

~~Historicality of Migration~~ Overseas Migration of Koreans ~~in the Colonial Period~~ and  
Historicality Postwar of Repatriation in the Colonial Period

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~~ABSTRACT~~ Abstract

This paper is an examination of the ~~historicality of coercive nature of the~~ Korean ~~coercive~~ migration during the Japanese colonial period and of the historicality of repatriation of overseas Koreans after liberation. The migration and repatriation of Koreans represents an unprecedented history of Korean plight ~~unprecedented~~ in ~~the~~ modern Korean history. The number of overseas Koreans at the time of Japan's defeat in 1945 reached some 5 million, accounting for 20 percent of the total Korean population. As clearly stated in Article 9 of the Potsdam Declaration, these overseas Koreans should have been promptly returned to Korea; however, ~~this was not realized~~ was not so in reality.

In managing postwar affairs, ~~foreign power each country~~ sought to protect ~~its~~ their own interests rather than protecting the human rights ~~and the rights~~ of overseas Koreans. Because of the GHQ and the Japanese government's ~~misirresponsible~~ management in addressing the repatriation issue, over 2 million Koreans in Japan ~~had to suffer~~ ed losses in the repatriation process. In China, where the number of Koreans reached 2.3 million, many Koreans were deported after having their personal assets confiscated by the Chinese government. Koreans in Central Asia and Sakhalin were detained and barred from returning to Korea, and ~~the~~ Koreans drafted and sent to the war front were taken by ~~the~~ Allied Forces as prisoners of war or "war criminals" and ~~had to suffer~~ ed extreme hardship.

The repatriation issue is a national question that demands resolution. ~~Even Both~~ on humanitarian grounds and as part of settling the colonial past, it is a historical task that must not be left unresolved. Moreover, it is a ~~research~~ research topic ~~question~~ that should be addressed prior to examining the historicality of overseas Korean communities today. The history of 7

million Koreans in overseas ~~Korean~~ communities around the world is an extension of the history of repatriation ~~issue~~. In this regard, addressing the issue is an act that not only examines ~~the~~ past history but also sheds light on the historicity of overseas Korean communit~~ies~~y.

**Keywords:** repatriation, forced migration, overseas Korean community, US~~AMJIK~~-~~Military~~ ~~Government in Korea~~, ~~the~~ GHQ (~~the~~ General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), international political climate of Northeast Asia

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## I. Introduction

The first wave of Korean overseas migration took place in the latter-half of the nineteenth century when many people moved to Manchuria and ~~the~~ ~~Russia's~~ Maritime Province ~~of~~ ~~Siberia~~. Most of these migrants were farmers from ~~the~~ Hamgyeong-do province who decided to move to the north ~~Kando~~Jiandao area and the Maritime Province ~~of~~ ~~Siberia~~ in order to escape starvation and poverty caused by extreme drought and economic exploitation by the landlord class. By the time of ~~the~~ Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, the number of ~~overseas~~ Korean migrants totaled some 300,000.

Under ~~the~~ Japanese colonial rule, political exile, ~~and~~ forced migration, and forcible drafting, forced relocation also led to forcible drafting greatly increased Korean overseas migration. ~~In the case of forced migration, mA large number of any~~ Koreans were sent ~~everywhere~~to numerous places, including to China, Manchuria, Siberia, Mongolia, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and ~~the~~ South Pacific, to serve in the Japanese imperial army or to work as civilian employees or as sex slaves for the Japanese army. ~~These conscripted Koreans~~ They were

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often ~~forced sentor taken away~~ to the extreme front of Japanese war of aggression and suffered extreme hardship.

By Japan's surrender in 1945, the number of overseas Koreans reached 5 million. Just in 35 years of colonial period ~~this~~ number ~~of overseas Koreans~~ has increased by 4.7 million, accounting for 20 percent of the entire Korean population at the time. As the victims of Japanese imperialism, the overseas Koreans should have been immediately repatriated, as specified in Article 9 of the Potsdam Declaration; however, it was not to be.

In managing postwar affairs, the foreign powers ~~sought to protect, in looking out for~~ their own interests ~~rather than the human rights, showed little regard for the welfare~~ of overseas Koreans. There were over 2 million Koreans in Japan at the time of liberation, and they were denied of the status as "liberated nationals." Moreover, many Koreans in Japan had to suffer losses ~~of property and wealth~~ in the repatriation process because of the irresponsible handling of affairs by the GHQ (the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) and the Japanese government. In China, some 2.3 million Koreans lost their property and wealth and suffered forced deportation amidst the internal war between Kuomintang and the Communist ~~party~~ Party, and the Koreans in Central Asia and Sakhalin were detained indefinitely. Moreover, the Koreans who had been conscripted to serve in the Japanese imperial army and captured by the Allied ~~ooccupation F~~ forces suffered extreme hardship and ordeal as prisoners of war or war criminals.

Repatriating some 5 million overseas Koreans following Japan's defeat was not simply an issue of homecoming or relocation. ~~Overseas migration of Koreans a~~ As a consequence of contradictions in and inhumane exploitation under the Japanese ~~imperial colonial~~ rule, the repatriation is ~~an issue~~ a historical task that should have been resolved immediately after the liberation, for humanitarian reasons and for historical ~~reckoning settlement~~ of the Japanese colonial rule. It is also a subject for research prerequisite for a close study on the historicity of ~~the thriving~~ overseas Korean communities today. Therefore, this study will discuss the circumstances of ~~the~~ Korean overseas migration during the Japanese colonial rule along with the

conditions and processes of repatriation of overseas Koreans after liberation. ~~It will, and it will~~ also ~~examine~~ define future research tasks and ~~assess the future~~ directions ~~for of~~ the issue.

## II. Japanese Colonial Rule and the Coerciveness of Korean Overseas Migration

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In addition to economic and ~~human-labor~~ exploitation, the Japanese colonial rule entailed a planned and systematic annihilation of ethnic identity. ~~Human-Labor~~ exploitation in ~~the~~ Japanese war of aggression took on various forms, such as conscription, forced labor, ~~forced~~-civilian military ~~personnel~~ employment, and sex slavery for the Japanese ~~imperial~~-army. Although different records show some deviation, 1.2 million is generally accepted as the total number of Koreans forced to migrate overseas during the colonial period.

