

# **Christian Missionaries in Korea and the Japanese Colonial Power in the March First Movement Period: Focus on the Principle of Political Non-intervention and Its Political Connotations**

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## **Introduction**

It is no overstatement to say that our knowledge of interaction between modern Korea and the West has come through Western missionaries. Although Korea also saw a number of diplomats, traders, and foreign experts employed by government during this period, only missionaries resided in Korea with the support of their institutional organizations over a long period of time. Business people and diplomats were usually restricted to interaction with certain social strata, while missionaries met and lived with all levels of Korean society, using these meetings as an opportunity to spread the Christian faith. Missionaries were typically, and especially the initial American Protestant missionaries, graduates of theological seminaries. Theological seminaries at the end of the 19th century were open to students who had received university education—comparable to the graduate schools of today. The first American Protestant missionaries to reside in Korea had generally all received higher education and were regarded as educated. These first missionaries did not restrict themselves to only establishing churches, but were also active in providing education and medical care. Missionary services and institutions, such as churches, schools, and hospitals developed organically as part of missionary work, eventually becoming integrated into a relatively organized system with missionaries organized in terms of specialty, such as medical missionaries and educational missionaries. Seen in this light, these first missionaries to Korea can be seen as not only being involved in disseminating Christianity but also as responsible for bringing modern Western ideas to Korea. The degree of contribution of these missionaries to modern education in Korea was exceptionally high when compared to contemporary Japan. Provision of education by both the government and Christian schools occurred at

roughly the same time in Japan. In 1870, Ferris Jogakuin was founded, marking the start of Christian education in Japan. The Ministry of Education (*Monbushō*) was established the following year, and established Japan's first public education system in 1872. The influence of the state was most marked in elementary education and boys' education in particular, while Christian education tended to play a bigger role in educating girls. In contrast to these developments, Christian education in Korea gained its first foothold from 1885, and missionaries established an educational network, primarily centered on centers of missionary activity, throughout the whole of Korea prior to the state developing its own public education system. Including their pre-colonial period work in girls' education, Western missionaries successfully developed a unified nationwide education system that taught all the way from elementary to higher education. The next section introduces the background to the arrival of these Protestant missionaries to Korea, bringing with them modern Western thought and ideas.

This background can be divided into a religious and political backdrop. In addition to substantial religious differences such as the Catholic and Protestant denomination of individual missionaries, the Protestant missionaries can be further subdivided into a wide range of churches, including Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Lutheran, Salvation Army, First Brethren, Episcopalian, Oriental Missionary Society (The Holiness Church and the Oriental Missionary Society). There were a total of 1529 pre-Second World War Protestant missionaries to Korea, of which 22.1 percent belonged to the American Presbyterian Mission, 12.4 percent were members of the American Southern Presbyterian Mission, 16.4 percent from the American Northern Methodist Mission, and 11.9 percent from the American Southern Methodist Mission. Other missionaries came from the Salvation Army (8.3 percent), Australia Presbyterian World Mission (5.5 percent), Church Missionary Society, Britain (5.0 percent), Canadian Presbyterian Mission (5.4 percent), Seventh Day Adventists (1.8 percent), Oriental Missionary Society (1.6 percent), and other churches (9.6 percent). In looking at the overall figures, Presbyterians (45.4 percent) and Methodists (28.3 percent) made up 72.3 percent of the missionaries coming to Korea at the time—a substantial majority. Church establishment in Korea during this period

matched accordingly. According to total statistics for the period of colonial rule in Korea (1925) there were a total of 355,383 churchgoers. Of these, 4.0 percent identified themselves as Catholic, 51.3 percent as Presbyterian Church in Korea 16.1 percent as American Southern or Northern Methodists, and 2.4 percent as Salvation Army. When viewed in terms of nationality, American missionaries made up almost 70 percent of the total number (69.3 percent), followed by British missionaries at 13.0 percent, Canadians at 6.4 percent, those from Australia at 5.6 percent, and other (5.7 percent).<sup>1</sup>

This division by denomination and nationality among missionaries to Korea also had an effect on the type of missionary work undertaken in Korea. There was a searching for practical missionary work within a framework of the relationship between local missions and their missionary boards at home, between different missions in the same country, and local politics and culture that differed from region to region.<sup>2</sup>

This study examines the relationship between Christian missionaries in Korea and Japanese authority during the country's period of colonial rule, with special focus on the March First Movement in 1919, using missionary-related sources and materials to present research based on case studies.<sup>3</sup>

As Korea entered its period of colonial rule, the Japanese Government-General immediately moved to clampdown on Christianity. This followed the 105 Incident (the attempted assassination of the Governor-General Terauchi Masatake in 1910). This went beyond suppression of Christianity to involve a crackdown on Christian schools that were connected to some of the participants in the assassination plot. Following on from the 1908 promulgation of the Decree on Private Schools, the Government-General promulgated the Education Act in August 1911, and established the basic principles of colonial education in Korea as aiming to "develop trusting subjects" and be "reflective of the people and the times," as well as establishing an education system based on "regular education," "practical education," and "specialist education." Immediately following the promulgation of the Education Act, the Government-General issued the Private School Regulations in October 1911 and planned for existing private school education to be governed by these rules. In March 1915 the Government-General then issued the

Revised Private School Regulations, which called for suppression of religious schools, and Christian schools in particular. These new regulations called for teaching subjects to be based on the standards for regular subjects as defined by these laws and forbade the teaching of religious subjects and banned religious ceremonies within school properties. All teachers had to familiarize themselves with the Japanese language, which was the basis for the Government-General to bring private schools in Korea under their complete control. This can be seen the final development of a legal framework for controlling education in Korea.

This crackdown was to become an issue of life or death for Christian schools. Despite being provided with a period of respite of ten years, missionaries now had to face the prospect of one of their major roles in Korea—teaching—being reduced and led to the missionaries beginning discussions with the Government-General and the missionaries' mission boards in their home countries. There was particularly fierce argument between the Secretary-General of the Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions, A.J. Brown, and the Government-General's Director of Foreign Affairs, Komatsu Midori, which developed through written communication between both parties.<sup>4</sup> In response to the Revised Private School Regulations, Presbyterian missionaries from the Northwest region, including W.M. Baird, the head of the Pyōng'yang Soongsil College, the missionary S.A. Moffett, and the headmaster of the Posōng School for Girls in Sōnch'ōn-gun, W.C. Whittemore, led efforts to prevent any shutdown of the religious schools. The missionaries' respective mission boards also showed no sign of compromising with this decision by the Japanese Government-General. The Methodist Church's Pai Chai School, however, decided to approve these new regulations in order to enroll students. Missionaries based in Seoul, and in particular, E.W. Koons, Head of John D. Well's School (Kyōngshin Hakkyo) were upset at this response, but the reaction of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches to the implementation of these Revised Private School Regulations were mirror opposites.<sup>5</sup> This was the educational background to the outbreak of the March First Movement, which ultimately resulted in changes to the Revised Private School Regulations, with freedom of religious education being recognized as part of the Government-General's "Cultural Policy." This period of ongoing tension between the Government-General and

foreign missionaries in Korea at the peak of the March First Movement led to a number of meetings between the missionaries and representatives of the Government-General.

Based on sources regarding missionary activity from the United Methodist Archives Center at Drew University, this study examines the relationship between missionaries and the Japanese Government-General in Korea at the time of the March First Movement. The following sources will be used in presenting actual case studies.

1. Report of First Session of Unofficial Conference, Chōsen Hotel, March 22, 1919.
2. Report of Second Session of Unofficial Conference, Chōsen Hotel, March 14, 1919.
3. Report of Meeting with Mr. Sekiya on the Afternoon of Saturday, March 29 and the Evening of Sunday, March 30, 1919.
4. A Statement of Missionary Position on Korean Agitation.

