Russo-Japanese rivalry in Korea, 1860–1916

William Nicholas Sagin

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RUSSO-JAPANESE RIVALRY IN KOREA, 1860-1916

by

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CHAPTER I
RUSSO-JAPANESE RIVALRY IN KOREA TO 1860

Korea, whose southern port of Pusan is less than one hundred and fifty miles from the Japanese city of Shimonosaki across the narrow Korean Strait, and whose northern border touches Russian territory a hundred miles from Vladivostok, has been threatened for centuries with absorption by one of her powerful neighbors. Japanese geopoliticians long have treated Korea as a "dagger poised at the heart of Japan," and Japanese industrialists have justified using the peninsula as a base of expansion to rich mineral deposits on the mainland. On the other hand, a careful student of Russia's strategic position in the Pacific has pointed out that "Russia cannot allow another power to dominate China, Japan or Korea without endangering its access to the Pacific and its security."

Korea, extending southward from Manchuria into the East China Sea, is a mountainous peninsula washed on the east by the Sea of Japan and on the west by the Yellow Sea. With an area of more than 85,000 square miles, the peninsula has a coast line of 6,000 miles. The east coast, except for Censan and Seishan, has relatively few good harbors, but the western and southern coasts, deeply

indented and fringed with islands and islets, contain many such good harbors as Chinnampo, Jinsen, Mokpo, Reisui and Fusan.

Physiographically, Korea is divided into two parts, the north and the south. In the northern portion, the "Ever White" mountains run along the Manchurian border from the north to the southwest; one of its ranges runs southward to the east coast to form the backbone and watershed of the peninsula. The Yalu and Tumen rivers hold great potentialities for the development of hydro-electricity, while the abundant timber and mineral resources offer promise of industrial development. The southern portion is characterized by fertile valleys on one hand and by steep and rock-bound slopes on the other. However, it is the south which is Korea's granary, and the majority of her population is concentrated there.²

II

The Japanese first obtained a foothold in Korea shortly before the opening of the Christian era, and held

parts of the peninsula under vassalage for seven centuries.\(^3\) By 880, however, Korea had been united and brought under the suzerainty of the T'Ang Emperor of China,\(^4\) and there it remained until 1895. Raids of Japanese pirates upon the Korean coast were perennial for the next nine centuries,\(^5\) but the Japanese government took no overt action.

At the close of the sixteenth century the Japanese, under Hideyoshi, their general and prime minister or shogun, were dreaming of conquering China. A master plan was drawn up in 1586 to secure control of Korea as a stepping stone into China and the rest of Asia. To test the resistance of his opponents Hideyoshi sent envoys to the various Asiatic powers demanding that they pay homage to Japan. The Japanese envoy to Korea failed to secure this capitulation, but in his report to Hideyoshi he stated that the Koreans were unprepared to repel an attack. A huge Japanese army landed at Pusan and swept over the peninsula, but was forced to withdraw when Korean naval forces cut off the supply link with Japan. Another attempt in 1596 to conquer Korea was


\(^{4}\) Kuno, I, 72.

was no more successful, and the Koreans were able to close
their doors to all nations except China for three hundred
years. 6

Ieyasu Tokugawa succeeded Hideyoshi as shogun in
1603, and the shogunate remained in the Tokugawa family
until 1868. Ieyasu set out to gain control of the trade
in the Orient for Japan. He realized that to accomplish
this he must gain the confidence of the Chinese who regarded
Japan as an untrustworthy nation. His first project was to
make peace with Korea, and peace negotiations were begun in
1599. Japanese envoys were sent to Korea on three different
occasions and each time they were arrested by the Koreans
and sent to the Ming court in Peking. 7 In 1601 a fourth
Japanese representative was sent to Korea, this time with
a group of Korean prisoners of war being returned as a
gesture of good will. The envoy was received by the Korean
court and was informed that all of Korea's national affairs
were under the direct control of the Emperor of China. The
Japanese shogunate, receiving the Korean reply, immediately
decided that the only way to win the good will of Korea and
China was to release all the Korean prisoners of war and to

6 Hulbert, 104-8; "Korea's Turtle Ship," The Voice of
Korea, II, No. 38 (July 10, 1945), 1-2; M. Fredrick Nelson,
Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia (Baton Rouge, 1948),
76; Kuno, II, 16-17; Andrew J. Grajdanzev, Modern Korea
(New York, 1944), 25.

7 Kuno, II, 17-20.
return them to their homeland. This gesture convinced the Korean king of Japan's sincerity and the king had his minister inform the Japanese that negotiations would continue, provided Japan would make amends for the desecration of the graves of the Korean kings by returning the offenders to Korea for punishment. Furthermore, Ieyasu must send a state document to Korea, with his seal, begging for peace.  

Ieyasu and his advisers realized that if Japan met the Korean demands, Japanese dignity and national standing would suffer, but deemed this not too great a sacrifice if trading privileges in China might be obtained through the instrumentality of Korea. In 1609 Korea and Japan signed a treaty by which Japan gained the privilege of engaging in trade with Korea once a year at Fusan, the Korean harbor nearest Japan.  

Formal Korean-Japanese relations continued until 1868, when the shogunate was abolished, a political development which the Koreans did not approve. However, the envoys who travelled yearly between Korea and Japan between 1609 and 1868 were merely good-will emissaries exchanging gifts.  

Under the Tokugawa shogunate Japan herself entered a period of seclusion. However, Russian advances across

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8 Ibid., II, 273-75.
9 Ibid., II, 278.
10 Ibid., II, 327-29.
Siberia, occupying Kamchatka and the Kuriles, began to alarm the Japanese in the early nineteenth century. The Japanese nationalists advocated the conquest of Hokkaido, Manchuria, Korea, the Siberian mainland, and eventually all of China. In 1856 Shoin Yoshida, a man of great patriotism and an outstanding imperialist, established a school known as the Matsushita Sonjuku, which was profoundly to influence future Japanese thought. His lectures were attended by almost all of the creators of modern Japan, such as Prince Itō, who drafted the constitution, Prince Yamagata, who built up the modern Japanese army, Shinagawa, the founder of modern industry in Japan, and Yamada, the founder of the judicial system. The plan of conquest which Shoin Yoshida advocated in his lectures proposed that: "(1) Japan should establish her supremacy over the islands of Yezo and Sakhalin (2) establish her power over Kamchatka and the domination of the Sea of Okhotsk (3) that the kingdoms of Liw Chiu and Korea respect their ancient relations with Japan and become tributary states (4) conquest of Manchuria which would serve as the base for the conquest of the rest of Asia and the Philippines." Shoin's contemporary, Sanai Hashimoto (1834-1859), says Kuno, "suggested that since Russia and England were the two rival dominant powers in the Orient, Japan

11 Ibid., II, 251.
12 Harcourt-Smith, 27.
should form an alliance with Russia, in part due to the geographical proximity of Russia. However, in 1902 an Anglo-Japanese alliance was concluded which checked Russian expansionist plans.  

III

The search for rich fur-bearing animals was the moving force behind Russian expansion into Asia and across Siberia to the Pacific. Taking every advantage of the river systems and the portages connecting them, and establishing control over the conquered territory by building castles or forts at strategic places, the Russians exacted tribute in ermine and sable and fox from the natives brought under submission. Yermak, a Volga pirate, entered Siberia in 1579, and by 1639 Russia reached the Pacific on the Sea of Okhotsk. Early in the eighteenth century the Russians moved northeast into Kamchatka, and by 1711 occupied the Kuriles. The Japanese were understandably alarmed at the irresistible nature of the Russian advance.

Between 1792 and 1811 Russia made a number of unsuccessful attempts to negotiate or to force a trade treaty with

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13 Kuno, II, 231.

14 See R. J. Kernes, The Urge to the Sea (Berkeley, 1942), especially 66-70; George V. Lantzeff, Siberia in the Seventeenth Century (Berkeley, 1942), especially 34, 57; Raymond H. Fisher, The Russian Fur Trade, 1550-1700 (Berkeley, 1945), especially 28, 34-35; Paul Hibbert Clyde, International Rivalries in Manchuria, 1889-1922 (Columbus, 1928), 23.

15 Kuno, II, 212, 228; Clyde, 7-8.
the Japanese. For the two generations following, no further advances were made. Then in 1852 a mission was sent to Japan under Admiral Putiatin, who by his tact and patience won over the Japanese to signing the treaty of Shimoda in 1855. The treaty gave to Russia most of the Kuriles, and provided for the joint occupation of Sakhalin by the two powers. Admiral Perry had landed in Japan a year earlier.

The year 1848 can be considered a landmark in Russia's eastward expansion, as in that year Nicholas Muraviev was appointed governor of eastern Siberia. It was his job to consolidate Russia's position and to obtain a naval base in the Pacific. Before his retirement in 1860 he had laid a solid foundation for an empire in the Far East, which was to be challenged by the Japanese in 1904.

In 1850 Muraviev conceived a plan which Russia should follow in the Far East if she desired to retain her possessions in that territory. *(1) Russia's main objective was to secure access to the Pacific and to defend it; (2) Russia should consolidate her possessions on the Asiatic mainland by relinquishing Alaska to the United States to prevent its falling into the hands of the British; (3) no power should be allowed to take Korea, Manchuria or Mongolia to use as a stepping stone into China.*

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16 Ibid., II, 228-48, 248-49; Clyde, 13.

