The Tapestry of Colonial Communication: Colonizing Discourses in the Seoul Press

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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Master of Arts, 2010
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the coalescence of Japanese and Anglo-American colonial discourses in the Seoul Press. Between the Protectorate Treaty of 1905 and the Annexation Treaty of 1910, Korea was dominated not only territorially but also discursively. Under the guise of the “civilizing mission,” the Japanese Residency General sought to legitimize its colonial project in Korea. To accomplish its goals of silencing foreign opposition to Japanese colonialism and of dictating international opinion about Korea, the Residency General established an English language newspaper, the Seoul Press. In the pages of this daily paper, the views of Japanese colonial officials as well as Anglo-American observers found expression. Through an analysis of articles from the Seoul Press, this thesis will reveal the existence of a dual-layered gaze of colonialism, the rhetorical threads of which made up the tapestry of colonial communication.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Korea1 was in a precarious situation. Preeminently, Japan had assumed an increasingly hostile stance toward Korea since the imposition of the Treaty of Kanghwa in 1876. Subsequently, with Japan emerging victorious from wars with China (1894-5) and Russia (1904-5), establishing the Taft-Katsura Agreement with the United States (1905), and renewing the Anglo-Japanese Treaty (1905), there remained in East Asia no hindrance to Japan’s claims on Korea. While Hilary Conroy and Peter Duus separately argue that colonization was by no means a decided course of action among Japanese policy makers in the late nineteenth century,2 Japan’s position on the “Korea issue” was far from ambiguous by the turn of the new century. Indeed, increasing Japanese aggression toward Korea resulted in the 1905 Protectorate Treaty, which effectively made Korea a vassal state of Japan. Though initially exerting political influence indirectly, Japan increased its governing powers in Korea through a series of unequal treaties that ultimately culminated in the official annexation of Korea on 22 August 1910. Under the new name Chōsen, Korea thus became an official colony of the Japanese Empire.

Even prior to the annexation, however, Japan had sought to garner international support for its colonial project in Korea. Seeking to justify its presence in the Korean peninsula, Japan employed various means to legitimize taking possession of its neighbour. One of the primary ways of accomplishing this was through engagement with and espousal of ideologies of the

1 Although officially called the “Empire of TaeHan,” most foreigners from Europe and America referred to the country as Korea. For the sake of convenience, this paper will follow the Western convention of the time.
modern West. In particular, the Japanese colonial administration co-opted the Western discourse of civilization in the promotion of their policies in Korea. Andre Schmid observes that by the late nineteenth century, “civilization had become the foundation of international law and, with its claims to universality, had become the central tenet of an international modern discourse.”

Under the guise of the “civilizing mission,” this discourse was employed as a justification for colonization. As Alexis Dudden explains, the term “civilized” was an internationally recognized designation based upon a shared logic of colonialism: “A regime was civilized only if it could claim the ability to transform an uncivilized people.”

Situating itself within this discourse, Japan endeavoured to dictate the terms by which it and Korea were perceived by the colonial Powers. Thus, Japan simultaneously attempted to define itself as “civilized” and to validate its colonial project by representing Korea as an “uncivilized” and “backward” country in need of Japan’s assistance. Consequently, Japanese colonial officials in Korea “did their utmost to disseminate particular forms of representations about Korea that served to extend and maintain their rule.”

One of the more significant obstacles Japan faced in advancing its position as a colonial – and thus civilized – power was the anti-Japanese media in Korea. For this reason, at the instigation of Resident General Ito Hirobumi, a series of sweeping censorship laws were enacted in 1907, which severely regulated all media until the annexation of Korea – at which point all privately-owned media were shut down. Most directly impacted by the censorship facilitated by these new laws was the newspaper, thus stifling the anti-Japanese sentiments of the Korean

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4 Alexis Dudden, Japan’s Colonization of Korea: Discourse and Power (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2005), 9.
5 Schmid, Korea between Empires, 13.
press. Nevertheless, one newspaper remained a thorn in the side of the Residency General: the *Korea Daily News* (Korean title: *Taehan mail sinbo*; 1904-1910). In addition to Korean language and mixed script editions, the owner of the *Korea Daily News*, Ernest T. Bethell, also published an English language edition, which was the only English language newspaper in Korea at the time. As a British citizen resident in Korea, Bethell was protected by extraterritoriality laws, rendering his newspaper largely immune to the censorship of the press and thus enabling the consistent printing of editorial commentary that was critical of the Japanese colonial administration. In fact, so widespread and negative were Bethell’s comments that the *Korea Daily News* quickly acquired a reputation for being an “outspokenly anti-Japanese newspaper.” Consequently, until Japan was eventually able, through diplomatic pressuring of its British ally, to silence Bethell and shut down the *Korea Daily News* in 1910, the Residency General was forced to pursue an intense public relations campaign against the foreign-owned newspaper.

Upon assuming office in 1905, Resident General Ito astutely recognized the gravity of the situation and sought to counter the effects of Bethell’s newspaper. His solution was to produce a rival English language newspaper sponsored by the state. According to Chin-Sok Chong, the Japanese colonial administration concluded that such a newspaper was required in order “to

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8 Chong, 64-65. Moreover, British Consul-General to Korea, J. N. Jordan is reported to have viewed the *Korea Daily News* as “assuming a hostile attitude towards almost every step the Japanese have taken in Korean [sic] and having recently descended to vulgar abuse of the members of the Japanese Legation.” Quoted in Chong, 65.

9 Notably, there were a number of foreigners who expressed opposition to Japanese policy in Korea via the media. Not to be underestimated in its influence on international opinion was the monthly English language periodical, the *Korea Review* (1901-1907). Published by Homer Hulbert, an American missionary to Korea, the *Review* was likewise critical of Japan’s policies in Korea. For more information, see “The Anti-Japanese Press and Japan’s Propaganda Strategy” in Chong, 139-171.
effectively suppress the anti-Japanese press of Bethell and Hulbert and to promote an international position favourable to Japan.”¹⁰ Consequently, the Residency General decided to purchase the Seoul Press, which was originally published as a weekly paper by John Weekley Hodge, to be the English language mouthpiece of the Japanese colonial administration in Korea.¹¹ The new Seoul Press began publication as a daily on 5 December 1906,¹² and it served as the official organ of the Residency General in Korea until it was ultimately discontinued in May 1937, when the Pacific War was under way and international support for Japanese colonialism was no longer sought.

Established and utilized to support Japanese colonialism in Korea, the Seoul Press was a site where Japanese and Anglo-American discourses about Korea coalesced. Through editorial commentary, the précis of speeches, and reproduction of correspondence from Japanese officials, the Seoul Press offered a distinctly Japanese colonial perspective on Korea. On the other hand, by publishing articles written by or about Anglo-American visitors to Korea, the newspaper also presented Anglo-American opinion on Korea and Japanese policy there. Japanese administrators resident in Korea included the politicians and government officials of the Residency General. Anglo-American observers in Korea can be divided into two categories: visitors to Korea and residents in Korea. The former category included politicians, journalists, and professors of prestigious universities who sojourned briefly in Korea; the latter category was composed primarily of diplomats and missionaries. Anglo-Americans who visited Korea often did so in

¹⁰ Chong, 153. Chong suggests a threefold purpose of the Seoul Press: “First, it was to suppress anti-Japanese public opinion;” “Second, it was to promote more effectively the Japanese policy towards Korea;” and “Third, it was to secure the support of international public opinion.” Chong, 156.
¹¹ Chong details the process by which the Seoul Press went from being an independent newspaper to a state-run medium: after being subsidized by the Japanese Legation in Korea in exchange for a pro-Japanese bias in his newspaper, Hodge eventually sold the rights to the Seoul Press to the Residency General, which began printing it as a daily newspaper (157-160).
¹² Since no copies of the Seoul Press from December 1906 have been preserved, the archive begins with the 5 March 1907 edition, which was the first copy printed after a short suspension in publication.
order to meet with dignitaries in the Japanese Residency General, to give public and private lectures, and to provide firsthand reports on the events in Korea to the Anglo-American media. These visitors often had limited knowledge of Korea and virtually no proficiency in Korean; in their interactions with Koreans, they relied heavily upon Japanese and expatriate interpreters. However, many Anglo-American residents had lived in Korea for extended lengths of time and thus possessed both extensive knowledge of Korea and varying degrees of fluency in the Korean language.

Despite their divergent perspectives, the Japanese officials and Anglo-American observers shared a colonial gaze on Korea. While this is unsurprising given the contemporary predominance of the logic of colonialism based on the discourse of civilization, I maintain that in the pages of the Seoul Press a dual-layered colonial gaze is perceptible: as Japanese colonial officials observed Korea, Anglo-Americans simultaneously watched Japan’s observation of Korea. Consequently, there existed a double layering of the colonial gaze, which involved concurrent processes of observing and being observed. These processes were then reflected in the Seoul Press as commentary about Korea and the Japanese colonialists. In addition, I suggest that the Japanese and Anglo-Americans possessed a similar viewpoint. Indeed, in the articulation of their perspectives vis-à-vis Korea and Koreans, Japanese officials and Anglo-American observers employed similar rhetorical expressions. David Spurr has shown that Euro-American colonial discourse was composed of “basic rhetorical features” that intersected across temporal and geographical boundaries, extending to the postcolonial period of today.13 Similarly, the colonial communication in the Seoul Press shares certain fundamental elements with the

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discourse of Western colonial Powers. Nonetheless, Spurr is quick to point out the discursive tensions contained within his rhetorical study:

[I]t will become clear that what we call colonial discourse is neither a monolithic system nor a finite set of texts; it may more accurately be described as the name for a series of colonizing discourses, each adapted to a specific historical situation, yet having in common certain elements with the others.¹⁴

In merging Japanese and Anglo-American perspectives on Korea within the physical constraints of print media, the Seoul Press gave broad expression to the various “colonizing discourses” of the early twentieth century.

The present study is an analysis of colonial communication in the Seoul Press. Although historians have frequently overlooked it as a source document for studying Japanese colonialism, I will show that as a foreign newspaper published for an exclusively foreign audience, the Seoul Press is valuable for investigating colonial communication in Korea. I will focus on the colonial rhetoric of the Japanese Residency General and of Anglo-American observers, uncovering parallel themes, tropes, and modes of expression. In analyzing “colonial rhetoric,” however, I intend to avoid creating a false impression of homogeneity; the rhetorical devices that appear in the newspaper are at once distinct and inseparable. In fact, the intertwining of diverse yet integrated rhetorical strategies to form a mosaic of colonial rhetoric has prompted me to invoke the metaphor of a tapestry, in which various threads are interwoven in a pattern to form a unified image. Needless to say, unlike the static nature of a tapestry, the colonial communication of the Seoul Press was dynamic, with constant alterations in the articulation and application of common rhetorical expressions. Notwithstanding this caveat, the image of a tapestry will suffice to visualize the coalescence of Japanese and Anglo-American colonial discourses about Korea as

¹⁴ Spurr, 1-2.
they converged in the pages of the *Seoul Press*. Moreover, by inspecting the individual threads of these discourses, I intend to show how the two colonial gazes intersected and interacted with the rhetorical themes that constitute the tapestry of colonial communication in Korea.

This thesis builds upon the work of three scholars in the field of rhetorical analysis. In his examination of imperial writings from Britain, France, and America, David Spurr presents “a general introduction to modern European colonial discourse.”15 Investigating a plethora of examples from colonial writings about Africa, the Near East, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, Spurr’s study provides a comprehensive investigation of imperial rhetoric, and the set of rhetorical devices therein identified provides the foundation for my research. In her study of the rhetoric of “Euroimperialism,”16 Mary Louise Pratt considers the colonial gaze as it found expression in travel writing. Her consideration of the relationship between observation and colonialism informs my analysis. Alexis Dudden makes Japanese discourse about Korea the focus of her research, concentrating on the legal nature of Japan’s annexation of Korea. While her discussion is limited to issues of legality, it provides an insightful exploration of the discourse of “enlightened exploitation.”17 Nevertheless, the current literature largely fails to notice the convergence of Japanese and Anglo-American colonizing discourses in Korea. Based upon their respective views, Japanese colonial officials and Anglo-American observers engaged in discourses about Japanese colonialism in Korea that reflected convergent rhetorical modes. Building upon the rhetorical studies of the scholars mentioned previously, I will examine the *Seoul Press* as the site of coalescence of Japanese and Anglo-American colonial discourses about Korea.

15 Spurr, 1.
17 Dudden, 8.
The focus of this thesis is the various modes of colonial communication that found expression in the *Seoul Press* during the first five years of Japanese rule in Korea. This period was a tumultuous time in which Japan effected the transition of Korea from a protectorate in 1905 to an outright colony in the Japanese empire through annexation in 1910. These five years were a decisive time for Japanese colonial administrators as they endeavoured both to silence opposition to Japanese colonial rule from within the Korean peninsula and to respond to international criticism. They sought to accomplish these two goals by representing the colonial project in Korea in terms consistent with the discourse of civilization, namely by framing the colonization of Korea as a necessary step in Japan’s civilizing mission. The period was also significant for Anglo-American observers of the events in East Asia. The colonial Powers looked on intently as Japan emerged from semi-colonial status and ascended to their ranks. Anglo-Americans in Korea thus served an important function in relaying information about the situation in the peninsula back to their home countries.

The study is divided into two parts. The first half will examine the themes, tropes, and modes of expression of the Japanese Residency General in Korea. To this end, I will analyze commentary given by the two consecutive editors of the *Seoul Press* as well as by the first Resident General. Zumoto Motosada was editor of the newspaper from December 1906 until April 1909, when he was sent to New York to found the Oriental Information Bureau. Yamagata Isoh assumed editorship on 8 April 1909. Ito Hirobumi was the first Japanese Resident General in Korea, and he was respected by Anglo-Americans as a friendly politician who was a proponent of moderate policy in Korea. Ito resigned from his post in June 1909 and was assassinated on 26 October 1909 by An Chung’gũn, a Korean nationalist. The second half of the study will examine Anglo-American opinion, identifying the intersections of and interactions
with the rhetorical themes, tropes, and modes of expression analyzed in the first half. To accomplish this, I will analyze commentary given by three of the more prominent foreigners cited in the *Seoul Press*: George Trumbull Ladd, William Scranton, and James Scarth Gale.

George Ladd was an American philosophy professor at Yale University, notoriously supportive of Japanese colonialism, who made a brief visit to Korea in 1907. William Scranton and James Gale were long-term missionary residents in Korea; Scranton was a physician from America, and Gale was an evangelist from Canada. Admittedly, Ladd, Scranton, and Gale, being well-educated men from North America, are by no means representative of the spectrum of Anglo-Americans whose opinions were published in the *Seoul Press*; however, with respect to their gaze and rhetorical expression, the three men characterize the foreign perspectives in the newspaper. Therefore, by drawing from the individual opinions of Japanese colonial officials and the two categories of Anglo-American observers, I will provide a broad sampling of the tapestry of colonial communication in the *Seoul Press*. 
Chapter 2
Japanese Claims to Authority

A regular theme in the Seoul Press is authority, specifically the implicit and explicit claims made by Japanese officials in Korea that they were qualified to speak authoritatively about Korea and the Korean people. Given the recurrent criticisms of Japanese colonial rule in Korea provided by Ernest Bethell in the editorials of the Korea Daily News, the Residency General apparently felt a constant need to bolster their authority during these early years. Such claims most frequently appear in editorials as well as the writing of the Residents General, particularly in the period between the establishment of the protectorate and the annexation of Korea. It is important to note that these assertions of authority were neither homogeneous nor were they mutually exclusive of other rhetorical strategies employed by the administration in Korea. On the other hand, in forming one pattern in the tapestry of Japanese colonial communication, these claims were multifarious and nuanced; they were interwoven with other forms of rhetoric in the overall discourse of civilization. The proceeding discussion of Japanese claims to authority in the Seoul Press will form the basis for a comparison in the second section of this paper with similar claims made by foreigners.

The first type of assertion of authority in the Seoul Press takes the form of expressions of impartiality. When publication resumed on 5 March 1907, Zumoto Motosada addressed his readers with respect to the purpose and new format of the newspaper. In an editorial entitled, “To Our Readers,” Zumoto explains why the newspaper should be considered the authoritative source for information about Korea and its people. He begins by introducing the new larger format of the newspaper as providing “increased possibility of serving the reading public.” The readers were thus to view the newspaper as existing for their benefit and concerned primarily
with their best interests. The intended readership is then identified with the epithet, “the enlightened community in Korea.” Given that the Seoul Press is an English language newspaper targeted at foreign residents in Korea, the editor here evokes the discourse of civilization, presenting the newspaper as a trustworthy source of progressive and enlightened information.

Next, Zumoto explains that the Seoul Press is “a common organ of opinion for fair-minded men and women of all nationalities in Korea.” This statement establishes impartiality as the basis of the newspaper’s authority in two ways. It suggests that the newspaper is unbiased because as “a common organ” the Seoul Press contains opinions which are not restricted to the Residency General but are shared among the reading community. In addition, the newspaper is suitable for all “fair-minded” people in Korea, regardless of nationality. The implication here is that the only people who would not appreciate the Seoul Press are foreigners with a bias.

Zumoto’s comments here warrant further examination. In referring to the target audience of the Seoul Press as “the enlightened community,” the editor appeals to what David Spurr refers to as the rhetoric of “classification.” Essentially, this rhetorical strategy begins with the positing of “a single standard of economic and political organization to which all nations must aspire;” subsequently, nations are judged with respect to the degree to which they meet this standard. In other words, a group of nations defined itself as “civilized” based upon a shared set of economic and political standards that described its members. These descriptive notions of civilization were then naturalized as proscriptive, and the level of civilization of other nations was subsequently evaluated based upon them. The civilized Powers expressed their status as civilized by colonizing nations they defined as “uncivilized.” Alexis Dudden succinctly explains the connection between the historical process of defining civilization and colonialism: “So-called

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18 Spurr, 63.
civilized governments predicated their claims to legitimacy on conquering and ruling so-called barbaric ones; such governments also infused their claims with political and social theories derived in part from nascent evolutionary sciences.\textsuperscript{19} Drawing upon racial theories and social Darwinism in particular, “civilized” nations justified their claims to superiority and produced a ranking of civilization. The result of this evaluation was “a taxonomy of the peoples of the world,”\textsuperscript{20} which served to legitimate the colonization of uncivilized nations under the banner of the civilizing mission.

Originally, this classification of civilization was a Euro-American project, its main actors being Britain, France, and the United States of America. However, when it emerged as a colonial power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Japan began simultaneously challenging and redefining the geo-political dimensions of the civilization hierarchy. Consequently, Andre Schmid points out that when Japan established its protectorate over Korea, there arose no little commotion among Anglo-American observers.\textsuperscript{21} Indeed, it was the unprecedented nature of Japan’s colonial actions in Korea which prompted Edwin Maxey, an American political scientist, to comment, “Never before in the history of the world has one oriental nation assumed a protectorate over another.”\textsuperscript{22} Several scholars have subsequently commented on Japan’s unique position among colonial powers as the only non-Western, non-Christian colonial power.\textsuperscript{23} It was in this context that Japan constantly sought to establish itself among the upper echelons of civilization along with the other colonial nations. To this end, the

\textsuperscript{19} Dudden, 9.
\textsuperscript{20} Dudden, 9.
\textsuperscript{23} Hyaeweol Choi refers to Japan as “the only non-Western, non Christian imperial power at the turn of the twentieth century.” See Choi, “Christian Modernity in the Missionary Discourse of Korea, 1905-1910,” \textit{East Asian History} 29 (June 2005): 41. Andre Schmid adds “non-white” as a third category by which Japan was evaluated and judged as different from the established colonial Powers. See Schmid, “Two Americans in Seoul,” 1.
Seoul Press served as a mouthpiece of the Japanese administration in Korea, consistently articulating Japan’s position as a civilized nation and buttressing its claims to authority.

Subsequently, the editorial assures the readers that the newspaper’s complete impartiality is guaranteed by its openness to outside input. Explaining this “policy of the open door,” Zumoto asserts:

We shall always heartily welcome candid expressions of opinion on any subject, even if they should be unfavourable to our national policy or to our own views. In fact such unfavourable criticisms, if only conceived in the spirit of fairness and candour, will be particularly welcome, for Japan wants her faults and shortcomings pointed out. Indeed we entertain no doubt that students of contemporary history will bear us out, when we say that few nations have shown a greater capacity to listen to, and profit by, outside criticisms.

