

Modern Manchuria as a Locus of the Origin of
Trauma: *Focusing on the Koreans in Manchuria*

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Abstract

Until now, the ethnic Koreans in China have been represented as successful minorities within China. However, the historical wounds they carry cut deep, still influencing their lives today. For ethnic Koreans in China, the deterioration of relations with the people in places where they reside following such historical wounds is a matter that must not be ignored, as such relations may be a strategy intimately tied to future survival. In this vein, this article focuses on the historical wounds that are the source of deterioration of relationships and historical trauma as the origin of said deterioration. The ethnic Koreans, called Cháoxiānzú in China, are a minority group in the People's Republic of China, and Koreans who lived in Manchuria historically share much common history with these ethnic Koreans. Therefore, to track the origin of the historical trauma of the Koreans in China, or the Korean-Chinese, it is necessary to understand first the Koreans in Manchuria.

The modern Manchurian space where the Korean people resided was not just a geographical space, but also a political one wherein social, cultural, and political relations were concentrated. The Qing, Russia, and Japan ushered Manchuria into the modern era through a direct process of power building. Historical events that occurred in complex spatial changes left different memories and wounds depending on each ethnic group living in Manchuria. The problem is that these memories and wounds could not be properly healed, only rendered invisible in the “sealing” in a new space of liberation and the process of establishing a nation state, and this “sealing” became an opportunity to create yet another trail of memory distortion and historical scars.

Keywords: historical trauma, Korean-Chinese, Koreans in Manchuria, imperialism, modern Manchurian space.

A Space Called “Manchuria” as a Repository of Historical Memories of Social Relations

To China’s rapid rise, the U.S. responded with return to East Asia and expanding influence in the capitalist economic order through reform and opening. In the new Cold War structure in East Asia, the time of the Korean-Chinese was led toward the forgotten concept of “Manchuria.” This is because the confrontation between the Southern Triangle and the Northern Triangle in East Asia re-produced, for the Korean-Chinese, the contexts lived by the Koreans in Manchuria. Crossing the boundary between the Southern Triangle and the Northern Triangle having become one of their ways of life, the Korean-Chinese experienced the return of the “Manchurian space” experienced by the Koreans in Manchuria in the past. In addition, the division of the two Koreas continues the experience of the absence of a state that Koreans in Manchuria faced during the period of loss of Korea’s national sovereignty. As such, the present East Asia has become a new arena of power, and simultaneously harbors a similarity to “Manchuria” of the time when the Korean people in Manchuria experienced it. In other words, the Korean-Chinese in China are also living the same experiences as the Koreans in Manchuria while struggling to survive in the process of traversing the boundaries of East Asia.

Unlike what E. H. Carr wrote—“History is a continuous process of interaction between historians and facts, and a constant conversation between present and past” (Carr 2018)—Manchuria is a spatio-temporality that has been intentionally forgotten in dialogue, and its relationships, constantly “sealed,” even though Manchuria is a space that is intimately tied to the past and present of the adjacent nations. However, “Manchuria” contains at once the physical meanings such as geographical space and relationships including conflicts and convergence among various ideologies and subjects following the influx of the West, and can be said to be a repository of various socio-historical memories. Therefore, the origin of the conflict between the Korean-Chinese and the local people in China—the conflict continuing

to date—should be considered in accompaniment to the concerns in that spatiotemporal context.

In his philosophy of space, Henri Lefebvre argues for “production of space,” premised on the thesis that “social space is a social product,” beyond the traditional confrontation of the physical and the psychological spaces. In addition, he argues that the social production of space means that the “(physical) natural space” is “the source of everything,” but gradually recoils and “every society produces its own space.” In other words, in space exist “the history of space, the history of spatial production such as ‘reality,’ and the history of the forms and representations of space.” In this respect, space is not a void to be filled with a particular context, but an embodiment of social relationships, a “social space,” and a repository of historical memories: in other words, “historical space” (Lefebvre 1991).

At the same time as the division of the two Koreas, since the Korean people in Manchuria were incorporated into the internal minority groups of the nation called China, the discourse of the history of the Korean people in Manchuria in the past cannot but entail a consciousness of the division of the two Koreas as well as the nation(s) to which the Koreans living in Manchuria belonged. According to the relationships re-established in the new space, the history of the space in the curvature of *time* experienced by an *act-or* who was a Korean residing in Manchuria is problematic in that the transformational process of the Koreans in Manchuria becoming Korean-Chinese has been synchronized and taxidermied (or “sealed”) without any dialogue. The Korean-Chinese were the latest to be incorporated into the Chinese state as a member of the current Chinese minority. In the process of incorporation, however, *time* in the space of Manchuria and the experiences of each *act-or* were “sealed” without being properly organized and understood. Ethnic violence between those in the mainstream, who had been in the ethnic majority but were recognized as subordinates of the colonizer after the Manchurian Incident, and the Korean residents of Manchuria, the minority, rose immediately after liberation, but was quickly frozen off by the enormity of the discourse of the structure inherent in the entwining of China’s

liberation war, the Korean war, and the Cold War.

