THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT AND REVOLUTION IN THE MODERNISATION OF KOREA: A HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE STUDY

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A NOTE ON ROMANISATION

In romanising Korean, we use the McCune-Reischauer system for the names of historical figures, places and social institutions in this thesis. In romanising the names of Koreans in the McCune-Reischauer system, we use the Korean order, family name first in all footnotes, and put a hyphen between the two personal names, the second of which is not capitalised. For works written in Korean, the author's name appears in McCune-Reischauer romanisation. For Korean authors in English, the author's name is written as it appears in the original publication. In ordering the elements of a person's name, we adopt the Western sequence - family name first in all alphabetised lists, but last elsewhere. This is the sequence used by some, but by no means all, Koreans who write in English. Also commonly recurring Korean words are not italicised.

Introduction

CHAPTER I

FOCUS, AIMS, AND METHOD

1. Starting Point and Purposes of the Study

Why have modern types of capitalism developed only in Western societies? This was the question famously asked by M. Weber in his book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Sprit of Capitalism.*[1] Weber insisted that modern types of capitalism developed in Europe because of the ascetic Protestant ethic which acted as a singularly powerful motivating force.

As a sociology student, I have often wondered why non-Western societies did not adopt modern types of capitalism at the same time as Europe, although this is a classical question. Non-Western countries like Korea, Japan, and China had religious ethics as well and tried to commence adjusting to the new world system in their own way in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many other scholars have studied this subject matter in a similar way; that is, focusing on the differences in modernisation between Western societies and non-Western societies. This thesis, however, is not a study of the differences in modernisation which preceding scholars have examined. It is an attempt to explore differentiated development *among* non-Western societies; more exactly to

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[1] M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976). First published as a two part article in 1904-5.

locate Korea's development[2] in relation to that of Japan and China.

There is no doubt that non-Western countries were sure to show symptoms of change as they adjusted to the stream of the new world order in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the more advanced Western countries were engaged in struggling for colonies in order to consolidate markets for the goods they made and to secure natural resources they needed for their industries under the logic of the world capitalist economy.[3] During that period, there was no country that was not influenced by the so-called great power colonialism over the world. The struggle to secure colonies was accompanied everywhere by social change. At the height of the struggle for colonies, social change took place not just in certain areas but in all parts of world. Accordingly, both Western and non-Western societies had to reform old social structures under the influence of structural change at the level of the unit of world.[4]

Here it is assumed that there were differences in the way countries coped with the demand for the reform of old social structure in the nineteenth century. A pioneering analysis on

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2 The meaning of development is socio-political as well as economic.

3 The world-system is I. Wallerstein's concept. He insisted that social change should be explained in terms of the capitalist world-system. I. Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

4 According to I. Wallerstein, the world capitalist economy is from the beginning an affair of the world and not of nation-state. Ibid., p. 19.

these lines was made by B. Moore.[5] Moore tried to explain the varied revolutions he identified through political roles played by the landed upper classes and the peasantry in the transformation from agrarian societies to modern industrial ones. According to him, modern political systems were fundamentally shaped by aristocrats and peasants in pre-industrial societies. Somewhat more specifically, Moore's book was an attempt to discover the range of historical conditions under which either or both of these groups had become important forces behind the emergence of Western democracy, and dictatorships of the right and the left, that is, fascist and communist regimes.[6]

Modern societies have their own historical and social conditions, and have experienced their own ways of coping with changes in the world-system. In the process of world change every country underwent a different path of change. Korea and its neighbours also went down their own paths and each developed in a distinctive direction. Japan adjusted itself in a uniquely effective way to the stream of world change and grew up to be a central state of world capitalism. China became a communist state and has only recently begun its open door policy for partial capitalism. Korea went through Japanese colonial rule, and now is suffering the pain of the tragic division into North and South Korea.

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5 B. Moore, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

6 Ibid. Moore distinguished the three societal political outcomes: England, France, the U.S.A. belong to Western democratic route, German and Japan to fascist route, and China and Russia to communist route.

The development of capitalism in Japan is being discussed constantly, because of the way Japan entered into the capitalistic world system without any major setbacks following the Meiji Restoration. By contrast, the communist system in China has been maintained in spite of the breakdown of the Cold War system. Korea may perhaps be seen as lying historically halfway between its two neighbours, Japan and China.

It has been shown, for Japan and China, that there were differences in the way the two societies coped with the demand for reform of the old social structure in the nineteenth century. According to Moore, Japan and China followed fascist and communist routes to the modern world respectively.[7] Even though Moore did not touch on Korea, it is not difficult to have a general idea that Korea has shown a different development aspect in the process of modernisation. What we can say exactly is that Korea failed in democratic political reform at that time. Therefore, all three countries, Korea Japan and China, had common characteristics in the fact that they failed in democratic political reforms in the process of modernisation in the nineteenth century. But as mentioned, Japan and China have been developing differently from each other. In the same way, we cannot but ask how to characterise the route that Korea has gone through. Put slightly differently, this question concerns the origin of the modern political identity of Korea.

This study makes a contribution to the analysis of why Korea has developed differently from Japan and China. In

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[7] Ibid., pp. 162-313.

attempting to answer this question, we will focus on the differences in way the different societies responded to the Western powers' demands that they open the door to trade and other relations. In so doing we shall be concerned with both political and religious movements. Moore analysed the varied revolutions as responses to new world change referring mainly to differences in social and political structure; he was largely indifferent to religion. But it may be shown that in each case the response to Western intrusion appeared firstly in the form of a religious movement and only secondly as political movement or revolution. In the Korean case, one of the most important responses to the Western powers was the Tonghak peasant revolution of 1894, which was a religious movement as well as a revolution. Tonghak was a new religious movement which arose from an attempt to cope with the coming of Western power and the peasant war of 1894 was influenced by Tonghak. Despite being generally recognised as an important historical event in the modernisation of Korea, it has been studied until now largely as a self-contained episode and not in relation to the larger sweep of Korean history or in a comparative context. I believe that the Tonghak peasant revolution is surely an important event which has affected the fate of Korea and shaped the character of Korean society. For this research, both the Tonghak religious movement and the associated peasant revolution will be examined.

To permit comparison with Japan and China, the Meiji revolution of Japan and the Taiping revolution of China will also be dealt with, although in less depth. Both historical events were also closely related with new religious movements

that have been interpreted as means of coping with Western penetration. Therefore, in this thesis, three historical events will be considered.

Accordingly, what this research tries to explain is two things. One is how differently Korea has developed from Japan and China. Korea failed in democratic political reform in the nineteenth century like Japan and China. But Japan turned towards an absolute state system, while China came to be communist state following several revolts and revolutions. If Korea failed in democratic reform, which was the route to modern society that Korea followed as compared with the other two countries? The other concern is what was the contribution of the analysed events to the socio-political character of Korea's modernisation? In other words, how do these processes help to explain the differences of modernisation between Korea and its neighbours Japan and China in the succeeding century?

In conducting this analysis, we will consider two explanatory variables: (1) the character of the religious movement, and (2) the character of the revolution. For Korea, the Tonghak religion will be examined as the former and the peasant revolution of 1894 will be described as the latter. As for Japan and China, the Meiji revolution and the Taiping revolution will be analysed, treating both the political events and the religious background.

In this process, this study has another, secondary, purpose. It is to overcome the established way of studying the Tonghak revolution, which has been approached by separate ways as a religious movement or a revolution respectively. In other words, our special concern is to explain how the religious

movement influenced the revolution. Following Weber, in this study I intend to show that religion played an important role in social change in non-Western societies.

Basic questions for the purpose of this research naturally include the following. What were the social conditions conducive to the outbreak of the religious movement and revolution? What prompted the religious movement to break out? What kind of traits did the religious movement have? Why did the revolution occur? What character did the revolution have? Did the religious movement influence the revolution, and how? What does the modern political identity of Korea owe to the religious movement and revolution? And what light does this analysis of the Tonghak experience shed upon the subsequent development of Korean society?

2. The Method of Study

(1) Sociology and Historical Events

This thesis is based on the study of historical events and processes. In general, the use of historical evidence in sociology enables us to find out how societies work and change through the study of the past. It puts great emphasis on the historicity of the subject-matter of sociology. However, the uses of historical materials in sociology has been the subject many disputes, including some that have lasted until

recently.[8] Therefore it is necessary to consider how meaningful historical evidence is within a sociological study before we study our main topic.

It is true that sociology and history are different academic disciplines, unlike each other in origin and intention, but they both deal with the same subject matter, human interaction and its results. From the recognition of this relationship arises the need to examine the actual or potential inter-dependence of sociology and history as disciplines, while respecting the legitimate and distinctive character of each.[9]

In this context many scholars advocate the development of a somewhat historical genre, which would be a mixture of traditional history and the social sciences. Peter Burke in his book *Sociology and History* (1980) explains the convergence of sociology and history as follows:

> 'What some of us would like to see, what we are beginning to see, is a social history, or historical sociology - the distinction should become irrelevant - which would be concerned both with understanding from within and explaining from without; with the general and with the particular; and which would

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8 For recent debates on the use of history in sociology, J. Goldthorpe's 'The Uses of History in Sociology', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (1991) and its critical responses, J. M. Bryant, 'Evidence and Explanation in History and Sociology'; N. Hart, 'John Goldthorpe and the Relics of Sociology'; N. Mouzelis, 'In Defence of Grand Historical Sociology'; M. Mann, 'In Praise of Macro-sociology'; J. Goldthorpe, 'The Uses of Historical in Sociology - A reply', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (1994).

9 W. J. Cahnman and A. Boskoff, 'Sociology and History: Reunion and Rapprochement', in W. J. Cahnman and A. Boskoff (eds.), *Sociology and History: Theory and Research* (London: Free Press, 1964), p. 1.

> combine the sociologist's acute sense of structure with the historian's equally sharp sense of change'.[10]

E. H. Carr in *What is History?* had already remarked on the influence of sociology on history, saying that 'the more sociological history becomes and the more historical sociology becomes, the better for both'. According to Carr, the reciprocal process of interaction between the historian and his facts, what he calls the dialogue between present and past, is a dialogue not between abstract and isolated individuals, but between the society of today and the society of yesterday.[11] The past is intelligible to us only in the light of the present. It is to be noted here that Carr emphasises that what distinguishes the historian from the collector of historical facts is generalisation: History is concerned with the relation between the unique and the general. In Carr's words on the relation between history and sociology:

> 'Sociology at present faces two opposite dangers - the danger of becoming ultra-theoretical and the danger of becoming ultra-empirical. The first is the danger of losing itself in abstract and meaningless generalisations about society in general. Society with a big S is as misleading a fallacy as History with a big H. This danger is brought nearer by those who assign to sociology the exclusive task of generalising from the unique events recorded by history ... The other danger is that foreseen by

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[10] P. Burke, *Sociology and History* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1980), p. 30.

[11] E. H. Carr, *What is History* (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 60.

> Karl Mannheim almost a generation ago, and very much present today, of a sociology 'split into a series of discrete technical problems of social readjustment'. Sociology is concerned with historical societies every one of which is unique and moulded by specific historical antecedents and conditions. ... Sociology, if it is to become a fruitful field of study, must, like history, concern itself with the relation between the unique and the general'.[12]

History is a study of society concerned with the time span, so it is a study of the past which should not be separated from the present.[13] In this sense, History is a social process, in which individuals are engaged as social being. Braudel insists as follows:

> 'Sociology and history made up one single intellectual adventure, not two different sides of the same cloth but the very stuff of itself, the entire substance of its yarn. ... It can hardly be denied that history and sociology come together, identify with each other, and merge often enough. The reasons are straightforward. On the one hand there is the inflated imperialism of history, on the other the similarity in their two natures: history and sociology alike are the only two global sciences, given to extending their inquiries into any aspect of social reality whatever. Insofar as it consists in all the human sciences in the vast domain of the past, history is a synthesiser, an orchestrator'.[14]

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12 Ibid., pp. 59-60.
13 F. Braudel, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980) p. 69.
14 Ibid.

Society cannot be analysed in separation from historical events. A. Giddens says that 'there simply are no logical or even methodological distinctions between the social sciences and history'.[15] Stressing structure and action as the two major aspects of social life which have to be analysed in relation to each other (the theory of structuration), Giddens insists that sociology should become, or should be regarded as being, historical in character. Similarly P. Abrams argues that sociology is concerned with process rather than with either structure or action. According to him, sociology is the study of social process. He remarks that history and sociology may be integrated as a single unified programme of analysis.[16] Abrams' explanation sees the relation between sociology and history in terms of the way individual action makes and is made by history and society.

> 'History and society are made by contrast and more and less purposeful individual action and that individual action, however purposeful, is made by history and society. How do we, as active subjects make a world of objects which then, as it were, become subjects making us their objects? It is the problem of individual and society, consciousness and being, action and structure; a problem to which the voices of everyday life speak as loudly as those of scholars. It is easily and endlessly formulated but, it seems, stupefyingly difficult to resolve. People make their own history - but only under definite circumstances and conditions: we act through a world

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15 A. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (London: Macmillan, 1979), p. 230.

16 P. Abrams, *Historical Sociology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. xviii.

> of rules which our action creates, breaks and renews - we are creatures of rules, the rules are our creations: we make our own world - the world confronts us as an implacable and autonomous system of social facts'.[17]

He insists that in terms of their fundamental preoccupation's, history and sociology are and always have been the same thing.

However, there would be no need for the sociologist to turn historian, if the historians asked the questions that are crucial to the sociologist. All sociologists would then have to do would be to use the historians' findings. The difference between historians and sociologists would be not in the methods employed but in the kinds of questions asked. Sociologists' questions could be concerned with conceptualisation and historians' questions could be concerned with sources. Therefore, the requirement for a historically oriented sociology could well be described as a combination of 'brains' and 'hard work', with 'brains' standing for conceptualisation and 'hard work' for a willingness to go to the sources.[18]

Another way of putting this is that history seeks to explain the unique, while sociology attempts to establish a complete 'inventory' of human behaviour in order to provide us with a knowledge of the range of recurrent types of individual conduct. As Cahnman and Buskoff suggest:

> 'Without such interplay between the general and the unique no explanation would be possible. In short,

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17 Ibid., pp. xiii-xiv.
18 W. J. Cahnman and A. Boskoff, 'Sociology and History: Reunion and Rapprochement', p. 13.

> if some historians see no generalities in their data, it is because they do not look for them. In that case, historically trained sociologists, along with better-informed historians, must step into the breach'.[19]

To sum up, the social world is essentially historical. Sociological explanation is accompanied by historical events. Thus sociology and history are similar in that both deal with social world. However, sociology focuses on the generalisation, while history on reliability of the sources. Historical sociology has to consider historical elements, but it is not history.[20] Sociology, especially when it is dealing with historical material, is the attempt to interpret historical events in their relationship to one another. This study will follow the above logic.

(2) Comparative Analysis

At first, this thesis was to be confined to the case of Korea. But, it soon became clear that to assist in the interpretation of specific events and to test the validity of the causal relationships suggested, the comparative method was essential. We therefore compare the historical experience of Korea with equivalent events in Japan and China. As mentioned as the beginning of the chapter, the thesis proposal sprang

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19 Ibid., p. 5.

20 Historical sociology has always been insisted to be a core element of sociology as a whole. According to P. Abrams, it is the essence of the discipline. P. Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, p. 2.

from questions about Weber's thesis. In this context, to consider Korea, Japan and China is to focus on three key non-Western societies. Thus there is a potential for developing an argument about the way modernisation is influenced by the religious ethos in non-Western societies.

Comparative historical analysis has been widely used in social science since it was first described in a systematic way in John Stuart Mill's *A System of Logic.*[21] The method was applied to theorisation by such classical social and historical analysts as Alexis de Tocqueville, K. Marx and M. Weber.[22] And it continues to be elaborated and applied by contemporary scholars, including B. Moore, R. Bendix and C. Tilly and E. K. Trimberger.[23]

A comparative analysis does not assume or attempt to argue that historical events should be described from case to case. It can prompt specific historical events representing variations to both theoretical extensions and reformulations which make an offer to generalise concrete historical cases.

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21 J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic* (London: Longmans Green, 1884). Abridged by E. Nagel in *John Stuart Mill's Philosophy of Scientific Method* (New York: Hafner, 1950).

22 For discussions of Tocqueville, Marx and Weber's use of the comparative method, see N. J. Smelser, 'Alexis de Tocqueville as Comparative Analyst'; R. S. Waner, 'The Methodology of Marx's Comparative Analysis of Modes of Production'; G. Roth, 'Max Weber's Comparative Approach and Historical Typology' in I. Vallier (ed.), *Comparative Methods in Sociology: Essays on Trends and Applications* (London: University of California Press, 1971).

23 B. Moore, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); R. Bendix, *Nation-building and Citizenship: Studies of Our Changing Social Order* (New York: Wiley, 1964); C. Tilly et al., *The Rebellious Century 1830-1930* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1975); E. K. Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978).

Of course, comparative method faces inevitable difficulties in applying its given logic, because it is impossible to find exactly the historical cases that one needs for the logic of a certain comparison. As Skocpol points out, comparative historical analysis is distinctively appropriate for developing explanations of macro-historical phenomena of which there are inherently only a few cases.[24] This analysis contrasts with the method of cases required for statistical analyses. As distinct from plentiful and manipulable cases suitable for statistical analysis, comparative study has too many variables and not enough cases. Furthermore, while comparative analysis has the advantage of closer approximation than the assumptions of social theory, it cannot provide the way of prediction and of guiding social actions towards defined goals.[25]

Skocpol and Somers present the purposes of comparative historical analysis as follows: parallel demonstration of theory, contrast of contexts, and macro-causal analysis.[26] The parallel demonstration of theory is to order the evidence in such way that a hypothesis or theory can repeatedly demonstrate its fruitfulness when applied to a series of relevant historical trajectories. Contrast of contexts is to demonstrate differences among the cases which are primarily contextual particularities and thus to highlight the

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24 T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 36.

25 R. Bendix, 'Concepts in Comparative Historical Analysis', in S. Rokkan (ed.), *Comparative Research across Cultures and Nations* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 69.

26 T. Skocpol and M. Somers, 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macro-social Inquiry', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22 (1980), pp. 174-97.

generality of the processes with which a theory is basically concerned. The macro-causal analysis is to make causal inferences about macro-level structure and process. The three procedures are of course not exclusive but interrelated.

Comparative historical analysis in this thesis will primarily serve the purpose of macro-causal analysis. It is oriented towards deepening the analysis of a particular historical case, rather than towards developing or testing a theoretical generalisation.

(3) Organisation and Sources of the Study

Following the aims and method as described above, this thesis is divided into six parts including this Introduction. In the Introduction after this chapter, a range of important concepts are investigated. This conceptual investigation is intended to arrive at definitions of modernisation, revolution and religious movement that can be used throughout the thesis. It draws on a critical analysis of the deployment of these concepts in previous works. This preliminary work is essential, because not only have these concepts been used in a variety of ways, but the particular historical events this thesis is concerned with have most usually been interpreted without the benefit of general concepts of this type.

Part I describes and analyses the social conditions which formed the background to the religious movements and revolutions that concern us in the three societies. This part deals with the socio-political structure of the old regime and

its crisis to establish the conditions under which the corresponding religious movement and revolution arose in the nineteenth century.

Part II has two main chapters dealing with the religious movements. In the first of these chapters the direct background and character of the Tonghak religion is analysed. This chapter suggests that this movement can be understood as a response to the problem of order created by the crisis of the old regime in Korea. In the second chapter, we then compare the Tonghak religion with the Sonno-joi religious movement of Japan and Taiping in China. The logic of this comparison is to use the well-studied experiences of China and Japan to illuminate the under-analysed processes that have contributed to the modernisation of Korea.

In Part III, building on the analysis of the religious movement, the peasant revolution of 1894 is examined. After examining the relationship between the religious movement and the revolution in Chapter 6, in Chapter 7 we describe the causes and character, including the ideology and organisation, of the revolution. A third chapter in this part presents the results of the peasant revolution and then compares them with those of the Taiping revolution and the Meiji revolution in China and Japan.

Part IV analyses the modernisation of Korea compared with Japan and China. Above all, we explain the character of modernisation which reflected in the religious movements and revolutions. In addition, the direction of the modernisation of modern period after the religious movements and revolutions will be dealt with, relying on Moore's analysis.

Part V is the final chapter, Conclusion. Here, we make a brief sketch of the whole contents and then discuss in a more general way how religious movements influence revolutions. That is to say, we consider what factors of a religious movement are important in relation to the nature and result of a revolutionary process with which it is associated. This conclusion also examines the experiences of modernisation in each society in the light of differences of the analysed events. This may help to explain the modern identity of Korea compared with that of Japan and China.

The source of material for this thesis is of two basic types: primary data on the events that are analysed and the works of preceding scholars. To the extent possible, we use primary sources about the Korean part - for example, *Tonghangnan Kirok* [Record of the Tonghak Rebellion], *Chuhan Ilbon Kongsagwan Kirok* [Record of the Japanese Legation in Korea], and *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn* [The Bible of Tonghak Doctrine]. As a matter of fact, it is not easy to discover the exact data and documents of the Tonghak revolution because most data and documents were destroyed or distorted under the Japanese colony. Recently, however, studies of the Tonghak experience have undergone a revival, which is helpful for this thesis. In order to establish certain facts, documents are an important source for this study in the case of Korea. In addition, studies by historians are drawn upon in a critical fashion. In contrast, the cases of Japan and China are analysed entirely on the basis of the published works, including many English-language sources. Until recently, historians in the English-

speaking world have been more interested in Japan and China than in Korea. Their analyses are regarded in many cases as authoritative, so that it is legitimate to use their works as comparative sources.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL INVESTIGATION

1. The Meaning of Modernisation

(1) The Sociological Meaning of Modernisation

Modernisation theory describes and explains the processes of transformation from traditional or underdeveloped societies to modern societies. One of the major theorists defined modernisation as follows: 'Historically, modernisation is the process of change towards those types of social, economic, and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth and have then spread to other European countries to the South American, Asian, and African continents'.[1]

The primary attention of modernisation theory has focused on ways in which past and present premodern societies become modern through processes of economic growth, and changes in social, political, and cultural structures. Modernisation theorists however are more concerned with the preconditions and consequences of economic growth within societies.[2] Industrialisation and agricultural development are components

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1 S. N. Eisenstadt, *Modernization: Protest and Change* (Englewood Cliffs N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1966), p. 1.

2 Modernisation theory has been one of the major perspectives in social change in connection with national development and underdevelopment which is the economic component since the 1950s. D. Lerner, 'Modernization: Social Aspects', in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 10 (New York: The Macmillan Co. and the Free Press, 1968), pp. 386-94.

in the process of economic growth. Modernisation theorists tend to study the social, political, and cultural consequences of economic growth and the conditions that are important for industrialisation and other economic change.

It should be noted at the outset that the sociological concept of modernisation does not refer simply to becoming current or 'up to date' but rather specifies particular contents and processes of social changes. This kind of social change is concerned with national development as a matter of course. Also modernisation does not necessarily have any relation to more recent concepts of 'modernity' and 'postmodernity'.[3]

Modernisation is often used interchangeably with 'industrialisation' and 'development' but in fact these refer to distinguishable phenomena. 'Industrialisation' is a narrower term than modernisation, while development is more general. Industrialisation entails the use of inanimate sources of power to mechanise production, and it involves increases in manufacturing, wage labour, income levels, and occupational diversification. It may or may not be present where there is political, social or cultural modernisation, and conversely, it may exist in the absence of other aspects

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3 Modernity refers to the perspective that there is one true descriptive and explanatory model that reflects the actual world. Postmodernity is the stance that no single true description and explanation of reality exist but rather knowledge, ideology, and science itself are based on subjective understandings of an entirely relational nature. While their philosophical understandings place most modernisation theories of development into the 'modern' rather that the 'postmodern' context. These separate uses of the term modernity should not be confused. Refer to D. Jary and J. Jary, *Dictionary of Sociology* (Glasgow: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991).

of modernisation. 'Development' implies economic growth, but not necessarily through transformation from the predominance of primary production to manufacturing, and not necessarily as characterised by modernisation theory. Even though modernisation, industrialisation, and development are strictly distinguished from one other, these concepts tend to be used interchangeably. Accordingly, modernisation covers industrialisation and development.

Modernisation theory indicates that advanced industrial technology produces not only economic growth in developing societies but also other structural and cultural changes. The common characteristics that societies tend to develop as they become modern may differ from one version of modernisation theory to another, but, in general, all assume that institutional structures and individual activities become more highly specialised, differentiated, and integrated into the social, political, and economic forms which are characteristic of advanced Western societies.

Social features like advanced Western societies might be theoretical assumptions and mechanisms to explain the shift from traditional to modern societal types. These explanatory approaches to modernisation draw upon the dominant theoretical perspectives in the 1950s and 1960s growing out of classical evolutionary, diffusion, and structural-functionalist theories.[4]

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[4] J. S. Coleman, 'Modernization: Political Aspects', in *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, Vol. 10 (New York: The Macmillan Co. and the Free Press, 1968), pp. 395-400.

The evolutionary perspective, stemming from Spencer, Durkheim, and other nineteenth-century theorists, contributed the notion that societies evolve from lower to higher forms and progress from simple and undifferentiated to more complex types. Western industrial society is seen as superior to preindustrial society to the extent that it has progressed through specialisation to more effective ways of performing societal functions. Diffusionists added the ideas that cultural patterns associated with modern society could be transferred via social interaction (trade, war, travellers, media, etc.), and that there may be several paths to development rather than linear evolution. Structural functionalists emphasised the idea that societies are integrated wholes comprised by functionally compatible institutions and roles, and that societies process from one increasingly complex and efficient social system to another.[5] This contributed to the notion that internal social and cultural factors are important determinants or obstacles of economic change.

Research by Smelser draws on all three traditions in describing modernisation of society through processes of social differentiation, disturbances, and reintegration.[6] In a manner similar to other conceptions of modernisation, Smelser emphasises four major changes: from simple to complex

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5 T. Parsons, *The Social System* (London: Tavistock, 1951); B. F. Hoselitz, *Sociological Aspect of Economic Growth* (New York: Free Press, 1960); M. Levy, *Modernization and the Structures of Societies*, Vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966).

6 N. Smelser, 'The Modernization of Social Relations', in M. Weiner (ed.), *Modernization: the Dynamics of Growth* (New York: Basic Books, 1966).

technology, from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture, from rural to urban populations, and most important, from animal and human power to inanimate power and industrialisation. Smelser describes modernisation as a complex, multidimensional transition.

Parsons' later theoretical work also combines these perspectives in a neo-evolutionist modernisation theory that treats societies as self-regulated structural-functional wholes in which the main processes of change are social differentiation and the discovery (or acquisition through diffusion) of certain 'evolutionary universals' such as bureaucratic organisations and money markets.[7] A similar neo-evolutionist social differentiation theory of modernisation is provided by Eisenstadt.[8] Another early influence on modernisation theory was Weber's work on the Protestant ethic.[9] This work stressed the influence of cultural values on the entrepreneurial behaviour of individuals and the rise of capitalism.

To sum up, there are two senses in which one may speak of the idea of modernisation. One is most general, synonymous with all kinds of progressive social change, when society moves ahead along some accepted scale of improvement. The other is more historically specific. It involves processes of industrialisation, urbanisation, rationalisation, bureaucratisation, democratisation, the ascendancy of

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7 T. Parsons, 'Evolutionary Universals in Society', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 29 (1964), pp. 339-57.

8 S. N. Eisenstadt, 'Social Change and Development', in S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *Readings in Social Evolution and Development* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1970).

9 M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976).

characteristic of the West. As R. Bendix suggested, all conceptions of modernising processes necessarily take off from the Western European experience, because that is where the commercial industrial and national revolutions originated.[12] However, the theoretical approaches that have been dominant until recently have generalised too specifically from the apparent logic of the advanced Western countries. Essentially, modernisation has been conceived either as innovation in technology and increasing division of labour, or as accumulation of capital and the rise of new classes. The assumption has typically been that every nation, perhaps stimulated by the example or influence of earlier-developing countries, would sooner or later undergo a more or less compressed version of the same fundamental kind of transformation apparently experienced by the advanced Western countries.

But every country has its own ethos of modernisation. It is natural that the Western development scheme which typified historical materialism and classical sociology have been thought as the generalised concept. But if this concept based on the experience of Western societies is accepted in other societies, this is evidently an error because other countries have their own cultural and historic background. In this sense, neither the developmental scheme of historical materialism based on Marx's theory of modes of production, nor the development theory based on the Weberian capitalistic ethos, can explain every modernisation.

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[12] R. Bendix, 'Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 9 (1967), pp. 292-313.

It follows that we must reject any concept of modernisation which entails westernisation.[13] This concept of modernisation reflects only the experience of Western societies.

Actually, modernisation may be conceived more broadly, on the assumption that the industrial mode of production depending on commodity markets turns out to be the dominant mode of all social development. Accordingly, modernisation in all countries never fails to be accompanied by the reformation of an Old Regime, a pre-industrial social order. The countries which experienced colonial rule were subjected in the same way as Western societies to modernisation in this sense.

But this process never means simply so-called westernisation which follows the same path as that of existing developed countries. In order to avoid this, a more relativistic definition is given by S. Chodak: 'Modernisation is a special, important instance of the development of societies, an instance where conscientious efforts are made to achieve higher chosen standards'.[14]

Historically, modernisation is not a process of westernisation which means to obtain the common traits of developed countries but a set' of specific processes for promoting social change to reform an old regime. That is to say, modernisation has to be described as the process of social change through which individual countries cope with the

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13 K. Marx referred in the preface to his *Capital* to: 'the process of social change whereby less developed societies acquire characteristics common to more developed societies'. But if Marx were alive, he would revise this sentence.

14 S. Chodak, *Societal Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 256.

challenges of the world system. Modernisation refers among other things to the way, in the process of world systemisation stemming from social changes in Western countries, political authorities in every country try to secure a rational organisation of labour together with efficient economic operations, and then make the effort to assume sovereignty and acquire the rights of a state.

To sum up, in the process of world change no country can avoid transforming its societal system. In other words, there was no country which did not experience a transformation through history deserving the name of modernisation between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But such transformation of each country had its own way, and needs to be analysed on its own terms.

2. Perspectives on Revolution

(1) The Definition of Revolution

Since there is little consensus about what a revolution is, it is not easy to clarify and theorise about revolution. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the word 'revolution' as meaning 'The complete overthrow of an established government or social order in any country or state by those who were previously subject to it; a forcible substitution of a new ruler or form of government'.[15] This definition suggests that

[15] *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 'Revolution'.

a revolution is concerned with the political level, involving governments and rulers, and that furthermore in order to count as such, it must succeed. Most definitions imply that in order to be regarded as a revolution, an uprising must be successful.

Baecheler remarks that revolution is 'a protest movement that manages to seize power',[16] and Neumann defines revolution as 'a sweeping fundamental change in political organisation, social structure, economic property control and the predominant myth of a social order, thus indicating a major break in the continuity of development'.[17] Trimberger also implies success in her definition of revolution as 'an extralegal take over of the central state apparatus which destroys the economic and political power of the dominant social group of the old regime'.[18] All these definitions of revolution assume that the result of revolution has to be successful.

At the same time, most definitions involve violence in the centre of their analysis. Thus Friedrich gives definition of revolution as 'a sudden and violent overthrow of an established political order',[19] and Huntington describes it as 'a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government

16 J. Baecheler, *Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p. 91.

17 S. Neumann, 'The International Civil War', *World Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1949), p. 333.

18 E. K. Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, p. 2.

19 C. J. Friedrich (ed.), *Revolution* (New York: Atherton, 1966), p. 5.

activity and policy'.[20] Thus, most definitions offered by social scientists are entangled in the fact that it must succeed and use violent means.

We also need to pay attention to the fact that the events called revolution tend to be political. That is to say, the events in which physical force (or the convincing threat of it) have actually been used are related to political revolution. Here, we face a new problem of definition: what is difference between revolution and political revolution. In reality, most social scientists, including Baecheler, Friedrich, and Neuman, have been interested in political revolution, not just in revolution. From a political aspect, naturally, revolutions that have broken out around the world aim to secure power.

Meanwhile, such an archaeologist as V. G. Childe based on the Marxist standpoint divides revolutions into the food-producing revolution, the urban revolution and social evolution by cultural and historical processes. In particular, referring to social evolution, he emphasises the phenomena of cultural divergence and convergence by explaining that societies adapt cultural complexes to the requirements of differing environments.[21] In a sense, it seems that Childe's social evolution as cultural sequences means social revolution.

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[20] S. P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 264.

[21] J. M. Treistman, 'Childe, V. Gordon', in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Science* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), Vol. 2, pp. 390-4. For further details, refer to V. G. Childe, *Man Makes Himself* (London: Watts & Co, 1936); *What Happened in History* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1942); *Social Evolution* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1951).

One who tries to distinguish social revolution from the other forms of social transformations such as political revolution, rebellion, and *coup d'état* is T. Skocpol. She, in her *States and Social Revolutions* (1979), expands the definition, offering the most comprehensive and succinct structural approach. According to her, political revolutions transform state structure but leave social structures largely intact, rebellions involve the revolt of society's subordinate classes but do not produce enduring structural changes, and *coups d'état* forcibly replace the leadership of states. None of these social transformations change social or state structures. Skocpol writes: 'social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structure; they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below'.[22]

But such a definition only involves revolutions that succeed. As M. S. Kimmel has pointed out, revolutions that do not succeed can provide as many clues to the causes and the process of revolutions as those that succeed.[23] Furthermore, a criterion of success might be disputable, because the results of revolution can be interpreted differently among theorists. It means that we must also be able to explain counter-revolution as well. As Tilly remarks 'if a theory purports to tell us when and why a society is ready for rebellion it also ought to tell us which sectors of the society will resist the rebellion and why'.[24]

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22 T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 4.
23 M. S. Kimmel, *Revolution: A Sociological Interpretation* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), p. 5.
24 C. Tilly, *The Vendee* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 30.

Therefore, the definition of revolution needs expanding to include attempts at transformation whether successful or not. Dunn suggests that revolutions are 'a form of massive, violent and rapid social change. They are also attempts to embody a set of values in a new or at least renovated social order'.[25] And Zagorin gives a more useful definition as follows: 'A revolution is any attempt by subordinate groups through the use of violence to bring about (1) a change of government of its policy, (2) a change of regime, or (3) a change of society, whether this attempt is justified by reference to past conditions or to an as yet unattained future ideal'.[26] As Kimmel tells us, a revolution may succeed or fail and may choose as its object a political transformation, a social transformation, or a simple change of ruler. But the important thing is the emphasis on the attempt.

From this viewpoint, we will focus on the causes and processes of revolution more than on the results. The causes and processes include not only the immediate factors but also the long-run social background, which is to say the social foundation. Accordingly, revolution can be defined as *an attempt by subordinate groups to transform the social foundation by using violence*. If we remember Weber's definition of sociology, that is as a science concerned with the interpretative understanding of social action and a causal

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[25] J. Dunn, *Modern Revolutions: An Introduction to the Analysis of a Political Phenomenon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 12.

[26] P. Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 17.

explanation of its causes and consequences,[27] the definition of revolution which focuses on not so much the results as on the causes and process may be more sociological.

The Tonghak peasant revolution, which we will discuss later, has provoked arguments involving all the terms discussed here. At different times, it has been called a peasant war, a rebellion, and a revolution. In the case of Taiping in China many writers also manage to use the term differently 'Taiping revolt', 'Taiping rebellion', and 'Taiping movement', and so on. The same events are labelled differently. Using the simplifying definition of revolution given above, we can clear up some of the unnecessary confusion surrounding the historical events.

(2) Theorising Revolution

The methods to theorise revolution are various. First of all, let us examine classical sociological theorists. Marx, the chief classical theorist of revolution, insists that 'a radical social revolution is connected with certain historical conditions of economic development'.[28] This means that when the objective structural conditions are formed, revolution can be made. Even though discontented people want to struggle, a revolution can not be made in a non-revolutionary situation.

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27 M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Vol. 1 (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), p. 4.

28 K. Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. by R. Tucker (ed.) (New York: Dorton, 1978), p. 543.

Thus, as Kimmel has noted, Marx's theory of revolution can be understood as composed of three separate parts as follows: structural, involving dynamics between objective structural forces; economist, depending on the contradictions in the sphere of economic production; non-voluntaristic, not depending on the psychological states of members of any collectivity; progressive, as the culmination of historical progress.[29] Each aspect is linked to his overall model of the dynamics of society.

For Marx, revolutions are structural and are also derived from economic relations. In his preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx explains his position:

> 'At a certain stage of development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or - this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms - with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution.'[30]

In Marx's view, a revolutionary situation in society happens when a conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production emerges. Skocpol expresses this conflict as 'a disjucture'.[31] As Skocpol points out, Marx's disjunction exposes itself to class conflicts. Eventually,

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29 M. S. Kimmel, *Revolution: A Sociological Interpretation*, p. 16.

30 K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971), p. 21.

31 T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 7.

revolution itself is accomplished through class action led by the self-conscious, rising revolutionary class.[32] Therefore, Marx's revolutions are the attempts of a revolutionary class to create the conditions for a new mode of production (economic and political power). Here the important condition for revolutionary action is self-consciousness (class-consciousness).[33]

Unlike Marx, Weber is not interested in revolution itself. Above all, Weber's theory of revolution is located within the typology of authority: traditional authority, legal-rational authority, and charismatic authority.[34] Revolution occurs when the forms of authority are not stable. Weber's revolution depends on the break-up of relatively stable mechanisms of authority.[35] According to Weber, the traditional and legal-rational authority are stable, because both systems of domination are anchored to non-personal, historically transcendent forms of custom and legal codes, respectively. That is to say, the stability of traditional authority is attributed to the fact that inherited custom demands obeisance, whereas the stability of legal-rational authority is attributed to the rationality embedded in formal legal

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32 Marx regards the bourgeoisie as a revolutionary class. Marx wrote in *The Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875) as follows: 'The bourgeoisie is here conceived as a revolutionary class - as the bearer of large of large-scale industry - relative to the feudal lords and the lower middle class, who desire to maintain all social positions that are the creation of obsolete modes of production'. K. Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 532.

33 For the conditions and process of revolution, see K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (London: Martin Lawrence, 1936), pp. 145-6.

34 M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Vol. 1, pp. 215-245.

35 M. S. Kimmel, *Revolution: A Sociological Interpretation*, p. 33.

code. Both authorities are stable and non-revolutionary. However, Weber's third type, the charismatic authority, is dynamic and revolutionary, because it rests on the devotion to an exceptional individual or leader. Weber explains the charismatic leaders who are revolutionary as follows:

> 'The legitimacy of their rule rests on the belief in and the devotion to the extraordinary, which is valued because it goes beyond the normal human qualities, and which was originally valued as supernatural. The legitimacy of charismatic rule thus rests upon the belief in magical powers, revelations and hero worship'.[36]

From this perspective, Weber's revolution can be found in charisma. Charisma leads people to transform their world.[37] Charisma is a capacity to revolutionise people 'from within', offering a 'revolutionary will' as an alternative to the traditional and legal authorities.[38] Charisma involves the rejection of convention, of established political order, and creates the possibilities of new and different forms of rule.[39] Weber's theory of revolution pays more attention to

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36 M. Weber, *From Max Weber*, by H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (eds.) (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1948), p. 296.

37 M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Vol.3, pp. 1115-7.

38 R. Robertson, 'The Development and Modern Implications of the Classical Perspective on Religion and Revolution', in B. Lincoln (ed.), *Religion, Rebellion, Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1985), pp. 253-4.

39 Since charismatic authority is located in a person and not in a set of abstract principles, it is transitory. However, Weber proposes a concept of the routinisation of charisma'. It involves reconciliation of the beliefs with the exigencies of organisation, development of reliable means for distinguishing true and false versions of the beliefs, providing for succession to the leadership. M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Vol. 1, pp. 246-54.

religious and ideological virtuoso with charisma. Unlike Marx, who emphasises revolutionary conditions, like economic development, Weber is more concerned with the outcomes of revolution than with causes

For Durkheim, the theory of revolution starts from the form of society, differentiating unsteadily in response to a variety of pressures. The society exerts its control over individuals via their participation in a shared consciousness. According to Durkheim, 'the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society forms a determinate system which has its own life; one may call it the collective or common conscience.[40] The shared consciousness is threatened by the advancing division of labour. Of course, to adjust individuals to a society, a new shared consciousness emerges in the process of differentiation. But the problem is the gap between the level of differentiation and the level of shared consciousness. The gap is what Durkheim calls *anomie*.

Durkheim points out that a series of undesirable results such as individual disorientation, destructive social life, and extensive conflict are attributed to the gap, *anomie*. Accordingly, Durkheim sees that revolution springs from anomie. *Anomie* is symptom of social breakdown, the absence of sufficient levels of integration and regulation which could provide the moral coherence of solidarity that alone prevents social disorganisation. Durkheim's theory of revolution thus

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40 E. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), p. 39.

departs from insufficient integration and regulation of social life based on the differentiation of society.[41]

Most social theorists build on one or other of the theories issued by classical theorists. Some theorists - especially Chalmers Johnson, Neil J. Smelser, and Samuel Huntington - assert that revolutions arise when societies undergo structural strains. Johnson develops the system model of revolution in his *Revolution and the Social System* (1964). According to him, in order to understand revolution, one must first understand the functional society which is a system whose members cooperate with each other by playing various roles that permit the whole system to function.[42] Johnson's society is regarded as a value-coordinated social system.[43] Thus revolution is the change of core value orientations of society. He claims that when revolutions succeed, they change the social system.

Like Johnson, Smelser takes the functional social system as his point of departure. He stresses that 'all systems are governed by the principle of equilibrium'.[44] Social change is brought about by specific disequilibration conditions. For Smelser, revolutions are simply a possible set of responses to the diseqilibrated social system.[45] Also Huntington, in his *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968) insists that both the causes and the consequences of revolution are

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41 M. S. Kimmel, *Revolution: A Sociological Interpretation*, pp. 36-7.
42 C. Johnson, *Revolution and the Social System* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Studies, 1964), p. 4.
43 T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, pp. 11-2.
44 N. J. Smelser, *Social Change in the Industrial Revolution* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), p. 10.
45 N. J. Smelser, *The Theory of Collective Behavior* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 47-66.

modernisation. Modernisation is a disequilibration process which places new strains on existing political institutions.

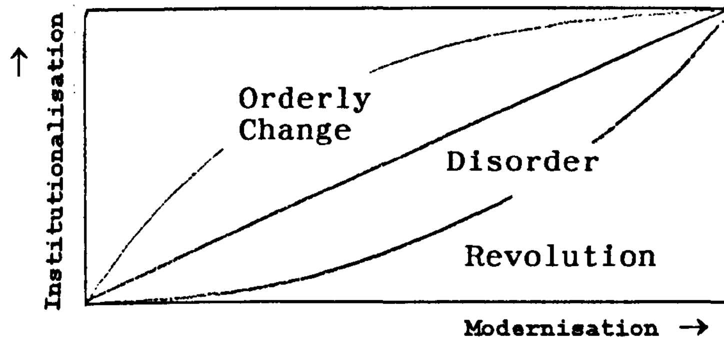

Figure 2.1 Huntington's model of revolution[46]

He develops a specifically political version of structural functionalism that depends upon the capacity of political institutions to meet new demands for incorporation by groups mobilised during the process of modernisation.

Such theorists as Johnson, Smelser, and Huntington develop their theories based on Durkheim's tradition, though the fundamental idea of revolution is borrowed from Marx. Those who follow more strictly Marx's tradition include B. Moore and E. Wolf. Moore, in his *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1966), develops the idea that it is class coalitions that shape the great modernising revolutions. The character of revolutions depends on the fates of agrarian classes in the course of the commercialisation of agriculture and the growth of the state. And the nature of the class coalition making the revolution has strongly influenced the

[46] Source: from C. Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978), p. 20.

subsequent political organisation of the country in question: democratic, fascist, and communist.[47]

Wolf explains the revolutionary response of peasants in the progress of the capitalist world economy. According to him, 'when the peasant can no longer rely on his accustomed in institutionalised context to reduce his risks, when alternative institutions are either too chaotic or too restrictive to guarantee a viable commitment to new ways, that the psychological, economic, social and political tensions all mount toward peasant rebellion and involvement in revolution'.[48]

Meanwhile, T. Gurr approaches revolution with a psychologically based theory. His theory is simple in essence. Political violence occurs when people in society are angry.[49] Gurr elaborates a theory of relative deprivation. C. Tilly, on the other hand, takes a political conflict approach. He argues that no matter how discontented an aggrieved people may become, they cannot engage in political action unless they are part of at least minimally organised groups with access to some resources.[50] I. Wallerstein, in his three volumes on *The Modern World System*, analyses revolution by reference to world-system theory. For him, geopolitical events - wars and

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[47] B. Moore, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

[48] E. A. Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. xix.

[49] T. R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). Cited by T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 9.

[50] C. Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978). Cited by T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 10.

revolutions - are linked to the expansion and contradictions of the capitalist world-economy in both time and space.[51]

All these theorists open their own perspectives on revolution. Here we do not represent exactly the same sort of scholarly endeavour as such general theories. This discussion has been intended to show a set of cases to indicate the range of revolution theory.

3. The Relationship between Religion and Social Change

As for Korea, Japan, and China in the nineteenth century, new religious movements were clearly a means of breaking traditional religion's values, of mobilising people for revolution, and of preparing a new social order at the dawn of modernisation. New religious movements aspire to make society reorganised and culture reconstructed in the process of modernisation. In this part, we shall try to trace the relationship between religion and social change. First of all, we need to define religion to make our task clear.

Defining religion is not an easy matter and there are many definitions offered by authorities on religion. For this reason, some sociologists have argued that it is better not to attempt to define the subject of investigation at the outset. Max Weber, for instance, declines in the opening sentence of

51 I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, Vol. 1 (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

this major work on the subject to give a definition of religion.[52] He argued that this could be done at the conclusion of the study. Weber, however, did not advance sufficiently in his own studies to come to a clear view on the definition of religion. An early attempt to define religion was made by Edward B. Tylor who proposed what he called a minimum definition of religion, 'the belief in spiritual beings'.[53] Tylor's definition was criticised by the ignorance of practices, which would be more important than beliefs and the real essence of religion. Durkheim, for example, considered religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices. Central to Durkheim's own definition was a distinction between the sacred and the profane as follows:

> 'A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them.'[54]

Durkheim's the sacred was not a reliable criterion although he spoke of the sacred as commanding an attitude of respect.[55] Durkheim's 'sacred' was criticised in that it is not applicable to the beliefs of non-Western societies.[56]

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52 M. Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 1.

53 E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1873), p. 424.

54 E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976) p. 47.

55 Ibid., pp. 37-8.

56 Goody argued that no distinction between sacred and profane was made by a Western African people he studied. J. Goody, 'Religion and Ritual: the Definitional Problem', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 12 (1961), pp. 142-64.

Others have tried to overcome the difficulties of definition by using terms which appear to be culturally specific. Spiro defines religion as 'an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings'.[57] He argued that religion is beliefs in superhuman beings and in their power to assist or harm man.[58] In spite of many writers' attempts, it seems not to be easy to build into a satisfactory definition. Worsley describes this well as follows: 'Religion is a stream of processes, not just ideal operation in soul, heart, or intellect, or the ritual dance of puppets determined by the morphology of their social structure'.[59] As he insisted, it is due to ideal as well as social. However, in order to distinguish religious belief from social belief, we would rather follow Spiro. For this thesis, we shall define religion as *beliefs in superhuman beings* and religion action as *the manipulation of relationships between human and superhuman beings*. On the basis of this definition, we will study the relationship between religion and social change.

(1) The Ideological Function of Religion

57 M. E. Spiro 'Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation', in M. Banton (ed.), *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* (London: Tavistock Publication, 1966), p. 96.
58 Ibid., p. 94.
59 P. Worsley, P. Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of Cargo Cults in Melanesia* (2nd ed.) (London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1968), p. xxix.

The relationship between religion and social change has usually begun with the analyses of Weber and Marx. While Weber suggested that religion could cause social change, Marx insisted that religion justified and legitimated the existing social order, and so inhibited change.

However, Weber did not suggest that religion always caused change, but wanted to show, through an analysis of the rise of capitalism, that religion could be an important factor. Thus, he was not saying that there was an one-way process.[60] For Weber, the situation was more complex than Marx had implied, because the necessary values and economic conditions must be presented for social change.

For Marx, religion is an instrument of oppression and exploitation. Religious beliefs effectively confuse and blind the mass of society into thinking that the social world is God given and hence unchangeable. However, it also serves to ease the pain of oppression by promising a paradise of eternal bliss after death and so makes this life more bearable. Because religion shows the possibility of a better world, it has the potential to raise man's consciousness. Engels suggests that some religious movements could pave the way for social change. He focused on 'what have become known as millenarian movements, which are often followed by those at the bottom of society. Such movements have been seen as prepolitical, that is to say, the ideas and beliefs developed have later been taken up by political groups.[61] Here, in order

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[60] M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976), p. 183.

[61] Engels explained the emergence of political awareness and activity by the movement centred around Thomas Müntzer during the peasant war in Germany during the Middle Ages.

to explore the operation of religious ideology, I will examine Marx's meaning of religion and Thompson's analysis of English Methodism as a concrete case.

According to Marx, religion is the 'opium of the people'. He says in his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* as follows;

> Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.[62]

Marx says that religion gives relief. People who suffer find their suffering eased by the thought that a better world awaits them. Indeed, in some religions, the more you suffer on earth, the more likely you are to be assured of a place in heaven, or a more favourable position in the next life. But it provides no real solution because it is temporary. In other words, religion tends to inhibit any real solution by making suffering and repression bearable. In this way, religious beliefs have been used to justify social inequality and status inequality. Therefore, for Marxists, religion is important to the privileged. Not only will it serve to justify their position, but it will serve to hide or disguise the real basis of their power and hinder the development of the awareness and understanding on the part of those who are at the bottom of the social ladder. In this sense, as Merton pointed out,

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K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955), pp. 97-118.
62 Ibid., p. 42.

religion can be an institutional means of social control. From the functional perspective, he explains that the religious ideology such as 'opium of mass' is a function of religion in that religion is a social mechanism for reinforcing the sentiments most essential to the institutional integration of society.[63] In other words, Merton considered religious ideologies as a function for social intergration.

Anyway, Marx believed that religion was essentially the product of a class society. According to him, religion did not create mankind, but rather mankind created religion on the grounds of consolation and justification. Marx expressed the idea in this way;

> 'Religion is the self-consciousness and self-feeling of man who has either not yet found himself or has already lost himself again. ... This state, this society, produce religion, a reversed world-consciousness, because they are a reversed world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in a popular form, its spiritualistic point d'honneur, it enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn completion, its universal ground for consolation and justification. It is the fantastic realization of the human essence...'[64]

In the fantastic reflection, God is thought to lead an independent existence and actually control man. God had

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63 R. K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 42-5.

64 K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion*, p. 41.

created the rich and the poor and the ruling and the ruled, and it was therefore immoral and ungodly to try to change things.

Therefore, this idea supports the notion that religion inhibits social change and attempts have been made to prove from a wide variety of historic sources. Evidence of religion as inhibiting change was shown by a French historian, Elie Halevy, who posed questions about why English working class consciousness was not more revolutionary. Halevy suggested that religion played an important role in preventing a revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Britain. In his thesis, he concluded that the English working class was distracted from revolutionary political consciousness through the absorption of its potential leaders into Methodism and Evangelical religion.[65] The same phenomenon was addressed by the historian E. P. Thompson in his remarkable, influential study, *The Making of the English Working Class*, as a successor to the Halevy thesis.

E. P. Thompson's thesis about the social control functions of Methodism suggested it had a broader impact than Halevy's thesis proposed. Thompson pointed out that the traditional community basis such as the Anglican church's parochial system was undermined by the social changes of urbanisation and industrialisation and could not integrate the working class into a dominant ideology of shared religious values in a situation which they were exploited and their interests were not democratically represented.

65 Elie Halevy, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century*, 3 vols. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1938).

Hence new religious movements such as Methodism and the Evangelical movement were ideologically effective. As Thompson pointed out, Methodism achieved most success in attracting the working class and served as an agency of social control in period of the Industrial Revolution. According to him, 'during the worst years of the Industrial Revolution, real opiates were used quite widely in the manufacturing districts ... many working people turned to religion as a consolation'[66]. The emotional excitement and involvement of preaching of Methodism also offered the limited alternative avenues through which to express the working people's discontent and then served to distract significant numbers of the working class from their grievances and any impulse to rebel. The consequence of these was that Britain, unlike many other European countries at that time, was relatively free from revolutionary upheavals and sudden change.

Accordingly, Thompson made an attempt to explain the ideological functions of Methodism by viewing this religious movement as expressions of working class cultures and aspirations and religious communities as instruments of the exploiting class for exercising social control and instilling discipline in the working class.'The chiliasm of despair as a work-discipline Methodism has shown was religious ideology which operated as 'opium of the mass'. Thus, Methodism in England corresponds to inhibition of change by indoctrinating the working class with conservative attitudes.

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[66] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 417-8.

Even though Thompson's analysis has given rise to controversy such as an argument that religion helped to develop the labour movement, it shows that religious ideology has something to do with social change. This means it can operate as an important factor in the process of social change, whether religious ideology may inhibit change or promote.

(2) New Religious Movement and Its Character

Religious movements, as we have seen Methodism of England, are connected with sectarian tendencies or new religions. Sects or new religions have often been concerned with attempts to build ideal societies, to eliminate imperfections in the dominant social surroundings, and to embody religious ideas, values and principles.

The term 'sect' in sociology initially came from a conceptualisation of types of religious organisation by E. Troeltsch. In his *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*, Troeltsch distinguishes between 'churches' and 'sects'.[67] 'Churches' are described as conservative, orthodox, hierarchic, traditional, and ritual-bound, having a high degree of organisation and institutionalisation. By contrast, 'sects' are characterised as perfectionist, radical, and egalitarian, and as manifesting a low degree of organisation and institutionalisation. Sociologists have agreed that sects

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67 E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931).

are related to a relatively low level of institutionalisation and with a tendency towards doctrinal heresy.

However, since Troeltsch regards sect and church as polar opposites and his work is concerned with sectarian movements within Christianity, it is difficult to apply it outside of this context. This is particularly the case where many Third World sectarian movements are concerned.

Because of this, Bryan Wilson rejects Troeltsch's dichotomous model and develops the sect as follows:

> 'The sect may be regarded as a self-distinguishing protest movement; its protest in the contemporary world is not (and formerly may not always have been) normally levelled specifically against the church. It may be against the state, against the secular institutions of society, or in opposition to or separation from particular institutions or groups within the society'.[68]

According to Wilson, a sectarian movement may not necessarily protest against church organisation but against state and other secular institutions within society. Wilson's insistence is that the conceptualisation of the sect should be liberated from a restricting assumption that placed the sociological category 'sect' in bondage to specifically Christian theological preoccupations. It is useful to examine the analysis of religious movements in less-developed societies as well as in Western, Christian societies.

