

HAWAII STUDIES ON KOREA

# THE ILSE

First-Generation  
Korean  
Immigrants  
in Hawai'i,  
1903–1973

WAYNE PATTERSON



CENTER FOR KOREAN STUDIES

H A W A I ' I   S T U D I E S   O N   K O R E A

# The Ilse

## FIRST-GENERATION KOREAN IMMIGRANTS IN HAWAI'I 1903–1973

Wayne Patterson

Foreword by

University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu  
and  
Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawai'i

© 2000 University of Hawai'i Press  
All rights reserved  
Printed in the United States of America

05 04 03 02 01 00 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Patterson, Wayne, 1946–

The Ilse : first-generation Korean immigrants in Hawai'i,  
1903–1973 / Wayne Patterson.

p. cm. (Hawai'i Studies on Korea)

Includes bibliographical references (p. 257) and index.

ISBN 0–8248–2093–2 (cloth : alk. paper). —

ISBN 0–8248–2241–2 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Koreans—Hawaii—History. 2. Hawaii—Ethnic relations.
3. Immigrants—Hawaii—History. 4. Hawaii—Emigration and immigration.
5. United States—Emigration and immigration—Government policy.
6. Immigrants—Government policy—United States
7. United States—Foreign relations—Korea.
8. Korea—Foreign relations—United States. I. Title. II. Series

DU624.7.K67P36 2000

996.9'00495—dc21

99–37153

CIP

University of Hawai'i Press books are printed on acid-free paper  
and meet the guidelines for permanence and durability of  
the Council on Library Resources.

Designed by Kenneth Miyamoto

Printed by The Maple-Vail Book Manufacturing Group

# **The Ilse**

*To Poe, Cromwell, Nabi and Maxwell,  
who always liked to help their daddy*

## PREFACE

Much has been written about immigration to the United States from many parts of the world, including East Asia. Japanese and Chinese immigration have received quite a bit of attention, but the same has not been true for Korean immigration. In an earlier work, *The Korean Frontier in America: Immigration to Hawaii, 1896–1910* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988 [cloth] and 1994 [paper]), I examined the process by which the first Koreans arrived in the United States. A gap in the literature still existed, however, because there was no study that looked systematically at what happened to these Korean immigrants after they arrived.

*The Ilse: First-Generation Korean Immigrants in Hawai'i, 1903–1973* is thus a sequel. It picks up the story where the earlier book ends, covers a longer period of time, and employs not only political and diplomatic history but also a great deal of social history. I hope this study will help correct the imbalance that exists in the study of East Asian immigration to the United States and fill a gap in the literature of the peopling of America. And because during that seventy-year period the vast majority of the Koreans in the United States lived in Hawai'i, this volume comes close to approximating a history of the first-generation Koreans in the United States before the next major wave of immigration in the late 1960s.

One cannot begin to approach this topic without confronting the overriding issue of Korean nationalism and the movement for independence against Japanese colonial rule. Koreans in Hawai'i played a significant role in this movement, and there exists a great deal of documentation about it. Indeed, because the nationalist movement looms so large, it poses the danger of overwhelming the other aspects of the history. Consequently, I made the decision early on not to attempt a complete history of the nationalist movement in Hawai'i here, but rather to look at selected aspects of the movement as they related to other issues concerning the first-generation Koreans. The full story of the Korean nationalist movement in Hawai'i deserves full treatment in a separate volume.

Research for this study was carried out at the following libraries and research collections: The New York Public Library; the Hamilton Library, the sociology

department, the library of the Center for Korean Studies, and the Archives of the University of Hawai'i; the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society Library; the Hawai'i State Archives; the Bernice P. Bishop Museum; the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association Plantation Archives; the Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan (Diplomatic Records Office) in Tokyo; the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia; the University of Oregon Library Special Collections; the Library of Congress; and the National Archives. Translations of Japanese and Korean language materials are mine unless otherwise noted.

This manuscript has taken shape over the past dozen years, and during that time its development has benefited from the assistance of many institutions and people. I am grateful to the Faculty Personnel Committee at St. Norbert College, which granted me sabbatical leave; to Dean Tom Trebon, whose funding helped subsidize very capable assistants: Nicole Cosgrove, Nora Rosichan, Beth Mazzia, James Bott, and Andrew Kauth; to the universities that invited me to be a visiting professor and that allowed me to make use of their libraries and facilities: the University of Chicago, Vanderbilt University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Korea University, Yonsei University, the University of Kansas, the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of South Carolina; to Michael Macmillan, who allowed me to quote extensively from his research on Koreans during World War II; to Ned Shultz and one anonymous reader for their thorough and meticulous reading of the manuscript and their suggestions for improvement; and finally, to my editor, Sharon Yamamoto, for her stewardship of this project from its inception to its final form.

