

Militant Diaspora : Korean Immigrants and Guerrillas in Early Twentieth Century Russia¹

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Abstract

This paper attempts to shed light on the history of rebellious Koreans in the Russian Far East (RFE), least covered by the Western scholarship. Shortly after Japan established protectorate over Korea in 1905, detachments of righteous armies (*uibyong*) shifted to the RFE, where numerous Korean communities had existed since the 1860s. An inflow of rebellious Koreans into the RFE as well as efforts of Japanese Consulate-General in Vladivostok to stop their activities split Korean communities into the anti-Japanese majority and pro-Japanese minority. Unable to stop the activities of rebellious Koreans in the RFE by itself, the Japanese government put pressure on the Russian Foreign Ministry to crack down on Korean guerrillas. Since April 1908, St. Petersburg demanded local authorities of the RFE to expel guerrilla leaders far from the Korean border, but not early as in 1911, Yi Pom-yun and other *uibyong* leaders were banished to Irkutsk. Moreover, after the outbreak of the First World War, the Russian government especially interested in preserving status quo with Japan stopped activities of the Korean ethnic organizations, prohibited publishing of Korean-language newspapers, and arrested or deported leaders of anti-Japanese movement to Manchuria.

I was going to step aside to give him [Prince Itô Hirobumi] a space to join his compatriots, but just at the same moment several hollow bangs three or four rang out, like the sound of pop-gun, and Prince Itô fell directly on me. I could not hold him and I feared he might fall on the ground, but my *côurier* Karasev who followed on my heels ran up and helped me. Some more shots rang out and the crowd rushed towards the assassin. General Pykhachev's aide-de-câmp captain Titkov knocked him down and handed him over to the railroad gendarmes.²

These scenes from the assassination of elder statesman (*genrô*) Itô Hirobumi occurred at the Russia-owned Harbin station are vividly described in memoirs by count V. N. Kokovtsov, the Russian Minister of Finance, and proved a culmination of the Korean insurgents activities against Tōkanfu. An Chung-gun, who assassinated *genrô* Itô Hirobumi was one of the leaders of the Korean guerrilla insurgents in the Russian Far East (RFE). The activities of this organization reached beyond nation-state boundaries and enveloped in the flame of struggle a vast region stretching from the shores of

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the Sea of Japan to the banks of Sungari River. Despairing of reconstituting the ranks of the insurgents, which had been significantly depleted in 1909, An Chung-gun decided on such a senseless act which some scholars call a tragedy, and others an act of just punishment.³

This paper attempts to shed some new light on the history of rebellious Koreans in the RFE, a topic in the history of righteous armies which has not been extensively studied by Western scholarship. The paper mainly examines the documentary sources in several Russian archives and Diplomatic Records Office of Japan, and works of Korean scholars completed or translated in Japanese.

1. Formation of the Korean Diaspora in the Russian Far East

In 1858 and 1860, Russia took advantages of the disastrous state into which the Middle Empire had been driven by the Second Opium War and Taiping Rebellion and achieved a much longed for revision of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1869) that allowed Russia to absorb a vast territory of what was later called the Maritime and Amur Provinces. Shortly afterward, Korean peasants from Hamgyondo Province started trickling into the south of the Russia's Maritime Province in order to sell cattle and meat to the inhabitants of newly founded Vladivostok. In the late 1860s, some of them were granted permission by the Russian authorities to settle and raise crops of millet and beans along the Russian-Korean border. They were well-treated by the Military Generals of the Maritime Province Petr Vasilievich Kazakevich (governor in 1856-1865) and Ivan Vasilievich Furugel'm (1865-1871) who purchased millet and other crops from Koreans to supply Russian troops stationed in both above-mentioned provinces. The military governors distributed hundred-desiatin (266-acres) parcels of land to Korean families in south of the Maritime Province in the 1860s and in an area near Blagoveschensk, later named Blagoslovennoe ("Blessed") where 500 Korean families were resettled in 1871.⁴ The Korean population in Russia swelled significantly between the end of 1869 and beginning of 1870, when whole Korean villages numbering over 8,000 starving Korean peasants fled to Russia (See Table 1)

By 1884, when the Czar and Korean Emperor concluded a treaty of amity and commerce, 16,000 Koreans already resided in the Maritime and Amur Provinces and had founded over thirty villages.

The supplementary treaty signed in 1888 granted the right to acquire Russian citizenship and own fifteen-desiatin (forty-acres) parcels of land to those Koreans who had migrated prior to the conclusion of the treaty of 1884. They were allowed to obtain Russian citizenship between 1893 and 1899, and even many of those who settled in Russia after 1884 had also become subjects of the Czar. Thus, by the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, nearly 30,000 Koreans densely populated the south of the Maritime Province. The overwhelming majority of them were engaged in agriculture and only small part resided in the "new Korean village" (*Shinhanchon*) in Vladivostok.