17 Francis Henry Skrine, The Expansion of Russia, 1315-1820 (Cambridge, 1904), 132; Clyde, II.

plan of defense, if it could be successfully carried out, would check the aggressive designs of other nations. It will be seen that Yoshida's plan for Japanese expansion on the Asiatic continent, announced six years later, was a direct challenge to Russian aims as set forth by Count Muraviev.
CHAPTER II
RUSSO-JAPANESE RELATIONS, 1880-1900

I.

Russian activity in Korea began in 1881 when Russian marines landed and took possession of the Japanese islands of Tsu-Shima. Since these islands were located in the Korean straits, south of the Korean port of Pusan, it was widely believed at the time that Russia was intent on occupying all of Korea. It was only upon the insistence of the British and the Japanese that Russia finally agreed to withdraw.1 In 1886, the Russians sent a warship to the Korean port of Gensan and demanded freedom of trade and residence, but these demands were refused by the Koreans on the grounds that all affairs were under the direct control of the Chinese government. The Korean reply to the Russian government was identical to the statements that the Koreans had made to the Japanese when they had attempted to establish trade relations with Korea. The Japanese reaction to the Russian attempt to threaten Korea by a display of arms to obtain trade relations and residence was one of alarm; however, beset with internal problems, Japan made no protest.2

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1 Chung-Fu Chang, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance (Baltimore, 1921), 25.
2 Mingchien Joshua Fau, The Foreign Relations of China (New York, 1921), 181-82.
The downfall of the Tokugawa shogunate which had ruled Japan for over two hundred and sixty-four years led to the restoration of the power of the emperor in 1868. Korea did not recognize the change, because she considered herself a vassal state of China. The Japanese were highly insulted by the Korean refusal to recognize the imperial government of Japan, and the war faction of the government demanded an invasion of Korea. However, fear of the western powers enabled the more conservative members of the Japanese cabinet to prevail over the war party, and the latter resigned in protest. The Japanese cabinet then demanded that China define her relations with Korea: either Korea was a subordinate of China or a sovereign nation. Although China declared that Korea was a dependent state, the Japanese government, after an exchange of communications with China, announced that the Chinese had failed in all ways to substantiate their claims to Korea.

As a result, the European powers evinced considerable interest in the Hermit Kingdom, sensing there the possibilities of new markets. A French military and naval force docked at a Korean port, only to be driven off by the Koreans. In 1866 an American trading ship, the

3 Kuno, II, 349.
5 Rubbert, *The Passing of Korea*, 117.
General Sherman, later entered the Tatong river without Korean permission and was destroyed and its crew killed. At that time Secretary of State Seward proposed that the United States and France take joint action in obtaining satisfaction, but it was not until 1871 that the United States took definite action.6 In that year, the American ambassador to China, F. F. Low, escorted by five American warships, entered Korean waters. He had been instructed to secure from Korea both an apology and a treaty.7 But the American landing party was repulsed by hostile Korean forces and driven back to its ships. Though firing on and destroying five Korean forts, the Americans sailed back to the United States without obtaining either the treaty or an apology.8

The Japanese watched these events critically. Three commissioners dispatched to investigate conditions in Korea reported that Russia and China were conspiring to gain political control of the Korean government. They recommended that Japan should bring Korea under her benevolent protection.9 As a result of her fear of a Russian-dominated Korea, the

7 Low to Fish, July 16, 1870, ibid., 1870-71, 362-63.
9 Harcourt-Smith, 22.
Japanese in 1875 sent a gunboat to survey the river Han. A Korean fort fired upon the gunboat, an act which was made to order for Japanese expansionist plans. In 1876 the Japanese sent their gunboats and transports to Korea and forced the Koreans to admit that they were not a vassal state of China, as the Koreans claimed to be, but an independent nation having equal national rights and standing with those of Japan. A treaty of amity and commerce was then concluded between Japan and Korea. This treaty of Kianghwa, signed on February 26, 1876, recognized Korea as an independent state enjoying the same sovereign rights as Japan and intercourse between the two countries to be on terms of equality.  

The treaty of Kianghwa provided a precedent for the western powers to open negotiations with Korea. The United States concluded a treaty with Korea on May 22, 1882, the first such agreement to be made with a western power. This Shufeldt treaty provided American recognition of Korean independence. Other powers soon followed the example of

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11 Foote to the King of Korea, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1883, 243-44; William Franklin Sands, Undiplomatic Memories (New York, 1930), 99; Edward H. Zabriskie, American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East, 1895-1914 (Philadelphia, 1948), 24. Zabriskie feels that this was the most important political move made by the United States in Asia until the occupation of the Philippines. It set in motion the chain of events which led to the Sino-Japanese conflict, the Russo-Japanese war, and finally the annexation of Korea by Japan.
the United States and Japan. In 1883 England and Germany concluded treaties of commerce with Korea, as did Italy and Russia in 1884 and France in 1886. In the meantime Russia had concluded a secret treaty in 1885 which stated that in return for her protection of Korean integrity, Russia would receive the use of Port Lazareff and the privilege of providing military instructors for the Korean army.\footnote{12}

Internally Korea was caught in a web; the time had come when the youthful heir to the throne should assume his duties. However, his father, the regent, was not ready to turn over the reins of government to his son, who was under the influence of his mother, the queen. The Japanese used this as a wedge and enlisted the aid of a group of Koreans to try to overthrow the government. But the queen, who was suspicious of the Japanese, appealed to China for help. Fortunately at this time there was a Chinese envoy with an escort of several thousand troops in Korea, and he responded to the queen's plea. In the meantime, the struggle for supremacy in Korea continued between Japan and China, first one winning control and then the other.\footnote{13}

The fateful result of these disputes was the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-1895.

\footnote{12}{Foulk to Bayard, Oct. 21, 1885, \textit{Foreign Relations of the United States}, 1885, 361; Zabriskie, 24.}

\footnote{13}{Sands, 62-63; Zabriskie, 25.}
Japanese aggression leading to the Sino-Japanese war can be explained in part by her desire to maintain her political security and her desire to obtain colonies and raw materials to satisfy the needs of a fast-growing population. The Japanese army and navy struck swiftly, and it soon was apparent to the western powers that the decadent Manchus were no match for the Japanese.

Negotiations for peace, which had been put off by the Chinese in the hope that the western powers would intervene, were finally opened at Shimonoseki on March 21, 1895. The Japanese demands consisted of: Chinese recognition of Korean independence, and the cession of Formosa, the Pescadores and the Liaotung Peninsula with Port Arthur to Japan; a treaty of commerce and the payment by China of an indemnity of three hundred million tael were also provided in the treaty. Russia opposed the demands because she coveted Port Arthur for her own use, and all the western powers, with the exception of Great Britain, opposed the acquisition of new territory by Japan. Russia, France and Germany presented notes to the Japanese government, advising it to renounce the occupation of the Liaotung Peninsula and Port Arthur. The Japanese, realizing that resistance was useless, yielded to these demands and requested additional financial indemnities. These were granted, and the treaty

14 G. C. Allen, Japan the Hungry Guest (London, 1923), 117.
finally was ratified at Chefoo on May 9, 1895. 15

Immediately following the end of the war the western powers began to pressure for concessions from China to further their own national ends. In 1896 the Russians laid plans which, if realized, would have led to Russia's domination of China and eventually all of Asia. 16 China borrowed from Russia the money with which to pay the Japanese indemnity, but only under difficult terms: (1) in case of default, the Peking government was to grant to Russia additional security, to be specified later; (2) China was not to grant any foreign power control over her revenues; (3) in case she failed to live up to these terms such power was automatically to be extended to Russia. 17 These stipulations eventually led to Russia's occupation of Manchuria.

Of the Sino-Japanese war and the peace treaty that followed it Professor Kerner has stated: "this was the starting point of a development in which not only England as Japan's public ally, but the United States, almost as

15 Zabriskie, 27-29; Clyde, 24-25, 30-31; Bau, 132. See also Satow to Salisbury, March 26, 1896, Gooch and Temperley, I, 25-27.

16 Kerner, "America Between Europe and Asia," California Monthly (Berkeley), November, 1941, I.

Japan's secret ally, gave that power every encouragement against Russia which was upsetting the balance of power in Asia.13

II

The end of the Sino-Japanese war was the signal for Japan and Russia to renew their rivalry for control of Korea. The Japanese seized the initiative by interfering successfully in Korean domestic politics.

