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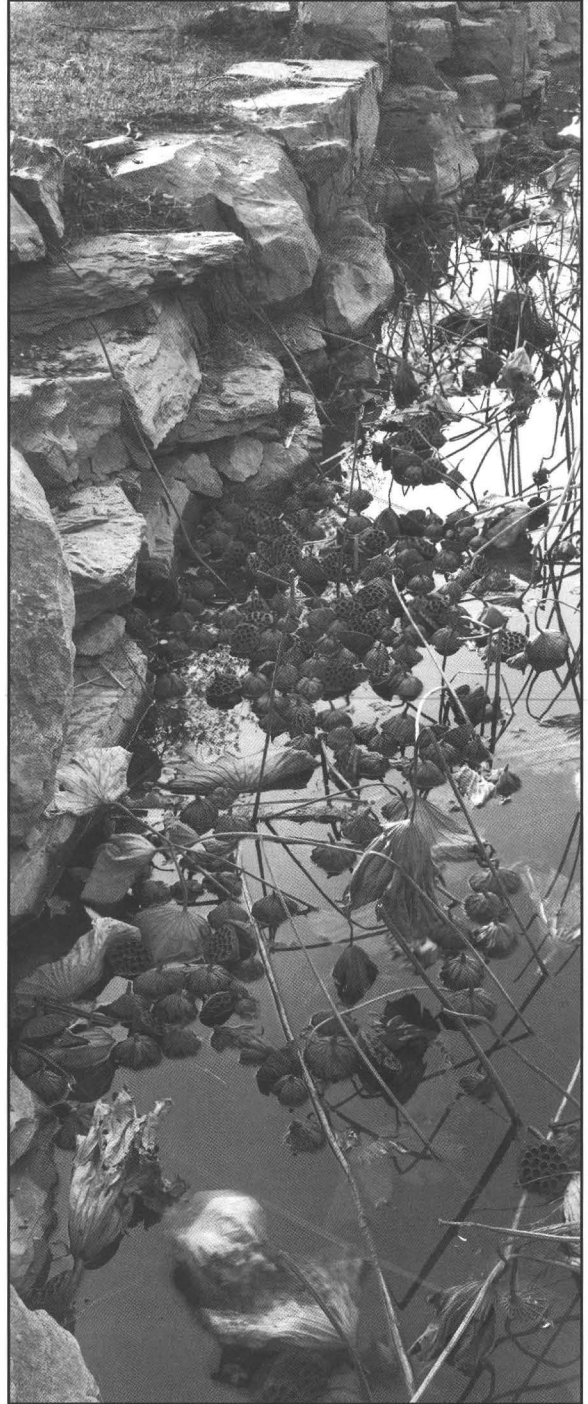
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- Cover illustration Takabatake Kashō, “My skin was like Jade when I left my country”; Yamauchi Hideo, young hero of the “Song of the Mounted Bandit.” Reproduced with permission of Yayoi Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan
- Errata** In recent issues Yan Zhenqing’s 顏真卿 name was mistakenly given as 顏偵卿 due to a change of fonts. We apologise for this error.

In the previous issue of *East Asian History* (No.29), in the article “In Search of Smokers” by Xavier Paulès, the caption on Figure 4, page 120, should read “Occupation of the population of Cantonese adult males in 1928.”

The editor and editorial board of *East Asian History* would like to acknowledge the contribution that two colleagues have made to the creation and evolution of our journal over the years.

Professor Mark Elvin, who took up a position as Professor of Chinese History at The Australian National University in February 1990, was the inspiration behind and instigator of *East Asian History* in its present form. With his encouragement and support we redesigned *Papers on Far Eastern History* and re-launched it as *East Asian History* in 1991. Mark retired from the department in December 2005.

Helen Lo, who began work with us in September 1987, was the designer and editorial assistant of *East Asian History* from its inception until her retirement in June 2005. She was the artist behind the style of the journal and her contribution is sorely missed.



Lotus at the Garden of Perfect Brightness,
Lois Conner, 1998

FROM PUSAN TO FENGTIAN: THE BORDERLINE BETWEEN KOREA AND MANCHUKUO IN THE 1930s

史 *Suk-Jung Han* 한석정 (韓錫政)

In his inaugural speech in February 2003, South Korean president Roh Moo Hyun expressed his desire for Korean products to reach Europe via Russia and the People's Republic of China—in particular via the northeastern region of the latter, so-called Manchuria, or nowadays Dongbei 東北, which abuts the Democratic People's Republic of Korea—by using the phrase “from Pusan 釜山 to Paris.” In fact, the Korean peninsula was once linked to the west in precisely this way—in the 1930s, a moment that is significant in comparison with its long secluded status during the Cold War era.

Pusan is the largest harbor in Korea, at its southeastern tip, and in the 1930s this city was the pivotal point linking Japan and Europe overland. More specifically, it connected Japan with northeast China, the region which, between 1932 and 1945, became the empire's breakaway state of Manchukuo 滿洲國. At that time Pusan was known as the “Gateway to East Asia.” “Pusan to Paris” was achieved at that time in a very real sense, and—critically—it was realised through a route that led via “Pusan to Manchuria.”

Manchukuo, a classic puppet state built by the Kwantung Army 關東軍 after its 1931 revolt that drove out the Zhang Xueliang 張學良 regime without any directive from the Japanese government or Army (in the so-called “Manchurian Incident”), has been long and purposefully forgotten among East Asians. Once it had collapsed along with the Japanese empire in 1945, it was something of a nightmare for Chinese, who “religiously affixed the prefix *wei* (false) to the very word.”¹ Its utopian justifications were remembered by some Japanese, but it was totally ignored by their government.

With special thanks to Alexis Dudden. I am grateful for the support of the Dong-A University Research Fund (2003).

¹ Gavan McCormack, “Manchukuo: Constructing the Past,” *East Asian History* 2 (1991): 106.

² For instance, see Kobayashi Hideo, *Daitōkyōeiken no keisei to hōkai* [The formation and collapse of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1992).

³ Korea, Japan and China are here referred to as they were before 1945, except when such specific markers as “post-liberation” and “after 1945” are used. Hence, “Korean government” denotes the government-general.

Curiously enough, Manchuria has seldom appeared in Korean historiography, except with the predictable theme of anti-Japanese resistance (largely before 1932). There was likewise no space for the relationship between Korea and Manchukuo in major works on Japanese imperialism, which have tended to focus on the relationships between the metropole and its respective colonies.² The Korea-Manchukuo nexus did not belong anywhere in the segregated field of East Asian studies.

Despite its oblivion after 1945, Manchukuo was an inalienable part of the social imagination in Korea.³ There was a constant flow of people and goods between Japan’s two discrete colonial spheres. Transport conditions were revolutionized between Japan and Manchukuo via Pusan. Quite a number of Korean intellectuals visited or decided to live in Manchukuo, often boarding the express train *Nozomi* 望み at one of its stops between Pusan and Fengtian 奉天 (present-day Shenyang 沈陽) or Xinjing 新京 (present-day Changchun 長春), the largest city and the capital of Manchukuo respectively. Such flows were not without bounds, however; sometimes human and material transfers were blocked. This article will explore this cross-border flow (which has so far been veiled) and the possible reasons for its intermittent interruption.

The Transnational Impact of Japanese Empire

⁴ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), p.31.

⁵ Linda Weiss, *The Myth of the Powerless State* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1998), p.170.

⁶ Globalisation here denotes the phenomenon of the circulation of capital, labor and information extending its volume since at least the eighteenth century, though not necessarily subsuming the whole world.

⁷ Sugihara Kaoru, *Ajiakan hōeki no keisei to kōzō* [The formation and structure of Pan-Asian Trade] (Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 1996).

