ways that notions of the East were presented during these years. Even for its critics, the East remained an important unit of analysis, as almost everyone in these years in one way or another appealed to that most slippery of phrases, "the peace of the East" (*Tongyang chi hwap'yŏng*). What such expressions concealed, however, were the differences in interpreting the nation's relation to the region. For Japanese colonialists, "the peace of the East" could be used to undermine Korean sovereignty, with regional security interests as defined by Tokyo rationalizing annexation as the best course for regional stability. Yet this same phrase could also be used by the most ardent of Korean nationalists, as seen in the case of An Chunggŭn, who cited the "peace of the East" in explaining his reasons for gunning down Itō Hirobumi, one of the most frequent users of this very expression, for his role in establishing the Protectorate.[199] Positioned between these two poles, the Pan-Asianism of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, in which "peace of the East" was a means of advocating solidarity, became untenable.[200] In this way, although the East served a number of shifting purposes for the editors of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* — universalizing *munmyŏng kaehwa* as well as redefining a cultural regionalism away from China to a Pan-Asianism centering on Japan — their attempt to stake out a middle ground was ultimately undermined by the polarizing effect of Japanese colonialism. Growing Japanese aggression in the peninsula skewed the Korean political spectrum, rendering not only political positions but also various forms of national self-definition less amenable to nationalist uses.

3 Engaging a Civilizing Japan

The new way of destroying countries is achieved through the shared principles of progress and change.

— *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, May 4, 1907

Korean writers at the turn of the century were often frustrated by the lack of information so central to nationalist movements: accurate statistical data. As the editors of the *Tongnip sinmun* complained, people could only guess at the total population of the country. Estimates varied wildly, they reported, from as few as 5 million to as many as 20 million people.[1] In 1908, the editors of *Sŏbuk hakhoe wŏlbo* carried this concern over to the question of the peninsula's natural resources. But besides bemoaning the dearth of records tallying the nation's wealth, they admitted that there was one solution, what they called "risking the shame of learning about one's own national affairs from foreigners." By turning to a book entitled *The Wealth of Korea*, produced by Takahashi Hidemitsu from surveys conducted by the Resident General Office and the Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industry, the editors were able to inform their readers that on an average per capita basis, Koreans held assets worth about 200 *wŏn*.[2]

As humiliating as it might be perceived by some, turning to Japanese books was quickly becoming routine in the last years of the Chosŏn dynasty. One observer noted that the number of Koreans going to Japanese bookstores in Seoul was increasing by the day, and many were even going directly to Tokyo and Osaka to buy books.[3] The Korean publishing industry could not keep up with the need for translated works.[4] Even old Korean histories, such as the *Tongguk t'onggam* (*The Comprehensive Mirror of the Eastern Kingdom*), were easier to buy in Tokyo than in the Korean capital.[5] While this rush for Japanese books, in the eyes of this observer, was somewhat of a

boon for the level of Korean "civilization," it came with certain risks, and not just to the domestic publishing industry. Describing the period as one when Japanese power in the peninsula was expanding while the Korean spirit was flagging, he warned that reading only Japanese books hazarded developing a "slavish tendency for venerating Japan."[6]

The dilemma was more than just a question of accurate data. It reflected one of the difficulties confronting nationalist intellectuals in colonial settings around the world: how to deal with knowledge about their home country developed in the colonial metropole. The production of national knowledge may have been a central function of the nationalist movement, but so too was knowledge of that country integral to the colonial enterprise. Just like any other forms of knowledge, Japanese understandings of Korea could be conveyed to the peninsula for the consumption of Koreans.

To be sure, Korean nationalism and Japanese colonialism had diametrically opposed political goals, but some of their aesthetic strategies and economic reform efforts must be seen in world historical terms as driven by a complementary endorsement of capitalist modernity. Because of this common commitment and intellectual pedigree, underneath the call for independence and injunction for colonization, Korean nationalists and Japanese colonialists shared much in the way of conceptual vocabulary, themes in cultural representation, and narrative strategies. It was precisely their rootedness in the same range of modern discourses that led nationalists and colonialists to represent Korean culture in very similar ways, a congruency that eventually jeopardized the nationalist meanings of some of these shared representations.

For Korean nationalists, *munmyŏng kaehwa* seemed to offer a means of ensuring their participation in the global ecumene in the same conceptual terms and on equal footing with the powers — if only the reform project they sponsored could be carried out effectively. However, as quickly became apparent after 1905, Japanese uses of these same principles of development and modernity made it all the easier for colonial authorities to co-opt certain types of cultural representation that Koreans had been mobilizing for nationalist purposes before 1905. As can be seen in treatments of the *yangban* as well as the concept of *sadaejuŭi*, the power of Japanese colonialism in this realm of national definition and representation challenged the viability of nationalist self-critiques, even threatening to render them part of colonial ideology. *Munmyŏng kaehwa* threatened to destroy rather than save the nation, as it had earlier seemed to promise. But by the time Korean writers

realized the double nature of *munmyŏng kaehwa*, they had so deeply embedded their knowledge of the nation and their own self-definition as leaders of the nationalist movement in its framework that, despite their alarm, they had difficulty extricating themselves from the civilizing logic.

The Authority of Japan

In the eyes of many Koreans, the Sino-Japanese War had validated both symbolically and, in its very real demonstration of Japanese power, the steps taken in Japan to reform its polity. The ideological foundation of this reform program, *bunmei kaika* — "civilization and enlightenment" — was the very same set of ideological principles that in their Korean rendition — *munmyŏng kaehwa* — was being actively promoted by nationalist intellectuals as a panacea for Korea. As a result, Japan's victory confirmed the ideological underpinnings of the Korean nationalist movement and granted to Japan a certain authority to speak on those issues of "civilization and enlightenment" that had become so central to Korean nationalists.

It had not always been this way. During the Chosŏn dynasty, the Confucian elite had largely disparaged Japan as a country of lesser learning. What is striking is how little attention was paid to Japan in the first half of the Chosŏn dynasty. The Imjin wars, when Japan twice invaded Korea in the last decade of the sixteenth century, heightened scholarly interest in Japan. Afterward, as Ha Ubong has shown, memories of the war lingered, giving impressions of Japan a distinctly militarist bent.[7] This was depicted in a handbook of morality, *Tongguk sinsok samgang haengsilto* (*Illustrated Manual on the Conduct of the Three Relations in the Eastern Kingdom*), commissioned in 1614 to promote various forms of proper conduct, in which the illustrations in the section on virtuous women featured Japanese marauders hacking resistant women into pieces.[8] Few works captured so powerfully the double image of Japan in the late Chosŏn dynasty as uncultured and violent.

From the time the newly established Meiji government dispatched a mission to the peninsula to announce the 1868 restoration of the emperor, Japan had in various ways been connected with the West in the eyes of Korean observers. At first, this association was hardly positive. Adamant isolationists such as the fiery Confucian Ch'oe Ikhyŏn castigated their opponents for contemplating a new relationship with Japan, contending that "the Japanese and the Westerners are one and the same."[9] The similarity in clothes and

hairstyles of early Japanese envoys to those of Westerners was sufficient for the likes of Ch'oe to extend his opprobrium. But as the exchanges with Japan deepened over the remainder of the nineteenth century, the relationship between Japan and the West became a subject of much investigation for those Koreans intrigued by the possibilities of the "new knowledge" (*sinhak*). Would-be reformers turned Ch'oe's reductive formula on its head, seeing the positive in those haircuts and smoking jackets and pondering their relevance to what, by the 1880s, was already an evidently stronger and richer Japan. Some, such as Kim Okkyun, a reformer turned revolutionary who, with Japanese backing, managed for three days in 1884 to overthrow his government, looked across the Eastern Sea for inspiration. But Kim and his co-conspirators were a minuscule portion of the intellectual elite, let alone the overall population, and had no forum in which to advance their program. Kim's premature gambit for power heightened the court's suspicion of Japan, making reform from within its ranks all the more difficult. Although in the economic realm, ties continued to deepen, looking to Japan as a source of motivation for reform had become politically risky for individuals, a point publicly made by the government in 1893, when one of its own officials lured Kim Okkyun out of his Japanese exile to Shanghai, where he was promptly assassinated.[10]

The political environment changed with the Tonghak peasant uprisings and the subsequent defeat of China by Japan. By 1895, hostility to Japan at the court had been temporarily sidelined, and organized opposition in the countryside had been suppressed with defeat of the Tonghak peasant armies. In the capital, the first in a succession of reform cabinets was established with the backing of a now preponderant Japan. Including members such as Kim Hongjip implicated in the 1884 coup d'état, the cabinet launched the massive Kabo reform program, aimed at renovating the country's finances, overturning the social order, and reforming governing institutions. It became once again possible to raise Japan as a hortatory example. With the rise of a new press in 1896, such efforts moved out of the privacy of the reformers' homes into the much more visible site of newspaper editorials.

One consequence of histories that focus on tracing the confrontation between the rising Japanese imperialism and the burgeoning Korean nationalism is that they overshadow the extensive intellectual interaction between Japanese and Koreans. The political contest over the future sovereignty of the peninsula has been seen as carried out by two discrete and exclusive entities, the colonized and the colonizer, an approach that, in

highlighting the oppositional character of the contest, tends to conceal the substantial resonance between colonial and nationalist thought. There was, in fact, a great deal of interaction and overlap between the two, even before 1905 — exchanges made all the easier because both structured their respective political projects around "civilization and enlightenment." This exchange and overlap, in turn, affected the political contest, showing how the form and content of national knowledge were deeply rooted in the structures of power underlying Japanese colonialism. Indeed, the power of colonialism was not simply the ability to coerce submission but, perhaps more deeply and longer lasting, to shape the very knowledge about their own nation that Koreans developed in these years.

