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An Analysis of Korean Intellectual Responses to the Exhibition of Koreans at Japanese Expositions: Nationalism and the Discourse on Northeast Asian Solidarity at the Turn of the Century

Hyeokhui KWON
University of Seoul

ABSTRACT

This paper examines Japanese exhibitions of Korean people and culture at the Anthropological Pavilion of the Fifth National Industrial Exposition held in Osaka in 1903 and the Crystal Pavilion of the Tokyo Industrial Exposition of 1907. These two exhibitions represent the discourse on social Darwinism in Northeast Asia before Korea's colonization by Japan. In particular, the responses of Korean intellectuals in these displays reveal complicated discourses, including the ideals of "Solidarity among the Northeastern countries" and loyalty among those of a "Common Race and Common Culture" in Northeast Asia and the outpouring of patriotic nationalism for resistance to Japan. In the end their response to the exhibitions can be seen as a portrait of Korean intellectuals who, after hoping for strategic solidarity among members of the yellow race, turned instead to nationalism.

Keywords: nationalism, Northeast Asian solidarity, social Darwinism, expositions as a phenomenon of modernity, human displays, colonialism and visual representation

"Human displays" first appeared in Western expositions in the late nineteenth century. They constituted a type of exhibit that showcased the stages of human civilization according to a modernist evolutionary scheme, while also serving as "freak shows" that catered to the visual curiosity of their audiences. They combined national aspirations built upon the expansion of Western empires with people's desire to see evidence of social evolutionary processes. Hinsley argues that "these displays of primitive 'others' tended to represent those peoples as raw materials within the regnant progressivist ideology" (1991, 345). Corbey also claims that these kinds of exhibitions should be interpreted within "the historical context of the collecting, measuring, classifying, picturing, filing, and narrating of colonial others" (1993, 338).

The popularity of social Darwinism in Western academic and popular circles led to its continuous presence as an idea at exhibitions beginning in the late nineteenth century. Western followers of social Darwinist theory essentially subscribed to the existence of a human evolutionary chain that placed some races nearer to animals than others (Greenhalgh 2000, 88–96). At this time, Western displays of humanity were not just reflections of existing peoples but aimed to render history, progress, and culture in order to evoke discourses on evolutionism and colonialism among their publics (Mitchell 1988, 101–02).

Government-sponsored expositions and human displays also appeared in Japan, Asia's sole colonial power. During the Meiji period (1868–1912), the content and purpose of government expositions in Japan focused on the development of commerce and trade based on industrial development policies. However, from the beginning of the twentieth century, such exhibitions also provided spaces for mass consumption, representing national expansion and colonized “others.” As in the West, human displays in early twentieth-century Japan were deeply associated with its own imperialist history of both internal and external conquest. To be more specific, human displays were connected to the colonization of the Ainu, the Ryukyuan (Okinawans), the Taiwanese, and later the Koreans. The popularity of these expositions reveals salient aspects of Japan's Meiji period, a time in which the country effectively absorbed Western ideas and practices. The human displays in Japan were very similar to the “native village” model, which had previously appeared at the Paris Exposition in 1889 and the Chicago Fair in 1893.

In this paper, I discuss two exhibitions: the Fifth National Industrial Exposition's *Gakujutsu Jinruikan* (Anthropological Pavilion) held in Osaka in 1903 and the Tokyo Industrial Exposition's *Suishōkan* (Crystal Pavilion) in 1907. These events were interlinked with the international political order in Northeast Asia at the time and became the subject of controversy. In the case of the Anthropological Pavilion, previous research has focused on the intentions of the Japanese organizers of the exhibition and has emphasized the discriminatory and imperialistic perspective that distinguished the Japanese from the other races displayed there (Matsuda 2003; Itō 2005). However, such research does not pay adequate attention to the 1907 Crystal Pavilion Korean display and, with respect to both exhibitions, has failed to address connections with social discourses reflecting international circumstances in Northeast Asia among the people who were represented. For Koreans, the two exhibitions in 1903 and 1907 resulted in complex ideological struggles concerning the survival of their nation on an international stage. In particular, Korean nationalists, especially those in the intellectual community, changed their stance from solidarity with Japan to resistance to it.

This study will examine the relationship between these exhibitions and the discourses of “Northeast Asian Solidarity” (*Tongyang yōndaeron* 東洋連帶論) and “Common Race and Common Culture” (*tongjong tongmun* 同種同文), both representing nationalism and social Darwinism as they were developing in Korea at that time, through the reconstruction of the intellectual responses to these two exhibitions. The Korean intellectual responses to the exhibits in the Anthropological Pavilion in 1903 and the Crystal Pavilion display of 1907 reflected these discourses, but took different forms in accordance with the internal and external circumstances of Korea. Consequently, this research examines how Korean responses transformed over time in accordance with a growing understanding of nationalism as the best means of saving the nation in a world of “survival of the fittest.”

Korean Reactions to the 1903 Display at the Anthropological Pavilion

The 1903 Anthropological Pavilion was a miniature version of the “native

village” exhibits at the world fairs of Western countries. The display by the Tokyo Anthropological Institute illustrated how anthropologists intervened in the public space of expositions and how they visually reproduced their studies. At that time, the purpose and contents of the display were detailed in the *Tokyo jinruigaku zasshi* (東京人類學雜誌 Tokyo Anthropological Journal), which explained that the human displays were based on the science of anthropology, only recently imported from the West. The prospectus of the anthropological pavilion explaining why the Tokyo Anthropological Institute participated in the exposition and what its objectives were was written by Tsuboi Shōgorō (坪井正五郎), who was the founder of the Tokyo Anthropological Journal and this institute. The Japanese classification of other ethnic groups in the Exposition was related to the rise of the new science of anthropology, which justified the idea of human displays. At the same time, the early twentieth century was the period in which Japanese people actively began to explore overseas research, including in Chosŏn, Taiwan, and Manchuria. This further developed the foundation established by journal publication, exhibition participation, and public lectures on anthropology that were conducted at the Tokyo Anthropological Institute during the nineteenth century. In fact, exhibitions of humankind can be understood as one of the activities intended to popularize this new discipline and establish the academic standing of anthropology in Japan (Sakano 2013, 70; Matsuda 2014, 188–99). This is specifically described in the prospectus for the Fifth National Industrial Exposition’s Anthropological Pavilion in 1903:

The Prospectus of the Anthropological Pavilion¹

The displaying of various ethnic groups based on their level of civilization, disposition, customs, and physical traits is absolutely essential for academic, commercial, and industrial development. Hence, it is proper to install comprehensive displays at exhibitions. The world fairs in Western countries provide justification as to why it is natural and reasonable to exhibit these displays of humans. . . . After discussions at the Tokyo Anthropological Institute, they (Japanese anthropologists) decided to bring in the seven types of natives closely related to the Japanese [to display]: the Ainu of Hokkaido, Taiwan’s indigenous people (*seiban* 生蕃), the Ryukyuan (琉球), Koreans, Chinese (支那), Indians, and Javanese. The aim of this display is to understand their lifestyles, level of civilization, dispositions, and customs by providing a place to view each country’s different residential models, garments, tools, behaviors, recreation and art, and racial features.

