

Special Feature

Insight into Korean History and Education

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Introduction

Our project, “Teaching Korean History in English,” which started in 2008, was a two-year research project supported by the Korea Research Foundation. The project included both teaching and research. The project members engaged in a joint teaching course which Yonsei University, Wonju Campus offered to both Korean and foreign undergraduate students. We also organized two international conferences and had intensive discussions about the teaching methods to be used in the course on Korean history. The title of the first meeting was “Present Conditions and Matters [of Concern]: A Case Study of Korean History Education in Foreign Countr[ies],” which was held on May 23, 2008 under the auspices of the Institute for the Study of Korean Modernity, Yonsei University. The second conference was “Reflection[s] on Teaching Korean History in English,” which was held at Robinson College, University of Cambridge on July 1, 2009. Scholars who teach in American and British universities also participated in the conferences. By having the opportunity to compare course structures among the three countries, we found curriculum issues which we need to tackle when we teach Korean history in English in Korea.

Don Starr from Durham University, United Kingdom, suggests that Korean history education in British universities has faced a dilemma over the issue of how to incorporate both Korean language and critical skills development training in Korean history education (Starr 2008:1). Korean language training is important so that non-Korean students can read Korean texts. Yet this type of education is not sufficiently oriented to the analysis of those social and political issues raised in the texts. By contrast, in the case of the United States, the concern is the shortage of appropriate books on Korean history written in English which are suitable for undergraduates. Non-Korean students are increasingly interested in taking courses in Korean history. Both Michael Shin, who teaches Korean history at Cornell University, and Albert Park, who teaches at Claremont McKenna College, argue that students enjoy studying cultural topics, such as those related to the Korean Wave phenomenon which involves film, food,

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architecture and religion (Shin 2008:5; Park 2009:28-9). Although students are interested in studying political and economic issues through cultural history, there are only a few appropriate books translated into English.

In our module of Korean history at Yonsei University, the students who registered for the class were mostly Korean, and only a few foreign students (Americans and Chinese) were enrolled. Korean students need to develop their English language skills in order to understand lectures whose operative language is English. The shortage of English books and articles for the teaching of Korean history is not a major concern of the course instructors, because students do not have sufficient command of the English language to read many books and articles in preparation for class. I used *Korea's Place in the Sun* written by Bruce Cumings and *Everlasting Flower* by Keith Pratt as the main textbooks for teaching topics related to Korea in the first half of the twentieth century, since many American and British universities use these two as textbooks. We discussed Korean history textbooks written in English during the two international conferences which our research team organized. Following the discussions, I determined that these two would be appropriate when dealing with the topic of the first half of the twentieth century. I will present my teaching experience related to this topic later in this article. As in the case of British students, who develop their skills through reading Korean texts, Korean students must develop their English language skills in order to understand Korean history as presented in English by foreign scholars.

Lee Hyunsook, who was the main instructor for our module and who coordinated the lectures given by different instructors in order to organize them into one consistent lecture series, has discussed the reasons students enrolled in the course (2009:19). Many students joined the class in order to improve their English skills. She mentions that this attitude is related to the social phenomenon of the so-called "English-craze", which has spread over Korea and which is deeply related to Korea's "globalization" policy. Such a policy has encouraged some educational reform, pursued since the era of President Kim Young Sam, and aims to support national economic prosperity during the age of globalization (Kim 2005:14). Yet the policy which puts emphasis on English education has resulted in accelerating competition among university graduates in the search for secure jobs. The employment rate of university graduates in South Korea (76.8 percent in 2005) is the second-lowest among the member states of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD) (Randstad 2008), and those who have a permanent job comprised only 48 percent of the 282,670 university graduates in 2008 (Korean Educational Development Institute 2008:28). In order to improve their job prospects, students are eager to obtain higher marks in the TOEIC test and to improve their oral presentation skills in English. Such practical demands have motivated the students to study Korean history in English, and Lee Hyunsook reports that the oral presentation skills of the Korean students who enrolled in our module have indeed dramatically improved (Lee 2009:20).

