

# Imitating the Colonizers: The Legacy of the Disciplining State from Manchukuo to South Korea

Suk-Jung Han

## Imitating the Colonizers: The Legacy of the Disciplining State from Manchukuo to South Korea

By Suk-Jung Han

By Suk-Jung Han

### Introduction

Scholars in the Asia field are finally turning their attention to Manchukuo. Labeling Manchukuo as a puppet state has long hindered exploring its multi-faceted character. Building Manchukuo was more complicated than Japan's outright takeover of Taiwan or Korea. Also, Manchukuo was a great laboratory for various modern projects. Grand narratives that describe the fourteen-year history of Manchukuo in terms of exploitation, heroic national resistance, or nostalgic development miss a wide space. An unknown part of Manchukuo is its role of linking the past and the future in the realm of the state-formation. A Long time ago, some

anthropologists proposed that cultural traits were transmitted from a center to marginal regions. Diffusion is not limited to cultural traits. According to John Meyer, the contemporary "world polity" is a cultural system in which actors (nation-states) imitate each other regarding constitution, census, data system, mass education, science, welfare policy, and so on (1999: 129). It follows then, that strategies of state managers are also replicable.

Gerschenkron once- now famously- argued that there were some advantages for economic growth for late developers who can bypass the trial and error of early developers (1966). Such logic holds true for latecomers in the field of state-making. In the 1930s, the rulers of Manchukuo did the same thing. State formation has been demonstrated to be a lengthy process or a "great arch" (Corrigan and Sayer 1985). It took centuries in the British, German, Russian experiences, or at least decades in modern Japan, the most famous late comer (Raef 1983; Norman 1940). However, state makers in Manchukuo (which included not only Japanese but also

Chinese leaders in the new regime), bypassed trial and error and quickly built their own. If we accept an analogy of the state as a building, the basic framework of the Manchukuo state was constructed during the first four months of 1932- the first year of the new state- and endured until its demise in 1945. [1] Pillars of an old state were also utilized by the founders of a new state. The Manchukuo state was not built from scratch. There was an old state, namely, the warlord regime of Zhang Xueliang which was driven out by the Kwantung Army in 1931. A large part of the old regime, including the soldiery and bureaucracy, was bequeathed to Manchukuo. Moreover, the rules of Manchukuo copied much of the blue print of the Meiji state. Originally, there was deep German influence in the formation of the Meiji state, and Japanese leaders studied German political institutions and the understanding of such reform from above. Influences were felt in the social policies of preventive action against socialism and thought guidance implemented by the Home Ministry and the Ministry of Education of the Meiji regime (Pyle 1974: 143). [2] As this article demonstrates, however, a significant but overlooked peculiarity of Manchukuo is that it influenced state-formation and state policies in South and North Korea, particularly during the Cold War era. Hence, Manchukuo is best understood as a node between old and new states, between Western and Asian states.

The legacy of Manchukuo can be seen in numerous "naturalized" events in South and North Korea. So-called "national ceremonies," such as paying a one minute silent tribute to the war dead in front of monuments, marching, lectures on the "current emergency situation", movie-showing, poster making, student speech contests, rallies, big athletic meetings, and so on- largely related to anti-communism, and all too familiar to South Koreans for several decades from the 1950s- were originally national events of Manchukuo in the 1930s.

Bruce Cumings once described North Korea as a corporate state, because its official discourse has been full of (Confucian) benevolence and loyalty (1993: 202-210). The leader, Kim Il Sung was called ubuyee (father) of the whole nation. But leaders of North Korea merely followed the example of Manchukuo, which had adopted Confucianism as a kind of state ideology. Since such North Korean leaders were the very anti-Japanese guerrillas at the border of Manchukuo in their youth, they likely were well aware of the operation of the regime. While fighting their enemy, the guerillas came to resemble them. And up to the present, trips made by cadres of the North Korean Workers' Party to local industrial spots remind us of the energetic inspection activity of the Manchukuo bureaucrats. Kim Il Sung himself died during a local inspection in 1994. Officials of Manchukuo were dispatched from the capital or provincial capitals throughout

the country for up to two weeks per month. These trips were routine parts of their jobs year in, year out. Big sports festivals and mass games, including the Arirang Festival in 2002, usually considered the masterpiece of North Korea, were Manchukuo's favorite events. A Soviet element, therefore, was merely one ingredient in North Korean state-formation (Armstrong 1997: 328).

Although Manchukuo's imprint on North Korea was tangible, the crucial linkage is between Manchukuo and South Korea. There were four sources of influence in South Korean state-formation. Those were the American military occupation, the Meiji state, the colonial state, and the Manchukuo state. The U.S. was deeply involved in the process, guiding the creation of the army and the police force (Cumings, 1981). Above all, the colonial state left a significant legacy. Similar to the legacy of the warlord regime in Manchukuo, the colonial state in Seoul (during the colonial period) bequeathed a large part of its bureaucrats and policemen to the new liberated Korean state. Furthermore, there is an affinity between the colonial state and its descendant in that both "stood over society", wielding enormous power downward, if we apply the jargon of state theorists.