Although I have been assisted by these and other individuals too numerous to mention, I alone am responsible for any errors or shortcomings.

W. P.

## A NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

I have followed the modified Hepburn system of romanization for Japanese names, terms, and places, with the exception of Tokyo, and the McCune-Reischauer system of romanization for Korean terms and places, with the exception of Seoul. For Japanese and Korean names, I have attempted to give the family name first, followed by the given name, as is the customary practice in Asia, and to use the McCune-Reischauer system to romanize Korean names. However, there are many instances among first-generation Koreans where the documents, the individuals themselves, or both employ an alternate spelling or name order, such as Syngman Rhee. Moreover, it is sometimes impossible to determine the correct McCune-Reischauer spelling based on the available documents. And some individuals have more than one spelling of their name. In these instances, some Korean names will not conform to the McCune-Reischauer system and may appear in the Western order of given name followed by family name. Readers should consult the index for more information.

For the sake of parsimony, notes appear in the text in omnibus form. That is, sources used for one or two paragraphs within the text are bundled together at or near the end of that paragraph or those paragraphs rather than scattered throughout the paragraphs themselves and are separated by semicolons. Moreover, when citations within the notes have been abbreviated, readers can find the complete citation in the bibliography.

Regarding specific abbreviations, readers should note that HSPA refers to the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association; HSPAPA stands for Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association Plantation Archives in Aiea, Hawai'i; UHSPJ refers to University of Hawai'i Student Papers and Journals, which I found in the 1970s in a file cabinet in the former building housing the sociology and history departments; Intelligence Files refers to materials in a folder found among the aforementioned papers, which belonged to Andrew Lind, a professor of sociology at the University of Hawai'i who advised the military government on Koreans during the war years.



# CONTENTS

Preface	ix
A Note on Conventions	xi
1. Prologue—The Arrival of the First Immigrants	1
2. Laboring on the Plantations	11
3. Organization and Disorganization	37
4. Methodist Mission Work	55
5. Exodus to the City	68
6. The Picture-Bride System	80
7. <i>Futei Senjin</i> : Japan and “Rebellious Koreans”	100
8. Educational Achievement and Social Disorganization	117
9. Intergenerational Conflict	128
10. Race Relations	151
11. The Pacific War and Wartime Restrictions	181
12. Epilogue—The Postwar Years	207
Notes	225
Bibliography	257
Index	273

## Prologue—The Arrival of the First Immigrants

The Korean community in Hawai'i began to take shape when the first organized group of immigrants, numbering 102, arrived aboard the *Gaelic* at the port of Honolulu on the morning of January 13, 1903. These 56 men, 21 women, and 25 children constituted the first wave of what would become an influx of nearly 7,500 persons in sixty-five ships over the next two and a half years. Since the history of this immigration can be found in my earlier book, *The Korean Frontier in America: Immigration to Hawaii, 1896–1910*,<sup>1</sup> it will suffice to paint in broad strokes some of its major themes as they relate to the formation of the Korean community in Hawai'i.

Although Koreans had been emigrating since the 1860s to the maritime provinces of Russia and to Manchuria in China as a result of worsening conditions in the late Chosŏn (Yi) dynasty (1392–1910), the idea of emigration to Hawai'i originated with the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (hereafter referred to as the HSPA or the planters) in 1896. As the forces propelling Hawai'i toward annexation by the United States gained momentum, the planters were faced with the problem of how to maintain their policy of guaranteeing a racial mix to prevent any one race from dominating plantation labor. This long-established policy of mixing the races was threatened by the impending annexation because it would deprive the planters of Chinese laborers to offset the Japanese who comprised nearly two-thirds of the plantation labor force. That is, since the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act would soon be applied to Hawai'i, there would be no way to prevent the Japanese from establishing a monopoly over plantation labor.

