

Korea and Japan During the Russo-Japanese War-With a Special Focus on the Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea

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Introduction

The Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars were colonial conflicts whose outcomes resulted in Japan emerging as the dominant power on the Korean peninsula. While a modernized Japan was granted control over Taiwan as the bounty for its victory in the Sino-Japanese War, it soon found itself involved in a long-drawn out conflict to establish its actual control over the island. Conversely, one of the biggest objectives which the Japanese attempted to secure through the Russo-Japanese War was to bring Korea under its effective control. Thus, if the seizing of Taiwan can be identified as the overarching Japanese motivation to stage the Sino-Japanese War, then the colonization of Korea can be seen as the main goal which Tokyo sought to achieve through the Russo-Japanese War. The Chinese defeat at the hands of the Japanese in 1894-95 made evident to the western powers the backwards state of the Chinese military, and subsequently resulted in the breakdown of the balance of power in East Asia. Moreover, the Sino-Japanese War also had the unexpected effect of clearing the way for Russian expansion into East Asia. The appearance of Russia on the East Asian stage, which emerged as a great concern not only for Japan but England as well, in turn, resulted in putting Japan and

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Russia on a collision course with one another.

The Komura-Waeber Memorandum reached between Japanese Foreign Minister Jutaro Komura and the Russian Consul General in Seoul Karl Waeber during negotiations held in Seoul to resolve the issue of the assassination of Queen Min in 1895 contained a clause which permitted the stationing of Japanese troops in Korea to protect telegraph communications, as well as the Japanese nationals living in that country.¹ Thereafter, a secret clause was included in the Yamagata-Lobanov Agreement reached in June 1896 in which both countries reaffirmed their mutual right to station a similar number of troops in Korea and to dispatch additional forces whenever necessary.² This kind of secretive agreement was the result of a colonial mindset in which the fate of Korea could be decided by these major powers without any input from Korea itself.

This paper attempts to delve into the detailed process through which Japan's colonization of Korea was achieved, and the impact of these actions on the Korean population, by focusing on the Japanese occupation forces which were stationed in Chosŏn following the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. The first matter which will be looked into is the manner in which the Japanese forces in Korea were organized, as well as their purpose.

Nature of the Japanese Forces Stationed in Korea

On February 6, 1904 Japan suspended negotiations with Russia. This was followed three days later by an attack on the Russian fleet anchored in the Bay of Inchŏn, thus officially marking the onset of the conflict which would come to be known as the Russo-Japanese War (Japan officially declared war on February 10). However, in actuality, four Japanese infantry units under the control of the Commander Kikoshi of the 23rd Division landed in Inchŏn on February 8 and immediately proceeded to make their way to the capital. Thus, the actual reason for the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War was not the result of military

skirmishes between the two country's militaries, but rather Japan's forced seizure of Korea's main cities.

This Japanese dispatch of troops to Korea was based on the tentative structure of forces agreement reached between Russia and Japan on December 18, 1903 during negotiations between the two countries; negotiations which as seen above, eventually broke down. The Japanese dispatch of troops before the war was officially declared was designed to achieve the strategic objective of rapidly reaching Seoul and seizing Korea's main centers.³ The actual mobilization of Japanese forces for the impending conflict commenced on February 5, with these troops headed to the Korean peninsula in order to pacify the capital area and seize the southern provinces.⁴

This action on the part of the Japanese military of invading Inchŏn and then rapidly making their way towards Seoul was in essence a replication of the scenario it employed at the outset of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-95. The Japanese' illegal seizure of Seoul carried out without any consideration of international law was intended to secure Japan's strategic advantage in the upcoming war with Russia. In other words, Japan unilaterally declared on Korea. In addition, the Korean's government's well-published declaration of neutrality in the case of any Russo-Japanese conflict was unilaterally ignored. Moreover, under immense pressure from the Japanese military, the Korean government was forced on February 23, 1904 to sign the Korea-Japan Protocol. The most troubling aspect of this protocol was far and away Article 4:

“In case the welfare of the Imperial House of Korea or the territorial integrity of Korea is endangered by the aggression of a 3rd power, or internal disturbances, the Imperial Government of Japan shall immediately take such necessary measures as circumstances require, and in such case the Imperial Government of Korea shall give full facilities to promote the action of the Imperial Japanese Government.”

The Japanese military thus used the contents of this article as the

pretext for their all-out invasion of the Korean peninsula and subsequently, forcibly mobilized Koreans as soldiers and laborers in the name of the so-called 'Korea-Japan alliance.'

The Japanese military stationed in Korea during the Russo-Japanese War can be separated into operational and occupational forces. While these 'operational forces' were employed to conduct the war with Russia, the 'occupational forces' (hereafter referred to as the occupation forces) were responsible for conducting support activities as well as for securing law and order in Korea. This paper will attempt to analyze the roles of the occupation forces during the Russo-Japanese War and their impact on Korea society.

Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea at the Beginning of the Russo-Japanese War

While the decision on the structure of the general command, regional command centers, and related facilities of the Japanese occupation forces that would be stationed in Korea was reached on March 10, 1904, the necessary preparations were completed on March 20, with the troops arriving in Seoul on April 4.⁵

The Japanese occupation forces in Korea, which were mobilized to maintain public security in Korea and to facilitate the operational troops activities by providing the necessary support, consisted of the general command, the quartermaster general and supply units, the forces responsible for transportation and logistics, a platoon of engineers charged with building temporary railroads, another charged with building the necessary communication lines, provost marshals, and military hospital staff. While the areas in which these troops operated was at the outset of the war limited to Yangdŏk and Tŏkwŏn along the Taedong River in Pyongyang, by May of 1904 this area was expanded to include the entire nation. These forces were in charge of maintaining the supply routes, defending occupied territories, and assuring public security.

The commander of the Japanese occupational forces, General Haraguchi Kanenari was conveyed the following orders from military headquarters in Japan: any diplomatic issues which might arise would have to be settled through the Japanese ambassador to Korea; in the case of matters related to logistics and communications, hygiene, and the construction of military railroads, deference should be given to the quartermaster general; meanwhile, with regards to the actual deployment of forces, there was a need to assure that a significant military presence was maintained at all times in the capital area. In addition, a look at the outline of the logistics-related tasks which these forces were responsible for reveals that the troops were ordered to, whenever possible, secure the supplies needed by each unit using local resources. Thus, the supplies needed by each unit, such as rations, human resources, and modes of transportation, were taken from local areas. This kind of activity not only had an effect on Koreans' economic activities, but also resulted in placing an increased burden on their shoulders.⁶

The placing of the utmost priority on the transportation of military units and supplies also put an additional burden on local populations. What's more, the Japanese military's monopoly of transportation networks had the effect of creating such a serious shortage of rice in the Inchön and Seoul areas that even the Japanese residents in these areas were made to suffer.⁷

In addition, the devastation wrought to the general population increased significantly in May when the frontline expanded to reach the northern reaches of the Korean peninsula. Meanwhile, in June, the occupation forces began to attempt to increase the number of livestock and fisheries production in the north, while also attempting to repair the main roads and forcing local government officials to collect information on Japan's enemies and report back to military headquarters.

Another task which was bestowed to the occupation forces was that of constructing military railroads. In reality, the implementation of Japanese military operations and the construction of military railroads were two completely different matters. What's more, because of the lack of any

<Table 1> The organizational structure of Japanese occupation forces in Korea (June, July, 1904)⁸

General Command	Quartermaster General		Supply units: 15 Rearguard: 1 st Battalion of the 47 th Division Rearguard: 14 th Division Rearguard: 24 th Division (1 st Company, and 1 st Platoon) Rearguard: 2 nd Company of the 1 st Battalion (1 st Platoon) Rearguard: 3 rd Company of the 48 th Division 2 nd Support Troops of the 12 th Division
	Railroad Department		1 st Company of the Railroad Battalion
	Military Police		
	Communication Department		
	Hospital Staff		
	Defense Unit		Infantry Corps: 3 rd Company of the 37 th Division
	Rearguard Units: The 2nd Company of the 1 st Battalion attached to the 40 th Division		
	Rearguard Units: 1 st Platoon of the 8 th Company of the 24 th Division (dispatched to Mokpo)		
	4 th Company of the 48 th Division		
	1 st Company of the 1 st Battalion of the 24 th Division- responsible for overseeing the defense of the Seoul-Pusan Railway		
	1 st Battalion of the 45 th Division		
	- Dispatched to Taegu		
	- Dispatched to Pusan		

railroad infrastructure in the North the role of such railroads in transporting military units was not even included in the Japanese’ operational planning. Nevertheless, the Japanese general command urgently set about constructing a railroad track in the Seoul-Yongsan-Ŭiju corridor. In this regards, while the Seoul-Ŭiju and Seoul-Wŏnsan railroads had begun to be built in 1902 by the *Sŏbuk ch’ŏldoguk* (Railway Bureau), Japan unilaterally informed Korea following the outbreak of the war that from this point onwards, the Japanese military was assuming responsibility for the construction of this railroad. The following is a passage from the notice which the Japanese military highhandedly forwarded to the Korean government with regards to this matter:

“It is a matter of great urgency that a military railway linking Seoul to Ŭiju be constructed so as to facilitate the transportation of

military units and supplies needed to speed up military operations.... Thus, the assumption of the construction of this railway by the Imperial Government of Japan is deemed to be a military necessity. The Government of Chosŏn should not differ on this matter and readily provide the facilities needed to construct this railway.”⁹

Thus, on the grounds that this was a military necessity, Japan assumed responsibility for the construction of Korean railways and unilaterally removed the sovereign government's rights to construct its own railroads. The Seoul-Ŭiju Railway was completed in 1905 under the auspices of the Japanese platoon of engineers charged with building temporary railroads. However, the torrid pace at which the railway was constructed resulted in forcing the Japanese to begin repairs to the line almost immediately after it was opened. Moreover, this railway appears to have been designed more for exploitation purposes than for military ends. Here, the fact that the majority of the human and material resources mobilized to construct this railway were secured locally should not be overlooked as well.