When Korean students have sufficient ability to comprehend texts written in English, they learn that there are different ways of analyzing Korean history. In school, Koreans learn Korean history by using textbooks which are approved by the government. For example, *Korea through the Ages*, which was produced by the Association of Korean History Teachers (AKHT 2005), seems to represent an authentic view of Korean history approved by Korean scholars. The following is an excerpt from the second volume of *Korea through the Ages*. It describes Korean history between the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century from the perspective of Korean patriotic movements against the illegitimate foreign intervention in Korea. Yet this textbook shows little interest in addressing broader issues of colonialism and imperialism, and how such a political ideology so dominant in the West at that time affected international diplomacy related to Korea and, consequently, the fate of Koreans. Here is one example:

Before and after the Russo-Japanese War, England and the U.S. respectively signed treaties with Japan and acknowledged Japan's right to rule over the Korean Peninsula. In 1905, the Great Han Empire became a protectorate of Japan with the consent of the imperialistic powers of the West (AKHT 2005:59-60).

The text does not explain why Westerners did not question Japan's interest in Korea. It emphasizes the conspiracy of Western countries and Japan which facilitated the Japanese annexation of Korea. The textbook claims that this annexation was also an illegitimate act. By contrast, the analysis of Bruce Cumings concerning Japan's advance on Korea is the following: first, if Japan would not interfere with America's occupation of the Philippines, the United States would not stop Japan's advance on Korea; second, the Western idea of colonialism acknowledged Japan's modernizing role in Korea (Cumings 2005:141-2). By comparing the views

of Koreans and Western historians on the topic, we can understand there are different ways of approaching it.

Although some Korean academics remain skeptical about using texts written by foreign scholars for Korean history education, it is important for students to know that there are different views on Korea's history. Korean students who have learned Korean history throughout their school education can now have opportunities to compare the historical knowledge which they acquired during their pre-university education with the information they learn from our module. Thus students can develop analytical and critical skills. In my teaching, I have provided both Western and Japanese views on Korea as background information and have encouraged students to develop presentational and critical skills whilst learning how to construct a logical argument. In this regard, what we have learned from Don Starr's comment on Korean history education in British universities is useful for the development of our course structure. Starr suggests that a Korean history course must teach both language and academic methodology. This principle can be useful for organizing Korean history courses in Korea through the medium of English. The enrolled students can have access to original English texts and nurture a critical way of thinking. Although the Korean educational system is different from the British one, to a certain extent we can apply their educational approach to our Korean history courses.

This paper focuses on one of the lecture topics in our module, "Japan's advance on Korea", during the first half of the twentieth century, and relates the intensive debate that I had with the students when they organized a discussion on the topic in class. One of the goals in our course is to encourage students to learn different versions of Korean history, and to produce historical knowledge in order to examine and interpret the world from a wider perspective, whilst breaking out of the dominant view of Korean history they learned in school.

An Experimental Study in Education

We can roughly separate out four different versions of Korean history—Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and Western. In our lecture series, we focus on English texts. This means that Korean students can obtain knowledge of Korean history produced by people from different academic backgrounds.

To study Korean history using books and articles written in English provides Korean students, who have already learned a Korean version of Korean history, an opportunity to reinterpret history for themselves and to produce their own version of historical knowledge. Foreign students also can learn Korean history by participating in the course. During my involvement in the class as a course instructor and anthropologist, I had to drop the positivist pretense that assumes different versions of Korean history basically share the same nature. The premise of positivism is to assume that the nature of all evidence is basically the same, and that what has been concealed is discoverable. By contrast, constructivist approaches to history focus on the interpretation of historical narratives by recognizing that such narratives may be of a different order than that of formal historical accounts. It does not mean that constructivist approaches do not place an emphasis on historical evidence. Rather, their approaches stress the social position of those who looked at history. Yet, at the same time, they do not pay enough attention to the process of this production, which clearly influences the shape and contours of such narratives. The key theoretical problem therefore is to try to integrate these two approaches—a far from easy task as noted by Trouillot (1995). Such differences are not simply a matter of interpreting historical evidence, which is examined and scrutinized, but are related to the process of production which certainly influences the shape of their history. Thus, I have attempted to design lectures in which students can involve themselves in such a process of historical production.