During the last decade of the twentieth century, globalising trends had a great impact on world history, impressing commentators who envisioned a whole new world. These trends have frequently been considered in their relationship with sovereignty or with the predicament (or even the end) of nation-states. Some claim that a new global form of sovereignty without a territorial center of power or fixed boundaries had already emerged in the second half of the twentieth century.⁴ Yet it has also been pointed out that the contemporary world is in a number of ways far less internationalised in terms of trade, investment and capital flows than it was in the period prior to World War I.⁵ This earlier globalisation is often overlooked in the current literature.⁶ In the East Asian context, Japanese colonialism was the first serious transnational flow in the twentieth century. It broke open the former barriers between polities through the revolutionization of transportation by land and sea. It was an immense force in an infrastructural sense. This revolutionization had its effects on the “pan-Asian divisions of labor.”⁷ It also diffused imperialist but transnational discourses such as: “Racial harmony” (*minzoku kyōwa* 民族協和); the “Harmony of five races” (*gozoku kyōwa* 五族協和, after Manchukuo was founded); the “Rise of Asia” (*kōa* 興亞); the “Unity of Manchuria and Korea” (*mansen ichinyo* 滿鮮一如); the “Unity of Japan and Korea” (*nissen itai*, with the Sino-Japanese War of 1937); and, finally, the “Greater East Asian Prosperity Sphere” (*daitōkyōeiken* 大東亞共榮圈, around the time

of the Pacific War).

One is tempted to view these phenomena through the lens of the current globalisation literature, that is in terms of the rise of transnational force at the cost of nation-states and a weakening of their boundaries.⁸ One problem with this approach, however, would be the tendency to treat Manchukuo as a mere colony of Japan, without paying attention to its “sovereign” state form. The state form, often queried by state theorists, is not a simple decoration. It can restrain a blunt capitalist or alien rule. According to some sociologists, for instance, the democratic state form of modern states makes capitalist rule problematic.⁹ In this way the independent state form of Manchukuo unexpectedly had some real functions, including a more or less sovereign stance *vis-à-vis* Tokyo, particularly in its early stages.¹⁰ The form of the state also exercised restraints upon the outright privileges of Japanese settlers in Manchukuo. And Chinese had to be represented in high positions of government and in the business world in this “sovereign” state, which adopted Chinese as its official language (in the early period). Priority was given to “Manchukuoans” (mostly Chinese) in several realms, and not to others who were excluded from the category (such as Korean settlers).

It is seldom discussed that a colonial state has its own logic that is different from that of settlers or missionaries from its metropole.¹¹ As Berman and Lonsdale aptly put it, it possesses “factors of cohesion” regulating the conflicting interests of various groups, including the settlers and indigenous people.¹² As a social system, it would potentially have “autopoietic” traits, which, according to Luhmann, “define its own specific modes of operation”;¹³ hence it sometimes refuses to be a docile branch of its home government.

There were several colonial states and puppet states in the extensive Japanese empire. In China alone there were three other puppet states in the 1930s: the Jicha 冀察 Government and the Jidong 冀東 Autonomous Government in central China from 1935, and the Wang Jingwei 汪精衛 Government in Nanjing 南京 from 1937. These were aimed at denying a sole and sovereign China (promoting what is called *bunji* 分治, divided rule).¹⁴ Some of them collided with each other or with the metropole owing to confusing command channels and disunities inside the ruling bloc of civilian leaders and the military, or between the army and navy in Japan.¹⁵ The behavior of Manchukuo was the most cantankerous, often conflicting with Tokyo.¹⁶ Its leaders set up a quasi-independent border. Manchukuo’s tariff barriers, for instance, would not move in spite of vociferous demands from businessmen in Japan and Korea. Manchukuo refused to be a simple source of cheap labor or a commodity market for them. The Manchukuo Government sometimes stopped material flows from Korea when required, in a manner reminiscent of contemporary sovereign states.¹⁷ In a sense, according to Duara, its state builders tried to build legitimacy as custodians of the timelessness and sanctity of the frontier peoples and regions (what

⁸ See Masao Miyoshi, “A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State,” *Critical Inquiry* 19 (1993): 744; Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalisation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

⁹ See Bob Jessop, *The Capitalist State* (New York: New York University Press, 1982), pp.91, 99; and Bob Jessop, *State Theory* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania University Press, 1990), pp.206–7.

¹⁰ See Suk-Jung Han, “The Problem of Sovereignty: Manchukuo, 1932–37,” *positions. east asia cultures critique* 12.2 (2004): 462–3.

¹¹ John Comaroff, “Images of Empire, Contests of Conscience,” in *Tensions of Empire*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1997), pp.179–81.

¹² Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1992), p.94.

¹³ Niklas Luhmann, *Social Systems*, trans. John Bednarz (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), p.34.

¹⁴ *Gendai shi shiryō: nitchū sensō*, [Contemporary historical materials: the Sino-Japanese War], ed. Shimada Toshihiko, vol.1 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobō, 1964), pp.368–71.

¹⁵ See Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); Sadako Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria: The Making of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1931–32* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1964); Robert Butow, *Tojo and the Coming of War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1961); and James Crowley, *Japan’s Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930–38* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966).

¹⁶ Alvin Coox, *Nomonhan: Japan against Russia, 1939* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985), pp.61–2; Nakagane Katsuji, “Manchukuo and Economic Development,” in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), p.142.

¹⁷ The Manchukuo government was run by Japanese and its final decision-maker was the Kwantung Army. Although the ratio of Japanese officials in the government was /OVER

/30–40 per cent (45.8 per cent in 1935, with 30.5 per cent in the public sector in 1940), they were put in important posts. Yamamuro Shinichi, *Chimera: Manshukoku no shōzō* [Kimera: a portrait of Manchukuo], suppl. (Tokyo 2004), pp.114–15; *Kangde qinian linsbi guosbi diaocha: zai Manzhonguo Ribenren diaocha jiegubiao—quanguopian* [1940 temporary national strength survey report, hereafter *1940 census (on Japanese)*] (Xinjing: Manzhonguo Zongwuting, 1940), pp.61–71, 281–7.

¹⁸ Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), pp.29–32.

¹⁹ See Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1998), pp.55–75.

²⁰ Pusan had the highest ratio of Japanese settlers in Korea in the 1920s and 1930s: 38.4 percent in 1925 and 31.3 per cent in 1935. See *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpo* [The statistical annals of the Korean Government-General] (hereafter *Chōsen sōtokufu*) (Seoul: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1937), pp.23–9.

²¹ David Abernethy, *The Dynamics of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires, 1415–1980* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), p.116.

²² Liu Jianhui, “Manshū gensō no seiritsu to sono shatei” [The formation of the Manchurian illusion and its range], *Ajiaryūgaku* 44 (2002): 15–17.

he calls the “regime of authenticity”), not to be contaminated by Han-Chinese (agrarian) or Japanese (capitalist) encroachment.¹⁸

Against the background of Manchukuo as a quasi-state I will first describe the advent of the transnational era in East Asia in terms of the view from Pusan harbor; I will then contend that colonialism is a Janus-faced phenomenon of transnational flows and the establishment of quasi-sovereignties, of blurring and reproducing boundaries inside the empire.

The Advent of the Transnational Age

With the establishment of Manchukuo came a great transnational wave in modern Korean history. In Pusan, one sensed that the empire was broadening into a new horizon, as Pusan itself became a central point linking frontiers. The founding of Manchukuo brought great excitement to the citizens of Pusan, particularly its Japanese settlers, just as the Manchurian Incident (which had swept the whole of Japan with imperial jingoism) had done in the previous year.¹⁹ Businessmen—mostly Japanese—in Pusan had high expectations of exporting goods and traveling to Manchukuo.²⁰ There was a flood of lectures on the “Man-Mō 滿蒙 [Manchuria-Mongolia] problem” by Japanese businessmen, war veterans and tourists who visited the two regions. There was also a special column in a Pusan newspaper, with topics broadly covering investment, exports, coal mining, Korean migration, security, transport and so forth. Businessmen solicited for the establishment of a Manchukuo consular office in Pusan.

