

Causes of the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea in 1965

TO WHAT EXTENT DID POLITICAL FACTORS LEAD TO THE
TREATY ON BASIC RELATIONS BEING SIGNED BETWEEN JAPAN
AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IN 1965?

History

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Introduction

The Republic of Korea (Korea), which had undergone Japanese colonial rule from 1910 to 1945, had been independent from Japan since the end of World War II in 1945 but has been a national hostility towards Japan for the next decade. However, the Park Chung-hee government of Korea, which had been in power since 1961, tried to relax its relations with the Japanese government unlike the previous government, and eventually regained its relationship with Japan in 1965 by signing the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. This paper will investigate to answer ‘To what extent did political factors lead to the Treaty on Basic Relations being signed between Japan and the Republic of Korea in 1965?’ This can be divided into political factors based on the nature of Park Chung-hee's regime, economic factors, and international factors with influence of the United States and Japan from 1960 to 1965.

Political factors based on the nature of Park Chung-hee's regime

Park Chung-hee, the second commander-in-chief of the army, and the 8-power-led forces led the military with more than 250 officers and 3,500 soldiers on military affairs on May 16, 1961, and announced the revolutionary pledge of six clauses. Among them, Park claimed that the government should take the initiative in its policy of "anti-communism policy that was only based on form and relief."¹ He also announced a decree that basically denied all democratic order, such as banning rallies and protests who are against his military

¹ *오/이/화* [Yi, I-hwa]. *오/이/화의 한 권으로 읽는 한국사* [Reading Korean History as a Book of I-Hwa Yi]. *고유서가* [Gyoyuseoga], 2016.

coup, saying that the scene regime's chaos would be corrected. The previous Cabinet decided on total resignation including the president Yoon Bo-seon.

Later, Park Chung-hee, who became president, and Kim Jong-pil, who became the prime minister, formed a central intelligence agency called the Central Intelligence Agency to monitor and detain those who opposed them, to preserve existing national security laws and to establish anti-communist laws. The military regime, following the procedure of transferring the civilian government, elected Park Jung - hee as president and launched the Third Republic. At the time, Korea was inseparably connected with the construction of an authoritarian state and the rapid development of the economy. He was at the centre of political power for 20 years until his assassination in 1979. The political regime of 20 years, unlike the previous government, showed a restoration of relations with Japan compared to previous government, which was influenced by Park Chung-hee's life history related to Japan.

Relationship between Park Chung-hee and Japan

Park Chung -hee, who was born in 1917 in a poor farmhouse, personally experienced the poor reality of the village which made him to realize the need of economic plan in Korea. He entered Manchurian military school in 1940, and he learned the rapid modernization of Japan from Manchuria and the Japanese Military Army in Tokyo, and impressed the proportion of the military in the Japanese government. After two years of military training, he was selected as a honorary student. In 1942, he was transferred to the Japanese Military Academy and graduated with the third grade. He served mainly in the Kwantung army until around the end of the Korean War.²

² 황경운 [Hwang, Gyeong-Un] . 맥락으로 읽는 새로운 한국사 [New Korean History Read in Context]. 21세기북스 [21th Century Book], 2011.

Historians Kang Sang-jung and Hyun Muam commented on Park Jung-hee's experience as a former Japanese soldier, "Park Jung-hee has a strong nostalgia for his career. He cannot find any traces of that shame ... he felt the pride of being an imperial soldier." Park's experience as Japanese soldier was effective to form a close relationship with Nobusuke Kishi, Japanese former prime minister who was started greatly influenced the recovery of relations with Japan since then, when Park Chung-hee took power.³

Dr. Park Han-yong said that the experience of Park Jung-hee had a great influence on the ruling period after the 5.16 coup.⁴ Among them, the totalitarian security system aimed at the advanced defence system and the 5-year plan for the state-controlled economic development. Moreover, Park's Yushin system was a Korean versioning of Showa Yushin, which the Japanese extreme right dreamed of. For example, in November 1961, when Park visited Japan for the first time since the 5.16 coup d'état, he met Nobuyuki Kishi. At the time, Park Chung-hee wrote a letter to Nobuyuki Kishi saying, "In the settlement negotiations between Korea and Japan, I think cooperation will be achieved through the recognition that strong ties between Korea and our country are the historical inevitability of both countries."⁵