When I gave lectures, I presented different views of Korean history, and then supplied the students with reading materials. This provided them with background information so that they could organize group presentations and in-class discussions. In this article, I will introduce the process of how students produce historical knowledge relating to Japanese colonial rule over Korea in the first half of the twentieth century. This topic provided the students in the course with an opportunity to look at different interpretations of the Japanese colonial occupation as presented by Western scholars. The first question which I put to the students was: “Why do Korean historians tend to discuss Korean history in the first half of the twentieth century from the viewpoint of anti-Japanese movements?” In other words, why do Koreans tend to describe their twentieth century history in terms of anti-Japanese patriotic movements? The reason that I had put forward this question was to encourage the

students to compare different views on history. Korean students, in particular, might be able to make a comparison between what they have learned in the past and the materials presented in our class.

I introduced to the students the argument developed by Bruce Cumings (2005:141-142) and explained his argument of how Japanese policy forced Koreans to “become” Japanese. Thus Korean unity as an ethnic and linguistic group was denied, whilst Westerners supported Japan’s “modernizing role” in Korea. Then, I explained the position of Japan in nineteenth-century world politics. The Japanese believed it was necessary to transform Japan into a powerful imperial power in East Asia. In the mid-nineteenth century, when Western powers came to Japan, Japan was powerless and forced to enter into unequal treaties of commerce with major Western countries. The Japanese eagerly adopted Western ideas of development and modernization which included acquiring colonies, and enlightening the “natives” and “barbarians” of colonies through development and modernization. Japan attempted to imitate what Western colonial powers had already achieved. During the colonial era, Japanese applied such ideas to the reconstruction of Korean history.

At the ideological level, “advancement,” which was the idea that Imperial Japan selected as the model for national prosperity, supported Japan’s colonial policy which aimed at the total assimilation of Koreans. Imperial Japan tried to justify the incorporation of Korea into Japan by claiming that Japanese and Koreans had sprung from the same ancestors in the distant past and that, in order to advance, Koreans required a close association with Japanese (Walraven 1999). Japanese anthropological studies of Korea were similar to those of European Orientalists who had studied Middle Eastern societies. These helped to justify their attempts at colonial domination by constructing particular images of the societies concerned. I have tried to explain that in both cases, the colonial powers attempted to legitimize their own ruling position with supporting intellectual ideologies (Asad 1973:116-8). The Japanese adopted the Western idea of progressive modernism, which meant that a restrictive foreign power facilitated modernization of its colonies and they believed that such a policy would bring modernity to Korea. Some examples that support such an argument are: a) the increase in agricultural production; b) the opportunity provided for Koreans to receive a Japanese-style modern education; c) the development of modern mass media; and d) industrialization (Pratt 2007:218-222). I also referred to James Palais

(1995:409-413) who argues that such a Japanese historical discourse was used to justify the apparent incapacity of Koreans, by saying that they were tied to the pre-modern Joseon tradition, and that this demonstrated their backwardness. Such a history robbed Koreans of their ethnic pride, and so Korean historians started to recreate their own history and use it to rebuild a base for reclaiming their national pride.

Then I returned to the first question which I put to the students: Why do Korean historians tend to discuss Korean history in the first half of the twentieth century from the viewpoint of anti-Japanese movements? I could not predict how students would react to the explanation offered above by a foreigner. I myself have had no experience of learning Korean history in a Korean school. I did not know exactly what students had learned during their school days, although textbooks, such as those produced by the Association of Korean History Teachers (2005), gave me some idea of their history education. I was afraid that the students might misunderstand me and believe that I support the argument that Japanese colonial power brought modernization to Korea. When I gave a talk during the 2009 Cambridge Conference on Korean history education by using this lecture as an example of my experience in the educational field, even Korean academics who were there commented that “we” Koreans were *emotionally* unable to accept and acknowledge such a theory of modernization. Cumings also notes that Korean scholars, who do not accept the idea that an external power brought modernization to Korea, claim that growing Korean nationalism and the development of a national bourgeoisie in the 1920s was the major force behind Korean modernization (2005:170-171). I can well understand that many Koreans cannot acknowledge the argument introduced by Japanese colonialist scholars and those who support such an historical view that Japanese collaborators contributed to the modernization of Korea.