Such “sealed” spatio-temporality eliminated the possible manifestation of immediate violence among ethnic groups, but from a long-term perspective, it was an opportunity to bury conflicts and transfer the problems of the present world to future generations. Rather, the inherited conflict is interpreted and remembered as a larger conflict at the point of the fissure inherent in the “mismatch between the people and the state.” The reason for today’s “sealed” past is, first, to prevent potential elements of conflict from escalating into another type of violence. Second, trauma causes disabilities that traverse time and space. Therefore, the healing of trauma that inevitably causes disabilities requires a re-exploration and re-interpretation of deliberately refracted time and space. In other words, the work of liberating the Korean people in Manchuria from the preemption and monopoly of the perception that they are merely victims of hardship, and understanding them from the perspective of an *act-ing* and active group of human beings should be carried out. Moreover, it is necessary to shed light on the space of Manchuria at the time and the dominant imperialism in flux in that space.

Space and time create the corresponding act-or, and the *act-or* repeatedly reproduces the corresponding space and time. As such, monopolizing and reconstructing space and time according to a specific ideology is an opportunity to produce *act-ors* who reproduce a certain kind of space. Since the 1980s, studies of space that have emerged around the world have generally developed around the dialectic of society/space. In other words, the spatiality is constructed by the social process, and in turn, the spatiality reconstructs the social process.

Such a perspective allows us to understand the correlation between the continuation of East Asian conflicts and the formation of space. The continuation of the East Asian conflict was clearly consistent with the process of production and re-production of a specific space. In addition, such a space was used to achieve a specific goal of maintaining East Asian conflicts and to increase the efficiency of the process.

“Manchuria” as a Chapter in Imperialism versus the Subaltern

The memory of Manchuria is not composed of a simple list and a signification of historical memories given in fragments. Rather, the *act-ors* who are compressing the memory of Manchuria form one axis, and at the same time, the meanings given by the succeeding generations for the overlapping experience these *act-ors* faced at a certain time form the other axis. The history of the Korean-Chinese was also constructed as a “new” combination of time and space in the past. For example, the time experienced by the Korean people in Manchuria was a time during which coexisted the experiences of *act-ors* such as anti-Japanese and pro-Japanese people, resistance and compromise, and conflict and coexistence. In succeeding generations, some texts were noticed as necessary, and some others were deleted or intentionally forgotten. The spatio-temporal existential form of the Korean-Chinese, the present, existential *act-ors* of the Koreans in Manchuria, also changes according to the regulations of these texts. Accordingly, the Korean-Chinese in China cannot be grasped simply vis-à-vis time after liberation, and the spatio-temporality that has been eliminated should be re-incorporated into the history of the Korean-Chinese in China.

Cohen (1997, as quoted in Im and Jeon 2006) categorizes migration as follows: persecution-escape (Jewish), imperial-colonial (European expansion), labor (Indian migration throughout British colonization, French migration to construct North Africa, the Japanese migration to the Hawaii in sugar plantations), commercial (Venetian, Lebanese, and Chinese migration), and cultural migration. However, the meaning of persecution of migration from the colonies is removed by dealing only with the case of imperial expansion of the European powers (Im and Jeon 2006). This perspective provides an abundance of angles on the migration of the Koreans in Manchuria and the Korean-Chinese in particular.

First, Koreans who migrated beginning in the mid-nineteenth century demonstrate strong labor characteristics,

and in fact, there had always been people crossing the border between Korea and Qing China and working in seasonal farming. However, Koreans who migrated to Manchuria from the early twentieth century to before the Manchurian Incident often fled to Manchuria due to the persecution of the Japanese Empire, and as such, their migration can be defined as the “persecution-escape” type. Since the Manchurian Incident, the migration of Korean people to Manchuria by Japanese state-run companies on the Korean Peninsula demonstrates an “imperial-colonial” nature, and considering that these Koreans were mainly bound to collective farms in the remote corners of Manchuria and engaged in labor, it can also be categorized as a “labor” migration. Therefore, an important condition for Koreans living in Manchuria was the transformation point of the space called Manchuria rather than the action called migration.

In other words, Manchuria’s space needs to be approached within a large framework of history with the combination of *time* and *act-ors*. In particular, in East Asia that is given to us now, there are also spaces created by the accumulation of various historical experiences and events before the incorporation into Western sphere of influence. Such a character becomes clearer when looking back on the history of the Korean people in Manchuria, in some ways a continuation of the Korean Peninsula in a different spatiality.

Accordingly, the time and space of Manchuria should not be dealt with independently, but in combination. Furthermore, in addition to the combination of time and space, the re-configuration of *act-ors* is also significant in understanding the Korean-Chinese in China. While the space surrounding us carries a personalized and specialized meaning, it also harbors a universal and objective meaning. This means that we *act-ors* live in a specific space, and reflection on the space is essential to understanding ourselves. This is because human life, including the culture of everyday life and value orientation, is clearly led on the physical basis of “space” or locus. It can be said that access or concern for such a space is particularly essential for those living in the periphery. This is because, as mentioned earlier, this space is not just a given space, but a spatialized time that contains the curved *time* of

the Korean people in Manchuria.