Manchuria fever was fanned by the Man-Mō Exhibition in spring 1932 (which was held after the International Colonial Exposition, representing the apex of European power, took place in Vincennes, outside Paris, in 1931).²¹ It was sponsored by several institutions: the Japanese government Department of the Army, Navy, and Colonization; the Japanese army in Korea; the Kwantung Army; the *Fusan nippo* 釜山日報 (Pusan Daily); Kyōngnam 慶南 province; and, Pusan city. It was planned to last for a fortnight but was extended for ten more days, and it attracted tens of thousands of spectators from all over the southeastern part of Korea.

Several kinds of tourist groups bound for “New Manchukuo”—students from high schools, colleges and the Army College, and war veterans—came to Pusan from Japan. Although tourism to Manchuria (as a site of war memorials) had been officially sponsored by the Japanese government after the Russo-Japanese War, it exploded after the founding of Manchukuo.²² The number of tourists reached into the tens of thousands during summer 1932. Ferries between Pusan and Shimonoseki 下關 were full from March. Adventurers seeking to reach Manchukuo by automobile or bicycle or on foot, and some boys seeking to “join the Manchurian bandits,” went up to Fengtian, Xinjing, and even further to Harbin 哈爾

濱 even in winter, overcoming the continental cold. Some bar hostesses in Japan and Pusan also joined in the exodus. Manchukuo was as attractive as the prospect of a great mountain covered with perpetual snow is for climbers.

Northbound cargo, from Pusan to Manchukuo, also increased dramatically. The freight from Japan to Manchukuo via Pusan in 1932 rose to nine times that of the previous year. The “special transit” trade between them (which was not processed by the customs office in Pusan) in the late 1930s was five times the amount of “normal” exports from Pusan to Manchukuo.²³ By train or ship, Pusan was connected not only to Japan and Manchukuo, but also to other northern regions of the Korean peninsula that had hitherto been isolated.

The demographic and physical expansion of Pusan corresponded exactly with the founding of Manchukuo. For a decade from 1925 to 1935, the increase in population in Pusan was the highest in Korea (at 74 per cent).²⁴ Every year the number of passengers of railways and ferries broke records.²⁵ The harbor met the hellish traffic without adapting to the sudden increase. When 3,000 passengers at once landed in Pusan at the beginning of spring in 1939, the pier became the site of “murderous congestion,” hence the promise of the colonial government to build the “Number One harbor in Asia” there.²⁶ Although the main infrastructure of Pusan was industriously built up during the whole colonial period, construction after 1932 surpassed that of the previous period in terms of speed. The newspaper kept pressing for the construction of the “Number One harbor” in order that the astronomic budget required be obtained from the colonial government. Numerous projects for the “great harbor true to the name of ‘Number One harbor’” in the 1930s grew inexorably. They included the reconstruction of piers, the reclamation of the Pusanjin 釜山鎮 area, the paving of main streets, the construction of tram lines and railways from Pusan to Haeundae 海運台 beach to Joachun 左川, Pusan Great Bridge (nowadays Yöngdo 影島 Bridge), the city hall and suchlike. The bridge, raised seven times a day, became the symbol of the “Gateway to East Asia.”

The advent of Manchukuo gave Pusan an exotic flavor as a transit port. Chinese opium smugglers were sometimes arrested in Pusan’s Chinatown. About ten thousand foreigners from 30 countries—including royal families, VIPs, and envoys of Japan, Manchukuo, Germany, and Italy—passed through Pusan every year.²⁷ “Super-large” vessels (six to nine thousand tons) bound for Europe and the USA passed through Pusan, bringing it the status of an international harbor. It also became a gateway of fashion. Young women arriving in western clothing with hats and parasols became targets for photographers from local newspapers. Mountains of Japanese magazines were piled high at the pier.

Above all, Pusan’s citizens were urged to direct their gaze toward

²³ Lee Haeju, “Singminji ch’iha üi Pusan kyöngje” [The economy of Pusan under colonialism], in *Pusan kyöngjesa* [The economic history of Pusan], ed. Sin Kyusöng (Pusan: Pusan Sang’gong’hoiüiso, 1989), p.686.

²⁴ *Chösen sötokufu, 1925*, pp. 34–41; *Chösen sötokufu, 1935*, pp.23–9.

²⁵ The number of ferry passengers (in both directions) rose from 700,000 in 1932 to 1.9 million in 1939. Railway passengers surpassed one million from 1932, reaching 200,000 in one month alone in 1939. See *Fusankö böekigairan, 1933* [An overview of trade in Pusan Port], (hereafter *Fusankö*) (Pusan: Pusan Zeikan, 1933), pp.265, 268; *Fusankö, 1937*, p.284; *Fusankö, 1940*, p.322.

²⁶ *Fusan nippo* [Pusan Daily], 7 April 1939.

²⁷ 5,821 foreigners from 30 countries came to Pusan in the first half of 1936. *Ibid.*, 21 July 1936.

²⁸ Ibid., 3 March 1937.

²⁹ Ibid., 29 October 1933.

³⁰ Ibid., 2 March 1939.

Manchuria, as epitomized in the speech of the new governor-general Minami Jirō 南次郎, ex-commander of the Kwantung Army. In Pusan in March 1937, he said, “Let us face the continent [Manchuria] with our eyes wide open.”²⁸ Manchuria touched on their daily lives. Japanese soldiers bound for Manchurian or Chinese battle fronts continually landed in Pusan. They would march through the downtown area to a wild ovation from the city’s Japanese settlers. The pier and the station square were full of brass band music and Japanese flags (*binomaru* 日の丸) waved by Japanese settlers, students and geishas welcoming the northbound soldiers.

The Manchurian dream co-existed with the “Manchurian retreat,” however.²⁹ Japanese who went bankrupt in Manchuria came down to Pusan to stay aimlessly in crammed public shelters. The war-wounded also marched through the main streets, and the remains of the war dead were returned to Japan through Pusan. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War there were city-wide rallies celebrating the fall of Nanjing, Guangdong 廣東, Hankou 漢口 and Wuhan 武漢, in spite of the increasing number of bodies of soldiers killed at the port being shipped back to Japan. To mark the fall of Nanjing, a high tower was built in front of the city hall and smoke rose at the Yongdu 龍頭 Shrine (the center of various rituals for Japanese residents in Pusan) in celebration. With the fall of Hainandao 海南島 in 1939, the heartbeat of this tropical area was transmitted to Pusan, with Japanese soldiers pictured resting under trees drinking coconut juice.³⁰ There were also new rallies for consoling the war-bereaved families in Pusan. At every important event, all citizens offered one minute’s silent prayer to the war dead. From September 1939, the prayer became fixed on the first day of every month. A climate of transnationality arrived in Pusan with “joy” and “sorrow” intersecting—with march and retreat—the passage of northbound soldiers and their southbound remains.

The Speeding-up of Integration

³¹ Wolfgang Shivelbusch, *The Railway Journey* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1986), pp.90, 93.