~~Labor exploitation by forcible drafting~~ ~~Forced conscription and labor were~~ ~~was~~ not the only atrocities committed by the ~~Imperial-imperial~~ Japan. Many farmers lost their land and became tenant farmers or jobless due to the oppressive agricultural exploitation of the Japanese government. Many of the Koreans who lost their livelihood as farmers went abroad to Japan, northeast China, and the ~~Russia's Russian~~-Maritime Province. The migration of these Koreans is sometimes seen as voluntary rather than involuntary, ~~as in the cases for those conscripted to serve in the Japanese army or forced labor~~ ~~compared to the cases for the forcible drafting~~. However, considering that the hardship, confiscation of land, and exploitation of ~~the colonial government~~ ~~Koreans~~ led to migration, it seems more involuntary than voluntary.

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The coercive overseas migration of Koreans began in 1910 with Japan's annexation of Korea and continued for 35 years until Japan's defeat. As generally known, in the process of the so-called "land survey project" in 1910, a large portion of Korean agricultural land was seized by the Japanese colonial government and ~~distributed to Japanese settlers~~ ~~Japanese landlords~~. The Japanese "land grab" turned as many as 80 percent of Korean farmers into tenant farmers. Some Korean farmers fled to mountainous areas and became slash-and-burn farmers while others went overseas. The crushing exploitation of colonial government impoverished Korean rural communities, and subsequently led to an increase in the number of Korean overseas migration.

The ~~economic crisis~~ Great Depression in early 1930 further ruptured Korean rural life, resulting in a sharp increase in the number of starving farmers as well as ~~in~~ the unemployment rate, and many people were forced to leave their rural hometowns in search of livelihood. Between 1925 and 1930, some 200,000 people left their rural hometowns, 300,000 for the first ~~half~~ of the 1930s alone, and the number surged sharply to 1.1 million during the latter ~~half~~ of the 1930s, amounting to 1.6 million people in just a period of fifteen years. Many of the people went abroad to Japan and northeast China, sustaining the minimum standard of living as day laborer and tenant farmer.<sup>1</sup> ~~[Footnote 1]~~

The Japanese colonial rule became even more oppressive with the Japanese invasion of China-Manchuria in 1931. Using the Korean peninsula as its supply base for the invasion of the mainland China, the ~~Imperial-imperial Government-government~~ of Japan expanded the forced mobilization of Korean labor and ~~economic force~~ exploitation of the Korean economy. The provocation of the Pacific War in 1941, just after the 1937 Sino-Japanese War, led to a full-scale mobilization of Korean labor forces to the ~~battle front~~ battlefront and exploitation of Korean material resources for use as munitions of war. Korean human and material resources were mobilized and sacrificed as a tool of the Japanese war of aggression. At the same time, the Japanese ~~colonial~~ government schemed to implement a genocidal policy ~~of assimilation~~ to ~~annihilate-eradicate~~ Korean ~~ethnicity~~ national identity, culture, and history through assimilation.

The ~~Imperial-imperial Government-government~~ of Japan implemented ~~the-an~~ assimilation policy under the ~~motto-slogan of~~ “Japan and Korea as ~~one-One bodyBody~~” (*Nai-sun Ilchei-Sen-ittai*) (내선일체의 음훈을 바꿈) and to “~~make turn~~ Koreans ~~into~~ full fledged imperial subjects” and mobilized them in its war of aggression. In 1938, the Japanese government introduced ~~so-called~~ the “~~A~~ Army Special-special Enlistment-enlistment Systemssystem and military recruitment.” In July 1943, the “~~n~~ Navy Special-special Enlistment-enlistment Systemssystem” ~~and the drafting of student soldiers was were~~ implemented, ~~abolishing the student draft deferment, to begin drafting students to serve in the imperial military~~. Finally in 1944, the Japanese government forcibly sent young Korean men into battle, and implemented

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<sup>1</sup> Bak (1986, 356-357).

~~conscription, and~~ over 200,000 ~~Korean young men~~ were drafted ~~to fight in the Japanese war of aggression~~ between 1944 and 1945.

With the introduction of the ~~emergency “Guidelines and procedures for student labor for Emergency Student Labor Mobilization,” and “Guideline for Emergency Student Mobilization”~~ in April 1944, the Japanese government mobilized elementary to college students to ~~work in produce food and munitions and to build military facilities. war supply production, military development, and food supply production.~~ Moreover, the government coercively enlisted some 3.7 million technicians and skilled workers. The drafted Koreans were sent to work in coal-mines, hydropower plants, railroad ~~construction-construction~~, war plants, and military base construction and ~~to made to~~ serve ~~in roles ranging from as~~ guards for prisoners of ~~war war, as military agents, to and as~~ sex slaves, suffering all kinds of inhumane treatments.

The forced mobilization of Korean labor ~~power~~ was carried out in three stages: ~~controlled~~ recruitment (1939--1941), ~~official mediation government-led arrangements~~ (1942--1943), and ~~forced labor drafts draft~~ (1944---1945). However, the difference among the three forms of mobilization was only formal. Whether ~~through recruitment or government-led arrangements, it was enlistment or government recommendation,~~ in all cases the government intervened often to enlist ~~Koreans people~~ against their will.

In August 1944, the Japanese government issued the Ordinance of Women ~~Laborers Volunteer Corps's Labor Service~~, by which tens of thousand Korean women between the age of 14 and 40 were mobilized to work in Japanese war plants or sent to China and South Pacific as ~~sex slaves comfort women~~ for the Japanese military men.<sup>2</sup> ~~[Footnote 2] Although the The Korean forcible drafting conscription of Korean civilian military employees for~~ the Japanese army and navy began in 1939, ~~and~~ the number increased sharply after the beginning of the Pacific War. They were sent to the battlefield, working at construction sites in the South Pacific under the navy or serving as guards ~~men~~ for army's prisoners of war or as logistics personnel.