From this point of view, in order to properly conduct the study of Korean residents in Manchuria, it is necessary to change the frame from the nationalistic view of migration only through the lens of the pain of diaspora, and to see it as a process of “composition” centered on space. The transition from the framework of “migration” to that of “composition” has following meanings.

First, if the frame of migration focuses on the act of leaving in relation to the home country, the composition focuses on the process of transforming the *act-or* of leaving into a new subject. Therefore, Manchuria cannot be a simple physical, geographical space of that time. When a newly migrated Korean is said to be re-composed as a Korean in a modern space called Manchuria, the historical origin or identity of Koreans in Manchuria is no longer subordinate to the past time as a beginning or origin; instead it becomes a dynamic product that is composed and composing in historical time.

Second, focusing on the aspect of composition rather than action, namely migration, does not mean defining Koreans vis-à-vis the dichotomy of the perpetrator/victim within the context of Japanese imperialism, created by semi-forced separation from the home country of colonized Korea. It does mean to focus on the interaction and transformation between the subalterns, that is, the Koreans and the Han Chinese, within the artifices of imperialism. Representatively, Ien Ang explains that the space of colonialism is a remnant of history that would not have occurred without colonial rule and is a “difficulty” mired in a “trap of ambiguity” that cannot be identified by the dichotomy of perpetrator/victim (Ang 2006). Therefore, it is argued that in order to have a nuanced understanding of colonial rule, we must move beyond the discourse of victims and victimization. Ang further argues that colonial rule and conflicts or conflicts between migrants and locals that penetrate imperialist history are not only lost in the past or remembered as a historical legacy, but are also traumas that are constantly evoked and re-produced under certain conditions. Therefore, close attention should be paid to the multi-layered aspects of the space where historical

trauma is created, namely the complexity of the binary of the empire versus the colonized, imperialist tactics, and cultural conflicts, as well as internal conflicts and confrontations within the colonized.

Third, the confrontation between imperialism and the colonized people and the conflict between the imperialist artifices and the subaltern do not occur only in the political and economic fields. Such confrontations and conflicts occur, utilizing cultural resources and creating a kin fog *performance* discourse. Here, the subaltern is at once a subordinate who is subjugated to imperialism and an agent or *act-or*. As a geopolitical area encompassing Japan, China, Manchuria, and Korea, East Asia is not a region defined by physical and legal realities, but an ideological, discursive space conceptualized by imperial Japan (Yoo 2012). Hence, it is not just an empire, but also an *act* created by imperialism. In other words, each axis, conflict, and hierarchy are the most important elements constituting the modern Manchurian space, and all subjects except imperialism can be defined as subordinates.

In such a way, only when there is a shift in the framework (namely, reconstruction, not migration) can the trauma arising from the axes, conflicts, and hierarchies in the modern Manchurian space be viewed in multiple layers, away from the resistance ethno-nationalism or nationalism within the subjects and away from the binary of the empire and the colonized. Ethno-nationalism and nationalism unite as one family, so they do not perceive violence inflicted on others as “violence.” Although historical trauma comprises a series of wounds created by violent clashes, certain races and ethnic groups do not feel the pain from which *others* suffer because they sublimate the violence committed against *others* as collective insanity. Therefore, only when it is beyond the perspective and emotional system monopolized by the ethno-national state and ethno-nationalism, can the ability to empathize with the pain and suffering experienced by others be exercised, and only then can trauma actually be faced directly.

Only when we do so, can the entire group of Korean people in Manchuria be included as the subject of the study. It can be seen that violence among the subalterns is caused

by an asymmetrical power structure with the upper-level subjects of imperialism/colonialism. Only when reconciliation and healing among the subalterns are premised, can we escape from the repetition of returning to the time and space of the past and sowing hatred for *others* for a specific event, for example. This is because the justification for dealing with the Koreans in Manchuria and the Korean-Chinese in China together is based on the focus on Koreans in Manchuria through the events that occurred in the interaction with the space of modern Manchuria, which can then reveal the memories constructed by such events and the internalized collective disabilities.

Historical Trauma and the Korean-Chinese in China

Freud once wrote that trauma “occurs after severe mechanical shocks, railway accidents, and other life-threatening accidents” (Freud 1998). In this case, trauma is associated strongly with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which occurs after an individual has an extreme experience. However, historical trauma refers to emotional and psychological wounds typically caused by some traumatizing event or experience and accumulated over generations (Park 2017). In other words, historical trauma is caused by a traumatizing event experienced by a group, not by an individual, and as such is not confined to those who directly experienced a certain trauma-causing historical event, but affects also those who did not directly experience it, traversing generations (Park 2017). In the same vein, Dominick LaCapra defined historical trauma as “secondary trauma” caused by transmission, and saw that this transmission was made by “transference” of trauma (LaCapra 2008).

