

TAMING CHINA'S FRONTIER: JAPAN'S ETHNIC CONTROL POLICY AND THE 1920 GANDO INTERVENTION

BEN PARK HANG FUNG
B.A. Candidate in History
Hong Kong Baptist University, Class of 2027

Abstract

This paper focuses on the formulation and implementation of Imperial Japan's policy of ethnic control in the Gando region by delving into the prelude and development of the Gando Intervention from October 1920 to May 1921. The Gando region had been a significant base for the Korean independence movement due to its proximity to the Korean Peninsula, which was favorable to independence activists' military operations along the Sino-Japanese border. From a different perspective, Japan also sought to expand its influence on Gando and eliminate anti-Japanese forces which continued to disrupt its colonial governance over Korea. China, which officially owned the territorial sovereignty over Gando, or Yanbian (based on the *Gando Convention* in 1909) had to deal with conflicts between Korean independent activists and Japan as well as Japan's ambitions towards control of Gando. This formed Gando as a contested space where three sides of power existed. By analyzing newspapers and official documents produced by these three sides, this paper highlights the complex interplay of imperial expansion, ethnicity, and the geopolitical situation in the early twentieth century. This paper breaks from the traditional narrative of military history, focusing instead on Japan's ethnic exploitation over the expatriate Koreans in Gando.

Introduction

On November 1, 1920, fearing the brutality of the Japanese army, Yi Wŏn-sŏ, a fifty-one-year-old Korean farmer, attempted to escape but was stabbed to death by the Japanese army in Yanji (延吉), a city located in the Gando region.¹ On November 6, 1920, another Korean farmer, Chi Sŏng-nyong's house was burnt down by the Japanese army since the whole village was suspected to have connections with

¹ "Jilin Yanji Xian disanqu Rijun shaosha kenmin sunshi caican ji siwang renkou shumu qingdan 吉林延吉縣第三區日軍燒殺墾民損失財產及死亡人口數目清冊 [A Detailed Record of Property Losses and Death Toll Due to Japanese Army's Burning and Killing of Civilians in District 3, Yanji County, Jilin Province]," Record, March 1921, 98, Foreign Ministry of the Beiyang Government, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), <https://archivesonline.mh.sinica.edu.tw/byfonds/init/byfonds/>.

the Korean Independence Army (대한독립군, 大韓獨立軍).² Both examples took place in the Gando region³ in Manchuria near the Sino-Japanese border and the Tumen River, approximately the present-day Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in the Jilin Province. (For the map of Gando drawn by Japan, see Fig. 1.) In 1909, the *Gando Convention* or the *Tumen River Sino-Korean Boundary Agreement* affirmed Qing China's sovereignty over the Gando Region after Sino-Korean territorial disputes were settled. Utilising the status of Gando as Chinese territory, many anti-Japanese Koreans had fled to the Gando region to escape the control of Imperial Japan, creating a special space for conflicts between Imperial Japan and the Korean independence activists. The examples of Yi and Chi epitomize the situation of Japanese military intervention in the Gando region from October 1920 to May 1921. On October 2, 1920, Japan started to send troops, mainly from the side of the Tumen River in the Korean Peninsula, to the other side, claiming to protect its own people from bandit groups and anti-Japanese Korean armies. The troops implemented indiscriminate burning and killing. These events happened right after the Second Hunchun Incident, where various parties, such as Chinese bandit groups and Gando Koreans (believed by Japan to be anti-Japanese), burnt down the Japanese consulate. Through a military intervention into the Gando region (including Hunchun 琿春 under the rule of China), Japan sought to exterminate these “threatening” groups, whom they had perceived to be a harm to social stability in Korea under its rule. To clarify, “China,” in this paper, is the Republic of China nominally represented by the Beiyang Government but locally controlled by the Fengtian Clique (led by Zhang Zuolin) in Manchuria.

Gando Koreans, in this paper, are defined to be Koreans based in the Gando region. This community of Koreans was partly formed by Korean migrants from the Korean Peninsula. Large-scale Korean migration to Gando started in the late nineteenth century and was primarily driven by natural disasters, such as heavy rain and hail, and corruption among officials in the northern provinces of Joseon Korea.⁴

² “Jilin Yanji Xian di'erqu Rijun shaosha kenmin sunshi caican ji siwang renkou shumu qingce 吉林延吉縣第二區日軍燒殺墾民損失財產及死亡人口數目清冊 [Register of Property Losses and Death Toll of Reclamation Settlers Caused by Japanese Military Burning and Killing in the Second District of Yanji County, Jilin],” April 1921, 101, Foreign Ministry of the Beiyang Government, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), <https://archivesonline.mh.sinica.edu.tw/byfonds/init/byfonds/>.

³ Gando is initially named by Koreans as “cultivating land (간토, 墾土),” “cultivating island (간도, 墾島)” or “in-between island (간도, 間島).” However, in many academic papers and books, it is written as “Jiandao” in the Chinese pinyin system. Since Gando has mainly been used by Koreans and Japanese, the Korean romanization is used in this paper. Gi-Dae Bok, “How Do You Understand ‘Gando?’” *Journal of Humanities* 74 (2022): 63–99, <https://doi.org/10.33252/sih.2022.9.74.63>; Junqiang Wang, “A Review of the ‘Jiandao Issue’ in Early 20th Century East Asia Focusing on the Writings of Naito Konan,” *Journal of the Graduate School of East Asian Cultures* 1 (January 2013): 265–79.

⁴ Ji-young Lee, “19 segi mal Ch'ongjoŭi tae Kando Chosŏnin chŏngch'aek - wŏlgan Hanin ŭi chiwi

Moreover, Qing China's implementation of the "immigration for practical defense" (*yimin shibian*, 移民實邊) policy and establishment of various institutions, such as the Hunchun General Bureau for Reclamation (*zhaoken zongju*, 招墾總局), attracted Korean border residents to "cross and cultivate" (*yueken*, 越墾).⁵ Thus, Korean communities were gradually formed in Gando with many migrants being peasants and lower-class individuals who desired a better life. Apart from them, anti-Japanese Koreans, including Korean independence activists such as the *uibyŏng* (righteous soldiers), also formed a part of Gando Koreans. After the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), Joseon Korea became an independent state and dissolved tributary relations with Qing China according to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which favored Japan in strengthening its influence over Korea. Later in 1910, Korea was completely subsumed into the Empire of Japan, and the Government-General of Korea under Imperial Japan was subsequently established. Thereafter, Koreans who were dissatisfied with the suppressive and militaristic Japanese rule fled to Manchuria, especially the Gando region, which was close to Korea.⁶ Moreover, since Koreans had lost sovereignty and political rights under colonial rule, the March First Movement broke out, wherein a large number of Koreans resisted against the Japanese rule in Korea and advocated for independence.⁷ Under intense suppression from Imperial Japan, many independence activists shifted their bases to the Gando region to evade the control of Imperial Japan in Korea.

Given the formation and structure of Gando Koreans, Japan implemented an ethnic control policy that predominantly aimed to expand its influence into the Gando region through political and cultural assimilation by means of its extraterritoriality in the Gando region according to the Gando Convention. This paper suggests that Japan's actions in Gando are ethnic-oriented and target the Gando Koreans exclusively, concluding that Japan's ethnic control policy was an unofficial doctrine before and during the Gando Intervention. An important detail within the policy is

munje wa kwallyŏnhayŏ 19世紀末清朝の對間島朝鮮人政策：越墾韓人の地位問題と
관련하여 [Late 19th Century Qing Dynasty Policies Towards Korean People in Gando: Regarding
the Status Issues of the Korean Settlers],” *Journal of Ming-Qing Historical Studies*, no. 32 (2009): 259–60,
<https://doi.org/10.31329/jmhs.2009..32.008>.

⁵ Lee, “19 segi mal Ch'ŏngjoŭi tae Kando Chosŏnin chŏngchaek,” 261.

⁶ The harsh measures of Imperial Japan towards Korea after 1910, such as dissolving all political organizations and prohibiting all debates and speeches, aroused anti-Japanese sentiments. In Teak Chung, “The Korean Minority in Manchuria (1900-1937)” (Thesis (Ph.D.), American University, 1966), 22–26, <http://hdl.handle.net/1961/thesesdissertations:3655>.

⁷ Japan's territorial interests in the Korean Peninsula to the Korean people's anti-imperialist movements in 1919. The Empire of Japan granted Koreans no political rights, implemented a total ban on political activities, and discouraged the restoration of Korean sovereignty. See Frank Baldwin, “Participatory Anti-Imperialism: The 1919 Independence Movement,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 1, no. 1 (1979): 123–62, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jks.1979.0015>.

that Japan perceived Gando Koreans to also be subjects within the Japanese Empire since the annexation of Korea in 1910 so as to gain control over them in Gando. Under this policy, Japan categorized Gando Koreans into two main types—“obedient” and “disobedient” subjects. “Obedient” subjects were neutral or pro-Japanese and willing to submit to the assimilation policies, whereas “disobedient” subjects were anti-Japanese or even Korean independence activists and rejected assimilation under Japanese influence.⁸ To control the Gando Koreans, Japan deployed conciliatory policies towards the obedient subjects and suppressive policies towards the disobedient. The ultimate goal of this policy was to encircle the entire Gando Korean population within the colonial system by turning them into collaborators and eliminating disobedient subjects by force. In doing so, the Japanese government’s official discourse and propaganda media firstly started to stigmatize disobedient subjects, mostly Korean independence activists, by labeling them “*futei senjin*” (不逞鮮人, unruly Koreans). In October 1920, the Korea Army (chōsen gun, 朝鮮軍), which was Japanese army in Korea, then started its military intervention to suppress the disobedient subjects and expand its influence while neglecting China’s condemnation and multiple objections.⁹ The Chinese government actively sought to negotiate with Japan and emphasized that it was “no longer necessary for your esteemed country to dispatch a large force,” and that the Japanese government should “cancel the action of sending troops.”¹⁰ However, these efforts were primarily unsuccessful; ultimately, the Japanese army remained in China until May 1921, and even after, still maintained a consulate police presence in Gando to take control over Korean communities.