The places to which Koreans migrated and were drafted were Japan, northeast and mainland China, ~~Soviet~~-Sakhalin, and Southeast Asia. In Japan, there were about 100,000

<sup>2</sup> ~~Bak (1986, 358-359).~~

Koreans in mid-1920s, exceeding 300,000 in the 1930s, and increasing by 50,000 to 100,000 every year since, reaching to some 800,000 by 1938 just before the implementation of forced migration. The number sharply increased to 1.2 million in 1940 when the Japanese government implemented ~~draft~~forcible drafting, and continued to increase by some 200,000 every year since, reaching 1.94 million by 1944. In May 1945, just before Japan's surrender, the estimated number of Koreans in Japan was 2.1 million. In ~~only just a~~ five-year period, the number ~~had~~ increased by over one million, with the draft-forcible drafting as the unmistakable cause for the sudden surge. The number of Koreans in Japan at the time ~~was 5 million, accounting~~accounted for 40 percent of the 5 million entire-overseas Koreans population.<sup>3</sup> ~~[Footnote 3]~~

With the implementation of ~~draft-forcible drafting~~ in 1939, the pattern of Korean overseas migration changed significantly. The Koreans drafted under the war mobilization system were sent off to work in either war manufacturing plants or heavy labor jobs shunned by Japanese people. Many Koreans were forced to labor under inhumane conditions in Japanese ~~coal~~mines coal mines, airfield construction sites, iron mills, and shipyards. During this period, the Korean ~~population-people~~ in Japan ~~was were~~ concentrated heavily in places such as Fukuoka, Yamaguchi, and Hokkaido.

Koreans in different areas of Japan worked in various fields but most worked in constructions. Construction workers and day laborers, the lower-class workers who constantly lived in fear of unemployment and subjected to relocation, were forced to work long hours and to live collectively in primitive sheds and billets. Like the construction workers, miners were also forced to work hard and long hours, living in terrible conditions. Of ~~the all~~ the Koreans drafted into forced labor, 60 percent were sent to work in mines in Hokkaido and Kyushu areas.<sup>4</sup> ~~[Footnote 4]~~ They were assigned to work in mine shafts, the part most vulnerable to fatal accidents. Towards the end of war, the frequent accidents in mines led to many Korean casualties,

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<sup>3</sup> Kang and Kim (2000, 31).

<sup>4</sup> In 1937, almost 80 percent of Korean miners were working in two prefectures, Fukuoka (44.6%) and Yamaguchi (33.4%). However, after the implementation of forced mobilization, the proportion for the Hokkaido increased and changed the distribution of Korean miners to 29.5% for Fukuoka, 24.3% for Hokkaido, 13.2% for Yamaguchi, and 7.4% for Nagasaki.

and the details of these casualties are still unknown due to the systematic cover-up by the Japanese government or the responsible companies.

Most Koreans in Japan lived in slums, some in inhospitable places by the river, marshy area, garbage dumps, and under the bridge. Working under unfair and unequal conditions, Koreans in Japan did not receive the social welfare services that other Japanese workers received, including mandatory schooling for children, and many Korean children could not attend school. In short, Koreans in Japan lived in racial humiliation and discrimination, forced to endure slave-like treatment.<sup>5</sup> ~~{Footnote 5}~~

The Korean migration to China was concentrated in the northeast region, the north ~~Jiandao Kando~~ area. The widespread starvation and poverty in Korea caused the initial overseas migration in 1860s. After the colonization of Korea in 1910, however, ~~the~~ Korean migration to China surged with political exiles and farmers who became impoverished by ~~the~~ colonial exploitation ~~and with political exiles~~. In 1910, the number of Koreans in the northeast China reached some 200,000 and reached 450,000 in 1920 with the implementation of “land survey project” that displaced many Korean farmers. The number reached some 600,000 by 1930 and surged to some 2.16 million in 1945 after Japan’s invasion of Manchuria, making the northeast region of China the place with the largest overseas Korean population.

The ~~Imperial imperial~~ Japan’s long-harbored aggressive designs on the mainland China at last materialized with the Manchurian invasion in 1931, and a puppet regime of Manzhouguo (Manchukuo) was established in 1932. For its dominance over Manchuria, the Japanese government mobilized Koreans. The Japanese Government-General ~~of in~~ Korea established ~~ManSun~~ Manchurian Agriculture Company 만선농사회사 and settled 20,000 households (100,000 Koreans) to Manchuria with plans to settle 300,000 more Korean households (1.5 million Koreans) in Manchuria by the fifteenth year planned to settle 20,000 households (100,000 Koreans) in Manchuria per year, totaling 300,000 more Korean households (1.5 million Koreans) within fifteen years. Although Japan’s defeat ultimately precluded the plans from materializing, the Government-General, meanwhile, continued to force Korean

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<sup>5</sup> The Investigative Committee on the Forced Relocation of Koreans (1990, 13).

relocation to Manchuria. As part of its plans for settling Koreans in Manchuria, the ~~Imperial~~ imperial Japanese ~~cabinet-cabinet~~ meeting in October 1934 established a policy that limits-limited Korean migration to Japan while promoting Korean settlement in Manchuria.

As part of its promotional effort for Korean migration to Manchuria, the Government-General, based on the resolution of the ~~Eighth-8th~~ Imperial Japanese Council-Diet meeting-session, established Manchurian Development Company — Manchurian Colonization Company 滿鮮拓植株式會社 in Seoul in September 1936 and Manchurian Colonization FirmCompany 滿鮮拓植股份有限公司 in Xinjing — (Changchun), China. The ~~national-policy~~ concerns Japanese government made a settlement plan for a total of 150,000 farming households, including 110,000 landed farming families in the southern region of Korea and settled some 14,000 households (65,000 Koreans) in Manchuria in a three-year period. Under ~~such~~ aggressive this forced migration policy, some 1.5 million Koreans settled in Manchuria in the period between 1930 and 1945.