³ 강상중, 현무암 [Kang, Sang-jung, and Muam Hyun]. 기시 노부스케와 박정희 (다카키 마사오 박정희에게 만주국이란 무엇이었는데가) [Nobuyoshi Kishi and Park Chung-Hee (What Was Manchukuo to Masaaki Takaku)]. 책과 함께 [Together with books], 2012.

⁴ 김덕련 [Kim, Deog-lyeon]. “끝에서 최우등으로 박정희가 거듭난 비결 [The Method That Park Chung-Hee Became the First from the Bottom of the List”]. *프레시안* [Pressian], 13 Jan. 2016, www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=132480#09T0.

⁵ 강상중, 현무암 [Kang, Sang-jung, and Muam Hyun]. 기시 노부스케와 박정희 (다카키 마사오 박정희에게 만주국이란 무엇이었는데가) [Nobuyoshi Kishi and Park Chung-Hee (What Was Manchukuo to Masaaki Takaku)]. 책과 함께 [Together with books], 2012.

The value of origin is as it is a primary source, this explicitly shows Park's personal idea about the need for improvement of Japanese- Korea relations. In terms of purpose, it illustrates the President Park was positive towards Nobusuke Kishi and his Japanese government to create a treaty. With content, it reflects that President Park was desperate to make a political connection between Korea and Japan from the meeting between two leaders.

However, with the limitation of origin, it might be a biased document as it is written by Park Chung-hee with an objective view on the political relationship between Japan and Korea, referring to the history. The purpose is limited as it only emphasizes the need of cooperation between Japan and Korea; With content, it does not address any description about both countries; domestic situation or position in international society which can further explains why the negotiation is needed.

Also, the relationship between Park Chung-hee and Nobusuke Kishi was amicable, historians Kang Sang Sang and Hyun Muam- Both explained that they were good partners for each other because they had strong common points such as a militaristic national transformation under anti-communism, and the idea of a planned controlled economy.

Radical militarism and Anti-Japanese sentiment in South Korea

Park Chung-hee was a civilian president, but the way he ruled was militaristic, from the way he seized power through military insurrection to the strict control of politics, society, and the economy. From 1961 to 1963, the Military Revolutionary Committee and the National Reconstruction Supreme Council, which practically governed Korea, brought the entire society to the militaristic line. The militaristic reign of the Park Chung-hee regime

reached its throne on June 3, 1964, when it was strongly opposed to the normalization of diplomatic ties with Japan in that day, led by college students and citizens. Considering the generations that lived under the Japanese colonial rule, they were born in the generation after the liberation.

As the protests against the potential possibility of signing Treaty with Japan gradually spread with anti-Japanese and anti-government demonstrations, the government declared emergency martial law nationwide and dispatched police officers to take steps to suppress them. As a result, 1120 people, including student activists, politicians, and journalists who led the demonstrations, were arrested, and 348 of them were sentenced to six months in Seodaemun prison for criminals. In order to maintain their extreme political system in the face of this rebellion, the people at that time could recognize the growth at a glance and the economic growth that they thought was the most necessary. And rationalized the Korea-Japan accord, which is his political move.

Within Korea, he rationalized his military regime on the grounds of 'economic development', while externally, he had his own advantage in anti-communism policy. Shortly after the outbreak of the coup, the chief United Nations Commander in Seoul and the US Ambassador to Korea expressed his support for Park Chung-hee. The coup forces suppressed opposition parties in the military, arrested and imprisoned innocent personnel and students. It also repressed democratic forces and reformist forces, including the National Emergency Preparedness Act and temporary measures against workers' collective activities.⁶ Moreover,

⁶사월혁명연구소 [The April Revolution Institute]. *한국사회변혁운동과 4월혁명* [Korean Social Transformation Movement and April Revolution]. 한길사 [Hangilsa], 1990.

he made clear its intention to strengthen existing anti-communist policies. The situation of Northeast Asia in the midst of the confrontation between communism and democracy in the 1960s was especially important, as Park Chung-hee regime supported the strong Democratic countries like the United States by advocating "anti-communism".