⁸ In this sense, the act of being obedient is defined by people’s behaviors instead of ideological changes, as “obedient subjects” include individuals of extremely complicated intentions, where some became “obedient subjects” for their self-interests and others merely to avoid colonial violence. Thus, the evaluation of the effectiveness of conciliatory policy focuses on whether it could cultivate the cooperation of Gando Koreans rather than changing their ideologies. Moreover, such binary categorization of Gando Koreans is based on Japanese discourse and its purpose of ethnic control; however, it was undeniably an imperial tool for Japan to simplify and rationalize its ethnic control over Gando Koreans. Such categorization is used in this paper to analyze Japan’s colonial policy in Gando instead of showing it as an objective political and social reality in the Gando region.

⁹ “102. Dispatch of troops in Jiandao Area,” Record Collection of Cabinet Meeting Decision Documents The third volume of Matsumoto File, 7 October 1920, B04120018000, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/image-en/B04120018000>.

¹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (China), “Hunchun An 琿春案 [Case of Hunchun],” Diplomatic Note, with Yūkichi Obata, 11 October 1920, Hunchun An, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), <https://archivesonline.mh.sinica.edu.tw/byfonds/init/byfonds/>. The complete sentence reads, “是貴國更無派遣大隊之必要，應請貴公使電達貴政府，將派遣軍隊之舉即行作罷。(It is therefore no longer necessary for your esteemed country to dispatch a large force. We should ask Your Excellency the Minister to immediately communicate with your government and cancel the action of sending troops.)”

Based on such historical background, this paper proposes two key questions: Firstly, how did Japan formulate and implement its ethnic control policy toward Gando Koreans in order to consolidate pro-Japanese power and eliminate anti-Japanese forces in Gando. Secondly, what were the strategies and outcomes of this policy before and during the Gando Intervention in 1920. Departing from existing scholarship on the Gando Intervention, this paper will utilize primary sources from three parties—China, Japan, and Korea—in order to comprehensively analyze the details from different perspectives, while supplementing the possible limitations of documents from any particular party. Official documents, such as *Kandō shuppeishi* (間島出兵史, “Sending History of Dispatching Troops to Jiandao”) from Japan and *Hunchun An* from China, will be used to describe the details of Japan’s ethnic control policy and casualties during the intervention. Korea’s sources, such as the *Independent* and reports of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea, can reflect a new perspective of Gando Koreans.¹¹

To be able to present the arguments in a well-structured manner with existing historical sources, this paper will limit its range of analysis to within 1919–22, from the March First Movement to the aftermath of the Gando Intervention. This paper will also be divided into three main sections. Firstly, this paper will explain the mechanism and design of Japan’s ethnic control policy before the Gando Intervention. Japan’s plan to expand its influence into the Gando region was established in the 1910s when they attempted to take control over Gando Koreans in an effort to maintain stability under its colonial rule in Korea and maximize its political and economic interests in Manchuria. The categorization of “obedient” and “disobedient” people in the policy will also be covered so that a more thorough analysis can be shown in this section. Secondly, this paper will delve into the escalation of violence in Japan’s ethnic control policy through the Gando Intervention, in which massacre and burning were used as chief weapons in eliminating “disobedient” Gando Koreans and to envelop them into Japan’s sphere of influence. Finally, this paper will evaluate the effectiveness of the ethnic control policy and responses of Japan, China, and the Korean independent activists to Japan’s ethnic policy to reveal how the policy catalyzed resentful sentiments

¹¹ The main Korean source in this paper is the *Independent*. It was the official newspaper of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea which was established by Korean independence activists in Shanghai. Sources of the *Independent* were mostly communication and intelligence networks of the Provisional Government, which were connected with other independence activists during that time. An example which illustrates the tragic situation of the Gando Intervention was informed by an ex-publisher of an anti-Japanese paper, the *Korea Daily News* (1904–10), who recorded the whole process. Woo-Taek Jeong, “Media Strategy and Poetry Arrangement in Shanghai Version of ‘Tongnip Sinmun,’” *The Korean Poetics Studies*, no. 59 (August 2019): 185–222, <https://doi.org/10.15705/KOPOET..59.201908.007>; “Kanbuk Naesin 墾北來信 [Letter from North Gando],” *The Independent* (Shanghai), 27 January 1921, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

of the Beiyang government and the local population within China, in addition to how the policy impacted the Korean independence movement, leading to new dynamics in Northeast Asia. The discussion focuses on how Japan established effective control over the Koreans in Gando, which was outside its official territory, before and during the Gando Intervention so that this paper can contribute to scholarship on Japanese colonialism.

Existing scholarship provides a strong foundation for this paper regarding the Gando Intervention of Japan and Japan's strategy of ethnic control. Early studies focus on the Korean Independence Army before and during the Gando Intervention, such as the activities of the Independence Army led by Hong Beom-do (홍범도, 洪範圖).¹² Their discussions shed light on the movements of the Korean independence activists from 1920 and 1921 and battles between them and the Japanese army through the lens of military history. Additionally, scholars such as Jin Chunshan and Park Minyoung expound on how the Gando Korean community suffered from Japan's Gando Intervention and clearly show the "governance and utilization" strategy of the Japanese government towards the expatriate Koreans during and after the intervention.¹³ Erik Esselstrom, while focusing on Japan's consular police network in Manchuria, delves into the radical Korean resistance in Gando against Japan and introduces the pro-Japanese Korean community after Japan's use of violence during the intervention.¹⁴ However, while their works mainly perceive the Gando Intervention to be a unilateral suppression of Korean independent movements, Japan's non-violence policies, which served as an indispensable part in Japan's Gando policy, are underemphasized. To delineate further, military operations, such as battles with the Independence Army and massacres are well-described and explained, but these studies overlook the nature of ethnic categorization and Japan's early policies towards pro-Japanese Korean communities before the intervention. In relation to the ethnic control policy within the existing literature of studies on Japanese colonial rule, there are abundant and comprehensive outcomes. For instance, Lee Ji Won, Lee

¹² Yong-ha Shin, "Tongnipkun ūi ch'ōngsalli chōnt'u 獨立軍의 靑山里戰鬪 [The Battle of Qingshanli of the Independence Army]," *Kunsa (Military History)* 8 (June 1984): 245–75; Yeongguk Chae, "1920 nyōn Honch'un sagōn chōnhu Tongnipkun ūi tonghyang 1920년 「琿春事件」 전후 독립군의 動向 [The Activities of Independence Forces before and after the 1920 Hunchun Incident]," *Institute of Korean Independence Movement Studies* 5 (December 1991): 273–94.

¹³ Chunshan Jin, "Kyōngshin Ch'ambyōn yōn'gu: hanin sahoe wa kwallyōn chiō 庚申慘變 연구: 한인사회와 관련지어 [Studies on the 1920 Massacre: Its Relation with the Korean Society]," *Journal of Korean History* 111 (2000): 137–76; Minyoung Park, "Kyōngshin Ch'ambyōn ūi punsōk yōn'gu 庚申慘變 의 분석 연구 [An Analytical Study of the 1920 Massacre]," *Kuksagwan nonchong* 103 (December 2003).

¹⁴ Erik Esselstrom, "Policing Resistance to the Imperial State," in *Crossing Empire's Edge: Foreign Ministry Police and Japanese Expansion in Northeast Asia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wr0v1.7>.

Bangweon and Gyewon Kim emphasize the cultural assimilation and suppression of Japan in the Korean Peninsula through means of social edification, superstition control, and categorization of “ideological criminals.”¹⁵ However, when focusing on a peripheral area of the Japanese Empire which lacked strong and effective administration, there are insufficient case studies to evaluate how Japan implemented its ethnic control policy in areas without its own official institutional power.

Departing from the conventional perspective of military history in viewing the Gando Intervention, Japan’s ethnic control policy concealed its ambitions in the Gando region by dehumanizing Koreans through various violent tactics. Through means of cultural assimilation and indiscriminate violence, a two-sided ethnic policy is reflected in which Japan produced an illusion of cooperation with Koreans while simultaneously fostering an atmosphere of intimidation in order to serve its own interests in the Gando region. The analysis in this paper, with various newspapers and official documents in the Chinese, Korean, and Japanese languages, reveals multiple perspectives. One example is the *Kandō shuppeishi* recorded by the Korea Army in 1926, which provides comprehensive information from Japan’s perspective.

To maintain analytical impartiality, the “Gando Intervention of the Japanese army” in 1920-21 is a more neutral name used in this paper for this particular incident of the Japanese army sending troops to the Gando region to suppress the Gando Koreans. This term is neither pro- nor anti-action in the sense that it does not include any explicit political judgments. Other names of this incident vary by country according to their perspectives. Where the Chinese literature mainly names it the *Gengshen nian da taofa* (庚申年大討伐, Great Campaign of the Year of 1920), *Yanbian can’an* (延邊慘案, Yanbian Tragedy) or *Hunchun shijian* (琿春事件, Hunchun Incident), the Japanese literature mainly names it the *Kandō jiken* (間島事件, Gando Incident) or *Kandō Shuppei* (間島出兵, Gando Expedition), and the Korean literature mainly names it the *Kando ch'ambyŏn* (간도참변, 間島慘變, Gando Tragedy) or *Kyŏngshin ch'ambyŏn* (경신참변, 庚申慘變, 1920 Tragedy).

¹⁵ Ji Won Lee, “Japanese Colonial Social Edification Policy after the March 1st Independent Movement and Chosun Ethnicity,” *Haklim* 45 (March 2020): 167–202, <https://doi.org/10.36274/HAKRIM.2020.45..167>; Bangweon Lee, “The Control of Superstition and its Effect on Daily Life during Japanese Colonial Rule of Korea,” *Study of the Eastern Classics* 24 (2005): 281–314; Gyewon Kim, “Faces That Change: Physiognomy, Portraiture, and Photography in Colonial Korea.” In *The Affect of Difference: Representations of Race in East Asian Empire*, ed. Christopher P. Hanscom and Dennis Washburn (University of Hawaii Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780824852818-007>.