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[68] B. R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium* (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 12.

The sect is the notion of a voluntary collectivity which has separated itself from the mainstream of religious or political ideas and which is concerned with a self-distinguishing protest movement to preserve its social, cultural, ideological exclusiveness. Many sectarian movements, therefore, display some degree of conflict and tension with both the religious and secular social world and are characterised by a desire to seek both deliverance and salvation from orthodox cultural forms, traditions and institutions.

Wilson further suggests that 'sect' may be typified in terms of its response to the world, of the kind of reaction which dominates the customary practices and its members' beliefs. He proposes a seven-fold classification of sects as follows: 'conversionist', 'revolutionist', 'introversionist', 'manipulationist', 'thaumaturgical', 'reformist'', and 'utopian'.[69]

By going beyond the concern with degree of organisation and doctrinal heresy it is possible to examine sectarian movements which have arisen outside Christian culture. Since sectarian movements arouse spontaneous action above ritual practice, they are often concerned with protest movements.

Here we should consider 'to whom sects appeal?' Weber suggests that sects appealed to the underprivileged; those who are towards the bottom of the social hierarchy.[70] New religious movements were closely related to social class, in

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69 B. R. Wilson, 'A Typology of Sects', in R. Bocock and K. Thompson (eds.), *Religion and Ideology* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 297-311.

70 M. Weber, *The Sociology of Religions*, p. 101.

particular, the ruled rather than the ruling. In reality, a new religious movement such as Methodism is likely to attract the disadvantaged. However, Thompson also explained 'Methodism served as ideological self-justification for the master-manufacturer and for their satellites'.[71] Thus, Methodism could serve simultaneously as the religion of the industrial bourgeoisie as well as of wide sections of proletariat. Different groups in society have varying interests and life chances and respond differently to different religions. Different social classes will interpret religion and its message in the light of their own circumstances and experiences.

So, new religious movements may not be confined to the disadvantaged. This depends on subjective assessments of how a person perceives his or her position in society by the concept of 'relative deprivation'. Glock and Stark argue that a necessary condition for the development of new religion, especially a sect, is a feeling of deprivation. Suffering economic and social deprivation, and denied any realistic hope of significant change through the political system, people turned towards religious sects. This notion of relative deprivation is usually discussed in economic terms, but as Glock and Stark point out, there are other forms of deprivation, each of which may have important implications for the type of religious movements which develop. For them, deprivation refers to:

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71 E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 391.

> any and all of the ways that an individual or group may be, or feel disadvantaged in comparison either to other individuals or groups or to an internalised set of standards.[72]

Glock and Stark suggest five kinds of deprivation to which individuals or groups may be subject relative to others in society. Economic deprivation refers to the unequal distribution of income and access to resources. Social deprivation refers to the distribution of prestige, power and status. Organismic deprivation includes the ways in which people are disadvantaged through physical factors, such as blindness and general ill health. Ethical deprivation concerns the possible conflicts between the ideals of society and those of individuals or groups. For example, some persons may find themselves embedded in situations conducive to the development and maintenance of values not held by the greater society, and, indeed, that conflict with general societal values. Finally psychic deprivation occurs when people find themselves without a meaningful value system with which to interpret and organise the world.[73]

On the basis of the idea of relative deprivation, sects as new religion frequently appear to develop in conditions of social change and disruptive social processes. Also social change, in which traditional norms, values and way of life are challenged may result in a feeling of relative deprivation. Therefore, together with relative deprivation, sect and social

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72 C. Glock and R. Stark, *Religion and Society in Tension* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1965), p. 246.
73 Ibid., pp. 246-8.

change are linked. This may be particularly true if we apply Glock and Stark's term of relative deprivation to Methodism in England. Wilson attempted to explain this as follows;

> The sense of cultural retardation among rural people, the sense of lost community among arrived urban immigrants, the feelings of inadequacy among native populations impressed by the evidence of more advanced technology, and the awareness of life-styles and opportunities available only to others - are all conditions that may be conductive to new world changing responses.[74]

What Wilson attempts to explain is that the rise of Methodism in England is a response by a particular group, the new urban working class, to the disruption and uncertainty of life in the new industrial areas. Methodism can be seen as a response to rapid social change and the feeling of relative deprivation, In a situation of change and uncertainty, sects offer the warmth and support of a strong community, they provide meanings and explanations, they offer a distinct life style with rules and procedures, they allow identification with a wider purpose and reason for living.

The reason that new religious movements through sects appealed to people was based on a belief in the imminence of a radical socio-political transformation by supernatural

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74 B. R. Wilson, *Religious Sects: A Sociological Study* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), p. 232.

intervention. This belief in social transformation began with utopian ideology. In the process of history, utopian ideology could be the cause of social change. As K. Mannheim pointed out, 'man has absorbed himself more frequently in objects transcending his scope of existence than in those immanent in his existence and, despite this, actual and concrete forms of social life have been built upon the basis of such "ideological" states of mind which were not in accord with reality. Such an incongruent orientation became utopian ideology and the cause of social change only when in addition, it tended to burst the bonds of the existing order'.[75] Those orientations tend to shatter the order of things prevailing at the time. The utopian mentalities based on those orientations, in this religious meaning, are a millennium that provokes social change. Hence, millennial character of new religion is an important basis of ideology providing people with legitimacy in the course of social change.

According to the millennial tradition, which is based on Jewish apocalyptic literature and the Revelation of St. John, the Messiah will return bringing a new millennium of one thousand years and in the guise of a warrior, vanquish the devil, and hold him prisoner.

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[75] K. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 173. The utopian mentality occurs when it is incongruous with the state of reality. This incongruence is evident in the fact that such a state of mind is oriented towards objects which do not exist in the actual situation. But Mannheim did not regard as utopian every state of mine which is incongruous with and transcend the immediate situation. He referred to as utopian is only those orientations transcending reality which break down the given order. So, utopian is closely related to social change.

The Latin term *millennium* literally means the period of a thousand years; in other words, Christ will then build the kingdom of God and reign in person for one thousand years.[76] In the Bible, the millennium is referred to as in the following:

> 'I also saw the souls of those who had been executed because they had proclaimed the truth that Jesus revealed and the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image, nor had they received the work of the beast on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and ruled as kings with Christ for a thousand years. Happy and greatly blessed are those who are included in this first raising of the dead. The second death has no power over them: they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they will rule with him for a thousand years.'[77]

It is during that period that God wipes away all fears from people's eyes; there is no more death, no more grief or crying or pain and a new heaven and a new earth appear.[78] The beneficiaries of the millennium are naturally the believers, who are given the collective reward of the faithful alone. However, historically, millennial movements have often displayed an activist response to their rejection of the world, believing that secular insurrection and revolt were necessary accompaniments of their dream.

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76 Y. Talmon, 'Millenarism', *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (New York: Free Press, 1968), vol. 10.

77 *The New Testament* (Today's English Version), 'Revelation', Chapter 20, Verses 4-6.

78 *The New Testament*, 'Revelation', Chapter 21, Verses 1-4.

In this sense, the millennium is a kind of spiritual mode of thought which influences and instigates the oppressed and the disprivileged. Most people who feel oppressed in their society have naturally the desire for equal treatment. In order to fulfil their desires, they will try to find the spiritual mode to mediate these conditions. In other words, for the oppressed, it is natural to seek to better the conditions of their present life and to expect the realisation of their dreams. For the sake of the substantive demands for social and political reform in any religion, Weber says, the disprivileged are disposed to accept the need for salvation.[79]

The millennium, we think, is a response to the need for salvation, which seems to be one of the widely experienced spiritual modes. A millennial movement is therefore an activist movement for the pursuit of the millennium.

If so, as distinct from many other religious and social movements, what kind of traits do the millennial movements have? Cohn and Talmon propose much the same set of characteristics which the latter incorporates into a useful definition. Talmon remarks the term 'millennium' is used to designate religious movements that expect imminent, total, ultimate, this worldly, collective salvation.[80] For Cohn, the millennial movement is described as salvation with following adjectives: collective, terrestrial, imminent, total, and miraculous.[81] Cohn leaves out the 'ultimate' aspect but adds

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79 M. Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon, 1964), pp. 95-117.

80 Y. Talmon, 'Millenarian Movements', *Archives Europeenes de Sociologie*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1966), p. 159.

81 N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Temple Smith, 1970), p. 13.

that this salvation will be brought about by miraculous. Here, Cohn's 'terrestrial' means this-worldly heaven as a salvation to be realised not after death but for our life. Indeed, the salvation in the millennial movement appears to be on this earth and not in some other worldly heaven. Therefore, that society is built now and here and has the new order of things to provide painless peace and material abundance.

B. R. Wilson also remarks that the millennial movement has tendency toward this-worldliness. He distinguishes millennial movements from other forms of religious expression, and summarises them in the form of a fourfold table as follows.[82]

Table 2.1 Wilson's Forms of Religious Expression

	Other worldly	*This worldly*
Collectivist	Traditional religion	Millennial movement
Individualist	Evangelical Christian sects	Gnostic sects

According to him, the millennial movement is 'the collectivist this worldly religious movement which rejects the assumed permanence of the existing social, political and economic order and expect its dramatic transformation'.[83] 'Collective' means that a millennial movement is carried out not in an individual level but in a collectivist level. That is to say, it is to be enjoyed by the faithful as a

82 B. R. Wilson, 'Millennialism in Comparative Perspective', p. 97.
83 Ibid., p. 96.

collectivity. And salvation is shared by the chosen people. The message of a millennial movement is proclaimed not for an individual but for the collective and demands a new form of society different from the prior time. Thus, those who take part in the movement distinguish themselves from the non-chosen people.

A millennial movement does not seek the gradual progress in this world and the simple improvement of one or two factors like economic and political circumstances. The millennial movement is accompanied by the complete destruction of the existing society in which the evil has dominated. In this sense the millennial movement is 'total'. The millennial movement is revolutionary and catastrophic, because at the unexpected moment, it may come true in front of us. Hence millennial movements have an 'imminent' characteristic. The millennium is not necessarily limited to a thousand years. It symbolises the metahistorical future in which the world will be inhabited by a humanity liberated from all the limitations of human existence, redeemed from pain and transience, from fallibility and sin.[84] Thus the society which becomes at once perfectly good and perfectly happy is the final stage to realise the need of salvation. Because of this, we can say the millennial movement is 'ultimate'.

As we see from the above, millennial movement is a kind of religious movement for salvation, which has the characteristics of this worldliness, collective orientation, totality, imminence and ultimacy. Such millennial movements

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[84] Y. Talmon, 'Pursuit of the Millennium: The Relation between Religious and Social Change', *Archives Europeenes de Sociologie*, Vol. 3 (1962), p. 130.

have arisen all over the world with different traits and modes depending on the place and time.

Attempts have sometimes been made to apply concepts originally derived from the Christian tradition in different contexts. For this reason, we find millennial movements called by different names around world; for instance, 'Revitalisation movements', 'Nativistic movements', 'Messianic movements', 'Cargo cult', and 'Ghost dance'.[85]

In particular, Wallace's revitalisation movement is a conscious effort to construct a more satisfying culture. He proposes the revitalisation process as follows: the revitalisation movements in a steady state begin with increased individual stress, experience the period of cultural distortion, and finally accomplish new steady state through the period of revitalisation.[86] So, all organised religions are relics of revitalisation movements, surviving in routinised form in stabilised cultures and religious phenomena per se originated in the revitalisation process.[87] He argued that revitalisation movements can be achieved by secular action as well as religious.[88] As variations of the movements, he also classified as revivalistic, importation, and utopian movements on the basis of differences in choice of

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85 A. F. C. Wallace, 'Revitalization Movements', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 58 (1956); R. Linton, 'Nativistic Movements', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 45 (1945); B. Barber, 'Acculturation and Messianic Movements', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 6 (1941); P. Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of Cargo Cults in Melanesia* (London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1968); V. Lanternari, *The Religions of the Oppressed: A Study of Modern Messianic Cults* (London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1963).

86 A. F. C. Wallace, 'Revitalization Movements', *American Anthropologist*, pp. 268-75.

87 Ibid., p. 268.

88 Ibid., p. 277.

identification. Revivalistic movements profess to revive a traditional culture now fallen into desuetude, importation movements profess to import a foreign cultural system, and utopian movements profess neither revival nor importation, but conceive that the desired cultural end-state will be realised for the first time in the future.[89] Wallace insisted that the Taiping revolution is an example of importation movements.

The name is different on account of the time, place and social conditions; however, all those names do not denote mutually exclusive categories and all those movements have the traits of millennium as a religious value-oriented movements.

(3) Political Turn of Religion

The study of millennial movements has been bound up with the study of the emergence of political awareness and activity among peoples and social strata which have not previously showed an interest in political activity. Here we need to pay attention to how a religious movement can take a political turn. A number of such studies have been carried out from a Marxist perspective. One of the earliest accounts in sociological terms of a millennial outburst was Engels' account of the movement centred around Thomas Muntzer during the peasant wars in Germany during the Middle Ages.[90] This type of interpretation sees millennial movements as essentially incipient political movements arising from class antagonism, oppression, and exploitation. Hobsbawm and Worsley

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89 Ibid., p. 275.

90 F. Engels, *The German Revolutions: The Peasant War in Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

in particular have contributed to this tradition. They tend to emphasise the positive contribution of millennialism to the development of realistic political movements among the lower classes in society. Such a view could be contrasted strongly with that of Marx himself, however.[91]

Meanwhile, writers like Worsley,[92] from his analysis of the Melanesian cargo cults, and Hobsbawm,[93] from his writing on nineteenth century movements in Southern Europe, try to pave the way for more realistic political movements. Worsley insists that religion can be infused with any kind of social content, notably political.[94] Because there is both the religion of the oppressed and the kind of religion that have been summed up to the Church of England as a ruling position. He explains how it can be political as follows:

> Insofar as the believer acts at all, and not only where he tries deliberately to influence others, he is acting politically, not just religiously. Insofar as he does deliberately seek to influence others, he acts 'politically', whether he is propagating his religious beliefs as theology or challenging the secular authority of the State. No matter how spiritual his goals, he will produce political

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91 Marx saw all religions, and perhaps millennial ones more so than most, as opiate-like and likely to preclude the possibility of the realisation of any real, practical, concrete political aims. For Marx's definition of religion, see K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955), pp. 135-6.

92 P. Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of Cargo Cults in Melanesia* (London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1968).

93 E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971).

94 P. Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall sound: A Study of Cargo Cults in Melanesia* (2nd ed.), p. xxix.

> action simply through acting, even if as unintended consequences.[95]

Therefore, social actions like the worship of God, earning one's bread, and caring for one's children can fundamentally be considered as a political action. But there are those religious movements that may change the power-structure of the society by aiming specifically not only at other-worldly targets but also at altering arrangements on this earth.

These movements occurred in conditions of change and stimulated by the break up of the old order and familiar pattern uncertainty have millennial characters. These movements, Cohn argues, was advocated by the millennial prophet to use such situations to raise support and to gain a following during a time of unrest. Thus, millennial movements in the Middle Ages could be outbursts of fantasy and mania, not early stages of political movements.[96] However, Worsley views such millennial movements as early phases of political movements and forms of political activism. In particular, these movements come up against institutionalised authority in many shapes, from that of other churches to that of the State. One possible way of coping with an unfriendly world, Worsley insists, is to withdraw from it.[97] But the opportunity to withdraw, he argues, is not available in the frontier situation. According to him, in that situation, more normally, the sect is involved in the world and its rejection of

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95 Ibid., pp. xxxvi-vii.

96 N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Pimlico, 1993).

97 P. Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall sound: A Study of Cargo Cults in Melanesia* (2nd ed.), p. xxxvii.

conventional values and the creation of wholly segregated utopian communities is possible.

Worsley insists that millennial movements pave the way for more realistic political movements and appear to be early exploratory stages of a growing political awareness. In his analysis of the Melanesian cargo cults, Worsley links the movements to the oppressed and the displaced elements in society and sees them as essentially revolutionary movements which reject the rule, power and values of the dominant group and inevitably come into conflict with it. Usually, this kind of movement occurs among peoples who are divided into small isolated units lacking adequate political institutions or existing means of organisation for coping with the situation in which they find themselves as in the case of the Melanesian situation. In a word, these movements provide an organisation for political movement. Worsley explains the development of the religious movements as follows:

> More normally, the sect has to be involved in the world, and its mere existence as a separate entity and its rejection of conventional values (which are usually those of politically dominant groups) ensure for it the ready hostility of those - more numerous, entrenched, and powerful - it rejects. In this situation, the movement that sets out to live in harmony with God ends up by fighting the State ... The existing ideological support accorded the charismatic leader is not greatly strengthened. He is a political as well as a religious leader, heading an organisation and not simply an unstructured 'movement', and one that, since it rejects the existing orthodox order .... The

> millenarian cult, then normally goes through phases of development: change is intrinsic to it, since it looks to an order of things different from that which exists at present and makes demands of the world that cannot be granted. To the extent that it does succeed - e.g., in establishing a flourishing organisation - it has to develop new forms and norms of sociation.[98]

In Worsley's view such millennial movements are early phases of political movements and forms of political activism. On this basis, what the millennial movement can do is to integrate small fragmented units into some degree of unity.

By having unified a people in these ways, according to Worsley, millennial movements tend either to develop into secular political organisations which divest themselves of their millennialism or they become passive. Worsley argues that this transition to passivism is marked in two situations as follows: 'where it has been defeated, and where political aspirations are no longer masked in religious forms, but are expressed directly through political parties'.[99] In other words, the religious movements are politicised and adopt a response which ceases to really confront the dominant powers of the current world order. So they lose their revolutionism. Therefore, these movements are early forms of political movement or they grow into secular political movements. Accordingly, Worsley insists that when political organisations were present, religious escapism appears rather than potential revolutionary religious movements.

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98 *Ibid.*, *pp. xxxvii-viii.*
99 *Ibid.*, p. 231.

In the situation that the religious movements are not influential, if the religious movements continue to insist on immediate millenarism, they are likely to invite attack and to encounter suppression.[100] And they become passive minority enclaves within a secular society and more specifically 'religious' in that their concern is now primarily other-worldly.

4. Conclusions

This chapter has dealt with a number of key concepts related to the subject of the thesis. In order to apply them to Korea, Japan, and China of the nineteenth century, we obviously need to explore them further in relation to Asian examples. At the same time, by defining the concepts in a general way, we intend to avoid confusion or misunderstanding about some of the essential features of the research.

Modernisation has been usually discussed in economic or political terms. But we should recognise cultural dimensions as well. Even though modernisation means transformation of each country by development and industrialisation, if considering cultural dimensions, it does not have a simple meaning like westernisation. Here modernisation has two senses: one is all kinds of progressive social change and the other is historically specific progress.

The term of revolution often calls to mind the French revolution, the Russian revolution, or the Chinese Communist

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100 Ibid., pp. xlvii-viii.

revolution, and can appear to be restricted to these 'Classic' episodes. Another problem is that the historic events of the three countries we are concerned with have been called by differences, like 'revolution', 'rebellion', 'peasant war', and 'uprising'. By simplifying the meaning of 'revolution', we have attempted to clear up any initial confusion and misunderstanding about this issue. Here, revolution is defined as an attempt by subordinated groups to transform the social foundation by using violence. In a sense, revolutions are a western or modern term. So we may not be accustomed to calling the nineteenth Asian historical events 'revolutions'. However, for our purposes they definitely are revolutions.

Concerning with the relationship between religion and social change, when a rapid social change proceed, those who cannot perceive their position in a new society (or feel relative deprivation) seek for new ideology, a kind of religious belief, for their recognition. In this process, new religion comes to instil conservative thought or radical and then inhibit political change or promote political change. Our discussion of the meaning and characteristics of religious movements will be drawn on in the historical analysis which follows.

Part I. Social Condition and Crisis

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE OLD REGIME AND THE COMING OF CRISIS

Social change proceeds on the basis of the established society. So the cause and character of social change are closely related to the old regime. In other words, the features of the old regime influence the directions of social change.

Even though Korea and its neighbours, Japan and China, had remarkable similarities as agrarian societies, influenced by isolation policies, and Confucianism until the nineteenth century, they had differences in some important aspects. These differences may have supplied the process of modernisation with different initial conditions, thus shaping the range of possible outcomes.

In order to distinguish the different conditions that three countries had, I will examine the socio-political structures of old regimes. To do this, three countries' power structures, dominant classes, ideologies, and economic systems will be focused on in turn.

Next, the culminating crises centred in the structure of old regime will be examined. These are believed to be the basic background of the religious movements and revolutions of the nineteenth century that we will examine in this study. In each case, the intrusion of foreign powers resulted in a social and political crisis, because three countries had not been ready for abandoning their isolation policy till then.

Both the international and the domestic dimensions of the crises of the nineteenth century will be briefly sketched at this point.

1. The Structure of the Old Regime

(1) Chosŏn Korea

① The power structure

Korea's Chosŏn society (1392-1910) had a centralised political system. Central government exercised its control over all realms of social life, including politics, economy and society.[1] Centralisation of power meant that power came from the king and the ruling class around the king.[2] The ruling class, the yangban, were required to make concerted efforts to help the king, as his loyal administration. There was no other power system which was capable of challenging the central government. The king was the central figure in the political system. Yangban who resigned from government office were thereby alienated from power. According to Han, the ruling structure of Chosŏn was as follows:

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1 Han U-gŭn, 'Chungang Chipkwŏn Ch'eje-ŭi T'ŭksŏng' [The Character of Centralisation of Power], *Han'guksa* [The History of Korea], Vol. 10 (1984), pp. 200-9.

2 Yi Tae-jin, 'Chipkwŏn Kwallyo Ch'eje-wa Yangban' [The Ruling Bureaucratic System and the Yangban] in Han'guksa Yŏn'guhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa Yŏn'gu Immun* [Introduction to Korea History] (Seoul: Chishik Sanŏpsa, 1981), pp. 262-71.

> The major organs of government were the State Council, the Six Ministries and the Royal Secretariat. The State Council supervised all government affairs, which were administered mostly by the Six Ministries. They were the Ministries of Personnel, Revenue, Rites, War, Justice and Public Works. The Royal Secretariat was in charge of drafting orders and decrees, and consisted of six secretaries, one for each ministry. The Six Ministries at first came under the authority of the State Council, but later were placed directly under the King's control, the State Council being relegated to a purely advisory role.[3]

The central and highest organ of Chosŏn government was the State Council (*Uijŏngbu*). The State Council was also a deliberative organ, and its joint decisions were made by three High State Councillors. These three officials discussed important matters of state, conveyed their consensus to the king, received his decision, and transmitted it to the appropriate government agency. In the process of decision-making, the king was in the core position of power.[4]

The State Council of Chosŏn had very few officials, and since many important matters of government were referred for disposition directly to each ministry of the Six Boards (*Yukcho*), the State Council gradually declined in authority. As the respective areas of jurisdiction of Chosŏn's Six Ministries, their political importance was far greater. The Chosŏn dynasty's political structure, therefore, might aptly

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3 Woo-keun Han [Han, U-gŭn], *The History of Korea* (Seoul: Eul-yoo, 1970), pp. 229-30.

4 Yi Hyŏn-hŭi, *Han'guksa Ch'ongnon* [A Comprehensive Theory of Korean History] (Seoul: Ilshinsa, 1980), p. 163.

be termed a 'ministries system', which in a sense suggests that the political structure of Chosŏn was more bureaucracy-centred. On the other hand, the reason that the bureaucracy of Chosŏn was highly developed was to realise a centralised political system. These points about the bureaucracy applied to the provincial as well as to the central government.

As for provincial and local government, the country consisted of the eight provinces of Kyŏnggi, Ch'ungch'ŏng, Kyŏngsang, Chŏlla, Hwanghae, Kangwŏn, Hamgyŏng, and P'yŏngan, and within the provinces counties of several types (pu, mok, kun, hyŏn) were recognised. A governor was appointed by the king and dispatched to each province, with jurisdiction over the various county magistrates. The county magistrate was the so-called shepherd of the people, the official who governed them directly and whose principal duty was to collect taxes and mobilise statutory labour for the central government. Accordingly, local government may be conceived as an additional administrative apparatus for the support of the yangban class.[5]

At the same time, the Chosŏn yangban bureaucracy had modern and rational aspects such as 'term limitation' and 'avoidance rule'. Charged with broad administrative and judicial duties, the provincial and local officials were appointed for terms limited to one year for provincial governors and five years for county magistrates, and the latter were not permitted to serve in the counties in which they resided. This seems to have contributed to preventing a

5 Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A History of Korea*, trans. by E. W. Wagner and E. J. Shultz (Seoul: Iljokak, 1984), pp. 175-6.

magistrate from acting in collusion with local yangban who were their kinsmen against the interests of the yangban class as a whole.[6]

In this sense, the yangban bureaucracy of Chosŏn was a modern and rational system. However the lower levels of local governments had limitations. A so-called 'local agency' (Hyangch'ŏng) was organised in each county by its yangban residents and through this, they wielded considerable influence. This office was directed by an overseer and his assistants. It served as a power base for the local yangban and is generally considered to have exerted considerable influence on local administration.[7] As A. Giddens has pointed out, 'traditional states are essentially segmental in character. The administrative reach of the political centre is low, such that the central ruling officials cannot govern in the modern sense'.[8] Chosŏn government never reached as far as the individual county or village. In reality, local government could be autonomous owing to the limitations of central government. Since it might seem to be a decentralised structure of administration, the insistence that Chosŏn had feudalistic characters is attributed to the limitations of central government. However, whether Chosŏn was a feudalistic state or not depends not on the ruling structure but on the ruling strength. Therefore, in this study the feudalistic character to be mentioned does not mean the ruling structure.

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6 Ibid., p. 176.
7 Ibid., pp. 176-8.
8 A. Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), pp. 3-4.

Another 'modern' feature was the examination system put into effect in Chosŏn as the basis of recruiting officials.[9] Since Chosŏn restricted appointments to the sons of officials of the second rank and above, unless one passed through the examination system the path to higher office was in effect closed. For most yangban, then, the examinations were truly the gateway to success. While it is true that anyone of commoner, that is of free, status was entitled to sit for the examinations, it is not too much to say that the yangban monopolised the examinations leading to appointment to the civil offices so prized by Chosŏn's yangban society. This is because the opportunities for the kind of education needed to pass the examinations were made available almost exclusively to the yangban as well as class structure prevented others but the yangban from taking the examinations.

② The dominant class

The Chosŏn dynasty, which lasted from 1392 to 1910, exhibited strongly hierarchical distinctions of social status. Choice of occupation, style of clothing and housing, liability to taxes, rates and legal 'penalties, eligibility for conscripted labour and military service were all determined by

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[9] The recruitment examinations which was given every three years for civil and military service were modelled after the Chinese style. Powkey Sohn [Son, P'yo-gi] et al., *The History of Korea* (Seoul: Korean National Commission for Unesco, 1982), p. 149. For details, see Cho Chwa-ho, 'Hakche-wa Kwagŏje' [The System of Education and Examination], in Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa: Yangban Kwallyo Kukka-ŭi Sahoe Kujo* [The History of Korea: The Social Structure of the Yangban Bureaucratic State], Vol. 10 (Seoul: T'amgudang, 1977).

an officially stipulated status hierarchy. The classes of Chosŏn were divided into four as follows:

> At the top, of course, were the yangban, the aristocrats who monopolised both political power and wealth. Immediately below them were the chungin (middle class), a relatively small class of petty officials. Next came the sangmin (common people) who were mostly farmers and formed the bulk of the population. Finally, there were the ch'ŏnmin (low-born people) who were mostly slaves, but also actors, mudangs (female shamans), kisaengs and butchers.[10]

The status in all classes was hereditary. These ranks also were closely related to occupations which were usually divided into four different categories: Confucian literati, farmer, artisan and merchant. During the Chosŏn dynasty, Confucian literati occupations were in theory exclusively occupied by the yangban. The literati were the dominant social class that directed the Chosŏn dynasty polity. The literati consisted of the members of the 'two orders' of officialdom who served in the bureaucracy as civil or military officials.[11] This is why, subsequently, the term yangban came to be used broadly to designate the status group in Chosŏn society privileged to occupy civil and military posts in the bureaucracy. They entered the administration by examination or recommendation. Apart from being administrators, the yangban

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10 Woo-keun Han [Han, U-gŭn], *The History of Korea*, p. 247.
11 Civil officials were called *munban* and military officials *muban*, the ending 'ban' signifying 'class'. *Yangban* simply means 'both classes', but because of the structure of Choson dynasty society it also has the meaning 'Literati'. Ibid., p. 236.

were scholars, particularly of Confucian literature, and they sometimes constituted a politically influential, if not powerful, intellectual community.

The yangban who thus alone enjoyed a variety of special privileges naturally could not be other than elitist.[12] In the early Chosŏn, yangban was so exclusive that the door to advancement in the society that had been so widely opened to the class of local functionaries (hyangni) gradually became closed to them. Yangban married only among themselves and so of course yangban status became hereditary. They did not even live side by side with those who were not yangban.

Moreover, the yangban in actual practice were exempted from the usual service obligations to the state, whether statutory labour or military duty. They were to devote themselves exclusively to study, to the cultivation of self that Confucian doctrine holds must underlie the governing of others, and so the privilege that enabled them to become officials took the place of other service obligations to the state.[13] And precisely because it was this yangban class that directed the government, economy, and culture of Chosŏn society, it may reasonably be designated a yangban society. The reason that the yangban as the dominant class secured practical ruling power and social privilege was that they had exclusive access to central and provincial government posts. Confucianist academic training was a necessary condition for qualifying for office via the examination system. For the

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12 Yi Sŏng-mu, *Chosŏn Ch'ogi Yangban Yŏn'gu* [The Study of the Yangban in the Early Chosŏn] (Seoul: Iljogak, 1980), pp. 373-89.

13 Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A History of Korea*, p. 174.

purpose of providing this training, a number of educational organs were available to the yangban class.

The increased size of the yangban class in turn greatly increased the importance of an examination system for the recruitment of officials. In order to protect the common interests of the whole yangban class, the Chosŏn dynasty found it wise to put primary emphasis on state examinations. Accordingly, government service via so-called protected appointments was strictly limited, making it difficult to advance solely on the basis of family background.

There were, however, distinctions within the yangban class itself. First, the military order was less well regarded than the civil order. Second, a law banning those of illegitimate birth from important government office made it difficult and, during much of the dynasty, impossible for the sons of yangban by secondary wives, and their descendants, to sit for the examinations that would qualify them for civil office appointments.[14] Sons and grandsons of yangban widows who remarried could not serve in government office at all. All of these limitations may be viewed as part of a self-selection process at work within yangban society.

The sole profession of the yangban was the holding of public office. Yet they did not serve in the technical posts that were among the other components of the bureaucracy. Positions as medical officers, translator-interpreters, technicians in the astronomy and meteorology office, accountants, statute law clerks, scribes, and government artists all were the hereditary preserve of the so-called

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[14] Yi Hyŏn-hŭi, *Han'guksa Ch'ongnon*, p. 171.

middle people (chungin). Nor did the yangban perform the routine duties of petty clerks and local civil functionaries (sŏri and ajŏn) or of military cadre members (kun'gyo). These, too, on their lower level, were the preserve of hereditary classes of functionaries.[15] The yangban also were not interested in working in agriculture, manufacturing, or commerce, for these were but the occupations of farmers, artisans, and merchants. The yangban scholars might well dream of achieving an ideal polity through the moral cultivation of Chosŏn's people, but this did not mean in fact that they were prepared to do away with distinctions of social status.[16]

The Chosŏn dynasty was in this way definitely dominated by the yangban. The social conditions in which the yangban could direct Chosŏn society were due to the status system and the landlord system based on Confucian ideology. Confucian ideology, which described the status system as a universal discipline, justified the yangbans' control over the lower people. Therefore, there was a close connection between the yangban and Confucian ideology. Also the yangban who held offices were supported in political power and had their roots in the landed class. They could amass wealth by using official power. Accordingly, the yangban who held offices could have economic power with ease.

The yangban-centred status system, however, gradually began to come apart from the seventeenth century on. By the nineteenth century, the occurrence of sharp upward and downward movements in social status had given an increasingly

15 Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A History of Korea*, p. 175.
16 Ibid., pp. 174-5.

vague coloration to the term yangban as used to define a social class entity. This phenomenon came about first of all because of the increase in the number of 'fallen' yangban.

Within yangban lineages which had been unable to obtain a government appointment for any of their members for several generations, some had been forced by circumstance to become small-scale farmers. These were the so-called fallen yangban (chanban), those who had sunk to the point where they no longer could maintain the dignity and authority that marked traditional yangban class status. Their numbers, moreover, were steadily increasing. Their capacity to actually exercise their claim to yangban status had been eroded.[17]

In the late Chosŏn period the many yangban thus excluded from government buried themselves in the countryside and fell to the status of a kind of local nobility. In spite of this, it is undeniable that Chosŏn dynasty had been structured as a highly stratified society dominated by the yangban class.

③ Ideology

Chosŏn's ideology was Confucianism; to be exact, neo-Confucianism. Neo-Confucianism is a philosophical Confucianism that explains the origins of man and the universe in metaphysical terms. At the same time, its political ethic that it expounds lays stress on the mutual relationship of ruler

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17 Kim Yong-sŏp, 'Chosŏn Hugi-esŏ ŭi Shinbunje Tongyo-wa Nongji Soyu' [The Change of Status and the Landowner in the Late Choson], *Chosŏn Hugi Nongŏpsa Yŏn'gu* [The Study on the History of Agriculture in the Late Choson], Vol. 1 (Seoul: Iljogak, 1984), pp. 396-444.

and subject, and it is an intolerant doctrine, rejects all other teachings. In a word, it was absolute and unique. Neo-Confucian ideology planted its roots deeply in the Chosŏn polity from the beginning of Chosŏn.[18] It was fundamentally in harmony with the outlook of yangban class. The yangban tried to cultivate themselves and accumulate knowledge of Confucian literature. The neo-Confucian knowledge was for self-training as well as for the examination for government officials. The fundamental trait of the yangban class is said to be that they cultivated their minds and improved themselves on the grounds of neo-Confucian ideology.[19] The yangban, who exercised political power as the dominant class, were thus transmitters and educators of neo-Confucian ideology.

Chosŏn's Confucianism was an orthodoxy with a strong emphasis on moral obligations. It was so strict that it was impossible to admit any other thoughts and ideologies. In particular, by moral obligations, one of the neo-Confucian characters, the people were put into the categories of top and bottom. Neo-Confucianism thus functioned as a status ideology that justified social stratification, approving the existence of upper and lower classes. In this sense, Chosŏn Confucianism was an ideology that made it difficult to abolish the status system. Accordingly, neo-Confucianism might be seen as a means for the yangban to preserve political power.[20]

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18 Hwang Sŏn-myŏng, *Chosŏn-jo Chonggyo Sahoesa Yŏn'gu* [The Study on the History of Choson's Religion] (Seoul: Iljisa, 1985), pp. 66-101.

19 Ibid., pp. 125-6.

20 Wanne J. Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History* (Seoul: Chung'ang University Press, 1972), p. 301.

However, the moral emphasis, and formal rationality of Confucian ideology had a negative effect on economic activity. Because neo-Confucianism compelled the yangban to manage the production and distribution of material wealth from a nominal standpoint, Chosŏn Confucianism could not give the motivation for the accumulation of wealth. In addition, productive economic action used to be blocked by that ideology, which was negligent in economic matters. Although, after the seventeenth century, economic ability was able to make progress in accord with the changes in the status structure, Chosŏn under neo-Confucian ideology never approved of the thought that state power depended on economic power or that the elite should concern themselves with economic matters.

④ The economic system

On the whole, from the beginning, Chosŏn repressed commerce and industry. It employed an agriculture-first policy and prohibited international trade except for some items. For this reason, the transportation system for the circulation and distribution of products could not be developed. In particular, there was a limitation to the development of the commercial classes because of the arbitrary exploitation of the government officers and the system of tax in kind. Until the nineteenth century, the ruling class's general attitude to commerce suggested that they demanded prohibition of commerce and industry. This too was due to the Confucian ideology.[21]

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21 Woo-keun Han [Han, U-gŭn], *The History of Korea*, p. 243.

However, practical society, as distinct from the old regime's system of thought, changed rapidly. After the seventeenth century, commerce and industry started making rapid progress. The development of metal money and the rationalisation of the tax system made the exchange economy grow. Also owing to the fact that the central government could not extend the reach of its power to every locality throughout the provinces, the prohibition on commerce was not thorough.[22]

The problem is how the society responded to this change. To the end, Chosŏn governments did not develop a positive policy on commerce and industry, although they had financial crises. The yangban class were only interested in the exploitation of feudal tax from land, and was indifferent to productive activity which could be the origin of additional tax.

In summary, until the nineteenth century, Chosŏn society had developed to the point where commerce and industry could have been developed if merchants had been encouraged. However, the Confucian prejudice against commerce supplied the yangban with negative judgements of value about economic matters. And then, the government as well as local government had financial problems and came to be exposed to political corruption such as the sale of office. It was time that a new social system should be built to cope with social and political problems.

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22 Wŏn Yu-han, 'Sanggongŏp-ŭi Paldal' [The Development of Commerce and Industry] in Han'guksa Yŏn'guhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa Yŏn'gu Immun* [Introduction to Korea History] (Seoul: Chishik Sanŏpsa, 1981), pp. 359-66.

(2) Tokugawa Japan

① The power structure

After his victory at the battle of Sekigahara, in 1603 Tokugawa Ieyase assumed the title of Shogun, traditionally the highest military office in Japan.[23] Although in reality Ieyase's position depended entirely on his own military power, he had to be authorised by the emperor. The Emperor, although without real political power or even much private wealth, was regarded as the source of political legitimacy and the symbol of national unity. From that time, a tradition of the Emperor reigning but not ruling began to take root. Over the next century, political power slipped into the hands of the Tokugawa family and then, as the central government declined, into the hands of feudal fighting men in the countryside.[24]

Government by the shogun, often referred to as the shogunate or bakufu (a term meaning military government), was an extremely complex and intricate mechanism. Basically, the shogun administered the country along two lines. First, roughly one-quarter of the land, which was amassed during

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23 After Toyotomi Hideyoshi's death, a tense two years power struggle broke out to see him as overlord of land. At a decisive battle in October 1600 at Sekigahara, near Kyoto, Tokugawa Ieyase triumphed over the opponent daimyo (lord) and assumed power. For details, see J. W. Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), pp. 160-77.

24 But even as power fragmented and Japan entered in a period of full-blown feudalism, the old imperial system, centred in Kyoto remained the source of legitimacy. Later the Meiji restoration could be successful by drawing on this legitimacy. K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Lexington: D. C. Heath and Company, 1978), pp. 11-2.

their rise to power, was controlled by the Tokugawa family. These lands, scattered throughout the countryside but mostly concentrated in central Honshu, the Tokugawa administered directly through their own samurai retainers. Second, the remainder of the country, approximately three quarters of it, was governed indirectly through the daimyo (lords), all of whom after 1600 swore allegiance to the Tokugawa. This two line system of the Tokugawa was called *baku-han*, indicating that it was based on the parallel existence of a shogunate (*bakufu*) and some two hundred and fifty daimyo domains (*han*).[25]

Among the daimyo there were some who were very powerful, and the possibility of an anti-Tokugawa alliance among them was an ever-present danger. The Tokugawa were not strong enough fully to subjugate the daimyo, and they refrained from interfering in their internal affairs so long as the daimyo gave no sign of disloyalty. Thus the daimyo were left largely autonomous within their own domains. A daimyo was officially defined as a lord possessing a *han*. During the two and half centuries of Tokugawa rule, the number of daimyo varied between 240 and 295.[26]

The daimyo were divided into three groups, depending on the relation of their family to the Tokugawa family.[27] First of all, the *fudai* (hereditary) daimyo were those who had pledged loyalty to the Tokugawa prior to the decisive battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Because their loyalty preceded this

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25 J. W. Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, p. 165.
26 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 13.
27 A. M. Craig, *Choshu in the Meiji Restoration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 117-9.

decisive battle, they were generally considered trustworthy and they helped the staff of the central councils of the shogunate.[28] In contrast to these *fudai* daimyo, the *tozama* (outer) daimyo were those who had taken Tokugawa Ieyase as their overlord only after the battle of Sekigahara. Because their pledge of loyalty was relatively recent, they were generally regarded as less trustworthy and therefore excluded from positions in the shogunate. Indeed, among the outer daimyo were lords who had fought against the Tokugawa-allied force at Sekigahara, the two most important of which were the domains of Satsuma and Choshu. Although they had submitted to the Tokugawa after Sekigahara, they still could not be trusted and had to be kept under constant surveillance. Eventually, two and a half centuries later, it was those two domains that led the overthrow of the shogunate. The third group of daimyo, the *shimpan* (related) daimyo, were members of Tokugawa branch families. Should the main line of the family die out, a shogun would be chosen from among these lords.[29]

To exercise control over the daimyo, the Tokugawa depended on various measures. As the most effective measures, a 'rearrangement of domains' and 'an alternative attendance system' were applied to the daimyo. The rearrangement of domains, which could be ordered by the Shogun, was to rearrange or reassign landed holdings for strategic reasons. In this way the disposition of fiefs could be arranged so that potentially disloyal daimyo would be shunted to remote positions or restricted by loyal daimyo. The alternate

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[28] By the eighteenth century, they numbered in the neighbourhood of 140 daimyo.

[29] They came to number 23.

attendance system was another important method devised for controlling the daimyo. Under this system all daimyo were obliged to alternate their residence periodically between their domains and Edo. Originally this meant residing in Edo every other year. While they were in Edo, the shogunate could maintain surveillance over them. When they returned to their domains, the daimyo were required to leave behind their wives and children as hostages. In theory, about half the daimyo would be in attendance at any particular time.

Surveillance was not the only purpose. The system also served as continuous drain on the economic resources of the daimyo. They had to build and maintain houses in Edo for their families and retainers, a considerable number of who accompanied them on their biennial trip.

Although Tokugawa bakufu made an attempt to establish control over the domains, it had limitations. Since the Tokugawa bakufu could not interfere in affairs of the han without any reason, the daimyo han could have a great deal of autonomy.[30] The baku-han system of the Tokugawa was certainly unique to Japan, representing the shogunate as a national authority and the daimyo as regional lords and administrators. Certainly the Tokugawa achieved 'much more power than that of

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30 Harumi Befu, in a seminal paper on 'Village Autonomy and Articulation with the State', described the extent to which central governments (the bakufu and the daimyo) could utilise the indigenous system of control, and the extent to which the village could ignore higher authority. And T. Smith, in *Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*, detailed how authority relations within the village shifted over time. Harumi Befu, 'Village Autonomy and Articulation with the State', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (1965), pp. 19-32; T. Smith, *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 197.

previous military hegemonies. But there is no denying that the regime kept alive a dynamic tension between decentralised and centralised authority.[31] In this sense, the central authority was not so much systematic as demonstrative and specific.[32]

Consequently, Tokugawa Japan was historically a land of decentralised government. From this point of view, Japan showed the characteristics of a feudal system.

② The dominant class

The Tokugawa propounded a view of society which was one of fixed stratification: a hierarchy of samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant. Each segment was subdivided and the distinctions between them were rigidly maintained.

As mentioned before, within their own domains, or han as they came to be called later, the daimyo were left with a great deal of autonomy, free from interference so long as they did not behave in any way regarded as disloyal by the shogunate. However, because the daimyo spent much of his time in Edo, his leading vassals often tended to exercise actual administrative leadership in the han. The vassals below the daimyo were the samurai class, which constituted six or seven percent of the population.[33] In Tokugawa times they were differentiated from all other people both by titles and by the

31 J. W. Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, p. 165.
32 Umegaki Michi, *After Restoration: the Beginning of Japan's Modern State* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), pp. 18-49.
33 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 18.

sword-bearing privilege which symbolised their right to govern all classes of farmers, artisans and merchants.[34]

In earlier periods the samurai had been a farmer-warrior, tilling the land in times of peace and following his lord into battle in times of war. But with the increasing scale and complexity of warfare in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, fighting had tended to become a specialist activity, so that the functions of the samurai and the farmer became distinct. In the end the farmer was forbidden to carry arms, while the samurai were incorporated into something very like the garrison of an occupied territory, living in a strongly-defended castle from which the surrounding countryside was governed. It was in this way that the typical domain of the Tokugawa period developed. Accordingly, the Tokugawa dominant class were warriors, the samurai centred on the daimyo.

However, they were not a homogeneous group, for there was a great deal of differentiation within the class.[35] Warriors ranged from the shogun and daimyo at the top, down to the foot soldiers at the bottom. High-ranking warriors served on the Council of Elders, or in some other capacity as advisors to the daimyo. They also acted as heads of guard groups or standing army units, as supervisors of financial affairs, and as liaison agents between the daimyo and the shogunate. The middle ranks of samurai served in bureaucratic posts having to

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34 Yazaki Takeo, 'The Samurai Family and Feudal Ideology', in Jon Livingston et al. (eds.), *The Japan Reader: Imperial Japan 1880-1945*, Vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1973), pp. 57-62.

35 In Choshu, for example, the samurai class among the 5,675 direct vassals of the daimyo were divided by income. A. M. Craig, *Choshu in the Meiji Restoration*, pp. 112-3.

do with administration of the castle town, the collection of taxes, and the management of religious and educational affairs. They may also have headed various lesser units of the militia. At the lower levels, warriors served as clerks or as low-ranking military men.[36] There was thus a minute graduation of hierarchy within the samurai class, with great differences between top and bottom.

③ Ideology

Confucian doctrines were offered by the shogunate as a means of providing a philosophical foundation for the new social and political order. The Confucian doctrine was authorised as the basic content of education in the bakufu and no other schools of thought were permitted. One of the Confucian principles was that a person's fate and fortune are determined by the social conditions of his birth. No one can alter his inherited station in life. This notion was uniquely tailored for the stabilisation of authority in the feudal social order of the Tokugawa[37]

Confucianism laid great emphasis on familial relations. As a proper model for government, the Tokugawa drew relations between parents and child into those between ruler and subject. Social distinctions were held to be in the natural order of things, and each class, each age-category, each group

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36 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 9.
37 Yazaki Takeo, 'The Samurai Family and Feudal Ideology', p. 59.

had to fulfil its obligations and maintain its proper place if society was to preserve harmony.

The Confucian doctrines exactly corresponded to a hierarchical society and operated as a benevolent paternalism in government, an ethical basis for administration, and a meritorious officialdom. All these coincided with Tokugawa purposes. Therefore, political authority derived its legitimacy from its ethical basis in Confucianism. The ruling elite must set an example for the rest of society by their exemplary moral conduct.

However, the Confucian doctrine of Japan was different from that of Korea. The difference was that while the yangban of Chosŏn accepted Confucianism for self-perfection, the ruling class of Japan adopted Confucian discipline as their legitimacy to dominate by force.

As seen before, the yangban of Korea were a status group based on Confucian ideology. In a sense, Confucianism was not so much a ideological system as a social foundation. Therefore, the Chosŏn polity was inconceivable without regard to Confucianism. Every realm had been influenced by Confucian doctrine. The political structure and status system in Korea were coincident with Confucianism.

As for Japan, however, it was different. Confucian doctrine was a supplementary instrument used to justify the control of the ruling class. It is well known that in Japan those who introduced and encouraged Confucianism were Shintoists and Buddhist monks. In the Tokugawa period, it was possible for Confucianism to coexist with Shintoism, Buddhism and other ideologies, whereas the yangban of Korea suppressed

Buddhism.[38] For this reason, it was possible for Shintoism to be advocated in the late Tokugawa times even though Confucianism was the dominant ideology.

④ The economic system

At the start of the Tokugawa period a pattern of self-sufficient, co-operative farming prevailed over nearly all the Japanese country-side. Physical isolation and the primitive state of the market imposed a self-sufficiency whereby the typical village produced simply what it needed to feed and clothe its own members and to pay the land tax in kind.

The nature of the Tokugawa system transformed this pattern of farming; rural life began to change remarkably, especially by the eighteenth century. As cities grew and communications improved, the peasants began to find a market to dispose of whatever surplus goods they produced. In addition to the great urban centres of Edo and Osaka, there were the new castle towns scattered across the countryside. Villages were thereby drawn into market networks that soon changed both their pattern of farming and their structure of social relations. Commercial farming spread rapidly and widely during the Tokugawa period. Villages began to grow crops that would fill the needs of the cities and towns; they began to specialise in the crops that their soil, climate, and market favoured. Those

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38 See R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957), Chapter 3, 4.

necessities that they no longer produced could be purchased in the nearby market.[39]

With the commercialisation of agriculture, the use of money spread. Buying and selling became a common aspect of village life. With the rising productivity in the countryside there went an increase in the average standard of living, but it was by no means evenly divided among the peasants. The farming class was every bit as stratified as the others. Concentration of landownership and the spread of tenant farming was very noticeable in many of the more economically advanced sections of the country during the late Tokugawa Period.[40]

The Tokugawa system gave rise to a growing commercial economy. Within the merchant class that grew up, there was of course a great deal of disparity. It was not a homogeneous group; rather it ranged from the Osaka financiers at the top to the small shopkeepers, pawnbrokers, journeyman, and peddlers. In between these extremes were wholesalers and shippers who specialised in a variety of commodities and presided over the development of interregional trade. Within local areas there were retailers, brokers and rural businessmen, some of whom worked in association with han governments to promote commercial development.

In particular, the Osaka financiers took advantage of the unique structure of the Tokugawa system to build great merchant houses. The major daimyo of central and western Japan, needing cash principally for their alternate attendance

39 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 27.
40 In many villages landless peasants constituted a significant protest group.

requirements, marketed huge amounts of rice in Osaka, and they were dependent on the great merchants of the city to handle all aspects of these transactions. Those merchants began extending to the daimyo long-term loans at high rates of interest.[41]

Because of their importance, the financiers were often given quasi-samurai status. Thus although official ideology was often opposed to the growth of the merchant class and commerce in general, in reality government was dependent on merchant groups for their special knowledge in conducting the financial affairs of system. As a result of this, Tokugawa economy, a commercialised economy with a differentiated agricultural sector, provided potentially the basis for industrialisation and thus contributed to the development of the industrial area at the stage of modernisation.

(3) Ch'ing China

① The power structure

Ch'ing China (1644-1911) had a centralised and autocratic administrative structure. Ch'ing China government retained the basic three-part structure that had been established under the Ming in 1368: a civil administration, a military branch, and a supervisory organ. As the civil administration, the central

41 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 29.

government was organised in the Six Ministries.[42] Within this six-fold structure were divided all kinds of administration under the categories of personnel, revenue, ceremonies, war, punishment, and public works. This structure was reflected in every local government. The military branch and the supervisory organs served in offices attached to the six boards at the central government and in the provinces. The former were stationed in small posts all over the country. They performed duties of investigation, while the latter were concerned with the scrutiny and impeachment of fellow officials.[43]

The Emperor was an absolute and legally unlimited monarch, with various of the Imperial clan clustered about him. Directly below him in the administrative hierarchy came the Grand Council and the Grand Secretariat, and below these came the six departments or boards.[44] Under the central government came the provincial administrations headed in each case by a Viceroy, or a Governor.[45] Under the latter period of the Ch'ing, the number of the provinces was eighteen.[46] The

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42 Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 55-77.

43 J. K. Fairbank, 'Introduction: the Old Order', in D. Twitchett and J. K. Fairbank '(eds.), *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 24-5.

44 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928* (Princeton: D. Van Nortrand Co., 1956), pp. 3-6; M. Loewe, *Imperial China: The Historical Background to the Modern Age* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 151-66.

45 K. S. Latourette, *The Chinese Their History and Culture* (New York: The Macmillan, 1972), pp. 457-60.

46 Each province was divided into smaller units designated as *tao* or circuits over which an intendant presided. Each *tao* was made up of *fu* (overseen by a prefect), and the *fu*, in turn, were subdivided into departments (under departmental magistrates) and *hsien* (under magistrates), Ibid., pp. 460-2.

provincial officials were appointed from above, all commissions being issued by the Emperor. They were subordinated to senior officers of the central government. And they had to regulate the affairs of their areas to the satisfaction of the centre, forwarding reports when necessary, and carrying out the tasks of government such as the collection of taxes and the dispensation of justice in accordance with procedures laid down for general compliance.[47]

Officials were appointed from the ranks of literati degree-holders, who together with their families comprised a very small percentage of the whole population.[48] Most literati passed government-sponsored examinations on the Confucian classics, although a minority purchased degrees and positions.[49] Candidates from virtually any social background could enter official positions, if they wanted. However, all had to secure sponsors for preparations for examinations or to devote themselves to the examination life for a long time.[50]

Here, one mystery may be proposed about the Chinese empire. This relates to its capacity to govern so large a populace with so small an official establishment. In the case of local government, the usual magistracy, one feature was its superficial position in a region of perhaps 200,000 or 250,000 inhabitants. As a superficial role, the magistrate could do his job only in close co-operation with the local gentry

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47 M. Loewe, *Imperial China*, pp. 166-75.

48 It was less than two percent of total population. Chung-li Chang, *The Chinese Gentry: Studies on Their Role in Nineteenth Century Chinese Society* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1955), pp. 137-41.

49 All gentry members could enter the gentry group through two routes, examination and purchase. Ibid., pp. 71-2.

50 Ibid., Part 3.

leadership. The central government also depended on his co-operation with them to maintain stability. Another feature of local government was that it did not have a separate budget but was expected to operate mainly on customary fees secured from the locality and thus pay its own way. Corruption was thus built into it by the custom of tax-farming.[51] These features was responsible for the importance of the local gentry leadership. The local gentry who typically collaborated with the magistrate could approach the local officials as a status equal.

Accordingly, the Ch'ing government was highly centralised but extremely superficial. It seemed to prevent local autonomy but put a great responsibility on its magistrate to co-operate with the local gentry. The regulations were rigid but in universal terms. In one sense, local government appeared to enjoy considerable autonomy.

② The dominant class

The social classes in traditional China were composed of officials, commoners and the 'mean' people.[52] The official enjoyed particular legal and political privileges, such as exemption from statutory labour, freedom from corporal punishment and legal protection. The superiority of the

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51 J. K. Fairbank, 'Introduction: the Old Order', pp. 20-1.
52 The ideology concerning the difference between upper and low people was developed and elaborated by the Chinese ancient scholars such as Confucius and Mencius. T'ung-tsu Ch'u, *Law and Society in Traditional China* (Paris: Mouton & Co, 1965), p. 128.

officials was admitted by the commoners. The commoners included scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants. Among the commoners were a variety of statuses and roles. Among these, scholars had the highest status. Intellectuals in general looked down on artisans and merchants. Persons in the same occupational group did not always enjoy the same status, as the difference between wealthy merchants and shopowners, and between landowner farmers and tenants could be large. However, the differences within this large group were relatively minor when compared with those that separated the commoners from the officials on the one hand and from the mean people on the other hand. The mean people comprised government and private slaves, prostitutes and entertainers. [53] Any ordinary person except slaves could enter an unworthy official job.[54] But the social distance between the mean people and the commoners was great.