Manchukuo was suddenly made accessible to Korea and Japan with the revolution in transportation. Astounding efforts to integrate the Japanese empire were made with qualitative breakthroughs in transportation, and many modes of transportation competed with each other in the 1930s. This went hand in hand with industrialisation in the empire, which was unique in comparison with Britain (where development came after the industrial revolution) or the USA (where the opposite pattern prevailed, with waterways preceding railroads as the essential transportation system).³¹

The whole development of transportation in the Japanese empire involved Pusan. The length of the ferry voyage from Shimonoseki to Pusan was reduced from nine-and-a-half to seven hours in 1933. The capacity of the ferries increased dramatically. Two “super-large” vessels of 7,000

tons discharged over 2,000 passengers each at the Pusan port daily from 1936, whereas only two to three hundred passengers had been carried in the 1920s. From the end of 1937, passengers could buy tickets for express trains to Manchuria on board. The schedule of the express train was fixed according to the arrival of the vessels. Submarine telegraph between Pusan and Shimonoseki, Hiroshima 廣島, Seoul and Fukuoka 福岡, and wireless telephone calls between Japan and Manchukuo, Pusan and Manchukuo were subsequently initiated. Manchukuo was getting closer to Pusan and Japan by air, too. Planes flew to Xinjing from Pusan and Tokyo 東京. The flight from Tokyo via Niigata 新潟 decreased to ten hours and that from Tokyo to Dalian 大連 to seven hours. Osaka 大阪-Seoul-Fengtian and Tokyo-Beiping 北平 air routes were also opened up with great fanfare.³²

The most impressive effort was made on the railway, with the catchphrase of “*Speedo-afu*” (speed-up), starting from Pusan. The Pusan-Manchukuo trains kept shortening their journey times; their endless record-breaking in the 1930s was like that of an Olympic marathon race in the 20th century. In 1933, there appeared an express, *Hikari* 光 (which, along with *Nozomi*, nostalgically gives its name to one of the super-express Shinkansen 新幹線 trains in Japan) from Pusan station to Fengtian. The whole trip all the way from Tokyo to Xinjing by sea and rail was reduced from 70 hours to 55 hours, and finally to 51 hours in 1934. The *Nozomi* and *Azia* (Asia) expresses ran from Pusan to Manchukuo and from Dalian to Xinjing respectively. The ambitious goal of reaching Xinjing from Tokyo in 35 hours was set. Slogans such as “breakfast in Pusan, dinner in Andong 安東” (near the Yalu 鴨綠 River in Manchukuo) appeared, with the high-speed train *Akatsuki* 曉 flying from Pusan to Seoul in eight hours by the end of 1936. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, deluxe trains ran between Pusan station and Beiping, connecting Pusan to the Chinese continent via Manchuria. In 1939, the *Tairiku* 大陸 from Pusan pier to Beiping and *Kōa* 興亞 in the opposite direction made their debuts and “flew like bullets.”³³ The grand dream of running between Pusan and Japan in two hours through an undersea tunnel was finally expressed (and is still talked about by businessmen in Pusan). There were speed races everywhere. Trains and ferries connected Japan, Korea, Manchukuo and the Chinese continent at an amazing speed. Pusan was the pivotal point.

The Manchurian Dream

Thanks to the revolution in transportation, Manchuria became part of daily life in Pusan—and not just in Pusan, but throughout the whole of Korea. The most important happenings in Manchukuo (even those censored there, such as the casualties on the Japanese and Manchukuo side from bandit attacks) were reported in Korea.³⁴ The security situation involving bandits was the primary focus. Korean newspapers frequently

³² According to a Japanese tourist, it took four hours to travel from Xinjing to Dalian by air via Fengtian and nine hours from Dalian to Osaka via Shin'ūiju, Pyongyang, Seoul, Taegu, Ulsan and Fukuoka. See Kawamura Minato, *Manshū tetsudō: maboroshi ryokō* [Manchurian railways: Fantastic travels] (Tokyo: Bun'gei Shunshūsha, 1998), pp.268–9.

³³ *Fusan nippo*, 1 November 1939.

³⁴ *Maeil shinbo* [New Daily] printed in Seoul, 22 June 1936; *Shengjing shibao* [Great Fengtian Daily], 20 June 1936.

³⁵ These showed up in pro-government magazines (such as *Sam'chöl'li*, *Rok'gi*, *Tong'gwang*, *Pyölkönkon* and *Sabaegong'ron*). One exemplary film was *Pokjimanni* [Blessed land of ten thousand kilometers]. There was a song with the same name. See Kim Chöl, "Mol'rak'hanön shin'saeng" [The fall of new life], *Sang'höbakbo* 9 (2002): 149–50.

³⁶ A gigantic figure in Korean literature, Choi Namsön joined the faculty of Jianguo University in Manchukuo. See Chizuko Allen, "Northeast Asia Centered Around Korea: Ch'oe Namson's View of History," *Journal of Asian Studies* 49.4 (1990): 788. Those who settled in Manchukuo were Kang Kyöng'ae, An Sugil, Pak Yöng'un and Yöm Sang'söp.

³⁷ See Lee Sangkyöng, *Kang Kyöng'ae chönjip* [The complete works of Kang Kyöng'ae] (Seoul: Somyöng Ch'ulp'ansa, 2003).

³⁸ It is little wonder that she has long been forgotten in South Korean literature given her socialist orientation. Her works were instead published in North Korea in 1949. In 1999, a monument to her was built in Yanbian, in former Manchuria, by Korean-Chinese novelists. Lee, *Kang Kyöng'ae chönjip*, pp.873–5.

³⁹ Yi T'aejun, "Nong'gun," in *Yi T'aejun chönjip* [The complete works of Yi T'aejun] (Seoul: Kip'un'saem, 1988: orig. 1939).

⁴⁰ For instance, the Wanbaoshan incident, a minor clash between Korean and Chinese farmers near Changchun, led to the massacre of Chinese in P'yöngyang in July 1931, as a result of exaggerated reports in Korean newspapers (permitted by the Japanese authorities). See Kim Chöl, "Mol'rak'hanön," pp.130–1.

⁴¹ Han Sölya, "Taeryuk," in *Shing'minjuüi wa pihyöp'ryök üi chöbang* [Colonialism and the resistance of non-cooperation], ed. Kim Chaeyong (Seoul: Yökrak Ch'ulp'ansa, 2003).

⁴² Han was a leader of the Marxist camp in Korean literature during the colonial period. After the Korean War, he remained in North Korea and never belonged to either the pro-Russian faction or the nationalist one (the so-called "self-reliance" faction). He was purged in 1962. Kim Chaeyong, "Saero palgyöndoen hansölya üi Taeryuk kwa manju insik" [The newly found Han Sölya's *Continent* / ●VER

reported on these and pointed to Zhang Xueliang and the Guomindang (國民黨, KMT) in the early 1930s and Russia from the middle of the decade as shadowy behind-the-scenes figures.

Other important news was widely reported in Korea: the celebration of the Manchurian Incident and the foundation of Manchukuo; recognition of Manchukuo by Japan, Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Spain; Manchukuo's approval of the Franco regime; the founding of Jianguo University; the reshuffling of the Manchukuo government cabinet; the government's Five-Year Economic Development Plans, and so on. For this reason some Korean readers in the 1930s were perhaps more knowledgeable on international matters than their descendants in the Cold War era who were physically and ideologically contained in half of the peninsula.

The Manchuria boom that hit Japan in the early 1930s reached the whole of Korea in the second half of the 1930s. Newspapers and magazines took the lead, with numerous articles, columns, travel accounts and analyses of political matters in Manchuria. Films were made and hundreds of songs written about Manchuria,³⁵ and a number of writers visited Manchukuo or moved there to live.³⁶ Manchuria provided a broad spectrum for them. The work of Kang Kyöng'ae 姜敬愛 is mostly about Manchuria and stands at the extreme of the most realistic description of the hardship of Korean migrants.³⁷ Manchuria was another hell for those who were forced to leave Korea under the feudal class system. Most of the protagonists in Kang's novels face death in unfavorable situations in Manchuria: extreme poverty, opium, attacks from bandits and anti-bandit suppression units, or exploitation by Chinese landlords. However, there are always heroes in her works who resist the imperial order or overcome adversity. For this reason she is widely remembered among Korean Chinese in the northeastern region now.³⁸

One of the most influential modernists during the colonial period, Yi T'aejun 李泰俊, also traversed Manchuria and wrote *Farmer* (*Nong'gun* 農軍) as his travel record.³⁹ The book initially describes the Korean diaspora as a pitiful sight but soon introduces their frontier spirit in conflicts with Chinese residents. The latter theme is located in the frame of the relationship of conflict between Korean settlers and Chinese farmers in the 1920s (or attacks on the former by the latter), which was long manipulated by the Japanese imperialist regime in Manchuria and was in particular politically exploited in Korea in 1931.⁴⁰