In October, 1895, the Korean queen and her anti-Japanese advisers planned a coup d'état for the purpose of driving out Japanese militarists and Korean soldiers trained by Japanese officers. At the same time, and aware of the queen's intentions, the Japanese sent Miura Goto, a protege of the military clique, to Korea to foster a pro-Japanese movement as a means of obtaining control of the Korean government by seizing the queen. Goto procured the support of the king's father and on October 8, 1895, the latter and several Japanese dressed as civilians forcibly entered the royal palace and murdered the queen and two ladies-in-waiting.19 The ex-regent, now a Japanese puppet, provided for changes in the administration acceptable to Japan and placed the royal palace in control of Japanese


19 Dun to Olney, Oct. 12, 1895, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1895, Part 2, 971; Sande, 64-65; Nelson, 223.
troops. As soon as news of the murder became known the
Japanese minister stated that the atrocities were committed
by Koreans disguised as Japanese. But immediately following
the murder the Russian charge d'affaires and the American
minister had seen thirty armed Japanese leaving the royal
palace. And an American military officer had seen Japanese
troops enter the royal palace in advance of the insurgents.
Dun, the American minister, stated that "sufficient evidence
implicating Japanese minister [is] overwhelming." An out-
rag ed public opinion and the protests of the diplomatic
representatives of the western powers in Korea soon pre-
va ile d upon Japan to recall from Korea the entire staff of
her legation. Miura Goto and his associates were brought
to trial in a special court convened in Hiroshima. It was
established that Goto had made the plans and had given the
instructions for the queen's murder. But, since the court
ruled that there was not sufficient evidence to prove that
the queen actually had been assassinated by a Japanese, the
entire group of conspirators was released. Goto's
successor, as special ambassador to Korea, was Count Inoye.
After the murder of the queen, the king was made a prisoner
in his own palace, and the Japanese gave orders that all
officials known to be friendly to the queen's party should
placed under arrest.

20 Dun to Olney, Oct. 14; Sill to idem, Oct. 26, 1895,
Foreign Relations of the United States, 372.
21 Nelson, 229.
The reaction of the western powers and Russia to the Japanese attempts to control Korea was one of indignation. Colonel Cockerill of the New York Herald, an American correspondent in Seoul, wrote articles denouncing the Japanese. The Japanese, realizing that they were placed in an unfavorable position, attempted to smooth matters over by issuing decrees glorifying the late queen, but still they retained possession of the king.

The Russian minister in Korea during this period was Alexis de Speyher who had taken over the legation on January 12, 1896. He believed in direct action rather than in adhering strictly to the legal nature of a minister's functions. Consequently, on February 10, 1896, one hundred and twenty-seven Russian marines landed at Chemulpo and entered Seoul, the Korean capital. The following day the king, together with the crown prince and princess, fled to the Russian legation where they stayed until February 20, 1897. While under Russian protection the king issued a royal edict condemning the pro-Japanese cabinet ministers as traitors. As a result, the prime minister and two cabinet members were assassinated; the others fled to Japan.

22 McKenzie, 57.

23 Baron Rosen, Forty Years of Diplomacy (New York, 1922), I, 125-26; Nelson, 231. Rosen stated that a Korean envoy requested Tsar Nicholas II, in May, 1896, to make Korea a Russian protectorate.

24 Satow to Salisbury, March 26, 1896, Gooch and Temperley, I, 25-27; Anderson and Hershey, 285-86; Chung-Fu Chang, 37-39; Clyde, 80.
At the same time, in April, 1896, Russian capitalists obtained mining concessions along the Tumen river and in the following August they also secured a timber concession on the Yalu river which they exploited ruthlessly.25 Thus Japan's plot to take over Korea was foiled by the encroachments of Russian capitalists.

III

Russian influence in Korea now steadily increased because the Korean king felt that he was obligated to the Russians for the protection that they had provided during the recent crisis. As a result, and realizing that they were losing ground, the Japanese changed their policy from aggression to agreements. On May 14, 1896, Japan negotiated with Russia the Waeber-Komura agreement. It provided that: (1) the Japanese would accept the new Korean cabinet; (2) Japanese subjects would be restrained from attacks against the Korean king; and (3) Japan agreed to limit the size of her military force in Korea.26

The following month representatives of the two powers met at St. Petersburg to decide the future of Korea. The Japanese suggested that Korea be divided into two parts, the northern to be dominated by Russia and the southern by Japan. The Russian government rejected this Japanese offer.27

26 Grajdanzev, 23; Nelson, 236.
27 Zabriskie, 35.
But Japan was not willing to end the negotiations, so the representatives journeyed to Moscow where they eventually concluded the Yamagata-Lobanov protocol. This merely provided that the two powers should recognize and accept the independence of Korea, and should join forces to restore political and financial order in Korea.28

The Japanese soon claimed that the Russians were violating this agreement. In July, 1897, three Russian officers and ten soldiers arrived in Seoul to instruct Korean troops. A Russo-Korean bank, headed by Mr. Alexeiev, who was also appointed financial adviser and general director of customs of Korea, was also founded with Russian approval and support. Not until March, 1898, did Russia recall her financial and military advisers from Korea, and even then she retained all of her concessions in the north.29 The withdrawal of these ministers came about in a peculiar way. The Russian minister, de Speyer, hoping that the Korean king would refuse his offer and insist upon continued Russian support, suggested the withdrawal of all Russian assistance. But contrary to his expectations the Korean king accepted the offer, de Speyer was relieved of his post, and Russia lost the advantageous position which up to this time she had held in Korea.30

28 Ibid., 35-36; Rosen, 124-26; Clyde, 60-81.
30 Zabriaskie, 36; Nelson, 229. According to Zabriaskie Russia did not live up to the terms of the agreement of
The Japanese, quick to sense a weakening of Russia's position in Korea, proposed another meeting of the two powers. On April 25, 1896, Russia and Japan concluded the Nishi-Rosen protocol which bound both parties to recognize the sovereignty and entire independence of Korea; (2) to mutually agree to abstain from all direct interference in the internal affairs of that country; (3) and in case Korea should have recourse to the counsel and assistance of either Japan or Russia, not to take any measures regarding the nomination of military instructors and financial advisers without having previously arrived at a mutual accord on the subject; (4) Russia also agreed not to obstruct the development of the commercial and industrial relations between Japan and Korea. This agreement strengthened Japan's position in Korea.

Russia and Japan, as before, soon accused each other of violating the terms of the Nishi-Rosen agreement. Russia complained that Japan was sending army officers to Korea to

1896, secretly promising the Korean minister to send military instructors and a financial adviser to Korea. It will be remembered that the secret treaty of 1885 between Russia and Korea had specifically given Russia the privilege of providing military instructors for the Korean army. Supra, 14. As for the concessions in the north, Japan herself had suggested that northern Korea should be dominated by Russia and southern Korea by Japan. Supra, 20.

31 Lansdowne to Whitehead, Oct. 16, 1901, Gooch and Temperley, II, 96-97; Allen to Day, May 26, 1898, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1898, 472; Rosen, I, 158-59; Anderson and Hershey, 266-67.
be naturalized as Korean subjects. On the other hand, Japan protested that Russia was supporting those Koreans who were anti-Japanese. Actually, neither of these actions, even if the charges and counter-charges were true, had been covered or prohibited by the Mishi-Rosen agreement.

The Russian minister negotiated a Russo-Korean agreement on March 30, 1900. The terms of this agreement centered around Masampo, which was one of the finest harbors in the east. The terms were:

**Article I**
Prescribes the conditions under which a site for a coal depot and a naval hospital is to be granted to the Russian government within a distance of 10 li from the foreign settlement of Masampo, and provides that the details of the arrangements shall be settled on the spot by a commission composed of the Russian consul at the port and a delegate sent from the Russian Foreign Office here.

**Article II**
Constitutes a reciprocal engagement under which Russia undertakes never to apply for permission to rent or purchase, either for her own use or for the use of her subjects in the prosecution of commercial or industrial undertakings of any kind, any land on Ko-je Do, or on the opposite mainland extending as far as the harbor of Masampo, or on any of the surrounding islands, while Korea, on her part, agrees not to allow any other Government to rent or purchase land for similar purposes in any of the above mentioned places."33

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32 Nelson, 245-46.
33 Jordan to Salisbury, Seoul, May 1, 1900, Gooch and Temperley, II, 32-33.
The English felt that the results of this agreement would be to place Masampo within the exclusive sphere of Russian influence, and would also link together Vladivostok and Port Arthur; possibly, too, Masampo in the near future might exceed Port Arthur and Vladivostok in strategic importance. 34 However, earlier Japanese acquisition of land on Ko-je Do and Masampo had greatly strengthened Japan's position in Korea, and now tended to neutralized Russia's gain in the Russo-Korean agreement of 1900.

34 Ibid., 33.
CHAPTER III
THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

I

The Boxer uprising which occurred in China toward the latter part of 1899 led to the armed intervention of the powers in order to protect their economic and territorial interests.\(^1\) The Boxers were a group of patriotic Chinese opposed to the economic penetration of China by the western powers. Protests by the western powers to the Empress Dowager of China were ineffectual, because her sympathies lay with the Boxers, and intervention promised to be the only means by which other nations could maintain their position in China.

On June 13, 1900, the Boxers entered Peking and murdered the German minister and the secretary of the Japanese embassy. Peking was cut off from the rest of the world by the Chinese rebels, and siege of the foreign legations began which lasted from June 20 to August 14, 1900.\(^2\)

In July, 1900, the Boxers attacked the Russian-owned Chinese Eastern railway line in Manchuria, and fifty thousand Russian troops were hurried to the scene. The Russians, having defeated the rebels, then occupied Newchwang and were in complete control of Mukden, Kirin,

\(^1\) Memorandum by Tilley, Jan. 14, 1905, Gooch and Temperley, II, 1.