In traditional China, the objective criteria of wealth and income which are decisive factors in a capitalist society, did not play an equally decisive role. Even though a merchant was wealthier than an official, the social status of the latter was much higher. The status of a commoner landlord was inferior to that of an official landlord.[55] Status did not depend on wealth and income but on the acquisition of a degree

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53 Ibid., pp. 128-9.

54 H. McAleavy, *The Modern History of China* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), p. 34.

55 Hsiao-tung Fei, 'Peasantry and Gentry: An Interpretation of Chinese Social Structure and its Changes' *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (1946), p. 11

to be an official. As Max Weber pointed out, the social order was primarily based on status instead of class situation.[56]

In traditional China, the dominant status group was the gentry. This was the privileged group which dominated Chinese society. In particular, the gentry exerted their influence on local administration by utilising their degree status and special contacts and privileges. Furthermore, the gentry conscientiously undertook the responsibility of paternal or benevolent rule. It was a form of elitism, not a form of representative government.[57]

The position of the gentry was gained through passing the government examinations or buying educational titles. Almost all gentry members entered the gentry group through one of these two routes.[58]

The power of the gentry was based on office holding and the ownership of surplus and liquid wealth. However, a gentry member was not necessarily a landlord, nor was a landlord necessarily a member of the gentry. A gentry member could be very powerful even if he had no land, while landownership without gentry status gave no power.[59]

From this perspective it makes sense to argue that the core of the gentry were landlord families with degree holding official members presently in their ranks. These gentry could exert all their influence on Chinese society. They were a

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56 H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1948), pp. 181-2; A. M. Handerson and T. Parsons, *Max Weber: the Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: The Free Press, 1947), pp. 424-9.

57 J. K. Fairbank, 'Introduction: the Old Order', p. 21.

58 Chung-li Chang, *The Chinese Gentry*, p. 71.

59 Ibid., p. xvii.

dominant class as well as a dominant status. Others who lacked all of this constellation of gentry attributes - such as wealthy families without degree holder members, or poor literati or officials - should also be considered as marginal members of the dominant status. For they shared the distinctive Confucian culture or the sources of wealth of the core gentry, and thus partook of aspects of its power. As Skocpol has said, the gentry's existence and survival as the dominant status depended upon the aspirations and ability of such 'marginal' members to attain whatever of the entire constellation of core class attributes they lacked.[60] Accordingly, the reason that the Chinese gentry flourished as a dominant status class for hundreds of years before the end of the nineteenth century was that there were many aspirants to degrees and official positions. Ch'ing China recognised and sanctioned the class structure but in reality, seemed to be characterised by high social mobility.[61]

③ Ideology

The dominant ideology of Ch'ing China was, of course, Confucianism. When the Ch'ing dynasty was established, Confucianism was adopted as the main ideology.[62] The grand design of imperial Confucianism under the Ch'ing combined ethics with politics and fused the social order with the

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60 T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 72.
61 For details, see Ping-ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962).
62 Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, pp. 169-70.

cosmic order. Originally, the teachings of classical Confucianism had stressed the power of virtuous example and right conduct to influence all beholders and so keep the social hierarchy of status intact.[63]

The social and political structure of China in fact had been formed by a system of all authoritarian government, modified by ethical or humanist principles that are described as Confucian principles. These can be briefly summarised as the insistence that man must take his appropriate place in the harmonious workings and arrangements of the universe. According to Confucian principles, the way to achieve the desired ideals is to be in conformity with a recognised order of procedure and behaviour. This was conceived as a means of encouraging individuals to maintain their social stations and to discharge their full communal responsibilities. Here individual human nature can be improved by education.[64] Thus, as mentioned, most of the gentry had to spend their lifetime on Confucian education.

Confucianism, in particular, influenced the system of the family. The essential parts of it, namely, the reverence for ancestors, respect towards parents and seniors and desire for sons were common to all classes df Chinese society.[65]

The much-debated question of whether Confucianism is a religion is due to the fact that Confucianism prevailed in every realm. In traditional China, it was concerned with the organisation of the state and of society, with the structure

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63 J. K. Fairbank, 'Introduction: The Old Order', p. 28.
64 M. Loewe, *Imperial China*, p. 96.
65 H. McAleavy, *The Modern History of China*, pp. 4-12.

of the family, and with man's relation to man and so on.[66] In the meantime, Buddhism and Taoism, two other major ideologies, had thrived by means of personal appeal and private benefaction. Provided that public order was not threatened, although itself committed to the support of Confucianism, Ch'ing China did not interfere with Taoist or Buddhist beliefs as such.[67] To the vast majority of people, the three were in no sense mutually exclusive.

④ The economic system

Chinese agriculture did not present large, owner-cultivated estates. Instead, land was owned, rented, and bought and sold almost invariably in small units. The vast majority of Chinese, at least 80 percent, were peasants who farmed plots of land that the family owned, or rented, or both.[68] Economic inequality in China was attributable to differential ownership of land. By the middle of the eighteenth century, approximately fifty percent of the farmland was rented out by landlords.[69]

But regional variations were considerable. In most of the central and southern parts of China, in particular, the older

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66 K. S. Latourette, *The Chinese Their History and Culture*, pp. 528-30.
67 H. McAleavy, *The Modern History of China*, p. 15.
68 Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, p. 95.
69 D. H. Perkins, *Agricultural Development in China 1368-1968* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1969), p. 99.

areas of the lower Yangtz and south-east coast,[70] tenancy rates were higher, while in most of the north and north-west, they were much lower. There were also intraregional variations among localities.[71]

In general, the renting out of land could be profitable in regions where transport, mostly by water, became available to sell grain outside of local area. In north China transportation was more difficult. So in south and central China where more progress was made with transportation, renting was profitable.

Agrarian China was, in fact, significantly commercialised, even though the country as a whole was not basically integrated by market relations. Problems of transportation fragmented trade into thousands of local markets, with most sales of agricultural products contained within limited regions.[72] Local and intraregional commerce was quite important. For, while peasants raised most of their own food, they still depended upon the periodic markets to sell their produce for money to pay taxes, or to purchase handicraft products and things for entertainment and religious services. In a sense, the effective social field of the peasant was not confined to his village but rather to his marketing area. Nevertheless, the Chinese peasant can be said to have lived in a self-contained world.[73] Similarly, wealthy families often

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70 For details, see E. S. Rawski, *Agricultural Change and the Peasant Economy of South China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

71 D. H. Perkins, *Agricultural Development in China 1368-1968*, p. 101.

72 Ibid., pp. 114-6.

73 G. W. Skinner, 'Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China - Part I' *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1964), p. 32.

resided in market towns which supplied them with luxury commodities and provided opportunities for very profitable investments in handicraft enterprises and, above all, in pawnbroking and usurious moneylending.[74] Such investments provided crucial supplements to the lower profits that wealthy families got from land rentals alone. This was mechanism of economic activity in the late Ch'ing China.

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[74] G. Rozman, *Urban Networks in Ch'ing China and Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 82.

2. The Coming of Crisis

After the onset of the nineteenth century, the structures of the old regimes began experiencing rapid change, showing numerous symptoms that a new social order would be required. Arising from the changes in the world economic system, the socio-political structures of the three countries could not avoid the stream of world change. The need for change was transformed into crises on the basis of the structural characteristics that the traditional states had. In general, change was converted into crisis on account of the growing weakness of the central government's ruling apparatus, the breakdown of the formerly strict class structure, the appearance of new ideologies, and changes in the economic system. Here, in the search for the concrete conditions of social change, I will explore what the main elements of crises were and how differently these crises showed up in each country.

(1) Korea: The Breakdown of Yangban Bureaucratic System

① Domestic crises

Three fundamental crises created strains within Chosŏn society. There were due to the changing dominant class structure, peasant uprisings, and the weakness of the central government.

First of all, in the late Chosŏn period, to be exact from the late seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century, a changing aspect of the dominant class was the increase in the number of yangban. The growth of the yangban group was due to pressures from common people wanting to be transferred to the yangban class for the purpose of exemption from statutory labour. Increasingly, common people were able to become yangban through buying the genealogical registers or marrying a member of the yangban.[75]

Because of increased numbers, many yangban could not enter government service and stayed in the countryside. Most of them fell to the status of a kind of local gentry. Furthermore, those who were unable to obtain a government appointment for several generations became small-scale farmers. These were the fallen yangban, those whose dignity and authority could not maintained any longer. The numbers of fallen yangban appear to have steadily increased over the period we are concerned with.[76] Meanwhile, the chungin, the

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[75] Yi Hyŏn-hŭi, *Han'guksa Ch'ongnon*, p. 210. M. Deuchler explains the reason of the inflation of 'yangban rank' as follows: Because yangban status was never clearly delineated legally, there is no sure guide to determine who deserved to be counted among the elite. Social upstarts could use yangban titles and purchase official ranks from the government, because the criteria mentioned were lacking. However, they could not be of high standing of yangban such as the *sadaebu* or Great officers. M. Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 6-14, pp. 298-303.

[76] Chŏng Man-jo, 'Shinbunje-ŭi Tongyo', [Tremors in the Status System] in Han'guksa Yŏn'guhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa Yŏn'gu Immun* [Introduction to Korea History] (Seoul: Chishik Sanŏpsa, 1981), pp. 369-75; Kim Yŏng-mo, *Han'guk Sahoe Kyech'ŭng Yŏn'gu* [Study on the Social Stratification of Korea] (Seoul: Iljogak, 1982), p. 43. This table shows the change of class in a small county in Kyòngsang province. It will be observed that the yangban class had greatly increased for about two hundred years.

hereditary class of technical specialists, were improving their social position. As a result of amassing fortunes through their skills or trading activities, they were pressing new claims for the improvement of their position in Chosŏn society. At the same time, the wealthy peasants and great merchants too were in the process of raising their social status.[77] Under the impact of these shifts, the traditional yangban status system started breaking down and losing the legitimacy and the effectiveness it had had as the cement of the ruling class.

Another serious symptom of the domestic crisis was the increasing prevalence of peasant uprisings. Leadership was generally provided by discontented yangban elements, often members of the fallen yangban. As the number of the yangban increased, some of them joined the uprisings. In a number of instances originally localised disturbances grew into large-scale rebellions.[78] These uprisings were mostly spontaneous in character, having the objective of getting rid of vicious local officials. But at the same time they represented an attack against yangban society itself.

The Change of Class in Taegu county

	Yangban	Chungin	Sangmin	Ch'ŏnmin	the Other	Total
1684	19.4	3.1	24.8	47.9	4.8	100.0
1727	21.5	12.5	19.2	33.4	13.3	99.9
1775	31.0	13.3	25.2	17.8	12.7	100.0
1825	35.1	12.2	24.6	16.2	11.8	99.9
1870	42.5	16.6	16.0	13.0	11.8	99.0

77 Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A History of Korea*, pp. 250-2.
78 Ibid., p. 254.

In reality, the peasant uprisings were brought about by the disorder increasingly prevailing in three areas of administration: land allocation, military service, and grain loan system. The three administrative areas were concerned with three prime sources of Chosŏn government revenue - land tax, military service tax, and the state granary system. In late Chosŏn times, these three revenue sources were exploited more intensively by local officials, and this appears to have been one of the basic structural causes of peasant uprisings.[79]

Finally, the growing weakness of central government contributed to domestic crisis by bringing disorder to the government process. The finances of the central government were threatened, first of all, by the growing corruption of local administration. In particular, local officials in conspiracy with local wealthy men manipulated the grade of land and thus grew fat on what they illegally extorted from the peasants in their charge.[80] At last the decay made it impossible to reverse the loss of control of the central government.

② The coming of foreign powers

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79 Cho Kwang, 'Shipku-segi Millan-ŭi Sahoe-jŏk Paegyŏng' [Social Background of the Uprising in the Nineteenth Century], in Tŏk-kyu Chin (ed.), *Shipku-segi Han'guk Chŏnt'ong Sahoe-ŭi Pyŏnmo-wa Minjung Ŭishik* [The Transformation of Traditional Society and the Consciousness of the People in Korea in the Nineteenth Century] (Seoul: Kodae Minsok Yŏn'guso, 1984), pp. 208-18.

80 Ibid., p. 210.

From early in the nineteenth century, Korea, Japan and China were confronted with Western power. At that time, Western nations displayed ever greater interest in establishing contact with three countries for trade and other purposes.

In the case of Korea, the Western powers such as Britain, France, America, and Russia one after another came knocking on Chosŏn's doors: 'In 1832 an English merchant ship appeared off the coast of Ch'ungch'ŏng province seeking to trade, and in 1845 an English warship spent more than a month in Korean waters, surveying the island-studded sea between Cheju and the southern coast. In 1846 three French warships dropped anchor off the Ch'ungch'ŏng coast, left a letter for forwarding to the court and departed, while in 1854 two armed Russian vessels sailed along the Hamgyŏng coast, causing some deaths and injuries among the Koreans they encountered. In 1866, the German adventurer Oppert twice asked permission to trade, though his request was denied'.[81]

This series of events symbolising the coming of Western power was regarded as a serious problem by a Chosŏn dynasty already troubled by a variety of internal ills. Korean governments at that time thought that they would be contaminated by Western ideas. The Chosŏn's isolation policy adopted by Chosŏn was thus to avoid the intrusion of Western ideas rather than to exclude Western trade. Fundamentally, Korea's rejection of Western demands is attributable to fear of the spread of Catholicism. This was not misconceived, as Catholicism won more and more converts from among chungin,

[81] Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A History of Korea*, pp. 262-3.

commoners, women, and other lower or oppressed segments of the population.[82]

At the same time, Korean authorities were aware of the fate that had befallen China in consequence of continuing clashes with Western nations - the Opium War of 1839-1842, the Arrow Incident in 1856, and others. The Korean government, then, looked upon rejection of Western demands for trade as a means of preventing such disasters from overtaking Korea as well.[83]

Accordingly, Korea's doors were tightly closed. The local populace, alarmed by the appearances of these strange vessels, also thought of the coming of Western nations as a menace. All contact with Westerners was regarded as fraught with peril, so that Korea's doors could not open. Even contact with Japan, which had established relations with the Western powers, was looked upon as dangerous. While Korea was ruled by the Taewŏn'gun (Prince Regent Yi Ha-ŭng) who intensified this policy of strict seclusion, only commercial relations with Ch'ing China were permitted.[84]

The Western nations, thereupon, attempted to compel Korea to open ports by the threat of military force. This resulted in the eruption of two major 'foreign disturbances', military

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82 Ibid., pp. 257-8.

83 Ibid., p. 263.

84 F. F. Chien explains that the Chosŏn's policy of seclusion began from 1637 as follows: 'in 1627 and 1636, the Manchu Prince, Huang-t'ai-chi, sent expeditions to bring the Koreans to terms. Korea, overpowered by the military supremacy of the Manchus, finally submitted in 1637, and agreed to the severe demands imposed on her. However, the Koreans were not a people easily subdued, and as a result of their humiliation they sealed themselves off from intercourse with foreign countries after 1637'. F. F. Chien, *The Opening of Korea: A Study of Chinese Diplomacy 1876-1885* (New York: The Shoe String Press, 1967), p. 13.

clashes with Western nations. The first was the 'Foreign Disturbance of 1866',[85] which was ignited by Korea's suppression of Catholicism. Nine of the twelve French missionaries who were active in Korea at that time had been apprehended and martyred. Five years later, the 'Foreign Disturbance of 1871' occurred. The destruction in 1866 of an American merchant ship, the General Sherman, on the Taedong River below P'yŏngyang has already been recounted twice, in 1867 and 1868.[86] Now belatedly, the American government decided to use the incident as a pretext to force Korea to open its ports to trade. However, the two clashes, which broke out on Kanghwa island, turned out in favour of Korea due to the stubborn Korean resistance. Exultant at these victories over the attacking French and American warships, the Taewŏn'gun now further hardened his exclusion policy.[87]

The continuous intrusions by foreign powers were, however, too much for the Korean government to adhere to its isolation policy. At last, in 1876 Korea opened its ports to Japan by the Treaty of Kanghwa, which Japan demanded forcibly. After this, Chosŏn concluded commercial treaties one by one with America (1882), Britain and Germany (1883), Italy (1884), France (1886) and so on.[88]

Chosŏn unwillingly came to enter onto the international stage. The fact that Chosŏn could not operate autonomous power

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85 In 1866 the American trading ship General Sherman sailed up the Taedong River to P'yŏngyang and was burned by a mob of the local populace and soldiery, with all who were on board perishing.

86 Yi Hyŏn-hŭi, *Han'guksa Ch'ongnon*, p. 266.

87 Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A History of Korea*, pp. 264-6.

88 Yi Hyŏn-hŭi, *Han'guksa Ch'ongnon*, p. 270.

as a independent state in the process of opening ports was received as a crisis.

(2) Japan: The Crisis of the Bakufu

① Domestic crises

As in Korea, the government system of Tokugawa Japan had come to be less efficient in the latter part of the period. Corruption and irregularity were not uncommon. This was caused by the soaring expenditures of the bakufu and the individual daimyo. Moreover, the alternative attendance system was one of the main expenditures, which threatened the finance of the daimyo.[89] It was true that some daimyo succeeded in developing additional sources of income, principally through the development of new cash crops that were run as han monopolies, but the government had not generated the added revenues necessary to defray its soaring expenses. Since the government failed to develop adequate methods for taxing the growing sectors of the economy, it found itself in financial troubles.

As a result of increasing economic troubles it was frequently unable to pay warrior stipends.[90] Like the daimyo and the bakufu, the samurai had to grope for some way to

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89 According to Pyle, the typical lord was devoting as much as 70 to 80 percent of his normal expenditures to costs connected with the system. Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 36.

90 By the end of the eighteenth century it was common to cut warrior stipends, sometime by as much as 50 percent. Ibid., p. 37.

resolve their financial difficulties. Many of these measures were makeshift and often they were degrading. According to Pyle, 'Hard-pressed for money, some samurai adopted merchant boys into their family or married their children to the children of their merchant creditors. Another recourse was to pawn the family armor. ... A large number of the poorer samurai families eked out their inadequate stipends through cottage industries, such as the making of straw sandals'.[91] Some poor samurai abandoned their duties and sought after a better living as commoners. In several linked respects, therefore, the rigid class structure established at the outset of the Tokugawa period was collapsing.

On the other hand, some peasants piled up fortunes because growing wealth in the agricultural sector was not taxed in a systematic way. These wealthy peasants could gain the right to wear swords, bear surnames, and send their sons to the domain academy - all privileges ordinarily reserved for the warrior, through contributions to their daimyo's treasury. But not all peasants were wealthy. As in the other classes, there was great disparity of wealth. In reality, large numbers of the peasantry lived at the subsistence level, contributing to repeated peasant uprisings. In particular in the 1720s, 1780s, and 1830s peasant uprisings occurred in succession.[92] Such outbreaks were usually directed against the wealthy, the moneylenders, and local officials. These riots were the ultimate protest that peasants could make against unbearable conditions, and though they were often not political in intent

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91 Ibid., p. 38.
92 H. Borton, *Peasant Uprisings in Japan of the Tokugawa Period* (New York: Paragon Book, 1968).

they held political meaning, for this form of protest was a spectre that any lord might fear in pondering the possibility of increasing the land tax.[93]

The internal crises of Japan in the late Tokugawa period, bore a close resemblance to those of Korea in character. However, in Japan the breakdown of class structure was caused by the collapse of the samurai, while in Korea, by the increase of the yangban. And unlike those of Korea, some peasants of Japan were able to have their own power to enjoy themselves by massing wealth and occasionally contributed to their daimyo's finance. Therefore, the peasant as the subject of social change were paid much less attention to than the samurai.

② Foreign power

The rulers of Japan had decided to shut out the outside world at the outset of the Tokugawa shogunate. This isolation policy was employed with a view to controlling the lords, particularly the tozama daimyo, who might use foreign trade to secure military and economic sources of strength. It was also intended to eliminate Christianity which would be a source of social disruption in the state order of the Tokugawa.[94] The

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93 Nor were the uprisings simply blind outbursts. Often they had very specific goals, such as the remission of certain taxes, the removal of a particular official, or the correction of some local abuse.

94 By 1650 Christianity was almost completely eliminated. Even more, Japanese were prohibited from travelling abroad.

bakufu made exceptions only for a handful of Dutch and Chinese merchants who were allowed to visit Nagasaki.[95]

For two hundred years this system of a closed country was maintained. In the nineteenth country, however, it began to weaken in the face of increasing encroachment from the Western powers.

Russia had posed the initial problems. Its envoys and traders began appearing on the islands north of Hokkaido in the 1790s, seeking to open trade relations with Japan. In every case they were rebuffed, and after 1813 there was no further contact for several decades.

A series of incidents ensued, beginning in 1808 when a British frigate flouted the exclusion decrees by sailing into Nagasaki harbour demanding supplies of food and water. In 1844 the Dutch, acting through their trading station representatives in Nagasaki, warned the bakufu about the situation and urged that the country be opened voluntarily before Western nations undertook to force Japan to this decision.

In 1852 the American mission headed by Matthew C. Perry tried to establish relations with the Japanese government. The Perry mission originated in the desire to protect shipwrecked American sailors and to acquire the right for ships to take on provisions. But deeper reason was to expand its interests in the Pacific. Perry presented his demands for treaty relations in the summer of 1853. The following year a treaty was signed (the so-called Kanagawa Treaty of Friendship) which provided

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95 W. G. Beasley, *The History of Japan* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), p. 2.

that two ports, Shimoda and Hakodate, would be opened to American ships and limited trade.

The opening of the port was a sign of crisis because it took place under the circumstance that Japan was forced to open. It was a important time that Japan experienced a new international order and felt the crisis of the independence of state.

(3) China: The Disorder of the Ch'ing

① Internal disorder

In the late Ch'ing period, internal disorders was mainly attributable to three factors: population growth, financial problems, and peasant uprisings. In particular, the role of population growth in the crisis of the nineteenth century distinguishes the Chinese experience from that of Korea and Japan. By the nineteenth century, population growth in China was running up against the limitations of the agrarian economy. Within an unchanging institutional structure, the traditional Chinese economy could be maintained steadily from the fourteenth century until the eighteenth century.[96] Owing to land development for cultivation and the application of more labour-intensive methods, grain production was able to keep up with population growth. Commerce and handicraft

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96 E. S. Rawski, *Agricultural Change and the Peasant Economy of South China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. 23-8.

industries also kept pace, and may even have experienced some real growth. These were spectacular achievements.

But, by the nineteenth century, the situation was different. Available new lands were running out, while the population had increased greatly.[97] The traditional agrarian economy was reaching the limits of its possible expansion without creating the conditions for any spontaneous emergence of industrialism. As a consequence, rural areas could be easily in disorder.

In the meantime, the Imperial authorities had financial problems. These were due to the fact that the Ch'ing, like the late Tokugawa, did not elaborate a tax system which would make them weather the financial problem. So they were becoming weaker financially and administratively. The main problem was with the land tax. Ever since 1712, provincial quotas for the land tax had not changed.[98] However, local and provincial collections increased because the increase of informal collection and fees. Accordingly, the Ch'ing's financial crisis was weakening the civil administration over the country.

At the same time, the Ch'ing were confronted from the end of the eighteenth century with peasant-based uprisings. The first great peasant revolts of the Ch'ing began in the north-west and Honan in 1795, the very year in which the aboriginal inhabitants of Hunan and Kweichow rebelled and piracy began again on the coast of Kwangtung and Fukien. A series of the

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97 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, 1956), p. 48.

98 Albert Feuerwerker, *The Chinese Economy, ca. 1870-1911*, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, No 5. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), p. 64.

peasant uprisings was a sign of a deterioration at that time. Entering the nineteenth century, the peasant uprisings continued. In particular, the peasant revolts inspired by the White Lotus sect were not repressed until 1803, and there was to be resurgence of this uprising a few years later.[99] Unlike in Korea and Japan, in China there were rebellions which were raised by people loyal to a previous dynasty, the Ming.[100] This kind of rebellion was based in part on the racial background of the power-holders - the Ch'ing being of Manchu stock.

The frequent uprisings of the nineteenth century had an enormous impact upon the Chinese Imperial state. The central government had no resources to combat the rebellions. A series of periods of warfare made tax receipts decline so that the Ch'ing dynasty was unable to put down the rebellions with its own Imperial standing armies. The central government was collapsing with increasing speed. Moreover, the overt challenges to its sovereignty distracted the Ch'ings' full attention from the growing external threats.

② Foreign crisis

Like other Asian countries, China could not avoid the implications of Western power. In the late era of the Ch'ing it came under extraordinary pressures from Western nations

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99 J. Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilisation*, trans., by J. R. Foster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 530-1.

100 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, pp. 50-1.

abroad. Since this happened even as internal disorders were unbalancing the social system, the Ch'ing were scarcely capable of responding effectively to the foreign threat.

During the nineteenth century China was subjected to intensifying foreign pressures of an unprecedented kind.[101] Traditional China did not seem to employ a strict isolation policy comparable with Korea and Japan. There was indirect contact between China and the west since Roman times, and in the thirteenth century the Mongol subjugation of much of the Eurasian continent made it possible for European merchants and travellers to journey to China.[102]

By 1516, the Portuguese had arrived and made contact commercially with the Chinese by setting up illegal camps off the coast.[103] Foreign traders were not permitted to reside or carry on business inside the country until the eighteenth century. Before that time, the Chinese had treated foreign traders as bearers of tribute and as actual or symbolic vassals of China in the manner of Korean or Southeast Asian states.[104]

However, from the beginning of the eighteenth century, a certain appointed place was open to the foreigners.[105] The only place where foreign traders were permitted to trade was Canton. Foreign merchants were rigorously regulated,

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101 F. Wakeman Jr., *The Fall of Imperial China* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), pp. 111-29.
102 Ibid., p. 112.
103 Ibid., p. 114.
104 Ibid., p. 118.
105 H. McAleavy, *The Modern History of China* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), p. 36.

supervised, and taxed by Imperial authorities in that area. It was known as the 'Canton system'.[106]

But beginning in the early nineteenth century, Britain could back the aspirations of its citizens for expanded 'free trade', in all of China. After inflicting decisive naval defeats on Chinese forces in the Opium War of 1839-42, Britain achieved expanded trading rights. And then other Western nations joined in the quest to 'open' China. Free-trade concessions, limitations on tariffs, extraterritorial jurisdiction in treaty ports, legal immunities for Christian missionaries - all were forced from unwillingly Chinese authorities step by step following repeated foreign invasions.

And ultimately the Western powers proceeded to carve out large 'spheres of influence'. The Ch'ing existence as a sovereign power was profoundly threatened.

3. Conclusions

This chapter has presented a comparative historical analysis of the old regime of Korea, Japan, and China. In the aspect of power structure, the old regime of Korea was a centralised system, while Japan had a decentralised structure. Ch'ing China also had centralised structure, but in practice it gave significant autonomy to local government.

As for the dominant classes, all three countries had given privilege to a dominant class: the yangban, the warrior, and

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[106] F. Wakeman Jr., *The Fall of Imperial China*, pp. 120-1.

the gentry. The Chosŏn yangban of Korea was the strict hereditary status class which benefited from the system. The class structure of Japan was also strict and hereditary. However, in Ch'ing China, as persons had, in theory, a chance to become the gentry through examinations and purchase, the gentry class was less hereditary. The yangban and the gentry were status classes based on Confucianism, while the warrior status was based on the relationship between lord and vassal. Because of this relationship, Japan appears to have had a more feudal character when compared with the other two countries.[107]

With regard to ideology, all three countries were strongly influenced by Confucian ideology. Korean Confucianism was, however, more exclusive than that of the other two countries. Chosŏn Korea never approved any other ideology, so the Buddhists, for example, were repressed.

In respect to the economic system, commerce in Korea was repressed owing to the prejudices of orthodox Confucianism. Chosŏn Korea employed the agriculture-first policy, so in general, peasants could not convert to commercial agriculture like Japan's peasant. Because of this, the life of the peasant was liable to deteriorate. Ch'ing China had a self-sustaining agricultural structure, so local markets formed around rural society. In contrast, Japan's commerce was more developed

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[107] Since the relationship between lord and vassal was not based on a contract relation but on loyalty and duty to superiors, it was a little different from Western feudalism. According to B. Moore, 'Japanese feudal bond seem more primitive, less objective and rational'. B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, pp. 233-4. For more details, see P. Duus, *Feudalism in Japan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969).

earlier. The decentralised power structure allowed a merchant class to develop without the interference of the bakufu.

In the course of time, all three countries were plagued by internal disorders and foreign conflict, causing a widespread breakdown of the existing social structure. With regard to domestic crises, in Korea, the increasing number of yangban, the corruption of local administration, and peasant uprisings were the main causes. In Japan, the financial problem of the bakufu and the daimyo and the breakdown of the samurai were important factors and in China, population growth and racial rebellions played key roles. In the meantime, foreign conflicts were a common crisis that the three countries experienced. The problem was how to cope with the infiltration of the foreign powers.

Table 3.1 Social Conditions in Korea, Japan and China

	Korea	Japan	China
Power structure	Centralised Power	Decentralised Structure (the bakufu-han system)	Centralised Structure
Dominant class	Yangban (literati)	Samurai(the worrier)	Gentry
Ideology	Confucian (exclusive)	Confucian	Confucian
Economic system	Agriculture first	Development of Commerce	Self-sustaining agriculture, form small market

We might say that domestic crises came out from the problems of the traditional societies and the coming of foreign powers came out from the process of reorganisation of the world economic system. In a word, it was a time in which the traditional social structure could not be maintained. In the next chapter, the concrete events revealing the different ways in which Korea, and its neighbours, Japan and China, reacted to these crises will be dealt with.

Part II. The Problem of Social Order

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT AS A FORM OF PROTEST

The previous chapter has described the characteristics of the old regime and shown the crises from with and without in Korea, Japan, and China. The crises were a sign of impending social change for a new order. The aim of the present chapter is to explore how Korea reacted to its crises. In order to specify the theme, as I said at the outset, we will focus on the Tonghak religious movement, which was one of the most important reactions to the crises. As a form of religious thought, Tonghak laid emphasis on a new ethic of the individual. As a movement for fundamental reform it rejected the human relations of a hierarchical society based on Confucian ethics and advocated human equality in a new society. At the same time, Tonghak set itself against the intrusion of Western powers. This chapter will focus on the historical development of Tonghak thought and then on the inner strains of the relationship between its religious ethic and the real political world. And I will indicate the characteristics of Tonghak which made its members take political action towards social reform.

1. The Formation of Tonghak as Social Order

(1) The Development of the Tonghak Religion

As we have seen, in the mid-nineteenth century when Tonghak was founded (1860), Korea faced a serious crisis which

was caused by the deteriorated political and social system of the Chosŏn dynasty, for example, the disorder of the three administrations, and by the intrusion of foreign powers demanding the opening of the country to foreign trade and influence. In particular, consciousness of crisis became prevalent after China was defeated in the Opium war (1839-1842). The crisis appeared to involve not only political and economic problems, but also spiritual and cultural disorders for both the government and the people.[1] One of the spiritual and cultural disorders arose from the influence of Christianity. Christianity was regarded as a barbaric and dangerous doctrine, because it was accompanied by the destruction of the Confucian ancestral tablets which were symbolic of the entire Confucian system of ethics and social control. These conditions are those that are said to have given rise to the Tonghak movement.[2]

Tonghak was established in 1860 by Ch'oe Che-u, a yangban alienated from society, who believed that the present should be delivered from the serious crisis of that time. The principles of Tonghak thought as elaborated by Ch'oe Che-u are based on *Poguk Anmin* (to sustain the nation and provide for the people) and *Kwangje Ch'angsaeng* (to save the oppressed people). In the sacred book of Tonghak, *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn* (The Bible of Tonghak Doctrine),[3] Ch'oe gives his own account of why he came to found a new religion:

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1 See Chapter 3, for details, Han U-gŭn, *Tonghak-kwa Nongmin Ponggi* [Tonghak and Peasant Uprising] (Seoul: Iljogak, 1983), pp. 1-45.

2 B. B. Weems, *Reform Rebellion and the Heavenly Way* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1964), pp. 5-6.

3 This Tonghak scripture was published in 1888 by his successor, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng. The sacred books are based on

> 'Our country falls into social illness from which the people suffer all the year round, and thus we will never fail to be injured. The Westerners always win, whenever they fight. So they can do whatever they want. If the universe perishes, we also cease to exist. Where do we have to find the way to prevent this?'.[4]

'Social illness' refers fairly directly to the corruption of Chosŏn society, while the concern over the Westerners' threat involves a sense of national crisis. Ch'oe believed that Tonghak could achieve a simultaneous breakthrough with respect to both the 'feudal' and national crises which the Korean people faced in the mid-nineteenth century.

The background to the advent of Tonghak is, in reality, well illustrated by Ch'oe Che-u's personal circumstances and biography. Because Tonghak arose in a direct fashion from Ch'oe Che-u's personal experience of revelation, it is relevant to examine his peculiar circumstances.

Ch'oe Che-u was a victim of the social system of Chosŏn, because he was born the son of a concubine of a yangban. The son of a concubine was excluded from the privileges of the yangban. Ch'oe Che-u was born to Ch'oe Ok (1762-1840), who was a descendant of a fallen yangban family.[5] Ch'oe Ok had no son to continue the family line, which was very important for

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Ch'oe Che-u's own writings and pronouncement. The quotations and page numbers used here from *Ch'ŏndogyo Kyŏngjŏn* [The Sacred Books of Ch'ondogyo] (Seoul: Ch'ŏndogyo Press, 1987). Tonghak was renamed Ch'ŏndogyo in 1905.

4 'P'odŏngmun' [On Propagating Tonghak] in *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn* [The Bible of Tonghak Doctrine], p. 29.

5 Yu Pyŏng-dŏk, *Tonghak Ch'ŏndogyo* (Seoul: Shiinsa, 1987), pp. 167-70.

the continuation of the lineage. He took a widow from his neighbourhood as his concubine. However, Ch'oe Che-u, born of this relationship, was considered illegitimate.

In Chosŏn society, illegitimate sons were forbidden to take the civil service examinations. Illegitimate sons of the time, no matter how competent and gifted, were not allowed even to enter the site where state examinations were administered. Furthermore, they could not call their father 'father' because of the strict discriminatory system against illegitimate sons. The social practices of the time despised illegitimate children even more than *chungin* (members of the middle class). In Chosŏn society, therefore, an illegitimate child was an outcast from birth. Ch'oe Che-u was born as an outcast in 1824, toward the end of the Chosŏn dynasty. At the same time, by all accounts, he was an individual who possessed a brilliant mind.[6]

Owing to the fact that he was illegitimate, Ch'oe experienced an early sense of personal frustration. He realised that no matter how hard he studied, he would never be employed or treated according to his personal merits in Chosŏn society. His frustration at the social injustices and political corruption of which he was a victim was profound. After his father died, he started wandering around the country to seek a means of livelihood. After he set off from his home, he undertook various studies as well as jobs. During his wandering, he studied various Chinese scriptures to seek

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6 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa* [The History of Tonghak] (Seoul: T'aegwang Munhwa-sa, 1987[1938]), pp. 43-4.

spiritual salvation and engaged in studies of Taoism, Buddhism and even Catholicism.[7]

However, Ch'oe Che-u was unable to achieve satisfaction from these pursuits. None of the religions he encountered, Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism or Catholicism, appeared to give him the truth. In despair, he returned to his family in 1854, 11 years after he had left home at the age of 31. His wandering throughout the country had not been entirely in vain, however. Although he had yet to arrive at spiritual enlightenment, he had gained important knowledge about and insights into the realities of contemporary society, his nation and its people.[8]

In a sense, the principles of Tonghak thought, *Poguk Anmin* and *Kwangje Ch'angsaeng*, might be seen as the result of Ch'oe Che-u's wandering. During his years of travelling throughout the country, Ch'oe Che-u observed that the people felt a deep need for a new order and a new world. This was his wish as well. He confirmed through his wanderings that the means of livelihood and the Way which he sought did not exist in this world. For his Way, he squandered almost all inherited fortune. He became determined to create a new religion and system of thought in order to save the people, including himself, society, and the country.[9]

To this end, Ch'oe Che-u undertook an arduous six years period of studies and meditation. Tonghak was founded through the determination of Ch'oe Che-u to respond to the people by

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7 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
8 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa* [The Founding History of Ch'ŏndogyo] (Kyŏngsŏng [Seoul]: Ch'ŏndogyo Chungang Ch'ongniwŏn, 1933), Vol. 1, pp. 3-6.
9 'P'odŏngmun' in *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, p. 29.

founding a new Way. Like the founders of many other new religions, he explained that he had arrived at spiritual enlightenment through a conversation with God, in which he received God's revelations.[10] In *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, his experience of revelation is described as follows:

> 'Suddenly the heavens shook and I heard the words of God. He said "I am called Sangje (the Lord of Heaven) ... I have also so far not achieved any merit. Therefore I have let you (Ch'oe Che-u) be born into this world to teach the Way of Heaven (Tonghak), a new Way, and teach the people as I (Sangje) told you"'.[11]

According to *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, Ch'oe felt an ecstatic, probably shamanistic, communion with the Lord of Heaven and was given divine approval with which to found a new religion. Furthermore, the means of salvation which God gave Ch'oe was a spirit medicine:

> 'By receiving the spirit medicine from me (God), relieve the people from illness. By receiving the magic from me, teach them and make them worship me (God)'[12]

Ch'oe Che-u, to be sure, was a prophet of the type who proclaims a religious doctrine or divine commandment by virtue of his mission. He belongs not to the category of 'exemplary prophet' but to that of 'ethical prophet'. The former may be

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10 The date of revelation is on 25 may 1860. Chi-yŏng O, *Tonghaksa*, p. 20

11 'p'odŏngmun' in *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, pp. 27-8.

12 Ibid., p. 28.

an exemplary man who demonstrates to others the way to religious salvation, as in the case of Buddha. The latter receives a commission from God and demands obedience as an ethical duty.[13] Such a role as prophet is to claim to bring a completely salvation.

Ch'oe's spiritual enlightenment changed him into a deliverer with charismatic capacity. By transforming himself in this way, Ch'oe Che-u was able to cope with the crises facing the country. As we have seen, these crises, observed and experienced during Ch'oe's 11 years of wandering, were largely two. One was the Western powers' invasion of eastern Asia, which had led to the breakdown of China. For him, encouraging the people to seek spiritual salvation in Western Learning (Roman Catholicism) would mean that a comparable national crisis would also be imminent in Chosŏn (the Eastern country). The other was the corruption and depravity of the Chosŏn dynasty itself. Those had reached such extremes that while evil persons enjoyed riches and honour, the virtuous suffered poverty. The people were confused, not knowing which way to turn, having lost the way to spiritual salvation. Ch'oe Che-u believed that such crises were the result of the absence of a religious ideology which showed a clear way forward. He pointed out that under such circumstances the existing religions and philosophies such as Confucianism and Buddhism were no longer effective, that they were without life or vitality.[14] And Catholicism, he believed, aggravated the

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13 M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Vol. 2, pp. 439-51.
14 'Kyohun'ga' in *Yongdam Yusa* [Anthology of Ch'oe Che-u's Hymns]. The quotations used here from *Ch'ŏndogyo Kyŏngjŏn*, p. 150.

situation, because it prohibited *chesa* (the traditional ancestor worship of Korea) regarded as an act of idolatry. He despaired that the world had arrived at a state of extreme depravity. In order to save the world, there was no way but to make a new religion.[15]

Ch'oe Che-u named the new Way, system of thought or religion which he founded, 'Tonghak' or 'Eastern Learning', emphasising that it had arisen in opposition to Western Learning.[16] He distinguished Tonghak and Western Learning (Roman Catholicism) as follows:

> 'Their purpose is similar to mine, but they do not have the truth ... My doctrine is based on the incarnation of God in mind. It shows one how to control one's mind, think clearly, control one's temper, and acquire information. These foreigners have no logical sequence in their speaking, nor order in their written books, and no decorum in their worship. They only pray for selfish benefits. They have no proper spirit to inspire them in their physical life, and there is no teaching concerning the true God in their system. They have an appearance of it but no reality. they do not have our Sacred Formula ... They do not really study to know God. Their differences from us are quite remarkable'.[17]

Ch'oe Che-u insisted that the doctrine was Heaven's doctrine but that the teaching was Eastern Teaching, Tonghak.[18] Here it

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15 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 33.
16 Ibid., p. 5.
17 'Nonhangmun' [On Learning of Tonghak] in *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, pp. 46-47.
18 Ibid., p. 48.

should be noted that the term 'Tonghak' has a dual meaning: one is 'Eastern Learning', and the other 'Learning of the Eastern Country' (Chosŏn). Ch'oe Che-u's Tonghak was a new religion and a new thought system. However, his thought system was created through a combination as well as a criticism of the principles of the then existing Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Furthermore, Ch'oe Che-u included some elements of Western Learning in this new synthesis. This is due to the fact that he was well educated in the Confucian Classics and in the literature of Buddhism and Taoism.[19] He also studied some Roman Catholic writings such as pamphlet and leaflet.[20]

Because of this, at first, Tonghak was regarded as stemming from Catholicism. Ch'oe Che-u explained the relationship between Tonghak and Western Learning in the following manner: 'their Way and their destiny are the same but their principles are different'.[21] He said that his Tonghak and Western Learning shared the same destiny because both were destined to flourish and that they followed the same Heavenly Way. This is understood as his acknowledgement that Western Learning was included in the founding of Tonghak.

Ch'oe Che-u recognised the mighty power of the West which was destroying China. He perceived Western power as stemming from the power of Western Learning, including the Way (Western Way), Learning (Western Learning) and religion (Catholicism), and from the military power of West. He saw Western Learning as the fundamental source of Western power and also believed that the military power of the West was ultimately based on

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19 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 5.
20 B. B. Weems, *Reform Rebellion and the Heavenly Way*, p. 7.
21 'Nonhangmun', p. 47.

this and guided by the same. Ch'oe Che-u felt a serious crisis, thinking that the power of Western Learning, after destroying China through Western military force as an intermediary measure, would invade Chosŏn and destroy his motherland as well. In order to avert this possibility, he founded Tonghak. That is to say, in founding Tonghak, he claimed to be laying the foundations of a superior Way compared to Western Learning. The Way Ch'oe founded was something that no one had heard of either in the past or in the present and it offered a law that was incomparable to any law of the past or the present. He confidently explained that it was the best Way of all ages and nations and a 'boundless great Way that was truly unique'.[22]

Ch'oe concentrated on elaborating the theoretical framework of Tonghak for one year after the first establishment of Tonghak. In 1861, he went on to compose the *P'odŏngmun* (On Propagating Tonghak) and began to work on the spreading of Tonghak. But as Ch'oe Che-u began to succeed in winning converts to Tonghak, he started to be the object of slanders and defamations. The most shocking of all to him was the allegation that Tonghak was actually Western Learning. At one time, Ch'oe was charged with poisoning the mind of the people by local officials.[23]

Despite persecution in the provinces, the influence of Tonghak grew rapidly. It was due to Ch'oe message that any followers of Tonghak, by exercising true faith, could acquire freedom from oppression and suffering. The government of the

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22 'Yongdamga' in *Yongdam Yusa*, pp. 197-8.
23 B. B. Weems, *Reform Rebellion and the Heavenly Way*, p. 12.

Chosŏn dynasty felt greatly threatened by the rapid growth of Tonghak. The government considered Tonghak as a religion contrary to national principles. So it had its soldiers sent to Kyŏngju, which is Ch'oe's home town, and arrested and executed him in 1864. His accusation was (1)proclaiming the existence of a being superior to the king and (2)his doctrine was regarded as being that of the hated foreigner's.[24] Accordingly he was the first Tonghak martyr at the age of 40.[25]

Following the martyrdom of Ch'oe Che-u, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng became the second leader of the movement. The government of the Chosŏn dynasty, with the execution of Ch'oe Che-u, declared Tonghak an evil thought and made it illegal. In the provinces the persecution of Tonghak followers by local authorities was severe, and included the confiscation of property and the killing of the faithful. Despite this severe persecution of Tonghak followers by the Chosŏn government, Tonghak continued to spread among the peasants as an underground religion.

To sum up, Tonghak was deeply rooted in the social conditions of its time. It had a nationalistic character and was an effort to contend with realistic problems. Tonghak arose to confront Western Learning and, Ch'oe Che-u believed, was able to prevent the people from succumbing to Western power and enable them to live happily. Ultimate problems of reality could not be solved by a mere reconstruction of a deteriorated Confucianism. On the contrary, Ch'oe declared

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24 Ibid., pp. 11-2.
25 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 1, p. 54.

that only the charismatic ability given by Heaven could save the world. This meant that Tonghak took a defiant attitude towards the then dominant thought, Confucianism, while on the other hand giving people utopian expectations about the possibility of a reconstructed social order.

(2) Main Strands in the Thought of Tonghak

The thought of Tonghak criticised Confucian ethics which had been the spiritual basis of the Chosŏn dynasty. Ch'oe Che-u thought that human inequality, exploitation, and repression could be attributed to the decayed Confucian ethics and moral corruption of the time. Ch'oe believed that the corruption and depravity of the Chosŏn dynasty had reached their limits. He was confident that this world would soon be drawing to a close and then a new world would come. The coming of this new world is referred to as *Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk* (Later Creation). According to Tonghak doctrine, Later Creation is a fundamental aim:

> 'Because the destiny of our faith is the destiny of Later Creation, the emperor of Heaven, Earth, and Man will come to us and become our ancestor. After that, our society will last for fifty thousand years'.[26]

Ch'oe's thought on the advent of the new world can be found in many parts in the *Yongdam Yusa* (Anthology of Ch'oe Che-u's Hymns).[27] The idea of Later Creation was not so much a

26 Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 70.
27 'Kyohun'ga', 'Mongjung Noso Mundapka' in *Yongdam Yusa*, pp. 143-71, pp. 201-11.

concrete vision as a dreamy and obscure thought. Ch'oe Che-u emphasised that the believer in Tonghak would be a man of virtue on the earth at the time of new world.[28] Here, it would appear that his thought reflects the problems of reality. That is to say, the strong criticism of the existing society gives birth to a utopian vision of what is to be expected upon the advent of a new world. Ch'oe believed that the Lord of Heaven had already abandoned his support of this obsolete world and turned to the creation of a new one.

The new world, Ch'oe Che-u insisted, would be achieved not by human will but by itself. This is based on his doctrine of *Muwi Ihwa* (natural becoming) meaning 'achieving everything by doing nothing'.[29] Because the given social order, which is corrupt and decayed, is destined to finish, the new social order cannot fail to come. According to the terms of Tonghak, it is *Ch'ŏnun* (The fate of Heaven) that the new world will come in this world later.[30] The idea of Later Creation was thus proposed in the form of a prophecy to the people. It gave a hope to the oppressed and grafted a religious idea onto their minds. However, this expectation also gave the oppressed a legitimacy to protest against the existing social system of depravity and corruption. In these senses, *Poguk Anmin* (sustain the nation and provide for the people) and *Kwangje Ch'angsaeng* (save the oppressed people) were key ideas for which members of different-social strata might be said to have been looking for some time.

28 'Kyohun'ga' in *Yongdam Yusa*, p. 156.
29 'Nonhangmun', p. 47.
30 'Mongjung Noso Mundapka', p. 210.

Meanwhile, beyond prophesying the destined coming of Late Creation, a new view of man and ethics was proposed in the thought of Tonghak, which explains why Ch'oe Che-u is considered as the founder of a religion, not as a fortune teller. The most significant and original phrase describing human nature in Tonghak thought is *Shi Ch'ŏnju*, which means 'bearing God' (Heaven) or 'serving God'. Its basic idea is described in Tonghak's 'Chumun' (On Incantation) which reads as follows:

> 'Ultimate Energy being here and now
> I yearn for its great descent
> Bearing God, I become free (natural)
> Eternally not forgetting
> I become aware of all'.[31]

Ch'oe Che-u explains *Shi Ch'ŏnju* as follows: '*Shi* or Bearing means that one has Spirit within... and *ch'ŏnju* or God means calling with respect and serving like parents'.[32] This shows that man's essential relationship with God is affirmed in terms of man's unity with God and man's respect for God as a higher being. Ch'oe Che-u's concept of *Shi Ch'ŏnju* also corresponded with the words of God revealed to him, saying 'my mind is your mind'.[33] Such an experience of revelation, having a mystical implication, seems to have been the basis of the concept of *Shi Ch'ŏnju*. Relatedly, *Shi Ch'ŏnju* is an

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31 'Chumun' [On Incantation] in *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, pp. 88-9. This translation is made by Yong-choon Kim [Kim, Yong-ch'ŏn] in his 'An Analysis of Early Ch'ŏndogyo Thought' *Korea Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 10 (1977). I checked this traslation with the original.
32 'Nonhangmun', p. 49.
33 Ibid., p. 59.

egalitarian religious thought based on the principle that all men can serve God. It means that there must be no inherited discrimination amongst humans.

Ch'oe Che-u's thought such as *Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk* (Later Creation) and *Shi Ch'ŏnju* (Bearing God) appealed to the people so much that the followers of the religion increased rapidly. But after the death of Ch'oe Che-u, Tonghak faced a crisis of transmission. The charisma of the founder had to be replaced by some other source of authority. The second leader, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, tried to succeed to the position of the founder by proposing practical ethics for Tonghak. He insisted that since human evil originates from the relationship between man and man, interhuman relationships were essential to the Tonghak ethics.[34]

As a practical ethics, emphasis was placed on *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* in Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng's doctrine. *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* means 'treat man as Heaven (God)'. This thought which is logically based upon the ideas of *Shi Ch'ŏnju* was arguably the most unique and important idea in Tonghak. Since man is essentially divine in his nature, it follows that one must treat his fellow man as God: with the utmost concern, respect, sincerity, dignity, and equality. Thus Tonghak ethics are based upon Tonghak ontology. The concept of *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* developed by Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng is connected with *Innaech'ŏn*, meaning 'man is Heaven (God)'. *Innaech'ŏn* which means man's essential oneness with God is expressed mystically by Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng as follows:

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34 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, pp. 36-7.

> 'Heaven, earth, and man, all follow one principle and one energy. Man is a lump of heaven, and heaven is the spirit of all things. Man is Heaven (God), and Heaven is man. Therefore, outside man, there is no Heaven, and outside heaven, there is no man'.[35]

This Tonghak concept of man's essential divinity and its ethical idea of equality were quite new and revolutionary in the nineteenth century feudalistic society of Korea. In particular, the idea of *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* presented a dynamic counterspirit against the feudalistic ethical system based upon a corrupted form of Confucianism, which cultivated a discriminatory class ethics. The *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* ethics might indeed be seen as a deliberate reaction to certain aspects of Confucian ethics when practised in an extremely discriminatory fashion. The Confucian system of the 'Human Relationships' could degenerate into extremely cruel forms such as husbands treating their wives as inferior creatures, fathers negating their sons' freedom, and kings treating their people as servants. Such were actual and probably quite common practices in Korea in the nineteenth century.[36] The *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* ethics struck out in a radical way against age discrimination, sex discrimination and all other conceivable interhuman inequalities.

Some of the essential aspects of the doctrine of *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* were described by Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng as follows:

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35 Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, 'Ch'ŏn, In, Kwishin, Ŭmyang' [Heaven, Man, Spirit, and Yin-yang], in *Ch'ŏndogyo Kyŏngjŏn* [The Sacred Books of Ch'ŏndogyo] (Seoul: Ch'ŏndogyo Press, 1987), p. 296.

36 Yu Byŏng-dŏk, *Tonghak Ch'ŏndogyo*, pp. 245-8.

> 'The way begins in meeting the people, for in dealing with people, one can change the world. The Way is neither high and distant nor difficult to practice.
> There is nothing that is not the Way in daily activities. The divine spirit of the universe moves together with all things. Therefore, practice the principle of respecting people and things.
> Do not strike a child in the house of believers, for such an act would be disobedience to the will of God. If a guest comes to your house, think that God has arrived. The peaceful harmony of husband and wife is the heart of our Way (truth), and therefore, if a wife is disobedient, bow before her with all earnestness. If one bows once, twice and repeatedly, even the wife who had the hardest heart will be reconciled. Treat all men like God. Do not strike a child, for to strike a child is striking God.
> Respect all men in the house like God. Especially respect your daughter-in-law like God. Do not judge others. Judging another is judging God'.[37]

These essential aspects of the doctrine of *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* are some of the basic and practical teachings of Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng. His teaching, especially concerning the wife, children, and daughter-in-law, etc., represented a radical departure from the traditional ethics prevalent in Korean society during his time. By emphasising the treatment of all men on the basis of their inherent characteristics from the purely spiritual and moral standpoint rather than on the basis of their social background, Tonghak rejected the traditional discrimination between the so-called *yangban* (ruling class) and the *sangmin*

37 'Naesudomun'[On the Religious and Moved Experience in Home] in *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn*, pp. 426-7.

(common and low class) and challenged the unequal treatment between a legitimate son and an illegitimate son.

In addition, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng expanded Ch'oe Che-u's thought, saying that the subject of *Shi Ch'ŏnju* refers not only to humans but also to nature and things. Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng insisted that all creations have God (Heaven). Furthermore, he suggested that to work hard is to bear God.[38] Work itself included God or Heaven. Developing a pantheistic thought, he raised working to the status of a sacred ethic. In various ways, therefore, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng's thought set up a more practical ethics than Ch'oe Che-u's.

To sum up, the basic tenet created by Tonghak was that man and Heaven or God are one and the same. Heaven here is not the Confucian Heaven but the one identifiable with Sangje, the Lord of Heaven (the native anthropomorphic god) who is usually enhanced far above the Shamanistic gods. Ch'oe Che-u called his Lord of Heaven 'Hanullim'. Man's inner union with Heaven is achieved by the influx into him of Hanullim's spirit. Ch'oe Che-u made Hanullim the One and only God in the universe who administered the workings of the universal elements and forces, but only through the human mind.

Tonghak's social teachings, which are historically more important than its religious content, are based on the equality of man, with an emphasis on such Confucian virtues as sincerity, respect, and trustworthiness in interpersonal relations. Since everyone has the spirit of God (Hanullim) residing in himself, or rather everyone serves the Lord of Heaven within himself, he should regard everyone else as the

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38 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, p. 79.

Lord of Heaven and treat him accordingly. Therefore, the principle of human equality is deeply rooted in the religion.

In addition, Tonghak doctrine suggests that a new world will come in due time if Tonghak doctrine is observed. Here, Tonghak doctrine became more practical, because the new world was not promised unconditionally, but promised only for those who live on the basis of Tonghak thought. Although the Tonghak believers were not urged to take any radical actions to do away with the unjust status system right then, it was understood that the practice for new world based on the thought of Tonghak had a potential which could render the status system null and void.

(3) The Followers of Tonghak

Who were the followers of Tonghak? In this section, we will attempt to provide an analysis of the social recruitment of Tonghak. It is important for us to focus on the social origins of the religion's followers.