There is, however, a crucial difference. While the colonial state left the ruling Yangban class intact, the new state, particularly after Park Chung Hee's military coup, did not allow the existence

of a powerful social class. The power of the landed class was gone before Park's coup, and in its stead the business class was fostered by his regime. Hence, the state had no challengers, be it the landed or capitalist class. This was similar to the earlier situation in Manchukuo. There was no powerful landed class, nor business class in Manchuria. Manchukuo was an empty space for its state builders or "brave new empire" which brought a utopian vision (Young 1998: 241).

In South Korea, Park's posthumous popularity rises high. Park's developmental state has been praised as the driving force of the South Korean economic miracle. Its archetype was that of Manchukuo, which pursued grand projects unchecked by any social force. Strong states were built in both countries, strong enough to penetrate and discipline society deeply. I will demonstrate how these common features were more than a coincidence. First, I will patiently trace what the Manchukuo state achieved in the realm of disciplining its people.

### **State Sponsored Confucianism**

South Koreans grew accustomed to the Confucian ideology of loyalty and filiality (choong-hyo) stressed by Syngman Rhee's regime (1948-1960) as well as Park Chung Hee's (1961-1979). The post-liberation ideology was different from the Confucianism of the Chosun dynasty, which had been not only the official

ideology but also the basis of ethics and cosmic philosophy. The former was less intense than the latter. But Confucianism was still influential in the post-liberation era. Important Confucian concepts, like loyalty to the nation, were instilled in students. It was Manchukuo that energetically patronized Confucianism. Manchukuo differed from mainland China where Confucianism was severely attacked by the May 4th intellectuals and their heirs. Also, Manchukuo differed from Japan in the 1930s when Shinto was deployed as the state religion.

The official ideology of Manchukuo was formed through several channels, such as Confucianism, Asianism, and Manchurian regionalism. Although the redemptive societies like the Daodehui were supported by the regime (see Duara 1997: 1034-1037), Confucianism was salient particularly in the early period (1932-1937, from state foundation to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War). One of the main official catch phrases of Manchukuo was the Confucian philosophy of wangdao (the kingly way). [3] The name of the first two years of the reign was the great unity (datong), transcending barriers of class, gender, and nationality. In a way, through Confucianism, the Japanese rulers of Manchukuo strategically garnered the loyalty of the Chinese landed class in the countryside. To aim at their collaboration, every county office organized a Confucian Studies Group. The government built Confucian shrines in every county and officially

performed religious services for Confucius two times a year (in spring and fall) across the country. It was at the exact time when Shinto was becoming powerful within Japan and colonized Korea. Also, after important official rallies, citizens would visit Confucian shrines. The Boy Scout graduation ceremonies were always held at the Confucian shrines. Every year, the government awarded people exemplifying Confucian virtues. [4] Confucian ethics became a subject for students, teachers, and officials in entrance or promotion examination.

At the same time, the Manchukuo regime held a joint ceremony for Guandi and Yuefei, Chinese deified martial heroes in the ancient period and Song dynasty. Worship of Chinese heroes was promoted by Japanese rulers in the Confucian style. Their loyalty was the key element, which state builders yearned to inculcate. In the ceremonies for Confucius, Guandi, and Yuefei, mayors, county magistrates, and school principals emphasized the Confucian virtue of filiality and its extension, loyalty to the new state. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), ways of honoring Confucius, however, became less formal and more Japanized. People could just bow instead of kneeling down in front of his portrait. They were asked to wear the uniform of the Concordia Association (kyowakai), the grassroots organization to connect government and people in order to propagate "racial harmony". [5] Shinto

elements were added to ceremonies in the Confucian shrines. Also, monuments for the war dead began to replace Confucian shrines for hosting some important events, although the two were common in encouraging citizens' loyalty to Manchukuo. Manchukuo was being swept up in the Sino-Japanese war. This was a new stage in its history. In a way, it was distraction from its own state building.

### Mourning Country

Although monuments for the war dead began to supplement Confucian shrines as the site of important ceremonies, the mourning ceremony, either for ancestors or soldiers, was long essential to Confucian practice inside and outside the home. In April, 1935, officials and army officers attended a great mourning ceremony (*zhaohunji*, *shokonsai*), held at the newly built monument in the capital. The assembly, opening ceremony, invocation of the spirits, enshrining of the dead, offering of food, and tributary speech solemnly proceeded. This was simply one example of numerous mourning ceremonies of subsequent years, particularly after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war. At the third anniversary of the state foundation, "the great state foundation mourning ceremony" was already held in Datong Park, and Emperor Puyi "honorably" participated. [6] And yet the next year at the same anniversary, "ten thousand citizens and students" attended and marched to the monument, bearing

flags.



The mourning ceremony for dead officials, policemen and soldiers was an important event, next only to one worshipping Confucius. Although prewar Japanese society also had ceremonies for the war dead at Yasukuni shrine, they were not equal to those in Manchukuo. In Japan, all the war dead (except those who died in hospitals, rather than at the front) were enshrined at Yasukuni. Ceremonies for all were held there at fixed dates. In Manchukuo, by contrast, ceremonies were held at numerous places and at various times. Each ministry of the central government, central police board, army district, province, and county office organized a committee for constructing monuments. Monuments and plazas for the war dead were built across the nation.