\(^2\) Zabriskie, 60-61.
Tsitsihar and southern Manchuria. This act by the Russian forces alarmed the Japanese, as they felt the next Russian move would be into Korea. The western powers were also aroused over the Russian occupation of Newchwang, and the British ambassador, Sir C. Scott, in St. Petersburg called on Count Lamsdorf, the Russian foreign minister, to discuss the problem. Lamsdorf informed the British ambassador that Russian troops would be withdrawn from Manchuria as soon as its pacification had been secured. Lamsdorf also notified the American charge d'affaires, Mr. Pierce, that Russia had no intention of permanently occupying territory in China or Manchuria. 5

On July 12, 1900, the Russians proposed that the United States and Russia withdraw their troops and legations from Peking and send them to Tientsin, and that the question of indemnities to be paid by China to the powers be submitted to the Hague Tribunal. The United States agreed to both proposals. Secretary of State Hay, however, believed that Russia was not playing the part of the good Samaritan to uphold the territorial integrity of China, but intended gaining control of Manchuria, North China, and possibly

3 Ibid., 66.
5 Zabriskie, 63.
vent permanent Russian occupation of Manchuria. Consequently
hearing the Chinese administration in Chine, should be pre-
ecessitated. He was to receive that accorded to the Peking Chins, and aparted from not
un Successful treaty to the Peking Chins, and apparently that
Should be in the hands of China. This agreement was
and that the Chinese administration of Manchuria
with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It provided that all Chinese
The treaty was signed November 9, 1900, and was known as
the meeting Alexander, the Russian Minister at Peking,
that to get it to support Russian demands for concessions. In
Peking Russian Chinese minister, to pay to a hue price
Chins were unsuccessful because of the refusal of China.
The negotiations between Prince Kuchukovsky and Li Hung
In September, 1901, and continued until November, 1901,
and Prince Kuchukovsky, the Russian representatives, stated
with China. Secret negotiations between Li Hung Chins
agree to consolidate their gains by negotiations an agree-
Healing made their absence in Manchuria, the Russians
Russian proposals.
also proposed, as they saw the concession aims in the
Korea. The suppositions of the Germans and British were
a draft agreement was drawn up and presented to China on February 8, 1901. The Chinese were to agree not to grant concessions of any kind to foreigners without the consent of the Russian government. Li, pocketing a percentage of his bribe, assured the Russians that the agreement would be accepted by his government. Li then appealed to Sir Ernest Satow, the British minister at Peking, to save his country. The Japanese foreign office also obtained information from undisclosed sources about the Alexelev-Tseng agreement. Japan was outraged at these developments, since she supposed that the next Russian move would be into Korea, thereby threatening Japan's security. The Japanese suggested to Great Britain and Germany that those two powers should warn China against making any treaties with any individual power involving territorial or financial concessions.

The Russian reaction to the Japanese suggestions to Great Britain and Germany was to deny the existence of any such agreement between Russia and China. It was true that the agreement had not yet been signed, although it had been negotiated. Count Lambsdorf also informed the Japanese that the question of Manchuria concerned Russia and China only, and that Russia had the right of permanent occupation to

9 Zafriskie, 63.

3 Memorandum by Tilley, Jan. 14, 1901, Coon and Temperley, II, 2.
defend herself against Chinese aggression, but that "Russia had no intentions of exercising her right of conquest."²

On March 6, 1901, Sir Ernest Satow, the British ambassador at Peking, sent to the Marquis of Lansdowne, the British foreign minister, a telegram containing proposals for the future government of Manchuria. Satow stated that the Russian proposal for the future government of Manchuria would deprive China of her sovereignty over Manchuria, "and that the prohibition to construct railways in Mongolia and Eastern Turkestan is equivalent to abandoning those regions also."³

On March 6, 1901, the Marquis of Lansdowne, in a telegram to Sir Ernest Monson, the British ambassador in Paris, noted that relations between Russia and Japan were becoming strained. Lansdowne also wished to know whether France would assist Russia in the event of a Russo-Japanese war.⁴

It is apparent that Baron Hayashi, the Japanese ambassador in London, feared that the Russian occupation of Manchuria would eventually lead to the occupation of Korea. Baron Hayashi informed Eckardstein, first secretary of the German embassy in London, that Japan would go to war with Russia if she were sure that Great Britain and Germany would prevail upon France to remain neutral.⁵ The German minister assured

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² Papers communicated to the Marquis of Lansdowne by the Japanese minister, Jan. 29, 1901, Gooch and Temperley, II, 34.
³ Ibid., II, 37.
⁴ Ibid., II, 40.
⁵ Ibid., II, 41.
Hayashi that Germany would observe benevolent neutrality, and that the German attitude would keep the French fleet in check.¹⁴ A memorandum dated March 11, 1901, by Mr. Bertie, who was attached to the British embassy in China, reflected the British viewpoint pertaining to the Russo-Japanese situation. The memorandum stated:

Germany has assured Japan that there is no secret understanding between Germany and Russia respecting the Far East.

The Japanese Government ask whether his Majesty's Government have been consulted by Germany ... and they further ask: How far may Japan rely upon the support of Great Britain in case Japan finds it necessary to approach Russia?

It is assumed by the Japanese Minister that "approach" in the context means "resist," which is war.

What Japan feels, or, rather, what is felt in that country, is that the Russian danger is advancing rapidly, and that it will not be long before Russia attempts to bring Corea within her sphere. Therefore, if Japan must fight for Corea, she had better do so over the Manchurian Agreement, before the Russian railway is completed.

If France were allowed to side with Russia, and they crushed Japan, the result might be a renewal of the triple understanding—viz., Russia, France and Germany. Those three Powers would become supreme in China, and we should go to the wall.

If Russia alone, or in combination with France, defeated Japan, and we came to the rescue to prevent the obliteration of Japan, we should incur the lasting enmity of Russia and France, and a defeated, and probably ungrateful, Japan would not be of much use to us as against encroachments.

It has been suggested that if Japan defeated Russia there would be grave danger to European interests in the Far East.

A great military and naval Power, with unbounded natural resources and an immense population such as Russia, is not likely to accept defeat permanently. She would reorganize for a further trial of strength,

¹⁴ Ibid., II, 41.
but such trial might be a long way off, and it would be greatly retarded by Japan being allowed to take as the spoils of war the Liaotung peninsula. Its possession by Japan would be a guarantee that there would be no reconciliation between Russia and Japan.

If we do nothing to encourage Japan to look to us as a friend and possible ally against Russia and France, we may drive her to a policy of despair, in which she may come to some sort of terms with Russia. I do not say that it is probable, but it is possible, and our interests would greatly suffer if she did.

II

Russian advances from the north undoubtedly alarmed Great Britain, and Britain's desire to protect her interests in the Far East led to the Anglo-Japanese treaty. The Russian encroachments in Manchuria did not directly concern Japan, but the Japanese statesmen felt that Manchuria, under Russian control, would become the stepping stone into Korea. Russian occupation of Korean harbors in the Pacific would turn Korea into a "dagger poised at the heart of Japan."

The first suggestions of an Anglo-Japanese alliance came from the first secretary of the German embassy in London, Baron von Eckardstein, who suggested an Anglo-German-Japanese pact to stop Russian expansion in the Far East. However, the Japanese were distrustful of the Germans, as they felt Germany was more interested in the partition of China than

15 Ibid., II, 43. Italics mine.
16 Chang, 79.
17 Lansdowne to MacDonald, April 17, 1901, Gooch and Temperley, II, 89; Chang, 81-82.
in stopping Russia in Manchuria. For that reason the Japanese were opposed to German participation in the alliance.

The Japanese were just as capable of dealing from the bottom of the deck as were the Germans and Russians. On August 26, 1901, Count Inouye, home on leave from his post as Japanese ambassador to Germany, invited Prime Minister Katsura to his home to discuss the possibilities of sending Marquis Itō Hirobumi, the former prime minister, to Russia to open negotiations for a treaty dealing with Korea. Itō fortunately approved of the project and on September 30, 1901, Katsura gave a farewell banquet in Itō's honor. The guests included the leading statesmen of Japan—Yamagata, Inouye, Itō, and the host Katsura. During the course of the dinner Itō inquired whether, if his mission were a success, it would be necessary to negotiate an alliance with Great Britain. Yamagata suggested an Anglo-Japanese alliance to cover the Far East, of which Korea was only a small part. Itō was not in favor of Yamagata's proposal because he wanted an agreement with Russia as the principal measure covering the Far East. Itō's opposition to Yamagata's proposal may have been part of a prearranged plan to hurry Great Britain into signing an Anglo-Japanese pact. On the other hand the geographical proximity of Russia to Japan, and the

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18 Zabriskie, 102.
19 Tota Ishimaru, Japan Must Fight Britain (New York, 1936) 27.
20 Ibid., 28.
fact that Russia was embarrassed by internal problems, may have motivated Itō in his opposition to Yamagata. The internal collapse of Russia might lead to her withdrawal from Manchuria, thereby removing a threat to Korea, and Japan could step in and occupy Russian territory. Yamagata and Inouye finally convinced Itō of the expediency of his trip to Russia.

