural and folk culture to national attention in the 1920s. The Nihon Mingeikan can still be found in Meguro on the south side of Tokyo.

folk arts pejoratively as a typical product of an unsophisticated, backward pre-modern society, Yanagi Muneyoshi advocated the positive aesthetic values of nameless traditional Korean folk arts and crafts, as an antidote to the authenticity of modernity.

Over the whole period of colonial rule Japanese scholars dominated and monopolized the hegemony of knowledge about Korea. Through de-contextualization and re- contextualization, often out of its original context of fabrication and location they composed a paradigm of Chôson art history to better fit the art history of Japan. This strategy played an important role not only as an academic theory but also in creating and providing the identity and system of knowledge for Japanese and Korean subjects, which were both constructed by the Imperial Japan. Therefor, it is the task of modern art historians to restore a meaningful historical continuity of contemporary Korean art with its allegedly broken, ancient traditional past.

## The Invention of Korean Modern Art

Many Korean art critics and historians have situated the emergence of Korean modern art in the year of the annexation, 1910 or 1909, when Ko Hui-tong (1886-1965) entered the Tokyo Academy of Art *Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko* to study Western-style painting.<sup>130</sup> In this understanding, the history of modern Korean art has been merely an imported one via the Japanese filter. This concept generates the belief that only through external stimulus, preferable by the assimilation of Western influences, modern Korean art was born and before there was nothing but folk art. The definition of art here echoes the constructed ideology of the 19th century European modernist notion. An autonomous value of modern art, existing for purely aesthetic appreciation, free from religious and utilitarian functions.

Modern art as an liberating departure from seven hundred years of traditional ink painting on paper and silk, executed by Confucian scholars for the refined taste of the royal court and the aristocratic class. European and American artists had introduced the Western techniques of representation to Korea at the end of nineteenth century and occasionally earlier in some religious context, but a formal transfer of method and ideology had failed to take place. Some reason why contemporary art would not gain a foothold was a lack of materials, language barrier and limited duration of stay by those foreign artists. This changed with the arrival of Japanese on their cultural mission. Their assimilation policy transformed modern art to a local adoption derived from the Western origin to overcome the insurmountable obstacle of strict codified standards that defined traditional Korean literati painting.

While painters of ink struggled to retain and even redefine traditional art, oil painting in Korea became the emblematic visual signifier of modernity and was utilized to supersede classical Chinese models, ingrained in Korean aesthetic culture. In this scenario some of the continuing traditional arts like calligraphy, which do not fit into that definition, had to be excluded from the Korean discussions of modern and contemporary Korean art history. This important shift in medium from ink on silk and paper scrolls to oil on canvas dramatically transformed the sphere of Korean painting and led to a departure from the aesthetic dictates and artistic practices that had governed Korean art for over eight hundred years. Many Korean intellectuals who did not obey the Nationalistic ideas, but still critic of Japan's political, social and cultural hegemony, recognized the significance of *munmeong gae-hwa* "civilization and enlightenment" to construct a modern nation. They advocated a new generation of Korean art works that would use the newly available visual vocabulary of representation to depart from traditional precepts and converge Korean art into an assured phase of artistic modernism, recording the realities of the world.

In 1897, two years after Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese population in the three open port cities of Incheon, Busan, and Wonsan had grown to 10,711. Including the Korean capital, 160 to 180 western foreigners are said to have lived on the peninsula in 1897, of which about 90 percent may have been missionaries.<sup>131</sup> In contrast to Japan, where since the end of the 19th

---

130 Including Ko Yu-sop (1905-1944) and Lee Gyeong-seong (1919 – 2009), who drew the following chronology of Modern Period which has been most frequently quoted by Koreans: Modern Period: The Period of Beginning (1910-1919) The Period of Search (1920-1936) The Period of Darkness (1937-1945).

In his influential book of 1979, *A History of Korean Contemporary Art* (Han'guk hyöndae misulsa), Oh Kwang-su (1938-), used the term 'contemporary' (hyöndae) in place of the 'modern' (künda). Oh categorised all diverse Korean arts from the 1900s to 'the present' as 'contemporary'.

131 S. Isabella Bird Bishop: *Korea And Her Neighbors, A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position Of the Country*, New York 1898, reprinted: Series of Reprints of Western Books on Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1983, pp.

century many merchants, diplomats and globetrotters of all kinds were staying, in Korea the image of the West until the 20th century was almost exclusively maintained by representatives of various Christian churches. Other than the missionary churches with their interiors, crucifixes, and altar paintings, Koreans had very few opportunities to see any Western art and architecture before the annexation. The few Western artists who visited the country before the Japanese annexation were met with great interest. Such as Leopold Remion, who introduced Western culture and art to Ko Hui-tong (1886–1965) and Henry Savage-Landor (1865-1924), who arrived in 1890 in Korea and painted the portraits of several noteworthy people including some members of the royal family.<sup>132</sup> In 1894, the Scottish artist Constance J.D. Tayler also arrived to capture the daily lives of Koreans through paintings and photographs.<sup>133</sup>

In 1898, Hubert Vos (1855-1935), was the first professional painter of Western techniques who arrived before the Japanese annexation. He made a favourable impression with Min Sang-ho, the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, who brought Vos to the attention of the Korean court.<sup>134</sup> In 1899 he painted a life-sized portrait of Emperor Gojong (1852-1919), a ¾ portrait of crown prince Min Sang-ho (1870–1933), and a landscape of Seoul. The paintings were placed in the Deoksugung Palace until all except the landscape of Seoul, were destroyed by fire in 1904. From Korea he travelled to China in 1899 and painted portraits of prominent leaders and famously one of Empress Dowager Cixi which is still displayed in the Summer Palace. Staying only a few month he may have had little contact with highly esteemed painters of the “Bureau of Painting” *Tohwasô* Min Sang-ho, An Chung-sik (1861-1919), or Cho Sok-chin (1853-1920), as well as other literary painters in the vicinity of the court.<sup>135</sup> Foreign artists tended to be visitors and a source of inspiration. Due to the obstacle of language barrier, they did not engage in teaching in Korea.

### Japanese Methods of Art Education

To get proper art education in Korea under Japanese rule was not easy at all. Despite that Governor General Saitô promised in his new cultural policy to establish a professional art and music academy in the 1920s, this was never to be happen. Japan was not intent upon producing highly cultivated and educated people in Korea, as it did not in Taiwan either. The highest academic institution, Kyôngsông (Keijô the Japanese name for Seoul) Imperial University, established in 1926 to counter the "People's University" movement, was primarily designed to teach Japanese residents which left Koreans to private colleges or, if they were wealthy enough, to go overseas to Japan or maybe some Western countries.<sup>136</sup> On the other hand, Japanese artist were also interested to encounter the peninsula and

---

469f

132 Savage-Landor's watercolour plates were later published as accompanying images for his book *Corea or Cho-sen, the Land of the Morning Calm* (1895).

At the request of the imperial court, Remion was asked to take over the porcelain class of a still-to-be-founded art school as well as the construction of a Korean porcelain manufactory. During his stay of until 1905, he taught Korean in Western oil painting and clay sculpture. Yông-na Kim: *20th Century Korean Art*, Laurence King Publishing, 2005, p.17

133 Constance J. D. Tayler, *Koreans at Home: Impressions of a Scotswoman* (London, Paris, New York and Melbourne: Cassell and Company, 1904).

134 In 1893 he commissioned the Netherland pavilion at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Married to the Hawaiian princess Eleanor Kaikilani Coney in 1897, the couple set out to a trip around the world heading tp Paris for the 1900 Universal Exposition.

135 An Chung-sik and Cho Sok-chin had been selected to visit in 1881 to accompany a mission to Tianjin in China where they stayed for one year to be lectured in Western drawing techniques at the Bureau of Machinery.

136 The overall purpose of the university, however, was consonant with the larger system of education, to develop loyal subjects. No

even before the annexation many lived in Korea, opened art studios, offered a formal training in *nihonga* and Western art, or became teacher at Korean public middle or high schools. In 1902, artist and former assistant professor at the “Department of Nihonga” at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts Amakusa Shinrai (1872–1917), opened the first private art studio. Other Japanese *yoga* artists such as Shimizu Tôun (1868-1929) in 1908, Hiyoshi Mamoru (1885-?), Yamamoto Baikai ( ) in 1911, Takagai Haisu (1877-1943), and Yamada Shin'ichi (1899-1991) followed later.<sup>137</sup> Yamada opened the Chosôn Art Institute *Chosôn Misulwôn* in the early 1920 and participated in official art exhibitions in Korea until he departed to Japan in 1945. Takagai Haisu, student of Kuroda Seiki opened his studio in 1916, stayed until 1925 and served as a judge at the first governmental exhibition in 1922.

Under this circumstances many Korean painters with an interest in Western art would acquire some skills at private art classes and circles. On the other hand, to promote their policy of assimilation the Japanese authorities were highly receptive of educating Korean students in Japan. For those of the first generation who could obtain a proper recommendation they would grant them special admission and an official scholarship to study in Tokyo.<sup>138</sup> Even those politically progressive Koreans who opposed Japanese policy did support sending young men to study abroad in Japan as a gradual trajectory for reclaiming political independence. In the realm of the arts, Japanese colonialism facilitated greater access to the metropole of Tokyo where they had the unique opportunity to witness public art exhibitions, being exposed to artistic societies and to contemporary modes of thought through Japanese art journals in which ideas about Western and Japanese art were disseminated.

Until 1930, sixteen students graduated from Tokyo School of Fine Arts from the department of Western painting, by 1945 over sixty Korean students graduated from the Departments of Western-Style Painting and Sculpture at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts *Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko*, 147 students at the Japanese Imperial Art School *Teikoku Bijutsu Gakko*, and 104 students at the Women's Art School *Joshi Bijutsu Gakko*.<sup>139</sup> Only a handful Korean painters had studied in European countries and most of their stays were also short and did not exceed three years. Ko Hui-tong was the first to go to Japan on a scholarship in 1909, returned in 1915, and later was followed by Kim Kwan-ho (1890-1959) in 1911.<sup>140</sup> Born into a progressive diplomatic family, Ko studied at the Han-seong, a French language school in Seoul where he was introduced to Western culture and art by his French teachers and artists such as Emile Martel (1874-1949) and Léopold Remion.<sup>141</sup> He studied in Korea under the country's last court painters, An Jung-sik (1861-1919) and Jo Seok-jin (1853-1920), and in Tokyo Western-style painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts under Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) and Fujishima Takeji (1867-

---

Korean instructors were ever permitted on the faculty and the ratio of Japanese to Korean students was approximately 3:1 by 1926.

<sup>137</sup> Amakusa returned in 1915, Shimizu in 1920.

<sup>138</sup> The numbers grew from 187 students in 1897 to 739 by 1909. From 1931 onward they had to compete with Japanese students on equal basis.

<sup>139</sup> Yoshida Chizuko, *Study on East Asian Art Students in Modern Period: Historical Records on International Students of Tokyo School of Fine Arts*, Tokyo, Yumani Shobou, 2009, pp.133–139

Youngna Kim: *Artistic Trends in Korean painting in* Marlene J. Mayo, J. Thomas Rimer, H. Eleanor Kerkham: *War, Occupation, and Creativity: Japan and East Asia, 1920-1960*, University of Hawaii Press, 2001, p.124

<sup>140</sup> These students came from families of means that had the financial resources to support artistic studies in Japan. During the years from 1924 to 1931, Korean and Taiwanese students were granted special exemptions that imposed fewer restrictions than Japanese students for gaining admittance to Tokyo School of Fine Arts.

<sup>141</sup> Emile Martel (1874-1949) arrived in Korea when the Korean government made a regulation on foreign schools in May 1895. Five months later, a French-language school opened in front of the French legation with the purpose of educating Korean diplomats.

Léopold Remion was invited by the Korean government for the purpose of instituting a craft school but as the plan never materialized, he returned to France. Youngna Kim: *Modern and Contemporary Art in Korea*, 2005, p.8

1943).<sup>142</sup> With his Impressionistic “Self-Portrait in Blue Hanbok” executed in 1914, Ko Hui-tong carefully mixed traditional garment with contemporary appearance and selectively constructed his indigenous cultural identity as an esteemed painter. The strict genre of portraiture dictated by Korean Confucian literati painting allowed only the royal and venerated to commemorate as subjects. His work was a modernity that did not signify an erasure but rather a re-appropriation of tradition.

