

## **KOREAN-JAPANESE RELATIONS:**

### **The Past, Present, and Future**

JUNG-HOON LEE

#### **Introduction**

If the overall history of Korean-Japanese relations could be painted on a canvas, the picture would resemble the works of Picasso rather than Rembrandt or Monet. Marred by the bitter memories of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasions between 1592 and 1598, and of course by the colonial experience (1910-45)—both of which left Korea physically and psychologically devastated—an ugly blend of emotions and attitudes inevitably set in which still haunt the two nations' relationship. Many Japanese are still in the habit of treating Koreans in a condescending manner while Koreans, for their part, remain bitterly resentful of the Japanese and constantly struggle to shed themselves of the colonial stigma. One might say that the Koreans have an inferiority complex. Of significance is the Korean obsession with the humiliation suffered at the hands of the colonialists, and their present burning desire to better the Japanese at every opportunity. These are important psychological factors that must be taken into account when dealing with any aspect of Korean-Japanese relations. Four

centuries after Hideyoshi's invasions and nearly half a century since the end of colonial rule, the enduring legacies of these events are still firmly etched in the minds of many, subconsciously affecting grassroots perceptions of and approaches towards the Japanese.

It took South Korea and Japan fourteen long years of strained negotiations before they normalized relations in a 1965 treaty. On the positive side, the treaty cleared the way for extensive trade relations that within a year saw Japan surpassing the United States as South Korea's number one trading partner. South Korea, too, became increasingly important to Japan as its market grew. There was also a down side, however, in that amidst the avarice and commotion created by lucrative economic possibilities emotional reconciliation, surely the key to lasting and genuine relationships, was hardly dealt with. The treaty was a marriage of convenience. Even if it earmarked the beginning of a new era, it stood on shaky ground since the two partners lacked mutual trust and understanding.

Today, 25 years on, economic factors still dominate and dictate the relationship. The volume of bilateral trade grew from \$221 million in 1965 to \$28 billion in 1988<sup>1</sup> and cultural interactions substantially increased. Yet the way Japanese and Koreans feel about each other has hardly changed. Opinion polls confirm this, and both sides consistently rank the other as the least-liked or least-trusted people in the whole world.<sup>2</sup> Even young Koreans, despite apparent Japanese influences on aspects of their lifestyle from hair styles to clothes, rarely allow material adornment of Japan to faze a sense of duty never to forget the injustices done to their forefathers. To be sure, the emotional dimension of the relationship has so thoroughly permeated the socio-political fabric of Korea that it would take tremendous efforts by both sides to rectify this.

There is a distinctively Korean word that brings together the feelings of remorse, agony, anger, anguish, frustration, and resentment. This is *han*, a word often used to describe, aptly, the feelings of those who experienced Japanese colonialism. Unless *han* is resolved, or at least dealt with in a positive way, issues such as prejudice against Korean residents in Japan, territorial sovereignty over Tokto Island (to the Japanese, Takeshima), trade imbalances, and lesser issues such as Japanese textbook revisions can set off political furores that would potentially turn the clock back on relations beyond the signing of the 1965 treaty.

### Historical Background

Although much of today's ill-feeling between Koreans and Japanese can be attributed to the colonial legacy, the history of bad blood predates this by hundreds of years. Hideyoshi's invasions are the most obvious example. Dipping even further into history, there are traces of aggression all the way back to the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., though all our knowledge needs interpretation. Some assert that the horseriders of Koguryō conquered the Wa people of Kyushu during the 4th century and established Yamato, the first Japanese state.<sup>3</sup> Following from this, speculation suggests that the Japanese imperial line may itself have some Korean connection.<sup>4</sup>

Others, however, suggest that the southern part of the Korean peninsula, then known as Mimana in Japan, was conquered and colonized by Empress Jingu in the early 3rd century.<sup>5</sup> Discrepancies of interpretation are clearly enormous, and in spite of later archaeological findings there

is scarcely enough evidence to clarify these issues. The point for us is, regardless of who conquered whom, aggression rather than peace seems to have formed the pattern of Japanese-Korean relations.