In repeating the importance of candour, Zumoto stresses that the newspaper is soliciting public opinion so that Japan can learn from the criticism of others. Notably, Zumoto here conflates the Seoul Press with the nation for which it functions as an official medium; no distinction is made between the newspaper of the Japanese Residency General and Japan proper. Moreover, the recent history of Japan is called as a witness to Japan’s willingness to receive and benefit from the criticism of foreigners. Consequently, the editorial concludes with the declaration that following the precedent of Japan, openness to public opinion “will be the attitude of the Seoul Press as regards foreign criticism of things Japanese in general and things Japanese in Korea in particular.” Zumoto here contends that the Seoul Press will be a source of symbiosis: the newspaper will provide accurate and reliable information while the readers will provide comments and criticism to ensure the neutrality of the newspaper. In this way, Zumoto presents the Seoul Press as an authoritative source of information on Korea and Koreans due to its openness and impartiality.
Another form of authority claim in the *Seoul Press* is reference to approval from the colonial powers. In seeking to justify Japan’s colonial project in Korea, the editors frequently refer to the endorsement of the Japanese civilizing mission made by the colonial Powers. One such instance appears in the 9 March 1907 edition of the *Seoul Press*. Under the title, “Korea’s ‘Friends,’” Zumoto Motosada editorializes about the foreigners who profess to be the “friends of Korea” but inevitably “inflict incalculable injury upon their ‘beloved’ people.” In the course of explaining why these unnamed foreigners are hurting rather than serving Koreans, Zumoto asserts, “They cannot, like their poor dupes [the Koreans], plead ignorance of the general position of international politics. In justice to their intelligence, it must be presumed that they know perfectly well that Japan is here with the general approval of the civilised Powers.” The point being made here is that the foreigners who supported Korean independence were not ignorant like the Korean nationalists who opposed Japanese rule; rather, these foreigners were fully aware of the international political situation that legitimated Japanese colonial rule. Accordingly, Zumoto reminds these foreign friends of Korea that “they know perfectly well” that resistance to Japanese colonial authority in Korea is futile because Japan has already obtained “the general approval of the civilised Powers.” By appealing to this higher authority of international endorsement, Zumoto articulates Japan’s position within the same discourse of civilization that foreign governments engaged in to justify their countries’ colonial possessions, thereby asserting Japan’s authority to colonize Korea. Thus, the editorial concludes with the contention that foreigners who really desired to assist Korea would “have frankly recognized the inevitable and devoted their efforts to making the most out of the situation.” Since the approval of the Powers legitimates Japan’s authority in Korea, it also renders the colonial project an inescapable reality. Consequently, Zumoto argues that in order to serve the greater cause of the
civilizing mission, true friends of Korea must not only accept Japanese rule in Korea but also co-operate with the Residency General.

An editorial printed two months later makes a comparable appeal to the approval of civilized nations. In the 1 May 1907 edition of the Seoul Press, Zumoto Motosada editorializes about the place of international approval for Japan’s actions in Korea within its wider historical context. He writes:

Nobody in the least acquainted with contemporary history in the Far East need be told that when Japan guaranteed Korea’s territorial integrity at the beginning of the late war [with Russia], it was not her intention thereby to guarantee the continuance of that very thing which has been the cause of all trouble during all these years. Consequently the establishment of a protectorate over this country was the logical consequence of the war. This result was expected by all practical men in the civilized world, and the regime as it now exists has the sanction of enlightened opinion in Europe and America.

A number of observations about this passage will reveal how Zumoto attempts to establish Japanese authority over Korean affairs. First, the paragraph begins with the assertion that anyone remotely aware of the situation in East Asia knew that Japan never intended to preserve Korea’s national existence. Blatantly ignoring the voices of opposition from men like Ernest Bethell and Homer Hulbert, Zumoto insists that international observers granted tacit approval to the protectorate in Korea, for they were cognizant of Japan’s intentions but made no efforts to stop Japan. Indeed, Zumoto asserts that in being familiar with “contemporary history in the Far East,” these amateur historians were well aware that Korean sovereignty was “the cause of all trouble during all these years.” Second, as a result of the problems caused by Korea’s existence as an independent nation, Japan’s protectorate over Korea was “the logical consequence of the war” with Russia. For Zumoto, Japan’s defeat of Russia was the prelude to the institution of Japanese rule in Korea, which culminated in the 1905 Treaty of Protection.

Third, Zumoto insists that Japan’s actions in Korea were anticipated by “all practical men in the
civilized world.” Not only does this statement deny the voice of people from “uncivilized” nations – preeminently, Korea – but it attempts to silence opposition to Japan generally, implying that to oppose Japan is to oppose the overall advance of civilization. Moreover, in the linking of pragmatics and civilization, Zumoto’s comments about the supposedly unsurprising nature of Japan’s actions in Korea echoes the rhetoric of classification. Since protectorate treaties are inherently “logical” aspects of the civilizing mission, “all practical men,” who by definition are civilized, would have expected Japan to establish a protectorate as a necessary precursor to the establishment of civilization in Korea. Finally, Zumoto declares that the Japanese colonial authority in Korea possesses “the sanction of enlightened opinion in Europe and America.” Here he locates the sanctioning of Japanese colonialism in Korea within the geographical sphere of Euro-America, which was the upper echelon of civilization. Therefore, by emphasizing the purportedly unanimous support among the civilized Powers for the Japanese colonial project, Zumoto presents Japan as occupying a position in the upper level of the hierarchy of civilization, endowed with the requisite authority to act decisively in Korea.

A third way the editors of the Seoul Press attempted to establish Japanese authority was by linking the colonial project in Korea with the global civilizing mission of the world Powers. This strategy both built upon and distinguished itself from the appeals to international approval examined previously. An example of this type of claim to authority can be found in the Seoul Press published on 22 March 1907. In an editorial with the title, “The Resident-General,” Zumoto Motosada welcomes Ito Hirobumi back to “his exalted post” as Resident General after a four-month absence from Korea. Zumoto then addresses the origins of the Residency General, asserting that Japan’s civilizing mission in Korea forms part of the larger story of civilization:
It was about this time last year that Marquis Ito first came here to inaugurate the régime [sic] of protection. It was the logical outcome of the fateful events which had opened a new chapter in the history of human progress. The situation was fraught with far-reaching consequences; it marked Japan’s début [sic] as a world Power, taking an active part in the mission of civilization. The task, which destiny has imposed upon Japan in this country, is one of supreme human interest and is attended with difficulties of an unusual description.

In repeating the common refrain in Japanese rhetoric that the protectorate in Korea was the “logical” consequence of “fateful events,” Zumoto links the colonial project with Japan’s fate, which anticipates his ensuing declaration about Japan fulfilling its “destiny” in Korea. In addition, Zumoto connects fate with “progress,” a trope that was inseparable from civilization. He asserts that the fateful events which made Japanese colonialism in Korea a logical necessity are the same events that “opened a new chapter in the history of human progress.” Consequently, in referring to Ito’s inauguration of the Residency General as the historical fulfillment of Japan’s destiny, Zumoto contends that Japan was obediently submitting to its fate of assuming control over Korea for the greater good of humanity. Not only does the rhetoric of a grand narrative of “human progress” link Japan to the histories of other colonial powers, but Zumoto here suggests that this is a decidedly “new chapter” in the story, one in which the civilizing mission is not exclusive to Western powers. Accordingly, the next sentence alludes to the “far-reaching consequences” of the situation, namely that of Japan’s elevation to the ranks of the world powers. In addition, the final sentence defines Japan’s work in Korea as “one of supreme human interest,” which connects it to the shared telos of all members of the civilized world, namely to

24 Thus, it is reported in an editorial that “Marquis Ito’s policy…consists in saving the Koreans from the effects of centuries of misrule and leading them on along the path of civilization and progress.” See “Korea’s Opportunity,” the Seoul Press, 19 September 1907.
bring civilization to uncivilized nations. Thus, in civilizing Korea, Japan is ostensibly contributing to the general improvement of humanity by raising another country from the depths of ignorance and backwardness. Zumoto then admits that this project involves “difficulties of an unusual description.” Intimating that the backwardness of Korea renders the path to civilization arduous, he nevertheless insists that Japan has accepted destiny’s call and will fulfill its duty to “world progress” regardless of the costs. In these ways, the editorial positions Japan’s colonial project in Korea within the grand narrative of human progress, attributing to Japan the authority of the civilizing mission.

The final way that Japanese authority is bolstered in the Seoul Press is through statements about the reliability of colonial officials as eyewitnesses to Korean affairs. The importance of firsthand observation is particularly emphasized in responding to foreign criticism. Two editorials written by Yamagata Isoh illustrate this point. In the 27 May 1909 edition of the Seoul Press, an editorial entitled, “Japan and Her Foreign Critics” makes reference to “the doubts and prejudices entertained by a large number of Europeans and Americans as to Japan’s policy in the peninsular Empire.” Yamagata then explains that these foreign critics are misguided due to a lack of direct observation of the situation in Korea: “Inasmuch as these critics base their accusations against Japan not on what they have actually witnessed but merely on hearsay, it is not to be wondered at that they should, as they do, fail to grasp the real situation and speak pessimistically of the future of Korea.” Thus, Yamagata attributes negative foreign criticism to a lack of firsthand knowledge of Korea, and the resulting failure to understand “the real situation” in Korea produces a similarly pessimistic view of the country’s future.

25 It was in accord with this constant trumpeting of Japan’s altruistic commitment to civilization that Yamagata Isoh would later declare unhesitatingly that the Resident General “died a martyr to the cause of humanity and civilisation in a foreign land.” See “The Assassination of Prince Ito,” the Seoul Press, 28 October 1909.
Likewise, in an editorial about Japanese criticism of foreign missionaries in Korea, Yamagata cites “ignorance” on the part of Japanese media as the cause of misunderstanding. Published on 14 January 1910, the editorial is entitled, “Notable Statements Concerning Foreign Missionaries.” Acknowledging the existence of “suspicion” and “very harmful reports” against foreign missionaries in Korea, Yamagata explains that the distrust fostered by some Japanese “is primarily due, we think, to their ignorance of the real work which is being done by those self-sacrificing and devoted propagators of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth.” Yamagata here implies that if the Japanese were able to observe the missionaries directly, they would realize immediately “what good friends they are to them.” He also states that he is “really sorry for those Japanese” for their “misgiving bred by ignorance.” Therefore, Zumoto contends that unlike the foreigners who receive their information from “hearsay” and lack of knowledge of “the real state of things” in Korea, the editor of the Seoul Press completely understands the situation and is capable of dispelling the biased rumours being published in foreign and Japanese media.

Notably, Ito Hirobumi joins the editors of the Seoul Press in professing the ability to speak definitively about Korea based on personal observation and intimate knowledge. In fact, even after resigning from his position as Resident General and returning to Japan to take up a position in the government there, Ito boasts of a special insider’s knowledge of Korea in a letter to the American Ambassador to Japan, Thomas J. O’Brien. Reproduced in the 7 March 1909 edition of the Seoul Press, the exchange of correspondence consists of an inquiry from O’Brien about comments made by Mr. Song, the Korean Minister for Home Affairs, and Ito’s response to O’Brien. In an interview with the Japanese newspaper, the Asahi Shimbun, Song is quoted as saying that the 350 000 Christian converts in Korea, “backed by a group of American missionaries,” were “united in the common object of opposing the present administration.”
Subsequently, O’Brien requests that Ito speak to the accuracy of Song’s comments, noting that “since the matter has been published throughout the United States a large number of estimable people, apart from the missionaries, residing in Korea, are deeply concerned.” In his reply to O’Brien, Ito refutes Song’s statements on two accounts.

Ito begins his response by discrediting Song’s ability to express himself in the Japanese language. Since the original interview was conducted in Japanese, Ito contends that the Korean official’s comments are the result of miscommunication. Concerning Song’s linguistic proficiency, Ito opines, “Minister Song has not yet mastered the Japanese language, and is therefore unable to express himself satisfactorily in that language.” Given that Japanese colonial officials often cited linguistic incompetence as the cause of miscommunication and misunderstanding about the situation in Korea, Ito’s comments reveal one strategy that Japan employed to deflect negative attention from its rule in Korea. Subsequently, in an attempt to assuage O’Brien’s concerns, Ito refers to his intimate knowledge of the situation in Korea. The former Resident General maintains that even if Song had made the remarks, “such misrepresentation of the real facts would indicate the Minister’s ignorance of the conditions existing in his own country.” Remarkably, despite Song’s position as Minister for Home Affairs in the Korean government, Ito brashly accuses the official of being ignorant of Korean affairs. On the contrary, Ito cites his personal acquaintance with missionaries in Korea as grounds for denying Song’s comments. Ito reports that he is “personally acquainted with many American missionaries stationed in Seoul,” and he insists that he is “fully familiar” with their conduct and views. He then asserts that these missionaries are “endeavouring to interpret to the Korean

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26 For example, Zumoto Motosada blames linguistic incompetence for the difficulties encountered by the Residency General in implementing reforms in Korea: “linguistic trouble necessarily renders progress slow and unsatisfactory.” See “Japan in Korea,” the Seoul Press, 30 May 1908.
people the true purpose of [the Japanese] regime.” Based on his profession of intimate knowledge of the situation, the former Resident General of Korea argues that he is able to report the true nature of American missionary work in Korea. In concluding his letter, Ito reiterates his intention: “I wish to make this explanation of the matter on behalf of the American missionaries in Korea.” Therefore, not only does Ito claim the authority to deny a report from a Korean government official about the situation in Korea, but he also alleges such intimacy with American missionaries in Korea that he is able to speak for them.

In both the editorials and the official correspondence of the Residency General, the question of what qualifies the Seoul Press to speak with authoritatively on Korean matters is a recurrent theme. As administrators of the protectorate in Korea, Japanese colonial officials regularly made claims to authority in the newspaper. These claims were made on the basis of four interrelated assertions: the Seoul Press is open and impartial; the Powers approve of Japan’s colonial project in Korea; the civilizing mission in Korea constitutes a dynamic new chapter in the global project of civilization; and Japanese officials provide reliable eyewitness accounts and possess intimate knowledge about the situation in Korea. Given the incessant repetition of the theme of authority during the initial years of the colonial project, Japanese officials in Korea clearly perceived a threat to their authority, which they sought vigorously to silence. As part of the tapestry of colonial communication in the Seoul Press, claims to authority were simultaneously distinct and inseparable themes in the rhetoric of the Japanese civilizing mission in Korea.
Chapter 3
Japan the Beneficent

A second common theme in the Seoul Press can be called, “Japan the beneficent.” In his consideration of the rhetorical forms of “affirmation,” David Spurr observes an “element in colonial discourse which continually returns to an idealization of the colonialist enterprise against the setting of emptiness and disorder by which it has defined the other.”27 The Japanese Residency General in Korea constantly perceived a need to justify its colonial presence in Korea, and its response was to speak of Japan as benefactor and Korea as beneficiary in the civilizing mission. By referring to the blessings of civilization being bestowed upon backward Korea by Japan, the Residency General sought to demonstrate its beneficence to an international audience. Notably, the violent and oppressive methods employed in this process of civilizing went largely unreported.28 Moreover, the trope of Japan the beneficent was neither static nor homogenous; rather, it was constantly being redefined and communicated with varying nuances according to the current situation both in Korea and in the international media. In fact, so ubiquitous were its forms that it became a standard trope in the Residency General’s newspaper, the Seoul Press.

Excerpts from several editorials will now be considered in order to observe some of the various manifestations of the theme. These observations will then provide insight into how the Residency General attempted to present Japan as the helper of Korea as part of the tapestry of colonial communication.

27 Spurr, 109.
One of the ways the editors of the *Seoul Press* spoke of Japan’s beneficence to Korea was in repeated assertions of the magnanimous nature of the colonial project in Korea. One such instance can be observed in the editorial from the 28 May 1907 edition of the *Seoul Press*. Under the title, “Speak Well of Your Friends,” Zumoto Motosada opines about foreigners in Korea who attempt to speak on behalf of Koreans. Seeking to advise any such foreigner who “poses as the advocate” of Korea, Zumoto begins the article by stating that “true friendship” with Korea “imposes obligations to be honest and fair in our dealings with each other, and to tell the truth though it may come hard and be received with ill grace.” In other words, Zumoto insists that while it is important to speak well of friends, it is equally important to speak the truth to them. After this introductory counsel on friendship, Zumoto speaks about Japan as the true friend of Korea, providing an example for foreigners to follow:

We are here as the friend and advocate of the Korean people. Their good points we are anxious to have known and recognized, their possibilities developed to the fullest extent, and their weak points corrected and improved. To realize this, however, unbounded adulation and blind adoration can play no important part. It is necessary to say some things that are hard and severe, and to do some things that seem arbitrary. Every schoolmaster is necessarily hard on his pupil for his own good, but in the end the pupil will bow in reverence before the rod that really made him a man.

The first observation to be made about this paragraph concerns its point of view. By employing the first person plural “we,” Zumoto assumes the voice of Japan, presuming to speak on its behalf. The perspective is thus conflated as Zumoto becomes the advocate of Japan in order to present Japan as the “friend and advocate” of Korea. In justifying Japan’s advocacy for Korea, however, Zumoto neglects to justify his own advocacy for Japan. Similarly, his position is suspect because he refuses to do the things that Japan as Korea’s advocate is professed to be doing. For example, rather than seeking to correct and improve Japan’s “weak points,” Zumoto simply speaks as Japan’s representative with the intention of asserting Japanese advocacy for
Korea. While it is unclear how Zumoto can independently declare himself the advocate of Japan – and it is equally unclear how Japan can unilaterally declare itself the friend and advocate of Korea – these types of declarations reflect the claims to authority made frequently in the *Seoul Press*. Thus, Zumoto’s failure to support his advocacy for Japan casts suspicion on similar claims of advocacy for Korea made by Japanese colonial officials.

The second observation to be made concerns the nature of Japan’s “friendship” and “advocacy.” The relationship is decidedly one-sided: Japan is in a position of superiority over Korea, and no attempt is made to justify Japan’s claims in Korea. The implication of the editorial is that Japan will determine the nature of Korea’s “good points,” “possibilities,” and “weak points” as well as the corresponding courses of action. Since there is no indication that Korea will have any input in Japan’s colonial rule, the coercive nature of the civilizing mission overshadows Zumoto’s attempts to characterize the relationship between the two countries as a friendship. Moreover, Zumoto proceeds to redefine the relationship between Japan and Korea as one of teacher and student, which supersedes the previous assertion of friendship, simultaneously making explicit the previously implied superiority of Japan. This characterization reveals much about the state of affairs in the Korean peninsula at the time. Rather than being peers, Japan and Korea are in an unequal relationship of power, and Japan’s civilized status is the qualification for Japan to be Korea’s teacher. Zumoto assures his readers that Japan will transform Korea into “a man,” implying that Korea is still a child; it lacks the maturity of civilization. This characterization of Korea as an undeveloped place parallels the rhetorical strategy that David Spurr refers to as “negation.” Negation is a rhetorical trope “by which Western writing

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29 See the discussion of theme of authority in chapter 2 of the present study.
30 Spurr, 92-108.
conceives of the Other as absence, emptiness, nothingness, or death.” In suggesting that Korea is a mere child, Zumoto creates a void of maturity for which an education in the ways of civilization can first be presumed and then proffered by Japan via colonial rule.

