

- REVIEW ESSAY -

Syngman Rhee: A New Horizon of Research on Modern History of Korea

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Introduction

This essay is based on two books: *Yi Seungmangwa hanguk dongnip undong* (Syngman Rhee and the Independence Movement of Korea) by Ko Jeong-hyu (2004) and *Unam Yi Seungman yeongu* (Study of Unam Syngman Rhee) by Jeong Byeong-jun (2005). Syngman Rhee (1875-1965) has been evaluated as a social reformer at the end of the Joseon Dynasty, a fighter for national independence under the Japanese colonial rule, and the father of a national foundation that led to the prosperous Republic of Korea of today. The April 19th Student Revolution in 1960 branded him as a dictator who stymied the democracy of Korea. During the cold war he was criticized as a culprit in the division of Korea through the unilateral establishment of a single government in South Korea after liberation from Japanese colonialism.

The recent opening and publishing of classified data relating to the activities of Syngman Rhee in tandem with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and of the collapse of Eastern European socialism in the early 1990s allowed academics to reconsider opinions on Syngman Rhee. These new viewpoints contributed to mitigating the negative recognition of Syngman Rhee as an individual that made it impossible to impartially discuss the achievements of the twelve year Syngman Rhee government. Writings contributed to newspapers and magazines during his youth until just before the liberation were found and published

on the 50th anniversary of the liberation (Won Yeong-hi and Choe Jeong-tae 1965). The documents of Syngman Rhee preserved at Yihwajang were transferred to the Yonsei University Research Center for Contemporary Korean Studies (1998) that published a photographic edition of the enormous amount of the vernacular documents just before August 15, 1948. These developments raised interest in the study of Syngman Rhee (Yu Yeong-ik 1996, 2002; Yu Yeong-ik, ed. 2000; Son Se-il Serialized in *the Monthly Chosun*; Yi Jeong-sik 2002).

Syngman Rhee and the Independence Movement of Korea by Ko Jeong-hyu and *Study of Uanm Yi Seungman* by Jeong Byeong-jun are masterpieces that introduce research on Syngman Rhee and his relation to modern Korean history. This essay introduces the contents of these studies to reveal the significance and characteristics of the ideology of new research in the comparison of these two works.

Syngman Rhee: The Independence Movement of Korea and the Eve of the Birth of the Republic of Korea

Professor Ko Jeong-hyu is a leading researcher recognized for a critical view of modern Korean history. A realistic approach based on concrete facts makes his viewpoint persuasive. *Syngman Rhee and the Independence Movement of Korea* is the first complete text on the participation of Syngman Rhee in the independence movement. The author raises four questions in this book that fill in the gaps of existing research.

Discussed is how Syngman Rhee was selected as the first president of the provisional government of the Republic of Korea after the March 1st Movement in 1919 that resulted in a turning point for Syngman Rhee in the modern history of Korea.

The second question is a survey on the organization and changes of the *Korean Commission to America* and Europe of the provisional government of the Republic of Korea. The *Korean Commission to America and Europe* was an organization established by virtue of the office of Syngman Rhee, president of consuls in August 1919. This organization was a fundraising route for the Korean community in the United States and diplomatically used as a negotiation tool with the western powers with the chief target being the United States. It is essential to review the *Korean Commission to America and Europe* when sur-

veying the activities of Syngman Rhee after the March 1st Movement. The special interest of the author on the subject of the *Korean Commission to America and Europe* (Ko Jeong-hyu 1991) can be seen in his doctoral thesis, and such a view is reflected in the book insofar as the political foundation of Syngman Rhee who had spent half of his life or more in the United States is the *Korean Commission to America and Europe*.

The third question is the relation between Syngman Rhee and the forces of national movement at home and abroad. The Independence Movement of Korea was widely developed locally but also abroad including Manchuria, China, Russia, Hawaii, and the United States. The author urges that special attention be paid to the interrelationships with other academic disciplines in order to grasp the whole process of the Independence Movement of Korea. Although Syngman Rhee had a direct or indirect influence on the national movement at home and abroad, existing research concentrated on one of these subjects: Syngman Rhee and the Korean community in the United States, Syngman Rhee and the provisional government of the Republic of Korea, or Syngman Rhee, the nationalistic forces at home. The period of coverage has also been limited.