Annexation would also mean an end to the stability of the contract labor system, which the sugar planters used to control their largely Japanese labor force, adding another uncertainty to the labor question. Workers would no longer be legally bound to fulfill their three-year contracts and would be free to sell their labor to the highest bidder. And since Hawai'i would now become part of the United States, plantation workers could (and would) move to California, where wages were higher. The planters were also troubled by the Japanese laborers' lack of docility. Their tendency to engage in strikes and work stoppages even

when these were illegal augured ill for the post-annexation period, when such actions would enjoy legal protection. Finally, the prospect of successful and legal strikes, an exodus of workers, and the potential monopoly of labor by the Japanese raised the specter of a wage increase, which the planters were loathe to entertain.<sup>2</sup>

These considerations of the supply, quality, composition, and price of labor are what initially led the planters to think about using Koreans to replace the Chinese as an offset to the Japanese. For the next six years, from 1896 to 1902, these considerations grew, particularly after annexation in 1898, making the perceived need for Koreans even more urgent. Thus when the American minister to Korea, Horace Allen, stopped in Honolulu on his way to Korea after home leave in the spring of 1902, the planters took advantage of this to discuss the feasibility of bringing Koreans to Hawai'i. Allen promised the planters that he would help them get Korean workers.

The initiative now shifted to Horace Allen in Seoul, who, in spite of orders to remain neutral in Korean domestic affairs, convinced Emperor Kojong (r. 1864–1907) of the benefits of allowing emigration to Hawai'i, selected a recruiter (David Deshler), brought over a copy of Japan's emigration regulations as a model, established a Department of Emigration (Yuminwŏn) within the Korean governmental structure to issue passports, and tried, without success, to convince the Korean government to send out consuls to look after Koreans living abroad. Why was Allen so helpful to the planters in their attempts to get Koreans to work in the sugarcane fields of Hawai'i? Allen was in profound disagreement with his government's policy of neutrality and nonintervention in Korea because such a policy would make it easier for Japan to take over Korea. By increasing American commercial interests in Korea, such as emigration to Hawai'i, Allen hoped for a resulting increase in the State Department's political interest in Korea.<sup>3</sup>

While the mechanisms were now in place to send Koreans to Hawai'i, there remained the problems of passage money and the laws concerning immigration and contract labor. Few Koreans at the turn of the century could afford passage to Hawai'i and still have enough money to convince immigration officials at Honolulu that they would not become public charges. The solution that Allen devised was to have the recruiter, Deshler, set up a "bank" that would use planter money to "loan" immigrants the necessary funds—about one hundred dollars each—even though such money laundering illegally assisted immigration. Thus Allen had almost singlehandedly solved the problems of convincing the Korean government to allow emigration, had found a way to fund (illegally) the immigrants, and had managed to keep this information from the U.S. immigration authorities. Moreover, Allen, who was knee deep in this enterprise, managed to conceal his involvement from his superiors in Washington, who continually enjoined him not to become involved in Korea's domestic affairs.

During the nearly three years of the immigration, the process survived sev-

eral close calls. One involved a lawsuit and subsequent investigation by the U.S. government because the planters had illegally promised Koreans jobs on the plantations. Another came from American missionaries who wanted Christian Koreans to stay in Korea to help with mission work. Yet another came from officials within the Korean government motivated either by corruption, Confucian propriety, or anti-Americanism. None of these efforts stopped Koreans. What *did* keep the Koreans from going to Hawai'i was the Japanese, and neither Horace Allen nor the planters could counter them.

From the beginning of Korean immigration to Hawai'i, Japanese emigration agents and the Japanese minister to Korea had registered their opposition. The emigration agents were worried that Korean immigration would cut into their business; the Japanese minister opposed it as harmful to Japanese interests in Hawai'i. Their protests were to no avail, however, as the foreign minister, Komura Jutarō, initially ignored their appeals. But in the spring of 1905, Komura, too, came to oppose Korean immigration to Hawaii.<sup>4</sup>

What caused Foreign Minister Komura's change of heart? In the spring of 1905, the California legislature passed a resolution recommending passage of a Japanese Exclusion Act to pressure Washington into excluding Japanese as it had excluded Chinese in 1882. Passage of the act would place Japan in the same lowly position occupied by China internationally, and psychologically, at least, it would negate all the gains won by a modernizing Japan, which saw itself as equal to the United States and other major Western countries. After all, Japan had the third largest navy in the world, had defeated both the Chinese and the Russians in recent wars, had a Western-style constitutional government, and boasted a rapidly industrializing economy. It was, therefore, in Japan's best interest to prevent the enactment of such an act for reasons of national prestige.

