

# The 1911 Revolution and the Korean Independence Movement: The Road to Democratic Republicanism

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## 1. Foreword

The Xing Zhonghui 興中會 (Revive China Society) started by Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) and Wang Zhaoming 汪兆銘 (Wang Jingwei, 1883-1944) merged with the Hua Xinghui 華興會 established by Song Jiaoren 宋教仁 (1882-1913) and Huang Xing 黃興 (1874-1916) on August 20, 1905 in Tokyo to become the Zhongguo Tongmenghui 同盟會 (Chinese Revolutionary Alliance). Sun Yat-sen was selected to head the organization, and Huang Xing to run general affairs. Various documents were adopted, including the “military government proclamation,” “general articles of the Tongmenghui,” and “revolutionary strategy.” The Tongmenghui issued as their organizational publication the *Minbao* 民報, which adopted the general principles advocated by Sun of “expel the Manchus and restore China, establish a republic, and equalize land rights.” Subsequently, they fomented uprisings all over China, but all ended in failure.

The Wuchang New Army successfully revolted against the Qing government on October 10, 1911. Other provinces followed suit by declaring independence from the central government. On January 1, 1912 the Provisional Government of the Republic of China was established in Nanjing, with Sun Yat-sen as provisional president. On February 12, however, Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) compelled the child emperor Puyi (1906-1967) to abdicate. The next day Sun Yat-sen turned in his resignation as president and recommended to the provisional National Assembly that Yuan take the position. On February 15 the provisional National Assembly agreed on Yuan’s appointment and to designate Nanjing as the capital. On March 8 the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China was drawn up. On March 10 Yuan

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Shikai was appointed second provisional president in Beijing, and the next day, the Provisional Constitution was promulgated.

In February 1913, a national election was held in accordance with the stipulations contained in the Provisional Constitution. The Kuomintang won the most votes, and Song Jiaoren was put forward as candidate for prime minister by the National Assembly.<sup>1</sup> On March 20, however, Song was assassinated in Shanghai on Yuan Shikai's orders. Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionist faction attempted an armed uprising against Yuan's Beiyang Government, but were quickly quashed (The Second Revolution). In 1914 Yuan abolished the Provisional Constitution and strengthened presidential powers. He made himself emperor in 1915, which proved to be a fiasco, and in June of the following year, died of illness. Li Yuanhong 黎元洪 (1864-1928), who was installed as president after Yuan's death, announced the reinstatement of the Provisional Constitution, but lost power the following year. Subsequently, the Beiyang Government led politics in a direction that diverged from what the revolutionists had intended.<sup>2</sup>

Sun Yat-sen exiled to Japan after the Second Revolution. He organized the Chinese Revolutionary Party in Tokyo in 1914, and on September 10, 1917 established the Chinese Nationalist Military Government (Kwangtung Constitutional Protection Government). Sun was appointed as generalissimo and began a movement to "protect the Provisional Constitution." This initiated the second phase of the Republican Revolution. The May Fourth Movement occurred during this period.

The above survey of historical developments in China's revolution indicates several points of similarity with Korea's contemporaneous independence movement. China and Korea were in very similar revolutionary circumstances as a result of certain interweaving chain events. Yet no research has been done on these similarities. One of the most important reasons for this lacuna is the tendency in historical research on East Asia toward national historical perspectives and unilateralism (national particularism). Research on regional history and comparative history is necessary to eliminate this problem.

This paper examines the relationship between the 1911 Revolution and the Korean Independence Movement. First, the secret society Sinminhoe 新民会 (New People's Association), will be discussed, including Cho Sŏng-huan

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1 The Kuomintang, which was established in Beijing on August 25, 1912, proposed that Sun Yat-sen be party leader, but in actuality, Song Jiaoren held power.

2 The Beiyang Government enacted the Constitution of the Republic of China, also called the Cao Kun 曹錕 (1862-1938) Constitution, on October 10, 1923, after which it abolished the Provincial Constitution.

曹成煥 (1875-1948), who was in charge of the Beijing headquarters, and his approach to the revolutionary situation in China. Next, the activities of Korea's independence fighter, Sin Gyu-sik 申圭植 (1880-1922), who exiled to China, will receive focus. Lastly, a comparison will be made of the similarities between the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China and that of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea organized in Shanghai after the Samil (March 1) Movement, and of the philosophical foundations of the “democratic republics” chosen by both countries.

## 2. Cho Sǒng-huan and Events Surrounding China's Revolution

The 1911 Revolution and its aftermath had a tremendous impact on the Korean Independence Movement. The “independence” in “independence movement” implies revolution; the 1911 Revolution was a good model for Korea's independence movement. Korea entered a type of revolutionary state when it was annexed in August 1910 by Japan. Actually, it could be said that the revolution had already begun when Korea became a protectorate of Japan through the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905 in November of that year. In particular, when Emperor Kojong 高宗皇帝 (1852-1919, reigned 1863-1907) was forcibly abdicated on July 24, 1907, the momentum of the independence movement shifted from the Constitutionlists to the Revolutionists. The Sinminhoe secret society was emblematic of this shift.

