

# The Formation of Bourgeois Nationalism during Japanese Colonial Rule and Korean Capitalists

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This article investigates the historical characteristics of bourgeois nationalism in the colonial period while keeping in mind to compare it with civil nationalism which resisted the despotic political structure of Korean. Korean nationalism grew after experiencing setbacks and suppression since its conception as a response to the shock of imperialism in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Korean nationalism during the Japanese colonial period in particular became exalted through the March 1st Movement of 1919, after which it suffered an ideological division into capitalism and socialism. Bourgeois nationalism which emerged in the 1920s with great volition advocated for independence and self-determination of the people based on the acceptance of the principles of the ideology of liberalism and bourgeois democracy. And the economic national movements (encouragement of native products) unfolded in early 1920s with the goal of establishing autonomous national economy under the lead of the Korean bourgeoisie received great support from the Korean people.

The ideological leadership of the bourgeoisie, however, could not continue for long in the colonial Korean society, because the advocated nationalism was perceived by the Korean people as a mobilizing ideology that requires unilateral fortitude over “personal” sacrifice. The bourgeoisie were active in utilizing national movements for capital movements, but they were passive or even indifferent to skyrocketing prices of “Joseon products” resulting from the movement process and in social problems faced by the people. As well, they attempted to justify the nationalism that they advocated by transmitting ultra-nationalistic awareness based on the founding myth to the people. Rather than attempting to gain agreement from the colonial Korean society, they attempted to educate from the top down only. The industrial bourgeoisie with modern knowledge and capital as well as pioneering characteristics was one of the key forces leading nationalism in colonial Korea, but the distance between it and the colonial Korean society widened as time passed. They became a part of the dominant system of the industrial policy advocated by the Japanese

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Government-General in Joseon under the supposed purpose of self-reliance of “the Joseon economy” since they began to accept the state-led economic ideology after the Great Depression. Bourgeois nationalism of the Korean capitalists transitioned into the main body that accepted and practiced the ideology of the Japanese fascist system (modern totalitarianism) based on the emperor as Japan entered wartime at the end of Japanese imperialism. As such, bourgeoisie nationalism experienced the cycle of highs and lows during the colonial period; the fragility of the ideology of liberalism and ultra-nationalistic national consciousness of Korean bourgeoisie became the key variable in the abandonment of bourgeois nationalism along with the challenge from the laborers and peasants as well as fascistization of Japanese nationalism.

Bourgeois nationalism of Korean capitalists turned into anti-Communist nationalism of the Republic of Korea after liberation, thereby maintaining cooperation with the tyrannical government. If the progressive tendency of Korean nationalism of the 1920s can be “revived” in the future, it will become a process through which the historical shadow from colonial experience will be shed on the one hand, and provide a possibility for creating a Korean model for social development by reaching a social agreement between capital and civil society the other hand. From this perspective, bourgeois nationalism of the Japanese colonial period simultaneously reveals potential and limitations.

*Keywords: Bourgeois nationalism, centralized bureaucracy and reform from above, industrial capitalist, liberalism, national economy and individual economic interest, totalitarianism, and fascism*

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In history, the future cannot be separated from the past, two of which is interwoven. This article examines the “past” which served the formation of totalitarian disposition in Korean bourgeois nationalism.

Especially the industrial bourgeoisie that emerged in the 1920s colonial Korea mounted a national movement to buy native products. Looking upon themselves as political subjects, they wanted to lead the increase the potential of national economy while acknowledging western liberalism and constitutionalism.<sup>1</sup> For a while, the economic movement that Korean bourgeoisie initiated

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1. They launched improvement campaigns in economics, education, the press and other cultural fields. Therefore, their nationalism is sometimes evaluated as “cultural nationalism” weak in

enjoyed the support from the people. Popular support was accompanied with the national consciousness raised in and after the March First Movement (1919). Korean bourgeois leadership did not last for long, however. They, appealing to the national sentiment, told populace to sacrifice their interests. As time passed, bourgeois faced resistance from the populace of, for example, labors and peasants. While being detached from the populace, the bourgeois embraced colonialism, assimilating themselves to the ruling system especially after the Great Depression, to the extent that they acted as the propagandist for militarist cause in the time of the Pacific War. This historical fact raised one question: Why did the Korean bourgeoisie who had initiated nationalist movements in the 1920s embrace Japanese colonialism and Japanese militarism in succession?