Formulation of Japan's Ethnic Control Policy

Before implementing the ethnic control policy in Gando, Japan attempted to exert total authority over Gando and Gando Koreans. During the period from 1905–09, Japan interfered in the Sino-Korean territorial disputes over the Gando region and actively investigated the historical and geographical information related to Gando after Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905. This is exemplified by Naitō Konan's (内藤湖南) investigation of the Gando problem, which attempted to frame Gando as a *terra nullius* ("nobody's land"), legitimizing Korea's claim supported by the Korean migration.¹⁶ In 1909, Japan, after negotiations, ultimately recognized Gando as Chinese territory and Gando Koreans as Chinese nationals.¹⁷ In exchange, Japan also gained the right to attend court hearings involving Gando Koreans and to be notified in advance in cases involving serious criminal charges. This marks the early stage of Japan's ambitions in controlling Gando Koreans with extraterritorial rights despite accepting China's sovereign rule over Gando Koreans. Later in 1915, Japan signed a treaty with China ruling that legal matters involving Japanese subjects should fall under the jurisdiction of Japanese consular officers.¹⁸ Since then, Japan claimed Gando Koreans as Japanese imperial subjects, equivalent to Koreans under the Japanese occupation since 1910, and had constant negotiations with the local government of Yanji in the 1910s, which did not bring about radical changes until the Gando Intervention.¹⁹ Concurrently, Japan began to implement the ethnic control policy

¹⁶ Naitō Konan, an editorial writer for the *Osaka Asahi Shimbun* until 1906 and a lecturer at Kyoto Imperial University since 1907, was twice commissioned by the General Staff Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to investigate the problem of Gando between Qing and Korea. Wang, "A Review of the 'Jiandao Issue' in Early 20th Century East Asia Focusing on the Writings of Naitō Konan," 268–75.

¹⁷ China aimed to take control of the Korean settlers in Gando by naturalizing them into Chinese nationals in order to check the further encroachment of Japan's influence in Gando. Such a policy of naturalization started in the late nineteenth century when the Qing government demanded to reinforce its "immigration for practical defense" policy. At that time, only the minority of Gando Koreans changed their nationalities mainly due to their dissatisfaction with the Qing hairstyle and their financial abilities. "Tumen Jiang Zhonghan jiewu tiaokuan 圖們江中韓界務條款 [Tumen River Sino-Korean Boundary Agreement]," 4 September 1909, Wikisource, <https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hant/圖們江中韓界務條款>; Lee, "9 segi mal Ch'ŏngjoŭi tae Kando Chosŏnin chŏngch'aek"; Hongxi Li, "The Sino-Japanese Negotiations for Jiandao in 1906–1931," *Modern Chinese History Studies*, no. 4 (2019): 20–34.

¹⁸ "Zhongri minsi tiaoyue 中日民四條約 [Sino-Japanese 1915 Treaty]," 25 May 1915, Wikisource, <https://zh.wikisource.org/wiki/中日民四條約>.

¹⁹ Longfan Jiang, "Manshū jihen" izen no Kantō Chōsenjin kankatsuken o meguru Chūnichikan no funsō 「満州事変」以前の間島朝鮮人管轄権をめぐる中日間の紛争 [The Sino-Japanese Dispute over Jurisdiction of Koreans in Gando before the Manchurian Incident], *East Asian Studies (Review of the Institute of Asian Studies, Osaka University of Economics and Law)*, no. 47 (2006): 35–37.

starting from the 1910s in an attempt to exert dominion over Gando Koreans, paving the way to its military intervention in 1920. The following will describe the strategies employed by Japan towards obedient and disobedient subjects before the Gando Intervention.

For obedient subjects, Japan, specifically the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was inclined to adopt a more compromising strategy to assert leadership through establishing pro-Japanese Korean organizations and implementing pro-Japanese education. Deploying a soft-policy approach towards compliant and submissive people could create a stable environment in favor of Japan's interests and turn them into advocates for Japan, helping spread influence in the Gando region. In 1916, Japan already observed a continuously growing number of Korean migrants in Manchuria and recorded around 270,000 living in Manchuria and 70,000 along the Yalu River.²⁰ Citing the discriminatory attitude and oppression of the Chinese people towards Gando Koreans and emphasizing the identity of Gando Koreans as imperial subjects, Japan decided to provide Gando Koreans with "protection" regarding their inherent rights and privileges in Manchuria. In 1920, *Manju Pominhoe* (만주보민회, 滿洲保民會, Manchurian People's Salvation Association) was established as a "self-defense organization" organized by futei senjin in response to the riots in Longjing (龍井, a village in the Gando region) in the spring of 1919 under the heightened nationalist sentiments fueled by the March First Movement.²¹ In Manju Pominhoe, obedient Koreans were required to study the Japanese language, and students had to use textbooks edited by the Government-General of Korea in order to learn "common virtues and knowledge."²² Particularly in history textbooks, Japanese nationalistic and revisionist historical perspectives were deployed in the description of Korean history in order to dampen the rise of Korean nationalism. For example, according to an elementary school textbook published in 1920, Empress Jingū subjugated kingdoms during the Three Kingdoms period of Korea and established Japanese governance in Mimana or Imna (任那).²³ Korean resistance was to a large extent not mentioned. This

²⁰ "1 From 17 November 1916 to 14 July 1920," Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 13 March 1920, B03041620600, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/image-en/B03041620600>.

²¹ "1 From 17 November 1916 to 14 July 1920," 39–48.

²² The original text is 子弟ニ普通ノ知識技能ヲ授ケ特徳性ヲ涵養シ國語ヲ普及スル目的. "1 From 17 November 1916 to 14 July 1920," 32–33.

²³ The issue of Imna has long been a controversial historical topic, with historians often arguing about its authenticity and nature. Imna was also described as a tool utilized by Japan to legitimize its colonial rule over Korea beginning in the 1890s. Government-General of Korea, *Jinjō shōgaku kokushi bojū kyōzai jidō yō Ken'ichi* 尋常小學國史補充教材兒童用卷一 [Ordinary Elementary School National History Supplementary Materials for Children, Volume 1], 1st edn (Keijō, 1920), 1:8, Uri yōksa net; Stella Xu, "Reconstructing Ancient History: Historiographical Review of the Ancient History of Korea, 1950s–2000s," *ASIANetwork Exchange: A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts* 19, no. 2

reflects the notion that Japan sought to control the rise of nationalist sentiments among the obedient Gando Koreans by introducing Japan's nationalistic ideology through history education.

Moreover, according to the confidential document produced by Shōsuke Akatsuka (赤塚正助), the Consul General of the Japanese consulate in Fengtian (present-day Shenyang), many Koreans were dissatisfied with the futei senjin's behaviors and some "dedicated Koreans" (*yūshi senjin*, 有志鮮人) came forward to organize a movement against them "under the aegis" of the Japanese authorities.²⁴ Interestingly, the bias of Japan's description, particularly in proving the widespread discontent of the Gando Koreans towards futei senjin, was revealed by *Shun Pao*, a Chinese newspaper on May 5, 1920, which recorded that many Gando Koreans who "had a sense of determination" suddenly realized the situation of Japan opportunistically using Koreans as pioneers for its invasion of Manchuria and Mongolia.²⁵ The sources reflect two different narratives in which the Japanese consulate tried to show an emergence of pro-Japanese movements within Gando, and, in contrast, the Chinese newspaper attempted to emphasize the widespread activities of Korean independence activists. Akatsuka's discourse shows an obedient-disobedient differentiation of Gando Koreans to weaken the legitimacy and representativeness of Korean independence activities, while *Shun Pao* insisted to stress China, no matter the Beiyang or Fengtian government, owned the territorial sovereignty over Gando and was responsible for the Gando affairs by describing the complexity of Korean independence activities in Gando in order to prevent further intervention by Japan. In this framework of the Japanese consulate's discourse, obedient subjects were indoctrinated with hostile sentiments against disobedient subjects and instilled with colonial values which Japan intended to spread in Gando. As a result, allegiance of the obedient subjects towards Japan grew gradually, cementing the binary categorization of pro-Japanese and anti-Japanese Gando Koreans, exemplified by an article in the *Eastern Times* in December 1920 about pro-Japanese Koreans warning against independence activists.²⁶ The article asserted that Manju Pominhoe announced three warnings to Gando Koreans, discouraging the public from joining them, claiming that the independence activists were not controlled by the law. The reporting reveals that the Manju Pominhoe was an exceptionally loyal channel to Imperial Japan, becoming promoters and backers to convey pro-Japanese messages publicly through existing organizations.

(2012): 19–20, <https://doi.org/10.16995/ane.22>.

²⁴ "1 From 17 November 1916 to 14 July 1920," 43.

²⁵ "Manzhou zhi Hanren yu Riben guanli 滿洲之韓人與日本官吏 [Koreans in Manchuria and Japanese Officials]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 5 May 1920.

²⁶ "Qinri Hanren jinggao dulipai 親日韓人警告獨立派 [Pro-Japanese Koreans Warn Independence Faction]," *Eastern Times* (Shanghai), 1 December 1920.