Lee Hyunsook (2009:24-5) mentioned that her Korean students were *emotionally* disturbed by Palais’ argument about Korean uniqueness (1995) and attempted to refute it. One of the responses which Lee Hyunsook received from one of her Korean students was that although Palais argues that one of the unique features of Korean history is the longevity and stability of the Korean dynasties, she wonders why the *yangban* were unable to overthrow the kings whose power the *yangban* restrained in certain extent. The students question whether or not Palais constructs his argument by referring to Japanese materials which argue

that the decline of Joseon is related to *yangban* factionalism. The students warn that in analyzing Korean history, it is wrong to support the ideas of colonialist historians of the early twentieth century. Lee (2009:25) mentions that such student attempts to interpret Korean history are a way of defending the national interest. I had to keep in mind that Koreans tend to show a sensitive reaction to a foreigner's comments on Korean history, and object to arguments which support the colonialists' view of Korea. Thus I had to tell my students in class that that I sought to introduce different views on history, and expected "them" to tackle the Western theory of colonialism from an analytical viewpoint.

I do not know exactly whether or not my lectures have influenced their historical understanding. Yet, some students who participated in discussion during class gave vent to their feelings through such phrases as: "I am so sad that we had such history." Others insisted that "it is a disgrace!" They did not say openly that Japanese colonial rule brought disgrace on Koreans. Yet what they attempted to convey to their classmates by using such expressions was their great distress at seeing Korea, their homeland, so powerless. Korean history textbooks emphasize Korean patriotic movements against Japanese rule, which they see as modernization movements which also aimed at restoring Korean sovereignty and territory. I thought that it might be shared "local knowledge" that the political struggle of restoring territory and sovereignty has nurtured Korean national pride. Yet, the students in our class paid more attention to the colonization of Korea, rather than the struggle of their ancestors for independence. This may be partly due to the content of my lecture, in which I only briefly mentioned Korean patriotic movements during Japanese rule over Korea, because I expected that Korean students had learned enough about it throughout their school education. As a course instructor, I struggled to bridge the gap between what Korean students learned in history classes in their pre-university education, and what foreign academics argue about colonial history. It is the nature of historical writing that the social position of the authors affects their work (Foley 2007:221). As a result of this, the way of understanding colonialism is not uniform. I have attempted to address wider questions related to colonization, issues in which Korean students might emotionally immerse themselves and which they use to analyze certain historical events. When they discuss the subject with Korean participants, foreign students can learn different ways of interpreting history. Teaching Korean history

in English seems to play a distinctive role in providing students with opportunities to compare and analyze the views provided by scholars who have different social and academic backgrounds.

Having introduced Western perspectives of Japanese rule over Korea in the twentieth century, I sought to discover how students analyze a particular historical incident and develop their own historical knowledge. I chose “Objects as Exhibit: Legitimising the Building of the National Museum of Korea,” written by Chung Yun Shun (Susie) (2007) as reading material. It discusses how a symbol of Japanese colonial rule was demolished in 1995.

During the presidency of Kim Young Sam the government demolished the former headquarters building of the Government-General (*Sotokufu*), a neoclassical-style granite building, which the Japanese had constructed and occupied during colonial rule, and which Koreans later transformed into the National Museum of Korea. The building housing the former headquarters of the Government-General had not only served as an office for the Japanese, but also acted as a center of Korean politics after the liberation. In 1945, it became the headquarters of the American military government. In 1948, President Rhee Syngman declared the independence of Korea in this building. At the time of the Korean War between 1950 and 1953, the seizure of this building was a symbolic act which demonstrated that the South Koreans had recaptured Seoul. The building of the former Government-General had functioned as a political center for Korean politics for nearly thirty years, from the liberation until 1983, when the government closed it in order to transform it into the National Museum of Korea (Kuroda 2001:148).