As can be easily imagined, modern Manchuria was an exceptional space. At that time, Manchuria was a compressed space of the different turbulent East Asian stadiums. For the Korean diaspora, Manchuria was a space for survival and life, but it also became a space for ethno-nationalism

resisting Japanese imperialism due to the loss of Korea's national sovereignty. In addition, after Japanese imperialism was ousted, Manchuria became a space for liberation war and an international space of praxis where the Koreans, the Manchus, and the Han Chinese fought together, bound by the ideology of communism. Behind the resistance in the modern Manchurian space, there were also a great many people who actively cooperated with imperialism regardless of ethnicity and nationality. However, the majority of Manchuria residents were notably located in the nexus of resistance and cooperation, and among them, the Korean people were only subaltern subjects who were too frequently used and oppressed according to the interests of imperialism and the government of the country of their residence. Therefore, Koreans in Manchuria were almost coerced into conflicts with locals due to imperialist policies as well as exposed to the violence of the regime in their country of residence.

As such, in interpreting the context experienced by the Korean people in Manchuria, we must begin by shedding the burden of the apotheosized past borne by the current Korean-Chinese in China and by breaking away from the a priori framework created by *power*. In particular, the current Korean-Chinese in China tend to view the narrative they created during the anti-Japanese armed struggle and the liberation war as beholden to the composition of good and evil. However, this rather simply limits their ontological characteristics, and so in order to pay attention to their real significance, it is necessary to diverge from the narrative composition of the good/evil binary with an objective approach to the past. Only with these attempts can the Korean-Chinese in China truly begin to recognize themselves objectively, overcome their contexts, and heal their internalized trauma.

Breaking away from the past begins with facing and speaking to the past. Therefore, it is necessary to re-verify the past that may be disastrous, starting with everyone knowing about the past that affects him or her, even if it is not taught. Of course, East Asia still has numerous issues and blind spots regarding history. These issues and blind spots become black holes one by one, and later, people refuse to gaze into

them. In particular, the dichotomy of the perpetrator and the victim created by imperialism may hinder an objective understanding of a specific group and cause the traumatized people to cease their own healing efforts. The loci where these black holes are most overlapped may be “Manchuria,” the conceptual land that has now disappeared, and the Koreans who lived there.

The Emergence of Manchuria as a Field of Imperial Power

Even if the physical space of Manchuria remains the same, the imagined image and its meaning are defined within a specific political-economic power field, so it is bound to change as the power field changes. In order to properly understand the space of Manchuria, therefore, it should be viewed from the perspective of Manchuria as a space of *power*, not as a physical space. At this time, the “Manchuria” we want to deal with is Manchuria that was created by the expansion of the colonies of the Russian and Japanese empires—that is, the arena of imperialism. However, in this space existed not just imperialist powers such as Russia and Japan, but also anti-imperialist *act-ors* such as the Qing and Korea, who fought against it and compromised with it.

Until the birth of the space called Manchuria as a modern field of imperial competition, Manchuria as a physical space had been under relatively stable rule by the Qing. Despite the shift of the center to Beijing, the most significant factor that allowed the government to establish stable Manchuria rule for about two hundred years from 1644 to 1850 was that the foreign relations with Russia and Korea, which were important factors affecting Manchuria, were highly stable (Song 2020). However, externally, the instability of the surrounding context due to the encroachment of imperialism and colonialism decimated this stability.

The advent of the West means not only physical changes in the Manchurian space through modernity, but also transformation of the concept of sovereignty of nations, the

principle of equality between sovereign states, the restriction of the rules of conduct under the system of treaties, and the institutional system of East Asia (Kim 2005). The “Western” changes in East Asian international relations and governance systems created new problems beyond the simple question of to which nation a territory belongs and where the people living within a given territory belong. For those living in Manchuria, the real problem of the confrontation of governing power was linked to the problem of citizenship, and because of the relatively frequent competition and fluctuations among the hegemonies, they often faced conflicts that were directly related to where to become a citizen and which system to follow.

The Time Origins and Extinction of Modern Manchurian Space

Distinguishing the period from the perspective of the emergence of modern Manchuria following the advent of Western imperialism, modern Manchuria emerged from the Treaty of Aigun, which defined Manchuria’s territory between the Qing Dynasty and the Russian Empire in 1858. Therefore, it can be said that the emergence of modern Manchuria coincides with the advent of Western imperialism. In 1860, under the Convention of Peking, the border between the Qing and Russia was defined from the Granitnaya River to the mouth of the Tumen River along the Hunchun River, making North Jiandao a border area between the three countries: the Qing, Korea, and Russia. However, Russia continued to dispatch troops to provoke the border issue in the Tumen River estuary, invading the area in 1868, the southern shore of the Hunchun River in 1875, and the surrounding area in 1878 (Kim and Kim 2002).