### **1. Informal and Unofficial Meetings between the Government-General and Missionaries**

In Kang Tong-jin's *Nihon no Chōsen shihai seisaku shi kenkyū* [History of Japanese Ruling Policy in Korea],<sup>6</sup> the author mentions the meetings held on March 22 and 24, 1919 based on reference to the meeting in *Gendaishi shiryō* [Sources of Contemporary History]. These materials are the private papers of Kokubu Sangai, Judiciary Director of the Government-General of Korea, titled, "Meeting with Foreign Missionaries to Reach Agreement on Independence Movement." The *Sources of Contemporary History* also includes the "Documentary Evidence II: Summary of Committee Findings on the Current Situation in Korea" submitted to the 66th U.S. Congress. This also included a partial overview of these meetings. In addition to analyzing these sources this study looks at the collected records of the missionaries concerning private records and off the record material. According to these sources, the secret meetings were held on March 22 and 24, with additional records indicating further meetings were held with Sekiya Teizaburō (Head of the Education Department) on March 29 and 30.

The meeting on the 22nd was held at the Chōsen Hotel at the behest of the Director of the Bank of Korea, Katayama and the high court judge, Watanabe Nobu. Other Japanese attendees included Kokubu Sangai, Sekiya Teizaburō, the engineer Sakaide, Hoshino Tokuji (Bank of Korea), Niwa Seijirō (General-Secretary of the Japan YMCA), Matsumoto Masahiro (lawyer), Yamagata Iso-o (The Seoul Press), and Kawabata Sanjiro (*Chōsen Hikaku* employee). The missionaries at the meeting was made up of a ten member delegation including, H. Welch (Head of the Methodist church in Korea), J.S. Gale (Presbyterian), Moffett (Presbyterian), Whittemore (Presbyterian), W.A. Noble (Methodist), D.A. Bunker (Methodist), R.A. Hardie (American Southern Methodist), J.L. Gerdine (American Southern Presbyterian), O.R. Avison (Director of Severance Hospital), and F.M. Brackman (YMCA).

The missionaries were primarily based in Seoul, although Moffett (Pyōng'yang) and Whittemore (Sōnch'ōn) represented the regional areas of Korea. While comparing the records of the missionaries with Kokubu's notes, I will look to recreate the events of these meetings based on both sides' accounts. The material from Kokubu will be referred to as Material A, while that of the missionaries is designated as Material B.

A number of defining characteristics can be seen when comparing both sides' materials. Kokubu's records are far more general in nature when compared to the missionaries' records, and his recordings of what the Japanese attendees said are even more brief and to the point. As these records are not formal minutes, they place an increased focus on what the other side—the missionaries—said over the course of these meetings. Moreover, the missionaries recorded a significant element of this meeting that was neglected by Kokubu. This can be seen in the record of Moffett's statement on the 24th, in which he commented that the majority of Japanese in attendance at the meeting were, in fact, Christians. This resulted in a meeting between the missionaries and Japanese Government-General officials, lawyers, editors of government-approved English newspapers bankers and industrialists, in which the majority of attendees were Christian. This provided a common cord linking the participants, regardless of nationality, and Moffett indicated that this allowed for a true heart-to-heart discussion of the issues. The latter half of this study will show that, despite the basic principle prohibiting missionaries from

involvement in secular politics, these meetings saw a number of times when this was disregarded as the missionaries became increasingly engaged in these discussions.

Material B indicates that Katayama and Watanabe hosted the March 22nd meeting. Material B states that Watanabe acted as chair of the meeting, with Material A indicating that he provided the initial introductions, with his reasons for holding the meeting described in Material B and outlined below.

While this meeting brings together individuals from different occupations, its objective is simply to provide solutions to improve the lives of the Korean people. As a judge, this includes the idea of treating all Koreans under the same laws and with justice; to protect the victims of crime and punish those guilty of crimes. The primary objectives of bankers should not only to be the pursuit of profits, but also the establishment of a financial system that will benefit the people. The role of teachers should be to educate the Korean people and missionaries should look to spread their faith amongst the people and help elevate their mind. This final point (activities of the missionaries) is probably the most important aspect of this meeting. Irrespective of our efforts, Korea is currently facing a terrible situation with the potential to lead to confusion and unrest. As bureaucrats, bankers, and missionaries, we have all probably committed some mistakes ... One of the factors behind this trouble has been raised as the differential treatment of Koreans and Japanese. However, I would like everyone to think of the situation in Korea only ten years earlier. This was a truly regrettable period. The first thing I did upon coming to Korea was to look over judicial records to familiarize myself with the country's legal and judicial process. Even though I searched and searched, I could find no evidence of any such records. They had been deliberately destroyed in order to hide evidence of unfair trials and the financial dealings of judges ...

In terms of education, there were no schools of higher or practical learning back then, and too many schools were simply

teaching Chinese classical literature. These were all factors that marked Koreans out as different from Japanese. All of the things we Japanese have implemented in Korea have been for the benefit of Koreans and there has been no oppression from the Government-General. I believe these to be the simple facts, and this is not a statement on behalf of the Government-General, which has responded to the times in correcting any injustices or unfairness.

Watanabe ensured that he thanked everyone for accepting his invitation to the meeting as well as mentioning the attendance of missionaries from outside Seoul, namely Moffett and Whittemore (B). These sources, however, provide no indication of how the Presbyterian missionaries from the Northwest area of Korea, who had adopted a different attitude toward the Government-General from the Seoul-based missionaries, came to participate in this meeting. All of the missionaries, however, thought of this meeting as important and attended the meeting either as a result of a request from the Seoul-based missionaries or after Pyŏng'yang obtaining information from Seoul. Whichever of the situations we take as being true, due to the participation of the Northwest Korean missionaries—who tended to focus more on evangelical work outside of Seoul—the importance of this meeting to Christians in Korea was thought to have increased.<sup>7</sup>

Kokubu's records denote the next speaker as Noble, although the missionaries' records suggest that it was actually Gale. As there is no reason for the missionary records to make a mistake over their own members, this may be an error on the part of Kokubu. Gale came to Korea in 1888 as a missionary from the University of Toronto YMCA, but became affiliated to the American Presbyterian Mission in 1891, becoming the first director of the Korean YMCA in 1903. He was a lifetime friend of H. Loomis, a resident missionary in Japan and President of the American Bible Society in Japan. At this first meeting Gale introduced himself by saying, "I come here with the hope of everlasting friendship between Korea and Japan and the whole of the Far East." He went on to state, "I have become extremely troubled over the current situation," and his speech is summarized below.

The Korean people are without doubt benefiting greatly from Japanese rule in a material sense. Although the Korean people should be grateful for this, I believe that the spiritual world is distinct from the material world. Over the past thirty years we have attempted to enter this country and this new world, but even now we are no more than onlookers. The more I've come to know the spiritual world of this country and its peoples, the more I've come to respect it. This is a world entirely different from that of the West and with a completely different way of thinking from Japan. But rather than continuing to insist on what makes Korea so different, it would be easier to govern the country based on a system that considers Korean civilization in a favorable light. Understanding this spiritual world is the key to resolving this current situation. Although the material world provides us with many comforts, if the spiritual aspects of life are not tended to, then these material riches shall mean nothing to the Korean people.

Gale was responsible for producing a Korean-English Dictionary in 1889. He was not only a scholar of the Korean language, however, and had written several historical texts and was a noted scholar on the effect of Chinese civilization on Korea, including such factors as weddings and other social customs. As a scholar of Korean civilization he therefore took a critical view of Japan's policy of assimilation in their rule of Korea.

Following Gale's opening remarks, Moffett went on to state, "Having lived thirty years in Korea, making numerous Korean friends and being an admirer of this country's people, my heart goes out to them." In addition to this statement Moffett underlined Gale's speech in remarking that rather than simply considering material aspects, the Korean people place a greater value on spiritual and ethical matters. Moffett also stated that what the Koreans wanted more than material prosperity was justice,<sup>8</sup> and that they wished to be treated as equal human beings leading lives that consisted of more than just material success<sup>9</sup> (B).

The next speaker was the Methodist R.A. Hardie,<sup>10</sup> who stated in the following remarks that he had the greatest respect and admiration for the Korean people.

The Korean people have witnessed remarkable development over the past few years. There is no doubt that we missionaries and the Japanese have made a considerable contribution to this and I think that the Japanese education system has had a great impact on the development of Koreans ...