Importantly, it is through the assertion of the need for Japan to teach Korea that Zumoto persists in asserting Japan’s beneficence. By drawing an analogy from education, he presents Japan as a “schoolmaster” who is “necessarily hard on his pupil for his own good.” While Japan might “say some things that are hard and severe” and even “do some things that seem arbitrary,” Zumoto insists that this hardship is to Korea’s advantage. In fact, Japan’s motivation in dealing harshly with Korea is purportedly selfless; Japan desires only that its student would mature into adulthood. To this end, Zumoto advocates the use of “the rod” of discipline. This statement indicates that he perceives Koreans as primitive boys who need to experience the pain of corporal punishment in order to become civilized men. In instructing Korea about civilization, Japan is thus justified in employing any means toward its goal, including the use of force, of teaching the Korean people what is good for them. According to Zumoto, the appropriate response of Korea is that of the lesser toward the greater: Korea will “bow in reverence” before Japan. Therefore, despite the perfunctory assertion to the contrary, Zumoto perceives Japan not as Korea’s friend but as its superior and dictator. The implication is that even after Japan supposedly raises Korea to civilized manhood through the education of colonial rule, Korea will remain Japan’s inferior. The negation of Korea is perpetual.

The editorials in the Seoul Press also attempted to demonstrate Japan’s goodwill toward Korea by heralding the specific benefits of civilization brought to Korea. For example, in an editorial entitled “Japan in Korea,” which appeared in the 30 May 1908 edition of the Seoul

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31 Spurr, 92.
Press, Zumoto concedes a number of hindrances to the Japanese civilizing mission in Korea before enumerating the specific progress made by Japan:

Yet, in spite of all these drawbacks, no unbiassed [sic] observer will refuse to admit that a great deal has already been accomplished in the way of evolving order out of confusion. To mention only the principal heads of the reform that has thus far been accomplished, a beginning has been made in the work of afforestation and in introducing a better and more scientific method of farming. Schools have been established, providing instruction in technical and scientific subjects of the most useful sort, while the interests of general education have in no way been neglected, a number of model primary schools having been inaugurated in various parts of the country.

Beginning with a reiteration of the importance of impartiality, which Japan and her supporters alone purportedly possess, Zumoto contends that Japan has made great efforts toward “evolving order out of confusion.” In characterizing Korea before Japanese rule as a confused country in need of a restoration of order, Zumoto makes the appeal of affirmation. Japan’s achievements in restoring order in Korea not only affirm the necessity of the colonial project but also demonstrate its beneficence. As evidence of the help provided by Japan, Zumoto then identifies “the principal heads of the reform” in Korea. Specifically, he notes the afforestation project and the introduction of a “scientific method of farming.” Here the association of science with farming implies that Japan is generously providing Korea with the modern technologies and techniques that will enable it to attain the basic necessities of life, which it was previously unable to attain. In addition, Zumoto informs his readers that education, which is another essential component of modern life, is being provided to the Korean people. By implying the absence of schools before the Japanese introduced a system of education in Korea, Zumoto ignores the pre-existing centres of learning, such as private Neo-Confucian academies called sŏwŏn.32 Notably,

32 Yong-ho Ch’oe presents an examination of sŏwŏn in his study, “Private Academies and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea” in Culture and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea, ed. JaHyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 15-45.
Zumoto describes the curriculum for the schools built by the Japanese as “technical and scientific subjects of the most useful sort.” The connection between pragmatism and civilization is thus once more emphasized in the Seoul Press in an effort to convince foreign readers that Japanese rule is beneficial for Korea in that the Korean people are being introduced to the eminent practicality of modern civilization. Finally, Zumoto stresses the creation of several “model primary schools.” While it is unclear what makes these schools exemplary, the very mention of their construction nonetheless implies a dearth of suitable schools in Korea, which reinforces Zumoto’s claim that education was essentially unknown before Japan began ruling Korea. Consequently, the reader is left with the impression that Japan has brought tangible benefits to Korea, which will assist the country in attaining a preliminary level of civilization.

In addition to the previously identified forms, the theme of Japan as Korea’s benefactor occurs prominently in the Seoul Press as a contrast between the conditions in Korea before and after the inauguration of the Japanese protectorate. This variant of the theme of Japanese beneficence occurs in the editorials of the Seoul Press as a way to demonstrate to the foreign audience the radical transformation brought about by benevolent Japanese rule in Korea. The most dramatic way to show the extent of the transformation is through contrasting the conditions of backward Korea with the progress in civilization initiated by Japan. Since this contrast between the “old” and “new” Koreas depended upon appreciable improvements in the conditions of Korea, it became a common theme only after the Japanese had ruled Korea for several years. For instance, in the 22 April 1910 edition of the Seoul Press, there appears an editorial with the title, “What the Police Have Done in Korea,” in which Yamagata Isoh offers “a word of praise” for “the many reforms and improvements undertaken by the police.” Yamagata begins with an assertion of the radical transformation that has taken place: “Older residents in Seoul are
unanimous in saying that under the new police system the capital of Korea has undergone such a change for the better that it looks as if the city were an entirely new one.” As an example of this change in the condition of Seoul, he cites cleanliness: “Whereas in former times, it was so filthy that one could hardly walk through its streets without feeling sick, it is now one of the cleanest cities in the Far East.” Aside from the observable change in the level of sanitation of Seoul’s streets, this comment lends credence to Japan’s claims to authority by linking the cleanliness of Korea to the international project of civilization being carried out in East Asia. Yamagata then concedes, “Their [the police force’s] work in Seoul is visible and everybody who has seen it appreciates it, but there are scores of works successfully carried out by them, which are not so apparent, but none the less conducive to the general welfare of the people.” While identifying the importance of direct observation in verifying the extent of the progress made by Japan in advancing the civilization of Korea, Yamagata also acknowledges that some of the accomplishments made by the police are less conspicuous. For this reason, he endeavours in the editorial to draw attention to some of these less prominent works of the police.

The first contrast between the old and new orders in Korea identified by Zumoto concerns the decrease in the number of thieves in Korea. Yamagata explains that “numerous bands of armed robbers called ‘Wha-chyok’ [sic] (literally ‘fire robbers) have existed from very old days.” Although these criminals frequently “molested peaceful inhabitants” in the past, the reorganization of the police force “on modern lines” has effected a significant reduction in the number of armed robbers. In fact, Yamagata contends that “these ruffians…have now been practically wiped out to the great relief of law-abiding people.” Another contrast mentioned by Yamagata concerns sanitation. After mentioning that the Sanitation Bureau of the Department of Home Affairs is responsible for the cleanliness of the country, Yamagata insists that the police
“take charge of the execution of sanitary measures.” Describing the contrasting views of Koreans about sanitation, Yamagata condescendingly reports, “The Korean people who had no idea of sanitation have been enlightened in it by various means.” While certainly an insulting case of hyperbole, the trope of filthy Koreans was ubiquitous in later Japanese colonial communication. Subsequently, Yamagata proceeds to discuss the improvements in public healthcare in Korea under Japanese rule. He writes that with respect to “the prevention and suppression of epidemical diseases, a great deal has been done by the police in that direction.” After identifying small pox as claiming “the greatest number of victims among Koreans” and mentioning the cholera epidemics of 1907 and 1909, Yamagata describes the training and vaccination programs initiated by the Japanese. He then reports, “The number of cases and the ratio of mortality among patients showed a great decrease compared with those of several years ago.” According to Yamagata, Koreans are noticeably cleaner and healthier under the Japanese than they were before the protectorate was established. Furthermore, the editorial describes the existence in former days of “many bad manners and customs in Korea,” such as “the carrying away of widows by force, slavery, and disputes about burial grounds” as well as “innumerable evil practices arising out of superstition.” Accordingly, Yamagata identifies the actions being taken by the police to curb these reprehensible practices from former times. He cites slavery as the prime example of the progress being made by the police: “Thanks to their efforts in this direction, slavery has been altogether abolished.” Therefore, in extolling the work of the police force under Japanese administration, Yamagata identifies progress between old and new Korea in the areas of crime prevention, sanitation, health care, and the abolition of slavery.

33 Todd Andrew Henry presents an interesting study of how this trope was employed by the Japanese Government General in “Keijō: Japanese and Korean Constructions of Colonial Seoul and the History of its Lived Spaces, 1910-1937” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2006), 218-273; 502-559.
In continuing the theme of old and new Korea as evidence of Japanese assistance being offered to Korea, the Residency General cited its efforts to overcome corruption in the Korean Court. The *Seoul Press* frequently identified misadministration in the court as a significant hindrance to the advancement of civilization in Korea, and the trope of corruption in the Korean government served as a common foil against which Japanese administrative reforms were lauded. On the occasion of the Korean emperor’s thirty-sixth birthday on 25 March 1909, Zumoto Motosada wrote an editorial about progress made by the Korean emperor with the assistance of the Japanese Resident General in removing corruption from the court. Under the simple title “The Emperor’s Birthday,” Zumoto suggests that the current ruler of Korea “is probably the only monarch who ever sat on the throne of Korea with any sense of security.” Zumoto proceeds to explain that previous rulers of Korea endured “what as a rule was the lot of Oriental sovereigns in bye-gone days to experience – intrigues and plots on the part of ambitious courtiers and ministers, which often led to dastardly deeds.” Here Zumoto returns to the negation of Korea by positing an endless cycle of chaos in all of East Asia. While Zumoto concedes that Korea was not alone in experiencing its share of corruption in the court, the *Seoul Press* often contained articles written by Japanese colonial officials and foreigners that characterized Korea as the most corrupt nation in East Asia.

Importantly, after the Japanese established the protectorate, reports of corruption began to decrease and negative public opinion about the Korean court began to change. To this effect, Zumoto maintains that “the Korean Court was a hotbed of corruption until some years ago,” which he refers to as “a fact well known to everybody.” After describing the “self-seeking men

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34 See the editorials in the *Seoul Press* from 19 September 1907; 21 September 1909; 13 January 1910; and 21 December 1910.
35 An example of the comments made by foreigners appears in the 24 September 1909 edition of the *Seoul Press*, which quotes W. T. R. Preston of the *Toronto Globe* as referring to Korea as “the storm centre of Asiatic politics.”
and women, many of low origin, who did everything possible to fatten themselves at the expense of the Sovereign and the common people,” Zumoto states that the accession of the present Korean Emperor in July 1907 brought about notable improvements in the court. Although neglecting to mention Japan’s role in forcing the abdication of King Kojong and in effecting the accession of his son, Sunjong, Zumoto attributes the ensuing “purification of the Palace” to Resident General Ito: “Guided and advised by Prince Ito, His Majesty [the Korean emperor] has ever been ready to adopt all measures calculated to eliminate evils from the Court precincts and to lead to enlightened administration.” Although ostensibly commending the Korean emperor for the elimination of “evils” and promotion of “enlightened administration” in the court, Zumoto essentially credits Ito for these improvements. Zumoto then presents the effects of Ito’s beneficent guidance and advice by contrasting the former state of the government with that of the present: “the Korean Court is now free from all the evils and corruptions which existed there in former days, while government has been much improved and the country as a whole is steadily though rather slowly advancing towards civilization.” Due to Ito’s assistance, the Korean emperor has purged “all the evils and corruptions” of the past and increased the overall state of civilization in Korea. Therefore, the contrast between the past and present conditions in Korea forms a basis for attributing the improvements in the Korean government to the Japanese Resident General.

An important part of Japanese colonial communication was the presentation of Japan as a helpful neighbour to Korea. In order to promote this favourable view of Japan’s colonial project to an international audience, the Residency General employed its official English language newspaper, the Seoul Press. Through editorial commentary, the Seoul Press frequently presented Korea as the weak, backward beneficiary of Japan’s civilizing mission. The trope of Japan the
beneficent formed part of a multi-faceted discourse that Japanese colonial administrators shaped according to present circumstances both in Korea and in the international media. As David Spurr observes, “Colonialism must always reaffirm its value in the face of an engulfing nothingness.”

Conscious of the watchful eye of Anglo-American observers, the Residency General attempted to demonstrate its benevolence by speaking constantly of the tangible benefits of civilization being introduced to Korea as well as of the progress being made in rescuing Korea from its former state of backwardness and helplessness. The editors of the *Seoul Press* lauded the benevolence of Japan in stimulating and promoting Korea’s advance in civilization in the ceaseless project of justifying Japanese rule in Korea. Consequently, the theme of Japan the beneficent became a principal pattern in the tapestry of Japan’s colonial communication in the *Seoul Press*.

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36 Spurr, 109.
Chapter 4
Looking Backward at Korea

In communicating to an international audience largely unacquainted with Korea, the Seoul Press presented itself as a source of unbiased information about Korea’s land and people. However, the editors proceeded beyond simple observation; they frequently assumed the role of interpreters, offering explanations of the Korean national character and culture. Unsurprisingly, given that Japan justified its colonial ambitions in Korea partially on the discourse of “enlightened exploitation,” the Residency General’s view of Korea was generally unfavourable. In fact, the rhetoric of the Japanese colonial gaze depended largely upon the rhetorical mode that David Spurr terms “debasement.” As Spurr explains, “In colonial discourse every individual weakness has its political counterpart – uncivilized society, according to this logic, being little more than the uncivilized mind and body writ large.”

Editorials in the Seoul Press thus reported debasing cultural commentary about Koreans that denigrated Korea as a backward and uncivilized country in need of the Japanese civilizing mission. A survey of several instances of providing cultural representation and commentary about Koreans will provide insight into the Japanese Residency General’s gaze on Korea and its corresponding rhetoric.

The most common form of cultural representation in the Seoul Press is the repetition of negative stereotypes about the nature of Koreans and the state of affairs in Korea. Examples can be located in every type of communication in the newspaper. The overarching characterization of the situation in Korea is that the conditions of the people are miserable. For instance, in the précis of a speech delivered by Ito Hirobumi, the Resident General is reported as referring to

37 Dudden, 8-9.
38 Spurr, 76.
Korea’s “weak condition” and attitude of “self-abandonment and self-destruction.”

Similarly, when speaking of the circumstances in Korea before the Japanese protectorate, Yamagata Isoh explains that “everything was in a wretched chaotic condition in this country.”

Zumoto Motosada contends that the present sufferings of the Korean people are “the effects of centuries of misrule.”

In another editorial, Yamagata speaks of “the wretched condition of the Korean masses.”

With respect to the character of the Korean people, the editors of the Seoul Press offer much negative commentary. For instance, while one editorial speaks of “the present abnormal psychological condition of the Korean people,” another contends that Koreans “have missed every opportunity for the advancement of their country in the past.”

Concerning the alleged weakness of the Korean race, Zumoto reports that Korea has always had a “lamentable lack” of self-sufficiency, and he elsewhere opines about the “conservatism” of Koreans.

On one occasion, an editorial referred to the people as “misguided Koreans” and “poor dupes.” Overall, Koreans are presented as backward, and the situation in Korea appears hopelessly dark.

Another way of communicating negative stereotypes about Koreans to the international audience of the Seoul Press was through editorial commentary. The editors of the newspaper would often posit a deficiency in the Korean character which necessitated Japanese colonial intervention. Under the pretext of providing assistance to Koreans, the editors of the newspaper would then describe the ways in which the backwardness of Koreans required Japan to engage in the civilizing mission in order to reform the country. An example of this technique occurs in an

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41 “Korea’s Opportunity,” the Seoul Press, 19 September 1907.
42 For example, see the Seoul Press editorials from 13 November 1909 and 9 July 1910.
43 The Seoul Press, 4 December 1907.
44 “Korea’s Opportunity,” the Seoul Press, 19 September 1907.
45 “Misguided Patriotism,” the Seoul Press, 8 March 1907.
47 “Korea’s ‘Friends,’” the Seoul Press, 9 March 1907.
editorial written by Zumoto Motosada and published in the Seoul Press on 6 April 1909. Entitled simply, “The Oriental Development Company,” the editorial is a congratulatory message concerning the commencement of operations in Korea of the Oriental Development Company. It is important to note that this company was presented as another of Japan’s generous gifts of assistance to Korea through the recruitment of Japanese farmers to live and work in Korea, teaching modern methodology to Korean farmers. The article begins with an offer of congratulations to the company for its achievements in preparing to commence operations. Zumoto then cites a recent speech given by the president of the company, Baron Usakawa, in which the aim of the Oriental Development Company is described as “the opening up and development of the natural resources of Korea.” Notably, this statement of the company’s purpose parallels the rhetorical strategy of “appropriation” identified by David Spurr. According to Spurr, the colonizer’s proprietary vision is disguised as “the response to a putative appeal on the part of the colonized land and people,” which may take the form “of natural abundance that awaits the creative hand of technology.” In quoting these words from the company’s president, Zumoto suggests both the existence of an untapped supply of natural resources in Korea and the need for Japan to assist in developing this supply. As a result, Korea appears to be an anaemic country unable to make use of its natural resources, and Japan is merely responding to Korea’s need for technological help in harnessing those resources.

On the other hand, Zumoto also engages repeatedly in negative stereotyping about the character of Koreans. In addition to the material boon to result from the Oriental Development Company’s operations, Zumoto asserts that the company will prove to be spiritually beneficial to

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48 For more on the nature and operations of the Oriental Development Company, see Duus, 381-383.
49 Spurr, 28.
Korea by doing “a great deal of moral good to the people of this country.” He proceeds to explain the connection between the inability of Koreans to exploit their abundant natural resources and the weakness of their national character:

At the risk of offending some ultra-patriotic Koreans and a certain foreign champion of their cause, we venture to say that the Korean people generally have not been credited as having the quality of industry amongst their most prominent characteristics. If what we have read and heard about them is not greatly at fault, one of their weaknesses appears to be a dislike of work.

It is not without reason that Zumoto prefices his comments with the mention of “ultra-patriotic Koreans” and “a certain foreign[er]” associated with them. Zumoto’s editorials frequently berate Korean patriots and their foreign supporter for creating obstacles to progress. This prelude is intended both to justify the ensuing cultural representation and to dismiss as irrational anyone who might object to it. On the one hand, Zumoto’s justification for the negative stereotype is the assertion of impartiality: any unbiased observer of Korea will concede the characterization of Koreans that follows. On the other hand, should readers disagree with Zumoto’s characterization, they are forced not only to defend their objection but also to distinguish themselves from the analogous position of “ultra-patriotic Koreans.” It is also worth noting that Zumoto attempts to bolster the credibility of his negative comments about Koreans by referring to “what we have read and heard about them.” Interestingly, the editorial here strays perceptibly from the common basis of Japanese claims of authority; rather than citing firsthand knowledge of Korea and its people, Zumoto defers to the implicitly more impartial views reported in writing and those heard second-hand. In suggesting to his readers that others have

50 The foreigner alluded to by Zumoto is undoubtedly Ernest Thomas Bethell, the editor of the Korea Daily News, who was consistently criticized in the Seoul Press for supporting Korean nationalists. For a discussion of the animosity between the editors of the two newspapers, refer to Chong, 158-162.
testified to similar observations about Koreans, Zumoto deflects possible criticism for his unfavourable cultural representation.

With respect to explaining the underdevelopment of natural resources in Korea, Zumoto cites a dearth of “industry” in the Korean people. He suggests that Koreans are not only failing to take advantage of the resources at their disposal but they are also unable to do so because of a reprehensible “dislike of work.” This kind of critical assessment of national character follows the rhetoric of debasement. Since Koreans supposedly lack the self-discipline to work hard – as demonstrated by their unwillingness to develop natural resources – Korea is perceived as a country that lacks the ability to govern itself.  

Notably, Alexis Dudden explains that this “trope of the ‘squatting’ and ‘slothful’ native” was in accord with the contemporary international discourse which “upheld progress and vigor as the criteria that determined national survival.” Consequently, in describing indolence as the character flaw responsible for the Koreans’ underdevelopment of natural resources, Zumoto places Korea within the internationally recognized category of “backward” countries that were ripe for colonization. Therefore, this editorial links the rhetoric of “appropriation” with that of “debasement,” implying that Japanese intervention is required to deliver Koreans from their weaknesses of character and transform them into a civilized people.

A more sophisticated method of engaging in cultural representations of Koreans was through editorials that were presented as observations about the country and people of Korea. In the 2 June 1909 edition of the *Seoul Press*, Yamagata Isoh provides a description of a recent visit to the campus of Ehwa Haktang. Initially presenting itself as unattached observation, the

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51 Spurr, 76.
52 Dudden, 134.
editorial describes Korea and its people unfavourably, particularly through the contrast of things Korean with things foreign. The article begins with the occasion of Yamagata’s visit to Ehwa Haktang, namely that he was “given the privilege of seeing the out-door sports” at the school. Yamagata then asserts that while the school is “well-known in this country,” there is a need to describe the founding and operation of the school “for the benefit of our readers who live elsewhere.” This assertion indicates the editor’s awareness of an international audience reading the newspaper. Describing it as “a school founded for the women of Korea by an American Lady, endowed with American money and run by Americans,” Yamagata depicts the school as essentially a foreign institution.