Japan, in distinction to the compromising strategy, imposed considerably more suppressive policies towards the disobedient subjects. After the annexation of Korea in 1910, Japan faced the existence of anti-Japanese sentiments against the colonial regime in Korea and thus labeled the anti-Japanese independence activists as futei senjin, a disparaging label used to pathologize these “rebellious” movements. Futei senjin accurately describes Koreans who “harbored grievances or complaints according to their own whims” and the “unruly and discontented Koreans who did not heed the demands of the Japanese imperialists.”²⁷ Such labels in official documents first appeared in 1911, where the general circumstances in Gando and Hunchun regions were recorded. While the term existed early on, futei senjin’s appearance had become substantially more frequent since the March First Movement in 1919, and Japan’s approach towards them became more suppressive in the sense that massive arrests were implemented.²⁸ It is recorded that the label futei senjin appeared for thirty-three days from January 1919 to September 1920 before the Gando Intervention in the *Asahi Shimbun*, a major newspaper in Japan.²⁹ In 1919–20, Japan made every effort to construct discourses on the demonization of Koreans, especially those who had strong anti-Japanese sentiments. An article dated May 15, 1920 in the *Asahi Shimbun* emphasized the Japanese threats from the futei senjin by simultaneously describing two terrifying incidents—futei senjin sending letters in the name of assassination squads threatening inspectors from the Japanese Foreign Ministry to resign from their jobs and Japanese being attacked by dozens of futei senjin in a hostel run by Koreans in Gando.³⁰ Through the description of these two incidents, the threats from Koreans were exaggerated to create a victimized image of Japan. Moreover, on February 21, 1920, an article in the *Asahi Shimbun* accused the futei senjin of forcing Gando Koreans to donate money and to join their organizations in Ji’an by threatening to shoot them.³¹ The article, regardless of the claim’s authenticity, tried to discredit the Korean

²⁷ Kyung-Ja Kang, “The Discourse and Policies over the “Criminal Koreans” before and after the Great Kando Earthquake Massacre,” *Journal of Japanese Culture* 86 (July 2020): 45–46.

²⁸ Kang, “The Discourse and Policies over the “Criminal Koreans” before and after the Great Kando Earthquake Massacre,” 51–52.

²⁹ This data is based on the search results of “不逞鮮人” (futei senjin) in the newspaper archive of the *Asahi Shimbun*. Also, *Asahi Shimbun* tended to adapt the Japanese imperialist discourse in order to cater to a broader national readership in Japan and avoid domestic controversies. Its position as a major newspaper was driven by business competition and sales, thus leading to a tendency towards moderation instead of controversial speeches, which might cause conflicts with the public discourse. Hayato Yamanaka, “The Formation of the Image of Koreans in the Modern Japanese Media: A Content Analysis of Korean Related Articles in Japanese Newspapers in the Prewar Period,” *Bulletin of the National Institute of Multimedia Education* 8 (1993): 89–118.

³⁰ “Kandō hōjin yūryo 間島邦人憂慮 [Concerns of the Japanese in Gando],” *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 17 May 1919, Asahi Shimbun Cross-Search.

³¹ “Futei senjin no kyōhaku 不逞鮮人の脅迫 [Threat of Unruly Koreans],” *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 21 February 1920, Asahi Shimbun Cross-Search.

independence movement by describing the independence activists as people who participated in a ruthless act of brutal extortion, reflecting Japan's attempt to delegitimize Koreans' self-determination. From these two articles, it is apparent that Japan started a policy to depoliticize independent movements in its own official discourse and demonize them as a form of terrorism through the media.

In addition to the stigmatization of disobedient subjects, Japan's suppressive strategies also involved concrete measures such as arrests and battles. Since late 1919, the Korean independence activists in Gando had continuously attacked the northern border of colonial Korea, sometimes even occupying cities along the border. According to an article on April 15, 1920 in *Shun Pao*, there were occasional incidents of "Korean parties (*Handang*, 韓黨, a name used by China to refer to the independence activists)" attacking Japanese officials and even hundreds of their soldiers entering Korea.³² *The Independent*, which aimed to increase the morale among Koreans and the expatriates, reported that more than eighty soldiers in the Independence Army attacked the Japanese gendarmerie in Onsŏng in late March 1920 and captured cash of 700 dollars.³³ Among the provocative operations during 1919–20, the most shocking case to the Government-General in Korea was the capture of 150,000 dollars from the Chōsen Bank in early January 1920, recorded in *Kantō shuppeishi* as an important catalyst to legitimize Imperial Japan's Gando Intervention.³⁴ According to *Donga Ilbo*, which possessed a certain extent of autonomy under the Japanese rule, the independence activists captured the money on January 4 while in transit from the Hoeryŏng Branch of Chōsen Bank to Longjing in Gando.³⁵ *The Independent* later further commented that Japan seized this opportunity to conduct a wide-ranging

³² "Dongbian Handang zhi huodong 東邊韓黨之活動 [Activities of the Korean Party in the East]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 15 April 1920; *Shun Pao*, "Manzhou zhi Hanren yu Riben guanli."

³³ "P'alship yŏ ŭi tongnipkun i chŏk'ŏn pyŏngdae rŭl chin'gyŏk 八十餘의 獨立軍이 敵憲兵隊를 進擊 [Over Eighty Independence Army Soldiers Attack Enemy Gendarmerie]," *The Independent* (Shanghai), 22 April 1920, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

³⁴ Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," The National Institute for Defense Studies, Ministry of Defense, 3 May 1926, 2, 陸軍省-密大日記-S1-4-4, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/image-en/C03022770200>.

³⁵ "Chosŏn ūnhaeng chijŏm shibo man wŏn dŏp'jyŏ ch'yŏngjin chich'yŏng ŭi kongp'ane puch'ŏ 朝鮮 銀行支店 十五萬圓犯人 청진지청의 공판에 부쳐 [Trial of the Criminal from the Chōsen Bank Branch for 150,000 Won at the Cheongjin District Court]," *Donga Ilbo* (Keijō), 16 July 1920, Korean History Database. *Donga Ilbo* tends to have a nationalist bias despite being censored by the Japanese authorities in Korea. It therefore provided the Korean civilians with news of the independence activities within a censorship boundary under the Japanese rule. Geon-ho Song, "Sam il undong hu ŭi minsim sa: Tong-a Ilbo ŭi chimyŏn punsŏk 三・一運動 후의 民心史: 「東亞日報」의 紙面分析 [A History of Public Sentiment After the March First Movement: An Analysis of Donga Ilbo's Pages]," *Creation and Criticism*, no. 36 (June 1975): 232–55.

search campaign against the Independence Army with its police force in Gando.³⁶ There were more than forty Japanese policemen searching for members of the Independence Army in schools and houses by threatening ordinary Gando Korean civilians to “say the truth,” all the while the Japanese policemen held them at gunpoint. The Japanese police “collaborated” with their Chinese counterparts to arrest suspicious and disobedient subjects in Gando. Japanese policemen even assaulted them during the two large-scale searches, according to the discussions in the Youth Association.³⁷ These suppressive actions of Japan were in response to threats from disobedient subjects. Japan aimed to stabilize the Sino-Korean border by preventing potential attacks in the northern border and to exert further influence in Gando by exterminating those threats. Sending consular police to Gando was the first step for Japan to suppress disobedient Koreans.

In order to capture and eliminate the disobedient subjects in Gando more thoroughly all at once, Japan even considered sending troops to China in May 1920. Japan sent Machino Takema (町野武馬), the Japanese consultant in Northeast China (Chinese official), to negotiate with China in two Fengtian conferences regarding the search of unruly Koreans in Gando. Later, according to the *Shun Pao*, China, represented by the Fengtian government leader, Zhang Zuolin (張作霖), agreed to conduct a deep investigation in Yanji for one month—but the investigation was unrelated to Japan, except for the case of Machino.³⁸ According to the Chinese negotiators, any unruly Koreans that were arrested should be returned to China’s jurisdiction. However, the Japanese side recorded that this incident was a Sino-Japanese collaborative investigation in which Japan held an active position.³⁹ This illustrates Japan’s ambition to utilize force in the Gando region and implement cross-border arrest campaigns in China in order to attain the goal of its ethnic control policy. Concurrently, this opportunity enabled Japan to eliminate disobedient subjects while presenting an aura of legitimacy. In early June, there were even devastatingly violent fights and battles between Japan and the independence activists in Santunzi (三屯子) and Fengwudong (鳳梧洞) along the border. The *Eastern Times* described that on June 4, fifty Independence Army soldiers entered Chongsŏng, a prefecture of Korea near the border, and later shifted to Santunzi on the Chinese side to continue the fight with

³⁶ “Puk kando t'ongshin shibo man wŏn sagŏn 北壘島通信 十五萬圓事件,” *The Independent* (Shanghai), 8 April 1920, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

³⁷ “Puk Kando ch'ŏngnyŏnhoe hwaltong kwa Ilgyŏng ŭi haenghaeng 北壘島青年會活動과 日警의 橫行 [Activities of the North Gando Youth Association and the Rampant Actions of the Japanese Police],” *The Independent* (Shanghai), 16 March 1920, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

³⁸ “Fengji Hanqiao zhi diaocha fa 奉吉韓僑之調查法 [The Investigation Method of Koreans in Fengji],” *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 31 May 1920.

³⁹ Korea Army Headquarters, “Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao,” 7.

the Japanese army.⁴⁰ Both sides eventually suffered losses in the Santunzi Battle. On June 6, another fierce battle occurred in Fengwudong on the Chinese side, and eventually the Japanese army was defeated and suffered the deaths of more than 120 soldiers. In contrast, *The Independent* recorded that the battle resulted in 60 deaths and 50 casualties for Japan.⁴¹ These two sources illustrate that although Japan actively sent troops from Korea to combat the Independence Army in an attempt to annihilate the disobedient subjects in Gando, the plan proved unsuccessful with a significant defeat and at least 60 deaths in 1920. This eventually paved the way for further Japanese military actions in order to destroy the bases of disobedient Koreans and achieve complete assimilation in the Gando region.

Generally, Japan's ethnic control policy towards the obedient subjects before the Gando Intervention was more effective than towards the disobedient. Employing conciliatory measures towards the obedient subjects through establishment of pro-Japanese organizations and promoting pro-Japanese education was effective and successful in cultivating collaboration at minimum, and ideally pro-Japanese loyalty. In contrast, the implementation of suppressive measures towards the disobedient subjects was not as satisfactory as Japan initially aimed due to the defeats in battles with the independence activists. However, before the Gando Intervention, Japan started its early stage of suppression towards the disobedient subjects through stigmatizing and by arresting them.