Table 1 . The Korean Population in the Maritime and Amur Provinces, 1863-1917

Year		Year	
1863	13 families	1906	34,399
1867	1,415	1908	45,397
1869	3,321	1909	51,554
1882	10,137	1910	54,076
1892	16,564	1911	57,289
1897	23,000	1912	59,715
1899	27,000	1913	57,440
1901	32,298	1914	64,309
1902	32,410	1917	81,825

Sources : Rossiiskii gosudarstvennii istoricheskii arhiv Dalnego Vostoka (The Russian National Historical Archives of the Far East = RNHA FE), file no. 87-4-1593, 7-8; Grave V. V. 1912. "Kitaitsy, koreitsy i iapontsy v Priamur'e : Trudy komandirovannoi po vysochaisheму poveleniyu Amurskoi ekspeditsii" (Chinese, Koreans and Japanese in the Amur Region. Report of the expedition sent by Imperial Order to the Amur Region). Vol. II, St. Petersburg : V. F. Kirshbaum, 129-130.

2. Righteous armies in the Maritime Province

After the Korean army was disbanded in Korea on August 1, 1907, those national guards, who had opposed the Tôkanfu, battled with the Japanese troops and joined the ranks of the righteous armies (*uibyong*)⁵ Some of the righteous armies soon retreated to the mountainous countryside or to abroad, particularly to the United States, Manchuria and the RFE. The leaders of the anti-Japanese movement in Seoul, who maintained relations with their counterparts in California, Hawaii and Manchuria, were apparently afraid of pro-Russian orientation of the political refugees in Vladivostok and avoided contacts with them.⁶ This attitude probably originated in the prewar controversial conflict between the pro-Japanese and pro-Russian parties in the Korean governing elite at the turn of century. While during the Russo-Japanese War most Korean soldiers were aware of the Russian annexation of Korea and sided with Japan, Yi Pom-yun⁷, the former governor (*kanrishi* in Japanese) of the area known as "Kando" in Korean and "Jiandao" in Chinese, formed a detachment of guerrillas and battled with the Japanese under the command of the Second East Siberian Infantry Division led by General Anisimov.⁸

At the beginning of 1906, the detachment led by Yi Pom-yun, shifted to the Russian Maritime Province. General Anisimov required Yi Pom-yun to disband his detachment⁹, but the sources do not allow us to determine whether the latter did this or not. It seems he, on the contrary, not only continued but expanded his activities. At first, he was successful in obtaining support from some of his compatriots, who resided in Russia. One of those who substantially aided him was Choi Ja Hyeon, a rich Korean merchant who fled to Russia at the age of ten, graduated from the Russian school, and had a Russian name, Piotr Semenovich Tsoi. He was responsible for recruiting new fighters for guerrilla detachments battered by engagements with the Japanese.

In January, 1908 a representative of the overthrown Emperor Kojong, Captain of the Seoul Imperial Guards Kim In Su arrived at Khabarovsk, where the government of the Priamur Governor-Generalship was located. In April 1908, three months later, Yi Sang-sol and Yi Wi-jong, who received

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credentials from the Emperor Kojong to represent him at the Hague Conference also came to Novokievskoe in the Maritime Province after the failure of the secret mission to the Hague. Moreover, some of the leaders of the seventy-thousand strong righteous armies, who attacked the Japanese troops from the territory of Manchuria in 1908, but were dispersed in the result of the Tôkanfu anti-guerrilla operation of 1908, also attempted to find new bases within the RFE. Among these leaders was previously mentioned An Chung-gun who acted as a leader of guerrilla group that numbered three hundred soldiers in Manchuria in 1908. This group was defeated by the Japanese and was not able to recruit any new fighters in northeast China. These people with divergent background but still united by the common aim of fighting Japanese, met in the neighboring outskirts of the Russian Empire.

An Chung-gun, Chon Myong-ung and other leaders made a round of the Korean villages, agitating to fill the ranks of the guerrilla insurgents¹⁰. Yi Pom-yun even issued an 'order' addressed to all ethnic Koreans resident in the Maritime Province¹¹, threatening those who would refuse to obey him.

His Majesty the Emperor [Kojong] was pleased to appoint me a Boundary Commissioner in Kando. Thus, having a relationship with the governor of Vladivostok [the Maritime Province], I founded this association. The aim of this association is to restore the independence of Korea.

I am addressing all our brothers resident in the Maritime Province to join us in the struggle for the liberation of our motherland. Remember that our grandfathers lie in the Korean mountains, and our brothers are also all Koreans by birth. Is it impossible to forget our motherland, even if you reside in the foreign countries where you do not live in poverty and are do not grieve.

I appoint Hon Pom-do to be the commander of the guerrilla combat group and order him to collect donations and rifles. I order all Koreans who have acquired Russian citizenship to obey implicitly Hon Pom-do in supplying him with rifles and bullets. If anybody does not obey his orders, I will ask the Military Governor to punish him.

I call on all Koreans resident in the Maritime Province to unite and achieve our aim. What would we not sacrifice for this? After we return to our motherland, those who have rendered especially great services in the salvation of our country will be honored.

Remember that the yellow race will be the yellow race forever. However long you reside in foreign countries, you will never be treated as the white race.

Commander Yi Pom-yun.

As will be shown below, the Military Governor of the Maritime Province never promised Yi Pom-yun that he would punish those Koreans who did not obey the order to donate money and rifles, as such an act would have contradicted the basic ideas of Russian foreign policy.