This is not to say that amicable relations never existed. In fact, immediately following Japan's unification in 1603, Tokugawa Ieyasu fostered friendly relations with the Korean Chosŏn dynasty, ostensibly to improve Japan's tarnished international image after Hideyoshi's indiscriminate military campaign. Ieyasu was also fascinated by the teachings of neo-Confucianism, which were available through Korean writings. But as the Tokugawa period drew to a close, so did cordial Japanese-Korean relations. Partly engendered by new-found confidence fostered by growing national strength, and partly compelled by contacts with the west, Japan became increasingly nationalistic. This, ultimately, led to the imperialistic path.

Japanese nationalism soon caused problems for their weak neighbours. Chosŏn easily fell prey to the ruthless game of imperialism, a game already being played at a ferocious pace by westerners throughout Asia. After Japan emerged victorious from both the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), both of which were fought largely for supremacy over Korea, she was at last able to annex the peninsula in 1910. Japan had paid her dues and earned the "right" to claim this much-coveted land that formed the gateway to continental Asia.

### **The Colonial Legacy**

1910 saw the beginning of undoubtedly the worst period in the history of Korean-Japanese relations. Unlike British imperialism, Japan's colonial rule was harsh and unremitting. Spearheaded by the military government-general, comprehensive efforts were made to "Japanize" the Koreans through policy measures which disallowed the use of the Korean language, made the adoption of Japanese surnames mandatory, and imposed Shintoism as the national religion. Furthermore, the government-general acquired much of the arable farm land and claimed its produce. Many Korean farmers were displaced and scattered in search of a livelihood.<sup>6</sup>

The intensification of Japan's war efforts, first against China and then against America, further worsened the Korean predicament. Conscripted as soldiers and labourers, tens of thousands of Koreans were called to make sacrifices for the cause of Imperial Japan. For many, this meant death. At the time of Japan's surrender in 1945, over two million Koreans had been mobilized to work in Japan.<sup>7</sup> In all, the number of Koreans involved in Japan's wartime programmes was so great that at least half of all households are estimated to have been affected. It should therefore come as no surprise that two of the most celebrated Korean national holidays, 1 March and 15 August, are dates which mark the colonial period.<sup>8</sup>

Dichotomous interpretation of the colonial era has hindered emotional reconciliation. Throughout the post-colonial period, Japan has tried repeatedly to justify her rule in Korea, maintaining that by providing education, building an infrastructure, industrializing urban areas, enhancing agricultural productivity, improving health and sanitation

services, and so on, her rule was beneficial. In October 1953, Kubota Kanichiro, Japanese Chief Delegate to the third round of Korean-Japanese talks, unleashed deep-seated feelings to give such a view prominence.<sup>9</sup> Considering the uproar he created, Kubota probably realized that he had made a diplomatic mistake, but he was only one of many Japanese—including even pro-Korean figures such as Kishi Nobusuke and Shiina Etsusaburo—who unreservedly considered their goals honourable and their colonial policies commendable.

Koreans, on the contrary, quickly dismiss any suggestion that Japanese rule was positive. Looking at the railroads, hospitals, schools, and factories left behind by the colonialists, they argue that they were not built for Korean consumption at all. Indeed, most statistics for the period show that the majority of the supposed benefits to the Koreans are grossly exaggerated by the Japanese. For example, in spite of Japan's frequent reference to the development of a well-balanced education system for Koreans, the 1944 population census shows that only 0.8% graduated from middle school.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, considering that over 11% of the population were forced abroad, mostly to Manchuria and Japan, and an incredible 20% lost their homes<sup>11</sup> as a result of population redeployment policies, it is difficult to imagine which segment of the population could have had the luxury of enjoying the beneficent rule of the Japanese.