I think that the majority of people believe that the Japanese people hold the key to the rest of Asia. Japan's mission in Korea lies in carrying out an administration that is correct, humane, and considerate ...

Although the Korean people acknowledge these material improvements, they are unable to satisfy their needs through these alone. While they continue to put up with suppression and being treated as inferior to the Japanese, then simply offering material benefits cannot fully satisfy what they want and need. There is an increasing belief that the more the Korean people develop spiritually, the more this is infringed upon, and this can be seen as igniting the current situation we now face. It is an expression of their pent-up distrust, dissatisfaction, and reaction against what they regard as deliberate forced racial discrimination. Koreans are unable to subjugate themselves as imperial subjects in response to such forced measures. You have to be able to win over their minds by other means. Winning over their mental beliefs is not something that can be done with material means or knowledge, but in the spiritual sense. This means gaining their trust and their belief.

Whittemore, the Presbyterian missionary from Sönc'h'ön, then raised two issues regarding the Government-General. The first of these was interference in the education system, with the second issue being the suspicious attitude of lower-ranking officials towards religion that had resulted in surveillance of such activities, which Whittemore stated was hated by Koreans<sup>11</sup> (A). When Whittemore was working as head of Posöng

School for Girls he had protested the restrictions on Christian education that had resulted from the Revised Private Education Regulations and had sent notification of the closing of the school to the Government-General in 1916. This resulted in his critical statements against the politics of the Government-General and his experience of this can be seen in his statement.

We will next move on to Kokubu's statement, which consists of a summary of his own records outlined below.

Kokubu regarded the current events as something extremely regrettable for both the Korean people and for the Japanese Empire, and stated that he had come to this particular meeting with the same purpose of all attendees in looking to resolve this issue at the earliest possible opportunity. He remarked that some people suspected the missionaries of contributing to the outbreak of this movement (although Kokubu personally believed that the missionaries were not involved (B)), and asked the missionaries present at the meeting whether they could help in resolving the current unrest against the country's laws and calm the current climate rather than simply acting as onlookers. (He stated that if the missionaries were to help in calming the unrest this would be of great service to God and would advance the cause of peace and love for humanity (B)).

The next speaker after Kokubu was Noble, whose contribution is listed as supplemental information at the end of the missionary records. As the missionaries' source material is located at the United Methodist Archives Center, in all probability it was a Methodist who recorded this information, indicating that the author was in fact the Methodist church missionary, Noble. This would explain why he placed records of his own statement—spoken during the middle of the meeting—as supplemental information at the end of the material.

Following his graduation from Drew Theological Seminary, Noble came to Korea and taught for three years at the Pai Chai School while involved in missionary work in the Suwŏn region.

Noble replied to Kokubu, stating that the bible taught Christians to follow the law and maintain public order, and that to the members of the 100 churches and four schools that he was responsible for, there was no one who had done anything more than join in "rioting," and in a meeting

with a leading government official Usami Katsuo, he had stated that Koreans were pessimistic about the future and for their families, and that this meant providing the population with something to look forward to in the future was of paramount importance. He finally stated that if efforts were not made to improve the current situation then this “rioting” would increase.

Sekiya Teizaburō, the Head of the Government-General’s Education Department, made the next statement. Kokubu’s records only provide a summary of his statement on the education system in Korea, explaining how this system could not only look to provide a system that took account of the Korean peoples’ hopes and feelings. The missionaries’ materials, however, provide the following detailed statement by Sekiya.

Although I do not believe Korean students bear complete responsibility for these disturbances, there are undoubtedly many students taking part in them. This is therefore something that has to be criticized in my role as head of the Education Department. Although the Government-General may have ignored the wishes of the Korean people, I can assure you that this was in no way a deliberate course of action. Our jobs are to ensure the continuing prosperity of the Korean people. Dr. Moffett stated that providing spiritual guidance to the Korean people was more important than any material development, but while this may not be an issue for the missionaries, the aims the Government-General differ from those of the missionaries ...

Although the missionaries concentrate on improving the spiritual state of the Korean people, you need to realize that they are poor in material terms and that there are times when the Government-General has to enforce laws and regulations that are not popular with the Korean people. The Education Department has tended to focus on the implementation of practical, vocational education in Korea. This has been in response to the Korean over-emphasis on spiritual aspects of education without sacrificing anything to develop a material lifestyle. We have to plan for an education system that can provide both spiritual and material aspects to teaching in this current era of material culture.

Previous education systems in Korea have simply taught reading and writing and I believe that the Korean people have come to disregard the value of work. The Government-General understands this situation and the errors of the Korean people, and we are now attempting to instill the benefits of hard work into the population. Another fault is an over-emphasis on manners and ceremony. Just to provide one example, many schools take a name that reflects more than the basic facts and mission schools share this tendency. The Government-General does not focus on the right school name but on actually improving the facilities of schools. Koreans say that it is unfair that they only have four years of primary education compared to the six years in Japan, but Japan ended the same four-year system ten years ago. While it is fair to say that there are an insufficient number of schools in Korea, this is due to a lack of public finances and we do not wish to see a sudden tax burden on the people. The Government-General already has a plan in place to address this issue and ensure the opening of new schools and is now only waiting for the approval of the Japanese parliament ...

Although we may be mistaken in our policies in governing this country, we cannot sympathize with the demonstrators' actions. While we respect the Korean people, recognizing their deficiencies is also constructive. They have to be able to correct their faults. Although it may be difficult for them to become like we Japanese, they do have to abandon their negative traits. I wonder if it is a good thing to always be trying to make the Koreans happy. There will no doubt be times when we have to do what we should do even if it would cause some misunderstanding. While we Japanese may be overly severe and the Government-General may have at times been too concerned with minor issues, we have no intention of subjecting anyone or forcing our laws on the Koreans. Although we may be unable to make the Korean people particularly happy, we would like the missionaries help in realizing the solutions and policies of the Government-General.

The next speaker was Bunker, and here the missionary sources differ from those of Kokubu. Bunker's statement was as follows:

I think that providing jobs for the Koreans is the single most important issue at this time. Due to the overall feeling of an unfair and impartial system being in place, then providing fair and relevant jobs would be the best way to assuage the feelings of the Koreans (A). The Koreans have a sense of unfairness regarding the current situation, and I wonder whether it would not be wise to support Koreans in their own road to self-government (B).

The next speech came from the Director of the Bank of Korea, Katayama, although there is no record of this among Kokubu's records. The following is a summary of his statement.

The approach adopted by the Koreans is a mistake. They are now part of the Empire of Japan. Our annexation of the country was undertaken following all international laws and there was no contravention of any laws or treaties and this annexation is now a reality. As this annexation is recognized in both reality and law then any such declaration for independence is a mistake. As the protestors are displaying an extremely rebellious attitude, they should face the consequences of performing offenses that contravene the laws of this administration. However, I believe that Koreans have to be dealt with in a fair and just manner. Although there may be cases of Koreans being treated unfairly, for the most part we Japanese have treated them in a fair and equitable manner. Everyone should obey the law and live in peace. While violence may have been involved in a number of cases, if this was performed illegally and if the missionaries' point this out themselves, then I will respect their judgment. Although we have to be tolerant of the Korean people and treat them freely, there is no reason to oppose the policies of the Government-General. This may invite a dangerous misunderstanding that could lead to conflict or an attack. Although Japan and the

United States have become allies, a misunderstanding could lead to conflict. We simply wish to work for the whole world without forgetting any friendly advice.

Finally, Brackman concluded the meeting with this statement.

I have been involved with the YMCA in both Korea and Japan for the past ten years. We have come to wish for cooperation between the Korean and Japanese sides and to ensure Korean nationalism. The Korean YMCA sees this ideal as being beneficial to the peace and prosperity of all parties. We hope to see a time when the Japanese Empire is properly represented by all of its members. This would involve Taiwanese representing their interests, Koreans looking after their affairs, and of course Japanese representing their interests as the mother country of this empire. If this situation were to be achieved then I am confident that Japan would take its place as one of the five great powers with all the honor and prestige that this involves (B).