The Sinminhoe was proposed by An Chang-ho 安昌浩 (1878-1938), who had returned from the United States in February 1907, and was created by seven individuals, including Yang Gi-tak 梁起鐸 (1871-1938), Yi Dong-nyǒng 李東寧 (1869-1940), and Yi Dong-hui 李東輝 (1873-1935). Yang Gi-tak was general manager, Yi Dong-nyǒng was elected general secretary, and An Chang-ho was executive officer of the organization. They adopted such documents as “Prospectus for the Sinminhoe 大韓新民會趣旨書,” and “Applied Articles for the Sinminhoe 大韓新民會通用章程.” Chapter 2, Clause 1 in the Applied Articles for the Sinminhoe declares: “We will reform the corrupt thoughts and customs of our Korea and restore the people....we will develop a restored free and civilized country.” This “free and civilized country” refers to an “independent country with a republican form of government.” That is, the Sinminhoe was a revolutionary organization that aimed at a republican revolution.

In March 1910, the Sinminhoe decided to exile several of its leaders abroad. The exiled leaders would establish themselves in separate areas. For example, An Chang-ho would exile to the United States, Yi Dong-nyǒng to the Russian coastal area (Primorsky Krai), Yi Dong-hui to Manchuria, and Cho Sǒng-huan to the branch headquarters in Beijing and other Chinese cities. Their foreign exile began in April of that year. More than ten of the

exiled vanguard leaders, including An Chang-ho and Sin Chae-ho 申采浩 (1880-1936) met in Qingdao in April to discuss a strategy for achieving their goals. The strategy chosen was An Chang-ho's plan to build a new Korean village and military academy.

Beginning in January, 1911, however, the Japanese Government-General of Korea rounded up groups of people in Hwanghae Province 黃海道 who were considered to require observation. In September patriots such as the Sinminhoe's general director, Yang Gi-tak, and other central leaders as well as regional members, were arrested, ostensibly for violating the security law. The Government-General, which had ferreted out the Sinminhoe organization, again made arrests in May of 1912, this time of Sinminhoe leaders and members throughout the country (the "105 Incident"). The Sinminhoe was thus effectively destroyed within Korea. Korea at that time entered an even darker period under the military regime imposed by the Japanese Government-General. Perhaps this is why there are no indications of discussion, meetings, or secret societies, even though the 1911 Revolution and its aftermath certainly must have had a tremendous impact on the independence movement within Korea.

What response did the Korean independence fighters exiled in China have to the 1911 Revolution and revolutionary events? Some indication can be discerned from part of a letter sent from Cho Sŏng-huan to An Chang-ho.<sup>3</sup> The letter, stamped October 21, 1911 (August 30 by the lunar calendar), eleven days after the Wuchang Uprising, describes the attitudes of various national envoys toward the revolution: "the Japanese, Russians, and others proposed negotiations, but the British, American, and French envoys opposed the idea, and proclaimed neutrality. They have sent military observers." The Japanese side, however, on the one hand would "encourage the revolutionary party and firmly make them resist the government," while on the other would "encourage the [Qing] government and requested permission to do mopping up operations." (p.582)

After repeating the content of the letter of the previous day, a letter stamped October 22 described in detail the fluctuations in internal and external affairs of the Qing government. The Korean revolutionists expressed deep emotion toward the revolutionary army of China: "we have great hopes, but wonder when such a day will come for us" (p. 589). Cho had praised the 1911

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3 Twenty-five of the letters (1, 174-198) from Cho Sŏng-huan to An Chang-ho are collected in the second volume of *Dosan An Chang-ho jŏnzip* 島山安昌浩全集, compiled by the editorial committee of *Dosan An Chang-ho sŏn saeng jŏnzip* 島山安昌浩先生全集編纂委員會編, (Seoul: Dongyang Publishing, Ltd. 2000).