The introduction of “secure rural community” ~~so-called~~ “secure rural community” 안전농촌 and “collective village” “collective village” 집단부락 illustrates the Japanese government’s ~~aggressive~~ settlement policy for Manchuria. After Japan’s invasion of Manchuria, the Government-General ~~of Korea~~ settled Koreans in Manchuria from 1932 and 1935 and built “secure rural communities.” Using the Manchuria-based Korean People’s Association 만주 조선인민회 as a cat’s-paw, the Japanese government built “collective villages” all over the Yanji and Helong areas in 1933, Wangqing Wangching?? 汪清 area in 1934, and Yanji and Wangqing Wangching?? 汪清 areas in 1935. The collective villages were built in remote areas where farming was impossible without self-defense capability. Among others, collective villages were built primarily to serve three purposes: to recapture the territory under the influence of socialist movement, to build a base for suppressing rebels, and to maintain transportation routes. Built like military fortresses, the collective villages functioned as outposts to suppress armed anti-Japanese forces to ensure “public peace and order” of Manzhouguo Manchuoko. For Koreans

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constantly subjected to questioning and inspection by the self-defense corps or the Japanese police, the collective villages were more like detention camps. It was also true for ~~“Secure-secure~~ rural communities” and ~~“collective villages”~~ in that both were built by the Japanese government after the Manchurian Incident to control and regulate Koreans in Manchuria.

Koreans first migrated to the ~~Russian~~-Maritime Province in the 1860s. Another wave of Koreans migrated to Russia in 1940s when the Japanese colonial government ~~forcibly~~ sent many Koreans to Sakhalin. The number of Koreans who migrated to Russia since 1863 reached some 100,000 by 1910. The ~~Russian~~-Maritime Province soon emerged as the locus of overseas independence movement. Although the influence of independence movement waned with the outbreak of World War I, the Korean community expanded significantly when some 300,000 Koreans migrated to the area in 1919. Regionally, there were some 48,000 Koreans in Vladivostok, some 52,000 in Nikolsk-Ussuriisk, about 50,000 in ~~northern-southern~~ Usuri region, and another 50,000 in the ~~Russian~~-Maritime Province and other areas in Siberia in 1927.

Ardent supporters of the Bolshevik revolution, the Koreans in Russia were at the forefront of building the Soviet Union in the ~~Russian~~-Maritime Province and deeply involved in partisan activities. When the Japanese began to expand its imperial power to Far East with the establishment of the puppet state of ~~Manzhouguo~~Manchukuo in 1931, the Soviet Union forced relocation of Koreans in the ~~Russian Maritime Province~~Maritime Province to Central Asia in September 1937 as part of the measure to stem further advances of the Japanese imperialism in the region. The forced migration of some 200,000 Koreans, carried out illegally without their consent, was not only an act of political oppression but also a violation of human rights. Moreover, the forced relocation disregarded the basic policies for ethnic minorities in the Soviet Constitution proclaimed in December 1936.

Forced to relocate to an unfamiliar environment, the Koreans had to endure the winter of 1937 in dugouts, warehouses, and stables. Deprived of the freedom to travel, they had to live in the Tashkent and Uzbekistan region indefinitely. For a very long time, the Koreans were denied of all legal rights of Soviet citizenship.<sup>6</sup> ~~{Footnote-6}~~ Even after the World War II, they were

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<sup>6</sup> Park D.N. (1922, 1274-1275). Because the Korean “special” migrants’ status was that of people with guilty verdict

detained in Central Asia, barred from returning to Korea. It was not until after Stalin's death in July 1953, when the regulations on restricted residency for Korean people were abolished, that some Koreans in Central Asia were able to return to the Maritime Province ~~when the regulations on restricted residency for Korean people were abolished in July 1953~~. Most Koreans in Sakhalin ended up there when the Japanese government drafted Koreans to perform forced labor in 1939. Drafted to work in coal-mines, the Korean ~~freed~~-laborers arrived in Sakhalin via Hokkaido, their number reaching some 43,000 at the time of Japan's surrender. Of this number, the majority originated from the southern Korean provinces. There were about 250,000 Japanese in Sakhalin ~~While, and about 250,000 Japanese in Sakhalin all~~ repatriated after Japan's defeat. Koreans ~~Most Korean in who were originally from southern Korean provinces~~ became stateless. They came as "Japanese" but lost their Japanese status with Japan's defeat, and they were detained by the Soviet's forced labor policy.

Where there is a battlefield of Japanese war of aggression, Koreans were sent to fight in the Japanese army. Whether deep inland of China or in the South Pacific or Southeast Asia, Koreans were forced to go and fight in battlefield. As the fiercest battle grounds, the South Sea Islands and the Southeast Asian jungles came to be known as "death zones." In a wide scale "human offerings" in the name of draft, conscription, or as "comfort women" for the Japanese military, numerous Koreans were sent overseas to perform forced labor under the scorching equatorial sun and to be sexually exploited as sex slaves for the Japanese army, living under inhumane conditions. Many of them died unable to endure the extreme hardship or were sacrificed in the flames of war. But the exact number of Korean casualties has not been confirmed to this day. Of some 1,400 Korean civilian employees of the Japanese army placed in Java as guardsmen for the prisoners of war, many were harmed or executed after the war when they were falsely charged as "war criminals."

### **III. ~~Post-WWII~~ Repatriation of Overseas Koreans after the World War II**

or on trial, they were unable to exercise the voting right in the election of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union in October 1937. Moreover, the basic rights of citizenship, such as the right to work, to be educated, to rest, to receive medical care, to join social, political or other organizations were withheld from the Koreans in USSR.

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—After Japan's defeat, the overseas Koreans who had been forced to migrate during the Japanese colonial rule should have been repatriated. Of some 5 million overseas Koreans, only 2.5 million returned while the remaining 2.5 million Koreans did not or could not return. Although the numbers vary among different records, it is estimated that 1.4 million Koreans repatriated from Japan,<sup>7</sup> some 800,000 from Manchuria, some 100,000 from mainland China, and some another 100,000 from Hawaii, Taiwan, Okinawa, and South Pacific islands. As for other places, there is no record of repatriation. For repatriation to North Korea, it is difficult to confirm the cases. In addition, some 200,000 Koreans are estimated to have died overseas.<sup>8</sup> ~~[Footnote 8]~~

In modern Korean history, the word "repatriation" does not simply signify the return of someone who has gone overseas. Repatriation signifies righting a wrong, the return of Koreans to their homeland upon liberation from the Japanese colonial rule, under which they have been forced to migrate initially. Since they have been sent abroad coercively under the Japanese colonial rule, their return to homeland should have been a natural course of event with the end of colonial rule.