In 1915, the term *tongyanghwa*, literally Eastern painting (often translated as Oriental painting), was used for the first time in the Korean press as a reference to ink painting, indicating a shift from the traditional term *sŏhwa*. In contrast the newly introduced oil paintings were referred to as *sōyanghwa*, literally 'Western painting'.<sup>143</sup>

In 1915 Ko Hui-tong (1886-1965) painted the first Korean Western-style oil painting, and in the same year, An Jung-sik (1861-1919), who was one of the most important Korean painter of the late 19th and early 20th century, experimented as one of the first Koreans with the method of occidental central perspective.<sup>144</sup> His sepia landscape painting from that year, emphasizes the application of the central perspective. On closer inspection it does not harmonize with the approximate viewer's point of view. Which means that even in 1915, five years after the annexation, Western techniques as perspective was still in a transitional stage.<sup>145</sup>

Kim Kwan-ho was likewise assisted by a fellowship from the Japanese colonial government and also defied the conventions of Korean self-portraiture. In his “Self Portrait” in 1916 he eliminated the very accoutrements which have traditionally identified the sitter as the elite literati artist. For his graduation project in 1916 he depicted two nude women washing their hair at a riverside. “Sunset” earned special selection at the official Japanese salon Bunten and received coverage in Korean newspapers. Since nudes were an unimaginable subject in traditional Korean painting, a photograph of the painting was not reproduced in the newspapers. Still the work generated much controversy within the highly Confucian society. For the first time Korean audience was able to form individual and personal perceptions about art, in contrast to former collective reverences for literati paintings.

Yi Chong-u (1899-1981), who went to France in 1925 to enrol in a studio, run by a Russian artist, exhibited at Salon d'automne in 1926. Na Hye-sok (1896-1948), the first Korean woman who majored in Western oil painting at Tokyo School of Fine Arts went to Europe in 1927 for three years to study in Paris.<sup>146</sup> Back in Korea she won a special prize at the 10th *Sŏnjŏn* Art Exhibition in 1931. As another early pioneer of Western-style painting, is to be named Chang Bal (1901- 2001), the first Korean to study art in the United States in 1921, and the younger brother of later South Korean prime minister Chang Myŏn.<sup>147</sup>

---

142 His graduation work, titled “Sisters,” was photographed and published in March 11, 1915 in the Korean newspaper Maeil under the heading “A Picture of the First Korean Painter of the Western Style” and honored with a longer special report.

Kim Chan-yeong (1893- 1960), the third student to graduate from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, was, in the end, more interested in collecting antiques than pursuing his own art. This pattern of renunciation shared by a number of artists—was likely resulted from a lack of understanding of artistic pursuits as a career, the difficulty of procuring materials, and the generally unfavourable social atmosphere under Japanese rule, which made wholehearted commitment to art difficult.

143 Charlotte Horlyck: Korean Art from the 19th Century to the Present, Reaktion Books, 2017

144 He was commissioned to paint a group portrait of cabinet members, royal advisers, a Japanese diplomat and ladies of the royal family at the banquet on the occasion of the signing of the Korean-Japanese Trade Agreement in 1883.

145 Since many of the early modern painters came from privileged backgrounds, some of them they did not take their own professions seriously. Like their precursors in the tradition of literati painting, they considered painting to be a hobby or a means for temporary escapism.

146 She was the first female artist to paint in Western style, but her assertion of a new sexual morality and her belief in gender equality make her a forerunner of the radical feminist.

147 Most of them were students of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Many of them showed their work at Bunten or the Taiten over the years, as Kim Gwan-ho, Na Hye-sok, Sim Hyeong-gu, Kil Jin-seop (1907-1975), Lee Bong-sa (1916-1970), Kim In-sung, Nam Kwan

Pai Un-Soung (1901–1978) who went to Japan in 1919, was the first who left for Europe in 1922 and stayed for eighteen years until 1940.<sup>148</sup> In Berlin he experienced the social and cultural milieu of both the Weimar Republic and the Nazi regime and earned several international awards. As one of a handful of Asian artists his works had been published in German publications as late as 1937. When he worked for the Japanese Embassy and the German-Japanese Society in Berlin, he may have been the only Korean ever to have a private audience with Hitler.<sup>149</sup> In 1930, Im Yong-ryeon (1901–?), who studied at Art School of Chicago and Yale University, and his wife Paik Nam-soon (1904–1994) returned from Paris.<sup>150</sup>

After their return to Korea, despite their newfound knowledge, many artists coming from wealthy families went about their daily lives without reference to their experience in Japan. Their memories in Tokyo likely became overshadowed by anti-colonial sentiments during Japanese occupation and buried under nationalist sentiment. Only some engaged in pivotal roles beyond teaching at schools to establish the structural basis for Korean Modern art by informing and mobilizing public consciousness. Back in Korea in 1915, Ko Hui-dong taught Western painting and established the term *misul* 'art' in Korea. With his former teachers An Chung-sik and Cho Sok-chin and ten other prominent painters and calligraphers he enlisted cooperation from master painters and calligraphers and launched the "Calligraphy and Painting Association" *Sohwa Hyophoe* in 1918. It was the first gathering of painters and calligraphers and the first modern art group in Korea. As literati paintings had exclusively been available for private viewing by the upper class, the exhibition opened made the latest oil paintings, by Korean artists returning from their studies accessible to the public. Alongside with works by indigenous ink painters the formation of a cohesive site for Eastern and Western-styles of art also provided a challenge to Korean ink painters who, while adhering to the traditional medium, engaged in the use of wider ranges of colour as well as single point perspective to create depth and realism in their works.

In the course of the new cultural policy inaugurated in 1919, from 1921 onwards the group introduced the annual art exhibition *Hyopchon* to promote modern artistic concepts.<sup>151</sup> At their first modern art exhibition for the general public, held at the hall of Choong Ang Secondary School, about 100 works were shown. As part of the enlightenment campaign, Ko also founded the Calligraphic Painters' Association News, Korea's first art magazine, committed to promoting unity among patriotic artists until the association was dissolved in 1939 due to Japan's oppression. The privately organized *Hyopchon* was discontinued after the 15th exhibition in 1936. Still, it contributed greatly to the revival of the Korean art scene and had a stimulating effect on the publication of exhibition and art criticism.<sup>152</sup>

---

(1911–1990), Lee In-sung (1912–1950) Park Yeoung-seon (1910–1994), Kim Jae-seon, and sculptors Yun Sung-uk (1915–), Yun Ho-jung (1917–1967), Kim Bok-jin, Cho Gyu-bong (1916–), and Kim Jeong-su (1920–).

148 Some other students overseas were Na Hyei-Suk (1896–1948), Lee Jong-Woo (1899–1981), Yim Phah (1901–?), Paik Nam-Soon (1904–1994), Pai Un-soung (1901–1978), Yi Jong-wu. Chang Lui

149 He married an aristocratic German woman and they emigrated to Paris in 1937. When Paris was occupied by German forces in 1940, Pai returned to Korea.

150 Im Yong-ryeon, who taught as an English and art teacher from 1931 until the end of the occupation, played an important role in the introduction of Expressionist painting.

151 The group also founded a art school in 1923 but it closed after only two years. That same year, Ko also published the first Korean art journal entitled the Bulletin of the Society of Painters and Calligraphers. Although short-lived, it served as a significant endeavor in the promotion and exchange of artistic discourse by Korean artists and an attempt to disseminate Western artistic concepts to the reading public.

152 As there was no proper education on art history at the time, the journalistic reflections on painting in both Western and Oriental styles, focused mostly not on the contentual or formal criticism of works of art, but on the enumeration of biographical facts about compatriots trained in Japan, Europe or the USA.

The Korean archaeologist and art historian Ko Yu-söp (1905–1944) was the first to suggest the year 1910 as the start of the 'modern'

Yanagi Soetsu organized at the end of 1921, at Bosung High School in Seoul, an exhibition of Photographic Reproductions of Western Art, which was well visited by Koreans.<sup>153</sup>

To get in control of the artistic landscape, *Chôsen Bijutsu Tenrankai* was organized and sponsored by the colonial Government-General immediately afterwards as a means to pacify Korean people by fostering artistic thinking.<sup>154</sup> With 23 annual exhibitions the series, also known as Senten *Sônjôn*, was held as the official art exhibition of Korea from 1922 until 1944.<sup>155</sup> Established as social enlightenment, the Senten *Sônjôn* took place between May and June in order to avoid overlapping with Japanese official salon periods in Spring and Autumn, after which it was modelled. In the beginning it comprised the areas, *tongyang-kwa* Eastern-style Painting (which was called nihonga in Japan but renamed in Korea and later also for official exhibitions in Taiwan), *shang-kwa* Western-style Painting, Calligraphy and the "Four Gentlemen", which is Chinese flower painting.<sup>156</sup> Other than the privately underfunded *Hyopchon*, the governmental backed *Sônjôn* or *Chosôn mijôn* how it was called later, enjoyed massive press coverage by several major newspapers as a huge public event, and produced a yearly illustrated catalogue. To showcase leading artists in the country to a larger public, the works were to be judged by a committee approved by the government and ranked by an award system based on an existing Japanese model. But even as most of the exhibitors and judges were Japanese and nationalistic minded artists and some of the members of the *Hyopchon*, boycotted the event at first, the event got more and more popular as an important gateway for many young Korean artists. Their fear that the *Sônjôn* would erase Korea's national identity could not withstand for a long time, as the exhibition held an authoritative power in controlling art in Korea at the state level.<sup>157</sup> Nevertheless, underscoring its public role as an art forum, the *Sônjôn* generated valuable discussions on art in the

---

and, in a sense, modernism in Korean art. He studied aesthetics and art history at Kyôngsyông Imperial University, as one of the few Koreans attempted to write about Korean art history. Well-informed about all the important Western theories of aesthetics and art and familiar with modern European research approaches he tried in his work to meet the objectives of the very systematic Vienna School of Art History. Through his introductory essays on European art history and its methods, Ko contributed significantly to the reception of the same in Korea.

Only a few Koreans obtained an education as art historians or researchers on prehistory in the 1930s. Dou Yu-ho (1905-1982?) earned a doctoral degree in archaeology from Vienna University in 1935. He researched at the Prehistory Institute of the University until 1939. In 1946 he chose to go to North Korea. Han Heung-su (1909-1953?) also studied at Vienna University. Han obtained a doctoral degree from the University of Fribourg in 1940, and worked for the Vienna Ethnological Museum in 1941. After staying in Prague from 1943 to 1947, he also went to North Korea. See Han Chang-gyun, "Dou Yu-ho and Han Hung-soo: Their Activities and Academic Debates between 1948 and 1950, Journal of the Korean Archaeological Society 87, 2013, p.8

One of the dedicated intellectuals who stayed in South Korea was Kim Chae-wôn (1909-1990), who became in autumn 1945 director of the Korean National Museum. He studied in Munich between 1934 and 1940 archeology and worked after his promotion in Gent as an assistant. Frank Hoffmann: Koreanische Malerei und Grafik "westlichen Stils" von den Anfängen bis zum Ende der japanischen Besatzungszeit, Eberhard-Karls-Universitaet Tuebingen, 1992, p.42

153 Soetsu Yanagi: On the Opening of the Exhibition of Photographic Reproductions of Masterpieces from the West," Donga Ilbo 4 December 1921 in Hyewon Lee: The Cult of Rodin: Words, Photographs, and Colonial History in The Spread of Auguste Rodin's Reputation in Northeast Asia, University of Missouri-Columbia, 2006

154 However, it is questionable that the colonial government feared the expansion of the *Hyopchon* or considered it as competitor. A large proportion of the visitors in the beginning were likely to be Japanese, given that the exhibition was more of a venue for Japanese artists residing in Korea, who constituted about two-thirds of the participants. The number of Japanese citizens residing in the colony had already reached several hundred thousand by the mid-1920s.

155 Also known as *Joseon Mijeon*

156 What had previously been called as *Seowha* ink painting and calligraphy was now renamed *Dongyang-hwa* Eastern-style Painting. Sculpture was included in the Western-style Painting section beginning in 1925 and in 1931 sculpture and crafts were merged into one section. In the end calligraphy was completely eliminated from the Exhibition, fully eclipsing this traditionally privileged genre. After the Calligraphy section was abolished in 1932 and replaced by the Craft and Sculpture section, "Seonjeon" consisted of three parts: Oriental Painting, Western Painting, and Sculpture and Craft. Beginning with 79 works selected for display at the first Senten, Western-style paintings soon outnumbered Oriental paintings and the proportion of Western-style painting in Korean was significantly higher than in national salons in Japan.

Byungwook Oh: Chosun Misul Jonramhoi Yungu, The Study of Korean Art Exhibition, Seoyang Misulsahakhoi Nonmunjib 5, 1993, p.9 in Hyewon Lee: The Cult of Rodin: Words, Photographs, and Colonial History in The Spread of Auguste Rodin's Reputation in Northeast Asia, University of Missouri-Columbia, 2006

157 The real purpose of Japanese Cultural Policy after 1919 remained the disruption and weakening of the influence of national independence movements by getting people to focus on culture rather than their hopes for independence that were raised by the March First Movement. Kim Hyeshin, "Images of Women in the National Art Exhibitions during the Korean Colonial Period," in *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, ed. Joshua S. Mostow et al., Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003, p.143.



media and opened up a public sphere for art critics and artists as an opportunity to expose the art of their own time and maybe express some moderate opposition to colonial rule. In the 1920s the *Sônjôn* became a big annual gathering for the general public and received about 25,000 visitors a month, with students as a huge part of these visitors, and the number of Japanese visitors surpassed that of Koreans.<sup>158</sup>

Despite the imperialistic justification of prime minister Hara Takashi (1856-1921), that the fine art exhibition was a means of assimilating Korean artists into the Japanese art community, it achieved its aim of distracting people from the current political situation.<sup>159</sup>

As it continued to grow it became less a tool to fulfil the lack of development of colonial Korean art, as it inspired Korean artists to perform as Japanese artists. The exhibitions' hierarchical promotion systems emphasized pro-Japanese propensity as an effective surveillance system to direct Japan's colonial policies and setting a type of exemplary taste that kept ideas controlled and unquestioned. The exhibition, which was popular celebrated as public event, was successful in promoting the Japanese civilizing mission with its positive aspects of the reformed policy. Therefore, critical works that deemed harmful to public affairs and morals were not permitted as the show focused on a wider audience, rather than the exclusive group of art lovers and collectors.