Determining whether Japan's colonial policies had a positive or negative effect on Korea is a daunting, if not pointless, exercise. The emotional undercurrents are much too overbearing to allow for a clear-cut and objective answer. But even if Koreans could be convinced that some aspects of colonialism such as modernization actually benefited them, this would have no effect on their perceptions about the

Japanese. As I will now discuss, the negative impact of the colonial legacy was most vividly illustrated in 1951, when the two sides first got together after Korea's independence to initiate the normalizing of diplomatic relations.

### **The Process of Diplomatic Normalization, 1951-65**

In the aftermath of Korean independence, South Korea severed all contacts with Japan until negotiations for the San Francisco peace treaty set the stage on which the two nations were allowed to negotiate for themselves. Urged by an administration in Washington eager to create a trilateral defence structure to facilitate war efforts on the Korean peninsula, the two nations embarked on a settlement process that was to take 14 years to complete. Seven rounds of official talks were held to settle a wide range of issues, including property claims, Korean residents in Japan, peace line disputes, territorial sovereignty over islands, and Japanese relations with North Korea. In all, five Japanese prime ministers, from Yoshida Shigeru to Sato Eisaku, and four Korean leaders, from Syngman Rhee [Yi Süngman] to Park Chung Hee [Pak Chõnghüi], were involved.

There were three basic reasons why the two agreed to get together. First, South Korea hoped to obtain a formal apology and reparation payments as part of an overall political settlement. Second, Japan was eager to settle the specific problem of Korean residents in Japan, possibly repatriating a substantial number of them. Third, the United States was prepared to act as a bridge between the two nations in order to consolidate its own anti-communist designs in the region. Aside from the American factor, it is

clear that there was a wide gulf between what Japan and South Korea wanted from the talks. Korean delegates insisted on sincere apologies, while their Japanese counterparts remained indifferent, showing willingness only to talk about Korean residents.

Syngman Rhee's establishment of what became known as the "Rhee Line" on 18 January 1952 complicated matters further.<sup>12</sup> As the meetings continued, so arguments were exacerbated. Historic enmity and contempt began to surface to the point where meetings turned from negotiations into platforms for demands and counter-demands. Despite their enormous influence, the Americans could hardly deal with the emotions. The fervently anti-Japanese Rhee at the helm of South Korean politics meant prospects were bleak. Neither side felt any urgency and both were apparently more concerned with domestic politics. Japan faced local issues of rearmament, conservative and socialist challenges, and pacifism. South Korea was more concerned with the civil war, economic reconstruction, and political corruption.

When Park Chung Hee came to power in South Korea by overthrowing the inept Chang Myōn government, the atmosphere between South Korea and Japan changed dramatically. Park was a graduate of Japanese military academies, had been an officer in the Japanese army, and was an admirer of the Meiji leaders. He was fluent in Japanese and exhibited no grudge or contempt towards Japan. Furthermore, he was eager to receive economic assistance from Japan to deliver Korea from its sorry state of economic collapse. Having come to power by a military coup, he saw in the economy one way to legitimize his rule. With absolute power at his disposal, and without a legislature or an immediate opposition to thwart him, Park was perceived by the Japanese leadership to be in an ideal position to strike a deal, especially since he was known to

want to solve the Korean economic crisis.<sup>13</sup> Thus, spearheaded by some pro-normalization forces in the Japanese ranks, and in particular by former premier Kishi Nobusuke, the negotiation process moved ahead.

With both sides in apparent accord for the first time since negotiations began, a breakthrough was achieved in late 1962. Japanese Foreign Minister Ohira Masayoshi and Korean Central Intelligence Agency Director Kim Jong-pil [Kim Chongp'il] signed the Kim-Ohira memorandum, agreeing to an economic aid package worth \$800 million over a 10-year period. This comprised \$300 million in grants, \$200 million in low-interest government loans, and \$300 million in commercial loans.<sup>14</sup> In effect, this concluded much of the property claims issue.