In general, Tonghak's followers appear to have been recruited from two social categories: one is the fallen yangban, and the other is the peasantry. The former were prominent among the leaders of Tonghak and the latter provided the religious mass following. In order to understand the relationship between Tonghak and the peasants, it is necessary to pay attention to the organisation of the movement and the publication of Tonghak doctrine.

After the execution of its founder, Tonghak seemed for a moment to fade away. But the religion went underground and recovered its power. And it permeated into the life of the peasants. The spreading of Tonghak was assisted by 'chŏpchu system', the organisation of Tonghak.[39] As Ch'oe Che-u's Tonghak was becoming very successful in his home town, Kyŏngju, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, the second leader, in 1862, suggested to Ch'oe Che-u the appointment of *chŏpchu* in various localities to foster the growth of Tonghak. Ch'oe Che-u accepted this suggestion and established *Chŏp* or local unit of Tonghak in various localities as an organisation to supervise the followers and appointed a *chŏpchu* (head) and *chŏpsa* (clerk) in each of the Chop.[40] As Ch'oe Che-u was executed on 10 March, 1864 in Taegu, and Tonghak was strictly forbidden by the Chosŏn dynasty, this system seemed to have collapsed. The organisation of Tonghak was broken up and Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng was hounded by the authorities and had eventually to hide to escape them. Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng travelled in disguise and was barely able to keep Tonghak alive.

However, during Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng's life in seclusion, publication efforts played a key role in propagating Tonghak. In 1880, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng established a publishing house for the holy scriptures in Inje, Kangwŏn-do province, and published the *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn* (The Bible of Tonghak

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39 'Chŏpchu system' consists of chŏp and chŏpchu. Chŏp is a local unit of Tonghak and chŏpchu is the head of a Chŏp. Chŏp is also known as chŏpso. This system was established by Ch'oe Che-u in 1862. Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 1, pp. 35-42.; O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 47.

40 Yi Ton-hwa, Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 40; O Chi-yŏng, Ibid., p. 64.

Doctrine). In the following year, 1881, he opened another publishing house in Tanyang, Ch'ungch'ŏng-do province and published eight volumes of *Yongdam Yusa* (Anthology of Ch'oe Che-u's Hymns).[41] *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn* was published in Chinese character for the learned men, but *Yongdam Yusa* was written in the pure vernacular for members of the lower classes such as women and peasants. Accordingly, the peasant could have access to the doctrine of Tonghak with ease. Moreover, following the establishment of another publishing house in Mokch'ŏn, Ch'ungch'ŏng-do province, copies of *Tonggyŏng Taejŏn* were distributed to peasants in various localities.[42] This clearly demonstrates that by that time, Tonghak was spreading to Ch'ungch'ŏng-do and Kyŏnggi-do provinces, was being welcomed among the peasants and began enjoying a growing power base.

On account of the publication and widening distribution of Tonghak doctrines, the number of followers of the movement began to grow rapidly. Together with his publication efforts, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng improved 'chŏpchu system', the organisation of Tonghak by instituting the 'six responsibilities' (yukim) system under one chŏpchu. The 'six responsibilities' system consisted of six members who took over a portion of the chŏpchu's work.[43] It proved to be effective for the propagation of the religion. In addition, in 1887 the Toso (a centre of Tonghak training) was established at Poŭn. Followers from all provinces came to Poŭn to meet Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng and to hear his lectures on Tonghak. It would appear, then, that

41 Yi Ton-hwa, Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 30.
42 In February 1883, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng published 1,000 copies of Tonggyŏng Taejŏn in Mokch'ŏn. Ibid., p. 31.
43 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, p. 34.

organisational features such as the chŏpchu system and the publication in vernacular form of the religion's sacred books contributed in important ways to the survival and institutionalisation of Tonghak.[44]

On the other hand, the reason why Tonghak could develop as a religion of salvation among the peasants was that the established religious ideology, Confucianism, did not consider the peasant's mind religiously. Moreover, Confucianists did not allow other religions and ethnic beliefs to become institutionalised religions.[45] Therefore, the peasant had no way but to be absorbed in magical ethnic beliefs. These social circumstances presented no problem so long as society was working in a 'normal' state. But under the impact of the processes of social disorganisation such as were seen in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Korea, the peasant was increasingly dissatisfied with magical beliefs, leading consciously or unconsciously to the search for a new religion. The atmosphere of the time made the peasant question the efficiency of magical beliefs. On this basis peasants became much interested in new religions in general, including the Catholicism which had been forbidden by the government as well as Tonghak. The peasant's motive in seeking a new religion can be understood by reference to Weber's writings as follows:

> 'The lot of peasant is so strongly tied to nature, so dependent on organic processes and natural events, and economically so little oriented to

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44 Ibid., p. 55.

45 Ch'a Sŏng-hwan, *Han'guk Chonggyo Sasang-ŭi Sahoehak-jŏk Ihae* [The Sociological Understanding of Religious Thought in Korea] (Seoul: Munhak-kwa Chisŏngsa, 1992), pp. 49-106.

> rational systematization that in general the peasantry will become a carrier of religion only when it is threatened by enslavement or proletarianization, either by domestic forces or by some external political power.'[46]

As Weber remarks, when peasants experience a deterioration in their situation, they resort to religion readily. While satisfying this need for a wider religious framework, Tonghak provided the peasant absorbed in magical traditions with a sufficient supply of magic factors such as spirit medicine or incantation.[47] These magical factors no doubt helped to make the new religious movement acceptable among the peasantry. For this reason, Tonghak appealed to the peasant without any rejection symptoms.

Along with the peasantry, the educated class also provided followers of Tonghak. As we have seen in the late Chosŏn period, the rapid multiplication of yangban produced a class differentiation among the yangban. In particular, the fallen yangban that had no means of livelihood never failed to feel relative deprivation. Even though they had no privilege in Chosŏn society, the fallen yangban must be considered members of the upper class. Most recruits from the learned class within Tonghak were from the fallen yangban. Ch'oe Che-u referred to this as follows: 'Many learned men came to me and asked me to explain the new doctrine which I was pondering'.[48]

By accepting 'many learned men', Tonghak was able to form a leadership group that would guide the peasant masses.

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46 M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Vol. 2, p. 468.
47 'P'odŏngmun', p. 28.
48 'Nonhangmun', p. 46.

Tonghak could be developed, having many local units all over country under the guidance of a sufficiently educated cadre of leaders. Thus, Tonghak recruited its mass following from peasants seeking a new religious ideology providing social order, while its leadership was based on the fallen yangban who had become cut off from their position of privilege. As we shall see, the relationship between Tonghak and the revolution of 1894 can also be understood through the character of the fallen yangban.[49]

2. The Character of Tonghak as a Millennial Movement

What further elements were important in the doctrine of Tonghak? In other words, what were the socio-ideological elements of Tonghak which captured the hearts of the people and were warmly welcomed despite the extreme persecution unleashed by the Chosŏn dynasty? We can arrange the characteristics of Tonghak that appealed to the people within four groups.

In the first place, the nationalism and anti-foreign, anti-invasion elements of Tonghak seem to have produced a strong response among Koreans of various social strata. Tonghak, as has been mentioned, reflected from the beginning a desire to sustain the nation and provide for the people; it was a system of thought full of nationalism. Once again, the word Tonghak means Eastern Learning. Eastern refers to the

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49 Ch'a Sŏng-hwan, *Han'guk Chonggyo Sasang-ŭi Sahoehak-jŏk Ihae*, p. 180.

Eastern country (Chosŏn) as well as to the East. The name Tonghak itself was thus a nationalistic name, established to counter Western Learning. Tonghak caught the intrusion and invasion of Western powers and took a lead in protecting the East and Chosŏn against them. In this sense, it might be considered identical to the movement of *Wijŏng Ch'ŏksa* (defending orthodoxy and rejecting heterodoxy). However, Tonghak did not subjectively despise Western power. Nor did it look down upon it as a non-ethical and spiritually weak power. Rather, Tonghak viewed the West as powerful and worthy of fear. Tonghak realistically and objectively observed the strength of Western power and tried to overcome it. This was very different from the subjective and unrealistic observation of Western power by the doctrine of 'defending orthodoxy and rejecting heterodoxy'.

Regarding Western Learning, as we have seen, Tonghak claimed 'their Way and their destiny are the same but their principles are different',[50] in this way recognising the flourishing nature of Western Learning. In addition, the Tonghak identified the Tonghak and Western Learning as following the same Heavenly Way thus demonstrating their universal view of God. This reveals that it was a far more universal and objective ideology compared to all the other religions of the time which regarded God as their own. It was also a rational ideology which saw the cultures of East and West as being equal, not looking down on the Western culture from one's subjective perspective. Also, the Tonghak perception of China (Ch'ing) shows very strong anti-Ch'ing

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50 'Nonhangmun', p. 47.

sentiments, as demonstrated in a hymn the verse of which reads 'let us take revenge on the Manchus',[51] recalling the invasion by Ch'ing China and the humiliation of the surrender of King Injo of the Chosŏn dynasty to the Ch'ing emperor in 1636.

Tonghak's perception of Japan was even more hostile, showing a very strong bitterness toward past Japanese invasions. The founder of Tonghak denounced the Japanese invaders and emphasised that ever since their failed invasion of 1592 the Japanese had been waiting for another opportunity to invade; thus Chosŏn should be on alert against them.[52] The founder of Tonghak was determined to destroy the Japanese if they should invade the country again, even though in spirit after his death, and he conveyed this determination to his followers.[53] In this sense, it is most significant that at the time when Tonghak was spreading in full force, another invasion by the Japanese was well under way after the opening of the ports. The peasantry had therefore every reason for strong nationalistic anti-Japanese sentiments and an anti-invasion ideology. These thoughts of Tonghak captured the hearts of the peasants and were welcomed among them.

In the second place, the egalitarian ideology of Tonghak can be seen to have had a strong appeal to the people who occupied the lower strata of society. According to Tonghak, each man had God in his heart and this God was the same regardless of social rank - legitimate or illegitimate, lord or servant, and regardless of sex, age or wealth. As each person had the same God, all men were equal. For example, the

51 'Anshimga', in *Yongdam Yusa*, p. 185.
52 Ibid., p. 186.
53 Ibid., pp. 187-8.

theory of equality of social rank explained that the yangban (ruling class) had God in his heart and the common people and the lower class all each had the same God. Therefore the yangban, the commoners, and the lower classes were all completely equal. The founder of Tonghak, as an illegitimate son of a fallen yangban family, identified with the poor and low-class group saying that 'the wealthy are the officials and the poor are the people. As the poor and the lowly, we grew up in the backwoods'.[54] The founder of Tonghak composed the following verse saying that after the Later Creation the poor and the lowly (the people) would become the wealthy: 'the wealthy and the honoured people were the poor and the lowly in the past, the poor and the lowly will be the rich and the honoured in the coming age'.[55]

Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, the second leader of Tonghak, emphasised even more strongly this egalitarian ideology. He also opposed the inequality of the sexes which was extreme in Chosŏn society and argued for the equality of the sexes.[56] The doctrine of Tonghak said that women as well as men had the same God in their hearts, and moreover, women were high and noble, as they give birth to God. Tonghak emphasised that husbands should respect their wives and that husbands and wives should live in harmony. Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng stressed that 'children were also God' and preached against striking or discriminating against children. His 'Naesudomun' suggests a code of conduct for the family of Tonghak faith regarding their children. He stressed that children should be respected

54 Ibid., p. 171.
55 'Kyohun'ga', p. 147.
56 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, pp. 36-8.

on an equal footing with adults as follows: 'since the children also are abodes of God, striking them is equal to striking God'.[57] This radically egalitarian content of Tonghak thought appears to have had a strong appeal among the peasants who increasingly suffered extreme oppression, discrimination and ill-treatment at the hands of the *yangban* bureaucrats.

In the third place, the concept of God was different from that of other religions and had a widespread appeal. All the religions of the world at the time, including Western Learning, fixed God as a separate and absolute being that existed outside of man. They preached that man should be ruled by God and should serve God or live as a servant of God. Tonghak viewed man, not as God's, but as God himself, and put him on equal footing with God, establishing man as the most high and the most honoured. The belief that 'man is God', a unique humanism which viewed man as equal to God, strongly appealed to people in late nineteenth century Korea. Ch'oe Che-u, the founder of Tonghak, based on the idea of 'attending God in humanity', preached that 'man is God and God is man'.[58] Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, the second leader of Tonghak, taught that since man is God, people should serve men as they would serve God.[59] Tonghak emphasised the dignity of man, claiming that 'man is Heaven'. They thought this idea seemed to appeal to the people even more than Western Learning. In reality, this view seems to have contributed to the people's recognition of Tonghak as a belief system and religion that was superior to Western Learning.

57 'Naesudomun', p. 426.
58 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 23.
59 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, p. 40.

Finally, the prophecy of the 'Later Creation' may help to explain the strong growth of the Tonghak movement. Ch'oe Che-u divided the history of mankind into two eras, that of the 'Former Creation' and that of the 'Later Creation'. Here the 'Creation' meant the opening of a new period in which the universe and the world would change fundamentally. The Former Creation meant the changes that had begun with the society of mankind, which would last approximately 50,000 years. How, then, would the Later Creation begin? According to Ch'oe Che-u, as the end of the 50,000 years approached, God selected Ch'oe Che-u, spoke to him and taught him the Way of God so that he might propagate it, thus marking the beginning of the Later Creation.[60] In other words, Ch'oe Che-u arrived at spiritual enlightenment through God's teachings, and the founding of Tonghak and its propagation were the beginning of the Later Creation, which would last yet another 50,000 years. Amidst the corruption present at the end of the Chosŏn dynasty the people could not find spiritual support in the existing morals and religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. They must have wholeheartedly welcomed the Later Creation of Tonghak which prophesied that Tonghak would usher in a new age in which the nation will be peaceful and people prosperous.

At the time of Tonghak, as we have seen, the corruption of the social and political structure lent itself to the growth of a new religion. In the case of Tonghak, its doctrine said that its ultimate aim was to secure the nation and protect the people. In this process, human equality had to be realised for their aim. And as its concrete scheme, Tonghak proposed the

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60 'Yongdamga', in *Yongdam Yusa*, p. 197.

new concept of God and created the new world (Later Creation). Therefore, the advent of Tonghak both gave the faithful a means to express their feelings against the existing social order and encouraged them to take a step to protect themselves.

The relationship between the Tonghak religious movement and the people, in particular, the peasant and the lower class of Chosŏn society, can be explained appropriately by the following statement of Bellah's: 'in a society in which the ideological level is not yet recognised as having independent legitimacy, the new movement must take on a religious coloration in order to meet the old system on its own terms'.[61] Accordingly, Tonghak was coincident with the need of people in the late nineteenth century to face the new world that was emerging and seek new ways of coping with it.

Stemming from these characteristics of Tonghak, there is much evidence to suggest that Tonghak has the characteristics of a millennial movement. First of all, the prophecy of the Later Creation offers a 'this worldly' heaven as a salvation. Ch'oe Che-u insisted that the 50,000 years would be realised in this world (Chosŏn), saying that 'my Way was received here and so my Way will be realised here'.[62] He insisted that Eastern Learning must come true in the Eastern area. As Talmon and Cohn point out - as discussed in Chapter 2 -,[63] millennial movements do not offer an other worldly orientation. In this

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61 R. N. Bellah, 'Religious Aspects of Modernisation in Turkey and Japan', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (1958), p. 2.

62 'Nonhangmun', p. 49.

63 Y. Talmon, 'Millenarian Movements', *Archives Europeennes de Sociologie*, Vol. 7 (1966), p. 167; N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Temple Smith, 1970), p. 13.

sense, the 50,000 years of Tonghak must be understood as a metahistorical future in which the world will be inhabited by a humanity liberated from all the limitations of human existence, redeemed from pain and transience, from fallibility and sin, thus becoming at once perfectly good and perfectly happy.

This is also related to the attitude towards time. Millennial movements view time as a liner process which leads to a final future.[64] Later Creation is, in this sense, the final future of Tonghak. It has not the view of the cycle of time which repeats history. This final stage is the accomplishment called 'ultimate'.

The collective orientation of Tonghak can be found in Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng's practical ethics. His practical ethics is a methodology to be pursued by the followers of Tonghak. In 'Naesudomun', he proposes the concrete method. As mentioned, some of the basic and practical teachings of Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng concerning the doctrine of *Sain Yŏch'ŏn* are the conditions which distinguish chosen from non-chosen people. To be sure, the doctrine of Tonghak should not be considered on the individual level, but on the collective level. As the fundamental ideology of Tonghák shows, the objective of salvation of Tonghak was not the salvation of individual souls. The salvation of Tonghak aimed to sustain the nation and provide for the people. Therefore, Tonghak movement had a 'collective' orientation.[65]

64 Y. Talmon, 'Millenarian Movements', p. 166.
65 Ibid., p. 167.

Tonghak's salvation was also revolutionary and catastrophic. The given social order (Chosŏn society's Confucianism) had broken away from the normal state, and only Tonghak could replace the decayed social order. In particular, the denial of the Confucian status system was a revolutionary event at that time. This thought was not proposed through a gradual process. Of course, this element caused the Chosŏn government to suppress Tonghak. This revolutionary character is related to 'imminence'. This 'imminence' is supported by the sudden charismatic ability of Ch'oe Che-u.

Tonghak's character as a millennial movement developed as follows:

a. Prophetic movement -- Ch'oe Che-u's revelation

b. Utopian movement -- the birth of the idea of Later Creation

c. Doctrinal movement -- Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng's practical ethics

Tonghak appears also to have been a sect movement which would cause social change.[66] In a word, from the beginning, Tonghak was revolutionary in that it rejected the mainstream of Chosŏn ideology as well as' the pretensions of foreign powers. Tonghak, however, showed duality. Tonghak occurred to counter Western power but Tonghak recognised that their Way was the same as the Western one, demonstrating a universal view of God. And Tonghak rejected the existing social order but, on the other hand, it insisted on sustaining the nation. In spite of this, Tonghak's attempt to produce a new order was

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66 I. Thompson, *Religion* (London: Longman, 1986), p. 50.

a religious movement to protest against the internal and external order.

3. Conclusions.

Tonghak was a national religion founded by Ch'oe Che-u in 1860 with the aim, intentional or unintentional, of addressing the internal and external crises in Korea in the second half of the nineteenth century. As Tonghak means Eastern Learning to counter Western Power, the reason that Tonghak was established might be seen as simply a response to Western intrusion. The shock of the Western culture, in fact was given to all part of Korea. However, Tonghak also proposed a way of relieving a people oppressed by local tyrannical government. Tonghak has a meaning in that all the people who were alienated from Chosŏn society were called together in the name of Tonghak.

Ch'oe Che-u's revelation was a important cause of the establishment of Tonghak. His spiritual enlightenment changed him to a deliverer with charismatic ability given through a form of prophecy. Such charismatic ability was helpful enough to create a new social order, which was believed to be a key to solving the nationalistic and actual problems. The problems in those days were the foreign threats like the Western power's and internal crises like social injustice and decayed social order. Therefore, the principles of Tonghak thought

which focused on these problems were based on Poguk Anmin and Kwangje Ch'angsaeng.

The Tonghak thought placed an emphasis on the coming of new world, the human equality, and the practical ethics. First of all, the new world was expressed as Later Creation, Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk. Later Creation was a new place, which could be exempt from the given problems. This could give a hope to the oppressed and implant a religious idea in them. Next, the human equality was involved in Shi Ch'ŏnju (Bearing God). This was related to the principle that all men can serve God. It was to deny Chosŏn's social status order and to contain an egalitarian religious idea. Finally, the practical ethics was Sain Yŏch'ŏn, which means 'treat man as Heaven'. It emphasised on man's divinity.

Such thoughts could eat into the heart of the oppressed like the fallen yangban and the peasantry. In view of the advent and thought of Tonghak, the character of Tonghak was nationalistic and egalitarian. As Later Creation pointed to a new place in this world for the 50,000 years, Tonghak also had a millennial character.

In a word, Tonghak provided a new social order. Tonghak can be regarded as a form of protest to overcome the impending crises from the inside and the outside of the country. Under the impending crises, a sense of deprivation that the oppressed in the traditional society had could have developed into a religious movement, Tonghak. This religious movement aimed to construct their own society. As Wallace pointed out, Tonghak is understood as a revitalisation movement in that Tonghak made an attempt to reconstruct the religious and

cultural system of Chosŏn society according to the vision given to Ch'oe Che-u.[67] The fact that we should pay attention to is that Korea's religious movement did not completely deny Chosŏn society as Tonghak's insistence on sustaining the nation. Even though Tonghak rejected the existing social order, its aim was to heal the decayed society and have national self-esteem and public well-being at the unstable point of the nineteenth century. How Japan and China's religious movements responded to the crisis will be dealt with next chapter as a comparison with Korea.

67 The Theory of Revitalisation applied to Korean history is discussed in a recent article, J. H. Grayson, 'Ideology, Religion, and the Roots of Nationalism: Two case Studies of Revitalization in Late Koryŏ and Late Chosŏn Times' in *Religion*, Vol. 24 (1994), pp. 235-51. This article shows the Tonghak movement is a revitalisation movement.

CHAPTER V

JAPAN'S SONNO-JOI AND CHINA'S TAIPING

In order to permit a comparison with Korea's Tonghak the Sonno-joi movement of Japan and the Taiping movement of China will be examined in this chapter. Like Tonghak, the two movements that are the basis of this discussion broke out in the nineteenth century when the Western powers were competing to seek out new markets in the East. In a sense, they were the East's response to the West and both movements can be seen as efforts to overcome the Western challenge. First of all, I will analyse the background and origin of the two movements, and then I will describe their main characteristics. In this chapter the movements will be treated with particular attention to religious aspects. The focus will be on the characteristics of the religious movements that influenced the subsequent revolutions in the two cases. Attention will be restricted to Japan and China. The comparison with Tonghak will be dealt with later.

1. The Sonno-joi Movement of Japan

(1) The Response to the West

In the nineteenth century, as we have seen, Japan suffered from the social stresses created by the impoverishment of the samurai, the growth of a market economy and the emergence of

new social classes. But the social stresses from inside were overwhelmed by the shock waves produced by the arrival of the Western powers demanding that Japan open itself to the outside world.

For nearly two centuries, Japan had cut itself off from contacts with outside peoples. The seclusion policy was fixed in the late 1630s following the Shimabara rebellion in western Kyushu in 1637. The rebellion, which began as a peasant disorder, enjoyed the support of a local Christian daimyo and it was rumoured that the rebels also got help from the Europeans. After this event, the recently-established Tokugawa regime stepped up its repression of all organised, politicised expression of heterodox thoughts. The Japanese people were thus deprived of the possibility of a powerful unity against feudal oppression based squarely on a religious movement.[1] Accordingly, the Tokugawa regime placed restrictions on the volume of foreign trade and put foreign merchants under the rigid scrutiny of Tokugawa officials. The only foreign traders allowed into Japan were the Dutch and the Chinese, who were confined to Nagasaki.[2] This seclusion policy worked well until as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century. Because of this, the Japanese view of the Western powers remained deeply tinged with hostility and suspicion.

The *Shinron* (New Proposals) of Aizawa Seishisai, written in 1825, the most influential piece of political writing of

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1 H. P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 7.

2 P. Duus, *The Rise of Modern Japan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), p. 21.

the late Tokugawa period, describes the Western invasion as follows:

> 'When those barbarians plan to subdue to a country not their own, they start by opening commerce and watch for a sign of weakness. If an opportunity is presented, they will preach their alien religion to captivate the people's hearts. Once the people's allegiance has been shifted, they can be manipulated and nothing can be done to stop it'.[3]

In the face of new pressures from the outside, the official policy was to hold the line in defence of seclusion. But this policy was shaken in the late 1830s by news of the Opium War in China. It raised the question of whether a similar fate might not be in store for Japan. The sense of threat from the outside was fanned into more urgent fear by the Opium War. Moreover foreign countries began to stimulate Japan to take some action.[4]

The sense of threat from the outside provoked debates amongst scholars, officials, and concerned political leaders over how best to deal with the Westerners. Their stance was anti-foreign. But there was far less agreement on how best to

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3 Takasu Yoshijiro, *Shinron Kowa* (Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1941), p. 198. Quoted in R. Tsunoda et al., *Sources of the Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 602.

4 British as well as French interest in Japan was reported as early as 1843. In 1844 Japanese officials received a letter from the Dutch king, urging Japan to give heed to what was happening around her and take steps to end her seclusion before the decision was forced on her from outside. W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 78.

deal with the foreigners' predatory intentions. There were in the main two opinions.

One broad segment of opinion was based on an interest in Western technology and military science. It formed part of a reaction against current orthodoxy and the unquestioning acceptance of Chinese models, which brought an attempt to restore the purity and prestige of Japan's national religion, the 'shinto revival'.[5] This opinion came notably from Takashima Shuhan (1798-1866), Sakuma Shozan (1811-1864), and Takano Choei (1804-1850), all Dutch scholars.[6] These men had an acute appreciation of Japan's military backwardness vis-à-vis the West. They were no less anti-foreign than the seclusionists. However, they urged that the main task in dealing with the foreign threat was to acquire Western science, Western technology, and Western guns. Without these, no matter how valiant and determined its people, Japan would be incapable of defending itself.[7] Sakuma Shozan believed that China's defeat by a country like England was due to disregard of the progress of machinery in foreign countries. Consequently, he thought it would be necessary to bring Western science to the defence of the Japanese spirit.[8] That is to say, to accept Western technology was the best way to defend Japan from the outside.

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5 Ibid., p. 79.
6 When the shogunate relaxed the ban against the importation of foreign books in 1720, Japanese scholars went to Nagasaki to learn the Dutch language and to translate Dutch books on subjects such as art, astronomy, geography, military science and history into Japanese. Dutch studies came to be called *rangaku* (Ran meaning Holland), and its scholars as *rangakusa*.
7 P. Duus, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, p. 59
8 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 81-2.

By contrast, the other opinion was formed under the patronage of Tokugawa Nariaki, daimyo of Mito, one of the great shimpan family. Supporters of this view were men like Aizawa Seishisai (1781-1863) and Fujita Toko (1806-1855), known as the Mito school, because of their connection with the daimyo Mito. They urged a rigid policy of seclusion in accordance with Confucian notions. Aizawa expressed his ideas notably in the book *Shinron* (New Proposal). He did not believe that salvation lay in the proposals of the Dutch scholars. Rather, it had to be pursued through armed preparedness and a policy of *joi* (expelling the barbarians).[9] This thought was influenced by Fujita Yukoku (1773-1826), the first leader of the Mito school, who had insisted that strengthening the army was a key to the restoration of Japan's morale.[10]

The seclusionists said foreign commerce would not only drain Japan of her gold and silver; it would also enrich profit-grubbing merchants and townsmen and encourage the habits of luxury, moral laxity, and social corruption already much too evident in the country.[11] These radical seclusionists, moved very much by the Confucian notion that morality was the pivot of politics, urged that the Western threat be met by a moral rearmament of the country. Unless the samurai class regained its old spirit of frugality, discipline, and martial vigour, and the people their old spirit of obedience, nothing could save Japan from being overwhelmed by its enemies or from slipping into moral decay following exposure to the Westerners. What was needed was a

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9 Ibid., p. 83.
10 Ibid., pp. 82-83.
11 P. Duus, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, p. 58.

restoration of moral and military virtue among samurai.[12] In good Confucian fashion, in order to strengthen the country, responsibility for taking this critical decision rested with the bakufu.

The Mito school demanded that the bakufu leaders set an example for the rest of the country by cleaning up official laxity, putting an end to corruption, showing more concern for popular welfare, and not spending money lavishly on concubines and entertainment. Internal troubles made Japan more susceptible to dangers from outside, they thought. Therefore, they demanded that the shogun give a lead, to show the way to national unity by demonstrating his duty transcended all lesser loyalties, to lord or lineage or domain. Above all the shogun must show that the Tokugawa were ready to subordinate their own selfish interests to those of the country.

The Mito school urged in addition that the shogunal authority manifest a devotion to the concept of *sonno* (revere the emperor).[13] The concept of *sonno*, they thought, would ensure that the emperor as the symbol of *kokutai* (the national polity) would again govern the land and control the people. Here, the important thing is that what the Mito school urged was the restoration of the imperial institution. They did not intend overthrowing the baku-han system, but rather making the emperor, already regarded with affection, loyalty, and respect by the people, into a kind of rallying point or national symbol.

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12 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 83.
13 Ibid., pp. 83-4.

(2) The Formation of a New Religious Ideology: Sonno and Kokutai

As a response to outside pressures, a new attitude toward the emperor and a new religious concept of the state sprang up in the late Tokugawa period. They were *sonno* (revere the emperor) and *kokutai* (national polity), both of which were to have profound consequences for subsequent history. This ideology constituted the political vocabulary of the Restoration movement. Sonno was to come together with joi (expel the barbarian) as a single slogan, to become the central objective of the loyalist samurai in the 1860's. Kokutai, with its implication of a mystical unity between emperor and people, was to become a constitutional ideal and also the essence of what joi sought to defend.[14] In a word, the slogan *sonno* (revere the emperor) typified the new emphasis on the emperor and the term *kokutai* (national polity) expressed the new concept of the state.

Though these ideas were indeed widespread, especially near the end of the Tokugawa period, they were developed by their most ardent advocates and propagandists, the Kokugaku school and the Mito school.[15] The Kokugaku school aimed at the revival of ancient Japanese culture and institutions. Its starting point was to revive interest in Japanese history, and in the literature and religion which developed in the seventeenth century. But in reality it emerged to challenge

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14 Ibid., p. 84.
15 R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, p. 99.

the Chinese tradition in Japan.[16] Its attempts were to reassert a native tradition against that of China. The extreme rejection of China was described well by Kamo Mabuchi (1697-1769): 'Since the introduction of Chinese manners, the sovereign, while occupying a highly dignified place, has been degraded to the intellectual level of a woman. The power fell into the hands of servants, and although they never actually assumed the title, they were sovereigns in fact, while the emperor became an utter nullity'.[17] This meant that Chinese influences were responsible for the corruption of relations between sovereign and subject. This idea was developed by Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), who declared that the emperor, as a descendant of the sun and able at all times to consult the gods by divination, was himself a god. He insisted: 'Simply to obey, venerate, and serve him is the true Way'.[18]

The Kokugaku school did not directly inspire an anti-foreign or anti-bakufu movement. But it gave a basis for the growth of such a movement in the nineteenth century. This national consciousness based on resentment of Chinese dominance could be applied in due course to the cultural and political menace of the West. At the same time the Kokugaku school in religious terms began to develop Shinto concepts. This school had a dream about the glory of Japan based on her unbroken line of emperors. Naturally therefore it rejected the

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16 M. B. Jansen (ed.), *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 49.
17 Quote from R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, p. 100.
18 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 144.

Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist traditions, and turned to the native religion, Shinto.[19]

The Mito school had strong resemblances to, as well as differences from Kokugaku. The key concept of the Mito school was loyalty and duty. This was fulfilling one's obligations toward the emperor, both as ruler and as ethical exemplar.[20] It meant that loyalty had to be observed in accordance with one's place in society. As Fujita Yukoku (1774-1826), one of the members of the Mito school, put it: 'If the shogunate reveres the imperial house, all the feudal lords will respect the shogunate. If the feudal lords respect the shogunate, the ministers and officials will honour the feudal lords. In this way high and low will honour their feudal lords. In this way high and low will give support to each other, and the entire country will be in accord'.[21] Hence, the kokutai was reinforced by filial piety, a respect for ancestors. The relation of ruler to ruled was strengthened by an element of reciprocity, in that the loyalty on the one had as its concomitant the benevolence of the other.

Here, Mito philosophy was firmly rooted in the orthodox Chinese model. The emperor is divine, he is lord and he is father of the national family. Moreover, the people are worshippers, retainers, and children. Loyalty is the great filial piety and devotion to parents is the small filial

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19 R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, pp. 100-1.
20 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 146.
21 H. Webb, 'The development of an Orthodox Attitude Toward the Imperial Institution in the Nineteenth Century', in M. B. Jansen (ed.), *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 177.

piety.[22] Unlike the Kokugaku school, the Mito school did not reject China, as is exemplified by the phrase from Tokugawa Nariaki: 'revere the Way of the land of the gods (Japan) and use the teachings of China'.

The high regard for the emperor when linked to this identification of loyalty and filial piety had some very interesting implications for the concept of the state. God, emperor, lord and father tended to be made into equivalents. Accordingly, in Mito doctrine, it became the shogun's duty to show reverence toward the emperor and benevolence toward the people as a condition of his monarchical power, and since benevolence entailed not only protecting the population from hardship, but also defending it from foreign attack, *sonno*, honouring the emperor, logically included *joi*, expelling the barbarian.[23]

Therefore, on the basis of sonno-joi and kokutai, a new religious ideology centred on the emperor began to take a concrete shape in Japan at the dawn of its opening to the West. Sonno-joi and kokutai involved an effort to define the desirable political entity as well as a religious renewal. This movement had the dual aspect so characteristic of Japanese religious thought. As it were, the forms of religious action were involved in such a way that they are identical with political action.

(3) From Ideas to Action

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22 R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, pp. 103-4.
23 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 146.

After Ii Naosuke (1815-1860), head of the senior *fudai* house, was appointed to the office of Great Elder (*tairo*) by the shogun on 4 June 1858, the ideas of Sonno-joi began to take more practical forms. Backed by the rest of the fudai officials, Ii signed the Harris treaty without imperial approval on 29 July 1858, effectively opening Japan to Western commercial domination.[24] The bakufu, in defying the emperor's wishes by signing the Harris treaty, had taken an unfaithful action as a delegate of the imperial power. The shogun himself could be branded as traitor. In reality, by the treaty the ancestral law of seclusion, a keystone of the Tokugawa order, was dead. By contrast, the emperor (Komei, 1831-1867, r. 1846-1867), who had taken a resolute stand against the treaty, emerged as a rallying point for Sonno-joi. Therefore the bakufu leadership began to be weakened.[25]

Along with declining confidence in the bakufu leadership, there was strong sentiment in favour of altering the regime in order to cope better with the foreign problem. A group of young samurai, recruited from all over Japan, urged expulsion of the foreigners from Japan under the leadership of the emperor in Kyoto. This samurai group of anti-foreign loyalists were mostly from Satsuma, Tosa, Mito and Choshu.[26] The loyalists' movement, based itself on the Sonno-joi movement.

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[24] W. G. Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), p. 63. By the Harris Treaty, (1) Edo, Kobe, Nagasaki, Niigata, and Yokihama were opened to foreign trade; (2) Japanese tariffs were placed under international control and import duties were fixed at low levels; (3) a system of extraterritoriality was established, which provided that foreign residents would be subject to their own consular courts rather than to Japanese law.

[25] P. Duus, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, pp. 63-4.

[26] W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 155-71.

The samurai insisted that the divine land would be contaminated by the barbarian foreigners. By confirming the emperor's stand against the West, the loyalist movement became an active force gathered in Kyoto.

For some loyalists the emperor was a rallying point because he was the divine embodiment of Japanese identity. For others he was the apex of a chain of loyalty stretching from the domains through the shogun. In either case by the early 1860s a firm link had been forged between anti-foreignism (*joi*) and 'veneration for the emperor' (*sonno*). From the start, the movement had both political and religious implications.

Here we need to pay attention to Yoshida Shoin (1830-1859) for a concrete expression of these ideas. He was strongly influenced by the Mito school and in turn was one of the most decisive influences on the leaders of what was to be the Meiji Restoration. He was a typical loyalist member from Choshu, who had shown early concern for Japan's foreign threat by travelling the country to study coastal defences and to make the acquaintance of technical Westernisers like Sakuma Shozan even before the Americans arrived. Yoshida became more and more contemptuous of both shogun and daimyo for their failure to stand up to the foreigners. By the time of his execution for his violent attitude toward the shogunate in 1859 he had come to respect and trust only the emperor. He called for a rising of low samurai, who would serve the emperor in

struggling against the foreigners without and the corrupt leaders within.[27]

Yoshida made an earnest effort to create for his ideas a legitimacy that would be persuasive for the Tokugawa people. One of the approaches to justify his ideas was national salvation from the foreign threat. This idea consisted of three elements: (1) an august emperor, who represented what was best in Japanese society (sonno); (2) Westerners, whose power if left unchecked threatened to impair that society (joi); (3) rationalising reform, which was the only plausible means of preventing such an eventuality.[28] For the purpose of Sonno-joi, Yoshida Shoin used the emperor as a convenient symbol for the well-being of a jeopardised Japan. This idea is described well in his confidential advice memorial of 1853: 'Under all of heaven there is no land that is not the monarch's land and to the edges of the sea there is no person who is not the monarch's retainer. ... Therefore if anyone within the realm endure the insults of the foreigners, the bakufu should all the more cleanse away the shame of the realm, leading her various lords. In this way it should console the mind of the emperor'.[29] With this idea of loyalty to the emperor, he provided the samurai with a motive for action in the context of bushido. Bushido was the values and ethics of the samurai as developed in Tokugawa Japan, which stressed selfless devotion to superiors, a minimum of personal

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27 H. E. Coleman, 'The Life of Shoin Yoshida', *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, vol. 45 (1917, reprinted in 1964). pp. 125-88.

28 T. M. Huber, *The Revolutionary Origins of Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981), pp. 63-4.

29 Yamaguchi ken kyoiku kai (ed.), *Yoshida Shoin zenshu*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: 1940), pp. 298-9. Recited from Ibid., p. 65.

consumption, and a vigorous prosecution of daily tasks and duties.[30] For Yoshida, bushido was righteousness.[31]

Accordingly, the loyalists were ethical activists basing themselves on bushido. The loyalist movement was prepared to be violent in order to realise their aim. Its members thought that their violence and heroism would bring the bakufu and the daimyo to their senses. The most dramatic act of terrorism was the assassination in 1860 of Ii Naosuke, a potent symbol of the arbitrary attitude of the bakufu and of its concessions to the foreigners.[32]

Beyond this the loyalists also attempted to provoke a bakufu confrontation with the hated barbarians by direct attacks on the foreigners and their lackeys. In 1861 Hendrik Heuskens, Townsend Harris's interpreter was killed in Edo and loyalist samurai attacked the British legation there, killing several of its staff.[33] In 1862 an English tourist by the name of Richardson was cut down.[34] In June 1863 loyalist leaders in Choshu managed to persuade the domain government to fire on ships passing through the Straits of Shimonoseki.[35]

The climax of the loyalist movement came in September 1863, when loyalist samurai from Satsuma, Choshu, and Tosa staged an attempted coup d'état in Kyoto. Their hope was to 'free' the emperor from the shogun's influence and to lead a military expedition expelling the foreigners from Japan. But this bold attempt was put down with troops from Satsuma and

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30 R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, pp. 90-8.
31 H. E. Coleman, 'The Life of Shoin Yoshida', p. 164.
32 T. M. Huber, *The Revolutionary Origins of Modern Japan*, p. 100.
33 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 170.
34 Ibid., p. 183.
35 Ibid., p. 196.

Aizu, whose daimyo had put their hopes on the *kobugattai* (unity of court and bakufu) policy.[36]

The fatal blow to the loyalist movement came in the summer of 1864 when the rump of the movement, many of whom had taken refuge in the domain of Choshu, clashed with troops of *kobugattai* (unity of court and bakufu) daimyo, Satsuma, Aizu, and Kuwana. Taking advantage of this act of insubordination, the bakufu managed to have the emperor declare the domain of Choshu an enemy of the court and mounted a military expedition against it. In late 1864, by surrendering without a fight, the loyalist movement shifted from acts of heroic violence to new efforts to build an organised anti-bakufu movement.

(4) Characteristics of the Movement

The loyalist movement attracted many men from the middle and lower ranks of the samurai class. Many came from the large domains, such as Satsuma, Choshu, or Mito, whose daimyo had been active in the high-level disputes of the 1850s. And most were young, in their late teens or twenties, angered and frustrated by the failure of older and more responsible men to deal with the foreign problem or with the country's weakness.[37] The movement also attracted commoners, especially those most heavily influenced by samurai ideals and lifestyle, such as sons of wealthy peasants or well-to-do townsmen. However, more significant than its class background was its ideological character.

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36 Ibid., pp 214-26.
37 Ibid., p. 158.

Yoshida's teachings influenced by the Mito school had millennial character. In particular, the idea of kokutai was the entity to realise a new world for the alienated. Yoshida noted: 'the hopes of farmers, shopkeepers, and persons who leave home to work is still not being realised, therefore, manage the government so as to rescue the poor, care for the sick and provide for children'.[38] According to him, the essential object of all government was to achieve the blessing of the people of which Mencius speaks. Using the orthodox Mencian concepts of Mandate of Heaven and the people's welfare, Yoshida argued that it was the duty of government to provide for the people. His idea was to condemn the *status quo* and to demand profound change. Since he used ethical notions from China in formulating the kokutai idea, this was less primitive than it might have been. Yet it remained nonetheless essentially utopian. To liberate the people, the government should be successful in meeting the people's needs. On the contrary, to realise this world, the people should be of one mind and be unable to bear being separated from the emperor.[39] This idea could be persuasive for the commoners and farmers.

The sonno-kokutai objective was to oppose the unquestioning loyalty to one's feudal superior and to restore the emperor to actual sovereignty for the realisation of a new society. Bellah explains the movement as follows: 'it had a clear religious goal which could be realised on this earth: the restoration of the emperor to actual sovereignty and

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38 *Yoshida Shoin zenshu*, vol. 1, p. 39-42. Recited from T. M. Huber, *The Revolutionary Origins of Modern Japan*, p. 60.

39 R. Tsunoda et al., *Sources of the Japanese Tradition*, p. 598.

purging of Japan of all corrupt influences. Once this had been done, Kokugaku foresaw an era of harmony between subject and emperor, man and deity, in which peace and morality would naturally hold sway'.[40] Because of this, the movement can be seen as a 'millennial' religious movement. The high regard for the emperor was a core concept for an era of harmony. The sonno-kokutai movement, above all, provided a new ideology to establish strong centralised monarchy toward which every Japanese owed absolute allegiance and to destroy the shogunate or any other power which stood between sovereign and people.

For this, the role of the samurai, the loyalists, was important. They did not simply advocate reform. They tried to embody in their own lives and political action the ideals of the samurai ethic. They found inspiration in the original samurai virtues of decisiveness, daring, and indifference to death. Many loyalists underwent something like a religious conversion, cutting themselves off from ties to the domains and abandoning loyalty to their daimyo for a more intense and personal commitment to the emperor.[41] In a word, the sonno kokutai as a millennial movement was not to pursue a new world, but to restore the old system and strengthen it with the emperor as central figure.

To sum up, the Sonno-joi movement, which started to respond to the West, was in its own terms a failure.[42] The reason can be described as follows: the movement lacked concrete future goals other than expulsion of the barbarians;

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40 R. N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, p. 102.
41 P. Duus, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, p. 67.
42 For details, see W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 208-23.

its goal of expelling the barbarians was a practical impossibility; and the loyalists found few sympathisers among the daimyo, most of whom regarded the movement as a threat to the compromise between court and bakufu and as a violation of the bureaucratic samurai ethic of loyalty to superiors. Accordingly, the meaning of joi was discoloured and the loyalists could not alter the essence of the social structure. But the movement's significance changed as it shifted from acts of heroic violence to new efforts to build an anti-bakufu movement using the religious ideology of the sonno and kokutai. We return to this transformation in Chapter Eight.

2. The Taiping Thought of China

(1) The Social Background

The political and social crises were exacerbated in China after the beginning of the nineteenth century. In particular, the age-old contradictions between the peasants and the feudal holders of power were deepened and brought to a climax by a combination of exceptional circumstances, the First Opium War (1839) and the Treaty of Nanking (1842). Ch'ing China was politically weak and corrupt, and harassed by both domestic and foreign troubles. China's domestic troubles were concerned with economic depression, official corruption, and ethnic conflict.

Economic depression was closely related to the Ch'ing economy which depended almost entirely on agriculture. The level of Chinese life was utterly dependent on the productive power of the land. However, since arable lands were concentrated in the hands of a small number of landlords, they created sharp distinctions between the rich and the poor. Industry was underdeveloped. So there were no means to accommodate the unemployed. Soaring population growth made matters worse. In the span of a hundred years from 1741 to 1841 the population increased nearly three times. But the amount of arable land did not keep pace with the tremendous general increase in population.[43] Also before the Taiping

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43 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, pp. 47-8.

revolution there were several years of famine. It was very hard for the Chinese farmer, living on the brink of hunger in a good year, to survive lean harvests. From 1826 to 1850 there were frequent floods and periods of drought in China.[44] The economic depression was deepened by these conditions.

Along with economic depression, official corruption showed a further ruinous tendency. Government officials avoided taking any responsibility for punishing law breakers. Instead they were glad to tolerate and to cover up infringements of the law so that there might appear to be no disturbances in the area under their jurisdiction. If no disclosures were made during their tenure of office, they saved themselves, even though their successors might incur the blame, for example, for the existence of secret societies. Flood, drought and bandits were not reported to the throne. Such news would cause the emperor anxiety. The central government officials tried to keep local magistrates silent and discourage them by inflicting punishment upon any of them who made a suggestion to the throne.[45] This made political corruption deepen.

The ethnic conflict was a more serious thing than other domestic troubles. Ever since the establishment of Manchu rule, those loyal to the Ming dynasty had been spreading the slogan 'Rebel against the Ch'ing and restore the Ming'. Even though strong pressure and forceful means were employed, the seeds of this movement could not be eradicated. Since the

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44 S. Y. Teng, *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers: A Comprehensive Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 29.

45 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, pp. 49-50.

first riot in 1786 led by Lin Shuang-wen of the Heaven and Earth Society (*T'ien ti-hui*), many riots broke out against the Ch'ing calling for the restoration of the Ming. Two decades before the Opium War, riots occurred in many parts of the country. The riots were led mainly by troublemaking organisations which were variously called 'The Sect' (*chiao* or *chiao-tang*) and 'The Society' (*hui* or *hui-tang*). They were secret societies united under the slogan, 'Rebel against the Ch'ing and restore the Ming'. Even though the central government of China repeatedly ordered provincial authorities to arrest these 'bandits', the seeds of the old Chinese nationalism could not be destroyed.[46]

After the Opium War, Western infiltration was one of the most important factors in rise of Taiping. By the Treaty of Nanking, the opium traffic, illicit before the war, was legalised. Accordingly, the ever-increasing import of opium caused a great outflow of silver from China. Since the land tax was fixed on the basis of silver, the peasants, commuting their hard-earned coins into silver dollars, were put at disadvantage by the changed exchange rate between silver and copper coins and thus were actually paying higher taxes. Their lives became more difficult.

The other immediate effect of the war was that Canton no longer monopolised China's foreign trade. The opening of other ports in the east of the country deprived Canton of much of the commerce which had been concentrated there when it had been the only port open to foreign trade.[47] Hundreds of

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46 Ibid., p. 50.
47 S. Y. Teng, *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers: A Comprehensive Study*, pp. 24-5.

thousands of boatsmen and porters in central and southern China were thrown out of work. Many turned to banditry or piracy. The merciless policy of the Cantonese government, in co-operation with the British, drove many of these pirates and bandits to the neighbouring Kwangsi province, where they awaited leadership. It was from among this group that several of the leaders of the Taiping revolution emerged later.[48]

The Opium War also resulted in a psychological defeat. China had had a strong sense of superiority. However, after their defeat, the Chinese realised that they were not strong enough to protect themselves.[49] At the same time, Western religion started to spread new seeds of nationalism in China. It generated a furious assault on China's existing social structure and values.[50] Western missionaries and traders now enjoyed much power, influence, and prestige in China. The fact that the Taiping could adopt Christianity, albeit imperfectly, was testimony to the effectiveness of the efforts of Western missionaries.[51]

Social disorder caused by economic depression and official corruption, inter-ethnic conflict, and foreign infiltration, thus provided a new historical catalyst. In a word, such was the social background which paved the way for the Taiping's rapid development.

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48 Ibid., p. 25.
49 Ibid., pp. 23-4.
50 J. K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol. 10, pp. 213-63.
51 S. Y. Teng, *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers: A Comprehensive Study*, p. 32.

(2) The Beginnings of Taiping

The Taiping movement was initiated by Hung Hsiu-ch'uan (1814-1864). He was the talented son of a well-to-do Hakka farmer from Hua-hsien just north of Canton.[52] Hung was from the gentry, even though his father was a farmer. His ancestors included a number of prominent statesmen and literati. His father was regarded as a just and able elder and was elected headman of the surrounding villages.[53] It was the hope of his family that Hung would pass the examination for government office. However, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan repeatedly failed the examination for the lowest gentry degree (sheng-yung).

This was a familiar syndrome in late imperial China, and those who suffered its frustration were sometimes prone to turn against the regime. But Hung Hsiu-ch'uan took another direction. Like Ch'oe Che-u of Tonghak in Korea, Hung experienced a mystical revelation. When he failed at another attempt in 1837, he became critically ill. The humiliation and disappointment of his failure brought on a serious breakdown. For over a month he remained in his room. He finally awoke with memories of strange visions. His illness had definitely altered Hung. He was transformed into a fiercely self-confident leader who visibly swelled in physical stature and

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52 The Hakkas were descendants of north Chinese who had migrated to Kwangtung over several centuries. They were called as *k'o-jen* or *k'o-chia*, meaning 'guest people' by the aboriginal people. Yu-wen Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 10.

53 Ibid., pp. 11-2.

spoke with new authority in his community. However, he paid little attention to his strange vision at that time.[54]

Hung Hsiu-ch'uan discovered the Way in 1843, six years after his hallucinations, when he read the Christian missionary pamphlets stored in his bookcase with a growing sense of revelation. Then the elements of his dream suddenly fell into place. The black-robed figure he saw during his hallucinations was none other than God, his father. Hung thought he was the younger brother of Christ, sent to earth with his demon-quelling sword to 'restore' Christianity to China.[55] By interpreting his visions in the light of what he read in Christian tracts and was taught by I. J. Roberts, an American missionary in Canton, in 1847, Hung became convinced that he had been chosen by God to restore all of China to the true worship.[56] His illness based on his delusions could be ascribed to a religious experience. After this, he claimed himself to be a saviour: 'I have received the immediate command from God in His presence: the will of Heaven rests with me. Although thereby I should meet with calamity, difficulty and suffering, yet I am resolved to act.'[57]

According to Hung's revelations, the religion of the conquering West had originally been a Chinese doctrine, revealed to the Central Kingdom long before the time of Confucius:

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54 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), vol. 1, p. 23.
55 Ibid., p. 25.
56 P. M. Yap, 'The Mental Illness of Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, Leader of the Taiping Rebellion', in Chun-tu Hsueh (ed.), *Revolutionary Leaders of Modern China* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 40.
57 Ibid., p. 41.

> 'Father had ordained the Heavenly Kingdom to be in China; since China was originally the home of the Heavenly Kingdom, it is therefore also the home of Father. Before Father descended to the earth, China belonged to Father, and yet the barbarian devils stole into Father's Heavenly Kingdom. This is the reason Father decreed that I should come to destroy them'.[58]

The foreign devils whom Hung believed himself destined to destroy were the Manchu as well as the West. When the Chinese people recovered their original religion by exterminating the barbarian devils, an age of great peace (*T'ai-p'ing*) would arrive, uniting the world in universal harmony and brotherhood. He was not adopting a foreign creed. He was asserting the Chinese right to it.[59]

Hung Hsiu-ch'uan would have been little more than a mystic, an inspired visionary, if there had not existed social forces ready to respond to his prophecies. These forces were produced by the confluence of inner and outer historical currents: population growth, official corruption, ethnic conflict on the one hand; the disruptions of the Opium War on the other.

The success of Taiping in becoming a religious sect was due on the other hand to the fact that they established a society of God Worshippers in the district of Kweiping,

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58 Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, decree, cited in Vincent Y. C. Shih, *The Taiping Ideology: Its sources, Interpretations and Influences* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), p. 6.

59 F. Wakeman Jr., *The Fall of Imperial China*, pp. 144-5.

Kwangsi.[60] Kwangsi province was especially stricken by these sources of disorder. Furthermore, as we have seen, after the Opium War, many bandits and pirates were driven to Kwangsi.[61] They were a potential source of public insecurity, along with unemployed silver miners, charcoal burners, and peasants driven off the land by drought.

Hung Hsiu-ch'uan became involved in this tumultuous situation because of religious persecution in Kwangtung. After his revelation, he and his cousin had baptised each other and began to proselytise other Hakkas (descendants of north Chinese) around his home town. But when Hung attracted the attention of the Hua-hsien magistrate for smashing Confucian idols, he was fired from his job as a local school teacher. In 1844 he persuaded one of his converts, Feng Yun-shan (1822-1852), to accompany him to Kwangsi, where they lived with relatives. When he returned to Kwangtung that same autumn, Feng remained in Kwangsi and during Hung's absence made astonishing progress in converting Hakka peasants living around Tzu-ching-shan (Thistle Mountain) to Taiping Christianity. It was there that Feng formed the converts into a God Worshippers' Society (*Pai shang-ti hui*), which turned the isolated villages into a self enclosed religious community. The God Worshippers' Society was an organised group of the adherents of the preaching of Hung.[62]

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60 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 54.

61 S. Y. Teng, *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers: A Comprehensive Study*, p. 25.

62 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, vol. 1, p. 29.

The God Worshippers' Society had some of the characteristics of traditional Chinese secret societies. Its members were held together by a bond of loyalty in the defence of their interests against outsiders and by the general spirit of brotherhood that prevailed among the members of all Chinese secret societies. But the belief that united the members of the new society differed fundamentally from the vague Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian concepts used by the traditional societies. The members of the God Worshippers' Society accepted a new religious faith, a faith quite contrary to all traditions of Chinese imperial society, a faith in a personal God and his guidance for one's personal salvation as well as in all matters of daily life and in the larger problems of economic, social, and political affairs. It was this faith that enabled the God Worshippers to accept some of the most revolutionary changes in their personal lives and in their social and political order.[63]

In 1847, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan went to Thistle Mountain and joined Feng Yun-shan in the leadership of the God Worshippers' Society, which Feng had established and which by this time had grown to a following of over two thousand converts, mostly peasants and miners. Together, the two expanded the organisation and its programme. Hung wrote a record of his preaching activities, and his writings at this time clearly indicate that in his mind the preaching of his religious experiences and ideas was to be used to realise his political aspirations. The demons that had to be fought were not only the evil spirits of the supernatural world but were now also

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[63] Ibid.

the Manchu and their supporters who had misled the people. The movement thus took on a revolutionary character.[64] After this, the religious doctrine which Hung preached took on a more political character.

In 1851, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan declared the formation of a new dynasty, the *T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* (The Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace). Hung himself assumed the title of T'ien Wang, (Heavenly King).[65] He disapproved of the secret society's dream of restoring the Ming dynasty and declared the foundation of his own dynasty. Hung's dynasty was based on the God Worshipper's religious doctrine that everything was dominated by heaven where God was the supreme ruler. His dynasty established a system of command and a division of authority. This meant that the concepts of his religious doctrine started to be transformed into the concepts of political doctrine.