Subsequently, the first physical description initiates a series of contrasts between foreigners and Koreans that admires the former while disdaining the latter. Yamagata writes, “The School is situated in the most beautiful part of Seoul, in which stand…foreign consulates and residences of foreigners.” While it is unclear precisely what makes this part of Seoul so aesthetically appealing, its association with the presence of foreigners both indicates a partiality toward things foreign and foreshadows a narrative contrast. Thus Yamagata writes of Ehwa Haktang, “The place is well wooded and is entirely free from dust and obnoxious smell which is characteristic of the native quarters.” Although superficially a simple description of a school campus, this debasing statement, in its juxtaposition with the preceding pronouncement of the beauty of the foreign quarters, is actually a reproach of the Korean people. It is no coincidence that Yamagata’s first description of the campus is a description of absence: the foreign school lacks the “dust and obnoxious smell” of the Koreans’ living area. As a result, the reader’s first impression of Ehwa Haktang becomes a negative impression of Korea as the school is “entirely free” from the filth and stench that characterize Koreans.
The contrast between things Korean and things foreign continues in the proceeding paragraph of the editorial, in which Yamagata narrates his journey to and arrival at Ehwa Haktang. In his narrative, Yamagata depicts a dramatic contrast between the conditions outside the school gate and those inside:

As on Monday afternoon after walking through some parched and dusty streets for half an hour we entered a small unpretentious gate of the School and suddenly found ourselves in a well-laid out and scrupulously clean garden covered with green turf and dotted here and there with clusters of budding roses and blooming peonies and saw before us a splendid two-storeyed [sic] foreign building in brick we felt as if we had been taken to an enchanted place; so striking indeed was the contrast between the outside and inside of the school.

Beginning with a description of his journey to the school, Yamagata returns to the contrast in cleanliness between Koreans and foreigners. Whereas the Korean streets are “parched and dusty,” which pictures the death and defilement characteristic of debasement rhetoric, the foreign campus is “well-laid out and scrupulously clean” as well as alive with green grass and blossoming flowers, which pictures life and vitality. The contrast between death and life presented here by Yamagata is compelling. The implication is that while Korea is backward and decaying, the foreign is modern and vibrant. Even the description of the school as a “foreign building in brick” contrasts the modern architecture of foreigners with the backwardness of Korean dwellings. In effect, Yamagata sees Ehwa Haktang as an oasis of foreign modernity in the midst of the desert of uncivilized Korea. Indeed, given its squalid surroundings Ehwa Haktang is surreal, prompting Yamagata to describe the school in fantastical terms: it is an “enchanted place.” Accordingly, the contrast between Koreans and foreigners as portrayed here by Yamagata is indeed quite “striking” and indicates an underlying disdain for Koreans as a people defiled both physically and morally.
The negative moral judgement about Koreans is accentuated when Yamagata’s narrative transitions from the school campus to the students of Ehwa Haktang. Yamagata describes being “agreeably surprised” upon observing “about a hundred Korean girls neatly clad in white playing in the grounds.” These young female students clearly made a positive impression on the author, for he writes: “All of them seemed to be in the best of health of spirit, their faces beaming with intelligence yet with modesty and innocence marking their gait and carriage.” The reason for Yamagata’s amazement is subsequently identified:

This pleasant sight was enough for us to enable us [sic] to see at once what good work the School is doing for the women of Korea. We did not trouble ourselves to ask questions concerning the school curriculum and other matters, for it was quite plain to us that nothing but thoroughly good education could transform these Korean girls in so striking a way.

Yamagata insists that the mere sight of young Korean women acting with “modesty and innocence” is sufficient evidence to determine Ehwa Haktang’s merit. Consequently, he deems as unnecessary an inquiry into “the school curriculum and other matters.” Given the propensity for Japanese colonial administrators to harangue at length about the content of education required by Koreans, this refusal to ask about curriculum is arresting. However, an explanation follows in the latter clause of the sentence. In his assertion that “nothing but thoroughly good education could transform these Korean girls in so striking a way,” Yamagata reveals his underlying view of Koreans as degenerate and desolate. Given the editor’s underlying assumption of the helplessness of Koreans, such a radical transformation as is manifested in the female students of Ehwa Haktang could be made possible only through foreign intervention in the form of education. Here the plight of the women symbolizes Korea’s backwardness because the implication is that Korean men are unwilling to provide the requisite education for Korean
women that would enable the country to advance along the path of civilization.\textsuperscript{53} This implication is made explicit later in the editorial when Yamagata surmises that “before many years elapse Korean women will be given their rightful position in society instead of being little better than playthings or slaves of the sterner sex as they are today.” He suggests that due to the exploitation and oppression of Korean women by Korean men, the nation’s progress toward modernity has been hindered. However, at the instigation of foreign missionaries, Korean women have been given an unprecedented opportunity for renewal through education. As a result, Yamagata predicts that “those girls at the Pear Flower School [Ehwa Haktang] would one day become mothers of a New Korea.” Therefore, Yamagata Isoh’s editorial about a visit to Ehwa Haktang contains negative cultural characterizations intended to present Koreans as backward and in need of outside help, which reflects many of the justifications provided for Japan’s colonial ambitions in Korea at the time.

Perhaps the most overt characterization of Koreans to appear in the \textit{Seoul Press} was in an editorial entitled “Our View of Koreans,” which was published on 30 January 1910. Written by Yamagata Isoh, the article contains a summary of Yamagata’s impressions of the Korean people gathered during the course of his first year in Korea. Having arrived in Korea at the end of March of the previous year to assume the editorship of the \textit{Seoul Press} in place of Zumoto Motosada, Yamagata Isoh had experienced numerous interactions with Koreans in Seoul. In the introduction to the editorial, Yamagata reports that upon arriving in Seoul “one of the first things which struck our ears was the unfavourable comments passed on the character of Koreans.” The substance of these criticisms against Koreans is then provided:

\footnote{For a study of American missionary discourse about Korean women from the same period see Choi, “Christian Modernity,” 39-68.}
We were told that deceitfulness was a prominent characteristic, that indolence was second nature to them, that they were dishonest and ungrateful, that when one treated them with love and kindness they would ask for more, but should one show himself strict towards them they would harbour enmity against him. In short Koreans were a people with whom it was extremely difficult to deal.

In sum, Yamagata reports that Koreans were notorious for their dishonesty, laziness, ingratitude, and antagonism. Notably, the source of these calumnies is omitted, but they resemble many of the comments made about Koreans by foreigners and Japanese in Korea. Notably, Yamagata mentions that it was rather common to hear Koreans being spoken of in this manner: “We have since lived in this country for nearly one year and heard several times similar views of Koreans.” Consequently, he endeavours in this editorial to answer the question, “Do we share such views?” The remainder of the article consists of a repudiation of these negative characterizations of Koreans based on personal anecdotes from Yamagata.

Yamagata attempts to refute the “unfavourable comments passed on the character of Koreans” by detailing his interactions with Koreans. He first mentions “some friends among Korean gentlemen,” whom he identifies as Mr. Yun, the Director of Educational Affairs in the Korean government, and Mr. Chang, the Mayor of Seoul. Yamagata explains that these two men have been his “intimate friends of more than ten years’ standing,” and he asserts that they have always been true to him. Yamagata states, “We have never been deceived nor made tools of by them, much less have they shown themselves ungrateful.” Next, he mentions that “several Korean hands” work with him at the Seoul Press, and he describes their character as “gentle, obedient, faithful and diligent.” As the final example of a Korean who has left a good impression on him, Yamagata refers to the “poor Korean peddler, who comes to our house from time to time” in order to sell his wares. Yamagata’s first description of the merchant is of the man’s physical appearance: the man is “dirty, hair unkempt and clad in very soiled clothes.” However,
notwithstanding the merchant’s filthy exterior, Yamagata recognizes his worth: “He looks like a beggar, yet we secretly regard him as a gentleman.” The reasons for Yamagata’s high regard for the Korean merchant are that the man has “never” cheated Yamagata but has always sold merchandise of good quality. Yamagata then proceeds to recount an occasion on which the man asked for an advance in “the enormous sum of one yen.” In spite of the fact that Yamagata “did not, and still do not, know his name and address,” he lent the man the money requested. Yamagata admits that he fully expected never again to “see his dirty but smiling face” and was “greatly and agreeably surprised” when the merchant returned a few days later to repay the loan. With this experience, the Korean merchant won Yamagata’s trust, and Yamagata subsequently lent him money on several occasions. Each time, Yamagata was “invariably gratified to find him coming to pay his debt punctually on the appointed day.” Similarly, the merchant demonstrated his integrity by purchasing a piece of furniture from the market on behalf of Yamagata and by refusing to accept as payment more than what he considered appropriate for the work. As the man walked away, Yamagata states that his “bosom swelled with an indescribable something and in our heart we bowed to him.” Thus, contrary to the injurious accusations made against the character of Koreans, Yamagata professes to have a favourable opinion of the merchant.

Notwithstanding these superficial courtesies, there is a noticeable incongruence between what Yamagata says about the Koreans in the editorial and what his words imply. With respect to his “intimate friends,” Yamagata mentions the important fact that the two Koreans were educated in Tokyo and now hold prestigious positions in the Korean government. This suggests that these “Korean gentlemen” were not typical of the Korean populace against whom the stereotyping and criticisms were being levelled. On the other hand, the Korean assistants employed at the Seoul Press had fewer ties to positive Japanese influence and thus were more
representative of the Korean people. Consequently, they are characterized more ominously. The first observation to be made about them concerns their lack of identity. The reference to the men as “Korean hands” objectifies them, as their value is connected solely to their labour potential as Koreans. Moreover, by describing them as easy to control and hard-working, Yamagata indicates that there is a great opportunity for harnessing their potential, which the Japanese management of the Seoul Press is able to exploit. The corresponding implication is that the Korean court hinders the actualization of its people because it is only when under the leadership of the Japanese that Koreans become productive.

Finally, there are several indications in the representation of the Korean merchant which suggest that Yamagata does not truly esteem the man but sees him as a nameless representative of all backward Koreans. First, the descriptions of the merchant are consistently condescending, despite expressed appreciation for him. For example, Yamagata repeatedly emphasizes the merchant’s uncleanness and poverty, which reflects the rhetoric of debasement. This theme of the dirty and downcast Korean is frequently employed in the Seoul Press to describe Koreans generally, as was seen in the editorial considered previously, in order to indicate a moral deficiency that is supposedly inherent in the Korean race. The editor also insults the merchant for his linguistic abilities, mocking the man’s “queer Japanese.” Second, despite the expressed esteeming of the merchant “as a gentleman,” this is an admittedly secret estimation. On the other hand, the merchant is later referred to in the article as “our lowly Korean peddler,” which suggests that Yamagata actually perceives the merchant to be of inferior socio-economic as well as moral standing. Likewise, despite the “indescribable something” that overcame Yamagata upon witnessing the merchant’s humility, the only bow of appreciation that Yamagata would make was “in [his] heart.” Finally, Yamagata marvels that in the midst of the rampant
materialism of the age, “such an upright man exists and that among humble Koreans, who are despised as if they were dogs!” While thinly veiled as a compliment of the humility of the Korean people, this comment actually insults the character of Koreans. The fact that Yamagata is perceptibly surprised at the existence of an honest man among Koreans indicates his condescending view of them. Therefore, particularly when contrasted with the commendation of Yamagata’s friends, the superficial compliments directed toward the unnamed employees at the Seoul Press and the nameless merchant are unable to mask the conspicuous disdain with which Yamagata generally regards Koreans. Disregarding the professed admiration for the unidentified Koreans, Yamagata’s negative characterizations coupled with the emphasis on the inequality of power in the relationships suggest that the editor sees these men as representative of the inferiority inherent in all Koreans.

Since many foreign media were unacquainted with Korea, the Seoul Press attempted to provide this international audience with firsthand observation of the country and its people. However, the editors sought to establish a perception of Koreans that would support the Japanese colonial project by moving beyond description to cultural representation. As an expression of their looking backward at Korea, the Japanese officials’ characterizations of Koreans followed the rhetorical mode of debasement, as weaknesses in the Korean people were extrapolated to the nation. When specific mention of Koreans is made, the individuals are frequently nameless, suggesting that the ensuing caricatures are ethnographic types intended to serve as examples of weaknesses of the Korean nation. Predominantly through negative stereotyping and contrast with foreigners, the editorials consistently present a picture of Koreans as backward, uncivilized, and helpless. The corresponding implication was that Korea was unfit to govern itself and thus outside assistance from the Japanese was inevitable. The Japanese Residency General published
these cultural representations in its English language newspaper in order to justify to the 
watching world that Japan’s civilizing mission in Korea was not only enlightened but necessary.
Chapter 5
George Ladd

George Trumbull Ladd (1842-1921) visited Korea in March 1907 and stayed for three months. The following year, he published the personal account of his travels under the title, In Korea with Marquis Ito.\(^{54}\) At the time of his trip to Korea, Ladd was a professor at Yale University in the midst of a third lecture tour to Japan. Before leaving for Japan, Ladd had considered the prospects of visiting Korea “a somewhat remote possibility,”\(^{55}\) but it was not until he arrived in Japan that he was presented with the invitation that would make real his desire.

While attending a dinner party in Tokyo, Ladd was personally invited to visit Korea by Resident General Ito Hirobumi. Ladd explains in his book that the invitation was for Ladd to be Ito’s “guest” with the intention of providing assistance to the Residency General.\(^{56}\) Given his expressed aspirations for visiting Korea, Ladd readily agreed to the invitation.

From the perspective of the Residency General, a number of problematic circumstances in Korea necessitated that Ladd serve as a spokesman for Ito. Specifically, Ladd speaks frequently of the existence in Korea of foreigners voicing grievances about Japan’s colonial project. He reports, “Complaints of various sorts were constantly being made, not only against individual Japanese, but also against the Japanese administration, as unjust and oppressive to the Koreans, and as selfish and exclusive toward other foreigners than its own countrymen.”\(^{57}\)

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\(^{54}\) George Trumbull Ladd, In Korea with Marquis Ito (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1908).

\(^{55}\) Ladd, In Korea with Marquis Ito, 4.

\(^{56}\) Ladd relates further details concerning the substance of the invitation: “A week later, however, it was disclosed by a visit from Mr. Yamada of the Japan Times, who came from Marquis Ito to present his request more fully and to arrange for a subsequent extended conference upon the subject. I was then informed, in a general way, how it was thought by the Resident-General I might be of help to him and to Japan in solving the difficult problem of furthering for the Koreans themselves the benefits which the existing relations of the two countries made it desirable for both to secure.” Ladd, In Korea with Marquis Ito, 4.

\(^{57}\) Ladd, In Korea with Marquis Ito, 5.
Consequently, Resident General Ito sought to reverse negative international opinion by inviting Ladd to explore Korea and to inform the rest of the English speaking world about the true situation on the Korean peninsula. Throughout the process, Ladd is fully supportive of the Japanese administration in Korea: “the purpose of the visit was to be in full accord with that of the Residency-General – namely, to help the Koreans, and to convince all reasonable foreigners of the intention [of the Japanese] to deal justly with them.” Ladd thus embarked on his journey to Korea as an unofficial representative of Japan to the international audience, cognizant of the continuous need to refute criticism of the Japanese in Korea and to buttress Japan’s case for engaging in the “civilizing project.”

George Ladd arrived in Korea on 26 March 1907. One of his intentions was to deliver lectures on morality, education, and religion in various venues throughout the peninsula. In the course of his travels around Korea, Ladd was the subject of much attention in the Seoul Press. Aside from reporting at length the text of Ladd’s various lectures and speeches, the Seoul Press also quoted articles from Japanese newspapers covering the visit to Korea. One such article reproduced in the 20 June 1907 edition of the Seoul Press is an excerpt from an interview with George Ladd conducted by a journalist from the Japanese newspaper, the Nichi Nichi. The article was originally published in the Japan Times. Organized into three sections, the article presents Ladd’s opinions concerning Korea’s land, the Korean people, and the Japanese colonial administration led by Ito Hirobumi. Several aspects of the article deserve particular focus, including Ladd’s claims to authority, unhesitating endorsement of the Japanese colonial project, and negative cultural representations of Koreans.

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58 Ladd, In Korea with Marquis Ito, 14.
59 On Ladd’s mixed success in this endeavor and his corresponding frustrations concerning Korea’s resistance to the advancement of civilization, see Andre Schmid, “Two Americans in Seoul.”
In the first section of the article, Ladd begins his report on the situation in Korea with a description of the country’s natural resources and an expression of the need for Japanese technology. In this opening paragraph of the article, Ladd engages in what David Spurr refers to as “appropriation.” In the course of several short sentences, Ladd observes that “Korea has bountiful natural resources” that are in need of “an ordinary good administration.” He then suggests that the implementation of a foreign administration, implying that of Japan, will yield significant results: “rapid and great progress in the future.” Ladd immediately contrasts this hopeful vision of the future with the current state of affairs: “But at present, southern Korea presents a sad aspect.” Ladd proceeds to explain that “[t]here exist no roads, and the hills are generally bald and slopes conspicuously covered by tomb-stones.” Here Ladd engages in the rhetorical strategy that David Spurr calls “negation.” Spurr describes negation as the process “by which Western writing conceives of the Other as absence, emptiness, nothingness, or death.” When viewing Korea, Ladd sees negative space; thus, he employs words of absence: there are no roads, the hills are bald, and there are ubiquitous tombstones, the presence of which indicates the absence of life. In other words, the land of Korea is void and awaits filling. In the remainder of the article Ladd subsequently identifies Japanese colonial rule as the appropriate substance to fill Korea’s deficiency. Returning to the trope of appropriation, Ladd recognizes the potential for improving the condition of the land. He then offers a conditional statement of expectation for exponential economic growth in Korea: “If worked in a modern way, the land, however, will be made to yield twice the present crop in the course of 10 or 20 years.” For Ladd, the introduction of modern agriculture holds the promise for making the fallow land of Korea productive, and the

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60 Spurr, 28-42.  
61 Spurr, 92.
identity of the benevolent bearers of the requisite agricultural techniques is subsequently revealed to be Japanese colonialists. Thus, Ladd concludes that the redemption of Korea’s land lies with “Japanese emigrants to Korea” who “will do much benefit to Korea in this connection.” In concluding his brief assessment of Korea’s natural resources with the hope of Japanese technology and beneficence, Ladd anticipates the inevitable annexation of Korea into the Japanese empire as the telos that he endeavours to legitimate. Significantly, in speaking of this narrative telos, Ladd distinctly recalls the rhetoric of the Japanese colonial officials in Korea.\(^2\)

Having introduced Japan as the solution for Korea’s “sad aspect,” Ladd then segues into praise for Ito Hirobumi and his policies, which constitutes the focal point of the article. Essentially, Ladd represents the Koreans as a homogenous group of backward people that have found a saviour in the Japanese, particularly in the person of Resident General Ito Hirobumi. With respect to the misadministration and backwardness prevalent in Korea, Ladd presents Ito as the remedy, making explicit the previous intimation that Japan would supply the necessary benevolence of “good administration.” Ladd begins his unabashed acclamation of Ito with the assertion, “Marquis Ito is guiding the Korean people with a view to the economic development of Korea.” Here Ladd contends that as Resident General, Ito is already on the ground in Korea, striving for the development and prosperity that Korea so desperately needs but is unable to provide. Accordingly, Ladd then alludes to forestry, mining, and fishery projects – designed to develop the efficiency of Korea’s mineral and natural resource extraction – which are “being promoted by the intention of Marquis Ito develop [sic] Korea for the benefit of Koreans.” Not only is Ito supplying Korea’s lack but he is doing it selflessly, reflecting his notorious moniker,

\(^2\) See chapter 2 of the present study.
“Friend of Korea.”63 In effect, this is Ladd’s position on the situation in Korea, namely that Japan is in the peninsula as part of a grand project of beneficence.64

The second section of the article begins a set of negative cultural representations that are characteristic of foreign writing about Korea and Koreans. Significantly, it also marks an important literary transition in Ladd’s comments as he shifts from a discussion of inanimate natural resources to be developed by the helping hand of Japan to the human resources similarly to be developed. In order to demonstrate the need for Japan to engage in a project of civilization, it must be demonstrated that Korea is uncivilized. Ladd endeavours to legitimate Japan’s colonial project by depicting the hopelessly backward nature of Koreans that has resulted in the despicable condition of their country. This line of colonial writing follows the pattern identified by David Spurr as “debasement.” Spurr writes, “In colonial discourse every individual weakness has its political counterpart – uncivilized society, according to this logic, being little more than the uncivilized mind and body writ large.”65 Importantly, Spurr identifies two purposes for this rhetorical trope: “Colonial discourse requires the constant reproduction of these images in various forms – a recurring nomination of the abject – both as a justification for European intervention and as the necessary iteration of a fundamental difference between colonizer and colonized.”66 While Spurr’s focus here is European colonialism, the analysis is nevertheless germane to this study of George Ladd’s comments because they reflect the same purposes that Spurr articulates. The discourse of civilization originated among the Western colonial Powers to

63 In a short letter to the editor of the Seoul Press after the assassination of Itō Hirobumi, Ladd refers to the former Resident General as Korea’s friend no fewer than four times, at one point exclaiming that Ito was “Korea’s most devoted and powerful friend.” “Correspondence,” the Seoul Press, 8 December 1909.
65 Spurr, 76.
66 Spurr, 78.
legitimate their acquisition of colonial possessions among “uncivilized” countries. Having taken up this discourse and articulated itself as a civilized power, the Japanese Residency General now calls upon Ladd to verify Japan’s claims in Korea. As a firm adherent of this discourse, Ladd witnesses the civilizing project of Japan in Korea and concurs that Japan is indeed qualified to engage in the civilizing mission.