However, just as the circumstances of the migration varied from one person to another, the circumstances of repatriation also varied. The Koreans who had been drafted to fight in the battle-front of Japanese war of aggression were dispatched to different places. Consequently, their repatriation took place in various places and took on various forms depending on the conditions of the host countries. Contrary to their will, some people never returned to Korea.

The overseas Korean communities formed during the colonial period took on various forms. In addition to those sent abroad forcibly, there were others who worked for the independence movement in various places overseas. In still other cases, Korean communities

<sup>7</sup> Approximately 400,000 of the 1.4 million repatriated on their own before the transfer of power to General Douglas MacArthur, and the remaining 1 million were formally repatriated from September 1945 under General MacArthur.

<sup>8</sup> Bak (1965, 90-91). In Japan some 10,000 died from accidents related to mining between 1938 and 1944, and the total number reached some 12,000 by 1945. Among the victims, Korean miners make up 6,000 to 8,000 because they worked in the part of the mine most prone to fatal accidents. Add to the death toll 150,000 Korean casualties in construction and other industrial sectors as well as in the soldiers and civilian military employees, the actual number of Korean deaths is likely to reach some 200,000.

were forming in places with a long history of Korean migration, such as northeast China, the US, and Central Asia. Among these overseas Koreans, some planted roots in the new place but most wished to return to homeland after liberation.

Although the Korean overseas migration was caused by the ~~its~~contradictions of Japanese colonial rule, the conditions of repatriation were different. In other words, no matter what the circumstances had been for the migration, repatriation depended on the policy and interest of the host countries, such as the Soviet Union and China, and many Koreans were detained and restricted from returning to Korea. In short, while the forced draft was unilaterally performed for the Japanese war of aggression, repatriation was variously determined by the interests of the overseas Koreans' the host countries determined the fate of the Koreans in the respective countries.

The Korean peninsula did not have an established ~~nation-nation~~-state immediately after liberation. Without a sovereign state, the repatriation of overseas Koreans was determined by the US ~~Army M~~military government-Government in Korea and the GHQ (General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers)-) in Japan that held the-de facto control over the Korean ~~Peninsula~~peninsula. Moreover, the division of the peninsula and the conditions of the Cold War system made it even more difficult for overseas Koreans to repatriate. -Repatriation of Koreans in the regions under the control of the Soviet Union and Communist China was either completely blocked or was very limited. That the repatriation of overseas Koreans after the end of World War II was determined by the international political climate sets the need for a comprehensive understanding and close examination of the international political climate around the Korean ~~Peninsula~~peninsula.

First of all, the Koreans in Japan were not given the status of liberated citizens-nationals after the liberation. The precarious status of Koreans in Japan had a direct effect on their repatriation. It was not the Japanese government that defined the postwar status of Koreans in Japan but the GHQ which took control over the Japanese Islands. At the time the USWashington considered Koreans "non-Japanese with Japanese nationality," people of a special historical

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background in relations to Japan.<sup>9</sup> ~~Footnote 9~~ Moreover, the US applied double standard by which Koreans in Japan were treated as both non-Japanese “liberated ~~citizens-nationals~~” and “~~enemy citizens~~” equal to Japanese nationals.<sup>10</sup> ~~Footnote 10~~ This view of Koreans in Japan was also adopted by, and reflected in, the Far Eastern Commission’s policy decisions on ~~5 June 5,~~ 1946, which also became the GHQ’s basic perception of Koreans in Japan during its occupation of Japan.<sup>11</sup> ~~Footnote 11~~

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In governing Japan, however, the GHQ governed indirectly through the Japanese government. Although the management of national affairs was carried out with the directives from the GHQ, the Japanese government exercised similar power of influence over the Koreans in Japan as it did during the colonial period. Moreover, the GHQ was not only inconsistent in its definition of the status of Koreans in Japan, but also tacitly approved the Japanese government’s treatment of Koreans as foreigners. In addition to anticipating East-West Cold War system, such a US policy on postwar Japan was motivated by the strategic plan to establish Japan as its foothold in Northeast Asia.

The Japanese government’s concern over Koreans in Japan had less to do with ensuring their repatriation but more to do with maintaining peace and order in Japan. The order of repatriation set by the Japanese government, in which the Korean coal miners whose labor is necessary for the recovery of Japanese economy were slated to be the last group to repatriate, clearly reveals the guiding principle of the government on the Korean repatriation issue. Such attitude of the Japanese government and the GHQ ran counter to the wishes of the Koreans in Japan for speedy return to homeland. Therefore, many Koreans took the repatriation effort into their own hands instead of waiting for the Japanese government or the GHQ to make decision, and some 400,000 Koreans in Japan repatriated in such a way.

<sup>9</sup> Jeong (1995, 134).

<sup>10</sup> According to the “Initial Basic Directives to SCAP on Occupation and Administration of Japan” issued by Washington to SCAP on 1 November 1945, it orders that GHQ treat Taiwanese Chinese and Koreans as liberated nationals if military security permits and that although they do not fall under the category “Japanese” in the directives, they may be treated as enemy citizens.

<sup>11</sup> Jeong (1995, 134-135).

However, it is also important to note that many have lost their lives in their independent repatriation efforts. Fed up with the Japanese government's delay in implementing programs for repatriation, many of the Koreans who took the matters into their own hands and chartered small vessels to Korea have lost their lives in typhoons in their travel across the ocean. The true circumstances of "Ukushima-~~M~~maru Incident," in which some 1,000 Koreans died on their way to Korea when their vessel was bombed by a Japanese naval vessel, ~~whether it was an accident or intentional act, is are~~ still unknown; however the incident symbolizes the tragic aspect of repatriation.<sup>12</sup> ~~[Footnote 12]~~—The tragic stories of repatriation of Koreans in Japan stand in a stark contrast to the safe and speedy Japanese repatriation from Korea after Japan's surrender.