Finally, in 1940, the Grand State Foundation Shrine, the Manchukuo version of Yasukuni was completed (McCormack 1991: 114). [7] It was

dedicated to 408,050 people who "sacrificed their lives for founding Manchukuo." Every county has its own name for the ceremony. "Ceremony to soothe spirits," "Ceremony to soothe the spirits of the brave," "Ceremony for enshrining the loyal spirits," "Memorial service for brave soldiers who died for the founding of the state," and the "Memorial service for those who died during bandit suppression" were those held throughout Manchukuo. Some services were held at the monument plazas while some were in temples.

After the Sino-Japanese War, some ceremonies were attuned to events in Japan. There was a ceremony for the war dead of the Russo-Japanese war, which was not directly related with the history of Manchukuo. Grand ceremonies commemorated Japanese Army and Navy day. From autumn of 1938, Manchukuo citizens attended these ceremonies at Yasukuni. [8] Also, a big ground for Sumo wrestling, Japanese national sports, was constructed in front of the grand monument of the Manchukuo capital and the funeral for Saionji, the last Meiji oligarch (genro) was held in Manchukuo. Japanese elements pierced the social life of Manchukuo citizens.

The second stage of Manchukuo's history was framed by a formula that entwined memorial services with important events. In February 1938, there was a memorial service right after the seventh anniversary of the entry of Japanese

soldiers in Harbin. People lived amidst memorial services. Manchukuo became a funeral state. After the start of the China-Japan war in 1937, the number of mourning ceremonies dramatically increased. When the remains of the war dead were borne to the capital, citizens flew flags draped in black. Entertainment places were closed. As the number of the war dead increased, this practice became customary. Monuments and memorial services were forms of theatrical lecture to officials, soldiers, and students of Manchukuo. Confucian and Shinto styles gradually became mixed in memorial services in a unique way. Those at provincial, or city, county levels were year-round events. In the ceremony, governors and magistrates played the role of main mourner.

Among them, the first premier Zheng Xiaoxu was a born mourner who displayed his talent for writing beautiful prose for the war dead. When he died in 1938, the government prepared the first state funeral for him. At emperor Puyi's announcement, a special committee was organized. At this state funeral for the state founder, citizens expressed deep sorrow by abstaining from entertainment. All government offices were closed. The Concordia Association patronized memorial services at schools and flew flags at half-mast. All the citizens prayed together at 10: 30 in the morning. Actually, Zheng had been forced to step down three years ago. His death was merely a prop for the

theatrical state.

### State-foundation Gymnastics

Most middle-aged and older South Koreans remember Jaegun gymnastics from the 1960s. "Jaegun chejo shijjak (let's start Jaegun gymnastics), one, two, three, four!" The song was broadcast in the early morning across the country in the 1960s following Park's military coup. [9] Most family members woke up to this song-like command and practiced Jaegun gymnastics, still practically asleep. Jaegun, meaning reconstruction (of the state or nation), was the catch phrase of Park's regime. Several other songs about Jaegun were written and propagated for citizens and students to memorize. The model for Jaegun gymnastics was the Jianguo (state foundation or construction of the nation) gymnastics of Manchukuo. Jianguo and Jaegun had the common Chinese character of foundation or construction ("jian" in Chinese, "gun" in Korean). Jianguo was the essential word in Manchukuo, from "Jianguo spirit", "Jianguo celebration day" to "Jianguo University" and "Jianguo exercise." Hence, construction and reconstruction were the key words for Manchukuo and South Korea.

In Manchukuo, exercise and sanitation were important fields in which the regime invested. There were special weeks of exercise and street cleaning. During this time, the human body came

under the jurisdiction of the state. One month after its foundation, the regime prepared an athletic meeting. Every May, the Jianguo athletic meeting (later renamed the Manchukuo National Olympic) was held. Imitating the German fascists, the rulers of Manchukuo were interested in the physical training of citizens, and the Manchukuo Athletic Association was created with local branches at provincial and county levels. Provincial governors headed provincial branches. The association sent its staff to Japan for study and even applied to participate in the Olympiad. Japanese and Swedish Track and Field Associations acknowledged the Manchukuo counterpart. Newspapers in Manchukuo boasted that a Canadian basketball team visited Manchukuo in 1939.

Through sports, Manchukuo sought international approval, for which the regime was so thirsty. Major cities built stadiums and people ran in races such as the "Marathon race between the capital and Jilin," the "Citizen's marathon," the "Fengtian soccer game," and so on. The starting line for such road races was often at a memorial monument of one kind or another. [10]

There was an inseparable relationship between the state foundation and exercise, between politics and sports. To commemorate emperor Puyi's first visit to Japan in April 1935, April 6th was set as national gymnastics day. The next year, May 2nd was designated as Jianguo gymnastics day. There were lectures to spread

Jianguo exercise across the nation. From 1937, the three days of March 1st (state foundation day), May 2nd (Puyi's visit to Japan), and September 18th (the Manchurian Incident) were fixed as "Jianguo gymnastics days." But "Jianguo gymnastics days" could be set at any time. In 1937, the Manchukuo Athletic Association planned to have athletic meetings in the name of "Athletic Manchuria" for one year. In September of the same year, there was "Athletic week" in which a twenty-six kilometer marathon, Jianguo gymnastics, and ball games were held. And in 1939, members of the Concordia Association practiced Jianguo gymnastics for a month. The foundation or reconstruction of the nation was to be manifested through exercise both in Manchukuo and South Korea.

