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Traditional Korean Law and Its Modernization

by Prof. CHOI Chongko

I. INTRODUCTION

There may be some, who wonder whether Korea is always a country of political clashes or is really a state with law. They might also ask, “Is there law in Korea? If Korean law does exist, what is it, and how does it compare with other legal traditions and world legal cultures? What was traditional Korean law and how has it been modernized? What is the present situation of law and legal science in Korea?” I will try to answer, taking a broad perspective. As you know, law is a specific and sometimes technical subject to handle. Since I am a legal historian, who teaches the history of legal thoughts at a college of law in Korea, I wish to tackle this problem from the historical point of view on the one hand and give a general description of the present Korean situation on the other hand, while focusing on the reception of western law as follows:

1) traditional jurisprudence, or Yulhak
2) early contacts with western legal science through Shilhak, the practical learning, school
3) access to international law
4) the roles of western legal consultants in Korea
5) reception of western law from American, French, and German laws and legal sciences.

Finally, I will describe the present situation of Korean legal culture and discuss the problem of the legal consciousness of Koreans and the problem of law and social development in Korea.1

II. YULHAK: KOREAN TRADITIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

In the traditional society of Korea, there have been, of course, laws
written in codes; like *Kyŏngje yugwŏn* (Six Division Code for Administration, 1397), *Kyŏngguk taejŏn* (Grand Code for Ruling the State, 1471), *Sŏktaejŏn* (Supplementary Grand Code, 1746), *Taejŏnt’ongp’yŏn* (Great Code for Ruling the State, 1785), *Taejŏnhoet’ong* (Grand Code for Ruling the State, 1865).

But as indicated aptly by Max Weber, the dominance of the cultured literati prevented the formation of the lawyer class (Juristenstand) in the Orient and thus made it impossible for jurisprudence to develop as an independent discipline. Traditional Jurisprudence, *Yulhak* (律學), existed in Korea throughout the Three Kingdoms, Koryo Dynasty, and Choson Dynasty (till 1910), but was always regarded as one branch of Technical Learning or Miscellaneous Learning, like medicine, arithmetic or divination, as inferior to Confucian Scriptural Learning. *Yulhak* was not taught at Sŏnggyunkwan, the leading national academy, but at the Ministry of Punishment as a technical subject in order to train its officials on a small scale. The executive and the judiciary were not separated from each other; as a result, administrators such as governors and county chiefs were empowered to administer justice, while *Yulhak* graduates merely assisted in the process of trial. The law was always utilized by the ruling *yanghan* (nobility) class as a tool of political rule. Even though there was some technical development of the criminal code, civil and commercial laws remained as customary law. As the law was regarded as a collection of samples showing the conduct of royal ancestors (*Chojongsŏnghŏn*, 祖宗成憲), older codes actually regulated a newly proposed code, quite unlike those in the West. Legal affairs thus remained stagnant in Korea until the latter half of the 19th century. The traditional Korean legal theory was strongly based on Confucian ethics and state ideology. Koreans regarded the law not as a purpose but as a means to realize morals. They typically said, “Morality is the main point, law is subsidiary” (禮主法從), “Virtue works, punishment helps” (德主刑輔). Because Confucianism contains basically a humanistic element, it could make reference to law and politics, while Buddhism has remained remote from public life. Law was associated with the concept of punishment rather than with the concept of rights or protection. One was never protected by law; one was exploited by it. The Confucian law was hierarchical, so equality under the law was unknown. The Confucian emphasis was on “*li*” (禮) or rules of polite behavior. If I may visualize the law and morals in the Confucian society as follows, it
seems quite different from monism or from the dualism of law and morality in Western countries.

My thesis is: because "li" was developed excessively in Korean history, law and morality could not develop independently. We see so many books on li doctrines (禮學書), while there have been few books on law (律學書) in traditional Korean society.

Because I have no time to explain more about traditional law, I would like to refer you to three excellent books about that. Hahm Pyong Choon's The Korean Political Tradition and Law (1976) and his posthumously published work, Korean Jurisprudence, Politics and Culture (1986) and William Shaw's book, Legal Norms in a Confucian State (1984).^4

III. Early Contacts with Western Law

Korea's first contact with Western law was through China in the 17th century by Korean scholars who formed the School of Practical Learning (Sihak, 實學). Korean envoys to the Chinese court brought back with them from Peking the so-called Books of Western Learning (Hanyak Sohaksŏ, 漢譯西學書), which were translated or authored by Catholic missionaries. The Korean scholars at the time did not study the books to learn Western law seriously but rather to satisfy their curiosity about Western Learning (Catholicism) and to criticize it.

Although it is difficult to compile an accurate list of Western books translated into Chinese which were brought to Korea at the time, it can be presumed that they covered a considerable variety of subjects and thereby exerted some influence on Korean society and thought in the succeeding years.

The books which introduced Western law were Sŏhak Pŏm (西學凡, 1623) and Chikpang Oegi (職方外紀, 1623) authored by Julius Aleni (1582-1649), an Italian Jesuit priest in China. Chikpang Oegi, in introducing the institutions and geographical features of various countries, sought to correct the Sinocentric world view of Chinese scholars who knew nothing
about the world outside their "Celestial Empire" and referred to the academic system of Europe. **Sŏhak Pŏm**, consisting of thirty three pages, introduced the university curriculum and contents of teaching of the West, which were divided into six fields: Rhetorica (文科), Philosophia (理科), Medicina (医科), Leges (法科), Canones (教科) and Theologia (道科). He defined Leges as an important discipline which deals with life and death of both the spirit and the body and admonished that judicial officers, whose mission was to embody Providence and justice, should pattern themselves after saints and sages and become well-versed in the classics. He then explained that only those who mastered philosophy were taught jurisprudence and were required to pass rigorous examinations to become judicial officers in the West.

*Chikpang Oegi* was introduced to Korea by the Korean envoy Chong Tu-Won (1581–?) in 1631, eight years after its publication. The first instance in which **Sŏhak Pŏm** was mentioned in Korean writing appears in the collection of Yi Ka-Hwan, who was killed in the Catholic persecution of 1801. The books which introduced Western law had a significant impact upon Korea’s traditional Confucian jurisprudence which was based on the principle of respecting the codes enacted and transmitted by ancestors (*Chojongsonghŏn-juŭi*, 祖宗成憲主義), Quite expectedly, Korean intellectuals of the 17th and 18th Centuries criticized and opposed "Catholic/ Western" jurisprudence.

Sin Hu-dam (1702–1761), a Korean Confucian scholar, read these Western books and wrote **Sŏhak Pyŏn** (西學辨), a lengthy dissertation criticizing Western Learning. On the basis of Confucian theory, Sin asserted that Western Learning is false from the outset by placing emphasis only on trivial subjects according to its erroneous educational principles and by adapting itself to practical life. He criticized Western Learning on three points: 1) Western universities, despite their mission to help students who complete primary and secondary courses and cultivate their virtue to perfection, taught only “ignoble techniques”; 2) law departments in Western universities did not profess that both law and politics find their origin in Enlightenment and that morality does not separate the two; 3) university graduates, who were victimized by these inadequacies of Western education, were assigned to technical duty through examinations. Such criticisms of professional Western legal education stemmed naturally from the Confucian educational ideology that respected general cultivation of a *Kunja* (君子, Gentleman) style of life.

The next step in the reception of Western jurisprudence was taken by
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Japan in the 1880s. Japan at the time, amidst the Meiji Restoration, was very eager to imitate the Western legal system — the German model, in particular.\(^5\)

In June 1880, Kim Hongjip (1841–1896), the Korean envoy to Japan, proposed to King Kojong that Korea open itself up to the rest of the world. King Kojong, inspired by this advice, ordered a group named the Gentlemen-Tourist-Group (Sinse Yuramdan, 紳士遊覧団) of twelve members formed. The Group, whose duty was to observe Japanese society and study its culture, left for Japan on February 9, 1881. One of the members, Om Saeyong, was designated to visit the Japanese Ministry of Justice and observe the legal culture of Japan. After his return to Korea, Om authored a book entitled Ilbon Kyonmun Sagŏncho (日本見聞事件草, My Observations on Japanese Things), and a report on the Japanese Ministry of Justice, entitled Ilbon Sapoŋsong Sichalki (日本司法省視察記). In these publications, the extent to which Om and his colleagues witnessed Japan and its legal culture becomes evident. Om translated almost all the contemporary laws of Japan, including the Japanese Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Law and many administrative statutes. Om and the other Group members, however, did not dare to assert that Korea should reform its traditional laws and system as Japan had done by imitating a Western model. On the contrary, they criticized the Japanese “reception of Western laws and civilization without critical evaluation”. Such critical reports on Japan only helped discourage King Kojong from reforming Korea’s traditional laws.\(^6\)

In summary, Korea did not receive, in the real sense of “reception”, Western jurisprudence and a legal system from either China or Japan. The process of introduction of Western law into Korea could more appropriately be called “counter-reception” (Gegenrezeption) or “pre-reception (Frührezeption) to use the terminology of Western legal history.

IV. THE ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL LAW

In the latter half of the 19th Century, Koreans made direct and voluntary contact with Western law. Yu Kil-chun (1856–1914), one of the Korean pioneers in the School of Enlightenment, studied at Keio University in Japan from 1881 under Yukichi Fukuzawa (1835–1901), an Enlightenment thinker, and also at Dummer Academy in the United States from 1883 to 1885 under Professor Edward S. Morse (1838–1925). His book Sōyu Kyonmun (西遊見聞, 1895) which he spent six years in writing after
his return to Korea, introduced Western civilization and a wide variety of subjects for the first time, including the Western concepts of state, law, rights, and liberty.

Sŏ Chae-pil (Philip Jaisohn, 1866–1951) began to study medicine in 1883 at La Fayette University and then at Washington University; he returned home in 1896. Having intended to study jurisprudence originally, he remained interested in law. As a consultant to the Korean government, he strove for national enlightenment, founded the Independence Club, and published the newspaper *Tongnip Sinmun* (The Independent), through which he endeavored to enlighten the Korean people on Western democracy and its rational legal system.\(^7\)

The first Korean to study law in Europe was Hong Chong-u (1854–?). His passport, issued in 1887, indicated that he was about to travel to France to study jurisprudence. Hong arrived in Paris on December 24, 1890. It is not certain, however, to what extent he studied French law during the three years he spent in France. Hong did not return home directly but stayed in Japan for some time. In Shanghai, on May 22, 1894, he is known to have assassinated Kim, Ok-kyun (1851–1894), leader of the Enlightenment Party. Unfortunately, it is not certain what role he played afterwards in the modernization of Korean law. He is known, ironically, to have obstructed activities of reformists in various ways.

In March 1895, a group of Koreans, including Yi Myon-u, Chang To, Hong Chae-gi, and Yu Mun-hwan, went to Japan to study law, for the first time with government scholarships. Most of them studied at Keio University and, upon returning home, became judges, prosecutors or professors at the Judicial Officer Training Institute (法官養成所).\(^8\)

The Western world’s concepts of international law most significantly affected the traditional Korean legal system and Korean way of thinking. Technology and international law, Professor Hahm Pyong-choon stated,\(^9\) were the two evident characteristics of Western civilization that fascinated the Oriental people. International law, known to have been “a public law common to all nations (*Man’guk Kongpŏp*, 萬國公法 )”, perplexed and threatened the Korean officials, who did not even know what a treaty or sovereignty was, due to Korea’s national policy that had long isolated her from foreign nations.

The first Western law books introduced to East Asia were translations done by William A.P. Martin (1827–1916), an American missionary active China.\(^10\) The first was *Man’guk Kongpŏp* (萬國公法 , 1841), a
translation into Chinese of Henry Wheaton's *Elements of International Law* (Philadelphia, 1836). *Kongpŏp Pyollam* (公法便覧, 1877) was also a translation into Chinese of Theodore D. Woolsey's, *Introduction to the Study of International Law* (N.Y., 1906). *Kongpŏp Hoetong* (公法會通, 1880) was again a translation into Chinese of Johann C. Bluntschli's, *Das Moderne Völkerrecht der Civilisierten Staaten als Rechtsbuch dargestellt* (Nördlingen, 1867). These three books on international law were immediately brought to Japan and marked the beginning of modern Japanese jurisprudence.

These three books on international law were presumably introduced to Korea directly from China. Although when the books were brought to Korea is not certain, it is known that on May 9, 1896, immediately after the Kabo Reform, Bluntschli’s book was printed by the Ministry of Education in three volumes following the Chinese text with a foreword by Yi Kyong-sik, the Ministry’s Director of Publications, and the copies were distributed among the monarch and ministers. This was the first Western law book in Korea, and it is presumed that terms such as “public law common to all nations”, which are found frequently in documents of that time, were derived from this book.

On October 25, 1897, King Kojong changed the name of the country to the Taehan Empire, enthroned himself as emperor, and proclaimed independence from China as the suzerain. In order to make the image of Korea one of a constitutional monarchy, he promulgated a constitution in August 1899. The first modern constitution of this country consisted of nine articles:

**Article 1:** The Taehan Empire shall be an autonomous and independent empire to be recognized officially by all nations of the world.

**Article 2:** The Taehan Empire shall be governed by the autocracy which has been handed down from generation to generation for 500 years and which shall be immutable forever.

**Article 3:** The Emperor of the Taehan Empire shall enjoy boundless sovereign powers and embody the right to define the Constitution as referred to in the public law. (I omit the following six articles.)

**Article 4:** Subjects of the Taehan Empire shall not violate the sovereign powers enjoyed by the Emperor without being blamed as being inconsistent with reason.

**Article 5:** The Emperor of the Taehan Empire shall command the army and navy of the country, regulate their organization, and declare or
lift martial law.

Article 6: The Emperor of the Taehan Empire shall enact laws, order their promulgation and execution, amend domestic laws in accordance with the legal codes common to all nations, mitigations, and reinstatements, and represent the right to legislate on his own authority as referred to in public law.

Article 7: The Emperor of the Taehan Empire shall institute or revise the organization of all executive agencies and the salary scale of civil officials, issue various imperial ordinances necessary for public administration, and represent self-governing and self-regulation as referred to in public law.

Article 8: The Emperor of the Taehan Empire shall appoint or dismiss civil and military officials, confer or rescind peerages, decorations, and other honors, and exercise free will to choose public officials as referred to in public law.

Article 9: The Emperor of the Taehan Empire shall dispatch to and station his envoys in countries with which the empire has entered into treaties, declare war, make peace, conclude various treaties, and exercise the right to send envoys of his own accord.

According to an analysis by Dr. Chun Bong-duck, a legal historian, this constitution was strikingly similar to the contents of Bluntschli’s book.\(^{12}\) The similarity suggests European legal theories’ strong influence on the Korean government through the publication of Kongpǒp Hoetong, (Bluntschli’s book), and a remarkable achievement in Korea’s reception of Western law. Suddenly and seemingly accidentally, the process of receiving Western law in Korea was speedy; Westerners could hardly imagine how immediate and broad the reception was. A book authored by a German scholar of international law helped formulate the basis of the first constitution of a country thousands of miles away.

V. THE ROLES OF WESTERN LEGAL CONSULTANTS

The third impetus for promoting contact with Western law, in addition to direct contacts and translations, came from Western lawyers who worked in Korea. It is well-known that a significant number of Western jurists, among them A. Moss, G. E. Boissonade and H. Roesler, contributed to the development of Meiji legislation in Japan.

The first Western legal consultant who came to Korea was a German
named Paul Georg von Möllendorff (穆麟德, 1847–1901).13 Having majored in law and Oriental studies at Halle University, he worked in China as a customs officer and, at the recommendation of Li Hung-chang, known as “the Bismarck of the Orient”, came to Korea towards the end of 1882 to assume the post of legal consultant for diplomatic and customs affairs. Until 1885, while he held posts in the port customs offices, he earned for himself the nickname, “Mok Champan” (Vice Minister Möllendorff 穆榮判) and exercised immense power; his multilateral activities extended to all segments of Korea’s national administration and focused on its legal system. Nevertheless, one could not expect Möllendorff, officially a consultant to the monarch and a close friend of conservative politicians, to effect a resolute legal reform or make contributions to Korean jurisprudence. We can find his ideas for reform of Korea only in Die Reorganisation Koreas (1897), a memorandum which he wrote later in China.

Owen N. Denny (德尼 1838–1900), a former judge from the United States, replaced Möllendorff as a consultant to the Korean government.14 Denny stayed in Korea for four years from 1886. He was the first foreigner to assert, in his booklet, China and Korea (清韓論 1888) that Korea was not a vassal state of China from the point of international law but was undoubtedly an independent country. This assertion, announced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Mitchell, was recorded in the American Congressional Record. Möllendorff, in China, wrote a refutation to Denny’s assertion; the argument between the two became the first discussion of Korea-China relations viewed from the perspective of international law. The next notable figure in Korea was Charles W. LeGendre (李善得, 1830–1899), a French American, who was legal consultant to the Korean Ministry of Home Affairs from 1890 until his death in 1899. His successor, William Sands (山島, 1875-?), also an American, wrote the autobiographical book Undiplomatic Memories (London, rep. Seoul, 1975), which contains many interesting episodes about the diplomatic world of Korea at that time. C. R. Greathouse (具禮 1845–1899), an American jurist, worked in Korea as a legal consultant to the Ministry of Home Affairs from 1890 until his death in 1899 and was buried along with LeGendre at the Foreigners Cemetery in Seoul. Laurent Crémazy (金雅趾, 1837-?), a French jurist and pupil of Boisonade, worked in Korea from 1900 to 1905 as a consultant to the Ministry of Justice and as a lecturer at the Judicial Officer Training Institute; during his stay in Korea he trans-
lated the Korean penal code into French and published it under the title, Foreign legal consultants working in Korea were fewer than and generally inferior in quality to their counterparts in Japan.\textsuperscript{15} Due to certain complications, the Korean government, moreover, could not adhere to the advice of the Western legal consultants fully. Korea was entering an unstable period of history. In September 1904, with the takeover by the Japanese consultants of important positions in each ministry of the Korean government, Korea's initial efforts to receive Western law were replaced by her obligation to follow Japanese law.

VI. DIRECTIONS OF RECEPTION

Turning to the stages of receiving Western laws in Korea, we can identify three phases: 1) American law, 2) French law, and 3) German law.\textsuperscript{16}

Although Anglo-American legal thought was widely introduced, it could not be realized in Korean legislation and legal science. There were two main reasons: the first is the inherent character of Anglo-American law, which does not consist of written legal codes but of case law or judge-made law. Such case law is easily developed only in the proper legal culture of England and America, and seems vague without corresponding legal theories and standards of interpretation in foreign countries.

The second reason was the severing of relationships between Korea and America due to the intervention of Japan. America gave up Korea with the secret bargain between Taft and Gazura under the auspices of Theodore Roosevelt. America welcomed the "modernization of Korean law by the Japanese", which was mainly propaganda to camouflage Japanese imperialistic expansion in Korea.

The next yearning toward Western law in Korea was toward French law. As in Meiji Japan, French legal thought began to have considerable influence in Korea after 1886. The French-Korean treaty was not entered into until that year, because the Korean government feared the spiritual influence of Catholicism, which had been spread mainly by French missionaries from the second half of the 18th century. French law did not have a continuous impact in Korea because of the dwindling power of France in Korea after the 1890s.

Korean access to German law was mediated by the growing power of Japan in Korea. Japan had, as is well known, already experienced almost
the same course, that is, from Anglo-American through French to German law reception. Japanese legislation of civil and penal codes was based in the long run on the German BGB (Civil Code) and StGB (Penal Code). German legal thought appeared to Koreans rather authoritative and conservative, not liberal or progressive, but her success in the Prussia-France War (1870–1871) made a powerful impression on Koreans. The Korean Government like Germany developed a strong yearning toward nation building. Books about the Franco-Prussian War and about the life of Friedrich the Great of Prussia were popular among the Korean people. If we look at the articles on legal topics in magazines and newspapers of the time, we find many news items and explanations of German things.

The German-Korean kinship in law, molded by the Japanese, remained uniquely strong even after the national liberation in 1945. Hans Kelsen and Gustav Radbruch have been best known as the main German scholars in Korean legal philosophy. Since 1945 about fifty Korean jurists have attained doctoral degrees (doctor juris utrisque) from German universities.

The Deutsch-Koreanische Juristengesellschaft (Korean-German Association for Legal Science) was founded in 1976 and publishes the magazine *Handok Pohak* (Recht in Deutschland und Korea). Though the three year U.S. military government from 1945 through 1948 “Americanized” Korea in many aspects, Korean legal culture remains uniquely pro-German. Korean law students nowadays learn almost all the German legal theories and the names of the German legal scholars.

Therefore, it can also be inferred that Korean legal culture has a dual character of German legal theory and Americanized social reality. Needless to say, this discrepancy is a stumbling block to the development of Korean legal culture.