Foreign Minister Komura linked the threat of a Japanese Exclusion Act to Korean immigration to Hawai'i. He had learned that Korean immigrants in Hawai'i were used as strikebreakers to keep the wages of Japanese laborers low. As a result, Japanese workers in Hawai'i were attracted to California where the wages were double those in Hawai'i. The resulting influx of nearly one thousand Japanese workers per month led Californians to advocate Japanese exclusion. If Koreans could be kept out of Hawai'i, Komura reasoned, then the wages would rise to the point where Japanese would be satisfied to remain on Hawaiian sugar plantations rather than move to California. As a result, the threat of a Japanese Exclusion Act would be eliminated.

Thus Japan came to realize that in order to avoid a Japanese Exclusion Act and maintain its international prestige, Koreans would have to be excluded from Hawai'i. And to be sure, doing so would have other benefits as well: it would limit the size of a community that was already showing signs of anti-Japanese activity; it would mollify Japanese emigration agents; it would ensure

Japanese could continue to emigrate to the United States; and it would raise the standard of living of Japanese in Hawai'i. But the primary reason Komura and the Japanese foreign ministry decided to prevent Koreans from entering Hawai'i was that the Japanese, above all else, wanted to avoid the loss of face that would result if the United States excluded Japanese. Ironically, doing so meant that the Japanese had to exclude Koreans from Hawai'i to prevent their own exclusion from the United States.

However, it was one thing for Japan to decide to prevent Koreans from emigrating to Hawai'i, and quite another for it to implement such an action. On the surface, it seemed relatively simple for Japan to prevent Koreans from entering Hawai'i. After all, in the spring of 1905, the Korean peninsula was filled with Japanese troops concluding the war with Russia, Japan had signed a "treaty" of alliance with Korea, and Japanese-appointed advisers were located in the key positions of finance and foreign affairs within the Korean government. Japan simply had to order the Korean government not to allow Koreans to leave. But if Japan *were* to stop Korean emigration in such a high-handed manner, it would call into question—especially with the United States—Japan's claim that it wanted only what was best for Korea and its people, and expose Japan's essentially self-serving motives.

Fortunately for Japan, Komura and his foreign office in Tokyo were aware of significant weaknesses in the Korean government that could be used to Japan's advantage. In fact, one of the weakest links in Korea's government was the emigration process itself. In April 1905, the government had inadvertently permitted one thousand Koreans without passports to depart for Mexico, where they worked on hemp plantations in the Yucatan peninsula in slave-like conditions. The Department of Emigration, which Horace Allen had so carefully helped establish, had been legislated out of existence in 1903, along with its emigration rules and regulations. There was no Korean consul in Merida to look after these new arrivals, and in fact, Korea did not even enjoy diplomatic relations with Mexico! Similarly, Korea did not have a consul in Hawai'i, where over seven thousand Koreans now resided. Korea had played right into Japan's hands.

At this point, it became a relatively simple matter for Japan to halt Korean emigration by appearing to be concerned about the fate of overseas Koreans. The Japanese minister to Korea simply "suggested" to the Korean government that emigration be prohibited temporarily, until the government got its emigration system in order. Until then, Japanese representatives in Hawai'i and Mexico would care for the unfortunate Koreans who had been victimized by their own inept government. Korea was hardly in a position to refuse. Because the government realized it was relinquishing its sovereign right to send its people anywhere they would be accepted, in the summer of 1905, the Korean foreign office decided to send its vice-minister, Yun Ch'i-ho, to Hawai'i and then to Mexico to investigate the condition of Korean immigrants. Upon his return, Yun would draw up appropriate regulations governing emigration that would

conform to accepted international norms. Japan now faced the possibility that it would be forced to resort to heavy-handedness and thus expose its selfish motives toward Korea to an international audience, primarily the United States. But Japan still had some cards to play in this game.

In September 1905, Yun departed for Hawai'i and spent about one month visiting all the plantations where Koreans worked. At the end of the month he concluded that Koreans in Hawai'i were generally well treated. He was then supposed to continue on to Mexico, where the real problems lay. But when he contacted Seoul requesting money for boat passage to Mexico, the Japanese adviser to the Korean finance office vetoed the expenditure, leaving Yun with no choice but to return to Korea, his mission unsuccessful.

Japan had prevailed. Yun was in no position to draw up appropriate regulations governing emigration, meaning that the temporary ban would become permanent, especially after Japan established a protectorate over Korea in November 1905. By exploiting weaknesses within the Korean government and wrapping itself in the idealistic cloak of "humanitarian concern" for the welfare of Korean immigrants, Japan had been able to stop Koreans from going to Hawai'i without revealing their true motive to the United States—preventing a Japanese Exclusion Act. Since the United States never discovered Japan's underlying motive, it continued to believe that the Japanese had honorable intentions toward Korea and did nothing to prevent the establishment of a Japanese protectorate in 1905 or, later, the annexation of Korea in 1910.