British sources state that Itō tried to negotiate a loan in Paris but failed, because of the strained relations existing between Russia and Japan over the Manchurian and Korean questions. However, French financiers encouraged Itō to go to St. Petersburg to obtain assurances of a treaty from the Russian government. These assurances would be sufficient for the negotiation of a loan. When Itō arrived in St. Petersburg he was received by Nicholas II, Lansdorff, Witte and Muraviev. It was his impression that the Russians would cooperate in solving the Korean question, and he therefore sent a telegram to Katsura suggesting that the ratification of the Anglo-Japanese treaty be deferred until it had been decided whether to enter into an agreement with Russia. Realizing that she could not conduct parallel negotiations successfully, Japan terminated those with Russia and, at a cabinet meeting summoned by Katsura,

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it was decided that negotiations with Great Britain should continue. 22

In his dealings with Russia, Itō found the Russian ministers haughty and over-bearing. The Russians treated the Japanese as inferiors and showed no signs of meeting the Japanese half way in Manchuria, which the Russians considered as their own private property. They would make no commitments pertaining to Korea because they hoped eventually to become the predominant power in that unfortunate country. 23 Originally Itō may have preferred an agreement with Russia, but the demeanor of the Russian ministers, coupled with the designs upon Korea entertained by Russian promoters and speculators, cooled Itō's preference and he began to look to England.

Itō left Russia for London, where he immediately called upon the Marquis of Lansdowne. He told Lansdowne that he had been fully informed of the negotiations Hayashi had been carrying on with the British government looking to an Anglo-Japanese agreement. 24 He inquired whether there would be any objection to the Japanese government's entering into an amicable arrangement with Russia for the protection of

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22 Ishimaru, 31-34.

23 Baron Sergius A. Korff, Russia's Foreign Relations during the Last Half Century (New York, 1922), 50.

Japanese interests in Korea. Lansdowne advised Ito that a
Japanese agreement with Russia would be permissible provided
that it would not be inconsistent with the Anglo-Japanese
agreement. Ito then told Lansdowne that Russia and Japan,
as the immediate neighbors of Korea, were the two nations
most interested in that country. Because it was vitally
important to Japan that trouble should not break out in
Korea, Ito felt that by peaceful penetration of Korea
Japan might obtain military bases to be used in the event
of a war with Russia. Consequently, it would be better to
come to an agreement with Russia pertaining to Korea, pro-
vided the Russians did not ask for an island in the Korean
Straits to be used as a naval base. However, Ito was sure
that Russia would ask for an island as the price for such
an arrangement, and he emphatically declared that Japan
would not be coerced into such a concession. As to
Manchuria, Ito informed Lansdowne that "sooner or later it
would be necessary to impose a limit upon Russian encroach-
ments in this direction, if not by bayonet, then by some
other means."25

The Korean problem was definitely one of the storm
centers of Russia's Far Eastern policy. In a letter dated
November 28, 1901, to the Russian foreign minister, Count
Witte stated:

25 Ibid., II, 110.
An armed clash with Japan in the near future would be a great disaster for us. . . . Furthermore, and that is most important to us in the eyes of the Russian people, a war with Japan for the possession of distant Korea will not be justified, and the latent dissatisfaction may render more acute the alarming phenomena of our domestic life, which make themselves felt even in peace time. . . .

A portion of Witte's letter was omitted in his Memoirs; the missing portion stated: "Japan would be weakened by the tremendous expense in Korea which would make her more amenable to Russian pressure later and which would make the conquest of Korea possible if conditions demanded it."26

Witte was blocked in his attempts to shape Russian policy in the Far East by a group of adventurers headed by A. M. Bezobrazov, Admiral Alexeiev, A. M. Abaza, the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich, and Prince F. F. Yussupov, all members of the palace clique. This group of adventurers looked upon Manchuria and Korea as their own special field of exploitation. Consequently, they were opposed to Witte's program of orderly capitalistic expansion and peaceful penetration, which "would give Russian imperialism the opportunity to achieve economic success and the opportunity to face war under more favorable circumstances."28 Actually, the only difference between Witte's policy and that of the Bezobrazov clique, as far as Korea was concerned, was in time.

26 Abraham Yarmolinsky (editor), The Memoirs of Count Witte (New York, 1921), 117.
27 Zabriskie, 81.
28 Ibid., 84.
After Ito's departure from London, Hayashi exchanged drafts with Lansdowne, certain amendments by the Japanese were withdrawn, and the Anglo-Japanese treaty was concluded on January 30, 1902. For present purposes, the most important provision of the treaty between Great Britain and Japan lay in its carefully worded Article I, which stated:

The Governments of Great Britain and Japan, actuated solely by a desire to maintain the status quo and general peace in the extreme East, being moreover specially interested in maintaining the independence and territorial integrity of the Empire of China and the Empire of Corea, and in securing equal opportunities in those countries for the commerce and industry of all nations, hereby agree as follows.—January 30, 1902—The High Contracting Parties, having mutually recognized the independence of China and Corea, declare themselves to be entirely uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies in either country. Having in view, however, their special interests, of which those of Great Britain relate principally to China, while Japan, in addition to the interests which she possesses in China, is interested in a peculiar degree politically as well as commercially and industrially in Corea, the High Contracting Parties recognise that it will be admissible for either of them to safeguard those interests if threatened either by the aggressive action of any other Power, or by disturbances arising in China or Corea, and necessitating the intervention of either of the High Contracting Parties for the protection of the lives or property of its subjects.29

III

The Anglo-Japanese treaty elevated Japan to the rank of a great power.30 The Russian reaction on the surface was one of calm and indifference, but inwardly Russian

29 Gooch and Temperley, II, 115-17.
ministers seethed with rage as they realized that Russian diplomacy had suffered a serious defeat. The Korean government regarded the agreement with favor, and notified Great Britain that Korea was anxious to prove herself worthy of the support which the agreement gave them. The American reaction is indicated in the following letter from Sir Ernest Satow to Lord Lansdowne on February 13, 1902:

The news of the Anglo-Japanese agreement only got out here late yesterday afternoon, and up to the present the only foreign opinion I have heard is that of my United States colleague, who thinks it the most important political event that has taken place for a long time. He seems to think that the Japanese are burning to go to war to turn the Russians out of Manchuria, and says they could easily put 100,000 men there in a month's time, but I do not imagine events will move as swiftly as that.

The Chinese government received the Anglo-Japanese treaty with favor and felt that now was the time to demand Russian evacuation of Manchuria. Plenipotentiaries were appointed on February 12, 1902, to negotiate on matters pertaining to Manchuria. Six weeks later a treaty was signed by which Russia promised to withdraw from Manchuria and to hand over the Chinese-Eastern railway to the Chinese government. Russia began evacuating her troops from Mukden province, but the troops were merely transferred to other

31 Scott to Lansdowne, Feb. 20, 1902, Gooch and Temperley, II, 131.
32 Lansdowne to Jordan, Feb. 15, 1902, ibid., II, 129.
33 Ibid., II, 126.
parts of Manchuria. The Russian transference of troops from Mukden to other portions of Manchuria, mainly the Korean-Manchurian border, may have been eventuated by the Japanese war machine. By April 6, 1903, Russia felt that she could bring new pressure upon China. She demanded the closing of Manchuria to the economic enterprise of all foreigners who were not Russian, and insisted that China forbid the opening of new treaty ports in Manchuria without the consent of the Russian government. The reaction of Great Britain, United States and Japan to these Russian demands upon China was one of indignation and protest. The Chinese, realizing that they had the backing of the powers, promptly rejected the Russian demands. This rejection by China of the Russian demands did not affect Russia's position in Manchuria in the least, as Russia continued to maintain troops there.

On July 13, 1903, the Japanese sent an inquiry to Count Lansdorff, asking whether the Russians were willing to reopen negotiations on the Korean and Manchurian questions. Russia notified Japan that she was willing to negotiate. As for Korea, the Russian foreign office expressed a willingness to

35 Macdonald to idem, April 27, 1903, ibid., II, 198-99.
36 Memorandum communicated by Viscount Hayashi, April 27, 1903, ibid., II, 201.
37 Zabriskie, 202.
recognize "Japan's preponderating interests in Corea and of the right of Japan to assist Corea with advice tending to improve the civil administration." Russia also notified the Japanese that they were willing to recognize the right of Japan to send troops to Korea for the purpose of suppressing insurrections or disorders, capable of creating international complications. There would also be a mutual agreement not to make use of any part of Corean territory for strategic purposes, and not to undertake on the Corean coast military works capable of menacing the free navigation in the Straits of Corea."
The Russians did not mention Manchuria in this counter-proposal, feeling that this province was outside the Japanese sphere of interest. The Russian exclusion of Manchuria from the proposal was very unsatisfactory to Japan.

38 MacDonald to Lansdowne, Dec. 14, 1903, Gooch and Temperley, II, 225; Anderson and Hershey, 270.

39 MacDonald to Lansdowne, Dec. 14, 1903, Gooch and Temperley, II, 225. It may be noted that Russia was already dealing with China over Manchuria, and to deal with Japan over it at the same time would be diplomatic double talk of the worst sort. To do so would be to admit that China did not control Manchuria, although she must recognize Chinese suzerainty in order to negotiate with China on Manchuria.

Japan's insistence, supported by England, upon war with Russia is evidenced once again, because the position Japan was taking on the Manchurian question just did not make diplomatic sense.
One European attitude toward Russo-Japanese relations to the end of 1903 is illustrated in a letter from Sir Ernest Satow to Lord Lansdowne:

The news that the Japanese have officially addressed the Russian Government on the Manchurian question seems of great importance. If the Russians refuse to discuss it, will not the Japanese Government find themselves compelled to declare war? For if they sit down quietly under a rebuff Russia will take the whole of Manchuria and ultimately Corea, to which she is already stretching her hand at Yongampho.