In this intention with the overwhelming influence of Japanese art, the *Sônjôn* not only served as the gateway for young local artists but also became a main platform for Japanese artists who promoted the influence of Japanese painting styles in Korean art.<sup>160</sup> Actually, with hardly any Korean jury members the number of Korean artists' entries fell far short of that of Japanese. In the first exhibition only three of 57 accepted participants in the Western-style painting section were of Korean origin, and in 1932, 87 Koreans out of 137 artists could convince the Japanese judges.<sup>161</sup> Many of them graduated from or lectured at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, such as Fujishima Takeji (1867-1943), Wada Eisaku (1874-1959), Minami Kunzo (1883-1950), Tanabe Itaru (1886-1968), Kobayashi Mango (1870-1947), and Ihara Usaburo (1894-1926). That the organizers probably deemed Korean artists unfit to serve as judges would be conceivable for the Western-style painting section but even in the section on Eastern-style painting, where Korean artists had a long tradition, Japanese judges Komuro Suiun (1874-1948) and Yūki Somei (1875-1957) would fill in. Such strategy served as a form of control aimed at taming Korean subjects through colonial aesthetics and ideology, along with journalism and other cultural activities. Although *Sônjôn* played a significant role to promote the artistic style of the Tokyo school and their interpretation of Western and Oriental art, Korean fine art became an imitation of 'Japanized' Western painting, and the exhibitions created an art market for Japanese residents.<sup>162</sup>

---

158 Ho-jin Jeong, "A Research on Joseon Art Exhibition: Focusing on the Oriental Section," PhD diss., Sungshin Women's University, 1999.

159 Lee Jung-hi: About the Establishment of Joseon Art Exhibition, Art History of Korean Modern Art, v3 1996, pp.104-120

160 Japanese artists were allowed to submit works if they have resided in Korea at least for six months prior to the show. In the first exhibition in the Western-style painting section fifty-five Japanese and only three Korean artists were accepted to display.

At the first *Sônjôn* exhibition only one male and a female painter of Korean descent participated in the department of painting of the Western style.

161 Even in Eastern style painting over the years only around half of the selected artist were Korean. Lee Jung-hi: An In-depth Study of Korean Modern Art History, Seoul; Yegyung, 2008, p. 94

162 Apart from the fact that a printing process such as that of the ukiyo-e in Korea was known but not commonplace, neither in the eighteenth nor in the nineteenth century an art market had developed. In contrast to the Japanese ukiyo-e prints, Korean paintings were of unique painterly work, with no reproductions for mass consumption. In contrast to Japan, Korea had not been able to form a comparably broad urban-mercantile layer of traders and art dealers. Even in 1930, under Japanese rule, four-fifths of the population still worked in agriculture, and only six percent of people lived in cities.

The economic boom of Korea fostered by Japanese entrepreneurs favoured Japanese artists and the same mechanism shaped Korean artistic tendencies. With only a small native private art market in place, Korean artists economical depended on the regulatory systems of the colonial government with the Joseon Dynasty Museum and the Governor-General in charge of art acquisition, publishing postcards, books and distributing prize money. The colonial taste favoured rather vulnerable female depictions and traditional rural scenes in contrast to images of a modern progressive Korea.<sup>163</sup> Their exotic taste was a reflection of imperialistic curiosity and desire to express a colonial backwardness. Under the patriarchal control and economic pressure, this resulted in a self-Orientalized nativism executed by Korean artists, consumed by a Japanese and Western audience.

### Eastern Lines and Western Colours

At the end of the twenties and early thirties a lot of these Korean artists who graduated in Japan and overseas flocked home, giving reports of the latest art trends in Europe and became teacher of their own. Ko Hui-dong taught for the “Goryeo Painting Group” *Goryeo Hwahoe*, 1919), Na Hye-seok, Baek Nam-sun (1904-1994), Jeong Gyu-ik taught at “Goryeo Art Institute” *Goryeo Misulhoe*, the “Moon and Earth All Research Group” *Towol misul yeon' guhoe*, and at the “Sakseong Painting Group” (1925) in Pyongyang, where Kim Gwan-ho and Kim Chan-yeong also taught. Yi Jong-wu, Na Hye-seok, and others opened their own studios and offered private lessons that apparently featured basic techniques like plaster-cast rendering and sketching. As far as this young fellows constituted an extremely selected group, aware of the coming of modern age due their travels abroad and encounters of new Western trends, after they returned home their work enjoyed only little attention.<sup>164</sup> Sure, Korean art was indeed no longer a neo-Confucianist means of cultivating the minds of the literati class, but bound up with colonial cultural policy, the reflection of modern art never challenged a critical discourse due a lack of broader understanding.<sup>165</sup>

To pander the taste of Japanese judges at the official art exhibitions, a far greater number of artists depicted scenes of folk life, sentimental ‘homeland’ themes with children and woman in traditional dress as bearer of cultural heritage and “Female Figure Paintings.” The use of Korean motifs in Western-style painting raised the discussion about the expression of national identity and the proper relationship between “immigrated Western art” and traditional Korean art. As far as Korean modernism goes, the produced artworks in the formative years imitated mainly so-called Japanized Western art. Finding an own way of Korean identity, group activities of all kinds prospered since the late 1920s and artists organized exhibitions in Seoul, Pyongyang and other cities to break away from tradition and the

---

163 For example, Landscapist Yi Sang-bom (1897-1972) was a member of the *Sôhwa Hyôphoe*, showing his work for the first time at its exhibition of 1921. The next year he entered the Eastern-style section of the *Sojon*, where he won the top prize every year from 1924 until 1934. Except those in the field of calligraphy, all other judges were invited from Japan.

164 Most of them belonged to the upper classes of the last Korean dynasty and therefore remained relatively untroubled by Japanese authorities, unless they participated in the independence movement.

Charles Baudelaire: *Art in Paris 1845-62, Salons and Other Exhibitions*, London Phaidon Press 1965, pp.118-119

When Kim Kwan-ho was awarded at the graduate exhibition of the Tokyo Academy of Art in 1916 and again at the Ministry of Education sponsored Buntan, his portraiture of a naked woman called *Sunset*, influenced by his teacher Kuroda Seiki, was not reproduced by any Korean newspaper due to its conservative constrictions.

165 As the majority in the resistance movement for independence were traditional Confucian intellectuals and pro-Western intellectuals considered modernization as a historical necessity, young artists were trapped in a systematic distortion of Korean culture conducted by the Japanese colonial government.

limitations of Western culture. *Nok Hyang Hoe* "Group for a Green Country" was one of the most influential Western-style painters associations, organized in 1928 by Kim Chu-gyông (1902-1981) and Sim Yong-seop (?). Students in Tokyo formed the *Pak U Hoe* "White Bull Group", later renamed Tongkyong Misul Hyophoe Association of Artists in Tokyo, the Group for the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and in 1925 the "Korean Fine Arts Society." In their understanding, as Yun Hi-sun (1902-1947) proposed, living in harmony with nature was considered as unique Asian style and a reaction against promoting Western industrialisation.<sup>166</sup>

Japanese jurors, according to the imperial policy enforced this reflection of naïve regional characteristics to emphasize the difference between itself and the colonies. With metropolitan Japan in the centre, Taiwan, Korea, and later Manchuria were considered as pre-modern provinces to be depicted in indigenous colours, exotic motifs, and picturesque scenes to proof cultural dominance.<sup>167</sup>

Opportunistic or convinced, many as the painter Kim Yong-jun (1904-1970) suggested that the aim of Korean art should be neither political nor imitate Western subject of matter and style and agreed on the portrayal of Korean climate, nature and rural life as the essence of "local colour" as the characteristics of indigenous art.<sup>168</sup> Like Pak Su-gun (1914-1965), Lee In-song (1912-1950) was a prominent artist, winning special recognition and awards even at the Teiten and Bunten in Tokyo. As far as he tried to overcome colonialism, he helped to define the Korean identity as one of the most successful artists at the time. In his ambition to find his unique "local colours" with Korean figure types and traditional dress he ambiguously was swayed by the political current to win approval from the Japanese.<sup>169</sup> His erotic portraits of Korean woman, not idealized in Western proportions, set in an primitive, romanticized land, revealed Japanese fantasies of a land of promiscuity. Interpreted as an expression of nationalism he strengthened the pre-modern, orientalized, feminized view of Korea. During colonial period native woman in ethnical dress became a prominent metaphor for Korean visitors and abroad. The Japanese government had strategically used the image of *kisaeng* throughout most of their colonial period.<sup>170</sup> The idealisation of Korean national identity through regional characteristics diverted colonial reality completely from modern Korean life and instead engendered Japan's cultural imperialism through art.

Fujishima Takeji (1891-1961) came as one of the first in 1913 to Korea and set early a trend by painting Korean woman in Chinese dress in an exotic pre-modern setting. With the Japanese military expansion other Japanese artist also began painting desirable Chinese subject matter, such as Kobayashi Mango (1870-1947) and Umehara Ryûzaburô (1888-1986). *Kisaeng*, Korean female entertainers much like geishas in Japan, became Tourist commodities representing Korea pictured on

---

166 Painter critic Sim Yeong-seop (active: 1920s-30s) first discussion of pan-Asianism appeared in 1929 in an article in the Dong-A Ilbo newspaper, titled "Discussion of Asianist Fine Arts" ("Asia juui misulron"). Sim advocated two ideas: first, the cultural superiority of Asian philosophy; and second, Asian art as the origin of European Modernism, with Henri Rousseau (1844-1911) and Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) in mind.

167 Also Japanese artists started to question Western-style oil painting at the time and considered to create their own version of modern Western art. Artist of the Independent Art Association, Kojima Zenzaburo (1893-1962), Suda Konarito (1891-1961) combined traditional colours and simplified forms.

168 Art criticism of the time, was mostly written by artists themselves. Oh Kwang-su (1938-) argues that the promotions of 'local colors' was a Japanese colonial cultural policy intended to fix Korean artistic interest to represent decadent localism and the past, thus divorcing it from reality.

169 The Oriental Section of the state sponsored *Sôjôn* in particular was gendered, in terms of the major themes of selected works and participant juries and artists. With about eighty percent of the entries being Female Figure Paintings, those were highly likely to have been produced to cater to the male dominated art market and juries.

Hyun-hwa Pak: "The Images of Woman in Korean Modern Painting: A Study Specialized on Works of Chosen Art Exhibition (1922-1940)", master's thesis, Mokpo University, 2002, p.25

170 The design of a postcard envelope published between the 1920s and 30s is an example. On the outside of the envelope, the Japanese Governor General Building and two *kisaeng* are illustrated.

postcards providing imaginary fantasies. After Japan's annexation of Korea, Japanese male painters including Kazuo Tōda (1891-1955), Ishida Hakudei (1882-1958), Ono Chikkyou (1889-1979), Tsujida Bakusen (1887-1936), Ihara Usaburō (1894-1976), Tōgō Seiji (1897-1978), Yasui Sotaro (1888-1955), Kojima Torajirō (1881-1929), Tanabe Itaru (1886-1968), Gyokuyo Kurihara (1883-1922), Gyoshū Hayami (1894-1935), Nakazawa Hiromitsu (1874-1964), Takeshiro Kanokogi (1874-1941) were attracted by the *kisaeng*'s exotic appearance. Japanese artists were eager to describe the abilities of these women of the colony after they visited the peninsula.<sup>171</sup> For them, Korea was a place that stimulated "sexual expectations," "tireless sensuality," and "insatiable lust" which was different to their own country.<sup>172</sup> Beside the exotic element of costume and appearance they witnessed, this patriarchal view of the female body itself was a key element in modern Western-style paintings.<sup>173</sup> In a time of transforming the role of woman in society, the painting of female bodies, revealed social discourses about traditional norms.<sup>174</sup> Art reflected the masculinity that governed these social discourses, exposing ideals held by both Japanese colonizers and Korean male elites.<sup>175</sup> This colonial-modern invention gave colonized Korean men an oppressive power over women in their own society, who at the bottom of this imperial hierarchy, were defined as "wise mother, good wife" *hyeonmo yangcheo* or utilized as object of desire like *kisaeng*.<sup>176</sup>

Therefore the social otherness of the *kisaeng* became as a pivotal element of art, a cultural emblem to mark national identity. Feeding the narrative of the colonizer and the colonized, their local beauty represented collective ideals, as well as immaturity and backwardness in modern society at the same time.<sup>177</sup> Described in Japanese travel books, advertisements, postcards, magazine illustrations, and painting, both exotic women in *hanbok* and the popular "child and woman" theme representing the innocence and local colour of Korea.<sup>178</sup> Art works feminised the colony from the standpoint of a superior ruler as an erotic invitation to the newly opened country, an emblem of territory to be conquered. Socially marginalized and desired as a successor of Korean tradition and a pioneer of

171 See Shin Min-jong: *Kisaeng in Painting: Representation of Korean Beauty by Japanese Artists in the Colonial Korea*, International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies (IJIMS), 2017, Vol 4, No.3, 1-13

Ono visited Korea in 1932, there he painted the scenery of Mt. Geumgang and submitted it for the thirteenth Imperial Art Exhibition Teiten. Kazuo Tōda moved to Korea in 1921 and taught drawing at Won-san Middle School and Yong-san Middle School.