Revolution as a “great hope,” which he described in a letter marked October 26 thusly: “The National Revolutionary Army’ is moral in their dealings, adept at diplomacy, and perfect in their facilities.” “From now on, it will probably become a model for the Chinese civil war.” (pp. 591-592). He subsequently lamented, “We don’t have enough capability yet, so we cannot express any empathy even if given the opportunity. This is truly distressing.” (p. 594)

After the success of the Wuchang Uprising, the Qing government suppressed the Beiyang Army’s insurgency and reinstated Yuan Shikai, who had been dismissed earlier from his position as Viceroy of Zhili. On October 22, Hunan declared independence, followed by Jiangxi the next day. On October 27, Yuan was appointed Imperial Inspector Minister and began his invasion of Wuhan. On November 1, the Qing government appointed Yuan Shikai as Premier.<sup>4</sup> Cho predicted presciently in a letter marked November 15 (September 15 by the lunar calendar): “Yuan Shikai has organized a new cabinet; no matter how clever the measures or how much they reform the administration, the three party factions (Sun Yat-sen’s Revolutionary Party, Kang [You-wei]’s and Liang [Qiqiao]’s Constitutional Party, and Yuan Shikai’s Government Party), close cooperation among them will be difficult, and there is no hope that the civil war will subside.” (p. 598)

Meanwhile, Shanghai was retroceded on November 3; Zhejiang declared independence on November 4 and Jiangsu on November 5, followed by declarations of independence by one province after another. Cho, who conveyed this news in his letter marked November 20 (September 30 by the lunar calendar), reported that wanting to receive “great empathy” from the Revolutionists, he wished to sow the seeds of “eternal mutual help toward our country in its entirety.” (p. 605) In the letter postmarked two days later, Cho, who came from a family of military officers, appealed: “I think it reasonable and appropriate to devote ourselves to this country, so I request my petition be granted.” (p. 615) Cho had the intention of participating in the 1911 Revolution.<sup>5</sup>

Once revolutionary governments were set up in every province in China, the establishment of a unified government became imperative. On November 9, Li Yuanhong appealed to have the representatives of each province sent to Wuchang. This appeal was the strategy of Song Jiaoren, but on the following

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4 Two days after Yuan attacked Hankou, however, he tried secretly to conduct peace deliberations with the Hubei Military Government.

5 It cannot be concluded that Cho participated directly in the 1911 Revolution, but it can be said that he participated indirectly. This is also true of Sin Gyu-sik.

day, Song left Wuchang for Nanjing. On the other hand, Chen Qimei 陳其美 (1878-1916), Governor-General of Shanghai, who, like Song, was a leader in the Central League of the Tongmenghui,<sup>6</sup> on November 11 asked that representatives from each province be sent to Shanghai. On November 15, a meeting was convened in Shanghai, and a representative federation was established of governors-general from each province.

On November 23, however, the Hubei military government in Wuchang reacted against the actions taken by participants at the Shanghai meeting. As a result, representatives from each province proceeded to Wuchang. In the meantime, Yuan Shikai presented to the Hubei military government three conditions for reconciliation: “a ceasefire; abdication of the Xuantong emperor (Puyi); and the appointment of Yuan Shikai as president.” On December 1, the two sides signed the “Wuhan Regional Ceasefire Agreement.” In the Wuchang meeting held on December 2, a provisional government organization outline was approved, and at the same time Yuan was confirmed as candidate for provisional president. The next day, a resolution was passed to enact general provisions article 21, chapter 3, and a policy of democratic republicanism with a presidency was confirmed. It was stipulated that they would convene in Nanjing within a week and that an election for provisional president would be held. Yuan appointed Tang Shaoyi 唐紹儀 (1862-1938) representative plenipotentiary on December 8 and held talks with Li Yuanhong and representatives from all of the provinces in Hankou.

Cho visited Beijing during this turbulent period to meet with Sin Gyu-sik, whom he had already met while living in the same military academy in the Republic of Korea. In a letter postmarked December 11 (October 21 by the lunar calendar), Cho relayed information on Yuan’s dispatch of Tang Shaoyi and other events in China, after which he said that he and Sin Gyu-sik had “resolved to move south and are leaving tomorrow.” “If battles continue, I’ll leave a token of my regard by firing just a single shot. If there is reconciliation, I intend to subsidize them [the revolutionists] with a thousand yuan or so worth of military provisions. The amount of cash that Brother Sin brought with him would cover that.” (pp. 618-619). As Cho said, he went with Sin to Nanjing, and then on to Shanghai, where he made friends with the leaders and other people in the revolutionary faction, thereby building deeper relations with them.

The next time Cho wrote a letter was on February 4, 1912 (December 15 by the lunar calendar). The situation in China during that interim had

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6 The Central League of the Tongmenghui was established in Shanghai on July 31, 1911. As a result of the election, five people, including Song Jiaoren and Chen Qimei, were elected general secretary.



changed: Sun Yat-sen had returned to China on December 25, and on December 29, the election for provisional president had been held in Nanjing. On January 1, 1912 Sun Yat-sen was thus able to proclaim the founding of the Republic of China. Hearing of this event, Cho extolled the founding of the Republic in his letter marked February 4: "There are many joyful events that I have seen and heard about since arriving here at the beginning of the month. Besides the four provinces of Zhili, Shandong, Shanxi, and Henan, fourteen other provinces have already joined the Republic. Sun Yat-sen has been elected Provisional President. Everything is proceeding along well day by day. This is fortuitous not only for China but for all of Asia, including our country." (p. 624).