Meiji 36 [1903], January 14²

The “level of civilization” mentioned above, refers to the social Darwinist perspective associated with the ladder of evolution. The ethnic groups included

¹ The name of this exhibition hall was originally Jinruikan (Pavilion of Human Species) but, as soon as the display was opened, its name was changed to Gakujutsu Jinruikan (Academic Pavilion of Human Species; *Tokyo asahi shimbun*, March 9, 1903).

² “Zatsuhō” [General news], *Tokyo jinruigaku zasshi* [Journal of the Tokyo Anthropological Society] 203 (1903): 209.

in the display were diverse. The Ainu and Ryukyuan³ had been absorbed within Japan's borders (Ziomek 2014), while the Taiwanese *seiban* (生蕃) and *jukuban* (熟蕃)⁴ resided in Japan's formal colony. Koreans, who were within Japan's external sphere of influence, also were a part of the display, as were the people of India and Java—Asian countries with rather different civilizations. As described in the quote above, the purpose of the exposition was to show the level of civilization, dispositions, customs, and racial aspects of the people displayed. Their placement according to a social Darwinist perspective was based on their “level of civilization,” while displays on “dispositions” and “customs” provided insight into ethnic particularities. The choice of the displayed peoples at the exhibition hall was a reflection of a Japanese-centered discriminative perspective which deemed the Japanese to be “civilized,” whereas the rest of the displayed ethnic groups were categorized as uncivilized or othered as premodern. Additionally, this exhibition hall was located in the entertainment section and therefore had commercial and recreational purposes as well. It also was educational in nature, as evidenced by the participation of anthropologists Tsuboi Shōgorō and his student, Matsumura Akira (松村遼). The two Korean displays were somewhat different from those of the Ainu and the Taiwanese. The Japanese attempted to recreate an authentic Ainu village by bringing in a native house together with an Ainu family consisting of men, women, and children. Likewise, the Taiwanese display was composed of a husband and wife. However, like that of the Ryukyuan, the Korean display consisted only of two women, according to an *Osaka mainichi shimbun* article.⁵

Based on their appearance, as shown in Figure 1, both of the Korean women were in fact *kisaeng* (妓生).⁶ This illustration is one of the commemorative postcards from the Fifth National Industrial Exposition and includes the description, “Korean women displayed in the entertainment section of the Fifth National Industrial Exposition.” This postcard depicts the inside of a house, including a large jar, some kind of fabric, and one Korean woman who is seated on the floor, facing forward, and another who is standing, positioned to reveal her left side. Their different positions clearly show details in their physiques and traditional garments.

³ The Ainu were natives of Hokkaido. The Ryukyuan Islands were unified into a single kingdom in 1429, but in 1879, after the Meiji Restoration, the 450-year-old dynasty was ended and the islands were annexed by Japan.

⁴ *Seiban* was a term used for those of the indigenous Formosan people of Taiwan who were not assimilated into Chinese culture. *Jukuban* refers to people who had assimilated into Chinese Han culture.

⁵ “Jinruikan betsuken” [Overview of the Anthropological Pavilion], *Osaka mainichi shimbun*, March 9, 1903.

⁶ *Kisaeng* refers to the women who served and performed at feasts or drinking events in Korean traditional society. They were similar to the geisha in Japan. The evidence that the women on display were actually *kisaeng* is recorded in the memoirs of Nishida Masatoshi, the director of the Anthropological Pavilion. He consulted with Tsuboi Shōgorō of the Tokyo Anthropology Institute while directing Yamada Nisaburō to collect people from various parts of the world. He wrote that the people included in the exhibit were: “Korean *kisaeng*, Indians, African natives, Ainu, Taiwanese, and Ryukyuan.” Unlike the other races, he clearly stated the profession of the Koreans women as “*kisaeng*.” See “Engeki ‘jinruikan’ jōen o jitsugen sasetai kai” 演劇‘人類館’上演を実現させたい会 [Meeting for the realization of the performance of the theatrical “Anthropological Pavilion”], *Jinruikan: Fūin sareta tobira* 人類館：封印された扉 [Anthropological Pavilion: The sealed door] 2005, 125–26.



Figure 1. Korean *kisaeng* in the 1903 Exposition Postcard (Author's collection).

The clothing and flower crowns on their heads are performance attire. Such images of *kisaeng* were widely distributed as tourist souvenirs. Based on the fact that people of each ethnicity took turns performing on the main stage, the Korean women most likely performed in these clothes (Dai go-kai naikoku kangyō hakurankai kyōsankai 1903, 198–99).

In this way, the Koreans in the Anthropological Pavilion display were distinguished from other ethnic groups of the typical “native village,” such as the Ainu or Taiwanese *seiban*, who were displayed in family units. The Ainu and Taiwanese were highlighted as residents of internal and external colonies, while the Koreans were represented more as entertainers distinguished by their racial characteristics and costume.

In short, the Korean display combined a social Darwinist evolutionary perspective with entertainment for visitors. In comparison with the displays of other ethnic groups, the scale and gender composition of the Korean display were reduced and the two Koreans were not selected as typical specimens. These differences may have resulted from colonial boundaries and the international political situation at the time. Koreans were not included in the territories under full (colonial) Japanese control, while Ainu, Ryukyuan, and Taiwanese were. However, the exhibit stirred antipathy towards Japan among Koreans who felt it insulted them. At the core of the controversy, there was a feeling of betrayal of the principle of “common race and common culture” (同種同文). The four Chinese characters of this slogan represented an idealistic discourse that sought survival for the yellow race through the solidarity of Northeast Asian countries against the West. However, this discourse changed in accordance with the international

political order in Northeast Asia and such a transformation is apparent in the controversy over the second Korean display.