Chung (2007) discusses the reason why Koreans regard the former headquarters building of the Government-General as a symbol of an illegitimate past, which disrupted Korea’s sovereignty and independence. Due to its location, directly in front of the Gyeongbok Royal Palace, the building was believed to intercept the natural energy forces coming from the sacred Mount Bugak, which is situated behind the palace. Koreans today believe that this building was a Japanese attempt to disrupt the continuity of Korean history as an independent state, by deliberately disregarding the authority of the Joseon dynasty (Chung 2007:233-4). Such historical sentiment is strongly related to the Korean practice of geomancy, in which topography determines future events as well as strengthening a family or a nation. Contemporary Koreans believe that the construction of

the Government-General building destroyed the topography of the land, which led to the withering of Korean political power.

In 1995, during his speech on the Fiftieth Anniversary of National Liberation, Kim Young Sam inaugurated both the destruction of the former Government-General building, which was to start on that very day, and the restoration of the original appearance of the Gyeongbok Palace. In doing so, he liquidated this symbol of national oppression whilst renewing one of the most important symbols of the nation. During his tenure, the regime attempted to find a meaning for the past by making use of national historical heritage (Chung 2007:229, 231, 241). Thus Koreans had to remove this symbol of their annexation to Japan, to efface this blot which marred the historical continuity of their state; and to restore themselves to power by re-creating the original topography. In this way, the government employed Korean culture and the practice of geomancy to confirm both what is auspicious and what provides signs of future success. In doing so, it emphasized the construction of a bright future for the Korean nation, and ensured its continuity. Thus the government made the history of the colonial era and its heritage a political tool, which has fuelled anti-Japanese feelings, whilst it has contributed to the enhancement of national sentiment.

Between 2008 and 2009, our research team organized three modules of Korean history. Student enrollment in each class was between twelve and twenty. Thus the students, whom our course instructors divided into several groups, organized group presentations on Chung's article. All the students enjoyed the opportunity to give a talk during their group presentation. Each group also organized an in-class discussion of how they understood the article. Each group included both Korean and foreign students. I also participated in their discussions. Then I asked the students: "This building also served as center of Korean politics after the liberation. Do you think it was the right decision to demolish the building of the former Government-General?" When students tried to answer the question, each student expressed what the colonial past meant for him or her. The following are examples of how Korean students viewed the historical event and interpreted their knowledge of the past.

Student A:

Chung tells us that the Koreans demolished a perfectly well-built edifice, which was the building of the former headquarters of the Government-General, because the Japanese had built it during their colonial rule over

Korea. The building might be a symbol of colonialism; the disruption of Korean history through geomancy and imperialism, which led to the withering of Korean political power. I wonder whether or not such reasoning can justify the demolition of the building. Although this building represents disgraceful parts of Korean history, it is embedded in history. It should be removed from Gyeongbok palace and be rebuilt in another location. Yet, the building witnessed Korea's experience of despair and loss as well as the process of Korea's development. Therefore, it has historical importance. The experience of misery and disparity tells us not to subjugate ourselves to foreign aggression and encourages us to become strong.

Student B:

The National Museum of Korea should not have been placed in the building of the former Government-General. Yet, I do not believe the building needed to be demolished, because it is a witness of historical events. If the building existed, people could easily recall how Koreans were humiliated and lost their dignity during the colonial occupation. Yet, I believe the building should be reconstructed in another location. Recollecting such history reminds us not to allow external forces to control Korea.

Student C:

In 1995, when the regime of President Kim Young Sam demolished the building of the former headquarters of the Government-General, the Korean public welcomed the demolition, because for them it meant the removal of an object which was related to their memory of the Japanese occupation. The building was a symbol of Japanese rule over Korea, since the Japanese deliberately built it in front of Gyeongbok palace which was the political center of Korea. In order to restore their own self-respect, Koreans were forced to demolish the building.

Student D:

Our identity was threatened during the Japanese occupation. Japanese built the headquarters of the Government-General in front of Gyeongbok palace, because they attempted to demonstrate their power to rule over Korea. This brought on our identity crisis. Although the building has architectural value, it had to be demolished in order to restore our national pride.