A probable answer to this question may be that their “apostasy” was attributable to the “external” pressure from Japanese imperialism. This, however, could be a superficial observation. This external threat alone need not bear the whole weight of explaining their behavior.

This article devotes itself to the explanation of the historical milieu against which Korean bourgeois nationalism espoused Japanese militarism. With this in mind, the article basically examines the relationship between a modernistic reform campaign from above and commercial bourgeoisie in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Korea. Additionally, it compares the relationship formed in Korea and that in Japan to appreciate the characteristics in the Korean case. These foci are closely related to our endeavor to understand the formation of the bourgeoisie who were to embrace Japanese militarism in the end. Next, this article deals with the activism of the industrial bourgeoisie who, appearing on the late 1910s Korea, appointed themselves as subjects in the realm of politics as well as of economy. Here, our focus is laid upon the examination of the historical process where bourgeois nationalism lost its popular support while revealing its totalitarian disposition. Lastly, this article endeavors to appreciate the historical implication of the espousal of Japanese militarism by Korean bourgeois and also their social activism held. I hope that this article can contribute to our critical review of Korean bourgeois nationalism from the perspectives of democracy and totalitarianism.<sup>2</sup>

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political resistance. For further discussions, refer to Seo Jung-seok (1991), Park Chan-seung (1992), and Robinson (1990).

2. It is noteworthy that unlike the Western history, the very *minjung* (people in approximate English translation), not bourgeoisie, has initiated the development of democracy throughout the modern Korean history. This marks the uniqueness of modern Korean history distinct from

## Top-Down Nationalism and the Commercial Bourgeoisie in the Latter Half of the Nineteenth Century

In the latter part of the 19th century, the Joseon dynasty received pressure to open its ports from Imperial Japan who had already established its own modern nation-state, the first time in Asia, even though Joseon was still under the influence of a powerful China. Korean nationalism was under the dual pressures of a pre-modern Chinese system and modern Japanese “imperialist system.”<sup>3</sup>

At first, the ruling classes of the Joseon dynasty responded to the western impact from the viewpoint of the worldview of Sinocentrism. It was similar that the ruling elite of the Qing China and Tokugawa Bakufu had responded to the western impacts. In spite of reaction against western civilization, it began to exert an influence on the society of ruling elites (so called “*yangban*” officialdom).

The reformative political group called the Enlightenment Party (Gaehwadang) appeared upon the scene of the history. The members of young aristocratic bureaucrats wanted to transform the Joseon dynasty thoroughly after the model of the Meiji Restoration. They desired to change Joseon dynasty into a constitutional monarchy, abolish the social status system, enhance national prosperity and defense by largely encouraging commerce and developing industries, and escape from Chinese intervention. They, however, were a minority. Their efforts such as the Coup D'état of 1884 (*Gapsin jeongbyeon*) and the Gabo Reform in 1894 failed largely because of the intervention of Qing China, the resistance of the ruling classes of the Joseon dynasty, and lack of support from the people.

In contrast, there was also another reformative force that attempted to introduce western civilization to Joseon. In 1897, King Gojong renamed the Joseon dynasty as the Great Han Empire and proclaimed himself as emperor by using the argument that his empire was not a dependent country of China but an independent country. Politically, the Korean empire became a conservative entity by strengthening the emperor's absolute power, but economically, Emperor Gojong had pushed forward such projects for national prosperity and defense such as

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Western one. This observation needs more articulate study afterwards.

3. Japan gained full-fledged initiative in Korea after successive victories in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. Japan grew into a supreme power state in East Asia with the help of the marine forces of the United States, the United Kingdom, and others. Here, “imperialist system” implies that a certain state does not leave others far behind.

railroads, banks, and urban development. But the Korean Empire was not competent enough to break through the pressures of imperialism. While the radical modernization movement failed because of the restraint by the China-centered system, the gradual modernization movement was frustrated largely because of imperialist forces and narrowly because of Japanese imperialism. Put differently, although the nationalism of both Japan and China was formed in a relatively simple antagonistic relationship with western imperialism, Korean nationalism was formed in the midst of complicated antagonism between Chinese and Japanese hegemony in the East-Asian region and between maritime and continental forces in the international arena.