Tanabe served as a member of the jury for the 16th Korea Fine Art Exhibition. Hayami firstly visited Korea in 1933 to serve on the jury of the Korea Fine Art Exhibition. Tsuchida Bakusen traveled to Korea in 1933, his work "Korean Bench" is one of the remarkable paintings that describe *kisaeng*. Gyokuyo Kurihara (1883-1922) was a female painter who painted *kisaeng* when she traveled Korea. Her *Happiness of Body, Happiness of Heart*, which used *kisaeng* as its motif, was accepted for the 11th Bunten Exhibition in 1917.

172 Some writers prefer *kisaeng*, as they describe them humane and sophisticated and not voluptuous or persnickety like Japanese geisha. Shin Min-jong: *Kisaeng in Painting: Representation of Korean Beauty by Japanese Artists in the Colonial Korea*, International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies (IJIMS), 2017, Vol 4, No.3, 1-13, p.3

173 In Korea an absence of recognition for artistic activities actually came along a strict social norm that prohibited women from becoming professional models. A strict custom called "Naewaebub," derived from Confucianism, prohibited men and women from free contact, and existed in Korea since the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1897).

174 The number of women figure paintings far outnumbered those of men, and became a popular subject. Beside depicting women as erotic objects many visual artists and writers also discovered a new era of beauty in the New Woman. Rather than connecting the image of the New Woman with urban modernity, depicted in a romantic setting, knowledge and education became additional tools in establishing that identity.

175 The Korean term for beauty *miin*, derived from Japanese *bijin*.

176 Artists who had difficulties when looking for models turned to *kisaeng* as they faced relatively less pressure regarding modelling in front of male painters.

177 Troupes of male Japanese tourists, created an image of Korea's comparative backwardness through their focus on antiquities from newly excavated sites and the more modern charms of the professional female entertainers, *kisaeng*, with whom they engaged.

Seung-Min Han, "Colonial Subject as Other: An Analysis of Late Meiji Travelogues of Korea," in *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*, ed. Helen Hardacre et al., Leiden: Brill, 1997, p.670.

178 Korean women were not exposed until the foreign intervention period in the 1890s. In Barton Holmes's book of voyeuristic observations, *Travelogues*, Korean women were described as mysterious and exotic beings because of the way their layered *hanbok* covered over their bodies.

Barton Holmes, *Travelogues*, Vol. 10, Seoul, Capital of Korea, Japan, the Country, Japan, the Cities (Brenigsville, Pa.: Nabu Press, 2012), 23-27.

modern trends at the same time, *kisaeng* became markers of the narratives of the nation as a symbol of “uncivilized utopia.”<sup>179</sup>

More progressive, leftist artists criticised the limitation of regionalism as an expression of nationalism and a bourgeois form with no relation to political and social reality. Along with Kim Bok-jin's extensive theoretical explorations from the standpoint of proletarian ideology, Im Hwa (1908-1953), An Seok-yu (1901-1951) Yun Hi-sun (1902-1947), and Park Mun-weon (1920- 1974), abolished traditional art as an alternative to the Japanese-style migration of Western art.<sup>180</sup> For them, modern art, as a new visual construct, provided the space to discover and define their self-identity within the framework of colonialism. They valued local colour art works only as export good for foreigners. Yet none of their works really embodied the Marxist ideology, representing socially critical content. Successful attempts to forge a new concept of visual art that could overcome both Western-Japanese art and traditional forms kept missing.<sup>181</sup> Other than painting, modern Korean poetry was able to use socialist realism to increase class consciousness and to demonstrate the plight of the working classes. In the late 1910s “The Taeseo” literary newspaper introduced French symbolist poetry, and during this first phase of Korean modernism, in the mid-1920s, European Dadaism and Surrealism coexisted with proletarian literature. This was made possible through the perspective of Seoul's urban culture and the establishment of the Korean Artists Proletarian Federation (KAPF) in 1925, an organization that often worked in collaboration with the Japan Proletarian Literary Front, founded the same year.<sup>182</sup> This was obviously problematic to the Japanese occupiers, who regularly harassed KAPF. After in 1931 Japanese military dominance intensified, the proletarian literature movement was disbanded by Japanese authorities in 1935, and direct political commentary became all but impossible.

Contrary to Japan, the social function of painting and graphics at that time could not establish as an expression of modern life and instead Western art was identified as an experiment and import article until the end of the occupation.

Before new and various kind of artistic expressions could blossom, Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, and Korea became even more important as a strategical base. Korean artists who took a critical stance against Japan's aggression or were looking for a more avant-garde style approach had to join the art scene in Tokyo which unfolded against the rising militarism for a couple of years. In the metropolis of Tokyo young artists who did not enrol in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts avoided also the large official venues. Instead, they joined some private art institutions as a new art scene, influenced by European tendencies including Fauvism, Constructivism and Surrealism, emerged around Ginza gallery district in Tokyo.<sup>183</sup> Going beyond the prevailing Impressionism, these young and often unknown

---

179 Hye-shin Kim: Study on Korean Modern Art: Cultural Dominance and Representation of Culture in the „Korea Fine Art Exhibition“ during the colonial period. Tokyo: Brücke; 2005, p.138

180 Kim Bok-jin (1901-1940), one of the main critics and founding member of KAPF (In Esperanto, Korea Artista Proleta Federatio), the first leftist organization for writers and artists in Korea in 1925, was imprisoned for over five years during Japanese rule, due to of his activities related to KAPF. His famous wooden sculpture *Baekhwa* (1938) won a prize in the 1938 *Bunten*.

181 O Sech'ang (1864–1953) sought to preserve the disappearing lineage of Korean artists in his biographical dictionary “History of Korean painting and calligraphy” in 1917. The compilation was in 1928 republished by the Kyemyōng kurakpu Enlightenment Club and widely distributed by Ch'oe Namsōn (1890–1957) under the new title *Kūnyōk sōhwa ching*. It contained biographical records of Korean painters and calligraphers, and became the foundation for all future Korean art historical scholarship.

182 Kimberly Chung, Proletarian Sensibilities: The Body Politics of New Tendency Literature (1924-27), *The Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (spring 2014), pp. 37-57

183 Some of the most representative private art schools in Japan were Kawabata School (1909-1945), Deikoku Art School (1929- ), Taiheiyō Art School (1890's- ), Bunka Academy (1921-1943), and Nihon Joshi Art School (1909- ).

artists performed in rather small group exhibitions which were received very well by the local Japanese art press. As well Korean artists, living in Japan and influenced by European modernism in the Tokyo art world of the 1930s, turned away from official venues to become active in this avant-garde group exhibitions. This small-scale art events were spearheaded by the abstractionist “Association of Free Artists” *Jiyū Bijutsuka Kyōkai* and the Surrealist “Association of Artistic Culture” *Bijutsu Bunka Kyōkai*, which appeared less rigid and much more accessible to them. Maybe not as progressive as the avant-gardists in the early 1920s, these groups still did not mesh well with the militarist spirit of the time and were subjected to harsh repressions. Despite that the police soon identified Surrealists as Communists and intellectual leaders Fukuzawa Ichirō and Takiguchi Shuzo were arrested, the “Association of Free Artists” organized eight exhibitions until 1941 and the Surrealist Association continued to install exhibitions until 1944.<sup>184</sup>

Korean artists in Tokyo who liked to experiment with Postimpressionism, Fauvism, Futurism, Surrealism, could participate through an open call and some even became fellows of the groups.<sup>185</sup> Kim Whanki (1913-1974) joined the “Association of Free Artists” quite early since its beginning in 1937 and Mun Hak-su (1916-1988), Lee Joong-seop (1916-1956), Yo Yong-guk (1916-2002) followed soon. Kim Whanki was selected to head the groups branch in Seoul as he left for Korea in the same year, and in 1940, the “Association of Free Artists” held an exhibition in Seoul at the Bumin Hall. Joined by most of the Korean members, between October 12 and 16, sixty works were shown, including twelve of Japanese artists. Articles appeared, explaining what abstract art was and the major newspapers did not cover the event. As far as the exhibition created some attention, most Koreans may have been not ready to handle such paintings proper. Not surprisingly the exhibition triggered no modern art movement in Korea which would take firm hold. The Korean artists also exhibited at the *NBG Yōgaten* “Neo Beaux-arts Group Western Painting Exhibition”, *Bijutsu Bunka Kyōkai* “Association of Artistic Culture”, and *Hakuban Kai* “White Savages Group” in Japan.<sup>186</sup>

Most of this avant-garde Korean artist studied at *Bunka Gakuin*, which opened in 1921 as the first co-educational school in Japan. Artist such as Ishii Hakutei (1882-1958), Kinoshita Yoshinori (1898-1996), and Akagi Yasunobu (1899-1955) lectured at its faculty of Western-style painting. Important members of the “Association of Free Artists” Tsuda Seishū (1907-1952) and Murai Masanari (1905-1999) who also lectured at *Bunka Gakuin*, had a close friendship to many of their Korean students and opened some doors into the artist circles.<sup>187</sup>

Surrealism was almost completely rejected on the peninsula, and despite its significant following by Japanese artists around Fukuzawa Ichirō and the “Association of Artistic Culture”, only three Koreans

---

184 Due repressions their avant-garde approach got less contradictory over time. The Association of Free Artists was founded in 1937 by the artists Hasegawa Saburo (1906-1957), Otsuda Masatoyo, Tsuda Seishū (1907-1952), Murai Masanari (1905-1999), Yamaguchi Kaoru (1907-1968), and Yabashi Rokuro (1905-1988). Other artists such as Nambata Tatsuoki (1905-1997) and Onosato Toshinobu (1912-1986), who worked with the Forum and Kuroiro Yōga-ten (Black Western Painting Exhibition) group were also associated with the group.

185 Because of the seniority selection process they could not become members of the larger and official groups, such as the Teiten.

186 Whanki, living in Korea, still participated until the fifth exhibition in Tokyo, in 1941. At the *Nikaten*, the biggest opposer of the official Buntens at the time, where styles like Fauvism, Cubism and Post-Impressionism were promoted, Ku Bong-Ung (1906-1953), Kim Whanki (1913-1974), Yi Kwa-dea (1913-1970), Kim Jong-chan, Park Sang-ok (1915-1968), Ku Pon-ung (1906-1953) and others participated.

The NBG advocated abstract painting and organized seven exhibitions between 1937 and 1939 at Kinokuniya Gallery in Ginza.

187 This may be the reason why so many Korean artists joined the Association. Tsuda Seishū taught Lee Joong-seop, Mun Hak-su, An Gi-pung and others.

are to be known to have participated in dedicated exhibitions in Tokyo.<sup>188</sup> Kaneko Hideo (1915-), Kim Ha-geon (), and Kim Young Joo (1920-2005) are listed in the catalogues of the “Association of Artistic Culture” from 1940 to 1944.<sup>189</sup>

The “White Savages Group” *Hakuban Kai*, established in 1936, one year earlier than the two other groups, was formed up from the “Western Painting Research Institute” *Avangyarudo yōga kenkyūshō*. The school around Tôgô Seiji (1879-1978), Abe Kongô (1900-1968), Koga Harue (1895-1933), and Fujita Tsuguji (1886-1968) was host to many Korean students including Kim Whanki and Kim Byungki.<sup>190</sup> Together with Kil Jin-seop, and Japanese artists Tsurumi Takenaga, Kanno Yuiko, Funakoshi Mieko they held exhibitions from 1936 on, in a Ginza gallery and joined forces with other groups. Mostly active with the “Association of Free Artists”, the “Association of Artistic Culture” and the “White Savages Group”, the first generation Korean abstract artists co-existed back home at the peninsula only as a kind of neglected opposition. As far as Korean artist were engaged in modern avant-garde while in Tokyo, they would not confront Korean society at large with their new international ideas about modern life. Modern art in Korea was run at the best by formal academicism based on nineteenth century France, as they were thought in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Once graduated, they made up the jury of the official exhibitions and assumed teaching positions at local schools. Sponsored by Japanese cultural policy the award winning works reflected this strategy and teacher and judges fostered the likes of them.