Furthermore, under the cover of attempting to prevent any military secrets from making their way into enemy hands, the Japanese grabbed control of Korea's Telegram Department and proceeded to censor all communications, with those deemed to be unflattering confiscated on the spot. The Japanese also reattached telegraph wires to their own facilities within their military bases in Korea in order to facilitate their ability to control and censor information and communications.¹⁰ This meant that all cables coming in and out of Korea were controlled by Japan, a situation which not only the Korean government, but also the foreign diplomats in Seoul took exception to. However, from the Japanese standpoint, this ability to control the flow of information represented a major success in terms of its capacity to wage war.

In January 1905, the Yalu Garrison was established and tasked with the goal of protecting Korea's Northwest borders and facilitating the Japanese operational forces ability to conduct their activities in Manchuria.

However, as the frontline moved into Manchuria this garrison fell the control of the Japanese occupational forces in Manchuria.

The Policy to Expand the Occupation Forces- The military's seizure of control in Korea

Even before the actual outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese military, in particular the General Headquarters in Japan, advocated the taking of a hard-line towards Korea. The General Headquarters first began to draw up its plans for the dispatch of troops to Korea as part of a military operation in December 1903. While this plan was in large part based on Japan's previous dispatch of troops abroad during the Sino-Japanese War, the actual occupation manual that would be implemented in order to secure Japan's military rule in Korea was not included in this plan. In particular, differences of opinions emerged between the military and the government over the issue of how military and political matters would be separated following the dispatch of troops.

The above-mentioned plan to dispatch troops established in December 1903 represents a perfect example of this phenomenon, as a struggle soon emerged between the Minister of Defense and the General Headquarters over who would have operational control over the military in Korea. This struggle was in essence over the issue of from whom the troops dispatched to Korea would receive their orders; in other words, this issue was one of vital importance as it was directly linked to whom would assume control over the waging of the war: the military or the government. In the end, the government's position on how the war should be waged, which was that of striking a balance between political and military strategies, carried the day.¹¹ While this particular incident was resolved amicably, the seed for future conflict between these two branches remained solidly in place.

The Japanese government's seizing of the upper hand in this particular incident is clearly evidenced by the inclusion of the clause in the orders

which the occupation forces received to the effect that ‘any diplomatic issues which might arise would have to be settled through the Japanese ambassador to Korea.’

As such, the government was somehow able to secure control over an increasingly independent-minded military which perceived its allegiance as being to the Emperor rather than the government, prior to the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. The Japanese government’s ability to juggle the political and military forces in Korea before the actual dispatch of the occupation forces had in large part been based on constant negotiations between the head of the Japanese Legation in Korea and the Military Attaché stationed in Seoul. However, in the aftermath of the dispatch of the occupation forces, many fissures began to appear in this structure.

In February 1904, the Japanese Military Attaché to Korea Ijichi Kosuke submitted a petition to General Headquarters in Japan in which he argued that Japan should either annex Korea outright or establish it as a Japanese protectorate in order to seize control over Korea’s military, diplomatic, and financial functions. Moreover, he also argued that the following clause should be included in the ordinance to establish the Government-General of Chosŏn :

“A military general or lieutenant should be appointed to the position of Governor-General, and this Governor-General should take his orders directly from the Emperor, while assuming control over the occupational forces and Japanese Legation in Korea. Moreover, he should also be responsible for the running of day to day affairs in Korea.¹²”

Regardless of whether or not this suggestion was implemented, the mere fact that the assertion that Korea be ruled by a military-based structure was made, provides us with great insight into the thinking that prevailed during this period.

Following the establishment of the occupation forces in Korea, conflicts emerged between the Japanese Legation led by Gonsuke Hayashi and the Commander of the Occupation Forces Haraguchi

Kanenari.

In addition, the Japanese Military Attaché to Korea Ijichi Kosuke claimed that:

“The military officials in Japan often take actions that go beyond the guidelines proscribed by the legation and often interfere directly in Korean politics through the Commander of the Occupation Forces or the Korean Army... In Seoul these days, a tripartite power structure has emerged between the legation, the military attaché stationed in the legation and the Commander of the Occupation Forces in which all three bodies vie for influence. Thus, a unified structure will be hard to achieve in Korea.”¹³

However Ijichi was transferred to Manchuria on March 19 as the Russo-Japanese War intensified and was replaced as Military Attaché by Saito Rikisaburo, a former member of the staff of the occupational forces. Thus, as the war intensified the legation and the occupational forces changed gears and opted for cooperation-based relations.

This issue is very significant in that it is closely related not only to the struggle between the government and military to assume control of the war effort, but also to unify these military and government structures under their command.

Regardless of this fact, these occupation forces consistently attempted to strengthen their position, as exemplified by the following passage taken from a report submitted in August, “It will be impossible to implement our policy of bringing Korea under our thumb for as long as the power of the Commander of the Occupation Forces is not brought into line with that of the legation’s.”