The limitation of top-down nationalism was due not only to exterior factors but also the ruling classes of the Joseon dynasty that had not absorbed the innovative energy of the peasants that arose out of inconsistencies of the ancient regime. One of the most common factors in the countries that had established modern states, i.e. western states and Japan, was the integration of various races and social classes into a nation and the use of innovative energy as the drive of nationalism. But the ruling classes of the Joseon dynasty were caught in the trap of the minor political elite's radicalism in their struggle for political power and accomplished their innovative aims by means of foreign forces and also asked for the support of these foreign forces to suppress the uprising of the peasants demanding social reform.<sup>4</sup>

Why was the top-down nationalism not separated from popular support? It may be associated with the centralized administration structure of the state as well as the ideological limitations of the ruling class in the Joseon dynasty. Hanseong (Seoul) as the center of politics and commerce was the place where new knowledge and civilization were transmitted to a considerable degree and where the conservatives fought fiercely with the progressives. The reformative forces—some progressive bureaucrats, the royal family, and other close associates—formed mainly around this city that was the capital of the Joseon dynasty. This signifies that Seoul served not only as the base of the forces maintaining the ancient regime, but also as the base of the forces wanting to change that same regime. The Gabo and Gwangmu Reforms as top-down projects on moderniza-

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4. The Joseon dynasty had asked for reinforcements from Qing China in 1894 soon after the uprising of the peasants (*Gabo nongmin jeonjaeng*). The Qing army advanced into Korea, and so did the Japanese army. This served as a momentum of the Sino-Japanese War.

tion were in fact reactions from centralized bureaucracy.

In contrast, the top-down revolution in Japan was led by such frontier districts as Satsuma and Joshu Han that met with new technology and knowledge according to the saying, "Revolution from Frontiers." These two Han were geographically far away from the control of the *Bakufu* (the central government), but were where commerce had developed and civilizations had crossed through maritime trade (Mochida Yukio 1972: 32-49). The Meiji Restoration established a modern nation-state by overthrowing the *Bakufu* and supporting the *Tennou* (Japanese emperor) was a response of decentralized feudalism toward Western impacts.

Thus, the forming process of the innovative forces leading to the top-down modernization derived largely from the differences in the national structure between medieval Korea and Japan, which will be made clear by comparing the medieval commercial structures of the two countries. The commerce of the Joseon dynasty was primarily confined to a tributary trading system. Foreign trade was confined to official trade with China, and trade with Japan was restrictively conducted under government control. Other than that, there was little or no significant foreign trade by sea with other countries. Commercial cities grew on tributary routes like the Gyeongseong-Gaeseong-Pyeongyang-Euiju. Coast cities as bases of foreign trade did not grow, and a coast city, Incheon, began to be developed only after the opening of a port in 1876.

In Japan, the cities had grown mainly in certain districts, i.e., Nagasaki, a southwestern coastal city, and others including Edo as centers of politics and economy. Japanese merchants were under the control of the *Bakufu* or *Han*, and Japanese cities did not become autonomous as compared with European cities. Particularly, the Tokugawa Bakufu of Japan prohibited the construction of deep-sea vessels in 1636 in order to strengthen their control of centralized power, just as Ming China had done in 1436. Domestic commerce centering in Edo was developed, but foreign trade declined. However, the two *Han* that led the Meiji Restoration continued maritime trade with China and foreign countries centering in Nagasaki, in spite of the *Bakufu*'s seclusion policy. Foreign trade largely contributed to strengthening the economic and military power of these two *Han*, and consequently the lower-middle class *Samurai* (Warriors) of the two *Han* learned from frequent contact with the modern civilization (Anderson 1974: 397-431).

As for domestic commerce in the Joseon dynasty, the number of country markets incessantly increased but stayed at the same level supporting a self-sustaining economy in the rural areas. In contrast, there were leading merchants

who did manage to prosper in the urban areas like Seoul and Gaeseong. They were the ones who purveyed to the court and the central government, and were closely connected with domestic or international trade in rice, fish, dry goods, and ginseng. In particular, these merchants transported rice from rural areas to the capital city as tax contractors.

As a centralized bureaucratic country based on agriculture, Joseon depended on a local tax system to maintain its central government, which also relied on the merchants acquainted with coastal routes. Merchants and the peasants were another important basis of support for the Joseon dynasty. The relationship between the ruling elites of Joseon and merchants was antagonistic in terms of social status but interdependent from an economic point of view.