In contributing to the legitimization of Japanese colonial rule in Korea, Ladd offers his opinions about Korea and its people. Ladd’s view of Koreans is congruent with the view of the Residency General because only in seeing Koreans as backward can Japan justify its colonial rule in Korea, a goal with which Ladd is in support. The following excerpt is a sample of Ladd’s debasing cultural characterizations:

The Korean people are in general ignorant, superstitious, and credulous to the extreme. But they are a meek and peaceful race. Northern Korean [sic] is infested by robbers, and the people there are rather wild and courageous. The Koreans can be said to be governable and will make good workmen in railway and other works. The corruption of the high class is beyond description.

Ladd begins with a sweeping description of Koreans as being “in general ignorant, superstitious, and credulous to the extreme” (emphasis added). Albeit tacitly allowing for individual exceptions, Ladd’s brush in painting this portrait is indeed broad; the three characteristics listed are foundational to an understanding of all Koreans. Notably, this debasement of Koreans posits the affirmation of the Japanese. As already indicated by his previous reference to the benefits to accrue under Japanese emigrants, Ladd here implies that the backwardness of Koreans has necessitated the imposition of civilized Japanese rule. Next, Ladd attempts to mitigate his harsh assessment by crediting the Koreans with meekness and passivity, suggesting that the disposition of Koreans is one inherently suited to being ruled. Indeed, given that Koreans are apt to get into danger on account of their ignorance, superstition, and credulity,
it is incumbent upon the Japanese to act on behalf of who they define as their “childlike” neighbours.67

Ladd resumes the racist stereotyping with an analysis of “northern Korea.” The ambiguity of the geographical referent when considered in light of Ladd’s preceding and proceeding comments suggests that the problems of this northern area are merely symptomatic of the entire peninsula. The first observation Ladd makes is that the north is “infested by robbers.” The malevolence of this cultural representation is manifested in its dual functions. First, it serves to add thievishness to the previous list of deficiencies in the national character of Koreans. Second, it establishes that the problem is not merely the presence of pilfering Koreans in northern Korea; rather, the area is “infested” with them. Here Ladd presents a visualization of the debasement he perceives in Koreans, picturing the country as overrun with the teeming vermin of its own populace. One of the reasons for this infestation is subsequently revealed: the entire population intrinsically possesses a precarious combination of wildness and courage.

Notwithstanding these negative assessments, Ladd unexpectedly inserts into his diatribe another ostensibly positive statement about Koreans. As with the earlier statement, however, this one ultimately concerns the usefulness of Koreans to the Japanese colonial project. Ladd identifies docility and industriousness as the Koreans’ redeeming qualities: “The Koreans can be said to be governable and will make good workmen.” Thus, Ladd affirms that despite their inability to rule themselves Koreans will submit to the rule of another, and when placed under appropriate taskmasters they will labour industriously.

67 Interestingly, this reflects the ideology of the “White Man’s Burden.” See the discussion in “Affirmation: The White Man’s Burden” from Spurr, 109-124.
Finally, Ladd resumes his negative representation of Korea by commenting on the indescribable corruption of “the high class.” Undoubtedly a reference to the aristocratic yangban, this trope of a corrupt ruling class, ubiquitous in Japanese colonial propaganda, casts a sinister hue over the entire country. The implication is that given the overwhelming corruption in the upper class, the moral decay present in the majority of the population – the infestation of robbers being but one example – is unimaginably worse. It is this very decay that has produced the current situation: Korea can neither govern nor protect itself. Once again the infirmity of the Korean character is portrayed as directly responsible for the weakness of the nation. Notably, Spurr explains that this type of rhetoric serves to demonstrate that “the physical suffering of indigenous peoples can be associated with their moral and intellectual degradation.” Therefore, in his terse summary of Korea’s woes, Ladd tacitly indicates that annexation by Japan is the only humane outcome. Since Korea is overcome with vermin and internal decay, it is incumbent upon Japan, as a civilized nation, to “protect” uncivilized Korea by annexing it.

Against the backdrop of the preceding cultural representations of Koreans, Ladd casts Ito Hirobumi as the protagonist in the story of civilization. Specifically, Ladd’s sweeping representations serve to establish the Koreans as a foil to Resident General Ito. The first area in which the Resident General is said to have effected positive change for Korea is in the area of politics. Ladd contrasts the previous remarks about the corruption among the politicians of Korea with the political savvy of Ito: “The recent Ministerial change took place smoothly, due to the influence and wisdom of Marquis Ito.” As a sign of transformation, Ladd proffers the newly appointed political cabinet that was initiated by the Resident General. Accordingly, Premier Yi Wanyong is reported to have “been allowed to select members of his Cabinet,” which implies

68 Spurr, 77-78.
that Ito successfully overcame the centuries-old corruption and political factionalism that inhibited true politics. Notably, Ladd refers to the Premier as “a first class statesman,” and proudly announces that “he has succeeded in forming a compact Cabinet.” Here Ladd again employs the rhetoric of “Appropriation,” albeit this time with a subtle shift in nuance. With respect to an alternate form of appropriation, Spurr observes that “the West seeks its own identity in Third World attempts at imitating it; it finds its own image, idealized, in the imperfect copies fabricated by other cultures.”

Having adopted Euro-American forms of political process, the Japanese under Ito are capable of instigating the modern democratic process in Korea. The first representative of “the better” way of modern democracy among Koreans is Yi Wanyong, who receives commendation from Ladd for successful replication of good American statesmanship. Accordingly, following in the footsteps of Ito by imitating Euro-American standards is “a step towards the better in Korean politics.”

The most significant aspect of Ladd’s view of the situation in Korea concerns the relationship between the Korean people and the Resident General. Ladd begins his discussion of the relationship between colonial authority and the colonized people – a relationship that the reader anticipates would be multifarious at best – with the simplistic, unsubstantiated statement: “The Korean people seem to sincerely respect Marquis Ito.” Naturally, given Ladd’s admission in his book that at the time there were numerous complaints about the Japanese colonial government and the mistreatment of its Korean subjects, such a superficial observation made by Ladd evokes within the reader’s mind questions about the complexities one would expect to find in such a power relationship as colonizer and colonized. As though anticipating such questions,

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69 Spurr, 36. Spurr continues, “To see non-Western people as having themselves become the standard-bearers of Western culture is in some ways a more profound form of colonization than that which treats them merely as sources of labor or religious conversion. In such cases, the object of appropriation is no longer the human body nor even the individual soul, but the very nature of reality in the Third World, now seen in its potential as an image of the West.”
Ladd next attempts to root the current animosity of Koreans toward the Japanese in history, stating, “Historically they are disposed against the Japanese.” Whether this statement is an allusion to the Japanese military campaigns of 1592 and 1597, in which Japanese forces led by Toyotami Hideyoshi invaded the Korean peninsula, is unknown. Regardless of the historical origins of this apparently one-sided animosity, Koreans are said to have “renewed the hatred on account of the outrageous conduct of thoughtless Japanese towards the natives after the late war [with Russia].”

Immediately after identifying the events following the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 as the cause for the renewal of Korean hatred, Ladd stresses that Koreans hold no ill-will toward the Resident General. Indeed, according to Ladd, Koreans “view Marquis Ito independent of these circumstances.” Unlike the “thoughtless Japanese” who had given the Koreans a cause for hating them, Ito, the resident symbol of colonial power and authority, is allegedly perceived as completely unconnected to the suffering of Koreans and is thus not the object of any negative feelings from them. Accordingly, Ladd offers a number of additional reasons for “the bad feeling between the Japanese and natives.” Overlooking recent actions taken by Japan that would certainly have contributed to the existence of bad blood between the two nations – such as the unequal Kanghwa Treaty of 1876, the forced imposition of the Protectorate Treaty of 1905, and the occupation of Korea by Japanese soldiers and colonialists – Ladd insists that the cause “may be attributed to misconduct on both sides and to irresponsible interpreters employed at the law courts.” In this way, Ladd attempts to obscure the misdeeds of Japan, presenting the situation as

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70 In his essay, Ladd contends that “the Koreans have in fact suffered much more from the baleful influence of China and from the invasions of Mongols from the North than from anything which Japan has been able or willing to do to them.” Consequently, he proposes that “the explanation [for the hatred] must be found, in part at least, in the emotions of jealousy and contempt: both jealousy and contempt on the part of the Koreans towards the Japanese, and contempt mingled with pride on the part of the Japanese towards the Koreans.” Ladd, “The Annexation of Korea,” 642-643.
one of mutual misunderstanding and grievance that can be eliminated with the “improvement of the personnel of interpreters.” This is a subtle shifting of blame reminiscent of Ito Hirobumi’s correspondence to the American Ambassador to Japan, Thomas J. O’Brien.\textsuperscript{71} By making Korea equally responsible for the animosity between the two countries, Ladd deflects attention away from Japan. On the other hand, citing such factors as Japanese farmers residing alongside Korean farmers, the influence of “Japanese ladies” upon their Korean counterparts, and the formation of a common educational system, Ladd insists, “There are already signs of the relations much improving.” Noticeably, however, the stimulus for this improvement is unidirectional: Japan is once more the active participant and Korea the passive recipient of goodwill.

In the third section of the article, Ladd denounces the foreigners who criticize Resident General Ito and provides recommendations for supporting the Japanese colonial project in Korea. Candidly admitting that not all foreigners in Korea respect Ito Hirobumi the way Koreans purportedly do, Ladd concedes the existence of “[a] very small number of foreigners” who “dislike Marques [sic] Ito.” The concession is immediately mitigated, however, by Ladd’s insistence that the foreigners who dislike Ito Hirobumi do so because they “desire to utilize Koreans for their selfish purposes.” Ironically, Ladd completely ignores the fact that the accusation of exploiting Koreans was frequently being made against the Japanese at this time. Moreover, he insinuates that all foreigners who oppose the Resident General do so because they are manipulative and selfish; Ito has given no cause for dislike or distrust. Thus, rather than acknowledging the instances of Japanese oppression and exploitation of Koreans that had caused some foreigners to oppose Ito, Ladd blames the prejudice of certain foreigners. Notwithstanding

\textsuperscript{71}“Correspondence,” the Seoul Press, 7 March 1909. For examples of Japanese colonial officials blaming linguistic incompetence for the problems in Korea, see chapter 2 of the present study.
this fringe group of foreign residents, Ladd proudly announces that “foreigners both official and private highly respect the Marquis.” As evidence of this nearly unanimous support, Ladd proudly cites the missionary community: “Of late some influential missionaries publicly declared themselves in favour of his policy.” Therefore, contrary to the tiny group of pessimists, the overwhelming majority of foreigners, especially the missionaries, support the colonial government and recognize its legitimacy.

The next area that Ladd addresses is the Japanese colonial population. Noting the presence of 80,000 Japanese living in Korea, Ladd declares them the unofficial teachers of Koreans: “their clean streets and nice houses are a good object lesson to the natives.” While Ito is leading Korea from the top in the form of policy and law, the Japanese emigrants are leading the country from below in the form of daily examples of hygiene and modern living. Ladd notes that while Japanese used to come to Korea alone, they have begun “coming with their families with the object of permanently settling.” Not only will Koreans benefit from the daily instruction of exemplary individual Japanese but they will begin to witness model family life as well. Clearly, Ladd perceives that there is much for the Korea to learn from Japan. Then as an endorsement of Japan as the teacher of Korea, Ladd includes all of the colonial administration in his praise: “The Japanese officials seem to be true gentlemen and their wives true ladies.” In thus referring to their conformity to Euro-American notions of civility, Ladd engages in what David Spurr calls “classification.” This form of rhetoric involves classifying nations according to their success in emulating “a single standard of economic and political organization to which all nations must

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72 The missionary community was repeatedly cited in the Seoul Press as fully endorsing the Japanese colonial project in Korea. For instance, see the editorials, “Christian Missionaries and Political Questions,” 12 November 1909; and “Christian Movement in Korea,” 20 February 1910.

73 Although Ladd neglects to identify these “influential missionaries,” undoubtedly they included Dr. William Scranton and Dr. James Gale, two missionaries who were frequently identified as strong supporters of the Japanese administration in Korea. The writings of both men will be considered in the following chapters of the present study.
aspire.”

According to the standards of civilization, Japan has situated itself favourably within the discourse of modernity, thus prompting Ladd to comment on the ability of the Japanese colonial officials to present themselves as models of civility to the Koreans. Consequently, Ladd deems the officials qualified to act as administrators of the Korean colony, fully capable of leading the people in the ways of civilization. Ladd then remarks that the Japanese officials, acutely aware of the need to maintain the discourse of civilization and enlightenment, concurred with Ladd’s assertion of the “heavy responsibilities for successfully governing Korea before the eyes of the whole world.” While reassuring the foreign readers that Japan is cognizant of its accountability to the “whole world” – that is, to the colonial Powers who consider themselves worthy of possessing the gaze of judgement – to succeed in advancing the project of civilization in Korea, Ladd unquestioningly affirms the power structures that define and sustain the project. In effect, Japan’s level of civilization is being tested by the ability of Japanese colonial officials to bring civilization to the Koreans.

Ladd concludes his comments on Korea with a hopeful vision for the future of Korea under the Japanese. Preeminent among his recommendations for ensuring the progress of the country under Japanese rule is collaboration with Ito. He begins with the statement, “In my opinion, the future welfare of the country can be hoped for by strongly supporting Marquis Ito in the execution of his policy.” Ladd’s predictions concerning the progress and prosperity of Korea are thus largely contingent upon international support of the Resident General and his administration. Moreover, Ladd contends that hindrances – Japanese or foreign – to the colonial project must be avoided: “It is to be desired that Japanese or foreigners will not try to obstruct the Resident-General.” Ladd insists that provided these recommendations are adhered to and

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74 Spurr, 62.
Korea remains under the continued leadership of Ito, “the Japanese-Korean crisis will be all over, on account of the economic progress and other reforms being achieved in Korea.” Once again avoiding all of the complications inherent in colonial rule, Ladd is convinced that all grievances and desires for freedom on the part of Koreans will be abandoned due to prosperity and advancement in civilization. While unsurprising given the ubiquitous adherence to colonial ideology among Americans and Europeans, Ladd’s naive belief reveals the extent to which he believes in Ito’s ability to save the Korean people. This belief is reiterated a final time in a summary statement: “The great danger point in Korean politics lies in the Court. The Marquis is, however, strong enough to successfully cope with this problem.” The foreigners reading Ladd’s comments have no need for concern: Ito is more than capable of handling the antics of backward Korean politicians, and he will succeed in his mission to bring civilization to Korea.

George Ladd visited Korea as an unofficial representative of Ito Hirobumi. The visit was orchestrated by the Resident General to reveal the “true” nature Japanese rule in Korea. Ladd was thus intentionally engaging the dual-layered gaze by evaluating Japanese colonialism and reporting the results to the international audience. As he travelled throughout the peninsula giving lectures and observing Japanese colonial rule, Ladd was constantly gazing upon both Koreans and Japanese colonialists. His reports were always unfavourable concerning the former and laudatory concerning the latter. During his stay in Korea, Ladd was interviewed by a journalist from the Nichi Nichi, and Ladd’s comments were published in the Japan Times, before being reproduced in the Seoul Press. In the article, Ladd echoes the rhetorical themes of the Japanese colonial administrators. Ladd rests his authority to speak about the situation in Korea primarily upon both the global civilizing mission and his direct observation of events. Ladd sees Japan’s civilizing mission in Korea as constituting a part of the grand project of civilization in
the world, the accomplishment of which justifies any inconvenience to or exploitation of Koreans required along the way. He repeatedly underscores the beneficence of Japan – personified in Resident General Ito – in bringing civilization to Korea. Finally, he engages various rhetorical devices in order to present Korea as resigned to a helpless condition of ignorance and backwardness. For Ladd, the answer to Korea’s problems is to be found in the modern, civilized rule of Japan. Echoing the constant refrain of the Residency General, Ladd proclaims that Koreans should submit to Japanese rule and enjoy the resulting benefits of civilization.
William B. Scranton (1856-1922) was an American physician sent to Korea as a medical missionary by the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Travelling with his wife and widowed mother, William Scranton arrived in Japan aboard the USS Alamo in February 1885. Upon completion of a three-month study of the Korean language, he continued on to Korea in May. After acquiring a house in Seoul and renovating it to encompass medical supplies and equipment, Scranton opened a hospital in September. In an article for the JoongAng Daily newspaper, Hyung-eun Kim reports that Scranton’s was the first privately-owned modern hospital in Korea.\(^{75}\) Kim proceeds to describe the naming of the hospital and the amicable relations between Scranton and the Korean court: “King Gojong (1852-1919) dubbed it Universal Relief Hospital, showing his support for the work Scranton was doing, according to historical records. Scranton was appreciative, comparing the Korean king to former U. S. president Abraham Lincoln and prospective patients to freed slaves, historians say.”\(^{76}\) In addition to his work at the hospital, Scranton founded Sangdong Methodist Church in 1888. Clearly, William Scranton was highly regarded by the Korean court and viewed himself as a benefactor to the Korean people. A look at his expressed views on Koreans, however, will present a more nuanced perspective from which to understand Scranton.

\(^{76}\) Kim, paragraph 10. Interestingly, the comments about King Gojong and the prospective patients reflect the rhetorical tropes of “Idealization” and “Appropriation,” which are characteristic of Scranton’s writing. The following discussion will address these issues in more detail.
While Scranton is not particularly prominent in the history of Christian missionary work in Korea, he wrote several articles concerning Korea that appear in archival documents of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Similar to Ladd, Scranton was the focus of much attention in the *Seoul Press*. Indeed, his work, extracurricular activities, and trips abroad were occasionally the subject of notices in the newspaper, which periodically ran advertisements for his Seoul Sanatorium for foreigners. He was also apparently a prominent member of the expatriate community in Korea as he is referred to as “the well-known Dr. Scranton of Seoul.” In addition, an article written by Scranton appeared in the 5 June 1907 edition of the *Seoul Press*. Under the title, “Straws,” Scranton employs the metaphor of straws being stirred up by the wind to describe the situation of Korea. He depicts the winds of civilization and progress blowing in from Japan, inevitably stirring up the straws of the old order in Korea along with the dust of criticism. In his article, Scranton attempts to legitimate the Japanese colonial project in Korea by rebuffing complaints against the Japanese made by both foreigners and Koreans as well as explaining why it was necessary for Japan to engage in its civilizing mission in Korea. In many respects, William Scranton’s article is similar to George Ladd’s. Indeed, immersed in the same discourse of civilization and progress, Scranton likewise employs many of the same rhetorical tropes identified by Spurr. On the other hand, Scranton makes explicit in his article a number of assumptions that remain implicit in Ladd’s. As with Ladd, Scranton’s tone is

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77 No major biography has been written about William Scranton, and very little mention is made of him in most works on early Christian missionaries to Korea. Indeed, when William Scranton is mentioned at all it is usually with reference to his mother, who is quite well known for having founded Ehwa Haktang (later renamed Ehwa Womans University) in 1886. For references to William Scranton and his work, see Donald N. Clark, *Living Dangerously in Korea: The Western Experience, 1900-1950* (Norwalk, C.T.: EastBridge, 2003), 181; and Wi Jo Kang, *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1997), 27-28.