The Japanese military headquarters in Tokyo, to whom this report was submitted, agreed with the occupation forces’ request, and immediately began to apply pressure on the Japanese government to strengthen the standing of the occupation forces in Korea on the grounds that such a move was necessary in order to efficiently carry out military operations. As a result, on August 13 the <Law Governing Occupation Forces in

Korea> was amended to increase the power vested in the general command of the occupation forces.

In Clause 3 of the amended version of the <*Law Governing Occupation Forces in Korea*>, the mission of the Commander of the Occupation Forces in Korea was altered to read,

“The Commander shall receive his orders directly from the Emperor and shall assume responsibility for the overall command of the forces stationed in Korea; moreover, the Commander shall be responsible for the protection of the Legation, of Japanese counsels and nationals residing in Korea, as well as for the maintenance of public security in those areas where occupation forces were stationed.”

Soon thereafter, Lieutenant-General Hasegawa Yoshimichi was promoted to the position of general and put in charge of the command of the newly-strengthened occupation forces.

On August 21, Prime Minister Katsura Taro, the Foreign Minister Komura and Defense Minister Terauchi Masatake held a meeting during which time they approved the amended version of the above-mentioned law. The main contents of this amended version can be identified as the following:

“... In order to prevent an invasion from the Chinese Mainland... the scale of the occupation forces will be expanded to two divisions and a select number of special forces (the size of each division should be the same as those stationed on the Chinese Mainland)

Deployment of troops

Given the situation in neighboring countries and the current state of the efforts to suppress Korea, one division will be deployed to Pyŏngan Province, and the other shall be broken up into smaller units and deployed in every province. The General Command shall be established in Seoul, while the headquarters of each

division will be set up in Seoul and Pyöngyang... Therefore the Commander of the Occupation Forces should serve as both the commander of Japanese forces and the highest-ranking Japanese official in Korea.”

The main crux of this amended version of the <Law Governing Occupation Forces in Korea> was that Japanese forces would now assume responsibility for the defense of Korea. As such, Japan intended to use military force to rule over Korea, with the Commander of the Occupation Forces installed as the highest ranking Japanese official in Korea. However, the expansion of the role of the military in Korea could not be carried out until the end of the war due to problems within the military itself. Nevertheless, the scale of the occupation forces was increased to twelve rearguard battalions following the appointment of General Hasegawa as commander of the forces in Korea.

While the Commander of the Occupation Forces was to ostensibly receive his orders directly from the Emperor, in reality, the directions related to military governance affairs were to be received from the Defense Minister, while actual military orders would come down from the Commander of the Imperial General Headquarters. Thus, the balance between the military and government in Korea was now altered so that the military exercised the dominant position.

The Occupation of Korea and the Public Security Policy- Implementation of a military governance structure and the application of martial law

As the Russo-Japanese war intensified in July 1904, the Commander of the Occupation Forces decided to establish a military governance structure in Hamgöyng Province. Moreover, he announced the establishment of a Military Police System in Seoul and Kyönggi Province, thus taking Chosön’s right to police its own population. What’s more,

following the announcement of martial law and of the establishment of a military governance system under the auspices of the occupation forces, the role of these military policemen was altered so that they could be dispatched to all four corners of the country to protect communication lines and railways. Moreover, they also began to take on the tasks of not only regular policemen, but also of those who would later come to be known as the High Police. In October 1905 the military police under the control of the occupation forces were divided into 12 squads and subsequently dispatched to 56 police stations. From that point on, these military police forces assumed responsibility for public security in Korea along with local police forces and investigative police units (*komun kyöngch'al*).

The occupation forces announced the establishment of a military governance system and of the imposition of martial law to the general population, justifying these actions on the grounds that such drastic measures were needed to protect their military facilities and preserve public order in the occupied areas. These actions were an obvious infringement on the sovereignty of Korea taken without any kind of consent on the part of the Korean government. This can also be perceived as the onset of the Japanese government and occupation forces' process of actually colonizing Korea. Given these facts, there is a need to raise the illegality, under the international law that prevailed at that time, of these actions undertaken by the occupation forces to establish a military governance system and declare martial law.

A closer look at this colonization policy allows us to see just how much the Korean people were made to suffer during this process, and why Korean resistance to Japan increased in strength and scope.

In July 1904 the Commander of the Occupation Forces announced the eight articles related to the martial law declared in the areas where vital communications and transportation networks were situated, namely, the Seoul-Wönsan, Seoul-Pusan, Seoul-Inchön and Seoul-Pyöngyang corridors.¹⁴ The proclamation of this martial law began with the announcement that anybody who damaged military communication or

railroad lines would be summarily executed, thus placing the responsibility for the protection of these facilities squarely on the shoulders of local populations. The Commander of the Occupation Forces instructed the generals in charge of each region and, as well as those responsible for logistics, that they were accountable for the implementation of this martial law in their local areas, while unilaterally informing the Korean government that local governors should be made to follow these laws.