Although the punitive expedition of Japanese troops and the activities of the pro-Japanese Ilchinhoe

members completely cut the ground away from under insurgent leaders' feet in Manchuria, they could recruit no more than 1,000 new soldiers during a short term in the Maritime Province. However, almost all of these recruits were those Koreans who had fled to Russia after 1905 and who struggled to earn their living. Arms, ammunition, and food were badly needed for them, and Yi Pom-yun managed to collect all these, but, as it will be shown below, this led to tensions within the Korean diaspora in the RFE. During the first year after its formation, this group successfully battled with Japanese troops in Korea, but by mid-1909 these activities decreased and the soldiers scattered. Only in August-September of 1910 did Korean national sensibilities flare up again when news of the annexation reached the Maritime Province. However, shortly afterward, in October 1910, Yi Pom-yun was arrested by Russian police.

Various groups of Koreans, involved in anti-Japanese activities, consolidated themselves in several associations like *Shinminhoe* and *Yuuhakhoe*, and at the beginning of 1909, the Korean National Association (Kungminhoe, KNA) was formed in the Maritime Province exactly at the same time when similar associations appeared in Hawaii and California. The sources do not allow us to determine if Korean associations in various countries coordinated their activities with each other, but the Korean-language newspaper *Shinhan minpo*, located in California, published several brief articles about Korean insurgents in Russia.¹² Branches of the KNA were opened in Vladivostok, Nikolsk, Iman, Khabarovsk, Blagoveshchensk, Irkutsk, Tiumen, Krasnoiarsk, Verkhneudinsk (present-day Ulan Ude) Chita and two more Russian cities. The number of departments increased to thirty-three by 1914.

One of the first actions organized by the KNA in Vladivostok was a meeting of Koreans at which time participants expressed their protest against the annexation of Korea. 2,324 participants signed the following declaration addressed to the great powers.¹³

The Minister of Foreign Affairs at Washington

To the great powers of Europe and America, and to China.

The Korean National Association protests against the annexation of Korea by Japan as Japan shows itself to be a relentless foe to us, Koreans. It has repeatedly violated the concluded treaties; it has violated in a bloody fashion the laws of nations and has ignored the law of justice. To prevent such proceedings we cannot find words strong enough. Japan is now preparing to proclaim the annexation of Korea to the powers, the annexation being against the will of the Korean people.

Japan wants to impose this annexation upon us by violence. To permit Japan to annex us by violence is in any way not only a violation of peace but is a preparation for the further continuation of the struggle without truce and without end. We hope that your Government will respect the rights of nations and the principles of justice and will oppose the annexation of Korea by Japan as it will preserve peace [in the world]. Bear in mind that we have always maintained

excellent relations with all of the powers of the world.

The President of the Korean National Association Yu In Sok¹⁴

This plea stirred up the Koreans in Russia, but the Korean factionalism precluded them from consolidating their efforts, and most naturalized Koreans continued on with their everyday lives.

When after the promulgation of the Newspaper Law (*Shinbunshi hô*) in 1907, many newspapers in Korea ceased¹⁵, Korean-language newspapers abroad continued their attacks on the Tôkanfu and called for struggle. Issued in Vladivostok from February to July 1908 the first Korean-language newspaper in the RFE *Haejo Ilbo* (海潮新聞) directed by Ch'oe Pong-chun (崔鳳俊) the head of the Korean mutual aid society (韓國人共濟會長)¹⁶, widely criticized the Japanese activity in Korea. This newspaper quickly shut down, as the newspaper itself was criticized by both the Russian authorities and the Korean mutual aid society¹⁷ for a series of articles about the assassination of the pro-Japanese American adviser to the Korean government called Durham W. Stevens.¹⁸ While the Russian authorities were afraid that these articles would cause tensions in the relations with Japan, the Korean mutual aid society expected the editors to concentrate on the everyday needs and problems of the Korean community.

One of the editors, Yi Gang¹⁹ soon started another newspaper *Taedong Kongbo* (大東共報) that was able to survive for a longer period from 1908 until it was suspended by the Priamur Governor General Nikolai Lvovich Gondatti on August 24, 1910. The eventual catalyst that forced the Russian authorities to close *Taedong Kongbo* was an article appeared in the newspaper on August 21, 1910 that addressed all Koreans in the RFE and Manchuria and called to “shed their blood for the independence of Korea”²⁰. Three days later, on August 24 the Russian local authorities closed the newspaper but not without a pressure from the central government which, in turn, complied with the request of the Japanese government.²¹ However, ten months later, on May 5, 1911, Yi Gang started *Taeyangbo* (大洋報) until September 2, when changed its title to *Kunming Ilbo* (國民新聞)²² and remained in press from March 3, 1911, until 1914, when all foreign-language newspapers and ethnic associations activities were suspended because of the outbreak of war.

Apparently, there were some contradictions towards the Korean-language press between local authorities and the central government which urged the Priamur governor-general to close it down. The ties between some prominent citizens of Vladivostok and the Korean community can be displayed by the fact that one of the editors of *Haejo Ilbo* was a former lieutenant of the Russian army I. F. Diukov²³, who had been an adviser for the Korean self-governing association and had been previously attached to the sub-unit of the 23rd Siberian Infantry Regiment, in which Koreans served.