The Hunchun Incident and the Application of Violence in the Ethnic Control Policy

Before the Gando Intervention, Japan had already formulated a detailed and strategic outline of a full-scale military intervention in the Gando region so as to fulfill the aims of its ethnic control policy. In July 1920, another Japanese consultant participated in the Third Fengtian Conference with China, requesting the reinforcement of the Sino-Japanese joint investigation and action against the unruly Koreans.⁴² China rejected the harsh suppression requested by Japan but maintained limited enforcement to preserve Sino-Japanese relations.⁴³ Therefore, due to apprehension regarding the feasibility of Sino-Japanese collaboration, Japan

⁴⁰ "Han Ri liangjun zhi jizhan 韓日兩軍之激戰 [Fierce Battles between Korean and Japanese armies]," *Eastern Times* (Shanghai), 23 June 1920.

⁴¹ "Tongnipkun yŏnjŏn yŏnsŭng chŏk ŭi saja yukship sangja oship agun sangja i myŏng 獨立軍連戰連勝 敵死傷者六十 我軍傷者五十 我軍傷者二名 [Independence Army Victories: Enemy Casualties Sixty, Injured Fifty; Our Army Casualties Two]," *The Independent* (Shanghai), 24 June 1920, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

⁴² Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 8–11.

⁴³ "Huaguan Qudi Dongsansheng Zuzhi 華官取締東三省韓黨組織 [Chinese Officials Suppress the Korean Party Organizations in the Three Eastern Provinces]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 28 August 1920.

formulated the *Plan for the Suppression of futei senjin in the Gando Region* (間島地方不逞鮮人剿討計劃) after the Third Fengtian Conference to establish the necessary groundwork for a large-scale direct military intervention in the Gando region.⁴⁴ Detailed plans were included, such as the mobility of the Japanese army from Vladivostok, and a total budget of 280,000 dollars for military intervention. China predicted Japan's possible cross-border suppression of the disobedient subjects after the Battle of Fengwudong.⁴⁵ In contrast, the Japanese recorded that the Chinese side encountered an "outright failure" to realize its aim of suppressing the futei senjin as it was extremely frugal in the utilization of ammunition.⁴⁶ Japan's discontent with Sino-Japanese cooperation in suppressing the disobedient subjects thus led to the more radical and aggressive decision to carry out the Gando Intervention. Therefore, Japan's intention and decision to launch a military intervention in Gando stemmed from its resentment toward China's attitude in the suppression of the disobedient subjects.

The Hunchun Incident served as a significant trigger for Japan's Gando Intervention. There were in total two incidents in Hunchun, a city in Gando, recorded in Japan's official document respectively on September 12 and October 2, where three hundred bandits, for the first time, attacked and burned down a market and houses, and for the second time, four hundred bandits including Russians, Koreans and even Chinese soldiers attacked and burned down the Japanese consulate in Hunchun.⁴⁷ Japan argued that such cruel and brutal behavior "had little difference with those of the partisans." However, the participants in the Hunchun Incident were described in differing ways by the various parties. For example, according to the report of the Foreign Ministry of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea, the incidents were unrelated to Koreans, and Japan tried to seize the opportunity of the Hunchun Incident to completely suppress anti-Japanese Koreans by promoting the involvement of Koreans in the incident.⁴⁸ The *Eastern Times* even claimed that the bandits and Chinese soldiers were doubtlessly masqueraded by Koreans and blamed the Chinese government for being useless in "listen[ing] to the words of Japan."⁴⁹ Nowadays there are still different versions of the "truth" about the Hunchun Incident

⁴⁴ Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 12.

⁴⁵ "Jisheng Helong Handang Ziluan 吉省和龍韓黨滋亂 [Chaos of Korean Parties in Helong, Jilin Province]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 1 July 1920.

⁴⁶ Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 14–15.

⁴⁷ Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 17.

⁴⁸ The Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea was a political organization established by the Korean independence activists in 1919 and based in Shanghai. "Puk Kando ūi Hanin e taehan Ilbon ūi manhaeng 북간도의 韓人에 대한 일본의 만행 [Japanese Atrocities Against Koreans in North Gando]," Government Report, 9 December 1920, Taehan min'guk imshi chōngbu charyojip, Han'guk kŭndae saryo DB.

⁴⁹ "Hunchun shijian zhi jinwen 琿春事件之近聞 [The Recent News of the Hunchun Incident]," *Eastern Times* (Shanghai), 6 November 1920.

in studies of the incident. For example, Yuan Canxing points out that there were no “radicalized Russians” (communists) involved, but the Independence Army was supported by communist Russians.⁵⁰ Some Chinese and Korean scholars have even insisted that the whole Hunchun Incident was planned by Japan.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the chaotic and controversial aftermath of the Hunchun Incident within Chinese society and the Gando region were advantageous to Japan in legitimizing its subsequent military interventions. Regardless of the true identity of the participants in the Hunchun Incident, it provided Japan with a timely opportunity to rationalize and operationalize its existing military plan. For Japan, the more important question was: How should it utilize this incident to rationalize its military intervention so that it could operationalize its ethnic control policy?

After the Hunchun Incident, the Japanese government urgently discussed its response to the attack on the Japanese consulate in Hunchun and ultimately decided to conduct a military intervention in the Gando region. Considering Japan’s perspective, its military intervention needed to be legitimate in order to avoid possible troubles and diplomatic obstacles in the future from the global Western powers, although the European powers were experiencing economic recoveries after the First World War and did not pay much attention to Northeast Asia.

Moreover, the military operation had to facilitate the progression of its ethnic control policy in Gando to exert influence to the maximum extent. Firstly, the Japanese government officially stated that the Gando Intervention was aimed at safeguarding its imperial subjects—probably including the Japanese people and obedient Koreans in Gando—and its national interests, which were compromised by the disobedient Koreans, or *futei senjin*.⁵² Japan aimed to either extirpate the threats from them or coerce them into submission, thus creating an advantageous ambiance of fidelity to Japan in Gando. Through the emphasis on the need to protect pro-Japanese Koreans, Japan reinforced a divide between obedient and disobedient subjects, eventually

⁵⁰ Canxing Yuan, “On Hun Chun Event in 1920,” *Journal of Shenyang University* 23, no. 3 (2011): 38.

⁵¹ Jin, “Kyōngshin Ch'ambyōn yōn'gu: hanin sahoe wa kwallyōn chiō,” 147; Yu Liu, “Zai tuique zhong shentou: Hunchun shijian shanhou jiaoshe de shenceng toushi 在退却中渗透：珲春事件善后交涉的深层透视 [Infiltration in Retreat: A Deep Perspective on the Aftermath Negotiations of the Hunchun Incident],” *Study & Exploration*, no. 9 (2015): 158.

⁵² The original text is 不取敢龍井村、頭道溝、局子街及百草溝等ノ帝國臣民及ヒ其利益保護警備ノ為メ軍隊派遣方ニ付直ニ支那側特ニ東三省巡閱使張作霖ニ対シ右軍隊派遣ノ已ムヲ得サト理由ヲ説明シ... (Regarding the dispatch of troops, urgently and directly in order to protect and guard the Imperial subjects and their interests in Longjingcun, Toudaogou, Juzijie, and Baicaogou, etc., the reason why the said troop dispatch is unavoidable was explained to the Chinese side, especially to the Inspector-General of the Three Eastern Provinces, Zhang Zuolin...). “103. Hunchun Incident,” Record Collection of Cabinet Meeting Decision Documents The third volume of Matsumoto File, 7 October 1920, 815–19, B04120018100, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/image-en/B04120018100>.

justifying stricter surveillance and assimilation policies. Secondly, the Gando Intervention was partially attributed to China's lack of thoroughness in subjugation against the disobedient subjects, according to Japan.⁵³ The Japanese consulate sent a diplomatic note to China questioning China about its lack of effective measures which resulted in the Hunchun Incident.⁵⁴ In light of Japan's situation, accusing China of incompetence helped legitimize Japan's expansion in the Gando region since it provided Japan with excuses and opportunities to intervene in Gando affairs. This was exemplified in the instance of Sino-Japanese collaboration and even in the Hunchun Incident, as well as in Japan's broader attempts to amplify control over Gando Koreans, both obedient and disobedient. It also allowed Japan to position itself as the only power capable of maintaining order, thereby legitimizing its administrative encroachment. Thirdly, Japan mentioned the involvement of radicalized Russian individuals in the Hunchun Incident, as illustrated in the official documents.⁵⁵ "Radicalized Russian individuals" here presumably referred to the communist Russians who aided the Independence Army. Combating the communists in the Russian Civil War, Japan exceptionally checked the influence of communism in Gando and was concerned about their expansion of influence in Northeast Asia. Within Japanese society, there was a claim that one of the causes of the Hunchun Incident was the communist linkages between the disobedient Koreans and the communist Russians.⁵⁶ This was due to the fact that Korean independence activists received arms from communist Russians to continue their movements.⁵⁷ The focus on communist Russians in such a claim validated the extension of Japan's intervention beyond security into ideological suppression, ensuring Koreans in Gando adhered to pro-Japanese sentiments.⁵⁸ Therefore, such emphasis on communist Russians' presence in

⁵³ "103. Hunchun Incident," 818.

⁵⁴ Japanese Consulate, "Hunchun Ri lingguan bei fenshao shi 琿春日領館被焚燒事 [Incident of the Japanese Consulate in Hunchun Being Burnt]," Diplomatic Note, 7 October 1920, Hunchun An, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), <https://archivesonline.mh.sinica.edu.tw/byfonds/init/byfonds/>.

⁵⁵ "103. Hunchun Incident," 815; Japanese Consulate, "Hunchun Ri lingguan bei fenshao shi," Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 18.

⁵⁶ "Kagekiha Rojin to bazoku to futei Senjin Akka renraku Konshun gyakusatsu no boppatsu shitaru dōki 過激派露人と馬賊と不逞鮮人 赤化連絡琿春虐殺の勃発したる動機 [Motives behind the outbreak of the Hunchun Massacre, involving radical Russians, horse bandits, and insolent Koreans, linked to communist activities]," *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 20 October 1920, Asahi Shimbun Cross-Search.