Eventually, from the 1860s onward, the Qing Dynasty gradually eased the quarantine of the Manchuria area, and took a series of measures such as establishing a civilian management agency centered on Shenyang and converting the land of the Manchurian privileged class into civilian land,

which essentially marked the beginning of the migration policy. According to the last demographic data of the Qing in 1912, Manchuria had a population of 18.41 million, which marked a drastic increase compared to 3.16 million in 1862 and 5.42 million in 1898 (Fan 2002). Moreover, from 1860 to 1917, the population of the Russian Far East, including Amur Oblast and Primoriye, increased from 70,000 to 875,000 (Park 2021). It can be said, then, that the emergence of modern Manchuria began with Russia's expansion into Manchuria and a series of political moves conducted by the Qing in Manchuria.

This was only the beginning of change, however, and the maneuverings did not yet birth Manchuria as a modern space where imperialism competed. Until Manchuria was born as a modern space, there was a relatively unstable and fluid process of struggle and policy changes among imperialist forces over dominance in Manchuria and, further, hegemony in Northeast Asia. The process of dominating the power field of Manchuria as a modern space until the Manchuria of today was created can be roughly divided into the following five periods.

(1) The emergence of modern Manchuria and the struggle for hegemony by imperialist forces (1858–1905): This was the period in which imperialist forces expanded into Manchuria, which constituted the periphery of the Qing Empire. While traditional colonialist states such as Britain and France expanded their power on the rich southern coast of the Qing, adjacent to the sea, imperial Russia proceeded to expand into Manchuria, which leads to Siberia and land. At that time, Russia's strategic policy in East Asia was to advance south and secure nonfreezing ports in the Pacific Ocean.

The timing of Russia's active expansion in Manchuria coincides with the defeat in the Crimean War (1853–1856), which temporarily thwarted Russia's strategy of advancing south on European soil. This background served as an opportunity for Russia to convert the strategic center of securing nonfreezing ports to the Asia-Pacific region. The construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1891 and the Triple Intervention in 1896 were both part of Russia's active Manchuria policy.

On the other hand, after the defeat in the Second Opium War, the Qing Dynasty signed a series of treaties, starting with the Treaty of Aigun (1858) with Russia. As a result, the border between the Qing and Imperial Russia was re-established in the Stanovoy Range stipulated in the Treaty of Nerchinsk to the north shore of the Amur River, with the exception of the Sixty-Four Villages East of the River. Then, through the Beijing Treaty (1860), signed two years later, Russia acquired the territory east of the Ussuri River, or the Maritime Province, which had been jointly managed with the Qing after the Treaty of Aigun. In this way, Russia acquired a large amount of land in the eastern part of the Amur River by signing a treaty with the Qing. This meant a change in the passive “Manchu quarantine policy” of the Qing and a border crisis in the Manchuria area.

After the Meiji Restoration (1868), Japan, another imperial power in Manchuria, implemented an expanding policy to the outside world thanks to its rapid development following the full acceptance of advanced Western culture. With the victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1895), Japan obtained 200 million taels in indemnity from the Qing government through the Treaty of Shimonoseki and was given the Liaodong Peninsula, Taiwan, and its annexes. However, due to Japan’s sole occupation of the Liaodong Peninsula, where Lushun Port, an important port in Manchuria, Russia and the Western powers and imperial Japan were in conflict over Manchuria’s interests. The turbulent return of Russia-led interference with the Triple Intervention in 1896 occurred against this backdrop, and Japan’s return of the Liaodong Peninsula eventually led to the deterioration of Russia–Japan relations and the Russo-Japanese War (1905).

As mentioned previously, in the period, Manchuria’s quarantine policy was eased due to the encroachment of imperialism as well as the crisis within China, and in this context, Koreans could also acquire legal status in Manchuria on condition of registration. In particular, this is the time when the Treaty of Aigun was concluded with the Treaty of Portsmouth signed between Russia and Japan in 1905. From the time of the signing of the Treaty of Aigun, Manchuria was modernized based on the Western model, and the Treaty

of Shimonoseki was linked to the collapse of the Chinese tributary system in Northeast Asia and the loss of interest in Manchuria. Furthermore, Japanese hegemony was firmly established in Korea and Southern Manchuria, with the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905.

As a result, Manchuria was incorporated under the influence of the Western public law of all nations through a series of wars and peace treaties, and the space of modern Manchuria was reconstructed by imperialism through these peace treaties. One of the most notable effects of the modern process of change in East Asia, including Manchuria, on the Korean people was the independence of Korea. According to the geopolitical changes in Manchuria, the issue of Koreans residing there changed into a diplomatic issue between the Qing and the as-yet independent Korea. Koreans living in Manchuria were reborn as beings with “potential power,” who could be called the modern citizens of Taehan Cheguk, or the Great Han Empire, an erstwhile endonym for Korea around the turning of the nineteenth century.

(2) Loss of Korea’s sovereignty and coexistence of Russia and Japan (1905–1917): With the conclusion of the Protectorate Treaty between Korea and Japan in 1905, Japan seized Korea’s diplomatic rights, and the Korean people in Manchuria were placed legally under the rule of the Japanese Empire. At the same time, Koreans who moved to Manchuria had the right to live legally in Jiandao with the conclusion of the Convention of Jiandao. However, in 1910, Korea was formally annexed by Japan, and as a result, the problem of the Korean people in Manchuria emerged as a diplomatic issue between China and Japan. In addition, Japan’s hegemony would be further strengthened in Manchuria with the Manchuria–Mongolia Treaty signed by China and Japan in 1915.