While this may, in part, have been the result of the influence of the powerful Japanese publishing empire, it was also a development following the specific pattern of Japanese colonization. In world historical terms, both Koreans and Japanese were latecomers to the modern knowledge subsumed under the calls for "civilization and enlightenment." Unlike in many colonies of the West, where nationalist ideologies developed in formal colonial settings, in Korea the potential of *munmyŏng kaehwa* was first explored in the years before the imposition of the Protectorate in 1905. For roughly a decade after the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, *munmyŏng kaehwa* seemed to offer the best means of bringing the nation into line with the principles of global capitalist modernity as a way of preserving the sovereignty that had only recently been won. Rueful as their recognition may have been, Korean nationalists acknowledged that the commitment to "new knowledge" developing in Japan, both inside and outside government, was far deeper than in Korea. Exchanges in these areas followed. But the consequences of appropriating what at first appeared to be benign forms of "civilized" information became more apparent by the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War. The nationalist press had intended to protect the autonomy of the nation, but after 1905, Korean writers faced the dilemma that the knowledge they had worked so hard to produce might, in fact, be facilitating the colonization of the peninsula.

The range of interactions with Japan can be seen in the widespread presence of Japan in the Korean nationalist press, whether they were reports on Japanese reforms, historical features, or the translation of speeches and essays. This presence indicates not only the powerful function of Japan in the formation of East Asian modernities but also the willingness of Korean intellectuals before 1905 to grant Japan this role in the belief that it simulta-

neously served their own nationalist ends. From the earliest days of the press, the "lessons" of the Sino-Japanese War emerged as a prominent subject of editorial comment. "How could such a small country beat such a large country?" the *Tongnip sinmun* asked. The paper found the answer in Japan's education policies and its understanding of the ways of the West. The result was "out of a one-story wood hut, [Japan] built a three- or four-story brick house."[11] The war provided a study in contrasts: a Japan united in purpose and harmonious versus a China in disarray,[12] a Japan with a committed public bureaucracy versus a China with officials who abused its people,[13] a Japan with mothers who understood how to rear warriors versus a China with a feckless military,[14] and underpinning most of these comparisons, a Japan energized by embracing the "new knowledge" at all levels and a China still clinging to the "old knowledge," where many scholars still stated that "for venerable China, learning from foreign barbarians is a shame."[15] Such comparisons were widely accompanied by a surge in a "How did they do it?" style of writing that dissected the efforts of the Japanese government and the people. Some papers serialized histories of the Meiji program, while others reprinted the famous clauses of the Charter Oath.[16] "In just thirty years of reform" became a stock phrase that at once indicated amazement at the changes in their island neighbor while insinuating that if only Koreans would listen to the enjoinments of these enlightened newspapermen, they could also reach that level in three decades.

By the last year of the nineteenth century, Japan was frequently being equated with the West. It was not catching up but had already caught up. No longer did Japan "lag behind the countries of Europe and America,"[17] since after several decades of change, "its reputation and abilities" ranked alongside those of Europe and America.[18] It had been "accepted" by the West[19] and was "an equal that will never again fall behind."[20] Japan's relations with Western nations were the best testament to its new status, whether it was because in 1898 Japan had successfully renegotiated its unequal treaties with the West[21] or was participating in international conferences.[22] The Japanese handling of pesky Westerners inhabiting their islands also impressed the editors of the *Tongnip sinmun*. At the beginning of 1897, it reported that the German consul in Japan had struck a student, causing such a public outcry that Germany had been forced to apologize officially.[23] Less than one and a half years later, the differing status of Japan and Korea became manifest in the actions of yet another German diplomat, this time one residing in Seoul. When a Korean official from the Foreign Ministry arrived at the German consulate, he was greeted not with diplomatic courtesy but by an irate consul who physically confronted him, pushed him out the door, and threw ministry documents at his feet. Enraged by what they saw as an insult to the nation, the newspaper's editors could not help but draw a comparison with Japan, concluding that only when the nation was reformed could such shameful abuses be avoided.[24]

The observation that Japan was the equal of the West did not need to be made so explicitly, since the very style of writing about examples of enlightenment often grouped Japan with the West. "Europe, America, and Japan" and "the West and Japan" emerged as standard expressions for the top rungs of the civilizing hierarchy.[25] At times Japan received lead billing, so that the advocacy of a particular reform could begin, "If one looks at Japan and other enlightened countries."[26] Although this particular piece concerned education, such clauses could and were followed by a myriad of examples, spreading across the full range of reforms, such as the improved management of national currency,[27] the advancement of women's education,[28] the dispatch of students overseas at government expense,[29] and its successful promotion of commerce.[30] Even a description of that peculiar modern institution, the zoo, in Tokyo's Ueno Park was deemed deserving of a front-page spot.[31] Firsthand observations by reporters traveling in the islands were reported as lead stories. Letters from students studying in Japan who wrote home about conditions in that country found their way into newspapers.[32] For newspapers struggling to keep their operations financially solvent, the literacy of the Japanese population, together with the high circulation rates of newspapers, was regularly — and wistfully — noted. Newspapers, after all, were for these writers a crucial indicator of a country's level of civilization, a fact they regularly tried to impress on their readers.[33] With thirty-six different papers printed in the morning in Tokyo and distributed by the evening throughout the country, one report explained, newspapers had become part of the social fabric of everyday Japanese life. Everyone — from the emperor and leading officials at the top, down to the average person in factories and farms, children, women, and imprisoned criminals — read the papers. Marveling at this wide readership, it remarked at how even Japanese rickshaw haulers pulled out a newspaper and read by the side of the road when waiting for customers.[34]

Observations of Japan were regularly accompanied by a more direct Japanese presence, such as reprints of speeches made by Japanese experts and translations of editorials from Japanese newspapers. The comments of for-

eign affairs specialists were approvingly printed as a way of discussing the problems faced by China, one expert explaining the reasons for Italy's attempt to acquire concessions in Zhejiang Province.[35] Visiting Japanese were welcomed to the capital and invited to give speeches. In the *Tongnip sinmun*, Itō Hirobumi's remarks on the importance of such civilizing institutions as universal education — "the basis for building the nation," as he stated — were substituted for the usual editorial.[36] Although women writers appeared only infrequently in newspapers of that time, the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* did print on its front page a short letter from an anonymous Japanese woman extolling the importance of orphanages, citing her donation to a newly opened foundling home as a testament to her commitment.[37] To be sure, editors quoted those speeches and cited examples related to their own concerns. In representing Japan as a success and reprinting the speeches of Japanese specialists, editors borrowed Japanese authority to reinforce points and issues that, in most cases, the editors had already made and were likely to repeat again in the future in another form.

This use of Japan was a strategy that cut across the Korean political spectrum. Almost anyone interested in reform could find something in Japan that could be cited in support of a particular cause or position. Even for those advocating a style of reform Confucianism, Japan could be invoked to make their case. As one writer pointed out, the rush for new learning had led Koreans to abandon their own national inheritance. But in Japan, where the "new learning is as high as anywhere," they could learn the new while maintaining the old. To support his case, the writer noted that Japanese scholars continued to revere the famous Korean Confucian thinker and teacher Yi Toegye, even though in Korea, as he bemoaned, no one studies his works anymore.[38] The authority of Japan was such that it could even be invoked to urge Koreans to embrace more fully their own heritage.

This offered a powerful strategy to garner support for reform in Korea, yet it was not without a certain reservation and ambivalence that writers associated Japan with the highest levels of civilization. Accompanying these representations of a Japan more enlightened than Korea was the memory of an earlier age when these roles were reversed, when in areas as diverse as "Japanese religion, literature, clothing, architecture, medicine, and tools," according to one commentator, Korea had been the teacher.[39] Such writing was more than nostalgia for better times. In their contrasts of a brighter past with a dismal present, these self-critical pieces confirmed just how far the country had slipped, decrying the course of events that led to the current

disparity with Japan. One especially galling case was porcelain, since as the editors of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* claimed, Japan originally had no porcelain of its own, having learned the art from Korean craftsmen. The irony for the editors was that Japanese porcelain was currently displayed in museums and exhibitions around the world, receiving such acclaim that a porcelain industry had arisen with exports reaching 165,000 pieces a year. That Korea was the ancestral home of this art was forgotten, but in their opinion, even more troublesome was the sobering fact that over the years Korean porcelain had lost its luster. "How is it that with the same original roots, Japanese porcelain has thrived, whereas Korean porcelain has receded?"[40] The answer to this question ruefully confirmed Japan's function as a hortatory example: the Japanese nurtured their artisans which, when extended to the national level, explained why they had become rich and strong. Causal theories abounded for the disparity — the inability to promote talent, to maximize the natural resources of the land, or to build an effective education system — but that Japan had waxed while Korea had waned confirmed one of the key suppositions of *munmyŏng kaehwa:* there was nothing essential or fated, nothing due to national character, that underlay the current differences between the two countries. In short, the former status of Korea could once again be achieved. This version of the past ensured that writers could always find refuge in a type of historical disdain for Japan. In the words of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo*, since "Japan is a country that in the past was enlightened by Korea, no matter how awesome its military power, Koreans in their hearts look down at Japanese."[41]

Others combined recollections of Korean superiority with a perfunctory dismissal of the Meiji reforms. This critique stressed that there was nothing special about Japan, since everything it had accomplished came from either the West or Korea. "The material civilization of Japan, which it boasts leads the East, all came with the arrival of Western ships. And what Japan boasts to the world as its own unique culture was all once imported from our country."[42] While its newly gained status offered the best proof that a non-Western nation could in fact climb the hierarchy of civilization, advocates of this style of critique were quick to point out that those things that were most frequently accepted as universal could be made particular to the West as long as they served to denigrate Japanese accomplishments.

This conclusion did not diminish the interest of students in going to Japan. Their numbers rose fourfold, from 187 in 1897 to 739 in 1909.[43] But this was mainly a question of proximity and frugality. Students did not go to

study what they perceived as specifically Japanese forms of knowledge but those truths of enlightenment that they somewhat paradoxically accepted as universal yet Western. Yu Kilchun explained that even though it had taken only thirty years for Japan to build its strength and wealth, eight or nine out of ten of the policies and institutions were little more than imitations of Western styles.[44] Yu was in the first group of foreign students in Japan studying at Fukuzawa Yukichi's Keio Academy and, for a short time, was even billeted in Fukuzawa's house. But this was not enough for Yu.[45] He left Japan for the West to verify "with his own eyes," he explained, what he had learned in Japan, as though he did not quite trust it as genuine.[46] At a later date, other Koreans residents in the United States urged Korean students not to go to Japan but to cross the Pacific. Writing in the early twentieth century, the editor of one overseas Korean newspaper told prospective students that what Japan had learned was only a "shadow" of the Western original. All they could hope to create by studying in Japan, he warned, was "a shadow of a shadow"—so why not travel to the United States, where they could study the original and, at least, form their own "shadow?"[47] In this way, although the blanket assertions about "Europe, America, and Japan" or "the West and Japan" filled the press, suggesting equivalence, the status of Japan was also rendered that of a surrogate, merely a derivative of what had already been achieved elsewhere.