However, as acts of sabotage and theft of military equipment soon started to emerge, the Commander of the Occupation Forces passed an additional ordinance which stated that anybody who tampered with communications or railroads, *or* stole military equipment would be deemed to have violated martial law.¹⁵ Moreover, they also passed another ordinance which claimed that all those who violated martial law would be prosecuted and punished accordingly.¹⁶

On January 6, 1905, The Commander of the Occupation Forces unilaterally announced to the Korean government that the Japanese army was now officially assuming control of police operation in Seoul and surrounding areas. Furthermore, they also announced additional provisions related to the martial law to the general population.¹⁷

The amendments made to the martial law resulted in separating the punishment meted out for violating its provisions into execution, imprisonment, exile, the paying of fines, and corporal punishment. Moreover, anyone who was found to be indirectly involved through such means as obstruction of police duties, refusal to reveal to the authorities the identity of those who committed criminal acts, the abetting of such criminals, or the destruction of evidence, would also receive punishment for their (in) actions. In July 1905, the occupation forces expanded their grip to include the entire Korean peninsula, while adding 7 articles and 22 provisions, as well as an annex, to the martial law. These new articles were applied in order to prevent 'any individual from interfering with the military actions of the Imperial Government of Japan in Korea'.¹⁸ Meanwhile the Japanese also strengthened their penalties for violating

this martial law.

In addition, in keeping with the Japanese' establishment of fortifications in the Bay of Yonghung and Chinhae, the announcement was made that martial law would be applied differently in these areas.¹⁹ Once again, this decision came in the form of a unilateral announcement by the Japanese which was then followed by the forced seizure of land owned by Koreans in the areas in which these fortifications would be built, an ignominious deed which resulted in not only taking away people's livelihoods but in essence their communities as well.

This violent martial law continued to be implemented even after October 1905 when the Russo-Japanese War came to an official close. "The Japanese occupation forces in Korea specially organized to ostensibly conduct the war have yet to go back to Japan... Even after peace was restored, Japan continued to apply its martial law under a military governance system."

In other words, this illegally declared martial law unilaterally and violently implemented by Japan which infringed on the general population's basic human rights remained in place even after the war. Furthermore, the occupation forces refused to repeal this martial law on the grounds that, "such an action would result in lowering the level of protection afforded to Japanese military facilities in Korea." Later on, the Japanese Residency-General in Korea forced the Korean government to approve this declaration of martial law, with a 'new' martial law officially proclaimed on August 7, 1906. In reality, the only difference between this new law and the older one was that execution was dropped as a means of punishing violators (韓駐參 Number 34).

Thus, this new martial law was no different from the previous one with the exception of the fact that execution was no longer to be used as a form of punishment. Article 1 of this new law, which stated that:

"The exact punishment of anybody who commits an offense punishable under law shall be decided in accordance with the nature and severity of the crime in question and in keeping with

the laws of the Imperial Government of Japan and Korea.”

makes clear Japan's intention to apply Japanese law to Korea. Japan's application of its laws to the sovereign nation of Korea is of course also highly questionable from the standpoint of international law. Furthermore, how could Koreans be punished under Japanese law? On the same day as this new martial law was proclaimed, the following regulations were also announced: <Regulations Governing the Identification of Punishable Offenses> (韓駐參 Number 35) <Regulations Governing the Approaching of Military Fortifications>, and <Regulations Governing the Enforcement of Martial Law>(韓駐參 Number 37), <Regulations Governing Access to Military Fortifications>.

The implementation of the above-mentioned martial law was suspended in November 1906 and completely abolished in 1910 when Korea was formally annexed by Japan. Based on official Japanese military documents, the following number of people were punished for violating the martial law from July 1904 to October 1906.

<Table 2> Number of people who received the various forms of punishment for violating the martial law²⁰

Execution	35
Imprisonment and detention	46
Exile	2
Corporal punishment	100
Fine	74
Total	257

The continued application of martial law by the Japanese occupation forces although the Russo-Japanese War had officially come to an end clearly proves the role the military played in securing public order during the process of colonizing Korea.

As seen above, the Japanese occupation forces which were stationed in Korea during the Russo-Japanese War played the leading role in Japan's military conquer of Korea, a process which was whitewashed in the name

of assuring rearguard support for the Japanese troops engaged in war with Russia. This means that Japan forcibly occupied Korea as part of an illegal action that was not backed by any treaty or agreement. The illegal nature of this action was visibly discernible during not only the process of expanding the scale of the occupation forces, but also during the implementation of a military governance system and all through the process of applying the martial law.

Although there exists a general perception of the relationship between the Japanese military and colonized Korea, no detailed analysis of this relationship has to date been carried out. As such, there is a need to conduct such studies in the future. Moreover, along with analyses of how Japan ruled Korea, future studies should also focus on adequately presenting the true features of the Japanese military in Korea, a military which was not only the physical organization that carried out the subjugation of Korea at the international and domestic levels, but also emerged as the main ruling power in Korea proper.