Cho's praise of the founding of the Republic of China continues in his letter marked February 20, 1912 (January 3 by the lunar calendar), in which he wrote: "Five thousand years of autocratic government by the old empire have been overthrown, and a dazzling republican government has been established on the six lands of China....This is a great success created by the Chinese Republic, a new light in Asian history; it is terrifying to the powerful neighbors that surround us." (pp.632-633) He also said, "It is a success for China, which advocated freedom on the Asian mainland, and it is a success that the revolutionary ideas that had been nearly eradicated have been roused again in the peoples on the Bando Kangsan [Korean Peninsula]." He continued, "So long as we bravely proceed toward our goal without losing our spirit, we will destroy the devil on our peninsula. I am confident that the time is not far away when the days will be bright again." (p. 633). By this expression, Cho was referring to his belief in the recovery of his homeland from the Japanese.

Cho also wrote: "when we visited important personages in Nanjing...they expressed their limitless welcome and gratitude, and treated us as if we were family," so in return, "Brother Sin sent several hundred yuan of our left-over travel money to supplement their military expenses. We expressed in writing to Huang Xing the spirit of our people." In response, "Huang Xing wrote, 'Allies and true gentlemen are perpetually helping us to be successful, and together we will enjoy each other's freedom and happiness.'" (pp. 634-635). Cho wrote that they had joined the "foreign group" of the Tongmenghui, and that they "had long since become members of the Freedom Party, and planned to join the Republican Constitutional Party shortly." (p.630)<sup>7</sup>

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7 The Freedom Party was formed in Shanghai on February 3, 1912, but was disbanded on August 30, 1913 by the capital administrative police department. The Republican Constitution Committee was established at the end of December, 1911 in Shanghai by Wu Tingfang 伍廷芳 (1842-1922). It was a

Cho said that he was encouraged by “several people” among the revolutionists: “If you establish your organization in various areas of China, contact comrades in your external regions, and travel together with us in perpetuity through thick and thin, there will be no hindrances or difficulties; we can expect that you will achieve great success within the space of a decade.” (p.630) Sin Gyu-sik remained in the area in accordance with this arrangement. “Older brother Sin is still in this land, diligently working on fostering new contacts, and trying to build a solid organization.” (p.630) Cho returned to Beijing and engaged in the work of forming a network with comrades for some time.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. The Chinese Revolution and Sin Gyu-sik

It can be discerned from some of Sin Gyu-sik’s poems in his Chinese poetry anthology, *Amoknu* 兎目淚 (*A Child’s Tears*), that Sin exiled himself in China in the latter half of November, 1911.<sup>9</sup> That is, Sin exiled to China after the success of the Wuchang Uprising and in the midst of the 1911 Revolution. He visited Cho Sŏng-huan in Beijing on December 11. Thus, the statement by Min Pil-ho 閔弼鎬 (1897-1963) in his *Yegwan Sin Gyu-sik sŏn saeng jŏngi* 睨觀申圭植先生伝記 (*Biography of Mr. Sin Gyu-sik*) that “After traveling to China, Mr. Sin changed his name to Sin-sŏng, joined the Tongmenghui and participated in the Wuchang Uprising under President Sun Yat-sen’s direction” is incorrect.<sup>10</sup> However, considering that Sin and Cho both joined the “foreign group” of the Tongmenghui, it’s possible that this is not entirely a mistake.

As mentioned above, Sin built close contacts with important people in the revolutionary group, a fact that can be ascertained in many of the Chinese poems in his *A Child’s Tears*. For example, the poem, “Bokŏm” 宝劍

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comparatively moderate group within the revolutionary faction.

- 8 In July, 1912, however, Cho’s plan to assassinate Katsura Tarō 桂太郎 (1848-1913) on the latter’s way to Europe via the Trans-Siberian Railroad failed. Cho was arrested by the Japanese police and sent back home. As soon as Cho was released a year after being punished with exile on Kōje Island 巨濟島 off the southern coast of Korea, he again took up exile in China.
- 9 While Sin was in self-imposed exile in China, he wrote over 140 Chinese poems and 19 panegyrics. Sin’s son-in-law, Min Pil-ho 閔弼鎬 (1897-1963), titled the collection *A Child’s Tears*. When Min published his own book, *Han-Jung Oegyosahwa* (*A Sino-Korean Diplomatic History*) 韓中外交史話 in 1942 in China, he included *A Child’s Tears* in it.
- 10 Min Pil-ho, *Yegwan Sin Gyu-sik sŏn saeng jŏngi* (*Biography of Mr. Sin Gyu-sik*); Si Yuan-hua 石源華 & Kim Chun-yŏp 金俊燁 eds., *Sin Gyu-sik, Min Pil-ho wa Han-jung kwangye* 申圭植·閔弼鎬 韓中關係, (*Sin Gyu-sik, Min Pil-ho and Korea-China Relations*) (Seoul: Nanam Publishing Co., 2003).