### **Anti-communist Rallies and Others**

South Koreans became sick and tired of anti-communist rallies (bangongdaehue) or "Great gathering for destroying communists" (myulgongdaehue) under Syngman Rhee's and Park Chung Hee's regimes. Old folks and housewives were led by officials of city districts and neighborhood districts, and students led by teachers gathered in great stadiums and shouted anti-communist phrases. Again, the model was Manchukuo. In prewar Japan, of course, there was mass mobilization (through such organizations as the Military reservist association and National youth association). After the

Manchurian Incident, in particular, jingoism spread among news media, magazines, movies, and literature. According to Louise Young, however, neither government repression nor market pressures can entirely explain the enthusiasm in the 1930s. It was voluntary. Journalists of Asahi or Mainichi supported the army, because they had conviction (Young 1998: 79). Also, the main enemy in Japanese society was not necessarily communist Russia (although it may have been for the Japanese army). Hence, there were no anti-communist rallies in Japan. By contrast, there were myriad anti-communist rallies in Manchukuo. Also, Manchukuo had many more occasions for rallies. Manchukuo was a pioneering place of maximum mobilization, summoning people day and night. The fascist gatherings of Germany and Italy flowed to both North Korea and South Korea through Manchukuo.

Initially, rallies in Manchukuo had the theme of "Jianguo" to express sovereignty among the people, although the nation was never recognized by the outside world. To celebrate its foundation in March 1932, citizens of the capital were asked to prepare decorated trains and rickshaws, signboards, air balloons, special lights and ribbons, posters of Jianguo, portraits of Puyi and the so-called founding fathers. Two years later, at Puyi's coronation, citizens were again asked to display flags and hold celebrations, marching in the streets bearing flags. Lantern



processions, street decorations, fireworks, and lectures followed. This was a model for subsequent celebrations that continued for the next fourteen years. In the first year, the celebration for state-foundation spread across the nation. In Harbin, the "Committee for Propagating State-foundation Thought" provided a special week, presaging future campaigns lasting for a week. Citizens were summoned to several "great gatherings" (dahui). In addition to the sports week and ceremony for Confucius and the war dead, they celebrated the New Year, Puyi's birthday (February), the State foundation day (March 1st), Puyi's visit to Japan (May), Commemoration of the Sino-Japanese war (July 7th), Japan's acknowledgement of Manchukuo (September 15th), and Commemoration of the Manchurian Incident (September 18th).

In 1935, more meetings were added such as, those for the first anniversary of Puyi's coronation, his birthday, exhibition for celebrating the coronation, the first state foundation ceremony after the coronation, enshrinement, celebration of his visit to Japan, promulgation of edict after his visit, the first anti-air raid week, national gymnastics day, Puyi's review of the navy, and athletic week. Celebrations continued all year long.

In 1936, "tree-planting day" was added. [11] There were other celebrations such as, those for Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations,

the entry of Japanese soldiers to Manchuria, the visit of Japanese royal family members, and the abolition of Japanese privilege, even one for the founding of the post office. [12]

The year of 1937 saw a long list of gatherings, for instance, those for the abolition of Japanese privilege, the friendship of three countries-Germany, Japan, Manchukuo, "the current emergency situation" after the Sino-Japanese war, the "special week to emphasize national spirit," the "campaign for mobilizing national spirit," and "national flag week".

Also, a great meeting named the "national gathering" (guomin dahui) was introduced for the new war. South Koreans later had gatherings of the same name frequently. Above all, from the beginning of 1937, "anti-communist" (fangong) or "destroy communism" (miegong) national gatherings swept the country. In the city of Jilin, posters of "support the kingly way," "red devil," and "communist party is the enemy of all the races" were written in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean and appeared in the main streets. Anti-communist rallies in Manchukuo could be related with the new situation in the Chinese continent. It would reflect fear of the "united front" between the Chinese communist party and the KMT after the Xian incident at the end of 1936. "Anti-communism" suddenly became an important theme in Manchukuo. The treaties, which Manchukuo signed with Germany, Italy,

and Spain, were called "anti-communist treaties." Anti-communist rallies were sometimes held at the Guandi shrines or were staged by minority people such as Muslims or White Russians. The Manchukuo regime utilized the religions of these minorities to attack the atheism of communism. Harbin, with its large White Russian community, was one of the main stages of anti-communist rallies. [13]

The state foundation day that year had a richer procedure than ever. In the city of Fengtian, almost everything was brought out for this single event. People displayed the national flag, learned the national anthem, and marched the streets, bearing flags. There were decorated trams, automobiles, dropping of leaflets from airplanes, commemorative seminars, a lecture tour, a speech contest, an exhibition, a gymnastics meet, a "religious peoples' great gathering", distribution of newsletters, a party for the elderly, a mourning service for the war dead, etc. This lasted for a week.