(3) Ideology and Character of the Movement

What was the Taiping ideology? This question amounts to asking how Taiping appealed to Chinese. Taiping ideology can be divided into two elements, the non-religious and the religious. The two were usually combined and seldom occurred separately in their published materials, but the distinction is of analytical value.

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64 Ibid., p. 31.
65 Ibid., p. 49.

The non-religious portion of Taiping thought was concerned with its political purposes. It was an attack on the Manchu regime on the grounds that it was un-Chinese.[66] This political purpose appealed to the humbler Chinese and was directed towards all classes of the population.

The Taiping movement was fundamentally an agrarian one, a revolt of the peasants against their 'natural' enemies within Chinese society, against landlords, gentry and officials. But at the same time it had a strong colouring of nationalism or proto-nationalism, and showed certain unique elements of modernisation. The elements of proto-nationalism in the Taiping movement linked it with peasant revolts of the past, with the risings against Mongol power in the fourteenth century, for instance, led by the peasant Chu Yuan-chang, the founder of the Ming dynasty.[67]

The Taipings wished to liberate China from the domination of the Manchu. They accused the dynasty of being incapable of governing China, of wanting to drain the country of its wealth, of being responsible for the internal and external misfortunes of China. Hence, the Taipings' important duty was to change those conditions. Boardman has described the strong case the Taiping leaders had against Manchu government in the following terms:

> 'The government sold shamelessly its scholarly titles and honours. The student without private means, unable to buy the wherewithal for official

66 E. P. Boardman, *Christian Influence upon the Ideology of the Taiping Rebellion 1851-1864* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952), p. 34.

67 J. Chesneaux, *Peasant Revolts in China 1840-1949* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), p. 28.

> position, came to feel that study was useless and scholarly offices and titles meaningless. When the rewards of study could be purchased, the position of literature was degraded, they said, and the study of Confucius and Mencius dishonoured. Manchu government officials were notorious for avarice and rapacity. Bribes were the price of office, money the price of pardons. There was little hope for the advancement of poor men of talent. Taxes were exorbitant. Through government monopoly, salt, a daily necessity, had risen to one hundred cash per pound. At the same time the government was not doing what it was paid to do. The Manchu could not keep order. They failed to fulfil the traditional responsibilities of governments of China to control floods and provide for famine. Their treatment of Chinese was inequitable'.[68]

The Taiping attempted to anchor in Chinese tradition as many revolutionary and new theological ideas as possible. This attempt made it possible for the Taiping to summon the Chinese to support, in place of the alien Manchu, a regime that was led by Chinese and would behave in a Chinese manner. This was done by alluding to the fraternal concern of Christ for his earthly brothers and sisters: 'God repeatedly sent his own son down into this world. He swept away and destroyed the fiends... he saved all (his) brothers and sisters. Therefore sincerity and filial feelings should be displayed'.[69] The importance of fraternal relationships had been mentioned by Mencius.

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68 E. P. Boardman, *Christian Influence upon the Ideology of the Taiping Rebellion 1851-1864*, p. 34.

69 Ibid., p. 38.

The Taiping's ideas that the Manchu were an alien race was consistently accompanied by positive evidence of Chinese orthodoxy. This is well described in the Heavenly Kingdom declaration:

> 'The empire is God's empire, not that of the barbarian Manchus: the people, their clothing, and their food belong to God rather than to the Manchus. Ever since the Manchus let loose their malignant influence, confusion has been rife in China, where much territory has been overrun by them and countless people have grown accustomed to their maltreatment. China is a sacred land; the barbarians are evil people. Why is China called a sacred land? Because the Heavenly Father, the Supreme Deity, and True God made its heaven, earth, mountains, and sea. Hence, formerly the name of China was Sacred Land'.[70]

Such anti-Manchu ideas dwelling on China's orthodoxy can be also found in one of the proclamations. In the minds of the Taipings the 'world' created by God was simply China:

> 'China is a spiritual continent, and the barbarians are devils. The reason China is called a spiritual continent is because our heavenly Father is the true spirit who made heaven and earth and the mountains and rivers; therefore, in former times China was designated the spiritual continent.'[71]

70 Quoted in Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 64.

71 V. Y. C. Shih, *The Taiping Ideology: Its sources, Interpretations, and Influences* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), p. 6.

The religious ideology of Taiping can be summarised as centring on salvation and eschatology. Above all, the Taiping ideology made use of Christian ideas in the Bible. The story of Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension is worded so as to establish the fact of salvation for virtuous believers. As Boardman points out, 'as important an event to Christians as the resurrection was represented by the insurgents as an example more of a return to earth than a guarantee of life everlasting. This made possible their theory of Christ's descent to earth in 1837 and other appearances among men in the years that followed'.[72] In their concept of salvation, the Taiping laid great emphasis on God, the Heavenly Father. Most of what the Taipings borrowed came from the first five books of the Old Testament. The Mosaic idea of God as the Creator and the only God to whom sacrifices might properly be made is conspicuous. Salvation demanded absolute devotion to God from the worshipers. Since God is jealous of homage shown to other deities, he has to be regarded as the God of all men to fulfil the myth of his universality for the Chinese as well as for the Hebrews.[73] Accordingly, for the purposes of salvation, religious duties were demanded. The duties were outlined in the 'Ten Heavenly Commandments' and the first duty of a member of the Taiping community was to observe these Commandments reverently and truthfully.[74]

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72 E. P. Boardman, 'Millenary Aspects of the Taiping Rebellion (1851-64)', in S. L. Thrupp (ed.), *Millennial Dreams in Action: Essay in Comparative Study* (The Hague: Mouton, 1962), p. 75.

73 Ibid., p. 72.

74 V. Y. C. Shih, *The Taiping Ideology: Its sources, Interpretations, and Influences*, p. 18.

In addition, the organisers of the Taiping movement accepted the need for an adequate eschatology and therefore set about constructing a theory of reward and retribution in the hereafter. When complete, the system was employed to enforce their own ordinances and especially to inspire the utmost effort of their soldiers during battle. The way was clear for the full utilisation by the Taiping of the ideological resources afforded by the Bible.

The Taiping eschatology used the New Testament as a fertile source of example and imagery. To begin with, Hung adopted the phrase 'the Kingdom of Heaven' from Matthew as the title of his dynasty. These relations between the Taiping's eschatology and the New Testament are well analysed by Boardman as follows: 'In Matthew's gospel, the procedure for reaching heaven is fully outlined and hell is represented as the scene of punishment for wrong doing. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of the apostle Paul promise eternal life for the believers. Revelations, a particular favourite of Hung Hsiu-ch'uan has an extravagance of figure and a profusion of physical detail that appealed to the Taiping'.[75]

The Taipings thus made full use of eschatological terms and ideas extracted from the New Testament. Heaven was described as the scene of endless bliss for the Taipings. *T'ien*, the character for 'heavenly', was appropriated in the preface of names of institutions and personages, for example, 'Heavenly Dynasty', 'Heavenly Army', 'Heavenly Elder Brother', and so on. In general hell was portrayed by them as a place of

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75 E. P. Boardman, 'Millenary Aspects of the Taiping Rebellion (1851-64)', p. 74.

punishment and unending misery.[76] Heaven and hell were a picture of a hereafter. Based on the formulation of the idea of a hereafter, the Taiping strove to establish an ideal commonwealth on earth and thus had a very practical end in mind.

Thus, as the appointed Son of Heaven, Hung's mission was to exterminate the devils, to regain the paradise lost to the people who had been misled by the devils, to rule the world when the devils had been driven out, and to propagate the true Way of heaven. The authority used by God in creating the world came to be given to Hung.

To sum up, the activities of the Taipings took place in a context which was no longer purely Chinese, for the shadow of the West had lain over China since the humiliating defeat of 1842. In other words, the Taiping response to Western culture was not expel it but to adopt it. Even though the Taiping started under the slogan 'repel the Manchu to restore the Ming', they ended by establishing their own Heavenly Kingdom. Also the elements of their religion were based on those of the Westerners. The Taiping accepted the Ten Commandments and the divinity of Christ, whose younger brother Hung Hsiu-ch'uan claimed to be; they practised baptism and gave the Old and New Testaments a place among their canonical books. These Christian elements were combined with popular traditional religions, with peasant cults and with Buddhist and Taoist elements. The Taipings thus created a complete politico-religious system, which combined spiritual salvation and

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[76] Ibid.

obedience to the will of God with the political and military system.

In addition, Taiping - like Tonghak and Sonno-Joi - had the characteristics of millennial thought. Above all the title of the Taiping had an interesting millennial flavour. As Boardman points out, it styled itself officially the *T'ai-p'ing T'ien kuo* (Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace). T'ien-kuo (Heavenly Kingdom), the second half of the title, entirely originated from the Bible. It was the place of salvation. The first half of the title on the other hand described the last and most utopian ages, reflecting the usage of the Chinese classics.[77] The Taiping's salvation would come true when the Manchu dynasty had been swept out of China.

In reality, the new regime of the saved was inaugurated by Hung's declaration of the new dynasty in 1851. The regime was to last for an indeterminate period. For this, Hung as the Heavenly Younger Brother of Jesus was sent down into the world by God. Accordingly, the Taiping was a religious movement to realise a stage of perfection for a Chinese people suffering under the devastated social conditions that followed the Opium War.

3. Conclusions

We have seen that the Sonno-Joi movement emerged in response to the threat of the West. After fixing a seclusion policy, the Tokugawa had maintained the policy for nearly two

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77 Ibid., p. 71.

hundred years. But in the nineteenth century, the threat from the outside provoked the development of two currents of opinion. One had a strict position toward the West. This formed around the Mito school, which urged a rigid policy of seclusion consistent with Confucian notions. As a response to the threat from the outside, new attitudes toward the emperor and a new religious concept of the state were generated. These were combined in the Sonno-joi movement (revere the emperor and expel the barbarian). This movement was closely linked to the concept of kokutai (national polity). The Sonno-joi was transformed into a kind of religious movement together with a kokutai centred on the emperor. The movement led by loyalists from the samurai class laid strong emphasis on veneration for the emperor.

In case of China, social disorder after the Opium War created propitious conditions for the emergence of a new ideology. Taiping thought was a response to both Western penetration and internal troubles. The Taiping started under the slogan 'repel the Manchu and restore the Ming'; unlike the Sonno-joi, the Taiping's purpose was not to expel the Western culture but to reconstruct the old regime. But later they established their own regime, the Heavenly Kingdom. An individual with the charismatic ability emerged. Hung Hsiu-ch'uan claimed himself to be the Heavenly Younger Brother of Jesus and declared the regime of the Heavenly Kingdom.

The attraction of Taiping for the Chinese was due to its ideology, which combined anti-Manchu sentiment with the promise of salvation. It was a millennial movement based on a dream of a new world. Japan's Sonno-joi also showed a

millennial character. The Taiping aimed to create a new world even though at first they insisted on restoring the Ming, while the Sonno-joi objective was to pursue an era of harmony between lord and retainer in which peace and morality would dominate by restoring the emperor.

The Taiping movement was led by Hung Hsiu-ch'uan who originated from the gentry and the Sonno-joi was led by samurai influenced by Yoshida Shoin. The leaders of the two movements were thus recruited in both cases from the dominant class. But Hung was a disappointed exam candidate and the samurai were a frustrated class. For both of them the stimulus of the foreign challenge was a chance to turn their attention to the building of a new social order. Both movements sought to create a new ideology to cope with the challenge of the West as well as with internal disorder. We must now go on to consider how these religious movements for a new social order developed into revolutions. In the next chapter, I discuss this issue in relation to the peasant revolution of Korea.

Part III. The Problem of Action

CHAPTER VI

THE PEASANT REVOLUTION OF 1894

To be successful, a revolution must persuade as well as overthrow. However, the peasant revolution of 1894 in Korea neither persuaded the whole people nor overthrew the established government. The peasant revolution started with the Kobu peasant uprising in the Chŏlla-do province in January 1894. The revolution was a historical event to deny the old system and to resist foreign power and was oriented towards the creation of a new society in which the wounds of late-Chosŏn society would be healed and the nation united and independent. In the first place, the revolution unified on a national scale the various peasant uprisings that had been taking place at local levels throughout the late-Chosŏn period, all of which were responses to the structural problems of Chosŏn society identified in Chapter Three.[1] At the same time, it represented an attempt to protect the nation against the various forms of invasion by the imperialist powers that followed the opening of the ports.[2] In December 1894, the peasant revolution was brought to an end by the arrest of the leader, Chŏn Pong-jun.

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1 A series of peasant uprisings took place, forty three in number, over twenty years (1875-1894) before Tonghak peasant revolution. Han U-gŭn, *Tonghangnan Kiin-e kwanhan Yŏn'gu* [Study on the Causes of the Tonghak Rebellion] (Seoul: Seoul University Press, 1971), pp. 55-81.

2 In particular, the peasant began to recognise seriously the commercial invasion of the foreign power. Han U-gŭn, *Tonghak-kwa Nongmin Ponggi* [Tonghak and Peasant Uprising] (Seoul: Iljogak, 1983), pp. 24-38.

Here what I give attention to is the relation between the peasant revolution and the Tonghak religious movement. And I will examine the character of the peasant revolution which I believe has an implication corresponding with the direction of modernisation.

In this chapter I trace the causes and development of the peasant revolution of 1984. In the part on the revolution's causes, the social and economic conditions that constitute the general background will be described in order to make possible a search for structural sources; then the events seen as the direct triggers of revolution will be examined. In the part on the development of the revolution, the aims of the revolution or of the various actors involved will be investigated by tracing the process as it unfolded. In this context, I analyse the relation between the religious movement of Tonghak and the peasant revolution. The character of the peasant revolution will be dealt with in Chapter Seven.

1. The Causes of the Peasant Revolution

(1) Social and Economic Conditions

In this part, the social and economic conditions on the eve of the 1894 revolution will be described. Here the social and economic conditions are analysed to identify background factors conducive to the peasant revolution. The social and economic conditions fall, to a great extent, into two spheres. One is the so-called feudal conflict and the other is the

imperialist invasion.[3] The former mainly concerns the disorder in the taxation system of late-Chosŏn Korea. The latter centres around the invasion of the foreign merchants and the collusion between these foreign merchants and the organisers of domestic distribution at the expense of the peasant.

As we saw in Chapter Three, one of the most serious sources of social conflict in late Chosŏn Korea was the system of land and tax which belonged to the three administrative areas. The system of land and tax in Chosŏn society had a special feature, the combination of a centralised power system and a landlord-based economic system.[4] The yangban (the ruling class) were bureaucratised through the civil service examinations. They occupied a key place in the centralised power system and as a reward, their economic position was guaranteed. The typical source of economic gain of the nobility or yangban was the ownership of land and slaves. The yangban's rule over land and slaves was controlled by the central government, because their concentration of land and slave possession could threaten the centralised power system.[5] However, the centralised power system could not operate

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3 Han U-gŭn saw the social background of Tonghak as the weakness of the government, the breakdown of the official, the disorder of feudal status system, and the people's uprising. But briefly, it can be divided into two as above. Han U-gŭn, *Tonghangnan Kiin-e kwanhan Yŏn'gu* [Study on the Cause of Tonghak Rebellion], pp. 9-81.

4 Kim Yong-sŏp, *Chosŏn Hugi Nongŏpsa Yŏn'gu* [The Study on the History of Agriculture in the Late Chosŏn], Vol. 1 (Seoul: Iljogak, 1984).

5 Yi Yŏng-ho, '1894nyŏn Nongmin-ŭi Sahoe Kyŏngje-jŏk Paegyŏng-gwa Pyŏnhyŏk Chuch'e-ŭi Sŏngjang' [The Socio-economic Background and the Growth of the Subject of Change in the Peasant War of 1894] in Han'guk Yŏksa Yŏn'guhoe [The Korean History Research] (ed.), *1894nyŏn Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu* [Study on the Peasant War of 1894] (Seoul: Yŏksa Pip'yŏngsa, 1991), Vol. 1, p. 21.

thoroughly, because of the limitation of the central government. The yangban officials in charge of the civil service exploited land and slaves and became a landlord class.

As we have seen, the ruling class, consisting of the king the nobility or yangban, was based on a landlord system. A dominated class of owner-farmers and tenant farmers was controlled by means of a land system. The economic reality of this relationship was revealed in taxes and rent, taxes defining the relationship between the state and the peasants, and rent the relationship between the landlord and the tenant. Of the two, the basic production relationship was the landlord-tenant relationship. However, social conflicts also arose from the state-peasant relationship based on tax. As most taxation depended on land at the end of the Chosŏn society, the landlord used to exploit the tenant much more for land tax. Hence, social conflicts centred on the landlord-tenant relationship. These were the conflicts between the yangban officials as the landlord and the peasant as the tenant.[6]

The yangban officials as landlords could abuse their power to exploit the peasant. This was due to a change of the tax system. A system fixing the total amount of tax was introduced in the mid-eighteenth century. This system was that a fixed amount of tax was allotted to each county without considering any rise or fall in the number of tax payers. The allocation of the total amount of tax was intended to deal with the decrease of tax payers and to secure a settled tax for the

6 Kim Hong-shik, *Chosŏn Shidae Ponggŏn Sahoe-ŭi Kibon Kujo* [The Fundamental Structure of Chosŏn Feudal Society] (Seoul: Pakyŏngsa, 1981).

central government. Owing to class movements such as the growth of the yangban group, the number of tax payers had been decreasing. Under the system the central government entrusted the yangban officials and local dominant class with full powers for tax gathering, so that it was possible for them to exploit the peasant unlimitedly and to lighten their own tax burden.[7] For this reason, the peasants in the nineteenth century began the peasant struggle over the taxation issue.

The causes of the revolution become clear in the demands advanced by the peasants. The peasant revolution of 1894, as the culmination of the nineteenth century peasant uprisings, was initially based on demands for the correction of problems related to tax collection and land, but then it progressed to include demands for reform of social class relations as well. Peasant uprisings at the local levels had called for the correction of the disorder of the three administrations which was the primary cause of the uprising.[8] The demands for land reform proposed during the peasant revolution were most clearly manifested in the inclusion of the demand for 'distributing land equally to the farmers' in the '12 Article Programme for the Reform of Misgovernment'.[9] It was also demonstrated in the demand for the punishment of the *kyunjŏnsa* (land surveyor general) and the burning of the land registers along with the tax records.

The demands of the peasant were a mirror of the social and economic conditions the peasant at that time. The demand for

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7 Mangwŏn Han'guksa Yŏn'gushil (ed.), *1862nyŏn Nongmin Hangjaeng* [The Peasant Protest of 1862] (Seoul: Tongnyŏk, 1988), p. 36.
8 Han U-gŭn, *Tonghangnan Kiin-e kwanhan Yŏn'gu*, pp. 82-88.
9 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 136.

equality of land distribution was merely an integration of the peasants' demands and intentions at a stage when the movement's detailed principles were not established. Hence, interpretations of these may vary, but the fact that the peasants aspired to own land seems clear. That is, they called for the abolition of landlord-tenant system, and the realisation of peasant ownership of land. It is for this reason that the Confucian scholars who belonged mostly to the landlord class could not support the reform of the peasant army.

The foreign commercial invasion was another important stimulus to the peasant revolution. The economic exploitation by the foreign commercial houses brought about a crisis in the state finances. The infiltration of foreign commercial power into the domestic commercial market threatened a source of taxation. In addition, an outflow of grain from the country organised by foreign merchants appeared to be a crisis in Chosŏn's self sufficient finances based on spot goods. The burden of this crisis, in turn, was transferred to the peasants.[10] Because of this, the peasant was strongly opposed to the foreign economic intrusion.

In this way, following the opening of the ports, the social-structural problems of late-Chosŏn society were compounded by the national problems arising from the foreign economic invasion. More specifically, the period from 1876 to

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10 Sŏ Yŏng-hŭi, 'Kaehanggi Ponggŏn-jŏk Kukka Chaejŏng-ŭi Wigi-wa Minjung Sut'al-ŭi Kanghwa' [A Financial Crisis of Feudalistic State and the Intensified Exploitation of the People at the Time of Opening] in *1894nyŏn Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, Vol. 1, pp. 126-69.

1894, just before the outbreak of the peasant revolution, was a period of intense struggle for hegemony between China and Japan, in an international environment of global division by Western imperialism.[11] The Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1894. An outcome of the war was that China dropped its imperialist aspirations and instead became a target of the imperialist powers. On the other hand, Japan joined the ranks of the imperialist powers and Korea became a semi-colony. In the ensuing power struggle among the Western powers, the Japanese monopoly over Korea was rejected but Korea had to accommodate the transfer of various concessions to the Western powers. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904 was the last barrier to Japan's gaining control over Korea. Japan won that war and signed the Protectorate Treaty of 1905 (between Korea and Japan), thus making Korea its colony.[12]

As has been mentioned, this part focuses on the period just prior to the revolution. During this period, along with the emergence of the Western powers, there was intense rivalry between China and Japan. China considered Korea in the traditional way as its subordinate, while Japan increasingly rejected this idea. China was experiencing an attempted modernisation after the Opium War, while Japan, following the Meiji Restoration, was undertaking a primitive accumulation of

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11 Kim Chŏng-gi, 'Ch'ong-ŭi Chosŏn Chŏngch'aek (1876-1894)' [Ch'ing's Policy on Chosŏn]; Ch'oe Tŏk-su, 'Kaehang Ihu Ilbon-ŭi Chosŏn Chŏngch'aek' [Japan's Policy on Chosŏn after the Opening of the Ports] in *1894ny'ŏn Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, Vol. 3, pp. 31-68, pp. 69-90.

12 Kim Kyŏng-ch'ang, '1890ny'ŏndae-ŭi Kukche-jŏk Hwan'gyŏng' [The International Situation in 1890s] in Han'guk Chŏngch'i Oegyo Sahakhoe [Korean Political Diplomatic History Research] (ed.), *Kabo Tonghak Nongmin Hyŏngmyŏng-ŭi Chaengjŏm* [The Issues of Tonghak Peasant Revolution of 1894] (Seoul: Chimmundang, 1994), pp. 65-100.

capital based on the exploitation of the agriculture in the service of industrialisation and an increasingly close interrelation between business and politics. Japan desperately needed to trade with Korea in order to facilitate the primitive accumulation of capital. Korea was a good source of raw materials such as grain. Although, at that point, Japan still could not be considered an imperialistic power, with the emergence of pro-Russian forces following the signing of the Chosŏn-Russia Treaty of Protection and Commerce (1884), the *Coup d'état* of 1884 (*Kapshin Chŏngbyŏn*), and the British occupation of Kŏmundo island in 1885-87, it began to show its imperialistic nature towards Korea. As the Western powers had already infiltrated China as their market, they were not much interested in Korea as a market.[13] So Korea became the main target of a power struggle between Japan and China which, similarly, had not yet reached the level of an imperialist power.[14]

The two countries' economic invasion first penetrated the distribution sector, as its objective was to gain access to markets to sell industrial goods from the advanced capitalist countries as well as to extract agricultural and mineral products from Korea. Japan which had not yet industrialised and was playing the role of a middleman in trading the manufactured goods of the advanced countries, was interested in raw materials and agricultural products such as rice for

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13 Na Ae-ja, 'Kaehanghu Oeguk Sangin-ŭi Ch'imt'u-wa Chosŏn Sangin-ŭi Taeŭng' [The Infiltration of the Foreign Merchants and The Response of Choson Merchant After Opening Ports], in *1894ny'ŏn Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, Vol. 1, p. 185.

14 Pow-key Sohn [Son, P'yo-gi] et al., *The History of Korea*, pp. 207-9.

the development of Japanese industries.[15] Korea had all the right conditions from these points view. After penetrating the distribution sector, Chinese and Japanese merchants reorganised the distribution system. For inland distribution, a sub-structure with comprador characteristics was formed by Koreans but as the economic colonisation of Korea proceeded, these sub-structures gradually came under the control of foreign merchants. As this occurred, the numerous people involved in distribution who had colluded with the imperialists at an early stage slowly became more nationalistic. However, as the government did not take a measure to meet the situation, the foreign merchants could keep controlling the distribution structure. Their activities became subject to criticism and attacks of the Chosŏn's merchants and peasants.[16]

Table 6.1 Korea's Grain Exports to Japan (1885-94)[17]

Year	Total (a)	Rice (b)	Rice (b/ax100)	Beans (c)	Beans (c/ax100)
	Yen	Yen	%	Yen	%
1885	388,023	15,691	4.0	28,884	7.4
1886	504,225	12,193	2.4	51,733	10.3
1887	804,996	90,097	11.2	335,415	41.7
1888	867,508	21,810	2.5	471,541	54.4
1889	1,233,841	77,578	6.3	645,429	52.3
1890	3,550,478	2,037,868	57.4	1,005,156	28.3
1891	3,366,344	1,820,319	54.1	913,939	27.1
1892	2,443,739	998,519	40.9	797,884	32.7
1893	1,698,116	367,165	21.6	628,324	37.0
1894	2,311,215	979,292	42.4	506,888	21.9

15 Ha Wŏn-ho, 'Kongmul-ŭi Taeil Such'ul-gwa Nongminch'ŭng-ŭi Chŏhang' [The Export of Grain to Japan and the Peasant Protest], in *1894ny'ŏn Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, Vol. 1, pp. 243-74.

16 Na Ae-ja, 'Kaehanghu Oeguk Sangin-ŭi Ch'imt'u-wa Chosŏn Sangin-ŭi Taeŭng', pp. 173-212.

17 Source: from Ha Wŏn-ho, 'Kongmul-ŭi Taeil Such'ul-gwa Nongminch'ŭng-ŭi Chŏhang', p. 246.

In particular, the issue of the outflow of grain directly affected the peasants. As shown in Table 6.1, the outflow of rice increased rapidly just before the revolution. When the Japanese drained Korea of its grain to develop their industries, they disturbed the domestic grain supply system, and raised prices. As grain became a commodity due to the outflow to Japan, the desire of the peasants to accumulate a surplus became greater. However, the merchant organisation, including the Japanese merchants and the local ruling class not only exploited the surplus products of the peasants but depressed the personal consumption levels of the peasants as well. In addition, the government over-issued worthless currency in order to secure finance, which, along with the grain export to Japan, caused an inflation of the price of grain and other goods.[18]

To sum up, the peasant in late-Chosŏn Korea was exposed to various forms of exploitation, including rent and tax exploitation, and this situation provoked a series of peasant uprisings at the local levels in the 19th century. At the same time, the economic plunder by foreign merchants contributed to a deterioration in the situation of the peasant. Under increased exploitation and worsening social conditions, a revolution was expected to break out as a more comprehensive movement oriented towards abolishing the old system and making a reform from below. In other words, these conditions appears

18 Sŏ Yŏng-hŭi, 'Kaehanggi Ponggŏn-jŏk Kukka Chaejŏng-ŭi Wigi-wa Minjung Sut'al-ŭi Kanghwa', pp. 149-54.

to have caused the peasant revolution to turn into a protest against the whole of existing society.

(2) The Politicisation of Tonghak

After the death of Ch'oe Che-u, the Tonghak movement concealed itself for about thirty years. Despite the oppression of the government, Tonghak's strength continued to grow. In the early 1890s, some followers began to ask the leader Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng to initiate a movement for the exoneration of the movement's founder, Ch'oe Che-u. Such a movement had meaning not so much to exonerate Ch'oe Che-u as to win approval for Tonghak in Korea. Under mounting pressure from his followers, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng agreed to make formal representations to the government with a view to clearing the name of the martyred Ch'oe Che-u. This implied the removal of the illegality of Tonghak. Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng wrote a circular letter to his Tonghak groups, advocating formal petition to the government:

> 'Our teacher, Ch'oe Che-u receiving a direct order from God, tried to spread widely the virtue of Tonghak as the Way in which Heaven and Man are one, in order to save the people from suffering. Unfortunately, he was falsely accused of being a heretic and was martyred in Taegu. Ah, what a tragedy! We are well-trained disciples of Ch'oe, our master. Therefore, the one object of redressing this wrong occupied our thoughts at all times ...'[19]

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19 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, pp. 46-7.

As soon as Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng declared this resolution, the movement for the exoneration of the founder Ch'oe Che-u began to take concrete shape in 1892. It was the start of a mass movement demanding the approval of Tonghak. In support of their petition, Tonghak followers assembled at Samnye (near Chŏnju, the capital of the Chŏlla province) on 1 November 1892.[20] The number of Tonghak followers who assembled at Samnye at that day remains uncertain. According to Yi Ton-hwa, several thousand Tonghak are said to have assembled in support of the petition.[21] Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng sent the petition both to Cho Pyŏng-shik, the governor of Ch'ungch'ŏng province, and to Yi Kyŏng-shik, the governor of Chŏlla province. In response to this appeal, governor Yi replied negatively, saying: 'Tonghak has been outlawed. Why do you continue to practice this heresy and allow yourselves to be captives of this doctrine, and commit crimes?'[22]

Tonghak followers repeated their original plea for both approval of Tonghak and justice. While Tonghak's approval was advocated by the upper leader group including Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, justice was insisted for the lower leader group including Sŏ In-ju and Sŏ Pyŏng-hak.[23] The former had a religious objective and the latter had a 'anti-feudal' political objective. This reflects the duality of Tonghak. The governor's response to

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20 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 85. The date is the lunar calendar. Hereafter lunar calendar.
21 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, p. 46.
22 Ibid., p. 48.
23 Pak Chong-gŭn, 'Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng-e daehayŏ' [On Tonghak and the Peasant War of 1894] in No Tae-ku (ed.), *Tonghak Hyŏngmyŏng-ŭi Yŏn'gu* [Study on Tonghak Revolution] (Seoul: Paeksan Sŏdang, 1982), p. 17.

the second appeal of the Tonghak followers was issued to the local officials as follows:

> 'Since the Tonghak doctrine is outlawed by the Government, you will prohibit the practice of this doctrine in accordance with the law. However, I have heard that in many places the proscription of Tonghak has been used as a pretext for confiscating the property and injuring the lives of Tonghak people. How can such action be justified by the law? Immediately upon receiving this message, you will: (1) search your jurisdiction for any Tonghak followers and persuade them to give up their beliefs and return to the righteous doctrine [Confucianism]; and (2) forbid any government employees from confiscating even a fraction of the property of anyone'.[24]

It became apparent that no real change in conditions would result from Tonghak appeals at the provincial level, even though Tonghak followers received the governor's order prohibiting confiscation of property. Early in 1893, they decided to prepare a direct appeal to the king. The petition to the king was, in its substance, almost an exact repetition of the previous appeals to the provincial governors. It asked for redress of the wrong done to the late founder Ch'oe Che-u.

Like the earlier petitions, the appeal to the king contained no anti-foreign sentiments. The most significant point about the text prepared for the king was that the Tonghak representatives went to great lengths to express in the humblest and most unequivocal terms their complete loyalty

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24 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, pp. 48-9.

to the Throne. This attitude is exemplified in some part of the petition to the king, as follows:

> 'We, *yuhak* [graduate Confucian scholars without official status] from each province, bowing deeply in profound respect and having humbly bathed ourselves, respectfully submit the following petition. ... By order of Heaven, this nation was formed and Your Majesty became our divine King. When people are in need, they seek their parents, and when they suffer, they seek God. This is the law of nature. Your Majesty is both God and parent to us, and we are your humble children. In a time of such suffering and need, we cannot but appeal to Your Majesty in unison even though we realise that this action will be offensive to Your Majesty'.[25]

When several thousand Tonghak members reached Seoul, some of the more radical members of the movement, including Sŏ Pyŏng-hak and Sŏ In-ju, attempted to pursue a course of more forceful action. They disguised themselves and infiltrated into the government troops in Seoul, with a view to overthrowing the government and thereby eliminating the corrupt officials. However, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng was alerted, and he decided to take immediate action. Ch'oe rebuked the two of them for this radical action. He ordered all Tonghak followers in Seoul to gather in front of the gate of the king's palace and wail in unison.[26] In the event, it was impossible to route the petition through the regular channels. While the Tonghak leaders were attempting to make these arrangements, the king

25 Ibid., p. 51.
26 Ibid., p. 53.

sent out his personal messenger with an order to the Tonghak followers to go home and return to their occupations. The order was accompanied by a promise that the king would carry out their wishes. On receiving the king's promise, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng ordered the Tonghak followers to obey, and the collective movement in Seoul ended.[27]

Following the petition to the king, the officials became more oppressive than ever, with the result that the lives and property of Tonghak members were constantly in jeopardy. The appeal to the king, in other words, resulted in failure. The followers had to take any action to survive. There was no choice but to depend on collective behaviour. For this reason, the Poŭn assembly was held on 10 March 1893.[28]

In the Poŭn assembly, the character of Tonghak was transformed from a religious movement into a political one. Tonghak withdrew its religious slogan, approval of Tonghak, and proposed the political slogan 'crusade to expel the Japanese and Westerners'.[29]

Tonghak's transformation at this point seems to have been due to the fact that its followers became progressively more aware of the infiltration of foreign merchants and the activities of the Western missionaries while staying in Seoul.[30] Their new slogan reflected the crisis of the nation on the one hand and the will to the escape from the

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27 Ibid., pp. 53-4.
28 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 96.
29 At Poŭn assembly, several thousand followers had flags on which 'expel Japanese' and 'expel the Westerner' was written. 'Ch'wiŏ' [A Collection of Manifestos and Slogans Related to Tonghak], in *Tonghangnan Kirok* [Record of the Tonghak Rebellion], Vol. 1, pp. 110-11.
30 Pak Chong-gŭn, 'Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng-e daehayŏ', pp. 18-9.

government's oppression on the other. The slogan was persuasive to people that regarded the Japanese and the Westerners as objects of hatred. At the same time, the slogan satisfied both the moderates and the radicals among the Tonghak leaders. The former emphasised religious propagation and the latter insisted on the struggle against illegal exactions from Tonghak followers like confiscation.

A series of acts of collective behaviour - making petitions, holding meetings, and proposing slogans - promoted mass politicisation. Mass politicisation was the process by which mass participation was substantially realised in practice.[31] In this sense, Tonghak's assemblies at Samnye and Poŭn were the starting-point of its politicisation.

(3) The Kobu Peasant Uprising

Coinciding with Tonghak's politicisation, a peasant uprising took place that corresponded closely with Tonghak's ideology. This was the Kobu peasant uprising. The Kobu peasant uprising was an important precursor of the peasant revolution of 1894. With this uprising the peasant reached a turning point, as the limits of purely local protests became increasingly apparent. The peasant revolution of 1894 was the direct result of it in the sense that it was when the peasants' demands of the Kobu uprising were ignored that the peasants began to prepare for a full-scale struggle. The

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31 D. E. Smith, *Religion and Political Modernization* (London: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 4.

immediate reason for the Kobu uprising was that Cho Pyŏng-gap, the magistrate of Kobu county, was considered an exploiter of the local peasants. According to the records of the interrogations on Chŏn Pong-jun, Cho's exploitation was as follows: collecting excessive water tax, levying a tax on land exempt from taxation, plundering the wealth of property, receiving money to build the monument to Cho's father, and pocketing relief grain.[32] Cho Pyŏng-gap abused his right to exploit local residents in favour of his own self-interest.

In November 1893, Chŏn Pong-jun, the Chŏpchu in Kobu (the head of Tonghak Chŏp), went to the Kobu government office with 40 peasants in order to ask Cho Pyŏng-gap to put an end to his abuses. But they were arrested and held for a while. After this incident, Chŏn Pong-jun made plans for a more radical attempt. Most of his supporters were Tonghak followers. They gathered every day at the Toso (the secret organisation of Tonghak) that was set up at Song Tu-ho's house in Kobu to work out measures to cope with the situation. They adopted a resolution as follows:[33]

> 1. To take Kobu Castle and execute Magistrate Cho Pyŏng-gap,
> 2. To occupy the arsenal and explosive warehouse,
> 3. To punish corrupt officials who exploit the people to curry favour with their superiors,
> 4. To occupy the Chŏnju government office, and then go directly to Seoul'.

32 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' [Records of the Interrogations on Chŏn Pong-jun] in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 522.

33 Shin Bok-ryong, *Tonghak Sasang-gwa Kabo Nongmin Hyŏngmyŏng* [The Thought of Tonghak and the Peasant Revolution of 1894] (Seoul: P'yŏngminsa, 1985), p. 119.

Those who took part in the resolutions and signed their names were twenty. The names were written in the form of a circle in order not to expose the leader. So it was called a 'round robin'.[34] The twenty signatories who had been encouraged, discussed with each other, and put forward the programme. The signatories decided to have a leader who would be able to realise their specific purposes. In this way, the Kobu peasant uprising broke out on 11 January 1894.[35]

In the morning of 11 January, the peasants led by Chŏn Pong-jun occupied the county office of Kobu, questioned and punished the corrupt officials, broke into a military depot to take away weapons, confiscated grain collected for taxation, distributed the illegally-collected tax rice to the farmers, and destroyed the newly-built reservoir, which Cho Pyŏng-gap had ordered to construct for water tax below the established reservoir, Mansŏkpo.[36]

The central government took various measures to cope with the situation. It recalled Cho Pyŏng-gap to Seoul for interrogation, lowered Governor Kim Mun-hyŏn's pay by three grades, appointed Yi Yong-t'ae as special inspector for the purpose of both searching for rebel leaders and rectifying malpractices, and appointed Pak Wŏn-myŏng as new magistrate of Kobu.[37]

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34 Ibid., p. 120. See Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu* [Tonghak and the Peasant Revolutionary Movement of 1894], pp. 118-29.
35 The date is the lunar calendar. The dates concerning peasant revolution, hereafter, are the lunar calendar.
36 Han U-gŭn, *Tonghak-kwa Nongmin Ponggi*, pp. 98-9.
37 Ibid., p. 99.

Chŏn Pong-jun's peasant army did not disperse after the uprising of 11 January. Instead, it moved to Malmok Changt'ŏ, and then to Paeksan, maintaining its military strength. It kept up its organised forces longer than any other rebel force in the past.[38] However, the peasant army did not maintain stationary troops; that is, 'the peasant soldiers would change places with one another so that there was no decrease in the number of troops. In addition, they used to come and go in small groups with bamboo spears'.[39] As a result, the members were always maintained at one thousand. The peasant army broke up on 3 March after Pak Wŏn-myŏng, a newly-appointed magistrate of Kobu county, had a talk with Chŏn Pong-jun and urged him disperse his army.

Meanwhile on 2 March, Inspector Yi Yong-t'ae arrived at Kobu with a force of 800 soldiers under his command. He then threatened Pak Wŏn-myŏng to arrest the peasant uprising's leader and the rebels. Moreover, Yi's soldiers spread out committing outrages on ordinary citizens, as a result setting a deep-rooted anger against them.[40] Under this cruel suppression, Chŏn Pong-jun's forces completely broke up on 13 March.

The Kobu peasant uprising continued for a long time but without an organised force, it would not have lasted so long.

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38 It is uncertain how many peasant got together. In the beginning of the uprising, about 500 peasant troops assembled at Malmok Changt'ŏ on 11 January, and later their number reached approximately 2,000 at the Battle of Hwangt'ohyŏn on 7 April during the first peasant revolution, so it is estimated that the number of peasant troops who assembled at Paeksan could not have been more than 1,000.

39 *Chuhan Ilbon Kongsagwan Kirok* [Record of the Japanese Legation in Korea], Vol. 1, p. 54, p. 371.

40 Han U-gŭn, *Tonghak-kwa Nongmin Ponggi*, p. 100.

Furthermore, only the peasants living in Kobu county took part. The firm leadership of Chŏn Pong-jun played an important role in the uprising.[41] It is also important that there was an intermediate organisation between the leaders of the uprising and the peasant. Such local autonomous organisation as *Tongjang, Chipgang, and Hyangim*[42] played intermediary roles in mobilising and organising the peasant army. The local nature of these organisations was a source of strength but also served to limit the range of the peasant army.

Two aspects of the Kobu peasant uprising need to be examined in order to better define its character. One is its socio-economic causes, and the other is the relation between the socio-economic conditions and the peasant's consciousness - that is, the peasants' reaction to the socio-economic conditions. The socio-economic causes of Kobu uprising were in a sense the structural problem of Chosŏn society. The peasants' reaction to the socio-economic condition was a concrete action to overcome the existing society. Here Chŏn Pong-jun's role was important.

Chŏn Pong-jun, the leader of Kobu uprising, differed widely from the peasants in his perception of the situation. He stated in his first trial: 'I brought about the Kobu uprising to remove evils for all the people who sighed and lamented'.[43] As we have seen, the Kobu Peasant Uprising did not end with the temporary outburst of resentment from 11 January to 17, but instead the peasants continued to gather at

41 *Chuhan Ilbon Kongsagwan Kirok*, Vol. 1, pp. 5-16, p. 372.
42 Ibid., p. 56, p. 372.
43 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 524.

Malmok Changt'ŏ and Paeksan. This was possible only because of Chŏn Pong-jun's strong will 'to remove all evils for people and to save the world'. However, the Kobu uprising had limitations and was unable to expand as a revolution. The majority of those who took part in the uprising were the peasants living in the area of Kobu, and the peasant uprising was dependent on the local autonomous organisations.

When the Kobu uprising ended at the end of February, all Korea's social structural problems were still left unresolved. It was at this point that a new movement based on the Tonghak organisation all over the Chŏlla-do province appeared. Its aim was the reform of misgovernment. This was a true revolution.

2. The Development of the Revolution

The peasant revolution of 1894, which took the form of a war between a peasant army and government troops may be divided into three stages.[44] The first stage began when fighting broke out in Mujang, Chŏlla-do province. In this stage, peasants were armed and organised into an army. Several counties were occupied by this peasant army, and in due course it came to enter the capital of Chŏlla-do province. From this stage, a full-scale peasant revolution was under way.

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44 Shin Yong-ha divides the peasant revolution of 1894 into four stages, including the Kobu uprising. Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu* [Tonghak and the Peasant Revolutionary Movement of 1894] (Seoul: Iljogak, 1993), pp. 130-131. But in this study, Kobu uprising has been separated and dealt with in connection with the causes of the revolution.

The second stage is associated with the Chipkangso (Local Directorates) established in Chŏlla-do province as a result of the first peasant revolution. During this stage, the peasant army and government army concluded the 'Chŏnju Peace Agreement' in order to prevent the Chinese and Japanese armies from invading Korea.

The third stage is that of the second peasant revolution which broke out to expel Japanese army from the Korean peninsula. In this part the development of Tonghak will be dealt with in terms of these stages.

(1) The Outbreak of the Peasant Revolution

The peasant revolution broke out in Mujang, Chŏlla-do province. The first stage of the revolution lasted from 20 March (of the lunar calendar) until 8 May, when the 'Chŏnju Peace Agreement' was concluded.[45] How did the peasant revolution break out? That is to say, how was the revolution connected with the Kobu uprising?

To begin with, we need to explore why the peasants started to protest again. The central government regarded the Kobu peasant uprising as a minor incident and took light measures based on this misconception. They replaced Cho Pyŏng-gap, the magistrate of Kobu county, with Pak Wŏn-myŏng. Yi Yong-t'ae, as an *anhaeksa* (specially empowered inspector), was dispatched to investigate the abuses of the Kobu county. As we have seen,

45 The place that the first stage of the revolution started has been controversial. Some scholars insist that the peasant revolution broke out in Kobu. Ibid., pp. 131-2.

the new magistrate, Pak Wŏn-myŏng, controlled the peasants so well that he initially achieved some success in persuading the insurgents to disband. The peasant who took part in the Kobu uprising began to break up from March 3. However, after Yi Yong-t'ae arrived with his men, the peasants were subjected to suppression with brute force in the name of the search for Tonghak believers.[46] Because of this, another peasant uprising might easily have been provoked, and yet the provincial officials were confident that conditions would soon be stabilised.

For his part, the leader of the peasant uprising, Chŏn Pong-jun fled to Mujang and established Toso (the secret organisation of Tonghak). It was a preparation to mobilise the peasants and make a chain of command for a full scale peasant protest.[47] On 29 February, rumours were circulating that a Tonghak peasant army was being amassed at Wŏnp'yŏng in Kŭmgu county.[48] On the 11th and 12th of March, the Tonghak followers, some 3,000 strong, were seen leaving Kŭmgu, passing T'aein, and marching toward Puan.[49] Finally, on 16 March, the peasant army rallied at Mujang, which eventually served as the staging area for the revolution.

With the completion of preliminary preparations on 20 March, Chŏn Pong-jun, Son Hwa-jung, and Kim Kae-nam issued the 'Mujang Proclamation'. This proclamation was the immediate stimulus to the outbreak of the revolution.

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46 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun* [A Personal Record], trans. by Kim Chong-ik (Seoul: Yŏksa Pip'yŏngsa, 1994), p. 71.

47 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 144.

48 *Chuhan Ilbon Kongsagwan Kirok* [Record of the Japanese Legation in Korea], Vol. 1, p. 38.

49 Ibid., p. 43.

> Morality calls for respect for all men. The king-subject relationship and the father-son relationship are the basic principles of morality. A country develops and prospers when the king is generous and kind to his subjects, who are in turn loyal to him, and when the father loves his sons who are in turn faithful to him. Where there is a wise king, there are wise subjects, and when the wise subjects support their king, their country can prosper and enjoy peace. However, subjects in this country, especially those in the government, neglect service to the country while receiving government stipends and positions, and thus becloud national wisdom. They call a man of good advice a liar and an honest man a thief. In the government there are no meritorious officials, to the people; there are only cruel and greedy officials. The people are increasingly restless, having few means to earn bread and few ways to protect themselves. Maladministration is ever mounting, and the equilibrium between the senior and junior has broken. ... Taxes find their way into the private warehouses of government officials, instead of into the National Treasury, with the result that national debts are on the increase. They indulge in luxury and all kinds of evils in spite of the fact that the whole country is laid waste and the people are reduced to the greatest misery. ... We have hoisted the flag of justice and made a vow to die under it. All the people, unite under this flag and fight for peace and justice.[50]

As the above shows, the leaders led their army under the banner 'sustain the nation and provide for the people'. The

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[50] *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, pp. 142-3. Translation into English by Shin Bok-ryong, in his *Tonghak Sasang-gwa Kabo Nongmin Hyŏngmyŏng*, pp. 435-6.

declaration focused on corrupt officials who exploit the peasant. Thus the peasant revolution started with criticism of misgovernment. In other words, the reason that peasants rebelled was to realise demands for an end to the misgovernment of the Chosŏn dynasty and for a society of peace and justice. The banner of the revolution was thus identical to the ideology of Tonghak.

Leaving Mujang in the early hours of 22 March, the 3,000 peasant soldiers marched through Koch'ang and spent their first night in Hŭngdŏk. On 23rd, they arrived in Puan county, where they stopped for lunch, and the battle of Kobu finally got under way after dusk the same day.[51] At the time of the attack, Yi Yong-t'ae, the special inspector dispatched to Kobu, and other government officials were so ill-prepared for the sudden attack that they fled to Chŏnju without putting up a fight. The local petty functionaries who were left behind immediately surrendered to the peasant army,[52] leaving the town of Kobu in the hands of the peasants. After the occupation of Kobu, the leaders of the peasant army made an attempt to reform as follows:[53]

1. executed several corrupt officials;
2. armed peasants with weapons withdrawn from the government armoury;
3. provided the peasant with bamboo spears;
4. liberated peasants who had been incarcerated for their participation in the previous Kobu Peasant Uprising;

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51 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, p. 523.
52 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, pp. 74-5.
53 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 151.

5. distributed food from the government stores to the poor; and
6. declared an end to the misgovernment of Kobu.

Within three days of the occupation of Kobu, other heads of P'o (Tonghak parishes) gathered with their peasant armies. At this point, the peasant army was composed as follows.[54]

Table 6.2 The Size of the Peasant Army in Kobu

P'o	number
Son Hwa-jung P'o	4,700
Kim Kae-nam P'o	1,300
Kim Tŏk-myŏng P'o	2,000

The number of the peasant together without uncounted peasants was thus estimated to be 8,000. By 25 March, the peasant army had resettled in Paeksan, near T'aein, and the leading groups of the peasant army were reorganised under the command of Chŏn Pong-jun.

Concerning the leadership of the revolution, O Chi-yŏng's *Tonghaksa* says that the top leader was Chòn Pong-jun, the second leaders were Son Hwa-jung and Kim Kae-nam, and the staffs were Kim Tŏk-myŏng and O Si-yŏng.[55] Chŏn Pong-jun issued a notice reiterating his stern feeling of antipathy to the officials' misgoverning. Their slogan was 'to eradicate

54 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 122.
55 Ibid.

corrupt officials of the government and to save the nation from foreign influence'.[56] They beseeched 'all those who suffered under the yoke of yangban oppression and the petty functionaries who had been unduly shamed by the local administrators' to join them. The leaders of the peasant army reorganised the 8,000 peasants and proclaimed 'the Four Point Manifesto of the Peasant army':[57]

The Four Point Manifesto of the Peasant Army

1. Do not kill innocent people; do not destroy other people's property.
2. Fulfil the duties of loyalty [to the sovereign] and filial piety [to parents]; sustain the nation and provide for the people.
3. Drive out and eliminate the Japanese barbarians and thereby restore the way of the [Confucian] Sages.
4. Storm into the capital in force and thoroughly cleanse [the government of] the powerful families and the aristocrats.

This manifesto shows that the peasant leaders called for the abolition of the social status system, the reorganisation of the corrupt central government and the expulsion of the Japanese from Chosŏn. It also shows that they tried to restrain themselves and their troops with self-imposed rules.

After making their objectives clear, a peasant army of 3,000 marched through T'aein and Kŭmgu with the intention of attacking Chŏnju, capital of Chŏlla-do province. The peasant

56 Ibid., pp. 122-3.
57 Quoted in Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 153.

army of 3,000 men which had marched out of Mujang now grew to 6,000-7,000 men. On March 30, they seized T'aein, and on April 2, when the leaders learned that government troops would soon launch a counter-attack out of Chŏnju, they sent back their main force through Puan to Kobu on 4 April and established a defensive line at Hwangt'ohyŏn hill near Kobu.[58]

On 3 April, government troops left Chŏnju with intention of rooting out the peasant insurgency once and for all. The peasant army collided with the government troops first at Hwangt'ohyŏn hill on 6 April. The peasant army took the victory in the first direct clash with the government troops. Estimations of government casualties during the battle ran as high as 1,000 men. Their remarkable victory at the Battle of Hwangt'ohyŏn gave the peasant army little or no resistance from government troops as they marched into Chŏngŭp, Koch'ang, Mujang, and Yŏnggwang.[59]

The government in Seoul had already dispatched Hong Kye-hun to Yŏnggwang, in command of an elite battalion of about 800 men from the capital garrison, to suppress the peasant revolution.[60] The peasant army immediately moved to Hamp'yŏng and once they had regrouped, marched on toward Changsŏng. On 23 April, the peasant army and the capital garrison clashed on the battlefields of Changsŏng. The peasant army took the initiative and crossed the Hwangnyonggang river to meet the government troops head on relying for weapons on bamboo spears. The government troops fled from the battlefield

58 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, p. 523.
59 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, pp. 127-32.
60 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 162.

leaving behind 300 dead, 3 artillery pieces, and several hundred rifles.[61] The peasant army then marched to Chŏngŭp and north on to Chŏnju. Finally on 27 April, the peasant army reached the environs of Chŏnju Castle and attacked the castle. When the peasants rushed into the castle, they found that all the government officials had already fled. Within hours the whole of Chŏnju Castle was overrun by the peasants.[62]

Meanwhile, the central government had on 18 April appointed Kim Hak-chin as the new governor of Chŏlla-do, and on 27 April they commissioned Yi Wŏn-hoe and Ŏm Se-yŏng to bring the situation under control.[63] However, when news reached Seoul that Chŏnju Castle had been occupied by the peasant army, the Chosŏn government hastily appealed to Ch'ing China to provide assistance. The Chinese army came to Korea on 2 May. Following the Chinese army, the Japanese army also came to Korea under the pretext of protecting Japanese during the revolution.[64] This turned the situation in favour of the government forces. As government troops around the castle grew with each passing day and food supplies grew dangerously low, the peasant army inside the Chŏnju Castle were seized with a growing panic. On 6 May, the leaders of the peasant army sent out messengers to negotiate for a cease-fire. Hong Kye-hun, a specially dispatched government official (ch'ot'osa), promised

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61 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 133.
62 Ibid., p. 134.
63 Ibid., p. 134-5.
64 When the Chosŏn government asked China for the help of her troops during the first revolution, Japan thought that Korea would increasingly lean towards China. I. Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy 1869-1942* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 272.

a safe conduct against arrest, if they surrendered.[65] This is how the Chŏnju Peace Agreement was concluded.

The agreement was reached easily without any clash on 7 May. This was because, on the government's part, letting the peasant army go seemed to be more palatable than allowing the Chinese and the Japanese armies send in their troops. On the peasant army's part, as worries were the intervention of the Chinese army and the Japanese army rather than the condition of the siege and food shortage, this was a point that was not lost as well. In a sense, the Chŏnju Peace Agreement was a displeasing compromise between two parties that had to find a resolution in haste.

The supreme leaders of the first revolution were Chŏn Pong-jun, Kim Kae-nam, and Son Hwa-jung, and the peasant soldiers were recruited from the various regions controlled by the chŏpchu (the heads of the Tonghak local units). The battle strategy employed by the peasant army was in many ways more advanced than that of the government troops and breakdown of discipline among the ranks was severely dealt with. Therefore, while the ordinary peasants thought of the peasant army as crusaders, the local government officials were so intimidated by its show of force that many fled their posts even before the first gun was fired.

In terms of social status, there was so little sense of status and rank within the army that some within the leadership expressed concern that this overtly democratic disposition would ultimately lead to a breakdown in

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65 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 163-8.

discipline. The emphasis on democratic organisation helped to encourage the oppressed peasant army's activity, and with few exceptions, the local wealthy men as well as petty functionaries, had no option but to capitulate to its demands.

In the areas they controlled, the peasant army now felt they had the physical capacity to eradicate the ills of the old ruling system which had victimised the peasantry for so many years. They destroyed the government offices, seized weapons, burned all records connected to the local government's ruling system including the family registers, and tried government officials accused of corruption and extortion. Under the circumstances, most of the county magistrates they encountered were more than willing to cooperate with the peasant army.

It may be argued that the primary objective of the first revolution was to deal with the ills of the old ruling system on the level of kun and hyŏn (administrative unit). Otherwise, their strategy might have been to use Chŏnju, the capital of Chŏlla-do province, as their base of operations to pressure the central government in Seoul. This is supported by the insistence on collaboration between Chŏn Pong-jun and the Taewŏn'gun[66] in which Chŏn Pong-jun had the plan to march all the way to Seoul to sweep out those in power and establish a new government under the Taewŏn'gun.[67] However, the important

66 Taewŏn'gun [grand prince] was a title by which Yi Ha-ùng (1821-1898) was known. When his second son was chosen as the king (Kojong r. 1864-1907), Yi Ha-ŭng was made to assist the king in conducting government affair. He was the effective ruler, the Prince Regent, of Korea from 1864 to 1873.

