

Short and long term effects of japan's occupation of korea



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RQ: What were the short-term and long-term political, social, and economic effects during the occupation of Korea by Japan from 1910-1945?

Argument: Although the horrific acts of the Japanese people almost destroyed the Korean people as a nation, Korea emerged from this time of struggle stronger than ever. Now, they are ranked 12th in the GDP Ranking of the World after only 70 years of rebuilding themselves.

Organization:

-Short-term social effect: Koreans were not allowed to speak their language in schools and were abused in their own country-including forceful worship of Japanese gods and women served as sex slaves (400)

-Short-term economic effect: Korea was modernized but was still under the control of the Japanese (400)

-Long-term political effect: 3 separate sovereign nations now because the government was torn, Korea was split into North and South (400)

-Long-term social effect: Koreans who still remember their past experiences still carry negative sentiments towards Japanese people but the younger generation is more tolerant (400)

-Long-term economic effect: Since then, South Korea's economy has skyrocketed and is now the 4th richest nation in Asia (North Korea has not prospered as much) (400)

-Korea's influence (K-pop, K-drama, food, Olympics) (200)

-The current relationship between Korea and Japan (200)

-Restatement of argument and conclusion (200)

Thesis:

- Although the Korean people/identities were destroyed during the Japanese occupation through means of government takeover, social abuse, economic restrictions, and causing a political split, they rebuilt themselves and are now one of the most influential nations in the world

Introduction:

Korea, otherwise known as “ The Hermit Kingdom”, was a targeted nation throughout much of history. Mongolia, China, Japan, and other nations surrounding the small country sought to invade and take from it. Suffering from numerous invasions and destruction, Chosun (Korea’s dynasty at the time) closed its borders. When European nations during the Age of Exploration who sought to trade and conquer were met with Chosun’s seclusion, they dubbed the tiny nation “ The Hermit Kingdom”. Despite this, Korea still faced invasion and attack from outside forces until 1910, where they underwent the most devastating invasion of all. The Japanese Empire, through years of intimidation, annexed Korea. The Korean people’s identities were shattered and they were abused in their own homes. The invasion left Korea completely changed forever. For 35 years, the Korean people suffered. But in 1945, Korea was liberated as a result of the end of WWII. With Korea left without a leader, many parties scrambled to be on top. There were two leaders who rose up and represented different ideals.

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Kim Il Sung, from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Syngman Rhee, from the Republic of Korea. The two sides fought during the Korean War. This led to the split of Korea; the creation of the North and the South. The war ended in an armistice that lasted for many years. Despite these setbacks, the Korean people persevered and now, South Korea has become one of the wealthiest nations in the world. Just a couple of years ago, even the thought of North Korea and South Korea coming together to meet was unheard of. Recently, not only has North Korea been more open and engaged in the international community, they have had several meetings with both South Korea and the US. The Korean people are a reflection of how people can recover despite past struggles and hardships. Although the Korean people/identities were destroyed during the Japanese occupation through means of government takeover, social abuse, economic restrictions, and a political split, they rebuilt themselves to be one of the most influential nations in the world. In this Extended Essay, I will address the question: What were the short-term and long-term political, social, and economic effects during the occupation of Korea by Japan from 1910-1945?

In order to analyze the effects of the occupation, one must understand the history and background of Japan and Korea's relationship. For centuries, the two nations fought and rarely got along. Japan was more powerful and had a greater army than Korea did. As a result, it was Japan who sought dominance over the small hermit kingdom. Tensions between the two nations were always high and many wars ensued. Despite the efforts to resist control, Korea (known as Joseon at the time) started to fall into Japan's hands during the Kanhwa Treaty of 1876

(explain). Since Korea followed the isolationist policy, they blocked out all foreign ideas and culture from their kingdom. But many Western nations sought to trade with them during the mid-nineteenth century. Initially, Korea was under the protection of China. China did not force their militaries or government over Korea and let Korea rule themselves somewhat autonomously. However, China was falling to Western influence. The Opium Wars reduced China's large kingdom down to half. Korea, seeing this, turned to Japan for protection. At the same time, Japan was also falling under Western influence. So, Japan used the Kanghwa Treaty to garner more control of Korea just as Westerners did to them. They wanted to remove Chinese influence in Korea to make occupation easier for them.