Thus, since he seized the power by the military coup, he needed to justify reason behind the coup by prevent Korea from the threat of anti-communism and severe economic depression which lasted for decade. Moreover, the personality of Park Chung-hee who are deeply influenced by Japan triggered the motivation to form amicable relationship with Japan. Although he faced the opposition about his militaristic ruling, treaty with Japan was perfect chance to prove himself as a saviour of Korea with a strong leadership.

Economic factors

Impact of Korean war and US economic aid

The Korean War has caused much damage to Korea, not only about 42 percent of its industrial production facilities have been destroyed.⁷ At that time, the government did not have enough money after the war because there was no taxation during the war. Moreover, because the war was not over and it was a ceasefire, large proportion of government budget were spent on national defence.

The administration of the Rhee Syngman decided to get help from the United States to solve these problems. Immediately after the war, the United States began to assist Korea with agricultural products. On the basis of US aid, various industries started to take place in Korea, for example, the sugar industry, the cotton industry, and the milling industry became the centre of the nation's economy in the 1950s. The price of crops has plummeted and farmers have been hit hard. As millions of wheats came in from the United States, American wheat was circulated cheaply in the country, and the price of domestic wheat fell, leading to a decrease in farmers' income.

⁷ 원유상 [Won, Yu Sang]. *역사교과서 집필진이 쉽게 풀어내는 술술 한국사 <현대>* [Korean History Written by the History Textbook Writing Staff <Modern>]. 김영사 [Gimmyoungjr], 2015.

However, there was a problem with Korea leaning too much on US aid, and from the late 1950s, US aid was changed from grants to loans. The Korean economy, which was absolutely dependent on the United States, has become even more vulnerable. Ten years later, in 1960, Korea was a major underdeveloped country in terms of agriculture. Of the 25 million Koreans, 67.5% were engaged in agriculture, with per capita income of around \$ 80, with an annual export value of about \$ 40 million. In 1961, the Korean industrial structure was 40.3% for the primary industry, 20.6% for the secondary industry, and 39.1% for the tertiary industry. The economic growth rate was 2.8% and the population growth rate was 2.9%.⁸

In other words, the Korean economy at that time was inevitably dependent on foreign aid only, and the technology was at the level of lead that did not even have a basis.

1. Almost all of the underlying technology in industrial activities was dependent on foreign countries.
2. Few industrial products could compete in the international market
3. There was not a comprehensive administrative system to efficiently implement technical administration.
4. National and public scientific and technological research institutes were poorly operated, there were few private research institutes, and there were no institutions actively promoting and promoting science and technology.

⁸ 김영섭 [Kim, Yeongseob] . *과학대통령 박정희와 리더십* [Science President Park Chung Hee and Leadership]. MSD 미디어 [MSD Media], 2010.

The military regime was also required to respond to two challenges from an economic standpoint. The military regime had to first rescue Korea's subordinate capitalist system by foreign intervention after 4.19. One was the resolution of the crisis of the "aid economy" and the other was the establishment of the national economy as proposed by 4.19. In order to achieve these aims, 'independent economy' of Korea became the most important goal of all the economic plan of Park Chung-hee.