We will now move on to examine the records of the second meeting.

The second meeting was held on March 24, 1919. Although the missionary records state this as occurring on March 14, this is clearly a mistake. Due to illness, Watanabe was unable to attend this meeting, with the Kokubu records stating that Saitō Otosaku attended. The meeting was held at the Chōsen Hotel.

Welch started proceedings by outlining the meeting guidelines, stating that this was to be an unofficial meeting between both parties. Moreover, he stated that the missionaries were not there as representatives of their missions or Korean friends, but merely in an individual capacity and their views were to reflect this status. The records of the meeting, or even the fact that such meeting was held, were not to be disclosed and the meeting was a purely private affair in which straightforward and honest opinions could be exchanged. Otherwise, both Koreans and Japanese could interpret this meeting the wrong way, he continued. Welch concluded by stating the current position of the missionaries.

As foreigners in Korea there are certain things that we are forbidden from doing. We are not supposed to become involved in political issues or problems of state. Although as missionaries with friends among both Korean and Japanese we have a great interest in current events, we should only act as onlookers in this regard. These recent actions have to be recognized as having developed without any incitement from missionaries in Korea. This movement is not a Christian movement. Most of the leaders and the majority of the demonstrators are not Christian. This is a national movement and is a dispute between the Korean people and the current administration. This therefore means that it would be inappropriate for missionaries to support one side or the other. In this situation there are no other options for foreigners in Korea than to adopt a neutral position.

This speech by Welch reflected the delicate position held by the missionaries at this point. Losing the faith of Korean Christians was something that was unacceptable to the missionaries in Korea and fatal to their missionary work in Korea; losing a channel for communicating with the ruling authorities was also something to be avoided. As reflected in the speech by Katayama, this meeting came at a delicate time in international relations, and especially between the relationship between Japan and the United States. The March First Movement in particular, was set off against the background of the Paris Peace Conference and President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points and its calls for national self-determination. Many of the Japanese side actually believed that the U.S. was in fact supporting an independent Korea.

The statement by Matsumoto Masahiro at this meeting was only briefly summarized in Kokubu's records, which is in contrast to the detailed recording in the missionaries' records. His speech is summarized below:

Judging from the protestor's proclamation, they call themselves an independence movement, but this is purely a political, or rather an emotional problem. This resembles no more than the latest high-class foreign fashions. On the surface, this movement

is full of people calling for Korea's independence, but their real intention is simply to appeal against differential treatment between Koreans and Japanese. They wish to be treated in the same way as those of us who were born in Japan. This request is at the heart of this movement and I can understand the feelings of the Koreans in this case. After all, Japan is also a member of the Paris Peace Conference and is calling for racial equality. But this request, while theoretically valid, is more difficult to meet in reality. This will involve everyone, not only government officials and missionaries, having to make an effort. Koreans themselves discriminate against Japanese, and they do not tell us what they are really thinking. Despite this, however, I have not given up on the current situation. This actually proves the success of the Government-General's education policies. Koreans have come to realize the potential of power awareness. Koreans didn't use to be this kind of people, and they must have learned about justice being realized. The missionaries are playing a big part in allowing the Koreans to wake up to this idea of justice, which is again evidence of success in this area. The missionaries are educating Koreans and I've heard that they are a people to value in terms of improving political and industrial development. I personally trust the Korean people as if they were my family ...

Due to there being a lack of current provisions for school education, we have no other option than to provide special education for Koreans. I believe that an exchange of freedom between Japanese and Koreans is very important.

Following Matsumoto's statement, Sekiya was the next to speak and he introduced an example of a Korean judge and prosecutor in Hamhŭng in looking at the issue of differential treatment between Koreans and Japanese. This case involved a public bathhouse in which Koreans could not bathe before nine o'clock in the evening and there was a similar case in Ch'ŏngju. The missionaries' records also note this discussion of racial discrimination regarding public bathhouses and this can be seen occupying the key area of the meeting. Following on from Welch's opening statement, Sekiya stated that he understood the Christian religion and went on to mention the

missionaries' non-interference in politics and their position as onlookers in the following way:

If missionaries were to perform their true calling, then when the people under their teaching and their followers break the laws of the country or commit crimes, and when these activities lead the people into suffering and trouble, then shouldn't the missionaries make an effort to stop such activities? Are the missionaries, who are supposed to be their spiritual fathers, just standing by while watching their behavior? These demonstrations are not so bad when restricted to non-violent behavior, but recent demonstrators have actually attacked and damaged police boxes, houses, and schools ...

If the current administration was really that bad then I believe that the missionaries' position would be appropriate. But the current government cannot be compared to previous administrations in Korea. We may have made some mistakes against the people and our friends, but we are striving to fix any such mistakes. I think that the missionaries, who have been in this country for many years, are familiar with conditions under the previous system and I think they can naturally make a balanced judgment regarding conditions now and then ...

The Bible teaches that Christians should follow the teachings of authority. I wonder whether now is a time for these commandments to be taught? While maybe not appropriate in a time of peace, but in this time of great unrest then they may be necessary. I wonder if it is time for you to talk to the Koreans as Paul wrote to the Romans in telling them how to behave.

In response to Sekiya's statements and the examples he provided, Welch gave the following rebuttal.

We have come here today to learn more about the current situation. I believe that I want to understand the actual true state of events and world opinion will surely be based on judgment of the facts. I understand that the slogan of the Korean protestors is

anti-violence. Even at the height of these disturbances, the protestors have not used weapons and violent protest is extremely rare. We have heard that even such unusual cases involving violence have only been in response to extreme violence from the other side and indicate that it was not the Koreans who started these events.

In response to this statement, Sekiya stated that as far as he knew, there are cases of non-violent demonstrations as well as cases of attacks on the military police, stating, "violence has become increasingly intensified recently," but he could not say which areas saw such events with certainty.

Kokubu then continued the debate by saying that the protests calling for independence were committing a felony simply by their actions. He went on to say:

The fact that these calls for independence are taking place is a crime in their own right. The frequent disturbances also mean that the police have to take action to stop this. Towns and cities throughout Korea are witnessing non-violent protests without violence following instruction from their leaders. But in many villages, these have involved violence from the very start and attempts to free those arrested. Even if peaceful demonstrations were to be taken as breaking the law, then would the missionaries hesitate in restraining protests that went beyond peaceful demonstration? No matter how bad the law, it is still the law and it has to be upheld and enforced. Although there may be certain areas requiring review, going against such laws while they are still in effect is a mistake. I wonder if the missionaries can have their Korean friends stop their illegal activities.

This open and tense exchange continued, and in response Welch gave three reasons as to why the missionaries should not get involved in the political process.

1) Having the missionaries become involved was not necessarily effective. Most the people involved in these demonstrations were not Christian and not under the influence of the missionaries. Welch stated that

people who had not heard the Christian message (people participating in the demonstrations) would not listen to the missionaries' advice and their involvement would only anger the protestors.

2) If the missionaries were to become involved in the dialogue between both parties, then the whole Korean population would surely be angered, Welch said. Missionaries can only work to improve the lives of Koreans if they were trusted and liked by the people. If the missionaries were to act against the will of the Korean people at this point this would have disastrous results.

3) Welch stated that having missionaries become involved in a political issue was highly inappropriate. If missionaries or foreigners in Korea became involved in politics, they would have to have the freedom to act for one side or the other. Welch said he was sure that the Government-General would not permit the missionaries to take a position against Japanese rule. He concluded by stating that any internal political issues were surely the preserve of the American and British consuls.

This speech by Welch provided an overview of the missionaries' response to being used by the Government-General in pacifying the protests in Korea and explained why the use of the missionaries in this role was highly inappropriate. This also indicated that if they were to become politically involved, then the missionaries could come down on the side of the Koreans and indicates the refusal to meet this request adding pressure on the Government-General.

Next, the Southern American Methodist Council missionary Gerdine, who had studied law and had used his specialist knowledge in the 105 Incident to work to release the accused parties, gave his own rebuttal to the Japanese position.

The late Baron Ito used to insist that missionaries should never become involved in political issues, but here we are being strongly encouraged to provide advice to Koreans in regard to political issues. These are two very different positions and it is right that we look at which of these positions is suitable for us missionaries.