This alliance between the Joseon dynasty and merchants was a base that enabled the commercial bourgeoisie to appear and respond to imperialist invasion. For example, privileged merchants participated in modernization projects such as the establishment of banks that were propelled by the central government. The establishment of banks was not only due to the appearance of modern monetary facilities, but also followed general social reform projects including the medieval tax reform. Privileged merchants accumulated considerable capital. The commercial bourgeois had the business talent and capital to accomplish modern projects but had existential limits and weaknesses in their exclusive ideological goals.

Thus, the top-down modernization of Korea that had grown through the centralized government system reflected, in large, the special characteristics of Korea that were different from those of Japan, showing possibility. It also revealed the limitation of the reform from above that was not associated with the peasants.

The Great Han Empire only maintained its external form of state after Japan won the Russo-Japanese War, but tumbled down to a Japanese colony in reality. In the process, the commercial bourgeois joined in the Patriotic Enlightenment Movement that stressed national self-strengthening through education and economic growth on the one hand, but also took part in the colonial reorganization of financial and monetary facilities led by Japanese officials on the other. They compromised with the colonial ruling system without friction, as they did with the ruling classes of the Joseon dynasty.

## Economic Nationalism and Industrial Bourgeoisie under the Japanese Colonial Rule

On March 1, 1919, a large stream of people demanding national independence erupted throughout the whole of colonial Korea. The resistance of the Korean people was easily ignited by nationalistic slogans demanding national independence because of the Japanese militant government and the deterioration of the peasants' economic lives. This movement did not accomplish its goal because of Japanese armed oppression, but it did help the national integration of the Korean people. Hence, Korean nationalism was linked together with the social revolution aiming at future nation-building to realize not just national independence but also a republican government (Kang Man-gil 1978: 142-199).

Japanese colonial rule did change from a merciless militant administration (*mudan jeongchi*) blocking freedom of speech, assembly, and association, and so on, to a more enlightened administration (*munhwa jeongchi*) allowing free economic, ideological, and cultural activities within the scope of not fundamentally rejecting the colonial system. A wide knowledge of Western and Japanese modern civilization flooded throughout the country through mass media including newspapers and magazines, and also spread downwards through educational activities. Although centered in urban areas, public consumption of modern civilization occurred enormously in Korean society during the 1920s, which perhaps naturally, converged on the aspiration for nationalism. On the other hand, the reproduction of Dangun mythology i.e., the origins of Korean nation, which helped contribute to national integration, was begun by the Korean bourgeois. This project was largely led by the new elites who shared common understanding with the bourgeois in that they thoroughly denied the tradition of the "near past" (Confucianism in Joseon dynasty) and instead looked for national characteristics from the "far past" (the birth of my nation). They emphasized blood and language. Thus, the national consciousness shown in the worship of Dangun was used as an ideology of the bourgeois nationalist movement, which saw social problems such as labor as subcategory of national problems.

The commercial bourgeoisie leading the Korean economy from the late of 19<sup>th</sup> to the 1910s had already been absorbed into the colonial ruling system and could not become a central nationalist group during the 1920s. After all, the nationalistic project to establish a nation-state was entrusted to the new bourgeois that was formed in the capitalist society of Gyeongseong (Seoul) from the middle of the 1910s.



A hero was young Mr. Kim Seong-su from Jeolla Province, a political frontier.<sup>5</sup> He was from a family of large aristocratic landowners in the Honam region and had prospered through rice trade and landowner administration.<sup>6</sup> His adoptive father and real father were generally sympathetic to the goals of the Patriotic Enlightenment Movement in the late 1900s. His intellectual curiosity about modern civilization was awakened at a modern school, Changheunguisuk (or Yeonghaksuk) established by his father-in-law. He also studied political economy at Waseda University in Japan between 1908 (he was 18 at the time) and 1914 (*The Dong-A Ilbo* 1985: 40-84).

In 1915 soon after his return to Korea at the age of 25, he took over Jungang School, which was famous for its long-cherished nationalistic education but had been short of funds, and later advanced to Gyeongseong as a school administrator. In 1919 he also established the Gyeongseong Textile Co. (Gyeongseong Bangjik) that led the textile industry in Korea, showing a new aspect of “pioneer entrepreneur” (Jo Ki-jun 1973: 293), and in the 1920s he launched the *Dong-A Ilbo* that played a key role in forming public opinion in colonial Korean society. Besides the above-mentioned details, he exerted an enormous influence upon colonial Korea as a bourgeois who was a landowner, educationalist, industrialist and press capitalist.