I think Admiral Bridge would agree with me that the results of a war in which Japan fights Russia single handed would be her defeat and the loss of Corea. Then Russia becomes the dominant Power in this part of the world and will swallow up at least all northern China.40

After six months of diplomatic wrangling the two powers were no closer to an agreement than they had been at the beginning. In the meantime reinforcements were being sent out from Russia to the Korean frontier. Itō, the Japanese prime minister, had been mainly instrumental in continuing negotiations for so long, notwithstanding repeated rebuffs from Russia, but he now realized that further negotiations were useless.41 War seemed imminent and on February 6, 1904, the Japanese severed diplomatic relations with Russia. Two days later Japanese forces attacked the Russian fleet off Port Arthur and on February 10, 1904, Japan declared war on Russia.42

40 Gooch and Temperley, II, 228-29.
41 Ibid., II, 252; Zabriskie, 100.
42 MacDonald to Lansdowne, Feb. 5, 1904, Gooch and Temperley, II, 242-43.
Japan was far better prepared for war than Russia, since she had a veteran army and navy, a full war chest, and the backing of the Japanese people. Russia on the other hand was hampered by a discontented population, and by graft, corruption and intrigue within the army. Russia was forced to fight the war on French loans. Japan was financed by Great Britain and the United States. The Japanese forces won brilliant victories on land and sea. Port Arthur fell to the Japanese and the Russian army was sorely pressed in northern Korea. Korean sympathies during the war lay with the Japanese, for the Russian troops, who apparently were undisciplined, molested Korean women. Japanese troops on the other hand treated the Koreans with respect and consideration. This false impression which Japan created led the Koreans to look upon the Japanese as liberators, and in some quarters it was hoped that Japan would modify the oppression of the native magistrates and introduce reforms which would materially benefit the Koreans as a whole. The Russian army was defeated at Mukden and on May 31, 1905, the main Russian fleet was annihilated by Admiral Togo in the Tsu-Shima Straits. The Japanese, whose war resources were completely exhausted by the end of March, 1905, asked President Roosevelt to act as mediator. He

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43 Zabriskie, 109.
44 McKenzie, 80.
45 Stanoyevich, 23; Takeuchi, 149.
accepted the proposal and on August 10, 1905, the peace conference opened at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. After twelve conferences and much wrangling the two powers finally signed the treaty on September 5, 1905.46

The terms of the treaty gave Japan a free hand in Korea. Article II stated that "the imperial Government of Russia, recognizing that Japan has predominant political, military and economic interests in Korea, agrees not to interfere or place obstacles in the way of any measure of direction, protection and supervision which the Imperial Government of Japan may deem necessary to adopt in Korea." Article III, pertaining to Manchuria, stated: "Russia and Japan mutually engage: (1) to completely and simultaneously evacuate Manchuria . . . (2) to entirely and completely restore to the exclusive administration of China all parts of Manchuria now occupied by Russian and Japanese troops."47

The ink was scarcely dry on the treaty when the two powers began to take steps to conclude a Russo-Japanese agreement to supplement the treaty of Portsmouth. Four Russo-Japanese agreements were concluded after the treaty of Portsmouth and before the Russian Revolution.48

46 Zabriskie, 121.


CHAPTER IV

JAPANESE ASCENDANCY IN KOREA

I

Korea proclaimed her neutrality on January 21, 1904, when conflict between Russia and Japan seemed imminent. But this paper defense did not prevent the Japanese from landing troops in Korea and compelling the Korean government on February 22, 1904, to sign a treaty of cooperation. The important provisions of the treaty between Japan and Korea lay in its carefully worded first and fourth articles. Article I stated that "the Imperial Government of Korea shall place full confidence in the Government of Japan and adopt the advice of the latter in regard to improvements." The word "improvements" more than likely referred to military installations to be used by the Japanese as bases against the Russians. Article IV provided that "the Imperial Government of Japan may occupy when circumstances require it such places as may be necessary from strategic points of view." Almost as an after thought, Japan promised to guarantee the independence and territorial integrity of the Korean nation. And no sooner was the treaty signed than the Japanese army occupied large

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1 Grajdanzev, 30.

2 Telegram received by the Japanese minister from his government on February 25 and left with the Secretary of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1904, 437.
sections of Korea on the grounds of military expediency.\(^3\)

Russia reacted to the Japanese occupation of Korea by notifying the neutral powers that Japan had openly violated the neutrality of Korea and had usurped the power in that country. She also warned all neutrals that ships docking at Korean ports would be in danger because of the expanding nature of the war.\(^4\)

In March, 1904, Marquis Itō visited Korea and paid his respects to the king. As a result of this visit the Japanese government two months later reached the following secret decisions:

(1) Korea should be made a Japanese protectorate at the proper time; (2) until the arrival of such an opportunity, Japan should strive to obtain practical results in giving political, diplomatic, and military protection and in developing Japan's interests in Korea. Both (the Prime Minister) Count Katsura (1847-1913) and (the Minister of Foreign Affairs) Baron Komura (1855-1911) feared the objection of the Powers should Japan announce these decisions at once, especially in the face of the declared purpose of war against Russia, and so adopted a plan of more gradual procedure.\(^5\)

By Itō's visit the Japanese laid a smoke screen in order to convince the western powers that Itō was a great friend of the Korean people and that the Koreans were clamoring for Japanese rule. The western powers, however, were not misled.

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\(^4\) Translation of a memorandum left with the Secretary of State by the Russian ambassador, March 28, 1904, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1904, 727.

by the Japanese statesman. Great Britain, Germany and the United States were willing to have Japan acquire Korea, provided that Japan would not use that unfortunate country as a stepping stone into China.6

America's purpose at this period was to give Japan a free hand in Korea. President Theodore Roosevelt in a conversation with the German ambassador, von Sternburg, stated that it was to the interests of the United States that the war drag on. Both powers thus would exhaust their resources and manpower, and the conclusion of the war would find that they still had the same geographical areas of friction. Japan would be satisfied with the acquisition of Korea. Russia's attention still would be diverted from her western frontiers to the east, because the end of a war of attrition would find Russia keeping her foothold in Manchuria.7 Thus would the two powers remain on a war footing, thereby neutralizing Japanese desires to expand into China and the Philippines and diverting the Russians from Europe.

On May 19, 1904, the Korean government, advised by Japan, summarily cancelled all treaties in force between Russia and Korea.8 Two months later the Japanese government forced the Korean government to engage a Japanese subject as

6 Zabriskie, 121.
7 Ibid., 108.
8 Jordan to Lansdowne, May 19, 1904, Gooch and Temperley, IV, 112.
financial adviser. And in the next month there followed an agreement between the two powers concluded at Seoul. The following articles which were agreed upon on the 19th of August, 1904, practically handed the administrative control of Korea to Japan. Article I stated that the Korean government would engage a Japanese subject as financial adviser and that all matters pertaining to currency would be in his hands. The Korean government then appointed Mr. Megata, a Harvard graduate and director of the revenue bureau of the finance department of the Japanese government, as financial adviser. After his appointment, Mr. Megata applied himself to the task of reorganizing the Korean finances. His reforms included placing Korea on the gold standard in order to have a uniform currency, establishing a central bank to act as the national treasury, and the unifying the system of tax collection. Megata also made a distinction between the properties owned by the Korean royal household and

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9 Grajdanzev, 31.


11 Government-General of Chosen, Results of Three Years of Administration of Chosen since Annexation (Jan., 1914), 13-14.

those owned by the state. This last reform would make it possible to ascertain whether the royal household or the government was levying taxes, thereby making it possible to balance the budget. Megata met with some opposition from Korean governmental officials, but these soon were replaced by Japanese and the reforms went through with permanent benefit to Korea.

Article II provided that the Korean government would engage a foreigner recommended by the Japanese government as a diplomatic adviser, and that foreign relations should be handled only with his advice and consent. Mr. Stevens, an American, was appointed as diplomatic adviser by the Korean government. Previous to his appointment Stevens had served in the Japanese Foreign Office and was sympathetic to Japanese aims in Korea.

On August 22 Article II was concluded, stipulating that the Korean government must consult the Japanese government before concluding treaties and conventions with foreign powers or granting concessions or contracts to foreigners. The purpose of Article III was to place a limitation on

13 Government-General of Chosen, Results of Three Years of Administration since Annexation. Korean money before Japanese administration was among the worst in the world; counterfeit coins were more numerous than legal tender.

14 Griscom to Hay, Sept. 1, 1904, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1904, 439; McKenzie, 86. Stevens was assassinated by a Korean nationalist in San Francisco in 1908.

mining concessions granted to foreign interests who were
developing mining property in northern Korea, an area rich
in gold, copper, zinc, iron and graphite resources. The
selection of these advisers was followed by the entrance of
other Japanese into Korea's government, men to supervise
police, military and judicial matters.\textsuperscript{16}

The next step in the Japanese advance toward the
acquisition of Korea was an agreement concluded between Japan
and Korea in April, 1905. By the terms of this agreement the
postal, telegraph and telephone services were to be taken
over by Japan. Article I stated that the government of Korea
would transfer and assign the control of administration of
the postal, telegraph and telephone service to the Japanese
government. Article II provided that the land, buildings,
furniture, instruments, machines and all other appliances
connected with the system of communications would be trans­
ferred to the control of the Japanese government. By Article
VI the Japanese, in operating the communication system, agreed
to employ as many Korean officials and employees as possible.\textsuperscript{17}
Japan showed no intention of employing Koreans. Japanese
were brought in and established in various governmental
positions, and the Koreans were relegated to the position
of a common laborer. When the Korean people began to protest,

\textsuperscript{16} Grajdanzev, 31.