The ~~Federation-General Association~~ of Korean Residents in Japan (Choryun) emerged as a major organization working for repatriation of Koreans in Japan. Established in October 1945, Choryun became the most influential organization in Korean community in postwar Japan and led the fight against the Japanese government to secure rights for Koreans in Japan and to facilitate in their repatriation. ~~The Federation-Choryun~~ dispatched its members to repatriation ports to register the returnees, to issue repatriation certificate, and to provide general assistance. It also managed the assets left behind by the repatriating Koreans. Relief Society for ~~Returning Koreans~~Korean Returnees ~~귀국동포원호회 (歸國同胞救援會)~~ and Korean Relief Society ~~조선인구원회 (朝鮮人救援會)~~ were organized in Hakada and Senzaki, respectively, the two areas with high concentration of Korean returnees, providing lodging and other necessary accommodations for returnees. However, ~~Choryun had to suspend its services when~~ the GHQ ~~suspended-suspended Choryun's~~their activities—in April 1946. Repatriation efforts, nevertheless, continued in small scales, but the outbreak of Korean War on 25 June 25, 1950 put an end to it.

Most of conscripted Korean workers who had to endure inhumane conditions and treatment during their time overseas returned to Korea without any compensation for their labor

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<sup>12</sup> Ukushima Maru, a Japanese naval vessel that left Ominato port in the northeast Japan, on 24 August 1945, with 2,838 Koreans who had been conscripted as laborers and 897 additional Korean passengers on board heading for Busan port, was bombed during its turnaround to Maizuru port in Kyoto, killing some 1,000 Koreans on board.

or suffering. These Korean workers had to experience despair once again when the Japanese government and the companies that exploited their labor refused to pay reparations. War reparation remains a pending issue even to this day.

Even in China, the country with the second largest overseas Koreans, Koreans faced obstacles to repatriation due to the intense confrontation between the Kuomintang and the Communist ~~party~~Party. The northeast region of China, occupied by the Soviet army at the time of Japan's surrender, was also a place of intense competition for control between the Kuomintang and the Communist ~~party~~Party. The fierce military confrontation between the two sides further complicated the fate of Koreans in the region. The region was divided into the "reclaimed area" under the Kuomintang control and the "liberated area" under the Communist control, and the fate of Koreans determined by the policy of the two sides. Although the Kuomintang's policy was to repatriate all Koreans, it considered Korean assets and businesses as Japanese asset or estate, thus subjected to government confiscation. Many Koreans, therefore, were expelled from China empty handed. The Communist ~~party~~Party, on the other hand, had a policy that encouraged different ethnic groups to settle in the region by granting ethnic minorities, including Koreans, a dual citizenship and providing them livelihood through land distribution, and many Koreans in the Communist-controlled "liberated area" chose to stay rather than to return to Korea. Hence, the number of Koreans who remained in northeast China reached somewhere between 1.3 to 1.4 million. Most of these Koreans were landed farmers, mostly from the northern provinces of Korea and mostly in the Communist-controlled "liberated area."

Most Koreans in the area controlled by the Kuomintang wished to return to Korea. The exact number is unknown, but many of them had to return to Korea either on their own crossing the border to North Korea or by the arrangements made between the US and the Kuomintang. The arrangements for Korean repatriation consisted of the Kuomintang rounding up and transporting Koreans in China and the US providing the vessels necessary for repatriation.

The repatriation of Koreans in northeast China did not begin until December 1946, after the conclusion of repatriation for Koreans in areas under Japanese or Chinese jurisdiction and over one year and four months after the liberation. As for Japan, repatriation began almost

immediately following the liberation and was reaching its conclusion by this time. There are several reasons for the delay in repatriation of Koreans in China, particularly in the northeast region. The delay seems to have been caused by both the political instability due to the confrontation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Partys and the policy of the US which had the decision-making authority on Korean repatriation. Forecasting the postwar political situation of Northeast Asia, the US tried to secure democratic hegemony in the region by maintaining peace and stability in Japan and by supporting the Kuomintang in China. Such political calculations seem to have influenced the repatriation process for overseas Koreans. Unlike the repatriation of Koreans in Japan that officially began in November 1945, as part of ~~to~~ the effort to establish peace and stability in Japan, the repatriation of Koreans in China was delayed because the US was too focused on expanding the Kuomintang-Kuomintang-controlled territory in China.

Some 100,000 Koreans are estimated to have been in the area under Chinese jurisdiction. Most of these Koreans were in the area controlled by the Kuomintang, which meant that they could have returned to Korea according to the Kuomintang policy. The problem, however, lies in the fact that the Kuomintang treated Koreans like its enemy citizens, like Japanese. In other words, the Kuomintang often confiscated the Korean people's wealth and even subjected them to internment. Although the treatment of Koreans improved somewhat with the efforts of the Shanghai-based Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai of the Republic of Korea which had maintained good relations with the Kuomintang, Koreans in China still experienced many difficulties in the repatriation process. From early 1946, Koreans returned to Korea using American vessels, departing from Chinese ports in Tanggu, TsingtaoQingdao, and Shanghai and arriving to the ports in Incheon and Busan.<sup>13</sup> ~~{Footnote 13}~~

As for some 400,000 Koreans in the Soviet Union, neither those forced to relocate to Central Asia nor those to Sakhalin<sup>14</sup> ~~{Footnote 14}~~ were able to return to Korea. In addition to

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<sup>13</sup> Jang (2004); Seo (2004).

<sup>14</sup> Sakhalin became Russian territory in 1875 when Japan gave it up in exchange for the Kuril Island; however, with the Portsmouth Treaty signed at the conclusion of Russo-Japanese War, south of the lat. 50° N, including the isles, became Japanese territory. Nevertheless, since Japan's unconditional surrender of 15 August 1945 at the conclusion of the World War II, southern Sakhalin has been the Soviet territory.

the Soviet policy preventing their repatriation, the Koreans in Sakhalin suffered a tragedy different from that befalling those in Central Asia.