He strengthened broad social and human relations in various fields through these three institutions. Pak Yeong-hyo, a pro-Japanese and key figure of the enlightenment party (Gaehwadang) was appointed as the president of Gyeongseong Textile Co. and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. Jang Du-hyeon, Pak Yong-hi, and Ko Yun-muk, and other wealthy merchants in Gyeongseong participated in the managerial staff of the above two organizations, and large landowners in Yeongnam, Hwanghae, Chungcheong, Pyeongbuk, and Hamnam regions, not to mention the Honam region, hometown of Kim Seong-su, also joined in the two organizations as stockholders. The new elite who had studied in Japan like Kim Seong-su had worked as teachers at Jungang School, or as managers, reporters, or major writers at the *Dong-A Ilbo*.<sup>7</sup> A variety of influential men gathered

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5. A political elite group called the Gyeonghwasajok was formed in Gyeongseong during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Kim family in Gochang had grown as landowners following their grandfather and became a famous aristocratic family, but was never at the center of power. Refer to Yu Bonghak (1995) regarding Gyeonghwasajok.

6. Refer to Kim Yong-seop (1992) for the landowner administration of Kim family.

7. Refer Kim Gyeong-taek (1998) for personnel lineup of the *Dong-A Ilbo*.

around him and he emerged as the core of the force pursuing capitalistic modernization with national ideology.

The industrial bourgeois forces associated with Kim Seong-su, unlike the commercial and financial bourgeois, were not satisfied as just economic elites and led the “Movement to Buy Korean Products” as an economic movement, the private university establishment movement as a cultural activity, and the self-governing movement as part of its political movement, thereby showing leadership in exerting hegemony in economic, political, social, and cultural fields. The new bourgeoisie conspicuously emerged in colonial Korean society receiving support from elevated nationalism after the March 1 National Liberation Movement.

They ascertained through the *Dong-A Ilbo* that their goals were “liberalism” and “constitutional government” formed according to the developing process of Western capitalism, and occasionally compared industrial classes of Korea as the third status that played a key role in the French Revolution,<sup>8</sup> proclaiming that the capitalist class was at “the center of modern politics.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, it was an epoch-making incident in the modernization process of Korean capitalism when the industrial bourgeois classes clarified their hegemony toward society as the main group in politics, as compared with the commercial bourgeois classes. It can be verified that the descendants of the Kims remained as bourgeoisie exerting a deeper influence on Korean society throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in spite of innumerable frustrations.

The “Movement to Buy Korean Products” in 1923 as an economic nationalistic movement was a test stage verifying publicly the political ability of energetic bourgeoisie. The *Dong-A Ilbo* was not only a supporter for the “Movement to Buy Korean Products,” but was also its practical leader. This movement received favorable public response throughout the whole country. The new elite temporarily succeeded in forming an “economic community” that was strongly conscious of its own independent subjectivity against Japan.

As soon as the “Movement to Buy Korean Products” began, the Korean people reduced their consumption of foreign merchandise and increased purchases of Korean products made from Korean raw materials (“*Joseon mulsan*”) in Korean

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8. *Dong-A Ilbo*. May 10-11, 1921. Editorial: “The Transition of Korean Social Classes—the Influence of the Third Status” (Part I-II).

9. *Dong-A Ilbo*. August 16, 1921. Editorial: “Economic Ability and Political Rights—Economy is the Basis of Politics.”

markets. Accordingly, the import of foreign raw materials to be made into Korean cloth decreased,<sup>10</sup> and the price of Korean products soared sharply. Someone donated money or house to the Society for the Encouragement of Native Products (Joseon Mulsan Jangnyeo-hoe) leading this movement. However, after the March 1 Movement, the sensational “Movement to Buy Korean Products” throughout the whole country waned within less than six months.