In response to this, the editor of the Seoul Press, Yamagata Iso-o, criticized the missionaries' actual involvement in the political process by providing an example of their actions.

The March 15 edition of the Peking Daily News included a statement of the Sŏnch'ŏn missionaries' allegations. This resulted in a quotation proclaiming the 'Korean Tragedy,' while also mentioning the violence of Japanese and criticizing Governor-General Hasegawa. We cannot prove whether the missionaries are inciting these protests, but if this kind of writing were to be made public, then it would be impossible for the missionaries to dissociate themselves from their suspected influence on these recent actions. This kind of writing gives support to the misguided Koreans and provides the fuel for their anger.

The next speaker was Moffett and the following summary is mainly provided based on the missionaries' own records.

If I were to offer my first hand opinion of recent climate in Pyŏng'yang, then I would be regarded as increasingly anti-Japanese. I saw a number of exceedingly brutal and violent incidents and before meeting with the consul I thought I should tell the governor of these events first. The laws described by Mr. Kokubu are indeed laws and we have to maintain and follow such laws as much as possible (A). But violations of such laws by soldiers, military police, and the fire brigade are also inexcusable and these are also against the law. As almost all of you are Christian, I can speak openly and honestly with you as friends. The main reason for me being here today is for you to understand such events correctly ...

What I saw in Pyŏng'yang was not restricted to soldiers arresting people on the streets, but extended to beatings of both men and women. A Japanese gentleman (Material A: School Inspector Yamada) was also a witness to what I saw with my own eyes—a government official attack someone he met by chance with a sword. This angered not just me but also my companion. I also

saw Japanese soldiers and military police beating people in front of a school. I thought one of them might have been my own secretary, but approaching to within ten feet or so, I realized that it was someone else. These three children and one adult were arrested by twenty to thirty men of the 77th Infantry Regiment and treated roughly and finally beaten with guns until I felt sick. The fire brigade used fire hooks to chase down girls. When I saw that so many of my friends were being treated in this way I could only feel a sense of despair and anger. If Korea truly has laws as you say, then I wish that these laws were maintained to protect all Koreans. The leaders of this movement are some of the leading Koreans of the day. I cannot judge whether they are being smart or foolish, but they are excellent human beings and I would like you to consider your actions in this light regarding their personal qualities.

The next speaker, the Canadian O.R. Avison, had studied medicine and pharmacy at the University of Toronto, and had come to Korea in 1892 as a missionary from the Presbyterian Council of America. He had been teaching medicine at the Chejungwŏn Hospital, but was now headmaster of the Yŏnhŭi Professional College (i.e. Chosŏn Christian College). The missionaries' records show him speaking of his experience as a Canadian subject of the British Empire and he applied his treatment to the current situation in Korea below:

As a subject of the British Empire in some ways I may have more freedom to talk about this subject than my American friends and colleagues. At this point I have to explain what being a subject of this Empire actually means. As Mr. Sekiya gave such a direct and honest statement, then I feel I should express my feelings and opinion in the same way. We have experience of fighting a world war, which was fought with our ally Japan to protect the ideal of freedom. This was fought not simply to attack and crush Germany, but also to maintain the principles of freedom. In order to maintain these principles, many countries around the world are attempting to form the League of Nations and even Japan has

expressed agreement with the founding principles of this organization as one of the world's big five powers. Here I would like to express my ideas on what freedom means to me.

1. The right to place importance on national spirit. Although I am a British subject, I moved to Canada as a small boy. This therefore means that I can talk of my experience as an immigrant. Canada is home to not only many British subjects, but also a great many French people. While French residents of Canada maintain their national spirit, they also support the Canadian government together with British residents. The great French Canadian Prime Minister of Canada, Sir Wilfred Laurier said in his opening remarks that 'As a Frenchman I take great pride in my French roots, and as a Canadian I remain loyal to the British Empire. This is because the Empire allows all members of the Empire to foster our own national spirit.' Canada allows all of its different people and races to develop their own racial identities, free from interference. But all of its residents are aware that this contributes to the greater wealth of the British Empire.
2. Free people have the right to use the language of their choice. Without this right then these people will never be satisfied. In addition to its two main languages, Canada has several other languages that are used, and everyone maintains the right to use the language they wish to speak.
3. Freedom of speech. All people have the right to think and speak their mind without fear of persecution. If this right is not maintained then people will continue to keep their thoughts to themselves and no matter how hard they try to suppress this there will be a time when this situation explodes. There is no greater safety mechanism than freedom of speech.
4. A similar ideal is freedom of the press. This is only slightly different from my previous point, in which words should be free to be expressed in print as well as speech.
5. A further ideal is freedom of association, with the right to discuss events being an important factor in a peoples' happiness. Canada once had three political parties: A party that favored merger with the United States; one party that favored complete

independence for Canada; and a third party that wished to see Canada continue as a colony of the British Empire. These three parties were all able to discuss and debate the issues without being branded traitors. When British politicians were asked what route Canada was going to take—whether independence or merging with America—they stated that ‘Canada should do what’s best for Canada. A breaking of the ties binding Canada and Britain would be regrettable, but Canada should decide what is in her best interest.’ When Canadians heard these sentiments they stayed within the Empire and for the past thirty years have remained loyal subjects of the British crown.

6. All free people should have the right to participate in government. If this is not allowed then people cannot be free. If one is not able to speak out on laws that will affect all of the people, then a person cannot truly be said to be free.

One of the things that has been troubling me since coming to Korea has been the regular use of the sword as a symbol of authority over Korea. When I visited Mr. Sekiya’s house outside of work, I observed a peaceful looking Mr. Sekiya out of uniform with no sword, at which point I felt feelings of friendship. But when I visit him in his offices, in his uniform wearing sword, I have to say I develop a sense of fear. I do not believe that Mr. Sekiya personally likes having to wear a sword (Sekiya stated that he did not personally like the sword). If that’s the case then I believe that Japan can be an ally in achieving the greater goal of human freedom.

Finally, from the Japanese delegation, Sekiya asked the missionaries for their honest and frank opinions regarding the Government-General. He also said that he felt no sense of anti-Japanese sentiment from Mr. Moffett and that his thirty years residence in Korea meant that it was only natural for him to have sympathy with the Korean people rather than with the Japanese government. Mr. Avison’s opinions had also revealed a number of points in common and he concluded by saying, “I think a time will come in which we will see a more outward-looking Japan, which will have to be done if Japan is to govern Korea successfully.”

The missionaries' records indicate Gale made some closing remarks on behalf of the missionaries.

The above description is a reconstruction of the events of this meeting between the missionaries active in Korea and officials from the Japanese Government-General and the characteristics of these sources materials are described below.

As stated earlier, the Kokubu records contain very little detailed information regarding the statements made by the Japanese delegation. Despite there being an abundance of detailed records describing the missionaries' statements, the Japanese records—in comparison to the missionaries' own records—have the characteristics of a summarized version. Compared to their fellow missionary's active in Japan, the Korean-based missionaries were more advanced in their study of the local language, but they did not have a good understanding of Japanese. As the Japanese delegation may not have been fully versed in English, then there may have been some form of interpretation present at the meeting. This therefore means that we have to consider issues concerning the ability of this interpreter, if present, and there are some differences between the Kokubu and missionary records regarding some detailed areas of the meeting. The missionaries' own records of the meetings are generally thought to be accurate. These records also provide more quantitative evidence of what the Japanese delegation did and said at the meeting. In reconstructing the records of the meeting, therefore, the missionary records have been used as a base with the Kokubu records used in a supplementary manner. As the Kokubu records, however, contain some details not recorded in the missionaries' records, then the relevant parts have been fully included in this reconstruction.

## **2. March 29th and 30th Meeting with Head of Education Department, Sekiya Teizaburō**

Following on from the meeting described above, the following reconstruction describes the meeting between the missionaries and Sekiya Teizaburō on March 29 and 30, 1919.