Even after the Russo-Japanese War had come to a close, the Japanese occupation forces remained in Korea in one form or another, with either two divisions, or one division plus temporary dispatched troops, stationed on the peninsula. The changes in the composition of the occupation forces can be found below:

<Table 3> Changes in the composition of the occupation forces after the Russo-Japanese War²¹

1 st Modification	13th Division, 15 th Division(October 16, 1905)
	Withdrawal of 15 th Division (February 6, 1907)
2 nd Modification	Changed to 6 th Division(September 1, 1908)
3 rd Modification	Changed to 2 nd Division (February 1, 1910)
4 th Modification	Changed to 8 th Division (March 1, 1912)
5 th Modification	Changed to 9 th Division (February 14, 1914)
	Recall of 9 th Division, and beginning of the establishment of the 19 th Division (April 1916)

The official title of the occupation forces in Korea was altered to Occupation Forces in Chosŏn following the formal Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, with this force in existence until the permanent establishment of the 19th and 20th divisions in 1916.

As can be seen in the above table, the 13th and 15th Divisions took over the role of the occupation forces in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War in October 1905. However, from March 1906 onwards the occupation forces consisted of one division and temporarily dispatched troops. Subsequently, these occupation forces played a leading role in carrying out the colonization of Korea and suppressing the Righteous Armies' opposition to Japanese rule.

The occupation forces changed their name to Occupation Forces in Chosŏn in 1910 following the formal Japanese annexation of Korea. From there until the two permanent division system was established the basic structure of these occupation forces remained essentially the same. Thereafter, the two permanent division system with the 19th and 20th divisions at its core remained in place until February 1945. After that, the 101st Regiment and the 30th and 49th divisions were added until 1944. Then in February 1945, based on the <Regulations Governing the Operation of The Combined Forces> promulgated in January of that year, the 17th Unit and the Imperial General Headquarters in Chosŏn were established. Following the official surrender of Japan in August 1945, these forces were restored in February 1946 only to soon thereafter be disbanded forever.

Conclusion- The Control of the Imperial Army in Chosŏn and Changes in its Organizational Structure

In the Meiji Constitution, the prerogative of supreme command rested with the Emperor. Moreover, the Defense Minister was bestowed with the right to control military affairs, while the Supreme Commander was responsible for the proclamation of military orders. The existence of such

a separation of powers created several political struggles in modern Japan, as the military increasingly attempted to establish itself as an independent organism with its own high command. Be that as it may, the fact that the military commanders were appointed directly by the Emperor meant that they in effect had operational control over the forces under their command.

However, in the aftermath of the establishment of the Residency-General in Korea, which was the body that actually carried out the task of making Korea a colony of Japan, the issue of the control of the Imperial Army in Korea began to exhibit different characteristics. As we can see from Article 3 of Imperial Ordinance Number 205 proclaimed on July 31, 1906 the Residency-General exercised control over the Japanese Army in Korea, "The Commander of the Imperial Army in Korea can employ these forces to maintain public order in Korea in accordance with the orders of the Japanese Residency-General in Korea." Moreover, in Article 4 of the <*Regulations Governing the Residency-general in Korea*> promulgated on November 20, 1905, "The Residency-General may order the Commander of the Defense Forces in Korea to deploy his forces whenever he may feel that such an action is needed to restore public order," it is once again stated the Residency-General possesses the right to exercise control over the Japanese military forces stationed in Korea.

Meanwhile in Article 1 of Imperial Decree No. 323 announced in October 1907 <*Regulations Governing the Military Police Stationed in Korea*> the tasks of the military police were identified as being two-fold: the regular administrative affairs associated with the preservation of public order as well as military-related matters, with these tasks undertaken in accordance with orders received from the Residency-General. Such regulations which granted operational control over the military were unique to Chosŏn.²²

The onset of the era of the Government-General of Chosŏn which began in the aftermath of the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910 saw the Governor-General, who was selected from the ranks of the military, secure the right to, "Receive orders directly from the Emperor and assume

operational control over naval and ground forces as well as all other matters related to the defense of Chosŏn.”²³ As such, the Governor-General assumed operational control over the military from the Residency-General. These regulations, which called for only military general to be appointed to the position of Governor-General of Chosŏn, proves that Japan’s rule over Korea was based on a military governance system. Based on Article 21 of the <Regulations Governing the Government-General of Chosŏn>, the high-ranking staff of the Government-General of Chosŏn was to consist of military officials. Moreover, in accordance with Imperial Ordinance Number 381 Japanese military officials were entitled to take part in any aspect of the occupation of Chosŏn.²⁴

Moreover in Imperial Ordinance Number 343 <Regulations Governing Military Police in Chosŏn> promulgated on September 9 of that same year it was stipulated that the military police force would be responsible for all regular and military police activities related to the maintenance of public order in colonial Korea, while receiving their orders from the Government-General of Chosŏn. Thus, we can see just how actively the Japanese military participated in the governance of Chosŏn. The exact extent to which the military was involved in the governing of Chosŏn is visible from the following:

“In addition, the commander of the military police in Chosŏn also assumed the position of Chief of Police of Chosŏn, while the regional commanders assumed similar positions in local precincts. Small detachments of military police were also dispatched to every single village in Korea.... Thus, they actively participated in governing Chosŏn”²⁵

This look at the process through which Chosŏn was colonized, and the manner in which the Japanese ruling structure was established, reveals that the highest priority of the Imperial Army in Korea was to assure public security. Moreover, there is a need to also draw attention to the fact that the imperial army in colonial Korea also played the role of a reserve

force designed to deal with any possible Russian encroachment onto the Asian continent.