At that time, the production capacity of Korean mills was too low to meet the sudden increase in demand. Although such kinds of structural problems became an obstacle to the “Movement to Buy Korean Products,” a more fundamental problem was caused by the leaders’ consciousness of the movement. The Society for the Encouragement of Native Products appealed to the people for “universal thought without regard to individual rights” to achieve “the self-support of the national economy” and for “the encouragement of native products,” i.e., “great management to promote the national origin of life,” having the “same belief as though a religion,” and also demanding people “to buy Korean products in spite of high prices in order to strengthen the foundation of national industry.”<sup>11</sup> The *Dong-A Ilbo* also urged Korean people to buy Korean products at the risk of individual economic sacrifice for the sake of increases in productivity and the improvement of national economic competence. Thus, the “theory of national economy” of the Korean bourgeois that urged the necessity of national protection for the growth of Korean industry came naturally in colonial Korea.

This “theory of national economy” was highly subject to obtaining continuous public support for the economic nationalist movement in order to survive, not temporarily but permanently, in colonial Korea. But the new elite group leading the movement could not cope with an emergency that distorted the market order caused by sudden price increases of Korean products. They did not take steps to mitigate the effects of merchants’ profiteering by taking advantage of the public propensity to consume, nor did they have in mind only to force the people to admit sacrifice. The leading group of the “Movement to Buy Korean Products” compelled Korean people to buy Korean products on the basis of national cause, but did not make any effort to obtain their confidence, simply criticizing them for not buying Korean products and calling them “inferior ani-

10. The *Dong-A Ilbo*. December 16, 1923. Editorial. “The Movement to Buy Korean Products’ Seen from the Standpoint of Trade.”

11. The *Dong-A Ilbo*. “Seeing the Impulse of Life at the Spring Garden” (3). *Ochon*. March 27, 1923.

mals,” for example. The people felt uninvited and used for the sake of the “national economy.” The phrase, “prosperity in the near future after sacrifice” was insufficient to touch the people’s mind. People gradually turned their backs on Korean products that were more expensive and inferior in quality.

In the latter part of the 1920s, the Society for the Encouragement of Native Products underwent organizational restructuring. This leading group participated in the Singanhoe (1927-1931) i.e., a united nationalist organization to reestablish the identity of the “Movement to Buy Korean Products” as a nationalist movement. Afterward, they tried to escape from the metaphysical idea of the movement, strengthening the solidarity and collaboration with commercial and industrial entrepreneurs. They also tried to attract public interest, such as opening bargain markets to sell cheap native Korean goods. The public attitude toward this propaganda was more positive than in the early 1920s. In contrast, their theory of movement was slightly changed to Encouragement of Native Products (*Tosanjangnyeoron*), repeatedly emphasizing national consciousness, national ethics, and national morals. In the meantime, some of the leading groups accepted protective economy in favor of international bloc economy after the Great Depression as their theoretical background of the “Movement to Buy Korean Products.” They began to count on the Rural Revival Movement (*Nongchon jinheung undong*) and the Industrialization Policy of Korea (*Joseon gong-eophwa jeongchaek*) of Japanese Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige, whose goals were the economic self-reliance of colonial Korea and the relief of the people’s livelihood during the early part of the 1930s, after which they assimilated themselves to the Japanese ruling system (Pang Kie-jung 1997; 2002: 115).

### **Increasing Fascist Tendency of Japanese Nationalism and Korean Bourgeois Nationalism**

After the Great Depression, Japanese imperialism had to face many challenges from inside and outside the system. Inside, terrorism against politicians and financial figures frequently occurred because of distrust of politics, thereby causing social unrest. Outside, it was hit by exterior crises such as the increase in national liberation movements in Manchuria and China as well as the extension of national power in the Soviet Union. It overcame such crises by starting the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, and the Pacific War in 1941. In the process, the Japanese military force leading foreign inva-

sions established a strong ruling system to remove interior and exterior obstacles at the time in cooperation with bureaucrats, hard-liners against foreign countries, and civilian rightists. They spurred the people into social innovation and coercive integration by fascism, aggravating outside crises, and producing fear in the people as well as the ruling classes.

Although Japanese imperialism was on its way to becoming a top-down fascist system, two lines of thought were set up in opposition to its foreign policy until the middle of the 1930s. One was the conservative force speaking for the political stand of Japanese conglomerates and maintaining the Washington system led by the United States and the United Kingdom. The other was the innovative force reflecting discontent of the Japanese populace and challenging the worldwide system centered on the United States and the United Kingdom. The former aimed at maintaining the order of existing political parties during the 1920s, while the latter aimed at criticizing and innovating it (them) (Yi Seung-ryul 1996: 67; Maruyama, Masao 1997; Furuya Tetsuo 1973).