3. The collision within the Korean diaspora in the RFE

In 1910, a Commissioner in the Russian Foreign Ministry V. V. Grave, who was in charge of

investigating the life conditions of East Asian immigrants in the Russian Far East reported of political collision between those who was reconciled with the absorption of Korea into metropolitan Japan and those who wished to continue the struggle for independence. This collision was especially sharp in the Korean district in Vladivostok which served as an asylum for most political refugees fled shortly after Japan established its protectorate over Korea in 1905. Grave, describes the social composition of the “Korean settlement” in Vladivostok of 1910 in the following way.

The settlement is a center, around which Koreans, dissatisfied by the present regime in Korea, political refugees and all, whose staying in their homeland are threatened by danger to their lives, form groups. Prosperous and well-educated Koreans, accepted into Russian citizenship, also reside here, and, finally, coolie-laborers, engaged in uncountable works in the city and port, huddle here too²⁴.

What caused such diversity? Apparently patterns of settlement diversified the Korean diaspora in the Russia. As we can see in the table 1, the Korean population in the RFE was roughly on the same level in 1901-1902, but doubled in number over the next ten years (1902-1912) from 32,410 up to 59,715 people. This was related to the exodus of those Koreans who could not be reconciled with the new regime and those whose property was appropriated for military installations or official facilities. Consequently, these 27,000 of newcomers fled to the Korean villages in the Maritime Province, but could occupy only the lowest class of cheap unskilled labor, and work as farm laborers (*batrak*) or were tenants (*arendatory*), cultivating the land of Russian or fellow Korean landlords. This impoverished group was the most fertile source for Yi Pom-yun’s “army”. On the other hand, many of their compatriot employers, well-to-do Korean landlords, acquired Russian citizenship in the 1890s and did not feel close to the insurgents’ struggle for the Korean independence. However, despite being able to recruit his soldiers from groups of newcomers, Yi Pom-yun was helpless without the financial aid of “old immigrants”. At first he was successful in obtaining this aid, but shortly afterward new attempts to collect donations were refused by naturalized Koreans²⁵. As a result, insurgents forced Korean peasants and workers to make donations. Thus, Korean workers at the Koreans-owned factory of Piankov and Co. complained to the Russian authorities that every time the insurgents visited their village they were forced to donate 0.5 roubles each, and there were people who had been forced to donate from 10.2 to 100 roubles. Moreover, since Yi Pom-yun resided himself in Vladivostok, they reported that his followers threatened to punish by death those who would not obey his orders²⁶. Korean merchants Yi Den-po, An Chang-ho, Yi-kan, Tengu Doi-kuan, Kim Seng-mu and Mun Chang-bo prospered in selling meat to the Russian army and other Russian clients, and were threatened not only by Yi Pom-yun²⁷, but also by Ôtori Fujitarô Japanese Consul General in Vladivostok who warned them that “their commercial operations would be stopped and property confiscated, if their

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compatriots in Russia actively resisted the annexation of Korea²⁸. Caught between two fires, the Korean merchants decided that following Yi Pom-yun's orders would be a dangerous course of actions for them and so they complained to the Russian authorities about the violence of Yi Pom-yun's guerrillas, and organized a self-defense group against the insurgents in Nikolskoe village. This self-defense group was led by Mun Chan-po, a naturalized Korean merchant, from the Putsilovka village, one of the oldest settlements of Koreans in the RFE. He embraced the Orthodox faith and had a Russian name, Vasiliï Andreevich Mun. When insurgents attempted to force Korean inhabitants of the village Chapigou to make donations, the self-defense group led by Mun attacked and scattered them.²⁹

Table 2. Naturalized and non-Naturalized Koreans in the RFE.

Year	Naturalized Koreans	Non-naturalized Koreans	In total
1906	16965	17434	34399
1909	14799	36755	51554
1910	17080	36996	54076
1911	17476	39813	57289
1912	16263	43452	59715
1913	19277	38163	57440
1914	20109	44200	64309

Source : RNHA FE, file 87-4-1593, 5-10.

Many newcomers, including those who were involved in the guerrilla activities, being in the midst of the collision between two powers (Russia and Japan) expanding their spheres of influence, chose to be citizens of the former. As seen in the table 2, the numbers of the naturalized Koreans swelled in 1906-1914. Thus, the following petition was submitted to the Russian local authorities one month after the annexation of Korea.

PETITION

We, representatives of the Korean associations of the Maritime Province from Vladivostok, Nikolsk-Ussuriisky, Khabarovsk, Bogorodskoe, Nikolaevsk, Suchan, Novokievskoye, Iman, Viazemskoe and other places, numbering sixteen persons, met in the city of Vladivostok on August 19, 1910. We resolved to demand that the Russian Government allow Korean subjects to acquire Russian citizenship without any special privileges and advantages and that these Koreans be put under the protection of Russian laws, as Korea was annexed. You should take into account that we, Koreans, have resided for many years on the Russian territory, and have lost any relation with our former motherland, which has been replaced by Russia. We would like to be faithful subjects of Russia along with many other ethnicities, populating it, with equal rights to them. We entrust the Russian government with the responsibility for these rights, and pledge to serve the Russian czar faithfully, as his loyal subjects, after we are accepted. We are ready to render military service, and thus, to reinforce the ranks of the Russian army in the Far East.