Japan and Russia, which were engaged in the hegemony struggle in Manchuria, entered a period of coexistence after the Russo-Japanese War and before the revolution in Russia. With the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, Japan overtook Russia in Manchuria to obtain complete hegemony, and the coexistence of Russia and Japan virtually ceased.

The problem with the Koreans in Manchuria during this

period was that part of Manchuria changed almost to be a part of Korea as Koreans lived with their identity as Koreans without assimilating into their surroundings. After the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War, imperial Japan dismantled China's tributary system and seized Korea's sovereignty. As a result, the center of the confrontation between Japan, which intended to expand into the continent, and China, is transferred from the Korean peninsula to Manchuria. The Korean people living in Manchuria at that time therefore became a medium of conflict between China and Japan. The Sino-Japanese conflict in Manchuria mainly surrounded the issue of Korean residents. Due to the loss of Korea's national sovereignty, the Korean people in Manchuria were now of the "Japanese Empire," and South Manchurian Railway and the Kwantung Leased Territory, which were ceded to Japan after the Russo-Japanese War, became the core power in Manchuria and became the starting point for the Japanese to actively engage in Manchuria affairs.

(3) Confrontation between the Republic of China and the Japanese Empire (1917–1932): In the 1920s, China and Japan formed the most acute confrontation in Manchuria. Japan tried to sever Manchuria and Mongolia from mainland China and secure Japan's exclusive rights and interests. In China, ethno-nationalism rose in the aftermath of the global nationalist movement after World War I: on one hand, the establishment of a unified state internally and externally, and on the other, the recovery of sovereignty robbed away by the world powers.

In 1919, as the March First Independence Movement progressed in Korea, the situation in Manchuria underwent yet another change, as anti-Japanese movements in Manchuria became active in the aftermath of the March First Independence Movement. In order to quell the anti-Japanese movements, the Japanese Empire dispatched troops to Jiandao under the pretext of jurisdiction and control over the Korean people in Manchuria. In China, nationalist sentiment was heightened by China's diplomatic failure at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. This led to a movement to oppose imperialism and restore national sovereignty throughout the 1920s. China's anti-Japanese nationalist sentiment in

Manchuria was also boosted by the aftermath of the national rights restoration movement within China and the dispatch of Japanese troops to Jiandao. The Chinese anti-Japanese nationalist sentiment in Manchuria was mainly expressed by local governments in a way that suppressed the Koreans, the legal citizens of Japan.

Throughout the 1920s, the confrontation between China and Japan in Manchuria became increasingly acute until imperial Japan's puppet state named Manchukuo was established. Due to the suppression of Korean residents in Manchuria by local Chinese officials, confrontation in the private sphere gradually became violent, hitting its zenith vis-à-vis the Wanpaoshan Korean-Chinese Exclusion Movement that occurred in colonial Korea in 1931.

In July 1931, the agricultural dispute between Koreans and Chinese at Wanpaoshan in Manchuria was falsely reported as the massacre of Korean-Chinese due to the misinformation by colonial media. However, on September 18, 1931, even before the Wampaoshan Incident was resolved, the Manchurian Incident worsened the anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese. In such a situation, the number of cases in which Chinese people perpetrated upon Koreans rose dramatically (Son 2001).

The heightened anti-Japanese sentiment of the Chinese was directed toward Koreans living in remote areas or miscellaneous areas of Manchuria, rather than the Japanese living in groups in the Showa Steel Works facility or the Kwantung Leased Territory, where Japanese troops were stationed. The irony was that the more severe the hardship of the Korean people in Manchuria, the stronger their dependence on the Japanese Empire. This sentiment was also revealed by the Korean people's ambiguous attitude toward the establishment of Manchukuo in 1932, as the Manchurian Incident and the establishment of Manchukuo began to be recognized as a hopeful event that could signal the end of the history of hardships, with Manchuria being viewed as a utopia in substitution for colonial Korea (Jeon 2010).

(4) The period of Manchukuo (1932–1945): After the establishment of Manchukuo, under the propaganda of ethnic harmony, the Korean people in Japan were recognized as one

of the five ethnic groups that comprise Manchukuo. As part of the Japanese colonial policy, a large number of residents migrated to Manchuria from the Japanese archipelago and the Korean Peninsula. Some were movements based on personal choice, while others were conducted to create collective farms according to Japan's colonial policy in Manchukuo. In order to procure land for Japanese and Korean immigrants, the Manchukuo government bonds company purchased the land from local Chinese at a price close to free of charge, which inevitably caused seething resentment by the Chinese people.

Under the pretext of paradise and harmony among the five ethnic groups at which the statesmanship of Manchukuo aimed, extreme economic exploitation of Chinese residents was carried out, and the ethnic conflict between the Japanese (which included the Koreans) and Chinese residents intensified in the area where these "Japanese" migrants settled.