Nowadays, Korean law schools are trying to introduce the American case-method in their curricula. The Korean Legal Center (法學院), which was founded with the help of the American Bar Association in 1953, offers some programs to broaden the knowledge of Koreans about American law. I can use in this sense the expression “Korean legal culture has German bones and American flesh”.

VII. RECEPTION AS PROBLEM AND TASK

Now I would like to sketch the present situation and climate of Korean law and legal science. Although the imported legal system has become effective within a relatively short time, the reality of Korean society is not really westernized. Sociological surveys still reveal the mixture of traditional and modernized legal consciousness of Koreans. The most important single study made of attitudes towards law in Korea was carried out by Hahm Pyong-Choon in 1964. In this study, he selected a random sample of 1,301 persons throughout the country.

In general, Hahm’s evidence demonstrates that there is considerable reluctance on the part of citizens to resort to law to solve pressing problems under any circumstances. For example, only 32.22% said they would go to court to settle a family problem which could not otherwise be resolved by family, clan, or other form of conciliation. In accordance with the Confucian ethical background of the co-mingling of law and morality, law is also tempered by social and ethical factors: the relative social or economic status of the people involved, and the Confucian norms of behavior. In picking the better person between a filial law-breaker and an unfilial law-abider, 41.76% picked the filial law-breaker as the better person while 33.22% picked the law-abiding person. In questions of adultery, 51.38% felt the woman was more to blame, while only 8.3% felt the man was more to blame. If a destitute family illegally builds a shack on another’s land, 80.25% would let them stay, and only 7.15% would force them to leave. If the land was needed, and the family refused to move, only 14.76% would resort to the law, while 40.68% would give the family money to move. Social justice was deemed more important than law.

There is also considerable reluctance to consult the police and blame or take action against the government. Only 56.91% would inform the police if they saw someone stealing, and that figure dropped to 30.91% if it was a poor man on the verge of starvation stealing from a rich man. However, 73.75% would inform the police if murder was about to be committed. In a case in which, in the American context, the state was clearly to blame for an unrepaired bridge, constructed by public funds, which caused injury to a citizen, 73.75% of the people said that it was the fault of the person who got hurt.

Hahm concludes that the rural sector is the most alegal and accepting element in the population as one might expect, that the metropolitan pop-
ulation (Seoul) is more legally oriented, and that the urban provincial is prone to compromise. While we have noted the religious origins within law in the West, Christianity in Korea seems to make no substantial difference in attitudes. Christian respondents indicated little difference from the general population in respect to their views towards law, although there was some indication that they were a little more conscious of their rights as individuals. Buddhists seemed slightly more respectful towards law, probably because the character used for law (法) is also the one used for Buddhist law, the dharma. The religious sample is probably too small to indicate a decisive trend on this question.  

In general, the group in Korean society most prone to be aggressive about rights and resort to the law was the lower middle classes who were high school graduates. The upper classes, college graduates, the wealthy, etc., were more inclined to avoid the law and felt more vulnerable, perhaps because of tax evasion. 

Koreans prefer moral values to the legal in life, and are inclined more to a political way of thinking than to a judicial one. They value modesty, humility and harmony over argumentation, dispute, competition, and context. They are skeptical about the decisions of the courts. Professor Hahm calls Korea a “dispute-avoiding” culture. Some scholars even maintain that the Korean language is more proper to emotional expression than logical. It might be said with some exaggeration that Koreans live not in a rational sense but rather in sentiment. In this harmonious, conciliatory sentiment, Koreans seem to feel a kind of happiness.  

What does the reception of Western law mean in this context? I think it means first of all the conceptualization of legal motives. As you know legal science began in the Roman period originally from the casuistic way of thinking, but with the help of Greek philosophy it became legal science or jurisprudence with legal concepts. Anglo-American jurisprudence has a somewhat different history with its case method, but I believe it will move more and more toward the concept-oriented process. Anyway, Korea traditionally also had a kind of casuistry in its way of legal thinking. Although Confucian philosophy and the general ethos among Koreans is a concept-oriented way of thinking, Korean traditional jurisprudence failed to be combined with this idea. Why? Korea has been invaded many times either by China or Japan, so that she could not build up her own legal methodology. I believe that law cannot develop, if social stability is not secured.
We have already seen, with this vacuum of legal science, how earnestly and rapidly Korea tried to receive Western law and legal science, but all problems cannot be solved by the reception of Western law, mainly of German law. The German legal science, which was introduced into Korea, is the so-called pandectistic legal science (Pandektenrechtswissenschaft), which was developed during the 19th century in Germany. As R. von Jhering nicknamed it, "Begriffsjurisprudenz im Himmel" (concept jurisprudence in heaven), it is formed solely with legal concepts and theories, abstract and sometimes vague, but this Begriffsjurisprudenz has been superseded in Germany by some new trends in legal methodology, namely Freirechtschule (free law movement) and Interessenjurisprudenz (interest law school). Only in Korea and probably in Japan, has this Begriffsjurisprudenz never been criticized basically or superseded. If we speak somewhat cynically, we can name Korean legal science as Begriffsund Bürokratsjurisprudenz; that is conceptual and bureaucratic jurisprudence. This means that unavoidably it contains the danger of remoteness from social reality. For that reason also, Korean lawyers regard their jobs not as a service but as a privilege. There are about 4,000 lawyers in Korea for 40 million people. There are 50 colleges and departments of law public and private, and approximately 5,000 law students are produced annually, but only 300 applicants pass the national bar examination; the judicial service examination. I think this is a problem institutionally and in policy making. Anyway, we sometimes hear criticism of the Korean judiciary as a Klassenjustiz (class judiciary).

VIII. CONCLUSION

In the above, I have explained how Western laws have been introduced into Korea. Now at law schools in Korea, Western laws are taught under the names of Introduction to Anglo-American Law, Introduction to German Law, Introduction to French Law, European Legal History, Roman Law, and History of Western Legal Thought. Regardless of the subjects, almost all lectures are strongly based on Western legal theories. In this sense, Korean lawyers seem to be richly equipped with knowledge about Western law.

Then finally, let us give some thought to the problem of the national self-identity of Korean law. I do not know where I could live more happily, in Korea or in a Western country. Some Western scholars praise the Asian conciliatory legal culture over a litigious or suing society like the
American one. I can not evaluate or prophesy, but I would say we can not be social romanticists anymore, at least from the point of view of a lawyer.

I sometimes think that law is like water. No doubt, we can not live without water nor without law, but law flows like water from high to low. If there is a more highly developed law, it must flow to underdeveloped law and society. Some Koreans may ask, why Koreans should be interested in receiving German and American laws, why Koreans are less inclined to develop their own laws and legal sciences. The answer to this question is very important, but as I said, law influences or submerges other law. The question is not whether the law is purely our own or a received one, but whether it is developed or not. If any law, either statutory or non-statutory, is made by Koreans, I believe, it is Korean law.

The problem of indigenization (土着化) of law is also widely discussed nowadays, especially among younger scholars. I myself am engaged in a working program to survey Korean customary laws. As the necessity of reforming the Korean civil and criminal codes increases these days, we should study "the living laws" of Koreans. Simple imitation of western legal theories is not sufficient to satisfy Korean students any longer, but it is regrettable that no Korean scholar has gathered and analyzed the customary laws of Koreans as Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm did in Germany. Only the Japanese scholars did this work and published the results in the many volumes of The Reports of Korean Customs Investigations (朝鮮慣習調査報告書) just before the occupation of Korea for the purpose of colonization. Korean scholars are now reviewing these reports with critical comments, and I believe, Korean lawyers should pursue actively finding out the differences between the North and South Korean legal systems and how to harmonize them in the process of national unification.

My final comment in this presentation follows: the reception of Western law in Korea will continue to gain breadth and depth toward globalization of the legal culture. In this integration process, Korea will find its own way of establishing Korean law, based on national self-identify, and contribute to world legal culture.
NOTES


4. For more information on traditional law see Chun Bong-Duck, William Shaw, and Choi Dai-Kwon, Traditional Korean Legal Attitudes, Berkeley, 1981.

5. See for example, Zentaro Kitagawa, Rezeption und Fortbildung des europäischen Zivilrechts in Japan, Frankfurt, 1970.


15. For information on legal consultants in Japan see Kurt Meissner, Deutsche in Japan, Stuttgart, 1940; Jahnnes Siemes, Die Gründung des modernen japanischen Staats und das deutsche Staatsrecht; Der Beitrag Herman Roeslers, Berlin, 1973.

16. For detailed discussion, see Chonko Choi, Die Reption des Westlichen Rechts in Korea, Seoul, 1984, 402-427.


19. For a detailed discussion see: Choi Dai-Kwon, Western Law in Traditional Korea,


25. For detailed discussion see Chongko Choi, Korean Law and World Law (in Korean), Seoul, 1989, 23-27.
Impermanent Residents:
The Seoul Foreign Community in 1937

by Prof. Donald N. Clark

Books about Korea often begin with introductory statements to the effect that before the outbreak of the Korean War, few Westerners had ever heard of the country. This commonplace, while true enough, overlooks the fact that there was a thriving Western expatriate community in Korea before World War II, made up of missionaries, consular officials, businessmen, adventurers, and refugees. While they were concentrated in the main cities, they lived in all parts of the country. The missionaries especially were committed to work in provincial towns, and much of what they accomplished there continues under Korean management. This paper, which is based on Japanese census documents, consular archives, and missionary literature, is a snapshot of their life in the year 1937, the year the Japanese attacked North China, and the last year of "normalcy" before a concerted campaign by the Japanese to wipe out all Western interests in Korea and East Asia.

Westerners in Seoul in 1937, like the Korean people, had already been living under Japanese control for many years. The Japanese called Korea "Chōsen," (Korean: Chosŏn) and Seoul was "Keijō" (Korean: Kyŏngsong). Of the city's total population of 706,396, fully 18.5%, or 131,000, were Japanese.¹ Many were small-time businessmen and workers; but the Japanese were also the power structure of the city. Governor-General Minami Jirō ruled Korea like a shōgun from his office overlooking Kyŏngbok Palace. At the Keijō Prefectural Office Building (City Hall), Mayor Yoshikuni Kanja administered the city, and at Ryuzan (Yongsan) General Koiso Kuniaki served concurrently as Commander-in-Chief of the Chōsen Army and the army's Twentieth Division. In downtown Seoul, Japanese power was manifested in modern buildings. The tallest structures in the city were the twin broadcast towers of station JODK downtown. The biggest building, however, was the Government General building facing southward from the head of Kokamon Avenue (Sejong-no).² Its dome commanded a view of the other citadels of Japanese rule in the down-
town area: Citizen’s Hall with its clock tower and the Keijo Prefectural Office Building (City Hall) across from it; the Mitsui Building on Koganemachi-iriguchi (Uchiro-ipku); the Chosen Hotel in Hasegawa-cho (Sogong Dong); and beyond, around the fountain in what was the heart of the Japanese city of Keijō, the Bank of Chōsen, the Keijō Main Post Office, the Mitsukoshi (Shinsegye) Department Store, and the Dai-ichi (Che‘i-l) Bank. On the slope on Namsan above, as a kind of spiritual antipode to the Government-General building, was the Chosen Shrine, the Korean headquarters of the Japanese Shinto religion.

In 1937, Seoul also boasted many new non-governmental structures. A granite museum building had just been opened in Toksu Palace. The Chosen Building was going up across the street from Mitsui to serve as an office building and hotel. Around the corner on Nandaimon-dori (Nam-daemun-no), the Teijiya (Midop‘a) Department Store was going up. Beyond this in Meiji-machi (Myŏng Dong), fashionable people attended concerts in the new Meiji-za Theater (the postwar National Theater). East, beyond the Catholic cathedral, were two new moviehouses, the Kogane-za (the Kukdo) and the Wakakusa Gekijo (the Scala).

Nandaimon-dori was the main avenue of Japanese Keijo, from the Chongno Bell intersection southwest to the railroad station. Along it ran a main streetcar line and the byways on either side were lined with the office buildings of Japanese banks, stores, and businesses of every description in classic Meiji and Taisho-era Japanese buildings which far outlasted the presence of their Japanese inhabitants after the war. Not so durable were the symbols of Japanese cultural dominance around the city, however; not only the Chosen Shrine on Namsan, but also the other jingū around the city, some of which honored heroes of Japanese imperialism on the mainland, and the monuments which commemorated Japanese heroes such as the “Three Human Bombs,” who gave their lives trying to save their superiors from an attack by Koreans in Shanghai. These things all served to emphasize the reality of Japanese control and the Government-General’s intention to rule on its own terms without taking Korean sensibilities into account.

In between the Japanese and Koreans in 1937 there were 486 Western residents in Seoul. Of these, 238 were Americans, ninety-two “White” Russians, eighty-eight British (including Canadians and Australians), twenty-six French, twenty Germans, twelve “Red” Russians at the Soviet consulate-general, four Swedes, four Poles, and two Czechs. American Protestant missionaries and their families made up the biggest sub-group
of Westerners in Seoul: among them were ninety-one Methodists, fifty-six Northern Presbyterians, and thirty-one Seventh Day Adventists. Other Protestants included Anglicans, Canadian and Australian Presbyterians, and British and Swedish Salvation Army officers. The Catholic missionary community was composed primarily of French priests and nuns, though there were Irish, German, and American Catholics in other parts of the country.  

The consular and business contingents were small by comparison. Only the British, Americans, and Russians kept consulates in Seoul on a permanent basis, while France and Belgium appointed various Westerners to serve as honorary consuls. The non-missionary, non-official community was made up of American and British businessmen in oil, mining, and import companies; a community of Russian refugees in the clothing business concentrated in Honmachi (Ch’ungmu-ro), a handful of freelance businessmen, and a few self-employed doctors and teachers, mostly Western language teachers at Keijo Imperial University.

From any of the heights surrounding Seoul one could look out and get the impression that Seoul was really two cities in the same spot: the Korean city, which was a matrix of one-story houses, some still with thatched roofs, and a foreign-run modern city dominated by Japanese establishments and the enterprises of Westerners. This was not, strictly speaking, correct; downtown there were a number of Korean-owned businesses such as the Tong-A-Ilbo and Choson Ilbo, newspapers. The year 1937 also saw the completion of the Korean-owned Hwashin Department Store and the imposing gothic buildings of Korean-owned Posong College (Korea University). For elegance there was Ch’angdok Palace and the Chong Myo shrine of the royal ancestors; and for eccentricity there were the Meiji-Victorian mansions of the former kings’ relatives in Unni Dong and Ogin Dong, but many of the city’s most striking features were Western. Foremost was the Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. On “Legation Street” and in places around Chong Dong there was conspicuous greenery decorated by Western symbols: the Romanesque tower of the Anglican Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Nicholas, the white tower of the Russian consulate, and the Stars and Stripes atop the flagpole at the American consulate.

In Ch’ŏng Dong and elsewhere around the city were missionary compounds, enclosing two-story red brick Western-style homes and boarding houses, a school or two, a church, and Korean houses for the local staff. The Northern Presbyterian Mission compound in Yŏnji-Dong, near East
Gate, was the biggest and most obvious, having been built along a ridge which had been bought cheap because of the difficulty of raising water. The pioneer missionaries solved the water problem with drills, pumps, and tanks, and then built nine missionary homes, the Yondong Presbyterian Church, the John D. Wells School for boys, and Chōngsin School for girls. Protected by a wall around the perimeter, the grounds had lawns, paths, vegetable gardens, and servants’ houses. Similar compounds were constructed by the Methodists in Naengch’on Dong, Chŏng Dong, and Sajik Dong, by the Seventh Day Adventists in Hoegi Dong, and the Oriental Missionary Society at Takezoe-cho 3-chome, (Ch’ungjŏng-no 3-ga). Missionary consortia also created Western housing clusters at key institutions such as Severance Union Medical College, which was then across from the main railroad station, and at Chosen Christian College in Sinch’on.

A few Westerners owned their own homes. Horace H. Underwood, president of Chosen Christian College, had a two-story home and garden on eight acres adjacent to the campus in what is now Yonhi-dong. The most conspicuous Western home in the downtown vicinity was the A. W. Taylors’ “Dilkusha”’ at No. 1 Haengch’on Dong, high on the slope of Inwang-san outside the city wall. Dilkusha, which was distinguished by a 400 year-old gingko tree, was located on a site once owned by Gen. Kwon Yul, a distinguished Korean military hero during the war with Japan in the 1590s. With its commanding view of the valley south to Kwanak-san, Dilkusha was Mary Linley Taylor’s social headquarters and the site of many festive events in the life of Seoul’s foreign community.

THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF THE FOREIGN COMMUNITY

In the grand tradition of the East, Western consuls were the unofficial heads of their respective national communities in Seoul, and of these the acknowledged dean was the British Consul-General. The British consul-general was housed in two standard China coast-style buildings constructed alongside Toksu Palace in the early 1890s. Over time, the British consular list turned into a Who’s Who of British diplomacy in the East: Sir Harry Parkes, W. G. Aston, Sir Claude MacDonald, Sir Walter Hillier, and J. N. Jordan, among others. The British consulate-general with its staff and imposing buildings, together with the neighboring Anglican mission with its bishop and pro-cathedral, comprised a substantial British presence in the heart of the city.
Each May 24th, on Queen Victoria's birthday, the British community hosted Empire Day festivities on the consulate's grounds, giving everyone in the foreign community at least an annual encounter with the consular aristocracy. For adults there was conversation, tea, and sandwiches. For the children there were races, games, and snacks. Empire Day presented quandaries for the ladies of the community: Would it be warm enough, or proper, to wear summer attire? How did one address the consul-general's wife? Would the children know how to behave? And there were occasional crises for the hosts as well, such as the warehouse fire that roasted the consulate's supply of condensed milk for Empire Day—just well enough, as it turned out, for the cooks to make the best caramel ice cream that anyone could remember.\textsuperscript{13}

In 1937, however, Empire Day was eclipsed by the coronation festivities for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, on May 12. The day began with services at the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Nicholas, followed by two luncheons, one hosted by Consul-General Gerald Phipps for the governor-general and his top staff, and one hosted by Mrs. Phipps at the Seoul Club for the foreign community. In the afternoon there was tea for the children, then a radio broadcast of the coronation relayed from London, a buffet supper, and finally dancing and the singing of British songs to the piano accompaniment of Mrs. Kathleen Gorman.\textsuperscript{14}

The American consulate was likewise located in Chŏng Dong in a modified Korean building originally purchased by U.S. Minister Lucius Foote in 1884 and then by the United States government. The post was normally staffed by a Consul-General, Foreign Service Officer Class 2, an American vice-consul, and a complement of Korean and Japanese interpreters and clerks, a gardener, a driver (originally a "jinricksha" man), and five coolies who served as laborers, watchmen, and messengers. With this staff the consulate maintained records and guarded the interests of the American business and missionary communities in Korea. The staff also collected and interpreted information on industry, finance, communications, transportation, and sometimes, but not usually, military affairs. This gave them the power of knowledge among members of the foreign community as well as social position.\textsuperscript{15}

Seniority was another source of prestige in the foreign community. The longest residents invariably were Protestant missionaries. These included Bishop Cecil Cooper of the Anglican mission (1908), Nurse Esther Shields of Severance Union Medical College (1897), Chosen Christian College professors Arthur Becker (1930) and E. M. Cable (1899), YMCA Director
Byron P. Barnhart (1916), and churchmen M. B. Stokes (1907), Charles Sauer (1921), Bliss Billings (1908), and E. Wade Koons (1903), among many others. Children of pioneer missionaries were also growing numerous in Korea in 1937, often at institutions founded by their parents. The first Western child to be born in Korea, Alice Appenzeller (b. 1885), was nearing twenty years with Ewha; her brother Henry D. (b. 1889) was with Paejiae Boys School; Horace H. Underwood (b. 1890) was President of Chosen Christian College, and Douglas B. Avison (b. 1893) and Ella Sharrocks (b. 1900) were at Severance Union Medical College. Each was recognized as a contributor in his or her own right, and each was listened to with considerable deference when it came to matters of Korea, its people, and its Japanese rulers.¹⁶

The business community, though much smaller, also had its senior, even legendary, members. One was James H. Morris, who came to Korea as a young engineer in 1899 to help build the Seoul street railway and settled down to become the city’s leading Western businessman. Morris invested first in gold mining, then turned to importing hardware and building supplies, Goodyear tires, and Universal Pictures, among other things, and a variety of automobiles from Overland to Dodge. The sons of George A. Taylor, another mining engineer who came to Korea in 1898, comprised the first two-generation business family. The two brothers, William (“W. W.”) and Albert (“A. W.”) remained in Seoul after their father’s death in 1908 and set up an importing firm in Hasegawa-cho across from the Chosen Hotel. The W. W. Taylor firm handled a range of products for the foreign community as well as the general Korean market, including Columbia gramophones, records and movies, Underwood typewriters, Eversharp pens and pencils, and Huntley and Palmer’s biscuits.