We entrust this petition to Boris Mikhailovich Polianovsky, as personally known by us, on behalf of all Korean residents of the Maritime Province, and entrust him with the protection of our interests. We sign this on behalf of the associations of the Maritime Province, numbered some 9,780 persons of male population, not including females and children. Vladivostok city, August 19, 1910.³⁰

The phrase “we are ready to render military service, and thus to reinforce the ranks of the Russian army in the Far East” signifies a readiness by Koreans to serve at the Russian army in the same way as all Russian citizens did. However, according to Grave, only a very small number of Koreans reinforced the ranks of the 23rd Siberian Infantry Regiment³¹ before the WWI, and the overwhelming majority of Korean men tried to dodge this duty.

Therefore, the sources demonstrate clearly that the Korean diaspora consisted of several groups very diverse in terms of their economic power and their attitude towards the annexation of Korea. This diversity might be more complicated than in the Korean communities in California, Hawaii or Mexico, as the formation of the Korean communities in the RFE dated to much further back than in other countries and was strongly influenced by the naturalization policy pursued by the Russian government.

4. The Japanese Consul and the Korean Diaspora

The Japanese Consulate General in Vladivostok that was in close connection with the Tōkanfu³², attempted to establish control over Koreans in the Maritime Province and to halt the anti-Japanese movement among Korean immigrants. Thus, shortly before Japan’s annexation of Korea in 1910, Torii, a Russian-speaking merchant, and Kido, a former member of Ilchinhoe were attached to the Japanese Consulate-General in Vladivostok by the Governor-General of Korea with the special mission to supervise Koreans in Russia.³³ As in Hawaii, these Japanese diplomats attempted to extend their control over all Koreans resided in the RFE, including those who were already naturalized in Russia. In this campaign, they received the support of some of their compatriots resided in the RFE. Approximately 5,000 Japanese who settled in Vladivostok and some other Russian cities and were mainly engaged in small trade and catering. They had formed a very strong ethnic association called Uraijo Kyoryūminkai (Vladivostok Resident Association)³⁴ Apparently, the consulate resorted to the help of the members of this organization to construct a similar, in terms of structure and aims, organization Chōsen kyoryūminkai (Korean Resident Association)³⁵

One episode of Japanese activities was recorded by the Ussuri Railroad Géndärmery Department. In November 1910, four months after the annexation, Nagano Ikujiro, a brothel owner³⁶ in Razdolnoe village, visited the local police superintendent in order to request a list of Koreans who resided in the village. The superintendent was absent, and his clerk refused to give him this list, which may not

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even have existed. However, Nagano Ikujiro visited some Korean families and tried to convince them to stop paying a high five-rouble poll tax³⁷ which all Koreans had paid, and chose a person in charge who would visit the Japanese consulate in Vladivostok and receive cheaper seventy-five *kopeika* tax stamps from the consul. Nagano Ikujiro also tried to convince them that the Japanese consul to Vladivostok would take care of all Koreans in Russia.³⁸ Apparently, the attempts of the Japanese consulate failed and Korean Resident Association had never come into existence.

5. The Korean insurgents' movement in regard to the Russo-Japanese relations

Over the decade since the end of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) the diplomatic relations between St.-Petersburg and Tokyo gradually improved. The two powers finally succeeded in their efforts to split northeast China and Mongolia into spheres of influence confirmed by the secret articles of the Russian-Japanese Convention of 1907. Russia reaffirmed Japanese special interests in Korea and South Manchuria and Japan confirmed Russia's priority in the northern part of Manchuria. Furthermore, the two powers made joint efforts to prevent the presence of other countries, particularly the United States, in Manchuria that was agreed in the second Russian-Japanese Convention signed in 1910. The third Convention of 1912 split Inner Mongolia between Russia and Japan along the Peking meridian. Russia secured the western part of Manchuria, and Japan dominated its eastern part.³⁹

However, the possibility of war with Japan was in the air in the Russian Far East from 1914 to the beginning of Japanese intervention in 1918. The remoteness of industrially developed European Russia, with its army and armoury, and the proximity of a well equipped Japanese army alerted Russian top-ranked officials to the outcome of a possible collision and gave rise to rumors about the approach of this conflict. In 1909, Russia's periodicals and even the Priamur Governor-General, Pavel Fedorovich Unterberger, continuously repeated a rumor about the approaching of a new war with Russia's eastern neighbor, and military officers made preparations to send their families to the other side of the Urals.⁴⁰ The peace with Japan was extremely important to Russia, as according to former Minister of Finance, Sergei Iulievich Witte, Russia badly needed peace for the reconstruction of its economy which had been undermined by the Russo-Japanese War and the Revolution of 1905. In this context, unable to influence the development of the situation on the Korean Peninsula, the Russian government expressed no objection to the Japanese annexation of Korea on August 22, 1910⁴¹ and, subsequently, refused to cooperate with the Korean insurgents fled to Russia.