Most of Koreans in Sakhalin were people who were forced to migrate there under the Japanese colonial rule. At the time of Japan's surrender in 1945, there were 350,000 people with Japanese citizenship, and repatriation of the Japanese nationals in Sakhalin began upon the conclusion of the US-USSR ~~Agreement~~ Agreement on Repatriation of the Japanese in the Soviet Union on ~~19~~ December ~~19~~, 1946. However, repatriation was denied to 43,000 Koreans in Sakhalin because the Agreement stipulated only “Japanese prisoners of war and Japanese civilians” to be eligible for repatriation. That the Japanese government had made no provisions for those Koreans with Japanese citizenship was an inhumane negligence motivated by racism.

When some remaining 80,000 Japanese returned to Japan between 1957 and 1959 in accordance with the USSR-Japan Joint Declaration of 1956, Koreans were once again excluded. Only the few Koreans who met certain qualifications were eligible to return to Japan. Those who met such qualifications, ~~---~~the Korean men married to Japanese women and their children, ~~---~~were able to leave the USSR. In total 1,541 ~~Japanese women, their Korean husbands and their children~~ left USSR for Japan at the time.

After the establishment of the DPRK in September 1948, the Koreans in Sakhalin were pressured to choose between USSR and North Korean citizenships, but those who wished to return to South Korea refused either because they feared that becoming a citizen of either USSR or DPRK would preclude their chance of returning to South Korea. In ~~the mid-1960s~~ 1965 when the Soviet government expressed its willingness to permit the “remaining” Koreans in Sakhalin to leave the USSR, the ~~Association of South Korean Residents in Japan Returning from~~ Korean Society in Sakhalin prepared a register of names of 6,924 people who wished to repatriate and submitted it to the South Korean government, which, in turn, requested the Japanese government to facilitate the repatriation process.

However, the Japanese government responded that it would only conduct negotiation with the USSR for those Koreans who wish to return to Korea, rejecting anyone who wished to

return to Japan. Based on the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed in 1952, the Japanese government considered Koreans in Sakhalin as having lost their Japanese nationality. However, considering that not only does the ~~Peace Treaty~~ states nothing about the nationality of Koreans but also no Korean representative participated in the signing of the ~~Peace Treaty~~ or no Koreans were given the chance to determine their citizenship status, the Japanese government's interpretation of the ~~Peace Treaty~~ is arbitrary. The Japanese government's position is unacceptable also on humanitarian grounds. Since it was Japan that used "Japanese nationality" as the rationale for forcing relocation of Koreans to Sakhalin to be exploited for its war objectives, it is also the responsibility of the Japanese government to return the Koreans to their homeland, and so doing would be a step toward assuming the responsibility for its past atrocities.

서식 있음

#### IV. Awareness and Task for the Issue of Repatriation of Koreans

— Repatriation of overseas Koreans is an issue that has been long neglected. As shown above, the repatriation issue is not merely about migrating overseas Koreans. Although the overseas migration and forced relocation of Koreans were caused by the Japanese colonialism, their repatriation has now become a complex issue that needs to be resolved within the newly ~~organized-formed~~ international political landscape of Northeast Asia ~~that formed~~ after the World War II. In other words, because the issue of repatriation of ethnic Koreans overseas is linked to the policies and interests of the USSR, China, Japan, the US, and other host countries, it is defined by not only the personal circumstances of the overseas Koreans but also the political and diplomatic conditions.

In this regard, the circumstances of Koreans in Japan, Manchuria, China, and the USSR ~~differed~~ from one another. Repatriation of Koreans in Japan, for example, depended not only on the Japanese government but also on the larger framework of the US policy on East Asia. Even after Japan's defeat and with the occupation of ~~US military government~~ the US military government in Japan, the Koreans in Japan continued to be subjected to racial discrimination and

oppression. The ~~US military government in Japan~~ US military government kept the basic framework of the Japanese government organs and bureaucratic system, exercising only indirect rule over Japan. Therefore, structurally, ~~the Japanese government the power of state~~ was subjected to the US occupying forces, but, functionally, ~~it the Japanese government~~ maintained relative independence and exercised, as a proxy, almost all administrative ~~powers of the occupying forces~~ affairs.<sup>15</sup> ~~{Footnote 15}~~ Moreover, the GHQ set as its basic course of action an expedient repatriation of Koreans in Japan, who were considered a possible source of trouble. Repatriation was given the highest priority in the GHQ's agenda for Koreans in Japan.<sup>16</sup> ~~{Footnote 16}~~

In China, the policy on repatriation of Koreans also depended on the respective policy of the Kuomintang and the Communist ~~party~~ Party. Therefore, unlike the Koreans in the area under the Kuomintang control, most Koreans in the area under the Communist control, whether it was self-willed or arbitrary, ended up settling in China. The chance of returning to Korea was slim for the Koreans in the Soviet territory who were forced to relocate to Central Asia in 1937, while the Koreans in Sakhalin were detained against their will. The policy of the host state and the international politics were the decisive factors that determined the outcome of the repatriation effort.

The delay in establishing a sovereign government in the Korean ~~Peninsula~~ peninsula after liberation and subsequent division of the peninsula between South and North were significant factors in complicating and ultimately frustrating the repatriation efforts. In the vortex of the Cold War between the East and the West, the Korean peninsula became the contesting ground between the US and USSR, and the question of repatriation was indefinitely deferred with the outbreak of the Korean War. Even in the Japan-ROK talks that began in the early 1950s, the property rights issue eclipsed the repatriation issue.

Ignored by the Japanese government and neglected by the Korean government, the Koreans detained in Sakhalin were able to find a shred hope for repatriation after more than fifty years after Japan's defeat with the USSR's policy of *perestroika* that eased the Cold War tensions,

<sup>15</sup> Institute for Korean Historical Studies (1989, 44); Iriye (1983, 93).

<sup>16</sup> Kang (1998, 567-570).

the growth of Korean economic powers, and the activism within the Japanese Diet. The story of the Sakhalin Koreans who lived many years in despair is a tragedy that exists in modern Korean history.