(“Treasured Sword”); the two poems, “Jǔng Huang Keqiang” 贈黃克強 (“To Huang Keqiang [Xing]”); and the poem, “Man Huang Keqiang” 挽黃克強 (“Panegyric to Huang Xing”) are four such poems included in the collection. The “writings” that appear in Cho’s letter postmarked February 20, 1912 to Huang Xing quoted earlier are thought to refer to the two poems “To Huang Keqiang,” or at least to one of them. The first poem is:

The righteous drums sound, chariots at the four borders;  
The high winds reach the Central Plains in October.  
Under the sun the fireflies and grasses add not a little;  
The horses on the riverside have heartfelt calls for revolution.  
The mainland welcomes the spring, proclaiming virtue.  
Qingshan wept bitter tears; the night summoned the souls,  
The Han thrived and the Qin was destroyed, but there is justice;  
Since that time who has known of the Lord Cang Hai (滄海君)?

Sin likened Huang Xing to Lord Cang Hai (the robust man of Cang Hai who is said to have thrown a mallet and hit Emperor Qinshi Huang [259-210 BC]).

The second poem is:

The mountains and rivers meet and are recast,  
The days and months appear new;  
Success and achievement cannot be taken from  
A great man in history.

Here Sin pays tribute to Huang as “a great man in history.” It should be noted that “Panegyric to Huang Xing” was composed on October 31, 1916 upon the death of Huang Xing.

Sin also sent two Chinese poems to Sun Yat-sen. The first one reads:

The Republic ushers in a new era,  
Refashioning the old heaven and earth,  
The peoples of the Four Seas are joyous.  
Long live Sun Yat-sen!

The second poem from “To Sun Yat-sen” reads:

The thorny travails of heaven and earth  
Are all but gone;  
The mountain paths bordering the Chu  
Are uneven,  
Blood and steel, a strong place, virtuously  
Facing the sun,  
Tens of thousands are of one voice.

Sin met Sun Yat-sen in Shanghai on April 17, 1912. An article entitled “Encomium to Sun Yat-sen, composed by the Korean XX,” carried in the *Minquanbao* 民權報 dated April 18 of the same year, is thought to have been

penned by Sin. The article states, “I heard news that Sun Yat-sen traveled through Shanghai and has gone again to Guangdong. I wanted to meet him, so I went to the Huizhong Inn last night. Just then, I met Hu Hanmin 胡漢民 (1879-1936), and Sun Yat-sen, who had just returned from outside....Hu Hanmin asked me to join them in the elevator and go to Sun’s room. Sun asked me to sit down, but I continued to stand, chanting, “Long Live the Republic of China! Long Live the first president of Asia!”

According to his Chinese elegy, *Do gou hyōra-kun* (“Mourning the Death of My Old Friend, Xue’er,”) in *A Child’s Tears*, the first Chinese whom Sin befriended in Shanghai was Xu Xue’er 徐血兒, a journalist for *Minlibao* 民立報 who later became secretary to Song Jiaoren.<sup>11</sup> In the elegy, which Sin wrote on the death of Xu, he added, “Xue’er, I traveled incognito from the year of the 1911 Revolution from the ancient capital across the seas; the next day you were the first person who befriended me.” In other words, the day after Sin traveled from the old capital of Nanjing to Shanghai during the year of the 1911 Revolution (thought to be sometime in the middle of February, 1912), Xu was the first person with whom Sin made friends.

Sin also built a close relationship with Dai Jitao 戴季陶 (1891-1949; pseudonym Tian Qiu) of the *Minquanbao*.<sup>12</sup> For example, there is a Chinese poem in *A Child’s Tears* called “To Tian Qiu.” In the poem Sin uses a metaphor for himself, as follows: “Gazing wistfully at the evening swan,” while lamenting, “the future is as a thousand waves, ten thousand valleys.” This poem was printed by Dai Jitao in the April 10, 1912 edition of the *Minquanbao* with the commentary, “The author of this poem is a patriot from Korea, a country now in ruins; he has gone into exile in China and is working himself to death in the independence movement. When we read his poem, we collapse in tears. Eventually we, too, might tread in the tracks of Korea.”

Another classical Chinese poem in *A Child’s Tears* is “To Song Yufu 宋漁夫 [Song Jiaoren; *yufu* means ‘fisherman’]”:

Political storms have opened the curtain of revolution,  
The snow and moon satisfy the fisherman on the shore.  
On this day of Han fortune and China’s rejuvenation  
We have not yet taken revenge upon the enemy of Qin.  
The strong pine can know contentment,

11 The *Minlibao* was launched in early spring, 1912 by Yu Youren 于右任 (1879-1964) and Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1881-1973); it was the newspaper of the Central League of the Tongmenghui.