‘Increase production, export, and construction’: ‘working year’ in 1965

Park Chung-hee cited the appeal of Winston Churchill's "export or death" after the Second World War with the slogan "Increase production, export, and construction." 1965 was the year for 'export or death' was designated as 'working year'. Kim Jin-man, a Korean politician, wrote in his article, "Social consciousness of intellectuals," written in the May 1965 edition of the ideological system, "Our living today is at least as difficult as my own life.”⁹

Based on the economic development plan established by the previous government, Park Chung-hee set up the First Five-year Economic Plan (1962-1966) and pursued it in earnest. The military regime has attempted to lay the foundations for a self-sustaining economy, such as organizing the rural irrigation schemes, illegal shippers, and monetary policy planning, while establishing the first economic development plan aimed at inclusive industrialization. These attempts were to create the legitimacy of the military regime, which

⁹ 홍석률 [Hong, Seuk-ryule]. “1960년대 지성계의 동향 -산업화의 근대화론의 대두와 지식인사회의 변동 [Trends in the 1960s - The Rise of Modernization of Industrialization and the Change of Intellectual Society].” *1960년대 지성계의 동향 -산업화의 근대화론의 대두와 지식인사회의 변동 [Trends in the 1960s - The Rise of Modernization of Industrialization and the Change of Intellectual Society]*, 1999, p. 227.

was dominated by a coup. At the time, however, the government lacked funds to pursue economic development plans. Such a plan will be forced by the limitations of domestic and foreign structural autonomy in the course of the military regime's failure in mobilization due to currency reform, internal mobilization, and sluggish introduction of loans.

In the end, the military regime has largely revised its first reforms, turning it into an open system, which this reformation plan was forced by the United States.”¹⁰ The United States, which initially opposed the inclusive economic development plan from the beginning, actively intervened in the process of establishing the complementary plan with the aid of the International Development Agency. This transferred the Korean economy to an external dependent system. Because of this, the United States pressed Korea to succeed in the agreement with Japan. At the same time, intellectuals showed support for economic cooperation between Korea and Japan after the 4.19 revolution. Lee Dong-woo, an editorial committee member of the Dong-A Ilbo, insisted that "the economic growth of Korea and Japan depends on the economic tie-up."¹¹ He also argued that in the early 1960s when aid from the United States was declining, the loan from Japan, which "knew the reality of Korea", was the most realistic for economic development.

Under these situations, Park tried to recover relations with Japan because it needed money to implement his economic plans.

¹⁰ 정운형 [Jung, Yun-hyung]. “개방체제로의 이행과 1960년대 경제개발의 성격 [The Transition to the Open System and the Nature of Economic Development in the 1960s].” *한국사회의 재인식 [Recognition of Korean Society]*, 1985, pp. 5–7.

¹¹ 박태균 [Park, Tae Gyun]. “동향과 전망 [Trends and Prospects].” *1950, 60년대 경제개발 신화의 형성과 확산 [Formation and Spread of Economic Development Myths in the 1950s and 60s]*, vol. 55, 2002, p. 13.

Therefore, the economic loss of the Korean War and the abrupt decline of US aid led to the Park Chung-hee administration to draw the treaty for its economic benefit from Japan which was experiencing rapidly high growth at the time. Finally, in 1965, when the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea was concluded, a new solution was proposed, "How to use Japanese capital effectively," rather than racial hatred toward Japan, which has been deeply rooted in society for the past 15 years. As a result, it appeared as a hope for Park Chung-hee's government, which came up with a new plan for the recovery of economy, Japan. Finally, with the wishes of the people such as economic growth, the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and Korea was achieved.

International factors: influence of the United States and Japan

Influence of the United States and Walt Whitman Rostow

In early 1960s, Lyndon B. Johnson made a desperate attempt to resume the talks between Japan and Korea. The reason was due to the changing international situation in Asia.

¹² The establishment of diplomatic ties in China and France in January of the same year, the bombing of North Vietnam in the US on August 4, and the success of China's nuclear test on Oct. 16 highlighted the need to tie the Japan and Korea together.

The Lyndon B. Johnson administration has made "the early conclusion of the Korea-Japan negotiations the most urgent." The reason is well documented in the report of the National Security Council (NSC), written in May and July 1964:¹³

¹² 강준만 [Kang, Chun-man]. *한국 현대사 산책 1960년대* [1960's Korean Modern History Walk]. Vol. 3, 인물과 사상사 [Person and idea], 2004.