According to the <*Plans for the Defense of the Empire*> announced in 1907, a minimum of 50 ground divisions would be required in wartime, while 25 divisions were required in peace time. This plan called for the gradual increase of the 17 divisions which existed at that time to 25. Of the 8 divisions that would be required to reach this number, four were to be established at once, while the remainder would be formed later on. In this regards, the 17th and 18th divisions were formed in 1907.

Following the formal annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, the original plan was altered somewhat so that two divisions would be stationed full time in Chosŏn (19th, 20th divisions). The Imperial Army informed the home government that such a move would be necessary in order to prepare for any future war with Russia or China; however, the real objective behind the creation of these two divisions and their subsequent permanent stationing in Korea was to subdue all Korean resistance and stabilize the public order in its new colony. This is clearly evident in the fact that the one division of the Imperial Army which was stationed in Korea, prior to the decision to dispatch another, was deployed in 110 locations across the country.²⁶

Meanwhile, the Japanese military's demands that two divisions be stationed in Chosŏn proved to be hard to implement as a result of the financial difficulties which Japan experienced in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War.²⁷ Furthermore, the Japanese Navy was also petitioning the government to have its budget increased as well. The debate over this demand that two divisions be stationed permanently in Chosŏn eventually led to the then-Minister of War Uehara Yusaku's tendering of his resignation in December 1912 and in the collapse of the 2nd Saionji Cabinet. This issue of increasing the size of the deployment to Korea continuously emerged as a source of contention and political struggles before being finally resolved on December 24, 1915 during the 36th Session of the Okuma Cabinet.

Moreover, once the details regarding the actual composition of this deployment were carried out, the Japanese Occupation Forces in Chosŏn were officially renamed as the Imperial Army in Chosŏn May 29, 1918. This Imperial Army in Chosŏn was immediately put on a semi-war footing (高定員編制, *kochŏngwŏn pyŏnje*).²⁸ As such, we can see that the Imperial Army in Chosŏn was ready to be deployed to deal with any crisis which might arise.

Thus, unlike the primary mission of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria, which was to protect the South Manchurian Railway and the Kwantung Leased Territory, the Imperial Army in Chosŏn was an elite military corps which was at the forefront of Japan's expansion into Asia

Notes :

- 1 “朝鮮問題に關する日露兩大表者間覺書 (The Memorandum of Understanding Reached Between the Russian and Japanese Representatives on the Issue of Chosŏn)” (外務省編 (Japanese Foreign Ministry), 『日本外交年表並主要文書 (Chronology of Japanese Diplomacy)』 Vol. 1, pp. 174-175
- 2 *ibid*, “朝鮮問題に關する日露間協定書 (The Memorandum of Understanding Reached Between the Russian and Japanese Representatives on the Issue of Chosŏn)” pp. 175-176
- 3 大江志乃夫 (Ooe Shinobu) 『日露戰爭と日本軍隊 (Japanese Military during the Russo-Japanese War)』 (立風書店, 1987 年), pp. 360-362
- 4 On December 30, 1903 the Japanese Cabinet reached a decision regarding the new course towards Korea, which included the basic outline for this proposed invasion (「對露交渉決裂の際日本の採るべき對清韓方針」, Japanese Cabinet's decision of December 30, 1903; 金正明編 『日韓外交史料集成 (Compilation of Diplomatic Materials Pertaining to Japan-Korea Relations)』, Vol. 5, pp. 3-8
- 5 『朝鮮軍概要史 (History of the Japanese Military in Chosŏn)』, p. 5
- 6 “韓國駐劄軍陣中紀要 (Records of the Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea)”, (防衛廳防衛研究所 所藏資料 (Materials stored in the Japanese Center for National Defense Archives))