12 The *Minquanbao* was launched on March 28, 1912 by Dai Jitao, a member of the Tongmenghui and Sun Yat-sen’s secretary from that year.

We will still grieve even after the yellow ape perishes.  
 The dragon hall will remember  
 The blood and tears of a man from Chǒnggu [Korea].

To paraphrase, Sin is saying that the curtain of the revolution has opened, and China's fortune has been to celebrate a day of rejuvenation, while Korea grieves that the Japanese are still in their country and that Korea has not yet been able to take revenge. This represents Sin Gyu-sik's own feelings. After Song was assassinated, Sin attended his funeral in Shanghai, where he displayed his tribute, drawing the attention of those around him.<sup>13</sup> Sin also wrote the elegy, "With respect to his friend, from a sentimental man from Chǒnggu." Sin read this poem when Chen Qimei was assassinated on May 18, 1916. In the elegy, Sin laments the death of Chen Qimei and expresses his anxiety about the many difficulties that lie ahead for the Chinese revolution and the Republic.

Sin organized the Dongjaesa 同濟社 (Mutual Assistance Society) on July 4, 1912 in Shanghai. The central figures in the Society were the illustrious independence fighters, Sin, Pak Un-sik 朴殷植 (1859-1925), Kim Gyu-sik 金奎植 (1881-1950), and Sin Chae-ho, as well as many study-abroad students, according to Min Pil-ho (*Biography of Mr. Sin Gyu-sik*, p.266).<sup>14</sup> Min Pil-ho also states that "The Korean and Chinese patriots joined forces, and in order to foster friendship between the two peoples, promoted organization of a new Asian Mutual Assistance Society." "Song Yufu, Chen Yingshi 陳英士 [Qimei], Hu Hanmin, Dai Jitao, and...Chen Guofu 陳果夫 (1892-1951)" were among the promoters of the new Asian society (pp. 266-267).

In 1913, however, the close relationship that Sin and the others had built with the revolutionaries received several serious blows. Song Jiaoren was assassinated on March 20 of that year, a setback that was followed by the failure of Sun Yat-sen's Second Revolution in July. Sun, Huang Xing, Chen Qimei, and the other revolutionaries fled to Japan. In July, 1914 they formed the Zhonghua Gemingdang 中華革命黨 (Chinese Revolutionary Party) in Tokyo, and continued their fight against Yuan Shikai. In December, 1915 Chen Qimei, who was the head of the Chinese Revolutionary Party, returned to China and raised an army in Shanghai (the Third Revolution) but it, too,

13 Bae Gyǒng-han 裴京漢, *Sonmun gwa Hanguk* 孫文과 韓國 (*Sun Yat-sen and Korea*), (Seoul: Toseo Chulban Hanul Publishing Co. 圖書出版한울), 2007, p. 59.

14 Major members of the Mutual Assistance Society became leading figures in the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea that was organized about seven years later. In that sense, it could be said that the Mutual Assistance Society was a precursor organization to the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea.

ended in failure. Then on May 18, 1916, Chen was also assassinated. Huang Xing continued planning various strategies, but died of illness on October 31 of the same year.

At the end of 1914, Sin and the other leaders of the Mutual Assistance Society were searching for new strategies for the independence movement, and had already begun the work of organizing the Sinhan Hyökmnyongdang 新韓革命党 (New Korean Revolutionary Party). From the name of the party, it can be surmised that Sin was influenced by the Chinese Revolutionary Party. If that is the case, then it can be assumed that some of the goals of forming the New Korean Revolutionary Party were to join in solidarity with the Chinese Revolutionary Party in their move against Yuan Shikai and to support their actions. But events took a different turn; the First World War that broke out in July of that year and the worsening of Sino-Japanese relations precluded this development. As soon as the war broke out, Japan sent soldiers to the Shandong Peninsula with the aim of taking over German interests there, and in August issued a proclamation of war against Germany. At the beginning of 1915, Japan submitted the 21 Demands to the Beiyang Government with the intention of destroying Chinese sovereignty, offering in return support for Yuan Shikai becoming emperor.

In March 1915, the leading independence fighter Yi Sang-söl 李相高 (1870-1917) visited Shanghai.<sup>15</sup> Under Yi's influence, the New Korean Revolutionary Party that was formed in March established its headquarters in Beijing. Yi was elected head of the party, Pak Un-sik director of party headquarters, and Söng Nak-hyong 成樂馨 (birth and death unknown), head of foreign relations. Leadership rights of the party organization were entrusted to the Beijing headquarters. Shanghai became one branch, and Sin Gyu-sik was selected as branch leader. The activities of the Beijing headquarters, however, took an unexpected turn. Predicting "German victory, and post-victory a Sino-German alliance in a war against Japan, resulting in Korean independence," the Korean party planned to conclude an anti-Japanese military agreement with Germany and a Sino-Korean Treaty of Amity with the Beiyang Government.