Last is the relation between Syngman Rhee and the United States. The Korean peninsula was divided and incorporated into a bi-polar system between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., which followed Korea's experience of a world-order centering on China and then exclusive rule of Japan after opening its ports. In the midst of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05), Syngman Rhee became convinced that only the intervention of the United States with no geopolitical interests in the Korean peninsula could guarantee the independence of Korea. Syngman Rhee tried to persuade the American government to recognize that the intervention of the United States in Korean affairs would be beneficial.

Instead the United States concluded the secret Taft-Katsura Agreement with Japan that recognized Japanese control over Korea. The United States regarded Korean affairs as a Japanese question of home administration until the breakout of the Pacific War in December 1941. After the outbreak of war with Japan, the United States avoided the issue of Korean independence and tried to solve the Korea issue through a common trusteeship of the allies.

To analyze these developments the author analyzed and reviewed the documents preserved at Yihwajang that included the 500 private letters of Syngman Rhee, the newspapers, magazines published by the organizations of the Korean residents in the United States, and the documents of the American government.

The end result was a book composed of three parts. In Chapter 1 (The March 1st Movement, the Hanseong Provisional Government and Syngman Rhee), the author reviews the process of establishing a united provisional government in Shanghai in early September after the declaration of independence in Seoul on March 1st, 1919. In Chapter 2 (*The Korean Commission to America and Europe and National Movement at Home and Abroad*) reviews the interrelationships between the *Korean Commission to America and Europe* of the provisional government and the *National Movement at Home and Abroad*. The *Korean Commission to America and Europe* reveals the contents after the year 1925 not covered in the doctoral thesis (1991) according to ‘the period of inactivity’ (1922-39) and ‘the period of reconstruction’ (1939-45). The process of reconstructing the *Diplomatic Commission of the Korean Mission to the United States* is analyzed after the abolition of the *Korean Commission to America and Europe* by the provisional government. Syngman Rhee was appointed as ambassador plenipotentiary to the United States by the provisional government on June 4th 1941. The economic situation of the Diplomatic Commission of the Korean Mission to the United States is also looked at on the basis of interior data. It is a conspicuous achievement to explain the material basis of the activities of Syngman Rhee. The book analyzes the controversy over reconstructing the Diplomatic Commission of the Korean Mission to the United States detonated by the mass meeting of overseas Koreans in April 1941 that had a negative influence on the attitude of the American government toward Korean organizations during the Pacific War period (1941-45).

In Chapter 3 (The Independence of Korea and Diplomatic Activities Approved by the Provisional Government), deals with diplomatic and propaganda activities of Syngman Rhee and the *Korean Commission to America and Europe* according to the period (1919-22) from the Paris Peace Conference to the Washington Conference and the Pacific War period. The author concludes through his analysis that “Syngman Rhee had a firm belief in blocking the intervention of the U.S.S.R. into Korean affairs from the very beginning to establish a country based on free democracy and capitalism and thought this belief of his would be in accord with the benefit of the U.S. not to speak of Korea.”

The first chapter is composed of three separate parts: “The March 1st Movement and the Conception of Establishing a Provisional Government,” “The Main Body of Organizing the Hanseong Provisional Government and the Process of Declaration” and “Syngman Rhee and Integration Movement of the Provisional Government in Shanghai.” It reconstructs the contents of six months

activities after the March 1st Movement that reflect the critical view of the author on this subject. The explanation of how Syngman Rhee was elected as the first president of the provisional government of the Republic of Korea after the March 1st Movement is the first task. The review and critical evaluation of the Hanseong Provisional Government is a standard of judgment about Syngman Rhee throughout this book. This is due to the fact that Syngman Rhee emphasized as his identity the presidency of the consuls of the Hanseong Provisional Government, which was declared in Seoul on April 23rd 1919, more so than the president of the provisional government in Shanghai during the process of establishing the Republic of Korea and even during the period of independence movement.

After the March 1st Movement the leaders of the Korean national movement tried to build a supreme organization for national movement in Chinese Shanghai, Russian Jiandao, and Korea. The provisional government of the Republic of Korea was established in Shanghai on April 13th 1919. The provisional government is a research target because it was a turning point for a supreme organization for national movement born with the March 1st Movement. This expands on research on the declaration of the Hanseong Provisional government and the process of establishing the provisional government in Shanghai. In spite of differences in the view it is explained in common that in the process the provisional governments in the Russian territory, Shanghai, and Hanseong were integrated into the provisional government of the Republic of Korea soon after the March 1st Movement, the Hanseong Provisional Government was organized in Seoul through a popular mass meeting composed of the representatives of thirteen provinces within the country and transferred the authority and legitimacy to the provisional government in Shanghai. It is seen as an advocacy of the provisional government to take control over the Republic of Korea.