## Mobilization due Art

In 1935 the Simjeon Cultivation Movement was launched to cultivate subjects loyal to the interests of the Japanese empire. The museums played a crucial role in communicating the intentions of the public campaign on mobilisation for the war.<sup>191</sup> With lectures and talks, special exhibitions, film screenings, and discounted admission fee, museums had to make it their responsibility to play a part in overcoming national hardship and facilitating a national reconciliation and unity. Events like The Museum Week , inaugurated across the empire from November 1933 and the Penchant Day for Historical Remains established on 10th September, 1935, proved the Government-General's intention to politically utilise the museum and cultural objects.<sup>192</sup> The organized events promoted a sense of unity as subjects of the empire to appease the Korean people to the notion that Japan and Korea were one ethnic nation. Themes such as women’s associations, seasonal customs, large families, rearing children, weddings, and other types of ceremonial gatherings were increasing created to encourage

---

188 Fukuzawa said Surrealism is natural to the Japanese because there are similarities between it and haiku and koan. Cubism and Surrealism were only introduced via art magazines without leaving any trace.

C.B. Liddell: When followers outdo the master, the japantimes, December 10, 2010, critic regarding: “Ichiro Fukuzawa and his Disciples” at the Itabashi Art Museum

189 Kaneko Hideo married to a Japanese woman studied under Fukuzawa Ichirô, and Kim Young Joo was a student at the Pacific School of Fine Arts. Only a few works of Kim Ha-geon, student at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, are photographically recorded as none remains. Unfortunately. Almost all of the works submitted by Korean artists to the “Association of Free Artists” are lost and remain only printed in magazines and catalogues.

190 The school was founded in 1933 and attracted around thirty students including Hirohata Ken, and sculptor Saito Yoshishige (1904-2001).

191 In this context all the affairs relating to cultural objects and remains were transferred to the Social Affairs Division in 1932 and to the Social Education Division again in 1936.

192 The Preservation of Treasures, Historical Remains, Famous Places and Natural Monuments of Chosen Act was also established in August 1933

loyalty to the nation, confidence in the war, and assurance of social stability. With subsuming Korean culture in Japan's historical past, fine art became a trope for justifying imperialism and was utilized as propaganda to support the imperial soldiers on the battlefield.

To stir up their pride in the Asian culture represented by Japan, a permanent exhibitions of Japanese modern fine arts was launched in 1933 under the name of the Yi Royal household at Seokjo-jeon in Deoksu-gung Palace as a symbol of the notion that Japan and Korea were one ethnic nation. The colonial authorities enforced the display of a modernized future by the regular presentation of works of well-known Japanese modernist painters and sculptors and demonstrated in a dehistoricized, very selective way, modernism, progress and enlightenment to the public. In January 1936 the Department of Ideology *Shisōka* was established in the Education Bureau of the Governor General of Korea and in December the Chosōn Thought Crime Law enforced political surveillance of Korean society. Furthermore, the colonial government pursued a policy to force the Koreans to speak Japanese and to consider themselves Japanese subjects. In 1937 the Japanese Governor General ordered that all instruction in Korean schools be in Japanese and that students not be allowed to speak Korean either inside or outside of school.

After 1937, when Japan launched the Second SinoJapanese War (1937-45) against China, the Japanese government passed the General Mobilization Act in 1938, which was felt in all segments of society, and the Korean community was no exception.<sup>193</sup> As wartime mobilization had reintroduced harsh measures to Japanese colonial rule, the *Hyopchon* could not take place anymore, and the state funded exhibition *Sōnjōn* or *Senten* largely served the presentation of war propaganda art.

The critical magazines of the 1920s had all been banned in the meantime or became depoliticized, well-financed mass papers. Korean language instruction was abolished in all primary and secondary schools by 1938, and the use of Japanese became mandatory. After the so-called cultural policy had been completely abandoned due to the total policy of assimilation and war preparations, all state activities in the field of culture were severely curtailed as early as around 1939-40, when another decree "encouraged" Koreans to adopt Japanese names *sōshi kamei*.<sup>194</sup>

A further display of the harmony between Korean and Japanese art was demonstrated in 1938, when the Yi Household Museum opened a permanent exhibition of ancient Korean art at a newly built Western style building right next to Seokjo-jeon. When an all-out national mobilisation movement *Kokumin seishin sōdōin chōsen renmei* commenced from July 1938 throughout Korea, the General Governor Museum utilised the cultural heritage of Korea for their political ambitions with a special exhibition titled *Relations between Korea and Japan in the Ancient Period*. The museums were used to secure colonial authority as discoverers and protectors of Korean culture, and the teaching of Korean history at public primary school was abolished. Teaching only a Japanese national history to Korean pupils propagated the harmonious coexistence as part of the empire of Japan.<sup>195</sup> Hardly any of the

---

193 The policy gave the military nearly unlimited power to pursue the war effort in China, including the mobilization of Korean labour for Japanese industry and general conscription in Japan and its colonies. The government began to enlist Korean youths in the Japanese army as volunteers in 1938, and as conscripts in 1943. Worship at Shinto shrines became mandatory, and every attempt at preserving Korean identity was discouraged.

194 By 1940 it was reported that 84 percent of all Korean families had done so. People often kept the same *kanji*, simply giving them a Japanese pronunciation. Religious and educational policies went along. Practitioners of all native religion and Christianity were required to worship at Shinto shrines, which were built throughout the country to be visited on a regularly basis by Korean citizens.

195 From 1919 on Japanese authorities increased the number of schools for Koreans, and mainly for Japanese living in the colony. In 1929 18% of Koreans and 99,5% of Japanese children used this opportunity. The purpose of the elementary school for Koreans was not to provide some preparatory stage for higher education, but rather to train them to be obedient subjects to the wishes of the Japanese empire. Japanese had no plan for higher education for Korean children.



leading intellectuals and former fighters for the modernization and independence of Korea, offended the Japanese policy. Well-known journalists and artists participated together with the country's press in the Japanese war propaganda for the military government.<sup>196</sup>

The patriotic hysteria suppressed any free artistic expression and all cultural activities became inherited by the empire. Like most intellectuals and mass media, Korean artists with a few exceptions seemed to transform from “nationalist and anti-colonial leaders” to pro-Japanese collaborators. In 1938 the working environment for artists changed when the Education Bureau *Gakumu kyoku* got in charge of organizing all exhibitions such as the Chosŏn National Art Exhibition *Senten*, which was formally the duty of the Society and Education Bureau *Shakai kyōiku ka*.

The 1940 Chosŏn Great Exposition promised an equality and fraternity between the Koreans and the Japanese within the larger concept of multi-ethnicity, replete with the ideology of a “New Order” in East Asia. On a second glance, the exhibition marked Japan’s desperate efforts to promote Korean Special Volunteer Soldier System, implemented only two years before, to call up Korean youth for service in the war. By doing so, the presentation was mediated from one specific point, a constructed view from the past to the future, filtered through the vision of the Japanese empire, and stressing the Japanese militaristic domination as a totalitarian and fascist machine.

Sponsored mainly by the Keijō Daily Newspaper, the event was situated within a series of projects meant to celebrate the 2600th anniversary of the Japanese empire, where imperial subjects were emotionalized within a new spatial and temporal context as one of members of the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>197</sup> Other than the two former main events, the 1915 Industrial Exposition and the 1929 Korean Exposition which took place in order to show the results of the colonization efforts by Japan, the event in 1940 was aimed to mediate the Korean people with the concepts of fraternity with the Japanese, going beyond any racial or national discrimination.<sup>198</sup> Located outside the city centre at a new transportation hub the exposition represented a new phase of Korea as a local nation, part of the larger multi-cultural empire.<sup>199</sup>

---

See Hung Kyu Bang: Japan's colonial educational policy in Korea, 1905-1930, University of Arizona, 1972

Ayako Shinomiya Burton: Japanese Language Planning in Korea 1905-1945, Simon Fraser University, 1994

196 In the long run this resulted in a kind of frustration and left behind deep resentment and a victim mentality among Koreans. Instead being under the strong influence of Chinese culture for centuries, many Koreans considered themselves as merely successors of the Chinese Ming civilisation which had been in their opinion preserved only in Korea thus far.

197 The exposition highlighted a variety of industrial and manufacturing achievements according to each Korean province, rather than concentrating on the country's romantic and simplistic otherness as in previous exhibitions.

The Japanese Prime Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke announced the idea of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in August 1940. On 27 September 1940, Japan signed the tripartite pact allying itself with Italy and Germany. In early November, just five weeks after the alliance was formalized, Columbia Records released its “Tripartite Alliance Song.”

Another example of cooperation between the state and civil society were the department stores, organizing patriotic events. The first exhibition celebrating the 2,600th anniversary opened at Takashimaya in Tokyo on 12 April 1939, drawing more than forty thousand visitors that first day. The “Promoting the Spirit of the Founding of the Nation: An Exhibition in Celebration of the 2600th Anniversary” was co-sponsored by the “Association to Celebrate the 2600th Anniversary”, a semi-governmental institution. Events like this produced no direct revenue, but brought potential consumers into the store.

Todd A. Henry: Celebrating Empire, Fighting War: The 1940 Exposition in Late Colonial Korea, *Asian Studies*, Vol. 134, Dec. 2008

Kenneth J. Ruoff: Imperial Japan at Its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire's 2,600th Anniversary, Cornell University Press 2014

198 Unlike previous assimilation policies, the new specific practices forcefully imposed on the Korean people such as: the same language, education and name used by the Japanese, and even the right of being soldiers for Japan. All in an attempt to transform the Koreans into Japanese citizens of the empire.

See Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation, University of California Press, 2001, chapter 3

199 Since the 1920s and 1930s multiple Japanese intellectuals tried to define a philosophical foundation for a multi-ethnic nation-state as an East Asian Cooperative Body, beyond a concept of Western type relations. Like Tanabe Hajime (1885-1962) “Logic of the Species” Shu no Ronri, or Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai “Shōwa Research Association.” The New Order in East

Reflecting the Greek Olympic ritual, in an opening ceremony a sacred flame, carried all the way from the Ise Shrine, was enlightened at the Chōsen shrine. To convict visitors of the constructed narrative of been sublated into a larger imperial history, the artistic technique of Western-style panorama painting was decisive. Two pavilions in particular, the Commemoration Pavilion of Colonial Administration and the Pavilion of Imperial History, were featured as the two most important historical sites that were replete with panoramic images. Entering the Imperial History Pavilion, visitors were surrounded by forty-eight panoramic scenes, selected to illustrate 2600 years of Japan's imperial ancestry and common roots between Korea and Japan. Furthermore, the photographic information in the form of panoramas were intended to give an overview of all aspects of Korea from its past thirty years under the Japanese empire to be understood at a glance. The panorama techniques at this event in particular featured alongside Japanese controlled media, Korean culture not as exotic other anymore, but as a provincial and local member incorporated temporally and spatially within all the Asian nations of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>200</sup>

The architectural methods of persuasion originated from the experience over fifteen years ago in Ueno park, where the the first public panorama paintings were exhibited. After entering the gate, the visitors would face an octagonal 18-metre high tower *Hakkō Ichiu*, a symbol of the holy war and a religious icon, justifying Japan's leadership.<sup>201</sup> But more than this it also presented a panoramic view to the general public, intended to make people feel as if they were the inheritors of this self-claimed history beneath.<sup>202</sup> The whole layout of the exposition mediated the Korean audience in a temporal sense to include the saturated conception of the *Naisen Ittai* ideology, the oneness of Korea and Japan in the same imperial narrative, and to mobilize the colonial urban bourgeois audience in the underlying principles of a holy war.

The Commemoration Pavilion of the Colonial Administration, hosted thirty-seven more panoramic images to show Korean colonial chronology, featuring such moments as the establishment of the modern education system, the Chōsen Shrine *Chōsen jingū* along with the phrase *Naisen Ittai*, the construction of the *Sorok* Rehabilitation Institution and the moment of the Forced Name Change Policy *Ch'angssi-Gae yŏng*.<sup>203</sup> Furthermore, a series of portraits of the Japanese authorities, from Itō Hirobumi to Minami Jirō, were on display, building a panoramic view of the colonial administration. In an utopian configuration, three-dimensional dioramas with wax figures and panoramic images

---

Asia, a new wartime policy proclaimed by Prime Minister Kono Fumimaro in 1938, mainly formulated by the research group, was intended to replace old systems by Western nations, and was desired to be "a covenant of racial accord for East Asians as a useful device to solve Japan's problem of surplus population without having to resort to emigration." Thomas W. Burkman: Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914-1938, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, p.206

See Naoki Sakai, "Subject and Substratum: On Japanese Imperial Nationalism," Cultural Studies Vol. 14 (3/4, 2000). Susan C. Townsend: Miki Kiyoshi, 1897-1945: Japan's Itinerant Philosopher, BRILL, 2009

200 In 1932, Korean born Park Chun-kum was elected to the House of Representatives and in 1938 one had been appointed by the emperor to the House of Peers. In 1942, 38 colonial people were elected to local assemblies of the Japanese homeland.