Germany was a monarchy at the time, while Yuan Shikai was scheming to be enthroned as emperor. The headquarters in Beijing thus tried to obtain a

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15 Yi Sang-söl exiled overseas in 1906, traveling through Shanghai and Vladivostok to the Russian territory Primorsky Krai, and from there to Gando 間島 (Jiandao) where he opened an ethnic Korean school and a base for the independence movement. He was also a pioneer independence fighter. In the spring of 1907, he received a secret order from Emperor Kojong and was sent to the peace conference at the Hague. He was one of the three secret Korean emissaries who petitioned for Korean independence.

secret order or permission from Emperor Kojong to organize a provisional government, while simultaneously obtaining recognition from China and Germany to form a tripartite alliance. Operations for obtaining a secret order from Emperor Kojong were to be undertaken by Sŏng Nak-hyong, head of foreign relations. Sŏng secretly entered Korea in July, 1915 and tried to carry out his mission but was arrested; his mission ended in failure. Not only did the plans of the Beijing headquarters dissipate, but the very existence of the New Korean Revolutionary Party became imperiled and in fact, the Party soon disbanded.

Although the Party was dissolved, the Party's plan to organize a provisional government survived. Sin Gyu-sik and the other leaders of the Mutual Assistance Society organized the Daedong bogukdan 大同輔國團 (Union for Helping the Nation) in 1915 in Shanghai. In July 1917, the Daedong Unity Proclamation 大同團結宣言 was promulgated under the names of fourteen members, including Sin Gyu-sik, Pak Un-sik, Cho Sŏng-huan, and Kim Gyu-sik. The proclamation aimed for the "birth of a new Korea" through unity of independence fighters and groups within and outside the country. The general provisions were comprised of seven articles. Article 1 stated, "We will organize a peerless, supreme institution," while Article 3 proposed, "We will enact a great constitution and implement a constitutional government befitting a civil government," etc. In other words, they established a unified organization for an independence movement that was to be a provisional government, with the aim of creating a democratic republic.

At the same time, Sin Gyu-sik and other leaders of the Mutual Assistance Society learned that the Stockholm Conference was to be convened in August, 1917. They sent a telegram to the Socialist gathering under the designation, "Korean Socialist Party." (Related articles found in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, dated September 2, 1917). Resistance from the United States and other Western powers resulted in cancellation of the Socialist conference in Stockholm, and the Korean telegram came to naught. The Korean Socialist Party was an organization in name only, but its existence indicates that Sin and the other leaders of the Mutual Assistance Society had expanded their consciousness of unity to include the international Socialist organization.

On November 18, 1917, after the Russian Revolution, the Soviet government issued a "proclamation on peace," which stated opposition to the forcible annexation of territories and peoples, including colonies. It also stipulated overall recognition of the self-determination of all peoples. It is easy to imagine that there was a strong desire among the Korean freedom fighters to cooperate with the Soviet regime. At the same time, US President Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) announced on January 8, 1918 his Fourteen Points. The

fifth of the Fourteen Points extolled “a free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims” as well as self-determination of peoples. This partial recognition of self-determination also probably increased the expectations of the Korean independence fighters.

The *Sinhan Chǒngnyon Dang* 新韓青年黨 (New Korean Youth Party) was formed in Shanghai on November 28, 1918 in this global milieu. The leaders of this organization were Yŏ Un-hyong 呂運亨 (1886-1947), and others who were youthful members of what could be called the second generation of the Mutual Assistance Society. The leaders of the Mutual Assistance Society supported this younger generation and participated in the activities of the New Korean Youth Party. For example, Kim Gyu-sik was appointed chairman of the Party, while Pak Un-sik became chief editor of the party bulletin, *Sinhan Chǒngnyon* 新韓青年, which continued to rally freedom fighters inside and outside the country to unify the independence movement.

Wilson, who was the US representative at the Paris Peace Conference held in January, 1919, advocated his Fourteen Points as the centerpiece of the American position. The New Korean Youth Party selected Kim Gyu-sik as special envoy to the conference, and submitted a petition demanding self-determination and independence for Korea. The petition was rejected, however, and the hopes that Koreans had placed on the conference evaporated. During this period, the events of the March 1 Movement began unfolding, and independence fighters inside and outside of Korea began establishing various provisional governments. Incorporating and integrating these trends, leaders of the Mutual Assistance Society and the New Korean Youth Party were instrumental in organizing a provisional parliament that became the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (Daehanminguk Imsijǒngbu 大韓民國臨時政府).