Continent (*Taeryuk* 大陸) by Han Sölya 韓雪夜⁴¹ is a complex novel. This newly rediscovered work is written in Japanese but defies easy categorisation as pro-Japanese literature. Han has long been considered one of the last who resisted collaboration to colonial rule.⁴² Although *Continent* borrows the frontier image with which Japanese imperialism envisioned Manchuria, it is different from the "native place writings" produced in Man-

chukuo in the 1940s such as *Green Valley* (*Lüse de gu* 綠色的谷) (1942) by Shanding 山丁, which dramatizes the “primitive authenticity” of Manchuria in its depictions of forest and aboriginal people.⁴³ While *Continent* allots Koreans a margin for hardship (from bandit attacks and looting by Chinese neighbors afterwards), it takes a broader view that extends towards transnationalism, as symbolised in the title; it is too broad for closed Korean nationalism. Remarkably, no Korean protagonists appear in the novel, but only Japanese and Chinese ones: a young Japanese man who grew up in a Korean village (and whose father, as an educator of Korean settlers, used to wear Korean clothes); another Japanese man, who severs his ties with his closest family members (namely his snobbish Japanese fiancée, father, and brother); a Chinese woman, a girlfriend of the second Japanese, who is subjected to racial humiliation by Japanese around her; her father, an open-minded Chinese community leader; and his friend, a bandit leader. All of the characters keep their distance from the Manchukuo government. Perhaps the author intends to reveal new layers or possibilities in Manchuria by omitting pro-Japanese figures. *Continent* is not simple praise of “racial harmony” in Manchukuo. Rather, it is a test of its validity; it presents a sophisticated accusation of Japanese arrogance, in the name of racial harmony.⁴⁴

Continent nonetheless appeals to the romance of Japanese colonialism in Manchuria (while suppressing its reality) by employing narratives of adventure and the civilising mission. It is full of bandit scenes (such as kidnappings and ransom demands, and the struggles of other protagonists against bandits) reminiscent of Hollywood films about native Americans in the “wild west”—with the significant difference that even the bandits are disarmingly described in *Continent*. Manchuria is depicted as a common experimental ground for East Asians, waiting to be “soaked by their blood” for its fertilisation and waiting to be “civilised” by the expulsion of natural or human obstacles (such as bandits).⁴⁵ The protagonists are ready to offer their blood for the barren continent, or to become “oil for a lamp to brighten it,” in a way that reminds us of those Westerners who wanted to bring “light” to their African colonies or “to the hidden evil, to the profound darkness of its heart” delineated by Joseph Conrad.⁴⁶

An exodus of Koreans to this “harmonious” continent of Manchuria occurred in the late 1930s. In Korean historiography, this migration has so far been explained in terms of such structural factors as the policies of the colonial government (such as the Grand Cadastral Survey in the 1910s) to provide land for Japanese settlers, the industrialisation of Manchuria (which absorbed labor from Korea), or a tactic to divert Korean migrants from Japan in order to protect Japanese labor markets.⁴⁷ One problem with these explanations is that they cannot account for the exact timing and the sudden increase in the Korean population in the latter half of the 1930s.⁴⁸

/and his view on Manchuria] (unpublished paper presented at the “Conference of the Manchurian Studies Association,” Andong, Korea, 2003), p.39.

⁴³ Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, pp.221–30.

⁴⁴ See Kim, “Saero palgyōndo,” pp.23–7.

⁴⁵ Han, “Taeryuk,” p.44.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.54. Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp.127, 136.

⁴⁷ Andrew Grajdanzev, *Modern Korea* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1944), p.76; In-teak Chung, “The Korean Minority in Manchuria, 1900–37” (PhD diss., American University, 1966), p.27; Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, vol.1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), p.55.

⁴⁸ The increase in the number of Koreans in the whole of Manchuria (Manchukuo and adjunct regions of the South Manchuria Railway) was greatest in the latter half of the 1930s. The increase rate of Koreans in the population was 16 per cent in 1915–20; 15.7 per cent in 1920–25; 14.1 per cent in 1925–30; 36.1 per cent in 1930–35; and 75.5 per cent in 1935–40. *Senzenkichūkoku zairyū Nibonjin tōkei* [Statistics on Japanese in prewar China] (hereafter *Senzenki*), ed. Kimura Kenji and Kōno Yasunori (Tokyo: Nihon Gaimushō Ajikyoku, 2004), vol.6, p.82, table 9.

⁴⁹ *Fusan nippo*, 20 August 1934.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 21 August 1936.

⁵¹ *Maeil shinbo*, 22 August 1936.

⁵² *1940 census*, p.422. Li Hyeyŏn, "Dainiji sekai taisengo ni okeru chūkoku tohoku chiku kyojū chōsen jin no hikiage no jitsutai ni tsuite" [On the retreat of Koreans living in the Northeast of China after World War II], *Hitotsubashi kenkyū* 27.2 (2002): 58.

Korean newspapers suddenly began to beat the migration drum in 1936, with special series on Manchuria. What triggered this? The catalyst was a natural disaster which severely affected the southern regions (including Pusan) in successive seasons, and offered the colonial government a chance to fulfill its old idea of transferring idle labor to Manchuria. Almost every summer from 1933, flooding attacked these regions. After experiencing a great flood "afflicting 180,000 people" in 1934, the colonial government sent several hundred families from southern Korea to Manchuria, mentioning a future plan of dispatching two million households.⁴⁹ The disaster in 1936 was gigantic, affecting "one million sufferers" and leading to the replacement of the governor-general, the superintendent governor-general and the police chief of the most afflicted region, Kyōngbuk 慶北 province. In the case of Koryōng-gun 高靈郡, which was entirely destroyed, people "ate the roots of herbs and the bark of trees."⁵⁰ The colonial government acknowledged the disaster as the worst since the annexation of Korea.

Now Manchuria was seen by the government as the ultimate solution, and peasants afflicted by the floods were induced to migrate there. Most peasants in Mil'yang-gun 密陽郡, for instance, told reporters that they "would rather go over to Manchuria" than stay and rebuild.⁵¹ The Korean-Manchurian Colonization Company was finally launched, with the grand plan of sending ten thousand households to Manchuria each year for 15 years. With this announcement, the wind of migration swept through the whole of Korea. The first project of the company began in Spring 1937, sending two to three thousand families each year until the demise of Manchukuo. From 1939, this wave of migration was solemnly named "frontier migration." In a strict and organized way, the Korean and Manchukuo governments dispatched and received Korean peasants through the company, providing transportation and allotting permits to people in each province of Korea. Finally, about 0.7 million Koreans (including the "frontier migrants") went over to Manchuria in the 1930s, most of them (over half a million) in the latter half of the 1930s. The number of Koreans in Manchukuo reached over two million in 1945.⁵²

Koreans became omnipresent in Manchukuo. There were all kinds: anti-Japanese fighters and collaborators, "frontier migrants" and wanderers, ordinary farmers, opium dealers, and smugglers. Manchuria became their El Dorado.