The meeting on the 29th was held between Sekiya and Welch and Avison through an interpreter. This meeting concerned the acts of brutality

against the Korean people by the military police. The missionaries had two items they wished to discuss, the first being asking for Sekiya's opinion as to what should be done regarding these acts of brutality and whether to report them and whether reporting them would have any serious effect, and the second being where and who to send these reports to.

Sekiya first explained the organizational structure of the military police and the army to the missionaries. He then went on to say that regarding the so-called acts of brutality, almost all of these incidents had been initiated by Korean protestors taking part in demonstrations who had resorted to violence and the police and military were merely using self-defense. While stating that he was unsure whether making any such reports would have an effect, he directed the missionaries to make any such reports to Sekiya himself.

Sekiya then appealed to the missionaries to use their influence in persuading the Koreans to stop their demonstrations and look to pacify the current situation, to which the missionaries once again explained their difficult position caught between both sides. Avison stated that while he could not support the Government-General, he did make the following suggestion as to what they should do to Sekiya.

As Koreans do not have the freedom of speech, press, or association, then they cannot talk with one another or make any appeal to the Government-General. If they talk about political issues they risk arrest and punishment. This therefore means that the only thing left for them to do is to make their voices heard through protest. This is intended to gain the attention of the Government-General and attract interest from the wider world by planning for the Korean people to join together in expressing themselves. If you were to remove restrictions on free speech, then they could meet and talk with each other, allowing them to exchange opinions with no risk of arrest and come to an agreed upon conclusion.

Sekiya then asked what would the Korean people do if this was to become a reality, and Avison replied that he didn't know what the Korean people would do, but that if he was in that position, then he would bring a

stop to the demonstrations and present the various opinions of the Korean people to the Government-General. Sekiya showed an interest in what Avison had just said and a meeting was arranged for the next day.

The same participants of the previous day's meeting attended the meeting on the 30th. Sekiya remarked that if Korea truly did achieve independence then they would face a number of problems regarding necessary financial and educational issues and explained the Government-General's role in education and agriculture. Initial government policy had been focused on how to deal with the Korean population, which was mainly an agricultural society, and he stated that this was the reason for the country's poverty. The Government-General had focused too much on the agricultural classes and neglected the smaller number of educated classes and bureaucrats who had undergone higher education, and Sekiya remarked that this was a failing of the government. Although there was a plan for increasing the number of such Korean bureaucrats, Sekiya said, if this had been implemented from the very beginning then perhaps the current situation could have been avoided. Avison rejected this line of argument, however, stating although the number of Korean bureaucrats may be increasing, this would not pacify those Koreans currently facing this difficult situation. In response to this, Sekiya said, "I understand what you are saying. You're talking about providing a broader sense of freedom in terms of individual freedom as you pointed out earlier when you mentioned freedom of speech."

The meeting then moved on to a reception room at the Chōsen Hotel where the second in command of the police department, Colonel Maeda, joined the meeting. Sekiya asked Maeda to provide his personal report on acts of brutality against Koreans and the missionaries gave their accounts of such violence of the military police to the colonel. Maeda's explanation, however, stated that three-fifths of the violence was as a result of violent demonstrations by the Koreans, who were more violent than the Japanese military police. He further stated that the violence against Mr. Thomas was not done by any Japanese military police, but was due to the actions by Koreans who believed that the missionaries were encouraging the movement. The incident involving the arrest of the five theological seminary students in Pyōng'yang and their beating twenty-nine times was found to be within a tolerable range following an investigation and he

stated that further details and investigation were ongoing. Towards the end of the meeting, Maeda stated that the Koreans were becoming increasingly violent and there was a possibility of increased bloodshed. He also said that he welcomed any further reports of such incidents and that he would investigate any such incidents thoroughly.

### **3. Missionaries Non-intervention in Politics and Its Political Connotations**

No date is provided for the “Declaration Regarding the Disturbances in Korea and Position of the Missionaries.” However, as there is a reference to the Cheamni Church Massacre incident,<sup>12</sup> then it can be determined as being produced after April 15, 1919. This was produced following a series of talks with Japanese colonial officials, most notably Sekiya who is mentioned in the document.

The document will be examined in detail here.

The declaration stated, “The political aspect to these disturbances, and more specifically, whether Korea should be an independent country or part of the Japanese Empire is something the missionaries should not be involved in as foreigners in Korea” and that the issue was something to be resolved by Koreans and Japan. “If the Japanese were to place the interests of the Korean people at the forefront of political direction by integrating all of the Korean people’s requests, then how can we oppose this?” as well as the opposing statement of “If the Japanese cannot fully satisfy the needs of the Korean people and the Koreans were to build their own independent nation, then can we truly be against this?” The missionaries’ aim was to spread awareness of their religion among Koreans through the teachings of Christ and they were satisfied with only having a fair opportunity in which to perform their mission in Korea. It went on to mention that Japan had previously stated that it would never give up its role in Korea and that Korea would remain part of Japan forever. This was the basis, it noted, for some missionaries adopting a policy of encouraging the Government-General in attempts to improve its policies in Korea and they avoided any encouragement of Koreans in their attempts for independence and refrained from involvement in the current situation. However, it also noted that the example of Poland once again becoming an independent nation in stating

that the future relationship between Japan and Korea was uncertain and that some missionaries believed they should inform the Korean people of this, together with providing examples of the undetermined future of places, such as Canada, India, Egypt, and the Philippines. These statements were based on the missionaries' assumption of freedom from continued Japanese rule in Korea. Due to nobody being able to understand the future, then it should be understood that there was a possibility of Korean independence. In the event of the end of Japanese rule and this being replaced by a Korean administration, then the missionaries would have to be loyal to the new government. While continuing to remain extremely cautious regarding the missionaries' non-intervention in politics, stating, "We should be neither the creators of governments, nor destroyers of government," as so many of the missionaries were engaged in working to improve the lives of the Korean people long before the Japanese Government-General became involved, then the missionaries' feelings of sympathy for the Korean people was only natural, as was their wish for individual freedom, and their indirect criticism of Japanese military rule over Korea. For these reasons, the missionaries could therefore not accept the Government-General's request for them to use their influence over the Korean people in an attempt to pacify the current disturbances and stated that this would have no effect anyway.

The declaration also stated as follows:

The use of soldiers, police, and military police to suppress the disturbances were not a political issue to the missionaries but of concern to them as citizens of the world. The authorities had to accept protests from witnesses to incidents of injustice, oppression, violence, or wrongdoing. Missionaries had reported incidents in which the police, military, and military police had deliberately fired upon protestors, and attacked non-violent Korean residents with swords and bayonets, but the Government-General had dismissed these as being fabricated or were unable to fully confirm their accuracy. As the number of deaths increased, and the number of arrested Koreans rose into the thousands, those arrested underwent brutal torture and many people had died as a result of beatings. One case involved the

burning of an entire village (of 317 residences), with residents forced into the church, where they are shot at and attacked with swords before the entire church was burnt down. The missionaries could no longer hold back their feelings and no longer felt compelled to restrict themselves to not reporting what they tell the rest of the world of the current situation in Korea. Even if the government officially prohibits basic human rights for Koreans, such as the freedom of speech and press; freedom of association; the right to correct injustice; the right to study the history of Korea; the right to study your native language; the right to elect legislators; and the right to foster a sense of national spirit, the missionaries could not believe that this would benefit the Korean people in any way. The current demonstrations could be seen as a reaction to attempts to suppress the growing awareness among Koreans of the concept of freedom. These demonstrations were non-violent and would naturally arouse sympathy from countries that had fought the Great War in order to gain the freedom of humanity.

Judging from the content described above, this declaration by the missionaries is clearly based on the series of four meetings between the missionaries and the Japanese Government-General in March 1919. The declaration included details of the acts of brutality committed by Japanese forces that were dismissed by Sekiya and Maeda. The statement also reflects the speech made by Avison regarding freedom. Some areas that are slightly different in nuance from the content of the March meetings can be detected however. These clearly reflect the considerable effect the Cheamni Church Massacre incident had on the Christian world. While the missionaries also included this in this declaration, the small number of Christians actually participating in these actions limited the missionaries' degree of influence or ability to intervene in these demonstrations.<sup>13</sup> Despite this small number of Christians, however, the deliberate violent suppression against Christians, as seen in the Cheamni Church Massacre incident, reflected the power of the missionaries in terms of recording events and explaining their views. In a similar way to the accounts of missionaries noted in these materials, such as Noble, F. Scofield, and H.H.