Initially a number of Korean guerrilla leaders expected to receive some support from the local authorities in the Russian Far East. One of them, Kim In Sou, former Captain of the Seoul Imperial Guards, requested the Russian Foreign Ministry Far Eastern Bureau Chief, N.V. Bogoiavlenski, in 1909 to supply Korean insurgents with rifles and other arms, trying to persuade his interlocutor that their struggle would be against the "common enemy" of Russia and Korea.⁴² However, Bogoiavlenski

rejected his request arguing that Russia was a Japanese ally and, therefore, could not allow guerrilla activities on its territory and that the protection of the anti-Japanese forces might become the cause for a new conflict with Japan.⁴³ This negative reply was obviously closely linked to the demand of the Japanese Foreign Ministry to stop the activities of rebellious Koreans that received sympathy within the Russian governing circles and Russian diplomats as the maintenance of friendly relations with Japan was Russia's first priority.

In April 1908, shortly after Japan's request, the Russian Foreign Ministry directly and through its representatives in Japan forced local authorities in the Far East to stop Korean insurgents' activities. Thus, Nikolai Malevski-Malevich, the Russian ambassador to Tokyo, pointed out in his dispatch to Vasilii Egorovich Flug, the Military Governor of the Maritime Province, that the requirement of the Japanese government to halt insurgents' activities "could not be ignored by the Russian government". N.N. Martos, the Priamur Governor-General, also was notified by the Russian Foreign Ministry that Korean guerrillas activities were "not permissible"⁴⁴, and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Petr Arkadieovich Stolypin ordered Martos "to take effective measures to stop the anti-Japanese movement on the Russian border, and, if necessary, to move Korean leaders off Novokievskoye to places more distant from Korea".

Afterward, Malevski-Malevich tried to persuade the next Priamur Governor-General, Pavel Fedorovich Unterberger to arrest a leader of the guerrillas Yi Pom-yun. He wrote, "Your Excellency knows, how the Russian government is interested in the removal of any suspicion of supporting an uprising in Korea. Therefore, I would like to earnestly ask you to take measures to disarm conspirators and prevent the participation of the Russians in the conspiracy. If Yi Pom-yun is a foreigner, he should be deported from the Empire".⁴⁵ Therefore, the Russian government continued the policy of non-admission of the Korean anti-Japanese movement on the Russian territory, and two years later, after the annexation of Korea the Russian Foreign Minister, Alexander Petrovich Izvolski, stressed again the priority of maintaining friendly relations with Japan above supporting, the anti-Japanese struggle of Korean guerrillas. "A danger of touching upon the Korean question, painful for Japan, is incommensurate with the benefit that we could have from the disturbances in Korea".⁴⁶

Nikolai Lvovich Gondatti, who replaced Unterberger in the post of the Priamur Governor-General in 1910, undertook various measures aimed at the stopping of Korean guerrilla activities. He instructed the Governor of Nikolsk-Ussuriisky District N.A.Kesselman to stop the creation of new guerrilla detachments and prevent guerrillas' border crossing that had not been done previously, in 1907-1908. Russian customs were also ordered to confiscate weapons, and specially enforced frontier troops had to deter Koreans from crossing the border.⁴⁷ Due to these measures, attacks of Korean guerrillas from the Russian territory ceased in March 1911. Three months later, Russia and Japan signed the Treaty of Extradition, prescribing the extradition of political criminals that was aimed at suppressing activities of Russian socialists in Japan as well as rebellious Koreans in Russia, and on November 22,

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1914, the Japanese embassy in Petrograd (the name of St. Petersburg in 1914-1924) forwarded a note to the Russian Foreign Ministry with a request to extradite twenty-one leader of the anti-Japanese movement. A list attached to the note (Liste des Coreens dent l'expulsion de la Russie est desirable) included sixteen Koreans from Vladivostok, two from Novokievskoye, and three from Nikolsk-Ussuriisk.⁴⁸ However, the Russian government did not agree to extradite guerrillas to the Japanese administration in Korea.⁴⁹ Finally, the situation was resolved due to a compromise. A number of the Korean guerrilla leaders were arrested, many others were deported to Manchuria, but no one was extradited to the Tōkanfu.

6. The Conclusive remarks

The KNA was closed by the order of the Military Governor of the Maritime Province⁵⁰ on 7 August 1914, soon after the outbreak of the War in Europe forced the Russian government to halt activities of all ethnic associations in the RFE. The Priamur Governor General Gondatti and Russian police kept eye on the Korean rebels until the revolution of 1917 and civil war violently shook the Russian society as a whole and the Korean community in particular. The Japanese intervention to Siberia of 1918-1922 caused a new confrontation between the Japanese troops stationed in the Maritime Province and Korean insurgents' detachments that culminated in a bloody reprisal at the Korean district in Vladivostok on 4 April 1920, when more than three hundred Koreans had been murdered.