During the early 1930s (more precisely 1931-1936), the sixth governor of the Government-General in Korea, Ugaki Kazushige, who belonged to the former group, worried that Japan could not avoid confrontation with Anglo-Saxon forces of the United States and the United Kingdom in the long run. He, first of all, put an emphasis both on establishing the basis of a Japanese self-supporting economy to cope with the rising bloc of European and American forces and on securing a bridgehead to invade China. His development tactics for Japanese imperialism were embodied in the Japan-Korea-Manchuria bloc signifying that Japan was a precision machinery industrial zone, colonial Korea was a crude industrial zone, and Manchuria was an agricultural and raw material zone.

After the incident of February 26, 1936 when Japan's innovative military force supporting the latter position mentioned above seized hegemony, Governor Ugaki resigned. The incoming governor Minami Jiro (1936-1941), who had filled in as commander of the Japanese Army stationed in Manchuria, successively supported the latter position. His "Industrialization Policy of Korea" was changed into war industry contributing to the Japanese invasion of China, contrary to his predecessor's policy (Joseon Sotokufu Syokusankyoku Syokoka 1937). During the 1930s, the inroads of Japanese conglomerates into colonial Korea increased to a considerable degree and consequently had a great deal of influence on the Korean economy.

The number of factories that were run by Koreans increased during the 1930s (Heo Su-ryul 1993). But most small-scale Korean factories as subcontract-

tors were enveloped by large companies, and subcontractors just watched while the Japanese conglomerates that advanced into colonial Korea made enormous profits in Chinese markets opened up by the invasion of China (Kweon Tae-eok 1989: 273-292; Shibahara Seiichi 1938). Among them, some Korean factories that were able to export goods like Gyeongseong Textile Co. established by Kim Seong-su strengthened close cooperation with Japanese conglomerates in order to advance into Chinese markets, and such Korean capitalists cooperated in the policy to spread the colonial government ideology and to mobilize Koreans to a war footing (Yi Seung-ryul 1997; Yeoksamunje Yeonguso 1993; Banminjokmunje Yeonguso 1993).

Kim Seong-su, who had played a central role in bourgeois society since the 1920s, persuaded young men to “join the Great East Asia Holy War” to “obtain the same brilliant treatment and rights as in Japan proper as an element of the Japanese Empire.” Han Sang-yong, a pro-Japanese man of finance evaluated the conscription system as “an epoch-making development for governing the Korean peninsula,” and earnestly asked young students to “play a brilliant role in the Great East Asia War as picked troops side by side with Japanese students” (Han Sang-yong 1943). Such was his attitude, but it was nothing more than that of the Government-General in Korea propagating that the conscription system to mobilize young Korean men was the completion of the theory of Japan and Korea being one (*Nae-Seon ilcheron*). Yi Kwang-su, a bourgeois intellectual, claimed that “to become imperialist citizens was the only way for Koreans to survive,” and continued to urge to do so (Kayama Mitsuro 1941). The theory of Japan and Korea being one derived from the theory of Japanese and Koreans being of cognate origin (*Il-Seon dongjoron*). The historical theory supporting that Japanese and Koreans were of the same origin became a theoretical background of Korean capitalists to substitute Japan, the “imperialist state” for the “Korean nation.” Japan was similar to fascist Italy and Nazi Germany in mythicizing the past and trying to draw out the loyalty of the people (Neocleous 2002), but was different in that it attempted to control resort to the “past” of other nation as mentioned above.

Even though the Government-General forced Korean capitalists to the pro-Japanese and invasive activities, they gradually assumed an aspect of internalizing totalitarian fascism. Pak Heung-sik, who ran a famous department store in colonial Korea (O Jin-seok 1998), rejected the liberalist economic principle whose object was to seek profit, and advocated “a new commercial ethics centered on a public sense of duty and also based on national ideology.” He also

urged the need of reorganizing the people, “rejecting individualism” and “turning to totalitarianism” to serve the controlled wartime economy for an invasive war upon China (Choe Rin, Pak Heung-sik, and Oh Geung-seon 1940). Thus, he came to affirm totalitarianism, denying individualism and liberalism. This was a challenge to “modernism” which attached importance to the “respect for human beings.” This propensity was not limited to the individual Pak Heung-sik (Eckert 1991: 185-186) however, and prevailed in numerous Korean bourgeoisie including capitalists and intellectuals. The ideology of liberalism and democracy adopted at the time when the *Dong-A Ilbo* was established in 1920 was being thoroughly denied by himself and fellow bourgeois,<sup>12</sup> as well as the bourgeois force that assumed the political main body of substituting “rights to make profit” for “rights to govern.”