Most of the violence committed in the exceptional situation that occurred when Manchuria was liberated was directed toward Japanese residents. However, in this situation, Koreans who flowed into Manchuria as migrants also became direct victims of violence occurring in the private sphere. Although the Koreans who migrated from the Korean Peninsula were victims the pain of diaspora and colonization, from the point of view of the Chinese, who had lost their land due to the influx of migrants, they were no different from Japanese imperialists. Even though the Koreans in Manchuria were victims of imperialism, they were caught in a dual-damage structure such as revenge against imperialism after liberation.

(5) Liberation period (1945–1952): When the Soviet Union dispatched its military to Manchuria in 1945 and Japan was defeated, the Manchurian region was "liberated." For the overwhelming majority of Koreans, the defeat of the Japanese Empire was liberation from hardship, but for Koreans who settled in the frontier of Manchuria, liberation was the beginning of a new hardship, accumulating on top of previous difficulties. The situation in the Yanbian area, a traditional residential area of Koreans, never appeared optimistic. This is because prejudice against Koreans was common even in

areas dominated by the Chinese Communist Party (Yum 2010); however, this prejudice was gradually resolved as Koreans played an active role in the Chinese Civil War.

During this period, the Korean people in Manchuria, now officially recognized as a minority in China, established a Korean-Chinese autonomous state, which lent the Koreans a different identity from that of the previous period. As China was liberated, the factors producing “Japan,” namely imperialism and colonialism, dissipated, and after the Civil War, the causes of national conflict on an official and structural level disappeared due to the establishment of a communist regime in China. Accordingly, all Chinese ethnic groups experienced a process of being reorganized and gradually planarized as Chinese citizens. It must be noted, however, that this “national unity” was maintained by an ideology based on class struggle and was the result of the deliberate suppression of the mainstream ethno-nationalism by the Chinese Communist Party.

The existing modern Manchurian space also experienced the process of death. Manchuria was restored as comprising the three northeastern provinces, a designation based on the inland of China as the Chinese center, and the process of de-imperialism and decolonization progressed gradually. However, the conflict between ethnic groups left by the modern Manchurian space remained without being healed.

Transition and Expression of Trauma Composed from Modern Space

The ethnic conflict, which formed part of the separation trauma of the Korean people in Manchuria, comprised part of the colonial trauma for the Han Chinese. In other words, the two start from the same experience in the same space, but they constitute different historical traumas due to the different historical contexts lived by the Han Chinese and the Korean people. While for the Koreans, the experience in Manchuria was closely tied to the pain caused by Japanese colonialism and severance from other countries, for the

Chinese people, the experience in Manchuria was mainly caused by Japanese invasion and colonization. It is clear that both peoples were victims of imperialist rule, but in modern Manchuria, solidarity and confrontation alternated. Predictably, the feelings of dissatisfaction accumulated in the private sphere through the Manchukuo period were unleashed by the Chinese shortly after liberation. In fact, the greatest threat to the Korean people in Manchuria immediately after liberation was the hostility created by exclusive ethno-nationalism after the loss of status granted by the Japanese. Therefore, the active participation of Korean residents in the communist army in the civil war may have been largely due to self-preservation desires, but ideological causes cannot be ignored.

The Korean people in Manchuria were able to overcome the status as an absolute minority first through the process of the Chinese Communist Party avoiding exclusive ethno-nationalism and establishing a class-based solidarity, and then by liberating themselves from the discourse of national hierarchy of perpetrators and victims of Manchukuo. They were also able to overcome the obstacles caused by the body traumatized by severance borne of the modern Manchuria space as much as possible by establishing an autonomous region and acquiring an official status as Korean-Chinese.

On the other hand, the Han Chinese were planarized into a people's solidarity based on horizontal classes by the Chinese Communist Party's national policy, even though they were an absolute majority. This planarization was progressed passively by the communist ideology, resulting in the maintenance of the traumatized body formed in the modern Manchurian space. The traumatized body of the Han Chinese did not interfere with the daily situation in which the Chinese Communist Party's minority policy was carried out; however, inevitably, the traumatized body awakens and restores hostility when vertical power that maintains horizontal solidarity meets exceptional contexts. In the anomic state of the early period during the Cultural Revolution, ethno-nationalist incitement by some powers-that-be triggered the colonial trauma of the Han Chinese at the time and created significant obstacles for the Korean-Chinese. These obstacles

led in turn to a situation that constituted a severance trauma for the Korean-Chinese in China.

The Cultural Revolution itself was an inordinately traumatizing event, so it has drawn great attention, but the entwined historical trauma of the Korean-Chinese and the Han Chinese, which consisted of their experience in the modern Manchurian space, has not been duly highlighted. After liberation, the trauma of the Korean-Chinese people was not easily evoked due to the Chinese Communist Party's policy of "sealing," while the colonial trauma of the Chinese people, especially that of the residents in Northeastern China, was not healed properly and has been constantly transferred and awakened in the private sphere.