Obviously, the rebellious Koreans movement embraced only very small segment of the Korean diaspora in the RFE, not more than five-ten per cent of the total Korean population in Russia, and had prolonged for a relatively short period. The movement failed due to the two factors. First, factionalism precluded Koreans from consolidating their efforts. Second, the Russian government took measures to halt it under the pressure of the Japanese Foreign Ministry. However, the sources still do not allow to determine whether the attitudes of the local authorities contradicted to the policy of the central government or not. Additionally, the study of the interrelation between Korean nationalistic associations in various countries may add useful comparative perspectives.

Notes

1. The first draft of this paper was presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studied held in Chicago on 22-25 March 2001. This paper greatly benefited from comments by Prof. Michael Robinson, Prof. Mark Caprio, and Prof. Wayne Patterson. The author also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Adam Clulow.
2. Kokovtsov, Vladimir Nikolaevich. 1992. *Iz Moego Proshlogo. Vospominaniia 1903-1919* (Out of My Past. Memoirs of 1903-1919) vol. 1. Moscow : "Nauka", 338.
3. Pak, Boris D. 1999. *Vozmezdie na Harninskom vokzale* (Just Punishment at the Harbin station) Irkutsk,

Irkutsk State University of Education.

4. Governor-General of the Eastern Siberia to Foreign Minister Alexandr M. Gorchakov, no. 42, June 30, 1871, Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Irkutskoi Oblasti (National Archives of the Irkutsk District) file no. 24-10-202 (K 2107) 128. There is only limited number of studies on the Koreans in the Russian in English. See. Bird, Isabella L. 1986. *Korea and Her Neighbors*. Vol. 2. Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1-28; Dae-Sook Suh ed. 1987. *Koreans in the Soviet Union*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press; Kolarz, Walter. 1954. *The Peoples of the Soviet Far East*. N.Y.: Praeger. 33-43; Stephan, John J. 1994. *The Russian Far East: a History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 76-80.
5. Ki-baik Lee. 1984. *The History of Korea*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 316-317; Chong-Sik Lee. 1965. *The Politics of Korean Nationalism*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 70-85; Duus, Peter. 1995. *The Abacus and the Sword: the Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 220-241.
6. Han Suk-chung. 1995. *An Chung-gun*. Part 2. Tokyo: Sakuhinsha. 204.
7. In 1902, Yi Pom-yun was sent as governor (*kanrishi* in Japanese) to Kando area.
8. Wada Haruki. 1976. Nichiro tōbo hanzaijin hikiwatashi jōyaku fuzoku himitsu sengensho (The Secret Declaration Attached to the Russo-Japanese Agreement on the Extradition of Criminals) *Shakai Kagaku Kenkyū* (Research in Social Studies) Tokyo: Tokyo University Shakai Kagaku Kenkyūjo, 27:4, 96.
9. The exact number of soldiers is unknown. The figures in Russian sources range from 1,000 to 4,000 soldiers.
10. Han Suk-chung. Op. cit., 204-205.
11. The Protocol of the interrogation of Yi Pom-yun no. 2. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennii istoricheskii arhiv Dalnego Vostoka (The Russian National Historical Archives of the Far East, hereafter RNHA FE) file no. 1-10-327, 2-3; file no. 1-11-73, 61.
12. Shinhan minpo, May 4, 1910, no. 183, p. 4; May 18, 1910, no. 185, 4; May 25, 1910, no. 186, 4.
13. Arkhiv vneshei politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii (The Archives of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire, hereafter AFP RE) file no. 150-493-210, 141.
14. This declaration and its English translation see also in Yun Pyong-sok. 1984. *Yi Sang-sol chong* (The Biography of Yi Sang-sol) 1984, 135-137.
15. Robinson, Michael E. 1984. Colonial Publication Policy and the Korean Nationalist Movement. Myers, Ramon H., Peattie Mark R. eds. *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, Princeton UP. 315.
16. Nihon Gaikō Shiryōkan (Foreign Records Office of Japan) Chōsenjin no kaigai ijū nami ni ijūsha no jōtai torishirabe ikken (The Report on the Koreans overseas) file no. 382-267. Part 3; Saki Ryūzō. 1994. *Itō Hirobumi to An Jun Gun* (Itō Hirobumi and An Chung-gun) Tokyo : Bungei Shunshu. 38.
17. Ibid., 43.
18. For example *Haejo Ilbo* on March 21, 1908 published an article by An Chung-gun, calling for the struggle against Japanese regime in Korea. Saki Ryūzō. Op. cit., 38-40.
19. Yi Gang was a Russian citizen, who had been baptized into Orthodox Church and who possessed a Russian