The Manchukuo Border

The boundary between Manchukuo and Korea for this human flow was somewhat porous. While Korean "frontier migrants" needed permits to settle in Manchukuo, ordinary Korean travelers were seldom checked, except in some strategic regions in northern Manchuria bordering the

Soviet Union. However, the borders for material flows were less permeable. There were customs offices on both sides of the Korea-Manchukuo border, and while merchants from both sides actively traded goods using two currencies in Sin'uiju 新義州 in Korea (now a candidate for special economic zone status in the DPRK), customs officials on both sides busily checked all incoming and outgoing goods. Vigilance on the Manchukuo side was intense, and officials searched Korean goods and smugglers tenaciously. On one occasion Manchukuo officials in the Andong office hunted down Korean smugglers and murdered them with clubs; this became a diplomatic concern on both sides.⁵³

Both sides also fought fiercely over the jurisdiction of the so-called Japan Sea Route connecting the three new ports in northern Korea and Japanese cities along the sea between Korea and Japan. While Manchukuo's South Manchuria Railway Company was initially in charge of managing the three ports (Ung'ki 雄基, Najin 羅津 and Chōngjin 清津) and a new railway between Jilin 吉林 and Hoeryōng 會嶺, most of these ports had been taken by the Korean side by 1940. Korea also frustrated Manchukuo's proposal to establish its own customs offices in these cities, designed to bypass double-checking procedures on both sides.⁵⁴

Above all, one might observe that Manchukuo refused to belong to the hierarchy of the Wallersteinian world system theory with Japan as the producer of sophisticated manufactured goods, Korea specialising in basic, unsophisticated industries, and Manchuria (later China) furnishing raw materials.⁵⁵ The material flow between Korea and Manchukuo deviated sharply from the classic form of this theory. Few Korean firms set up established branches in Manchukuo to obtain raw materials or cheap labor. Although Kyōngsōngbangjik 京城紡織 might be an exception in that it built a subsidiary in Manchukuo (called the Southern Manchurian Spinning Company), it brought its own labor from Korea.⁵⁶ Also, its heavy investment in Manchukuo resulted in a severe deficit and a reshuffle of its management.⁵⁷ It would be difficult to say that Korea had a semi-peripheral advantage (that is, exporting manufactured goods and importing agricultural or marine products) *vis-à-vis* Manchukuo.⁵⁸ The first round of Korean exports to Manchukuo in the early 1930s consisted largely of salted or dried fish products from the southeastern region, including Pusan. There were in addition important transit cargoes between Japan and Manchukuo. Even if Korea exported industrial products to and imported agricultural ones from Manchukuo, this largely reflects the pattern of such trade between Japan and Manchukuo, and not between Korea and Manchukuo.⁵⁹ In general, Korea faced a trade deficit in its economic relationship with Manchuria for about thirty years.⁶⁰

Furthermore, Manchukuo maintained firm tariff barriers toward Japan and Korea. In spite of the noisy demands of businessmen in Japan and Korea and several high-level meetings of all three authorities, the Manchukuo government would not lower its tariffs on exports from Japan

⁵³ *Fusan nippo*, 16 July 1935.

⁵⁴ Tanaka Ryuichi, "Manshūkoku to Nihon no teikoku shihai: shokuminchi Chōsen to no kōzō renkan o chūsin ni" [The imperial rule of Manchukuo and Japan: on the structural relationship with colonial Korea] (PhD diss., University of Osaka, 2004), pp.143–55.

⁵⁵ Carter Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: Kōch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism* (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1991), p.115.

⁵⁶ Eckert, *ibid.*, p.177.

⁵⁷ See Chōng An'gi, "Chōn'sigi Manju bangjōkōp ūi sōngjang kwa sanōp t'ongje ūi t'ōkijil" [The war-time growth of the spinning industry in Manchuria and the characteristics of industrial control] (unpublished paper presented at the "Conference of the Manchurian Studies Association," Ch'ōngju, Korea, 2004), pp.15–20.

⁵⁸ For instance, Korea exported sugar, cotton, rayon and timber to and imported sorghum, soy beans, sugar, coal and fertiliser from Manchukuo. The two exchanged timber, sugar, steel, fertiliser and soy beans in 1937. See Elisabeth Schumpeter, *The Industrialization of Japan and Manchukuo, 1930–40* (New York: MacMillan, 1940), p.295.

⁵⁹ Yamamoto Yuzō, *Manshūkoku keizaisbi kenkyū* [A study on the economic history of Manchukuo] (Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press, 2003), p.234.

⁶⁰ Korea had a trade surplus with Manchuria for the seven years from 1938 to 1945, mostly related to the special boom of the Sino-Japanese War. See Yamamoto Yuzō, "Chōsen, Manshū kan rikukyō bōeki ron: chiiiki kankeishi no hitotsu no kokoromi" [A study of the Korea-Manchuria land trade: An essay on the history of regional relationships], in *Nenpo: kindai Nihon kenkyū*, ed. Kindai Nihon kenkyūkai [Annals: The study of modern Japan], vol.19 (Tokyo: Yamagawa Shuppansha, 1997), pp.142–3.

⁶¹ *Fusan nippo*, 18 November 1933.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 15 July 1932.

⁶³ Tanaka Ryuichi, "Tairitsu to togo no Man-Senkankei" [Manchuria-Korean relationships of confrontation and integration], *Historia* 152 (1996): 121.

⁶⁴ Tanaka, "Manshukoku to nihon," p.160.

and Korea, and indeed sometimes raised them. The Korean government retaliated by restricting millet and apple shipments from Manchukuo, for example, when Manchukuo levied a 20 to 70 per cent tariff on Korean socks and timber in November 1933.⁶¹ The Manchukuo government took the issue of tariffs seriously. One reason was that any move to make Japanese (and Korean) products duty-free would have resulted on a drain on its budget. From the beginning, the government was steadfast in its position that tariffs were an important source of revenue.⁶²

The Manchukuo side was also afraid that preferential levies for Japanese and Korean products would incite Western powers to retaliate over Japanese exports.⁶³ Ultimately, the sovereign state form of Manchukuo was also a constraint; that is to say, it was feared that Western powers would recognize Manchukuo as merely a Japanese colony. In spite of several tariff amendments, Korean and Japanese products could not pass the Manchukuo trade barrier smoothly until 1944, when the tariff was abolished in the final stage of the Pacific War.⁶⁴ Until then, there was a borderline of substance between Korea and "sovereign" Manchukuo.

The Border Within Manchukuo

⁶⁵ F.C. Jones, *Manchuria since 1931* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp.69–72; Bruce Cumings, "The Origins and Development of the Northeastern Asian Political Economy," *International Organization* 38.1 (1984): 13.

⁶⁶ Daily wages for Koreans and Chinese were 1.37: 0.97 *yuan* (for males) and 0.59: 0.52 *yuan* (for females) respectively in 1939. *Manzhouguo zhengfu gongbao* [Government gazette of Manchukuo, hereafter, *MZGB*] (Xinjing: Manzhouguo Zongwuting), 12 April 1939.

⁶⁷ *Manshūkoku keisatsushi* [A history of the Manchukuo police], vol.1 (Xinjing: Manzhouguo Zhi'anbu, 1942), p.244.

⁶⁸ Out of 86,479 policemen, 8.1 per cent (6,972) were "Japanese." Koreans were included in this category. Makuuchi Mitsuo, *Manshūkoku keisatsu gaisbi* [An unofficial history of the Manchukuo police] (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1996), p.226.

⁶⁹ From 1890 to 1940, 25 million moved from North China to Manchuria (from 1932 to 1942, in particular, 760,000 moved on average annually). Thomas Gottschang and Diana Lary, *Swallows and Settlers: The Great*

Another borderline was drawn inside Manchukuo over Korean residents. Koreans have long been considered a "middleman" minority in Manchukuo. They have repeatedly been described as "effective agents," occupying "a middle position between Japanese overlords and Chinese peasants."⁶⁵ There was a slight wage difference between Korean and Chinese workers,⁶⁶ and it is recorded that only Japanese and Korean policemen were paid the overseas bonus in 1942.⁶⁷ There were not many Korean policemen,⁶⁸ however, and Koreans could not match the flood of Chinese immigrants coming from North China in the competition for wages.⁶⁹

It is interesting to note that the "middleman" image was symbolically attached to various kinds of grain, as in a Japanese editorial published in the late 1920s which recorded that millet was to be cultivated in Manchuria and Mongolia to be exported to Korea, so that as much Korean rice as possible could be imported to Japan.⁷⁰ There were also sporadic memories of ethnic discrimination in grain rationing in some places in Manchukuo in the 1940s. Rice was distributed to Japanese (as first-class citizens), rice and millet to Koreans (as second-class citizens) and millet to Chinese (as

Migration from North China to Manchuria (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2000), pp.2, 180.