Just as things were beginning to look up, the secretive and collusive manner in which Kim had handled negotiations sparked public fear of a national sell-out. This led to nationwide demonstrations against the talks. Park, having barely won a presidential election in August 1963 against former president Yun P'osōn, had to contend with the public's growing sense of indignation. During 1964, when the demonstrations peaked, he even considered postponing the talks. In Japan, too, an anti-normalization movement gained momentum. This was led by socialists, communists and other leftist elements, and had the support of the pro-P'yōngyang *Chosoren*, the federation of Korean residents in Japan.

The situation in Japan was not nearly so bad as that in South Korea, where martial law was declared in June 1964 to control the deteriorating situation. The question was not whether Sato could handle domestic pressure—which he could and did—, but whether Park could handle Korea. We know now that Park decided to "live or die" with the

normalization issue. Convinced that the economic boom was the key to sustaining his rule, he staked his political career on the issue. His conviction allowed Foreign Ministers Shiina Etsusaburo of Japan and Lee Tong Won [Yi Tongwŏn] of Korea to sign the Treaty on Basic Relations and four additional agreements on 22 June 1965, effectively concluding the normalization process.<sup>15</sup> Problems remained in abundance, but both sides survived the ratification of the treaty. Sato was not about to suffer the same fate his brother, Kishi, had faced over the crises following the Japan-United States security treaty in 1960. Park had made a shrewd gamble, and he remained in power largely on the strength of the economic turn-round made possible by Japanese money until he was assassinated in October 1979.

#### Post-Normalization Relations

In spite of all the furore the normalization treaty had generated, relations between South Korea and Japan were remarkably cordial during Sato's premiership until 1972. Sato went a step further than the treaty, linking the security interests of the two nations. In the Nixon-Sato Joint Communique issued on 21 November 1969, a "Korean clause" was introduced in which South Korea's security was recognized as an essential part of Japan's own security.<sup>16</sup> This was in line with Sato's support for a strong relationship with the United States and his belief in the American Northeast Asian strategy. Close co-operation with South Korea was an important aspect of that strategy.

Winds of change swept across Asia in the early 1970s which inevitably had an impact on Korean-Japanese

relations. Japan's *rapprochement* with China following Nixon's visit led the new Tanaka government to review relations with both Korean states. Furthermore, in the wake of Red Cross meetings at the truce village of Panmunjŏm which tentatively reduced South-North tensions, Tanaka departed from the "one-Korea" policy of his predecessor, and argued for a more pragmatic and flexible approach. This led to approaches to both regimes, and was reminiscent of the Ichiro Hatoyama government's policy in the mid-1950s. The government argued that detente in the peninsula rendered the "Korean clause" no longer pertinent.

In August 1973, the kidnapping of Kim Dae-jung [Kim Taejung] in Tokyo fuelled deteriorating Korean-Japanese relations. Park was implicated, because Kim was his opponent, and a rival candidate in the closely contested 1971 presidential election.<sup>17</sup> A year later, a Korean resident from Japan who had assumed a Japanese identity by taking a Japanese name and passport and speaking Japanese, shot and killed Park's wife in an assassination attempt on the president. South Korea held the Japanese government responsible.<sup>18</sup> The Japanese showed no sympathy, and did not apologize. This sparked off widespread demonstrations and a raid on the Japanese embassy in Seoul.<sup>19</sup>

Miki Takeo, when he replaced scandal-plagued Tanaka, gradually calmed the storm. He was concerned that America's loss of the Vietnam war in 1975 might encourage the northern leader Kim Ilŏng to contemplate a second invasion of the South, so he abandoned Tanaka's equidistance approach to ensure greater stability. Firmly convinced that a communist takeover of the entire peninsula would pose serious problems for Japan, he

sought to strengthen ties with the South and reaffirmed the "Korean clause".