W. W. Taylor also sold automobiles, and shortly after he switched franchises from Chrysler to General Motors in 1932, he was asked to represent G. M. in Manchuria. His brother A. W. then ran the family firm, maintaining the Hasegawa-cho office and living in Dilkusha with his wife Mary, their son Bruce, and Mary’s sister Una Mouat-Biggs. Mary and A. W. had met in Shanghai when she was on tour with a London theater group playing to audiences in British enclaves across the East. After marrying A. W. and moving to Seoul she presided over the Seoul Amateur Dramatic Club and assisted with the annual Shakespearean play at Seoul Foreign School.

A handful of British businessmen also sank roots in Seoul. Henry W. Davidson actually left enduring monuments in the form of Pagoda Park
and the Sokcho-jon stone hall in Toksu Palace. Originally from Aberdeen, Scotland, Davidson first worked in China with the international staff of the Imperial Maritime Customs Service. With the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion he was transferred to the Korean Customs Service where he worked under the director, Sir John MacLeavy Brown. Brown, who was in charge of Korea’s modern port and navigation facilities, was assigned to plan other public works as well, including the park and the stone hall in which Davidson had a hand. Davidson stayed on, then, with the gold mines in Unsan and then in Seoul, where he settled down to the importing business. Like J. H. Morris and the Taylor family, he handled many products but was best known, perhaps, as the agent for Canadian Pacific, Sun Life, Simmons bedding, and the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company.

Like the missionaries, members of the foreign business and consular community developed family ties which bound them, if not to Korea itself, to the foreign community in Korea. Emile Martel was married to the daughter of the King’s German bandmaster, Franz Eckert, and their daughter was a Benedictine missionary. Lillian Joly, daughter of Henry Bencraft Joly, British consul in Chemulp’o during the 1890s, married Grant Whitman, who represented the Standard Oil Company in Seoul for nearly fifteen years. Una Mouat-Biggs, Mary Taylor’s sister, worked for Standard Oil for the same period, from the mid-twenties to the late thirties. Mary and A. W. Taylor’s son Bruce married Joyce Phipps, daughter of British consul-general G. H. Phipps. James H. Morris’s daughter Marion married American consul Charles H. Stephan. And the H. W. Davidsens’ daughter Joan, who returned from schooling in England to work at the British consulate, married Horace G. Underwood in July, 1941. Missionary children, who referred to each other as “Korea Kids,” often married other missionary children, but they had the advantage of regularly-scheduled furloughs, periods of a year or so when their families were assigned to work in their home country. During furloughs they met many new friends without Korea backgrounds and regularly married outside of the “tribe” as well. Business families, on the other hand, did not generally leave their work to spend such prolonged periods in touch with home; and while many came and went over the years, the senior members of the business community over time lost touch with their hometowns and friends. Their roots in Korea, therefore, were often deep and permanent.
THE EXPATRIATE WAY OF LIFE IN 1930s SEOUL

Except for homesickness and the frustrating slowness of communications with home, life as a foreigner in Korea in the 1930s was usually not unpleasant. Most Westerners were here by choice, at least; and many of them enjoyed the exhilaration of shared purpose. Missionaries in particular had tasks and goals and considerable freedom within which to pursue their work. They managed their own time and met with enough success to be able to point with pride at what was being accomplished year by year. They also felt privileged, if not by the literal extraterritoriality enjoyed by foreigners in China, by the fact that special consideration was always being extended to them for their sacrificial mission, or their prestige as teachers, or their high social status as evidenced by their standard of living. Occasionally someone would accuse them of having come to Korea to live off the land and sweat of others allegedly because they had been failures in their own countries, but in most cases local people treated them politely.

Managing a Western-style household in Korea required considerable ingenuity. Supply lines for many of the barest essentials stretched halfway around the globe. The simplest furnishing—a faucet handle or a brass drawer-pull or a window shade—might be impossible to replace. Clothes had to be bought months and years in advance, from catalogs, or made by tailors and dressmakers from catalog pictures. Westerners ate Western food, both out of habit and for their health, so there was usually a vegetable garden next to the house and often a fruit tree, all carefully controlled as to seed and fertilizer. Food preservation was primitive, often in ice boxes, later in kerosene-burner refrigerators. Much of the diet depended on home canning and food that was dried or bought in tins.

In country stations Westerners pooled their food orders and had large case lots shipped in from Japan, Hong Kong, or America. Something as simple as a slice of breakfast toast, therefore, was an impressive accomplishment: made with bread from home-ground Korean wheat flour, baked in a Japanese oven, toasted in an American toaster, and spread with Australian butter and English marmalade.

Eventually, suppliers in Seoul began to stock favorite food items. The best store was E. D. Steward’s, named for its Chinese proprietor who once had waited tables on a British ship. “Steward’s” store, located on Taihei-dori (Taep’yŏng-no), was a godsend for the Western community, a cornucopia of such un-Korean goodies as Edam cheese, “KLIM” powdered
whole milk, Kellogg’s Corn Flakes, and Maxwell House coffee. Other stores took up the same business from time to time, but none of the upstarts had Steward’s stock or reputation. Steward sold house brands of staples such as coffee, along with locally-produced ‘Morning Calm’ foods from the Northern Presbyterian Mission’s experimental farm near Pyŏngyang.

By the 1930s, the infrastructure in Korea was such that many Western necessities other than food could also be had in Seoul. Pharmaceuticals were made locally by Ilhan New, in what eventually became Yuhan Chemical Company. Coal, which got scarcer as the war approached, was sold in various forms by Woo Cho and You Shin Coal Companies. Stoves, hot water tanks, and plumbing and heating equipment could be had from Sugiyama Seishakusho Company in Takezoe-cho. Coleman lamps were sold by J. H. Morris. Rugs and mattresses could be ordered from the Anna Davis Industrial Shops on the Presbyterian compound in Pyongyang. The Methodist Mission’s training school in Songdo (Kaesong) supplied good-quality cloth, while the Salvation Army in Seoul sold ready-made men’s shirts. The Chinese Gospel Building Association at 26 Chong Dong made furniture to order. With foresight, funds, and Korean cooks, amahs, washerwomen and “outside men,” therefore, it was quite possible to maintain the Western style virtually anywhere in 1930s Korea.

The distance from home was underscored by the slowness of the mails. A month was the minimum time for one way communication to the United States or Europe. Cables, therefore, were necessary for urgent business. The American consulate-general sent entire letters and reports by telegram to Tokyo for forwarding to Washington. Private citizens used standard code books, typical of the era, to reduce common phrases to single words, which saved money. For example, “KAUDN” meant “Wire instructions immediately,” and “UQAHC” meant “Please inform relatives.” Nor was there much current news. Short-wave radios were forbidden in Korea in 1937, and there was little of significance in the only English language paper, the Seoul Press, published by the Keijō Nippo, the semi-official government paper. The Press was good for train and movie schedules, the Chosen Hotel guest list, the daily doings of the Governor-General and his staff, a little news from Japan, and occasional international stories about such things as the Hindenburg fire and Amelia Earhart’s travels. The Press also reprinted articles from overseas: a speech by Joseph Goebbels on the evils of Bolshevism took several columns every day for more than a week in April, but the community lost even this much
in May, 1937 after the Press’s editor, Frank Kim, died. The government wryly announced that there was no need for an English newspaper since so many foreigners had been learning Japanese.\textsuperscript{18} English newspaper subscribers after that were forced to wait several days for the Japan Advertiser and the Nippon Times to cross the channel from Tokyo.

Western children in Seoul attended Seoul Foreign School in Chong Dong. Seoul Foreign School had been begun in 1912 on property adjacent to Paejae Boys School by Ethel Van Wagoner before she married Horace H. Underwood. In 1923 the school moved to a new location in a compound a stone’s throw from West Gate which had been the home of the Plaisants, a family of French traders. In 1924, J. H. Morris made a donation of a 300-seat auditorium to be built onto the Plaisant house as a second story, after which the whole building came to be known as “Morris Hall.” Here the foreign community met for church services at 4:00 o’clock every Sunday afternoon.\textsuperscript{19} Here, too, the school children presented their annual play, usually a Shakespearean drama directed by Fr. Charles Hunt of the Anglican Mission with the help of Mary Taylor.\textsuperscript{20}

In 1937 SFS also had a new principal, Lucy Norton, replacing Robert A. Kinney who had just moved on to the Peking American School. The staff of the school usually included five teachers covering grades one to twelve, with part-time assistance from the community. The annual tuition was $55.00 and the student body was drawn from business and consular families as well as missionaries, unlike the larger Pyeng Yang (Pyongyang) Foreign School (“PYFS”) up north, which was a boarding school for missionaries’ children from everywhere in Korea and from mission stations in Manchuria and China. A fierce rivalry always existed between Seoul Foreign School and PYFS. The PYFS student body was half again as large (about 120, in all grades) as SFS (about 80) and usually won in baseball and basketball, SFS’s only varsity sports. There was one famous occasion, however, when the Seoul Foreign School baseball team, woefully behind in the early innings of a championship game, pulled suddenly into the lead. R. O. Reiner, the PYFS principal, had already packed the trophy to take back with him on the train and had actually departed for the station when Seoul won the game. The triumphant team went en masse to the Seoul Railroad Station and confiscated the trophy from Mr. Reiner at trainside to cheers from the winners and boos from the losers.\textsuperscript{21}

The memory of such triumphs loomed especially large against the fact that there were so few diversions in Seoul at the time. Recreational facilities were scarce. The foreign community had two clubs: the Seoul Club, in
Chŏng Dong, and the Seoul Union Club at No. 2 Izumi-cho (Sunhwa Dong), just over the city wall from Paæjæ Boys’ School. Of the two, the Seoul Club was the more cosmopolitan, with members from the business and consular community as well as leading Japanese and Koreans. Its building belonged to the former royal family of Korea and had been loaned by Emperor Kojong in 1907 to the foreign community as a place to gather and relax. Located next door to the American consulate, it had a bar, a library, a billiard room, and by the 1930s, occasional films and tea dances. This made for a very different atmosphere from the Seoul Union, which was frequented mainly by missionaries. Its main activities were sports and tennis teas, activities reflecting the mores of the missionary community which frowned on smoking, dancing, and the movies and absolutely forbade drinking alcohol in any form.

The Seoul Club and the Seoul Union met on the tennis court for tournaments several times each year. Ever since 1906, when H. W. Davidson won the Fox Dragon Trophy away from the Chemulpo Tennis Club, tennis had been a major avocation among the city’s Westerners. The Club had only one court while the Union eventually had five, but the competition was fairly even. In 1937 the Union lost the Tanaka Singles Cup to the Seoul Club, but in overall play Dr. John McAnlis of Severance, representing the Seoul Union, remained indisputably the city’s tennis champion. Leading members of the community continued to supply trophies to replace those taken out of contention by McAnlis and the other top players. In 1937 a new tournament was founded between Chosen Christian College and the Seoul Union, with the singles cup from C.C.C. president, Horace Underwood. The ultimate All-Korea Tennis Championship trophy was the Taylor family’s contribution, being traded back and forth between the clubs from year to year.

In 1937, members of the Seoul Union were enjoying their new swimming pool, 40 by 16 feet and seven feet deep under the diving board. The club building, finished in 1930, had also just acquired another unique feature: twin bowling alleys, moved in their entirety from the recreation hall of the Oriental Consolidated Mining Company in Unsan, where they had been little used. Outside, when the temperature dropped below freezing, the tennis courts adjacent to the building were flooded for ice skating, and with steam heat in the bowling alley and a kitchen and dining room upstairs, the Seoul Union was a pleasant place to be all year around.
LEARNING ABOUT KOREA

Belonging to Korea and learning about it occupied the attention of a good many foreigners in the 1920s and thirties. Some of them were accomplished scholars who did original research of remarkable quality and quantity in scientific and cultural fields. Much of this emerged in the form of papers read before meetings of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. This branch, which was one of several in East Asia, was founded in 1902. Its annual volume of proceedings called *Transactions* became a series which continued long after the the Second World War. In the *Transactions*, for example hunter/mountaineers Jack Boots and Horace Underwood both published papers of enduring value on characteristic themes: Boots’s “Korean Weapons and Armor,” and Underwood’s “Korean Boats and Ships.” Other major studies published by the RAS included E. M. Cable’s studies of Korean bells and of early American-Korean relations, the venerable Bishop Mark Trollope’s “Korean Books and their Authors,” and W. W. Taylor’s down-to-earth “Korean Roads Past and Present.”

The annual meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society on May 31, 1937 at the Seoul Union Club marked the organization’s thirty-fifth year. Of the Society’s membership of 216, sixty were present to hear the annual report and to elect officers for the coming year. E. Wade Koons then read a paper written by his son-in-law G. St. G. M. Gompertz on the life of Archbishop Gustave Charles Marie Mutel (1854-1933), the pioneer missionary of the Societe des Missions Etrangeres de Paris and builder of the Catholic church in Korea.

The same year saw the beginning of what was perhaps the Society’s most enduring contribution: the McCune-Reischauer system of romanizing the Korean language. The summer saw the arrival of George McAfee (“Mac”) McCune, son of former Presbyterian missionary George S. McCune of Pyongyang, to work on his Berkeley Ph.D. dissertation. Then in September, Edwin and Adrienne Reischauer stopped off in Seoul. Ed, the son of Presbyterian missionary A. K. Reischauer in Tokyo, was enroute to Peking to work on his Harvard dissertation but got stranded in Seoul because of the outbreak of Sino-Japanese hostilities on the mainland. While he awaited travel clearances, his two-month sojourn in Seoul turned out to be a valuable introduction to Korea, one which later helped him become an important advocate of Korean Studies at Harvard. It also presented him with a chance to wrestle with a research problem: the lack
of a standard system for romanizing the Korean language. With the help of Chosen Christian College linguists Ch’oe Hyŏn-bae, Chŏng In-sŏp, and Kim Sŏn-gi, Mac McCune and Ed Reischauer eventually succeeded in inventing the romanization system which was adopted during the war by the American government and subsequently, in modified form, by the South Korean government in Seoul. The finished McCune-Reischauer System for romanizing Korean was published in the 1939 volume of the Royal Asiatic Society’s Transactions, which also included McCune’s demonstration of the system in the article “The Yi Dynasty Annals of Korea.”

GETTING ALONG WITH KOREANS IN 1937 CULTURAL DISPARITIES

The language barrier was the most obvious reason for the social isolation of Westerners in Korea in the 1930s. Speaking Korean was a matter of degree: everyone could speak a little and many could do very well in social and professional situations, but none of the Westerners in Korea had been educated in the Korean or Japanese way and with the rarest exceptions there was none who could hold his own with an educated Korean on traditional subjects. Such knowledge was not necessary to teach an English or religion class, nor was it relevant to technical or business matters, but the lack of it isolated Westerners from the things which Koreans thought about a good deal of the time. They could read about current issues in the daily Seoul Press, but given their general disinterest in Japan and Japanese affairs, most missionaries especially were without the background to talk politics and current events with Koreans and Japanese.

The inability to converse effectively in sophisticated Korean made it difficult for many foreigners to be friends with Koreans of social importance. Missionaries, for example, were routinely limited to contact with persons in subordinate roles—the students, employees, and proteges of various kinds. In the social context of Korea where hierarchy was so important, it would have been difficult to form intimate friendships across such social lines, but basic cultural differences also hindered development of real Western-Korean friendships in the 1930s. “Foreigners” were still foreigners, from different races and family backgrounds in unimaginably distant places. There were exceptions, particularly in the relationships between single women missionaries and their Korean counterparts (“Bile-women”) with whom they itinerated in the countryside and upon whom they relied for companionship on journeys which lasted for weeks and
months at a time. In the cities and towns, though local Koreans respected
and even loved individuals on the compounds the foreigners as a rule were
too distant in their thinking, too rich, too brash, and often, one suspects,
too odd-looking for real intimacy. Understanding Koreans was so much
more than a matter of language; it required a fund of sensory memories
from childhood, of the aroma of kimjang and the smokey smells of the
Korean farmhouse; of listening to farmers singing in fields and makkoli
houses, of the clanging of the yot candyman's taffy scissors, or the scary
presence of ghosts in the stories told by grandmother, or the local sha-
maness's kut, or the chanting of the neighborhood men as they practiced
the rituals of the village funeral. Westerners and Koreans grew up in
incomparably different worlds, and by the time they were adults it took
a concerted effort to communicate across the chasm.

Koreans and Westerners who kept up Western-style social contact,
therefore, faced certain difficulties. Entertaining always involved one side
or the other making a choice. If it was to be a Korean-style evening,
should the Western man bring his wife along? If it was dinner in a Korean
home, would the Western wife sit at the table with the men or eat separately
with the women? If the dinner was at a restaurant, would the Korean
wives be present? Or if the evening was Western-style, should the Korean
guest bring his wife? Would everyone be able to communicate? What kind
of food would be served and would it be safe, or even edible? What kind
of utensils would they use to eat, and what was the proper way to use
them? To be sure, there were Westernized Korean couples who could both
be comfortable in social settings with foreigners, but they were extremely
rare. International marriages were rarer still.30

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

On another level, however, there were many opportunities for close
association among Westerners, Koreans, and Japanese. All the mission
schools had boards of directors whose memberships were mixed. Church
organizations had local pastors as well as missionaries in their decision-
making bodies. The Hanyang Lodge of the Masonic Order, the Seoul
Rotary Club, the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, the Keijo
Chamber of Commerce, and the International Friendly Association all
met regularly for social contact and planning development of the coun-
try. The International Friendly Association, for example, was founded in
1910 as a hospitality club for visitors to the city. Sponsored by the Govern-
ment-General, it included residents of all nationalities in Seoul and hosted receptions and lectures on themes designed to foster good relations between the foreign community and the colonial regime. There were also English clubs, where Korean students met with foreign teachers or colleagues to polish their language skills. The Good Life Society, included faculty members of Seoul’s best schools, mission and non-mission, who met to practice their English on many sensitive topics. As J. Earnest Fisher recalled, “If the Japanese Government-General authorities had known of our meetings and had heard some of our discussions, we might all have had to serve prison terms.” Some of its members went on to very important positions: Pyon Yong-t’ae, for example, became prime minister under Syngman Rhee.

THE JAPANESE AND THE END OF THE PREWAR WESTERN COMMUNITY

On February 24, 1937 in the Concert Room of the Chosen Hotel the Rotary Club of Keijo celebrated the thirty-second anniversary of Rotary International with a gala dinner party. The Rotarians and their guests were the ruling circle of Korea under Japanese control: Mrs. Minami was there, representing the Governor-General who was in Tokyo. Commanding General Koiso Kuniaki was the senior Japanese official present, followed by Mauor Yoshikuni. Fertilizer tycoon Noguchi Jun was there, and Miwa Kunitaro, the manager of Mitsukoshi Department Store was the master of ceremonies. Foreigners present included the British and American consul-general Gerald Phipps and O. Gaylord Marsh, as well as leading businessmen such as J. H. Morris.

As they arrived, the guests were given unpainted raku bowls to decorate with glazes, to be fired during the party and picked up at the end of the evening. The decor was all cherry blossoms and Rotary pennants, with paper lanterns around the room for atmosphere. Each guest’s invitation card bore the name of a Japanese city, denoting tables where they were assigned to sit for dinner. When all had found their tables, the festivities began with the singing of the Kimigayo, the Japanese national anthem, and the Rotary Song, first in English and then in Japanese. The banquet was followed by speeches and toasts, a lottery drawing, and then a music and dance program featuring a number by part of the Seoul Philharmonic, some pop songs, a shakuhachi solo, and a nagauta rendition by Mr. Miwa. The party ended with three rousing cheers of “banzai” for Rotary.
A visiting Rotarian from the other side of the world might have been impressed that night with the sophistication and harmony of the Rotary party. He might well have been tempted to see Korea as nothing but a backwater being dragged into modernity by determined and talented Japanese, and there would have been no question in his mind that Korea was a part of Japan to stay. The Westerners living in Korea at the time, including those in the Concert Room of the Chosen Hotel that night, knew, however, that there was bitter resistance against Japanese rule on the part of the Koreans. Some of them knew that the Japanese already were driving themselves into military adventures which might well lead to a conflagration in the Pacific. By the next Rotary anniversary in Seoul, Japan was at war, Korea was under wartime mobilization and serving as a staging area for the war, and the resident Westerners were being pressured into selling their businesses and pulling out of missionary work. The next two years brought police harassment, the closing of schools, and estrangement between Westerners and Koreans over compliance with Japanese orders. By the end of 1940, fully a year before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. State Department concluded that Americans in the Far East should withdraw, and advice went out to evacuate all “non-essential” American personnel from areas under Japanese control. Other governments followed suit, and three-fourths of the Westerners in Korea left that winter. Only a handful remained by December 1941, and with the outbreak of war they were interned. Repatriation followed in the summer of 1942, and with that, the curtain fell on sixty years of Western activity in Korea.