⁷⁰ Herbert Bix, "Japanese Imperialism and the Manchurian Economy, 1900–31," *China Quarterly* 51 (1972): 60.

third-class citizens).⁷¹ The mixed grain ration for Koreans significantly contributed to their fixed “middleman” image.

However, the grain composition reflects not only a discriminatory difference (between Japanese and other ethnic groups) but a cultural one as well (between Koreans and Chinese). Rice was not a marker of racial discrimination between Koreans and Chinese in Manchukuo, since the staple of most Chinese there was wheat flour. One study reveals that in big cities under the command economy in the 1940s, the policy of distributing rice to both Japanese and Koreans and flour to Chinese could only be partially achieved because of the limited amount of rice available. While rice was provided for Japanese, differential combinations of rice and millet (or sorghum) flour were given to Koreans and Chinese.⁷² Koreans were no better off than Chinese in Manchukuo as a whole as regards the rationing of necessities such as grain or charcoal.

In Xinjing, the new rationing system in the final stage of Manchukuo, which forced people to use accounts in merchant cooperatives or community associations to obtain grain, brought panic to Koreans because most Koreans did not belong to these organizations and did not organize any of their own.⁷³ Korean small-restaurant owners or rice-cake peddlers could not obtain rice. Once rice had been excluded from rationing (starting in Xinjing in March, 1940), it became meaningless as a marker of ethnic hierarchy. Since most Koreans could not buy rice at the highly inflated prices, they managed to survive on other grains, while Japanese (and some rich Chinese) could afford rice. The situation of Koreans and Chinese was equally dire in the final stages of Manchukuo. The general picture was that there was discrimination between Japanese and other ethnic groups, and not between Koreans and Chinese.

Aggregate statistics also repudiate the reality of Koreans as “middlemen.” In the early period, two thirds of Koreans were in the primary sector, and only 3.4 per cent were in manufacturing, commerce and transportation. They were seldom found in the public sector (even in Jiandao province, in which they were clustered).⁷⁴ The majority lived in the countryside and became easy prey to both bandit attacks and bandit suppression units on the Manchukuo side.⁷⁵ The situation was no better in the three big cities of Fengtian, Xinjing, and Harbin. The proportion of Koreans in the primary sector was the highest of all ethnic groups, and so was their unemployment ratio (about two thirds of them were unemployed).⁷⁶

In the later period (after the Sino-Japanese War), Koreans spread from Jiandao to all provinces, but their status did not fundamentally change. According to the 1940 census, which is the most reliable source of data on Manchukuo, about 80 per cent of them (out of those in labor participation) remained in the primary sector.⁷⁷ They were relatively conspicuous in the public and professional realm,⁷⁸ but while two Koreans were symbolically appointed governor and deputy-governor of Jiandao province (as

⁷¹ Yamamuro, *Kimera*, pp.279–80.

⁷² Yun Hwit'ak, “Manjuguk sang'gongŏp'gye ūi minjok kusŏng kwa kŭshilt'ae” [The ethnic composition of industry and its reality in Manchukuo], *Hanguk minjok undongsa yŏngnu* 36 (2003): 265–70.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.266.

⁷⁴ According to one source, only 1.6 per cent of Koreans were in the public sector in 1935. *Di'erci tongji nianbao* [Second statistical annals, hereafter *NBAO*] (Xinjing: Manchukuo Minzhengbu, 1936), p.46. However, a serious problem with all the official statistics published by the Manchukuo government, except the 1940 census, is that they aggregated the dependents with household heads in occupational composition, and are hence not comparable with the census. Also, about 60 per cent of Koreans lived in Jiandao until the mid 1930s. The ratio was 65.1 per cent in 1930, and 56.8 per cent in 1935. *Senzenki*, vol.6, table 9.

⁷⁵ In the early period, only 3.5 per cent of Koreans lived in nine big cities (1935). See *NBAO*, p.100. 13.8 per cent of them lived in 78 towns (with above 5,000 people) (1936). *Di'erci linsbi renkou diaocha baogaoshu* [Second temporary population survey report] (Xinjing: Manzhouguo Zongwuting, 1937), calculated from vols.4 and 5.

⁷⁶ *Di'erci linsbi renkou diaocha baogaoshu* [The first temporary population survey report] (Xinjing: Manzhouguo Zongwuting, 1937, hereafter *1937 census-a*), pp.50, 56–9, 63, 93, 108–11, 153.

⁷⁷ In 1940, 6.9 per cent lived in fourteen cities of over 100,000. The percentage of Koreans in Jiandao fell to 42.5, *1940 census (overall)* (Xinjing: Manzhouguo Zongwuting, 1940), pp.174–97.

⁷⁸ 42 (80) per cent of Koreans were in the primary sector, 3.8 (7.3) per cent in mining and industry, 4.2 (8) per cent in commerce and transportation, and 0.9 (1.8) per cent in the “public” sector, while 47.7 per cent were unemployed (out of those in labor participation, in parentheses). This contrasts markedly with Japanese, except for the unemployed: 5.0 (10), 13.4 (27.6), 19.4 (40.1), 6.5 (13.5), 51.6 per cent respectively in the same categories. Koreans in the public sector (13,401–10,339 officials and 3,062 in education) comprised 7.6 per cent of /OVER

/the whole administration (175,422), over-representing their population ratio (3.4 per cent). By contrast, the number of Japanese in the same sector was 53,507 (46,246 as officials, and 7,261 in education), comprising 30.5 per cent of its labor power. The number of Korean officials is larger than that suggested by Yamamuro (about 2,300 Korean “ruling agents”). See Yamamuro Shinichi, “Shokumin teikoku nihon no kosei to Manshūkoku: tochi yoshiki no seni to tochi jinsai no shuryū” [The composition of imperial Japan and Manchukuo: the change in ruling mode and the circulation of ruling agents], in *Teikoku to yū genzō* [The Illusion Named “Empire”], ed. Peter Duus and Kobayashi Hideo (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1998), p.194. And 2,314 Koreans were in “medical service” (in which nurses and assistants might be included). *1940 census (on Japanese)*, pp.61–71, 281–7. About two hundred Koreans began to obtain doctors’ licenses in 1938 and 1939. *MZGB*, 29 October 1938; 1 November 1938; 4 November 1938; 10 January 1939.

⁷⁹ *Manshūkoku gensei, 1938* [The current trend in Manchukuo, 1938] (Tokyo: Kuretsu Shuppan, 2000; orig. 1938), p.187; *Manshūkoku gensei, 1941*, p.177.

⁸⁰ Their unemployment fell from 65 per cent to 52 per cent, and their ratio in industry increased from 6.4 to 7.7 per cent in the primary sector, 7.2 to 12.4 per cent in mining and manufacturing, 13.7 to 17.2 per cent in commerce, 2.2 to 4.2 per cent in transportation, and 3.1 to 4.3 per cent in the public and professional category. *1937 census-a*, pp.107–19; *1940 census (on Japanese)* (Xinjing: Manzhouguo Zongwuting, 1940), pp.55–65, 110–20, 143–53, 253–9, 288–984, 309–15.

⁸¹ Yun Hwit’ak, “Pongchōnshi ūi minjok kusōng kwa chosōn’in” [The ethnic composition of Fengtian and Koreans] in *Tong Asia ūi minjok isan kwa toshi* [The national diaspora in East Asia and cities], ed. Kim Kyōng’il et al. (Seoul: Yōksa pip’yōngsa, 2004), p.164.