78 See for example, the *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1893): 44-46; and (1895): 38-40.

generally condescending toward Koreans and favourable toward the Japanese colonialists. Even in their respective structures the two articles parallel one another. Aside from the differences in their professions and their reasons for becoming involved with Korea, both Ladd and Scranton are essentially of one mind vis-à-vis Korea and the Japanese administration operating there. In fact, the main difference between the two articles is that whereas Ladd focuses primarily on Ito Hirobumi and the future benefits to be enjoyed by Koreans through his leadership, Scranton addresses the Japanese administration and the present display “of the fruitage of their occupation.”

In the first section of the article, Scranton presents himself as qualified to speak truthfully about the present state of affairs in Korea on the basis of his eyewitness accounts. He begins with an eyewitness account of two blind Koreans attempting to pass through the Great South Gate in Seoul. Contemplating the “anxious attempts” of the men, Scranton remarks, “There was a time, not so very far back either, when it would not have been so difficult as it was on this particular and recent day.” Having established a temporal contrast, Scranton immediately proceeds to explain the difference in situation: “But even blind men can see the difference between the present bustle on all the streets of Seoul, and the sleepy days of old.” The purpose of this hyperbole, the reader recognizes, is to exaggerate the contrast between the previous and present states in Korea: even blind men are able to “see” the difference between the “sleepy days” then and the “bustle” now. Notably, in describing Korea’s past as “sleepy days of old,” Scranton picks up the rhetorical trope of “negation.” Unlike Ladd, who viewed Korea as negative space, Scranton sees it as negative history. Korea’s past is not real history; its former days were merely stages in the long sleep of stagnancy. By contrast, Scranton identifies “prosperity” as the

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80 Spurr, 92-108.
characteristic that sets the present so markedly apart from the past. He announces that so ubiquitous are the signs of prosperity that even blind men can “observe” them: “Indications of prosperity are on every side, and even blind men take cognizance of them.” Nevertheless, not all blind men are capable of making these observations, for there are “those blind men from the West who come with a bias, and get their information from inside (of a room) sources, and not from vital touch, and actual knowledge of what was before their visit.” This transition – from the physically blind Koreans who are able to recognize progress to the foreigners who are blinded to the signs of change due to their prejudice – both explicitly demeans the foreigner visitors to Korea and implicitly bolsters Scranton’s own qualification. Here Scranton echoes the theme of authority based upon impartiality. Similar to claims made by Zumoto Motosada in his editorial, “Japan in Korea,” Scranton claims to be an unbiased witness of the situation in Korea. Whereas foreign journalists and politicians merely sojourn in Korea briefly, are biased, gather information from dubitable sources, and lack an understanding of the conditions that existed before the Japanese enacted the protectorate, Scranton is a long-term resident in Korea with history in the land and abundant experiential knowledge that sets him apart. Thus, Scranton has a uniquely thorough understanding of Korea and Koreans which qualifies him to provide precise commentary.

A common theme in the article is Scranton’s disparaging view of Koreans. Upon establishing his authority to speak about Korea, Scranton immediately begins describing the effects of the modernization project being undertaken by Japan. One of the first changes cited is a new industriousness in Korea. Scranton says that “in the good old times…only one thing happened at a time, and that at rare intervals. But now the sun is said to rise a half hour earlier

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81 See the discussion of Zumoto’s editorial in chapter 3 of the present study.
than before in Korea, and yet it is with difficulty that one can accomplish all that needs to be
done in one short day.” Employing the rhetoric of debasement, Scranton establishes a dramatic
contrast between the backward and lethargic ways of “old” Korea and the modern, industrious
days of Korea “now” (i.e. under the Japanese). Thus, Scranton emphasizes the notions of time
and productivity as symbols of progress brought about by the Japanese, the implication being
that a yearning for the quieter days of the past is a regression in the civilizing project.

Shifting to the rhetoric of appropriation, Scranton next draws attention to the current
condition of the economy. Although admitting that the local “jinrikisha coolie” now charges two
or three times as much as before, Scranton asserts that even this is a sign of progress “since the
money of the country was put on a sound basis, and you really know what it is you are taking
and receiving in the name of the coin of the realm.” In other words, before the Japanese took
control of the monetary system in Korea, the money had no set value. Now that the currency has
been stabilized, one is finally able to calculate the relative value of goods and services. Here
Scranton suggests that Japan has restored order to the financial chaos that previously existed in
Korea.82 He concedes that some grumble about the inflation, but he subsequently dismisses this
grumbling as “only a straw.” Scranton reasons that the rise in prices demonstrates an overall
increase in prosperity in Korea: “it shows that somebody can pay those rates or he [the coolie]
could not live.” Besides, “the coolies are cleaner now than they were before, so we get some
benefit after all.” This offensive comment recalls some of the racist characterizations made by
Ladd, and Scranton’s use of the rhetorical trope of debasement here is further intended to
demonstrate that wretchedness of conditions before the Japanese rule. Prior to the protectorate
treaty, Koreans lived in squalor; since the establishment of the protectorate, the living conditions

82 Spurr, 28.
have improved so dramatically that even the lowest of workers has been introduced to basic principles of hygiene. In referencing the personal hygiene of the lower class workers, Scranton reinforces the link between hygiene and modernity, thereby supporting the civilizing project undertaken by the Japanese.

Returning to the metaphor of blindness, Scranton cites the many benefits effected in Korea by the Japanese. He emphasizes the importance of personal verification, contending that “a short trip to Fusan [sic] or to Pyeng-yang [sic]” will plainly reveal the indications of progress that are “evident to any but a blind man.” Among the signs to which Scranton alludes are increased trade, urban expansion, the proliferation of schools, and forestation initiatives. In referencing the introduction of “forest culture,” Scranton reminds the reader that this project is “so necessary in this land of clean shaven hills.” Echoing the “bald” hills in Ladd’s trope of negative space, Scranton similarly points to irresponsible deforestation as a sign of the emptiness of Korea’s land. On the contrary, the Japanese colonial government is working to teach responsible management of natural resources.

At this point, Scranton switches directly to the trope of “idealization,” which Spurr defines as “a rhetorical position in which the writer takes an ethical position in regard to his or her own culture.”83 Scranton praises the “experimental farms” of the Japanese, in which “are worked out problems for the people and their benefit, which the average farmer of the West could not solve.” In this instance, Scranton admires Japanese agriculture for accomplishing what Western agriculture could not. Notably, Scranton inadvertently degrades Japan with this idealization. While demeaning “the average farmer of the West,” Scranton simultaneously

83 Spurr, 125. While David Spurr is primarily concerned with analyzing “[t]he tradition of idealizing the savage,” his method of analysis can be applied to the present context, in which a Western observer (i.e. Scranton) idealizes a non-Western colonizer (i.e. the Japanese).
demeans Japan, for there is a degree of surprise in the declaration that Japan has managed to solve agricultural problems that the West could not. In other words, despite the similar colonial role shared by America and Japan, the latter is still regarded as inherently “Other,” thus enabling it to become the object of Scranton’s idealization. He then asserts that this final example, “good for the eyes of conscientious observers, is enough to gladden any but a chronic grumbler, and stop the cavilling of some who ask, and never look to see, what is being done for Korea, by her neighbours.” This summary statement serves several related functions. First, in affirming that the experimental farms constitute enough evidence to satisfy all “conscientious observers,” Scranton declares that only the bias of a “chronic grumbler” would enable someone to question the progress being advanced by Japan in Korea. Second, with respect to those who complain about the Japanese rule, Scranton accuses them of moral deficiency in refusing to examine for themselves the achievements being accomplished on Korea’s behalf. Moreover, seemingly unaware of the inherently biased nature of observation, Scranton again assumes that as a long-term resident of Korea he accurately sees from close proximity the beneficence of Japan’s colonial project in Korea. Upon this assumption rests his chief qualification to speak authoritatively on the situation in Korea.

The second part of the article is a discussion of Korea’s deficiency and Japan’s successes in supplying what is lacking, which is reminiscent of the negation and appropriation rhetoric employed by Ladd. Resuming the harsh censure of Koreans, Scranton portrays Korea as an ignorant child in need of a teacher. Specifically, he identifies education as Korea’s most pressing need and presents Japan’s suitability for teaching Korea: “Exact and practical teaching is what Korea needs most, and it is just this which she is getting from Japan.” This assertion recalls the comments made by Zumoto Motosada, namely that Japan is acting as a teacher to Korea “for his
Scranton then summarizes the curriculum that Koreans need from their Japanese teachers:

It is required that somebody should tell the Koreans just what will make and keep up prosperity, and give good wages, and a longer life to enjoy things, and better houses to live in, and justice to protect them in their rights while they stay here. And these are just the lines Japan is following in Korea to-day. She is taking the things which have only so recently been found practical in Japan, and is teaching and developing these here in Korea.

In prescribing what Korea needs to be taught, Scranton assumes the condescending tone characteristic of the rhetorical strategy of classification. Assuming the position of authority – this time not only over unnamed foreign observers but over Korea itself – Scranton posits himself as capable of identifying Korea’s needs, which he subsequently dictates. Moreover, this list is markedly secular; not one of the items is related to the spiritual realm, the area with which Scranton, as a Christian missionary, would presumably have been most concerned. In fact, the entire article makes no mention of religion whatsoever. Appearing more interested in supporting the advancement of Japanese civilization than in promoting a religious agenda, Scranton assumes the colonial gaze of Japan. Significantly, while he declares that Japan is pursuing the “lines” of progress and development identified as necessary for Korea, Scranton does not overlook Japan’s relative position in the hierarchy of civilization: the markers of civilization “have only so recently been found practical in Japan.” While ostensibly sanctioning Japan’s right to introduce civilization to Korea, Scranton reaffirms that this civilization is manifestly Western and had to be first introduced to Japan from America. The subtle unease about Japan’s status as colonizer thus permeates the article as Scranton again finds it necessary to remind his audience that before America assumed its role as teacher to Japan, the Japanese at that time fared no better than

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84 “Speak Well of Your Friends,” the Seoul Press, 28 May 1907. See the discussion of this editorial in chapter 2 of the present study.
Koreans in the present. Accordingly, by asserting that Japan “is teaching and developing” in Korea the very things Korea needs to learn, Scranton reinforces the classification of civilization in which America supersedes Japan.

The article then proceeds to detail the ways that Japan has effected profitable change in Korea. Scranton begins, “It is perhaps in the way of justice that Japan is conferring a conspicuous and lasting benefit.” Korea is presented as a land of lawlessness, in which justice would never have been found “were it not for the fostering, not to say the enforcing of it at the hands of our friends from across the straits!” Aside from identifying the “chaos that calls for restoration of order” in Korea, this statement proclaims the bonds of friendship with which Japan and Korea are tied. As with Ladd, Scranton prominently portrays Japan as the friend of Korea. Scranton wants his readers to know that true friendship, rather than personal interest, was prompting Japan to act on behalf of Korea. An important sign of this altruism is then identified: “the protection that is gradually being evolved by the new courts, and affording the Korean people protection against one another” (emphasis added). According to Scranton, the seal of Japan’s friendship is the granting of legal protection to Koreans from other Koreans. Despite the grave crimes committed by the Japanese in Korea, such as the Nagamori land plan and the removal to Japan of Korean artifacts, Scranton informs his audience that it is in fact the lawless Koreans who perpetrate injustice against one another. Notably, Scranton here echoes Ladd’s assertion that Korea is a land of “robbers.” Japan is consequently presented as restoring justice to anarchistic Korea while any sense of Japanese culpability is suppressed.

85 Spurr, 28.
86 For further information on the Nagamori plan, see Duus, 368-373. Examples of an Anglo-American’s outcry voiced against Japan can be found in editorials from the Korea Daily News: “Protecting Korea,” 4 August 1904; “Nagamori Again,” 16 August 1904; and “Japan and Korea,” 20 February 1905.
In order to buttress his assertions that Japan has successfully established law and order in Korea, Scranton once more reports anecdotal evidence. Not surprisingly, the story he relays involves a “certain Korean official, well-known, but especially active in promoting schemes.” Containing curious, albeit contrary, parallels to the Nagamori plan, Scranton’s story consists of a group of Koreans who complain to a foreigner that “the Japanese authorities had suppressed a monopoly granted to the Koreans, and that it was now being given to the Japanese.” Relaying further details of the Korean scheme, Scranton explains that the foreigner investigated the documents, which seemed to be in order, and requested an explanation from the appropriate Japanese authorities – the kind of request, boasts Scranton, that is “always most willingly granted.” Scranton then reports the conclusion of the matter: “After a very thorough sifting of the matter,” the Japanese Residency General discovered that the corrupt Korean official had obtained an illegal land grant from “a Head of a Korean Government Department” and was attempting to sell the monopoly to a Japanese resident. When the prospective Japanese buyer inquired about the legality of such a deal, it was revealed that the “mammoth grant” was “in contravention of an express treaty with Japan made many years ago.” In this way, the Residency General revealed that the Korean investors’ real grievance was against the corrupt Korean official, “not against the Japanese.” Scranton then happily concludes: “In fact the Japanese seem to be set at the present time to protect Koreans’ interests, and are being called upon to do this daily.” Clearly, the purpose of this anecdote is to reveal that Korea’s problems are internal rather than external. In demonstrating that Korea is unfit to rule itself due to internal corruption, Scranton makes explicit the link between individual weakness and its political counterpart. As Spurr explains, “the qualities assigned to the individual savage – dishonesty, suspicion, superstition, lack of self-discipline – are reflected more generally in societies characterized by
corruption, xenophobia, tribalism, and the inability to govern themselves.\textsuperscript{87} Consequently, Scranton assures his readers that while Korea is corrupt and unfit for autonomous rule, Japan is both capable and willing to “protect Koreans’ interests.”

Having detailed the advances brought about by the Japanese occupation of Korea, Scranton then presents Korea as an ungrateful and whiny child. In a disparaging tone, he laments, “It is unfortunate that just at this time, when the Japanese Government are at the point, and well able to point out some of the fruitage of their occupation, that so much dust (not real obstruction) is set flying, stirred up by selfish, or short-sighted motives.” This statement, in bemoaning the missed opportunity to admire the harvest of the Japanese colonial rule, is a blatant dismissal of Koreans’ objections to that rule. The derogatory reference to Korean opposition to the Japanese colonial project as “dust” reinforces the debasement rhetoric, for Scranton’s selection of the metaphor of dirt and filth is calculated to reflect the defilement that exists in Korea. Further, Scranton refutes the validity of the Korean objections to Japanese rule as interference, which is “not real obstruction,” and declares it “selfish” and “short-sighted.” The reader is to understand any form of opposition to the Japanese administration as both unreasonable and symptomatic of the underlying ingratitude and corruption to which he previously referred. Indeed, in light of the manifold benefits achieved in Korea by the selfless Japanese, the only possible conclusion for Scranton is that Koreans do not welcome Japanese rule: “It stands to reason that the Koreans do not want to be managed. That they do not want some one [sic] from the outside to come in and right their internal affairs.” The marked incredulity in this sentence reveals the potency of the contemporary rhetoric of classification. By definition, civilized nations engage in civilizing missions to uncivilized nations, so for Scranton,

\textsuperscript{87} Spurr, 76.
and presumably for the majority of his readers, the discourse of civilization had been naturalized to the point that a rejection of its fundamental principle was unthinkable and thus indicated the piteous plight of Korea. 

Next, Scranton attempts to mitigate his conclusion by referring to the natural dislike demonstrated by students toward their teachers: “Teachers if effective are always looked upon by their pupils with more or less dread, or disaffection.” While somewhat justifying the Koreans’ trepidation toward and aversion to their Japanese instructors, this statement likewise serves to insinuate that the Koreans’ reaction actually constitutes the measure of Japan’s effectiveness in teaching civilization to Korea.

Resuming the chronological dichotomy of “then” and “now,” Scranton contrasts the past conditions in Korea with those of the present. The first set of contrasts concerns the whole country: “To-day [sic] here in Korea there are on every hand the signs of new life, beginning prosperity, and stability, as against previous uncertainty, pitiable poverty, and worse hope.” The second set of contrasts concerns the capital city: “Seoul was a city of officials, and office seekers, and hangers-on. To-day [sic] it is a city of students, business bustle, and enterprise.” Notably, both sets of contrasts reflect a synthesis of the rhetorical strategies of debasement and idealization: in each case, the wretched state of Korea in the past is juxtaposed with present manifestations of modernity. Thus the uncertainty and poverty of old Korea are contrasted with the prosperity and stability of new Korea; the plutocracy and parasitism of old Seoul are contrasted with the meritocracy and industriousness of new Seoul. Significantly, Scranton is quick to point out that the radical transformation from “then” to “now” had to be initiated by

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88 Explaining the “logic of the politics of enlightened exploitation,” Alexis Dudden writes: “Ultimately, the ability to control colonial space defined a nation as ‘sovereign’ and ‘independent.’ Regimes that sought to dominate others legitimated their actions in terms consistent with this intellectual order. Declaring a territory a protectorate did not merely apply a euphemism to the action of taking over; it established a legal precedent for defining certain people unfit to rule themselves.” Dudden, 9.
Japan: “What Korea could not do before, at her own initiative, and would not do at the advice of her friends, is now being done for her, before her very eyes, in her own land, and by a neighbour. They refused to lead. They now have the privilege of following.” Korea is here personified as an obscurantist, both unable and unwilling to be enlightened; conversely, Japan is presented as a selfless neighbour acting in response to Korea’s inability and stubbornness. The language is that of appropriation: Japan aptly responded to the want of and resistance to civilization in Korea by engaging in the civilizing mission “in [Korea’s] own land,” and the refusal of Korea to begin the work of civilizing appropriately resulted in what Scranton sarcastically refers to as “the privilege of following.” Consequently, following the rhetorical strategy of classification, Japan is represented as above Korea in the hierarchy of nations, actively fixing the problems within Korea’s borders and leading a passive Korea along the path of civilization.

Having established the roles of Japan and Korea in the civilizing project, Scranton addresses the process of the two countries becoming familiar with one another. He writes:

Frictions that were inevitable under such unusual circumstances, are daily growing less, the tension is giving way in the consciousness that something is being evolved, and the two peoples are getting acquainted with one another. Ignorance and inertia are gradually giving way before such a display of intelligence and energy, and both peoples are being benefitted to say nothing of the whole Far East.

Beginning with the admission of “inevitable” frictions caused by the protectorate, Scranton then assures his readers that the discord between Japan and Korea is decreasing “daily.” Here the progress in resolving the relational strife between the two countries parallels the progress being made by Japan in its civilizing mission, which suggests that Korea’s backwardness is the cause of both types of difficulties. Scranton’s reference to “unusual circumstances” is somewhat ambiguous, for Korea was certainly not the first country to be judged unable to civilize and thus forced to sign a protectorate treaty. On the other hand, it is
likely that Scranton is expressing the astonishment common among many American and European commentators at the time concerning the unprecedented event of one Asian country (i.e. Japan) establishing a protectorate over another (i.e. Korea). Regardless of the precise nature of these extraordinary circumstances, Scranton’s point is that they are not a hindrance to the overall project in Korea. Indeed, there is a growing perception among the people that “something is being evolved.” In employing the metaphor of evolution to describe the civilizing mission, Scranton discloses the ideology underpinning the entire civilization discourse. Moreover, he reports that the Japanese and Korean people “are getting acquainted with one another,” suggesting that a lack of familiarity is the root of the conflict between the two countries. With these simple statements, Scranton shrouds the violence of the Japanese colonial project in Korea. Next, Scranton asserts that the new relationship between Japan and Korea is one of symbiosis with far-reaching effects. Though Korea was once a land of ignorance and passivity – a common trope in Japanese colonial writing about Korea – this backwardness is “giving way” to the “intelligence and energy” of Japan. As a result, the Japanese and Koreans are experiencing the benefits of civilization, which extend throughout “the whole Far East.” Here again Scranton is rather ambiguous in his assertion. In addition to the implication that the conditions of all people in uncivilized East Asia will be improved by Korea’s progress, Scranton’s words also tacitly legitimate a broadening of Japanese colonialism into other countries beyond Korea’s borders.