Student E:

To maintain historical monuments, which serves to transmit our historical memories to younger generations, is also important. Yet I

believe it was the right decision to demolish the building of the former Government-General. It was built in front of Gyeongbok palace, which is now located in one of the entertainment areas in Seoul. Many events and celebrations take place there. If people come to the area, and the building of the former headquarters of the Government-General brought to mind the colonial past, it might be unpleasant for them. We do not want to evoke bad memories when we want to have fun.

For the Korean students, the search for a national history was an attempt to rescue Korea from subjugation and degradation. The younger generation, such as students in our history class, who live under democratic affluence have no experience of being threatened by foreign aggression, and so have no need to suppress their memories of the events that are attached to the building of the former Government-General. As subjects of history, people involve themselves in historical production through creation of historical narratives, and contribute to the communal history of their nation as a collectivity (Trouillot 1995:13-16). By contrast, the political elite presents history as political discourse. As Scott (1990:2-4) points out, political elites tend to produce the state's history as a reflection of their own view of that history. The Korean political elite in the middle of the 1990s belonged to the generation who had both direct and indirect experience of the colonial occupation. This means that they had experienced inequitable power relations with Japanese under colonial rule. The Koreans' previously "hidden transcript," that was formerly a clandestine discourse on the subject of domination, is now the "public" transcript of their twentieth-century history, one in which Koreans refused to yield to the Japanese, and demonstrated a firm determination to achieve Korean independence. Thus they tend to describe their twentieth century history as that of anti-Japanese movements and show their respect for patriotic fighters who participated in such movements. The regime of Kim Young Sum attempted to enhance national pride by means of demolishing a symbolic building of its own colonial past.

By contrast, students A and B attempt to strengthen Koreans' pride by recollecting Koreans' memories of despair and loss. These students who have no experience of the Japanese colonial occupation claim that the building of the former headquarters of the Government-General might have contributed to remembering the past, if it had not been demolished. Yet both of them insist that the building should be reconstructed in another location. Other students, such as students C, D, and E regard the

demolition of the building of the Government-General as a legitimate act. They seek to restore the original landscape of Gyeongbok palace and reclaim Korea's national pride. As subjects of history, these students involve themselves in historical production by analyzing the text and expressing their opinions, which are their own historical narratives. During the past two decades, Koreans have achieved economic development—the so-called “Miracle on the Han River”—and so Korea's highly accelerated export-fuelled economic growth has given them great self-confidence. These students who live with the affluence of a democracy seem to choose whether or not they conceal what occurred in the past.

The students' argument seems to be different from that constructed by the generation of President Kim Young Sam. The older generations remembered the events before and after the liberation from Japanese occupation and tried to eliminate a past that they considered illegitimate. Yet, the students are proud of how Korea has become developed, and what Korea has achieved after the Second World War. Some students, such as student C and D, tend to suppress the shared memories of Korea's suffering in order to claim that “we” Koreans are a proud people. They support the elimination of the historical monument which reveals that Korea used to be weak and vulnerable. Their concealment of Korea's unbearable experience in the past is also different from the way ordinary Japanese have attempted to suppress their imperial past and war-time trauma. Japanese sublimated their despair into the construction of material prosperity. This was their attempt to merge themselves into the world order, when they accepted American hegemony. Many Japanese tried to forget their country's imperial past and were, and many still are, reluctant to open up documents relating to this past for public inspection. They tend to conceal memories of their shared colonial past (Igarashi 2000).¹ Yet, Yoneyama (1998:235-36) is cautious about the Japanese attitude because they indulge in ethnocentric “amnesic remembering.”

1. One such example are the notes written by a former official of the Imperial Household Agency, the late Tomita Asahiko (富田朝彦), which were opened to the public in 2007 (Nikkei Net 2007). These notes show the reason why Showa Emperor Hirohito stopped going to the Yasukuni shrine, which was consecrated during the Meiji era as a place where one can revere the souls of Japanese who dedicated their lives to the nation. It enshrines the souls of class A war criminals of the Second World War. Because of this, Showa Emperor Hirohito ceased his visits there.