At the time of Japan's surrender, there were some 6.3 million overseas Japanese. Even as a vanquished nation, the Japanese government took the lead in making diplomatic efforts and even providing aid to the host country, if necessary, to have its citizens returned to homeland. As a result of the government efforts, all overseas Japanese returned to Japan. Even the remains of deceased Japanese ~~were were~~ returned to be buried in homeland. Initiated in the wake of its defeat, the Japanese government's effort to repatriate its citizens who were left behind during the war period continued for some fifty years. Since Koreans were forced to relocate not only to Japan but also to anywhere the Japanese army was mobilized, the repatriation of Japanese nationals has much relevance to the repatriation of Koreans. In this regard, the indifference of Korean scholarship and the government on the issue stands in a sharp contrast to the Japanese efforts to repatriate its citizens.<sup>17</sup>~~[Footnote 17]~~

In addition to the Japanese case, there are other cases worth consideration, such as the postwar repatriation policy for Germans or the repatriation issue of Polish people who had been taken away by the Nazis. There were some 18 million Germans living outside Germany at the end of World War II. Among them 2.1 million were either deported from the host country or died from retaliatory attacks. From the end of the war to 1992, 12 million Germans returned to Germany.<sup>18</sup> ~~[Footnote 18]~~ The West German government carried out a methodical and continuous repatriation program for its people. In 1975, the government signed an agreement to commit DM 2.3 billion in economic aid to Poland in return for 120,000 ethnic Germans in Poland. Additional DM 150 billion was spent to subsidize their transition to their new life in Germany.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The repatriation project the Japanese government undertook for some 50 years can be divided into three phases. The first phase is from 1945 to 1958, during which the first collection project of Japanese remains ended, the collective repatriation was completed, and the Maizuru Repatriation and Relief Bureau was shut down. During the second phase which lasted to 1972 the regulations concerning relief for surviving family members were adjusted and the second collection of Japanese remains was concluded. The third phase is the period from 1972 to present.

<sup>18</sup> According to the official estimation, some 3.5 million Germans currently reside in Russia and Southern Europe. After the end of World War II, some 7.6 million deportees settled in former West Germany, 3.7 million in former East Germany, and 500,000 in Austria.

<sup>19</sup> Institute for Peace Affairs (2000, 22-24).

~~{Footnote 19}~~ To this day, Germany and Poland are negotiating talks over paying war reparation for the 8 million Polish victims of the Nazi era.<sup>20</sup>~~{Footnote 20}~~

The repatriation of Koreans who were forced to relocate under the Japanese colonial rule is an unresolved issue that has become complicated not only because of the Japanese government's refusal to assume responsibility for the inhumane atrocities it committed during its imperial era but also the contest for the hegemony over the postwar East Asian region among the US, USSR, and China. Consequently, the repatriation issue must be approached with prior knowledge and understanding of the international politics, and its resolution should meet humanitarian standards.

About 7 million Koreans in overseas Korean communities today are descendents of the 2.5 million Koreans who were unable to return to homeland when the war ended. Many Korean communities around the world are celebrating their one hundred-year overseas history. To gain a proper understanding of these overseas Korean communities, the first task should be to examine their historicality. It will not only settle the unfinished task of confronting the past but also lay the groundwork for a clear future for overseas Korean communities.

서식 있음

## V. Conclusion

— Today's overseas Korean communities are largely built upon the history of Korean overseas migration during the Japanese colonial rule, by which Korea now ranks fourth or fifth in the world as the country with most emigrants. The repatriation issue is not an issue of the past but a real task that demands practical solution today.

Moreover, the repatriation issue does not end when the person returns to homeland; rather, ~~the period of~~ adjustment and reintegration to the home society and attendant social issues are all part of the repatriation process. Just after the liberation, close to 3 million people were

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<sup>20</sup> On 28 April 1992, the German government and Polish government established "Reconciliation Fund" to give reparation payment to the victims of the crimes committed by the Nazi regime. Germany has agreed to contribute DM 500 million to the fund. Hiroshi Tanaka et al. (2000, 193-194).

incorporated into ~~13-16-17~~ million South Korean populations, causing a great economic hardship. Relief for the returnees emerged as the most urgent social issue for the liberated Korean society. The gravity of the social impact of the returnees, who did not have farmland to return to, became more salient as they became heavily concentrated in cities. The ~~USUS Army~~ Military Government in Korea and social organizations introduced relief programs, but these programs were fundamentally limited to meet the task. The social issues attending repatriation remain a scar in the modern Korean history and Korean society, illustrating the historicity of repatriation that lives beyond their return to homeland.

Since Korea never had a specific policy for repatriating overseas Koreans, there is no accumulated outcome or policies for the issue. Japan, on the other hand, pursued a long-term and systematic plan to repatriate its overseas citizens immediately after its defeat. Therefore, in contrast to Korea, Japan has rich resources and research results on repatriation issues. Moreover, to gain insight from a comparative historical perspective, it is necessary to expand the scope to consider the repatriation cases of Polish people and Russians who served in forced labor under the Nazi regime ~~and the repatriation of Russians~~. These cases will provide important suggestions for the repatriation issue of overseas Koreans and the settlement of colonial past still pending between Korea and Japan.

The history of over 7 million Koreans all over the world in overseas Korean communities is an extension of the history of repatriation issue. Therefore, the study on the issue is also a study on the historicity of overseas Korean communities. Moreover, resolving the repatriation issue is not only part of close examination of past history but also a significant step forward in resolving a present task. The issue of ~~reparation for~~ the victims of Japanese war of aggression (those conscripted to fight in the Japanese army, and to serve as forced labor and as sex slave), unresolved in the ~~1965~~-ROK-Japan Treaty Agreement of 1965, still remains ~~unresolved~~so.

In ~~reckoning settling~~ its colonial past, Japan should first accept full responsibility for its war of aggression and pay reparation for its victims. Repatriation of the Koreans who were forced to relocate under the Japanese colonial rule and who were subsequently left abandoned is essentially different from “homecoming” or “returning to one’s country.” Only by approaching

the repatriation issue as part of resolving or settling the atrocities Japan committed during its colonial rule, we can then arrive at the core of the issue.

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