We should not overlook the fact that ethnic conflicts during the Manchukuo period can be "sealed" and dealt with side by side in the name of harmony and unity between the ethnic minorities and the mainstream. This fact should also not easily be forgotten or sublimated; we should instead acknowledge the sheer magnitude of historical trauma and try to restore relations through healing. Memory is often hidden due to the taboo-ization in the public domain, but it is latent in the private sphere and ineluctably transferred to posterity. As the context of the Cultural Revolution illuminates, this latency can cause collective obstacles without notice and quickly be switched to hostility toward *others*. Overcoming these obstacles as much as possible and minimizing the damage is one of the reasons why the healing of historical trauma should still be addressed as a significant problematic.

Although the historical trauma of the Korean-Chinese, which, as aforementioned, originated from the modern Manchurian space, does not cause serious obstacles at present, but must be duly noted. Firstly, this is because the suture through national policy based on class theory is a factor that weakens the structure entangled with trauma by state violence, but leads the Korean-Chinese to suppress their "unrecalled memories" within their collective psychology and yields a deformed transmission of their history. Secondly, this is also paradoxically the same as the Korean-Chinese forming an obstacle of driving the "self" into conflict with the Han Chinese and trauma of socio-cultural violence. If we are to

be limited by the framework of considering the single ethnic group within the multi-ethnic state, to the Korean-Chinese people, the recurrence of the Han Chinese' colonial trauma can only be felt as violence toward their own society, which can also easily comprise a newly traumatized body of the Korean-Chinese people and their reversal to extreme pure-blood ethno-nationalism or to the nationalism of the nation in which they reside.

The Healing of Trauma Originating in the Modern Manchurian Space

Healing the historical trauma of the Korean-Chinese in China should be dealt with alongside the healing of the historical trauma of the Han Chinese. This is because the current historical trauma of the Korean-Chinese people is a “trauma of social violence” that originated from their social relationships with the Han Chinese. In terms of the close “bodies of relationship-building” in which the Han Chinese and the Korean-Chinese people live together as “Chinese,” such work is essential to recover relations, which are at once the last stage of “healing” and the starting point.

If so, which methodology of healing should be carried out? The trauma healing proposed by Judith Herman consists of three steps: first, securing safety; second, remembrance and mourning; and third, recovery of connection (Herman 2012). First, securing safety means creating conditions for the victim to face and speak of his or her wounds by securing physical and structural security before starting the healing process. The problem is that securing safety at the level of historical trauma is more complex and difficult than doing so for trauma at the individual level.

Securing the safety required in the healing of historical trauma is first to solve the problems of East Asian international politics as “recalling of memory” and “real anxiety” that manifest trauma at present, and second to undermine a culture that prevents them from facing memory by forming cultural violence. At this time, since the first

is a problem related to the political environment and the international situation, we attempt to secure the second type of safety.

Disbanding culture here begins with a subversion of the narrative. This means the work of changing the meta-narrative that is the driving force for cultural violence, by recalling and re-narrating memories that are not intended to be remembered, memories that could not be remembered, and those distorted, untold, and sutured.

The second stage of healing, remembrance and mourning, begins in continuity at this point. *Facing* is a process of remembrance, and since recovery of memory is a memory-ization that dismantles memories that act as a trauma trigger, it should aim for improvement in terms of empathy and mourning. Mourning fundamentally begins with an empathetic attitude toward the narratives of others, and since it is meaningful in terms of healing only when mourning proceeds at the social level, the recipient of empathy is at once oneself and *the other* as a social member (Park 2020).

Judith Herman argues that remembrance and mourning, the second stage of healing, are essential, but at the same time the most difficult and harrowing process (Herman 2012); the same is true of the historical trauma accumulated in the complex space called “Manchuria.” This difficult task is to reconstruct memories to find the origin of the historical trauma of the Korean-Chinese in China, but at the same time, to remember a distorted aspect of the “self” by facing the colonial trauma of the Han Chinese, which has thus far been avoided. Reconstructing the memory of “Manchuria” is a process of recovering scattered narratives. This process of *facing* inevitably calls for the work of understanding the complexity and stratification of the nature of trauma formed in the modern Manchurian space. As we proceed with this step by step, we will understand the relationships with various others associated with the process of forming trauma.

An important point in the healing of trauma is the recovery of the damaged sense of self, which in turn means the recovery of damaged relationships. What is important in this recovery is the intimacy formed in a healthy relationship with *others* (Herman 2012), so the process of facing the

traumatic memories of “Manchuria” means the recovery of memories and the restoration of relationships that were quashed in historical context that succeeded “Manchuria.” The recovery of the relationships, which begins with the recovery of intimacy, starts with a sympathetic understanding of “they” who were forced to be in a different position from “I” at the time. When this process begins, the second stage of healing, namely mourning, will open up a phase where it will be possible to reflect on the “self” who was in the victim position, as well as “self-existence” that, in the perpetrator’s position, damaged *others*, a reflection that enables apologies and condolences to those others. Above all, this process is extremely important in that it can proceed to the final stage of healing, the recovery of connections. Ultimately, the healing methodology of historical trauma proposed in this article is the work of performing the facing with healing as a step-by-step process.

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