The 1907 Crystal Pavilion and Its Representation of Koreans

Unlike the case of the exhibits in the Anthropological Pavilion, no anthropologists participated in the Crystal Pavilion of the 1907 Tokyo Industrial Exhibition. The features of the Crystal Pavilion can be best understood by examining its interior. The exhibition was broadly divided into three stages. The first was a hall built in the form of a dark cave, which provided a terrifying experience. The second was the Crystal Palace, a fantasy experience hall consisting of a luxurious palace decorated with crystals and utilizing mirror reflections to create optical illusions, providing a mystical and fantastical atmosphere. Lastly, the third stage, displayed at the end of the Crystal Palace, displayed two Korean individuals, a man and a woman, dressed in traditional garments and seated in chairs.⁷ It is important to note that the Crystal Pavilion served as an entertainment facility for the exposition, while at the same time was built as a subdivision of the Korean exhibition hall.⁸ Because there were initially not many visitors to the Korea exhibition hall, which was located in the corner of the exposition area, after its opening, neighboring Japanese merchants built the Crystal Pavilion to attract visitors' attention and hired Koreans to naturally connect these two pavilions.⁹

There are newspaper and magazine records from Korea discussing how the Koreans came to be exhibited at the time. While there are some discrepancies among the accounts, they all state that the Korean man was hired by a Japanese.



Figure 2. Exposition postcard of the two Koreans who were on display, together with Japanese merchants (Author's collection).

⁷ "Suishōkan no Kankokujin mondai" [The problem of Koreans in the Crystal Pavilion], *Tokyo asahi shimbun*, June 16, 1907.

⁸ "Suishōkan" [The Crystal Pavilion], *Fūzokugahō* 風俗畫報 [Pictorial magazine of [Japanese] customs] no. 365, 1907, 28–29.

⁹ "Kankokushiki no fujin kaihō" [Women's liberation, Korean style], *Yomiuri shimbun*, June 17, 1907.

However, there are major differences in their accounts of the presence of a woman on the stage. The records provided in the Japanese newspapers, *Tokyo asahi* and *Yomiuri*, describe the Koreans as coming to the exposition of their own free will.¹⁰ However, they did not know how they would be displayed, which became an issue for the Korean woman because customarily Korean women were not exposed to public view in such a way.¹¹ The following two accounts reveal this, as well as consequent Korean reactions:

- She said, “I heard that I can enjoy sightseeing and also make a lot of money if I went to the exposition of Japan.” However, I was insulted like this. . . . Do our compatriots know? Have they heard? Or have they not heard that one of our Korean women is shedding tears, suffering under enormous disgrace from people all over the world?¹²
- Korean international students came every day and expressed their painful feelings to the manager of the Crystal Pavilion because displaying a Korean woman as a spectacle is against Korean customs.¹³

Korean articles agree that the woman on display was from Taegu and that she was in her early twenties, though the daily newspaper *Mansebo* (萬歲報) article also described her as a *kisaeng*, named “Chwihyang” (翠香).¹⁴ The most significant discrepancy in the records concerns her name.¹⁵ The *Taehan maeil sinbo* introduces her as “Kim,” but she is referred to as “Pak” in *Maechön yarok*, whereas the *Tokyo asahi* and *Yomiuri* are more specific in that they provide her full name as “Chŏng Myŏng-sŏn,” with the Chinese characters for her name (鄭命先) being included in the *Taegŭk hakpo*. The man who was displayed was introduced as “Interpreter Pak” in the *Taehan maeil sinbo*, but was referred to as “Pak Hang-yang” in the *Taegŭk hakpo* and as “Pak Yang-hang” in the *Tōkyō asahi shimbun*. Pak was not only put on display, but also acted as an interpreter who explained about the woman to the crowds. Among the many records, the monthly magazine *Taegŭk hakpo* (太極學報) has the greatest credibility in that it contains coverage of a Korean official who discussed the issue of the Korean woman’s repatriation with the director of the with her most competently. In other publications she was most commonly just identified as a “woman” and according to the articles in the daily newspaper *Taehan*

¹⁰ “Suishōkan no Kankokujin mondai” [The problem of Koreans in the Crystal Pavilion], *Tokyo asahi shimbun*, June 16, 1907; “Kankokushiki no fujin kaihō” [Women’s liberation, Korean style], *Yomiuri shimbun*, June 17, 1907.

¹¹ In general, there was the custom of covering the face in traditional society when Korean upper class women went out. Therefore, the exhibition of a Korean woman would have been shocking to Koreans.

¹² “Tonggyōng pangnamhoe e ch’ulp’umhan a puin” 東京博覽會에 出品한 我婦人 [One of our women displayed in the Tokyo industrial exposition], *Taehan maeil sinbo*, June 21, 1907.

¹³ “Kankokushiki no fujin kaihō,” *Yomiuri shimbun*, June 17, 1907.

¹⁴ “Tonggyōng pangnamhoe sŏnghwang” 東京博覽會盛況 [The success of the Tokyo industrial exhibition], *Mansebo*, June 23, 1907.

¹⁵ The name of the woman was also given as “Chŏng Myŏng-gwang” and that of the man as “Pak Yang-hwŏn” in the *Fūzokugahō*. See “Tonggyōng pangnamhoe e ch’ulp’umhan a puin,” *Taehan maeil sinbo*, June 21, 1907; “Chappo” [general news], *Taegŭk hakpo* 11, June 24, 1907, “Suishōkan” [The Crystal Pavilion]; *Fūzokugahō* no. 365, 1907, 28–29.

Table 1. Descriptions of the Displayed Koreans¹⁶

Man	Woman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Shaved head, wearing traditional clothing, and often seated with legs crossed · Wearing traditional clothing and dressed in a large-sleeved jacket · Dressed in pale yellow garments while wandering around the inside of the exhibition room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Wearing green and white Japanese garment decorated with a purple butterfly pattern and a Korean-style skirt¹⁸ while sitting in a chair and singing a sad song · Wearing a skirt that covered her head but left her eyes showing; sitting in a chair wearing a Korean woman's garments · A typical lower class Korean female covered in white makeup and painted with red rouge · A Korean woman was hired to wind the music box. She was dressed in pale yellow and made to pace the interior of the palace

maeil sinbo, she herself stated that she was a “commoner.”¹⁷ The *Taehan maeil sinbo* provided descriptions of the Koreans on display. The different ways the man and woman were described can be seen in Table 1.

According to the records mentioned above, the Korean man and woman on display were dressed in traditional Korean clothing. A railing was installed to prevent visitors from coming too close. They were therefore displayed like objects, as stereotypical specimens of Koreans, while a Japanese guide informed the tourists of their names and ages and described their appearance.¹⁹ The Koreans were presented simply as a source of entertainment, not unlike the terror and fantasy experiences of the Crystal Palace. In addition, lots of traditional objects relating to Korean daily life were displayed in the Korea exhibition hall located next to the Crystal Palace.²⁰ Consequently, it can be said that Koreans displayed in the Crystal Palace were selected as a subject thematically connecting the two pavilions together. Therefore, the Crystal Pavilion was an entertainment facility that provided terror and fantasy experiences, as well as exhibiting Korean specimens. Korean newspapers described the Koreans on display as being exhibited like “animals,”²¹ inciting the anger of Korean intellectuals,²² who regarded the event, particularly the

¹⁶ “Tonggyōng pangnamhoe e ch’ulp’umhan a puin,” *Taehan maeil sinbo*, June 21, 1907.