**Conclusion**

When the Pacific War ended and Korea was liberated and divided almost in the same stroke, the terms of engagement between the West and Korea were dramatically changed. The typical Western figure in Korea was no longer to be the gentle Anglican sister or the American missionary teacher but rather the young uniformed military policeman in a jeep. The occupation troops from the XXIVth Corps of the U.S. Army, who marched into Seoul in September 1945, are usually described as having known nothing about the country they were coming to rule, yet in their confused early months here they were forced to decide much of what was to become Korea’s modern history. It was an important assignment, complicated and frustrated by the Soviet presence in the north, and the
American occupation forces needed all the help they could get. While they made use of certain Western-educated Koreans and a small handful of Americans from the prewar missionary, business, and consular communities, the occupation was conceived and executed as a military venture, part of a theatre of operations under the command of General Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo, and in all important respects it was a sideshow of MacArthur’s occupation of Japan. The manifest failures of the Korean occupation are now much-discussed by Korea scholars who attribute them largely to American ignorance of the country, its people, and their psychology. It cannot be said, however, that no expertise was available. One can only stand back and find it remarkable that better use was not made of the pre-war expatriates. Many of them could have played a positive role in mediating between the military authorities and the Korean people in the effort to build the country’s future.

Notes:


2. For the sake of historical authenticity, place names are given in Japanese according to usage in 1937, with the current Korean usage in parentheses.

3. The American Embassy annex, now occupied by the United States Information Service/American Cultural Center.

4. This was later the Bando Hotel, on the site of the present Lotte Hotel. The builder was Noguchi Jun. of the Chosen Fertilizer Company, one of Seoul’s leading businessmen.


6. These included shrines honoring Ito Hirobumi, the great Japanese statesman who was Korea’s first Japanese ruler and who was assassinated in 1909 by the Korean An Chung-gun, in Harbin, and General Nogi Maresuke, the military hero of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95.

7. In this incident, the Korean Yun Pong-gil, threw a bomb at a party of Japanese officials celebrating the Showa Emperor’s birthday in Hung-k’ou Park, Shanghai, in 1932, and succeeded in killing and wounding several important Japanese diplomats.


9. Mining was the biggest business concern of foreign nationals in Korea, but the foreigners in mining generally lived on-site, in Unsan and elsewhere in the hinterland, leaving only a few in Seoul as office staff.

11. According to Taylor family lore, the name “Dilkusha,” a Persian word meaning “Palace of Delight,” was taken from the name of a place in India which had been defended by one of Mary Taylor’s ancestors during a mutiny against British rule. Interview with Bruce Taylor, Santa Rosa, California, 9 Aug. 1989. Dilkusha and the gingko tree are still standing, on the ridge above and a few meters to the north of the Sajik Tunnel.


17. “Korea Kids,” whether or not they married out of the “tribe,” have always maintained a remarkable cohesion, organizing periodic reunions such as the 1986 Pyŏngyang Foreign School reunion in Montreat, North Carolina, and forming the core subscriber list of the “Korea Klipper,” a monthly newsletter now approaching its fiftieth year.


19. The hour was chosen to permit the missionary community to attend Korean church services at the traditional hour of 11:00 a.m.

20. Although in 1937 the tradition was not upheld: the school play was “The Runaway Song,” a musical extravaganza which involved every child in the school. *The Seoul Press* 20 Apr. 1937.


26. News Notes, The Korea Mission Field XXXIII Dec. 1937: 264. With McCune was his wife, Evelyn Becker McCune, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Arthur L. Becker of Chosen Christian College. The couple stayed with the Beckers while “Mac” studied.

27. Edwin O. Reischauer, My Life Between Japan and America. New York: Harper and Row, 1986: 68-70. Romanization systems were on everyone’s mind at the time, because the Japanese had just abandoned the Hepburn system for a new system which turned “Chosen” into “Tyosen,” and “Prince Chichibu” into “Prince Titibu,” among other oddities.


29. One of these exceptions was James Scarth Gale, whose knowledge of Classical Chinese and Korean civilization made possible his history of Korea, later annotated and reprinted as Richard Rutt, James Scarth Gale and his History of the Korean People, Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 1972. However, Gale retired in 1928.

30. A notable exception was the marriage of Agnes Davis of Missouri to David Kim, documented in Agnes Davis Kim, I Married a Korean, New York: John Day, 1953.


33. In 1936 Pyon, who was an English teacher at Chung’ang High School, published a book of Korean stories in English which was reprinted in 1946 and again as Y. T. Pyun, Tales from Korea, Seoul: Shinjoshia, 1956.

34. This account follows that which appeared in the Seoul Press, 25 Feb. 1937: 3.

35. A statistic: In a single station (Pyongyang) of a single American mission (the Northern Presbyterians), the 39 Americans present in 1937 averaged 26.14 years in the field, making for a total of 1,019 man/woman-years of service. Although by 1945 a number of them were too old to serve, many were not; and yet to the best of my knowledge not a single one had anything to do with the planning of postwar American policy toward Korea.
"You are Dead, the Square is Dead": The 1989 Chinese Pro-Democracy Movement

by Karen EGGLESTON

You are dead, the Square is dead.
They say now is a great victory,
    thinking that death can protect their criminal existence.
We live on,
We give our hearts to you, the dead ones,
to let you live again through our lives,
to complete the mission which you left incomplete.

by Gu Cheng and Yang Lian

The unprecedented student and mass demonstrations in China starting in April 1989, and especially the massacre in central Beijing on the night of June 3-4, called world attention to events in China. Those were weeks filled with determination, courage, hope, excitement, sacrifice, anger, tension, despair, and tragedy. Why? If "an answer" is to be found, history cannot be ignored. This paper will first review the historical background of student-led popular protest in China, then the actual sequence of events that spring, and lastly consider the aftermath of the massacre and what may lie ahead for China.²

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Student protest in China dates back to 542 B.C. when students in village schools protested to the government only nine years after Confucius was born. In 1126 students at the Imperial College, after petitioning the emperor to resist the Northern invaders, led hundreds of thousands of ordinary Chinese citizens in protests which resulted in a change of foreign and domestic policy. Other student protests and strikes continued during the Sung and Ming dynasties, often involving students in factional political struggles.³ (Involvement in, and manipulation by, factional political struggles continues to be one of the least successful characteristics of Chinese

Twentieth century student activism, although distinct from its dynastic precedents in many respects—a modern educational system, younger students, and most importantly, nationalistic issues—nevertheless inherits its legitimacy from the longer history of Chinese student protest. In 1895, young provincial literati who were in Beijing for the national examinations gathered in front of Tiananmen, the Gate of Heavenly Peace leading to the Forbidden City Imperial residence. They gathered at that auspicious and politically crucial place to protest the humiliating terms of the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Their protest, as Andrew Nathan has pointed out, was in many ways transitional: traditional in form but modern in content, for their themes of nationalism, modernization, and “saving China” continue, in essence, today.

The real foundation of the modern Chinese student movement, however, occurred almost a quarter century later, seventy years ago: the May Fourth Movement of 1919. Approximately three thousand Chinese college and university students gathered in front of Tiananmen protesting China’s humiliating policy toward Japan. Their action led to months of demonstrations and strikes by students, workers, and merchants, the dismissal of prominent officials seen to be traitors to China’s national interests, China’s refusal to sign the Versailles Peace Treaty, and the promotion of an unprecedented Chinese intellectual revolution.

The year 1919 was just the beginning. From the continued protest of Japanese aggression and exhortations to “save China,” through the “co-optation-with-a-twist” after the Communist victory in 1949, the history of the student movement reflected the main currents of Chinese political history.

Twentieth century Chinese student activists in many ways have inherited from their Confucian forbears what can be termed a “Confucian protest ideology,” a “protest ideology” being not the issues of protest themselves, but rather “the ideology which delineates the student role in, and obligation to, protest.” This “Confucian protest ideology” existed within the rigidly ritualistic and dynastically manipulated institution of Confucian philosophy, as an obligatory, moralistic duty to express loyal dissent.

A true Confucian scholar was obliged by Confucian precepts to express dissent to the emperor, even at great physical danger to himself, to point out imperial errors and to advocate correctly virtuous policies. Such dissent embodied the highest form of loyalty: the belief that with self-
initiated reform, the emperor could govern most correctly, fulfill the mandate of heaven and promote the welfare of the people and the kingdom. This tradition, although rarified by the years and transformed by China’s revolutionary twentieth century history, nevertheless has left its imprint on Chinese student protest to today.

The notion of an educated elite with a special political role to play, embedded in Confucianism, fit nicely into the modern nationalist tool of Marxism-Leninism, and meshed with the Chinese reality of an elite group of intellectuals with a vital role to play in China’s modernization process. Even as student protesters attacked Confucianism itself—in the May 4th Movement, in the Cultural Revolution, and in 1989 by decrying the "feudalistic" tendencies such as nepotism and corruption apparent in contemporary China—they nevertheless could and did retain the erstwhile Confucian notion of an intellectual elite with a moralistic duty to express loyal dissent. Later in this paper, those facets of the recent student protests which reflect this heritage will be elaborated upon.

The terms "loyal" and "dissent" were often contradictory, especially in the eyes of the rulers. What is left today of loyalty in dissent—i.e., calls for reform rather than revolution, and appeals to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to change itself rather than for the people to overthrow its rule entirely—stems more from political realism than Confucian loyalty. The CCP, despite its corruption, its hollow ideological appeals and its murderous grip on its own aging rule, is nevertheless currently the only viable political power in the PRC.

The study of Chinese student protest history reveals several important points. First of all, nationalism, defined in terms of struggling for national sovereignty, national strengthening, and national modernization, has been the hallmark of twentieth century student activism. From protesting the humiliating terms of defeat by Japan in 1895, through opposition to Japanese aggression in terms of the Twenty-one Demands in 1915, the takeover of Shandong and the Versailles Peace Treaty in 1919, student calls for a united front against Japanese invasion in the 1930s, and protesting civil war in the 40s, to visions of a strong and modern China which did not reflect the CCP’s version of "truth" in the very different outbursts of 1956, 1966, 1976, 1978, 1986 and 1989—nationalism has always been, in a popular official Chinese phrase, the "key link." The most common student slogan of the movement this year was, "The students love the country, and loving the country is not a crime!"

A second historical fact of Chinese student protest is that Tianan-
men—the gate itself, the square only after 1949—has been the focus. In 1895 and again in the famous protests of 1919, students gathered in front of the gate; during the Sino-Japanese war, the capital fell to invaders; then Mao Zedong, after proudly proclaiming the People’s Republic of China in 1949 from atop the gate, tore at the fabric of the new polity in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and accepted a Red Guard arm band atop Tiananmen. In the 1976 Tiananmen Square Uprising, and repeatedly in 1985, 1986, and 1989, the square was the destination of marches, the gathering point for protesters, and the most sensitive political symbol for the CCP. Just a march by the gate and the square, on April 27th and a week later on May 4th, proved the triumph of the student demonstrations. In the weeks that followed, the battle over the square symbolized the ebb and flow of the political upheaval itself. Between the hunger strikers and the reception for Gorbachev, between the students and people on one side and troops trying to enforce martial law on the other, everything centered on the square. In the end “saving” the hardliners’ “face”, with the square its image, led to the bloody June 3-4 crackdown.

Tiananmen has been and inevitably will continue to be used, and misused, as a symbol, by the pro-democracy movement, by the government and Party, and by the international media. Recently, almost all references to the bloody crackdown speak of the “massacre in Tiananmen,” despite the fact that most of the violence did not take place on the square itself. The Chinese government uses the supposedly completely bloodless recapture of the Square by government forces as a technical loophole with which to refute condemnation of the “Tragedy in Tiananmen.”

Thirdly, modern Chinese history suggests that student-led popular protest goes through stages in which the motives, issues, and political players change, often in somewhat predictable patterns. Most protest movements begin with a direct appeal by students to the government, followed by direct appeals to the people and segments thereof (e.g., fellow students and intellectuals, workers, merchants, party members, journalists), appeals directed to different ruling factions, feedback by the populous, and appeals to fellow citizens based on the martyrdom of student protesters. Of course, all of these are also open to manipulation.

Historically, appeals to the people to rise up against victimization of dissenters has had varying effectiveness. In the 1930s, condemnation of the government for harsh suppression was much less successful than appeals to form a united front against the common threat of Japanese
aggression. Again in 1989, early "victimization" rallying cries—urging Chinese to cry out against the beating up of students by police following the confrontation at Xinhuamen—had little effect. Broader appeals to nationalistic causes, such as anti-inflation, anti-corruption, and pro-press freedom slogans, aroused greater sympathy and affirmed the students' nationalistic credentials. Although setting out to be martyrs is an unfair characterization of most student protest activities, the sacrifices which students make in the struggle are not unacknowledged by the students themselves as a way to underscore their cause. For example, John Israel records the attitude of a Chinese activist preparing for the famous December 9, 1935 demonstration, who thought that "certainly our influence would be still wider if there were deaths." This last spring, in an interview in late May, Chinese student leader Chai Ling said, "People ask me what the next step is. I feel very sad. I want to tell them the next step is bloodshed. Only when the square is washed in blood will the masses wake up. But how can I tell my fellow students that? They will do that if asked... but they are still children."8

The June 4th massacre, the agony of innocent and even uninvolved lives snuffed out by a senile and power-hungry octogenarian oligarchy—this tragedy is nonetheless, as exiled movement leaders have affirmed, the closest to assurance of victory in the future for the pro-democracy movement as there could be.

One final lesson to be drawn from history is that most Chinese intellectuals, both before and after the CCP came to power, embraced communist ideology basically out of nationalistic yearning for a way to "save China," to modernize and strengthen their homeland. The party itself periodically embraced and then attacked the intellectuals, distrustful of their ultimate loyalties, perhaps rightfully so. Communism for the majority was never a goal in itself, but a means to "save China." Democracy is an "ism" of wide appeal and vague definition mostly because it, too, is a tool with which to "save China."

A knowledge of the history of Chinese student movements helps to shed light upon not only what parts of the legacy still shape the present, but also how student activists and their intellectual advisors have learned from past mistakes. One prominent example is what the student activists of 1989 learned from the shorter protests of 1986–87:

The protesters learned to organize meticulously and to guard against infiltration by agents trying to discredit the movement by yelling "down with the Communist Party!" They learned to present more specific peti-
tions and demands. In fact, some would legitimately argue that the protesters got so specific that in the end they left no leeway for the government to negotiate and save face. They learned to stick to nationalistic slogans that had an appeal to the general populous and specifically to workers, such as anti-corruption, anti-inflation, pro-rights to organize and demonstrate, and pro-press freedom slogans, instead of the need for higher funding for education, better school conditions, and better job assignments and salaries for college graduates. In 1986, press freedom was a secondary and later-phase issue, whereas in 1989, press freedom was among the initial issues of student protest. In 1986, a student-worker alliance died before it even hatched; two and a half years later, workers joined the student demonstrators at first as supportive spectators and later as participants, establishing an autonomous workers’ union on the eve of the declaration of martial law. 9

Although CCP leadership disunity was a key catalyst in allowing the movement to develop, one thing which perhaps the activists did not learn as well from previous protests is the danger and fickleness of emphasizing or appealing to individuals in the leadership. Mao Zedong called out the so-called “little generals” in 1966, exiling them to the countryside a few years later. Deng Xiaoping hero of the 1976 Tiananmen Uprising, by the late 1980s had become a neo-Mao in his own right, clinging to power through force and destroying self-appointed successors. Hu Yaobang, at first a villain in the early stages of the 1986 protests, became a victim for the cause in 1987 and was by 1989 practically a “saint” for democracy in China. His successor Zhao Ziyang, originally seen as a corrupt high official like all the others, suddenly became the student hero, then dubbed the arch-villain and toppled by the Deng-Yang-Li Peng triumvirate and their octogenarian powerbase. A justified conclusion is that without change in the political system, nothing will ultimately change.

In fact, despite lessons in specific tactics, one may question just how far China has come in the 70 years from 1919 to 1989; the slogans, calling for Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy to save China, live on, and they will surely reappear in even greater force before the end of the century.

Numerous parts of the movement last spring indicate that elements of a “Confucian protest ideology” continue to animate China’s young dissenting elite. Loyal dissent—that complicated, often contradictory idea—was evident from the start. Students abandoned their Mapai (Mazhang faction) and Tuopai (TOEFL faction), symbols of their disillusionment, political apathy, and selfcenteredness, and instead committed themselves to
sacrifice for national hope. Students called upon the Party to live up to its own anti-corruption, pro-"democracy" statements, and to reform to save the nation's future. They presented their call at considerable personal risk, and they knew it. The spirit of sacrifice for the nation inspired protesters to defy previously effective official threats of retaliation. The early slogans which called to uphold the CCP and quoted Deng's reformist statements were not pure sarcasm, but rather expressed a fervent hope that real progress was possible. "The people love the PLA and the PLA loves the People" was a cry of bittersweet sarcasm and desperate authenticity: please don't go against the People!

Wuerkaixi, the student leader who scolded Chinese Premier Li Peng on national TV, avowed that he had originally wanted to join the Party. The hunger strike was a clever tactic, a world-media attention-grabbing maneuver, but it was also the ultimate in loyal dissent. In these early stages of the movement, the hope was genuine that loyal dissent would inspire begrudging but authentic progress.

Even the cynics who would insist that students were ultimately aiming to topple the government from the start—not to be denied for some—nevertheless have to admit that up to that point in late May the government still had the option of relenting, negotiating, and moving forward on anti-corruption measures without resorting to violence. Such is the essence of loyal dissent.10

When the Party and government leaders visited hunger strikers hospitalized after collapsing from exhaustion, one student's talk with the leaders, broadcast more than once on national television, embodied what appears to be the modern Chinese protest ideology. He spoke of the serious problems facing the nation—e.g., overpopulation, a low economic base, a poor educational level—which confront any person or group ruling China. The people, however, were losing hope in the Party. He said he took the drastic measure of hunger striking because, "If the CCP has no hope, China has no hope." He emphasized that the leaders had to use the knife against corruption by starting with their own sons (Cong erzi kai dao) in order to restore faith in the Party.

In addition to initially loyal dissent, the influence of Confucian protest ideology on the student protesters is also evidenced by the students' conviction that they were an elite on a mission for the common people. The press receiving office and press conferences on the Beijing University campus and other campuses definitely effused an aura of eliteness. That student leaders struggled among themselves for the ultimate leadership
posts was perhaps sadly inevitable. Apparently Wuerkaixi was voted out of top leadership for reasons other than purely tactical differences. Phil Cunningham observes that Chai Ling became supreme commander in late May largely because she lacked the ego problems of other student leaders.¹¹

As one observer noted, although Westerners seem to assume that the Chinese student protesters want the same liberal democracy which the West sees itself as enjoying, the Chinese students “in their pursuit of democracy, . . . created a system much like the one they wanted to reform: operated on personal connections, or guanxi. . . . The self-governing Association had a standing committee, liaison offices with provincial students’ organizations and the foreign press, and a tireless propaganda department.”¹² A member of Gaozilian, the protesting students’ top organization, complained on the morning of fateful June 3rd, “We don’t decide any policy. People just sit around arguing over who’s going to fill what position and what their responsibilities in the hierarchy should be.” Earlier in May, one Beijing University student was called a traitor for opposing an on-campus demonstration in favor of continuing a class boycott. She responded defiantly, “What kind of democracy is that, if I can’t even give my opinion? It’s no better than the Cultural Revolution!”¹³

Just as the government always threatened the activists by harking back to the Cultural Revolution, so the activists themselves could not escape their own history and ideological conditioning. Reportedly a student leader described Wuerkaixi as “having no major errors in his thought.” The May 4th edition of Beijing University’s independent student newspaper claimed that “the tide of democracy allows no obstruction; all must comply with this trend. If not, they will be condemned by history.”¹⁴ The same rhetoric which once pronounced the inevitability of Communism, now condemns Marxism itself to the “garbage heap of history.” The intolerance of opposition, however, seems identical.

The elite factor is also well illustrated by the competition between Beijing University, home of the May 4th Movement, and Beijing Normal University, Wuerkaixi’s home university and one of the most prominent in the 1989 movement. At Beida, as Beijing University is known, after a big character poster announced the hunger strike, only forty students signed up. According to one commentator, when the news came back to Beida that 200 students volunteered to hunger strike from the Normal University, the Beida number of volunteers shot up to three hundred.¹⁵

The outpouring of support and concern for the hunger strikers from society, the extreme sensitivity and sympathy of the official press, the
efforts of officials to show at least the image of dialogue, the careful official enumeration of how the government sent food, medicine, and shelter to aid the hunger strikers in an otherwise highly condemnatory report—these all illustrate the power, acknowledged even by the CCP and government leaders, of the hunger-striking image: the youthful intellectual elite sacrificing themselves for the betterment of the nation. One might note that none of the public executions were of student or intellectual leaders, and even the most severe official reports affirmed that the majority of the students were patriotic.