Underwood, this declaration included a collation of accounts of treatment for those wounded in the protests and helping refugees as part of surveys of the situation on the ground.<sup>14</sup> The missionaries' declaration expressed their "being unable to suppress their feelings of anger." The declaration on missionaries' non-intervention in politics also differed slightly from the contents of the meetings described earlier, with a number of changes now visible. The U.S. Department of State had recognized, "At all times, Korea will continue to be a part of Japan," as the Department had approved Japan's annexation of Korea at the earliest stage. While the missionaries had previously shared this idea, they now made clear their differences with their previously held assumptions. Following their discarding of these previous positions, it should be noted that they continued their statements on Korean independence. While the missionaries continued to state that this issue was something to be determined between the two parties, and not something that the missionaries should become involved in, stating, that they were not "the founders or destroyers of nations," they did say that in the event of Korea becoming an independent nation, then they would be unable to oppose this, with the declaration stating, "In the event of the end of Japanese rule and this being replaced by a Korean administration, then the missionaries duty would be to be loyal to this." This made clear the choice open to the Japanese administration in changing their continued rule and making clear their position when that time were to come. The missionaries were also aware of the position of world opinion following the end of World War I with successive statements for independence from colonies. The missionaries provided the cases of Poland becoming independent, and also the potentials of future independence of Canada, India, Egypt, and the Philippines as being applicable to the case for Korean independence. The violent suppression of Christians in Korea such as seen in the Cheamni Incident marks the beginning of these events, and the awareness of the missionaries towards the Korean independence movement and their position in this took a further step forward and can be seen as taking a new direction concerning these events.

## Conclusion

Hasegawa Yoshimichi, the Governor-General of Korea, referred in an opinion paper on the transfer of administration to “the propagation of American missionaries in Korea provides powerful support to this country and their method of propagation is very skilful,” and he went on to state that such teachings would continue to increase in the future. Although Ch’öndogyo, which had played a leading role in the March First Movement, was a native religion, Christianity was different with its multinational network of faith and strong links to the Western world, and the United States in particular. Hasegawa’s belief in the opinion paper that it was extremely dangerous to allow foreigners to teach religion, was almost certainly due to the recent events. Certain parts of the Government-General had initially believed that the missionaries were providing support and encouragement to the independence movement, with newspapers also noting, “The issue of Korean disturbances and the missionary problem.” However, the March First Movement was something that the missionaries themselves denied any direct involvement in and despite there being some support for the movement from certain missionaries, this was based on individual actions from each region of Korea with Korean Christians themselves being involved in the movement.

From the very beginning of this independence movement, the missionaries had been placed in a precarious situation in the tense political confrontation between Japan and Korea, with this position being questioned by both sides. Against this backdrop, even in their meetings with Japanese Government-General officials, they clearly repeated their trust, affection, and sympathy for the Korean people, and based on this assumption, they stated their principles of not becoming involved in political issues, and bluntly refused any specific request from the Government-General to use their influence in stabilizing the situation. Although the Japanese side attempted to influence the missionaries by using conciliatory Japanese Christians who shared the same faith as the missionaries, in response to the theological debate started by Sekiya’s bringing forth of the idea of following authority as shown in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, Welch countered this on the grounds of the current situation being a secular problem and finally the missionaries released a

declaration regarding independence for Korea that suggested the possibility of change to the idea of “authority” regarding Korean independence. As to the approach of the Japanese government of Korea, it is worth noting that the missionaries stated several specific criticisms. One of these was a criticism of military rule. This was expounded upon in Hardie’s statement, “Koreans cannot become subjects of the Empire of Japan by force.” A further criticism leveled by the missionaries was a multifaceted criticism of the basic policy of the Japanese Government-General being one of assimilation. Both Gale and Moffett stated that while Koreans may be satisfied materially, if they were not satisfied in spirit, then this would mean next to nothing for the Korean people. Statements on Korean culture and Avison’s example of Canada’s multiculturalism in stating such comments as “the right to study the history of your country,” “the right to study your own language,” and “freedom to develop a national spirit,” were also made in this spirit. In response to these criticisms of Japanese rule, the Government-General representatives, as seen in the statements of Sekiya, stated that the cause of these independence movements was simply due to discrimination and they were prepared to rectify the situation by making improvements to the current situation in which discrimination was practiced.

Even amongst the missionaries, there were statements praising Japanese Government-General, such as that by Hardie, as well as those agreeing with their attempts to improve the conditions of discrimination (policies of improvement). Other missionaries, such as Brackman and Avison, stated that even if Korea became autonomous, it would still be a part of the Japanese Empire and would assume the idea of limitations on dealing with this issue as an internal problem of the Empire of Japan. On the other hand, however, stated that while non-intervention in political affairs was to be maintained, problems related to fundamental human rights, such as freedom of speech, press, association, and thought, were issues that were of concern to everyone as citizens of the world. This belief was that all governments had an obligation to protect these rights, which could be taken as indicating that they were planning to become involved in the politics of the Government-General. Seen in this light, then the missionaries’ stance can be interpreted as having a sufficient political sense within the complicated relationship to authority while they maintained

their political neutrality and non-intervention in the political world. In practice, this was seen in the declaration issued following the Cheamni Incident, suggesting the missionaries' gradual post-colonial statements and indicating the missionaries conceived of the possibility of the Japanese administration being brought down and replaced by rule by the Korean people themselves.

The Japanese Government-General did not view the missionaries' statements as being the views of simple missionaries. As statements from foreigners in Korea, they were aware of the existence of Western countries and the United States in particular, behind their statements. This therefore meant that in the case of the American missionaries, this would be reflected in the U.S.-Japan relationship and was affected by the policies of President Woodrow Wilson, whose post-World War I outlook was one of national self-determination amidst the current world public order. The statements of the missionaries were made in full awareness of the post-World War I world order. The missionaries undoubtedly believed that universal beliefs and the effect on world order would add to the political pressure on the Government-General in Korea in terms of their sense of politics as missionaries. In other words, at this historical crossroads the presence of the missionaries in Korea can be seen as resulting in the political relationship between Japan and Korea being elevated to a global sense. In a similar way to their response to the 105 Incident, further statements by the missionaries regarding the Cheamni Incident, which was mentioned in the declaration, saw the missionaries being the ones responsible for bringing acts of Japanese imperial brutality to the attention of the world.

Hasegawa was aware of the potential danger of the missionaries in interfering with Japanese rule of the colony and stated that the Government-General should adopt a policy that "limited teaching authority to Koreans or Japanese." This was not to become a reality, however. While native Japanese took over the role of missionaries in Japan in leading churches and teaching in schools at a relatively early stage, this was different from the situation in Korea. Institutions such as churches and schools that could relativize Japanese rule were, at least up until the period of the government's imperialization policy of forcing Japanese customs and culture on Koreans, mostly under the control of the missionaries.

This cannot be said to be as a result of the missionaries' adherence to their right to teach and is thought to reflect the reality of colonial Korea. In other words, it was the Korean people themselves who sought to use the political role of the missionaries who could relativize Japanese rule.

However, the incorporation of the missionaries' political edge into colonial rule was part of the Government-General's "Cultural Rule" period of 1919.