¹⁷ “Tonggyōng pangnamhoe e ch’ulp’umhan a puin,” *Taehan maeil sinbo*, June 21, 1907.

¹⁸ This refers to the *ssūgaech’ima*, a kind of skirt Korean women traditionally used to cover their faces when they went out in public

¹⁹ The entertainment function of the Crystal Pavilion can also be seen through the lottery held after the viewing. When visitors came out through the exit a host gave out prizes through a lottery. The prizes, in order of monetary value, were a golden crystal ring, crystal-embedded items, crystal hair ornaments, and coupons, which could be used to purchase dishes such as sushi, red bean soup, and beer, as well as Western dishes. See “Suishōkan” [The Crystal Pavilion], *Fūzokugahō* no. 365 (1907): 28–29.

²⁰ See the *Tokyo kanyō hakurankai jikki* 東京勸業博覧会実記 [The report of Tokyo Industrial exposition] (1907), 37.

²¹ *Taehan maeil sinbo*, June, 6 1907; *Mansebo*, June 23, 1907; and *Maech’ōn yarok* (the latter by Hwang Hōn 黄玑) described how the Koreans were exhibited as if they were animals. Such a response might be due to the fact that displaying the woman was against Korean custom.

²² In this paper, the phrase Korean intellectuals refers to people who had a significant understanding of modern knowledge and the international situation, such as high officials, international students in Japan, and journalists.

exhibition of a woman, as a mockery of Korea.

To summarize, both displays were a combination of an effort to educate the public as well to provide an entertaining attraction that captivated the eyes of the masses through visually stimulating subjects. In particular the 1907 display was presented as something of a “freak show.” In light of this, the expositions of the early twentieth century were different from the previous industrial expositions in size and content and were transforming into sites of commercialization reflecting the spread of a (Japanese) culture of consumption and the growth of Japan’s entertainment industry. The Anthropological Pavilion and Crystal Palace were examples of the production and commercialization of ethnographic displays with Koreans as their object.

The most significant similarity between these two displays was that Korean protests against them resulted in their withdrawal. The display of the Anthropological Pavilion was canceled within a short period of time after March 19, 1903, when three Koreans in Japan submitted a joint protest against the pavilion to the Japanese director of the Osaka police bureau. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, fearing that the issue would result in diplomatic problems with Korea, ordered its removal. Korean students in Tokyo protested against the Crystal Pavilion display multiple times, with Korean media printing critical articles, and the exhibit was subsequently removed. Ultimately, the two displays stimulated ethnic sentiment among Koreans, leading to fierce criticism against Japan in the Korean media. However, the responses of Korean intellectuals to the two displays also showed distinct differences.

The Anthropological Pavilion and Korean Responses

Although the Chinese exhibition was canceled even before it opened due to opposition from Chinese students studying in Japan, the Korean display in the Anthropological Pavilion was opened on March 10, 1903, and continued at least until shortly after March 24.²³ It was only withdrawn by the Japanese government for diplomatic reasons following the Korean protests in Osaka.²⁴ Subsequent to the filing of complaints by three Koreans, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave orders to remove the Korean display. Shortly thereafter the local government in Osaka reported the removal of the Korean display to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which put an end to the controversial issue.

The Japanese government recognized the Chinese and the Korean displays in the 1903 Anthropological Pavilion as sensitive issues. An examination of the diplomatic documents disclosing the perspective of the Japanese government reveals that it was concerned about diplomatic relations at the time the complaints occurred. This can be seen in the following document that indicates the Japanese

²³ According to diplomatic records, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered the Osaka government to withdraw the Korean display on March 19, and on March 24 the Osaka government reported its plan to do so. Thus, it was probably removed after that date (Itō 2005, 78).

²⁴ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed the withdrawal of the Chinese display and then ordered the withdrawal of the Korean one (Itō 2005, 78).

government's official response to the Korean display at the Anthropological Pavilion:

The purpose of this exposition is to advance the commercial interests of China, Korea, and Japan. Additionally, the government was urged to provide convenient facilities and encourage officials, merchants, and common people of both China and Korea to come and view the exposition. This incident, however, offended the Chinese and Koreans, which contravened the original intention of the government and was damaging to the mutual bond of trust between our peoples that has been maintained for a long time.²⁵

In this document, the Japanese government stressed its concern for the original purpose of the exposition—economic advancement and commercial development—and the possibility that diplomatic problems with Korea, which was still an independent country, could arise.²⁶ While the report to the Japanese foreign ministry by the Osaka vice-governor on March 24, 1903 states that “the Korean display was never [formally] presented to Koreans” and the Koreans who actually saw this display were likely few in number, the diplomatic document quoted above indicates that people from both China and Korea were encouraged to “come and view the exposition.”

The immediate cause of the removal of the Korean display, the protest filed by the three Koreans, was recorded in the March 19 issue of the daily newspaper *Osaka mainichi shimbun*. Though a Japanese paper, it printed a protest against the Korean display written by Koreans living in Japan. The March 19 article begins: “Cho Hui-yön (趙義淵 1856–1915) and two others remonstrated to the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the display of Korean women at the Anthropological Pavilion is detrimental to the [good] relations among neighboring countries and [their petition] reads as follows”:

Protest against the Fifth National Exposition

The advancement of civilization demonstrated by the exposition deserves to be admired and encouraged. The exposition is equipped with the products of the land and the sea, industrial goods, and it lacks nothing. The Academic Human Pavilion, however, displays the savage races, which consists of the Ryukyuan, the natives of Hokkaido, and native Taiwanese, [all of who are] under the domination of imperial Japan. As for the Korean women, we are not certain whether the two countries, Korea and Japan, came to an agreement about the display. But, according to what we have seen and heard of the display, the women were merely individuals whom the traders hired through trickery. Will you investigate the merchant to find out the reason for this act? Do you not also think that the trust between neighbors should not be broken? Righteous people and those with greater purpose will always agree. It is said that the three Northeastern nations abide by the mutual bond of “common race and common culture.” However, would not displaying only the Korean women not cause great

²⁵ Itō 2005, 78.