201 Like the five-story *Chureito* Pagoda, the architecture of the octagonal tower contributed to wartime mobilization and occurred across the entire empire.

See, Akiko Takenaka, "Architecture for Mass-Mobilization: The *Chūreitō* Memorial Construction Movement, 1939-1945," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman, Duke University Press, 2009, p.238

202 *Hakkō Ichiu*, Japanese World War II slogan alluding to the Emperor Jimmu (711BC, his accession is traditionally dated as 660BC) the first emperor of Japan. In an 8th century literary collection, *Nihon Shoki* "The Chronicles of Japan," his words are recalled that the "eight corners of the world be united under one roof" creating a brotherhood of races.

203 The Chōsen Shrine, which symbolized the extension of imperial rule over Korea, was located in Namsan Park, completed in 1925 and demolished on August 15, 1945 by the Japanese government itself. The message of the diorama was that by following *Naisen Ittai* practices, such as visits to the shrine, Koreans would now – in a temporal realm – being incorporated into the history of the Japanese empire. *Naisen Ittai*, meaning "one body of Japan and Korea," was a policy promulgated by Minami Jiro, who became governor-general of Korea in August of 1936. Wan-yao Chou: The Kōminka Movement in Taiwan and Korea: Comparisons and Interpretations, in Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie ed.: The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931- 1945, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996

predicted how the country's population, education and transportation systems would be changed thirty years into the future.

Including all the ethnic nations of the empire, the exposition layout at the start featured the spirit of the empire *kōkoku* to illuminate the ideal of an East Asian Cooperative Body, and secondly exhibited the quintessence of the armed forces, economy, industry, and culture of Greater East Asia. To demonstrate the majesty of the Japanese empire, the exposition was accompanied by a religious vocabulary, such as holy war, elevating the procedure to the level of divinity.

For the victory of the entire empire and to promote the Special Volunteer Soldier System, which had been introduced only a few years before in 1938, the show mostly targeted the youth to support the imperial army and to spur the construction of the New Order in East Asia.<sup>204</sup> Starting at the areal with the tower *Hakkō Ichiu*, eight corners under one roof, the tour ended at "The Street of Holy War," which was filled with a variety of armaments and weapons, including warships and aircrafts. Visitors were guided into the "War Deeds Pavilion," which aimed to respect the memory of the war dead with exhibits including sabres and field glasses that had been used in battle, as well as 300 portraits of those who had died in the recent Sino-Japanese war. At a replica model of the tower devoted to the fallen war heroes, funds could be offered for the defence of the country.<sup>205</sup> Beside all subliminal metaphor, wrapped in ideological staging techniques, newspapers and military authorities stressed clearly the role of Korea as a logistics base toward the military advancement into the Asian continent. Moreover, by exhibiting the war deeds of the imperial army amidst the militaristic atmosphere of the Asia-Pacific War, Japanese authorities utilized the exhibition as crucial input for the production of national subjectivity to promote the significance of the East Asian holy war.<sup>206</sup>

The performative visual technologies of the exposition enacted discourses of multi-ethnic cooperation, turned soldiers into heroes and military gods, and promised Korean youth acceptance as Japanese citizens by their death for the empire. The experience of the exposition, beside narratives mostly printed in magazines, newspapers and textbooks which also followed this process, led to the encouragement of Korean youth to go to the war and to die for the emperor, moving beyond a narrow sense of ethnic nationalism toward a larger and higher realm. The religious metaphors employed by the exhibition led to the aspect of the event overcoming the former tensions and contradictions in order to progress toward a future of Korea as an active member of Big Asia. Japan did not expect Koreans to subjugate, but tried to eradicate their culture and replace their Koreanness to merge them into the greater Japanese nation. Whereas previous exhibitions mostly featured views of the past and traditional customs of Korea, the ancient history of Korea was not displayed at this event. It was replaced by demonstrating the imperial path from birth and evolution, showing the shared ancestry and shared root of Korea and Japan *Naisen dōsō, dōkon*.

---

204 The Special Volunteer Soldier System was introduced in 1938, and it was replaced with compulsory conscription in 1944. The choice of young men to become soldiers was often linked to involuntary forces, as economic reasons inherited from their poor peasant villages. There also existed a great deal of tacit pressure from government organizations such as the police and schools to promote volunteerism, in order to be accepted as real citizens.

Brandon Palmer: "Japan's Mobilization of Koreans for War, 1937-1945", University of Hawai'i, 2005

205 Throughout the Asia-Pacific War, while the emperor was deemed to be a "God," the fallen war heroes were worshiped as military sub-gods, often revered through public ceremony, such as collective funerals.

206 Expositions aimed at showing off Japan's military power were held across the country since a decade, including 1930 Marine and Air Exposition, 1935 National Defense and Industry Exposition, 1937 China Incident Holy War Exposition, 1939 Greater East Asian Exposition. The 1940 event in Seoul was accordingly not only sponsored by the newspaper *Keijō Nippō* and the Governor-General of Korea, but also by the Japanese army that was stationed in Korea and various military authorities.

See Hong Kal: *Aesthetic Constructions of Korean Nationalism: Spectacle, Politics and History*, Routledge, 2011, Yamaji Katsuhiko: *The Colonial Expositions of Modern Japan*, Fukyosha, 2008

Neglecting Korean culture, the gap between policy statements and reality of colonial exploitation, and the subliminal forms of domination over the people, were taken from the road-book of Western colonisation at the time, but Japan's approach was unique in another way. The attempt of a total recreation of cultural identity differed from racist ideologies in Germany and Italy or colonial concepts of Britain, Netherlands, or France. Japan's endeavours were conceived of as being beneficial to everyone under their benevolent leadership.

### **War Artists - *Nanŭn*, as far as I am concerned**

After the cultural policy of the Japanese authorities in Korea had been tightened already in 1931, under the mobilisation law in 1938, *Kaiga hokō* "Serve the Nation by Art" became the motto of all art supported by the government. With the integration of all cultural organizations into an organized and controlled system of war propaganda, artists began to develop visions for the project of a Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere.<sup>207</sup>

In the 1930s climate, many painters once openly critical of the Japanese- and Western-centric art world that held sway in Korea, turned into ostensible supporters to paint pro-Japanese themes glorifying the imperial idea of *naisen ittai* "Japan and Korea as one single body." After the beginning of the Pacific War in 1941, urgent measures to create propaganda art became compelling orders. To maintain work as an artists they had to overcome any individual differences and share their patriotic ideas with the local people, otherwise their work would hardly be approved in any publications and exhibitions.<sup>208</sup>

Tankwang Hoe (Red Sunlight Association) was an organization that was founded to produce paintings glorifying the empire's war effort. Its nineteen members, including Korean painters Kim In-sung, Sim Hyong-ku (1908-1962), Park Yong-son (1910-1994), Son Ung-song (1916-1979), and resident Japanese painters Yamada Shin'ichi, Yamashita Kazuhiko, Tōyama Masaharu, Sakurada Shōichi, and Takahashi Takeshi, coproduced in 1943 the large scale record oil painting entitled "Memorial Painting Commemorating The Chosŏn Conscription System," depicting a young soldier departing for war, a young boy with a toy plane and the director of the volunteer soldier training school.<sup>209</sup>

Art works in conformity with the state ideology were presented at such military art exhibitions as the *Songjon Misuljon* "Exhibition of the Holy War" in 1940, and in 1942 the renamed Association of Total Mobilisation organized exhibitions at such places as the Mitsukoshi department store in Keijō Seoul to demonstrate the new world order. Another exhibition displayed in Korea was "Promoting the Spirit of the Founding of the Nation," a patriotic representation of national history with a narrative of national history made up of thirty seven diorama scenes focusing on the post-foundation period. After ending its run at the Tokyo Takashimaya department store on 27 April 1939, the exhibit moved to Osaka and Kyoto stores for May and June, and was then hosted by department stores in Kyoto, Fukuoka, Kagoshima, Nagoya, Sapporo, Hiroshima, and in four cities in Manchuria: Shinkyo, Harbin, Mukden, and Dairen. The official attendance for this touring exhibition, which continued into 1940, was 4.4

---

<sup>207</sup> After the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe, the restrictive measures intensified also in Korea and all Japanese and Korean painters had to return to their homeland from abroad.

<sup>208</sup> Maeil Sinbo newspaper, Mainichi Shimpō June 24, 1939

<sup>209</sup> The Chosŏn Artist Association organized the Peninsula Home Front Art Exhibition in November 1943 to celebrate the conscription system which was introduced in August before.

million.

Many Korean artists became advocates of the local colour in visual art, promoting the multiculturalism of the empire and campaigning for acceptance of the Japanese colonial government. The *Pando Chonghu Misuljon* "Exhibition of the Peninsular Rear Area," which was sponsored by the Department of Information of the Colonial Government and held three times (1943-1945), and the *Kwaejon Misuljon* "Exhibition of the Glorious War" presented Korean artists in 1944.

Lee Joong-seop (1916-1956), an example of a deliberately apolitical painter, and one of the most important representative of Asian Fauvism in Korea, nevertheless could develop unhindered both formally and stylistically.<sup>210</sup> Under circumstances, the ever-increasing propaganda art was still opposed with the developments of post-impressionist, fauvist, expressionist, cubist, abstract and surrealist painting, but there was hardly any other painter who could avoid war propaganda like Lee. Almost all painters of the Western as well as the Oriental style confessed in a written or visual way to do the most possible for the duty of their nation.

Ku Ponung (1906-1953), once an avant-garde painter, was one of those that negotiated "between subliminal resistance and outward acceptance."<sup>211</sup> In his early years, Ku utilized the visual language of Western art movements, as French Impressionism and German Expressionism in an act of fusion to create a Korean version of modern art. Somehow he switched from a position rejecting those artists who participated in a second importation of Tokyo's filtered Western-style painting to a statement that Korean art should be seen as an extension of Japan's art society and unite in the principle of *naisen ittai*.<sup>212</sup> With his drawings and illustrations for the Japanese colonial government propaganda he glorified the war and encouraged young men to enlist to the military, which included him on the list of collaborators who supported the colonial body.<sup>213</sup>

No Su-hyon (1899-1976), a painter of the Oriental style, became one of the most active propagandists during wartime, and even such prominent intellectuals as the writer Yi Kwang-su (1892-1950), the convinced communist like Chông Hyôn-ung (1911-1976) and others who had campaigned for Korea's independence ten years earlier, became active collaborators and called on their youth to volunteer as soldiers.<sup>214</sup>

Many of the artists raised under the cultural policy became faithful to the empire and produced paintings and organized or participated at exhibitions like the *Senten* which cheered war propaganda and donated the proceeds to the military. This two different objectives to the exhibitions included to propel people on the home front to engage in efforts toward victory, and to raise funds through sales of the paintings to support the military. Artists also used their popularity to promote the national ideology like Sim Hyong-ku, who published an article in the October 1941 issue of *Shin Sidae* "New Period" entitled "The State of Things and Art," in which he wrote that artists should not adhere to the dogma of

---

210 Unfortunately, due to the Korean War, both of them have a large part of their works lost before 1950. Lee Joong-seop was glorified since the beginning of the 70s and his popularity today is far greater than it was in his lifetime.

211 Jungsil Lee: *Reconsidering the Body in Korean Modern Art: Ku Ponung's Body, World, and Art*, University of California, 2011, p.239-212p.326

213 In 2009, the Roh Moo-hyun government completed a list of pro-Japanese collaborators from the investigation of "anti-national activities" committed during colonial occupation. The presidential commission spent four and half years collecting and documenting various collaborative activities, and produced a database to define collaborators who engaged in "anti-national behaviours", such as mobilizing fellow Koreans into Japan's war.

See Mikyoung Kim: *Routledge Handbook of Memory and Reconciliation in East Asia*, Routledge, 2015

214 No Su-hyon served after the liberation as a professor at the Seoul Art College until 1961. This was partly based on the naive belief that Koreans and Japanese would be partners with equal rights after the war. The conformism was by no means limited to the artists remaining later in the south. Many of the northern painters also collaborated openly with the Japanese fascists.

art for art's sake but rather respond to the nation in need and produce art that serves the nation.<sup>215</sup>

In the believe that art should service the state as its conscious objective, patriotic home front, woman and uniforms appeared more and more in paintings. Sim Hyônggu work "Costume for the Battle", which shows a woman in a traditional Korean costume used in dances depicting battle scenes, had been accepted for the seventeenth *Senten* in 1938. For the nineteenth *Senten* in 1940 he submitted a painting "Protect Greater East Asia", honouring the obligation of men becoming soldiers and with "Girls" he enforced the image of woman at the home front *jûgo* supporting the male and waiting in return. "Chosôn Volunteer Soldier" created by Yamada Shin'ichi (1899-1991), art chief of the imperial forces' press division in Korea, which depicts a mother sending her son of to war beside a young girl holding a Japanese flag, participated at the first "Holy War Art Exhibition" in 1939.<sup>216</sup>

Specialists in figure paintings preferred to eschew war messages by sticking to images of female beauty. Like Anbo Michiko with *Rear* 1940, and Kim Ki-chang with *Gathering* 1943, encouraged Japanese imperial soldiers by propaganda paintings, depicting gatherings of patriotic women in support of the war.