1938 was a cruel year for Manchukuoans. Since it was an emergency period (the year following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war), rallies were pursued to the maximum. On New Year's day, people bowed from afar (yohai) to the royal palace (Puyi's residence) in Japanese style. In February, there was an anti-communist rally and a celebration for the national foundation day of Japan. Numerous ceremonies followed. Let me

list the names of those for which Manchukuoans were summoned incessantly. The week from February 26th to March 4th was the "week for spreading state foundation spirit". Several events were held during this week, emphasizing the emergency situation. Two days following this week, the "lecture for citizens" at the ceremony for Confucius was held. At the end of March, there was a joint ceremony for Guandi and Yuefei in several cities. At the beginning of April, there were photo exhibitions across the nation to "celebrate victories" in the China front. The duration of "tree-planting day" increased to four days. At the end of April, there was an enshrining ceremony for Yasukuni and the state funeral for ex-premier Zheng Xiaoxu. One week from April 23rd was "the commemorative week for Puyi's visit to Japan." There were mourning services in various regions, in various times. In May, there were celebrations for the Japanese emperor's birthday, Italian delegate's visit, and five countries' normalization (Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, and Manchukuo).

In June, the "grand state foundation athletic meeting" and anti-communist rally was held. In July, the first anniversary of the "China Incident" (the Sino-Japanese War), the enshrinement of Zheng Xiaoxu, a celebration for the anti-communist bloc, and a national frugality campaign followed. The city of Yanji had a lecture for national spirit every morning from July 1st. In August, there was a mourning service

for the war dead. And in September, there were the "state foundation athletic meeting for the fifth anniversary of Japan's recognition of Manchukuo," an exhibition for victories, and an invocation ceremony for the spirits of the Manchurian Incident. In October, there were the joint athletic meeting, volunteers' gathering, and grand enshrinement ceremony for Yasukuni; in November, there were the praying ceremony for national strength, celebration for the occupation of Hankou, anti-communist week, and anti-air raid practice. Finally, in December, the Jianguo Shrine was completed. The majority of these events would be repeated in the future. In addition, there were the gathering for "reporting of Manchukuo delegates to Europe," national housewives' meeting, national savings campaign, "Asian prosperity" Jianguo exhibition, and "cities' federation for Asian prosperity" gathering.

From 1939, the celebration of Puyi's special edict (promulgated in 1935 after his visit to Japan) was renamed the "national gathering for Asian prosperity." And seven representatives of "Manchukuo, Japan, Tokyo, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Huabei (Northern China), Huazhong (Central China), Huanan (Southern China)" marched together bearing torches and solemnly held a lighting ceremony. Anti-British phrases were highlighted in a national gathering in which "several tens of thousands of people got together" in July. From this year, "Asian prosperity" (xingya) appeared frequently, such as, "Asian

prosperity national gathering," "spirit of Asian prosperity," "Asian prosperity youth camp," "Asian prosperity day," etc. Asian prosperity was, of course, the logical outcome of Asianism, one dimension of the Manchukuo official ideology. It presaged the appearance of the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere," a key term in the Japanese empire with the outbreak of the Pacific War. The Volunteer Army was also organized for the Sino-Japanese War. It had an inauguration ceremony in front of the "Grand State foundation Shrine." The ceremony consisted of hoisting the national flag, bowing to the palace from afar, silent prayer for the war dead (or "the beautiful spirits who founded the state"), a congratulatory speech, three hurrahs, and a closing, most of which would be used for decades to come by the South Koreans. Also noteworthy was a mobilization of Manchukuo youths to be dispatched to the China front. [14]

Students, in addition to attending numerous rallies, held speech contests, slogan writings, and prayers for the soldiers' bravery and safety. In June, 1933, each middle school sent a student to the "Student speech contest to cultivate the state foundation spirit" hosted by the Educational board of Fengtian province. [15] This became a model for subsequent students speech contests in Manchukuo (and in South Korea several decades later); a "Manchukuo-Japan students' speech contest" was also organized. From 1937, the Concordia Association hosted a "youth speech contest" every year. Teachers were also

summoned to the contest to listen to youngsters' speeches, after bowing to the Manchukuo national flag and emperor three times.

As "national gatherings" became customary with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, the rulers of Manchukuo introduced a thrift campaign. The Concordia Association introduced the simple and frugal "Concordia style marriage", while attacking "costly and complicated marriage in traditional style, which was out of step with the current emergency situation." [16] Abolition of waste and useless formalities was the key part of "the total mobilization of national spirit" which was promulgated in January, 1940. On the newly designated "Day for Asian prosperity" (April 3rd), people were asked to abstain from entertainment and liquor and to clean their homes. The day of full mobilization was near at hand. People were exhorted to maintain the spirit of temperance, simplicity, and self-control.