²⁶ However, there are no official documents from the Korean government on this subject. Within twenty days of its opening the Korean display was removed, and with the exception of the daily newspaper, *Hwangšong sinmun* (皇城新聞), there was no other significant Korean media coverage.

tension between our two countries? We intervene out of a desire to avoid such a situation. We are of a common race, and with the affections of a common culture, we believe it is reasonable to dare to submit this protest, as this incident is extremely offensive. The Korean citizens Cho Hüiyön, Yi Chin-ho, Ch'oe Chöng-dök²⁷

The core of this protest is that the Korean display harms the trust between the three nations. This problem is set forth in two arguments. In the first argument, it is pointed out that the Ainu, the Ryukyuan, and the natives of Hokkaido and Taiwan were under Japanese domination, but because Korea was an independent country at the time, the article implies that its people should not be subjects of the exhibition. The other argument emphasized the neighborly relations and mutual trust that arose from the three nations being of a “common [yellow] race” and sharing a “common [Confucian] culture.” In particular, the three Koreans criticized the fact that only Korean women were displayed among the three nations (though technically Japanese subjects, the Ryukyuan women were not regarded as truly Japanese or as members of the same “yellow” race). They objected that Koreans were treated in this way even though the planned exhibition of Chinese women was withdrawn before its opening. As a result, they considered such a display of Korean women as a betrayal of the principle of a “common race and common culture.” This perspective, however, contrasts with the protests of the Chinese at the time, with Chinese students strongly criticizing the planned exhibition, their stance clearly presented in their proclamation, “Oh Chinese! Oh Chinese!”

India and Ryukyu, the fallen nations, are the slaves of the United Kingdom and Japan. Korea, once our vassal state, is now a protectorate of Japan and Russia. The Javanese, the Ainu, and the Taiwanese *seiban* are the world's lowliest races, close to beasts. Even if the Chinese people are so despised, how could we be treated as being at the same level as these six races! (Tomiyama 2002)

While Koreans mentioned the moral conduct between neighboring countries, the Chinese took great offense at being placed on the same level as the other races on display and strongly objected. According to the documents, they perceived India and Ryukyu²⁸ as “slaves of the United Kingdom and Japan” and the Javanese, the Ainu, and the Taiwanese *seiban* as “the world's lowliest races.” Korea likewise represented the decline of the Chinese nation as it was “once a vassal state of China” but “now a protectorate of Japan and Russia.” They understood the Anthropological Pavilion within the framework of imperialist international

²⁷ “Jinruikan to Kankokujin kanrankyaku” [The Anthropological Pavilion and Korean visitors], *Osaka mainichi shimbun*, March 19, 1903.

²⁸ Ryukyuan also started a display-withdrawal movement. Since the Ryukyu Islands had been integrated into Japan they felt that only withdrawing the Chinese and Koreans from the displays was an insult to them as compatriots of the Japanese. Moreover, the *Ryūkyū shimpō* (琉球新報) in Okinawa led the public outcry in protesting against the exhibition, condemning most vehemently their being placed in the same rank as the Ainu and Taiwanese *seiban*.

relations. This defiant opposition of the Chinese students studying abroad reflected their frustration following China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War.

Although the Chinese rhetoric is more explicitly prejudicial, the Koreans, too, saw the issue through a racialized lens influenced by social Darwinism, the ideology that dominated the international environment in the late nineteenth century. In addition, there were many voices among Korean intellectuals and bureaucrats who sought to resist Western imperialism by unifying with Asia's superpower, Japan. Such views by Korean intellectuals in the late nineteenth century can be clearly seen in an editorial of the daily newspaper *Tongnip sinmun*.

Not only are Korea, Japan, and China all located in one Asia, but they also share similarities in racial origin, thus sharing similar physical characteristics, the common use of Chinese characters, and many common customs. These three countries must protect and help each other by strengthening their bonds, and emulate European studies and education so that the three Northeast Asia countries can quickly and capably fend off the Europeans' invasion and not succumb to their rule.²⁹

As shown above, the idea of “Northeast Asian Solidarity” created by some intellectuals and pro-Japanese bureaucrats was based on the rationale of a common race and culture, and the Koreans who protested against the exhibition in 1903 emphasized the unjust nature of the Korean human display through the same discourse. Additionally, the three Koreans who criticized the display were from a pro-Japanese background. The first signatory, Cho Hŭi-yŏn, was a bureaucrat who had served as a Defense Minister and was exiled to Japan after the collapse of the Kim Hong-jip Cabinet in 1896. He was one of the eight collaborators who led the pro-Japanese party with Kim Hong-jip (金弘集, 1842–1896), Kim Yun-sik (金允植, 1835–1922), and Pak Chŏng-yang (朴定陽, 1841–1904) at the end of the nineteenth century. The second, Yi Chin-ho (李軫鎬, 1867–1946), who was also exiled to Japan, returned after the signing of the Protectorate Treaty in 1905 and later became a high official in the colonial government. The last, Ch'oe Chŏng-dŏk (崔廷德, 1865–?), was also a typical member of the pro-Japanese party of that period.³⁰

In the end, the protest of the exhibit, published in the *Osaka mainichi*, reflected the three Koreans' recognition of the Japan-centered discourse of “Northeast Asian Solidarity” against the West. Korean intellectuals and bureaucrats believed that they could protect Korea from Western imperialism and strengthen Korea with the help of the Japanese, who had successfully modernized and won the Sino-Japanese War. This means that intellectuals' or bureaucrats' understanding of the Korean display of 1903 was based on the discourse recognizing Japan as an allied nation of the same yellow race. After the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905),

²⁹ “Nonsŏl” [Editorial], *Tongnip sinmun*, April 7, 1898.

³⁰ Yi Chin-ho and Ch'oe Chŏng-dŏk continued to act as pro-Japanese bureaucrats. Lee served as the head of the education and management bureau in the colonial government and Ch'oe served as the governor of South Kyŏngsang Province after the Protectorate Treaty (1905). Information about the three men can be found in the *Han'guk minjok munhwa taebaekkwajasŏn* [Encyclopedia of Korean culture] (<http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Index>).

however, Japan came to dominate Korea through seizing its diplomatic rights in 1905, and disbanding the Korean army and placing Japanese in all the government ministries in 1907. Therefore, protests against the display of 1907 reflect the fact that Korea was weakening rapidly in an international political order based on “survival of the fittest.”