Many paintings dealt with Japanese cultural traditions depicting martial arts and addressing discipline such as "A Girl" 1940 by female artist Arano Yoshiko showing a girl in Navy uniform, Hirano Haruko "Inner Discipline" 1940 showing a girl in Kendo uniform, or Asakura Kanichirô "Boy Sword Man" 1940.

As part of the colonial policy an increasing number of Korean women college graduates and students became involved in various activities as cultural and social modernizers. Female intellectuals, artists and pro-Japanese woman's organisations under the colonial government dealt with nationalist concerns from a feminist perspective. Mo Yun-suk (1910-1990) who gained great popular admiration raised woman's consciousness of their role in the war.<sup>217</sup> Through lectures and articles she ardent promoted the Japanisation of Korean life and the spirit of "Yamato woman" as warriors and daughters of a new period in East Asia. Traditionally, Korean interpretation of Confucian Law was based on family units, causing women to be severely controlled for the sake of the restoration of masculine authority. The Japanese concept of "good wife, wise mother" was invented largely in Korea after the annexation, as part of the development of the modern nation-state. Therefore, woman were educated and integrated as work force in order to support the concept of the family and to sacrifice for the nation. Formerly invisible in society, in time of mobilization, women were subjected to being monitored and controlled, becoming publicly responsible for raising future citizens, being skilled homemakers or factory workers, supporting the frontline by protecting the country.

Not only with paintings for exhibitions, but also with illustrations for magazines and newspapers artists promoted colonial policy, targeting an even wider audience. With magazine covers like Chong

---

215 Youngna Kim: Artistic Trends in Korea Painting, in Marlene J. Mayo, J. Thomas Rimer: War, Occupation, and Creativity: Japan and East Asia, 1920-1960, University of Hawaii Press, 2001, p.138

216 Since the Kantô Earthquake in 1923, Yamada had lived in Korea until the end of the war. During the war, he produced war paintings, although not commissioned by the military.

In a feature entitled "Art in Korea," published in the July 1939 No. 290 edition of "Joseon" (the official name of Korea under Japanese imperial rule), a magazine published by the then Government-General of Korea, Yamada Shinichi wrote that "Senten [the Korea Fine Arts Exhibition] needs to go a long way to reach the level of major central exhibitions in Tokyo or Kyoto ... but it is far ahead of the exhibitions in Taiwan, known as Taiten, or in Manchuria, known as Manten, and has become a prince among regional exhibitions." Together with Japanese artists Yamashita Kazuhiko, Tôyama Masaharu, and Korean artist Sim Hyonggu and others, Yamada Shin'ichi produced the large scale record painting "Memorial Painting Commemorating The Chosôn Conscription System" in 1943, depicting a young soldier departing for war, a young boy with a toy plane and the director of the volunteer soldier training school.

217 Mo Yun-suk was given the honor of officially representing Korea at the U.N. General Meeting in Paris in the fall of 1948. A charter member of the Syngman Rhee regime, she was married to An Hosang, the German-educated head of Rhee's anticommunist youth network. Syngman Rhee (1875-1965) was the first and the last Head of State of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea, and President of South Korea from 1948 to 1960. he was married to Austrian Franziska Donner (1900-1992).

Hyonung's "Young Student Soldier" for the February 1941 issue of *Sin Sidae* "The New Era" artists emphasized the coherence of war and art for mass education of the imperial citizens. In an article Chong Hyonung referred to Germany as role model to create high quality art with a clear goal to express national and ethnic joy. Neglecting art for art's sake, he manifested art for a purpose to strengthen ethnic ideals and national consciousness.<sup>218</sup>

For a poem by Kim Tonghwan (Shiroyama Aoki), published in *Sin Sidae* January 1942, Chong Hyonung contributed illustrations that portray Hitler walking among welcoming citizens and neat rows of soldiers. Describing the beautiful German scenery of the movie "Triumph of the Will", Kim Tonghwan writes, "Hitler, you are the great father of Aryans and a friend of ours. Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler!, a small man in the East, call your name and look in the direction of Berlin! [...] The Führer comes to Berlin on July 5 of 1940, while the young girls of the Hitler Youth Group carry flowers in their skirts and scatter them on the streets of the city with welcoming smiles."<sup>219</sup>

### Korean Relations to NS Germany

Another admirer of German social and cultural milieu was Pai un-song (1900-1978) who cooperated with Japanese imperialism by pledging fidelity to "paint in service of the country" and "paint for the state." he left for Europe in 1922 and from 1925 to 1930, Pai studied Western art in Berlin at the Unified State Schools for Fine and Applied Arts *Vereinigte Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst*, receiving instruction from German artist Ferdinand Spiegel (1879-1950), who later became one of the favoured artists of the German Reich.<sup>220</sup> At that time also liberal artists such as Karl Hofer (1878-1955), Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945), and Oskar Schlemmer (1888-1943) served as teachers at this school, until 1933 when the atmosphere of freedom and enterprising spirit of the the Weimar Republic was replaced by the Nazi regime.<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, Pai seems to have been indifferent to the modern experimental arts of the time, and retained his love of classicism and tradition in this bustling social atmosphere. After his graduation in 1930, Pai stayed as a professional artist in Berlin and established his identity as an "Asian artist in Europe." More than that he underscored his originality "Koreanness" in various artistic ways as he choose as subject matter old Korean customs and painted in ink on paper, and drew pictures on woodcut with Chinese brushstrokes. Although he had received an education in Western art his national identity was the defining feature of his art to European society where the understanding of Korea was still insufficient. Maybe only comparable to Foujita Tsuguharu he tried to harmonize and contrast at the same time the East and the West in his art with a coexistence of conflicting values as the most fundamental principle of his art. This intriguing fusion of Asian and European painting concept attracted Europeans and Japanese officials. Pai worked as an illustrator of magazines, and became intimate with influential people, as German educated Japanese industrialist

---

218 *Sin Sidae*, October 1941, Kim Hyeshin: Visual Representations of War in Korea, 1937-1945, in Asato Ikeda: Art and War in Japan and its empire, 1931-1960, Brill, 2013, p.328

219 *Sin Sidae*, January 1942

220 From 1918 he was a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, from 1924 the United State Schools of Free and Applied Arts in Berlin. Spiegel, who was a valued artist during the National Socialist era, was represented at the Great German Art Exhibitions in the Munich House of German Art with a total of 35 works. Since 1939 he led a master atelier at the Berlin Academy. In the final phase of the Second World War Adolf Hitler took him in August 1944 in the *Gottbegnadeten* list of the most important painters, which freed him from a war effort, even on the home front.

221 In April 1933, the NS functionary Max Kutschmann (1871-1943) took over the office of director, smashed the structures of the Weimar period and ensured that until 1936 Jewish and dissident teachers were dismissed.

Mitsui Takaharu (1900-1983), director of the Mitsui Mining Company and Mitsui Corporation, and the first president of the Mitsui Shipping Company.<sup>222</sup> Pai painted portraits of Mitsui's family members, and Mitsui Takaharu in reverse supported him as a form of patronage in different ways. On his request Pai produced paintings for the reception room of the Japanese Embassy in Germany, and due Mitsui's connections for promoting cultural relationships between Japan and Eastern European countries he would have helped Pai un-song with venues for his solo exhibitions.<sup>223</sup> Well connected with the Japanese envoy in Europe most of his projects were funded by official organizations as they sponsored him financially during his stay in Europe. Furthermore, he was quite active in self-promotion and took full advantage of his unique "exotic" background. His success continued with a solo exhibition in the famous *Gallery Gurlitt* in Berlin, as the well-known Jewish German art critic Max Osborn, noted that he was "*a Korean turned Berliner*."<sup>224</sup> Beside exhibitions in different East European countries, including Poland Hungary and Estonia, in February 1936, the Japanese Society of the Oriental Institute under Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894-1972) organized an exhibition with Pai at the Bohemian Art Union gallery in the heart of Prague.<sup>225</sup>

During the Berlin Olympic in 1936 he worked as a news reporter in Korean journalism and befriended with many European artists as famous German fashion photographer Ewald Hoinkis (1897-1960) and Kurt Runge (1906-), who introduced him to the German press and prominent people from various circles.<sup>226</sup>

For the money he received as remuneration for Mitsui's portrait, Pai could purchase an exclusive atelier in Paris where he was active between 1937 to 1940.<sup>227</sup> In Paris, Pai submitted paintings to "Le Salon" and "Autumn Fair", participated in the "Japanese Artists' Exhibition" and held a solo exhibition at one of the most prestigious galleries in June 1938, supported by the Comité Franco-Japonais.<sup>228</sup> Three month before he was introduced to the French audience with an article and an illustration "Child of Korea" for the 27 issue (March 1938) of the Japanese-French cultural exchange magazine *France-Japan*, published from 1934 to 1940 in Paris by Kuni Matsuo (1899-1975) and Alfred Smoular (1911-1994).<sup>229</sup> Financed by the South Manchuria Railroad Company, the magazine served like *Nippon* as a propaganda tool to recover Japan's public image, which was tarnished in international society since the

---

222 Baron Mitsui was at the time also the chairman of the Japanese-German Society and a famous Philatelist. On January 17, 1941 Takaharu Mitsui was appointed honorary senator of the University of Vienna. He owned zinc mines near Omuta on the island of Kyushu, where Allied prisoners of war were used for forced labor during World War II. Many did not survive the brutal treatment in the Fukuoka 17 camp. Baron Mitsui was not convicted as a war criminal.

223 Frank Hoffmann: Pae Un-sông: Auf den Spuren seines 15-jährigen Berliner Aufenthalts, April 1991, pp.55– 62

224 Frank Hoffmann: 1993

225 Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi's father Heinrich was high-ranking Austro-Hungarian diplomat, and his mother Mitsuko Aoyama, a daughter of a wealthy Japanese land-owner.

226 Kurt Runge published a book titled "Unsong Pai erzählt aus seiner koreanischen Heimat", Darmstadt, Kulturbuch-Verlag, 1950. In the book which translates as "Korean Old Stories Heard From Un-sung Pai" he states: "I may say that all his aspirations were to become rich. Of course, his name recognition rose immensely with portrait commissions such as Mitsui or the well-known film actor Gustav Fröhlich."

227 Pai's woodcut "Baron Mitsui and His Works" 1934 represents Mitsui's and his families status and accomplishments for Japan. The seven medals on his uniform, which he received in seven European countries including Austria, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, emphasize his cultural exchange services between Japan and European countries. The work was first exhibited at his solo show at the Ethnological Museum Hamburg in 1935, where it still remains.

Frank Hoffmann: Pai Unsongs Holzstich "Baron Mitsui und sein Werk" In Uri Korea: Kunsthistorische und ethnographische Beiträge zur Ausstellung, edited by Susanne Knödel und Bernd Schmelz, Hamburg, Museum für Völkerkunde, 2017, pp. 402-408

228 Galerie Charpentier, 76, Faubourg Saint-Honoré, 11 to 23 June 1938. Under the patronage of the Japanese-French committee and opened in presence of ambassador to France, Sugimura Yotaro, who made an effort to promote cultural exchanges between Japan and France.