67 Han U-gŭn, *Tonghak-kwa Nongmin Ponggi*, p. 102; Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, pp. 57-8.

thing is that the first stage of the revolution was the peasants' struggle for the reform of misgovernment.

(2) The Chipkangso Period

There was an interval of four months before the second revolution. This time span preceding the second revolution is usually called the 'Chipkangso Period'. The Chipkangso period was a time of truce based on the conditions of the Chŏnju Peace Agreement. Here I will explore two issues; (1)How were the Chipkangso (Local Directorates) established? (2)What the Chipkangso means for the peasant war and what the role of the Chipkangso was?

Various views exist among historians in regard to the character of Chipkangso.[68] However, all accept their existence and the fact that they were newly created during the peasant war. I take the view that Chipkangso were established by peasants as a means of pressing their demands on the local government. Hence the establishment and operation of Chipkangso in the process of the peasant revolution was a means of advancing the claims the peasants.

First of all, let us examine the background of establishment of the Chipkangso. The activities of the peasant army after the 'Chŏnju Peace Agreement' were confined to

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68 One has it that Chipkangso were entirely independent of government control, others claim that they were autonomous ruling organs that cooperated with the government, while some state they were mere subordinate government agencies. Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 160-1.

rather moderate demands for the reform of local government abuses and a guarantee for the safety of its members. On 7 May, the peasant army asked that their programme for reform be delivered to the king. Hong Kye-hun, the government official, accepted the demand and indicated that a pardon would be granted.[69] On 8 May, the peasant army retreated from Chŏnju Castle and returned home, and the government troops took over the castle.[70] As already indicated, the reason why the Chŏnju Peace Agreement was reached with such ease was that both sides wanted to avoid the involvement of foreign forces.

Calming down the peasant soldiers, the leaders made strenuous efforts to push forward the demands stated in the programme for the reform of misgovernment and to guarantee the safety of their former troops.[71] One result of this was the establishment of Chipkangso to fully exercise the peasants' rights. We can guess at the formal establishment of the Chipkangso from the content of the governor's instructing letter to the peasants on 3 June: 'if you (the peasants) were treated unfairly, you could report to the government office through the Chipkangso'.[72]

In reality, during the first peasant revolution, the peasant army was able to maintain its close-knit network only by mobilising village chiefs called *Chipkang* who were given collective responsibility.[73] Accordingly a Chipkang was a person in charge of a local area. And a Chipkangso can be understood as being composed of a number of Taedoso, a Taedoso

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69 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, pp. 132-5.
70 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, p. 64.
71 *Chuhan Ilbon Kongsagwan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 141.
72 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, p. 176.
73 Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 55.

being regarded then as an office operated by Tonghak followers.[74] Such being the case, there were two types of Chipkangso: the peasants' own ruling organs and the officially recognised ones. They had a common function, but differed in their status. Therefore, at first, Kim Hak-chin ignored those Chipkangso without official recognition.

The phrase 'establishment of Chipkangso' indicates that they were officially recognised by the powers-that-be. However, even before this official recognition of the institution, Chipkangso may well have existed *de facto*. In that sense, Chipkangso might have already been set up in regions occupied by the peasants during the first peasant revolution. Having occupied a region, the peasant army would have needed a system to govern the area, and such a system would have existed without any authorisation of the government.

How then were Chipkangso able to obtain authorisation from the government? The situation in late May can be briefly described as a confrontation between Kim Hak-chin's half-hearted efforts to make a compromise relying on the traditional Chipkang and the unstable power of the peasant leaders with no legal authority. Under such conditions, Kim Hak-chin, the governor, could not restore law and order, nor could the peasant leaders exercise a firm and prevailing influence.[75] Furthermore, the leaders of the peasant army could not keep effective control over the activities of its members. The unstable control of the peasant leaders was

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74 Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 174.
75 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 178-9.

described well in *Oha Kimun*, which was a diarylike record from 1864 to 1894 written by Hwang Hyŏn: 'Chŏn Pong-jun attempted to put the army under control, but his orders were not obeyed, and powerful ringleaders scrambled to set up their own Chŏp and fought among themselves for leadership in the army'.[76] Chŏn Pong-jun was placed in a difficult position, as he had no means to check the disorderly conduct of the Chŏpchu (the heads of Chŏp).

Amid such a situation, an opportunity to proceed with the negotiations between Kim Hak-chin and Chŏn Pong-jun was arranged. Kim, who hoped to restore administrative control, could not but accept the virtual control by Chipkangso over the community. On Chŏn Pong-jun's part, he probably judged that it would be advantageous for him to secure an officially-granted authority in negotiating with Kim Hak-chin and to strengthen his position in the peasant army.

In the process of negotiation in late June, at last, the Chipkangso were able to obtain officially recognised administrative power. Governor Kim Hak-chin invited Chŏn Pong-jun to the governor's office, and permitted him to set up a Chipkangso at each kun (county) to foster co-operation between the local government and the peasant army.[77] Kim Hak-chin helped Chŏn Pong-jun bolster his position by accepting most of Chŏn's requests. It was his response to Chŏn's promise to tighten discipline in the peasant army and to his demand to stop the repression. It was through this process that the Chipkangso were finally granted official recognition.

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76 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, p. 131.
77 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, p. 65.

The peasant army developed the role of the Chipkangso, thereby differentiating them from the Taedoso, which originated from Tonghak organisation. With this change of role, the Chipkangso became responsible for the administrative affairs of the magistrates. Accordingly, the activities of the Chipkangso were to attend to administrative affairs of local communities in consultation with the local government and people and to claim administrative power over the kun and hyŏn unit.[78]

The major role of a Chipkangso at that time was to guarantee peasants' rights, that is, to realise reform of government abuses. Its other crucial roles included preventing 'those pretending to be Tonghak followers from ill-treating and exploiting the common people' and mobilising funds for the peasant army. Therefore, in a sense, the Chipkangso might have served a basis for mobilising peasants for the second peasant revolution. However, the Chipkangso could not maintain their power on a unified basis across Chŏlla-do province and other areas. Systematic operation of Chipkangso was probably possible only for those centred around a victorious Chŏp.[79] In some areas in which the peasants' demands were accepted, the peasant army punished the local petty government functionaries, *isŏ* and *hyangim*, who were responsible for the harms inflicted on the people. They also took the initiative, though temporarily, in the administration of the *ŭp* community

78 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 173-4.
79 Ibid., pp. 188-92.

All these were notable achievements as a result of the peasant struggle.

A rally staged in Namwŏn on 15 July by tens of thousands of the troops led by Chŏn Pong-jun and Kim Kae-nam symbolised the situation of that time. The record *Oha Kimun* states that Chŏn Pong-jun designated his confidants as chipkang in the Toso of every *ŭp* and had them take over the post of magistrates.[80] This record suggests it was the intention of Chŏn Pong-jun to claim command over the entire peasant army through the Chipkangso system. The fact that he staged a rally of tens of thousands shows that he attempted to clarify the legitimacy of Chipkangso in front of them.

The Programme for the Reform of Misgovernment with 12 articles recorded in *Tonghaksa* (the History of Tonghak) was the general principle or platform for Chipkangso at that time.[81] Its contents were as follows:

Programme for the Reform of Misgovernment

1. Eliminate the chronic mistrust between Tonghak believers and the government and cooperate in dealing with problems of administration.
2. Investigate the crimes of venal and corrupt officials and punish the guilty severely.
3. Sternly punish men of wealth who owe their fortunes to high-handed extortionate practices.

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80 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, p. 129.
81 At first the reform programme was put forward with 27 articles during the occupation of Chŏnju Castle. It was the culmination of the first peasant revolution. The 12 articles in *Tonghaksa* are viewed as the summary of reform during the Chipkangso period. O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 133.

4. Discipline those yangban in or out of office whose conduct is improper.
5. Burn all documents pertaining to slaves.
6. Rectify the treatment of those engaged in the 'seven despised occupations' (lackeys attached to government offices and labourers assigned to perform certain arduous services for the state) and free the *paekchŏng* outcasts once and for all from the wearing of their distinctive 'Pyongyang hat'.
7. Permit the remarriage of young widows.
8. Ban the collection of all arbitrary and irregular taxes.
9. In employing officials, break the pattern of regional and class discrimination and appoint men of talent.
10. Severely punish those who collaborate with the Japanese.
11. Cancel all outstanding debts, whether owed to government agencies or to private individuals.
12. Distribute land equally for cultivation by owner-farmers.[82]

Right after the Chŏnju Peace Agreement was concluded between the government officials and the leaders of the peasant army, the peasants began to put this programme into practice through the Chipkangso. Restoring social order was essential in forging a reconciliation between local government and the peasant army and was needed by both sides in the conflict. The Chipkangso system was successful in checking the disorderly struggle of the peasant army and bringing stability to some areas. Through Chipkangso as a organ of peasant rule, the peasants tried to tackle the problems of old social order. As seen in the above Programme, the peasants' target was those

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82 Ibid., p. 136.

who had grown wealthy through extortion as well as corrupt officials. They also wanted to abolish the social status system and to reform the land system. However, the major limitation of the reform movement pursued by the peasant army was its failure to create a new, modern system to replace the old order. It could not last long.

(3) The Recurrence of the Revolution

There were several reasons why the peasant rebels decided to take up arms once again just four months after they had voluntarily withdrawn from Chŏnju Castle. The main reason the peasant revolution broke out again around Chŏn Pong-jun on September 1894 is related to foreign power, to be exact, to Japan's intervention. The process of Japan's intervention can be divided into three.

First of all, despite the disbanding of the peasant army, the Japanese army which entered the Korean peninsula under the pretext of protecting Japanese citizens during the first stage of the revolution had not withdrawn.

Secondly, in the Sino-Japanese war (1894), which started by Japan's attacking China in Korea to take the initiative about Korea, the Japanese army defeated the Chinese army. Thus Korea was forced to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with Japan on 26 July.[83] Such a change as this gave a enough cause for the peasant, who had antipathy against foreign power, to provoke again.

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83 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 292.

Finally, there was a rumour that the government intended to suppress Tonghak followers using Japanese troops. This was not implausible. Affected by the Japanese intervention, the attitude of the government towards the peasants (exactly Tonghak peasants) changed unfavourably compared with the attitude at the time of the conclusion of the Agreement. Facing this situation, the peasant army had no choice but to reconstitute itself. O Chi-young described the situation as follows: 'It was September 1894. It was heard that the government together with Japanese troops and Chinese troops would attack the three southern provinces. Because of this, all the Chipkangso in Chŏlla province had to be ready'.[84]

Unlike the first stage of the revolution, the root cause of the second stage was anti-imperialism. On condition that the Chosŏn government would do its best to drive away the Japanese army, the Peasant army reached the Chŏnju Peace Agreement. This ushered in Chipkangso period. However, far from withdrawing the Japanese troops, in order to establish the pro-Japanese government, the Japanese army made an attack on the Kyŏngbokkung palace on 21 June. This event was a critical factor dealing an adverse effect to the reform drive. At the news of the occupation of Kyŏngbokkung palace by Japanese troops, some units of the peasant army in Chŏlla-do province became agitated.[85]

The anti-Japanese movement was shaping up towards a full scale revolution once again and, naturally, the peasant army attempted to reinforce its armaments. Until then, however,

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84 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 143.
85 Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 529.

such endeavours emerged only sporadically without any systematic action directed by the leadership. In particular, Chŏn Pong-jun held on to a wait-and-see attitude, paying keen attention to how the government's reform (Kabo Kyŏngjang), initiated in late June, would develop. The reform was carried out by an organisation called *Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ* (Deliberative Council). It was created by the new Chosòn government following the coup by the Japanese forces. The new government was in favour of Japan.[86]

Expectations for the government's reform prevented the peasant army from reacting immediately. They had two kinds of expectations. One had to do with the content of the reform, and the other with the debut of the Taewòn'gun on the political stage.[87]

The peasants gave enthusiastic support to the reform of taxation on land and family that were included in the government's reforms of 1894.[88] However, as the Japanese army gained a signal victory over the Chinese forces in the battle of P'yòngyang on 17 August, the situation took a sudden turn. From then on, Japan openly interfered with Korean state affairs and revealed its intention to invade. The government's

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86 Ki-baik Lee [Yi, Ki-baek], *A New History of Korea*, p. 290; Paek Chong-gi, *Han'guk Kŭndaesa Yŏn'gu* [A Study of Modern History of Korea] (Seoul: Pakyŏngsa, 1983) pp. 272-3. Some historians regards this as a revolution from the above. Han'guksa Yŏn'guhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa Yŏn'gu Immun* [Introduction to Korean History] (Seoul: Chishik Sanŏpsa, 1981), p. 440.

87 Japan restored the Taewŏn'gun, King Kojong's father, to power. It is said that Chŏn Pong-jun expected the Taewŏn'gun to hold the reins of power. This has been explained by Yi Sang-baek in his article 'Tonghaktang-gwa Taewŏn'gun' [The Tonghak Party and the Taewŏn'gun] (1962).

88 E-wha Lee [Yi, I-hwa], 'A Study of the Relationship between the Reform of Misgovernment and the Kabo Reform,' *Korea Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (1994), pp. 76-89.

reform, being pursued on rather limited autonomy so far, lost its original reformative spirit and became distorted. In this situation, the Korean peasants embarked on the second peasant revolution which was henceforth endowed with a markedly anti-imperialist character. The 'anti-feudal' thrust of the first peasant revolution was replaced and forced into the background.

The character of the second peasant revolution is well shown in the *Kongch'o*.[89] Chŏn Pong-jun stated his reason for launching the second revolution as follows:

> 'I have heard that Japan, in the name of modernisation, invaded our capital and attacked our imperial palace and terrorised our King, and in response to this, we, the 'righteous army,' have been mobilised for our loyalty and love of country.'[90]

Chŏn makes it clear that the main reason for the second peasant revolution was to counter Japanese influence in Korea. Therefore, we can conclude that at least at the outset, the second peasant revolution was highly 'anti-Japanese.' Actually, following the 'Kyŏngbokkung coup,' on 21 June, anti-Japanese sentiments among the common people was notably high, and there were also sporadic efforts to organise the 'righteous army' for the anti-Japanese struggle in various regions of the country.

89 This is the record of interrogation of Chŏn Pong-jun after his arrest.

90 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 529.

In reality, the peasant army had already rearmed itself even before the beginning of September. It is important to note that the peasant army had retained most of the gunpowder and weapons brought out during their withdrawal from Chŏnju Castle.[91] At the time the peasants deemed it prudent not to give up their arms until the government showed its willingness to meet their demands for reforms.

Chŏn Pong-jun had made it unmistakably clear that if the government continued to disregard its demands, the peasant army would rise up again in the near future. As explained before, this was the background to Kim Hak-chin's willingness to come to the negotiation table with Chŏn Pong-jun and to seek 'harmony between the government and the peasant army' through the Chipkangso.

As rumours that the Japanese army was on the verge of invading Korea spread across the provinces, the peasant army had been rearming since late June.[92] The rearming of the peasant army was spurred on by their new-found patriotism to save the nation from the threat of the Japanese rather than by the dynamics of their 'social' struggle. This time, the rearming of the peasant army extended beyond the borders of Chŏlla-do. The peasant army seemed to have judged that the government troops would ally themselves with the Japanese to suppress the peasant army when the Sino-Japanese War ended in Japan's favour. Accordingly Kim Kae-nam, the commander of the peasant army in the east of Chŏlla-do, demanded that the peasant army be formally raised again, after occupying Namwŏn

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91 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, pp. 201-2.
92 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 288.

on 25 August.[93] Even though Chŏn Pong-jun, for his part, thought that a remobilisation was premature, Kim argued that an another uprising was the only means to achieve the movement's reform objectives.[94]

In this process, Chŏn Pong-jun had no choice but to accept the demands of the peasant army and endorse a new rising. In Samnye on 13 September, Chŏn Pong-jun and his troops established the Taedoso, where they regrouped to rise up again. Chŏn issued the declaration of the second revolution and sent it to local counties. The actual march northward towards the capital was delayed until the following month because of the harvest season.

The second stage of the peasant revolution was significant in that the revolution involved peasants from not only Chŏlla-do province but many other regions of the country as well.[95] Moreover, as we have already insisted, the movement had a new quality in that they were fighting for the expulsion of Japanese influence. This being the case, it would be helpful to ascertain what other social groups apart from the peasants willingly took part in the second stage.

First of all, some of the yangban joined the peasant army. During the Chipkangso period, quite a few of the rich nobility and the local yangban offered their co-operation, mainly in

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93 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, pp. 227-33.

94 Kim Ho-sŏng, 'Kim Kae-nam-ŭi Chaep'yŏngga [A Reconsideration of Kim Kae-nam]' in Han'guk Chŏngch'i Oegyo Sahakhoe [Korean Political Diplomatic History Research] (ed.) *Kabo Tonghak Nongmin Hyŏngmyŏng-ŭi Chaengjŏm* [The Issues of Tonghak Peasant Revolution of 1894] (Seoul: Chimmundang, 1994), p. 254.

95 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, pp. 529-30.

fear of their lives.[96] Armed anti-peasant movements were also on the rise in response to the reinforcement of the 'anti-feudal' struggle.[97] In the second stage, however, some of the anti-peasant movements joined Chŏn's army.[98] The participation of the peasant army under the Northern Assembly of Tonghak was another factor that contributed to the augmentation of the peasant forces during the second stage. As of early September, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, the leader of the Northern Assembly of Tonghak was not in favour of another peasant insurgency. Ch'oe was openly critical of Chŏn Pong-jun's decision to remobilise the peasant army, claiming 'rationalising their actions in the name of righteous cause, those in the Southern Assembly of Tonghak have molested commoners and harmed our brothers of the faith'.[99] The supposition that 'the Northern Assembly was in danger of being wiped out by the Southern Assembly' exemplified the level of friction between the Northern Assembly and the Southern Assembly.[100] In the end, however, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng had to allow his followers to join in the peasant war, when he could no longer ignore the outrage boiling within his ranks following the massacre of Tonghak members by Japanese and government troops.

It is important to note that Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng acquiesced only in consideration of the well-being of his followers. He also instructed Tonghak members to try to persuade Chŏn Pong-

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96 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, pp. 204-5.
97 The local aristocrats in some areas responded by organising private armies to confront the peasant army. Even those in the ruling class who had once co-operated with the Chipkangso now turned a cold shoulder.
98 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, pp. 150-1.
99 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, pp. 63-4.
100 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 145.

jun to cease the rebellion at once. This notwithstanding, Son Pyŏng-hŭi and Son Ch'ŏn-min led the peasant army of the Northern Assembly to Ch'ŏngsan, and on 16 October, they joined the southern Assembly's army led by Chŏn Pong-jun in Nonsan.

What must be made clear here is that Northern Assembly's reason for joining the peasant war was not identical with that of the Southern Assembly. Chŏn Pong-jun himself insists that this joining of forces was realised without his prior discussion with Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng.[101] But, in any case, the second peasant war presented a united front between the Northern Assembly and the Southern Assembly.

On 11 October, Chŏn Pong-jun and his troops started their drive northward in earnest. They passed Kanggyŏng and reached Nonsan on 12 October and linked up with the Northern Assembly's troops there.[102] Soon after, the combined forces of the Northern Assembly and Southern Assembly gathered near Kongju and made final preparations for the storming of Kongju Castle.[103]

The peasant troops amassed for the second stage were greater in number than in the previous revolution. The peasant troops gathered in Nonsan were 167 thousand men from the Southern Assembly[104] and 60 thousand men from the Northern Assembly.[105] But the main force under Chŏn Pong-jun's command was comprised by approximately 4,000 men from the Chŏlla-do

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101. 'Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 522.
102 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 309-12.
103 Ibid., p. 315.
104 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, p. 382.
105 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, p. 66.

province, rearmed during the Chipkangso period.[106] There was little actual increase in the number of troops directly under the command of Chŏn Pong-jun. When Chŏn Pong-jun marched to the capital, Ch'oe Kyŏng-sŏn and Son Hwa-jung opted not to march their troops to the capital and remained as a reserve contingent. Kim Kae-nam, who had no less than ten thousand troops under his command, did not join forces with Chŏn Pong-jun.[107] Among the leaders who had fought together during the first peasant revolution, only Kim Tŏk-myŏng accompanied Chŏn Pong-jun on the march to the capital. It was a fatal blow to the combat readiness of the peasant army.

Chŏn Pong-jun and his troops left Nonsan for Kongju on 21 October. After the victories of the peasant army in Yiin and Hyop'o, Chŏn Pong-jun led his forces against the government troops in the battle of Ungch'i on 25 October, but the peasant army retreated after having suffered heavy losses. On 8 November, Chŏn Pong-jun's forces marched towards Kongju and fought a bitter battle against government troops at Ugŭmch'i once more. They were again repulsed. Chŏn's defeat was due to the fact that the Japanese forces established a defence line at Kongju and thus assisted the Government troops.[108] The Japanese forces had already operated to suppress the peasant army in September when the peasants rose in the second revolution.[109]

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106. Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, pp. 530-1.

107 Ibid., pp. 551-2.

108 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 330-43.

109 Ibid., pp. 322-3.

Following the two unsuccessful assaults on Kongju, Chŏn Pong-jun and his troops were demoralised and Chŏn ordered an all-out retreat. The peasant army in retreat suffered a series of humiliating defeats. It finally arrived at Chŏnju, only to fight other losing battles at Wŏnp'yŏng on 25 November and T'aein on 27 November. Chŏn Pong-jun dispersed his army at Kŭmgu on 28 November and fled to Sunch'ang where he was eventually captured.[110] The peasant army had been defeated by an allied army of Japanese and government forces. Their defeats were due to their lack of fire power and combat skills.

The second peasant revolution was a nation-wide affair, unlike the first stage which was limited to the Chŏlla-do region. Because of the scale of the second revolution, individual battles with government troops were numerous. Of course, the main peasant forces consisted of Chŏn Pong-jun's troops and the peasant troops from the Northern Assembly. However, small scale skirmishes, independent of Chŏn Pong-jun's main forces, were also prevalent in Kangwŏn-do, Hwanghae-do, Kyŏngsang-do, and the southern region of the Chŏlla-do. It is perhaps because of these isolated armed struggles waged against the Korean establishment and Japanese imperialism that the second peasant revolution took on a stronger flavour of a nation-wide struggle.

The historical significance of the second peasant revolution can be found in a document, which clearly defines its goals. This is a 'manifesto sent to the capital troops, the local government troops, the local petty functionaries,

110 Ibid., pp. 345-9.

and the common people', dated 12 November,[111] in which Chŏn Pong-jun stated that the primary objective of the revolution was to punish the Japanese in Korea as well as the pro-Japanese faction in the government. This correlates with the explanation provided in the Kongch'o mentioned earlier in which the main reason for the second peasant revolution was 'to resist Japan for the nation'.

3. Conclusions

The revolution of 1894 broke out owing to the deteriorated social and economic conditions arising from the feudal conflict and imperialist invasion. Every country, in particular in Asia, has experienced such conditions in the process of modernisation. The outflow of grain had a serious impact on the peasant. Moreover, the corruption of the government officials touched off the accumulated emotions of the peasant. The tax and land system were the main foci of the social conflict. However, the economic exploitation by the yangban (the ruling class) was connected with the structural problem of the three administrations.

Such conditions arising from the new forms of imperialist power and the 'feudal' conflict were the basic structural causes of the revolution. As summarised in the table below, however, each stage of the revolutionary movement had distinctive characteristics. The Kobu uprising, which was the major trigger of the main revolution, started in one county.

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111. Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o' in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 379.

Its target was local corrupt officials. In the first stage of the revolution, which followed, the peasants' objective was to deal with the symptoms of the 'feudal' conflict between the corrupt officials and the peasants. In this stage, the peasant expanded their target from local level to the whole country. Chipkangso was the interregnum stage in which the peasants realised their reform. The peasants controlled corrupt officials and managed the ruling system temporarily. As conditions changed the peasant army entered the second stage. The peasants' objective was now to dispel the imperialist power. In this stage, as I said, Tonghak leader Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng fully supported the peasant army. Even though the Tonghak leaders showed a passive attitude at first, in due course the Tonghak leadership showed the same antipathy towards the imperialist power as the peasant army did. Following each stage, the peasant revolution had developed struggle forms from inside to outside.

Table 6.3 The Struggle Forms of the Peasant Revolution of 1894

stage	form of struggle		
Kobu uprising	local peasant	vs.	local official
First stage	the peasant	vs.	the old ruling system, misgovernment
Chipkangso	the peasant/the poor	vs.	corrupt officials (the wealthy), the ruling system
Second stage	the whole peasantry (full support of Tonghak)	vs.	foreign power (Japan)

The starting-point of the peasant revolution was a new religious sect, Tonghak. Tonghak came to be politicised through a struggle for the exoneration of its founder. The Tonghak mass movement helped the peasantry to realise their collective power. In particular, in the Poŭn Assembly on March 1893, the Tonghak movement began to go beyond its religious character by proposing a political slogan. Tonghak's ideology was in this sense a direct precursor to the demands of the peasant army. Of course, this can be said to reflect the trend of the times. But there is much evidence suggesting a relation between Tonghak and the peasant revolution.

Above all, Chŏn Pong-jun was a member of Tonghak. Just before the Kobu uprising, he was a head of Tonghak Chŏp (chŏpchu) in Kobu. When Chŏn made plans for attacking Kobu government office, his supporters were also Tonghak followers. After the Kobu events, Yi Yong-t'ae, the inspector, ordered his men to search for Tonghak believers.

Next, what is certain is that Tonghak's organisation played a key role in the revolution. The first stage of the revolution broke out in the framework of the secret organisation of Tonghak, Toso, in Mujang. Toso was used to mobilise the peasants for the struggle and to make a chain of command. After the outbreak of the revolution, the peasant armies gathered around Tonghak parishes, P'o, and the soldiers were recruited from the various regions controlled by the chŏpchu (the heads of the Tonghak local units). Most of the leaders of the peasant army were drawn from the chŏpchu. Chipkangso also originated from an office operated by Tonghak followers.

In the second stage, the leader of Tonghak, Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng, and his followers participated in the revolution. After this, the peasant revolution had real support from the Tonghak. Therefore, at every stage the peasant revolution was closely related to Tonghak. In this sense, Tonghak's ideology may be said to be reflected in the peasant revolution. If so, what was the character of the revolution as social action? This will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION

As we have seen in Chapter Six, the peasant revolution of 1894 involved the pursuit of a new social order to overcome and replace the established one. The revolution was the culmination of a series of peasant protests in 19th century Korea that may be viewed as part of a transitional process in which the existing corrupt society was replaced by a new social order. In order to explore the nature of the new social order that the peasants wanted to achieve, we need to observe the character of the peasant revolution. Here, three aspects will be looked into as follows: first, who or what was the subject of the peasant revolution? secondly, what were the objectives of the peasants in the process of the revolution? and finally, what were the implications and limitations of the revolution? In other words, the final question is: was it a successful revolution or unsuccessful one?

This analysis of the peasant revolution, therefore, aims to enhance the understanding of the revolutionary movement in an historical, transitional period. Its purpose is also to gain an understanding of the orientations of the modernisation of Korea. Furthermore, it will be helpful in exploring the implications of the political culture of Korea later.

1. The Subject of the Peasant Revolution

In order to capture the character of the revolution we need to examine the social forces that made the revolution. The subject of a revolution is believed to be related to its direction. In fact, as B. Moore points out, the peasantry have never been able to accomplish a revolution by themselves. There have been leaders from other classes in all 'peasant' revolutions.[1] In this sense, the leading group of the peasant revolution of 1894 does not seem to have been the peasant themselves. The main resistance group as the subject of the revolution of 1894 can be roughly divided into the main force and the leader group. There are no objections to the view that the former group were the direct victims of the feudal and national conflicts. Naturally, the main force of the peasant revolution was composed of the commoners and the lower-class people such as the poor peasants, petty craftsmen, and petty merchants.[2]

As for the commoners' participation in the peasant army, the magistrate in Muan at that time remarked: 'Almost all the commoners joined the peasant revolution'.[3] As for the lower-class people, Hwang Hyŏn said: "The low people, such as the private slaves, station labourers, husbands of mudang, and

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1 B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, p. 479.

2 Social status in Chosŏn society can be divided into four: Yangban (the ruling class), Chungin (the middle people), Sangmin (the commoner), and Ch'ŏnmin (the low people), See Chapter 3, or Woo-keun Han [Han, U-gŭn], *The History of Korea*, pp. 247-55.

3 *Tonghangnan Kirok* [Record of the Tonghak Rebellion], Vol. 2, p. 328.

outcasts, etc., were the first to join Tonghak'.[4] Some of these 'low people' who joined the peasant army became leaders. Another major force of the peasant revolution was the poor peasants who were economically less well-off than the middle-size farming peasants. Poor peasants were half-proletarianised peasants who had difficulties making a living out of their farming.[5] In addition, petty merchants, petty handicraftsmen, agricultural labours, miners, and labourers could also be included in the group that made up main force of the peasant war as a participant force.

On the other hand, views differ as to which group of people formed the leadership group. There are basically three opinions about the leadership group, stressing respectively the chanban (fallen yangban), the wealthy peasants, and the poor peasants.

The chanban (the fallen yangban) leadership theory focuses on the lowest level of the yangban class, who were in practice no different from commoners. Such people, it is argued, took sides with the peasants and became the leaders of the peasant army as chŏpchu (heads of Chŏps). The process by which the chanban established themselves as the main body of leaders of the peasant uprising is summarised as follows: poor yangban → becoming peasants → taxpayers → rebels.

The wealthy peasant leadership theory argues that the wealthy peasants demonstrated their bourgeois aspirations for popular and revolutionary modernisation from below through the

4 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, p. 129.
5 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 69.

peasant revolution. According to this theory, although they had accumulated wealth through frugality and improved agricultural methods, wealthy peasants were exploited by the local authorities and the yangban. Hence, they joined the Tonghak organisation which took up the cause of the peasants and acted as their leaders during the peasant war.

The poor peasant leadership theory focuses on the large group consisting of, in terms of social status, the commoners and the lower class centred on the slaves. In terms of social rank, the same group consisted of the poor peasants including tenant farmers as well as petty merchants, petty handicraftsmen, labourers and the unemployed. This theory stresses the role of chanban in forming an *anti*-revolutionary army, attacking the peasant army in concert with the government and the Japanese. The wealthy peasants, it is emphasised, were a target of the peasant army's attacks.

On the issue of the leadership group in the peasant war, the poor peasant leadership theory is often considered the most convincing interpretation.[6] However, there is some evidence to suggest that fallen yangban played an important role. When Tonghak followers insisted on the exoneration of their founder and went to Seoul to make a petition, the content of the petition showed that the leadership group were drawn from the yangban. In the introductory part, it says as follows: 'we *yuhak* [graduate Confucian scholars without official status] from each province submit the following the petition'.[7] 'We yuhak' means that they identified their status

6 Ibid., p. 63.
7 Yi Ton-hwa, *Ch'ŏndogyo Ch'anggŏnsa*, Vol. 2, p. 51.

as the yangban. In *Tonghaksa* [The History of Tonghak], the status of Chŏn Pong-jun is described as that of a yangban.[8] Also, in *Tonghangnan Kirok* [Record of Tonghak Rebellion], when Chŏn Pong-jun was interrogated, he said his occupation was teacher.[9] Here this is not a simple teacher, but the teacher of Confucian doctrine. In other words, he was a classical scholar. In the case of Sŏ Pyŏng-hak from the fallen yangban, one of the leaders who led the radical action, it has been said that he joined the movement for the exoneration of Ch'oe Che-u.[10] He was also from the fallen yangban. This apparently supports the view that the leaders were on the whole from the yangban. It is also said that those who remained faithful to the ideology of the revolution were the chanban (fallen yangban).[11]

Here, it should be noted that the leadership group was formed around the Chŏpchu (head of a Tonghak local unit).[12] These were almost always composed of socially fallen yangban. The fallen yangban were the yangban who had been ruined over several generations (chanban), and those who had collapsed economically, although they maintained a certain degree of social influence in the local society. In addition, there were yangban who had dropped out of the competition among the

8 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 168.

9 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 521.

10 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 66.

11 Ko Sŏk-kyu, 'Shipku Segi Nongmin Hangjaeng-ŭi Chŏn'gae-wa Pyŏnhyŏk Chuch'e-ŭi Sŏngjang' [The Development of the Peasant Protest and the Growth of the Subject of Reform in 19th Century] in *1894ny'ŏn Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu* [Study on the Peasant War of 1894], Vol. 1, pp. 350-60.

12 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, p. 535.

yangban families to gain power in the local society (hyangban).

To be sure, this leading group of the peasant revolution consisted of individuals from a variety of economic strata: from small-and-medium landlords and wealthy farmers (yoho pumin) to the poor who made their living as farmers and local teachers. At the same time, there were the intellectuals who were very much aware of the conflicts inherent in the social system of the late-Chosŏn dynasty. They too felt exploited and had a strong will to bring about changes. However, as a rule they had limitations as revolutionary leaders because they all had been influenced by Confucian ethics with a conservative character.

2. Objectives.

(1) Socio-Economic Objectives

It is not clear what kind of objectives the peasant army strove to realise, because the peasant war ultimately failed. We can only guess at their objectives through several items in the reform programmes offered by the peasant army in the process of the peasant revolution. These were the reform programmes suggested by the peasant army such as in the 'round robin' issued in early April; a petition filed in the name of the Confucianists in Chŏlla-do province, and the '12 Article

Programme for the Reform of Misgovernment' recorded in the *Tonghaksa* (The History of Tonghak, first manuscript).[13]

First of all, let us examine the social objectives of the peasant army found in the 12 Article Programme of the Reform of Misgovernment during the Chipkangso period. The peasant army advocated the severe punishment of the 'feudal' ruling class, namely, the corrupt officials and the yangban as well as the emancipation of the low people, including slaves.[14] Their demand implies in effect the liberation of commoners from oppression by the ruling class. In particular, Chŏn Pong-jun, the leader of the peasant war, ultimately put the blame upon the ruling class by saying: 'The abuses imposed on the people came from the rampancy of the petty functionaries, and their rampancy resulted from the greedy officials, and the greedy officials reflected the avarice of the ruling class'.[15]

In reality, during the Chipkangso period, the peasant army captured and punished corrupt Confucian scholars and the yangban who enforced discrimination based on the traditional status system.[16] In fact, this idea came from the Tonghak ideology of 'Treat men like God,' which at least did away with the differentiation between the noble and the low people, and between slave and master. Because Tonghak ideology included a concept of equality, it could attract a large number of the low people into the organisation of the peasant army. The low people who joined in the peasant army led the emancipation movement by burning slave registers. This movement carried out

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13 O Chi-yŏng, *Tonghaksa*, p. 136.
14 Ibid.
15 Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2
16 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, pp. 202-203; Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 215-6.

by the peasant army centred on the Chipkangso in each local community. As already indicated, when the peasant army seized power in local society, they carried out the reform of government abuses, abolished the traditional status system, and exercised self-government. These actions show the tremendous change in the social consciousness of the peasant army, compared with previous peasant uprisings which had merely demanded the eradication of corrupt local government officials. Their social objective was the realisation of human equality.

The economic objective of the peasant army can be summarised in three points: tax collection, commercial activity, and the land system. To begin with, the most important issue of the peasant army was the reform of the 'feudal' tax collection system in the 'three administrations'. The strong demands of the peasant army for the reform of the tax collection system illustrated the most serious problem shared by the peasant army, which was composed of people from diverse social strata, from the wealthy (yoho pumin) to poor peasants. By that time, the wealthy were conscious of the fact that the Chosŏn system obstructed their economic growth. Among the poor peasants, this problem was the factor that threatened their economic independence as petty farmers. Thus the leading group of the peasant army could not but bring up this problem to consolidate the unity of such diverse peasant troops.

Secondly, there were several item of reform concerning commerce[17]: (1) abolition of privileged commercial activities, (2) prohibition of the exploitation of petty merchants by the

17 Shin Yong-ha, Ibid., pp. 215-229.

feudal bureaucrats, (3) guarantee of the commercial rights of rural petty merchants against the threat of itinerant sellers (*Pobusang*) and foreign merchants, and (4) control of foreign merchants' expansion of inland commerce. These demands reflected the interests of petty merchants in rural areas who could not join the itinerant sellers' organisation. From this, we can understand why many rural petty merchants joined the peasant army. The demand to prohibit the trading of rice at high prices by foreign merchants also reflected the interests of the poor farmers who had to buy rice during the spring food shortages, and urban labourers who had to buy rice all year round.

Thirdly, with respect to the land system, the peasants' reform programme called for 'distributing land equally' and 'abolishing the landlord-tenant system'. There are several interpretations of the item on 'distributing land equally to the farmers' that appears in the Programme for the Reform of Misgovernment. The problem of land reform, as expressed in the move to abolish the 'landlord and tenant system', has also become controversial in academic circles. The reliability of the item is in doubt because there is no mention of it in any other materials regarding this issue. Thus, it appears unreasonable to analyse the peasant army's orientations toward land by focusing on this item. Rather than looking exclusively at the surviving texts, it is necessary to pay attention to the peasant army's behaviour. In many cases, the peasant army burned land registers and refused to pay rent for tenancy after the fall harvest. Their behaviour reflected the consciousness of a peasant army which was bent on ending the

established land ownership system. It was also the manifestation of the desire of most poor peasants with little or no land to achieve economic independence through ownership of land.

Even though the peasant army attempted to realise their dream of revolutionising land ownership during the Chipkangso period, circumstances did not allow them to make this a formal item in the reform programme. It was impossible to carry out such a fundamental reform and to realise this level of reform within the system of the peasant army. Nor was it easy to build a consensus on the reform because of the diverse composition of the peasant army.

In practice, the social and economic objectives of the peasant army can be regarded as expressing the broad principle of Tonghak ideology, which is to save the nation and provide for the people. In both its scope and lack of specificity, the peasants' dream was on the same lines as Tonghak ideology.

(2) Political Objectives

Under this heading, we need to focus on the way the peasant army perceived the Taewŏn'gun and the *Kaehwa'pa* (the Enlightenment Group), and how it was related to each. Concerning the Taewŏn'gun, the document sent to the Naju government office on 18 April tells us: 'the purpose of our uprising is none other than to return the benefit of the state upward and to protect the people downward, and to punish

corrupt officials in villages we pass. ... and then to uphold the Taewŏn'gun to administer the government'.[18]

The Taewŏn'gun, the father of King Kojong, tried to put into effect a series of sweeping reforms encompassing national finance and government administration from 1864 when King Kojong reigned. He strengthened the royal authority by nullifying the power usurped by powerful yangban, and courtiers related to the queen's (the king's wife's) family. Moreover, he vigorously opposed the increasing foreign power in Korea.[19] However, in those days of the peasant revolution, as the Taewŏn'gun was restricted in his action by the opponents and Japan's intervention, he had no power to make the reform.

The peasant soldiers advocated that the Taewŏn'gun should come in power, although it is not clear whether there was any previous connection between the Taewŏn'gun and Chŏn Pong-jun. In the letter sent to Hong Kye-hun, the specially dispatched government official (ch'okt'osa), in Chŏnju on 4 May, the peasant army asked: 'Why is it treason to let the Taewŏn'gun take charge of the government?'.[20] This suggests that leaders of the peasant army saw the first stage in establishing a new social order as involving support for the Taewŏn'gun.

In regard to the second stage, however, the peasant army does not seem to have visualised any role for the Taewŏn'gun.

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18 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, p. 87.

19 Paek Chong-gi, *Han'guk Kŭndaesa Yŏn'gu*, pp. 17-23. For details, see Sun-keun Lee [Yi, Sŏn-gwŏn] , 'Some Lesser-known Facts about Taewongun and His Foreign Policy' *Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 39 (1965), pp. 23-46.

20 Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o [Records of the Interrogations on Chŏn Pong-jun] in *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, pp. 533-4.

Chŏn Pong-jun strongly denied any relationship with the Taewŏn'gun in the course of his trial. During his interrogation, he answered the questions of whether the second stage was instigated by the Taewŏn'gun, by saying: 'The second revolution was carried out as we had planned. Even though the Taewŏn'gun suggested in the statement that we disband, we would have risen up again since we would not have trusted him.'[21] However, it is possible that being a man of exceptional strength of character and integrity, Chŏn committed perjury in the Japanese-monitored court to protect his sponsor-hero, the Taewòn'gun.[22]

Chŏn Pong-jun, arrested after the failure of the second revolution, stated that after expelling the Japanese army and corrupt officials with the help of the Tonghak peasant army, he had planned to establish a government system ruled jointly by several prominent figures. They would be in charge of political affairs on the basis of mutual understanding, because it was dangerous to confer national leadership on one influential person.[23] It is understood that the one person refers to the Taewŏn'gun. However, this suggests that the peasant leaders had the intention of establishing a joint government.

The relation between the peasant army and the *Kaehwap'a* (the Enlightenment Group) is a different matter. The peasant

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21 Ibid., p. 548.

22 Young-ick Lew [Yu, Yŏng-ik], 'The Conservative Character of the 1894 Tonghak Peasant Uprising', *The Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 7 (1990), p. 161.

23 Shin Bok-ryong, *Tonghak Sasang-gwa Kabo Nongmin Hyŏngmyŏng*, pp. 151-63.

army did not view the Enlightenment Group favourably.[24] A manifesto presented by the peasant army on 12 November 1894, referred to the Enlightenment Group of the coup d'état of 1884 as a 'wicked faction'.[25] It said 'after the opening of ports, they in October of 1884 conspired together to put the king in danger, but this wicked faction was destroyed due to the virtue of the good fortunes of the king and the country'. Also in this document, the peasant army blamed the Enlightenment Group for colluding with Japan to come to power, for suppressing the king, and for abusing state power. The peasant army in this document also suggested the repression of the Enlightenment Group by saying: 'now it is time for us, Tonghak followers, to become a righteous army, exterminate the Japanese, restrain the activities of the Enlightenment Group, calm the royal court, and protect the state'.[26]

The peasant army did not criticise the reform programmes of the *Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ* (Deliberative Council) carried out by the Enlightenment Group in the summer of 1894, but only the Group as a political force. This is because the various items of reform passed by the Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ after 28 June and reported to the peasant army by the local magistrates, including Chŏlla-do governor Kim Hak-chin,[27] had included most of the peasant army's demands. The items of reform passed by

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24 *Kaehwap'a* (the Enlightenment Group) was denounced for their reliance on foreign power. As we have seen in 1884, they planed the coup but the plot was not fully carried out. They insisted on the reforms that would improve social conditions, enrich and strengthen national power and ward off capitalist encroachment.

25 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 2, pp. 379-80.

26 Ibid., p. 379.

27 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, p. 164.

the Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ included the abolition of feudal social status, reform of the taxation system, and prohibition of exploitation by the local gentry. These measures were primarily designed by the Kabo regime to pacify the peasant army.[28] Thus, there was no reason for the peasant army to oppose these reforms.

Regardless, the period of compromise between the two groups did not last long. On 4 August, on the grounds that the Tonghak followers had become violent, the Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ decided to dispatch a temporary official to the three southern provinces, first to persuade the peasant army to surrender, and if that failed, to send troops to suppress them. On 25 August, the Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ adopted a carrot-and-stick plan to suppress the peasant army with troops, at the same time attempting to persuade it to discontinue its activities. The Tonghak followers were becoming increasingly uncontrollable with each passing day, despite the dispatch of the specially empowered official and the situation in Ch'ungch'ŏng-do and Chŏlla-do was deteriorating.[29]

Around late August and early September, the peasant army and the Kabo regime clashed in several confrontations, thus ending the ambiguous period of compromise. This new antagonism stemmed from their opposite attitudes toward Japan. The reform regime of the government had to co-operate with the Japanese since it could not maintain its political power without Japanese support. The peasant army, on the other hand, considered expulsion of the Japanese army as the most urgent

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28 Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa* [Korea History], Vol. 17 (Seoul: Tamgudang, 1984), pp. 286-311.

29 Hwang Hyŏn, *Oha Kimun*, pp. 106-7.

task, because the Japanese had occupied the royal palace, had interfered with national interests, and were stationed in Seoul preparing to invade Korea.[30]

Eventually the Tonghak peasant army could not but regard the Enlightenment Group as a force of opposition contriving to maintain its power and suppress the peasant army with the help of the Japanese. It was unfortunate that the two innovative forces, the peasant army and the Enlightenment Group, became mutually hostile because of their different attitude towards foreign forces, because at root they wished to achieve the same things.

In sum, in the political realm the revolution in reality did show some conservative characteristics. As has been mentioned, the peasants said that the purpose of the peasant revolution was to return the benefit of the state and to protect the people. The state meant the king as the ruler and the people as the ruled. Even though they wanted to abolish the old ruling system, the peasants showed an attitude of respect toward the existing state system centred on the king. Therefore, their target of struggle was not a regime centred on the king but the government officials' ruling method. Because of this, the peasants advocated the seizure of power by the Taewŏn'gun, not of their own power. In addition, they denied the Enlightenment Group, stressing the king and the group's reliance on the Japanese. In a sense, the character of the revolution was defined by the tension between the outwardly radical ideas as the creation of new order and

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30 Chŏn Pong-jun Kongch'o in *Tonghangnan Kirok* , Vol. 2.

inwardly conservative ideas such as protecting the king and the state.

3. Limitations and Implications

(1) Limitations

Ostensibly, the Peasant War of 1894 did not register any degree of success in spite of the large-scale participation and sacrifice of peasant troops. What were the reasons for this failure?

First, the most powerful factor leading to the failure of the peasant war was intervention by foreign forces. In the first stage, the peasant army demonstrated its power by achieving victory against government forces at the battles of Hwangt'ohyŏn hill and Hwangnyonggang river. Of course, these battles were not fought against the main body of the government army, and it is thus not appropriate to judge the military capacity of the peasant army just by the results of these two battles. However, if the low morale of the government army is taken into consideration, the superiority of the peasant army can be guessed. In this instance, the peasant army's plans to go to the north were interrupted by the landings of the Japanese army and the Chinese army in Korea. The second stage was aimed at expelling these foreign forces, but was instead itself suppressed by these foreign forces. In the 1890s, when the political situation in East Asia was rapidly changing, the first stage was used as an excuse by Japan to initiate the Sino-Japanese War, and the

second stage was frustrated by Japan's aggressive policy of making Korea a protectorate.[31]

The second reason the peasant revolution failed was the change in the government's attitude. To be sure, the government acknowledged the Chipkangso system established as a result of the compromise between Governor Kim Hak-chin and Chŏn Pong-jun. However, this was just a temporary compromise made under the special conditions of the Sino-Japanese War. The government, once taken over by the Enlightenment Group, considered the peasant army as an adversary and not a force that could assist its reform work. This was a fatal blow to the peasant army. The government's social reforms carried out under Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ from July to August of 1894 accommodated many of the demands of the peasant army.[32] But the pro-Japanese government changed its attitude toward the peasant army when the Sino-Japanese war neared an end in Korea in mid-August. The government of the Enlightenment Group made a decision to suppress the peasant army, and in early September it asked the Japanese army to help start its full-scale suppression. The government of the Enlightenment Group thought of the peasant army as 'rioters' who 'oppressed the yangban literates and robbed the properties of others'.[33]

Thirdly, the failure of the peasant war resulted in part from the peasant army itself. That is, the peasant army suffered from, among other things, an immature ideological base, an insufficiently organised system of control and

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31 Kim Kyŏng-ch'ang, '1890ny'ŏndae-ŭi Kukche-jŏk Hwan'gyŏng', pp. 65-100.

32 Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa*, Vol. 17, pp. 280-311.

33 *Tonghangnan Kirok*, Vol. 1, pp. 285-6.

command, tactical errors in battle strategy, and inferior arms. The insurgent force relied on Tonghak ideology such as 'to sustain the nation and provide for the people', rather than creating a new revolutionary paradigm. This could not provide the ideological basis on which a modern society could be founded. As seen in Mujang Proclamation, the peasant army started with an ideology based on the basic principles of morality, emphasising the king-subject relationship and the father-son relationship. This emphasis on the relation between the senior and junior was not pertinent to the revolution. The peasants' ideology influenced by Tonghak was not sufficiently rigorous to lead a social revolutionary movement continuously and systematically as well. At the same time, the peasant army did not have a real strategy. It was also so poorly armed that the peasant soldiers themselves believed that a hundred of them were needed to fight one Japanese soldier. The peasant army could not overcome this sense of inferiority despite their strength in numbers.

Even though the above reasons led the peasant revolution itself to failure, the revolution was certainly of significance to Korea. This is pursued in the next section.

(2) Implications

In the final analysis, the peasant revolution of 1894 was unsuccessful in plain terms, but it was a very significant event in the modernisation in Korea. It can be suggested that it had three implications.

First, the peasant war of 1894 provided the crucial turning-point to break down the old system of Chosŏn society. Korean society at that time was maintained by two main systems: the social status system and the landlord system. The peasant revolution offered an important chance to destroy the social system based on the differentiation between yangban and commoners. In fact, this social system had been shaken since the mid-sixteenth century.[34] However, the basic framework of the social class system still existed at the time of the revolution. The peasant revolution provided an opportunity to destroy the foundations of the system. It delivered a fatal blow to the authority of the yangban ruling system in local society, and with this system, the slave system started to collapse, not only legally, but also in reality.[35]

As mentioned above, it is difficult to find any evidence to support the idea that the peasant army formally advocated the abolition of the landlord system. But the peasant army revealed its intentions by refusing to pay land rents in the fall of 1894. The army's ultimate goal was the abolition of the landlord-tenant system and the realisation of landownership of the peasantry. This goal remained unrealised with the defeat of the peasant army. However, it showed that the peasants rejected the relationship between the yangban official as a landlord and the peasant as a tenant which was the core of the Chosŏn social system.

As well as the final phase of the 'anti-feudal' peasant struggles which had been going on since the late Chosŏn

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34 Yi Hyŏn-hŭi, *Han'guksa Ch'ongnon*, pp. 201-1.
35 Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe (ed.), *Han'guksa*, Vol. 17, pp. 202-11.

society, the peasant revolution of 1894 was the starting point of the modern struggle from below. First of all, the peasant war was significant particularly because of the rapid progress of its development in comparison with previous popular uprisings. That is, it showed a high level of peasant struggle in several aspects:[36] it maintained its cohesion over a large area, unlike other local and dispersed peasant uprisings; its resistance struggles were aimed at the central government and its officials; and it became the main force of reform, within certain local areas through the Chipkangso, etc. In particular, the peasant revolution of 1894 is correctly described as a 'revolution', in definite contrast to previous 'popular uprisings', in that it demanded reform of the whole existing social system, including the abolition of the social class system. At the same time it was a class struggle for the fulfilment of common people's demands. This aspect of the peasant revolution was a sign of the change in social consciousness in the Chosŏn society in which the ruled could not confront the yangban because of strict Confucian ideology.

Finally, the peasant revolution of 1894 was the beginning of the anti-imperialist and anti-foreign struggles against the encroachment of foreign forces, which is the most important issue in contemporary Korean history. 1894 was the year in which Japan's ambitions to invade Korea became clear as a result of the Sino-Japanese War. Japan's ambitions began to take concrete shape with the policy to make Korea a protectorate in late 1894. At that time, the peasant army, the most aggressive anti-Japanese force in Korea, was an obstacle

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[36] Ibid.

to Japan's plans to control Korea. Japan attempted to get rid of this obstacle, and as the target of this attack, the peasant army best understood Japanese plans.[37]

The peasant army had started the anti-Japanese struggle as a measure of self-protection, but it also assumed it for the salvation of the country from its imminent crisis. The peasant army considered the Japanese army's invasion of the royal palace and seizure of Seoul not as mere encroachments on national sovereignty, but as signs of Japan's ambition to invade Korean territory. The Enlightenment group, in contrast, regarded Japan's actions as attempts to make Korea independent of China, and to lead Korea to enlightenment. The group's leaders were, for the most part, unaware of Japan's plans to invade. This difference in understanding of foreign forces by the peasant army and the Enlightenment group eventually resulted in a hostile relationship between the two.

Consequently, the peasant revolution contributed to the doctrine of traditional authority in terms of the struggle against the old system of Chosŏn society through destroying the social status system and abolishing the landlord system. The peasant revolution was also an attempt to exercise power from below. It was in this sense a starting sign of differentiation of power. In addition, the peasant revolution contributed to the formation of nationalist ideology through its struggle against encroachment of foreign power. The decline of traditional authority, the differentiation of power, and the nationalist ideology are phenomena of

37 Shin Yong-ha, *Tonghak-kwa Kabo Nongmin Chŏnjaeng Yŏn'gu*, pp. 364-5.

modernisation. Therefore, the peasant revolution was a significant event for the modernisation. This theme will be taken up in Part IV.

3. Conclusions

Concerning the subject of the peasant revolution, we have seen that the main force was no doubt the commoners and the lower class people such as the poor peasants, petty craftsmen, and petty merchants. In case of the leadership group, the issue is more controversial. Among the arguments, the chanban (fallen yangban) theory is persuasive. The fallen yangban as a leader had a strong will to bring about changes, but as a Confucianist he could not avoid being influenced by Confucian ethics, which gave him a conservative character. Such a leadership group might lead a peasant revolution into ultimately conservative action. This is not inconsistent with what we have found about the objectives of the revolution.

With regard to the objectives of the peasant revolution, the social objectives shown in the Programme of Reform were mainly related to the crisis of the 'feudal' class system; the punishment of the corrupt ruling class and the liberation of the oppressed. The economic objectives concerned the guaranteeing of commercial rights and the reform of the tax and land system. These objectives addressed the real problems that the traditional society had. It is above all in the political objectives of the movement that the peasant revolution revealed a conservative character. The peasant army

showed an attitude of deep respect toward the king and the state. Furthermore, they insisted on taking up the cause of the Taewŏn'gun as the best way of maintaining social order. In other words, the leaders of the revolution wanted not their own regime but at the most a joint-regime under the Taewŏn'gun.

Neither prospect was actually realised. Had the peasant army succeeded in breaking through and marched all the way to the capital to crush the Japanese army and the pro-Japanese factions within the government, they might have fulfilled their plans to establish a government system ruled jointly by the Taewŏn'gun and a number of power-regained yangban leaders. In this way they could have facilitated a transfer of power from above. In other words, the peasant revolution could not have created power from below, however successful it might have been. This is supported by the peasants' ideology based on the principles of morality, emphasising the relation between the king and the subject and between the senior and the junior. Consequently, I argue that the peasant revolution of 1894 had some conservative characteristics we should not be overlooked.

What the peasant revolution of 1894 has been acknowledged to be, on the other hand, is a noble attempt to achieve a resolution to the chronic problems of foreign intervention and an inept social system, two main obstacles in Korea's movement towards modernisation. We returned to this in Part IV.