In the years that followed, despite movements in the on-off efforts to enhance trade and cultural ties with the North, particularly during the Fukuda years, the basic tenets of Japan's Korea policy have remained relatively consistent: maintaining the status quo and encouraging peaceful coexistence. Adjustments have had to be made to resolve problems such as Kim Dae-jung's internment and the Japanese textbook controversy in the early 1980s, but the politico-economic rationale has managed to prevail over more emotional issues. In the 1990s it is difficult to imagine Japan changing her basic policy. While South Korea grows stronger and more confident, North Korea remains isolated, belligerent, and relatively poor. So, unless the increasing economic gap between North and South is somehow reversed, there are no legitimate reasons for Japan to revert back to an equidistance policy at the risk of jeopardizing trade relations.

One can argue that as the world changes, Japan must re-assess her policy towards the North to reflect the rapidly changing international order. But P'yöngyang can arguably be considered the last bastion of communism. Remarkably, P'yöngyang resists the surging waves of democracy. One cannot underestimate the resilience of a 45-year regime built on a personality cult, and Kim Il-söng's power is unlikely to wane in the foreseeable future; this is precisely why Korean-Japanese relations will remain little changed.

### **The "Third Generation" Conundrum**

Out of the calm atmosphere of the late 1980s, the status of third generation Korean residents in Japan has become a problem. Positive Japanese approaches could help to erase one of the most ugly legacies of the colonial past, possibly bringing about an era of genuine bilateral relations based on mutual respect and amity rather than contempt and resentment. Otherwise, the consequences could be dire. In a broad sense, the issue is not just about the status of Korean residents (for in early 1991 there were only three known babies falling under this category, all in the Osaka area), but the overall treatment of 680,000 Koreans who are estimated still to be living in Japan.

Briefly, the problem stems from what South Koreans see as short-sighted stipulations in the Agreement on the Legal Status and Treatment of Nationals of the Republic of Korea Residing in Japan, concluded in 1965 as part of the overall normalization treaty. In this, permanent residence was to be granted to i) those residing continuously in Japan since or prior to 15 August 1945 up to the time of application, ii) children of such people born on or after 16 August 1945 and before 16 January 1971, and iii) children of those falling in either previous category who were born after 16 January 1971, that is, five years after the treaty was implemented. The people in the first two categories were to be considered "first generation" residents, and those born since 1971 "second generation". The status of "third generation" residents, that is the children of those born since 1971 was to be discussed within 25 years of the date when the treaty came into force. Herein lies the problem, for the 25 years expired on 16 January 1991.<sup>20</sup>

In 1990, the southern government urged the Japanese not only to grant permanent residence to "third generation" Koreans, but also to make genuine efforts to improve the treatment of all Korean residents. Obvious demands included the abolition of compulsory finger printing, the requirement that foreigners carry registration certificates at all times, forceful deportation of foreign subjects, and the requirement of re-entry permits.<sup>21</sup> The Japanese did not respond well to Seoul's demands. They sympathized with the position of "third generation" residents, but shied away from making commitments, arguing that any special treatment of Koreans would be unfair to other foreign residents. Seoul, in response, emphasized the unique circumstances that brought Koreans to Japan in the first place, as forced labourers during colonialization, whereas other foreigners came of their own will.

Imbued with prejudice against Koreans, the Japanese find it difficult to make concessions. Yoshida Shigeru once referred to Korean residents as "insects living in the stomach of a lion with the potential to kill the lion itself if not checked".<sup>22</sup> Extreme as this may be, it is a type of mentality that has been fostered in Japan over the years. Thus, the solution to the Korean residents' issue largely depends on how the Japanese government counters this inbuilt prejudice. The "third generation" issue has given the two governments a rare opportunity to reconcile emotional differences which have been ignored for too long. Both sides, but the Japanese in particular, need to realize that, as two civilized and prosperous neighbours, the time has come to close the chapter on the dark side of relations. It may take time for emotional feelings to catch up with the thriving economic relations, but the opportunity exists to initiate that process.