What this overt downplaying of Japan and the emphasis on direct links with the West concealed was the important function of Japan as the primary mediator through which Korean writers learned about the West and its supposed universal civilization. After spending a little more than a year as the first Korean student in the United States, at Governor Dummer Academy outside Salem, Massachusetts, Yu returned to Korea and wrote his famous work *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* (*Observations of a Journey to the West*) that he had printed in 1895. In this widely circulated and highly influential work, his descriptions of the mansion of a New York merchant, Western education systems, the disinclination of "gentlemen" to smoke in front of women, and the variety of governmental forms bore witness to his assertion that the locus of civilization lay in the West. But what was not made explicit to the reader was the book's relation to the seminal Japanese work by Yu's former teacher, Fukuzawa Yukichi, entitled *Seiyō jiji* (*Conditions of the West*). Although the accounts of his journey to the United States, France, Germany, and other countries in *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* were Yu's personal observations, the first four-fifths of the book, which related more general information on topics as various as the races of the world, the basics of currency, the history of Western religions, and the format of fairs and exhibitions, owed much to Fukuzawa's work.

In a careful comparison of these works, Yi Kwangnin noted that roughly 50 percent of the two main sections of Yu's book were copied directly from the *Seiyō jiji*, sometimes with a few explanations or some elaboration added.[48] Most of the remainder was Yu's own, yet even in these sections the conceptual vocabulary did not veer significantly away from that in Fukuzawa's work. Fukuzawa also had a direct hand in the publication of the work. In Korea at this time, there were no modern printing presses with Korean script capabilities, but such presses did exist in Japan. As Yi Kwangnin has shown, Fukuzawa not only provided Yu with a subvention of 450 yen for the work but also had his publishing house produce the volume.[49] One thousand copies were published, which Yu promptly distributed to high government officials and influential reform advocates. Appearing one year before the establishment of the first newspaper, *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* was the first widely circulated didactic work introducing the West and enlightenment to Korea. It had an immense impact. Often used as the basis for later editorials and essays, *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* became a key reference for explaining the new conceptual vocabulary from abroad.[50] This book on the West with ostensibly no connection to Japan was, in its content and form, shaped by Yu's experience in Japan; indeed, his ties with Japan enabled its very production.

The conceptual vocabulary that Yu used in his work reflected what over the next fifteen years emerged as a shared lexicon for much of East Asia. In Korean newspapers at the turn of the century, one of the primary didactic functions of editorials was defining terms. "What is this thing called money?" began an editorial in the *Cheguk sinmun* in typical fashion for the era.[51] Whether defining currency, international law, or welfare houses, such pieces introduced the new concepts that were to frame the nation and the project of reform within the ideologies of capitalist modernity. Behind these terms, derived from the West, stood the mediating function of Japan, where most of these neologisms had first been created.[52] If Yu's *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* was one source for the dissemination and definition of these terms, so too were Japanese dictionaries. During these years, no modern Korean-language dictionaries had yet been produced. Not until 1920 did the first modern Korean-language dictionary appear. Until that time, however, anyone wanting to understand new terms could purchase a Korean-Japanese dictionary at most Seoul bookstores.[53] It was through these types of reference works that writers

were literally coming to terms with the new international order and notions of enlightenment. This was true even of the two main editors of the *Tongnip sinmun*, Philip Jaisohn and Yun Ch'iho, who had the rare opportunity to spend more time in the United States as students than in Japan. Despite its editors' direct access to the West, its status as the first newspaper in Korea, and its position as the first to abandon the use of characters, the *Tongnip sinmun*'s calls for reform were not expressed through its own idiosyncratic neologisms but were lexically little different from what was appearing in newspapers in Japan or China.[54]

The remarkable consistency in the formation of a shared vocabulary for nationalist reformers across East Asia had much to do with the growth of newspapers in all three countries at the end of the nineteenth century.[55] Indeed, it is arguable that a transnational newspaper culture, centered in Japan, emerged. Key to this newspaper realm was the shared use of characters in all these countries, enabling translated concepts to be immediately incorporated by writers across the region. For Korea, this was certainly ironic, since this was precisely the historical moment when Koreans were calling for the expurgation of characters as a premise for establishing an authentic national culture. Yet these new terms, rooted in characters, were now shaping conceptions of the nation. This common newspaper culture also depended on the regular exchange of newspapers across national boundaries. As Chŏng Chin-sok has argued, few newspapers could afford to send correspondents to cover news in their neighboring countries. It was far cheaper to subscribe to foreign newspapers and to reprint, whether attributed or not, stories from that paper.[56] This was especially necessary when Western wire services did not carry the detailed coverage of Asian affairs that editors wished to pass on to their readers.[57] In Korea, papers regularly quoted and sometimes engaged in heated arguments with their counterparts from around the region. From China came the *Zhongxi ribao* and *Wanguo gongbao*, and from Japan came the *Tōkyō Asahi shimbun*,[58] *Jiji shimbun*,[59] *Ōsaka Mainichi shimbun*,[60] *Nichinichi shimbun*,[61] *Taiyō*,[62] and *Yorozo chōhō*,[63] among others. On the peninsula, the Japanese resident press was always ready for an editorial debate with its Korean counterparts, particularly in the cases of the Seoul-based *Kanjō shimpo* and the Inchon-based *Chōsen shimpo*.[64] The *Qingyibao*, published in Japan by the exiled Liang Qichao, had an especially wide readership, with two distribution offices on the peninsula, one in Seoul and one in Inchon. The *Qingyibao* reached out to many of Liang's contemporaries, particularly those transitional elites who were trained in the classics

but were now struggling with new forms of knowledge. Like so much of his other writing, Liang's pieces in the *Qingyibao* were often précis of Japanese articles. They had immense influence in Korea, where they were frequently translated in journals and further circulated in a multivolume collection of selected works.[65]

Only rarely did a newspaper bring the otherwise transparent process of translation to the attention of their readers. Even rarer was the choice of a specific term challenged. One letter writer to the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* did just that, however, questioning the Japanese neologism for "protectorate." In Japanese, what had been rendered *hogokoku* or, in Korean, *pohoguk*, was a two-character expression consisting of "protect" and "nation," implying that the object being protected by foreign rule was the nation itself. He argued this term had been deliberately chosen so as to conceal the true nature of Japan's actions.[66] Despite this challenge, the paper continued to use the term, indicating how difficult it had become to move outside this powerful shared lexicon even with a critical understanding. Thus, as a consequence of these interactions, the conceptual vocabulary of the modern Korean nation was fashioned by this shared East Asian lexicon. The fact that Korean editors could decide to incorporate a Japanese speech or essay into their own newspapers reflects the degree of lexical commensurability between their nationalist project and the reform endeavors undertaken in Japan. With a shared vocabulary and working within the common framework of *munmyŏng kaehwa*, Korean and Japanese reform intellectuals spoke the same language.

That these terms were shared, however, does not mean that they were always equivalent. In their didactic function of explaining these neologisms, newspapers regularly returned these universal terms to a national context, often pushing the nuances and uses of a term in new and unusual directions.[67] Indeed, part of the contest between colonialists and nationalists was over the meaning of this shared vocabulary, as each tried to define the terms in ways that would buttress their conflicting political goals. The struggle between nationalism and colonialism was often one of definition.

A Nationalist Dialogue

Interactions with Japan were not restricted to the possibilities of the "new knowledge" and the exchange of vocabulary. The same Meiji publications from which editors extracted commentary and news reports also carried a

wide variety of articles about Korea. The peninsula was headline news in these years, as Japan's political and economic interests became deeply enmeshed with Korea's fortunes. Much recent scholarship has shown how European powers built their empires not only with superior weapons and elaborate administrative infrastructures but also with the efforts of experts and nonspecialists whose knowledge of the colonies both enabled and supported the construction and maintenance of metropolitan rule.[68] Similarly, the growing presence of Japan on the peninsula provided opportunities and stimulated new endeavors to investigate and write about Korea.

Just as Korean newspapers were producing knowledge about Korea as part of their nationalist commitment, so was knowledge about the peninsula integral to the growing Japanese dominance. Featured in the same newspapers and intellectual journals as the other expert Japanese opinions used by Korean editors, these articles were also grounded in the universals of "civilization and enlightenment," only now these concepts and terms were being applied to Korea. These pieces used Korea as an illustration for further articulating the principles of civilization, and conversely, these principles were used to frame public representations of Korea. At times, especially before 1905, these Japanese writings about Korea were often cited by Korean writers as outside authorities to confirm their own judgments and arguments. But around 1905, it became increasingly clear to many Koreans that Japanese representations of their country were supporting the colonization of their country. Consequently, the principles of civilization that underlay both Korean and Japanese writing—principles that had enabled the earlier interchange—began to be viewed with growing cynicism.