From 1904-1905, the Japanese and Russians fought the Russo-Japanese War. Czar Nicholas of Russia sought to use Korea's peninsula as a navy and trade base. But the Japanese were afraid of growing Russian influence and wanted to stop them. This war was seen as one of the final catalysts of Japan's occupation of Korea.

In 1905, Japan and the US signed the Taft-Katsura Agreement. At this point, Japan was the only nation fighting for the rule of Korea. The Taft-Katsura Agreement allowed the US to recognize Japan's colonization over Korea and in turn, Japan's recognition of the US's takeover in the Philippines. The Koreans felt that this violated the previously agreed Korean-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1882 (explain). The US indirectly allowed Japan to take control of Korea because the treaty promised peace between them. But with the Taft-Katsura Agreement, this peace was broken by a third party (Japan).

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Eventually, this led to the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910 and started the era of desolation for Koreans. Essentially, Japan tried to steal Korea's identity. The Annexation Treaty stated that the Emperor of Korea had to give full sovereignty over to the Emperor of Japan. How did Japan establish full control over Korea? By targeting their culture. The Korean people could not speak their language and hundreds of thousands of historical documents were burned. Many Korean women were turned into sex slaves for the Japanese military. Japan stole Korea's land by settling and growing new trees/plants in place of Korea's natural and indigenous environment. Even Korea's religion was targeted. Japan forced Koreans to worship their gods in order to fully assimilate and change them. Korean names were changed to fit Japanese names. It wasn't Korea anymore, it was a colony of Japan.

Although Japan had complete control over Korea, the hermit kingdom was not planning to go down without a fight. During the 35 years Japan occupied Korea, there was a series of unsuccessful resistance movements led by those desperate for liberation. The first of many revolts was the March 1st Movement. In 1919, 33 activists gathered and read off grievances against the Japanese government to protest. They claimed that the Japanese were destroying the Korean identity and stealing what was once theirs. Some grievances included discrimination, heavy taxes, and suppressed Korean language and culture. The March 1st Movement sparked the Korean Independence Movement. From then on, there were many liberation-focused groups fighting for independence. Religious parties (Catholics, Methodists, and Presbyterians) created liberation armies such as the Donghak Peasant

Revolution and the Korean Independence Army to combat the Japanese. However, many of these resistance fighters were massacred by Japanese soldiers. The soldiers wanted to suppress the Korean identity and turn them into slaves for Japan. Almost 2, 000, 000 Korean people participated in 1, 500 protests. 7, 000 were killed, 16, 000 were wounded, and almost 1, 000 Korean buildings were burned down. The March 1st Movement had such a great impact on the liberation era in Korea that it became a holiday in both the North and the South.

The short-term political effect of the Japanese takeover of Korea was that at the time, Korea's government was run by Japanese officials. In 1895, the last Queen of Korea, Empress Myeongseong (otherwise known as Queen Min), was assassinated. Due to Japanese influence and fear of takeover, Queen Min was desperate for an ally. She turned to Russia and tried to gain favor from them to aid Korea in the struggle against Japan. When the Japanese found out of Queen Min's resistance efforts, a man named Miura Goro enacted " Operation Fox Hunt". The plan was to enlist both Japanese and traitorous Korean assassins to kill Queen Min. Following the assassination, Emperor Gojong (Queen Min's husband) founded the Korean Empire. This new era took the place of the Joseon Dynasty and was an effort to modernize and Westernize Korea. However, with constant economic and military pressure from the Japanese, the Korean Empire was quickly dissolved. With the Taft-Katsura Treaty in 1905, Korea was made a protectorate of Japan. Japan sought to implement many reforms in Korea with the intent of decreasing Korea's power. One such reform was the reduction of the Korean Army. Military units spread throughout Korea were