### Some Future Assessments

The future of Korean-Japanese relations still seems promising. Recent and ongoing international events have helped to reduce tension on the peninsula and South Korea has become less sensitive about Japan's contacts with the North. Also, the South's growing economic confidence and the 1988 Seoul Olympics have helped to improve South Korea's image in the eyes of many Japanese. This, although an intangible factor, can enhance overall relations. On the domestic front, the creation in South Korea of the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP), apparently modelled on the Japanese LDP, and the Japan Socialist Party's (JSP) gradual shift away from a rigid anti-South Korean policy, offer the possibility of an auspicious future. The creation of similar ruling party structures will help to enhance the understanding of the other's political mechanisms, particularly now that the pro-Japanese Kim Jong-pil is again active in mainstream politics.<sup>23</sup>

Another factor that could have an interesting bearing on relations is the LDP leaders' reduced sense of power and confidence in Japan's domestic politics. No longer certain of the firm support they once commanded, LDP leaders may try to avoid controversial issues—such as the Korean issues—which could arouse public resentment. Japan, faced with continuing heated trade disputes with America, may shy away from generous concessions on the Korean residents issue, lest it compound the public perception of a weak government unable to resist foreign pressure. Yet, when Kim Young Sam [Kim Yōngsam] visited Japan, Kaifu told him that "he would do his best".<sup>24</sup>

Japan is on the verge of becoming a legitimate superpower as economic might replaces ideology and



military strength in the new international order. Considering that economic factors may be the most important criterion determining status, Japan's position is safely ensured. But in the absence of ideology, which traditionally was the medium by which lesser countries identified themselves, other criteria must arise—such as moral integrity—to complement economic power. It is this integrity that Japan must not ignore if she is to be regarded as more than an economic animal.

There has been much trepidation over the resurgence of Japanese nationalism. But from an objective standpoint, if the Japanese have lost the notion of imperialism and are genuine in their pursuit of an independent foreign policy, there is nothing wrong with the expression of nationalist sentiments. On her way to becoming a superpower, moral compassion and magnanimity—particularly towards her neighbours indicating a genuine conversion from a hated imperialistic past—will lead to the international recognition she has long sought. The pursuit of such ends will ensure that Korean-Japanese relations will enter an age of unprecedented amity. If Japan does not follow such a path she will repeat the same mistakes that led her to be so thoroughly hated and isolated not so long ago.

## NOTES

1 "Sŏnjin'gwŏn kukpyŏl pyŏnjan [Categoric Publication on Advanced Nations]", Sanŭp Yŏn'gusŏn [Industrial Research Institute] (Seoul, 1989), p.75.

2 For a recent public opinion poll with relevant questionnaires, see *Tonga Ilbo*, 1 January 1990.

3 For an excellent summary of the ancient history of Korean-Japanese relations, see Chong-sik Lee, *Japan and Korea: The*

*Political Dimension* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1985), p.153-64.

4 *Ibid.*, p.159.

5 Jon Carter Covell and Alan Carter Covell argue in contrast that Empress Jingu was in fact a princess from Puyo who had led the "horseriders" in conquering Japan in 369 A.D. Jingu's portrayal as a Japanese queen who invaded Mimana in 200 A.D. is, the Covells argue, a *volte-face* cover-up devised by Japanese court historians in the 8th century. Jon Carter Covell and Alan Covell, *The Korean Impact on Japanese Culture: Japan's Hidden History* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym International Corp., 1987), pp.6-24 and 111.

6 Kim Sanghyŏn, *Chae-il kyop'o munje chosa pogosŏ* [Report on the Problems of Korean Residents in Japan] (Seoul: National Congress Press, 1964), p.5.