⁵⁷ "Chajin Hanguo Mindang Qingxing 查禁韓國國民黨情形 [Circumstances of the Suppression of the Korean Nationalist Party]," *Eastern Times* (Shanghai), 13 March 1920. For further discussion of this problem, see Andrew James De Lisle, "Japanese Borderland Colonialism and the Koreans in Jiandao, 1905–1932" (PhD thesis, Australian National University, 2020), 114; Esselstrom, "Policing Resistance to the Imperial State," 38.

⁵⁸ There is another interpretation of why Japan exceptionally emphasized the relationship between the

a certain sense implies Japan's desire to control the ideology among the Gando Koreans through the Gando Intervention. By framing the Hunchun Incident in these three aspects, Japan could both legitimize its intervention and advance its long-term aims of enforcing ethnic and ideological control over Gando.

In this instance, the role of obedient subjects in Gando was also significant in legitimizing Japan's military intervention. On October 4, the chairman of the Manchuria Residents Association, another pro-Japanese Korean organization, advocated for sending Japanese troops to Gando while emphasizing that the Hunchun Incident was tragic, "like the Nikolaevsk incident," and led to deaths and casualties of many Japanese people.⁵⁹ This shows that Japan's pre-intervention policy towards the obedient Koreans was effective since it was successful in cultivating the compliance of a group of Gando Koreans who could eventually support its expansion, either wholeheartedly or superficially, into the Gando region.

During the Gando Intervention, Japan's ethnic control policy chiefly targeted the disobedient subjects, with the support and assistance of the obedient subjects in the Gando. Two strategies were adopted, where Japan, firstly, had direct military confrontations with armed forces of the disobedient subjects—such as the Independence Army—and, secondly, carried out violent policies of massacres, burning, and looting, predominantly in the Korean communities. After Japan dispatched troops to the Gando region in the name of protecting its subjects, it immediately requested Sino-Japanese collaborative military actions.⁶⁰ In this collaboration, Japan continued to take a more prominent role; sometimes there were only Japanese troops, and no Chinese troops present in the countryside of the Gando region. The collaboration was merely titular in a sense that Japan had complete power in controlling Gando during the intervention. Concerning the battles between the Japanese army and the Independence Army during the Gando Intervention, there are a myriad of studies from the perspective of the Korean Independent movements. A typical example is Shin Yong-ha's *Tongnipkun ūi ch'ōngsalli chōnt'u*, which provides a thorough analysis through the lens of military history of the Battle of Qingshanli (青

Hunchun Incident and communist Russians. Wang Long-hua argues that it was because Japan intended to create a plausible explanation for its maintenance of military presence in Siberia. Long-hua Wang, "Hunchun Shijian zhi yanjiu 琿春事件之研究 [A Study of the Hunchun Incident]" (Thesis, National Taiwan Normal University, 1990), 137, <https://ndltd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/gs32/gsweb.cgi?o=dncldr&s=id=%22078NTNU2493007%22.&searchmode=basic>.

⁵⁹ "Petition for Japanese Army Dispatch by Chairman of Manchuria Residents Association and Representative of Feryon City Citizen Conference," From 1920 to 1922 Documents Related to Jiandao Incident 1 of 2 Ministry of the Army, 26 December 1922, C06031218300, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/image-en/C06031218300>.

⁶⁰ Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 33; "Zhongri huijiao hufei ji Handang zhi zhenxiang 中日會剿胡匪及韓黨之真相 [The Truth About the Joint Sino-Japanese Suppression of Bandits and Korean Factions]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 30 October 1920.

山里) in late October 1920, in which the Independence Army tremendously defeated the Japanese army.⁶¹ This paper, with the foundation of Shin's work, aims to present this battle vis-à-vis Japan's ethnic control policy.

The Battle of Qingshanli marked an early stage of Japan's campaign to crush the disobedient subjects in Gando and was the most representative battle among the military confrontations. Japan sent troops from northern Korea, such as from Hoeryōng and Namyang, to Hunchun and Wangqing (汪清), and the Japanese army spread all over Gando.⁶² The Japanese troops, after noticing that the anti-Japanese forces had shifted to Sandaogou (三道溝) in Helong (和龍), advanced rapidly to Qingshanli in Sandaogou and attempted to utterly destroy and eradicate those forces in Gando.⁶³ *The Independent*, likely with morale-boosting purposes for the Koreans, exaggerated that the Japanese army "possessed a multitude of advantages" in the battle and even underestimated the enemy.⁶⁴ However, Shin argues that Japan was defeated by the Independence Army since it was completely unalert and inexperienced in the battlegrounds of dense forests and rugged terrains.⁶⁵ Moreover, the morale of the Japanese army was so low that there was war fatigue among the soldiers. To the Independence activists, the Battle of Qingshanli was the largest war of victory during the independent movement of thirty-six years, while Japan suffered 1,200 deaths and 3,300 casualties from this battle due to logistical and morale-related issues. Not only did the battle lead to huge losses of Japan's military force when combating the independence activists, but it also marked a significant failure in the implementation of its ethnic control policy against the disobedient subjects solely through direct military confrontations. As a result, after the Battle of Qingshanli, the independent activists gradually shifted to Siberia through the Sino-Russian border in late 1920 and early 1921, and the defeat of the Japanese army in military confrontations led to the second step of the Gando Intervention, which was characterized by a more violent approach.

After the Battle of Qingshanli, the Japanese army, humiliated by their loss, directed their resentment toward the disobedient Koreans in Gando and thus began the large-scale suppression of Gando Korean civilians who were suspected of having connections with the disobedient subjects. Japan, in general, targeted a few groups of disobedient subjects: independence activists, Koreans who had a Christian

⁶¹ Shin, "Tongnipkun ūi ch'ōngsalli chōnt'u."

⁶² "Ch'ōngsalli pugūn ūi chōn 青山里附近의 戰 [Battle near Qingshanli]," *The Independent* (Shanghai), 25 December 1920, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

⁶³ *Chaoxianzu jianshi 朝鮮族簡史* [A Brief History of the Korean Ethnic Group], 1st edn (Yanbian People's Publishing House, 1986), 41–42.

⁶⁴ "Taehan kunjōngsō pogo 大韓軍政署報告 [Report of the Korean Military Government Office]," *The Independent* (Shanghai), 18 January 1921, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

⁶⁵ Shin, "Tongnipkun ūi ch'ōngsalli chōnt'u," 272–75.

background, and Koreans connected with bandits and terrorists.⁶⁶ One of the target locations in the suppression plan was the Korean villages in Gando. Japan employed tactics of killing, burning, and looting during the suppression, as recorded in *The Independent*, which reported that three thousand “miserable compatriots” were killed and their homes and food were lost, resulting in them being unable to bear the freezing winter.⁶⁷ According to statistics from the Provisional Government, more than 2,300 Gando Koreans were killed and more than 2,500 houses were burned down by the Japanese army during the Gando Intervention.⁶⁸ In the *Eastern Times*, it was recorded that the Japanese army “freely sent troops, indiscriminately slaughtering villages and burning houses everywhere, to the extent that some entire villages had no survivors.”⁶⁹ Even the army “unleashed their brutal power and burned everything to ashes at the time of the autumn harvest when grain and fodder were stored in fields and granaries.” Young children were thrown into flames. The article emphasized that the purported purpose of the Gando Intervention of Japan was to exterminate the Independence Army, but those who suffered were all innocent civilians. Reports of the Chinese government after investigations include many cases of the Japanese army unreasonably burning the belongings of Gando Koreans. For example, the house and belongings of Hwang Un-o, a sixty-six-year-old farmer, were burnt on November 1 by the Japanese army because the army simply claimed he belonged to the Independence Army.⁷⁰ Japan also burned the churches and Christian schools of Koreans with a Christian background, exemplified by the pro-Japanese Korean newspaper, *Maeil Sinbo*, which recorded that the Japanese army entered Zhangyandong (獐岩洞) to burn down a Christian school having conspiratorial agendas of Korean independence.⁷¹ These accounts of the destructive and brutal actions by the Japanese army in the Gando Intervention, though it may include potential biased purposes for Korean independence activists to maximize the emotional impact for international sympathy or for Chinese newspapers to report Japanese misconduct in the Chinese territories, illustrate that Japan was outraged at their defeat by the Independence Army and

⁶⁶ Watanabe Rie, “Sōninūi haengdonge kwanhan kōn 선인의 행동에 관한 건 [Regarding the Actions of the Korean People],” Confidential Document No. 59, 25 August 1921, Korean History Database, https://db.history.go.kr:443/id/haf_011_0410.

⁶⁷ “Kando tongp'o ūi ch'amsang 間島同胞의 慘狀 [The Tragic Condition of Compatriots in Gando],” *The Independent* (Shanghai), 18 December 1920, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

⁶⁸ “Puk Kando ūi Hanin e taehan Ilbon ūi manhaeng,” 59–67.

⁶⁹ “Yanhun jiaoliu zhi zuowen 延珽交涉之昨聞 [Recent News on the Yanji-Hunchun Negotiations],” *Eastern Times* (Shanghai), 12 November 1920.

⁷⁰ “Jilin Yanji Xian dierqu Rijun shaosha kenmin sunshi caican ji siwang renkou shumu qingce,” 6.

⁷¹ “Changamdong ūi tongniptan ūn yasugyo hakkyo 獐岩洞의 獨立團은 耶蘇敎學校 [The Independence Corps of Jangamdong is in a Christian School],” *Maeil Sinbo* (Keijō), 6 November 1920, Newspaper Archive of ROK.

attempted to heighten its suppression of the disobedient subjects in the Gando region in response. Through such atrocities, Japan sought to, on one hand, eradicate all disobedient subjects using all means and, on the other hand, take full control of the Gando Korean communities. In a concise manner, the horrendous behaviors conducted by the Japanese army were due to both its ambition toward the Gando region and the revengeful sentiments from the Battle of Qingshanli.