Thus, the history of Chinese student activism and the notion of righteous intellectual dissent helped lay the groundwork for the development of the 1989 pro-democracy movement, to which we now turn.

SPRING 1989

After ten years of Deng Xiaoping’s Open Door, reform policies were meeting increasingly hard times. “Friction” between the “two track” mixed market and planned economy, and the opportunity for manipulation between the two by corrupt guandao, were undermining the economy. In the Fall of 1988, after efforts at price reform unleashed double digit inflation and large scale, panic buying, the leadership initiated the Zhili Zhengdun campaign, the official catch phrase for cracking down on inflation while dealing with corruption. “Deepen reform” was tacked on to the end of Zhilizhengdun to try to convince the world that reforms would continue, not merely be put on hold. Li Peng and other hardline conservatives had gained the upper hand. The Party admitted mistakes in the implementation of reforms, but grew impatient with those who emphasized the problems lying ahead instead of the progress which had been made. As the 70th anniversary of the May 4th Movement approached, young intellectuals recognized that the heros of 70 years previous—Mr. Science and, most of all, Mr. Democracy—were still far from accomplishing China’s salvation. The government tried to emphasize science and patriotism; students, in at first small but ever-swelling numbers, opted for nationalism and Mr. Democracy.

The Chinese pro-democracy movement last spring went through at least five discernible stages. The first phase developed in the week and a half between the death of Hu Yaobang on April 15th, and the People’s Daily editorial of April 26th which condemned the budding movement as a small, villainous group inciting chaos in order to overthrow the CCP
and socialism. Typically, the movement began with big-character posters at Beida, other Beijing campuses, and other universities in major metropolitan areas, mourning Hu Yaobang’s death and expounding upon what he had come to represent: reform, liberalization, and democracy. There were calls for dialogue with the government, demonstrations in front of Xinhuamen (“New China Gate”), and even an attempt to storm Zhongnanhai, the Beijing government compound. Police chased away the demonstrators and beat up several of them.

Student leaders learned a valuable lesson from previous movements and the storming of Xinhuamen: they must at all costs avoid any violence which would give the Party and government leadership an excuse to crack down on the movement, and they must guard against infiltration by those who would discredit the movement.

The press was not free to cover the reality of the student protests, and with each misrepresentation, the calls for freedom of the press would grow stronger and gain greater legitimacy and public support. Only by denying the official press a shred of proof for their condemnatory articles would the movement have a chance to convince a critical mass of people, journalists and Party members included, that the Party line which castigated their actions and motives was fallacious.

The students called not only for freedom of the press, of speech and of assembly, but also for the rehabilitation of Hu Yaobang and condemnation of the “anti-bourgeois liberalization campaign” which followed Hu’s sacking in 1987. They also petitioned to have the personal finances of top officials made public and for corruption to be dealt with severely. Such were the “demands” listed on the student petition which three students held up as they knelt on the steps of the Great Hall of the People on April 22. An estimated fifty thousand fellow students on Tiananmen Square waited with them for premier Li Peng, or any government official, to come out to accept the petition. Fearing that they would be barred from the square on that Saturday, the day of the memorial service for Hu Yaobang, the students had come to the square the night before and had waited all night for the memorial service the following morning. No one came out to recognize the student petition. It was a day of mourning, not only for Hu Yaobang, but the complete disregard of the government for the petitioners’ concerns. Many were moved to tears.18 Chai ling reportedly said, “From that day on, I began to work for the governing body of the students.”19 The following Monday, April 24th, students began boycotting classes. At Beijing University, students held a large rally, and students at
several campuses began setting up their own speaker systems, broadcasting their petitions, their reasons for boycotting classes, and tapes of news from the Voice of America.

Deciding that things had gone too far, the Party leadership—its unity to be splintered to an unprecedented extent by the developing crisis—issued the April 26th editorial “take a clear stand against turmoil” which appeared on the front page of the People’s Daily, the Beijing Daily, and other newspapers. It characterized the movement as a throwback to the Cultural Revolution, incited by a small group who grabbed power from official student organizations, took over school speaker systems, and forced students not to attend class. Activists were labeled radicals who roamed about the country as the infamous Red Guards had, trying to overthrow socialism and CCP rule, leading to disorder and lawlessness. If allowed to continue, the editorial emphasized, years of reform progress would be ruined and the country would descend into chaos.20

A joke among young Chinese intellectuals said that when Jiang Qing, Mao Zedong’s infamous wife and member of the Gang of Four, read the April 26th editorial in her jail cell, she cried “Let me out! It’s obvious that Yao Wenyuan21 is out and working, so I want out too!”

Despite this bitterly sarcastic joke, student dissenters took the editorial as no joking matter. The second phase of the movement began the next day, April 27th, when students angered by the harsh editorial, and especially for being characterized as yi xiao cuo—“a small group,” a term used to describe the Gang of Four—staged the largest student demonstration in China to date.

The estimated 50,000 students from over 30 colleges and universities, who demonstrated that Thursday, broke through several lines of policemen as the students chanted “The People love the People’s Police, and the People’s Police love the People!” By three or four that afternoon the student ranks were marching triumphantly past Tiananmen, and then continued to follow the second ring road on its circuit of the city, past the foreign resident section at Jiaoguomenwai and north again to their respective campuses. In well-led rounds, they chanted “The People’s Daily/ babbles like a clown/ central TV/ turns truth upside down!”22, “The students’ petition is not turmoil!”; “Down with official corruption!;” and of course “The students love the country/ loving the country is not a crime!”

They were cheered on by some 250,000 citizens23 who lined the streets and gathered at bridges over the ring road to have the best view hours
before the students passed. People brought water, soda, and food to the students, most of whom marched a total of 25 miles from their campuses northwest of Beijing to the square and back on a clear, hot spring day without breaking ranks to stop for food or drink.

Everyone knew it was historic. A worker told me, "We really support the students, but we can't be involved ourselves, or else the government will crack down on them." A high school student came up to me near Tiananmen, and informed me that at least two high schools were also boycotting classes in support of the college students' demonstrations. One elderly Chinese man who saw me taking pictures came over and said "duo zhao ji zhang"—take a few extra pictures today, as if to say, "Let everyone know of this great event."

If Deng Xiaoping and other officials had counted on the students being cowed into submission by the editorial on the 26th—in the manner of "the emperor has spoken: thou shalt cease to dissent!"—then they were overwhelmingly proven to have underestimated the students' resolve.

A People's Daily editorial on April 29th, although emphasizing stability, nevertheless was more accommodating. On the same day, Chinese government spokesman, Yuanmu, held a "dialogue" with student representatives, televised live according to the students' wishes. The participants were the official, not student-elected or dissenting student leaders. Gaozilian, the top umbrella student organization, declared that the meeting was not a dialogue at all. After watching it, I would agree that the students' questions were by-and-large quite tame, Yuanmu's attitude quite patronizing.

A similar so-called dialogue was held April 30th between twenty-nine students from ten Beijing campuses and two leaders, Beijing mayor Chen Xitong and Education Minister Li Tieying. They were shows of conciliation by the government, and the students interested in authentic dialogue and tangible results dismissed them as such.

The hardliners made a show of their "great restraint," saying that the editorial was never directed at the students in the first place, but rather at the villainous few who continued to plot and scheme. Perhaps the authorities knew that another demonstration the next week on the 70th anniversary of the May 4th movement was inevitable, and in the face of contradictory opinions within leadership ranks over how to deal with the student unrest, hoped that the movement would die off of its own accord subsequently. Moreover, decisive suppressive action was all but impossible while representatives of the Asian Development Bank were in Beijing, and before the international media swarmed into the capital for
Gorbachev’s visit.

Whatever the government and Party leaders may have thought, their inaction in this early phase left the people and the students with the impression that popular action and a show of numbers could in fact bring about positive, albeit grudging, change.

When Zhao Ziyang returned from North Korea, he reportedly criticized the harsh April 26th editorial. In his speech to the Asian Development Bank representatives, Zhao expressed confidence in the future and a more conciliatory attitude toward the demonstrations. On the same day, after the government had rejected the students’ proposed terms for dialogue, and in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, students in the tens of thousands took to the streets again. The Party and government surely saw the fewer numbers on May 4th, and the decision of a majority of students to return to classes the next day, as the beginning of the “fizzling-out” of unrest.

Journalists were confused and emboldened by the changing and contradictory official line. Some journalists became outspoken critics of press censorship, calling for reform and liberalization for the media.\textsuperscript{25} The search for effective means of voicing these concerns led to a huge bicycle demonstration in Beijing on May 10th, and proposals on campuses for a hunger strike. After repeated government refusal to hold talks with the new student organizations, which were officially denounced as illegal, several hundred students began a hunger strike on Tiananmen Square. The third phase of the pro-democracy movement, that of the week-long hunger strike, began.

The hunger strikers called on the government to refute the editorial, recognize the student organizations as legal, and affirm publically that the student movement was patriotic, not counterrevolutionary. The students were not so naive as to assume that softer rhetoric, without any concession on these critical points, would prevent a crackdown on activist students before long. It took equal naivete and audacity, however, to think that the leadership might actually grant the student organizations legality, for “had this demand been granted, the students would have achieved the legalization of the first completely independent political organization in PRC history.”\textsuperscript{26} Not surprisingly, preliminary talks collapsed.

The strikers’ numbers grew to two or three thousand, some students refusing water as well as food. Gorbachev’s schedule had to be changed many times to avoid the square and the massive daily demonstrations of people, a million strong and spanning the entire social spectrum, including...
government organs and Party members, showing concern and support for the hunger strikers. Press coverage, unprecedentedly open and sympathetic, brought the colorful moving spectacle to Chinese throughout the country.

Although some campuses, such as Nanjing University where I was studying, had been involved in the movement from the beginning, it was during this third phase, the Beijing hunger strike, that the movement really spread nationwide. Nanjing was almost never even mentioned in the national or international press, but there were huge demonstrations with participants numbering in the tens of thousands, including workers as well as college students. A few students even joined in a sympathetic hunger strike, and over a hundred began a march on foot to the capital, but before either got very far, the situation in Beijing took a dramatic turn for the worse.

On May 18th, Li Peng and other officials had met with representatives of the hunger striking students, including Wuerkaixi and Wangdan. The proceedings were televised live, according to the students' wishes. Although very obviously physically exhausted, the students energy, commitment, and palpable personal sacrifice for their vision of a better future for China came across as a moral victory over the government. Wuerkaixi's eloquence under pressure clearly outshone the staid officials opposite him, even though nurses at one point rushed to revive the student leader with oxygen. In contrast, not only were Li Peng's words abrupt, but his delivery was at times almost comic. In one long pause it seemed evident he had lost his train of thought. He ended by asking the students to convey his sincere regards to the hunger strikers, except that he said it like a growling lion, as if he were announcing the students' execution instead.

As it turned out, he was simply practicing for the special meeting the next night when he announced the declaration of martial law for "parts of Beijing." Zhao Ziyang "called in sick," that is, sympathetic with the opposition, "sick" in the same way that Wan Li was "sick" when he returned to Shanghai and was actually detained and "convinced" to side with the hardliners.

Zhao Ziyang, earlier one of the targets of the student drive against corruption, by now was a virtual hero of the protesters. His isolation from the hardliners was becoming more obvious. In his meeting with Gorbachev earlier that fateful week, he revealed the state secret of a 1987 agreement to defer to Deng Xiaoping on all policy decisions. As commentators later pointed out, he was "publicly washing his hands of everything that had gone wrong in China for the past few years."
Early Friday morning May 19th, Zhao visited students on the square. The General Secretary spoke to the hunger strikers in a somewhat broken voice, clearly moved by the students’ conditions and probably also by knowledge of his own downfall. He started by apologizing, “I came too late.” Students replied, “At least you came at all.” Zhao said he hoped they would live to see and to create China’s future—for “I am already without effect” (wo yi wusuowei). Other than these few phrases, his speech was not too different from the official line at the time, and since the internal power struggle was as yet unknown to most, general reaction to his speech was mixed. Some of my Chinese colleagues found it disgraceful that the hunger strikers mobbed Zhao asking for his autograph on shoes, pamphlets, and scraps of clothing.

When martial law was declared in Zhao’s absence, it was clearer that he had been essentially purged. By May 19, Deng Xiaoping had the crucial military power behind his hardline position, but it had not come without some effort. The indecision within the military and key leadership concerning a crackdown led to the tense, uncertain, yet hopeful dragging on of the fourth stage of the movement, May 19 through June 3—when Beijing was under declared but unenforced martial law.

On the morning of May 20th, it gradually became apparent that Beijing-resident “people power” had stopped the troops on the outskirts of the capital. Chinese news reports were quite remarkable, with the hardline juxtaposed to sympathetic coverage of the movement. That Sunday’s evening news contained a critical sign of hope; prominently reported was a speech by Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth emphasizing that the most despicable part of authoritarian rule was the use of the military to settle internal political struggles.

Despite marital law, on Tuesday May 30th Beijing saw a demonstration of a million strong calling for the lifting of martial law and removal of the hated Premier Li Peng. As the days drew on, however, reports from the capital emphasized that order had been restored to the city. The people disassembled road blocks, and students joined policemen in directing traffic. There was essentially no crime, unusual for such a large city; even criminals feared citizen wrath, knowing that any excuse would be used to call the situation “chaotic” and to justify enforcing martial law.

The People’s Daily, the official Party-run newspaper, published an article about how Beijing residents’ public values had returned. People were polite to each other, understanding and helpful despite the many traffic inconveniences; store clerks served people politely in a city infam-
ous for its horrible service attitudes. Peasants selling vegetables in free markets did not raise prices despite unprecedented demand, simply because, as one peasant said, "At such a time, everyone must have a conscience." One elderly lady declared: "Troops will enter the city over my dead body!"32

One of the great ironies of the hardline rhetoric and Chinese reality is that a "spiritual civilization" of high public morality and feeling of togetherness in struggle to better the nation, although supposedly the fruit of the realization of communism, actually was more closely approximated by the struggle against communist hardliners. Beijing in late May saw a collective spirit of decency and compassion realized through struggle for individual rights and freedoms.

Days passed. A full week passed. Almost two. The demonstrations against martial law and open calls for the resignations of Li Peng, Yang Shangkun and Deng Xiaoping himself, dissipated into a tense "normalcy." Although no one was sure what was happening in the leadership, it was obvious that an internal power struggle had taken the limelight from the students on the square—and then the whole nation was left in the dark.

Such strong tension could not continue indefinitely, and despite cynicism and realistic misgivings to the contrary, young Chinese intellectuals were willing to hope that, as Li Peng had said May 25th when he finally did reappear on national TV, the troops had not reached their destinations because "the People's Army loves the People."33 "Love" ironic words!

The large number of out-of-town students who had gone to Beijing to join in the protests reportedly exacerbated the food supply problem in Beijing, but it was undoubtedly more strained by the huge contingent of troops ringing the city who tearfully accepted food and water from the residents blocking their entry, since the troops had no food or water with them. Logistics later straightened out; the martial law troops encamped on the outskirts of Beijing received daily news coverage for putting up with innumerable hardships and helping the people. The government and Party wrote letters of regard; officials visited them; singers entertained them; and schoolchildren gave their red scarves to the "Uncle People's Liberation Army soldiers."

On May 27th, Li Tieying gave a televised speech commemorating the anniversary of the International Red Cross and calling upon all nations to uphold international laws of humanitarianism as China does.34 Such bitterly ironic words!
Meanwhile, as the student numbers on Tiananmen Square dwindled, thirty students at Beijing's Central Academy of the Arts were hard at work—nonstop for three days and nights—remodeling a statue of a man holding a flag with two hands into the "Goddess of Democracy." Some fifty thousand Beijing residents flocked to the Square to see the statue-raising. With the symbol in place, the students could have left Tiananmen, but a minority voted to stay, so stay they did.\(^35\) Many students in other cities by this time had either returned to classes or had gone home for the rest of the semester.

On June 3, the noon news prominently featured a report by the Beijing propaganda department entitled "clarify the real nature of the turmoil and the necessity for martial law." There were some clashes between demonstrators and police involving stones and tear gas.

Hearts sank. Everyone knew from the start that the movement's commitment to nonviolence was its safeguard against suicide.

In Beijing, a severe warning on TV admonished residents to stay indoors: if anyone ventured out, their safety could not be guaranteed. Beijing residents knew it was a declaration of war.

The brutal crackdown during the darkness between June 3rd and 4th ushered in the fifth, final, and tragic phase of the movement. Estimates place the death toll in the thousands. Rumors in Nanjing and elsewhere shot it up to tens of thousands. Amnesty International puts the figure at 1,000 dead in Beijing, another 300 later in Chengdu.

Why should this be "phase five"? Was it not simply the tragic end of the movement? Yes and no. Despite the slaughter which continued with random military fire in Beijing the next few days, protest continued. There was suicidal defiance in Beijing. Violence broke out in Chengdu. Reports of demonstrations came from all parts of the country, except the already well-repressed minority areas. In Nanjing, numerous demonstrations of hundreds and thousands of people in mourning, many wearing white shirts and black arm bands, carried hand-made wreaths to the central square near our school. Funeral music announced the solemn marchers as they went by. Angry slogans of defiance appeared on walls and at the railway station. They accused military strongman Yang Shangkun of trying to become emperor, and they urged people to defy the murderous Li-Yang-Deng triumvirate. There were ominous rumors of civil war.\(^36\)
AFTERMATH

The massacre in central Beijing, brought home to people around the globe by graphic media coverage, shocked the world. Executions of so-called “ruffians” in the next few weeks kept the revulsion center stage. Western powers and even Japan imposed sanctions on the PRC.

China denounced the international “anti-China wave.” Authorities moved swiftly to round up the movement’s leaders, with thousands of arrests. They published and televised a list complete with detailed descriptions of the twenty-one most wanted student leaders. National television waves filled with hour-long, on-the-hour “news” recounting the official version of events: unprovoked attacks by armed civilian ruffians on highly restrained, self-sacrificing and patriotic soldiers, many of whom were savagely beaten and burned to death.

Leaders not seen for weeks or longer reappeared as they visited the martial law troops one-by-one, day-after-day—all but Zhao Ziyang, of course, whose “mistakes” received much of the blame for the whole “counterrevolutionary rebellion.” Deng Xiaoping himself made a definitive speech on June 9th, praising the troops and defying rumors that he was deathly ill or already deceased: Thank goodness this counterrevolutionary revolt occurred while we veteran revolutionaries were still around to recognize its essence and take correct, decisive action. If one reads closely, one can see in Deng’s speech an almost silent plea not to blame the Open Door and economic reforms themselves for the turmoil.37

In truth, Deng sacrificed much more in early June than what he reportedly termed “a little blood.”38 Yet, as cruel a human calculation as it may seem, the fact remains that the number killed in the massacre was miniscule compared with China’s population, and civil war would have been a much worse fate. Stability, despite all its abuse by the tyrants of the world, still has its virtues.

As a friend working for CNN in Beijing commented, many Chinese, especially the older generation, took the crackdown much as if it were a natural disaster. Many have befallen China, with a great toll in human suffering; but for most, life goes on, and one looks out for one’s own. As professor Roderick MacFarquhar of Harvard has noted, “During the past forty years, the CCP has visited far greater disasters upon its long-suffering people: the campaigns of the early 1950s resulted in at least 800,000 executions; the Great Leap Forward caused up to 28 million deaths; the Cultural Revolution, perhaps another half million. By those standards,
the Tiananmen Massacre may seem a minor mishap, but it was the first time that the regime turned its guns on peacefully demonstrating people in Beijing with the world and the rest of China looking on.}

Now the Party is moving to patch up its shredded image by reforming from the inside, as is Deng’s wont: never admit room for opposition to Party policy, always reform the Party from the inside. The Party’s efforts to regain legitimacy include a highly-touted anti-corruption campaign, moves to close the wide gaps in income distribution, cutting inflation and trying to convince the people and the world, especially for the 40th anniversary of the PRC, that the situation has never been better.

Many of those they are trying to convince know better.

The PRC economy, whose poor shape was one of the prime factors unleashing the unrest in the first place, has not improved. Economic costs of the political unrest itself were in the billions of dollars. Estimates are that China lost one billion US dollars in lost man-hours and damaged property, and continued losses due to worker resentment have cut into productivity. China lost another estimated one billion dollars in precious foreign exchange as a result of virtually non-existent tourism after the crackdown.

The effect of China’s instability on the international business community is far-reaching. Previous investments will continue to operate, but myriad new investments have been cancelled or postponed. The Wall Street Journal, for example, quotes one Western trade official as saying that of five Fortune 500 companies that had planned a total of $650 million in new China operations, all but one have cancelled.