She maintains that, by reflecting on what “we” had done, Japanese want to be forgiven by those who suffered during the Second World War and when placed under Japanese rule. This attempt conceals the fact that the Japanese have previously suppressed movements to reveal their criminal acts in the past. By contrast, some Korean students in our history class may not want to acknowledge their own country’s experience of despair and loss during the colonial occupation. Korea’s position in the past is so different from the contemporary one. The image of the past is so different from what they believe are the distinctive characteristics of Koreans: Koreans are proud of the fact that they have established their position in the world within a short period of time by constructing a democratic society and achieving economic prosperity. They may not want to look at the historical remnants which contradict their own image of Korea. Thus the students support the demolition of the building of the Government-General and seem to suppress the memories it brings to them. Student E tends to trivialize the syndrome that she does not really have the memories. This student may be more typical of present and future trends.

Conclusion

The regime of Kim Young Sam attempted to construct the future through demolition of a symbolic building of Korea’s colonial past, whilst the university students who live with the affluence of a democracy look at what occurred in the past in ways different from those of the former political elite. Students can enjoy what Foucault (2001) calls *parrhesia*, which means frankness in speaking the truth, and challenge the political discourse produced by the political elite. The students have developed their own historical knowledge of Korea’s colonial past and utilize it in order to strengthen Korean pride.

The relationship between anthropology and history has undergone major changes through the evolution of the two disciplines. The two approaches have not only become more closely related, but also much more sophisticated in their appreciation of how to tackle events in the past. There is a sense in which one could argue that there is a fundamental divide in the way the two disciplines analyze the relationship between past and present. One can illustrate this divide in terms of two axes: *the direction of explanation*, and the *nature of uncertainty*. Yet, from a

pedagogical perspective, the combination of the two approaches seems to be useful, because the subjectivity which students acquired in their pre-university history education seems to influence their understanding of Korean history.

When the Korean students in our history class analyzed the texts, their attitude towards Korea's colonial past gave them a fresh perspective on the subject. They looked at their colonial past from the perspective of the present. Students can develop their own historical knowledge by analyzing English reading materials, which are produced by scholars from different academic backgrounds, and with different points of view, who introduce ideas in sharp contrast to the subjective criteria of Korean undergraduate students. As a course instructor, I am able to observe the process of how the students produce such historical knowledge, which influences the shape of their historical accounts. They try to explain what occurred in the past, and this process suggests how the current situation of Korea affects their own narratives, which are quite different from those of the 1990s described by Chung.

Analyzing the narratives given by the Yonsei students, it seems clear that the accounts of the political elite given in the 1990s concerning the former Government-General building influenced the students' production of their historical accounts. They interpret the historical evidence in a way similar to that of the former political elite: a) the existence of the building hinders Koreans in reclaiming their national pride; and b) the building recalls Koreans' memories and sentiments of despair and loss during the colonial occupation. The students have developed that local knowledge in their social and school education, which has an influence on the production of their historical accounts. Such narratives are imbued with deep feelings related to their national pride. Yet, having analyzed the students' accounts, we can see that their historical accounts differ from those produced by the former political elite. This suggests that differences of experiences between the older and younger generations affect the relationship to the past, and influence the structure of historical accounts. The students have no experience of the foreign invasion of their country which the older generations had. The younger generations look at Korea's economic achievement during these two decades and identify their nation as prosperous, whilst the elders despaired over the political conflicts and poverty in the past. It seems that their relationship to the past and social position affect the production of their historical accounts.

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Abstract

Our project, "Teaching Korean History in English," includes both research, and teaching which was offered to both Korean and foreign undergraduate students at Yonsei University, Wonju Campus. This paper is focused on one of the lecture topics in our module, "Japan's advance on Korea," during the first half of the twentieth century, and relates the intensive intercommunication that I, as a course instructor, had with the students, when they organized an in-class discussion on the topic. One of the goals in our course is to encourage students to learn different versions of Korean history, and produce historical knowledge for interpreting and acting upon the world from a wider perspective. As subjects of history, these students involve themselves in historical production by analyzing the text and expressing their opinions, which are their own historical narratives. My experimental study suggests that their social position and experience affect their relationship to the past, and influence the structure of their historical accounts. Teaching Korean history in English seems to play a distinctive role in providing students with opportunities to compare and analyze the views provided by scholars who have different social and academic backgrounds.

Keywords: education, Korean history, colonialism, memory, anthropology