\textsuperscript{17} British and Foreign State Papers, 1904-1905 (compiled and
edited by R. W. Brant and Willoughby Maycock) (London, 1909),
1188.
the Japanese brought in their police and established them throughout Korea to stifle political opposition. 18

The reaction of the United States and Great Britain to these events in Korea was to accept a fait accompli. On July 29, 1905, the Taft-Katsura agreement was signed, in which "the United States gave its approval to Japan's suzerainty over Korea, and Japan assured the United States of its pacific relations toward the Philippines." 19 As for Great Britain, the Anglo-Japanese alliance was renewed on August 12, 1905. Article III follows:

Japan possessing paramount political, military, and economic interests in Korea, Great Britain recognizes the right of Japan to take such measures of guidance, control, and protection in Korea as she may deem proper and necessary to safeguard and advance those interests, provided always that such measures are not contrary to the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations. 20

It was generally accepted by the outside powers that Korea, so close to the Japanese homeland and so clearly unable to stand alone, must fall under the control of Japan. This was made certain by Russia's elimination from Korea as a by-product of her defeat in the Russo-Japanese war and was duly conceded by Russia in the Treaty of Portsmouth. Even so, it should be remembered that her domestic

18 McKenzie, 32.

19 Wilson to the Secretary of State, Nov. 29, 1905, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1905, 615; Zabriskie, 121.

20 Gooch and Temperley, IV, 166.
difficulties had contributed to securing Russia's withdrawal from Korea. And for one reason or another the United States, Great Britain and Germany all accepted, with reservations protecting their own interests, Japan's paramount position in the peninsula. 21

In November, 1905, Marquis Itō was sent to Seoul as a special envoy from the emperor of Japan to the Korean king to present demands which would make Korea a Japanese protectorate. Itō was received by the Korean king on November 15. He presented a series of demands, drawn up in treaty form, which provided for the total control of Korean foreign relations. Two days later an agreement between Japan and Korea was signed whereby Japan assumed charge of the foreign relations of Korea. Article I stated that the government of Japan would control the external relations of Korea, and that Japan should have charge of the subjects and interests of Korea in foreign countries. Article III provided that a resident-general in Seoul would represent the Japanese, primarily for the purpose of taking charge and directing matters pertaining to diplomatic affairs. Japanese consuls in the different districts in Korea, and responsible only to the Japanese resident-general at Seoul, were to be made residents with the powers of supreme local governors. The signature of the Korean king on the agreement signified that Korea was rapidly surrendering her independence as a

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21 British and Foreign State Papers, 1904-1905, 1139.
state and that the control of Korea's internal administration was now in the hands of the Japanese. The Korean people were informed that this agreement was to serve "until the moment arrives when it is recognized that Korea has attained national strength." This was a promise that the Japanese never intended to fulfill, as witnessed by an imperial Japanese ordinance for the organization for the residency-general and residencies in Korea promulgated on December 20, 1905. This ordinance gave the resident-general power to use Japanese troops in Korea to maintain peace and tranquillity. He also was to supervise officials of the Japanese government and others who might be in the service of the Korean government, and to have the authority to issue residency-general ordinances which would be enforced by levying a fine of two hundred yen and one year's imprisonment upon violators.

In February, 1906, Itō was appointed the first resident-general at Seoul, now the capital of a Japanese protectorate. Itō was the best choice that the Japanese government could have made at the time, since he was respected by the Koreans more than any other Japanese. In theory a protectorate is a

22 Ibid., 1139-40.
23 Ibid., 1141; Japanese charge to the Secretary of State, Jan. 19, 1906, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1906, 1025.
24 Grajdianzev, 33.
form of sovereignty in which the protected country administers the government under the guidance and protection of the protecting country. In this case, the imperial government of Japan for all practical purposes administered Korean affairs, although the Japanese acted in the name of the Korean government. Itō as resident-general was actually the supreme administrator of Korea with power to do as he pleased. All appointments were in his hands, although he did consult with the Korean court as a matter of political expediency when minor positions were to be filled or when minor decisions were to be made.

On July 24, 1906, an agreement for the judicature of Korea was promulgated which provided that: (1) in the residencies, the resident would preside at all court sessions and pronounce judgment, and (2) imperial ordinances would be issued to be applied to Korea with respect to judicial matters. This agreement fortified Japan's position in Korea by placing in her hands the actual functions of government.

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25 White, loc. cit., 19.
26 McKenzie, 105.
27 Wright to the Secretary of State, July 6, 1906, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1906, Part II, 1036.
28 Nelson, 280.
protectorate, but in actuality the resident-general was the dictator of Korea. But he was a dictator who conducted certain functions of government through native officials because the time was not yet right for outright annexation. 29

In the early summer of 1907 the Korean king, realizing that his country was gradually being absorbed by the Japanese, secretly sent three delegates with Mr. Bulbert to the Hague Conference. These delegates were to assure the powers that the Korean king had never consented to the Japanese-Korean treaty of 1905 which robbed Korea of her independence. Arriving at the Hague, the delegates were refused a hearing. 30

Japanese reaction to the Korean appeal for assistance from the western powers was one of silent wrath. The Korean cabinet ministers, who in the main were Japanese tools, were very apologetic for the king's ingratitude toward the Japanese. A cabinet meeting was held at the resident-general's palace where it was decided that the king should abdicate in order to save his country from being absorbed by Japan as punishment for his misconduct. On July 20, 1907, the Korean king was forced to abdicate in favor of son. 31 The son was endowed with a weak intellect and

29 White, 19.
30 Grajdanzev, 42.
31 White, 19.
character and consequently was never more than a tool in the hands of Korean advisers who were Japanese puppets.\textsuperscript{32}

On July 24 an agreement was signed whereby the Japanese resident-general became a virtual regent. The six articles of the agreement were as far reaching as possible. All reforms in administration would be under the guidance of the resident-general. No laws were to be enacted without his consent, and judicial affairs in Korea were set apart from the affairs of ordinary administration. All officials were to be appointed and dismissed by the resident-general and the government of Korea would appoint as Korean officials Japanese subjects recommended by the resident-general. And the last article stated that the Korean government could not engage the services of any foreigner without the consent of the resident-general.\textsuperscript{33}

On July 17/39, 1907, Japan and Russia signed an agreement by which each party agreed to respect the territorial integrity of the other; the two powers also recognized the independence and territorial integrity of China and the principle of equal opportunity of trade and commerce in that empire. This treaty was accompanied by a secret unpublished treaty which divided Manchuria into Russian and

\textsuperscript{32} McKenzie, 125.

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{The American Journal of International Law}, 397-98.
No mention was made of Korea.

In August, 1907, the Japanese resident-general arranged the coronation ceremony for the crowning of the new Korean king. Arrangements were made to include as many Japanese as possible at the ceremonies and to exclude as many foreigners as possible, especially if they were unsympathetic toward Japanese aims in Korea. The Russian consul-general in Seoul, M. de Plancon, was extended an invitation, but was conspicuous by his absence. It was apparent by M. de Plancon's actions that the Russian government did not approve of Japanese policies in Korea.

Korean reaction to the abdication of the king and the coronation of his incompetent son was shown by a series of riots in Seoul which eventually spread throughout the country. These riots were quelled by the Japanese army and police. From 1907 to the end of 1908 14,566 Koreans were killed and 8,728 surrendered.

Its attempts at reform were being constantly obstructed by the Korean administration, and he felt that Japan's interest would be furthered by the outright

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35 McKenzie, 131.

36 Grajdanzev, 44.
annexation of Korea. In 1909 Itō resigned his post as resident-general and was appointed president of the Japanese privy council. His successor in Korea was Viscount Sone who continued Itō's policies. If Itō had had a free hand in Korea he might have laid the foundations of good government in Korea. However, he was hindered in his efforts to rule wisely by the Japanese military police whose only responsibility was to the military authorities. Japanese militarists worked on the theory that the only way to maintain order was by force. Firmness was undoubtedly needed, but "a state of martial law that lasts for fifteen years stands self-condemned."

II

Japan had very definite ideas about the permanent control and annexation of Manchuria. Despite the secret agreement of 1907 which apparently had balanced the interests of Russia and Japan in Korea, Manchuria and North Manchuria,

37 Ibid., 39.
38 Nelson, 231.
39 White, 21.
40 Ibid., 23.
Japan was making preparations for a new war, and was using Korea with her improved railway lines, military arsenals, camps and ports as a base from which to attack Russia. 41

A letter from Sir C. MacDonald to Sir Edward Grey throws further light on the subject:

On the 21st I received your telegram stating that His Majesty's Government would not in principle object to the opening of the Dardanelles and that if I were approached on the subject by the Japanese Government I might reply to this effect, adding, however, that nothing had been definitely settled.