### **Inheritors in the 1970s**

In May, 1975, columns on national security, or "total mobilization and our nation" appeared in newspapers throughout South Korea for a whole month. The Pen Club quickly declared its resolution on national security. With literary people in the lead, there arose a wave of "anti-communist great gatherings" (bangong daehue) across the nation. On May 2nd, "tens of thousands of professors, students, and factory

workers" held great anti-communist gatherings in the big cities of Pusan, Daegu, Kwangju, Ulsan, etc. Ex-policemens' Association and ex-congressmen's association announced resolutions on the same day. [17] The Farmers' Association, the Businessmen's Association, and the Association of Immigrants from North Korea followed. Furthermore, thirty-eight associations, including the Veterans' Association, created "the National Council for Total Security." "One and a half million citizens" held great gatherings for "citizens' unity for security" in Pusan, Chinju, Daegu, Chunju, and Chungju. Intellectuals also joined in this wave. Professors of Soongjun University, Aju Engineering College, Sungkyunkwan University, Sogang University, and Sookmyung Womens' University announced resolutions. "Forty thousand students" from Seoul National University, Yonsei University, and Korea University were reported to have held gatherings "for national security" and a ceremony for burning an effigy of Kim Il Sung at the stake. [18]

On May 11th, 1975, "one million four hundred thousand citizens" of Seoul gathered at Yuydo plaza for the same theme and had the same burning ceremony. Someone wrote such characters as "national security" and "anti-communism" with his own blood by cutting his fingers. With this wave, the government promulgated the notorious "Emergency Act 9" to prohibit accusation or even discussion of the

Yushin Constitution which guaranteed the life term of president Park Chung Hee. Students' involvement in politics, spreading of rumors, even heralding of such matters by the news agencies, were banned. Newspapers reporting such matters could be closed. A previously unheard of organization named, "the P.T.A of Seoul National University" also announced its concern about student involvement in politics. And there began the notorious "fundraising for national security," which would last for nearly two decades. Students, citizens, and businessmen were all required to donate money for the national defense. It was an informal tax. Students at high school and college levels were organized into Students' National Defense Units. Schools, essentially, became military camps, whereby a representative of students was called a "commander" of the unit. The Confucian ideology of loyalty and filiality (choong-hyo) was endorsed with verve and enthusiasm. It became almost the state slogan. Huge stones with the same characters carved in them were being placed in plazas and parks across the nation. Most of the carvings were copied from the president's calligraphy.

The above story is not about Manchukuo in the 1930s, but about South Korea in the mid-1970s after the so-called Indo-China shock. The South Vietnam government backed by the U. S. surrendered to Communist Vietnam on May 1st. Neighboring Laos fell on May 13th. This shocked

the so-called free world, but South Korean leaders converted it into a crisis in order to strengthen their authoritarian regime and to attack dissidents. South Korea formed a heavily militarized garrison state. In the 1970s, pedestrians had to stop at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, while the national anthem was loudly broadcast throughout the country at the ceremony of the lowering of the national flag at every office and school. People stood still to hear the song and "the oath to the national flag." Also, Park heavily patronized the cult of Admiral Yi who, according to Korean official historiography, drove out the Japanese Navy at Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion at the end of the 16th century. His statues or monuments stood not only at school grounds, but also at the entrance of most mountains. The admiral's statue (and stature) embodied the Korean version of the ideals of Confucius, Guandi, Yuefei, and the anonymous war dead in Manchukuo. No country in the world could so precisely replicate the disciplining methods of the Manchukuo state as that of Park's regime. It covered a wide range of "national gathering," mourning ceremonies, monuments for the war dead, student speech contests, slogan making, marches, great gatherings including anti-communist rallies, gymnastics, catch phrases of "construction" or "reconstruction," "total security," and "total mobilization."

**Manchukuo as a Land of Opportunity**

After Korean historian Shin Chaeho extended the national space of Korea to Manchuria in the early 20th century, the lands of Manchuria came into Korean nationalist historiography and historical consciousness. [19] However, inquiry concerning Manchuria in the colonial period was long discouraged by the postliberation regimes of South Korea. Manchuria was an epistemological vacuum. In this vacuum, Manchuria remained mysterious. The life history of some famous figures stopped there, and President Park's biographies, which stated that "he went to Manchuria with a big, blue dream in his youth," were silent about that youth (Cho 1998: 101). Manchuria was a blank sheet in which something could be written. Hence, politicians in the 1950s and 1960s described their past as anti-Japanese fighters in Manchuria. Actually, most Korean fighters were rooted out in the late 1920s before the founding of Manchukuo. The number of anti-Japanese forces in Manchukuo (categorized as "bandits" by the regime) had decreased to several hundred in the late 1930s (Coox 1989: 413; Kato 1989: 98). The Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army, the last anti-Japanese force, was hunted down in the winter of 1939 and almost demolished in February, 1940 (Jiang et al 1980: 528).

After Manchukuo was founded, it became a land of opportunity for many Koreans. The number of Korean immigrants from 1932 to 1940 is estimated to be about seven hundred and twenty

thousand (Kim 1994: 10). In the Korean newspapers in the 1930s, Manchuria was presented as an exit from a crowded Korea, which further induced immigration. [20] Some Koreans became low ranking policemen (Jones 1949: 69). Many who later would become leaders in many fields of South Korea, spent their youth in Manchukuo. Even some respected nationalist intellectuals chose Manchukuo for their new (collaborating) lives. For instance, Choe Nam Sun, the famous poet who wrote the Declaration of Independence for the 1919 March First Independence Movement, taught at Jianguo University (Allen 1990: 788).