CHAPTER VIII
THE MEIJI REVOLUTION IN JAPAN AND TAIPING REVOLUTION IN CHINA

This chapter will deal with the two wars in Japan and China respectively in a comparative perspective. The two wars, of course, should be understood in relation to the comparative discussion of religious movements in Chapter Five. In the case of Japan, the civil war of 1868-9 was a decisive event. It seems to have been closely bound up with the Sonno-joi ideology. Stemming from a movement to restore the emperor and expel the foreigners, the war resulted in the Meiji Restoration. It surely played a key role in the process of the modernisation of Japan. For China, the Taiping War was also carried out on the basis of the Taiping ideology. Even though the Taiping revolution seemed to end in failure, its results were important in respect of China's modernisation.

In this chapter, I would like to explore two things: how the revolutions were influenced by the corresponding religious ideology; and what were the main processes and characteristics of the two wars. The first objective is to explain the relations between religious ideology and revolution, and the second to analyse and compare the character of the two revolutions. This chapter, as a matter of course, is for comparison with Korea's revolution of 1894 in the concluding chapter that follows.

1. Japan's Meiji Revolution

(1) The Anti-bakufu Movement

As we saw in Chapter Five, Japan's response to outside pressures was the Sonno-joi movement (revere the emperor and expel the barbarians [foreign power]). It was a new religious concept of the state as well as a new attitude toward the emperor. The samurai who followed the Sonno-joi movement developed it into a concrete action, rejecting the bakufu and attempting to free the emperor from the shogun's influence. In order to suppress samurai activists who supported the emperor based on the Sonno-joi movement, the bakufu made a military expedition. However, the bakufu could not change its destiny by the suppression of the Sonno-joi movement. The bakufu's prestige had already been damaged by its inability to put down internal dissent. After the failure of the Sonno-joi movement, the loyalists in Satsuma, Choshu, and Tosa began to form an anti-bakufu alliance. The ideology of the anti-bakufu movement was influenced by the Sonno-joi movement, and showed a conservative character as well. Yet since they felt that neither 'expulsion' nor 'loyalism' was a practicable solution to the problems, the anti-bakufu forces turned away from the negative attitudes associated with simple Sonno-joi and replaced them with the positive aims of *fukoku-kyohei* (enrich the country, strengthen the army), a programme that was to be put into effect immediately in their own domains and then extended to the country as a whole.[1]

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[1] W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 241.

This change weakened the joi movement by depriving it of the support of those who could have been its most powerful advocates. The sonno element, on the other hand, was strengthened by the samurai activists. From the outset, what the loyalists sought to realise was the sonno. As Lehmann has expressed it, the sonno seems to have come to be regarded as more important ideology for Japan than joi.

> 'Joi was an obscure and irrational expression of a desire to retain what was perceived as an idyllic existence: the seclusion of Japan from the outside world and its corrupting influences. Joi, in other words, sought to maintain the status quo as far as the country's relations with the West were concerned. Perceiving that the bakufu was incapable of protecting that particular cocoon, sonno, in its inception, illustrated a romantic desire to return to an illusory historical womb. If the old monarchical system of past glory could be restored, the gods would be pleased and Japan would be saved'.[2]

It was at the moment of discarding joi that the nationalism of Japan was born. In order for the nation to be saved, all means were justified. Therefore, it was realised that the West could and should be used for the purpose of strengthening Japan. Here sonno and kokutai became important terms to justify the change of attitude to the West. This change also contributed to a process of reshaping political alignments among those linked to the anti-bakufu forces. The anti-bakufu forces sought to build a new government centred on the emperor. The

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2 J. Lehmann, *The Roots of Modern Japan* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 155.

anti-bakufu forces began a programme of vigorous self-strengthening designed to build up self-sufficiency in the event of a domestic trial of strength. Under the influence of sonno and kokutai, their aim was to curb the feckless and aimless bakufu leadership.

Since both Choshu and Satsuma had succeeded in putting their finances on a firm basis during the early nineteenth century, both had funds to buy foreign arms and ships from foreign merchants. As for Choshu, for nearly a century it had regularly saved a portion of its income and had invested it in profitable enterprises, thus accumulating capital that could be used in time of emergency. On the other hand, Satsuma was able to base its finances on a highly profitable state-operated sugar monopoly.[3] These resources enabled Choshu and Satsuma to buy rifles, cannons, and ships.

The anti-bakufu forces became increasingly convinced that the great domains should somehow unite politically to set up themselves against the power of the bakufu. In March 1866 Choshu and Satsuma made a secret agreement to help each other if attacked by the bakufu. In the years between 1861 and 1865 as the bakufu began to lose its authority, the two domains were rivals, each proposing its own solution to the crisis: Choshu, identified with the *Sonno-joi* movement, and Satsuma, with the *kobugattai* movement.[4] Choshu put forth the more extreme proposal for solution of the national crisis,

3 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, p. 58. For details, see R. K. Sakai, 'The Satsuma-Ryukyu Trade and the Tokugawa Seclusion Policy' in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1964), pp. 391-403; A. N. Craig, *Choshu in the Meiji Restoration*, Chapter 2, pp. 26-50.

4 A. N. Craig, *Choshu in the Meiji Restoration*, pp. 311-2.

favouring a more resolutely pro-imperial court stand and demanding the expulsion of the foreigners. Satsuma, on the other hand, agreed with the *kobugattai* proposal of 1862, which was a union of the imperial court and the bakufu. It was able to win important concessions from the bakufu in the appointment of reformist officials, the moderation of the alternate attendance requirement, and the agreement that the shogun would travel to Kyoto to consult on national policy.[5] But Choshu's leadership had to acknowledge the futility of joi, and Satsuma was dismayed by the bakufu's reassertion of Tokugawa supremacy. In this situation, Choshu and Satsuma concluded a secret alliance, pledging mutual support to prevent a recovery of Tokugawa power. A samurai in Choshu described the alliance as being 'of the utmost importance in the regeneration of our imperial land'.[6]

The alliance, soon proved itself effective when in 1866 the bakufu sent a second expedition against Choshu to assert its authority. Satsuma refused to participate in the expedition, and Choshu defeated the bakufu forces easily.[7] In addition, Tosa's reformers and surviving loyalists found common ground as their fellows in Choshu and Satsuma had done. Tosa moved some way towards an anti-bakufu position.[8]

By mid-1867 the anti-bakufu forces in control of Choshu, Satsuma, and Tosa were determined to overthrow bakufu rule and create a new government centring on the emperor. The idea had

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5 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 173-84.
6 Ibid., p. 256.
7 A. N. Craig, *Choshu in the Meiji Restoration*, pp. 329-33.
8 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, pp. 276-8.

already been put forward by men like Iwakura Tomomi, a loyalist court noble, who wrote in 1866:

> 'The purpose of requiring the bakufu... to surrender its administrative powers is to make it possible to reassert our national prestige and overcome the foreigners. To achieve this requires that the country be united. For the country to be united, policy and administration must have a single source. And for policy and administration to have a single source, the Court must be made the center of national government. Thus may the will of the gods of the wishes of the people be observed'.[9]

The leaders of Choshu Satsuma and Tosa advocated that imperial rule should be restored. The remaining problem was how to achieve the restoration of imperial power.

In July 1867 activist samurai from Tosa, led by Sakamoto Ryoma, put forth a new plan for a peaceful transfer of power: the abolition of the shogunate, the demotion of the Tokugawa family to mere daimyo status, and the establishment of a bicameral assembly made up of an upper house of court nobles and daimyo and a lower house including samurai and even men of commerce.[10] The samurai activists' great duty was to establish the ruling structure of the imperial court of old and to return political power to the imperial court.

In November Tokugawa Keiki finally agreed to a formal return of sovereign powers to the emperor and announced his willingness to surrender his administrative functions as

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9 Ibid., p. 261.
10 M. B. Jansen, *Sakamoto Ryoma and the Meiji Restoration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 295-6.

shogun, though not his title.[11] The change, however, was more formal than substantive. Under the new regime Keiki still held considerable powers, serving as head of both the executive and legislative branches of the new government and retaining the power to appoint judicial officials as well. The Tokugawa family also retained control of its ancestral house lands, which were sufficiently extensive to be used as a political and economic base from which to challenge imperial authority. The anti-bakufu faction (tobaku-ha), fearing that the bakufu intended to pursue its own selfish interests, now decided to pursue another plan of action.

(2) The War between the Imperial Court and the Tokugawa

At last two opposing forces in Japan were formed. One group was the imperial faction led by the anti-bakufu forces under Choshu and Satsuma. This faction's chief leaders were Okubo Toshimichi and Saigo Takamori in Satsuma, and Kido Koin in Choshu; and the crafty and influential court noble Iwakura Tomomi usually associated with them. The other group was the pro-Tokugawa faction, consisting of a loose alliance of moderate and conservative forces. This group favoured compromise, clemency to the Tokugawa and maintenance of a modified system.[12]

The two factions could not avoid clashing with each other over the centralism of the restoration of imperial power. In

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11 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 281.
12 C. D. Sheldon, 'The Politics of the Civil War of 1868', in W. G. Beasley (ed.), *Modern Japan: Aspects of History, Literature and Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1975), p. 27.

reality, the war for the Restoration cannot be said to have been a simple struggle for power between factions of the ruling classes. There were a number of street demonstrations of a wider public in Kyoto in 1867. In the tradition of Sonno-joi, the public displayed their opinion to criticise the bakufu for its dealings with foreigners and political corruption.[13] As Sheldon points out, 'the ruling classes, the many-tiered hierarchy of warriors, were not alone involved in the fighting. Whether in the village, towns or cities, people of all classes were involved in one way or another. The civil war served to intensify conflicts and compromises between group interests, breaking down feudal solidarity among the samurai, stimulating new ideas and innovations and speeding the defeat of the traditional political and moral principles associated with feudalism'.[14]

In the civil war, the pro-imperial anti-bakufu forces took the victory. Their success was based on three important events: the victories of the imperial forces in the battles at Toba and Fushimi (27-30 January 1868), the one-day battle of Ueno in Edo (4 July), and the taking of the castle of Wakamatsu in northern Japan (5 November) after a long and difficult campaign.[15] The pro-Tokugawa faction was hard hit by the three events, which resulted in the victory of the imperial forces. The other way, the victory of the imperial forces came to bring about control by the militant anti-bakufu faction.

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13 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 292.
14 C. D. Sheldon, 'The Politics of the Civil War of 1868', p. 28.
15 Ibid., p. 27.

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13 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 292.
14 C. D. Sheldon, 'The Politics of the Civil War of 1868', p. 28.
15 Ibid., p. 27.

The first event of them started on 26 January 1868, when the pro-Tokugawa forces began to move troops towards Kyoto along the roads through Toba and Fushimi, ostensibly as a show of force. The following day, they were stopped at Toba and Fushimi by the Satsuma and Choshu forces, who refused demands for passage through to Kyoto. The Satsuma and Choshu forces were clearly well prepared for an attack. On 29 January they went onto the offensive, making good use of their superior fire-power and experience with rifles. The pro-Tokugawa troops were repulsed and by the morning of 31 January, all troops had returned to Osaka.[16] At the same day, the imperial court issued a decree blaming the shogun for the hostilities and relieving his followers of their duty toward him. Three days later Osaka castle surrendered.[17]

The January victory of Satsuma and Choshu was an advantage both for their own morale and in persuading the undecided domains to ally themselves with the imperial side, or at least not to aid the side branded as enemies of the imperial court. Within a few months, on 3 May, Tokugawa Keiki surrendered Edo to the imperial forces under Saigo Takamori. Keiki's explanation of this was that it was the only way of avoiding needless bloodshed and major hostilities which could bring down upon Japan the additional calamity of foreign intervention.[18]

During the fighting, the imperial forces began to change their attitude to the foreign affairs. In the imperial

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16 Ibid., pp. 34-6.
17 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 297.
18 C. D. Sheldon, 'The Politics of the Civil War of 1868', p. 41.

proclamation of 11 February 1868, an attempt was made to pacify anti-foreign elements: 'What is urgently needed now is to respond to the times with eyes open, to rid ourselves of former evil customs, and to show forth the light of virtue to all countries'.[19] Changes in attitudes were necessary not only because of worries about possible foreign intervention in the civil war; it was also thought that the change could serve to strengthen the hand of innovators in the government.

In the meantime, the one day battle at Ueno on 4 July solved the problem of the final disposition of the Tokugawa. The resolute action of the new imperial government at Ueno attacked and defeated a force of Tokugawa adherents. In August, the change of capital from Edo to Tokyo was announced.[20]

However, no sooner had the imperial forces consolidated their position but new anti-government forces emerged. They entered into an alliance on 23 June by twenty five lords of domains.[21] The anti-government alliance blamed Satsuma and Choshu rather than the imperial authorities. In a sense, the alliance was another appearance of the conservative position, pressing for the traditional methods to solve the problem. The group's memorandum began with a statement of basic support for the return of political power to the emperor.

By this time, the victory in the battle of Ueno placed the imperial government in a position of superiority. The able and aggressive leader Saigo was sent for the final stages of the northern campaign to suppress aggressively anti-government

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., pp. 43-4.
21 Ibid., p. 45.

domains, in particular, Aizu and Shonai in northern Honshu. During the northern campaign, the imperial government brought over the common people to the imperial side and enabled some domains to leave the anti-government alliance.[22]

At last, the struggle on the main islands ended completely in January 1869. This followed the surrender of the various northern domains by the middle of November, after the decisive victory over Aizu when the strongly defended Wakamatsu castle was taken by a large imperial army under Saigo on 6 November.[23]

(3) The Character of the War

With regard to the modernisation of Japan, the civil war of 1868-69 played a decisive role insofar as it brought to an end the feudal system of bakufu-han under the shogun and ushered in the stage of building a modern state. In March 1869, after months of persistent negotiation, the imperial government leaders persuaded the daimyo, including those of Choshu, Satsuma and Tosa, to return their land and population registers to the emperor. This measure was meant to demonstrate that daimyo domains were ultimately the land of the emperor and their populations were the subjects of the emperor rather than subjects of the lord.[24] In this way the bakufu-han system came to be abolished. Other measures followed were a stepping-stone on the path of the modernisation of Japan: elaborate status distinctions within

22 Ibid., pp. 47-8.
23 Ibid., p. 48.
24 W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, p. 331.

the samurai class were simplified into just two classes, the stipends of retainers were reduced, all remaining fiefs were made public land, and uniform procedures for tax collection and the like were established.[25]

The Meiji revolution has been regarded as a virtually bloodless affair. Yet, as we have seen the civil war for the restoration of the emperor involved several substantial battles. According to incomplete statistics there were no less than twenty-four battles, two of them naval battles, and three of them involving some naval action. Estimates of casualties for 1868-9 were 10.000 dead and 12,000 wounded. During the ten years preceding 1868, more than 2,000 were killed in internal struggles in the domain of Mito alone.[26] Hence the civil war should no longer be characterised as bloodless.

Also, the civil war was not a struggle between progressive and unprogressive forces. In reality, the bakufu under the last shogun, Tokugawa Keiki, made an attempt to carry out vigorous and impressive reform.[27] For example, there were efforts to build a modern navy, to modernise the bakufu army, and to initiate a prefectural system. With respect to the aim of strengthening Japan itself, the intention of the two groups seem to have been similar. Howevèr, the anti-bakufu tendency's purposes were linked to an element of self-interest in desiring to restore the old system as much as possible. Furthermore, the success of the anti-bakufu was influenced by Sonno-joi ideology, because they could establish their

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25 Ibid., pp. 335-49.
26 C. D. Sheldon, 'The Politics of the Civil War of 1868', p. 48.
27 Ibid., pp. 28-30.

legitimacy through such ideology. In other words. they could justify their non-traditional use of power, in particular, the monopoly of power by the Satsuma-Choshu leaders. Consequently, ideological grounds as well as practical ones were important for the Japanese revolution. For their revolution, they used traditional slogans - the restoration of imperial rule.

2. China's Taiping Revolution

(1) The Development of Taiping Warfare

After the Opium war (1840-1842), China was in disorder within and without. The Taiping movement started in response to both internal troubles and Western penetration. The principles of the Taiping made use of Western Christianity. On the basis of the Taiping ideology, the Taiping's Heavenly Kingdom was declared by the founder, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, in 1851 and prepared for the Taiping revolution. However, the immediate cause of the Taiping's concrete action were conflicts between guest settlers and local people in Kwangsi.

In the mountainous province of Kwangsi, many bandits appeared after the Opium War. This was due to the oppression of poverty-stricken peasants by landlords and tax collectors, and to the great famines in South China in 1847 and 1849. In order to maintain order local groups organised their own militias. The God Worshippers also organised themselves to give protection to their own members. The superior security their organisation afforded was attractive to the guest

settlers, especially to persecuted Hakkas. The guest settlers were mostly immigrants from Kwangtung, which was Hung's home. There was accordingly a steady growth in the numbers of the God Worshippers. The aim of the organisation was primarily religious but its persistent religious iconoclasm brought its members into conflict with the authorities.[28]

From the outset, Hung and Feng thought that it was necessary to overthrow the Ch'ing dynasty in order to carry out the Heavenly Father's instructions. Their efforts followed religious lines. But when disorder in Kwangsi grew and official opposition to the God Worshipper Society developed, the religious movement began to take on military and political aspects.[29] The official opposition to the religious movement was led by the local gentry, the scholars and retired officials. The reasons that the local gentry opposed the God Worshiper Society can be explained as follows:

> 'First, as doctrinaire Confucianists, the gentry placed loyalty to the emperor above all other virtues and ipso facto opposed revolutionists. Second, as scholars and teachers of the great body of Confucian principles, the gentry felt a special responsibility for the perpetuation of China's Confucian heritage. To this end the members of the gentry class scrupulously rejected all unorthodox doctrines - Chinese or foreign - but ironically let the Confucian spirit of nationalism languish in their rush to support the Sung Neo-Confucianism adopted by the Manchus as the state orthodoxy. Third, the gentry had become virtual captives of the

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28 Yu-wen Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, pp. 53-4.
29 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 1, pp. 37-8.

> Manchu regime, dependent on Peking for their whole way of life, from academic honors and economic privileges to their right as gentry to organise and command local militia for the suppression of banditry. Any threat to the status quo was a threat to their personal and class interests'.[30]

In 1850 the local gentry was stirred to anxiety and repeatedly demanded that the local governments arrest the leaders of the God Worshippers. Upon receiving this information the leaders decided to call the Taiping to arms. Hung provided the guiding leadership of the revolution. The plan was drawn up by Hung in concert with five kings, whom Hung appointed himself, as follows: Feng Yun-shan, Yang Hsiu-ch'ing (a community leader), Hsiao Ch'ao-kuei (the brother-in-law of Hung), Wei Ch'ang-hui (an educated Hakka) and Shih Ta-k'ai (a rich Hakka farmer). All except Feng came from Kwangsi. Shih Ta-k'ai and Wei Ch'ang-hui were landowners. The general headquarters of the revolution was Chin-t'ien in the Thistle Mountain area.[31]

In order to improve the morale of the God Worshippers assigned to military duties two methods were used. One was that soldiers who risked death were told that all who died in battle would go to heaven. The other is that liberal practice came to be made of the descent from heaven. The descents by God and Jesus continued to occur during the years that followed whenever the military situation became critical.[32] The regime for the military troops was strict. All infractions

30 Yu-wen Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, pp. 37-8.
31 Ibid., pp. 57-8.
32 E. P. Boardman, *Christian Influence upon the Ideology of the Taiping Rebellion 1851-1864*, p. 16.

of the military rules were punishable by one of four methods: death by beheading, burning, or tearing the body apart by four horses; carrying of the cangue (a large wooden collar worn by criminals as a punishment) for public exhibition; a beating with a bamboo stick, and degradation in rank.[33] The organisation and system of the Taiping military were applied rigorously.

The Taiping revolution formally began with Hung's proclamation of the Heavenly Kingdom in 1851. Hung intended to found a new dynasty influenced by the Christianity, not to restore the Ming rulers.[34] It seemed that he wanted to distinguish his movement from secret societies advocating the Ming. In reality, the secret anti-Manchu Triad society, a group which aimed to restore the Ming dynasty had asked to join the God Worshipper society. However, collaboration between the Taiping and the triads was impossible, because there were basic differences in attitudes toward religious ideology.[35]

The timing of Hung's proclamation of a new dynasty was important for the revolution. Along with this, the Taiping militia was revolutionised and begun conducting mobile warfare on a huge scale, all the way from the mountains of Kwangsi to the city of Nanking. This was a real people's war, and the peasant rose in response. In 1853, the Taiping troops took Nanking and changed its name to *T'ien-ching* (Celestial Capital).

33 Yu-wen Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, p. 48.
34 Ibid., pp. 65-6.
35 Ibid., pp. 69-70.

After establishing their capital at Nanking in 1853, the Taiping were at odds with the Ch'ing dynasty for eleven years until their downfall in 1864. The history of the struggle against the Ch'ing dynasty can be divided into three periods.[36] The first period was the time of the struggle for the control of the upper valley of the Yangtze (1853-6). The second period was one of warfare in the middle part of the Yangtze (1857-59). The third period was the stage of military operations in the lower valley of the Yangtze (1860-64).

In the first period, the Taiping forces tried to extend their power by launching two further expeditions. The Taiping's northern expeditionary force moved toward the north part of the Yangtze and to harass the government troops in North China. But they were defeated because of lack of reinforcements.[37] The other expeditionary force was to reconquer the upper Yangtze valley (the west part of Yangtze). Fortunately for the Taipings, the Ch'ing dynasty had at this time no navy. The western expedition of three years was able to enforce the Taipings' power.[38] In this period, despite the Ch'ing dynasty's constant threat to Nanking, the Taiping succeeded in defending their capital. This time was the Taipings' height of prosperity.[39]

However, this success was followed by internal dissension among the followers of the Heavenly King, and this terminated in a series of assassinations. The leadership system of the

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36 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 70.
37 Yu-wen Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, pp. 169-94.
38 Ibid., pp. 195-215.
39 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 71.

Taipings had been complex from the outset. At this time their leadership system was a loose, undefined structure of what would be called 'collective leadership'.[40] The leaders of Taiping consisted of five kings. The title of king was conferred upon the commanders by Hung. They were glad to co-operate with Hung, but all these men had great ambition. The kings killed each other to get more power. In other words, there was internal dissension over power and position within the leadership system of Taiping. This conflict among the key leaders ruined the concept of brotherhood of the whole group of leaders. The concept of the Taiping system in which all men were brothers and sisters and formed the family of God made a distinction between the brotherhood of the leadership, the original kings of the Taiping, the old comrades who had organised the movement at the beginning. Therefore, the principles of divine sanction for some of the leaders and of the brotherhood of all could and did come into conflict.

Of the five kings, only three survived. - the Eastern king, Yang Hsiu-ch'ing; the northern king, Wei Ch'ing-hui; and the Assistant king, Shih Ta-k'ai. The authority of the Heavenly Kingdom was eventually almost completely monopolised by the Eastern king, Yang Hsiu-ch'ing. However, Yang abused his power so that he was killed by Wei. And then Wei was murdered by the order of the Heavenly King because Wei became too ruthless. In this process, Shih, realising that his position was hopeless, left Nanking.[41]

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40 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 109.
41 Ibid., pp. 109-14.

This internal conflict weakened the Taipings tremendously. During dissension among the Taiping, the headquarters of the imperial army could have the time to reorganise. From that moment, victory was gradually decided in favour of the government's troops. Moreover, the leadership conflicts gave the followers the cause reasons to question the mystic doctrine based on dreams.[42]

During the second period (1857-1859), the centre of hostilities was shifted to Kiangsi and Anhwei. The Taipings lost control of Kiangsi, but still maintained their power in Anhwei and Nanking.[43] After the internal dissension in 1856, the Heavenly Kingdom lost some able leaders, and a search was undertaken to identify capable men. Two young men, Li Hsiu-ch'eng and Ch'en Yu-ch'eng, were simultaneously selected and promoted to eminent positions. The two were given the titles of second chief commandant and deputy commandant respectively.[44] They had never played much of a part in Taiping military affairs before the Nanking time.[45] However, Li Hsiu-ch'eng employed clever tactics. He attempted to co-operate with the Nien forces, a local rebellious group. The co-operation led to the joint occupation of a number of cities in the Huai area in the years 1857 to 1859.[46] The combined forces proved a severe menace to their opponent, and thus enabled the Taiping commanders to maintain themselves and gain

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42 Ibid., p. 115.
43 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 73.
44 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 122.
45 Ibid., p. 123.
46 Ibid., pp. 124-5.

local victories in the central Yangtze area.[47] But the co-operation, which remained on a purely military basis, did not last.[48]

After entering 1860, Li led his army to victory and could control the lower valley of the Yangtze. His victories contributed to Taiping's stability. The two provinces Kiangsu and Chekiang became the sphere of his activities. Li was very different from other Taiping leaders, who had devoted themselves to taking food and valuables from people. Li and his commanders tried their best to develop the parts of Kiangsu and Chekiang that they controlled. They urged the people to return to their occupations. They warned their soldiers not to disturb the people.[49] Li's actions were particularly respected by people. Following occupation of various cities in Kiangsu and Chekiang, Li Hsiu-ch'eng concentrated once more, in 1862, upon taking Shanghai. In order to try to wrest control of this centre of wealth in south-eastern China he operated this time with greatly increased forces.[50]

When Li Hsiu-ch'eng attempted to occupy Shanghai in 1862, Chinese and foreign merchants became frightened. By this time foreigners had changed their attitude toward the Taipings. Natives of Kiangsu, who were refugees in Shanghai, were joined by other rich merchants in recruiting a volunteer corps for

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47 Ibid., p. 126.
48 Because the political structure of the Nien rebels, which was only a federation of autonomous communal units, did not lend itself to any further integration of the two forces, quite aside from their ideological incompatibility. Ibid., p. 126.
49 Ibid., p. 161.
50 Ibid., pp. 152-4.

self-protection. Some adventurous Englishmen, Americans, and Frenchmen joined the Chinese merchants. But a number of the Kiangsu gentry and merchants went to Anhwei in 1862 to beg for Tseng Kuo-fan's aid.[51] Tseng Kuo-fan (1811-72) was the leader on the government side who was to defend the traditional social order against the Taipings.

In the meantime, the forces opposing the Taiping had taken Anking in 1861 and used it as a springboard to reach Nanking.[52] The army assembled to suppress the Taiping was newly organised and assisted by the volunteer corps trained by the Americans.[53] Li Hsui-ch'eng's power was wiped out and he was driven from Shanghai to Soochow. During war in the lower valley, the situation in the Celestial Capital became more precarious. The Heavenly King, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, urged Li Hsiu-ch'eng to come back to relieve Nanking. Li was obliged to yield ground at the front in order to join the Heavenly King, as a result of which the opposing forces took Soochow and Hangchow.

The Heavenly King, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan himself, did not live to see the end of his government. On 1 June, 1864, he died at Nanking at the age of 50, after a lingering illness of twenty days, possibly after taking poison.[54] The Taiping relief forces outside Nanking were cut off. The defences of the Celestial Capital were broken through on 19 July 1864, and The Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace was destroyed.

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51 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 77.
52 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 169.
53 Ibid., p. 170.
54 Ibid., p. 173.

(2) The Reform Activities

While established in Nanking, the Taipings created the apparatus of a government, with a capital, a political system, a bureaucratic administration and a group of leaders which soon became a privileged class. Taiping reform activities are reflected in two particular publications. One has the title T'ien-ch'ao t'ien mou chih-tu [the Land System of the Heavenly Dynasty] (1853). The other is called Tzu-cheng hsin-p'ien [the New Draft of the Heavenly Administration] (1859). The former details the distribution of land and the organisational system of communal units, while the latter deals with the administration of the Taiping kingdom.[55] From this, we can derive the organisation and activities of the Taiping system.

With regard to organisation, the smallest unit of the Taiping's organisation was the family.[56] Every twenty five families formed a larger unit and among these twenty-five families there was an officer called a master sergeant managing social, judicial, and religious affairs. The officer seemed to play the role of a chaplain as well as army officer, teacher, and ruler in the area of unit. Above the twenty-five families unit, there were several larger groups. According to *The Land System of the Heavenly Dynasty*, 'the lowest unit in the local organisation consisted of 25 families administered

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55 J. C. Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion 1850-1864* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1963), p. 38; F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 2, pp. 309-20.

56 Chien-nung Li, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, p. 62.

by a sergeant. Four of the 25-family units formed a 100-family unit under the administration of a lieutenant, five of the 100-family units were combined under a captain, five of the 500-family units were combined under a colonel, and five of the 2500-family units were combined under the administration of a corps general. The largest unit of the local organisation, then consisted of 13,156 families, i.e., five 2500-family units and the families of all the administrative officers'.[57]

This Taiping system lent itself easily to military organisation. In any unit of administration, there were two officers in charge of land, taxes, revenue and expenditure: of whom one was the chief and the other the assistant. The officer of each unit reported in detail to the higher officer through the organisational system such matters as births, deaths, demotions, promotions and so forth.[58] Furthermore, in this unit there was a system of reward and punishment. Those who were diligent in farming received rewards, while those who were lazy were to be punished.[59] Concerning justice, the officer had to judge the right from the wrong if there was dispute between two families. If the matter could not be settled, it was presented to another higher official, who re-examined it. If the two parties were still discontented, the case was finally brought before the Heavenly King. Judgements by the Heavenly King and officials in each unit seem to have

57 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 2, p. 320.
58 J. C. Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion 1850-1864*, p. 42.
59 Ibid., p. 41.

been based on the Ten Heavenly Commandments.[60] The Ten Heavenly Commandments set by Hung on the basis of the Christian Ten Commandments were used as a discipline for the Taiping community and enforced like a code.[61]

The fundamental content of *The Land System of the Heavenly Dynasty* was concerned with the reform of the land. The Taiping economic system aimed at three goals: public ownership of land, equal allotment of surplus money and food, and a self-supporting food economy. In regard to the land system, the key content of *The Land System of the Heavenly Dynasty* is that 'land shall be farmed by all; rice, eaten by all; clothes, worn by all; money, spent by all'.[62] There could be no inequality in the system.

This means that the traditional system of ownership of land under governors was rejected. No matter whether man or woman, everyone over sixteen years of age should receive land. The distribution of land was to be made according to the size of the family, irrespective of sex, with only the number of persons taken into account. The land was to be divided into nine grades by the quality of soil.

This system shows that the Taiping did make an attempt to realise their principle of complete equality. However, the programme for equal distribution of the land among the people does not seem to have been put into practice at all. In many places, especially during the late period, the landlord's right to collect rent was upheld again even if in some

60 Ibid., p. 42.
61 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 33.
62 J. C. Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion 1850-1864*, p. 40.

localities, for a short time the landlords were forbidden to collect rent.[63] Whether this revolutionary programme could ever have been realised by the Taipings is debatable. As F. Michael has pointed out, the Taipings were never able to devote their full time to these matters, for the Taiping leaders were obliged to pay full attention to the continuous military struggle in which they were engaged.

With respect to the reforms during the later part of the Taiping, *The New Draft of the Heavenly Administration* issued by Hung Jen-kan in 1859 is an important source material. He emphasised the importance of sound legislation and sound personnel. The programme he aimed at included three categories of change: enlightenment by culture, rule by law, and censure by punishment.[64]

First of all, 'enlightenment by culture' was for abolishing bad customs, such as bound feet, and recommended the development of institutions for promoting social welfare, such as hospitals, churches and schools. Secondly, the content of 'rule by law' was the main part of the programme. It was not merely the introduction of an abstract system of rules but a whole system to lead the people to the right way. Hung stressed education and law at the same time. In particular, he was interested in the creation of a public opinion, dependent in part on a public press. For instance, a Board of Posts should be set up to communicate official correspondence

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63 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 2, p. 311.

64 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 748-51.

between provinces and a Bureau of News to receive criticisms from the people, provide news of fluctuations in commodity prices across provinces and of other trends. It was thought that people in authority could draw up plans and remedies for administration. Furthermore the programme under this category proposed a way to use the Western skills. 'All foreigners who are skilled in craftsmanship and advanced in technique ought to be allowed to trade.'[65] This was an attempt to introduce Western knowledge to the Taiping. Finally, 'censure by punishment' was concerned with reconciling punishment of crime with humane principles. Before expanding on this programme, Hung insisted on the danger of having the central authority undermined by cliques among the officers of the government.[66]

To sum up, the important content of the New Draft of the Heavenly Administration may be divided into political, economic and cultural aspects. In the political aspect, the programme emphasised the enforcement of central authority, the importance of public opinion and the Western system based on Western knowledge. In the economic aspect, the programme promoted modern enterprises on the basis of Western technology such as communications, the building of vessels, the establishment of banks, post offices, and newspapers, and the institution of patents.[67] And in the cultural aspect, the

65 J. C. Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion 1850-1864*, p. 46.
66 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 748-9.
67 J. C. Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion 1850-1864*, pp. 52-8.

programme expressed the abolition of bad customs and the importance of education.

The New Draft had a progressive meaning at that time. It clearly aspired to construct a new society. However, it does not seem to have been realised. The New Draft could not create a new turning point which would evoke an echo in society because it did not reflect the demands and interests of the peasants. It was impossible to realise the programme because there was no subject which was capable of putting it into practice. Though the programme had a tendency toward capitalism, there was no class to lead it.

(3) Limitations and Meaning

The Taiping attempted to carry out a total revolution against Chinese religion, politics, and economics. But eventually the Taiping failed. The failure of the Taiping movement was caused by several factors. First of all, the military tactics of the Taiping were weak. The Taipings only concentrated on forward movement with total disregard of security measures to hold the rear, and in regard to political policies, the Taipings cared only about seizing territory. They were not much interested in making plans to govern it. Except for Li Hsiu-ch'eng, they had little regard for the feeling of the populace.

Secondly, as far as leadership was concerned, there was no capable leader after the internal dissension. Though the Taipings had some good warriors, they suffered a great lack of men with political talent. Their opponents, the warriors of

the Hunan Army may not necessarily have been superior to those of the Taipings, but men with political ability and knowledge in the imperial camp far outbalanced those on the side of the Taipings.

Thirdly, Taiping Christianity did not appeal to the Chinese people. The Taipings' pro-Chinese policies lost their effect when joined with their principles of Christian divine right. Moreover, Christian principles at that time did not persuade the majority of the Chinese people. The Confucianism of the Hunan Army, on the other hand, had been firmly established and through the promotion of such scholars as Tseng Kuo-fan, Confucian ideas were more continuously popular than Taiping Christianity. Furthermore, the Christianity of Hung Hsiu-ch'uan and others was not authentic. The adherence of Hung and his followers to Christianity seems to have been regarded as a false belief cloaking their personal ambition and desires.

Despite failure, the Taiping movement was of considerable significance. As Teng points out, the one direct, important, and immediate effect of the Taiping was its influence on modernisation or westernisation in China, especially in military reorganisation and equipment.[68] The Western challenge of the first Opium War (1839-42) could not arouse China. However, the prolonged warfare of the Taiping contributed importantly to the modernisation of the military system. Since the Taiping demonstrated the superiority of foreign

68 S. Y. Teng, *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers: A Comprehensive Survey* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), p. 384.

organisation and discipline, Ch'ing China was forced to change the military system.[69]

Next, the Taiping had an influence on the Chinese political system. The most important aspect of this was the weakening of the central government. The Taiping shifted the control of military and political power from the central government to local governments, from the emperor to local governors. During the fighting, the militia generals had to recruit men and support them with funds raised from the locality. Hence the soldiers began to focus their loyalty on the general rather than the state. Similarly, the military and financial authorities could keep tax money for local use instead of sending it to the emperor.[70] Accordingly, the central power was jeopardised and localism weakened the unity of the nation and the very life of the Manchu regime. Together with this, the centre of finance shifted from the centre to the provinces. Also the Manchu regime had to reduce taxes along the lower Yangtze valley, to match the lenient policy of the Taiping.[71]

All these trends provoked by the Taiping weakened the central power of the government and encouraged Chinese in seeking a new order. It marked 'the beginning of the end of Confucian China.[72] The Taiping movement was revolutionary in character. Fantastic and irrational as it was, its basic ideas were borrowed from the West. After the Taiping revolution, such ideas could find more favourable ground in China. The

69 Ibid., p. 390.
70 Ibid., pp. 390-1.
71 Ibid., p. 400.
72 F. Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 199.

Chinese people were henceforth more willing to abandon their basic traditional beliefs.

3. Conclusions

The civil war of 1868 in Japan brought to its demise the Tokugawa shogunate and create a new authority under the symbol of the emperor. Japan achieved a new national unity by destroying the bakufu-han system. As the loyalists insisted, the emperor had been returned to the centre of government. When Japan faced the Western menace, the emperor thus provided a new rallying point for the nation.

Japan's initial reaction to the Western impact was taken in the name of a return to the past. To this extent, a restoration had taken place. The reason that the imperial forces were victorious was that they appealed to the supreme authority of the emperor, which was the centre of a religious movement. As a result of the civil war, a distinctively conservative coalition composed of the emperor, court nobles, daimyo and their agents assumed political power. However, along with their original objective of destroying the shogunate, which was a political reform, was the objective of strengthening the country to meet the threat from abroad, which implied social and economic reform.

The Taiping revolution of China started from a religious group with a strong ethnic cohesion, inspired by a prophetic leader who had charismatic appeal. The Taiping revolution broke out on the basis of a new religion, whose organisation at first was based on the so-called God Worshipper Society.

Drawing on the reassurance that the Heavenly Father of their religion would help and protect the followers of the movement, the Taiping were able to achieve a broad following. The movement's ultimate objective was to build a new society, even though its preachers advocated the Ming at first. After the Opium War, the factor of Christianity helped the Taiping to define its ideological grounds.

Unlike the Japanese case, the Taiping revolution aimed to create a new order by denying the present system. The attitude toward the West appears to have been considerably more positive. The leaders of the revolution had reform plans for a new world, but in practice found little time to implement their grandiose scheme. Even though it failed at that time, it contributed to the undermining of the Ch'ing system and to the ideological opening that eventually ushered in a new social and political order in China.

Part IV. The Orientation of Modernisation

CHAPTER IX

RELIGION AND REVOLUTION IN THE MODERNISATION OF JAPAN, CHINA AND KOREA

When Western powers knocked at the door of the three countries we have studied, the modernisation of those countries entered a new phase. Together with domestic problems, the appearance of Western power became a detonator for modernisation. In order to solve the problems that were being posed from within and without, all three countries needed to replace the old social system with a new one. In this context, a religious movement arose and a revolution followed, and the character of these movements helped to define the path of modernisation each society followed.

This chapter deals with two things: the influence on modernisation of the religious movement and revolution which occurred in the process of opening the door to the West; and the direction taken by modernisation after the religious movement and the revolution. The three countries' approaches to modernisation were not the same in that different kinds of new societies were foreshadowed in the process of the religious movement and revolution. The differences are analysed in this chapter. We also make a brief sketch of subsequent developments in the modern period in the three countries. This is intended to explore the implications of the religious movement and revolution for the modernisation of the three countries up to the present day.

1. The Orientation of the Religious Movements and Revolutions

In order to analyse the contributions of the movements considered to be modernisation movements in the three countries, let us rethink Moore's theory mentioned at the beginning of this thesis. To be sure, none of the three countries pursued a democratic route on the way to modern society. According to Moore, in the period of the transformation from agrarian societies to modern industrial societies, the modern political system was shaped by historical conditions and shifts in relationships between important power groups such as aristocrats or peasants. His analysis shows how Japan's path to the modern world resulted in a dictatorship of the right while China's resulted in a dictatorship of the left. It was the modernisation of Japan and China that shaped the conditions for the emergence of fascist and communist regime respectively.

In the case of Japan, Moore argues, the advent of fascist dictatorship was the result of Japan's having modernised on the basis of a revolution from above. Moore explains the character of Japan's modernisation through the fascist route as follows:

> Where the [revolution from above class] coalition succeeds in establishing itself, there has followed a period of conservative and even authoritarian government. ... At a rather generous estimate, one

> might hold that to this species belong the period ... in Japan, from the fall of the Tokugawa shogunate ... Their history may be punctuated with attempts to extend democracy. ... Eventually the door to fascist regimes was opened by the failure of these democracies to cope with the severe problems of the day and reluctance or inability to bring about fundamental structural changes.[1]

Japan's modernisation had a conservative and authoritarian character, and this laid the foundations on which the 'fascist' regimes of the 1930s and 1940s were built.

As for China, in his discussion of China's modernisation, Moore emphasises the Chinese peasants' role, saying that 'the peasants provided the dynamite that finally exploded the old order'.[2] If they did that, the peasants of the Taiping could be said to play an systematic role in destroying the old order and serve to intensify and accelerate other peasants' struggles against imperial decay. Such a peasant outbreak in Nien (1853), in reality, co-operated with the Taipings.[3] After all, by a revolution from below, a peasant revolution, China ended up as a communist regime, which asserted a higher freedom beyond bourgeois democracy. In China's modernisation, the communist regime had to destroy the old order and take steps toward the creation of a new one. All process by government direction produced radical change, to the extent that 'the Communists broke the village apart at its base,

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1 B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, pp. 437-8.
2 Ibid., p. 227.
3 Ibid., p. 215.

obliterating the connection between landed property and kinship'.[4] According to Moore, 'in the absence of a bourgeois revolution, there came a peasant revolution that in turn opened the road for totalitarian modernisation'.[5] China's modernisation had a radical and liberal character the Taiping had shown, and it culminated in a Communist revolution.

Even though we did not use the same variables as Moore, we can confirm his theory on the character of Japan and China's modernisation. For this, we need to focus on the new society foreshadowed in the religious movement and revolution of Japan and China respectively. The new society put forward to replace the old order suggests the character of the movement's impact on modernisation.

In case of Japan, the new society was one centred on the emperor. The movement's aim was the revival of ancient Japanese institutions by restoring the emperor to actual sovereignty. This gave it a retrospective and conservative character. This was shaped by a religious movement which started in response to new pressures from the outside. As we have seen, new pressures from the outside provoked two opinions; accepting Western technology and rejecting it. Both opinions, in reality, were the same in that they had the intention of defending Japan from outside. The former, led by the 'Dutch scholars', said that to accept and use Western technology was the best way to defend Japan from the outside, while the latter, led by the Mito school, said that to reject Western technology was to secure the country by urging a rigid

4 Ibid., p. 226-7.
5 Ibid., p. 228.

policy of seclusion for joi (expel the barbarians). Here, in the process of coping with pressures, a new social order was pursued under new concept of sonno (revere the emperor) and kokutai (the national polity). The new social order Japan needed was to be based on a strong central monarchy. The millennial ideology of new society was to strengthen the traditional order centred on the emperor and then to realise an era of harmony under the rule of the emperor in which peace and morality would naturally hold sway.

The concrete action for new social order was the Meiji revolution. The Meiji Restoration was a result of the war for the emperor. It was time that the formal existence of the emperor changed into a practical and powerful existence. The victory of the imperial forces united the nation under the emperor and made it possible to recreate the old system. In this sense, Japan succeeded in creating a new social order, returning to the traditional system. Japan's alternative to the existing social order was the revival of the old order around the emperor. To this extent, it had a conservative character. After the Meiji revolution, the Meiji government set out to modernise Japanese society by means of the administrative unification of the country, the reform of the class system, and the institution of the new land tax.[6] And the Meiji leaders began to engaged in building of a modern state.[7]

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6 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 78-82.
7 For details, see Michio Umegaki, *After the Restoration: The Beginning of Japan's Modern States* (New York: New York University, 1988).

In case of China, the new society that was put forward was Hung Hsiu-ch'uan's own kingdom, which he called *T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* (Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace). In Hung's kingdom, man could be emancipated from the actual problems of a ruinous society. The reason that the Taiping created a new society centred on a personal religious charisma was to overcome the problems of ruinous society. A new society would be realised when Chinese people had exterminated the barbarian devils and followed the Taiping doctrine. The barbarian devils were the Manchu and the West. In other words, the movement's aim was to destroy the existing social order. Its ideology made use of Christian ideas from the Bible. Even though Hung seems to have rejected the West, he accepted a Western creed. But this contributed to its radical character. The Taiping thought based on Western texts centred on a new idea, very different from traditional Chinese ideology; the new religious faith was based on a personal God and his guidance for one's personal salvation as well as in all matters of daily life. As Weber pointed out, this was quite contrary to all tradition of Chinese society.[8]

And the eleven years of fighting between the Taiping and Ch'ing China was a struggle to expand Taiping power for their kingdom, their new social order. Its character was radical and liberal. This was revealed in its reform activity. The reforms such as the twenty-five family unit system, public ownership

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8 Weber describes the Taiping revolution as 'by far the most powerful and thoroughly hierocratic, politico-ethical rebellion against the Confucian administration and ethic which China has ever experienced'. M. Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism* (New York: Free Press, 1951), p. 219.

of land, and equal allotment of surplus money and food, gave a radical aspect to modernisation. Some of these reforms were practically the same as those carried out later under the Communist regime. Taiping's new society was a new social order based on radically altering traditional ideology and accepting a Western creed.

The central ethos of liberalism and radicalism is based on progress in the emancipation of man's mind and spirit from the religious and traditional bonds of the old order and in humanitarian liberation of man from inequalities. That of conservatism is tradition, emphasising the values of community, hierarchy, authority, and religion.[9] According to this, the character of Japan's modernisation was conservative and China's was radical and liberal. These differences might be linked with the modern political systems that emerged in the two society; Japan's conservative modernisation led to a fascist regime and China's to a communist regime.

If so, what character did Korea's modernisation have? Korea's religious movement, Tonghak, started with the aims of healing a corrupted domestic society and preventing foreign domination. The central principle of Tonghak thought was *Poguk Anmin* (to sustain the nation and provide for the people) and *Kwangje Ch'angsaeng* (to save the oppressed). For this, Tonghak rejected 'Western Learning' and advocated 'Eastern Learning'. Eastern Learning, in a word, meant the 'learning of the eastern country (Chosŏn)'. So Tonghak's new social order might be seen as, in one sense, based on Chosŏn society.

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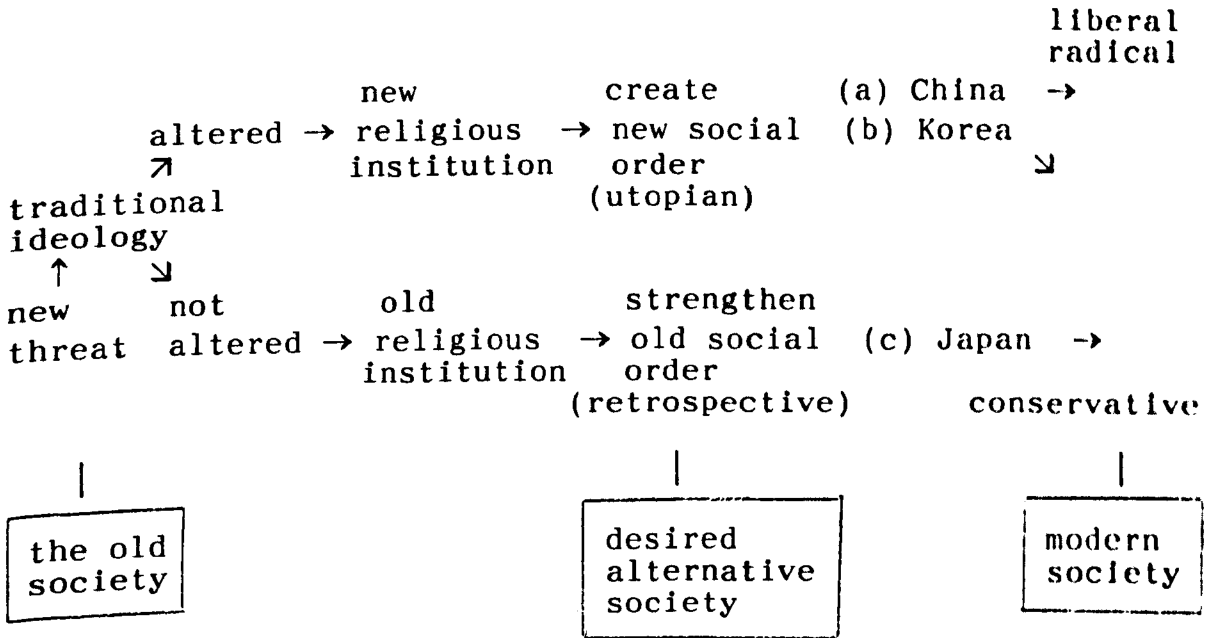
9 R. A. Nisbet, *The Sociological Tradition* (London: Heineman, 1967), pp. 10-2.

Tonghak's founder, Ch'oe Che-u, insisted on the advent of this new world, *Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk* (Later Creation). It was Tonghak's new world under its doctrine, which provided a millennial ideology. However, it would be achieved not by human will but by itself under the doctrine of *Muwi Ihwa* (natural becoming). This meant that the given social order was destined to finish and the new society to be realised. Tonghak's new society seems not to have been a function of human will. Therefore, Tonghak might not need radical action for their new society.

Despite this doctrinal point of view, during the revolution and, in particular, the Chipkangso period, the peasants tried to carry out in part a radical reform in the social status and land system; but they did not create their own regime for reform. This seems to be related to Tonghak's doctrine Poguk Anmin (to support the king and sustain the nation). This placed emphasis on the king and the state, and sprang from a defence of social tradition strongly influenced by Confucian ideology. Under this logic, as seen in Chapter Seven, the view that the Tonghak peasants may have planned to uphold the Taewŏn'gun is plausible. This process shows the conservative character of the movement. Accordingly, we can argue that even though the peasants showed a radical character for their reform on the basis of a new ideology, Korea's Tonghak and its revolution had a conservative character at least in the political aspect.

Figure 9.1 The Three Countries' Orientations to Modernisation



As seen above, like China, Korea's direction was to create a new social order based on a new religious institution, while Japan's direction was to restore the old order. In China, under the change of world system, the Taipings' desired society to replace the existing social order was the Taiping Kingdom, which denied Ch'ing China and accepted a new order by taking advantage of Western doctrine. Their new social order seems to have assimilated influences from Western religious ideology. It was a sacred and utopian society very different from the experience of the 19th century Chinese. In Japan, on the verge of a new threat, the movement's desired society to replace the existing society was based on the old social order centred on the emperor. It was to strengthen the traditional

ideology rather than to deny it. In a word, Japan's desired society was retrospective.

Korea appears similar to China in the process of religious movement and revolution, in that the Tonghak rejected the existing society and expected a new utopian society through Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk. However, the point we need to pay attention to is that unlike China, Korea had not assimilated Western influence. On the contrary, the Tonghak's new society was formed on the basis of exclusion from Western culture. Because of this, the Tonghak's new society could not completely avoid the ideological influence of the existing society. In this respect, it seems that Korea's experience was closer to that of Japan. In sum, Tonghak and its revolution can be said to have distinctive features in comparison with both China's and Japan's direction in the process of modernisation.

In more detail, we can distinguish the Tonghak revolution from the Meiji revolution and China's Taiping with respect to the character of its contribution to modernisation as follows.

First of all, with respect to the orientation of the religious movement, Japan's sonno persisted in the pursuit of a restoration of the old system centring on the emperor. It was not really the development of new religious orientation; rather, in response to the growing strains from the inside and outside, the old religious ideology was strengthened and its effects expanded. It is true that the sonno itself would not have been related to modernisation, but it provided the Meiji government which initiated modernisation with a political rationalisation. In China, the Taiping was to destroy Confucian principles and accept a deformed Christianity. Its

orientation was realised as the Heavenly Kingdom. The Taiping religious movement, as it was, gave the Chinese a new ideology and helped to give a positive aspect to ideological or cultural modernisation. Like China, Korea's Tonghak can be said to have contributed to an ideological modernisation. Chosŏn society was dominated by an orthodox Confucian ideology which formed a uniform ideology which regulated the whole social system. While it challenged the old order, the advent of Tonghak could also be seen as a breakthrough to expand Chosŏn's religious ideology. Tonghak made a new concept of God and expected a new world (Later Creation) which could never have been thought before. But in the sense of expanding the realm of religious ideology, it contributed to modernisation by extending the scope of tradition.

Secondly, in relation to revolution, Japan's revolution itself could not be said to be oriented towards modernisation until the Meiji government was established. This is due to the fact that the Meiji revolution started with the aim of strengthening the power of the emperor and unifying the social structure to cope with the threat from the West. Furthermore, the revolution seems to have been a power struggle between different groups of samurai to seize power around the emperor. But China's Taiping undertook some reform activities oriented towards modernisation during the revolution, even though the movement started under the slogan of being anti-Ch'ing. In particular, the reform of redistribution of land and the organisational system of communal units were thoroughly radical. Since with such radical elements it tried to create a new society, different from the existing society, the

orientation may be seen as radical and liberal. Korea's Tonghak, at first sight, seems to be similar to China's case. Tonghak was a social reformative movement to get rid of social corruption and a decayed structure. For its reform, the Tonghak proposed a programme with radical content, such as abolishing slavery and distributing land equally. In this sense, it was directed against the existing social order based on Confucian ideology. At the same time, the Tonghak insisted on sustaining the nation in the name of *Poguk Anmin* and *Kwangje Ch'angsaeng*, by which it developed a concerted protest against the imperial power. Even though Tonghak had a radical aspect in the social and economic realms, it showed a conservative face in political respects. Therefore the orientation of Korea's Tonghak could be seen as located between Japan's and China's movements in its fundamental character. In respect of implications for modernisation, Korea's Tonghak can be said to have had a dual orientation. In other words, it could be considered intermediate in terms of its combination of radicalism and conservatism.

Finally, with regard to the results of the revolutions, the Tonghak peasant revolution resulted in the loss of the country's sovereignty due to the failure to ward off foreign military intervention and avoid being colonised. By losing its sovereignty, Korea had no opportunity to develop its own form of political modernisation, but the Tonghak must have provided Chosŏn society, an undifferentiated society, with social modernisation in that it built up the foundation of liberation from traditional forms of consciousness as well as the traditional status system. On the basis of social

modernisation, Tonghak could develop as a protest form against Japan's colonial rule. Japan's Meiji revolution resulted in the victory of the imperial forces, and then the imperial government led the modernisation of Japan. The Taiping revolution, even though it ended in failure in warfare, prepared the way for the downfall of the Ch'ing. Since the Ch'ing government could not raise the funds needed as a result of the Taiping revolution, the government was weakened and its authority began to collapse. The collapse of the imperial system thereafter was gradual but unremitting. Under this situation Ch'ing China was at last destroyed by another revolution, that of 1911. After that, in the absence of a strong central power, the peasants kept being exploited by the private violence of the landlords, as a result of which the peasants were positive in establishing a new Communist regime.[10] The Communist regime might be seen as the creation of the new social order the Taiping desired to establish, although this is obviously debatable.[11]

2. The Impact on Modernisation

Japan's Sonno-joi ideology and Meiji revolution resulted in the creation of a conservative polity, as a result of which the Meiji government had a conservative and even authoritarian

10 B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, p. 221.

11 Weber already mentioned that the State of the Taiping revolution was a typical military booty communism intermixed with acosmistic charity in the early Christian manner. M. Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, p. 221.

character. A strong conservative government has distinctive advantages. It can both encourage and control economic growth. It can restrain the ruled who pay the costs under all forms of modernisation from making too much trouble. But Japan had a problem that was inherently insoluble. It was to modernise within the old system which meant not to change their social structure. The only way out of this dilemma, Moore argues, was to unite the upper class and to frame an imperialist policy through militarism.[12]

Japan's process of modernisation from a religious ideology to imperialism is described well in Bellah's writings: 'The desire to make Kokutai [religious and utopian ideology] a living reality tends to put the goal-attainment dimension foremost. It acts to motivate a strong drive toward certain ends, at first the Restoration, then as it became a large part of the modern nationalistic ideology of Japan toward building a strong country and finally toward imperialism'.[13]

Japan's modernisation accompanied imperialism. At the same time, Japan started a rapid economic development based on imperialism. This direction of modernisation was determined by Japan's conservative polity, which could be a product of the government's effort such as revitalising local Shinto and emphasising national loyalty to the imperial throne.[14] It originated from the sonno-kokutai ideology.