In addition, government and aid groups have restricted loans. Commercial banks have tightened credit. A five-fold increase in the trade deficit in the first half of 1989, a growing foreign debt, large-scale unemployment, and acute shortages of energy and raw materials plague the Chinese economy. Agriculture, once Deng Xiaoping’s success story, has hit hard times as well. Workers’ motivation is at an all-time low. Nevertheless, stability and the rhetorical lifting of martial law have persuaded some to lift sanctions. A good harvest has somewhat ameliorated the agricultural malaise, and Chinese people, disgusted with politics, have turned with renewed vigor to making money. As a whole, however, with the Party and government preoccupied with political problems, and the economy in the hands of old, disproven economists, China’s economic problems are quite daunting.

Politically, Ted Koppel has said, “If China was normal during the
Cultural Revolution, then China is back to normal.’’\textsuperscript{44} Actually, Chinese and Westerners alike make many references and comparisons to the Cultural Revolution without a very thorough knowledge of what they mean. Deng Xiaoping himself compared the student unrest to the Cultural Revolution, but as Dr. MacFarquhar has pointed out, ‘‘Tiananmen Square of 1989 was virtually the mirror image of Tiananmen Square of 1966.’’\textsuperscript{45} What really does resemble the Cultural Revolution, however, is the government propaganda, starting with the April 26th editorial.

Last May one of my Chinese term papers was a comparison of the two ‘‘authentic versions’’ of the 1976 Tiananmen Incident, i.e., the Gang of Four’s vilification of the uprising immediately following in Spring 1976 and the reaffirmation of the righteous ‘‘revolutionary uprising’’ by Deng Xiaoping when he regained power in 1978. The 1989 Chinese hardline propaganda eerily revives many of the techniques that the Gang of Four employed. Both, for example, feature a pre-defined verdict of the movement as counterrevolutionary and the accusation that the dissenters were destroying ten years of hard-won progress; in 1976, ten years of the revolutionary egalitarianism of the Cultural Revolution; in 1989, ten years of economic reform and the open-door policy. Both Gang of Four and post-June 4th Chinese propaganda resort to blatant rewriting of history and dwelling upon loopholes, such as the ‘‘completely peaceful’’ clearing of the square itself. Salient in both is the incredible irony of rhetoric typifying the oppressive force as rightly indignant and self-sacrificing, values properly attributed to the now-silenced victims of suppression. As in the Cultural Revolution, recent propaganda has glorified the supreme leader and castigated the ‘‘top capitalist roader in the Party’’—to use Cultural Revolution terminology not far removed from 1989 propaganda—or ‘‘bourgeois-liberalist’’ Zhao Ziyang. The former Party General Secretary now goes the way of five previous heir-apparents in PRC history: official ignominy as an anti-Party conspirator, or at least as one who committed ‘‘serious mistakes.’’

Foreign newspapers were seized, the Voice of America jammed, foreign satellites cut off, and ‘‘evil influences from the West’’ criticized in the arts. Official books and a video tape blasting the ‘‘counterrevolutionary revolt’’ appeared, including a new tape of old songs popular during the Cultural Revolution such as ‘‘Socialism is Good,’’ ‘‘Without the Communist Party There Would Be No New China,’’ and ‘‘Party, Beloved Mother.’’\textsuperscript{46} Talk of class struggle has even resurfaced.\textsuperscript{47} The PRC’s system of justice has been abused and ignored, as the People’s High Court
instructs lower courts not be slowed and distracted by “details” in pros-ecuting the “counterrevolutionary traitors.”

The educational system is once again prey to ideological cheapening. College admissions have been cut drastically, especially for schools most active in last spring’s movement. No new students can enroll in graduate programs in philosophy, history, international politics, or public administration. Students are to receive from a few weeks to a full year of military training for freshmen at Beida. Graduate students must first labor in a factory or in the countryside a year or two before continuing their education. In early June, it was even announced on the 6:30 am news that ideological education was too lax at the kindergaren level!

What will the future bring? If the exciting and then tragic events of April, May and June teach us anything, it is that the future is largely unpredictable. Although professional cynics would have us believe that they predicted June’s disaster from day one, they fool nobody. No one—not the so-called experts, not the Chinese people, not the highest Chinese leadership—no one knew exactly how events would unfold. Because the future is so critical and intriguing, however, everyone tries to predict it anyway. In conclusion, therefore, I would like to posit a few “certainties”:

Most obviously, Deng will die. He reportedly has already had surgery for prostate cancer and is taking strong pain-killing drugs. Post-Deng PRC politics are far from clear. Secondly, the facts of the 1989 movement and crackdown will probably never all be known, for history always has been rewritten by the victorious. Thirdly, one of if not the critical factor in Chinese politics for years to come will be who commands the loyalty, or which loyalties, of the military. Finally, the student movement will come again, and there will be a re-reckoning of the June 4th massacre. This is perhaps my most dangerous prediction, since it is also my fervent hope and conviction.

The potential for further unrest is not to be underestimated. The persistence of thinly-veiled hatred and ridicule of the current PRC regime, by no means restricted to intellectuals, can nevertheless be illustrated by recent political humor circulated among educated youth in Beijing. According to one joke, a convicted “counterrevolutionary” questions his prosecutor as to why he received a fifteen-year prison sentence whereas all the others are to be imprisoned only ten years. The prosecutor tells him that he had divulged a very sensitive state secret. What secret was it? “Li Peng is a pig.”

A second pointed joke is set in an airplane about to run out of fuel.
The situation becomes even more serious for the five people on board—President Bush, Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang, and two crew members—when they discover that there are only four parachutes on board. One crafty crew member announces that he will demonstrate for them how to use a parachute; he then quickly jumps to safety. President Bush, declaring that he is the leader of the United States, indeed of the whole free world, grabs the second parachute and makes good an escape. Deng Xiaoping then anxiously declares that since he too is a very important leader and China cannot do without him, he must also parachute to safety; he hastily grabs one and jumps. Two are left in the doomed plane. Zhao Ziyang turns to the young crew member and magnanimously offers to give him the last remaining parachute.

At this juncture, the joke’s narrator departs from standard mandarin to render his or her best imitation of Zhao’s thick accent, mimicking the exact tone and words that Zhao used to address the hunger strikers on Tiananmen Square the day before martial law: “I am old, without effect (wu suo wei). You are young…”

When the crew member, extremely moved by Zhao’s generosity, goes to put on the last parachute, however, he discovers that there are actually two left. Deng Xiaoping, in his haste, had grabbed a backpack instead of a parachute.50

Dr. MacFarquhar writes that “for the first time, it appears more likely than not that the Communist regime will not long outlive its first generation. In the long trajectory of Chinese history, the PRC is beginning to look like one of the great founding dynasties which have left indelible marks upon the polity, but imposed such terrible hardships on the Chinese people that they were tolerated only for a few decades.”51 Perhaps. There are many who hope so.52

NOTES:

1. Author’s translation from the Chinese in Jiushi Niandai (The Nineties), Hong Kong: Going Fine Ltd., 16 June, 1989: 8.

2. The author gratefully acknowledges the support of a Dartmouth Reynolds Scholarship to study at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center in Nanjing 1988–89 and a Fulbright Grant to study in Seoul 1989–90. She also would like to thank the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch for sponsoring this paper, presented in Seoul on 11 October 1989. The chronology of the spring events described herein is based upon the author’s experiences in the PRC and her contact with young Chinese intellectuals who were both involved in and perceptive
observers of the pro-democracy movement. For the sake of Chinese friends, professors, classmates, and relatives, all personal sources remain anonymous.


8. Quoted on the Ted Koppel TV special "Tragedy at Tiananmen: The Untold Story" (hereafter "Tragedy at Tiananmen").


10. For a similar view of the protesters' motives and ideals, as well as an excellent analysis of the factors shaping this remonstrative moderation, see Andrew J. Nathan, "Chinese Democracy in 1989: Continuity and Change," Problems in Communism, September-October 1989: 16-29. Nathan concludes that "if the exercise of free speech that is guaranteed by the Chinese constitution is illegal, then the students and intellectuals denounced by [Beijing mayor] Chen Xitong did commit subversion. But the democrats continue to see their relation to the regime differently. In the words of the biographer of China's first remonstrator, Qu Yuan: 'It was his fate to be faithful and yet doubted, to be loyal and yet suffer slander—can one bear this without anger?'" (p. 29).

11. "Tragedy at Tiananmen."


13. Ibid.


15. Commentator on "Tragedy at Tiananmen."

16. Beijing Party Secretary Li Ximing's report on the development of the movement up to 20 May, quoted in Guang Jiao Jing ("Wide Angle"), Hong Kong, 16 June 1989: 94-98. Concerning the efforts to assist the hunger-striking students, see pp. 96-97. According to the report, along with the efforts of the Red Cross and various official departments, the Beijing Military District contributed one thousand cotton quilts to keep the hunger strikers "cool in the day and warm at night." All of these things, he concludes, show that "the Party, the government, and the whole society showed great solicitude for, took good care of, and adopted a responsible attitude towards the hunger striking students" (p. 97).

17. In the following account of the movement, I present a "students'-eye-view" of the unfolding events. For analyses of the intellectual antecedents of the movement and the elite
18. Author's conversation with Beijing students, 22 April 1989.
19. Quoted in "Tragedy at Tiananmen."
21. Yao Wenying, the infamous propagandist of the Gang of Four.
24. "Tragedy at Tiananmen."
25. For more on the role of the media in the protests, see Walder, "The Political Sociology" (note 9), pp. 38-39.
27. "Tragedy at Tiananmen."
31. See *Renmin Erbao*, "Beijing jieyan di yi tian" (The first day of Beijing martial law, through the ninth day), 20–29 May 1989: 1.
33. Li Peng, in a meeting with three ambassadors newly accredited to Beijing, said that martial law troops had not reached their destinations in Beijing not because the troops "lack this ability," but "because our government is the people's government, our army is the people's own army." In the same newscast, Premier Li Peng remarked that jieyan, what was declared for "parts of Beijing," was distinct from junguan, "rule by the military," even though their English translation is identical: martial law. Thereafter, many young Chinese intellectuals ridiculed Li Peng's "linguistic brilliance" along with his "skills of oratory." Also, in the same newscast, an official from the Foreign Ministry made the point that his ministry, as part of the government, was ready to help the new ambassadors, thus publicly refuting the widespread rumor that the Foreign Ministry had declared itself independent of the Li Peng government. (Author's transcriptions of CCTV news, 25 May 1989).
34. Eleventh item on the CCTV evening news, 27 May 1989 (author's notes).
35. "Tragedy at Tiananmen," and other media and personal accounts.
36. Despite the swift crackdown on student and worker activists, it nevertheless took the government over two weeks before they declared all exit permits issued before the crackdown invalid. Two days before they did so, my Chinese husband and I left Beijing.
37. See *Renmin Erbao*, 10 June 1989: 1. For an English translation, see Lawrence R. Sullivan, "Documentation: The Chinese Democracy Movement of 1989," *Orbis*, Fall 1989: 580-583. According to this version, for example, Deng says "Perhaps this bad thing will enable us to go ahead with reform and the open-door policy with a more steady and better—even a faster—pace" (p. 581).
38. Quoted in “Tragedy at Tiananmen.”
42. Ibid.
44. “Tragedy at Tiananmen.”
47. In his speech commemorating the PRC’s 40th anniversary, new Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin spoke of the “serious class struggle” needed to defeat bourgeois liberalization; see “Jiang Zemin tongzhide jiaghua” (Comrade Jiang Zemin’s Speech), Guangming Erbao (Guangming Daily), 30 September 1989: 1.
50. Author’s conversations in Beijing, January-February 1990.
52. Since the presentation of this paper, the startling events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have served to underscore, for those reflecting upon “Beijing Spring,” that the choice of dialogue versus crackdown is a conscious decision, that what the Chinese students struggled for—anti-corruption, press freedom, the right to assemble, even the resignation of all the top leaders and political as well as continued economic reform—was not as unthinkable as it may have seemed not so long ago. Of course any direct comparisons are suspect for overlooking fundamental differences between countries and regions. Nevertheless, it seems to be accepted that the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe were somehow “inevitable” since mass demonstrations left the ruling leaders with “no choice” but to relent, resign, reform. Was the PRC “inevitably” doomed to darkness? If the choice of the CCP senile-oocracy, through power of reverse example, helped to tip the scales in Eastern Europe toward dialogue instead of crackdown, then perhaps something good has come of China’s tragedy. And perhaps for China, horror can give way to, even itself spawn, new hope. As a Chinese proverb says, “The darkest part of the night is just before dawn.”
A Comparative Look at the Portrayal of Parenthood in Korean and English Fiction

by Ji-moon SUH

This topic suggested itself to me after I had read a number of nineteenth century English novels with my graduate students and was struck by how important the idea of parental duties was to many English novelists, and as I also recalled what weighty shadows parents cast on the lives of the protagonists in Korean fiction. It occurred to me that it might not be unprofitable to compare parent-child relationships as portrayed in English and Korean fiction.

The idea of parenthood is very different in the Korean mind from the European’s concept of parenthood. I can’t imagine a community on earth where the parent-child relationship is more reserved than in Korea, except perhaps in the Arab world, of which I know next to nothing. While almost limitless indulged in infancy and childhood by their parents, Korean children simply do not bring their problems to their parents once they reach their teens. It is not because they distrust or underestimate their parents; it is rather because such things are simply not done. In the old days, when Koreans lived in multi-generational families, parents were ashamed to show any marked fondness for their own children, especially when the latter ceased to be small children. Korean children grew up in the midst of numerous siblings, cousins, second cousins, etc., and learned survival strategies from each other. Besides, the parents were too busy with work to talk to their children and look into their psychological welfare in lower class families, or could not afford to be seen to associate with their children too closely on account of their dignity in yangban families. So, Koreans are not used to regarding their parents as human beings with complex wishes and desires. Parents are regarded simply as parents, who owe their children basic sustenance and as many educational opportunities as they can possibly afford, and who in return can demand absolute loyalty and obedience from their children. Few, if any, Koreans have had heart-to-heart talks with their parents even once. Sharing the details of one’s intimate life with one’s parents or children is
thought to be indecent, to say nothing of being embarrassing. So, until quite recently, Korean parents were basically required to work their fingers to the bone to feed and shelter their children and to punish them when they lied, stole, or cheated. Beyond this, it was eminently desirable that they practice what they taught their children, and be respectable members of the community, but they were not required to be their children’s “friends.” Sons did seek their father’s advice at critical junctures in their lives or, depending on the character of the father, report the need for decision-making and await the father’s decision, but few fathers ever talked to their sons “man to man.” Mother-daughter relationships seem to have been much closer, but mothers and daughters could have few contacts after the daughters got married and became “outsiders.”

As close communication between parents and children is forbidden by rules of decorum, it is not surprising that in Korean literature many parental characters are stereotypes. The age-old stereotype is the mother who is totally self-sacrificing and the father who is remote and awesome but ready with profound wisdom or noble sentiment at times of crisis. On the other hand there are wicked-parent stereotypes, such as mothers who elope with lovers and abandon their children, or fathers who get drunk every night and beat up their wives and children.

Korean literature, like any other country’s literature, has been shaped by the historical experience of the people whose lives it records. In pre-modern Korea, living conditions were harsh. Even many yangban were poor, either through excessive probity or from failure to obtain official appointments—they were often split between struggling and scheming for power and position and preserving their scholarly integrity amid poverty and royal disfavor. For the masses, it has been a story of oppression and exploitation generation after generation. And then, after the forcible opening of the Hermit Kingdom by foreign powers, one shock wave after another hit Koreans. First, it was the ideas of prosperity through technological progress and equality for all people. Then came the bitter humiliation of colonial subjugation for 35 long years. Then came liberation and the desperate ideological confrontation between the supporters of communism and free democracy. Then the division of the country and the bloody internecine war and the resultant scattering of families and destruction of property, and the wound has not yet healed for many Koreans.

Up till the end of the Yi Dynasty, much of Korean literature had overtones of sadness and regret, which is only natural in light of the condition of life in those times. However, much of the literature also had
rugged strength, buoyant zest for life, and a sense of irony, testifying to
the courage and resiliency of ancient Koreans. It is only in the twentieth
century that the tone of literature has become overwhelmingly gloomy.
The many unhappy experiences of life have left their mark on Korean
literature in various forms. The mark on parent-child relationships in litera-
ture is very distinctive. The prolonged resistance movement against the
Japanese colonialists and the ideological warfare drafted many Korean
men away from their homes into national and ideological battlefields, and
it demanded greater and greater self-sacrifice of Korean women. As a
result, Korean literature teems with absent fathers and mothers who are
forced to do double duty. Many of the absent fathers, moreover, not only
fail to fulfill their duties as fathers by reason of their prolonged or perma-
nent absence, but put their families through unspeakable torment by
caus[ing them to be watched by the police. Families of independence
fighters during the Japanese colonial rule and the leftists' families during
the Korean War and immediately after were subject to police surveillance,
interrogation, even torture. While fear of communists ran high, they had
to endure many forms of social prejudice and discrimination. Until quite
recently close families of communists were barred from a number of im-
portant professions, most notably executive and judiciary offices, and the
stigma of treason and the suggestion of fiendish brutality clung to them.
It is no wonder that many young writers today are exploring what it
meant to be a leftist in the era of post-liberation ideological warfare and
during the aftermath of the Korean War.

If I may be allowed a sweeping generalization, modern Korean litera-
ture reflects the story of the Korean people's victimization at the hands of
historical and social forces. Most characters in Korean literature are
victims in some sense, often in more than one. Consequently, the parents
of the central characters are viewed either as part of the victimizing force
(brutal, negligent, incompetent parents) or victims like the central char-
acters. Sometimes both parents belong to either the one or the other
camp, and sometimes one parent belongs to one and the other to the
other. Having a victimized parent or parents increases one's sense of being
a victim, as Korean children have an undeniable duty of redressing the
wrongs suffered by their parents. This duty is even more binding than the
parents' duty to protect and nurture their children. Naturally, parenting
is very popular in Korea.

Of course it is not easy for literary protagonists, a sensitive breed in
the literature of any nationality, to redress their parents' wrongs suffered
at the hands of the inhuman forces of history or of gigantic social mechanisms. In many cases, coming to terms with their parents' failures is about all they can do to make their lives supportable. The most common strategy employed to this end is to discover some noble trait of character in the defeated and failed parents. In Yun, Heung-gil's "Fuel," the father disappoints his son terribly by cringing before the forest guard when caught red-handed gathering timber in a forest preserve. In his inability to buy or obtain fuel in any way, the father looks more and more incompetent and weak, but the redeeming moment comes when he tells his son simply and affectionately that he will make his family warm that winter even if he has to burn his own body for fuel.

In "The House" by the same author the father is powerless to prevent his unauthorized shanty from being forcibly demolished by the city, and he brings horrendous shame upon his family by trying to thwart the demolition team's job by locking himself in the hut and threatening to get crushed to death, but he does not have the willpower to stick even with this threat, and jumps out when the demolishers make as if to simply go on with the demolition regardless. The resultant loss of face makes his elder son ring the church bell like mad in the middle of the night, but presumably the younger son, the narrator of the story, will find pity and affection for his father in the hearts of the story's readers.

For those who cannot come to terms with their fathers' failures, like the young protagonists in "Filial Affection, or Hostility" by Kim Won-u and "Meditations on a Snipe Bird" by Kim Won-il, stories in which the fathers simply bear the oppressions of life's various forces like beasts of burden, the vision is one of stark pessimism. In the latter story, the father is a victim not only of the world but of his grasping wife. He gets kicked out of his teaching job, because his wife forces him to embezzle money from his school's funds to finance her investment and fails to reimburse him. Thereafter he is dependent on her for spending money which she, of course, begrudges him.

Victimization of one spouse by the other is of course as old as literature, but in Korean literature it is only quite recently that the husband's victimization by the wife has become at all noticeable. The classic prototype has always been the abused wife who is neglected, cheated, robbed, and brutalized by the husband. Idiot Adada in the short story of the same name and the missis in "The Deaf and Dumb Bondsman Samyong" are classic examples of this type of wife. This type is in fact so numerous in Korean literature that it may well be said that there is a sub-genre spe-
cializing in the abused wife. As in Guy de Maupassant’s *Une Vie*, this type of wife symbolizes not just the pitiful lot of Woman, but the lot of the helpless and powerless in a brutal, unfeeling world. Bernard Malamud once said “all men are Jews,” in reference to the rootlessness and helplessness of all men before the cruel forces of life. In the same way, it can well be said that Korean literature suggests that all men are women. A delicious irony, considering the insidious chauvinism of Korean males!

However, in recent years, with the improvement of women’s status and the growth of women’s power, misogynist sentiments have begun to tell in Korean literature, and a sizeable number of stories have been devoted to denouncing the termagant wife who creates “skirt wind” and wreaks havoc with the social and domestic order. The animosity against this type of woman approaches insane hatred, because women’s selfless sacrifice and submission have been the very foundation of Korean society, and women’s economic power and dominance pose threats not only to the male ego but the basic male identity. These self-aggrandizing and power-wielding women are almost always shown as veritable Medusas without any tender feelings. As yet, however, these women are in the minority, even in literature. Luckily, too, Korean writers, male as well as female are beginning to see the advantage of having interesting and complex female characters in their stories, instead of those strong stereotypes of old.