Three ex-presidents of South Korea experienced Manchukuo. Park Chung Hee was an officer in the Manchukuo Army and Choe Kyu Ha had a temporary position in the Manchukuo government. The extremely impoverished Chun Doo Hwan family also crossed the border for a better life. Kim Il Sung, the North Korean leader, was a cadre of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army, while Park served on the opposite side in Manchukuo (Suh 1988: 20). Indeed, Manchukuo incubated the leadership of both Koreas.

It was in the South Korean Army that those who had been to Manchukuo rose conspicuously after the liberation. Korean officers of the Manchukuo Army comprised the nucleus of the South Korean Army in the 1950s and supported Park's military

coup in 1961. [21] They had witnessed historical incidents in Manchukuo. Examples were the revolt of the Kwantung Army against Tokyo (staging the Manchurian Incident), the state-led industrialization, bandit suppression, and mass mobilization. While the technique of bandit suppression was inherited by the Syngman Rhee regime, [22] all the rest became the hallmark of Park's regime, which may be summarized as constructing a state so strong as to assure rapid industrialization without hindrance and to domesticate its subjects in a military style. Park's coup truly signaled the advent of Manchurians in South Korea. [23] A critical ideologue linking both regimes was Yi Sun Kun, who was in charge of military historiography and propaganda for Rhee and launched a "national education campaign" and Hwarang ideology for Park. [24] He had been a Korean of the Concordia Association in Binjiang province in Manchukuo (Im 2001: 177).

## Conclusion

Manchukuo was a great laboratory. The various experiments of Manchukuo were the product of rapid state making. The secret lay in the fact that it inherited much of the past. It borrowed much material from an old state, copying the blue print of the Meiji state (itself, influenced by the contents of the German state). It also became a model for Korean states after liberation. The Manchukuo state, in a sense, links West and East,

past and future, in East Asia.

We are reminded of Homi Bhabha's dictum that colonizers raised "almost the same but not quite" subjects (Bhabha 1994: 89). Those Koreans who went to Manchukuo in the 1930s later, almost perfectly imitated the disciplining whip of the regime in many realms, including Jaegun gymnastics. Then, what is the "not quite" part? Jaegun (reconstruction of nation, the key term for the Park regime, and the name of Park's junta right after his coup) was a slight modification of Jianguo (construction of the nation, the Manchukuo catch phrase). There might be other differences such as that between the cult of Admiral Yi in South Korea and that of Guandi, and Yuefei in Manchukuo. There could well be others. This would suggest a direction for the comparative study of Japanese colonialism in the future, that is, the study of difference- not just the common points- of the empire. It also would include the influence not only between the metropolis and its peripheries, but also among peripheries. It also might cover the flow of ideas and institutions among peripheries not only in the colonial period, but also in the post-colonial era.

## Notes

\* Special thanks to Alexis Dudden who read and gave valuable comments to this paper.

[1] Manzhouguo zhengfu gongbao (hereafter

GB), 4, 5, 16 May 1932.

[2] Ito Hirobumi, the architect of the Meiji state, even imported many of the interior decorations for the Throne Room from Germany when building the new palace in 1888 (Fujitani 1996: 77-79).

[3] In addition to the kingly way, there were the "racial harmony" and the "state foundation spirit". The latter was no less important than the kingly way. About its official ideology, see my work (in Positions, forthcoming).

[4] The Minister of Education awarded the commendations based on reports from the governors and mayors. GB, 20 February 1933.

[5] Shenjing shibao (hereafter SJ ), 2 September 1939.

[6] SJ, 8 March 1935; 1 March 1936.

[7] SJ, 16 September 1940.

[8] SJ, 20 October 1938.

[9] Its remake is being played even today in military camps.

[10] SJ, 24 June 1937.

[11] In April, after a brief ceremony for the "great greening campaign," officials and citizens planted trees throughout whole regions. At the ceremony, the Guomindang government was accused of deforestation. The official message that "the deep forest of the Qing dynasty was devastated during the Republican era" was delivered. SJ, 21 April 1937.

[12] SJ, 9 June 1936, 27 July 1936.

[13] In Harbin, May 1st was designated as "anti-

communist day" in 1940. SJ, 4 May 1940.

[14] SJ, 1 May 1939.

[15] SJ, 1 June 1933.

[16] SJ, 25 October 1939.

[17] Chosun Ilbo, 2 May 1973.

[18] Ibid., 3 May 1973.

[19] About Sin and the rediscovery of Manchuria, see Schmid 1997.

[20] For instance, a special column titled as, "Manchuria and Korean Farmers" appeared for several months in a Korean newspaper in the 1930s. Maeil Shinbo, June to September 1936.

[21] Men from the Manchurian clique held the highest positions of the Korean Army in the 1950s: the Chief of the General staff, the Commander of the 1st Army, the Commander of the 2nd Army (Han 2001: 243).