- 7 As in the aftermath of the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the only vessels which could be found at sea in the area were either battleships or military transport ships, the regular distribution of consumption goods was paralyzed. Especially affected was the distribution of rice, which resulted in the outbreak of a severe food shortage in Korea. As a result, many Japanese nationals who resided in Korea came out strongly against the military's actions. These events are succinctly recorded in the memoirs of Nakai, the then president of the Hansŏng Sinbo and representative of the association of Japanese nationals residing in Korea, (中井錦城 (Nakai), 『朝鮮回顧錄 (*Memories of Chosŏn*)』, 糖業研究會出版部, 1915, pp. 94-98)
- 8 “韓國駐劄軍陣中紀要 (“Records of the Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea)”
- 9 March 4, 1904 「電報(Electric Magazine)」(毎日コミュニケーションズ編 (Maeil Communications), 『明治ニュース事典 (*Meiji News Dictionary*)』 Vol. p. 269; 高橋泰降 (Takahashi Yutaka), 『日本植民地鐵道史論 (*The History of Railroads in Japanese Colonies*)』(日本經濟評論社, 1995) pp. 65-66
- 10 “韓國駐劄軍陣中紀要 (Records of the Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea)”
- 11 大江(Ooe), *ibid*, pp. 203-213; 由井正臣 (Yui Masaomi), “日本帝國主義成立期の軍部 (The role of the Japanese military in the emergence of imperialism in Japan)”(『大系日本歴史 (*A Summary of the History of Japan*)』, Vol. 5, Tokyo University Press, 1976) pp. 130-131
- 12 谷壽夫(Tani Hisao) 『機密日露戦史(*Secret Military Documents*)』(原書房 (Harashobo) 1966) p. 72
- 13 Yui Masaomi (由井), *ibid*, p. 131
- 14 訓令(Military Ordinance) 「July 2, 1904 韓駐參 Number 259」
- 15 訓令(Military Ordinance) 「July 2, 1904 韓駐參 Number 269」
- 16 訓令(Military Ordinance) 「January 4, 1905 韓駐參 Number 9」
- 17 Amendments to the martial law 「January 6, 1905 韓駐參 Number 15」
- 18 Martial law declared by the Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea 「July 3, 1905, 韓駐參 Number 313」
- 19 July 13 Military Ordinance Number 1」 and 「August 1, Military Ordinance Number 39」
- 20 『韓國駐劄軍歴史(History of Japanese Occupation Forces in Korea)』
- 21 Im Chong-guk, 前掲書, Vol. 1, p. 123

- 22 Yui Masaomi identified this situation as being the result of internal political struggles within the Residency-General itself which pitted the civil officials against military ones. This kind of regulations is unlike any other implemented in the history of the Japanese military. The formulation of this kind of regulations is clear evidence of Japan's high interest in Chosŏn and of the crisis which affected their ruling structure in Korea(由井正臣 (Yui Masaomi), “日本帝国主義成立期の軍部(The role of the Japanese military in the emergence of imperialism in Japan)” ; 中村正則 (Nakamura Masanori), 『大系 日本歴史 (A Summary of the History of Japan)』, Vol. 5, Tokyo University Press, 1976) pp. 138-142
- 23 September 30, 1910, “朝鮮總督府官制 (Regulations Governing the Government-General of Chosŏn)”, Imperial Ordinance Number 354
- 24 Article 21 of the <Regulations Governing the Government-General of Chosŏn>,
 “總督府ニ總督附武官二人及専属副官一人ヲ置ク
 總督府武官ハ陸 海軍少将又ハ佐官ヲ以テ之ニ補ス
 總督府武官ハ参謀トス” ; Imperial Ordinance Number 381,
 “陸海軍現役将校又ハ同相当 官ニシテ朝鮮總督 府臨時土地 調査局,
 通信官署, 医院, 営林廠, 平壤鉱業所又ハ道慈恵医
 院ノ職員ニ任セラレタル者ハ陸海軍ニ於テ 之ヲ定員外ト為スコトヲ得
 ...”
- 25 『朝鮮軍概要史 (History of the Japanese Military in Chosŏn)』,
- 26 Yoshi Kenichi, “植民地治安維持体制と軍部－朝鮮軍の場合－(The Japanese military's role in preserving public order in the colonies- Military forces in Korea)” (『季刊現代史 (Contemporary History Quarterly)』 Issue No. 7, June 1976, p. 167
- 27 A look at Japan's financial status before and after the Russo-Japanese War reveals that while Tokyo issued bonds in the amount of 550,000,000 yen prior to the war, this amount was increased to 2.2 billion yen after the completion of the war. Thus, the Japanese government was hard-pressed to cover even the interest on this amount, and found itself unable to balance its budget because of the massive expenditures which were accrued in the aftermath of the war. 藤原彰(Fujiwara Akira) 『日本軍事史 (History of the Japanese Military)』 Vol. 1, (日本評論社, 1987) p. 151.
- 28 The organization of the Japanese military before 1939 was based on four-divisions units, with each division consisting of 10,000 soldiers in peace time

and 25,000 in times of war. The scale of these divisions was similar to that employed in the West. While the basic organization employed under the *kochŏngwŏn pyŏnje* system was based on the peace structure, the number of troops attached to each division, as well as the equipment they possessed, was based on the wartime structure. Thus, these divisions were referred to as *kochŏngwŏn pyŏnje sadan*(高定員編制師団). 秦郁彦(Hata Kunihiro), 『日本陸海軍総合事典 (Comprehensive Dictionary of the Japanese Army, Navy and Air Force)』 Tokyo University Press 1991, p. 704