The Response of Koreans to the Crystal Pavilion Display

Compared with the earlier Anthropological Pavilion display, the one at the Crystal Pavilion in 1907 did not explicitly showcase discriminatory views of “the civilized against the uncivilized.” Nonetheless, the Korean media criticized the display and protested against it, while the Japanese trivialized their reactions. The Japanese perspective on the Korean display can be seen through the following article from the daily *Yomiuri shimbun* 読売新聞:

They hired a Korean woman for the spectacle and made her a wind a music box . . . The Crystal Pavilion of the first exhibition section of the Exposition is not popular due to its poor location . . . even though the manager of the Crystal Pavilion tried to convince the international students [to cease their protest] by explaining that they did not intentionally insult the Korean woman and that the event was being held out of good will in order to encourage women’s activities, the Korean students did not accept that explanation . . . Their anger is understandable based on their customs but we understand the display as intending to take her away from male domination or as an attempt at women’s liberation to enable women to transcend their lives of seclusion . . . The most important thing is her will . . . but it is a really funny thing that she did not wish to return to her country.³¹

According to this article, in the Japanese media the controversy about the Korean display is not related to discrimination against Koreans or the violation of humanitarian principles, but to the issue of freedom represented by a Korean woman working at the fair. In addition, neither the movement to repatriate the woman by Korean students in Japan nor their arguments were included in the press. Instead, the article emphasized the fact that the woman displayed had been hired as a worker and did not wish to return home. In contrast, the Korean *Taehan maeil sinbo* reported that the Japanese organizer enticed the woman to work at the exhibition by telling her that she could make easy money and also have the opportunity to travel, but that in the end she felt insulted by being exhibited inhumanely. On one hand, this reaction in the *Taehan maeil sinbo* implies a Japanese insensitivity previously revealed in the *Yomiuri shimbun* towards the ethical issues of exhibiting neighboring countries’ people. On the other hand, in many Korean reports, such as those found in the *Mansebo*, *Taegük hakpo*, and *Maech’ön yarok* (梅泉野錄), she was depicted as a victim because the Korean responses were not focused on women’s rights but on national shame. Korean responses can be classified into two types. One simply criticized the display as racist, such as the responses found in *Mansebo* and *Maech’ön yarok*, summarized in

³¹ “Kankokushiki no fujin kaihō,” *Yomiuri shimbun*, June 17, 1907.

Table 2. The Response of Koreans to the Crystal Pavilion Display Recorded in the *Mansebo* and *Maech'ŏn yarok*

Source	Response ³²
<i>Mansebo</i> ³³	This [display of the woman treats her as] no more than an animal [in a zoo]. Korean students proposed gathering funds to return the displayed woman back to Korea, but it is unfortunate that I could not contribute to the cause because I did not have any money.
<i>Maech'ŏn yarok</i> ³⁴	This is a mockery of the Korean people, displaying one of us as a squirming animal. But the two people didn't even know why they were being displayed. They just stayed seated quietly day in and day out, obeying the orders of the Japanese. At the time, people from all over the world were shocked to see such a spectacle, a heinous act by the Japanese.

Table 3. The Response of Koreans to the Crystal Pavilion Display Recorded in the *Taehan Maeil Sinbo* and *T'aegŏk Hakpo*

Source	Response
<i>Taehan maeil sinbo</i> ³⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Such a tragedy has come upon us! Previously, I looked on African natives with pity, but who would have known that on this day the African natives would pity me even more! · It is even more painful and frustrating to hear that some Koreans do not realize the enormity of such shame and insult upon our nation and fellow compatriots, but rather compliment the director of the Crystal Pavilion. · At this fair, not even African natives were put on display, but why have the Japanese displayed our compatriots in an exhibit and received admission fees from Western and Northeast Asian people alike? · Korea has had a four-thousand-year history of independence. . . What excuse could we give to explain why we sold even just one of our own, a female compatriot, for display to outsiders? As long as I can shed tears and have bones in my body I will continue to ask each of my compatriots [this question].
<i>T'aegŏk hakpo</i> ³⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · You may say that the exhibition does not damage the dignity of Koreans, but it is because you observe this event from the Japanese perspective. When a Korean, even the most ignorant person, observes the same incident from the Korean perspective, it is only obvious that this is a grave insult to us. · A few years back, a deceitful merchant exhibited two Korean women in the "Savages" Pavilion at the Osaka national exposition and charged an admission fee. On the surface, this exhibition may seem to be of a different nature; yet in actuality, there is little difference, so consider again the matter of humanitarian principles and morality and return this woman back to Korea! · Compatriots! If the 20 million Korean compatriots in this country had the same heart as Min Wŏn-sik,³⁷ would not the nation develop?

³² The author excerpted this information from the *Mansebo* and *Maech'ŏn yarok*.

³³ "Tonggyŏng pangnamhoe sŏnghwang" [The success of the Tokyo industrial exhibition], *Mansebo*, June 23, 1907.

³⁴ Hwang Hŏn, *Maech'ŏn yarok* (Seoul: Munhak kwa chisŏngsa, 2005), 400–01.

³⁵ "Tonggyŏng pangnamhoe e ch'ulp'umhan a puin," *Taehan maeil sinbo*, June 21, 1907.

³⁶ "Chappo" [General news], *T'aegŏk hakpo*, June 24, 1907.

³⁷ Min Wŏn-sik (閔元植, 1887–1921) propagated northeast Asian solidarity with Japan. After the colonization of Korea, he was known for organizing pro-Japanese media and organizations. However, he raised the issue of repatriating the Korean woman on display at the Tokyo Industrial Exposition of 1907 while he was visiting Japan as a Korean government official during this period. It seems that he was angry at the exhibition of a Korean woman because he regarded the case as a betrayal of the principle of "common race and common culture."

Table 2, while the other strongly protested against what was regarded as a national disgrace, and called for an awakening of Koreans, such as the articles in *Taehan maeil sinbo* and *Taegük hakpo* displayed in Table 3.

The two records quoted above emphasized the inhumanity of the exhibit, using terms like “an animal” and “squirming animals.” In *Maech’ön yarok*, Hwang Hön also described the Korean display as “a heinous act of the Japanese” and the newspaper *Mansebo* wrote of her as being treated as “no more than an animal,” but neither mentions the movement pursued by the Korean students to return the displayed subjects home. On the other hand, the *Taehan maeil sinbo*, a representative newspaper of the Patriotic Enlightenment movement, and the *Taegük hakpo*, a journal of Korean students abroad, reported the incident and people’s reaction to it in greater detail. The *Taegük hakpo*, in particular, raised the matter of humanitarian principles through a comparison with the 1903 incident in Osaka. In addition, many patriotic claims were expressed with emotional rhetoric that connected with the prevailing nationalistic discourse in the media of the Patriotic Enlightenment movement era as revealed in the cases below.