⁸² Yun Hwit’ak, “Manjuguk ūi idūng kukmin, kŭ shilsang kwa hōsang” [The second-class citizen of Manchukuo, reality and image], *Yōksahakbo* 169 (2001): 155–60.

the highest Korean officials in the whole of Manchukuo),⁷⁹ most Korean officials were in low-ranking positions.

The three big cities seemed to bustle with a population of Koreans that tripled in the five years from 1935 to 1940. According to the censuses of 1935 and 1940, their work participation ratio increased, particularly in mining, manufacturing and commerce.⁸⁰ Among this group, however, were also farmers (7.7 per cent, compared to 1.7 per cent among Japanese), servants, manual laborers, clerks, small-capital traders, opium dealers, and hostesses. Their housing conditions were miserable. The Xita 西塔 area (the largest Korean quarter) in Fengtian, for instance, was like an over-crowded purgatory with endlessly incoming migrants.⁸¹

In spite of the demand in the industrial sector with the Manchukuo government’s Five-year Plan for Economic Development, many Koreans suffered from unemployment in the cities. Ready to go back home—which was, after all, not far from Manchukuo—some Koreans (from the adjacent northern part of Korea in particular) sought only temporary jobs, repeatedly going back and forth. It was not difficult to find Koreans indulging in gambling and excessive alcohol and straying about in the big cities.⁸²

The marginal character of Koreans was largely a function of their status as a subcategory of Japanese. Since they were not “Manchukuo’ans” (who were mainly Chinese and Mongolians) in this “sovereign” country, their status was obscure. Their instability was also to do with the conflicting nature of official discourses in the empire. The slogans of “Harmony of five races” (from the Manchukuo government from 1932) and the “unity of Japan-Korea” (from the Japanese and Korean governments from the late 1930s) clashed with each other over where Koreans in Manchukuo belonged. According to the former principle they were supposed to be members of Manchukuo, while under the latter they were claimed to be “Japanese subjects” under the jurisdiction of the Korean government-general (and ultimately of the Japanese government). The nationality law of Manchukuo was not stipulated until its demise; thus the status of Koreans was obscure to the end.

After extraterritoriality for Japanese residents in Manchukuo was abolished in 1936–37, education, nationality and military service for Koreans in Manchukuo became the object of unresolved disputes. The rights of Koreans were confusing, torn across respective jurisdictions. For instance, their education in the area adjoining the South Manchuria Railway lay under Japanese educational authority, while in other regions it was the responsibility of the Manchukuo government. While Korean children in the former regions learned Japanese at school, those in other regions of Manchukuo learned Chinese.

The issue of military service was also perplexing. Since they were not formally Manchukuo citizens, their military service was only pending until

the last stage of Manchukuo. When the conscription law was proclaimed in 1940, Koreans were the only group who were “exempted” from military service; instead, the Jiandao Special Unit (*Jiandao tesbedui* 間島特設隊) was organized among Korean youths in Jiandao province and named a “voluntary” troop.⁸³ Koreans were not middlemen in Manchukuo, at least because of the formal limits that derived from Manchukuo’s “sovereignty.” Priority was given in principle to its (Chinese) citizens.

⁸³ Tanaka, “Manshūkoku to nihon,” p.111.

Conclusion

Observing the wave of transnationalism in twentieth-century East Asia from the perspective of Pusan Harbor reveals a close relationship between Korea and Manchukuo in the 1930s. The Japanese empire opened a transnational page in East Asian history by absorbing a new periphery, breaking open inner barriers with its powerful arsenal of trains, ferries and telecommunications. The compressed speed of Japan’s drive for competition in the world system reflects its so-called latecomer imperialism.

As the “Gateway to East Asia,” Pusan harbor connected continental China and Japan, with the volume of northbound passengers and cargo directly from Pusan to Manchukuo increasing massively. In a sense, Pusan became a “global city” (a term borrowed from Saskia Sassen) in the empire, linked with the big cities of Tokyo and Fengtian—and bypassing Seoul, the capital of Korea.⁸⁴ This change was accompanied by a reversal of association in railway directions: southbound transport (from Seoul to Pusan) was referred to as “going up,” while northbound transport (from Pusan to Seoul or Manchukuo) was “going down,” designated in terms of the direction toward, or from, the imperial capital, Tokyo.⁸⁵ This reversed the meaning of going “up” or “down” for the first time in more than 550 years of Korean history, ever since Seoul has been the capital (both in the Chosŏn 朝鮮 dynasty and in the post-liberation period).

With these relentless innovations in transportation, Manchukuo was brought close to Korea. It became a land of opportunity not only for Japanese, but also for Koreans, and many Koreans entered the whirlpool of Manchurian migration in the late 1930s (particularly, after a series of natural disasters in Korea).

However, the boundaries inside the empire were not so permeable. It was not a homogeneous transnational space, but was composed of individualistic colonial states, each claiming its own jurisdiction. There were physical borderlines across them for geographic or administrative reasons, though these were not as “hard” as those of contemporary sovereign states. Basically they functioned as check points. The main check points between colonial Korea and Japan, for instance, were Shimonoseki

⁸⁴ Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁸⁵ Southbound travel was “going up,” because the direction was toward the imperial capital, Tokyo, a symbolically higher place, just as the current direction from other places (higher than Tokyo in latitude) to Tokyo is designated in Japan.

⁸⁶ Kim, Minyŏng, *Ilje ūi chosŏ n'in nodong-ryŏk sui'al yŏn'gu* [A study of Korean labor exploitation by Japanese imperialism] (Seoul: Han'ul Academy, 1995), pp.36-7.

⁸⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), p.105; William Miles, *Hausaland Divided: Colonialism and Independence in Nigeria and Niger* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1994), p.15.

⁸⁸ On the influence of the disciplinary regime, see Suk-Jung Han, "Those Who Imitated the Colonizers: The Influence of State-making from Manchukuo to South Korea," in *Crossed Histories: A New Approach to Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, ed. Mariko Tamanoi (Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), pp.171-7.

and Pusan, whose customs offices searched runaways or illegals in both directions (although less strictly from the former city to the latter). After 1925, of Koreans who wanted to visit Japan, only those with permits were allowed to cross the strait between the two ports. About 60 per cent of Koreans who applied for a permit or attempted to cross without one were stopped either at ports or in their hometowns in the 1930s (until 1939, when the massive dispatch of Koreans as forced labor to Japan began).⁸⁶ As a result, the counterfeiting of permits in southern Korea persisted for a long time. Runaway Japanese coming to Korea were also easily caught at either of the two ports.

By contrast, the borderline between Korea and "sovereign" Manchukuo was substantial. Manchukuo constructed a high tariff wall around Japanese and Korean products, not only because tariffs afforded an important budget source but also because its sovereign form mandated such a gesture towards the outside world. Korean "frontier migration" to Manchukuo in the late 1930s was under the scrutiny of both Manchukuo and Korean authorities as well. Some Korean smugglers also risked their lives at the border. A boundary was drawn inside Manchukuo too, placing Koreans outside the category of citizens, and bringing them much trouble as they were caught between conflicting ideologies of colonial authorities.

Thus the Japanese empire brought not only a transnational stream to East Asia, but also tangible nodes or units with several internal boundaries within, formal or informal. Colonialism is a doubling phenomenon, both erasing and reproducing boundaries. It provides an infrastructural basis for regional integration. At the same time, it bears the seeds of future segments (or sovereignties) with boundaries drawn by alien rulers, just like those administrative units of Spanish empire in eighteenth-century Latin America that later came to acquire national meaning, or the partitioning into two by Westerners in the nineteenth century of Hausaland, which would later become separate postcolonial states.⁸⁷

Manchukuo was not only closely linked with Korea in the 1930s, but also provided an important laboratory for post-liberation South Korea in such realms as techniques of state-making, the disciplining of its subjects and the developmental state.⁸⁸ Manchukuo has an open-ended history. It would be meaningful to ask why it has remained so long hidden or contained in Korean historiography.

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