The author brings a meaningful criticism and a counterargument against this point of view (Ko Jeong-hyu 1991, 1997, 2000). This book compares and reviews the contents of the plans of the provisional government published or devised at home and abroad at the time of the March 1st Movement in the form of government, the selection of Cabinet members, and the location of government. This reveals the characteristics of each government. On this basis, the author puts forth a thesis on the main body of organizing the government and also precisely arranges the analysis of the process of establishing the provisional government in Shanghai. The author confirms that there were religious (the

Cheondogyo versus the Christian religion), regional (Gyeonggi and Honam versus North-West inside the country, Shanghai and the United States versus Russian Territory outside the country) and ideological (restoration of sovereignty versus republicanism) conflicts and antagonism.

The author indicates that concerning the Hanseong provisional government as a political basis of the activities of Syngman Rhee, it was a refugee government secretly organized by Christian forces represented by Syngman Rhee and figures from Gyeonggido and Honam and did not conspicuously present republicanism. Also raised is a strong question on “advocacy” of the Hanseong Provisional Government organized and declared through a popular mass meeting composed of the representatives of thirteen provinces in Seoul. Indicated is that the “advocacy” was nothing more than moral justification to smooth down opposition of figures from a Russian territory in the process of integrating the governments by the provisional government in Shanghai and to raise a question about the reality of a popular mass meeting.

Such criticism is of considerable significance in itself. The precise and accurate analysis of the Hanseong Provisional Government and “a popular mass meeting” beyond criticism can be highly evaluated. There is room left for re-discussion. In spite of the meaningful criticism concerning advocacy of the Hanseong Provisional Government to take control of the Republic of Korea is called the basis of the activities of Syngman Rhee. The author does not present a convincing answer to how the Hanseong Provisional Government persuaded the figures from Shanghai and a Russian territory played a key role in integrating the provisional governments (Yi Hyeong-ju 1997, 2003).¹ It is advisable to make an effort to maintain a prudent attitude and to find out new data because the absolute absence of data is an obstacle to revealing this point. According to historical interpretation it is an important matter to re-write the history of the provisional government in a narrow sense and the history of Korean independence movement in the modern history of Korea.

The Forming of Modern Korean State and the Way of the Rightist

1. Refer to Lee Hyun-joo (2003), Chapter 1 “Yimsijeongbu suripundonggwa sahoejuuiseryeokui taedong” (The Establishing Movement of the Provisional Government and Signs of Forthcoming Socialist Forces).

Professor Jeong Byeong-jun is an excellent researcher on modern history of Korea after the Liberation in 1945. He has accomplished remarkable academic achievements in a research on great figures in modern history of Korea such as Syngman Rhee, Kim Gu, and Kim Yong-jung, in a way of sincere interpretation of historical data.

The book *Unam Yi Seungman yeongu* (Study of Unam Syngman Rhee) contains an enormous amount of 800 pages of historical data from the research. The author stated that the research was a “constant challenge, given the depth and breadth of data.” It remarkable to extend the research period outside his major area of study to the end of the Joseon Dynasty and the Japanese colonial rule after the liberation that is inevitable considering the composition of the content of the subject. As known in the academic world the only the ambition of a scholar can expand a research subject.

The focus of this book is to concentrate on pursuing the role of Syngman Rhee in bridging the gap between modern and contemporary history of Korea. This book concretely reviews the historical background and process of forming the plan of Syngman Rhee after the liberation. This book approaches Syngman Rhee the individual according to the way of researching life history. In addition to research on the personal characteristics the author emphasizes a real intention to review the ideological direction, scope, and historical significance of the bourgeois and nationalistic view led by Syngman Rhee in modern Korean history.

The author presents two arguments about research on Syngman Rhee during the Japanese colonial rule. The first is an evaluation of the tactics of independence movements. The key points of the argument are whether the diplomacy of advocacy of trusteeship of Korea can be recognized as a tactics of independence movements and how diplomacy can be evaluated in the whole history of independence movements. To this argument the advocacy of trusteeship of Korea has been largely criticized and studied as a theory of denying independence but has been supported as an inevitable choice under the then situation because it advocated the absolute independence in case of changes of situation. The second is a question about the status and role of Syngman Rhee within the Korean community in the United States. While there is a positive evaluation of the contribution of Syngman Rhee to the integration of the Korean community in the United States there is another negative evaluation of the segregation of the community.