Writer Yun Heung-gil, who is in his mid-forties now, rather skillfully combines this abused and enduring wife theme with the woman-as-Medusa concept. His ambitious novel, *Emi*, presents a woman who gets cheated and battered by life as much as any woman can, and who keeps herself and her sons alive by working like an ox and by intimidating her neighbors with her spite and ill-temper, but who in the end rises above the pathetic to sublimity by virtue of her vitality and her capacity to transcend her own viewpoint.

At the end of the book, her son says, “I always believed that women are to be pitied, but I realized just now that women are not in the least pitiful. I think women are battered neither by national crises nor by men. They have always pretended to accept exploitation and abuse, but I think that such notions as exploitation and abuse do not apply to women because no brute force can completely overpower women. Instead of fighting violence women simply accommodate violence and men in their interior…. I won’t say any longer that my mother was abused by my father all her life. Neither of them has won or lost because my mother
never regarded my father as an opponent. I think we can say that everyone—my father, myself, and my brother—are all lucky seeds who have survived the lean years because we have been planted on the rich soil of my mother." To me, this sounds very much like male cunning used to encourage women to greater self-sacrifice, and male impudence into the bargain which dares to envy women for the hardships they, men, have forced them to bear. But the novel is an impressive performance with a memorable central character, making splendid use of Cholla-do dialect.

Dealing with absent fathers is another major problem that has to be resolved by the young generation of writers. Korean fathers always tended to be remote and reticent, both in life and in literature, as Korean yangban males were required to place official duty before familial concerns, and were wont to be absent from home for study, for execution of official duties, or for any number of reasons. In fact during the Yi Dynasty families were not allowed to accompany government officials to their posts of appointment. Moreover, it was thought less than masculine to be obviously affectionate to his family or to be familiar with the details of household matters, so even resident fathers were distant and severe. Besides, fathers who are absent because they died in the post-liberation ideological struggle or because they defected to the North during those years pose special problems, as they are not only absent but have left lingering persecution and stigma behind them. It is only recently that writers were granted a measure of freedom to examine and discuss the ideological battles as conflicts between two valid ideologies and not as strife between patriots and traitors. Naturally, in the last ten years a host of fictional works that explore the characters and thoughts of the young leftist thinker or thinkers has been produced, and have greatly enriched Korean literature. Perhaps the greatest gain has been Yi Min-yol's two-volume novel, The Age of Heroes. This very forceful novel has as protagonist a young leftist active in the forties and fifties, patently the writer's own father.

Yi Mun-yol imaginatively reconstructs the life of his father who, from being an idealist who saw in socialism a solution to all the iniquities and backwardness of Korean society, becomes more and more embroiled in the political power struggle within the communist camp. Although he, too, has his drive for power, he cannot stoop to his colleague's brand of party struggle, and he is inevitably phased out of the communist hierarchy. The novel is a story of a typical intellectual embroiled in an ideological contest that quickly turns into a deadly power struggle and forces him to
commit unheard-of atrocities in the name of sacred goals. Thus, it is much more than the story of one ideologue. It is a social history of those turbulent years and it is also an exploration of the interaction of the human mind and will and ideologies. Yi, Mun-yŏl writes: “In my boyhood, the word ‘communism’ was understood as something resembling blood-dripping swords or smoking guns, but as I grew older I came to realize that it was something that had neither color nor smell, but was just a bunch of thoughts contained in impersonal language. That made me wonder: how did that bunch of thoughts become transformed into dripping swords and smoking guns? Moreover, after I grew still older, I came to realize that democracy, which I had been educated to regard as a sacred religion, played the same role as communism to its enemies. So I came to wonder still more. So I began to speculate on the massive aberration of intellectuals that took place on the ruin of the ancien regimes of Asia; on their bewilderment and restlessness; on their self-righteousness and bigotry; on the deadliness of immature ideologies and all ideologies which confuse ends with means.” Yi once said that he became a writer to write this novel.

But not to leave you with the impression that no Korean home was ever normal, and that no Korean parent ever left beneficial legacies but only burdens and pains, I would like to close by introducing one set of eminently admirable and entirely natural parents from a roman fleuve that has recently received much attention from being dramatized as a television serial. In Nodaji, a strongly autobiographical four-volume novel by Sonu Hui, the hero’s parents are typical Korean farmers. The father had had some classical education in his childhood from his father, who had belonged to the yangban class, but after his family’s decline he does all sorts of rough work, including digging in a gold mine. After he is able to purchase his own land, he settles down as a farmer. When he has a son after three disappointments—i.e., daughters—he sleeps with his son and tells him folk tales and tales of heroes every night. He is never preachy, and he is not a hero as such, i.e., he is not a member of the resistance movement against the Japanese, but he is an embodiment of honesty and is capable of great courage, as becomes evident when he has to shelter a group of Chinese men wanted by the Japanese police. He is rather a survivalist who wishes that his children would stay out of the big social conflicts, but he allows his sons to join communist or democratic movements when the times drafted all educated young men into ideological warfare. In spite of his great love for his land and hometown, he orders his sons to flee to
the South and stay there, when he sees that life will be blighted in the Russian occupied North.

He is a man of great physical strength, and lives by the exertion of his muscles, but his delicacy is seen when, for example, his son quits his teaching job with the country's liberation and loafs at home. His son entertains his friends at home day and night and feeds them chickens from the family poultry yard. The father disapproves of his son's behavior, but instead of scolding him he asks his son if he knows how many chickens there had been in the poultry yard when he came home and how many there were then. And then he tells his son to throw one more party for his friends and exhort them to find some work, any work. Then he buys his son a calf, so that the son can look after the calf and thus put his time to some constructive use.

His mother is for the most part a hard-working and loyal wife, but she flouts her husband's authority to attend church with her three daughters, because she finds true religion in Christianity and wants her daughters to get the benefit of the educational opportunities offered by the church. She decides to stop attending church, however, even though her husband gives his formal permission for her to do so, because she decides that she doesn't want to be separated from her husband after death—i.e., lest she go to Heaven and he to limbo.

It may be wondered why I am comparing the portrayal of parenthood in twentieth century Korean fiction to that in nineteenth century English fiction, but the world of twentieth century European and American fiction is a world extremely alien to that of twentieth century Korean fiction and Korean society. It is to nineteenth century England that I naturally turn, to find similar problems and similar concerns. "Parent is a dirty word," says the protagonist's mother in Peter Schaffer's Equus, and in twentieth century Western literature parents are just one more factor in making the heroes and heroines maladjusted, alienated, lonely, and suicidal, but not so in the nineteenth century. British fiction up to the emergence of Thomas Hardy can be said to deal with how the individual can be integrated into his society as a mature adult capable of contributing to the improvement and strengthening of the society. We might say that this concern arose in the process of building a stable and cohesive society amid rapid social changes and that the concern in its turn contributed to social cohesion in spite of the disintegration of many kinds of traditional structures. I will take two outstanding nineteenth century British writers, Jane Austen from the rural gentry and Charles Dickens from the urban middle-
class, to see what roles and responsibilities they postulated on their parents and parental figures in their protagonists’ struggle for achieving maturity and adulthood.

Jane Austen has been correctly evaluated as “the most forthright moralist” in English literature. Superficial readers are apt to think that Jane Austen novels are stories of young women finding marriage partners, but the right kind of marriage in Jane Austen novels means so much more than acquiring romantic happiness or realization of the Cinderella dream. The right marriage in her novels means the couple’s winning of citizenship in the adult world, and her novels show the process by which that citizenship can be won. Her heroes and heroines qualify themselves for marriage and for citizenship in the adult world by arriving at a knowledge of themselves—which means eliminating the conceit in them—and acquiring the ability to sympathize with, and be considerate of others, while the role of parents is shown to be crucial in inculcating in their children, to quote Austen’s own phrase, “that higher species of self-command, that just consideration of others, that knowledge of [their] own heart, that principle of right” which make them fit both for marriage and for participation in the real businesses of life. In fact, all six of Jane Austen’s novels can be seen as treatises on the crucial importance of parental duties and as stern criticism of those who fail in parental responsibility.

In Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen’s first published novel and her most popular one, her high spirit and zest for life were stronger than her disenchantment with the world. Mr. Bennet, though clearly presented as a derelict parent, is still drawn with tenderness. Mrs. Bennet, with all her insufferable stupidity and vulgarity, is a figure of fun rather than a positively destructive force, but Austen made it clear that their inadequate parenting exposed their children to grave risks.

Even though a man of intelligence, Mr. Bennet is mentally lazy and does not take the trouble to instill stability and a sense of moral responsibility in his daughters. On the contrary, he contents himself with being witty at the expense of his stupid wife and three immature younger daughters. Elizabeth is his favorite, being a young woman of keen wit and high spirits, but one gets the feeling that Mr. Bennett’s uncritical admiration and fondness for this second daughter has given her an undue confidence in herself and was the cause of her several misjudgments. The most reprehensible result of Mr. Bennett’s neglect of parental duties appears, however, in the character and conduct of his youngest daughter,
Lydia. Instead of trying to check her thoughtless frivolity he allows her to go to Brighton, where an army is stationed, because, in his own words, “Lydia will never be easy till she has exposed herself in some public place or other.” Elizabeth pleads, “If you, my dear father, will not take the trouble of checking her exuberant spirits, and of teaching her that her present pursuits are not to be the business of her life, she will soon be beyond the reach of amendment.” Mr. Bennet, however, only responds with the hope that at Brighton she will realize her own insignificance. Lydia’s trip to Brighton results in her elopement with Wickham, which would have brought fatal disgrace on the whole family, if Mr. Darcy hadn’t been there to bribe and blackmail Wickham into marrying Lydia.

In Emma, Mr. Woodhouse is mentally and physically infirm and positively dotes on his daughter Emma. He is also totally lacking in sympathetic imagination. On the marriage of his daughter’s governess he says,

“Poor Miss Taylor!—I wish she were here again. What a pity it is that Mr. Weston ever thought of her!”
“... you would not have had Miss Taylor live with us for ever and bear all my odd humours, when she might have a house of her own?”
“A house of her own!—but where is the advantage of a house of her own? This is three times as large.—And you have never any odd humours, my dear.”

Miss Taylor, who might have been a surrogate mother to Emma, thought too highly of her to be critical and disciplinary, and Mr. Woodhouse, instead of being a parent to Emma, in reality becomes dependent on her like a child. So, Emma suffers from “the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself.” It is only when she is chastened by a series of her own mistakes and humbly accepts the moral tutelage of Mr. Knightley that she becomes qualified for marriage as a mature, responsible adult.

In Mansfield Park, Sir Thomas Bertram is a grave and upright man with all the right principles, but he entrusts the upbringing of his children almost entirely to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Norris, from a mistaken confidence in her judgment and character. Lady Bertram is a whining invalid whose moral influence on her children is nil, so the Bertram children are left to the mercy of Mrs. Norris, who indulges their selfish tendencies to make them dependent on her. Edmund and Fanny have to guard themselves against the interference of Mrs. Norris and fight against her evil
influence on the other Bertram children. In the end, they have to become their own and each other’s parents. It is in this novel that we have one of the passages of acutest criticism of British moral education that places more importance on outward form than inward feeling:

Julia... was now in a state of complete penance, and as different from the Julia of the barouche-box as could well be imagined. The politeness which she has been brought up to practice as a duty, made it impossible for her to escape; while the want of that higher species of self-command, that just consideration of others, that knowledge of her own heart, that principle of right which had not formed any essential part of her education, made her miserable under it.

(Vol. I, ch. ix)

Sir Elliott of *Persuasion* is the deadliest of all Austen fathers. As a pompous fool he is laughable, but in this last novel Jane Austen is no longer amused by pompous fools. His selfishness makes him a villain as well as an idiot, and his callous coldness makes a hell of Anne’s existence. Anne does have a good surrogate mother in Lady Russell, but ironically it is Lady Russell’s well-meant advice which makes Anne decide to break off her engagement to Wentworth and pitches her into blackest misery for eight long years. Anne’s happiness is restored only after she has learned to completely ignore, and disassociate herself from her own family’s selfish claims and gained enough confidence in herself as the best arbiter of the prospects for her own happiness.

All in all, tracing Jane Austen’s development as an author, we can say that her novels exhibit a progressively deepening disenchantment with the realities of life and people. Whereas in her earlier novels Austen sees parental failures as arising from simple negligence or excessive trust in the children, in *Persuasion* Sir Elliott is a villain as well as a fool. Another notable aspect is that while in *Pride and Prejudice, Emma* and to some extent *Mansfield Park* the male heroes are tutelary spirits and father figures to the heroines, in *Persuasion* Wentworth abrogated the tutelary role altogether and his recognition of Anne’s unchanging worth constitutes an education for him alone. Thus, it can be inferred that Austen became more and more convinced that young people, especially young women, can expect precious little help from parents and surrogate parents in attaining adulthood and must become self-reliant if they are to have any chance of happiness at all. We can say that Jane Austen saw every-
where truly reprehensible neglect of parental duties, sometimes amounting to moral destruction of children by parents, and that to her it accounted for so much of what was wrong with the world. Having never married and had children herself, she does not seem to have considered the psychological, moral and material obligation of children to their infirm parents and elders.

A child is at the heart of most Dickens novels, and Dickens children are often orphans; they are orphans because their parents have deserted them or have died. To children, their parents’ death cannot but look like an act of desertion. Some parents do even worse than dying or deserting their children: they oppress and exploit their children. In all such cases, children are the victims of the adult world, and in the Dickens world, the child stands for not only the young in years but for all sensitive human beings at the mercy of forces larger than themselves.

It is well known that Dickens’ own father’s sending him to the blacking factory to work when he was twelve remained a lifelong wound to him, and his mother’s wanting him to go back to the factory, when he was sent home by his employer, rankled in his heart till death. It is, therefore, no wonder that a Dickens parent is often seen as a persecutor and oppressor. Mr. Dombey in Dombey and Son is a prime example. He so completely cows and intimidates the first Mrs. Dombey that she lives and dies in mortal dread of him. His lovely and affectionate daughter Florence he regards simply as a nuisance, since a daughter cannot grow up to be a business partner. On his son, Paul, he lavishes such affection as he has, but he “loves” him solely as an instrument to carry on his business and perpetuate the name of his firm, so little Paul dies, crushed by the cruel weight of his father’s expectations and Florence grows up feeling unwanted and worthless.

Another set of Dickens children destroyed by a father are Louisa and Tom Gradgrind of Hard Times. Mr. Gradgrind is far from being a heartless monster like Mr. Dombey. Though severely deficient in imagination and feeling, he raises his children with the best of intentions and is a hard-working father. Firmly convinced that sentiment and imagination weaken character and mess up the affairs of the world, he brings his children up to be reasoning machines. Because he forbids all expression of emotion, Louisa finds an outlet for her abundant love only in Tom, her worthless brother; and Tom, being denied any healthy pleasure, surreptitiously purchases base pleasures with stolen money. Mr. Gradgrind’s repentance was sincere when he found out how his system had destroyed his children,
but by then Tom had committed robbery and caused the death of an honest labourer, and Louisa was cast aside by her monster of a husband and had to live the rest of her life in disgrace.

Orphan Oliver’s tribulations in *Oliver Twist* have become an emblem of the suffering innocent at the hands of evil grown-ups. David Copperfield is a bit more fortunate, but he also has his period of blackest misery, terror and degradation. The numerous parents and surrogate parents in *David Copperfield* are all either perverse or inadequate. David’s mother was affectionate, but she was totally powerless to shield David from the murderous Mr. Murdstone. Mr. Peggotty’s love for Emily is clearly abnormal. Mr. Wickfield, through excessive love for his daughter Agnes, becomes helplessly dependant on her. Dora’s father Mr. Spenlow dies without leaving a will. Mr. Micawber, said to be modelled after Dickens’ own father, is a perpetual child no more capable of adult responsibility than any in his crop of children. Great Aunt Betsy is the good fairy, and creditably discharges the office of both father and mother to David, but her emotional inhibitions make her inadequate as David’s adviser in his relationship with Dora. In the end David has to find a true mother in his patient and loving Agnes and become his own father, which is what becoming a writer partly signifies.

Another child left to the mercy of a series of surrogate parents is Pip in *Great Expectations*. Both parents having long quitted him and the world, he is left to the mercy of the ill-tempered and selfish Mrs. Gargery, his sister. His brother-in-law, Joe Gargery, is his fellow-sufferer, companion and protector. Pip would have grown up to be an honest and stalwart blacksmith like Joe and all would have been well, had not destiny interfered by thrusting in Pip’s way two false surrogate parents: the rancorous, jilted old maid Mrs. Havisham and the vindictive escaped convict Magwitch. When informed that he has a patron who wishes to make a gentlemen of him, he naturally thinks it is Mrs. Havisham, as she is the only rich person he knows. Seduced by the thought that she must be intending him to be the husband of her adopted daughter, the beautiful Estella, he accepts the offer without a moment’s hesitation and leaves behind his lifelong friend and protector without the least regret. Pip is almost the only Dickens child who has a corrupt heart and sticks to his corrupt choice. Not all Miss Havisham’s terrifying weirdness and vindictive rancor can dim the allure of the gentleman’s status. It is only after he learns that his patron was not Miss Havisham, but the brutish ex-convict he once saved from death by starvation with stolen food, that he realizes
the vanity of his dream. However, in the course of his struggle to smuggle Magwitch out of the country before he gets caught by the law Pip, finds himself able to pity and love the vulgar convict, and he is saved. In this moral salvation Pip gets a lot of help from Joe, that rare creation who is wholly good, entirely wholesome and completely believable—a character only Dickens could create. Although Joe has plenty of natural sagacity and native dignity, however, he is too simple-hearted to be a sufficient guide to Pip, living in industrialized London. Pip, therefore, has to acquire the wisdom to live his own life through tribulations and errors. Here, too, therefore, it could be said that Pip has to become his own father.

Summing up Austen and Dickens, we could say that both of them in the end arrived at the conclusion that one has to acquire one's own wisdom and learn one's own way in life, though a good parent can do ever so much for a child's happiness and growth, but I think the two authors concluded this for different reasons. While Austen can be said to have despaired of the possibility of finding parents wise enough and caring enough to fulfill all the duties of parenthood, in Dickens it is much more because the world is changing so rapidly and the wisdom of the parents' generation is never enough for the much more complex world of the children's generation.

In conclusion, I think we can say that, broadly speaking, English literature emphasizes parents' duties to children, and Korean literature often deals with children grappling with the legacies of their parents. Each addresses one of the most fundamental problems of human existence, and both are the stuff of important and meaningful literature.
Chŏng, Tasan (1762–1836)
Translated by Hyun-key Hogarth

by Moo Sook Hahn

The works of Chŏng Yak-yong (pen name: Tasan), one of the greatest scholars that Korea has ever produced, today, 153 years after his death, continues to fascinate not only Koreans, but also people from all over the world. Who was Tasan? He was a great scholar who wrote more books than any other scholar since the invention of Chinese characters. There is even an exclusive field of studies called "Tasanology." I, a mere novelist, cannot but feel stupefied at his wide, profound, systematic, creative, innovative thoughts, his unbelievably extensive knowledge, his vast writings which range through more than five hundred books, and his incredible achievements. Therefore, I would like to point out that what I am writing is only an infinitesimal part of his achievements.

Tasan, who was a great sage and a Shilhak (pragmatism) scholar in the latter half of the Yi Dynasty, wrote books on philosophy, politics, science, economics, medicine, etc, and none of these subjects was dealt with negligently. He even left superb literary works, more than 2,500 poems and innumerable pieces of prose. Since I am a literary person, I would like to discuss him from a literary point of view, but before that I think I should briefly write something about his life.

The Yi Dynasty adopted as the national guiding principal Confucianism, which replaced the corrupt Buddhism of the end of the Koryo Dynasty and emerged as a fresh ideology. The Confucianism that the Yi Dynasty adopted was metaphysics, as perfected by Chu-tzu of Southern Sung. Studies were done and new depth added by Korean scholars, and in the latter half of the 16th century a theoretical climax was reached.

Metaphysics, however, tended to be excessively speculative, and dealt only with government administration, and the government authorities used it as a tool for their own self-defence. As the situation got worse, they suppressed their political enemies in the name of Chu-tzu. By this time, metaphysics had lost its historical function and had become medieval authoritarianism. During this period, the doctrines and ideology of Chu-
tzu supplied theoretical ground for maintaining and fortifying the feudal system of production because of its strong conservative nature. The dogmatic and authoritarian government authorities at the time had already lost the ability to rule over the country effectively. Moreover, after the Japanese invasion of 1592 and the Chinese invasion of 1636, the country was devastated, and the government had to levy heavy taxes on the people to supplement the dried up national treasury. On top of that, the government officials gave the wretched people a hard time with all sorts of wicked practices in the process of collecting taxes. The political strife among the political leaders reached a climax, and its evil consequences were enormous.