Japanese writing on Korea could be put to good effect by Korean newspapers. An editorial in the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* in 1907 captured one common way in which Japanese authority on civilization as expressed vis-à-vis Korea could be used by Korean writers. Written as a fictitious conversation between a Korean and his close Japanese friend, the editors granted the Japanese figure the enlightened ability to discern the reasons for Korea's plight. The piece begins with the Korean character asking his friend why Japan has trampled over the rights of Koreans, leaving them "hardly a spot to make a living," especially since in the past Japan had announced to the world that it supported Korean independence. "This is what the Russians have done to the Polish and what the French have done to Vietnam," the Korean accuses, "How could you have so profoundly abandoned humanitarian ways [*indo*]?" The Japanese companion immediately responds that his

interlocutor has missed the crux of the dilemma: "People must first humiliate themselves before others can humiliate them. A country must destroy itself before others can destroy it." He follows up on the offered historical analogies, arguing that Poland and Vietnam caused their own ruin, just as Korea was currently doing. Shifting to his diagnosis of Korea's situation, he focuses first on the holders of power. The people in office "know only themselves, not the country; know only their families, not the people" he begins, and because of their fear of Japan, there was "not a single right they were unwilling to hand over." Moving on to satirize the Confucian elite (*sarim*), the Japanese points out that all they do is read old books and dismiss newspapers as heterodox. Finally, taking a broader look at society, he criticizes the people for being willing to sell their homes and lands to foreigners. He concludes, "You cannot turn your anger against others but must reflect on yourselves." In this exchange, the Korean figure is not so much upbraided than taught by the Japanese figure that the dilemma of his nation is internal, one that cannot be resolved by blaming others. The Japanese figure's voice is that of an astute adviser, aware of the ways of the world and able to recommend the proper ways of extricating the nation from its predicament.

In contrast, the Korean figure is depicted as less worldly. His response is to sigh deeply and maintain a long silence as he contemplates these remarks, as though they came as a surprise. Finally, he admits that there were indeed self-inflicted reasons for Korea's predicament. But despite granting the Japanese figure authority over matters of enlightenment, the editors reserve for the Korean character a superior moral sensibility. With his final parry, the Korean figure counters his Japanese friend's attempt to rest the blame solely on Korea. He states, "It is not only a question of our country but also a question of your country . . . [because Japan is] seeking petty profits and has abandoned a deep sense of what is right." At this point, it is the turn of the Japanese figure to sigh and wipe away his tears in what amounts to the ultimate redemption of the deeper meaning of the otherwise hapless Korean character.

The effect of this dialogue was to present two different views, when in fact both voices were that of the editor. To a regular reader of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo*, there was little new in what the Japanese character had to say about Korea: the selling of land had been a controversial issue since the early days of the *Tongnip sinmun*; criticism of officeholders and concession politics was a mainstay of editorial writers; denunciations of conservative elites were a favorite of progressives; and the analogies of Poland and Viet-

nam had been widely bandied about in the type of comparative history that could slide past Japanese censors. Yet assuming a Japanese voice at a time when Japan was widely seen as having accomplished what Koreans wished to do was an effective rhetorical technique for acquiring more authority for arguments already made in the past and to be repeated in the future. The Korean character, with his assent to the gist of the Japanese character's position, both reflected and affirmed this authority and the logic of his analysis. But just as important, the Japanese companion was used to show that Japanese authority over matters of enlightenment did not necessarily transfer to a parallel ethical authority, an authority allocated to the Korean figure who could castigate Japan for the impropriety of its interference with Korean sovereignty.

To conclude the piece, the editors assumed their own voice to address the reader directly. Noting that the conversation had served "to awaken these two gentlemen," they explained that they printed the piece in the hope it would have a similar, wider impact.[69] Regardless of this one editorial's effect, the two voices captured the ways that the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* and other papers employed Japanese writing and speeches about Korea. As in the dialogue, certain Japanese were granted the authority to speak on Korean matters, and Korean readers were advised to heed their words. Whether in the voice of a fictional character or in the reproduction of a real Japanese speech, it was the editors' decision to deploy Japanese authority to support the reforms of their own choice. Editors of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* urged Korean capitalists to pay careful attention to the speech by the consultant to the Kyūshū Enterprise Group, entitled "The Wealth of the Country Lies in the Wealth of the People," in which he offered paths that Koreans could follow to richness and strength while pointing out weaknesses in the nation's trade infrastructure and financial institutions.[70] A Japanese expert's essay on Korea's finances stressed frugality for the state at a time of reform when matters such as hiring foreign advisers put a strain on financial resources: expenditures must meet revenues, he urged, so that debt is not incurred.[71] An official from the Japanese Daiichi Bank was interviewed about the Korean currency over six issues.[72] Summaries of essays written about Korea by Japanese travelers who ventured on inspection tours also were printed, as in the case of Matsumiya Haruichirō, whose critique of the Korean government, especially the power of translators, appeared in the *Hwangsŏng sinmun*.[73] Again, these pieces were carefully selected to fit the particular points

the editors chose to make, largely concerning those "civilized" reforms in which Japan had been so successful that individual Japanese had earned the authority to speak or write on such matters to a Korean audience about Korean affairs.

Beyond these areas of supposed universal expertise, however, Korean writers did not hesitate to challenge Japanese views. Replicating the function of the Korean character in the dialogue, editors could easily assume the moral imperative to condemn Japanese views. Just as commonly, Japanese commentaries were reprinted so as to set them up as targets for scathing criticism. The *Tongnip sinmun* took issue with a Japanese newspaper's characterization of Koreans as intemperate and unable to sense humiliation.[74] More typically, Japanese suggestions of the possible diminution of Korean rights received anything but a welcoming response. Well before 1905 and before being subject to Japanese censorship, the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* reprinted Japanese criticisms of the Meiji government for not being sufficiently aggressive on the peninsula. The next day it followed with a long list of powers already wrested away from the Korean government: Japan, it asked, has "taken over more than half of Korea's important powers—how is this not enough?"[75] The Japanese-language press in Korea, often far more jingoistic than its counterparts on the home islands, frequently became the object of scorn. The *Hwangsŏng sinmun* scolded the *Kanjō shimpo* for urging censorship of Korean-language papers, lecturing its Japanese counterpart that diversity of opinion and debate were essential to freedom and progress.[76] Like writers in other colonial settings, these writers trod a careful line, granting Japan an authoritative function in their own attempts to use *munmyŏng kaehwa* to frame the nation while resisting any implications that reform in the name of enlightenment and as recommended by these outside observers might undermine their own nationalist goal—full sovereignty.

This dilemma worsened as Japanese actions on the peninsula became more aggressive, showing *munmyŏng kaehwa* as able to support both nationalizing and colonizing projects. The double nature of *munmyŏng kaehwa* had always been apparent to Korean writers. But as intellectuals who saw themselves belonging to the forces of progress in Korea, it had not always been apparent that the notions of civilization in which they framed their conceptions of the nation would actually be used to rationalize its usurpation. The press's treatment of worldwide colonialism before 1905 reflected this disassociation. Although some sympathy was expressed for the aspira-

tions of colonial peoples to free themselves of external rule, colonialism per se did not emerge as a target of criticism. Indeed, the opposite held: writers tended to identify with the claims of the imperialist powers to be spreading "civilization," a goal that they saw as part of the same historical processes that were shaping their own enterprises in Korea. The *Tongnip sinmun*, with its Anglophile tendencies, repeatedly praised Britain for a wide variety of accomplishments, among which was always listed its expansion of empire.[77] On the occasion of Queen Victoria's sixtieth year of reign, it marveled at the immense advancements during that time, pointing to the fact that Britain now controlled 27 percent of the world's total area. "Every year its national flag is raised over barbarous countries and now is even in Africa." Without any hint of the inherent incongruity, the *Tongnip sinmun* commented that Britain was the teacher of freedom for the rest of the world.[78] In India, it explained, the British had used the country's rich resources, which, because of internecine disputes, had been allowed to lie idle and go to waste. Only when India became a colony (*sokpang*) of Britain, were its riches properly exploited.[79] The *Tongnip sinmun*'s English-language edition spoke more generally of the link among the West, civilization, and colonialism. "History tells us that wherever Western civilization has made its appearance, the place was transformed into a new country altogether . . . many places of the tropical coasts of India and Africa have been changed into abodes of some of the most enlightened races of man."[80]

Although not in the same category as Britain, the nascent Japanese empire also received the plaudits of the *Tongnip sinmun* and other papers. Specifically, they admired the amount of capital and manpower Japan was investing in civilizing endeavors in Taiwan, the island "stolen from China."[81] The *Cheguk sinmun* devoted an entire editorial to the finances of the Japanese project in Taiwan, recording the enormous expenditures on schools and sanitation and the encouragement of commerce and agriculture.[82] This admiration was extended to Japan's internal colonization of the Ainu, who were repeatedly treated with scorn. The editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinmun* regularly held up—with little sympathy—the Ainu as a counterexample of what happened to a people who did not reform.[83]

Known for its nationalist editorial policy, the *TaeHan maeil sinbo*'s attitude toward colonialism was ambivalent. In an editorial published during the Russo-Japanese War, the paper took up what was to become a common and much debated comparative case of colonialism, the British rule of Egypt.[84] The piece set out to measure British colonial practices in Egypt

against Japanese involvement in Korea, two cases that it concluded were somewhat similar but ultimately were incommensurate. This appraisal did not rest on the fact that Japan had not yet annexed Korea formally but centered on the paper's view of the comparative benefits of colonialism. In Egypt, the British had invested immense capital, built up the infrastructure, and transformed a country that had been poor into one "just as rich as India." Crucial to the paper's argument was the belief that these advancements had been for the benefit of the people. In this way, the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* linked colonialism to development, leading it to condone British rule in India and Egypt. This same logic had the paper dismissing a comparison with Japan's actions in Korea, for the Japanese were neither developing Korea nor pursuing any policies for the benefit of the people. As it concluded, "Japan says that it will modernize Korea, but it is clear that it will work for the benefit of its own country." This distinction, more than any ideological opposition to colonialism itself, had the paper at this stage rejecting the legitimacy of Japanese rule. At a later date, the editor expressed his amazement when looking at a world map at the ability of certain strong countries to spread their rule around the globe. Writing in 1909, well into the Protectorate period, the editor's point in mentioning these empires was not to question their morality or legitimacy. Rather, in a statement reflecting the powerful logic of the civilizing endeavor, he wondered when Korea would be able to establish its own realm around the world.[85]