Thus what Horace Allen and the planters started in 1902 was stopped short by the Japanese just three years later. During that period about 7,500 Koreans had arrived in Hawai'i, sharing three demographic characteristics with their East Asian immigrant counterparts: age, gender, and marital status. That is, like the Chinese and Japanese immigrants to Hawai'i, most of the Koreans were young unmarried males in their twenties. Specifically, there were around six thousand men, about one-tenth of whom were accompanied by wives and children, bringing the total number of women to around six hundred, with about five hundred children. For the next fifty years, the size of the Korean population in Hawai'i would remain around this size.

Several additional attributes of this first group of Korean immigrants are important because they often differentiated the immigrants not only from the average Korean but also from the immigrants from China and Japan. These distinguishing attributes are discussed not just to highlight differences, but because they will be important in explaining why the Korean community in Hawai'i developed as it did.<sup>5</sup>

First, as a group, Korean immigrants were far fewer in number than the 50,000 Chinese who arrived between 1853 and 1900 and the 180,000 Japanese who arrived between 1885 and 1907. This small number is important because it hastened the adaptation of the Koreans to American society, whereas the

larger number of Chinese and Japanese immigrants insulated, to a certain extent, the influences of the Western world in Hawai'i and resulted in a slower rate of adaptation.

Second, the great majority of Korean immigrants had lived in the cities rather than the countryside before coming to Hawai'i. This would be expected because David Deshler's recruiting offices (the Tong-Sŏ Kaebal Hoesa, or East-West Development Company) were located exclusively in Korea's ports and larger cities, and because many of the immigrants were connected in some way with Christianity, most of whose missionaries and their converts were located in the cities. Their urban origins distinguish them not only from their fellow countrymen—late Chosŏn Korea was an overwhelmingly rural society—but also from the immigrants from Japan and China. Japanese immigrants tended to originate from the rural areas of western Japan, specifically Hiroshima, Wakayama, Yamaguchi, and Okayama Prefectures, while those from China tended to come from the rural areas of Guangdong Province. This urban orientation of the Korean immigrants will be of importance when we analyze the subsequent development of the Korean community in Hawai'i, particularly their preference for urban residences.

Third, Korean immigrants toiled in mostly nonagricultural occupations prior to their emigration, as would be expected, given their largely urban residence. Many of the immigrants had worked as common laborers or coolies, while others had served as soldiers, minor government clerks, policemen, miners, fishermen, boat builders, railroad workers, woodcutters, household servants, students, political refugees, and Buddhist monks. Fewer than one-seventh had been farmers; many were simply unemployed city dwellers. Thus at the turn of the century urban employment—or perhaps, unemployment—rather than farming, predominated among the Korean immigrants, making them different from most of their farming countrymen, as well as from most of the Chinese and Japanese immigrants to Hawai'i who had also been farmers. As we look at employment patterns in Hawai'i after immigration, it will be important to remember this urban occupational profile.

Fourth, while the case can be made that most Korean immigrants were urban residents working at urban-type occupations prior to coming to Hawai'i, there is evidence suggesting that the city was not necessarily their birthplace or hometown. According to this evidence, a significant proportion originally had been from the countryside but had moved or fled to the cities. Between 1893 and 1905, no less than three armed conflicts—the Tonghak Rebellion, the Sino-Japanese War, and the Russo-Japanese War—took place on Korean soil, causing many Korean peasants to flee to the cities. In addition, famine and oppressive taxes drove farmers from their homes. That a sizable number of immigrants had migrated to cities within Korea prior to leaving for Hawai'i is important, as first-generation Korean immigrants would make a similar rural-to-urban movement in Hawai'i.

Fifth, these pioneer Korean immigrants were widely dispersed geographically within Korea. This is not surprising, since Deshler's eleven recruiting offices were located throughout the entire peninsula, from Sŏngjin and Ŭiju in the north, through cities such as P'yŏngyang, Seoul, Wŏnsan, and Inch'ŏn in the center, to cities such as Mokp'o and Pusan on the southern coast. While perhaps slightly more northerners than southerners emigrated, the fact remains that Korean immigrants came from all over the peninsula, unlike immigrants from China and Japan, who tended to come from one region. This fact would have important ramifications for the development of the first-generation Korean community in Hawai'i because their scattered origins, like their differing urban occupations, made the Koreans as a group much more heterogeneous than the Chinese and Japanese.