The Effectiveness of and Responses to the Ethnic Control Policy

The Gando Intervention of Japan was to a large extent effective in realizing its objectives of the ethnic control policy to assimilate the Gando Koreans with pro-Japanese ideologies and eliminate the disobedient Koreans in order to create a “futei senjin-free” Korean community in Gando. More precisely, Japan aimed to transform Gando Koreans into compliant citizens and obedient subjects who could be easily controlled. Japan provided a brief conclusion to the impacts of the Gando Intervention in 1926 and listed out a few achievements, namely the scattering of the bandit armed groups, the destruction of bandit stronghold resources, and the surge of surrenderers.⁷² Many disobedient subjects from the Korean independent associations escaped from Gando or surrendered, and the Independence Army led by Hong Beom-do and Kim Chwajin (김좌진, 金佐鎭) was eradicated and the epicenter of their movements was obliterated. Light firearms and ammunition were captured from the disobedient subjects. The articulation of the Japanese army here, despite including potential biases such as overstating the success of its intervention to further validate its actions, reflects the reality of the shift of the Independence Army to Russia through the Sino-Russian border.⁷³ As a result, the resistance from the independence activists advanced Japan’s ethnic control objective to exterminate disobedient subjects in Gando. Thus, the withdrawal of the primary resistance forces against Japan from the Gando region led to a promising future of the ethnic control policy, as the disobedient and adversarial forces were largely removed due to the military intervention, creating space for Japan to reinforce its assimilation policies.

However, *Kandō shuppeishi* did not reflect the increasing allegiance of some obedient subjects towards Japan in the Gando Intervention. The impartial circumstance was that Japan’s intervention and maintenance of troops in Gando could protect the livelihood of the obedient subjects “from the depredations of criminal gangs and radical Korean resistance groups.”⁷⁴ In their view, safety and stable social

⁷² Korea Army Headquarters, “Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao,” 143–46.

⁷³ “A tongnipkun ūi toch’ō hwanyōng 我獨立軍의 到處歡迎 [The Warm Welcome Everywhere for Our Independence Army],” *The Independent* (Shanghai), 27 January 1921, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

⁷⁴ Esselstrom, “Policing Resistance to the Imperial State,” 76.

order were priorities, and banditry was an exceptionally troublesome matter which undermined their daily lives. The *Independent*, in January 1921, described that Japan incited the Koreans in Longjing and Toudaogou to initiate a petition for troop deployment.⁷⁵ This newspaper article could be a presentation of obedient Koreans' pro-Japanese actions during the Gando Intervention. The incitement of Japan was possibly the implementation of the assimilation approach under the ethnic control policy, while initiating the petition could be a proactive behavior to support Japan's military intervention. Another apparent example was the consecutive warnings given by Manju Pominhoe to the disobedient subjects.⁷⁶ The military advantage and domination of Japan might provide such obedient subjects with a strong background to voice their allegiance and patriotism towards Japan during the Gando Intervention. Additionally, within the binary categorization between obedient and disobedient subjects, Gando Koreans could change their status from being disobedient to obedient, or vice versa, depending on their needs. The choice, in most cases, was not a reflection of their political views or ideological alignments, but simply for survival. Tao Bin (陶彬), the Yanji Circuit Intendant at the time, sent a telegram to the Beiyang government informing them of the situation that many Gando Koreans went to the Japanese consulate to submit letters of repentance "in an endless stream" to prevent possible damages during the suppression of the Japanese army in November 1920.⁷⁷ Tao's description can be corroborated by sources from other parties. The pro-Japanese colonial newspaper in Korea, *Maeil Sinbo*, recorded that all members in a "conspiracy group," presumably referring to an anti-Japanese group, surrendered to Japan.⁷⁸ Sakai Yosankichi (堺與三吉), the Japanese Consul-General, sent a message with eleven points about how the surrenderers should be treated in Gando to Uchida Kōsai, the foreign minister of Japan. The first point is translated in English as follows:⁷⁹

⁷⁵ "Waejök ūi ūmhyung hanin ūl chongyong hayō chubyōng ch'ōngwōn ūl shik'yō 倭賊의 陰凶 韓人을 懲患하여 駐兵請願을 식혀 [The Japanese Bandits' Sinister Plot Incited Koreans to Initiate a Petition for Troop Deployment]," *The Independent* (Shanghai), 18 January 1921.

⁷⁶ *Eastern Times*, "Qinri Hanren jinggao dulipai."

⁷⁷ Bin Tao, "Hanmin fu Ri lingguan ju huiguoshu you 韓民赴日領館具悔過書由 [Reasons for Koreans Submitting Letters of Repentance at the Japanese Consulate]," Telegram, Yanji, 17 November 1920, Foreign Ministry of the Beiyang Government, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), <https://archivesonline.mh.sinica.edu.tw/byfonds/init/byfonds/>.

⁷⁸ "Kwisŭnja ūi kyōluŭmun, ūmbodanŭl hanado namgiŭi ani hago ta kwisyunsikhijya nŭn ttŭt 歸順者の決議文, 음모단을 하나도 남기지 안이하고 다 귀순식히자는 뜻 [Resolution of the Surrenderers, the meaning is to force everyone, without leaving a single member of the conspiracy group to surrender]," *Maeil Sinbo* (Keijō), 13 December 1920, Republic of Korea Newspaper Archive.

⁷⁹ Yosankichi Sakai, "Kwisuncha-e taehan ch'och'ō 歸順者에 對한 措處 [Measures for the Surrenderers]," Telegram, 7 November 1920, Korean History Database.

1) Policy regarding the treatment of surrenderers: In view of the fundamental objective of the punitive expedition, regarding ringleaders and similar core figures appropriate measures shall be taken. Dispositions must be carried out decisively. However, for other non-ringleader personnel, a policy of moral influence should be adopted, and treatment should be as lenient as possible. However, even in the case of ringleaders, exceptions need not apply if: their repentance is evident and there is a definite prospect of them becoming law-abiding citizens in the future; or if they report the whereabouts of other ringleaders or the hiding places of weapons and ammunition, and assist our forces in the joint punitive expedition with distinguished merit; or if, due to special circumstances, granting leniency is deemed particularly advantageous from the perspective of political strategy.

Moreover, *The Independent* on October 28, 1921, published an article warning those Gando Koreans who were to surrender to the Japanese army and consulate that they should not do so for “short-term security” and might be “captured and killed” later.⁸⁰ These sources illustrate a trend: Gando Koreans sought to join the category of obedient Koreans in response to the colonial violence and military power possessed by Japan during the intervention. Disobedient subjects labelled by Japan surrendered to Japan, sought leniency, and thus became obedient subjects. In general, the Gando Intervention resulted in increased manifestations of cooperation from the obedient subjects, underscoring its successful implementation.

Regarding Japan’s ethnic control policy in the Gando Intervention, there were distinct responses from important parties of China and the Korean independence activists. These responses serve as important references to observe Japan’s well-rounded policy execution and to analyze the impacts of the ethnic control policy on these parties.

With regard to China, Japan’s ethnic control policy was an ambitious and aggressive move which posed critical harm to the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Gando region. Japan’s ethnic control policy originally aimed at establishing complete dominion over Gando Koreans by both conciliatory and suppressive means, but Gando Koreans, in China’s view, should be controlled by the Chinese government in accordance with the *Gando Convention* of 1909. Thus, the military actions of Japan after the Hunchun Incident, including conducting active searches of disobedient subjects in the Chinese territory and perpetuating acts of

⁸⁰ “Chōg-ege kwisunghanūn chōdūl-iō 敵에게 歸順하는 者들이어 [You who surrender to the enemy],” *The Independent* (Shanghai), 28 October 1921, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History.

genocide and looting against them, were illegitimate and in breach of China's sovereignty. At the governmental level, China immediately requested Japan to withdraw its troops through the diplomatic route, emphasizing that the Chinese troops were sufficient to maintain societal order.⁸¹ The Foreign Ministry of China stated that the Sino-Japanese collaborative military action suggested by Japan was in breach of China's territorial sovereignty while China "possess[ed] a resolute commitment to seek fundamental solutions" to the problems facing the "Korean Parties."⁸² *Shun Pao* also reflected that the local government sought to "restore harmony and tranquility" in the negotiations with Japan.⁸³ The general public in China showed a more serious and discontent attitude towards them, as shown in the protests and petitions of the citizens of Jilin Province. The Jilin Provincial Assembly sent telegrams to the Foreign Ministry to request serious negotiations with Japan regarding the withdrawal of troops from Gando.⁸⁴ Jilin students showed their resentment by protesting, distributing anti-Japanese leaflets, and boycotting Japanese products.⁸⁵ These examples illustrate the resentful and dissenting attitude of China towards Japan's intervention and ethnic control policy in Gando since China believed that Gando's affairs were China's internal affairs, and Japan should not interfere—including in the administration of Gando Koreans. In contrast, Japan believed that its military intervention made China realize that Japan's cross-border military actions in Gando were not completely impossible and that they needed to be serious about the rebellious Koreans in Gando.⁸⁶ Japan's analysis implies the incompetence of China in resisting Japan, contributing to its more lenient attitude in dealing with the Gando Korean problem with Japan in the future. In spite of determined diplomatic actions and strong popular opposition by the Chinese government and people, no practical military actions were taken to halt Japan's military intervention or force Japan to withdraw its troops, thus allowing Japan to maintain its troops freely in Gando without restrictions, and indirectly facilitating the implementation of Japan's ethnic control policy in Gando.

Korean independent activists were compelled to act in lawful self-defense and organize a considerable militia to counter Japan's military intervention with force. As highlighted in the previous section, the Independence Army was victorious in the

⁸¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (China), "Hunchun An."

⁸² Ministry of Foreign Affairs (China), "Hunchun An."

⁸³ "Hunchun Shijian Zhi Mianmian Guan 琿春事件之面面觀 [A Comprehensive View of the Hunchun Incident]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 24 December 1920, 9.