¹³ 이재봉 [Lee, Jae-bong]. “박정희 정권 "일본과 한국은 패밀리, 미국은 큰 형님 [Park Jung-Hee Regime 'Japan and Korea Are Family, America Is Big Brother].” *프레시안* [Pressian], 23 Aug. 2018, pressian.com/news/article.html?no=208202.

"This is the long-term way to reduce the financial burden on the US, rather than reducing its troop strength." The United States still spends more than \$ 300 million annually on Korea with a population of 20 million, So the United States needs to find a country that can bear the burden over a long period of time, and that is Japan, and if a Korea-Japan agreement is reached, a variety of Japanese funds of between \$ 6 billion and \$ 1 billion will go into Korea.”¹⁴

What gave hope to Korea in this pressured situation was the "Economic Growth Phase: Anticommunism Declaration" that Walt Whitman Rostow made in 1960, when he was a professor of economics at MIT, had a great impact on Korea. The society in the process of leaping, the mature society through the industrialization process, and the society reaching the stage of mass consumption at a high level. In the transitional society and the society of the leaping stage, the military is designated as a source of political leadership for modernization. The appeal of Rostow's economic development ideology to the leaders of the underdeveloped countries is that the less developed countries and the advanced countries can develop and the less developed countries achieve the economic prosperity achieved by the advanced countries in the past hundreds of years.

President Park met with Rostow in November 1961 when he visited the United States. Rostow, who was Johnson's adviser and chairman of the State Department's policy committee, sought to advance the Korea-Japan talks. For that reason, Rostow visited Korea

¹⁴ 이재봉 [Lee,Jae-bong]. “박정희 정권 "일본과 한국은 패밀리, 미국은 큰 형님 [Park Jung-Hee Regime 'Japan and Korea Are Family, America Is Big Brother].” *프레시안* [Pressian], 23 Aug. 2018, pressian.com/news/article.html?no=208202.

on May 2, 65, and the next day Park and the officials met and lectured. The main content was "Korea is now out of the swamp of the backward country. The Korean economy is a leap forward." Historian Park Tae Gyun claimed that "It has had a big impact on Koreans living in the myth that Korea is achieving the economic development."¹⁵

Park summarized Rostow's economic ideology and commented that Rostow's theory basically the economic ideology of the United States and the West.

1. Only the underdeveloped countries' economic development plan is the only way to prevent the communist ideological expansion.
2. Developed countries will be favourable to the United States and advanced empires through economic growth.
3. The economic development plan of an underdeveloped country should never have self-perfection.
4. Independent plans should be rejected and oriented towards an economic system that can be fully incorporated into the world capitalist system.
5. To this end, active imports of foreign investment, export-led development, and imbalanced growth theory should be introduced into the economic development plan.¹⁶

The value of origin is that it covers different perspectives about plans for the development of underdeveloped countries' economy. The value of purpose is that it explains

¹⁵ 박태균 [Park, Tae Gyun]. "동향과 전망 [Trends and Prospects]." *1950,60년대 경제개발 신화의 형성과 확산 [Formation and Spread of Economic Development Myths in the 1950s and 60s]*, vol. 55, 2002, p. 15.

¹⁶ 박태균 [Park, Taegyun]. "참여사회 [Participating Society]." *한국경제발전론의 대부, 김영선과 박희범 [The Godfather of Korean Economic Development, Kim Young Sun and Park Hee-Beom]*, 1997, pp. 58–59.

how Rostow's theory affected the change of general economic system in underdeveloped countries such as their trade or domestic economic policies. In terms of context, this source offers insight into both Park Tae Gyun and Rostow's view and contains comparison between the economic plans from capitalist countries and communist countries

At the same time, the origin is biased since it contains only Rostow's theory and his advice for underdeveloped countries' economies. Link to the origin, in terms of purpose, as this theory it to persuade the leaders from underdeveloped countries like Park Chung-hee, it might not provide fairest proven theory. With content, Rostow has biased view towards communist countries as well as glamorized capitalist economy to make countries to join in allies with United States. Furthermore, this is not specialised only for Korea which makes it is hard to distinguish which factor inspired Park to follow Rostow's theory.