[22] The Syngman Rhee regime, confronting the thorny problem of leftist guerrilla activity in many regions at its foundation, presumably preferred officers from Manchukuo who had experience in bandit suppression.

[23] It is ironic that the so-called Manchurian clique of both Korea and Japan met each other in their 1965 normalization. The so-called Kishi mafia, or the Manchurian clique in the prewar Japanese politics was involved in the normalization of Korea and Japan in 1965 (Johnson 1982: 1312; Halliday and McCormack 1973: particularly, chapter 5). The Japanese foreign minister in charge of normalization was Shiina Etsaburo, Kishi's right hand man.

[24] Hwarang is said to have been in a young



fighting unit in the Shilla dynasty who, according to Korean official historiography, sacrificed their lives in the unification war in the 7th century. It became a model for cadets of the South Korean Military Academy (and every youngster in Park's reign). A central building of the academy is called "Hwarangdae." Since the capital of the Shilla kingdom was located near Park's hometown, Hwarang ideology is very regionally biased. This is one example of Yi Sun Kun's achievements.

#### REFERENCES

- Allen, Chizuko, "Northeast Asia Centered Around Korea: Ch'e Namson's View of History." *Journal of Asian Studies* 49. 4.
- Armstrong, Charles. 1997. "Surveillance and Punishment in Postliberation North Korea." In *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, ed. Tani Barlow. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bhabha, Homi. 1994. *Location of Culture*. N.Y.: Routledge.
- Cho, Kap-Je. 1998. *Naemudume Chimul Batara (Spit on my grave)*. Vol. 2. Seoul: Chosunilbo Press.?
- Coox, Alvin. 1989. "The Kwantung Army Dimension." In *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Corrigan, Philip and Derek Sayer. 1985. *The Great Arch: The English State Formation as Cultural Revolution*. N.Y.: Basil Blackwell.
- Cumings, Bruce. 1981. *The Origins of the Korean War*. Vol. 1. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1993. "The Corporate State." in Hagen Koo (ed.), *State and Society in Contemporary Korea*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Duara, Prasenjit. 1997. "Transnationalism and the Predicament of Sovereignty: China, 1900-1945." *American Historical Review* 102.
- Fujitani, Takashi. 1996. *Splendid Monarchy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gerschenkron, Alexander. 1966. *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Halliday, Jon and Gavan McCormack. 1973. *Japanese Imperialism Today*. N.Y.: Monthly Review Press.
- Han, Hong-Ku. 2001. "Daehanminkukemichin manjukukuy yusan" (The Legacy of Manchukuo to the Republic of Korea). *Journal of Chinese Historical Researches* 16.
- Han, Suk-Jung. 2004. "The Problem of Sovereignty: Manchukuo, 1932-1937." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 12. 2.
- Im, Sung-Mo. 2001. "Ilbonjekukjuuywa manjukuk" (Japanese imperialism and Manchukuo). *Journal of Korean Nationalist Movement* 27.
- Jiang, Niantong et al. 1980. *Weimanzhouguoshi (The history of the puppet Manchukuo)*.

- Jilin: Renmin chubanshe.
- Johnson, Chalmers. 1982. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Jones, F. C. 1949. *Manchuria since 1931*. N.Y.: Oxford University Press.
- Kato, Yutaka. 1989. *Manshukoku geisatsu shoshi* (The history of Manchukuo police). Tokyo: Daiichi hoki shuppansha.
- Kim, Ki-hoon. 1994. "1930nyundae iljeuy chosunin manju yujungchaek" (The Japanese policy of Korean migration in the 1930s) (unpublished).
- Maeil Shinbo (Maeil Daily). Seoul.
- Manzhouguo zhengfu gongbao (The Manchukuo government gazette). Xinjing.
- McCormack, Gavan. 1991. "Manchukuo: Constructing the Past." *East Asian History* 2.
- Meyer, John. 1999. "The Changing Cultural Content of the Nation-State." In *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Norman, E. H. 1940. *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State: Political and Economic Problems of the Meiji Period*. N.Y.: Institute of Pacific Relations.
- Pyle, Kenneth. 1974. "Advantage of Followship: German Economics and Japanese Bureaucrats, 1890-1925." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 1, 1.
- Raeff, Marc. 1983. *The Well-ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Schmid, Andre. 1997. "Rediscovering Manchuria: Sin Ch'aeho and the Politics of Territorial History in Korea." *Journal of Asian Studies* 56, no. 1.
- Shengjing shibao (Shengjing Daily). Fengtian.
- Suh, Dae-Sook. 1988. *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader*. N.Y.: Columbia University Press.
- Young, Louise. 1998. *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Suk-Jung Han teaches at Dong-a University. This is a streamlined version of an article that appeared in Mariko Tamanoi, ed. Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire* ([http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0824828720/qid=1121089579/sr=8-1/ref=sr\\_8\\_xs\\_ap\\_i1\\_xgl14/103-7362169-5355060?v=glance&s=books&n=507846](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0824828720/qid=1121089579/sr=8-1/ref=sr_8_xs_ap_i1_xgl14/103-7362169-5355060?v=glance&s=books&n=507846)), Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005. Posted at Japan Focus July 10, 2005.