## Prospect

The bourgeois nationalism urging national self-determination and independence on the basis of adopting liberalism and bourgeois democracy deriving from the developing process of Western capitalism was connected with the tasks of anti-feudalism and the anti-imperialism social revolution. This can be called the progressive aspect of bourgeois nationalism.

But ideological progressivism was not realized in the process of the bourgeois nationalism movement. On the contrary, bourgeois nationalism, particularly in the process of the “Movement to Buy Korean Products” as a national economic movement during the 1920s, was an ideology of mobilization unilaterally urging the people to endure “individual” sacrifice for the good of the whole nation rather than being an ideology of national integration based on liberty and equality. New intellectuals speaking for bourgeois benefit spread to the people a consciousness of “national characteristics” based on the mythology of “far past” nation-building “to mobilize the nation.” Some bourgeois intellectuals accepted the economic ideology handed down by the state, watching the trend of becoming a bloc of the world economy to construct a self-sustaining economic bloc.

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12. The *Dong-A Ilbo*. April 1, 1920. The editorial in commemoration of the foundation; the *Dong-A Ilbo*. June 11, 1920. Editorial. “Independence Request in the Philippines (III)—Relations between the State and Lives & People’s Political Psychology.”

Among them appeared some who were absorbed in the colonial government system, turning to the Government-General in Korea that propagated the self-sustenance of the “Korean economy.” In the last stage of Japanese imperialism when the invasive war raged, the bourgeois nationalism of the Korean capitalists became the main body that accepted and practiced the ideology of the Japanese fascist system (modern totalitarianism) based on the emperor. This can be called the conservative aspect of bourgeois nationalism.

As time passed, the conservative aspect of bourgeois nationalism was continuously strengthened. In the background, there were challenges from laborers and peasants and exterior environmental changes like the increasingly fascist trend of Japanese nationalism. But certain interior changes turned bourgeois nationalism into a conservative one. One was the ideological limitation of the bourgeois who tried to use nationalism in capitalist movements but neglected social problems; another was the inability of bourgeois society not to control the excessive merchant surplus. Their thought and behavior became estranged from the people by degrees.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, top-down nationalism, although mainly based on the political elite and commercial bourgeois of the Joseon dynasty, did not support from the populace. In the 1920s, bourgeois nationalism had the time and opportunity to get the popular support in virtue of the March First Movement. The bourgeois also regarded themselves as the political subjects to be able to realize the modernization of capitalism and to practice the general tasks of a bourgeois democracy. They forced the Korean people to take interest in economics for the growth of national economy. The nationalist movement that they led was detached from the support of the populace. This totalitarian disposition was the internal base from which the bourgeois could assimilate themselves to Japanese militarism.

If the progressive trend of bourgeois nationalism in the 1920s is revived in the future, it could become a process of removing the historical shadow shed by colonial experience in Korea on the one hand, as well as helping produce a Korean model to reach a compromise between the “capitalist” of the ruling class and civil society on the other.

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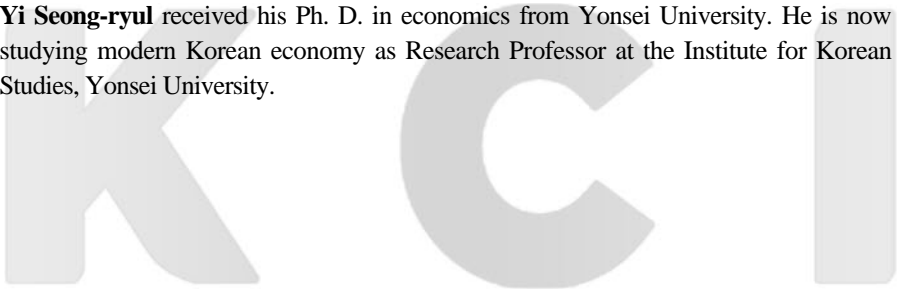
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