## NOTES

- 1) Kim Sŭng-t'ae and Pak Hye-jin, *Naehan sŏn'gyosa ch'onngnam 1884-1984* [List of Visiting Missionaries to Korea, 1884-1984], the Institute for Korean Church History, Seoul, 1996, pp. 4-5.
- 2) Research into the history of Christian missionaries includes materials differing by denomination and mission, with research being performed based on these relationships between missionaries as a matter of course. Historical research on modern Korean history, however, is often fixed on describing the relationship between missionaries and government authority, with depictions taking a pro-Japanese or anti-Japanese stance from beginning to end. Such studies also tend to treat missionaries as a whole, with little focus on individual missionaries' denominational background or interests. Regarding Christianity itself, some studies tend to describe it in terms of "shelter," "bulletproofing," and "religious shell," as the reason for extraterritoriality, in being unable to adequately explain the thoughts and actions of the national movement in internalizing Christianity. On the other hand, some Christian history studies show a more apologetic tendency, with a trend to place less emphasis on the relationship with power. In order to overcome these kinds of constraints on research, the field of Christian research will be placed within the area of modern history, with expectations for increased accumulation of individual research in the future.
- 3) The principal English sources used in this study are from the collected material regarding missionary activity from the United Methodist Archives Center at Drew University.
- 4) Refer to Yi Sŏng-jŏn, "Senkyōshi to nitteika Chōsen no kyōiku" [Education in Colonial Korea and Missionaries], *Chōsen minzoku*

*undō-shi kenkyū* [History of Korean National Movements], no.9, Fuji Shuppan, 1993.

- 5) *Ibid.*, pp.134–140.
- 6) Kang Tong-jin, *Nihon no Chōsen sikai seisakushi kenkyū* [History of Japanese Ruling Policy in Korea], University of Tokyo Press, 1979, p. 76.
- 7) The author believes that Christianity in Korea is in an elliptical structure with two main cores. This was a construction that continued even into the colonial period. The missionaries' response to the 105 Incident, establishment of the Korean Christian University, the Revised Private School Regulations, and enforced praying at Shinto shrines differed between Seoul and Pyōng'yang. This can be seen as reflecting differences in the distance from the center of power, but also spiritual differences among the missionaries. The Seoul missionaries were characterized by their liberal attitudes and worldliness, whereas the Pyōng'yang missionaries were more conservative and evangelical. In political terms, Seoul was more comprising, while the Pyōng'yang missionaries adopted a more antagonistic approach.
- 8) "Justice" is translated as *fukōhei* (unfair) in the Kokubu records. I translated this as *seigi* ("justice"). The Government-General understood the problem as unfair in policy terms, but in the political context, it was not just a problem of unfairness to the Koreans.
- 9) In the Kokubu records, Moffett was asked by Tokutomi Sohō regarding the appropriate attitude to take towards Koreans. Moffet subsequently replied that a fair treatment was most important and any differential treatment should be avoided.
- 10) Hardie was appointed as a YMCA missionary in 1890. In 1898 he joined the American Southern Methodist Council. He was also head of the Hyōpsōng Seminary Theology School.
- 11) Regarding this statement, the Kokubu record can be judged as more accurate than the missionary records.
- 12) The unit responsible for this was the 79th Infantry Regiment. Twelve of the 23 killed were Christians, of which 11 were followers of *Ch'ōndogyo*.
- 13) Missionary sources indicate that only few Christians were involved in the independence movement, but this can be viewed an attempt to

protect the organization. Sixteen out of the 33 national representatives were Christian.

The role of Christians was not insignificant. According to Yi Man-gyu, the population of Korea ranged from 16 to 17 million, of which more than 200,000 were Christian. Although this was no more than 1.3 to 1.5 percent of the population, approximately 20 to 30 percent of those involved in the movement were Christian. Yi Man-gyu, “San-ichi undō to kirisutokyō” [March First Movement and Christianity] (Lecture) in *San-ichi dokuritu undō to Teiganri kyōkai jiken* [March First Movement and the Cheamni Church Massacre], Kobe Student Youth Center Publications, P. 30.

- 14) Noble's report was included in the *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1919*. Scofield was a missionary belonging to the Presbyterian Church in Canada and a professor at Severance Medical University. His report was sent to friends in the U.S. and Canada. This was included in H.W. Shin's *The Rebirth of Korea*, which was published in the U.S. Underwood's testimony was included in *The Korea Situation, The Commission on Relations with Orient of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 1919*.

## Summary

### Christian Missionaries in Korea and the Japanese Colonial Power in the March First Movement Period: Focus on the Principle of Political Non-intervention and Its Political Connotations

This thesis aims to review the political connotations inherent in the principle of political non-intervention maintained by Western Christian missionaries in Korea based on the record of their interviews with Sekiya, the head of the Board of Educational Affairs, and statements issued by Christians. The thesis also deals with the memoirs of Kokubu Sangai and the records of the missionaries about their meetings with the Japanese colonial authorities during the March First Movement in 1919.

From the very start of the fully fledged independence movement among Korean people, Christian missionaries became a major issue, aggravating the political conflict between Korea and Japan. The meetings between missionaries and the Japanese colonial authorities were particularly problematic, although—according to the accounts of the missionaries—the meetings were actually between missionaries and Japanese lay believers.

The records show that the Japanese Government-General in Korea tried to win the favor of the missionaries by showing its knowledge of the Bible. The missionaries, however, maintained the principle of political non-intervention and effectively refused the request of the colonial authorities to exert their influence to quell the popular demands for independence. Sekiya, for instance, took up the question of obedience to authority in the 13th chapter of The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, but the missionary recognized his hidden intention and avoided the theological debate.

The missionary's statement in the meeting suggested the possibility of change in the popular efforts for the independence of Korea, effectively refuting Sekiya's view. The missionary claimed to stand for the principle of political non-intervention, but the remaining materials clearly show that he was critical of the colonial rule. His criticism was directed, first of all, against the iron rule of Korea by the Japanese colonialists. This was most

clearly expressed in the statement made by Hardy, who insisted, “No material force can turn the Korean people into Japanese imperial subjects.” His second criticism was directed against the policy of assimilation established by the Japanese to form the very basis of their colonial rule. Missionaries such as Gale and Moffett, for instance, referred to Korean culture that Korean people were as good as dead if they could not satisfy their spirit (i.e. culture), even if they were able to meet the demands of their body (i.e. economy). They also left important statements about various aspects of Korean culture and the rights of the Korean people, Koreans’ right to learn about their national history and language, and the necessity of promoting the national spirit. The criticisms made by the missionaries led the Japanese colonial authorities to believe that the Korean people’s independence movement was caused by racial discrimination and hence that ending the discrimination would be the best way to solve the problem.

The Western missionaries in Korea gave various responses to the Japanese colonial rule. Some, including Hardy, sympathized with the Japanese colonial policies while others, such as Brockman and Avison, talked about home rule under the Japanese imperial government. On the one hand, these missionaries insisted that they would stick to the principle of political non-intervention, but on the other hand they openly expressed the idea that as world citizens they were concerned about certain issues closely related with basic human rights, such as freedom of the press, publication, assembly and thought. It may mean that they tried to involve themselves in politics by exploiting theories that ought to be respected by any government in the world. The principle of political neutrality that the missionaries claimed to maintain developed into complex political issues in relation to the power with which they were confronted. The climax of their political entanglement came following the Cheamni Church Massacre, which is widely regarded as the foremost symbol of the Christian oppression committed by the Japanese Government-General.

The missionaries revealed a post-colonial view in a statement to the effect that the Japanese Government-General would soon collapse to be replaced by an autonomous government established by the Korean people. It was during that time that U.S. President Woodrow Wilson paid attention to the world order after World War I and mentioned such concepts as

universal ideology, basic human rights, and the world order. It surely created a huge political burden for the Japanese colonial authorities in Korea.

In a speech made upon his departure, Governor-general Hasegawa insisted, "Education [of the Korean people] should be promoted by the Korean people." His view reflected the fact that in Japan Western missionaries had already begun to hand over churches and schools to Japanese Christians. By contrast, the influence of Western missionaries remained strong in most churches and mission schools in Korea, at least until the full launch of the policies designed to force the Korean people to become loyal Japanese imperial subjects. The situation cannot be explained by the simple reason that the missionaries did not stick to the religious authority. One may conclude rather that it reflected the reality of Korea as a Japanese colony. In other words, it was by the choice of the Korean people that the missionaries could enjoy sufficient political (including ideological) influence to stand against the Japanese colonial rule. At the same time, it is also true that their political influence was the main consideration of the Japanese colonial rulers when they turned to cultural approaches in a bid to find a more effective tool for their colonial rule.