Some days previous to the receipt of this telegram, in an informal conversation I had with the Foreign Minister, the latter introduced the subject of the troubles in the Balkan Peninsula and stated that this was a matter which did not affect the Far East, but there was one phase of it which was of the greatest interest to the Japanese Government, namely the opening of the Dardanelles. His Excellency went on to say that if the Dardanelles were opened to the passage of Russian warships from the Black Sea, Russia would possess a naval base some five or six thousand miles nearer to Japan than those she had at present. It is well known that Russia was straining every nerve to build up a new navy, and the establishment of a naval base so much nearer to Japan could not be otherwise than one of considerable concern to the Japanese Government. His Excellency reminded me that, had the Black Sea Fleet been in a position to join that of Admiral Rozhestvensky, the consequences might have been very serious for Japan. The attitude taken up during the war by His Majesty's Government in respect to this question of the opening of the Dardanelles and the assurances given by Lord Lansdowne to the Japanese Minister in London previous to the outbreak of the war, had been a source of the greatest satisfaction to the Japanese Government and would always be remembered with sincere gratitude by Japan.

I said I had received no information or instructions regarding the negotiations which I saw in the Press were proceeding between Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Iswolsky, doubtless because they only concerned

41 Zabriskie, 143.
matters relative to the Near East. Count Komura replied that this was without doubt the case and added that the Japanese Government were most anxious not to embarrass the British Government in any way, but the importance of this matter to Japan might be overlooked in case the question came up.

It is not likely that I shall be again approached by Count Komura on this subject for some time at any rate. I propose, if possible, to avoid the subject altogether until I get further instructions from you in the matter.

This change in policy by His Majesty’s Government will of course be a great disappointment to the Japanese Government and the Japanese people, but the former will recognize that the longer and directer questions affecting the Near East must take precedence of one which affects the Far East, and that in a somewhat indirect manner.42

Russia’s reaction to Japanese preparations for war was to approach the United States with the proposal for an agreement which would neutralize Japan’s position in Asia. The United States was receptive to the idea of a Russo-American entente, provided that the Open Door be maintained in Manchuria. However, Russia’s foreign minister, Izvolsky, felt that the neutralization of Manchuria would not save Russia from further attacks by Japan in the Amur province, and consequently he felt that a Russo-Japanese alliance would be more beneficial.43

The Japanese, taking advantage of Russo-American differences pertaining to the Open Door policy in Manchuria, and uncertain of Britain’s attitude, sent Itō to Harbin in

43 Zabriskie, 155.
October, 1909, to discuss Russo-Japanese problems with Count Kokovtsov, the Russian minister of finance. Following a conference on Russo-Japanese problems and a possible alliance, Itō was assassinated by a Korean nationalist, but not before an apparent agreement had been reached. A second Russo-Japanese treaty was on its way. Despite Itō's death Russo-Japanese negotiations continued, and on July 4, 1910, a treaty was signed containing both open and secret provisions. The open provisions provided that the two high contracting parties would maintain and respect the status quo in Manchuria as provided for in existing treaties and conventions concluded between Russia and Japan. The secret provisions of the treaty stated that:

Russia and Japan mutually agree to recognize and take such measures as may be deemed necessary for the maintenance and protection of these interests in Manchuria. In case these special interests should be threatened, the two Governments will agree on the measures that may become necessary for common action or mutual support in order to protect these interests.

The two former rivals were now united in opposing the economic penetration of the United States into Asia.

Six weeks after the signing of the Russo-Japanese treaty Japan and Korea signed a treaty whereby Japan formally annexed Korea. The treaty provided that the Korean king should make complete and permanent cession


45 E. C. Stowell, The Diplomacy of the War of 1914, the Beginnings of the War (New York, 1915), 551.
to the emperor of Japan of the sovereignty of Korea; and that Japan would employ in Korea only Koreans who would accept the new regime. Other clauses provided that the Japanese government would confer peerages and monetary grants upon those Koreans who were entitled to special privileges. The king of Korea and his family would receive monetary grants befitting their position. It is apparent from the agreement that Japan would subsidize quislings in the interest of maintaining order in Korea for the explicit purpose of exploiting the resources and manpower of the land.

The Japanese regarded the Koreans as inferiors, and consequently did not receive that support of the Korean populace which was essential to carry through administrative reforms. The achievements of the Japanese administration in the economic field in Korea received widespread praise from western observers. The western powers found the old corrupt administration replaced by Japanese efficiency, which of course was borrowed from the western nations. Sound currency measures were instituted, railroads were extended to facilitate the movement of troops when necessary, highways were built and improved for the same purpose, agriculture was developed for the purpose of exporting large quantities of food to Japan, new industries under Japanese control were instituted, and educational institutions were developed for the purpose of assisting the

Japanese in assimilating the Koreans.\textsuperscript{47}

Russian reaction to the Japanese annexation of Korea, at least on the surface, was one of approval by the Tsar's government. Hence in 1912 another secret Russo-Japanese agreement was concluded, defining the Russian and Japanese spheres of influence in Mongolia. The treaty also stipulated that in the event that Russia became involved in a European war, she would withdraw two army corps of troops from Siberia and China, and that Japan would then assume the protection of Russian interests in China. Furthermore, Japan would not occupy Vladivostok, and in return Russia would not object in the event the Japanese took possession of Kiaochow.\textsuperscript{48} The result of this third Russo-Japanese treaty was to bar the door to dollar diplomacy in Manchuria and Mongolia.

Japan now turned her attention to the problem of administrative reform in Korea. The new regime in Korea was headed by a governor-general, who was a military man and responsible only to the Japanese emperor who appointed him. The governor-general was the chief executive, the commander-in-chief; and he issued decrees and appointed judges and provincial governors, and saw to it that all school principals appointed were Japanese. A central

\textsuperscript{47} Grajdanzev, 50.

council was also created, to be composed of Koreans of ability, to advise the governor-general whenever he chose to consult it upon administrative policy. Unfortunately the central council was never called in to give advice on administrative reform. Its only function was to keep the governor-general posted on the popular reaction to his decrees and to advise him on Korean beliefs and customs.\footnote{49}

It is evident that this type of administration, based upon martial law, would meet with opposition. Japan justified her actions on the grounds that Korea before 1910 was ruled by a family of oriental despots which did not give the population a voice in their government, and therefore the people were not capable of self-government. On the other hand Japan's attempts to assimilate the Korean had failed, and his nationalistic spirit had been set ablaze by Japanese occupation.

\footnote{49 Grajdanzev, 46.}
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Occupying a strategic position on the Asiatic continent, Korea has been a factor for centuries in the game of power politics between Russia and Japan. Japanese interest in Korea is of great antiquity, as the peninsula was perhaps the first object of Japanese greed. From the time of Hideyoshi Japan has regarded Korea as a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan, and has felt that the domination of Korea was necessary if the home islands were to be secure. Korea was also to be used by the Japanese for a base from which to expand into China and the rest of Asia. The Sino-Japanese war and the defeat of China separated Korea from Chinese suzerainty and made possible Japan's becoming the dominant power in that country through a process of infiltration and bribes.

Russia, in search for a warm-water port in the Pacific, occupied the Japanese islands of Tsu-Shima in 1860. Forced to withdraw from Tsu-Shima the Russians attempted to open Korea by force, but were thwarted by China. After the Sino-Japanese war Russia, unwilling to accept a secondary position in Korea, befriended the Korean king who was being held captive by the Japanese. Japan's plan to take over Korea was foiled by Russian intervention in behalf of the Korean sovereign.
Russian ascendancy in Korea strained relations between Russia and Japan, and as a result Japan changed her policy toward the Korean government from one of aggression to one of agreements. Korea now became a power in the larger game of Russo-Japanese rivalry in northeastern Asia. Both powers interpreted the agreements to fit their own plans and accused the other of violating them. The conflicting interpretations were bound to lead eventually to armed conflict.

The Boxer uprising led to Russia's assuming hegemony over Manchuria. Outraged at Russian action in Manchuria, and with Korea in mind, Japan prepared to go to war with Russia if England would stand by. Japanese reaction to Russian advances in Manchuria led to the Anglo-Japanese treaty and the closing of the Dardanelles to Russian warships. The treaty contributed materially to the Japanese victory over Russia.

Between 1895 and 1910, and particularly after 1904, the Japanese adopted a policy of gradual absorption of Korea, a process which met with unorganized Korean opposition.

Russia accepted her elimination from Korea, and put off until she could regain her strength all efforts to recover her position in the peninsula. Japanese inquiries
of Britain in 1908 indicate that Japan was worried about the opening of the Dardanelles. If Russia could move her Black Sea fleet to combine with the fleet in the Far East, Japan's victory in the war of 1904-1905 might be reversed and her plans for expansion on the Asiatic continent, and particularly into Manchuria, might be thwarted. Fortunately for Japan, events in the west tied Russian attention to Europe.

The Japanese annexation of Korea resulted in an all-out effort to exploit the peninsula politically and economically. The severity of Japanese rule led to Korean insurrections, and to a state of martial law which lasted for a period of forty-one years. In spite of Japanese attempts at suppression, the Korean spirit of nationalism lived on.

Throughout this period Russia's belief was apparent that she could not allow any other power to dominate Korea or Manchuria without endangering her access to the Pacific. On the other hand Japan would never allow Russia to occupy Korea, as this would constitute a threat to Japan, and she occupied and absorbed Korea in order to forestall Russian aggression.

Korea's geographical location, with her good ports and natural resources, made her the center of this conflict of interests. The situation has changed since 1945 only in
the adversaries, the United States taking the place that Japan occupied in the half century following the Sino-Japanese war. Bolshevik Russia has taken the same stand in the mid-twentieth century that tsarist Russia took in the nineteenth.
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