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89 In addition to Edwin Maxey’s article, cited previously, similar observations were made in William Elliot Griffis, “Japan’s Absorption of Korea,” *North American Review* 192, no. 659 (1910): 516-526.
90 Dudden, 9.
Scranton concludes the article with a summary of the situation in Korea. Stressing the progress made by Japan in leading Korea toward civilization, Scranton insists, “Korea is a long way in advance of what she was a year ago even, and the conditions then, even the adverse stories which were rife, have become out of date” (emphasis in original). The rhetorical effect of this statement is forceful. First, Scranton’s diction in this sentence is compelling. The phrase “in advance of” is multifarious: it contains connotations of moral improvement, in which Japan has produced a nascent morality among Korea’s populace; of spatial progression, in which Japan is leading Korea forward along the path of civilization; and of promotion in position, in which Japan has elevated Korea from the rank of uncivilized to semi-civilized. In addition, the non-restrictive clause, “even the adverse conditions which were rife” serves to reinforce the rhetoric of debasement used throughout the article. One year prior to the writing of this article, Korea was in such a wretched state that unfavourable reports were prevailing. Like a patient rife with disease, Korea was overcome with the various forms of barbarity previously identified by Scranton. Similarly, the expression “out of date” is not only a chronological reference, contrasting the situation in Korea “then” with that of the present day, but it also creates a metaphorical link between the conditions and “adverse stories” that have been rendered obsolete and the old order of Korea itself, which is likewise antiquated. Second, Scranton’s praise for Japan in this sentence is substantial. The radical transformation brought about in the course of just one year is undeniable proof that Japan is an apt teacher for Korea. In the circular logic of “enlightened exploitation,” Japan has demonstrated its qualifications for engaging in the civilizing mission in Korea through the quantifiable signs of development and progress articulated in the main body of the article.

92 Dudden, 9.
Scranton’s final remarks draw together a number of the strings – or perhaps, more fittingly, “straws” – that appear in the article. His last words summarize the results of Japan’s colonial project since the enactment of the protectorate treaty: “Even in two years the straws show what is the real current, and the patient and energetic efforts which the Koreans could not understand, and too often objected to, are now bearing fruit before their eyes.” Arguing from effect back to cause, Scranton asserts that “the straws” stirred up by the winds of Japan blowing through the Korean peninsula indicate that “the real current” is civilization and enlightenment. Furthermore, the patience and dynamism sown by Japan, which ignorant and backward Korea could neither comprehend nor embrace, have produced a harvest of progress that is in plain view of Koreans. Clearly, then, Koreans are enjoying the benefits of the education granted by their Japanese teachers.

William Scranton had been residing in Korea for more than twenty years when his article was published in the Seoul Press. Scranton’s article reflects the dual-layering of the colonial gaze that is observable in the Residency General’s official English language newspaper. Scranton evaluates Japan’s colonial project favourably based on the numerous benefits of civilization that Korea is receiving from Japan. Notably, in articulating his perspectives on Korea and on Japanese colonialism, Scranton evokes the same rhetorical expressions utilized by the Japanese officials of the Residency General and by George Ladd. Scranton asserts his authority to speak definitively based on his purportedly “true” view of the situation in Korea, repeating the common mantra that eyewitness observation is an assurance of impartiality. He also places Korea within the global context by contending that the tangible benefits of the Japanese civilizing mission extend regionally throughout East Asia. Scranton interweaves censure for Korea with commendation for Japan. He consistently views Koreans unfavourably,
characterizing the people as ignorant children in need of Japanese instruction. Presenting the country as lacking even the rudiments of civilization, he refers to Korea as a pitiable place of ignorance, obstinacy, and inertia. In contrast, Japan is represented as a benevolent teacher offering the intelligent, patient, and energetic education of civilization. Woven from rhetorical threads similar yet distinct from those previously examined, Scranton’s article constitutes another part of the tapestry of colonial communication in the Seoul Press.
Chapter 7
James Gale

James Scarth Gale (1863-1937) was Canada’s first missionary to Korea. Originally sent by the Young Men’s Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) of the University of Toronto, Gale left for Korea in October of 1888. After spending some time in Japan, Gale arrived in Korea in December 1888 and soon joined G. H. Underwood, a pioneer Presbyterian missionary in Seoul. Gale later made a trip to northern Korea and met Yi Ch’angjik, who would become his travelling companion and literary assistant. During his first year of Korean language study, Gale worked with Underwood to produce a small Korean-English dictionary. Gale later transferred to the American Presbyterian Mission Board, North to join his missionary friend, Samuel Moffett.93 Gale worked as a pioneer missionary in Wŏnsan before assuming a pastorate at Yondong Presbyterian Church in Seoul. Gale was ordained minister by the presbytery of New Albany, Indiana in 1897 due to the influence of Moffett, and Gale was awarded an honorary doctorate of divinity from Howard University in 1904. He stayed in Korea until June 1927 and retired from missionary work the following year.94

Although appointed as a missionary, Gale is best remembered for his extensive activities, particularly his scholastic endeavours. In addition to evangelistic work, Gale was involved in a plethora of auxiliary activities: he founded several schools; taught as a professor at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pyongyang; was one of the founders of the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch; helped found the Korean Y.M.C.A. and was elected its first president; worked as a correspondent for the North China Daily News; and served as editor for several

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94 Gale, James Scarth Gale and His History of the Korean People, 1-88.
periodicals, both Christian and secular. Gale also wrote or co-authored several books on Korea, its history, and its people. Nonetheless, it is for his pioneering work in translation for which Gale is best remembered. Gale translated large portions of the Bible into Korean as a member of the Permanent Executive Bible Committee of Korea; published several dictionaries and grammars of the Korean language; translated and published John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, which was the first Korean translation of an English literary work, along with other works of English literature; and translated a voluminous amount of Korean literature into English, including the *Cloud Dream of the Nine*. Needless to say, Gale garnered a reputation as a distinguished linguist among the missionary community in Korea. It has often been said of Gale that he possessed a unique insight into Korean culture. So widespread was James Gale’s influence that Young Sik Yoo contends, “It is hard to overestimate the influence on the modernization and development of Korea which was exerted by this one man during the thirty years that he laboured in Korea.” While patently an exaggeration, this lauding of Gale’s work in Korea reveals underlying assumptions of the discourse which Hyaeewol Choi terms, “Christian modernity.” This discourse, which was prevalent among the missionary community

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95 For a more detailed account of Gale’s ministry in Korea, see “James Scarth Gale (1863-1937) and the Young Men’s Christian Association of University College, University of Toronto” in Young Sik Yoo, *Earlier Canadian Missionaries in Korea: A Study in History, 1888-1895* (Mississauga, ON: The Society for Korean and Related Studies, 1987), 25-36.
96 These include *Korean Sketches* (1898), *The Vanguard: A Tale of Korea* (1904), *Korea in Transition* (1909), and *The History of the Korean People* (n.d.). For a comprehensive list of Gale’s writings, see *James Scarth Gale and His History of the Korean People*, 373-384.
98 Yoo, 35.
in Korea at the time, reflected a widely-held ideology of imperialism that blended Christianity with Western civilization, positing missionaries as agents of civilization.\textsuperscript{100}

While James Gale’s name appears frequently in the \textit{Seoul Press}, often as a “good friend” of the Korean people,\textsuperscript{101} in connection with the Korean Y.M.C.A. and various other missionary activities, it is not until 1910 that full-length articles are devoted to his speeches and writings.\textsuperscript{102} Whereas two of the articles about Gale are précis of speeches given at church gatherings in Japan, a third article is the reproduction of an article written by Gale for the \textit{Japan Mail}. Appearing in the \textit{Seoul Press} on 16 April 1910 under the title, “Fighting Cholera in Korea,” this article will be the focus of the present study. In the article, Gale writes about the epidemic of cholera in Korea for an international audience. Referring to the enemy as “Asiatic cholera” and “Ho-yul [sic]” (the Korean name for cholera), Gale narrates the skilled response of Japanese and Korean physicians and police officers in dealing with the deadly disease. It is important to note a certain intimacy with disease and death experienced by Gale in Korea. Richard Rutt reports that Gale’s arrival was concurrent with a smallpox epidemic, the sights and smells of which left an indelible impression on the twenty five year-old missionary.\textsuperscript{103} These experiences are clearly reflected in the description of the cholera outbreak given by Gale. The tone of Gale’s article is


\textsuperscript{101} For example, one editorial refers to James Gale, Bishop Harris, and Dr. George Heber Jones as the “host of other good friends of Koreans.” See the \textit{Seoul Press}, 23 November 1909.

\textsuperscript{102} Notably, despite the relative lack of devotion in the \textit{Seoul Press} to Gale’s writings and speeches from 1907 through 1909, in the span of two months in 1910 (March and April), three articles exclusively about Gale appear in the newspaper, all coming by way of reproduction of articles from Japanese newspapers.

\textsuperscript{103} Richard Rutt relates an incident in which Gale became intimately involved with the horrors of an epidemic while staying in Pusan. Receiving word that an Australian missionary, J. Henry Davies, was ill, Gale invited the Australian to stay with him. Rutt describes the event thusly: “Gale and Yi [Ch’angjik] helped him walk to Gale’s house, where he lay down on the cot, sure he would soon get better. But he could not eat, so Gale called a Japanese doctor, who diagnosed smallpox…Towards noon the next day pneumonia set in. ‘Er wird bald sterben,’ said the Japanese doctor; and less than an hour later Davies died. Gale and a few Koreans buried him on a nearby hillside.” See Gale, \textit{James Scarth Gale and His History of the Korean People}, 16.
similar to that of Ladd and Scranton. Assuming the familiar attitude of superiority common among Anglo-American observers of Korea, Gale writes rather disparagingly of Koreans, particularly in contrast to the glowing praise given for the enlightened Japanese and their “modern scientific methods of meeting [cholera].” Likewise, many of the rhetorical strategies employed by Ladd and Scranton are present in Gale’s article. Indeed, the entire article is essentially a combination of debasement of the Koreans and idealization of the Japanese. Moreover, Gale’s view is that of the colonial force of doctors and police, as his article is framed by his “admiration for the skilled physicians and police.” From this viewpoint, Koreans are judged by their degree of conformity to the Japanese authority. In this way, Gale shares with Ladd and Scranton the colonial perspective of modern Japan, and his article serves a similar function of justifying Japan’s civilizing mission in Korea.

On the other hand, the rhetorical strategy of “aestheticization” in depicting the cholera epidemic differentiates Gale’s article from the previous two. Spurr explains that aestheticization involves “a certain possession of social reality which holds it at arm’s length and makes it into the object of beauty, horror, pleasure, and pity.” Where George Ladd and William Scranton address the overarching problems of Korean and the solutions offered by Japan, James Gale narrates a specific cholera epidemic and in so doing creates an aestheticization of the experiences of Koreans. This is achieved in a number of ways. First, the opening paragraph establishes the importance of eyewitness testimony: “After three or four views of Asiatic cholera at close range and of modern scientific methods of meeting it, two impressions are left, deep-marked and permanent.” Having witnessed several cholera epidemics in Korea, Gale is able to relate accurately the details of the most recent outbreak along with his reflections on it. Second, the

104 Spurr, 59.
classification of the disease as “Asiatic” distances the audience from the story. In representing this strain of cholera as unique to “Asia,” Gale exaggerates the foreignness of both the disease and, especially, the people who suffer from it. What follows, then, is a tale of disease and death whose reality is obscured by the rhetorical distancing of the Euro-American readers from the “Asian” characters in the story. Third, Gale narrates the cholera epidemic as a form of entertainment: “This year we had as fine a tournament in the course of the epidemic as was ever seen. It was Japanese and Korea [sic] experts against Asiatic cholera.” Notably, the depiction of the epidemic as entertainment intensifies the aesthetic effect while simultaneously trivializing the suffering of real people. Whereas the very act of reading about the cholera epidemic establishes the reader as a consumer of a story of suffering in faraway Asia, the metaphor of competition reduces the epidemic to a melodramatic contest of man versus nature.

The article begins with an introduction to the story, in which the cast of characters is announced. Having witnessed several outbreaks of cholera in Korea, Gale has been left with two “deep-marked and permanent” impressions. By way of articulating these impressions, Gale introduces the main characters of his narrative. Gale’s first impression of “Asiatic cholera” is “one of awe over this implacable foe of mankind.” Here cholera is introduced as the antagonist of the story. Interestingly, Gale presents this enemy as universal, not restricted to a distant place in East Asia. However, it is a particular battle against cholera in Korea with which Gale is concerned, and he relates his tale with emphasis on the suffering of Koreans caused by their own ignorance and backwardness. In his description of the awe-inspiring nature of cholera and its unrelenting enmity with humanity, Gale thus introduces the tension that will be resolved at the conclusion of the article. Gale’s second impression is “one of admiration for the skilled physicians and police, who, with cool nerve and well-adjusted judgment know how to meet it
[cholera], grapple with it, down it, and drive it from the field.” Here physicians and police are introduced as the protagonists of the narrative, and it is with manifestly modern Western medical practices that the doctors and police overcome their foe. As a result, both of Gale’s impressions anticipate the development of the plot and foreshadow the resolution to come.

Having thus identified the antagonist and protagonists, Gale continues the introduction by setting the scene of the story. He does so by describing “the past two months,” during which cholera has made a steady approach toward Korea from the mainland: “China suffering untold misery, with no power to protect her helpless millions, and no knowledge of hygiene back of her whatever.” In his description of China succumbing to the disease, Gale employs several tropes that serve to establish a parallel between China and Korea and which will subsequently form a contrast between these two countries and Japan. China is here represented as suffering, powerless, and ignorant. These adjectives invoke the rhetorical strategy of negation, in which China’s lack of health, power, and knowledge creates space for colonial expansion by a country able to supply what is missing. Similarly, the rhetorical strategy of debasement is also present: as a land of misery, helplessness, and defilement, China is presented as a corrupt and backward country in need of moral cleansing.

The juxtaposition of Korea to this narrative of China indicates a parallel between the physical and spiritual bankruptcy of the two countries. It is important at this point to perceive Gale’s understanding of the relationship between China and Korea, which underlies this literary transition to Korea from China. For Gale, as well as for other missionaries, there had always existed a link between China and Korea, the moral stagnancy of the former perpetually diffusing
into the latter.\footnote{During a speech to a group of Japanese pastors and elders in Yokohama, James Gale is reported to have identified an “immense influence exercised by China upon the mind and spirit of the Korean. This influence was one of passivity – always looking back, resting in the present, without any regard for the future.” For the précis of Gale’s speech, see “Dr. Gale on Korean Affairs,” the Seoul Press, 12 April 1910.} This transmission of moral corruption is given expression in the transmission of disease from China to Korea: “little by little its approach toward Seoul was reported. Over the border it came persistently, doggedly, \textit{li} after \textit{li}, until the word went forth, ‘It is with us.’” Subsequently, Gale asserts, “It is nothing new for this ancient city to scent cholera, for it has known it from time immemorial.” In this trope, Gale connects Korea with antiquity in a way that recalls Scranton’s repeated contrasting of the old and new orders of Korea. In addition, Gale’s reiteration of Seoul’s antiquity both connects Korea to China and prepares a negative image of the two against which modern Japan will soon be contrasted.

Gale then resumes the aestheticization of Korea with a reporting of the effects of cholera epidemics in previous years:

800, 900, 1000 dead a day used to be the record. Long lines of bearers would carry away the victims wrapped in matting. No funeral decorations were possible, nothing to charm or wave away malignant spirits, just any method at all to get the dead outside of the city and under ground a foot or two. We have stood and counted them as they moved out, – one, two, three, another, another, another, on and on and on, till a whole city seemed to be making its exit past us wrapped in matting.

In its matter-of-fact retelling of human suffering, this paragraph presents Gale’s gaze as impartial. However, his privileged position as observer enables him to make judgements about the objects of his observation. Aside from the dehumanizing effect of statistical representation in calmly noting the usual death toll wrought in Seoul by cholera, Gale’s observation of the victims of cholera amplifies the aesthetic effect. Gale mentions in passing that the dead bodies were “wrapped in matting,” and the inclusion in the narrative of this detail, seemingly insignificant to the plot, indicates Gale’s interest in the exoticism of Korea. This is supplemented by information
about the foregoing of common rites and rituals for the victims necessitated by the extremely contagious nature of cholera. Though superficially a dispassionate report of traditional practices, in light of similar comments made throughout the article, the malicious nature of Gale’s characterization of native practice is made manifest. Moreover, there is an odd fascination with the atavistic nature of Korean burial customs. The existence of rituals to “charm or wave away malignant spirits” indicates both the primitive and heathen nature of the Korean race. Since Korea needs rescue from its barbarism and deliverance from its superstition, the insinuation in the article is that while Japan is engaged in undertaking the former, only Christian missionaries are qualified to effect the latter, in the form of Christian modernity. Gale returns to the pragmatics of Korean burial during a cholera epidemic. He informs his readers that “any method at all” was undertaken “to get the dead outside of the city and under ground a foot or two.” Interrupting this depiction is the insertion of Gale into the narrative – in the form of the first person pronouns “we” and “us” – observing the removal of dead bodies from Seoul. Counting the bodies as they passed, Gale desultorily reports the indistinguishable nature of the dead, echoed monotonously: “another, another, another, on and on and on.” This comment involves “a cost in human dignity” by reducing the humanity of Korean victims to little more than corpses. The hyperbole of the next clause, “till a whole city seemed to be making its exit past us,” adds to the rhetorical effect of the story since Gale passively observes the carnage wrought by the disease as it decimates Korea’s capital city. Finally, Gale returns to the exotic nature of this

106 For a detailed explanation of how different missionaries navigated the ideological gap between non-Christian Japan and Christian modernity, see Choi, “Christian Modernity,” 39-68.
107 Spurr, 25.
108 This type of melodramatic narration is replicated in the proceeding paragraph, in which Gale personifies cholera and asserts its stealth in attack: “A city under cholera is a battlefield, the enemy veiled completely from view, using smokeless powder and noiseless weapons. Not a sign is there of his whereabout [sic], or any announcement, till
Korean catastrophe by repeating the peculiar detail that rather than placing the dead in coffins or covering them in shrouds, Koreans wrap their dead in mats.

After an extensive introduction, Gale commences the narrative of the most recent cholera epidemic in Korea. In describing the “tournament,” he informs his reader of the opening action: “Scores of special police were sworn in, relays of physicians were called [sic] for from Japan and Tokyo, and the city laid out for action.” Immediately contrasting the passivity of China and Korea with the decisive action of Japan, Gale represents Japan as dynamic and prepared to battle its opponent with the modern weapons of policing and medicine. While all of the doctors are Japanese, Gale later concedes that the police force is “composed largely of Koreans, though under Japanese inspectors.” Thus, the physicians and police are agents of Japanese colonial administration, competent to handle the epidemic. This competence is demonstrated by Gale’s description of Japanese protocol which follows. He reports: “When a case was discovered, immediately the patient was hurried off to the special hospital, outside of the East Gate, and the house put under police surveillance…for a week or more the inmates were thoroughly disinfected and declared safe.” Again the dynamism of Japan contrasts with the inactivity of Korea depicted previously.