The results of research on the activities of Syngman Rhee after the liberation are enormous. Research on Syngman Rhee after the liberation concentrates on the policy of the establishing a separate government for southern Korea during the

period of 1945-48. The points at issue are by what criterion this policy should be evaluated and the background of success. According to criticism by the author the existing opinion that the political victory of Syngman Rhee after the liberation was caused by his superiority and the role of the United States was nothing more than the historical view of heroism or the determinism of superpowers. The pursuit of the analysis of the government policy was "to explain historically the process and cause of Syngman Rhee's political victory soon after the Liberation," which is the most fundamental critical mind proposed by the author in this book. Half of the content of the research is on the end of the Joseon Dynasty and Japanese colonial period that arranges the details is to explain these parts deeply. The area of description during the Japanese colonial period concentrates on the diplomatic independence policy regarded as a tactics of independence movements of Syngman Rhee and the political view. The analysis of the process of forming and developing the line of fostering force, the connection between Syngman Rhee and home political forces and the analysis of the supporting basis supports this.

The author emphasizes the importance and usefulness of research on the activities of Syngman Rhee in revealing the major aspects of modern and contemporary history of Korea. Research on Syngman Rhee is an analysis of individual influence and interrelations between individual and society (and) between individual and state. In particular, it is also a project on explaining the status of an important political leader in the process of establishing a country. The author shows that he role of Syngman Rhee under the political situation after the liberation was second to any political leader or founder of a dynasty historically in a turning point of the times or in a changing period of dynasties. This is confirmed in the title of the doctoral dissertation by the author that is the basis of this book (Jeong Byeong-jun 2001). The author shows that research on Syngman Rhee is a concrete medium explaining the historical relation between Korea and the United States and the history of pro-Americans within Korea. Explained through the prism of Syngman Rhee are major points in the dispute of history of relationships between Korea and the United States, such as the process of forming pro-Americans in Korea, the concrete process of uniting pro-Americans with the United States and the process of achieving influence.

To answer these questions the author researched infinite data. For example, there are lots of documents of Yihwajang published by Yonsei University as introduced before, the data of Gyujanggak, the documents of the hall of diplomatic historical data of Japanese foreign ministry, the interrogatory and decision

of the prosecution and the police, the micro-films possessed by the National History Compilation Committee, Korea University, Korean Broadcasting System, and the Board of National Records. This does include the variety of newspapers and magazines published by the Korean community in the United States and an enormous amount of documents recently unclassified relating to Korea possessed by the office of national documents and records of the United States. It is meritorious to select and record the testimony of some figures concerned, arranging and using usefully.

This book is divided into four parts dealing with the whole life and activities of Syngman Rhee. In Part 1 (The End of the Joseon Dynasty, the Period of Enlightenment: Growth, Education and Enlightenment Movement), the author analyzes the physical constitution formed in childhood through researching on the family line and schoolwork of Syngman Rhee and describes the process of forming the political view achieved in the process of schoolwork and in early social activities. According to the analysis of the author through the thematic approach to Chapter 1: The Family Line and the Consciousness of Royal Family, Chapter 2: Schoolwork and Participation in the Independence Club, Chapter 3: Studying in the United States, and exile. The home background and schoolwork in childhood of Syngman Rhee became the basis of establishing an identity continuing from the Japanese colonial period until after the liberation.

In Part 2 (The Japanese Colonial Period I: Independence Line of Diplomacy and Diplomatic Activities), the author grasps the characteristics of the political view of Syngman Rhee through the forming and changing process of the view of diplomacy and independence policy of diplomacy. In Chapter 4: The Formation and Characteristics of Independence Line of Diplomacy, Chapter 5: Diplomatic Activities during the 1910s-30s, and Chapter 6: Wartime Diplomatic Activities during the Pacific War Period, the author pays attention to the consistent petition of trusteeship (1919) by Syngman Rhee in his independence policy of diplomacy based on the unique and peculiar concept; neutrality diplomacy since the Independence Club at the end of the Joseon Dynasty. The author indicates that after the petition of trusteeship independence policy of diplomacy by Syngman Rhee was affected by Irish independence, a matter of international interest at the time that he tried to imitate. It is also an excellent view that the author evaluates the theory about the outbreak of war between the United States and Japan as a result of the independence diplomacy policy by Syngman Rhee.