## **Conclusion**

The content of the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China, comprising seven chapters and 56 articles, was appropriate for the first democratic republic founded in East Asia. The General Provisions of Article 2 of Chapter 1 stipulated the principle of sovereignty for the people: “The sovereignty of the Republic of China shall reside in the whole body of citizens.” In Article 5, Chapter 2, the principle of impartial equality for the people of the country, various rights to freedoms and basic human rights, and duties of the people were delineated: “All citizens of the Republic of China, irrespective of race, ethnic origin, class, or religion, shall be equal before the law.” The provisional constitution adopted the system of three branches of government, becoming a democratic republic incorporating a parliamentary system under a president.



Nearly eight years after the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China was promulgated on March 11, 1912—that is, on April 11, 1919—the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea was established, and the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of Korea was enacted. Article 1 of the Provisional Constitution states: “The Republic of Korea shall be a democratic republic.” Article 2 advocates a parliamentary system: “The Republic of Korea shall rule through resolutions of the provisional parliament of the provisional government.” The informal constitution was comprised of ten articles on the equality, freedoms, and duties of the people. The constitution of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea enacted on September 11, 1919 reflected a revision of this informal constitution, and consisted of a preamble, eight chapters, and 58 articles.

There are many clauses in common between the provisional constitutions of the Republic of China and Republic of Korea. For example, the General Provisions of Chapter 1, Article 2 of the Korean Provisional Constitution state: “the sovereignty of the Republic of Korea shall reside in the people”; Article 4 states: “All citizens of the Republic of Korea shall be equal before the law.” Chapter 2, “Rights and Duties of Citizens,” details each freedom and fundamental human right, as well as duties of the people. The contents are nearly identical with those of the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China. The form of government described in the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of Korea is the same as that of the Republic of China in that it adopts a system of three branches of government, and is a democratic republic consisting of a parliamentary system under a president.

Thus, China and Korea, in their respective constitutions, adopted democratic republican forms of government and attempted to traverse paths toward becoming “democratic republics.”<sup>16</sup> What exactly was the philosophical underpinning of the democratic republics that each nation chose? I would like to draw attention to the fact that neither democratic republic was simply an importation from the West. Chinese and Korean traditions, especially the traditional Confucian philosophical foundation, are reflected in them. These include the philosophical concepts of Mencius’s *minben* 民本 (the people are the foundation of the state), *Tianxia weigong* 天下為公 (The world is for all),

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16 The paths of China and Korea to democratic republicanism, however, were full of travail. For example, in the case of China, there was discord between the Beiyang Government and the Nanjing Provisional Government, which created domestic factionalism (warlordism); conflict between the left and the right that surfaced after the May 4 Movement; the First United Front and its disintegration; repercussions from the civil war; the Sino-Japanese War and other historical adversities that unfolded in succession. Korea also traveled a long, arduous path.

and *Tianxia gonggong* 天下公共 (Everything in the world shared by all). These notions gave rise before the modern era to the concepts of intrinsic democracy, people's sovereignty, joint governance between the emperor and the people, republics, etc.<sup>17</sup> It is thought that these ideas were used as a base upon which modern democracy and republicanism were adopted. In that sense, the Chinese and Korean democratic republics are a product of hybridization of tradition and modernization. In other words, they are a synthetic form produced through the acculturation of tradition and modernization.

In contrast, Kita Ikki 北一輝 (1883-1937) theorized that "Confucianism and the republican governmental system are absolutely incompatible." He states: "There is a forcible conflation of the abdication of the legendary Chinese emperors Yao 堯 (2354-2255 BC) and Shun 舜 (23<sup>rd</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> century BC) and popular will," and "never look for theories of sovereignty of the people in changes of dynasty."<sup>18</sup> Kita's theory is a misunderstanding of Confucianism. Confucianism can be compatible with republicanism, and the abdication of Yao and Shun can indeed be seen as a change in dynasty through the will of the people. Further, Mencius's theory that tyrannicide is equivalent to revolutionary change in dynasty can be linked with theories on sovereignty of the people. What should be investigated now is, rather, the problems and limitations of traditional Japanese Confucianism, and the nonexistence of, or defects in, democratic republicanism in early modern Japan.

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17 In my personal opinion, *minben* is the concept underlying democracy. *Minben* itself connotes human rights and the concept of civil rights, but when it is merged with the notion of *Tianli ziran* 天理自然 (natural law) of the Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianist School 程朱学, for example, it definitely formulates the concepts of human rights and civil rights. Further, *Tianxia weigong*, seen in the *Li Yun* 礼运 (*The Conveyance of Rites*) in the *Classic of Rites* 礼记, and *Tianxia gonggong* that is often used after the advent of the Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianist School, are concepts inherent in the ideas of joint rule by an emperor and the people and in republicanism.

18 Kita Ikki, *Zōho, Shina kakumei gaishi* 支那革命外史 (*Unofficial History of the Chinese Revolution*), (Tokyo: Kyōdō Printing Co., 共同印刷株式会社 1921), p.339.