As shown above, the reactions of the *Taehan maeil sinbo* and *Taegük hakpo* were quite vehement. The use of the word “compatriot” multiple times in both papers appealed to nationalist sensibilities in readers and emphasized that the Korean display was not just a personal matter but a disgrace imposed upon the whole nation. The *Taehan maeil sinbo* likened the situation of Koreans to that of African natives, viewed as the most barbaric race by Korean intellectuals at that time, sorrowfully lamenting that both were represented as being at a similar stage of civilization, and underscoring the fact that only the Korean race was exhibited at the fair in 1907. Overall, the *Taehan maeil sinbo* appealed to nationalistic sentiments, expressing a fiercely emotional reaction to the “enormous disgrace” of the Korean display, while the *Taegük hakpo* simultaneously stirred up nationalistic emotion as it criticized the Japanese and their Korean display. It claimed that the Crystal Pavilion display was no different from the exhibition of the Anthropological Pavilion in 1903 and emphasized the discriminatory views underlying the exhibit.

Thus, these papers revealed themselves to be typical representatives of the Korean media during what historians call the “Patriotic Enlightenment movement” (1905–1910), as they emphasized the patriotic sentiments of nationalism. In such papers of the time, references to an “awakening of compatriots” and “strengthening of national power” were common, an example of which follows:

Oh, twentieth-century imperialism! Like swirling winds, floodwaters rushing, tides clashing, thundering, lightning striking like fire! Under the banner of the sacred Monroe Doctrine (the principle that I do not interfere with others and others do not interfere with me), the six or eight powers are now vigorously worshipping this imperialism. They have fought amongst each other and succumbed to imperialism. Now imperialism dominates the world. That being the case, how do we go about defying this imperialism? The only way is to inspire nationalism. Nationalism is truly the way to preserve our nation . . . Oh, those who want to preserve this nation, what are you doing if not revering nationalism? . . . If nationalism develops and shows its magnificent light, even vicious and ruthless imperialism would not

dare invade us . . .”³⁸

This nationalist tone of the press should be seen against the historical backdrop of the Korean attempt to defend national sovereignty from Japanese imperialism. As seen in the editorial above, written by Sin Ch'ae-ho (申采浩, 1880–1936), nationalism was thought to be the ideology best suited for fending off imperialist invasion following the Russo-Japanese War. Shin advocated a synthetic system of socio-political and cultural thought which may be called “Confucian social Darwinism,” a nationalistic worldview based on the principles of “the survival of the fittest” and “the law of the jungle” that at the same time was underpinned by Confucian ethics (Tikhonov 2008, 108–09). He also highlighted national history as the “familial genealogy of the national family” and defined a “national hero” as a person able to “regard the whole of Korea as his household” (Tikhonov 2010, 199). Like Shin, many other Korean intellectuals raised the nationalist banner in hopes of saving their nation from annexation. Thus, many calls for the solidarity and unity of the population appeared in the Korean press in these years (Schmid 2002, 46).

The social Darwinist understandings of Korean intellectuals were essential elements of nationalistic discourse around 1907. The most important goal of the Patriotic Enlightenment movement was to spread nationalism among the Korean people. Nationalistic appeals were a practical strategy for survival and an inevitable choice as a means to avert annexation by Japan. The responses to the Crystal Pavilion display in 1907 were created against the historical backdrop of such a discourse. The tone of the arguments expressed in the *Taehan maeil sinbo* and *Taegük hakpo* emphasized strong resistance to Japan and support for national unity and was largely influenced by the nationalistic movement that developed after the Protectorate Treaty of 1905. The Crystal Pavilion incident was treated as an appropriate opportunity to awaken the Korean people to the necessity of national unity and to inspire in them opposition to Japanese imperialism.

The Transformation in Korean People's Perceptions of the Display of Koreans

As examined in the previous sections, the response of Koreans to the displays in 1903 and 1907 reflects the rapid transformations in Northeast Asia at the beginning of the twentieth century, when Korean intellectuals believed that the fate of their nation would be determined by the principles of social Darwinism. From the 1890s onward, social evolutionary theory, which spread through newspapers and magazines, identified nations and races engaged in a struggle of survival of the fittest. Basing themselves on the same discourse, Korean intellectuals insisted on the adoption of Western civilization in order to survive. With national independence under threat, the social evolutionary perspective was accepted as an appropriate model for providing an explanation of the politics of the international order and a means for resisting the Western imperialist invasion of Asia. Many

³⁸ “Chegukchuüi wa minjokchuüi” [Imperialism and nationalism], *Taehan maeil sinbo*, May 28, 1909. Excerpt from Sin Ch'ae-ho's editorial.

Korean intellectuals accepted the social-Darwinist perspective of competition between races, which was promoted by Japanese politicians like Itō Hirobumi (伊藤博文, 1841–1909).³⁹ Itō's idealistic presentation of the need for solidarity between the three countries of China, Japan, and Korea was the logic that justified Korean support of Japan during the Russo-Japanese War.

Such perspectives of Korean intellectuals on the international situation, however, were challenged by the attitude of Japan after its victory over Russia in 1905. Before the Protectorate Treaty of that year, many Korean intellectuals, who viewed international politics as a struggle for dominance between the yellow and white race, believed that Japan should act as a shield against the West. They also recognized the importance of solidarity among the three Northeast Asian nations, which were situated together in a region with cultural and racial affinities, as a means to survive. This was due in part to their expectations of Japan playing a leading role and the discourse that the three Asian countries should coexist. The discourse emphasizing the coexistence and balance of the three countries based on cultural homogeneity was shared by many Korean intellectuals before the Russo-Japanese War, such as the following newspaper editorial.

It is hardly surprising that people of a common race have a special affection for one another. Among the yellow race, there are three nations in Northeast Asia: Korea, Japan, and China. Their relations are like the legs of a cauldron, so if one leg falls, the pot will slant. Likewise, if even one of the three nations is corrupt and politically unstable, it will be difficult to fend off the Western powers. Thus, against such a crisis, it is inevitable that the three Northeast Asia powers would support one another.⁴⁰

The concept of “Northeast Asian Solidarity” illustrated above in this editorial of the daily newspaper *Cheguk sinmun* was derived from the race-centered social evolutionary perspective. However, the persuasiveness of the idea of a “common race and common culture” as a foundation for Asian solidarity was weakened by Japan's seizure of Korean national sovereignty. From the late 1890s to the early 1900s the leading Korean newspapers had stressed the unity of the three Northeast Asia nations, but in 1905 they began to move away from race-centered Pan-Asianism and, after the 1905 Protectorate Treaty, switched their stance to support the Sovereignty Restoration Movement that strongly criticized Japan. Promoting patriotism in the media was one of the methods of resistance to Japan for the restoration of sovereignty. At this time, Korean independence activists carried out patriotic activities based on nationalism, the core of which was the ideal of an “autonomous realization of national power,” to resist the encroachments of foreign countries by enlightening the common people.

The responses to the Korean display incidents, as examined in this article, reflect the changes in perception of the Korean elite according to the power shifts

³⁹ Itō was shot to death by An Chung-gūn (安重根, 1879–1910) for his perceived betrayal of Northeast Asian solidarity.