Japan's conservative polity, together with a strong leadership of the government, led to a process of economic

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12 B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, pp. 441-2.
13 R. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, p. 105.
14 K. B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 117-8.

growth from above. In several important ways, the Meiji government played a critical role in laying the foundations for economic growth such as creating an infrastructure of communications, of public utilities, and of financial services.[15]

In addition, the selfless dedication of the upper class (of samurai origin) to the nation made a contribution to the success of growth from above. The reason that Japan alone among non-Western countries made a rapid transition to industrial society has been explained in terms of Japan's unique cultural tradition of leadership such as the loyalty of the samurai class. 'The spirit of bushido - the warrior code - inspired elements of the samurai class to selfless devotion to their nation, led others to invest their commutation bonds in the new national banks, and so fuelled Japan's industrialisation'.[16]

Why the upper class dedicated themselves to the nation was due to the fact that they were naturally loyal to emperor and nation influenced by sonno-kokutai ideology. Therefore Japan could modernise itself under the control of a conservative and authoritarian government. Japan's conservative polity both led to imperialism and contributed to Japan's advanced economic growth in Asia.

In the case of China, after the Taiping revolution the Ch'ing government performed no function that the peasants regarded as essential for their way of life. Hence the link

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15 Ibid., pp. 82-3.
16 Ibid., p. 86.

between rulers and ruled was weak and largely artificial, liable to break under any severe strain.

The Ch'ing government became less and less able to keep even a minimum of order over wide areas of China as its weak policies helped to generate peasant outbreaks. In the end, the Ch'ing dynasty was overthrown by the Revolution of 1911. The Han people who suffered two hundred and fifty years of alien Manchu rule could be emancipated and establish the Republic of China. The goal of the 1911 Revolution was to overthrow the Manchus and restore China to the Chinese.[17] Its objectives were similar to those of the Taiping revolution. In a sense this revolution was a realisation of the Taiping's initial insistence 'repel the Manchu and restore Ming'.

But China's new republican regime was not stable. The power struggle continued. Ultimately China came to be a communist state. As a matter of fact, it may be rash for us to discuss the modernisation of modern period in China in this thesis, because China has recently begun its open-door policy. What we can say, however, is that China is still under a communist regime which belongs to the dictatorship of the left.

The fact that Tonghak and its revolution had two characters, radical and conservative, in the process of modernisation suggests that if it were considered in the light of Moore's theory, Korea's polity could be thought of as occupying an intermediate position between the dictatorship of the right and that of the left. In fact, Korea had little

17 F. Wakeman Jr., *The Fall of Imperial China*, pp. 225-55.

opportunity for autonomous political and social change, because Korea fell to the Japanese colony soon after Tonghak peasant revolution was suppressed. A certain thing, however, is that the ideology of Tonghak and its revolution contributed substantially to the nationalistic ideology that grew during the colonial period and after.

The third leader of Tonghak, Son Pyŏng-hŭi, officially renamed the movement Ch'ŏndogyo. Even though Ch'ŏndogyo could not take revolutionary action, it began to take root in Korea as an institutionalised religion. The more important thing is that Ch'ŏndogyo was instrumental in opposing the Japanese during the period of the Japanese colony (from 1910 to 1945). Especially in the 1919 Independence Movement, known as the March First Movement (Samil Undong), Ch'ŏndogyo played an important role in Korea's remarkable nation-wide demonstration for independence. It was sparked into flames by the death of the last Korean king, Kojong (reigned 1863-1907, died on 21 Jan. 1919), who had been forced by the Japanese to abdicate. The flame exploded into open fire in March when Korean patriots secretly organised a nation-wide, non-violent demonstration for freedom timed to take advantage of the king's state funeral scheduled by the Japanese for 3 March. Two days before the funeral a Korean Declaration of Independence was signed, read in public at what is now Pagoda park in Seoul and circulated with amazing speed through the Korean peninsula. There were 33 signatories. Among them, 15

were from Ch'ŏndogyo (Tonghak) and its leader was the leader of Ch'ŏndogyo, Son Pyŏng-hŭi.[18]

This action was an expression of the deep resentment that Koreans felt at Japanese overlordship. Under the influence of the Tonghak doctrine, in particular, Poguk Anmin (to sustain the nation and provide for the people), Ch'ŏndogyo provided the people with a nationalist ideology. With such an ideology Ch'ŏndogyo played a key role in the anti-colonial struggle, undertaking activities and movements to enlighten the masses and promote national independence. Because of its strong nationalist orientation, Ch'ŏndogyo suffered from Japanese oppression during the Japanese colonial period.[19]

On the other hand, Korea's social and economic transformation during the Japanese colony proceeded radically and its impact on Korean society was profound. In respect to social transformation, the Japanese dismantled the old foundations and established new ones such as the abolition of slave status and the codification of civil law.[20] The Japanese took further steps to wipe out Korea's national and cultural identity by employing a Japanisation policy in the 1930s as follows: 'All Koreans were forced to take Japanese names, and schools had to teach in the Japanese language. Even on the playground, Korean children were expected to speak to each

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18 Hwang Sŏng-mo, *Han'guk Sahoesaron* [A Study of Korean History] (Seoul: Shimsŏldang, 1984), pp. 191-2.

19 Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch (ed.), 'Religion and Social values', *Transactions: Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 46 (1971), p. 88.

20 A. H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 32.

other in Japanese'.[21] This situation helped to reinforce Korean nationalism and Korean hatred of the Japanese. Concerning economic transformation, as Amsden has insisted, Japanese colonialism might have been a 'modernising force' in that the Japanese colonialism removed the old blockages to industrialisation and created a modern infrastructure in the areas of finance, transportation, and commerce.[22] But this economic transformation was caused by Japan's own expanding needs; for example, the land reform of the Japanese colonial government after 1910 was carried out for the purpose of raising land-tax revenues.[23] Because of this, it is difficult for us to say that social and economic modernisation during this period was related directly to the religious movement and revolution we have discussed so far.

After Japan's retreat from Korea (1945), Korea could not form its own polity for the time being. So the direction of modernisation cannot be judged. The end result of Japanese colonialism in Korea was a society that was unable to support itself and totally in a state of confusion. Peasants opposed landlords, and those who resisted the Japanese stood against those who had collaborated.[24] In a word, there was a general decline in political, economic and social order in that

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21 E. S. Mason et al., *The Economic and Social Modernisation of the Republic of Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 74.

22 A. H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization*, p. 32-3.

23 Amsden pointed out that this was Korea's contradictory quality of modernisation during Japanese colony. Ibid., p. 34. For details, see Sang-chul Suh, *Growth and Structure Changes in the Korean Economy 1910-1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 143-4.

24 A. H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization*, p. 35.

period, leading to increases in crime, political assassination and violent strikes. With a distended police force accustomed to domestic repression, and a minuscule army incapable of national defence, Korea once again, fell victim to the Great Powers, Russia and America. Russia and America accepted and controlled, respectively, the northern and southern parts of Korea so that they were effectively dividing Korea into two.[25]

In a word, the events between August 1945 when Japan retreated from Korea, and June 1950, when the Korean War began, were dictated by the ideological struggles of the Cold War under the influence of the two superpowers. And after the Korean War North and South Korea each began to develop their own ideologically determined methods for modernisation. Here the character of North Korea under the communist regime cannot be analysed exactly, since North Korea is still a closed society. What we can say about North Korea, however, is that it adheres to an unique communism under the idea of *Chuch'e*, which is the ideological concept of political-economic self-reliance. The idea of Chuch'e has been used as a strategy to maintain social order and a theoretical support to struggle against foreign powers. Until recently, some people could say that the idea of Chuch'e had contributed to North Korea's economic development, including a relatively high degree of self-sufficiency in food-grains, industrial raw materials, and basic consumer goods.[26] However, considering that North Korea

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25 D. C. Cole and P. N. Lyman, *Korea Development: The Interplay of Politics and Economics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 18-22.

26 G. White, 'North Korea Juche: The Political Economy of Self-reliance', in M. Bienefeld and M. Godfrey (ed.), *The Struggle for Development: National Strategies in an*

has suffered from food-shortages recently, such an analysis is not precise.

Instead, in order to help the understanding of Korea's communism, B. Cumings' analysis of communism in Korea in 1945 seems to be appropriate. 'It was a specifically Korean communism. Its adherents could scarcely be distinguished from nationalists and conservatives in their belief in the uniqueness of the Korean race and its traditions and the necessity to preserve both, or in their understanding that a unique Korea required unique solutions'.[27] This was in tune with the nationalistic and conservative character of the broader Korean polity at that time. As Cumings has pointed out, the 'communism of Korea in 1945 did not signify a deeply held world view, or adherence to an authority residing in Kremlin, or commitment to Marxist internationalism'.[28] This could be regarded as consistent with Korea's own character as revealed in the Tonghak revolution. That is to say, Korea always holds on to its conservative and nationalistic character, even though it shows a liberal and radical response to world change and advocates a revolutionary reform.

In what is now South Korea, in order to understand the ensuing course of modernisation, one must consider that the polity of Korea also acquired a conservative and authoritarian character. This is not difficult to prove. In modern political history Korea has never experienced a change of regime to the benefit of an opposition party so far. This signifies that the

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International Context (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1982), pp. 328-51.

27 B. Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 86.

28 Ibid.

Korea polity is conservative and authoritarian rather than radical and democratic. This character of the polity made Korea's rapid economic development possible, because a conservative government was able to encourage and control economic growth. Since the early 1960s at least, the Korean economy has been operated under highly centralised government. Mason and associates draw attention to the main features of Korea's economic modernisation as follows: 'The rapid economic growth that began in S. Korea in the early 1960s and has accelerated since then has been a government-directed development in which the principal engine has been private enterprise. ... The hand of government reaches down rather far into the activities of individual firms with its manipulation of incentives and disincentives'.[29] Hasan also supports this by saying that the rapid economic development of Korea depended on highly centralised government.[30] Over the past three decades or so, Korea's modernisation or, to be exact, its economic development, was due to the directive role of a conservative and authoritarian government, which could be possible under the leadership of dictatorship. The top priority of South Korea was economic development, for which the authoritarian regime controlled private enterprise and influenced all business decisions. Therefore, Korea's conservative and authoritarian polity can be said to have led to the modernisation of Korea.

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29 E. S. Mason et al., *The Economic and Social Modernisation of the Republic of Korea*, p. 254.

30 P. Hasan, *Korea, Problems and Issues in a Rapidly Growing Economy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 26.

Like Japan just after the Meiji revolution, Korea took the course of 'growth-from-above' in 1960s. It is difficult to prove that Tonghak and its revolution contributed to the modernisation of the modern period, because there is such a long interval between the Tonghak peasant revolution and the establishment of Korea's own regime. But the conservative character of Tonghak peasant revolution may perhaps be understood as foreshadowing the conservative polity that led to the modernisation of Korea.

3. Conclusions

This chapter has been an attempt to explore the relationship between modernisation and the historic events of the nineteenth century. Japan's route towards modern society had a conservative and authoritarian character, which was based on strengthening the old society by emphasising the old religious system. China set out towards a liberal and radical society, which could replace the existing society. Between the orientations of Japan and China, Korea may be said to have had some elements of both patterns without corresponding closely to either.

So Korea's orientation towards modern society would have to be located in an intermediate position on the continuum between Japan and China. But whether this orientation actually influenced the modernisation of the modern period or not cannot be fully proved at the moment, because there was such a long interval during the Japanese colony before Korea

established its own polity. What we can say now is that a conservative orientation, Moore's *dictatorship of the right*, was what led to the modernisation of modern period in Korea. This process and method of modernisation seem to follow in many respects Japan's conservative and authoritarian regime just after Meiji revolution. Therefore Korea's modernisation of the modern period seems to be closer to that of the right than to that of the left. This was one of the characteristics Tonghàk revolution helped to stamp on subsequent Korean history.

Part V. Conclusion

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

This study has had two aims. One is to explain the relations between a religious movement and a revolution, focusing closely on Tonghak in Korea. The other is to analyse the Tonghak peasant revolution of Korea in comparison with similar episodes in the history of Japan and China. As I mentioned in the Introduction, this involves explaining two things: how differently Korea has developed from Japan and China; and what was the contribution of the analysed events to the development of modern societies. In other words, the former concerns the route to modern society that Korea has gone through, and the latter concerns the differences in modernisation between Korea and its neighbours Japan and China.

The relations between religious movement and revolution have been presented in the foregoing chapters. As comparative events in the neighbouring countries, the Sonno-Joi movement and the Meiji revolution in Japan and the Taiping and their revolution in China have been described. In order to make the aims clear, this final chapter contains the following: (1) a brief résumé of what has been shown about the religious movements and revolutions in Korea and its neighbouring countries, Japan and China; and (2) an examination of experiences of modernisation in the light of the differences between the three countries' religious movements and revolutions. The former is for the general discussion on the

relationship between religion and social change (here revolution), and the latter is for explanation of Korea's specific character through religious movement and revolution in comparison with Japan and China.

1

The transition from traditional society to modern society was not smooth and crisis-free in Korea. Entering the 19th century, Korea experienced both domestic and international crises. Domestic crises were basically caused by a change in the structure of the dominant yangban class, frequent uprisings, and weakened government, while international crises were caused by the political and economic oppression of a foreign power. During the 19th century, Japan and China also experienced domestic disorder and the threat from foreign powers. Under these historical conditions, demands for a new social order became more frequent. Those increased domestic and international crises led to attempts to transform the existing social order. And the attempts to change social order appeared to be religious movements. It was Tonghak in Korea that was a new religious movement proposing a new social order. In the same way, Japan's Sonno-joi movement and China's Taiping movement emerged. As Worsley pointed out, where political organisations were absent, the response to such crises tended towards revolutionary religious movements. The absence of alternative avenues for change developed religious protest movements. Just as stateless Melanesians developed a religious movement for coping with the situation, Korea, Japan

and China followed a similar pattern. There no adequate political institutions to lead to social change, hence people looked to new religious movements. Religious ideology was political ideology, since it aimed at social transformation.

A Tonghak's basic ideology sprang from Poguk Anmin (to sustain the nation and provide for the people) and KwangJe Ch'angsaeng (to save the oppressed). This religious ideology is as good as political. We can also find political intentions in religious ideology of Japan and China. Japan's Sonno-Joi movement started with an ideology to strengthen the old system. 'Sonno' was to revere the emperor, and 'Joi' was to expel the barbarians. Japan's movement rejected foreign power under the slogan 'joi' and advocated a new ideology, 'kokutai' (national polity). It was a method of overcoming both domestic disorder and international threats. In other words, it represented both a constitutional ideal and the essence of a method of preventing further crises. China's Taiping movement was to deny the existing order and to create a new social order as well. Taiping instituted a concrete Kingdom to realise its ideal society. Its original slogan was 'rebel against the Ch'ing China and restore the Ming'. All these religious ideologies were related with political resolution with regard to the nation, which later produced forms of political activism, (revolutions).

On the other hand, the basis of Tonghak as a religious movement was Shi Ch'ŏnju and Sain Yŏch'ŏn. Shi Ch'ŏnju (bearing God) meant that all men can serve God. In the logic of Shi Ch'ŏnju, there can be no discrimination in serving God. It was an egalitarian form of religious thought. Going

further, Sain Yŏch'ŏn meant that all man and God (heaven) were one and the same. These elements in Tonghak emphasised man's essential dignity and equality. This was a starting point of millennial character in that Tonghak could realise human equality to do away with the strict class structure by identifying man with God.

As Worsley has remarked, millennial ideology can be regarded as early phases of political activism, Tonghak's millennial elements could be a foreboding of political movement. As its vision of the new world, Tonghak proposed Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk (Later Creation). In this way it directed the oppressed to a utopian vision of the future, a millennial ideology. But this was not to be achieved by human will; Tonghak's new world was seen as belonging to the natural order. Nevertheless, this new religious movement was a challenge to this world, insofar as it questioned traditional discrimination by yangban (ruling class) and Confucian ideology emphasising the gulf between the upper and lower orders. In any case, since the founder, Ch'oe Che-u, was martyred, the prophetic element in the doctrine was weakened and the practical ethics of Tonghak were emphasised. Thus, the appearance of Tonghak under strong Confucian ideology was revolutionary in that Tonghak proposed its own doctrine and a new social order different from traditional one. However, Tonghak also represented a perspective full of nationalism. As we can gather from the name of Tonghak (Eastern Learning), its starting point was to build on the culture of the Eastern country (Chosŏn) and to reject foreign influences. Tonghak's thought was for a new social order centred on Chosŏn, in which

all crises would be surmounted and doctrines such as human equality could be realised.

Millenarianism in Japan can be found in the society centring on the emperor. A clear religious goal could be realised on this earth by the restoration of the emperor. The successful movement in Japan emphasised the position of the emperor and rejected the shogunate. It was not demanding a change of social structure but change in authority relations at the apex of the political system. It was directed towards recovering the old system. So, Japan's movement was connected with anti-bakufu movement which resulted in political activism. That is to say, the millennial character for the ideal society around the emperor meant a political struggle to deny bakufu. On the other hand, The Taiping salvation would come true when the Ch'ing dynasty was swept out of China. However, Taiping went further and proposed a new society as an alternative to the corrupt existing society. It accepted a part of Christianity in its doctrine for its ideal society, the *T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* (Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace). The Taiping movement could not avoid political activism to realise its own ideal society which was a place of salvation as well. So the Taiping displayed an activist response to the Ch'ing China, believing that secular insurrection was a necessary accompaniment of their dream.

Religious movements substituted for political protest movements in the early stage came to develop into revolutions as political activism. In Korea, Tonghak revolution of 1894 would be a political action to realise the social order

proposed by the Tonghak religious movement. The peasant revolution of 1894 started with the Kobu Uprising. As the background to this event, Tonghak's followers had been politicised in the process of a movement for the exoneration of their founder. At first, during the movement for the exoneration of the founder demands were limited to recognition of Tonghak, but later they presented more political slogans such as 'crusade to expel the Japanese and Westerners'. This slogan were able to justify Tonghak followers' collective movements. The collective movement could lead to the Kobu Uprising, of which leaders and followers were from the Tonghak members. As soon as the uprising was suppressed, the leader, Chŏn Pong-jun, prepared for a full scale peasant revolution for a reform of society and then proclaimed the outbreak of the revolution in Mujang.

In the first stage of the revolution, the peasants aimed to drive out the corrupt officials. Within a few days of the outbreak of the revolution, many peasants gathered on the basis of the organisation of Tonghak. The ultimate slogan of the revolution was 'to eradicate corrupt officials of the government and save the nation from foreign influence'. During the revolution, there was some evidence that the loyalty of the movement's members to the king remained unchanged. The King in Korea was never a symbol in the same way as the emperor in Japan. He was the centre of power in the Chosŏn regime. Accordingly, the object of their struggle might not be seen as the Chosŏn regime or the king but as the misgovernment of its officials. In particular, during the Chipkangso period, the peasants made an attempt to practice their justice under

the recognition of the government. The rule of the peasant army was systematic in victorious areas. In this period, they presented a reform programme concerning the abolition of social class distinctions, reform of the land system and so on.

But it could not be for long. Owing to the power struggle within the central government, the weakened government could not but ask China to suppress the peasant army. At this time Japan intervened. Because of this, the peasant revolution recurred. The second stage, to be sure, was a struggle against the foreign power. This stage of the revolution was fully supported by the Tonghak because the root cause of the revolution, anti-imperialism, was the same as that of the Tonghak ideology.

The revolution as a political action for a new social order turned into a revolution for defending the country. In the process of the revolution, the character of movement's nationalism may be found. The peasant revolution of 1894, as it was, ended in failure. There are many reasons for its failure. Above all, the conservative character of the revolution should be not overlooked, Because of this, it could be said to be an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary event. The peasant army wanted a new order, but in their action they could not avoid their principles of morality, which emphasised the nation and the king.

In the case of Japan, starting with the Sonno-Joi movement, the Meiji revolution was a struggle for the restoration of the emperor. It was based on strengthening the sonno element. Under the influence of religious ideology, it

was a power struggle between the loyalists around the emperor and the shogunate. In the end, the anti-shogunate forces took the victory. The emperor was regarded as having a god-like existence. Even the ideological drive towards the restoration of the emperor could therefore have been quelled by an order of the emperor. It was in this way that the ideology of Joi (expelling the barbarian) was able to change into accepting the barbarians for their development. The success of the Meiji revolution thus made modernisation from above possible.

China's Taiping revolution was rooted in an ethnic ideology. The revolution started with Hung's proclamation of a Heavenly Kingdom, which led to the actual creation of a Taiping state, which tried to extend its power. During the revolution, reforms with radical aspects were carried out, such as the introduction of public ownership of land, equal allotment of money and food and so on. This involved rejecting the traditional system of China and accepting a completely new system. The Taiping, accepting a new religious ideology originating in Christianity, showed a new radical reform in the revolution as well. The Taiping revolution was suppressed, but the Ch'ing government never entirely recovered and in due course collapsed, which was the ultimate aim of Taiping. Their radical orientation to a new society foreshadowed the doings of the communist regime later.

Here let us examine some common characteristics. With regard to religious movement and revolution, all three cases have something in common as follows

First of all, even though the response took different forms all three religious movements were connected with the Western intrusions of the 19th century. The Tonghak religious movement started as a religious response to the Western menace. The term 'Tonghak' is 'Learning of the Eastern Country' which implied confronting the Western learning which was beginning to infiltrate into Korea. The Sonno-joi and the Taiping were also responses to the Western threat. Japan's Sonno-joi showed a negative attitude to foreign things, while China's Taiping, in reality, took place by adopting the Christianity of the West after the Opium War. Whether positive or negative in attitude, they surely started as a response to the West.

The Western intrusions of the 19th century might be a necessary precondition for the rise of any social movement, whether it be religious or secular. Political and military response to invading powers is the understandable initial reaction. So, insurrection seems the more likely response of the oppressed and the displaced in traditional societies. All three pre-modern societies had not been familiar with the outside until then and lacked political institutions for coping with the outside owing to the domestic crises. Therefore, in Korea, Japan and China, facing the Western intrusions, religious response took place of political response.

Secondly, all three religious movements had the characteristics of a sect. Tonghak was not so much a religion as a sect. The Tonghak did not enter into the stage of religious institutionalisation, and thus was in a position to

confront the prevailing religious ideology. The Sonno-joi and the Taiping are also to be regarded not as institutionalised religions but as new sects. In this regard, the outbreak of the revolution can be understood as the first step towards the institutionalisation of a religion.

Here we need to consider that the appearance of sects had something with domestic crises as well as Western intrusions. In reality, the crises of traditional societies came from strict social structures which made the ruled feel disadvantaged. This was deprivation. Glock and Stark acknowledged that many great religious inventors seem to have been motivated primarily by a sense of deprivation (Glock and Stark, 1965, p. 248). In the process of Industrial Revolution, Western societies experienced ethical deprivation which was value conflicts between the ideals of society and those of individuals or groups. As a result of this, sects emerged. However, all three Asian countries in the 19th century were experiencing social deprivation concerning with societal rewards as prestige, power, status and opportunities for social participation. Social deprivation of traditional societies accompanied economic deprivation as well because of less divided social structure. This deprivation had in it the seed of revolution.

Thirdly, all three religious movements had leaders with exemplary or charismatic ability. The leaders advocated new social order through new religious movement because of impossibility of social transformation within the existing social order. Tonghak was founded by the charismatic character Ch'oe Che-u who was from a yangban (ruling class) background.

He established Tonghak after a revelation from God. His personal charismatic ability was a key element in the propagation of Tonghak. As a new religious movement relies on a charismatic leader, Tonghak was also established on the basis of the ability of a religious leader at first. Furthermore, unlike the argument that religious movement would disappear if the leader died, Tonghak spread out after death of the founder. After him, the leaders of the religious movement were Ch'oe Che-u's disciples. As for Japan's Sonno-joi, the appearance of exemplary leaders such as the samurai Yoshida Shoin was important in activating the religious movement. After the Meiji revolution, most imperial government leaders were pupils of Yoshida Shoin. He may thus be seen as the spiritual leader of the Meiji revolution. In the case of China, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, who was from the gentry like Ch'oe Che-u, experienced a revelation before founding the Taiping religion. These religious leaders could be a condition for new religious movements as sects.

Fourthly, the three religious movements all denied the existing social system. They also showed the attributes of millennial movements. In order to destroy the old structures and the old political organisations, the millennial character was effective. According to Worsley, the religious movements with the millennial character have unified people and tend to develop into political protest movement for social change. It means that millennial character can develop into political activism. All three religious movements had proposed such an ideal society. The Tonghak made an attempt to create a new world under the slogan *Kwangje Ch'angsaeng* (to save the

oppressed). The Sonno-joi of Japan advocated the old order centring on the emperor, and the Taiping's slogan was to overthrow the Ch'ing and to build the Taiping society. All three revolutions as a political activism aimed at a new society. The Tonghak, at first, insisted on the coming of a new world, *Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk* (Later Creation). The Meiji revolution of Japan persisted in a society centred on the emperor, in which the emperor would restore the country's sovereignty and purge of Japan of all corrupt influences. The Taiping revolution attempted to realise a place of salvation, *T'ien-kuo* (Heavenly Kingdom).

In conclusion, the discussion whether religious movements such as the Tonghak, the Sonno-joi and the Taiping movement caused the Tonghak peasant revolution, the Meiji revolution and the Taiping revolution or not is a complex issue. However, the religious factor must be seen, in this way, as one of the most important elements in the process of revolution in Korea, Japan and China in the nineteenth century, even though it cannot be said to have been an absolutely necessary condition. In particular, as we have seen, the Tonghak provided the ideology and organisation for the peasant revolution. At least in the nineteenth century when there was no ideology to justify protest action, religious ideology such as the Tonghak must be seen as an important factor enabling revolution. The revolutions of Japan and China were also supported by their own religious ideologies.

Figure 10.1 The Relationships between Religious Movement and Revolution

new religious movement	→	ideology justified religiously	→	revolution
Tonghak	→	anti-feudalism resist foreign power	→	Peasant revolution
Sonno joi	→	anti-bakufu restore the emperor	→	Meiji revolution
Taiping	→	anti-Ch'ing create Heavenly Kingdom	→	Taiping revolution

However, in the process of modernisation, the appearance of religious movements in Korea, Japan, and China already involved political protest movement. So, the relationship between religious movement and revolution should not be made as a causal interpretation. The point I want to argue here therefore is that the religious factor should be considered as the key to revolutions in the modernisation of Korea, Japan and China. Religious movement was an early stage of revolution. In other words, religious movement could be an useful means for social change in Korea, Japan, and China. Therefore, Marx's insistence that revolutions are inhibited by religion and Weber's emphasis on the religious factor in social change do not apply to the three countries. Rather than two arguments, Worsley's account might be appropriate to the explanation of the relationship between religious movement and revolution in the non-Western societies, like Korea, Japan and China.

2

In Korea, Japan and China the principal historical roles that religious movements as we see them have played are to supply an ideological basis for a struggle to meet both the threats to social order and the ultimate frustrations caused by social crises of internal and external origin such as those of 19th-century Asia. These primary functions require an orientation to a new social order characterised by attributes of the absolute. The absolute was Heaven (God) in the Tonghak revolution, the emperor in the Meiji revolution and the Heavenly Father in the Taiping revolution.

The absolute supplies a source of ultimate power and meaning which can support and fulfil human motivation in the face of ultimate frustrations. It also supplies a new world to realise the dream. This may be the reason why millennial thought occurred in all three events. Millennial expectations easily built up in the conditions of the nineteenth century in which specific sources of social disorder and the Western intrusion had developed into a revolutionary situation. Such a description readily fits the Tonghak, Meiji, and Taiping revolutionary or pre-revolutionary position. All three countries tried to resolve the crises by religious actions, the manipulation of relationships between human and supernatural beings. The Tonghak, Meiji, and Taiping began as religiously-preoccupied movements and later became more and more political and military. Further, the religious ideas at issue were brought into action consciously to serve the

reform. However there the differences between the three countries' religious movements and revolutions.

With respect to the characteristics of the three religious movements, the Japanese religious ideology was all about reconstructing the old system, while the Chinese case aimed at destroying the existing social order and constructed a complete new society, which was called Heavenly Kingdom. Japan's new society advocated by the Sonno-joi movement was one centred on the emperor. Its aim was the revival of ancient Japanese institutions by restoring the emperor and its ideal society was to be realised under the rule of the emperor. However, Taiping's Heavenly Kingdom declared by the founder, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, was a new society centred on a personal religious charisma. Its reality was influenced by the Western culture and was quite contrary to all tradition of Chinese society. In this sense, as Wallace had already insisted, the Taiping movement was *an importation movement* which professed to import a foreign cultural system and to abandon the ancestral ways. On the contrary, the Japanese religious movement could be said to be *a revival movement* which professed to revive a traditional culture now fallen into desuetude. Accordingly, these characteristics of the religious movements directed Japan towards a retrospective and conservative character and China towards a radical and liberal character in the modernisation.

Meanwhile, like the Chinese case, Korea's religious movement, Tonghak, also denied the existing social system and proposed a new social order. In terms of the polar line

between the pursuit of the old system and the creation of a new social order, Korea's religious movement was at the same end as China's, directed towards creating a new society and denying the existing social order. However, Tonghak rejected both a traditional orientation and a foreign orientation in its new social order. According to Wallace, movements which profess neither revival nor importation, but conceive that the desired cultural end-state will be realised in a future are utopian movement. So, Tonghak could be a utopian movement at first. Tonghak's new society, Later Creation, was a natural becoming that could not be achieved by human will. In a word, there was no practical method for realising a new society in Korea, even though Korea's Tonghak visualised clearly enough its alternative society. At the same time, we should not conclude that Tonghak be a utopian movement. As Tonghak means 'learning of the eastern country (Chosŏn)', its new social order might be regarded as within the existing (traditional) social order. Therefore, Korea's religious movement began with such an intention as China; creating a new society, and could have concluded as a practice as Japan; sustaining the traditional society.

As the characteristics and aims of the three religious movements differed, Korea and its neighbours are dissimilar also in the implications of their revolutions for modernisation. While Japan's revolution, the Meiji Restoration, was a concrete action for social order centred on the emperor, China's Taiping revolution aimed at overthrowing Ch'ing China and creating its own new regime based on a

radical reform. Japan's revolution resulted in the victory of the imperial forces, which united the nation under the emperor and made a kind of revival of the old order possible. The success of the revolution reflected the conservative character of the religious movement. This conservative character later influenced the modernisation of Japan. On the contrary, the Taiping revolution in China aimed to overthrow the Ch'ing government. And it showed radical and liberal reforms in respect of Taiping organisation, land allocation and so on during eleven years' fighting. The Taiping revolution reflected the radical and liberal ideology the Taiping movement had shown. This radical character might be seen as foreshadowing the reforms carried out by the communists.

The Tonghak revolution in Korea was influenced by the Tonghak religious ideology, but Korea's revolution could not avoid the strong influence of Confucian ideology. So even though the advocated reform was in part radical, the revolution was carried out within the framework of conservative doctrines such as Poguk Anmin (to support the king and sustain the nation), which laid the emphasis on the king and the state. As E. P. Thompson argued that the ideology of Methodism in England functioned conservatively, the Tonghak ideology which emphasised the king and the state under Confucian ideology could make the revolution conservative rather than radical. This was due to Tonghak's defence of social tradition based on Confucian ideology. Therefore, the Tonghak revolution could not demand to reject the existing social order completely and remained strongly connected with the existing society, the nation and the king. Korea's

revolution thus displayed a dual orientation, with both conservative and radical features. This involves similarities with Japan's mode of modernisation as well as with China's.

Now we may answer the first of the two questions we posed at the outset: 'how differently has Korea developed from Japan and China?' B. Moore argued that Japan and China came to go through fascist and communist routes by the differences in the way to cope with the demand for reform of the old social structure in the nineteenth century. Moore's argument was that Japan took a conservative route and China followed a radical route. This thesis has also shown that Japan and China had a conservative and radical character in religious movements and revolutions respectively. Historically, the former resulted in a dictatorship of the right and shaped the conditions for a fascist regime, and the latter resulted in a dictatorship of the left, preparing the way for a communist regime. Applying Moore's theoretical analysis to the case of Korea, what route would Korea be said to have taken between Japan and China?. As we have seen, the Tonghak peasant revolution had some conservative elements as well as the radical ones that as a revolution it would have to have. Tonghak's original motivation was to create a new world but the new world could not go beyond the existing social order. Its struggle was also to maintain the whole order. The radical and conservative elements coexisted in the religious movement and revolution. Because of this, the route of Korea's modernisation could be said to have been in an intermediate position between the

right and the left. In other words, Korea was located in the dual characters in the process of modernisation.

As Huntington insists that both the causes and the consequences of revolution are modernisation, all three historic events contributed to modernisation. Referring to the contribution of the events to modernisation - our second question -, Japan's Meiji revolution produced a strong conservative government, which led to growth-from-above. In the case of China, Taiping's radical and liberal character could be said to foreshadow the communist regime, even though the Taiping revolution was suppressed. Japan's dilemma, which was to modernise within the old system, could be overcome by an imperial policy based on the sonno-kokutai ideology. This imperialism made it possible to embark on rapid economic development. As a result of the Meiji revolution, Japan formed a conservative polity and pioneered rapid economic growth in Asia. As for China, it may be too early to undertake a discussion on the modernisation of China, because China still remains under a communist regime but recently began an open-door policy whose implications remain uncertain. All we can confirm is that China surely belongs to the dictatorship of the left which reflects the radical characters of the Taiping movement and revolution.

Compared with those of Japan and China, the analysis of the Tonghak revolution suggests that Korea's polity was oriented towards an intermediate position. Owing to the establishment of the Japanese colony soon after Tonghak revolution, there was no opportunity for autonomous political and social changes. But Tonghak contributed to the formation

of a nationalistic ideology during the colonial period. Accordingly, while Japan's Meiji and China's Taiping could transform their own societies, Korea's Tonghak could not. Alternatively, Tonghak became a nationalistic movement for coping with the colonial situation in Korean society unable to have political institutions. Tonghak which as a sectarian movement began with millennial promises to mitigate earthly deprivation came to transform itself into a national religion showing conservative characters.

The contribution of Tonghak to the modernisation of Korea had to be considered after Japan's withdrawal from Korea. To be sure, Korean politics in the North as well as the South retained a conservative and nationalistic character after Japan's withdrawal. In addition, the rapid economic development in South Korea that started in the 1960s was indebted to a dictatorship of the right, to a conservative and authoritarian government. The modern identity of Korea, therefore, seems to be closer to the conservative than to the radical pole. The conservative character of the post-1960 regime may be seen as linked to the legacies of the Tonghak revolution.

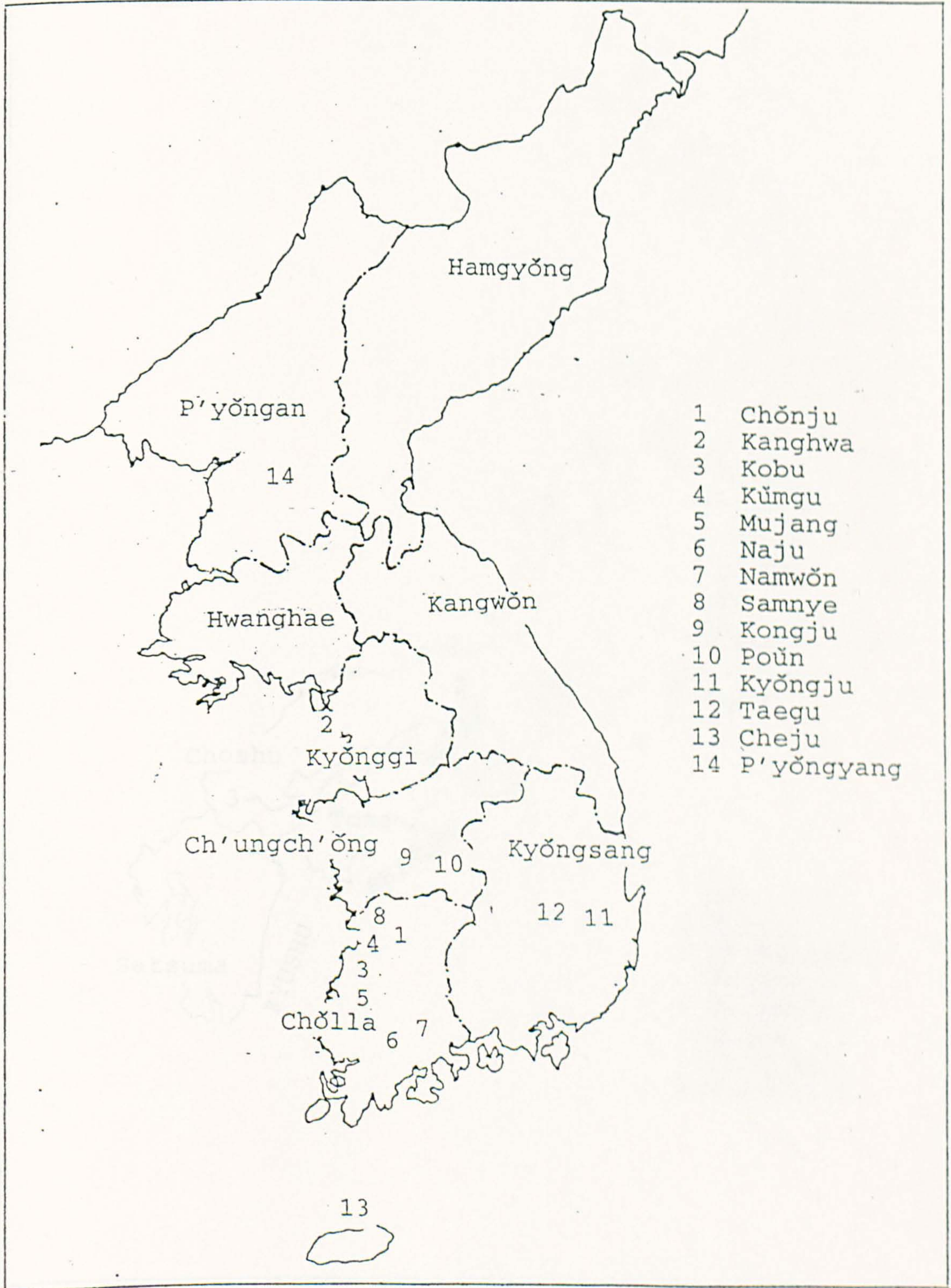
Given its scope and analytic framework, this thesis has some obvious limitations. First of all, because of the focus on Tonghak in comparison with Meiji and Taiping, we are not able to consider other religious movements and revolutions. Next, since there is no common standard by which to measure the concepts like modernisation, Korea could not be compared with Japan and China exactly. In particular, it has not been

possible to explore the modernisation of China and North Korea under communist regimes. This is a subject that will need to be touched in the future. Finally, since there is a long interval between the analysed events in the 19th century and the emergence of a distinctive national pattern of modernisation in case of Korea, establishing the suggested linkages has not been easy. These issues suggest important topics for further research into religious movements and revolütions in the modernisation of Korea.

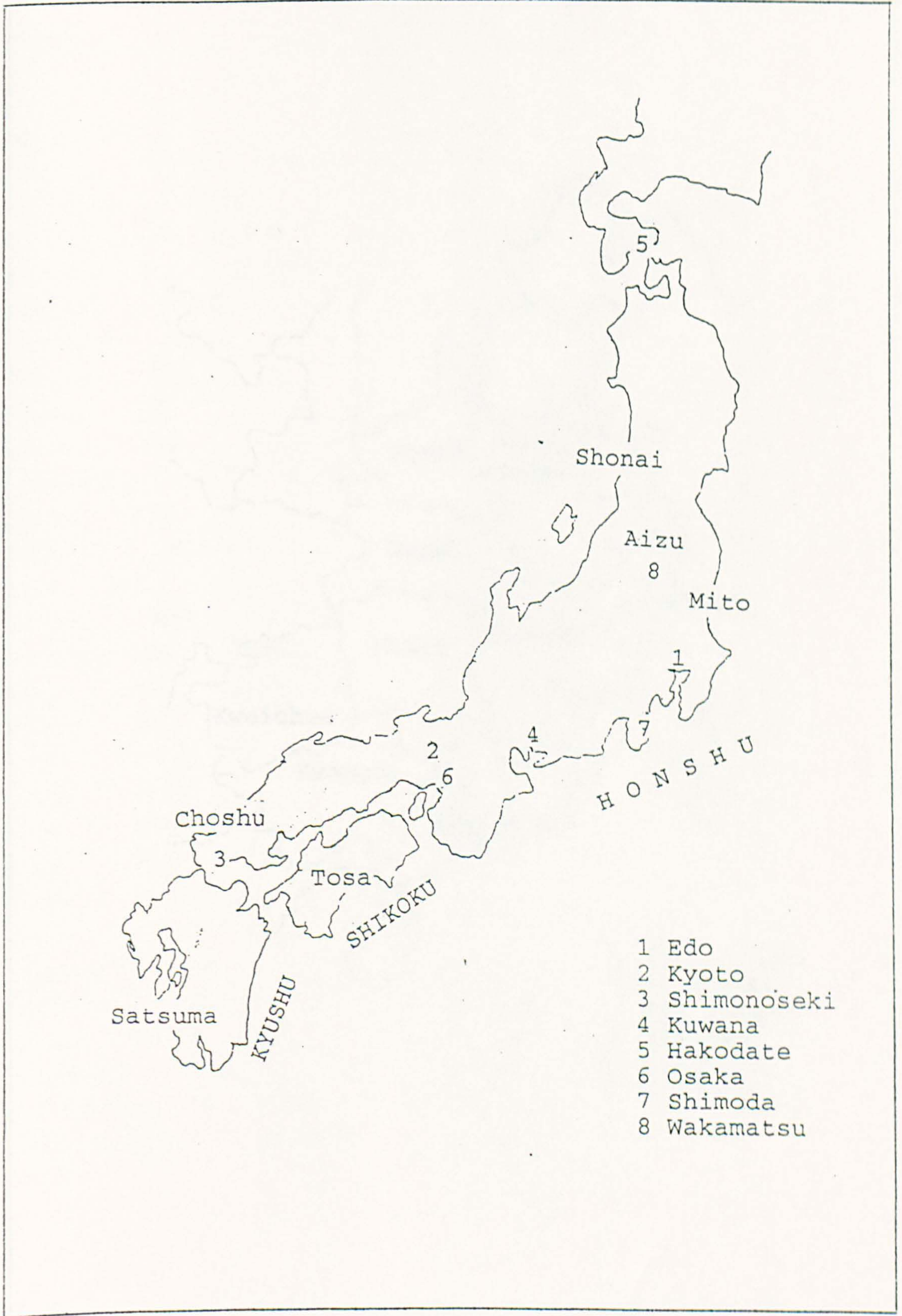
Appendix One

Maps of Korea, Japan and China

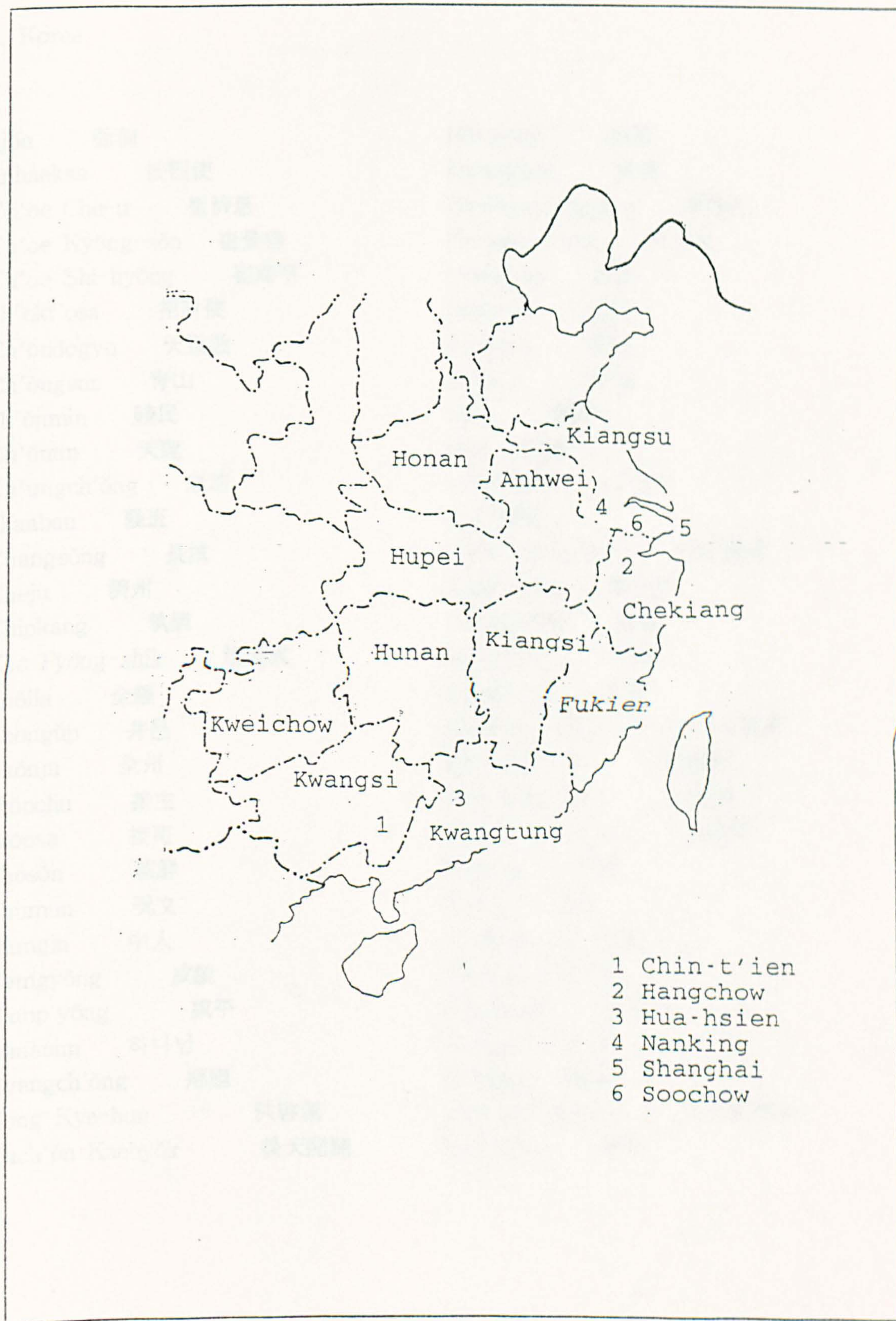
1. Major Towns and Provinces in Korea's Tonghak Revolution



2. Major Towns and Provinces in Japan's Meiji Revolution



3. Major Towns and Provinces in China's Taiping Revolution



Appendix Two

Glossary of Romanised Names, Places, Words and Phrases

1. Korea

ajŏn 衙前
anhaeksa 按覈使
Ch'oe Che-u 崔濟愚
Ch'oe Kyŏng-sŏn 崔景善
Ch'oe Shi-hyŏng 崔時亨
ch'okt'osa 招討使
Ch'ŏndogyo 天道敎
Ch'ŏngsan 靑山
ch'ŏnmin 賤民
Ch'ŏnun 天運
Ch'ungch'ŏng 忠淸
chanban 殘班
Changsŏng 長城
Cheju 濟州
Chipkang 執綱
Cho Pyŏng-shik 趙秉式
Chŏlla 全羅
Chongŭp 井邑
Chŏnju 全州
chŏpchu 接主
chópsa 接司
Chosŏn 朝鮮
Chumun 呪文
chungin 中人
Hamgyŏng 咸鏡
Hamp'yŏng 咸平
Hananim 하나님
Hyangch'ŏng 鄕廳
Hong Kye-hun 洪啓薰
Huch'ŏn Kaebyŏk 後天開闢
Hŭngdŏk 興德
Hwanghae 黃海
Hwangnyonggang 黃龍江
Hwangt'ohyŏn 黃土峴
hyangban 鄕班
Hyangim 鄕任
hyangni 鄕吏
Hyop'o 孝浦
Inje 麟蹄
Injo 仁祖
Innaech'ŏn 人乃天
isŏ 吏胥
Kabo Kyŏngjang 甲午更張
Kaehwap'a 開化派
Kanggyŏng 江鏡
Kanghwa 江華
Kangwŏn 江原
Kapshin Chŏngbyŏn 甲申政變
Kim Hak-chin 金鶴鎭
Kim Mun-hyŏn 金文鉉
Kim Tŏk-myŏng 金德明
kisaeng 妓生
Kobu 古阜
Koch'ang 高敞
Kbjong 高宗
Kŏmundo 巨文島
Kongju 公州
Kŭmgu 金溝
Kun'guk Kimuch'ŏ 軍國機務處
kun'gyo 軍校

Kwangje Ch'angsaeng 廣濟蒼生
Kyŏngbokkung 景福宮
Kyŏnggi 京畿
Kyŏngju 慶州
Kyŏngsang 慶尙
Kyunjŏnsa 均田使
Malmok Changt'ŏ 말목장터
Mansŏkpo 萬石洑
Mokch'ŏn 木川
Muan 務安
mudang 巫당
Mujang 茂長
Muwi Ihwa 無爲而化
Naju 羅州
Naesudomun 內修道文
Namwŏn 南原
Nonsan 論山
Ŏm Se-yŏng 嚴世永
P'o 包
P'odŏngmun 布德文
P'yŏngan 平安
P'yŏngyang 平壤
paekchŏng 白丁
Pak Won-myŏng 朴源明
pobusang 褓負商
Poguk Anmin 輔國安民
Poŭn 報恩
pu mok kun hyŏn 府 牧 郡 縣
Puan 扶安
Sain Yŏch'ŏn 事人如天
Samil Undong 三一運動
Samnye 參禮
sangmin 常民
Shi Ch'ŏnju 侍天主
Sŏ In-ju 徐仁周
Son Ch'ŏn-min 孫天民
Son Pyŏng-hŭi 孫秉熙
Sŏ Pyŏng-hak 徐丙鶴
sŏri 胥吏
Sunch'ang 淳昌
Taedonggang 大同江
Taedoso 大都所
Taegu 大邱
Taewŏn'gun 大院君
Tanyang 丹陽
Tonggyŏng Taejŏn 東經大全
Tonghak 東學
Tonghangnan Kirok 東學亂 記錄
Tongjang 洞長
Toso 都所
Ugŭmch'i 牛金峙
Ŭijŏngbu 議政府
Ungch'i 熊峙
ŭp 邑
Wijŏng Ch'ŏksa 衛正斥邪
Wŏnp'yŏng 院平
yangban 兩班
Yi Kyong-shik 李耕植
Yi Kyu-t'ae 李圭泰
Yi Wŏn-hoe 李元會
Yi Yong-t'ae 李容泰
yoho pumin 堯戶富民
Yongdam Yusa 龍潭遺詞
Yŏnggwang 靈光
yukim 六任
Yiin 利仁

2. Japan

Aizu 會津
bakufu 幕府
baku-han 幕藩
bushido 武士道
Choshu 長州
daimyo 大名
Edo 江戸
fudai 譜代
Fujita Toko 藤田東湖
Fujita Yukoku 藤田幽谷
fukoku-kyohei 富國强兵
Fushimi 伏見
Hakodate 函館
han 藩
Honshu 本州
Ii Naosuke 井伊直弼
Iwakura Tomomi 岩倉見視
Kanagawa (Treaty) 神奈川
Kido Koin 木戸孝充
kobugattai 公武合体
Kokugaku 國學
kokutai 國体
Kuwana 桑名
Meiji 明治
Mito 水戸
Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長
Okubo Toshimich 大久保利通
Saigo Takamori 西鄉隆盛
Sakamoto Ryoma 坂本龍馬
Sakuma Shozan 佐久間象山
Satsuma 薩摩
Sekigahara 関ケ原
Shimabara 島原
Shimoda 下田
Shimonoseki 下関
shimpan 親藩
Shinron 新論
shinto 神道
Shonai 庄内
sonno joi 尊王攘夷
tairo 大老
Takashima Shuha 高島秋帆
Toba 鳥羽
tobaku-ha 討幕派
Tokugawa Ieyas 德川家康
Tokugawa Keiki 德川慶喜
Tokugawa Nariaki 德川齊昭
Tosa 土佐
tozama 外様
Ueno 上野
Wakamatsu 若松
Yoshida Shoin 吉田松陰

3. China

Anhwei	安徽
Anking	安慶
Ch'en Yu-ch'eng	陳玉成
Ch'ing	清
Chekiang	浙江
chiao (chiao-tang)	敎 敎黨
Chin-t'ien	金田
Chu Yuan-chang	朱元章
Feng Yun-shan	馮雲山
Fukien	福建
Hangchow	杭州
Honan	河南
Hsiao Ch'ao-kuei	蕭朝貴
Hua-hsien	華縣
hui (hui-tang)	會 會黨
Hunan	湖南
Hung Hsiu-ch'uan	洪秀全
Hung Jen-kan	洪仁玕
Kiangsi	江西
Kiangsu	江蘇
Kwangsi	廣西
Kwangtung	廣東
Kweichow	貴州
Li Hsiu-ch'eng	李秀成
Ming	明
Nanking	南京
Nien	捻
Pai shang-ti hui	拜上帝會
Shanghai	上海
sheng-yung	生員
Shih Ta-k'ai	石達開
Soochow	蘇州
T'ai-p'ing (Taiping)	太平
T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo	太平天國
T'ien-ch'ao t'ien mou chih-tu	天朝田畝制度
T'ien-ching	天京
T'ien ti-hui	天地會
Tseng Kuo-fan	曾國藩
Tzu-cheng hsin-p'ien	資政新篇
Tzu-ching-shan	紫荊山
Wei Ch'ang-hui	韋昌輝
Yang Hsiu-ch'ing	楊秀清
Yangtz	楊子

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