Such comparisons were nevertheless tempered by a warning. It might be proper, in the case of Britain's occupation of India, that idle resources were finally used, but the example was a cautionary tale designed to incite Koreans into properly exploiting the peninsula's riches before a country like Britain could come along and do the same to Korea.[86] They could commiserate with colonial peoples, wishing that people like the Filipinos could reform themselves as an independent nation, but again never questioning the priority they granted to *munmyŏng kaehwa*.[87] For readers, a list of all the colonies in the world, "covering two-thirds of the globe territory," could be enumerated, emphasizing the ability of Europe, "the smallest continent," to conquer all these countries and contrasting Western abilities with the "ignorance and weakness" of the colonies.[88]

As Japan extended its reach into peninsular affairs, however, faith in notions of "civilization and enlightenment" was replaced with cynicism as writers became aware that Korea's lot would more likely rest with the colonized than the colonizing. There had always been some doubt about the claims

of the powers to be both civilized and civilizing, a skepticism that owed much to social Darwinism. But now the earlier cynicism came to be more widely and, in some cases, more vehemently expressed in a steady stream of pieces satirizing Japan's civilizing claims.[89] Because of its experiences with the Japanese censor, the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* was forced to employ indirect, but nonetheless effective, means. In a four-day serialized editorial published in 1907, "The New Ways of Destroying Countries" (Myŏlguk sinbŏmnon),[90] past and recent tactics of vanquishing countries were compared. Whereas in earlier days, one court might replace another court, as Koryŏ (A.D. 918–1392) replaced Silla (57 B.C.–A.D. 935), and Chosŏn replaced Koryŏ, the country itself was never obliterated. Today, it warned, the country was not the property of a single person or family, so destroying the country now would mean not replacing the court but destroying the people. Such a method might be much slower but would be possible through the use of techniques like advancing loans, providing replacement soldiers, appointing advisers, stirring up factional strife, or constructing roads. Parodying the rhetoric of the Resident General Office without actually naming it, the editorial elaborated:

> [When a] civilized country is extinguishing your country, it must say, "I am reforming your politics," as an excuse for interfering in your internal affairs; it must say, "I am rectifying your currency," as a verbal cover for grasping control of your finances, or it falsely invokes threats to the public order in order to restrict your right to expression, or claim to be repressing internal disorder . . . or it moves its own country's people [into your country] to exploit your resources, or it secretly stirs up unreliable and shameless followers to serve as its leading puppets, or it establishes educational organs aimed at making the people ignorant.

Although the editorial discussed in detail the history of such techniques in Poland, Egypt, India, and Persia, it did not extend the discussion to Korea itself. Instead, it merely asked who was "to blame for Korea's fall." The answer to this question, after all the attention to the problems created by the new forms of colonization, could be found by turning inward: "The first reason is our own fault. The second reason is also our own fault." Two years into the Protectorate, during which many of these new methods had been already been deployed in Korea — especially for the editors, the restrictions on the right to expression — the Japanese could not be mentioned. Over the

next few years, the paper covered other colonial situations, often using these cases for the opportunity they offered for veiled criticism of Japanese policy. Increasingly, such pieces exhibited a sense of solidarity with other colonized peoples.[91]

The *TaeHan maeil sinbo*, free of the heavy hand of the Japanese censor, could be more direct. Its editors complained that Japanese always talked about how they had to lead the Koreans to advance their civilization. But through the example of a recent loan that had been extended for the purpose of "developing Korean education" and a proposal to use Japanese-language books in the schools, they argued that these policies were little different from methods used by Russia to "swallow" Poland. This was a "hidden poison" that Japan extended at the same time as it claimed to "nurture civilization and develop education" — a tactic, it charged, that "couldn't fool the smallest child."[92]

To be sure, the editors of these two newspapers were not fooled. But to acknowledge and satirize the self-serving uses of *munmyŏng kaehwa* did not translate into its complete disavowal. Korean nationalists could hardly abandon this notion, since it offered the higher conceptual framework in which their reform agenda, fundamental conceptions of the nation, and even their own self-perception as a leading force of change were positioned. *Munmyŏng kaehwa* so deeply shaped their sense of self and nation that even though they had become cynical about its application, it was difficult to move outside its conceptual parameters. What had been seen as a mutual enterprise, in which Japan provided a hortatory example, promised by 1905 a much more ambiguous future. Consequently, the idealistic appeals to *munmyŏng kaehwa* receded in these two papers, but its logic, however implicit, continued to shape their discussion of the nation, particularly in regard to cultural self-representations.

Images of the *yangban*

With a mutual commitment to capitalist modernity, as captured in their calls for civilization and enlightenment, nationalist and colonial thought shared similar assumptions about the relationship among nation, culture, and progress. For both, the teleology of history was relentlessly progressing toward the modern, in which culture was measured for its contribution to this advancement. In the early twentieth century in Korea, one of the main

areas in which this relationship was articulated was in representations of the *yangban*, the traditional hereditary elite that emerged as metaphorical personification of the Chosŏn dynasty. As one of the most dissected, vilified, and satirized groups in these years, the *yangban* was prominent in both nationalist and colonial writing as a convenient shorthand for representing the Korean past and, to varying degrees, Korean national culture. And as an icon of national culture, the *yangban* offered a means to account for the country's political, economic, and social conditions. Despite some significant differences in tone, both colonial and nationalist writing treated the *yangban* in similar ways, although their representations were put to different purposes. How these differences played out—with one using the *yangban* as an example to exhort reform and the other using them to assert the impossibility of change—affected the disposition of power on the peninsula.

In Japanese newspapers, the *yangban* became a stock character for representing Korea. With his black horsehair hat, flowing white robes, and traditional shoes, the figure of the *yangban* delighted cartoonists with possibilities for caricaturing the Korean people. Annexation could be captured in the image of a helpless-looking *yangban*, his hat and robe discarded in the background, as a robust-looking Japanese helped him put on a kimono in front of an applauding foreign audience.[93] A *yangban*, bent on his knees, gnawing on and desperately hanging on to the leg of a hardworking Japanese worker expressed fears about the costs of colonial rule to Japan.[94] And a *yangban* waving a Japanese flag signified the supposedly exuberant Korean celebration of annexation.[95]

Besides mocking and belittling, such images represented Korea as backward. Sonia Ryang has explained how travel writers like Itō Sadagorō could write, "White clothes and a long pipe—these seem to reveal a cultural backwardness and primitiveness."[96] Whether the faults of the *yangban* were redeemable was a point of contention among Japanese writers, with some arguing that this backwardness was part of an immutable heritage and others suggesting that Japanese guidance could overcome the problems.[97] Generally they agreed that because of one or another feature—and here authors could place onto this useful figure their individual diagnosis of his sickness—the *yangban* as a group was one of the root causes of Korea's dilemma. The *yangban*'s responsibility for what was seen as the country's internal political turmoil was perhaps the most prominent theme.[98] So, too, was their so-called social uselessness, as *yangban* had no particular military or learned skills, in the opinion of one commentator, and merely occupied a privileged

social position while living and eating off the labor of the commoners.[99] The *yangban*'s greed as officials knew few bounds, according to many, causing the people to be naturally suspicious.[100] In short, writers identified their various causes for Korea's problems and, by linking them with notions of "enlightenment," found an embodiment of their causes in this white-robed, black-hatted figure.

In Korea, the *yangban* assumed an even more prominent position in nationalist writing, although the disparagement and ridicule never reached the degree in those pieces written by Japanese authors. In much of Korean writing, the *yangban* was a convenient target because, again, many of Korea's ills, about which so much had been written, could be attributed to them. This form of self-criticism also was part of the process of decentering China, since the *yangban*, as the elite of the Chosŏn dynasty, could be held responsible for a history of cultural and political subservience to China. Implicit in these discussions was an interpretation of the past that provided a historical context for the nation's current dire straits. At a time when comprehensive national histories had not yet been written, the *yangban* emerged as the single most potent historical image, through which the earliest efforts to interpret the national past in light of new theories of progress were made. A number of themes linked the various newspapers' treatment of the *yangban*—in particular, their lack of practical knowledge, laziness, corruption, and tendency toward factionalism—all themes that also were featured in Japanese writing about Korea.

The *Tongnip sinmun*, the earliest and most zealous proponent of "civilization and enlightenment," took special aim at the unwillingness of Confucian scholars to refurbish their learning in accordance with this new era of change. Their adherence to outmoded styles of thought, a spring editorial noted, was like wearing your winter clothes in the summer.[101] Editorials written in a conversational style imitated the questions of a conservative scholar, ignorant of the ways of the world, to a recently returned traveler from abroad. In one, the scholar begins by noting that newspapers have begun to appear in Korea, only to complain that all they do is "print useless rumors and circulate them in the world." The traveler counters, "Newspapers are just as critical to enlightenment as schools." To this, the scholar takes umbrage, pointing out that schools teach the Four Books and Three Classics along with the composition of poetry, odes (*pu*), memorials (*p'yo*), and essays, so "How can you compare them with newspapers? What a strange thing to say!"[102] The editorial reflected the *Tongnip sinmun*'s emphasis on

knowledge (*hangmun*), whereas the fundamental "sickness" of the nation, as best illustrated by the *yangban*, was the lack of it. Because of this absence, Korea had not progressed and was not treated by foreign powers as an equal.[103] The editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* also used this line of criticism, indicating their amazement that as late as 1910, a group of 150 scholars could petition the government for a subsidy to publish the massive *Complete Works of the Song-Dynasty Philosophers* — "of all the books urgently needed in Korea these days!"[104]

Unlike the *Tongnip sinmun*, the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* did not so lightly or polemically dismiss what it called "Confucian circles" (*yugye* or *yurim*). This was partly a question of strategy, since in one editorial entitled "What to Do with the *Yangban*?" the editors estimated that one of three people fell into this category — a number, they argued, that could not be discounted if the country was to reform.[105] Admitting that answers to the question were not easy, they repeatedly announced that because *yangban* had been leaders in the past and remained so today, the future of reform and hence the country rested in their hands.[106] This did not mean that the *yangban* did have not serious problems. Picking up on a theme popular in all the media, the editors contended that the past veneration of literary learning had made scholars passive and indolent.[107] Most of them did not grasp the value of time, even though its proper use was what distinguished "the strong from the weak, the courageous from the cowardly." Instead, too many were content to stay at home in bed and read the same books over and over again.[108]