⁴⁰ “Nonsōl” [Editorial], *Cheguk sinmun*, February 9, 1900.

in international politics. In 1903, when Russia and Japan were competing for domination over Korea, Korean intellectuals were conflicted about the stance they should take. While Japan was a member of the yellow race symbolizing the East and Russia and the white race representing the West, among intellectuals there were voices warning of Japanese invasion even as there was a widespread discussion focusing on a Japanese-centered “Northeast Asian Solidarity.” Therefore, the three Korean men’s protest stressed friendship among the Northeast Asian nations and the fidelity to a “common race and common culture.”

Conversely, the Korean reaction to the Crystal Pavilion display in 1907 was one of fierce emotions characterized by concerns over “national disgrace.” Not only did this reflect the events of 1905, when Japan broke the bonds of “common race and common culture” and concluded the Protectorate Treaty, but it was also connected to the eruption of strong anti-Japanese feelings after the forced abdication of Emperor Kojong and the dissolution of the Korean army in 1907. Thus, the strong resistance and anti-Japanese sentiments of Koreans to the Crystal Pavilion display emerged at a historical juncture in which the realization of the discourse of peace in Northeast Asia based on Pan-Asianism had become highly unrealistic. The 1907 display of Koreans in the context of the Japanese exhibition shocked Korean intellectuals of the time, such as Yun Ch’i-ho (尹致昊, 1865–1945), Chang Chi-yŏn (張志淵, 1864–1921), and An Chung-gŭn (安重根, 1879–1910), who saw Japan’s violation of the trust of a greater Northeast Asia peace as an act of betrayal. In particular, the formation of nationalistic discourses of Korean intellectuals around 1905 began to be strengthened after their expectations for Northeast Asian Solidarity were disappointed. The extracts below from Yun’s diary and Chang’s newspaper editorial written in 1905 also reveal severe criticism of Japan’s betrayal. As shown below, Korea intellectuals regarded the shift in power relations in Northeast Asia as destructive of cultural unity and threatening to the peace between the three Asian countries. Such emotional nationalism had been widespread among Korean intellectuals since 1905 and was therefore also expressed in response to the display of Koreans in 1907.

I am glad Japan has beaten Russia. The islanders have gloriously vindicated the honor of the yellow race. The white man has so long been the master of situation that he has kept the Oriental races in over [sic] for centuries. For Japan to break this spell single handed, is grand in its very conception. Even if she had failed, the grandeur of her heroism would have been an eternal honor. Just think where would and could a yellow man have lifted his face in this world even had Japan been beaten! I love and honor Japan as a member of the yellow race; but hate her as a Korean from whom she is taking away everything including independence itself.⁴¹

Previously when Marquis Itō Hirobumi came to Korea, the innocent Korean masses said amongst themselves, “Since the marquis spoke of himself as one who arranges the peace of the three Northeast Asia nations, the reason why he came to Korea today must surely be to

⁴¹ See Yun Ch’i-ho 1989, 143.

recommend the independence of our country.” So every Korean welcomed him from the port of Inchön to Seoul. But there are so many unpredictable things on this earth. Why has the 1905 Five [-article] Treaty been submitted! This treaty will not only endanger Korea, but also bring division and strife among the three Northeast Asia nations. Then where did Marquis Itō’s real intention lie?⁴²

As mentioned above, the arguments in these records reveal resistance to Japan’s betrayal of the trust that should prevail among “a common race” after the Russo-Japanese War. Of course, there were some nationalists, like Sin Ch’ae-ho, who attacked the faults of the pro-Japanese position, but the belief in its values was deeply rooted in others, such as An Chung-gün. Koreans wished to be free of the Western threat by banding together with Japan, the only nation perceived to be fully “modern” in Northeast Asia, in order to survive the harsh reality of the process of modernization that would follow invasion. As shown in the arguments of Yun Ch’i-ho and Chang Chi-yön, quoted above, however, Japan underwent a complete transformation from strategic partner to invader, after which intellectuals became strongly nationalist and anti-Japanese.

In short, the articles on the Crystal Pavilion display in June 1907 were produced amidst this fervor of nationalism. Koreans were exhibited at the same time that the Korean emperor sent three special envoys to the Second International Peace Conference held in The Hague to challenge the validity of the 1905 Treaty. In the wake of this incident, the Korea emperor was dethroned (July 1907) and the army was disbanded ten days later. As a result, the responses of Korean intellectuals in 1907 not only reflected the fate of a Korea standing at the crossroads of survival, but signified that they identified the condition of the woman in the display with the vulnerable position of Korea in the international political order. In the end, Korean intellectual responses in 1907 mirrored the decline in faith in “Northeast Asian Solidarity” and reveal a portrait of contemporary intellectuals who, after hoping for strategic solidarity among the yellow race, turned instead to nationalism.

Conclusion

The Korean displays of the Japanese exposition at the outset of the twentieth century can be read as a complex text against a context of racially-tinged social Darwinism and political upheaval in Northeast Asia. The Anthropological Pavilion display, justified in the name of modern science, was a visual representation of ethnic groups “otherized” by Japan, and while the Crystal Pavilion display functioned more as entertainment, the two exhibitions share some overlapping characteristics. They combined social Darwinist views with commercialization strategies that visually stimulated the public’s curiosity. Korean responses reveal, however, that the two displays were not mere spectacles, but also reflected the complex and shifting historical context of Northeast Asia.

In particular, the two displays demonstrate both the ethnocentrism of the

⁴² See Chang Chi-yön’s editorial “Siirya pangsöngdaegok” [This day, wail loudly!], *Hwangöng sinmun*, November 20, 1905.

Japanese colonial era in Northeast Asia and the resistance of Korean intellectuals to this attitude through their response to the exhibitions. The intellectuals whose voices are recorded were inclined to put their faith in the ideals of a “common race and common culture” and a “discourse of solidarity among Northeastern countries.” However, they changed their views as Japan’s imperial ambitions in Northeast Asia became manifest. The hope that the three Northeast Asian nations would unify against the West became untenable in the face of the betrayal by one member of the yellow race and was replaced by the insistence that only nationalism could guarantee survival. The discourse based on the concept of a “common race and common culture” developed into a rationale for Japanese imperialism.

GLOSSARY

Gakujutsu Jinruikan	學術人類館	tongjong tongmun	同種同文
hwanginjong	黃人種	Tongyang yōndaeron	東洋連帶論
Suishōkan	水晶館		

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- Taegūk hakpo* 太極學報
- Taehan maeil sinbo* 大韓每日申報
- Tongnip sinmun* 獨立新聞
- Yomiuri shimbun* 讀賣新聞

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