229 The first edition was published in 1934 and a total of 49 volumes had been issued by 1940, financed by the South Manchuria Railroad Company and supported by the French-Japanese Committee. Pai was the only Korean who painted illustrations for this journal, and one of the few Korean artists to be featured in the magazine.



invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and the withdrawal from the United Nations in 1933. Due his multiple and intimate connections with the Japanese authorities, once more in the 30 issue in June another article on his exhibition appears, which is presumed to have been held as part of Japan's cultural activities and their mutual relationship with France.<sup>230</sup>

Designed and supported by Japanese Ambassador Sugimura Yotaro (1884–1939) and the French Minister of National Education and Fine Arts, Jean Zay (1904–1944), the “Japanese Artists’ Exhibition in Paris” was held once a year both in 1938 and 1939. With artist and engraver Kiyoshi Hasegawa (1891-1980) he served as a member of the display in the first show from December 17 to 30, 1938 at the Bernheim-Jeune gallery.<sup>231</sup> For the second exhibition, held from June 27 to July 13, 1939 at the Charpentier gallery, he submitted a woodcut print “*World Tour*”, and an oil painting titled “*Voltre*” (*On the way home*).<sup>232</sup>

Pai un-song's woodcut was reproduced in a Korean newspaper and commented on an article informing that Pai had participated in an international exhibition in Paris and his work were praised by a French journal.<sup>233</sup> While the contemporary Korean press was presenting to its readership stories of Pai's successes abroad mainly based on his own letters, European art critics often were quite harsh giving him no special credit for just being East Asian. The German and Czech press for example was quite unimpressed about the exhibition in Prague, calling the works “mediocre as they are more European”, calling him a good, and even an excellent disciple with an exotic name, but not a real personality who has not achieved a fusion of the artistic traditions of his homeland with European artistic life in any of his works.<sup>234</sup> Regarding Pai's solo exhibition in Hamburg in 1935, a German critic has pointed out that Pai's colour choices and shadow expressions were somewhat underdeveloped. On the other hand, his woodcuts and more traditional works were highly praised as reminiscent of Ukiyo-e expressions and ground-breaking in terms of modern engraving or the level of detail in the painting. Bridging some gaps on cultural ground his ambitions of Western-style works remained mediocre but critics praised his “Eastern Lines and Western Colours” Asian-style works, which pandered the exoticism of Europeans with their attractiveness of the flat composition, the textures of skin, and beauty of the line drawings.<sup>235</sup> However, as subject of the Japanese empire, Pai was able to take advantage of opportunities to enter the international art world. Europe was significant in the internationalization of Korean art and an important place where he could develop as an artist in a different social environment. The steady correspondence about his success in Europe did not solely rise his acceptance in Korea. Critics in his homeland thought he had merely consumed Korean images and relegated the cherished traditions of Korea to his advantage. Influential as his work may have been, in his art he permanently wandered between the boundaries of tradition and modernity, different

---

230 Two of his illustrations were published in issue 28 April 1938, and an article in November 1938 issue 35 and December 1938 issue 36. The issue 37 from January 1939 featured his illustration “Winter Game of Children in Korea” at the frontispiece.

231 Pai was the only Korean artist participating next to 68 Japanese artists from various genres and and 52 Japanese artists at the second exhibition, including Genichiro Inokuma (1902–1993), Rikizo Takata (1900–1992), and Saburo Miyamoto (1905–1974).

232 The same gallery he had a solo exhibition one year before. Hasegawa moved to France in 1919 to learn copperplate printing, and never returned to Japan.

233 Frank Hoffmann: Koreanische Malerei und Grafik "westlichen Stils" von den Anfängen bis zum Ende der japanischen Besatzungszeit, Tübingen, 1992, p.171

234 For more see: Hoffmann, Frank (2015): The Berlin Koreans, 1909–1940s. In: Hoffmann, Frank: Berlin Koreans and Pictured Koreans. Wien: Präsenz, pp. 9-178. - Schirmer, A. (ed.): Koreans and Central Europeans: Informal Contacts up to 1950. Vol. 1. and Czech Republic Ambassador to Korea Jaroslav Olša, jr.: *The Korean painter Pae Un-sŏng (Unsŏng Pai)* and his 1936 Exhibitions in Czechoslovakia, unpublished

235 Minjong Shin: Understanding the Insides of Un-Soung Pai (1900–1978): Records of the Korean Artist's Work, and Life, Including Their Identity, The Asian Conference on Asian Studies 2016

cultures, and the acceptance by a Western audience. Marked as as an anti-nationalist or pro-Japanese collaborator after the liberation of Korea, he hoped to settle in Paris just to live as an artist, but instead was forced to defect to North Korea after the Korean War (1950-1953).<sup>236</sup>

Pai was not the only member of the Korean elite, which by the mid-1930s was perfectly integrated into the Japanese Empire, and became entangled with the NS regime. The Germans made no distinctions between Japanese and Koreans and both benefited from the special status assigned to the entire “Japanese race.” The policy called “Honorary Aryan” (Ehrenarier), was given to Arabs, Chinese and Japanese who deemed valuable to Germans economy and politics.<sup>237</sup>

Ahn Eak-tai (1906-1965) was a classical composer and conductor who went to Europa in 1936 after he was educated in Japan (1919 Kunitachi Music School ) and the United States (1930 University of Cincinnati, and the Curtis Institute of Music). Ahn continued his study in Vienna and Budapest and completes his composition “Symphonic Fantasy Korea”, while staying in Berlin in 1936, at the time of the Olympic Games where he also meets with Pai un-song.<sup>238</sup> Ahn established a relationship with Richard Strauss (1864-1949) when he conducted *Japanische Festmusik* (Japanese festival music) 1942 in Vienna and elsewhere.<sup>239</sup> The Austrian had composed the piece in 1940, commissioned by Joseph Goebbels and dedicated to the Japanese Tennō to mark the 2600th anniversary of the Japanese Empire.<sup>240</sup>

On 18 September 1942 Ahn conducted *Mandschoukuo, Symphonische Phantasie für großes Orchester und gemischten Chor*, a symphonic fantasia for orchestra and mixed chorus with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, in front of high-ranking Nazis and Japanese diplomats.<sup>241</sup> He wrote this music which praises the harmony of the five races in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of Manchukuo, and conducted it again with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, on 11 February the following year, organized by the German-Japanese Society.

Ahn was quite integrated into the world of Japanese Imperial politics and cultural propaganda as he stayed from 1941 to 1943, when not travelling, in Berlin at the luxurious villa of Japanese diplomat Ehara Kōichi, who was a Councillor of the Manchurian Embassy in Berlin.<sup>242</sup> Ehara learned to know

---

236 Pai said that he left 167 pieces of his art with the owner of his atelier and he would return to Paris after the Second World War. Lee Gu-Yeo: Rediscovery of Pai Un-Soung, Pai Un-Soung, Catalogue of Exhibition, p. 10; Talk/Dialogue: Report of the Two Who Have Returned to Korea Late from War-torn Berlin, Paris and Belgium, Samcheolli, Dec. 1940, p. 110

Most of the artworks were rediscovered in 1999 by a South Korean doctoral student in France, Jeon Chang-Gon, and are now with him in South Korea. Now director of the Alliance Française de Daejeon, he was made "knight of the order of Arts and Letters" in Daejeon on September 8, 2016.

237 In 1934 policy prohibited the German press from discussing race laws when Japanese were involved. Furuya, Harumi: Japan's Racial Identity in the Second World War: The Cultural Context of the Japanese Treatment of POWs, In Philip Towle, Margaret Kosuge, Yōichi Kibata: Japanese Prisoners of War. Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000

238 The composition was sponsored by the German– Japanese Society for their cultural propaganda programs, and became very popular when he sent it first to Koreans in San Francisco. The finale called *Aegukga* was adopted by the Shanghai exile government in October 1945 as the Korean national hymn and became the national anthem in 1948.

239 Other than the Korean manifested in his memoirs, he did not work with Richard Strauss (1864-1949) in Vienna and Munich for 12 years, as it has been proofed that he never even met Strauss before 11 or 12 March 1942. Richard Strauss was president of the 1933 founded Reichsmusikkammer (Reich Music Chamber) until he was dismissed in 1935.

See Frank Hoffmann: Berlin Koreans and Pictured Koreans, in Andreas Schirmer: Koreans and Central Europeans Informal Contacts up to 1950, Vienna, 2015, p.127

240 It had been conducted by Helmut Fellmer (1902-1977) in an earlier official concert in December 1940 in Tōkyō for the “26th Centennial of the Foundation of the Japanese Empire.”

241 Another Asian conductor who became member of the Reich Chamber of Culture and performed with the Berliner Philharmonic orchestra was Hidemaro Konoe (1898-1973), younger brother of pre-war Japanese Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe and signer of the Japanese pact with Germany and Italy. Both were in contact with Manfred Gurlitt (1890-1972), composer and conductor who exiled himself to Japan in 1939 and brother of art dealer Wolfgang Gurlitt (1888-1965), where Pai un-song had his solo exhibition.

242 According to a U.S. Army intelligence report from 1949 Ehara was listed as head of the Japanese Intelligence Service personal in Europe to German knowledge during the Third Reich. U.S. National Archives, IWG, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, Record

Ahn playing the piano in Bucharest, Romania when he attended a ceremony at the Japanese legation. Their relation intensified when Ehara wrote the lyrics to the symphonic fantasia *Manchukuo* and Ehara promoted Ahn and his career like it was the case between Mitsui and Pai un-song.<sup>243</sup> It seems that every single concert Ahn conducts in the first half of the 1940s have been arranged and sponsored by the German–Japanese Society.

Kuni Masami (1908 – 2007), born as Park Yeong-in in Ulsan, Korea arrives in Berlin in late February 1937, after graduating from Tōkyō Imperial University, on a Japanese government scholarship to pursue a doctorate at Friedrich-Willhelms-Universität (today Humboldt Universität).<sup>244</sup>

Other than mentioned in many biographies and by himself, Kuni Masami was no scholar of Rudolf Laban (1879-1958), one of the pioneers of modern dance who directed major festivals of dance under the funding of Joseph Goebbels' propaganda ministry from 1934-1936.<sup>245</sup> Laban ended his contract in March 1937 and soon after traveled to Paris and from there went to England where he arrived in February 1938 and maybe met Kuni years after.<sup>246</sup> Nevertheless, in Berlin he met Harald Kreutzberg (1902-1968), Laban's pupil and colleague Max Terpis (1889-1958) and he did participate in some courses that Mary Wigman (1886-1973) taught as a guest lecturer at the Master Workshops in Berlin.

Even more than Pai un-song and Ahn Eak-tai, became a self-declared cultural representative of Japan due the support of the German–Japanese Society, that organizes many of his appearances across Europe.<sup>247</sup> Apart from the society, Kuni also regularly worked for the Nazi cultural propaganda institution *Kraft durch Freude* ("Strength through Joy," KdF) to promote the fascist cooperation of the two nations, reinforce the strong image of the Japanese as "honourable Aryans" and empower further his career. Despite all normal cultural life stopped latest in 1943, Kuni could still generate some income working for KdF until August 1944 when he dances at the theatre in Lodz near Auschwitz.<sup>248</sup> His tours through Europe for Japanese and German propaganda and intelligence services supporting the war effort and fascist multinational cooperation enabled a luxury life as the "Dancing Professor" with a servant, a car, a villa in Berlin and a countryside home.<sup>249</sup> Postwar the U.S. wartime intelligence reports on his travels and activities as dancer and journalist having deep involvements with Japanese secret services.<sup>250</sup> Regardless of his opportunistic intentions, Kuni can be recognized as an influential

---

Group 263, RC Box #08, RC Location 230/902/64/1

243 Mun Hak-su: Ahn Eak-tai Performed the "Kimigayo" on a Japanese Holiday, *The Kyunghyang Shinmun*, 2015-08-31

244 In Japan he studied under Baku Ishii (1886-1962), who is widely regarded as the creator of Japanese modern dance. Park becomes a Japanese citizen and adopts the name Ehara Masami, known under his stage name Kuni Masami 邦正美. The Kanji 邦 translates state or nation. His school named Kuni Masami Ryu (拳正流) is carried on in Tokyo Setagaya by his Japanese disciples until now. [www.kuni-dance.jp](http://www.kuni-dance.jp)

245 Goebbels, puts an end to his career in Germany after the final dress rehearsal of a monumental mass dance event for the pre-Olympic dance festival in early 1936 with 1,200 performers and multiple orchestras in around 30 cities. Short after Laban enters a sanatorium and later leaves to Paris and England.

246 Evelyn Doerr: *Rudolf Laban: The Dancer of the Crystal*, carecrow Press, 2007, p.180

247 Pai strongly expressed his identity as a Korean, sometimes more than as an artist, by dressing himself in Korean traditional Hanbok. Kuni Masami never was described "Korean" over the years in any European press releases during the war, and later became American transforming his identity again.

248 When Japanese Ambassador Ōshima Hiroshi received an honorary doctorate from Leipzig University as late as July 1944, Kuni himself appeared in a play that he adapts for German audiences. Beside cities like Breslau, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, Prague, Breslau, Kaliningrad, and Istanbul, he performed in Linz in November 1941.

249 Many of his biographical data, published multiple times when he lived in the United States as an instructor, like for instance his doctoral degree in aesthetics from Tokyo Imperial University, and memories about Rudolf von Laban and Mary Wigman as his mentors in Berlin are not correct. His life got in the news again in 2017, when American actor Fred Armisen (1966-) discovered that he is a grandson of the former dancer, who long time was believed to be an influential Japanese modern dancer and was now revealed as Korean spy for the NS regime to a broader audience. *Finding Your Roots*, October 10, on PBS

250 He also wrote a couple of times for the propaganda magazine *Nippon: Zeitschrift für Japanologie* 4, no. 2 (April 1938) *Nippon: Zeitschrift für Japanologie* 5, no. 3 (July 1939), *Nippon: Zeitschrift für Japanologie* 6, no. 2 (April 1940)

Japanese dancer during his residence in Germany, building bridges between two nations, regarding traditional and contemporary dance theatre. At his time he became an icon of cultural transfer, building up acceptance of Japanese accomplishments as an equal to a wider audience in Europe.<sup>251</sup>

---

<sup>251</sup> He was able to stay as one of the few until the end of war, and transferred via Russia back to Korea, before he left to the United States for the rest of his live.