However, Gale is quick to describe how the precision of Japan’s modern methodology is misunderstood by the Koreans. Relating a personal anecdote, Gale mentions the gullibility and naïveté of his “house boy.” Given that the reader is subsequently informed that the man had a wife and child, the moniker “house boy” is insulting, and it tellingly builds on Scranton’s trope

suddenly the friend at your side says, ‘Aigo, I have it!’ drops as if shot, and with a spasm or two crumples up and dies.” From another quarter and still another, out goes the call, ‘Ho-yul’ (cholera), and the battle is on.”
of Koreans as children. The salience of this connection is revealed in the ensuing anecdote. According to Gale, when the house boy reported that his wife and child were ill with severe indigestion, Gale inquired whether it was cholera. Right away, the house boy denied the possibility, fearfully uttering, “If it were cholera we would be dragged out of the city and burned alive. The Japanese are burning all Koreans alive who have symptoms of cholera. Let not the master say cholera.” Without delay, Gale extrapolates his house boy’s baseless reaction and bemoans all Koreans: “Poor old Korea: she has suffered all these years from doubt, and rumour, and suspicion, until she will believe anything in the world except the truth.” With this statement, not only does Gale set himself over all Koreans, but he also decries Koreans for being plagued with credulity, ignorance, and obstinacy. The rhetorical strategy of debasement is engaged when Gale refers to these rumours based on hearsay: “So fast did this false word carry that the whole city was infected by it.” Once again, Gale employs the image of disease and death. He insinuates that the foolish and superstitious rumours about inhumane treatment of Korean cholera patients at the hands of the Japanese are worse than the disease itself; indeed, so hazardous and contagious were they that all of Seoul became “infected.” Moreover, these outlandish rumours serve as potent evidence of the existence of the “doubt, and rumour, and suspicion” previously identified.

Two more anecdotes serve to further illustrate the ignorance of Koreans. Gale reports that his “foolish friend” hid his wife in “the wall-box, a cubby-hole” when she became sick with cholera. Due to the lack of light or ventilation, she died. When the police discovered what happened, they removed her remains and imprisoned her husband for three weeks. Gale informs his readers that in other cases, people hid outbreaks of cholera until the patients died, at which point they attempted “to smuggle the bodies out of the city, but were arrested, and I hear were
given a term of service in the chain-gang.” Here Gale aestheticizes the experiences of Koreans, demonstrating how their ignorance and folly led to suffering and death. He notes as a conclusion that ignorance and folly was punished by the police. In this way, Japanese colonial control is seen to be making progress in suppressing the ignorance of Koreans.

Another “friend” of Gale learned a welcome lesson entirely different from the previous friends. Gale states that this friend did what most Koreans refuse to do: he went to the special hospital and the crematory to investigate the rumours and to learn the truth. Gale reports that this person “found to his surprise that Koreans were treated kindly. In case of death all Japanese were cremated, but not the Koreans; they were buried and the grave marked by a tablet of wood.” At once Gale defends the Japanese authorities by disproving the rumours of Japanese cruelty and describing how patients who succumb to cholera are respectfully treated according to their respective customs. Rather than “burning all Koreans alive,” the Japanese were in fact cremating the dead bodies of Japanese patients only; the dead bodies of Korean patients were buried according to Korean practice. Consequently, Gale returns to the case of his house boy. He reports that when he called the authorities, “[t]he doctor and police came with white coats on tied close about the wrists, with disinfecting apparatus, etc., to make inspection.” As opposed to the superstitious talismans and amulets of Koreans intended “to charm or wave away malignant spirits” of cholera, the Japanese arrived fully equipped with modern medical supplies. The treatment received was enough to amaze the house boy: “They were so gentle and kind that the house-boy was astonished.” Gale then reports the conclusion of the matter: “It was cholera and they took possession. It is over now; the baby died, but the wife lived. The house-boy learned that there were no burnings of the living, and no unkindness even toward the dead, but a firm and strict dealing with this fierce and awful disease.” In an ironic twist, the perceived threat of the
Japanese is misguided such that Japan is portrayed as a threat only to the disease that ravages Korea. Thus, the lesson of the anecdote is plain: Korean ignorance and suspicion toward the Japanese is more dangerous than cholera.

The remainder of the article details conflicts between Korean customs and the modern methods employed by the Japanese to contain the cholera epidemic. Gale relates another anecdote that reveals the backward nature of Koreans. Despite ubiquitous government notifications listing cholera precautions, Gale reports that the people ignorantly ignored the mandates: “People were discovered, as of yore, washing cabbage in the street sewers. The cabbage and all its accompaniments were dumped into the garbage wagon for the heap outside the East Gate.” Here Gale contrasts the old order of Korea with the new. Demonstrating their ignorance and indifference in the face of adequate warning, Koreans continued their backward customs, here exemplified in “washing cabbage in the street sewers.” Importantly, Gale does not hesitate to tell the reader that this practice is “of yore.” In describing how Koreans have been preparing food in unsanitary conditions for ages, Gale implies that the persistence of uncivilized culinary practices, exacerbated by apathy, is responsible for the frequent outbreaks of disease. In contrast, the new order being imposed by Japan is one of efficiency and exactness. When people were discovered to be persisting in old customs, the police promptly intervened by confiscating the cabbage and arranged for its disposal in the “heap outside the East Gate.” Rather than nonchalantly contributing to Koreans’ demise, the police in this anecdote are portrayed as acting in the best interests of Koreans. Consequently, the implication is that the Japan, being higher in civilization than the Korea, is compelled to teach the ways of modern civilization to its backward neighbour and is fully justified in doing so.
Likewise, in the face of rational demands based upon modern medical practice, Koreans are reported to interfere with household inspections because of traditional notions of propriety. Specifically, Gale mentions the reluctance of families to permit unmarried women (“sacksee [sic]”) into public for inspection for the reason that “it is contrary to the good custom of our clan.” With sound medical authority, the police are said to retort, “Never mind custom, out she comes; we are out inspecting for cholera.” Gale then succinctly summarizes the situation: “All the Oriental’s ideas of propriety were knocked to pieces by this matter-of-fact police force.” This example, in its isolation of the Korean custom of keeping unmarried women out of sight from men, is a demeaning caricature of Korean culture intended to display the backwardness of Koreans, which would be incomprehensible for Anglo-American readers. As Hyaeweol Choi asserts, “To missionaries, the widespread practice of the separation of genders was the central illustration of the shockingly oppressive lifestyle Korean women led.”

While the practice of not allowing unmarried women to be seen by men was frequently cited as a source of astonishment and frustration for early missionaries to Korea, Gale oversimplifies the scenario by presenting a diametric opposition between Korean custom and modern medical practice. Accordingly, the readers of the article would be inclined to concur with Gale’s insinuation that the police were justified when they “knocked to pieces” the backwardness of “the Oriental’s ideas of propriety” for the greater good of defeating disease. However, a closer consideration reveals the simplicity of Gale’s assertions. Despite previously suggesting that the Japanese were compassionate in respecting Korean customs against the cremation of dead bodies, Gale here contradicts that suggestion. Instead of arranging for female nurses to inspect the inner chambers

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of a house, where the women resided, the police brashly insisted that all members of a household, “[y]oung women as well as old men, had to appear and be checked off, well or ill.” Thus, Gale unwittingly reveals that the Japanese were not as civilized as he purports. Nevertheless, the tone of the article indicates that that the benefits of modern medicine supersede a people’s rights to practice indigenous customs. Consequently, this event of forcing Koreans to surrender their bodies to the “civilized” demands of the Japanese serves as a metonym for the Japanese colonial project in Korea.

Next, in describing the extent of hygienic precautions undertaken in Seoul, Gale contrasts the old order of Korea with the new. Specifically, he portrays the filth, sloth, and apathy inherent in Koreans by describing the conditions in the capital city. For instance, he reports that all gutters in Seoul, a city described as “very dirty and pestiferous,” were “scoured out and such a scouring as was never seen for 500 years.” Moreover, Gale mentions the precautions taken with respect to well water: “Wells that had been drunk from for half a millennium were dosed with quantities of lime and left deserted.” Implicit in both statements is that the people in Seoul were content to live in filth and squalor for five hundred years, and it took a cholera epidemic to force them to clean up after themselves. Notably, in his insinuations of the dirty and lazy nature of Koreans, Gale recalls Scranton’s portrayal of Koreans as ignorant and obstinate children. Furthermore, Gale indicates that the massive sanitation effort was not an undertaking of the Korean people: “Certainly the mayor deserves the thanks of every Korean for the vigorous and efficient way in which he cleaned up.” This comment is insulting to the residents of Seoul to the degree that it insinuates that they were not even persuaded to improve their conditions even in the face of a deadly disease; instead, the mayor is singularly given credit for the drastic improvement in sanitary conditions in the capital city. Gale further lauds the mayor of Seoul with the assertion,
“Probably there is not a cleaner city than Seoul in the wide East to-day, and many not so clean in the West.” Not only does this comment idealize the modern sanitation methods employed by the mayor of Seoul under the authority of the Residency General, but it also serves to legitimate the colonial project by setting Seoul as the standard of cleanliness for the whole world. Gale also points out the beneficence of the Japanese in providing access to drinking water: “Wrenches belonging to the Waterworks Company were left hanging to the hydrants so that any one could draw and use as they pleased, the Government paying for it, thus providing clear and pure water to drink.” Without this gracious provision of clean water from the colonial administration, Koreans would have had nothing to drink but sewer water or contaminated well water. On the other hand, in taking care of Koreans, even providing for their daily needs, the Japanese are proving themselves worthy of the reputation as benefactors to Korea.

Finally, Gale concludes the article with a summary of the epidemic and a statement of appreciation for the efforts of the Japanese in overcoming the cholera. In summing up Korea’s most recent bout with cholera, Gale transitions from anecdote back to statistical analysis. Gladly proclaiming a significant reduction in casualties caused by cholera, he contrasts Korea’s former hopelessness against cholera with the modern science and medical practice embraced and employed by the Japanese: “Had Korea been left to the tender mercies of herself we should have had thousands of deaths, but as it was, the world’s latest modern scientific skill took command, and only about 900 occurred.” Whereas the old order in Korea could produce only a staggering number of deaths in the face of disease, Korea under the new order of the Japanese is responsible for a significant preservation of life. Thus, in concluding the article, Gale expresses his appreciation to those deserving of the credit: “Thank God, the doctors and the police.” Gale invokes God as one of the benefactors to be thanked in the overcoming of cholera by the doctors
and police. In prefacing this expression of thanksgiving with reference to the benefits of modern medicine, Gale employs rhetorical mode of “idealization.” Gale’s admiration for the Japanese colonial officials is stimulated by their embodiment of the ideals of the modern West, namely the “latest modern scientific skill.” Gale’s underlying ideology of Christian modernity is seen in his positive evaluation of Japanese colonial rule. The concluding praise offered to God and to the agents of civilization in Korea is a convergence of the Christian God and Western civilization. In its promotion of the ideals of this civilization, Gale’s work in Korea parallels that of the Japanese Residency General. Consequently, Gale sees no contradiction in thanking God for the benefits of modern civilization while simultaneously endorsing the Japanese colonial project in Korea.

James Gale is fondly remembered by many as the Canadian missionary who assisted the Korean people as an agent of civilization. What is often overlooked is his gaze on Korea and its resulting rhetoric expressed in his writing. In observing Japan’s observation of Korea, Gale joins George Ladd and William Scranton in possessing the dual-layered gaze of colonialism. Moreover, Gale’s article in the Seoul Press is characterized by rhetorical devices similar to those utilized by the Japanese colonial officials and the two Anglo-American observers already discussed. Gale’s authority comes by virtue of his direct observation of and intimate interactions with Koreans. Like Scranton, Gale is a long-time resident of Korea. Accordingly, he relates numerous personal anecdotes and speaks definitively about Korean culture and character. Known for his linguistic abilities, Gale bolsters his authority by demonstrating his proficiency in Korean. Sporadically using Korean words in the article, Gale demonstrates his understanding of the

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110 Spurr, 125-140.
“Korean mind,”111 which increases his credibility as one able to provide accurate commentary on the situation in Korea. In narrating the most recent outbreak of cholera in the peninsula, Gale lauds the Japanese Residency General for its administration in Korea, asserting that the benefits of Japanese rule are evident in the area of healthcare. In his negative cultural assessments of Koreans as superstitious, ignorant, and backward, Gale’s perception of Koreans is virtually indistinguishable from the Japanese administrators and Anglo-American observers of his day. Finally, a unique feature of Gale’s article is its expression of the ideology of Christian modernity. On the one hand, James Gale echoes George Ladd and William Scranton by engaging in the discourse of civilization. On the other hand, unlike the other two men, Gale thanks God for the improvement of conditions in Korea. Moreover, he viewed Korea as holding strategic importance for the evangelization of East Asia. During a visit to Japan in March 1910, Gale gave an address to Union Church in Yokohama in which he spoke to this evangelistic importance: “The geographical situation of Korea, in the centre, as it were, of China and Japan, offered unique opportunities of the evangelization of the Far East.”112 Consequently, Gale looked favourably upon the Japanese colonial administration in Korea as the catalyst to the spread of the Christian gospel.113 Therefore, while the article reflects rhetorical devices similar to those examined in the preceding chapters, James Gale contributes the thread of Christian modernity to the tapestry of colonial communication in the Seoul Press.

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111 In his chapter about James Gale, Young Sik Yoo declares, “Gale was probably the best interpreter of the Korean mind to Western readers in that early period.” Yoo, 35. The persistence in present day scholarship of this cultural categorization of the “Korean mind,” which is reminiscent of Japanese colonial rhetoric, is troubling.
113 On another occasion, Gale commented about the global significance of Korea: “By accepting the Japanese administration, and doing their best to strengthen it, the Koreans might yet become a blessing to themselves, to Japan, to China, and to all the world.” “Dr. Gale on Korean Affairs,” the Seoul Press, 12 April 1910.
Chapter 8
Conclusion

In this study, I have analyzed the Seoul Press as the site where divergent forms of colonizing discourses came together. Specifically, I have examined the opinions of six men: three Japanese colonial administrators and three Anglo-American observers. On the one hand, as the official English language newspaper of the Residency General in Korea, the Seoul Press imparted a manifestly Japanese colonial view of Korea. On the other hand, by concurrently publishing articles written by or about Anglo-Americans, the newspaper contained voluminous foreign commentary about Korea and Japan’s colonial project there. In explaining the convergence of these overlapping perspectives, I have argued that there existed a dual-layered colonial gaze on Korea: the Japanese gaze on Korea operated on one level while the Anglo-American gaze on the Japanese gaze operated simultaneously on another level. This process of one colonial gaze enveloping another represents a unique phenomenon in the history of colonialism and is perceptible in the pages of the Seoul Press. Moreover, I have shown that the colonizing discourses resulting from this dual-layered gaze reflect parallel themes, tropes, and modes of expression. In sharing a colonial gaze on Korea, therefore, Japan and Anglo-America articulated shared perspectives on Korea and Koreans.

The three Japanese colonial officials considered in this study were Zumoto Motosada, Yamagata Isoh, and Ito Hirobumi. Whereas Ito is widely remembered for his role as the first Resident General in Korea, Zumoto and Yamagata are rather unfamiliar figures in the history of Korea, despite their roles as editors of the Seoul Press during the period between the Protectorate Treaty of 1905 and the Annexation Treaty of 1910. Nevertheless, in the pages of the Seoul Press, these three colonial administrators worked toward the same goal, namely dominating the
discourses about Korea and Japanese colonialism in the peninsula. Through their persistent commentary, these men laboured to silence the voice of anti-Japanese colonialism of Ernest Bethell and his *Korea Daily News* as well as to justify Japan’s civilizing mission in Korea to an international audience. With respect to the Anglo-Americans whose views were analyzed, George Ladd, William Scranton, and James Gale were well-known and highly respected men during their time in Korea. While all three were from North America, their professions and purposes for being in Korea were different. Ladd was a professor from Yale University who was personally invited by Ito Hirobumi to visit Korea as his unofficial spokesman. Scranton was a missionary physician, and Gale was a missionary evangelist. As ardent supporters of the colonial administration in Korea, these three Anglo-Americans spoke as authorities on Korea via the *Seoul Press* in order to promote international support for the Japanese Residency General. Thus, all six men wrote with similar intentions, namely to influence international opinion about Korea and to present a favourable report of the Japanese colonial administration.

With respect to their motivations, the six men can be considered individually. For the Japanese Residency General, the *Seoul Press* was a means to silence Ernest Bethell’s *Korea Daily News*. Since the censorship laws were ineffective at shutting down Bethell’s newspaper and Bethell was protected by extraterritoriality rights, the Residency General was forced to seek an alternative approach. Accordingly, the *Seoul Press* was established and Anglo-American opinion in support of Japan’s civilizing mission was sought. As Resident General, Ito Hirobumi had a vested interest in muffling Bethell and controlling the English language discourses on Korea because he was the pre-eminent official representative of Japanese colonialism in Korea. The editors of the *Seoul Press*, Zumoto Motosada and Yamagata Isoh, were recruited by Ito to accomplish his goals. Having previously worked with Ito in establishing the *Japan Times* for
similar purposes, Zumoto was fully prepared for his role with the *Seoul Press*. Similarly, Yamagata had been involved in writing and translating books about Japan for Anglo-American audiences, and he was accustomed to articulating a Japanese perspective to international readers.

There were numerous Anglo-Americans who contributed articles to the *Seoul Press* between 1905 and 1910. The Residency General especially sought prominent foreigners who would espouse the Japanese colonial agenda in Korea, and given the preponderance of the discourse of civilization at the time, it is unsurprising that there was no shortage of such support. George Ladd, William Scranton, and James Gale were three of the more well-known foreigners in Korea whose views were solicited. George Ladd was an avid supporter of the Japanese colonial mission in Korea, and during a lecture tour in Japan, he was personally invited to visit Korea by Ito Hirobumi. Completely immersed in the discourses of civilization – and thus in full support of Japanese colonization in “backward” Korea – Ladd enthusiastically consented by travelling to Korea for three months and writing a book about his experiences. William Scranton was a Christian missionary who seemed more interested in the material benefits of civilization than in spiritual blessings. Consequently, he ardently supported the Japanese civilizing mission to Korea, attempting to stifle the voices of opposition and advocating for international support of the Residency General. James Gale is unique among the three in that his views alone reflected the ideology of Christian modernity. For Gale, Korea held strategic importance for the propagation of the Christian faith in East Asia, and unanimous support for the Residency General was required to accomplish the greater goal of spreading both Christianity and civilization to the ends of the earth.

Notwithstanding their divergent motivations and foci, the six men expressed their perspectives using similar rhetoric. They attempted to establish their authority to speak
decisively on Korea, albeit in slightly different ways. The men uniformly endorsed Japanese colonialism in Korea, lauding Japan for the many benefits of civilization that had been bestowed upon Korea. In addition, all six men engaged in negative cultural representation, presenting Koreans as backward, ignorant, and uncivilized. Not only did they view Korea as devoid of civilization, but they viewed Japan as qualified to serve as Korea’s “teacher” because Japan had joined the ranks of the colonial Powers. The conclusion reached by the six men was therefore identical: Japan’s civilizing mission in Korea was not only justified but desirable. Accordingly, I argue that the dual-layered nature of their colonial gaze caused the men to share a narrative telos that pictured Korea as part of the grand story of human civilization. Ito, Zumoto, and Yamagata perceived Korea as a threat to world peace, and they argued that Japanese rule in the peninsula would ensure the maintenance of that peace. Ladd, Scranton, and Gale saw Korea as existing in a hopelessly uncivilized state, and Japan was in the process of rescuing Korea through training in the way of civilization.

The Seoul Press is a significant document for studying the history of Japanese colonialism in Korea. Within its pages, there emerges a dual-layered colonial gaze, in which the Japanese gaze on Korea was enveloped by the Anglo-Americans’ gaze. This layering of the colonial gazes produced a series of distinct yet overlapping perspectives on Korea which resulted in simultaneous participation in colonizing discourses about Korea by Japanese colonial officials and Anglo-American observers. The Seoul Press was the site where these perspectives coalesced, and in their interweaving of common rhetorical threads, the colonizing discourses created an intricate pattern in the tapestry of colonial communication. The effects of Japanese colonialism in Korea reverberate through history, and the rhetorical modes employed by
Japanese officials and Anglo-American observers continue to find expression in the colonizing discourses of the present day.
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