Against this background, there was a group of scholars who sincerely attempted to overcome the crisis the country and the people were faced with; they were none other than the Shilhak scholars, the pragmatists. These scholars were mainly those estranged from government posts, and though their status was that of the yangban (aristocrats), they actively supported the interests of the commoners.

*Shilhak* is divided into three schools: the government administration section, the promotion of public welfare section and *Shilsagusa hakp’a*. The government administration section was mainly interested in reforming the system and solving the problems of farmers, whilst the promotion of the public welfare section concerned themselves with technical reform for city merchants and handicraftsmen, and the third section contributed to modernising science through a thorough study of the Chinese classics of the Ch’ing Dynasty. Tasan, with his excellent scholastic ability, embraced all three sections, and he, therefore, is called the greatest *Shilhak* scholar.

Tasan lived in an age when new ideas and studies were emerging, but at the same time those in political power used bigoted and empty ideas as their theoretical shield to protect their power. At that time all was anarchy and strife caused by their tyranny, fierce political infighting and corrupt administration.

Tasan was born on June 16th, 1762, at Mayon-ri, Chobu-myǒn, Kwangju-gun, Kyǒnggi-do, and died in the same house on February 22nd, 1836. When discussing his 76 years of life, we normally divide it into three phases. He passed his state exam at the age of 28, but he had already passed his elementary state exam at 22 and had been admitted to Song-gyun’gwàn, now a university, so his first phase is generally considered to be between 22 and 40. Those eighteen years were truly a period of recognition and prosperity for him, when he was favoured and appreciated by the
great King Chŏngjo, who was fond of learning.

With the demise of King Chŏngjo, however, he was driven out by his political opponents, but somehow managed to save his neck, and was banished to Changgi, Kyŏngsang-do and Kangjin, Chŏlla-do, for the next 18 years. It was not until he was 57 that he was pardoned and allowed to return to his hometown, Mahyon. He lived for another 18 years there before he died.

To understand why he lived such an ill-fated life, it is necessary to understand something about the state of affairs at that time. The Yi Dynasty has often been called a period of factional strife. People of high birth were divided into four factions and hated, intrigued, plotted against and were generally antagonistic to one another, and also shed much blood in the pursuit of political power. Tasan’s family belonged to the Nam-in Party, which means “people in the south”—so named because the head of the original party, Mr. Woo Song, lived in the south of Seoul. They had long before lost power and had been estranged from government office. Though out of government service, they were nevertheless yangban, and devoted themselves to studies. Fed up with outdated, bigoted, empty metaphysics, they groped for new learning through the books obtained from the envoy to China. That is why there were overwhelmingly more Shilhak scholars belonging to the Nam-in Party than any other faction. These scholars naturally came into contact with Western ideas and science, which had already arrived in China. Since they could read and write Chinese like natives, they learned Western ideas through the Chinese translations and were fascinated with their rationality. In time they had opportunities to read the Catholic doctrines and were greatly impressed by their profound truth, and came to embrace the faith passionately. Thus a spontaneous church was born for the first time in history. Many illustrious Nam-in scholars joined the church, and Tasan was one of the first to be baptized.

Throughout the 500 years of Yi Dynasty history, the most gruesome affair was the murder of the only son and crown prince, Seja, by his father King Yongjo, in the year of Tasan’s birth. After the incident, people of high birth were divided into two parties: those who supported the King’s conduct as justified and those who sympathized with the crown prince, and these two parties were at one another’s throats. The king’s advocates were called the Pyŏkp’a, and the Crown Prince’s, the Ship’a. Most of the Namins, including Tasan’s family, belonged to the Ship’a.

After the death of King Yongjo, who had his own son killed, his
grandson Chongjo acceded to the throne. He was a great king, who loved learning and made a great effort to do away with factional wrangling. He witnessed the tragic death of his beloved father at a tender age, and experienced at first hand all the evils of factionalism. He adopted his grandfather’s Tangp’yŏng-chaek, the policy of impartiality, and appointed talented people from all factions, including the Namin. Most of all, he recognized and cherished Tasan’s genius, and Tasan’s future appeared to be full of promise and glory, but the ruling party at the time, the Noron, were jealous, and hated and plotted against him.

The Yi Dynasty had a unique system, whereby anybody at court could express his opinions freely through direct written petitions to the king. Therefore, the political climate was more or less a case of a weak king and a strong court. King Chongjo covered up for Tasan through wrath, apologies and various pretexts, but could not ignore the fast and furious petitions of his ministers. To protect his life, he had no choice but to demote him and condemn him to exile.

Tasan suffered enough during the lifetime of the king who was his greatest protector, so one can imagine how precarious his position became after the sudden death of the king, who according to some was poisoned. Immediately afterwards, the Noron Party set out to kill all their political enemies, so King Yongjo, his son Seja and his grandson King Chongjo were all victims of the factional wrangling.

Queen Chongsun, whom King Yongjo married in his old age, was about the same age as his grandson King Chongjo. She came from a family, which belonged to the Pyokp’a, King Yongjo’s advocates, and spent melancholy days after the death of the old king. She came to power after the sudden death of King Chŏngjo, ostensibly to help the eleven-year-old king by Suryomchongjong. Suryonchongjong was the Yi Dynasty system of regency whereby the queen mother carried out state affairs sitting behind a reed screen when the king was too young to rule the country.

The Queen, who married the sixty-odd-year-old king when she was only 16, had a lot of han, a frequently used Korean word which has no equivalent in English but which means something like a deep-rooted sorrow, grudge or grievance. She was widowed at a very young age, and moreover with the accession of King Chŏngjo, her brother, the head of the Pyokp’a, who were responsible for influencing King Yongjo to kill the Crown Prince Seja, was banished and died in exile. Her allies, all belonging to the Pyokp’a, were purged, and she was obliged to lead a powerless
and lonely life. Immediately after the king’s funeral, she set about taking her revenge. She decided to use Catholicism, which had been causing a public outcry, as the means of her revenge. She had been observing the fact that most of the leading personalities in the Catholic church were scholars from the Namin families.

In any age or any area, when a new heterogeneous culture or ideas are introduced, there is bound to be some friction and resistance before they are accepted, but the great persecution of the Catholics in Korea was caused directly by political reasons. Blood was shed everywhere in the name of uprooting the so-called evil religion, and the Catholics suffered extremely cruel tortures and death. The Pyokp’ a Party accused all Namins of being believers of the evil religion, including those who were not Catholics. Moreover, the Namins themselves were divided into two groups: the Shin-so-p’ a, which means the believers in Western ideas, who were Catholics, and the Kongsop’ a, which means those who reject Western ideas. The latter ostracized and plotted against the former almost as vehemently as the Pyokp’ a Party members. As a result, the Shinso-p’ a Party were almost exterminated.

Tasan’s family, who belonged to the Shinso-p’ a, could not avoid the disaster. His third brother was executed and his second brother and Tasan himself were banished: the former to Shinjido in early 1801 and the latter to Kyongsangdo in April, 1801. In October, 1801, the two brothers were imprisoned again, because of the famous Hwang Sa-yong’s White Letter Incident. However, they were proved innocent, and his brother Yak-jon was again banished to Huksando, and Tasan to Kangjin in Chollado. Therefore, these two brothers clearly became apostates.

That was not the first time Tasan had apostatized. While King Chŏngjo was alive, he had written an article entitled Chamyong-sol, which means self-explanation, and submitted it to the king to avoid persecution. He was relegated to a local government post through the thoughtful consideration of King Chongjo, and while there, he even persecuted the local Catholics. He also strongly tried to persuade them to abandon their faith. Thanks to his shameful apostasy, he managed to save his life, but important government posts were now beyond his reach, and he lived the life of an exiled culprit for the next eighteen years. The days of his prosperity and recognition were now over, and he was faced with a life of hardship and despair. Was this phase in his life really, however, a period of waste and devastation? I don’t think so. I think this was a blessed time when Divine Providence bestowed upon him a true victory as a human
being. In *Chach'onmyomyong*, his personal epitaph—a sort of autobiography, he wrote, "I am happy and contented now that I’ve finally acquired leisure," in November, 1801, shortly after he arrived at Kangjin, Ch'olla-nam-do, his second place of exile. November in the lunar calendar is in the middle of winter, and almost at the end of year. However, he started writing straight away, and as early as 1802, he had already finished several articles on etiquette. He continued to write in earnest, as well as educate his two sons, who had been left behind in his hometown, through letters.

*Shilhak*, pragmatism, was a new school of thought created by a group of scholars who tried to reform society democratically with deep love for the suppressed people, and Tasan is generally accepted to be its most prominent scholar. Until he was exiled, however, he was a man of prosperity who enjoyed the king’s greatest favours, and could not possibly have witnessed the corrupt government administration, devastated land, and the mass of people who suffered abuse and hunger. He had previously been relegated to a local government post a few times, but even in those days, he had been in a position to rule over people. It was not until he was thrown among them as an exiled, political prisoner that he witnessed with his own eyes the sufferings of the people, and as he wrote, "the society which is corrupt through and through."

Tasan was only about forty then, but he could not read without his glasses, and he had been stricken with paralysis and could not use one arm. Despite the physical suffering and a constant fear of death, he read and studied books, classical and modern. Fortunately for him, his mother’s family lived not far away, and one of his ancestors on his mother’s side was a great scholar called Yun, Kosan, and his vast collection of books was readily available. He perused every one of them with his insight, broad vision and excellent scholastic ability, and wrote many books on them with footnotes to teach students. He also reported the cruel sufferings of the people in detail and presented concrete ideas about social reform. These eighteen years indeed afforded him an opportunity for on-the-spot surveying and uninterrupted research, and was a great period of ceaseless effort and splendid achievements. He wrote no less than five hundred books in his lifetime, and many of them were written during this period. With this first hand experience, living among the common people, his reform ideas were reconfirmed and a clear direction was shown in *Shilhak*. His basic viewpoint is also reflected in his literary work.

His literary achievement was as great as any in other fields. He made
it very clear that he did not think much of the miscellaneous narrative historical stories of the Ming and Ch’ing Dynasties in China. Therefore, none of his writings can be called novels, but there are five biographies, and innumerable prefaces, footnotes and other pieces in his collection of writings. Nobody seems to agree as to whether these writings can be considered literary works or simply practical pieces.

He also wrote many epitaphs, including his own, which were certainly ordinary practical writings, in so far as they described particular people’s life stories and achievements. They can, however, be considered as a sort of biographical literature, because they clearly depicted the people and their achievements in a style which is compact, lucid, well-arranged and refined.

Among his prose works, the most representative are said to be Kyŏngseyup’yo and Mongminshimso. In the former he presents ideas for reforming the entire government administration structure beyond the legal boundaries, and in the latter he suggests correcting the mistakes of local government administration within the legal limit. To understand his reform spirit, therefore, both Kyŏngseyup’yo and Mongminshimso have to be studied and correctly comprehended. When discussing his works, in the preface, one pyo and two so’s are often mentioned. This one pyo refers to the Kyŏngseyup’yo, and the two so’s, Mongminshimso and Humhumshimso. These three works were the result of his continuous painful search for improving the miserable conditions of the people of that time.

This reform spirit is also clearly reflected in the more than 2,500 poems included in his anthology, Book 1 to Book 7, so his innumerable social poems are a clinical report of Yi Dynasty society which was “diseased to the tips of its hairs,” and “one pyo and two so’s, prescriptions for its cure.

In the old days in Korea, politicians were engaged not only in politics, but also wrote poetry and prose. Most illustrious families have family anthologies, handed down through the generations. Looking at the world of these people’s poetry, it is very introspective and individualistic. The greatest task of metaphysics is to rule the human mind individually, which meant to set it right. Literature also had its raison d’etre only when it was related to controlling the human mind. Therefore, their poetry depicted the pain and hardship in the process of reforming the mind and sang of the sense of achievement and joy when they finally attained that state. No interest in society and its management ever appeared in their poetry.
Tasan, however, never separated the position of a politician and that of a poet. He wrote to his two sons who had been left behind in his hometown, "Poetry only exists when the poet worries about the world, feels sorry for the suffering multitude, relieves the poor and feels their pain. If he is only concerned with his own self-interest, his works cannot possibly be poetry. He has to love his king and worry about his country. He must feel the pain of the turbulent age and lament the corrupt customs. He must glorify the righteousness, satirize the absurdities, encourage the good and reprimand the evil."

He always wrote poetry with this spirit. Therefore, most of his representative poems contain an intense social consciousness. His poems of this type present and indict the fundamental realities of his time. In a poem entitled, "Choksong Village," he described the miserable state of the village and its inhabitants. He wrote it whilst passing through the village as a powerful secret royal inspector at 33, still at the height of his prosperity. He already possessed social consciousness then, though he was living the life of the privileged.

When discussing Tasan's poems, they can be divided into four categories: the aforementioned social poems, nature poems, fables and lyrics. In his social poems on behalf of the suppressed underdogs, he sharply and accurately indicted the evil, corruption and wrongdoings of those in power and the irrationality of society, which he witnessed at first hand. His nature poems also clearly reflect his own view of the real world, unlike other Korean poems written in Chinese characters which generally lacked individuality. He did not idealize nature, but viewed it as a whole. Nature did not always appear as something beautiful; it was life itself, it provided necessary products to maintain life, and it was full of joys and sorrows.

Passing by a reservoir with beautiful lotus blossoms, he marvelled at the human power of irrigation, as well as thinking that it would be perfect for boating there.

Thick bamboos make it difficult for horse riding,
Boating among lotus blossoms is befitting.
Great is the power of irrigation,
Thousands of rice paddies are dancing in the breeze.

There are those who think that his poems such as this are too full of practicality, but we cannot help being moved by his warm love for the poor people who were worn out by hardship and poverty, and his ardent
wish to reform the inconsistencies of the social system and the archaic and corrupt government administration structure.

In his fables, he also satirized the contradictions of the system, the sufferings of the common people and the wrongdoings of the government officials. For example, there is a poem which describes a cat which is kept to catch mice, but instead of catching them it steals the master's food and causes several times more damage than the mice. These poems in the form of fables are witty, clever, full of imagination and extremely delightful.

I will fix large arrows in my red bow,
And shoot you all to death in a row.
If again the mice misbehave,
A fierce dog I'll rather have.

Here again, his strong sense of justice and grim determination to reform all social evils are clearly shown. There are those who say that he lacked poetic technique, but reading his fables one is surprised to find so much poetic talent and technique.

Tasan was a cool-headed intellectual. He was also an affectionate man. Even whilst living the miserable life of an exile, he often wrote detailed letters to his wife and children. He was also a loving and meticulous husband, who painted irises on skirts and sent them to his wife. This tender side of him is reflected in his lyrics, which are impressive with overflowing feeling and excellent expressions. The poem he wrote on Tano, while thinking of his young daughter from far away, is so full of paternal love that it touches everybody's heart.

I am neither a poet nor a connoisseur, but I love a poem called *Haeryuhwa*.
I saw a branch of flame-red *Haeryuhwa*,
Abandoned one late spring day.
I took it away
To plant under my window.

This poem moves readers with the beauty of the lonely soul who did not lose a feeling for beauty despite his miserable circumstances. An abandoned criminal in exile whom everybody shuns for fear of repercussions picks up a branch of flowers deserted on the road to plant it under his window. Perhaps Tasan rather consoled himself by gathering the abandoned flowers. The abandoned flower which still blossoms, and the
lovely mind of exiled Tasan, who saves it, both touch readers’ hearts with their beauty mixed with pathos.

There is another important aspect to Tasan’s poems. He always emphasized the importance of the independence of Korean literature. He repeatedly wrote to his sons not to neglect the study of Korean history and literature. Though he wrote only in Chinese, his love for his country was very strong and he even put the pronunciations and phrases in Chinese, so his works still impress us more than any pieces written in Korean. Unfortunately, however, his works cannot frankly be called people’s literature, because they were written in Chinese.

In the autumn of 1817, when he was 57, he was pardoned and returned to his hometown. He lived another eighteen years in peace and quiet, rearranging his works and meditating, since his return to a government post was still out of the question.

According to Charles Dallet, the author of the History of the Korean Catholic Church, Tasan repented and returned to Catholicism in his later years, lived the life of a devout Catholic, and just before his death was given the last rites by a Chinese Catholic priest, Father Yu Pang-jae. He also states that the early history of the Korean Catholic Church was based on Tasan’s Pogumchollaesa. Unfortunately this precious book was burned during the cruel persecution and is no longer available. Confucian scholars vehemently claim that the books written by foreigners cannot be trusted. I do not think it is necessary to argue over whether Tasan really returned to the fold or not. Confucianism is not a religion, and therefore, the fact that Tasan converted back to Catholicism does not mean that he abandoned Confucianism. The former existed at the same level as the latter in Tasan’s case.

Whether he was a true Catholic or not, he was without a shadow of a doubt one of the greatest scholars that Korea has ever produced. As such, he lives among Koreans all the time, in love, respect, pride and admiration.
Annual Report of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1989

The Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, is one of several branches of its parent organization, the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. Founded in London in 1824 under the royal patronage of King George IV, the purpose of the Society as a whole is to study the "progress of knowledge in Asia and the means of its extension." Since its founding in Seoul in June 1900 by a small group of foreign residents, the Korea Branch has been devoted, as its constitution requires, to stimulating interest in, promoting the study of, and disseminating knowledge about the arts, history, literature and customs of Korea and neighboring countries. To meet these requirements, the Korea Branch sponsor lecture meetings, tours, and publications. Among the requirements of the Branch's constitution is one that specifies an annual meeting at which a report of the year's activities should be made to the membership. The annual report follows:

Membership: From its founding 17 members in 1900, the Korea Branch has increased to 1,721 members, this being the number registered in 1989 at the time of this report. The total includes 67 life members, 524 overseas members, and 1,630 regular members residing in Korea. Membership includes not only those who participate in the activities of the branch in Seoul but also those who are members of the Taegu Chapter.

Meetings: During the year, 19 lecture meetings were held in Seoul and seven in Taegu.

Tours: Full schedules of tours were carried out by the branch in both the spring and the fall of 1988 with participation totalling more than 2,050.

Publications: The Korea Branch is justifiably proud of its accomplishments in producing and distributing works in English about Korea. Annual Transactions Volume 63 for 1988, was distributed free to members.
Fiancés: Monthly statements from the treasurer report that because of the continuing sale of its publications, the Korea Branch enjoys a state of financial health which allows it to continue to meet its commitment to contribute to the "progress of knowledge" about Korea and her neighbors.
1989 R.A.S. Lectures

Seoul Branch

January 13  Korean Traditional Classical Music:
            Kayagum Performance
            Ms. Yang, Sung-Hee

January 25  The Poetry of Ku Sang
            Brother Anthony Teague

February 8  Attribute of Asexuality in Korean Kinship and Sundered
            Korean Families during the Korean War
            Prof. Kim, Choong-Soon

February 22 Progress and Problems in the Status of Korean Women Today
            Dr. Lee, Tai-Young

March 8    Buddhism and Christianity: Two Different Religions or One
            and the Same?
            Dr. Rhi, Ki-Yong

March 22   Yi Dynasty Seoul Today: Yi Dynasty Seoul as a Cohesive
            Governmental, Cultural, and Social Centre Seen Through
            its Buildings—and What Remains Today
            Mr. Peter Bartholomew

April 26   North Korean Leadership
            Dr. Suh, Dae-Sook

May 10, 1989 The Chinese in Korea during the Japanese Occupation
            Professor Song, June-Ho

May 24     Search for Historical Treasure: The Excavation of the 14th
            Century Chinese Treasure Boat at Sinan, Korea: Tracing a
            Wealth of History Through Treasure
            Dr. Kim, Won-Dong

June 14    Encounter of a Special Kind: The Life and Times of Tasan
            Ms. Hahn, Moo-Sook

June 28    A Study of Kogoishi (Mountain Walls) in Ancient Japan with
            Reference to Mountain Fortresses in Korea
            Professor Lee, Chung-Myun

August 23  Korean Drumming
            Mr. Gary Rector

September 13 The Shaman’s Journey: Real and Ideal in a Living Folk Tradition
            Dr. Laurel Kendall
September 27  History in a Jar
    Dr. Robert Sayers

October 11  You are Dead, the Square is Dead: The 1989 Chinese Pro-
    Democracy Movement
    Ms. Karen Eggleston

October 25  The Korean Judge as Mediator
    Dr. Linda S. Lewis

November 8  Abstract Geology of Korea
    Dr. Kim, Jeong-Hwan

November 22  Yonbyon (Yanbian) as Seen Through Its Literature
    Dr. Mark Peterson

December 13  The Korea of 1900
    Dr. Horace G. Underwood
### 1989 R.A.S. Tours

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