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- name Avraam Efremov. He had studied in Moscow in 1907, and stayed in San Francisco on his way from Moscow to Vladivostok exactly in the time when Durham W. Stevens was assassinated.
20. Yu Hyo-jong. 1985. *Kyokutô roshia ni okeru chôsen minzoku undô : kankoku heigo kara daiichiji sekai taisen no boppatsu made* (Korean Nationalist Movement in the Russian Far East : from the Annexation of Korea to the Outbreak of the First World War) *Chôsenshi kenkyûkai ronbunshû* (Proceedings of the Society for Korean History Studies) 22, 138.
 21. RNHA FE, file no. 1-6, p. 73; Pak, Boris D. 1965. *Iz istorii emigrantskoi pechati* (Out of the History of Immigrants Press, 1909-1914) *Narody Azii i Afriki* (Peoples of Asia and Africa) 3, 176.
 22. Stephan, John. Op.cit., p. 367.
 23. Pak, Boris D. 1993. *Koreitsi v Rossiiskoi imperii* (The Koreans in the Russian Empire) Moscow : Moscow University Press.
 24. Grave V. V. 1912. *Kitaitsy, koreitsy i iapontsy v Priamur'e : Trudy komandirovannoi po vysochaishemu poveleniyu Amurskoi ekspeditsii* (Chinese, Koreans and Japanese in the Amur Region. Report on an expedition to the Amur Region sent by Imperial Order) Vol. 11. St. Petersburg : V. F. Kirshbaum, 183-184.
 25. Popular support of insurgents also declined in Korea itself, where rebels often forced well-to-do Korean peasants to make donations. See Duus, Peter. Op. cit., 231.
 26. When Yi Pom-yun was arrested by the Russian authorities in October 1910, he denied the fact of enforcing Korean farmers to donate his activities, but Russian did not investigate this case carefully. RNHA FE, file no. 1-10-327, 1, 6, 57-58; file no. 1-11-73, 58.
 27. RNHA FE, file no. 1-11-73, 67-68.
 28. The Secret Report of the Ussuri Railroad Géndarm Department Chief to the Military Governor of the Maritime Province S. Svechin, no. 1581, November 6, 1910. RNHA FE, file no. 1-10-327, 57-59.
 29. The Secret Report of the Nikolsk-Ussuriiskiy District to the Military Governor of the Maritime Province S. Svechin, no. 877, August 12, 1910. RNHA FE, file no. 1-11-73, 38-39.
 30. Grave V. V. Op. cit., 423.
 31. Ibid., 196.
 32. The Japanese newspaper "Jiji Shimpo" published an article which stated that the Governor-General of Korea sent two top-rank officials on an official journey to each area, where many Koreans resided, to observe them. *China and Japan*, 151, 3 August 1913, Khabarovsk.
 33. A report by P. Iu. Vaskevich, an interpreter in the Russian Embassy in Tokyo, 1911. AFP RE, file no. 148-487-758, 24b.
 34. For the Japanese community in the RFE see Stephan, John J. Op.cit., 76-80; Igor R. Saveliev. 1998. "Japanese across the Sea : Features of Japanese Emigration to the Russian Far East, 1875 and 1916" *Amerasia Journal* 23:3 (UCLA: Asian American Studies Center) 103-122.
 35. A report by P. Iu. Vaskevich. Op.cit., 24b.
 36. Japanese prostitutes constituted a large part of the Japanese residents in the RFE.

37. According to the regulation of May 17, 1888 the poll tax amount for Koreans and Chinese was five roubles while Japanese as the citizens of a most favored nation were charged only 0.75 roubles. One rouble contained one hundred kopeika.
38. The Protocol of the search of the house of Nagano Ikujiro and interrogation of the Koreans Nahm Ten-sam and Kim Ito-ki by the Ussuri Railroad Gendarmery Department Chief Captain Korf, December 24, 1910. AFP RE, file no. 148-487-759, 13-17.
39. Grimm, E.D. 1927. *Sbornik dogovorov I drugih dokumentov po istorii mezdunarodnih otnoshenii na Dalnem Vostoke (1842-1925)* (Collected Treaties and Documents of the Far Eastern International Relations' history) Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies.
40. For Unterberger's position on the item of a possibility of a new war with Japan see : Kokovtsov, Vladimir Nikolaevich. 1992. *Op cit.*, 345-346.
41. Mo Shen. 1960. *Japan in Manchuria. An Analytical study of Treaties and Documents.* Manila: Grace; *Nihon gaikô bunsho* (Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy) 1910. Vol. 1. Tokyo, 686.
42. A Private Letter of Foreign Ministry Far Eastern Bureau Chief N.V Bogoiavlenski to the Deputy Foreign Minister N. V. Charykov. Khabarovsk, 31.01.1909. AFP RE, file no. 148-487-1096, 85-87.
43. Ibid., 86-87. See also : Pak, B. D. 1992. The Anti-Japanese Struggle of the Koreans in Russia before and after Annexation. *Han Minchok Tok'ip Unton Sayu* (A History of the Liberty Movement of Korean Ethnicity) Seoul, 1108.
44. A Secret Telegramme to the Lieutenant-General N. N. Martos, 28.04.1908. AFP RE, file no. 143-491-88, 22.
45. RNHA FE, file no. 1 - 3 -1160, 19, 68.
46. RNHA FE, file no. 702-1 -640, 220.
47. Pak, Boris D. Koreans in the Russian Empire. *Op.cit.*, 173-182.
48. A Secret Telegramme of the Priamur Governor-General, Khabarovsk, October 14, 1914. AFP RE, file no. 148-487-767, 16.
49. See Hara, Teruyuki. 1987. The Korean Movement in the Russian Maritime Province, 1905-1922. *Koreans in the Soviet Union.* Dae-Sook Suh ed. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 4 -5.
50. RNHA FE, file 702-3 -515, 9.

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