In Part 3 (The Japanese Colonial Period II: Connection with Home and the Supporting Basis), the author explained the supporting basis of Syngman Rhee

within the country. After the failure of independence movements based on the independence strategy of diplomacy during the March 1st Movement period, the theory of fostering force rapidly gained power and national reformism spread (Bak Chan-seung 1992). The same thing can be said of Syngman Rhee according to the author. During 1919-22 when the diplomatic line based on the theory of diplomatic independence failed, Syngman Rhee seriously urged the movement to build strength from 1923 on. Building of strength to Rhee meant fostering of education and economy of the Korean residents in Hawaii. The author argues that the movement for fostering force both at home and in Hawaii was developed simultaneously not only for appearance's sake but based on the interchange between men and movement. The Heungeop Club organized in 1925 was a result of the solidarity of human exchange and political line and a supporting basis of Syngman Rhee within the country. It is interesting that the short-wave broadcasting of the United States Army during the Pacific War period had an enormous influence on the background that Syngman Rhee emerged as a representative political leader after the liberation. This evaluation was made through the analysis of the relation with the force of home nationalism during the 1910s to 1920s (Chapter 7), the supporting basis of Syngman Rhee within the country the Heungeop Club during 1925-38 (Chapter 8) and the incident of short-wave broadcasting during the Pacific War period and the recognition of Syngman Rhee within the country (Chapter 9).

In Part 4 (Soon after the Liberation: the Line of Establishing a Government and Activities), the author deeply investigates the fact of the movement for establishing a government pursued by Syngman Rhee soon after the liberation and the background of his political victory. Through the sharp analyses of important and controversial subjects such as Chapter 10: Early Return of the Country and Tokyo Meeting, Chapter 11: The Emergence onto the Political World and the Organizing of the Central Association of Fostering Independence, Chapter 12: The Strengthening of Supporting Basis in 1946 and the Proposal of Establishing a Sole Government, Chapter 13: The Raising and Managing of Political Fund during 1945-47, and Chapter 14: The Division of the Right Wing and the Realization of a Separate Government during 1947-48, the author sees that after the return of the country Syngman Rhee was supported superficially by the right and left wing within South Korea and constructed a basis to grasp domestic politics by returning home fifty days earlier than the return of key figures of the provisional government in China. The cause of the early return of Syngman Rhee to Korea and the reason behind the United States support of him,

and the background of his being supported by the United States Military Government as well as left- and right-wings in the process of being recommended to the presidency are precisely and realistically reconstructed.

More than half of the description in this book concentrates on the period before 1945. As a historian it is beneficial that the author pays special attention to the end of the Joseon dynasty and the Japanese colonial period as the background of establishing a government after the liberation. The author energetically analyzes the connection of Syngman Rhee with the inside of the country and those who gave support to him. The author recognizes that this was directly connected with the movement to establish a government and the coming into power after the liberation.

The importance of systematic foundation for a politician is an essential element in coming into power because it is possible to raise political fund according to the character of systematic foundation. In this respect it is well grounded to connect the organization of the Heungeop Club within the country with a clique of Syngman Rhee. It is problematic that the whole of colorful constituents of the Heungeop Club can be taken as a supporting basis of 'individual' Syngman Rhee. If the variety and colorfulness of the club can not distinguish between pro- and anti-Japan in the imperialistic colonial period, Syngman Rhee could not help calculating the loss and gain as a politician. Considering the aspects and characteristics of constituents of the Heungeop Club at the end of the Japanese colonial period the close connection of Syngman Rhee with them could not be profitable under the political situation after the liberation. It will also be remarkable that Syngman Rhee surpassed other leaders in making a popular image through the activities of the Independence Club and the Convocation of Ten Thousand People in the midst of the tumultuous political situation after the liberation. The importance of interrelationships with figures of the Heungeop Club cannot be despised but should be considered restrictedly.

The analysis is agreeable that the incident of short-wave broadcasting enabled the people at home to know about the reality of the world-wide political situation and independence movement in the end of the imperialistic rule. According to the author, there was left no official supporting basis for Syngman Rhee at home after 1938 when many of the Heungeop Club members were arrested. In this vortex, the short-wave broadcasting began in 1942 in San Francisco and in Chungking China. Through the Voice of America transmitted in San Francisco, Syngman Rhee made a speech instigating a struggle against Japan many times as a representative of the provisional government of the

Republic of Korea. At home, there was a mass arrest of distinguished radio listeners. According to the evaluation of the author this incident of listening to the short-wave broadcasting played a decisive role in Syngman Rhee emerging as a nation-wide leader supported by the right and left wing in South Korean political world after the liberation. In particular, the arrest of the sympathizers of Yeo Unhyeong and Heo Heon who led the *Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence and the People's Republic of Korea* and were connected with this incident soon after the liberation became the background for Syngman Rhee to be recommended as the president of the People's Republic of Korea.