⁸⁴ State Council of China, "Jilin Sheng yihui diancheng Hunchun An qing yanzhong jiaoshe you 吉林省議會電稱琿春案請嚴重交涉由 [The Jilin Provincial Assembly Telegraphed a Request for Serious Negotiations Regarding the Hunchun Case]," 23 October 1920, Foreign Ministry of the Beiyang Government, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH).

⁸⁵ "Fengtian xuesheng zhi youjie kang Ri 奉天學生之遊街抗日 [Fengtian Students' Street Demonstrations Against Japan]," *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), 16 December 1920.

⁸⁶ Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," 147–48.

Battle of Qingshanli, which led to great losses for the Japanese army. The Korean Provisional Government stressed that the independent activists would not be discouraged by Japan merely because of its atrocious behaviors in Gando.⁸⁷ The report stresses that the “burned villages would see the emergence of more devoted patriots and the murdered fathers would inspire their children to resolutely pursue and advance the independence movement.” This proves that the Gando Intervention led to huge devastation to the bases and families of independence activists, fueling vengeful sentiments towards Japan. From a different standpoint, many independence activists could escape the massacres and burning by fleeing to Russia to meet the communist Russians.⁸⁸ As Gando was no longer a safe place for them to organize the independence movements under the protection of China, the independent activists became more inactive due to the increasing surveillance and suppression carried out by Japan. In other words, Japan’s ethnic control policy was effective in eliminating the disobedient subjects and furthering their control over the Gando region. After the withdrawal of troops, Japan increased the number of consular police so as to check the revival of disobedient subjects within Gando.⁸⁹ This shows the consolidation of Japan’s influence in Gando after the intervention.

On the whole, Japan’s ethnic control policy was effective in exploiting Gando Koreans through cultivating pro-Japanese sentiments among the obedient subjects and concurrently exterminating disobedient subjects. After the Gando Intervention, the Gando region became a place where Japan could enter freely and arrest citizens as it wished when Japanese consular police increased. The increasing aggressiveness of Japan also led to a sentiment of discontent amongst the general public in China and a stronger attitude of the Chinese government in the negotiations after the Gando Intervention with Japan. Korean independence activists experienced a shift of bases and could no longer operate the independence movements in Gando on a large scale with the extension of Japan’s influence to the Gando region. The Gando Intervention thus became a turning point for China, Japan, and the Korean independence activists in the governance of the Gando region.

Conclusion

From the formulation and strategy to the outcomes, Japan’s ethnic control policy toward Gando Koreans in China was continuously reinforced by Japan before and during the Gando Intervention. Through such calculated yet challenging imperial

⁸⁷ “Puk Kando ūi Hanin e taehan Ilbon ūi manhaeng,” 69.

⁸⁸ *Shun Pao*, “Hunchun Shijian Zhi Mianmian Guan.”

⁸⁹ Japanese Consulate, “Hunchun chetui Ri junshi 琿春撤退日軍事 [Japanese Military Withdrawal from Hunchun],” Diplomatic Note, 8 April 1921, Foreign Ministry of the Beiyang Government, Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), <https://archivesonline.mh.sinica.edu.tw/byfonds/init/byfonds/>.

policy, Japan aimed to establish full governance among Gando Koreans using a categorization system which labelled them as either obedient or disobedient subjects. This was a policy in which conciliatory measures were taken to foster obedience and suppressive tactics were used to eliminate resistance. Simultaneously, the ethnic policy evolved from subtle influence on violent intervention, which gradually unveiled Japan's ambition to control the Gando region. In order to observe the big picture of the ethnic control policy, the exploration of Japanese relations and their corresponding responses is indispensable. The ethnic control policy was deeply rooted in Japan's early 20th-century territorial ambitions over Gando, and Japan proactively utilized the Sino-Korean disputes to formally establish influence over Gando. Gaining extraterritorial rights in the Gando region from the Gando Convention in 1909, to a large extent, established a key foundation for Japan to claim Gando Koreans as imperial subjects after the Korea-Japan merge and the conclusion of the 1915 Sino-Japanese Treaty. The dual strategies used for Gando Koreans were clear since the 1910s: obedient subjects were integrated through pro-Japanese education and pro-Japanese Korean organizations such as *Manju Pominhoe*, which served as a crucial pathway to spread Japanese ideology and strengthen pro-Japanese imperialism. In contrast, disobedient Koreans, labelled *futei senjin*, faced different kinds of demonization, arrests, and military suppression, especially after the 1919 March First Movement. The Gando Intervention, triggered by the Hunchun Incident, marked the policy's violent apex. While Japan scattered the Independence Army and coerced some into submission, defeats like the Battle of Qingshanli and atrocities against civilians revealed the policy's partial failure to fully subdue resistance.

The Gando Intervention resulted in multifaceted outcomes where obedient Koreans continuously submitted and became more cooperative with Japan, exemplified by petitions and warnings issued by *Manju Pominhoe*, whereas disobedient Koreans were forced to flee to Russia and their network in Gando was disrupted during the intervention. On the other hand, the implementation of the ethnic policy in the cross-border intervention undermined China's sovereignty and even exposed its incompetence in countering external aggression. The protests of Chinese people show the resentful sentiments of China against Japan. While the ethnic policy's aims were largely achieved, the tension between Japan's imperialism and the resilience of Korean identity in a contested borderland was heightened. Moreover, the success in the ethnic control policy at the same time implied that Japan had exerted influence over the Gando region. Geopolitically, Japan's actions in Gando thus led to the Sino-Japanese convention of 1925, which officially allowed Japan to conduct cross-border arrests of Gando Koreans.⁹⁰ The incidents in the early 1930s such as the Wanpaoshan Incident (July 1, 1931) and the Mukden Incident (September 18, 1931) were also not unrelated to the ethnic control policy of Japan in the 1910s and 1920s.

⁹⁰ De Lisle, "Japanese Borderland Colonialism and the Koreans in Jiandao, 1905-1932," 134-37.

Manchurian ambitions of Japan at the same time also caused the collaboration between China and the Korean independent activists as the Gando Intervention spurred Koreans in Shanghai, such as the Provisional Government to engage in active speeches in an effort to promote their experiences to the Chinese people.⁹¹ This paved the way to the further collaboration between the Provisional Government and the Nationalist Government of China led by Chiang Kai-shek, a relationship which intensified with the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937. Ultimately, Japan's ethnic control policy in Gando reveals its measure of forming a binary categorization of Gando Koreans and its imperial ambition of controlling the Gando region whereas strategic assimilation and brutal suppression collided with fierce resistance, leaving a legacy of both domination and defiance in China's frontier.

⁹¹ Hyun-hee Lee, "1920 nyöndae Han Chung yönhap hangil undong 1920 年代 韓・中聯合 抗日運動 [The 1920s Korea-China Joint Anti-Japanese Movement]," *Kuksagwan Nonch'ong* 1 (October 1989): 17–20.

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Appendix

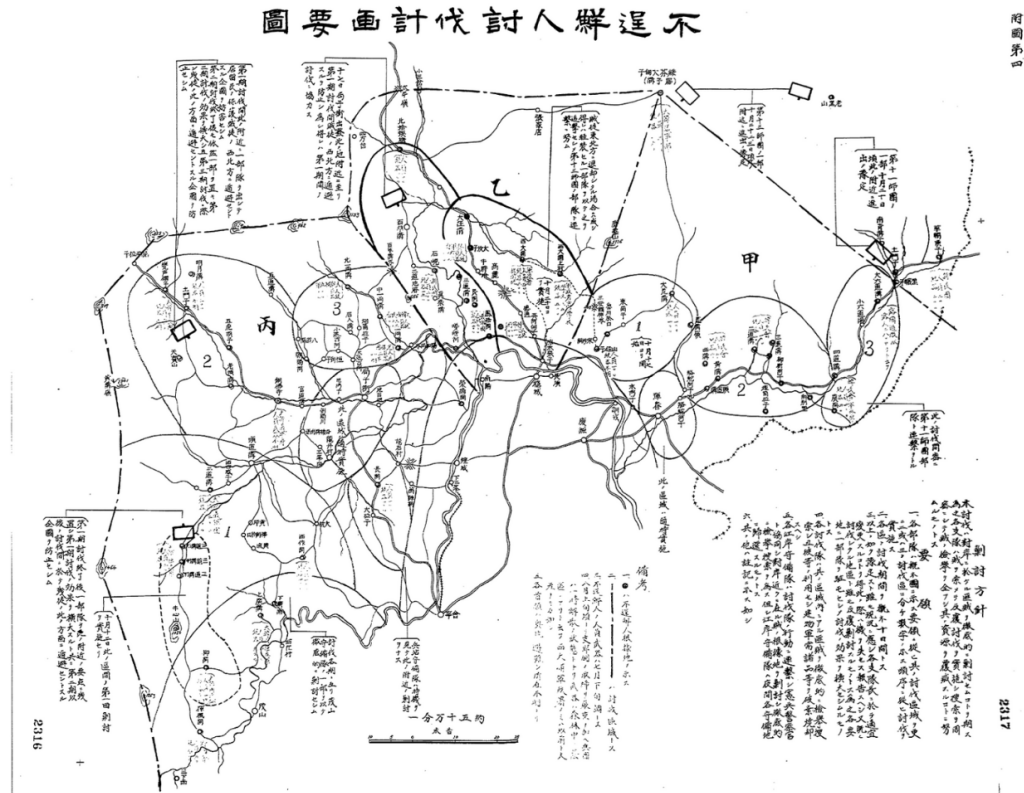


Fig. 1. A map of the Gando region and a small part of Northern Korea depicting the subjugation plan of futei senjin (The river in between is the Tumen River). Source: Korea Army Headquarters, "Sending history of dispatching troops to Jiandao," The National Institute for Defense Studies, Ministry of Defense, 3 May 1926, 陸軍省-密大日記-S1-4-4, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/image-en/C03022770200>.