For the *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, the *yangban* was a much more complicated figure. Committed from its beginning in 1898 to joining Confucian values to notions of civilization and, in the last three years of its run, going so far as to advocate a revitalized Confucianism as critical to the nation, the editors refrained from sweeping statements that condemned the group as a whole. For a newspaper that continued to write in an opaque style full of classical allusions and Chinese characters, it was the traditionally trained elite who provided the main market for their product and the target audience for its exhortations to change. Appropriately, the editors adopted a time-honored Confucian strategy of exculpating what they defined as the core of Confucian teaching while berating those who, they claimed, had abandoned these principles. For those delinquents — those who "close their ears and eyes and seal their minds" and do not "breath the air of civilization"[109] — the editors reserved a special term, "corrupt Confucians" (*puyu*) and, like other newspapers, did not hesitate to criticize them.[110] Most notably, these people resisted change because "regardless of the issue, they revered what the ancients did and looked down on the accomplishments of their contemporaries."[111] What they valued was nothing more than "frivolous and empty" literary writings.[112] They provided the source for officials even today, even though their "custom of idleness had become a sickness," a custom that "inevitably would lead to disaster."[113] Many *yangban*, the editors accused, do not work for the country and want only to become officials for selfish reasons, without learning what is necessary to fulfill their duties at this special time.[114]

As part of their attempt to limit these problems to those "corrupt Confucians" while salvaging what they saw as the core of Confucianism, the editors specifically contrasted the recent past with the earlier years of the dynasty. The problems of the nation were traced to the late Chosŏn dynasty, when the elite lost the commitment of their predecessors. The ancestors of today's *yangban*, the editors maintained, had pursued the principles of the classics, had loyally built the country, and had established a great peace for the people. But after several hundred years, their descendants no longer were learning the appropriate knowledge and technologies, no longer serving the monarch loyally, and no longer protecting the people with a loving heart. "They have not prevented the foundational achievements of their ancestors from collapsing, so should they still be called the *yangban* descendants of *yangban*?"[115] In this vision of what was tantamount to a "fall" in the last half of the Chosŏn dynasty, ease of living and idleness were again offered as reasons.[116]

So too the change in dynastic fortune and the character of the *yangban* were linked to what became the main issue of governance in the period, factionalism. Divisions among officials from the sixteenth century onward had beset the court politics of the Chosŏn dynasty. Nationalist writers highlighted this disunity and squabbling, citing it as an explanation for the nation's misfortune and blaming it for establishing patterns of political conduct that continued to shape the current administration. Linking the notion of scholarly *ki* (vitality) to the nation's prosperity, one editorial noted that at the beginning of the dynasty, *ki* enlivened the country but that since the outbreak of factionalism, this *ki* had been squandered.[117] Using factionalism to link a disputatious elite to poor government was nothing new. During the Chosŏn dynasty, Confucian writers blamed factions for putting the petty interests of inferior men (*soin*) ahead of those of the greater, moral good — an argument with a long history in East Asia.[118] The *Hwangsŏng sinmun* revived this style of critique to show how the ills of the past had led to the

current political turmoil dividing officeholders, who they called the "criminals of society."[119] The vocabulary of the past — the old and the new factions, the north and south parties versus the Way of Kings — was fused with notions of "civilization and enlightenment" — efficient, stable, and centralized government as necessary for reform — to formulate appeals for good governance. Both conventional and new critiques were fused, offering a critique of the political elite and a bleak assessment of the late Chosŏn dynasty.[120]

In these many ways, the *yangban* came to personify the problems that writers, sometimes with divergent political goals, identified with Korean society and politics. As a repository for the country's various ailments, the *yangban* served as a negative model, used to admonish the past for setting the course that had led to the current predicament. As a form of cultural representation relating the current nation to the past and offering a target for cultural critique, Koreans' representations of the *yangban* were not unlike their depiction in the Japanese media. In theme if not in tone, writers in both countries focused on similar issues, such as factionalism, laziness, bookishness, or a lack of originality. These derived from the common usage of "civilization and enlightenment" with its emphasis on economic efficiency, unity in government, emphasis on action, and privileging of "practical" knowledge. All the people should be disciplined in this fashion while the culture of the nation should be judged by its contribution to or detraction from these ideals.

Despite this resonance, significant differences also separated Japanese and Korean writing on the *yangban*. Most notably, they differed on the question of reformability. At the core of all reform agendas — whether nationalist or colonial — was the need to guide the population into the kinds of activities that would both enable and spur change in desired directions. Self-strengthening, as editorial after editorial in the full range of publications from the period explained, began with the individual — his or her outlook as captured in issues such as valuing time, taking the initiative, and helping oneself. Slothfulness, laziness, and idleness — these were the obstacles to change. On this point, both Korean and Japanese writers might agree, but as applied to the *yangban* — and often extended to the entire population — they differed in their emphasis. Korean condemnations tended to underscore the *need* for disciplining the population, whereas Japanese reproaches highlighted the *lack* of disciplining. The former, written from an activist position, had much to do with the self-identity of the reformers, who viewed themselves as models for the rest of society, in opposition to the conservative

yangban circles. Through such a view, they allocated to themselves the role of leaders who, with their newspapers, could properly enlighten their readers about what constituted the necessary disciplining. This also meant that Korean editors were quick to combine their critical assessments of the *yangban* with evidence of successful change in the country, however insufficient they believed it to be. Accounts of collecting funds to create private schools were frequently printed together with the charters of newly established agricultural, commercial, or workers' night schools.[121] A song celebrating the opening of a school in Hamgyŏng Province was deemed worthy of publication.[122] In 1909, the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* reported the happy sounds" (*pogŭm*) emerging from Confucian circles as more and more scholars were "awakening" and participating in the new education movement.[123] Six months later the "happy sounds" had crescendoed into what they now called a "revolution" in Confucian intellectual circles.[124] The need for discipline came with the *possibility* of disciplining and all the consequences that it entailed. The conservative *yangban* were an obstacle and the late Chosŏn dynasty might have been a bleak era, but already in areas as diverse as the construction of schools in the countryside, the opening of a new pottery factory, and the establishment of the first public library, there were promising signs of change. In this way, the minatory was accompanied by the hortatory, as editors warned their readers against the complacency of the *yangban* and the late Chosŏn past while offering encouraging models in the present that illustrated how the legacy was indeed already being overcome.

In contrast, much Japanese writing downplayed the potential for Korean reform and ignored the changes already under way in the country. Especially before 1905, when most writing took the position of an external observer, often in a self-congratulatory vein comparing Korean and Japanese social customs, little heed was paid to the changes made by Korean reformers.[125] This was the reason why Kim Okkyun, a would-be reformer with close connections to Japan, was — more than twenty years after his attempted putsch in 1884 — still widely remembered in the Japanese press. He alone was considered to have tried to separate himself from the legacy of the *yangban*. For many Japanese, his failure stood as the loss of opportunity and the end of the possibility for autonomous change in Korea. His assassination in 1893 by a Korean who was, in turn, rewarded for his actions by the government, only confirmed this assessment. Thus, the lack of discipline embodied by *yangban* as represented in Japanese texts was just that — an absence that few writers questioned and even fewer refrained from presenting as an essential

national character.[126] Unwilling to see the changes already achieved in Korea, Japanese reports tended to suggest that reform would result only from external impetus or foreign guidance.

The common themes in Japanese and Korean representations were also partly due to direct exchanges. Korean writers, well versed in Japanese newspaper culture, were aware of the Japanese characterizations of *yangban*, however uncomfortable it was for them to read the same criticisms in foreign papers. The editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* worried about the effect of Japanese media depictions on Korea's international reputation. The problem was that although they realized Japanese reports ridiculed Koreans as always smoking tobacco or enjoying afternoon naps, as if they were "cold-blooded animals," the portrait was sufficiently close to their own complaints that it was difficult for them to refute it. The only way to stop such shameful writing, they charged, was to "put an end" to these customs, a response that, in not opposing the representation, indicated their concurrence.[127] They might regret Japanese attention to such matters, but they did not challenge the depictions themselves. Other Koreans used these less than salutary Japanese representations. The *Hwangsŏng sinmun* summarized the contents of an article appearing in the *Nihon shimbun shūhō* (*Japanese Newspaper Weekly*), entitled the "Diseases of Korea," in which the Korean elite were described as those who "don't do anything to clothe or feed themselves and only form factions" — an account, according to the Korean editors, that characterized them "quite appropriately."[128] In an essay on the need for unity, Chang Chiyŏn cited five "sicknesses" that divided the Korean people, one of which was laziness. In explaining his reasoning, Chang turned to a Japanese observer, invoking his assessment that "the laziness of Koreans cannot be seen elsewhere in the world."[129]

While no doubt lending the representations a sense of veracity by a foreigner's confirmation, such exchanges were not the sole reason for the thematic similarities in colonial and nationalist writing. This was less a question of Japanese influence on nationalist writers — images originating in Japan and spreading to Korea through the media — than the logical consequence of these writers sharing the same ideological framework. The impulse of nationalism to articulate the nation's uniqueness, accompanied by the evaluative criterion of *munmyŏng kaehwa*, caused national culture to be judged in terms of compatibility with reform and ideals of an economically and politically defined citizenry. This impulse led to the overlap in not only the strategies but also the content of cultural representation. Despite the opposing goals of nationalist and colonial writers, the *yangban* served as a locus for writing about Korean culture and exploring the connections between that culture and the sovereignty of the peninsula. Although both nationalists and colonialists condemned the *yangban* for a variety of features that seemingly interfered with the progress of the nation, the different ways in which these representations were invoked supported different goals and actions. One sought self-strengthening through *munmyŏng kaehwa*, in which the legacy of the *yangban* was to be overcome in order to protect national sovereignty. The other privileged *munmyŏng kaehwa* as the ultimate goal, even if achieved through external stimulus and regardless of sovereignty.