The author shows that the short-wave broadcasting transmitted the news about ① The provisional government of the Republic of Korea or the Republic of Korea was established in America. ② Syngman Rhee is president of the provisional government of the Republic of Korea. ③ The U.S.A., China and officially recognized the provisional government of the Republic of Korea and handed out in economic and military aid. Although the news was not true and was an exaggerated advertisement it is undeniable that the listeners were amazed at not the truth of the news but the natural voice of Syngman Rhee.

The author is a researcher majoring in the political history of modern Korea after the liberation. The description of the line and activities of Syngman Rhee for three years after the liberation is based on a realistic firm foundation than that of the previous times. Impressive is the seriousness of the author to pursue the antagonistic relation between Syngman Rhee and the temporary American Military Government in Korea in pursuit of power to be established afterward. Considering the character of historical data used for the description of such contents the author depends on the data of the information authorities from the American Military Government in Korea. Although this is inevitable to a certain degree under the situation of insufficiency of data on the subject of research such reservation has a point considering Syngman Rhee caused a variety of conflict and trouble with the American Department of State and the temporary authorities of the American Military Government in Korea in the process of establishing a government. There were few figures described favorably by the information authorities of the American Military Government in Korea in the political history of modern Korea.

Conclusion

These two works enhance the academic level of research on modern and contemporary Korean society in Syngman Rhee as a historical individual. The two researchers on the history of the independence movement of Korean people in the United States and the political history of modern Korea recognized the importance of Syngman Rhee. Problem-solving around him in modern and contemporary history of Korea competitively produced two books to explain this importance. These two books are not written from the same viewpoint as they deal with the historical individual Syngman Rhee as a subject of research. There is a difference in the period of a subject of research dealt with emphatically and in the conspicuous distinction of research.

The period of a subject of research in *Yi Seungmangwa hanguk dongnip undong* (Syngman Rhee and the Independence Movement of Korea) is limited from the March 1st Movement in 1919 to just before the liberation in 1945. The research on Syngman Rhee by the author began with topics at the end of the Joseon Dynasty and the enlightenment period in the early 1980s (Ko Jeong-hyu 1986) shows this work was prepared long ago. This was a result of consistent research on a single subject for nearly twenty years. There are some unsatisfactory points in the systematic structure because this book edited other articles that have already been published. In this respect parts of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 are redundant in the table of contents and the contents of the book. A minor criticism as this book is not a biography or a critical biography of Syngman Rhee. As indicated by another critic (Kim Do-hun 2004), it is a merit of this book that the author was indulged in explaining the dynamic relation between Syngman Rhee and the independence movement of Korea and activities can be viewed objectively. For the same reason, the author emphasizes the internal aspects of the history of the independence movement of Korea saying in the preface “It is more desirable to focus on the conflict and antagonism in the inside of a nation than on the heroic struggles against Japanese imperialism.”

In comparison with *Yi Seungmangwa hanguk dongnip undong* (Syngman Rhee and the Independence Movement of Korea), the period of a subject of research in *Unam Yi Seungman yeongu* (Study of Unam Syngman Rhee) is more extended. It is more or less a surprise considering the confession that the intended the period of research be limited from after the liberation in 1945 to the period of establishing a divided government. It is an appropriate approach to criticize a habitual practice in regarding the historical experiences of Japanese

colonial period before 1945 as a supplementary research in studying the period after the liberation to voluntarily trace the historical origin. The activities of Syngman Rhee after the liberation are ‘objectively’ described centering on the role connected with the whole movements, there is a danger of justifying activities after the liberation to excess by concentrating on a historical approach to an individual to activities before liberation. This is to be supplemented in view of the consistency of approach as shown in the subtitle of this book *Hanguk geundaegukgawi hyeongseonggwa upaui gil* (The Formation of Korean Modern State and the Way of the Rightist) as connected with the expanded scale of this book.

In spite of these differences these two books are not in contradictory condition. They have more in common in explaining historical truth. It is evident that the significance of these two books in the history of research will be enhanced by complementing the period and focus as a subject of research, and the explaining of new facts in the midst of a reciprocal infiltration of approach method.

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