By the influence of Rostow, Park introduced various policies and measures for inclusion into the open. In May 1964, the rate of exchange rate hikes and the realization of the interest rate in 1965. At the same time, the economic development plan was led by the light industry-oriented export of cheap domestic labour that became the trademark of the Korean economy Industrialization.¹⁷ In particular, these changes lead to the extension of absolute labour time and the maintenance of low wages, aimed at securing international economic power in the future, which was an important opportunity for institutionalizing a new powerful and oppressive political system.

¹⁷정운형 [Jung, Yun-hyung]. “한국자본주의와 국가 [Korean Capitalism and the State].” *국가, 계급 및 자본축적: 8.3 조치를 중심으로* [State, Class and Capital Accumulation: Focus on 8.3 Measures], 1985, pp. 242–243.

Influence of Japanese economic miracle

In the 1960s, Japan had a controversy over the issue of keeping Japan safe by forming the Cold War system with the US and the Soviet Union as two axes. Progressive favoured unarmed neutrality, and the conservative side rebuilt the armaments and insisted that they actively suppressed communism as America's active ally. In the end, Japan took the form of supporting Japan 's Cold War policy by allowing US troops to stay in Japan under the nuclear umbrella of the United States in relation to national security, and not supporting Japan's own security obligations. In the meantime, it established a limited and small-scale military organization, the Self-Defence Forces, dedicated to the mainland defence. The United States wanted Japan to enter a collective defence system like the United Nations peacekeeping force, but Japan rejected the US request for a peace constitution.

While Japan is in a low position in international politics and military stage, Japan has revitalized the economy in a short period of time by giving the loyalty of samurai-style to its affiliated companies. As a result, in 1960 Japan achieved an average annual growth rate of 10%. Japan's intention was to go further from its home country through the Korea-Japan accord and urge its radical economic growth. As a result, the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and Korea Was signed in June 1965, and the commercial loan of the daily newspaper was pushed to the surface. This was the moment when Japanese monopoly capital began to newly enter Korea, and many Japanese goods became monopolized in the Korean market.

The rapid industrialization that was promoted in this context was centred on the introduction of foreign capital and financial and taxation support to enterprises. Particularly

in the fertilizer, refining, chemical, cement, and electrical machinery sectors. During the first five-year economic development plan, exports increased markedly, and the share of industrial products also increased sharply. As a result, the traditional agricultural sector was destroyed and flowed out of the countryside, and the labor force absorbed the second and third parts of the city. The government - led industrialization policy has led to serious social contradictions. After the Korea - Japan accord, Japan's economic penetration became active and the trade imbalance with Japan deepened, resulting in Korea being subordinated to the Japanese economy.

In essence, an international situation related to the United States and Japan influence Park's decision of agreeing on the treaty. For the U.S, the relationship between Korea and Japan was vital to secure the democracy against the threat of communism from China and the Soviet Union. With Japan, they need another market to sell their export goods which is in the part of their economic miracle plan during the 1960s. For Park Chung-hee who needed to stable Korea's position in the international society, he desperately needs his political partners under the same political system, democracy. Therefore, he agreed to the treaty which the common benefits for Korea, Japan, and the United States.

Conclusion

Overall, it is true that the political factor was a significant factor causing the Treaty of Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea in 1965. At the period, Korea desperately need a strong leader and government to solve the problem of anti-communism and economic recovery. A strong relationship between Park and Japan drove a good-neighbour relationship to compare to previous governments which promoted anti-Japanese sentiments. However, weak economy of Korea also contributed to cause the treaty as Park and his government tried to implement the first five-year economic development plan. The action of Park's active economic policies was initially aimed to get the public support after his violent coup as the way of justification. This showed that the guaranteed compensation from the treaty act as economic funds. Moreover, the U.S. pressure in order to secure the democracy in north-eastern Asia gave Park a pressure to form an ally with Japan, another democratic country. Also, Japan was opened to Korea to expand its position in the international society as a part of its economic miracle plan in 1965. Therefore,

the Treaty of Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic Korea caused by the combination of political, economic and international factor.

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