The Dangers of *Sadaejuŭi*

The congruency of colonial and nationalist representations carried significant political ramifications. For nationalists, there was the danger that these shared assumptions and cultural characterizations, developed and disseminated before 1905 for their own political objectives, would be linked to colonial goals after 1905. The overlap and similarity, despite differences in tone and intent, meant that nationalist representations intersected with colonial ideology. This threat was evident in a topic often related to the notion of the lazy *yangban* too comfortable with traditional knowledge to pursue national ends, namely, dependence on foreign powers. Anyone treating early Korean history had to deal with Sino-Korean relations, a situation no less true of colonial than nationalist writers. If the move to decenter the "Middle Kingdom" entailed a sustained critique of Korea's historical relationship with China, one that juxtaposed a past dependence with a contemporary independence, then so too did colonial writing discuss Sino-Korean ties, highlighting Korea's historical reliance on China as an indication of the lack of national will and the absence of the potential for self-rule.

As Hatada Takashi has observed, from the 1880s, Japanese historians underplayed Korean subjectivity, reducing the peninsula's cultural, political, and economic history to one of external forces.[130] Hayashi Taisuke's important *Chōsenshi* (*History of Korea*), the first comprehensive Japanese history of Korea, published in 1892, reflected this approach. In the first page of his preface, Hayashi wrote about the early extension of Japanese rule over the southern portions of the peninsula, following these comments with discussions of Korea's reliance on China.[131] External dependence was twofold: in

the earliest ages, on Japan, and, afterward, on China until the end of the nineteenth century. At the time of annexation, the Japanese media repeatedly raised the issue of dependence, using it as a departure point for countless articles explaining the train of events, whether long term or short term, that had led to the annexation treaty. After all, since "dependence" identified the Korean national character and since for "two thousand years of history, [Korea] frequently relied on and followed other countries," most Korean phenomena could be related to this central stereotype.[132] Shortly after annexation, the *Tōkyō Asahi shimbun* published an article describing Korean customs and institutions that it characterized as reminiscent of earlier Japanese ages. Immediately equating the Korea of today with the Japan of yesterday, the article depicted Korea as backward and unchanging. The reason that current Korean items like food implements, the wearing of white clothes, and the three divine implements resembled their past Japanese counterparts, the article continued, was because both countries borrowed heavily from the Tang dynasty. What distinguished the two, it concluded, was the Japanese ability to develop subsequently its own distinctive customs while, even after the Tang dynasty, Koreans continued to imitate Chinese style. The article emphasized the cultural aspects of "dependence" to show Koreans had little originality and no ability to develop their own national customs. Everything, it insinuated, was derived from other cultures.[133]

The official propaganda after 1910 continued to emphasize "dependence." The Governor General's Office publicly claimed that it was part of the national character (J. *kokutai*, K. *kukch'e*), making every dynasty submit to China from the Han dynasty onward. In the eyes of this official publication, *sadae* allowed Korean history to be divided into two periods: all of Korean history until annexation was marked by evil, despotic governments that submitted to China, versus "Chōsen," the new Japanese colony, which was reaping the benefits of "civilized law and benevolent administration."[134] Whether used to make such a bald link to the reasons for annexation or, as in the case of the *Asahi shimbun* piece, used to disparage Korean culture, the various ways of explaining "dependence" made this concept central to the Japanese production of knowledge about Korea, both in public and state-sponsored writing.

Again, as in representations of the *yangban*, the colonial and nationalist writing on "dependence" sounded similar themes. From the earliest days of the nationalist press, "dependence" had been key to contemplating Korean sovereignty and its relation to national culture. But by 1905, as it became

apparent that this concept was being used to legitimize the Japanese presence on the peninsula, the question confronting nationalist writers was to what extent they could continue to use this concept effectively when the colonizing state and its supporters were using a very similar version. Japanese public and private usage threatened to arrogate the concept and make it less viable for Koreans to use for a radically different purpose: reform in pursuit of sovereignty. This was one of the most powerful consequences of the colonial production of knowledge about Korea. As writers became aware of the double nature of *munmyŏng kaehwa*, they could take pleasure in satirizing its use by the resident general. But although the direct, more vulgar invocations of "civilization" were easy to scorn, it was less simple to dismiss the many ways that the powerful standards of *munmyŏng kaehwa* had been used to represent and evaluate various aspects of Korean culture. It was precisely these more subtle articulations of this overarching framework, as captured in the type of cultural representations that by 1905 had already shaped Korean self-understanding, that Japan was now effectively employing for its own political objectives.

This threat was manifested in the gradual shift in the Korean terminology for "dependence." In early nationalist texts, this historical phenomenon had largely been designated as a question of reliance and dependence (*ŭibu* or *ŭiroe*) or slavishness (*nobisŏng*). But after 1905, the term began to shift toward a Japanese expression. By the mid-colonial period, "dependence" had gradually become more or less fixed on various forms of the Japanese term for the phenomenon—*jidai* or, in Korean, *sadae*, used in a compound form as *sadaejuŭi*, literally the "ism of serving the great," or *sadae sasang*, "the ideology of serving the great."[135] Even in essays by some of the most famous nationalist polemicists writing in exile, outside the immediate colonial setting, this lexical shift can be observed.[136] The power of Japan to determine even the vocabulary of nationalist versions of "dependence" threatened to blur the division between nationalist and colonial usage, rendering nationalist meanings less effectual. By 1905, nationalists had so widely promoted the notion that "dependence" was a deep-seated feature of Korean national character that any reader of the Korean press would be quick to point to this problem as in urgent need of reform if the nation was to be saved. But now Japanese colonial officials were invoking similar notions of dependence. What nationalists had so authoritatively disseminated over the preceding ten years as a new historical understanding crucial to the future of their nation was now being wielded for a very different objective. It was a powerful strat-

egy, one that threatened to make amenable to colonization a major trope in nationalist conceptions of history and identity. This overlap, in turn, compelled some nationalist writers to readjust their own uses of "dependence" so that despite the lexical and representational similarities, it could be conceptually fine-tuned in order to retain its nationalist potential.

The danger of co-option was not lost on the editors of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* and *TaeHan maeil sinbo*. Both sought to preserve nationalist uses of "dependence" by denying the equivalence of the Korean and Japanese uses of the term and highlighting their differences. In so doing, the earlier, more polemical critiques of reliance on China that had served such an important function in decentering the "Middle Kingdom" were adjusted to counter the potential encroachment of Japanese definitions of *sadaejuŭi*. As many Japanese claimed, if Korea's relationship with China demonstrated a lack of ability for self-rule, thereby justifying Japanese governance, these two papers responded by defining more narrowly their account of past Sino-Korean relations at the same time as they contrasted that relationship with Protectorate rule.

The editors of the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* admitted that for more than five hundred years since the founding of the dynasty, Korea had submitted to China, receiving their patents (*komyŏng*) and engaging in the rituals of conferring tribute.[137] But as for the administration of internal and external affairs, "there was nothing that we did not control ourselves [*chaju*] and administer exclusively. Never did we endure even an iota of interference." Using contemporary terminology for past practices, they insisted that although "nominally we were a vassal state, in actuality we were an independent [*tongniṗ*], self-ruling [*chaju*] nation." The oppositional character of this piece took on special importance, since it followed by one day the paper's summary of a Japanese legal expert's opinion, entitled "The Future of Korea," in which he offered a classic justification for colonial rule: Without the wherewithal for independence, Korea would be protected and eventually guided toward sovereignty by Japan.[138] Under the gaze of the censor, the editors could not directly challenge this argument, but because *sadaejuŭi* was inherently a historical issue, a reinterpretation of history offered a means of debunking the Japanese position by underscoring the self-autonomous features of the dynastic past. This reinterpretation denied Japanese claims that past practices demonstrated a lack of Korean experience in self-rule, showing instead that they did have the wherewithal—in fact, had been autonomous for more than half a millennium.

The piece next went beyond this point to contrast tribute relations with the Protectorate. Arguing that since the Sino-Japanese War, Korea had been nominally independent, the editors pointed out that it was precisely because of Japan that Korea had been unable to substantiate this status and instead had been declared a protectorate. Looking back over recent affairs, they noted that in internal and foreign affairs, "the right to self-rule has been completely lost." Reversing the phrasing for Sino-Korean relations, they wrote, "Although nominally we are independent, in actuality, we are an example of a vassal state. Even protectorate nations should not be [treated] like this. Is there any greater shame for the nation than this?" What earlier nationalist and Japanese colonial writing had castigated as historical was now rendered contemporary—and blamed as the doing of Japan. The vocabulary of dependence—before 1905 the province of nationalists—was here confirmed, only they now sought to reverse its meaning against Japan.

With its more protected political position, the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* did not need to shy away from more explicitly barbed comments. It, too, offered a reinterpretation of past Sino-Korean relations, only more narrowly directed toward Japan and its allies on the peninsula. "In the eyes of Japanese," it began, "Korea had already been oppressed by the Yuan, the Ming, and the Qing dynasties, so that for six or seven centuries since the time of the Koryŏ dynasty, it had lost its independence."[139] That many Koreans had made similar arguments in the past was not pertinent to the editors, who now realized annexation was imminent and sought to undermine some of its ideological underpinnings. "Because of this, they [Japanese] hold Koreans in contempt." As the article went on to contend, the times had changed. In the past, Koreans had considered China the ancestral country of Confucianism. Now that this "period of religion" had been supplanted by a "period of the nation," Koreans would never submit to Japan. Moreover, taking up the argument offered by the *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, the editors maintained that the earlier submission to the Ming and Qing dynasties had been superficial, little more than forcing the government to offer some gold and some ginseng under the guise of "tribute nation." Suggesting that Korea in fact received more in return than they gave and noting that neither the Ming dynasty nor the Qing dynasty "dared usurp the people's rights," the editors argued that their status as a "tributary nation" was nothing but an "empty name" and that the people suffered no hardships. Again, a contrast was drawn to delegitimate the Japanese assertion that the past *sadae* relationship was part of Korean nature

and thus amenable to colonial rule: "Koreans do not consider what the Japanese are doing as the same as the Ming and Qing."