Sixth, the Korean immigrant group had what might be termed a bimodal class background. Many, if not most, were from the lower classes, with little or no education. At the same time, a small but significant number were literate, educated, and from the upper classes (i.e., *yangban*). Thus the immigrants came from all levels of Korean society, adding to the first generation's heterogeneous nature. No such heterogeneity existed among the Japanese immigrant farmers, and certainly very few from the Chinese gentry class emigrated to Hawai'i.

Finally, the Korean immigrants had a strong Christian connection. The reason was that the very people most susceptible to the message of Christianity were those city-dwelling Koreans from the lower classes who had been uprooted from their more conservative roots in the countryside—in other words, the type of person who opted to emigrate to Hawai'i. This Christian connection distinguishes the Korean immigrants from their countrymen, who were overwhelmingly non-Christian (there were only about one hundred thousand Christians out of a total population of eight million at the time), as well as from the Chinese and Japanese immigrants. This is not to say that the bulk of the Korean immigrants were baptized Christians when they arrived in Hawai'i, but the evidence strongly suggests that many of the immigrants had some contact with American missionaries in Korea's cities prior to their departure. In the cities they might have gained some literacy in either Korean, English, or both in mission schools; become familiar with Western people, houses, medicine, clothes, foods, and customs; and, of course, become acquainted with Christianity. This characteristic helps to explain why the Korean immigrants overwhelmingly affiliated themselves with Christian institutions after arriving in Hawai'i. Moreover, their attraction to Christianity while still in Korea indicates that they were more "liberal" than most Koreans, having rejected to a certain extent many of the conservative tenets of Confucian Korean society in the late Chosŏn period. This liberal nature helped them adapt more quickly to Western values.



Just as the immigrants from Korea were a diverse group, so also were their reasons for leaving their country and coming to Hawai'i. In explaining the flow of these immigrants to Hawai'i at the turn of the century, some writers have emphasized that it occurred within a world capitalist system that caused cheap labor to move from the periphery to the core. However true that may be, ultimately nobody forced Koreans to go to Hawai'i. Rather, they were rational actors who made up their own minds after weighing factors of push and pull.

Clearly, the most important "push" factor that made people want to leave Korea was the terrible conditions characterizing late Chosŏn dynasty Korea, which made life difficult for the average Korean. One example was famine and the resulting threat of starvation. Even for those Koreans not directly threatened by this, problems such as banditry, inflation, rebellion, war, cholera epidemics, counterfeit coins, oppressive taxes, corruption, maladministration, and grinding poverty provided ample reason to flee the country. And some—mostly demobilized soldiers—left in the fear of an impending Japanese takeover. However, since the majority of the emigrants originated from the urban poor and working class, we must conclude that deteriorating living standards in Korea, rather than Japanese imperialism, was the primary factor in causing people to leave. Whether the emigrants left Korea because of economic hardship, fear of a Japanese takeover, or a combination of both, it is more than likely that such reasons would tend to make these emigrants adopt a settler, rather than a sojourner, mentality in their adopted country, since most would not consider returning to Korea until conditions there improved or until it was liberated from Japanese rule.

But why go to Hawai'i? Koreans had the option of going to China or Russia, and indeed, most did go to those places in the late Chosŏn period. To determine why Hawai'i held promise as a destination, we must look at the "pull" factors that drew emigrants there by first examining an intervening variable—the role of Christianity. Because the percentage of Christians in Korea at the turn of the century was minuscule and because a large proportion of the immigrants to Hawai'i had had some connection with Christianity, it follows that by examining Korean Christians at the turn of the century, we will arrive at some conclusions concerning their motivations.

Most Koreans at the turn of the century were rural peasant farmers whose tradition-bound and Confucian-oriented value system led them to be suspicious of Western ideas such as Christianity and leery of the prospect of immigration to America. But those who fled to the cities at the end of the nineteenth century came into contact with urban-based American Protestant missionaries and became primary targets for conversion. Most were attracted to the new religion by the prospect of a better life. Young, rootless, newly urbanized, unable to perform the required Confucian rituals at the ancestral graveyard, dispossessed of farms and perhaps relatives, and now, perhaps adherents of Christianity, they were confronted with the opportunity to emigrate to