7 Kim Sanghyŏn, *Chaeil han'gugin* [Korean Residents in Japan] (Seoul: Tan'guk Research Institute, 1969), p.38.

8 1 March (*samiljŏl*) commemorates the same date in 1919, when the largest and bloodiest independence movement staged during the colonial period began. 15 August (*Kwangbokjŏl*) marks the end of the Pacific war, the date Korea effectively gained independence from Japan, in 1945.

9 The major points made by Kubota Kanichiro, Chief Delegate to the 3rd Round of Talks on 15 October were: i) Japan's expenditure of over 20 million *yen* on Korea's development had been instrumental in bringing about Korea's modernization; ii) had Japan not annexed Korea the political circumstances at the turn of the century were such that Korea would have been usurped by another power; iii) The Cairo Declaration's reference to Japan's colonization of Korea as "slavery" is unreasonable, resulting from wartime hysteria; iv) the separation of Korea from Japan at the end of the war was an act that contravened international law. See Koryŏ taehakkyo aseamunje yŏn'gusŏ [Asiatic Research Center, Korea University] (eds) *Han il munje charyojip* [Materials on Korean-Japanese Relations] (Seoul: Koryŏ taehakkyo aseamunje yŏn'gusŏ, 1976) vol. 1, pp. 108-11.

10 Chong-sik Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

11 Bruce Cumings, "The legacy of Japanese colonialism in Korea," in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (eds), *The Japanese*

*Colonial Empire, 1905-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 490.

12 Hideo Takabayashi, "Normalization of relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea: agreement on fisheries," *Japanese Annual of International Law* 10 (1966), p.16.

13 For some comments made by Japanese leaders on Park's takeover, see Ooka Ippei, "Jiyu kankoku o mamoru: Nikkan kaidan no mondaiten [Defend 'free Korea': some problems in Japanese-south Korean talks]," *Chuo Koron* (January, 1962), pp.284-88.

14 Chae-jin Lee and Hideo Sato, *U.S. Policy Toward Japan and Korea: A Changing Influence Relationship* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), pp. 29-30.

15 For the contents of the treaty, see *Japanese Annual of International Law* 10 (1966), pp.263-323.

16 *New York Times*, 22 November 1969.

17 *Asahi Nenkan*, 1974, pp. 227-8. Also see John Welfied, *An Empire in Eclipse: Japan in the Postwar American Alliance System* (London: The Athlone Press, 1988), pp. 340-2.

18 *Tonga Ilbo*, 16 August 1974.

19 *Tonga Ilbo*, 7 September 1974.

20 *Japanese Annual of International Law* 10 (1966), pp. 303-7.

21 *Tonga Ilbo*, 27 February 1990.

22 Quoted in *Tonga Ilbo*, 2 March 1990.

23 For a comparison of south Korea's conservative merger in January 1990 with Japan's own in 1955, see *Tonga Ilbo*, 22 January 1990.

24 *Tonga Ilbo*, 20 March 1990.

## REVERSE SYNCRETISM AND THE SACRED AREA OF MUA-K-TONG:

### The Accommodation of Korean Folk Religion to the Religious Forms of Buddhism

JAMES HUNTLEY GRAYSON

In a previous paper,<sup>1</sup> I discussed the question of the process of religious syncretism as an aspect of the transmission and development of Buddhism in the Three Kingdoms (Silla, Paekche, Koguryō) of ancient Korea. The syncretism of that period is an example of a missionary world religion accommodating itself to the fundamental religious ethos of the culture to which it has been transmitted. Here I will discuss another form of syncretism, a syncretism which is the reverse of the process normally observed to have occurred during the era of the Three Kingdoms, namely the accommodation of the autochthonous religion to the missionary religion. Although the evidence for the exact means by which this process of syncretism took place is slim, it is an obvious, if often overlooked feature of the contemporary Korean religious scene. After defining what I mean by syncretism, the bulk of my paper here is devoted to an examination of an unusually sacred site in Seoul. This site, Muak-tong, offers abundant illustrations of the reverse of the usual form of syncretism. I conclude with some suggestions for further research.