The *TaeHan maeil sinbo* moved further away from earlier nationalist usage in order to tie "dependence" to the present problem of how individual Koreans related to the Japanese presence on the peninsula. As with earlier usage, this shifting definition had both a political and a cultural dimension. The editors redefined *sadae* away from what had been a historically oriented concept directed at past attitudes toward China to a more contemporary usage, targeting followers of Japan. What had been seen as a traditional style of behavior, blamed for leading the peninsula into its current predicament was now seen as a contemporary problem. Both were traditional behaviors, reinforcing the notion that this was part of the national character, but one was in the past, whereas the other marked the continuity of this traditional behavior in the present. People of this "slavish ilk" (*nobae*), began one description, have the "vile tendency to believe blindly in the ancients, to be locked in old habits, pander to the prevailing power of the time, and worship foreign countries." While this description fit neatly into earlier nationalist writing concerning dependence on China, to the point that such behavior would "lead to the destruction of the nation," the cases that followed looked in a different direction. Instead, the writer described walking along a street in Seoul where he noticed on the lintel of a prominent Korean home a name board that imitated Japanese-style names. It combined the name of a Korean town famous for its Confucian scholarship, Andong, with a typical Japanese ending for personal names. This produced a hybrid name that, in Korean, would be pronounced "Andong ch'anang" or, alternatively, in Japanese, "Andōjirō." In short, powerful Koreans were of their own accord taking on Japanese-style names. The article next complained about Koreans who constantly had the name of Itō Hirobumi on the tip of their tongue, venerating him as though he were a teacher or father figure. Making a comparison with another colonial situation, the editors pointed out that even though Gladstone was generally considered to be a great person, Egyptians certainly did not think of him in this way. But Koreans, the editors warned, were willing to worship the very people who were destroying their nation. They also took offense at a recent letter by a local government official who, against all protocol, had used the Meiji reign dates rather than Korean ones.[140] Thus, much to the chagrin of the editors, in terms of names, heroes, and even the recording of time, Korean were already aping Japanese ways.

Earlier worries about the obsession with Chinese characters and classical texts were now being supplanted by the fear of Japanese cultural forms—with the cultural and temporal gap between these two explained by the same concept of *sadae*.

"Dependence" also came to be redefined as a strategy for subverting pro-Japanese groups in Korea. "Japan's Three Great Loyal Slaves" was the title of one editorial that accused a trio of leading public figures of activities that threatened the nation's vitality.[141] Japan might use *sadae* to rationalize its presence on the peninsula, attempting to co-opt the concept from the nationalist arsenal of rhetorical weapons by rendering it supportive of colonialism. But nationalists could, in turn, also redirect the concept's use toward Japan's own allies in Korea, deploying the same negative meanings used by the Office of the Resident General for this concept to delegitimize the office's own allies. The historical tendency of Koreans to rely on others was seen by the editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* as having been transferred to Japan. Just as reliance on China in the past had weakened the nation, dependence on Japan in the present, they warned, would make sovereignty unattainable. As in Japanese definitions of *sadae*, the division between past and present remained central to this formulation, but rather than attributing to the Japanese Protectorate the current freedom of Korea from China, past and present were linked, bridged by the same concept of *sadae*, only here the temporal division was interpreted as a shift in the recipient of Korea's dependence, from China to Japan.

In these ways, "dependence" came to be further articulated and, ironically, by widening the scope of the concept, ensured its entrenchment in Korean political culture. Yet the genealogy of this term so central to the nationalist movement cannot be seen as merely the autonomous outgrowth of a burgeoning sense of nation. Rather, its meaning came from within the colonial context, through various interactions with and against Japanese colonial discourse. Japanese colonial power extended well beyond the reach of their policemen with the samurai swords. With both colonizer and nationalists embedding their knowledge of Korea in "civilization and enlightenment," nationalists struggled to preserve a discursive space for the nation that could not be co-opted into supporting, directly or indirectly, the colonial enterprise. One of the ultimate powers of the colonizer is to define the terms and representations in which the colonized articulate their own sense of self. But the slipperiness of the terms, together with the multivalences of repre-

sentations, offered much latitude for Koreans to continue to work with the concepts and forms of knowledge that they had explored for their own purposes before 1905 but that thereafter Japan threatened to arrogate for its own purposes.

Colonial Denouement

Although the editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* and the *Hwangsŏng sinmun* made a number of efforts to contest various aspects of colonial ideology in the last few years before annexation, the establishment of formal colonial power in 1910 ended the possibility of further public exploration of these possibilities. The day after announcing annexation, the colonial authorities shut down both papers. The *TaeHan maeil sinbo*, with its unsullied nationalist reputation, was quickly transformed by the new Governor General's Office into its official mouthpiece. With *TaeHan* struck from its title, it became simply the *Maeil sinbo*, or *Daily News*. As the only Korean-language daily newspaper, the *Maeil sinbo* became the most important voice for explaining colonial policy during a time when the majority of Koreans still could not read Japanese.[142] Many prominent staff members, like Sin Ch'aeho, resigned from their positions with the paper, but others such as P'yŏn Il, Sŏnu Il, Yi Haejo, and Cho Chungnae stayed in the paper's offices after 1910, easing the transition between a paper that was once the most prominent critic of Japanese policy to one that legitimized colonial rule.[143] To be sure, the takeover of the paper, now under the official guidance of the famed Japanese newspaper entrepreneur Tokutomi Sohō and grouped together with the *Keijō nippō*, the official Japanese-language organ of the Government General, resulted in wrenching editorial change. Any treatment of sovereignty, so central to the earlier nationalist newspapers, became taboo. Now readers were told that their goal should be to behave like good imperial subjects by properly celebrating the emperor's birthday and commemorating annexation as the day when "doubt and hate between the two Korean and Japanese peoples was abandoned."[144]

The replacement of calls for independence with the promotion of imperial ideologies was nevertheless still expressed within the parameters of "civilization and enlightenment." Although there was certainly a rupture with earlier editorials on the nation, those Koreans who continued to work in its offices likely found some solace in the continuity in other areas of the

paper's editorial positions. This continuity, both lexical and thematic, could be seen in cultural representations and the calls for reform. The figure of the *yangban* as a conservative scholar once again appeared prominently in the early pages of the *Maeil sinbo*. Again he was depicted as always committed to "an old form of knowledge" consisting of the words of the sages and the "Way of Kings" while dismissing all alternative forms of knowledge as "heterodox."[145] Using a rhetoric reminiscent of earlier nationalist papers, the editors warned "corrupt Confucians" of their insensitivity to the demands of a new era:

> If their thought is corrupt, then even if they have ears they cannot hear, and even though they have eyes they cannot see, and even if they have mouths they cannot taste. They have no sense whatsoever of changes. When they sit, they are little more than statues, and when they walk they are nothing more than moving flesh — how can they be called living people?[146]

Such passages could have been lifted from the pages of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* or the *Hwangsŏng sinmun*. Although the standard of critique had changed little, now missing was any linkage to sovereignty. The attitudes and activities of these scholars might need to be improved, but now this reform was an end in itself, in service to *munmyŏng kaehwa* and not the nation.

Clearly, the *TaeHan Maeil sinbo* had been stripped of its nationalist goals. However, many of the assumptions and representations that underpinned nationalist writing were still held with conviction by its successor, except that now the higher authority that had once framed the definitions of the desired nation — civilization and enlightenment — had become the ultimate goal. As seen in editorials treating topics as diverse as the enlightening function of newspapers,[147] early marriage,[148] laziness as the cause of corruption,[149] hygiene and sanitation,[150] standardizing measurements,[151] and the harm of superstition,[152] the agenda of reform had changed little. In this way, the nationalists' dilemma of what took precedence — the nation or civilization? — was resolved by colonialism in favor of the latter. The nationalist attempt to come to terms with their participation in a global capitalist modernity through *munmyŏng kaehwa* had unraveled — and the nation was left out.

Here lay the conundrum of a nationalism that appealed to the higher

authority of the universal principles of "civilization and enlightenment" and the natural laws of social Darwinism. Nationalist interpretations of *munmyŏng kaehwa* did buttress a program of self-strengthening: only reform enabled a nation to survive and to receive equal treatment from the community of "civilized" nations. But the double nature of *munmyŏng kaehwa* was that it could also be used to promote acceptance of colonization, whether it was the permanent loss of independence or its postponement to a future date. Natural laws taught, after all, that the strong *should* conquer the weak, and the progressive vision of history demonstrated that the less civilized *needed* the guidance of the more civilized. To oppose these conclusions was to oppose the natural laws of society and the proof of history. While many Korean nationalists were eager to stake out such a position, others, like the Korean staff of the *Maeil sinbo*, found the commonalties between colonial and nationalist thought sufficient grounds to work within the strictures of colonial rule. Their commitment to capitalist modernity remained, only now rather than being channeled through a sovereign Korean nation, it was to be achieved through colonial subordination.

4 Spirit, History, and Legitimacy

These days in Korea, everyone talks about "love of country, love of country," but finding just where the spirit of patriotism resides is difficult.

— *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, April 25, 1908

In March 1910, the editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* asked its readers how foreigners viewed Korea. "Is the image of Korea in the eyes of Europeans and Americans a true view of Korea," it asked, "or is the image of Korea in the eyes of Japanese a true view of Korea?" The stimulus for this query came from an editorial in the Seoul-based Japanese paper, the *TaiKan Nippō*, which in its own way was also worried about representations of the peninsula. In the estimate of this Japanese paper's editors, however, the problem lay with Americans and Europeans, who misunderstood Japan's policy in Korea. They charged that foreigners were sending erroneous views back to their home countries, leading their readers to believe, for example, that "Koreans are a people that have the wherewithal for independence." The *TaiKan Nippō*'s accusations of muddled understanding tried to claim that the paper had a deeper and truer insight into Korean affairs than other newspapers did. By reprinting parts of this editorial in their own newspaper, the editors of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo* hoped to undermine that claim, showing just who, in fact, had a more muddled understanding.[1]

The Japanese editors' sensitivity to Western criticism and the eagerness of the *TaeHan maeil sinbo*'s editors to play on these fears reveal the concern in the early years of the twentieth century about images of Korea, past and present, true or false. Japanese colonial authorities and Korean nationalists fully realized that cultural representations were an integral part of their contest over the peninsula's political future. Both expended much energy disseminating those visions of Korea that supported their political goals to