eliminated and the army was reduced. By doing this, Japan removed any possibility of a rebellion and resistance of Korean forces. After 1906, Japan's employment rate in Korea's government skyrocketed. In 1908, 40.7% of government officials were Japanese. With the new governmental reforms, Japan created new positions and kicked out old Korean officials. Koreans who spoke Japanese were given priority in government jobs as an effort to gradually integrate the Japanese language into Korean society. By doing so, they carved away a bit of the Korean people's identity over time. Seven out of thirteen governors were replaced and out of 143 magistrates, 49 were removed, 44 were appointed, and 27 transferred to other parts of the government. In 1909, Japan also had the policy to have at least one Japanese official in each magistracy. Japan also centralized the government to have a more concentrated influence over institutions like the court and police. The Japanese gendarmerie took over Korea's policing power and each prefecture had a head inspector. In 1910, Japan successfully annexed Korea with the Japan-Korea Treaty. In the treaty, it stated that " His Majesty the Emperor of Korea concedes completely and definitely his entire sovereignty over the whole Korean territory to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan." and that " His Majesty the Emperor of Japan accepts the concession stated in the preceding article and consents to the annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.". The treaty was agreed upon through force. Emperor Gojong had no intention of signing it but had no choice. He was powerless against the Japanese influence and strength. The police and military had immense power. Many future laws and regulations were implemented by force. At this point, much of the country was run by the gendarmerie and military. This was only a short-term effect because the government

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takeover ended in 1945. However, it still made an enormous impact on Korea. For the time, the Korean people were oppressed and powerless. Because its core strength, its government, was eliminated, the Koreans could do nothing.

The short-term social effect of the occupation was the broken Korean identity. The Japanese wanted to assimilate the Koreans as best they could to absorb them as part of themselves.

The heart of a nation is its language. When Japan occupied Korea, one of the first things they did was to subdue the Korean language. One way of doing this was through censorship through the Advisory Police Board. This committee was created in 1906 “ to examine the draft of each paper or to prohibit the publication of the same if facts were misinterpreted or comments made injurious to public peace”. In 1907, the *Shinmun Ji Bop* , or Newspaper Law, created restrictions on Korea’s freedom of the press. The law allowed Japanese officials to seize and check newspapers. Every newspaper required permission from the Minister of Home Affairs in order to be published. Since Korean newspapers were censored, many were discontinued. Only one, the *Taehan Maeil Sinbo* continued to deliver news in Korean. From 1910-1921, the Japanese burned 200, 000 ancient Korean historical texts. These records were lost and much of the historical information we have today is written by others like the Japanese, not the Koreans. Another way the Japanese restricted the Korean language was by limiting speaking Korean in schools. While the language was still allowed, Korean was only allowed in the Korean language classes. Many businesses and shops had signs in Japanese as well. In 1937, Japanese officials decreed <https://assignbuster.com/short-and-long-term-effects-of-japans-occupation-of-korea/>

that students could not speak Korean in schools and that all classes were to be taught in Japanese. In 1939, *Sōshi-kaimei*, or the changing of the family name, was implemented by the Japanese. *Sōshi-kaimei* pressured Koreans to change their last names to a Japanese one. Nearly 84% of Korean families chose to do so in order to escape Japanese discrimination. The Japanese tried to assimilate Korea even through religion. In 1925, they forced Korean students to worship at Shinto Shrines. The National Mobilization Law of 1938 forced Christians to bow down to idols through military threat. This forced worship destroyed the Korean's religion and culture. By worshipping other gods, the Christian God's laws were disobeyed. But they could do nothing, they were physically forced to worship. Those who did not were sent to prison. The Japanese people thought of this as uniting the Korean and Japanese together as part of their "Korea and the Homeland, Together, as One" campaign. Buildings were demolished and built in Shinto-style to further weaken Christianity's image. Perhaps the most devastating social effect the occupation had on the Korean people were the use of sex slaves.

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